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**Shakespearean Boars and Dolphins:  
Representing Character through Animal Dreams in *Richard III* and *Antony and Cleopatra***

**Claude Fretz**

Abstract

This article explores how Shakespeare combines dreams and animal symbolism to foreground the characterological driving forces of his plots. The article comprises two case studies. Firstly, it investigates Stanley's dream of a boar in *Richard III*, showing that Shakespeare draws on the boar's various cultural meanings to construct an image of Richard III that is consistent with revisionist Tudor myths, but that Shakespeare also adapts and reshapes these cultural references for the purpose of character representation. Secondly, the article explores Cleopatra's dream of a dolphin-like Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*, arguing that the dream image of the dolphin captures Antony's mercurial character and highlights the tragic distance between Cleopatra's celebration of his delphine character and the steadier character types that the play's social and political reality demands.

Keywords: animals, adaptation, cultural history, dramaturgy, dreams, Shakespeare, sources, tragedy

In Book XI of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid recounts how Morpheus, the god of dreams, revealed to Alcyone the fate of her drowned husband Ceyx. Ovid narrates how Morpheus took off his wings, adopted the face and form of Ceyx, and ‘st[ood] naked before the couch of the hapless wife’, with ‘water drip[ping] heavily from his sodden hair’.<sup>1</sup> Morpheus then addressed Alcyone with the following words:

Do you recognize your Ceyx, O most wretched wife? Or is my face changed in death?  
Look on me! You will know me then and find in place of husband your husband’s shade.  
No help, Alcyone, have your prayers brought to me: I am dead.<sup>2</sup>

Intriguingly, Ovid comments that Morpheus spoke these words ‘in a voice she might well believe her husband’s; he seemed also to weep real tears and had the very gesture of her Ceyx’ hands’.<sup>3</sup> It is as if Ovid is reviewing an acting performance. Morpheus has successfully and convincingly played the part of Ceyx: he has not only used disguise or costume but has also performed vocal imitation, used gestural language, and expressed emotions with the credibility required. Ovid here seems keen to underline the performance aspect of Morpheus’s oneiric shapeshifting; Morpheus, in short, is an actor. Unlike Ovid, who seems to have subscribed to the prevailing view of his time (and of Greek antiquity) that dreams were, or at the very least could be, supernatural, Shakespeare never expressed any consistent theory or understanding of dreams. This is despite his many borrowings from Ovid and his reliance on various forms of dream devices across works of different genres: the dreams in his plays range from the profane to the prophetic, and from the somatic to the supernatural.<sup>4</sup> But inherent both in Ovid’s account of Morpheus’s performance and in Shakespeare’s use of dreams across his dramatic works is a deep

interest in the integration of dream and performance. Indeed, Shakespeare's conception and representation of his characters' dreams can never be divorced from the theatrical and narrative contexts in which they occur. The present article sets out to advance our understanding of Shakespeare's intertwining of dream, drama, and character by investigating how the playwright uses oneiric animal imagery to highlight the characterological motors of his plots. By examining the plays of *Richard III* (c.1593) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606), the article will argue that Shakespeare deploys dream devices at crucial junctures in order to anchor the catalysts of plot development firmly in the perspectives and experiences of key characters, often by drawing on, and lending to, the long tradition of animal symbolism as a marker of human qualities.

In investigating animal dreams, the present article sets out to build bridges between the burgeoning interdisciplinary fields of dream studies and animal studies. Since the representations of animals and dreams across Shakespeare's works are rich in thematic associations and dramatic applications, with meanings built on classical, medieval, and early modern precedents, it is no surprise that these topics have been approached from different theoretical angles and by critics of different persuasions. Representations of animals have attracted attention from posthumanist critics who have explored the decentring of the human in Shakespeare's works and investigated the tensions and interactions between nature and civilisation in early modern literature. Bruce Boehrer, for instance, has focused on what he calls a 'set of interrelated zooliterary histories', examining the changing and emerging roles of animals as literary characters in early modern Europe.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, Jeanne Addison Roberts has explored the tension, in Shakespeare's plays, between male, civilised culture and the wild world of animals, women, and other marginalised figures.<sup>6</sup> Karen Raber, for her part, has analysed 'the questions and issues raised by early modern animal embodiment for both early modern and modern theories of the human', and Erica Fudge

has studied rationality and animality in early modern culture.<sup>7</sup> As far as dreams are concerned, critics have discussed them as literary and artistic creations, as cultural historical phenomena, and as parts of a wider history of the senses. Noteworthy efforts have been undertaken by Carole Levin, who has used dream reports to explore early modern mentalities, beliefs and cultural politics, and Katharine Hodgkin, Michelle O’Callaghan and Susan J. Wiseman, who have examined dreams in relation to early modern culture and society.<sup>8</sup> In addition, Ita Mac Carthy, Kirsti Sellevold and Olivia Smith have tackled the relationship between literary and scientific investigations of dreams, delusions, and illusions; and Stuart Clark has investigated the wider early modern fascination with errors and uncertainties of perception. Studies with a greater focus on literature have been produced by Peter Brown, Marjorie Garber, and Claude Fretz, with the latter two focusing on Shakespeare’s dramatic uses of dreams.<sup>9</sup> Despite these productive lines of inquiry, studies of animal symbolism in Shakespeare’s dream images continue to tilt heavily towards a single play, namely *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595), with Bruce Boehrer, for example, suggesting that the play is ‘patently about bestiality’, Rebecca Ann Bach arguing that the play envisions an ‘animal continuum’ that ‘does not distinguish absolutely between all humans and a singular category of animals’, and Claude Fretz exploring ‘topographical and zoological similarities’ between the dream representations in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and those in Francesco Colonna’s *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499).<sup>10</sup> By focusing on *Richard III* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, the present article offers case studies of plays where the nexus between dream framework, animal symbolism, and character representation has remained underappreciated but where dreams and their animal imagery produce crucial insights into the protagonists’ motivating forces both for audiences and for other characters onstage. These two

plays also reveal how Shakespeare takes traditional tropes of animals (such as the symbolic use of a species) as his starting point but adapts traditional heritage for dramatic purposes.

