

Fairies and the Devil in early modern England

Darren Oldridge

Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts, University of Worcester, Worcester, UK

In 1593, Thomas Churchyard, one of the least golden writers of the golden age of English poetry, published an account of a fantastical dream with “many significations”. After meeting a fairy queen and enjoying a sumptuous banquet, the dreamer encountered a “troop of dames” who began to dance. Their revels were quickly dissolved, however, and the true nature of the dancers was revealed:

All hand in hand they traced on,
a tricky ancient round:
And soon as shadows were they gone,
and might no more be found.
And in their place came fearful bugs,
as black as any pitch:
With bellies big and swagging dug,
more loathsome then a witch.


"First hand" account from the period in which we see that Fairies are associated with mischief and not Rainbows and lollipops. Similar to bugs. Bugs live in the forest like Fairies in our story

The “hellish hags” held their circle, and turned their attention on the unfortunate dreamer. In a scene that echoed the first book of Spenser’s *Fairie Queene* (1590), the spirits told him that he was abandoned by God and would be punished horribly for his many secret sins. Then they vanished into hell, “where foul fiends full far from bliss, in torments still remain”. The dreamer was left alone to contemplate his past misdeeds and gaze heavenwards in the hope of mercy.¹

Fairies deliver punishment. One could interpret Bottom’s “transformation” punishment for committing the sin of Pride.

Churchyard’s poetry has been mercifully neglected. But his portrayal of fairies as demons in disguise touches on a larger theme in the English Reformation: the attempt to reorder the world of spirits to conform to Protestant interpretations of scripture, and the resulting elimination, or reimagining, of beings such as fairies, hobgoblins, and imps. By the late sixteenth century, it was well established among reformed Christians that such “doubtful spirits” were figments encouraged by the Roman Church. In *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), Reginald Scot famously attributed the various creatures – or “bugs” – of popular belief to the influence of Catholic superstition.² From a rather different perspective, the minister Henry Holland wrote in 1590 that “the fairies, the goblins [and] the hegs ... came unto the church with the rotten mist of popery”.³ This image was echoed in 1603 by Samuel Harsnett, the future archbishop of York, who placed fairies and imps in the “popish mist” that “had befogged the eyes of our poor people”.⁴ For these and many other late Elizabethan writers, the bugs of folklore belonged to the unreformed past – but their vestiges lingered unhealthily in the present. Thus, Holland claimed that fairies were “put to flight from amongst us not many

Societal norms pushed out the fairies as societal norms push the lovers into the forest. It is safe world for them both to exist. Are they both monsters?

CONTACT Darren Oldridge  d.oldridge@worc.ac.uk

© 2016 The Author(s). Published by Taylor & Francis.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

Another Bottom parallel, he is left alone in the forest to contemplate what has happened after the ass head is removed

For Travis: Research Shakespeare’s relationship with Religion.

years past”, and hoped that “the remnants of these diabolical delusions be discovered and cut off” by the continued preaching of God’s word.⁵

If the fairies of traditional belief were not what they appeared to be, what was their true nature? The reformation of spirits radically simplified the supernatural world, but also introduced elements of deception. A strictly biblical model of the cosmos could not accommodate the activity of saints, ghosts, and “doubtful spirits”; it also needed to explain historical sightings of such entities, as well as reports of their continued appearances. In the case of fairies, at least two broad approaches were available: they could be dismissed as delusions or idle tales, or reinterpreted as demons. In her work on fairies in the 1950s, Katherine Briggs suggested that the latter course was often favoured.⁶ More recently, Diane Purkiss has claimed that for “godly Protestants, fairies were demons”; and Peter Marshall has argued that “fairies were given an inevitable demonological twist” in the hands of reformed writers.⁷ In the context of witchcraft, Emma Wilby has noted the involvement of fairies in allegations of *maleficium* and the similarities between fairies and demons in some accounts of the witch’s pact with the Devil.⁸

As seen in Midsummer with the love potion.