Methodologically, the present article also moves beyond historical and contextual studies of dreams and animals and intervenes in recent debates and reappraisals in the areas of character studies and source studies. While the Bradleyan approach to Shakespeare's characters has long been superseded by new assumptions and presuppositions, character studies have undergone a rejuvenation. Despite the long-held postmodern contempt for character studies, indeed, encountering Shakespeare imaginatively, creatively, and emotionally always means engaging with Shakespeare's characters, notwithstanding the ideological pressures and shaping forces that have rightly been recognised by New Historicists, Cultural Materialists, and others. In 2009, Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights proclaimed that 'character has made a comeback'.<sup>11</sup> Since then, Shakespeare scholars have published studies of character and moral agency (Michael D. Bristol), of characterisation, subjectivity, and selfhood (Yu Jin Ko and Michael W. Shurgot), of the processual emergence of character via situations in the plays (Nicholas Luke), of character and cognition (Nicholas Helms), and of Shakespeare's use of Senecan characterological resources (Curtis Perry).<sup>12</sup> Building on these insights into the importance of character to comic or tragic agency, the present article sets out to postulate dreams as an extension of Shakespearean character, arguing that dreams crystallise the driving force(s) behind the characters' agency. For the purpose of this article, character is understood as a creation confined within the dramatic structures of the plays but shaped, like the representation of dreams, by both intratextual and extratextual references and meanings. In its investigation of relevant extratextual references, the article takes its cue from John Drakakis's recent call for a recalibration of terminology and methodology in source studies. Drawing on different theories of intertextuality, Drakakis puts the

case that the relationship between Shakespeare and any sources is ‘circular’ and arises from ‘a general reservoir of popular knowledge that informs the alert writer’ – what he calls ‘the palimpsestic practice reaching out, incorporating, and embellishing material that they had already internalized’.<sup>13</sup> Rejecting the practice of ‘source hunting’, Drakakis proposes the term ‘resources’ (rather than ‘sources’) to describe textual and intertextual references, ideological influences, material and cultural environments, dramatic conventions, and archetypal narratives or characters that influenced the cultural productions of Shakespeare and others.<sup>14</sup> The analysis of animal dreams that follows is informed by an awareness not only of likely direct sources but also of shaping contexts – particularly dream theories in Shakespeare’s time. In early modern England, dreams went through a transitional phase that deeply influenced their use as dramatic devices – especially their use as devices of characterisation. While Mary Baine Campbell has shown that dreaming ‘loses its epistemological prestige’ in the seventeenth century when a more rational and analytical model of oneirocriticism and self-understanding began to develop, it is important to bear in mind that dreams in Shakespeare’s lifetime still retained their epistemological and prophetic significance.<sup>15</sup> Amid this early modern transition from theological or oneiromantic models of dream interpretation towards a gradual psychologisation of dreams – an early form of what modern dream research calls the continuity hypothesis – the link between dream, character and inwardness was becoming more widely established and recognised. For example, the Italian mathematician Girolamo Cardano recorded his dreams because he thought that they revealed something about his own person and identity, while the English essayist and poet Owen Feltham opined that ‘dreams are notable means of discovering our own inclinations’, adding that the ‘wise man’ learns to ‘know himself’ through his dreams.<sup>16</sup> Charles I’s Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, too, recorded his dreams, some of which express fear

about losing political patronage or hint at potentially homoerotic desires, only to see them used by his adversaries to defame him in court.<sup>17</sup> As I will show in the present article, Shakespeare's plays build on this emerging association of dream symbols with psychology and selfhood and deploy animal dreams as tools of characterisation, with each layer of meaning reflecting upon important elements of plot and character. This means that dreams in Shakespeare's plays do not have inherent meanings – in other words, they are not carbon copies of the one-size-fits-all teachings found in the widely circulated classical, medieval, and early modern dream manuals – but rather have constructed meanings that derive from the playwright's adaptation of dream theories for the purpose of representing character and dramatic agency.

In order to investigate the characterological functions of Shakespeare's animal dreams, the present article is composed of two case studies. Firstly, it investigates Stanley's dream of a boar in *Richard III*. It shows that Shakespeare in this play draws on the boar's various cultural meanings to construct an image of Richard III that is consistent with revisionist Tudor myths, but that Shakespeare also selectively adapts the systems of understanding that inform these cultural resources and references, enlisting them in his endeavour of character representation. For example, the article explores how the episode of Stanley's dream contributes to the construction of Richard's dramatic character by foregrounding both his public self-characterisation and his (mis-)characterisation by others. Secondly, the article explores Cleopatra's dream of a dolphin-like Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Drawing on classical, medieval, and early modern dream theory and animal symbolism, the article argues that the dream image of the dolphin captures Antony's mercurial character and vividly highlights the tragic distance between, on the one hand, Cleopatra's celebration of Antony's delphine character and, on the other hand, the steadier character types demanded by the social and political realities in the play.



### ***Richard III: Dreaming of Boars***

Shakespeare never constructs character purely through the words and deeds of the dramatic figures in question but also through what other personae say about them. The tragedy of *Richard III* offers a fine example of how characters can tragically misjudge the main agent or protagonist of a play. Even though its eponymous protagonist repeatedly shares his evil intentions with the audience, he successfully manipulates most of the other characters in the play. In 3.2, Shakespeare uses a dream rich in animal symbolism to foreground not just the gulf between Richard's selfish rapacity and other characters' naïve trust in him but also to reveal and recapitulate, in condensed form, the character traits that turn Richard into the chief driver of tragic action in the play.<sup>18</sup> In this scene, Lord Stanley sends a messenger to Hastings to deliver a stern warning:

He [Stanley] dreamt tonight the boar had razed his helm.

Besides, he says there are two councils held,

And that may be determined at the one

Which may make you and him to rue at th'other.

Therefore he sends to know your lordship's pleasure:

If presently you will take horse with him

And with all speed post with him toward the north

To shun the danger that his soul divines. (3.2.9–16)

The (white) boar in Stanley's dream is a clear allusion to Richard III, on whose crest it is pictured.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the play, Richard is referred to by his emblem: Queen Margaret insults him as an 'elvish-marked, abortive rooting-hog' (1.3.225); Stanley (perhaps still affected by the memory of his dream) later reports that he is unable to come out in support of Richmond because his son is being penned 'in the sty of this most bloody boar' (4.5.2); and the ghosts of the murdered young princes appear to Richmond in a dream and pray that 'good angels guard [him] from the boar's annoy' (5.4.130). Richmond's rousing address to his troops before the decisive battle even turns Richard's emblem into an extended metaphor loaded with both agricultural and biblical symbolism:

The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,  
That spoils your summer fields and fruitful vines,  
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough  
In your inbowelled bosoms, this foul swine  
Lies now even in the centre of this isle,  
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn.  
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.  
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,  
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace  
By this one bloody trial of sharp war. (5.2.7–16)

In this speech, Richmond draws on the biblical image of the boar trampling on God's vineyard (see Psalm 80:8–16), which was variously interpreted and appropriated as a symbol of deviation

from orthodox faith. One such case in point is the clergyman Thomas Drant's early modern translation of Gregory of Nazianzus's epigram against Arianism (a Christological doctrine that denied the divinity of Christ): 'Whence springs this mischeifes load? Howe commes the mone so darke, / That once so brigome boade? / Howe coulde that brockishe Boare / Our Haruest so destroye?', it asks.<sup>20</sup> After the Reformation, the boar also became a symbol for either Protestantism or Catholicism, depending on the speaker's or writer's denomination.<sup>21</sup> But boars had long been viewed as banes to agriculture in a literal sense, too, largely because of their rooting, wallowing, and foraging behaviour. According to Book VIII of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the mythological Calydonian Boar, later successfully hunted down by the Argonauts, 'trampled down the young corn in the blade, and ... laid waste the full-grown crops of some farmer who was doomed to mourn, and cut off the ripe grain in the ear'.<sup>22</sup> Shakespeare's play calls upon these different cultural associations of the boar to conjure up an image of a tyrannical Richard III who not only threatens the religious and spiritual identity of England but also presents an existential threat to the very soil that supplies the English with food and habitat.