Given the religious lens this is going through, this demonic interpretation is a negative one, which supports our concept

For early modern English Protestants, the range of possibilities was fluid. It was conceivable that fairies were sometimes figments of the imagination and sometimes demons in disguise. Moreover, the Devil could be involved in both phenomena. This was because Satan was believed to operate through both indirect and direct methods, and was prone to deceive the mind at least as often as the eyes. In this context, it is notable that the fairy-demons in Thomas Churchyard’s dream appeared first as visible spirits, but immediately focused their attack on his mind. It was in this capacity, as the “father of lies”, that the Protestant Devil was most busy: he sought to tempt and deceive people both directly through planting wicked thoughts and from a distance through encouraging corrupt ways of thinking.⁹ Thus, it was probable that Satan would use the idea of fairies to encourage false belief, but this did not preclude the possibility that he occasionally disguised himself as such a spirit.

This article will examine the ways in which Protestants in Elizabethan and early Stuart England perceived the relationship between fairies and the Devil. The first part considers the treatment of fairies in printed religious texts and argues that fairy beliefs were framed in the context of false religion and illusion, both of which were associated with the father of lies. Protestant attitudes towards “real life” fairies are examined in the second part. This argues that belief in fairies was demonised, but sightings of fairies themselves were only occasionally attributed to evil spirits. This was because reformed Christians were more determined to expose false ideas than false apparitions, and because fairies – unlike saints and ghosts – did not relate to their central religious concerns. The final section examines the implications of these attitudes for fairy beliefs in early-modern English culture as a whole.

I

The literature of Tudor and Stuart England suggests a lively interest in fairies. Indeed, Ronald Hutton has suggested that “fairy mythology was probably more prominent in British culture between 1560 and 1640 than at any time before or since”.¹⁰ When fairies appeared in religious texts in the period, the follies and dangers of Catholicism were often nearby. It was the “fruit of infidelity” in the popish past, wrote Edmond Bicknoll

Shakespeare’s p

in 1579, that “we were given over to believe [in] Hobgoblin, Robin Goodfellow, fairies, and such other fancies”.¹¹ An anonymous satire against the Pope in the same year mocked the pontiff’s power to protect his subjects from fairies.¹² In a similar vein, George Goodwin noted sardonically in 1624 that the authority of priests was based on their supposed ability to put fairies and goblins to flight.¹³ The false doctrine of purgatory, suggested the minister John Guild in 1625, was like the “elf-fire” that led unwary travellers to their doom.¹⁴ Such views were echoed in the later seventeenth century. Writers such as Richard Flecknoe and Thomas Heyrick casually linked fairy beliefs to Roman idolatry and superstition.¹⁵ More forcefully, the sceptical demonologist John Webster asserted in 1677 that “in the times of blind popery and ignorance, there was no discourse almost but of fairies, hobgoblins, [and] apparitions”. These creatures were spawned, Webster claimed, from “the superstitious credulity and ignorant fancies of the people, joined with the impostures of the priests and monks”.¹⁶

Strength measured by the ability to deal with the fairies. The lovers fall for their antics, making them weak?

Although writers like Webster associated fairy beliefs with an ignorant past, the use of fairyland in anti-Catholic polemics was based in part on traditional ideas. The motif of deception was central. In English popular culture, fairies were frequently viewed as adept tricksters. Their ability to change shape meant that their appearance could not be trusted. Likewise, “fairy money” was worthless and “fairy gold” fooled the eye. For reformed Christians, this quality made fairyland an obvious partner to popery: the arts of deception sustained them both. In his critique of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the Jacobean rector John Downe compared the transformation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ to a fairy illusion. If a thing loses its nature, he wrote, “and ceases to be what it was, then whosoever comes to Rome must not believe his eyes, but think he is in fairyland, where things are not what they seem to be”.¹⁷ Moving in the other direction, the poet Thomas Heyrick claimed that the belief in “fairy elves and goblins, [and] wakeful sprites” flowed from the “outside pomp and empty pageantry” of the Church of Rome.¹⁸

This emphasis on false religion and illusion led naturally to the Devil. The qualities that connected fairyland so clearly to Catholicism connected them both to the father of lies. Belief in fairies and belief in popery resulted from “spiritual blindness” – the propensity of fallen men and women to be seduced by false ideas about the supernatural. As Nathan Johnstone has argued, this doctrine was basic to the reformed understanding of Satan: it was through fostering and exploiting spiritual blindness that the prince of darkness kept people in thrall to bogus forms of worship.¹⁹ In the words of St. Paul, “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ ... should shine unto them” (2 Cor. 4:4). At a general level, then, reformed thinkers viewed fairies within a framework of assumptions that inclined them to accept the involvement of the Devil.