Richard's boarishness in the play also extends beyond these agricultural, political, and religious connotations, for it describes and defines his very character and identity. Edmund Topsell's bestiary *The Historie of Four-Footed Beastes* (1607) helps to explain just why the boar was such a convenient symbol for Richard III and why its polysemy was so attractive to Shakespeare, especially against the backdrop of Tudor myths that sought to demonise the last Plantagenet king by linking his moral wickedness to physical abnormality and deformity. At the start of his entry on the boar, Topsell lists the animal's various epithets:

The Epithites of this beast are many, both in Greeke and Latine, such as these are[:]  
sharpe, wilde, *Arcadian*, *Attalantean*, troubler, bloody, toothed, hard, *Erymanthean*,  
cruell, outragious, fierce, strong gnashing, lightning, yellowe, raging, ... quicke, rough,  
rough-haired, horrible, ... threatning, wood-wanderer, cruell, *Sabelican*, bristle-bearer,  
foaming, strict, filthy, *Tegean*, *Thuscan*, fearfull, wry-faced, truculent, deuourer, violent,  
*Vmbrian*, wound-maker, impetuous, mountaine-liuer, armed on both sides.<sup>23</sup>

Some of these adjectives can very easily turn into descriptions of Shakespeare's Richard III. For example, Richard is 'sharpe' and 'toothed' because he is said to have been born with teeth (*R3*, 4.4.46) – that is why he reports earlier in the tetralogy that he is bound to 'snarl and bite and play the dog' (*3H6*, 5.6.77).<sup>24</sup> The analogies with the gnashing and sharp-toothed boar also extend beyond the story of Richard's birth. As an adaptation of the medieval stock character of the Vice, who entertained audiences with banter and witticisms and was never seen without his dagger, Richard is in fact a knife-wielding villain (see *R3*, 3.1.110–111).<sup>25</sup> This possession of a dagger further aligns him with the boar which, as Topsell teaches his readers, 'cut[s] like sharpe kniues'.<sup>26</sup> Like the boar, the dagger that Richard carries is not just an emblem or appendage but a metaphor for the character himself. When it comes to Richard's dramatic character, indeed, Topsell's boarish epithets – 'bloody', 'cruell', 'fierce', 'quicke', 'fearfull', 'truculent' – accurately describe the traits, impulses and actions that seal the crimson stage spectacle of his rise and fall: in the course of the play, Richard 'urge[s] [Edward IV's] hatred more to Clarence' (1.1.146) until the latter is conducted to the Tower of London; he confesses to the murder of Henry VI at the latter's funeral procession (1.2.99); he employs two murderers to kill Clarence in his prison cell (1.4); he arranges the imprisonment of Rivers, Grey and Vaughan (2.4.44–47);

and he disposes of his wife Anne as soon as she has outlived her usefulness (4.2.50–51; 4.3.39). As the plot progresses, Shakespeare deploys the boar as a device of *enargeia*, appropriating cultural animal symbolism to create visual images in the minds of readers and audiences that aid his representation of Richard's actions and their consequences. By doing so, Shakespeare allows the image of the boar to transcend its status as a mere emblem, with the distance between the boar and Richard collapsing under the weight of the character's boarish action and behaviour until the image and the character constantly rebound off each other.

In 3.2 of *Richard III*, the symbolism of the boar is framed by a dream device in order further to pinpoint the character-driven energies that spur the play's tragedy. When Richard boasts to the audience earlier in the same act that he is able to 'moralize two meanings in a word' (3.1.83), he foregrounds his duplicity as one of his chief traits. Crucially, it is also Richard's duplicity that is highlighted by Stanley's dream and the characters' subsequent responses to it in 3.2, as I will show. Richard excels at manipulating public and private opinion of him, whilst at the same time relishing in the sharing of his malicious intentions with the audience. A case in point are the events in 1.2, where he successfully woos Lady Anne during the funeral procession for her father-in-law, Henry VI, for whose death he is responsible (he has also murdered her husband Edward). As Donald R. Shupe writes, Richard 'maneuver[s], lie[s], cajole[s], chastise[s], flatter[s], and even offer[s] up his own life to Anne'.<sup>27</sup> In doing so, Richard moves Anne from cursing him – she wishes, among other things, for all his children to be 'abortive' (1.2.20) – to playfully bidding him farewell (1.2.209–210) and even marrying him later on. Richard's duplicity is supremely apparent again in 3.7, where the character is seen in the company of bishops, with 'a book of prayer in his hand' (93), in order to broaden his political support and manipulate the gullible Lord Mayor and the citizens of London. Like Anne and the

Londoners, Hastings, too, is either wilfully or unintentionally blind to the true nature of Richard's character. His blindness is brought to the fore when he is told of Stanley's dream in 3.2. Rather than being taken aback by the cautionary content of Stanley's dream, Hastings summarily dismisses it as 'shallow' and calls it a 'mock'ry' (3.2.23, 25). 'To fly the boar before the boar pursues us', Hastings reasons, overconfident in his political acumen, '[w]ere to incense the boar to follow us / And make pursuit where he means no chase' (3.2.26–28). In other words, running away would only provoke Richard's suspicion. Hastings seems to believe that the tyrant holds no such suspicion at present. He even goes as far as predicting that 'the boar will use us kindly' (3.2.31). The cultural meanings of the boar, underpinned by Richard's boarish behaviour throughout the play, render Hastings's statement here deeply ironic and expose the foolishness of his strategy. Early modern writings invariably echo the boarish epithets collated by Topsell, describing the boar as 'angry chafing' (*Venus and Adonis*, line 662), 'stif-bristled' (*Heroicall Aduentures of the Knight of the Sea*), or 'anger-froathing' (John Weever's *Faunus and Melliflora* – which harkens back to Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and revisits the story of Shakespeare's epyllion).<sup>28</sup> Because of the boar's savagery, the hunting of it was considered a rite of passage for young nobles and a deed of heroism for knights; corresponding stories can be found in the compendium *The Heroicall Aduentures of the Knight of the Sea* (1600) as well as in the medieval *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (late fourteenth century). Of course, Hastings's disinterest in heroically levying arms against a boar, albeit metaphorically, does not stem from any lack of enthusiasm for hunting but rather from his misreading of the boar. Hastings even doubles down on his dismissal of Stanley's dream as a 'mock'ry' (3.2.25) when he goes on to mock Stanley himself. When the dreamer enters a few lines later in the same scene, Hastings welcomes him with the sarcastic question: 'What, my lord, where is your boar-spear, man? / Fear you the boar,