This broad connection between fairies and Satan was often made. Thomas Bicknoll noted in 1579 that to believe in such creatures was to “cast off the spirit of grace”, and consequently expose oneself to Satan’s wiles.²⁰ Reginald Scot made a similar point in *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584): it was the Devil’s policy, he implied, to encourage belief in false spirits to divert people from true understanding of God.²¹ In a commentary on Revelation published in 1593, John Napier associated the see of Rome with “devils, fairies and spirits of illusions”.²² By the seventeenth century, it was a commonplace that Satan benefited from misplaced faith of all kinds, whether in popery or the

Fairies are connected to power. Oberon and Titania are drawn to what’s happening with Theseus and Hippolyta. We get this in the text the first time we encounter Oberon and Titania.

Fairies are a result of humanity’s ignorance. Our ignorance creates problems, false love, transformation, war. Direct mirrors between the fairies and humans.

The lovers are by this definition “spiritually blind”. Perhaps there is a lens where we can see them as sinful or un-pious.

Danger of the Forest

spirits that haunted “old wives’ fables”. Even the materialist philosopher Thomas Hobbes, linked fairies with Catholicism and the Devil: he began an extended comparison of the follies of fairyland and popery in *Leviathan* (1651) by noting that fairies served “Beelzebub, prince of demons”.²³ As Hobbes did not believe in a personal Devil, this passage probably referred to the spirit of error that animated enemies of the Christian commonwealth.²⁴ By making Satan the king of the fairies, however, he followed a logic that most English Protestants would have accepted. The father of lies was the natural leader of a kingdom of deceit.

Might be giving Oberon too much credit, but it would be awesome if he had horns or hooves.

The demonisation of fairies can be illustrated, in miniature, by the treatment of a discrete class of fairy spirits: those that were described loosely as “will o’ the wisps”. It was widely believed that some fairies used lanterns, or “false fires”, to lead travellers astray at night; this was either to lose them in woods or, more treacherously, to direct them towards dangerous bogs. The creatures responsible had many names. Reginald Scot identified “Kit with the Candlestick” and “the puckle” in 1584; Robert Burton also named “pucks” as will o’ the wisps in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).²⁵ The hobgoblin Robin Goodfellow was also counted among these spirits, as Shakespeare attested by naming him “Puck” in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

I’ve never seen Will O Wisps used in production, but I’m going to look into this now. Such a strong correlation, also the use of Fire even if fake will add to the danger of the situation.

These creatures shared obvious qualities with the Devil. Both were false lights that beckoned the unwary from the true path. William Tyndale hinted at the demonic nature of will o’ the wisps in his commentary on the first epistle of St. John in 1531: without the light of scripture, he argued, Christians were left to “wander as in a mist, or (as we say) led by Robin Goodfellow, that they cannot come to the right way”.²⁶ If Christ was the “true light” described in St. John’s epistle (1 John 2:8), then Satan was the false equivalent; and he pursued his ends through deceptive appearances – as darkness masquerading as light (Luke 11:35). Later Protestant writers linked will o’ the wisps explicitly with the Devil. In 1616, Francis Rous noted that the love of wealth “makes sport for the Devil, and thus is man most truly fairy-led, even led aside by the spirits of darkness”.²⁷ The theme was refined in the devotional poetry of Thomas Washbourne in the 1650s. In “Upon His Losing His Way in a Mist” (1654), Washbourne imagined himself as a wayfarer beguiled by elf-light:

An absolute power

And till the fog was by the sun
Dispell’d, I in a maze did run
And ride as if ‘twere fairy ground,
Or that the Puck had led me round.