and go so unprovided?’ (3.2.72–73). Hastings’s behaviour is remarkably myopic. From an audience’s perspective, Stanley’s oneiric imagination of Richard as an aggressive boar overthrows both Hastings’s characterisation of Richard and Richard’s public self-characterisation. The dream highlights precisely the literal and metaphorical toothiness that makes Richard (and the boar) so dangerous. In addition, Hastings’s and Stanley’s responses to the dream underline the success with which Richard has shaped a public image of himself that disguises his cunning and malevolent self – the latter is powerfully exhibited in the play’s opening soliloquy where Richard announces that he is ‘determinèd to prove a villain’ (1.1.30). The dream also crystallises Stanley’s own pusillanimity, for he goes on to join one of the divided councils together with Hastings. At the council, intriguingly, Stanley invites Hastings to read Richard’s physiognomy. Hastings’s response again reveals his credulity because he notes uncritically that Richard does not look offended (3.4.61–62). Significantly, Stanley neither agrees nor disagrees with Hastings’s assessment: ‘I pray God he be not [offended]’ (3.4.63). Stanley’s indecisiveness and gullibility are expressly remarked upon elsewhere in the play. In 3.1, Catesby provides an incisive reading of Stanley’s character when he responds to Buckingham’s request for his opinion on Stanley’s likely allegiance: ‘He will do all in all as Hastings does’ (3.1.167). Stanley’s later failure to act upon his own dream, compounded by his failure to challenge Hastings’s consistently bad judgement, throws into relief his lack of autonomy. Stanley and Hastings’s inaction is all the more tragic because Stanley’s dream not only intertwines animal symbolism, character, and selfhood but also boasts prophetic veracity in that Richard goes on to order Hastings’s decapitation at 3.4.80–81. This happens after Hastings defends his lover Mistress Shore against Richard’s accusation that Shore colluded with the queen in using witchcraft to deform him; Richard’s paranoid charge here closely resembles those

brought in the period's witch trials, where denial was usually futile. Ocular proof of Hastings's execution is provided when Catesby later brings his severed head onto the stage (3.5.18.1). These ensuing events in the play demonstrate that the prophetic value of Stanley's dream remains unacknowledged by characters who have fallen victim to Richard's cunning self-characterisation.

When working on Stanley's dream, Shakespeare was inspired by Edward Hall's *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548), which is also listed as a source by Geoffrey Bullough. More reports that, the night before Hastings's death, Stanley 'sent to him a trusty messenger at midnight in all the haste, requiryng hym to ryse and ryde away with hym ... for he had a fearfull dreame in the whiche he thought that a bore with his tuskes so rased them both by the heades that the bloud ran aboute both their shoulders'.<sup>29</sup> As in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Hastings dismisses the dream in Hall's account, even though it makes 'a fearfull impression in [Stanley's] harte'.<sup>30</sup> Stanley puts the case to the messenger that dreams are psychophysiological 'tryfles' arising either from 'feare' or from the 'dayes thought'.<sup>31</sup> He then asks the messenger to report back to Stanley that 'it is playne wichcraft to beleve in such dreames' and, as in Shakespeare's play, makes the argument that fleeing would prove their falseness to Richard.<sup>32</sup> But it would be reductive to look only at the direct and specific sources that Shakespeare is believed to have used. As Martin Mueller has argued, Shakespeare's readings haunted him throughout his career and formed complex webs of memory pathways – 'resources', as Drakakis might put it – that he was able to call upon even in plays that they did not directly influence.<sup>33</sup> For example, another animal dream that may have been on Shakespeare's mind when he was penning *Richard III* is that of Thomas Arden in Scene 6 of the anonymous *Arden of Faversham* (c.1588), which bears verbal, structural, and syntactic resemblances to Clarence's



retelling of his dream journey into hell (*Arden*, 6.6–19; *R3*, 1.4.1–60).<sup>34</sup> The same dream may have helped to inspire Shakespeare's treatment of Stanley's dream, too. Thomas Arden dreams that he was taking part in a hunting expedition for deer but that he himself became the hunters' prey, the 'game we seek' (*Arden*, 6.19). In the context of the play, the dream is proleptic of Thomas's murder and signifies, unbeknownst to the character, his blindness to the plotting that is taking place around him. As an animal dream that is misunderstood or goes unheeded, there are similarities between the device in *Arden* and Stanley's dream in *Richard III*. But the link between oneiric animal symbolism and character is weaker and less developed in *Arden*: the symbolism of the deer does not illuminate or define Thomas Arden's character in the multifaceted way in which the boar in Stanley's dream foregrounds the tragic driving forces that emanate from Richard's character. Another, possibly concurrent but likely more direct, influence is found in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, where Lord Rivers reports a 'fearefull dreame' which, like Stanley's in Shakespeare, involves a boar and which, like Stanley's in Shakespeare, is predictive of Hastings's death:

I sawe a Riuer stopt with stormes of winde

Where through a Swan, a Bull, & Bore did passe.

Fraunchinge the fish, and fry, with teath of brasse,

The Riuer dried vp saue a litle streame

Which at the last did water all the Realme.

Me thought this streame did drowne the cruell Bore,

In little space, it grew so deepe, and brode:

But he had kil'de the Bull, and Swan before.<sup>35</sup>

In keeping with the prevailing cultural associations of the boar, the animal is here pictured not only devouring fish but also killing the bull and the swan. In this context, the bull and the swan must surely refer to the heraldic badges of Hastings (the bull) and Buckingham (the swan), both of whom will perish at the hands of Richard. It is not difficult to imagine that Shakespeare's interest in using heraldic badges to represent characters symbolically and mysteriously in fearful dreams was piqued by this episode in the *Mirror for Magistrates*. But it is also clear from these comparisons that Shakespeare's strategy for adapting both sources and resources into dramatically compelling dream episodes was selective, and that any faithfulness to sources was subordinate to his dramatic ideas of characterisation and inwardness. Hall's *Union*, the play of *Arden of Faversham*, and *The Mirror for Magistrates* do not achieve the same deep and varied integration of animal symbolism and character as Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Shakespeare's dramatic characterisations are also not in thrall to the prior cultural connotations borne by the symbols and images that he uses, and they cannot be separated from the theatrical contexts in which they appear. Topsell's observation that the boar 'is not wont to strike a man vntill he be wounded first by him', for example, is painfully at odds with how Shakespeare's Richard behaves.<sup>36</sup> The case of *Richard III* shows how Shakespeare imaginatively deploys established cultural connotations as exhibitions of dramatic inwardness. In this process, cultural meanings of dreams and animals become windows into Shakespearean character, converging in pivotal moments to 'dreamatise' the characterological driving forces of the action.