Maze is a great buzz word for the whole design team. As well as something to take in account when staging if the point of Pucks was to disorient people

In this maze of spiritual confusion, he followed “the Devil’s track, not God’s”.²⁸ A few years later, Richard Baxter used a similar image to warn against the allure of worldly things.²⁹ In the most compelling expression of this idea, John Milton portrayed Satan as “a wandering fire” in *Paradise Lost* (1667). As he led Eve towards the forbidden tree, he was like a spirit that “hovering and blazing with delusive light,/misleads th’ amazed night wanderer from his way/to bogs and mires”.³⁰

These texts described fairies in abstract or fictional contexts. They found a natural place in the web of associations between popery, false religion, and the Devil. But fairies also appeared outside the pages of devotional literature and fiction, and here their treatment by Protestant thinkers was rather different. It is striking that the

demonisation of fairies in real situations was limited and unsystematic and often went no further than the assertion that belief in such creatures – either real or imagined – was an impious folly that served Satan’s ends. This can be shown in the context of fairy encounters reported in the Elizabethan and early Stuart period, as well as cases of witchcraft.

II

There were, of course, Protestant writers who equated “real life” fairies with demons in early modern England. The future King James I took this position in his *Daemonologie* (1597), though he grew increasingly sceptical on such matters in his later life.³¹ Similarly, Robert Roche attributed the “curious feats” and love spells of village magicians to evil spirits in a pamphlet published in 1599.³² In *The Souls Exercise* (1641), the poet William Vaughan described the complete panoply of Satan’s deceits, including his manifestation as various earthly spirits:

Historical basis for the love Potion

The Lord indeed permits him still to range
With lies, false shows, and seeming wonders strange.
Yea too, and other wiles to play the ape,
Ghost, goblin, fairy, in fantastic shape,
Whereby men’s outward senses he beguiles,
As their crazed brains, with visions, dreams, and wiles.³³

By the middle years of the seventeenth century, the Devil’s ability to confound “men’s outward senses” as well as their minds was increasingly a matter of learned dispute.³⁴ Nonetheless, it was still possible to portray fairies as demons. In 1675, Henry Smith, the rector of St Mary’s in Colchester, referred to demons as “vagabond fairy-elves”.³⁵ As late as 1712, the owner of an annotated copy of Martin Luther’s *Table Talk*, now held in Worcester cathedral library, made a marginal note that fairies were “a sort of devil somewhat partaking of human nature”.³⁶

Vagabond, is such a loaded term this could be a lens with which to portray the fairies very differently. I associate words like Sick and Mangey with “Vagabond” but there is also a strong component of worldiness. Like a hippy with a negative connotation.

There was, however, no sustained campaign to discredit or demonise English fairies. In part this was for practical reasons. Of the various inhabitants of the traditional world of spirits, fairies were relatively marginal to the controversies of the Reformation. The cult of saints had been embedded in medieval Christianity, and involved the kind of allegedly idolatrous practices that Protestants were most determined to expunge. Thus attacks on saintly relics, and apparitions of the “holy dead”, were central to reformed religion. Similarly, ghosts were controversial because their existence supported the doctrine of purgatory.³⁷ Fairies, in contrast, were an anomaly in the biblical cosmos. They were certainly not what they appeared to be, and presumably played some part in Satan’s empire of falsehood; but they had never been integral to the Roman church, and were only indirectly related to the great theological debates of the age. Consequently, they were dealt with on an ad hoc basis. Going to research more, are they still dangerous

Second, reformed ideas about Satan meant that the demonisation of fairies was a far from straightforward business. As we have seen, belief in fairies was easily explained as a misconception encouraged by the father of lies, but it did not follow that fairies themselves were demons. All reformed writers agreed that the Devil’s main purpose was, in the words of William Perkins, to entangle souls “in the bands of error,

ignorance, and false faith”.³⁸ This consensus on fundamentals allowed scope for differences on less basic issues, such as whether evil spirits disguised themselves as fairies on earth. Some denied this possibility entirely; and for many others, it was only one of a range of possibilities, including human tricks, optical illusions, or idle tales. The idea of fairies as demons was not particularly appealing, especially in cases of witchcraft. This was because the notion that Satan appeared as a small creature, and acted only when human magicians required him to do so, was the kind of dangerous belief that many churchmen wished to eradicate. As a consequence, even those who accepted that the Devil could deceive people in this way recognised that this was merely a diversionary tactic and focused instead on his power over human minds.