## ***Antony and Cleopatra: Dreaming of Dolphins***

As well as being a murderer and a tyrant, Shakespeare's Richard III is also a lover. He seduces Lady Anne and (after he has poisoned Anne) woos Elizabeth of York. While wooing Anne, he even indulges in verbal eroticism. In response to Anne's diatribe that he is 'unfit for any place but hell' (1.2.107), Richard playfully tells her: 'Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it. ... Your bedchamber' (1.2.108–109). Richard's (momentary) self-fashioning as a courtly lover here invites a further parallel with the boar, whose lustfulness is noted by Topsell:

Being inflamed with venereal rage, he so setteth vpright the bristles of his neck, that you would take them to be the sharp fins of Dolphins; ... breathing forth his boyling spirit, not only at his eies, but at his foaming white mouth, he desireth nothing but copulation.<sup>37</sup>

Topsell's comparison of the boar's bristles to the dolphin's sharp fins invites analogies between the phallic symbolism of the boar and that of the sportive dolphin. Shakespeare evokes the dolphin's playfulness, and possibly lustiness, in *All's Well That Ends Well* (1604–1605), where Lafeu puns on the French title *dauphin* (the heir apparent to the throne of France) by telling Paroles that 'your dolphin is not lustier' (2.3.26) – although this could be a printing error and might instead be intended to read '*lustiger*' (German for 'more frolicsome'), a foreign adjective which Lafeu uses again, this time in its positive degree, at 2.3.42.<sup>38</sup> The Shakespearean character that is perhaps most prominently described as a dolphin, though, is Antony in the tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*. The characters of Richard III and Antony may at first seem to be situated at opposite poles: while one values his political ambitions above anything else and 'cannot prove

a lover' (*R3*, 1.1.28) – except when political considerations demand it – the other is prepared to throw away his political status in the pursuit of a woman. Intriguingly, though, Shakespeare in *Antony and Cleopatra* uses the same representational strategy as in *Richard III*, for he cleverly deploys a symbolic animal dream to highlight the characterological driving forces behind Antony and Cleopatra's tragedy.

In 5.2, after Antony has died, the Queen of Egypt reports having dreamt that Antony was an 'emperor':

I dreamt there was an emperor Antony.

O, such another sleep, that I might see

But such another man! ...

His face was as the heav'ns, and therein stuck

A sun and moon, which kept their course and lighted

The little O, the earth. ...

His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm

Crested the world; his voice was propertied

As all the tunèd spheres, and that to friends;

But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,

He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,

There was no winter in't, an autumn 'twas

That grew the more by reaping. His delights

Were dolphin-like; they showed his back above

The element they lived in. In his livery

Walked crowns and crownets; realms and islands were  
As plates dropped from his pocket. (5.2.75–91)<sup>39</sup>

Even though *Antony and Cleopatra* is a tragedy set in classical antiquity, Cleopatra's dream does not spell disaster in the manner of Calphurnia's prophetic vision of Caesar's death in *Julius Caesar* (1599), Atossa's prophetic dreams about Xerxes' eventual defeat in Aeschylus's *Persae*, or Hecuba's dream of giving birth to a firebrand in Seneca's *Troades* (which signifies the destruction that the child Paris later brings upon Troy). Instead, Cleopatra's dream continues the pattern of the lovers' optative rhetoric about a shared imperial future and victory over Rome. Cleopatra's report of her dream not only describes her idealised image of Antony in beautifully poetic terms but also underlines the lovers' romantic ambition, which is the tragedy's main driving force. Strikingly, her report perpetuates the lovers' aspiration even after Antony's death, continuing to deploy it as an antidote to their political reality. As in *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), tragedy in *Antony and Cleopatra* befalls the lovers when their romantic (and, in this case, political) ambitions collapse under the weight of the reality they inhabit. The image of Antony appearing 'dolphin-like' encapsulates Cleopatra's idealistic but ultimately delusional view of Antony and of their shared prospects. The idea of the dolphin bespeaks a hubristic image of a transgressive and untouchable Antony whose 'delights' surpass the world in the same way that the dolphin's back rises above the waterline.

Cleopatra's dream was likely Shakespeare's invention. Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, which in its translation by Thomas North (1579) was Shakespeare's main source for this play, does not recount it. But Plutarch does allude to dolphins elsewhere in his volume when he retells the story of an orator by the name of Amphicrates, who had been

banished from Athens and fled to Seleucia, located within the present-day metropolitan area of Baghdad. When the Seleucids requested that Amphicrates teach them the art of eloquence, he told them dismissively that ‘a platter was too little to hold a Dolphin in, meaning that their city was too small a thing to contain it’.<sup>40</sup> The passage could have inspired Shakespeare, because Amphicrates uses the image of the dolphin in a similar way to how Cleopatra does: in both cases, the emphasis is on the dolphin’s refusal to be contained by its surroundings and on its constant desire to transgress. It is noteworthy also that Shakespeare was writing his play in an era of expanding maritime endeavours in which the dolphin increasingly acquired a reputation as a sportive and playful mammal, not least because it was frequently observed accompanying ships at sea.<sup>41</sup> The dolphin’s qualities, thus noted in antiquity as well as in the Renaissance, dovetail seamlessly with Shakespeare’s representation of Antony throughout the play. Like the dolphin, Antony is vagarious and itinerant: not wanting to be confined to his political role in Rome, he seeks greener pastures in Egypt. In addition, much of Antony’s playful behaviour involves the very notions of excess and transgression with which the dolphin was associated: Antony crosses gender boundaries with his transvestism (see 2.5.21–23; 3.7.18); and he indulges in feasting, merrymaking, and other sensual delights whilst eschewing his duties as Roman triumvir (1.1.6–10; 1.4.3–5; 2.2.189–190; 2.5.19–23), prompting Octavius to accuse him of ‘rioting in Alexandria’ (2.2.78). The dream image of the dolphin thus captures Antony’s wallowing in sensual delights and his desire to break free from his Roman shackles.

The vices and virtues of Antony’s oneiric or real-world transgressions, though, lie in the eyes of the beholder. In the same way that Antony’s transgressions are virtues rather than sins for Cleopatra, the dream image of the dolphin is to her mind positively enchanting not only because it captures Antony’s carefree and luxurious way of life and his (in her eyes) heroic grandeur but

also because it expresses her desire for their shared supremacy over the world. According to the queen's retelling of the dream, the image of the dolphin is overwhelmingly auspicious; this is despite Antony's death and the tragic direction to which Shakespeare's plot is already firmly committed at this stage in Act 5. Thinking *in utramque partem* does not seem to be Cleopatra's strong suit, because she is oblivious to alternative ways of reading either the dream or the wider action of the play. Of course, perspectival differences, whether between Cleopatra and Octavius or between the two lovers and the audience, lie at the heart of the play's tragedy. In fact, the oneiric dolphin is emblematic of the lovers' (mis)understanding of their trajectory. Rather like members of the Calvinist elect, Antony and Cleopatra imagine themselves as being destined not for tragic catastrophe but for transcendence and sovereignty over (in the words of Antony) a 'new heaven, new earth' (1.1.17).<sup>42</sup> That explains why Cleopatra continues with what she later calls her 'immortal longings' (5.2.75) not just in her dream report but even right up until her own death, when she likens the 'stroke of death' to a 'lover's pinch' (5.2.289). Here, as at other points in the play, Antony and Cleopatra's rhetoric not only resembles assertions (or delusions) of predestination but also comes close to the Donnean metaphysical conceit, in which cosmic or religious imagery is audaciously deployed to position the lovers as the centre of the universe or even as the creators of a new world.<sup>43</sup> Cleopatra's dream of an imperial and dolphin-like Antony suggests a mindset which can be said to be misguided, of course, but also one which is characterised by attractively audacious verve and by imagination capable not only of overcoming Antony's death but of creating new worlds in the minds of readers and audiences.