All things we see in Midsummer

Removing the culpability from humans. The powerful taking from the people. A connection to our modern day world

Again, the treatment of will o’ the wisps illustrates Protestant attitudes towards fairies more generally. Very few writers attempted to explain contemporary reports of “walking flames” as demons. In 1567, the Swiss Calvinist Ludwig Lavater devoted some pages to the phenomenon in his treatise on spirits, which was printed in an English translation in 1572. “Many times candles and small fires appear in the night”, Lavater noted, “and seem to run up and down”. Lavater suggested that “these things, and many such like, have their natural causes” though he kept open the possibility that demons could sometimes be involved.³⁹ In 1621, Robert Burton identified will o’ the wisps among the species of “walking devils” that included fairies and spirits that pretended to be ghosts.⁴⁰ No further detailed discussions of the phenomenon were published in England until the late seventeenth century. Then naturalistic explanations were favoured: Thomas Blount argued that moving lights were caused by swarms of flying glow-worms, and the anonymous author of *The Sheepherd’s New Kalender* (1700) attributed them to rising vapours.⁴¹

So Puck could be a devil

It is easy to explain why tales of will o’ the wisps were not presented as demonic apparitions. They simply demanded little attention of any kind. Like sightings of fairies more generally, they did not relate to major theological concerns or points of dispute between Protestants and Catholics. Nor did they involve the kind of difficult judgments that were thrown up by reports of fairies in cases of witchcraft. It is notable, nonetheless, that walking flames played such a small role in the demonology of reformed Christians: after all, the idea of “false lights” that led the innocent astray seemed unusually well suited for such treatment. The fact that they were not explained in this way probably reflects the ad hoc nature of Protestant responses to fairy beliefs as a whole: while Satan was associated with such spirits at a general level, there was no systematic attempt to demonise the creatures that haunted woodlands and bogs in the popular imagination.

Light being a crucial symbol in Christianity so an unknown light must’ve been both exhilarating and scary at the same time.

Some other reports of fairies required closer scrutiny. This was the case when “cunning folk” employed them in magical operations. In 1566, the interrogation of a village magician in the diocesan court at Exeter was published as *The Examination of John Walsh*. This included Walsh’s admission that he consulted with fairies on hilltops, at midnight or noon, in order to learn the names of victims of bewitchment. The text was prefaced by an account of a satanic pact supposedly entered by Pope Alexander VI, and other abominations committed by the bishops of Rome. This may have implied the demonic nature of Walsh’s activities, alongside the usual association of such things with popery. But the pamphlet offered no gloss on the nature of the fairies that the conjurer consulted, and merely printed his own statement of their helpful activities. Another

I’m going to look at this closer to look for anything about love potions.

Fireflies are Fairies?

witchcraft pamphlet in 1619 also reproduced, without comment, the claims of a Leicestershire cunning woman, Joan Willimot, that she employed a fairy to detect and cure the victims of harmful magic.⁴²

The remarkable story of Ann Jeffries can be added to these accounts. As a young woman in Cornwall in the mid-1640s, Jeffries claimed that she was visited by fairies who gave her the ability to cure the sick. The authenticity of these spirit-helpers was, unsurprisingly, challenged by some local magistrates and clergy: they tried unsuccessfully to convince her that “they were evil spirits that resorted to her, and that it was the illusion of the Devil”.⁴³ Interestingly, however, no account of Jeffries’ encounters with the fairies (or demons) was printed until the 1690s. Fifty years after the original events, in the very different context of the struggle between defenders of Christian orthodoxy and naturalistic sceptics, her story was presented as evidence of the “great and marvellous works” of an interventionist God.⁴⁴