While Shakespeare's 'dreamatisation' of the boarish Richard relies largely on historical accounts and on cultural perceptions of the boar, his delphine Antony may owe much to early modern dream books. Much of the early modern understanding of dreams relied on cheap

chancebooks (containing lists of potential meanings keyed to the letters of the alphabet and interpreting dreams through a chance process rather than through analysis of their content), dreamlunars (interpretations according to the phases of the moon), and manuals or dreambooks such as the medieval *Somnia Danielis*, Thomas Hill's *A Little Treatise of the Interpretation of Dreams* (1567), and the Greek diviner Artemidorus's *Oneirocritica*, which offered their readers short interpretations of specific dream motifs or symbols, often framed as clues about the dreamer's fortune.<sup>44</sup> As Steven R. Fischer explains, the *Somnia Danielis* and other dream manuals of its kind are inventories of 'general dream topics once universally understood', which means that their entries draw on 'commonplace' interpretations of dream symbols that were 'readily intelligible without the supplementary assistance of a dreambook'.<sup>45</sup> Intriguingly, the most famous and influential of these dreambooks, Artemidorus's *Oneirocritica* (first issued in English in 1606, around the time when *Antony and Cleopatra* was written, but available in Latin and French much earlier), includes an entry on dreams of dolphins:

To see a great Fish in the Sea, is good for no man, onely the Dolphin excepted, which promiseth Winde from the place from whence he commeth: but out of the Sea every Fish and great monster is good, for they can hurt no more, nor save themselves, and therefore besides that, our dream signifyes that our Enemies cannot hurt us: it sayes moreover, that the wicked shall be punished. Notwithstanding, the Dolphin séene out of the Sea, is not good, but signifyes the death of some of our good friends.<sup>46</sup>

At first glance, Artemidorus's interpretation of delphine dreams dovetails with how Cleopatra seems to understand hers. Unlike fish in general, the dolphin is a propitious symbol when seen in



the sea: by ‘promis[ing] Winde from the place from whence he commeth’, the dolphin bespeaks renewed momentum for the dreamer’s projects and endeavours – presumably these can include, if the dreamer were so inclined, the pursuit of imperial or romantic ambitions. But while the dolphin is generally a positive image, it is not unproblematic, for when seen to be out of the sea, it signifies the death of friends. Elsewhere, the author of the influential medieval dream book *Somnia Danielis* does not talk specifically about dolphins but repeats Artemidorus’s warning about the ambiguous and potentially ominous significance of fish: ‘To see ffishe [*sic*], be taken impediment’.<sup>47</sup> Shakespeare draws on this meaning of fishes in *Richard III*: when Clarence dreams of descending into the underworld, he sees ‘fishes’ gnawing upon ‘ten thousand men’ (*R3*, 1.4.24), which adds to a chthonic imagery that foreshadows Clarence’s imminent execution. As regards Cleopatra’s dream, its delphine Antony could fit into Artemidorus’s category of dolphins out of the water because he seeks to escape, and rise above, the element that he lives in. As such, the dream may refer to Antony’s death in 4.15 – and even to Cleopatra’s own imminent death. So, while the image is a positively transgressive one to Cleopatra, it might equally be interpreted as a sign of the kind of overreach that ultimately seals the tragedy for Antony and Cleopatra. Their tragic end is arguably symbolised by the image of the emperor in Cleopatra’s same dream. Artemidorus tells us: ‘To dream to be a King or Emperor, to the sick is death, for as the King, so also death is subject to none. To him which is in health it is losse, or separation of parents and friends, for the King hath no companion’.<sup>48</sup> The dream book *Somnia Danielis* is even more direct than Artemidorus’s *Oneirocritica*: ‘To se kyngis, hit betoknyth to passe owjt of this whorld’.<sup>49</sup> Ultimately, the ambiguous nature of Cleopatra’s dream, underpinned by the abstruse readings of the dolphin in early modern dream manuals, reflects the ambiguity of genre in Shakespeare’s play. *Antony and Cleopatra* does not just shuttle between the settings of Rome

and Egypt but also between comic and tragic perspectives. The different genre-informed perspectives in the play are thrown into relief by the gap between the lovers' imaginative (comic or romantic) view of their trajectory – namely, that it leads to a transcendental empire, even if it is after death – and the narrative (tragic) reality of their political demise. The reading of Cleopatra's dream and its dolphin image essentially hinges on whether the interpreter's presupposition is comic or tragic.

Like Hastings's and Stanley's quibbling over the dream of a boar, the image of the dolphin in Cleopatra's dream sheds light on one of Shakespeare's strategies for adapting dreams and prophecies dramatically. By exploiting their ambiguity and malleability in the early modern cultural understanding, he was able to marry them to the premises of his human-focused and human-driven tragedies. Specifically, Shakespeare was remarkably adept at exploiting the perceived ambiguity of dreams to elucidate the perspectives and outlooks of his characters. By placing the emphasis on the characters' interpretations of dreams, Shakespeare was able vividly, and sometimes ironically, to foreground the ways of thinking that define his characters. In Shakespeare's time, dreams did not have stable epistemologies or aetiologies; even though dream manuals interpreted dreams symbolically or decoded them cryptographically, there were many moving parts, including the dreamer's personal, social, political, or psychological circumstances. For example, truthful and prophetic dreams were associated with certain social, moral, or intellectual preconditions. In addition, dreams could arise from natural or from supernatural causes, and they could recall the past, reflect the present, or glimpse the future. Consequently, the same dreams could mean different things to different people. Thomas Hill noted in *The Pleasant Arte of the Interpretacion of Dreams* (first published in 1559) that true and prophetic dreams could 'onely happen to suche, whose spirites are occupied with no

irrational imaginations, nor ... geuven to any other bodelie pleasures'; he named 'graue & sober persons' amongst these privileged dreamers.<sup>50</sup> Thus, a seemingly prophetic dream could only be declared prophetic were it to happen to a rational, sombre, or sober person. Were the same dream to happen to an irrational or lascivious person, it would be nugatory. Hill also advised his readers that one needed to consider 'what the persone tradeth or occupyeth, & of what birth hee is & what possessions he hath & what state he is in for the healthe of bodye & of what age he is'.<sup>51</sup> Further adding to the confusion, even environmental factors like the season, day, and time when dreams occurred played a role in determining a dream's meaning. For example, 'truer dreames' tended to occur 'in the Sommer and the Wynter', in 'quiet seasons', and in the early morning.<sup>52</sup> These intricacies demonstrate just why Owen Feltham pronounced dreams to be 'the guessiue interpretations of dim-ey'd Man: full of doubt, full of deceit', and why Marc Vulson noted that the rules about dreams and dream interpretation 'cannot satisfy all persons one way; but sometimes according to times and persons, they admit of various interpretations'.<sup>53</sup> Since there were infinite moving parts in the reading of dreams, dreams could mean whatever one wanted them to mean. Shakespeare shows his awareness of the ambivalence of practices such as soothsaying and dream divination in *Antony and Cleopatra*. When Scarus, one of Antony's soldiers, reports the augurs' silence about the swallows nesting in Cleopatra's sails, he states that Antony is 'valiant, and dejected, and by starts / His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear / Of what he has and has not' (4.12.6–9). Scarus's report of Antony's paradoxical feelings suggests that soothsaying is a doubtful practice, unable to supply definitive answers. In one of his other Roman plays, *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare even turned the reading or misreading of dreams into one of the chief catalysts of tragedy.<sup>54</sup> Importantly, Scarus's report of Antony's behaviour also suggests that Antony himself is befuddled about whether his endeavours are fated to succeed or

to fail, and of whether his conduct is politically wise or self-destructively presumptuous. As Cleopatra puts it elsewhere in the play, Antony is confused about whether to give way to ‘mirth’ or to his ‘Roman thought’ (1.2.77–78). The triumvir does experience occasional moments of lucidity in which he grasps the danger of Cleopatra’s company, as when he remarks that he must break ‘these strong Egyptian fetters ... / Or lose [him]self in dotage’ (1.2.112–113). It is striking that he also calls Cleopatra the ‘serpent of old Nile’ (1.5.26) – a phrase which suggests ideas of temptation and seduction but also of sin, aligning her with the Whore of Babylon. Like the dolphin which lives in water but shows its back above the water, Antony inhabits, and is torn between, two different worlds.