Different, interpretation of evil fairies, more in line with what we associate with things like the Salem witch trial

Particular features of these cases help to explain the official interest that they received. Allegations of murder by witchcraft, driven by Francis Manners, the Earl of Rutland, led indirectly to the examination of Joan Willimot in connection with the supposed crime. It seems that Willimot was drawn into the investigation to testify against one of the accused, Margaret Flower, and mentioned her dealings with a fairy under questioning.⁴⁵ Ann Jeffries attracted a large clientele for her services, and broadcast openly her association with fairies. Her activities also coincided with a major witch hunt in the eastern counties.⁴⁶ These factors presumably encouraged suspicions about the spirits that she served.⁴⁷ It is doubtful that magic involving fairies would have provoked legal attention in less colourful circumstances: after all, harmful sorcery was reported far more often to the courts than acts of supernatural healing.

To demonise the fairies employed by “cunning folk”, and healers such as Ann Jeffries, was to read against the grain of the stories in which they appeared. But in other circumstances the fairies of traditional culture were believed to be harmful by those who encountered them. Individuals could be “fairy-stricken”, “fairy-pinched” or “haunted by fairies”. Such beliefs arose most urgently in allegations of witchcraft. It is possible that the noxious spirits that featured so prominently in English witch trials were a kind of fairy.⁴⁸ A character in George Gifford’s *Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes* (1593) described an old woman who kept “three or four imps”, and noted that “some call them puckrils”.⁴⁹ This name, which Gifford also used in his *Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles* (1587), apparently connected the spirits to pucks and the hobgoblin, Robin Goodfellow.⁵⁰ The connection is apparently confirmed in Ben Jonson’s unfinished play *The Sad Shepherd*. Here, a witch’s spirit is named “Puck Hairy”.⁵¹ In a soliloquy, the creature reveals that it is truly a demon, but sometimes dances “about the forest ... like a goblin”. As Peter Marshall has pointed out, the “familiar spirits” recorded in witch trails sometimes had fairy-like names such as “Puckle”, “Robin” and “Hob”.⁵² It was uncommon for the terms “puckril” and “imp” to appear in the records of English witchcraft before 1645, but in that year several witches in Suffolk described harmful spirits as imps.⁵³ If these creatures were fairies, they possessed several qualities that distinguished them from others of their kind: they appeared as small animals that fed from teats hidden on their owners’ bodies; they obeyed human commands; and their character was always wicked.

the powerful using the unknown as an excuse to abuse their power

All three could be fun things to play with whilst staging

This sounds on brand for our Puck.

Did Protestants demonise these tormenting spirits? Some evidence suggests this. Occasionally, the godly victims of witches' bugs explicitly identified them as demons. This was the case when Richard Galis, the devout son of a former mayor of Windsor, was menaced at night by a strange cat sent by the witch Elizabeth Francis in 1579: he declared that the creature was "the Devil himself in the likeness of a cat".⁵⁴ On a much larger scale, the witchfinders Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne explained the "imps" they encountered in East Anglia in 1645 as demons. But some caution should be exercised. If witches' imps were a kind of fairy, they were a kind that was already identified in traditional culture as malevolent. Their appearance and behaviour were consistent from the earliest trials in the 1560s to the end of the legal prosecutions, and beyond; and it seems extremely unlikely that these qualities were imposed by Protestant reformers. The "demonisation" of these creatures, then, was really an attempt to reconcile the Protestant Devil with a popular understanding of evil spirits. This process was by no means straightforward: indeed, it led several Protestant thinkers either to dismiss or problematise witches' imps.

So Shakespeare's England had a grasp of both the Witch understanding as well as the demonic understanding

This was most obvious in writers such as Reginald Scot and Samuel Harsnett, who held that the Devil pursued his goals entirely by spiritual means. Scot identified several kinds of fairy spirit among the imaginary bugs that frightened credulous men and women: these included imps and "the puckle". Harsnett copied Scot's list in *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603), and noted that such fears were most common among fools, women, and sufferers of melancholy.⁵⁵ Later sceptics such as Thomas Ady were equally dismissive. In *A Candle in the Dark* (1655), Ady challenged the physical evidence associated with attacks by familiar spirits, as well as the marks on witches' bodies that supposedly indicated the nursing of imps. He noted that breast feeding and menstrual disorders could cause livid marks to appear on the flesh, "which some common ignorant people call fairy-nips".⁵⁶

Another name for Puck.