If anything, the ambiguity of the dolphin in Cleopatra’s dream captures Antony’s equally inscrutable, mercurial, and incomparably singular character. In that regard, the dolphin is rather like another notorious animal in the play, namely the crocodile that Antony half-jokingly and half-disdainfully describes to the inebriated Lepidus, and which points to the ineffable qualities of Egypt as well as of Cleopatra: ‘It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth. It is just so high as it is, and moves with its own organs. It lives by that which nourisheth it, and the elements once out of it, it transmigrates’ (2.7.38–41). Perhaps the transmigratory capability of the cryptic crocodile stands for the transcendental migration of Antony and Cleopatra into a new, higher world: ‘I am fire and air; my other elements / I give to baser life’ (5.2.283–284), Cleopatra enthuses in her final moments, in anticipation of her and Antony’s imagined exaltation in the afterlife. Here, Cleopatra perhaps echoes Hercules’ lofty words, reported in Jasper Heywood’s translation of Seneca’s *Hercules Furens*, which predict his apotheosis: ‘To spaces hygh I wyll bee borne of hawghtye skyes about’.<sup>55</sup> But unlike the apotheosis of Hercules, the resurrection and exaltation of Antony and Cleopatra are conceived in the characters’

imagination. In a work of drama that depends on its audiences' cooperative imagination to recreate the worlds of ancient Rome and Egypt, this does not necessarily mean that their imagined exaltation should be ridiculed. But the tragic force of *Antony and Cleopatra* lies in the perspectival differences of its characters. These differences are vividly foregrounded in Cleopatra's dream, where Shakespeare deploys the resources of animal and dream symbolism to underline the distance between, on the one hand, Antony's delphic character and, on the other hand, the steadier character types that the play's social and political reality demands.

At the time Shakespeare composed his plays, there were already rich precedents for the use of animal metaphors or similes to verbalise singularity or to describe deviancy from societal or political norms. For example, witches were associated with goats (suggestive of lust), owls (symbolic of darkness, night, and death), rats (connoting lustfulness, gluttony, disease, and pollution), and animal-human hybrids like satyrs (standing for monstrosity and lust).<sup>56</sup> In addition, the image of the werewolf could connote 'civic and political crisis', 'tyranny', 'fratricide', and 'civic collapse'.<sup>57</sup> In all of these cases, the animal is a shape that encompasses and concretises fears, marvels, fantasies, and – ultimately – otherness. In *Richard III* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare dramatises the lives of remarkable historical characters but amplifies further their singularity and otherness, either for ideological reasons to do with Tudor propaganda or for dramatic effect. In the dreams of Stanley and Cleopatra, the images of the boar and the dolphin, respectively, become metaphorical illustrations of Richard's and Antony's aberrancy. It is here that the exceptionality of Richard III and Antony – in other words, their character – is unmistakably and vividly asserted as the dramatic catalyst par excellence.

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## Notes

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1. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 2:167.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. For Shakespeare's borrowings from Ovid, see Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). For the Ovidian influence on Shakespeare's use of animal dreams in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, see Claude Fretz, 'Dreaming of Serpents and Asses: Shakespeare's Ovidian Animal Dreams in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', *Shakespeare* (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2022.2073385>.
5. Bruce Boehrer, *Animal Characters: Nonhuman Beings in Early Modern Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 3.
6. Jeanne Addison Roberts, *The Shakespearean Wild: Geography, Genus, and Gender* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991).
7. Karen Raber, *Animal Bodies, Renaissance Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 5; Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).
8. Carole Levin, *Dreaming the English Renaissance: Politics and Desire in Court and Culture* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Sue Wiseman, Katharine Hodgkin and Michelle O'Callaghan, eds, *Reading the Early Modern Dream: The Terrors of the Night* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
9. Ita Mac Carthy, Kirsti Sellevold and Olivia Smith, eds, *Cognitive Confusions: Dreams, Delusions and Illusions in Early Modern Culture* (Cambridge: Legenda, 2016); Stuart Clark,

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*Vanities of the Eye: Visions in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Peter Brown, ed., *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Marjorie Garber, *Dream in Shakespeare: From Metaphor to Metamorphosis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974); Claude Fretz, *Dreams, Sleep, and Shakespeare's Genres* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

10. Bruce Boehrer, 'Bestial Buggery in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', in *The Production of English Renaissance Culture*, ed. David Lee Miller, Sharon O'Dair and Harold Weber (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 123–150, here 123; Rebecca Ann Bach, 'The Animal Continuum in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', *Textual Practice* 24, no. 1 (2010), 123–147, here 124, 141, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09502360903471714>; Claude Fretz, "'The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen": Multisensory Dreams in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*', in *Träumen mit allen Sinnen*, ed. Stephanie Catani and Sophia Mehrbrey (Leiden: Brill; Paderborn: Fink, 2021), 157–177, here 167–168, [https://doi.org/10.30965/9783846765920\\_010](https://doi.org/10.30965/9783846765920_010).

11. Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, eds, *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1.

12. Michael D. Bristol, ed., *Shakespeare and Moral Agency* (New York: Continuum, 2010); Yu Jin Ko and Michael W. Shurgot, eds, *Shakespeare's Sense of Character: On the Page and From the Stage* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012); Nicholas Luke, *Shakespearean Arrivals: The Birth of Character* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Nicholas R. Helms, *Cognition, Mindreading, and Shakespeare's Characters* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Curtis Perry, *Shakespeare and Senecan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).