Scientific POV on Fairies. A connection to the War on women. Not sure if we can connect this to our production.

While thinkers such as Harsnett and Ady rejected Satan's physical interventions in the world, others who retained this possibility were almost equally reluctant to present witches' spirits as demons. Instead, they tended to favour a spiritual interpretation of the Devil's activity. George Gifford, the godly minister of Maldon in Essex, typified this position. Gifford published treatises on witchcraft in 1587 and 1593, intended to warn the "common sort of Christian" against the dangers of a naive understanding of magic and evil spirits. He did not deny that the Devil could appear in the world. Indeed, he devoted one chapter in his first tract of 1587 to proving that wicked angels "can appear in a bodily shape, and use speech and conference with men", and another to exposing the "futility and vanity" of those who denied this fact.⁵⁷ Gifford's deeper concern, however, was the purpose to which Satan employed these and his other powers. Within the parameters that God allowed, he sought to undermine true religion by fostering superstition and ignorance – and false ideas about fairies and imps was one part of this scheme.

As we have seen, Gifford's tracts referred to spirits called puckerils and imps. He also mentioned a woman "haunted with a fairy".⁵⁸ In each case, he placed these creatures in scenarios intended to illustrate common beliefs about witchcraft: they all menaced innocent villagers, who resorted to counter-magic in self-defence. Gifford set up these scenarios to expose the mistakes on which he believed they were founded. First, Satan tricked people into believing that he possessed great earthly powers, when in fact he was

utterly constrained by God; and second, he sought to foster irreligion by boosting the trade of magicians. Those troubled by puckrils sought relief through the services of village sorcerers; and the woman assailed by a fairy was cured with a charm. Such remedies, Gifford observed, were the Devil's "own inventions to mock the people, for he made them believe he was riven away by these, when in the meantime he ruled in their hearts".⁵⁹ The true remedy was faith in God. Thus, Satan lay behind the fear of tormenting spirits – but for right-thinking Christians this fear was groundless.⁶⁰

While Gifford did not deny that demons could appear as "puckrils", the whole thrust of his argument made such counterfeits largely irrelevant. **It was the Devil in the mind that people should fear, rather than the bugs of popular belief.** Later thinkers struggled to accommodate these spirits within a Protestant theory of witchcraft. They were largely ignored by Henry Holland, William Perkins, and Thomas Cooper, though these writers were far more willing than Gifford to support the prosecution of witches. Richard Bernard, the godly minister of Batcombe in Somerset, was more bold in *A Guide to Grand Jury-Men* (1627). Bernard suggested that the Devil marked the bodies of his servants with the teat from which they fed their spirits. This was, he argued, a physical sign of their compact with the fiend.⁶¹ By ingenious thinking of this kind, the activity of imps could be fitted into a theory of satanic witchcraft. But the fit was an awkward one. As the Cambridgeshire minister John Gaule pointed out in 1646, there were numerous theological and practical difficulties in accepting testimony involving these creatures:

Whether all witches have their imps, or deal with familiars? ... Whether the imp works at the witch's, or at the Devil's command or instigation? How can a familiar or imp be discerned, if it never did anything but what (by nature or art) a creature of that same kind may stand in a capacity to do? Who can flatly attest with a good conscience that this or that dog, cat, rat, mouse, etc, is the witches imp? ⁶²

Such questions made the involvement of imps in witchcraft contentious at best, and in practical terms they made witch trials an uncertain and perilous business.

The demonisation of English fairies, then, was a layered, selective, and often limited process. **As good fairies appeared only infrequently in English witch trials, there was relatively little opportunity or need for Protestants to explain them as demons – even if they were inclined to do so.** If witches' imps can be regarded as a variety of wicked fairies, their demonisation was more thorough, though they were already evil spirits before the demonologists came to terms with them. Even then, they were not easy to assimilate within the reformed understanding of the Devil.