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13. John Drakakis, 'Inside the Elephant's Graveyard: Revising Geoffrey Bullough's *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*', in *Shakespeare and Authority: Citations, Conceptions, and Constructions*, ed. Katie Halsey and Angus Vine (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 55–78, here 70.
14. *Ibid.*, 74. Also see John Drakakis, *Shakespeare's Resources* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021).
15. Mary Baine Campbell, 'Dreaming, Motion, Meaning: Oneiric Transport in Seventeenth-Century Europe', in Hodgkin, O'Callaghan and Wiseman, *Reading the Early Modern Dream*, 15–30, here 27; Fretz, *Dreams, Sleep, and Shakespeare's Genres*, 82–86.
16. Jerome Cardan, *The Book of My Life (De Vita Propria Liber)*, trans. Jean Stoner (New York: Dover, 1960), 156–162; Owen Feltham, *Resolves: A Duple Centvrie* (London, 1628), 152.
17. Carole Levin, 'Dreaming of Death and the Dead in the Stuart Political World Imaginary: The Case of William Laud', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 47 (2021), 172–195, <https://doi.org/10.1163/23526963-04702003>.
18. References are to William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. John Jowett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
19. Richard's coat of arms is made up of the Royal Arms of England and France, flanked by two white boars.
20. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epigrams and Sentences Spirituall in Vers*, trans. Thomas Drant (London, 1568), sig. C2r.
21. See Karen Raber, 'The Tusked Hog: Richard III's Boarish Identity', in *Animals and Early Modern Identity*, ed. Pia F. Cuneo (Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 191–208, here 200–201.
22. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1:427.

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23. Edmund Topsell, *The Historie of Four-Footed Beastes* (London, 1607), 694.
24. William Shakespeare, *Henry VI Part Three*, ed. Randall Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
25. Richard self-consciously identifies with his ancestral character when he remarks in an aside: ‘Thus like the formal Vice Iniquity / I moralize two meanings in one word’ (3.1.82–83).
26. Topsell, *Historie of Four-Footed Beastes*, 696.
27. Donald R. Shupe, ‘The Wooing of Lady Anne: A Psychological Inquiry’, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (1978), 28–36, here 28, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2869166>.
28. Colin Burrow, ed., *William Shakespeare: The Complete Sonnets and Poems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 210; *The Heroicall Aduentures of the Knight of the Sea* (London, 1600), 87; John Weever, *Faunus and Melliflora* (London, 1600), sig. C4v.
29. Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957–1975), 3:265.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Martin Mueller, ‘Plutarch’s “Life of Brutus” and the Play of Its Repetitions in Shakespearean Drama’, *Renaissance Drama* 22 (1991), 47–93, <https://doi.org/10.1086/rd.22.41917272>; Martin Mueller, ‘From Leir to Lear’, *Philological Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (1994), 195–218.
34. The similarities between Arden’s and Clarence’s dreams include the repeated use of ‘methought’ and the division into parts. Clarence’s dream begins with a segment in which the character drowns, and it is then ‘lengthened after life’ to depict his descent into the underworld (R3, 1.4.40). Meanwhile, Arden’s dream begins with an episode in which the character finds

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himself in a park and is waiting on a hill for a herd of deer to approach. This is then followed by a period of ‘sweet repose’ and ‘golden rest’ (*Arden*, 6.10–11). Arden’s dream concludes with a section in which he is being ensnared by foresters who tell him that he is the deer they have been seeking (*Arden*, 6.19). References to *Arden of Faversham* are to *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 150.

35. William Baldwin, *The Last Part of the Mirour for Magistrates* (London, 1578), fol. 111v.

36. Topsell, *Historie of Four-Footed Beastes*, 699.

37. *Ibid.*, 697.

38. References are to William Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, ed. Susan Snyder (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

39. References are to William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. David Bevington (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

40. Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, trans. Thomas North (London, 1579), 560.

41. For a reference to the dolphin’s habit of swimming alongside ships, see Michael J. Curley, trans., *Physiologus: A Medieval Book of Nature Lore* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 70. Elsewhere, George Sandys’s adaptation of Psalm 104 evokes ‘high-built Ships . . . About whose sides the crooked Dolphin plays’. See George Sandys, *A Paraphrase upon the Divine Poems* (London, 1638), 126.

42. It was believed that members of the elect might feel God’s grace within them. In 1589, William Perkins published *A Treatise Tending vnto a Declaration whether a Man be in the Estate of Damnation or in the Estate of Grace*, which discusses the possibility of achieving

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discovery or assurance of one's afterlife location and soteriological status, for example by looking for indices of divine favour (or lack thereof). The human capacity to discern God's secret plan was seen as fallible and conjectural, however. See Clare McEachern, 'Calvin, Shakespeare, and Suspense', in *The Oxford Handbook of Calvin and Calvinism*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Carl R. Trueman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 183–199.

43. Consider, for example, how John Donne reverses the relationship between macrocosm and microcosm in the aubade 'The Good Morrow'. In this poem, the lovers' bedroom becomes a new world more important than the worlds being visited by 'sea-discoverers' (see lines 12–14) and the lovers' eyes become the two hemispheres of the Earth: 'Where can we find two better hemispheres / Without sharp north, without declining west?' (lines 17–18). Gordon Braden, ed., *Sixteenth-Century Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 526–527.

44. *Interpretatiiones seu Somnia Danielis Prophete Revelata ab Angelo Missus [sic] a Deo Primo de Diebus Lune* (Rome, 1479); *Somnia Salomonis David Regis Fili Una Cum Danielis Prophete Somniorum Interpretatione* (Venice, 1516); Thomas Hill, *A Little Treatise of the Interpretation of Dreams* (London, 1567); Artemidorus, *The Interpretation of Dreams: Oneirocritica*, trans. Robert J. White (Park Ridge, NJ: Noyes Classical Studies, 1975).

45. Steven R. Fischer, *The Complete Medieval Dreambook: A Multilingual, Alphabetical 'Somnia Danielis' Collation* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1982), 7.

46. Artemidorus, *The Judgement, or Exposition of Dreames, written by Artimodorus, an Auntient and Famous Author, First in Greeke, then Translated into Latin, after into French, and now into English* (London, 1606), 75–76.

47. Fischer, *Complete Medieval Dreambook*, 70–71.

48. Artemidorus, *The Judgement, or Exposition of Dreames*, 87.

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49. Fischer, *Complete Medieval Dreambook*, 65.
50. Thomas Hill, *The Most Pleasante Arte of the Interpretacion of Dreams* (London, 1576), sigs A2r–v.
51. *Ibid.*, sig. B6r.
52. *Ibid.*, sigs D7v–D8r.
53. Feltham, *Resolves*, 282; Marc Vulson, *The Court of Curiositie*, trans. J. G. Gen (London, 1669), 5.
54. For the central role of dreams and dream interpretation in *Julius Caesar*, see Fretz, *Dreams, Sleep, and Shakespeare's Genres*, 104–115; and Simona Corso, 'What Calphurnia Knew: *Julius Caesar* and the Language of Dreams', in *Questioning Bodies in Shakespeare's Rome*, ed. Maria Del Sapio Garbero, Nancy Isenberg and Maddalena Pennacchia (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2010), 171–190.
55. Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, trans. Jasper Heywood, in *Seneca His Tenne Tragedies*, ed. Thomas Newton (London, 1581), sig. I8.
56. For an illustration of several of the animals commonly associated with witchcraft, see Cornelisz van Oostanen's painting *Saul and the Witch of Endor* (1526).
57. Susan J. Wiseman, 'Hairy on the Inside: Metamorphosis and Civility in English Werewolf Texts', in *Renaissance Beasts: Of Animals, Humans, and Other Wonderful Creatures*, ed. Erica Fudge (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 50–69, here 62 and 64.