Broadly speaking, English Protestants demonised the belief in fairies rather than fairies themselves. To accept fairies as real was to succumb to superstition and false religion, fostered ultimately by the prince of this world. But it did not follow that reports of fairies were demonic apparitions – though this possibility was available. The follies of superstition served Satan perfectly well without any direct intervention on his part. It is striking that those writers who believed that demons masqueraded as fairies normally placed this activity in the Catholic past: this was the case for such diverse thinkers as Henry Holland, Thomas Cooper, and John Gaule.⁶³ When godly demonologists identified similar counterfeits in their own time, they stressed that Satan's real purpose was spiritual and psychological: this was as true of Richard Bernard as it was of George Gifford.⁶⁴ Most Protestant writers would have accepted John Gaule's assessment

The love potion affects the mind. Sound mindedness seems to be important to society.

This informs how Shakespeare's audience might have seen the fairies.

Could be seen as committing the sin of lust.

of Satan's strategy: he worked primarily "by the seduction of sin, not any production of nature".⁶⁵ Definitely worth exploring Sin in the text

III

How did reformed attitudes towards fairies and the Devil affect the wider culture of Elizabethan and early Stuart England? Given the analysis presented above, the impact was probably small. The surviving evidence tends to confirm this impression. Fairies were seldom depicted as demons in chapbooks and ballads – though misplaced faith in the power of fairies was sometimes presented as one of the Devil's snares. The fairies of popular entertainment were not demonic. Rather, they retained their traditional role as deceptive and untrustworthy spirits, but without the innate malevolence that characterised demons; and in the case of Robin Goodfellow at least, it was possible for a fairy to be portrayed as essentially good.

So only educated were most likely aware of this.

Our Fairies in the traditional sense.

A pamphlet published in 1594 illustrates the potential of fairy texts to convey a religious message. *The Brideling, Sadling and Ryding, of a Rich Churle in Hampshire* described the crimes of Judith Philips, who deceived and robbed people by pretending that the queen of the fairies could lead her to hidden treasure. The churl in the title was an unfortunate man from a village near Winchester, whom Philips allegedly bridled and rode as part of a quest for fairy gold. While the spirits in Philips' operation were bogus, the author of the tract connected belief in such sorcery securely to the Devil. The sin of covetousness that led to the downfall of Philips' victims was the sin that transformed Lucifer into "an angel of darkness". More directly, the pamphlet observed that "whosoever believes in witchcraft and sorcery believes in the Devil: yet God doth suffer the Devil and his angels to spread abroad the world, to tempt those that be weak in faith, and like wolves in sheep's clothing, seek to devour us".⁶⁶

Here again sin is the first domino that falls.

While the career of Judith Philips involved real-life (if fraudulent) dealings with fairies, the stories told about Robin Goodfellow were closer to the world of popular entertainment. These stories contained elements of traditional fairy belief, but had evolved into comic tales by the late Elizabethan and early Stuart period. A pamphlet in 1588 noted that Robin was "famous in every old wives' chronicle for his mad merry pranks"; and in the mid-1590s he provided the basis for Shakespeare's mischievous fairy Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.⁶⁷ In 1628, Robin was the hero of a printed collection of jests, and he appeared in at least three ballads published in the first half of the seventeenth century. In these numerous incarnations, he was pre-eminently a trickster – but he was never portrayed as satanic. Indeed, as his character developed he was increasingly involved in the righting of wrongs. In the jest book, for instance, he helped two lovers whose union was prevented by a lecherous uncle; he converted a miser into a generous neighbour; and he punished a publican who defrauded his customers.⁶⁸ In a ballad published in 1648, Robin even apprehended thieves at night and delivered them to a parish constable.⁶⁹ Unlike the Devil, who also served as an agent of justice in contemporary texts, these late tales about Robin made it clear that his intentions were good. The author of the jest book noted that he "always did help those that suffered wrong, and never would hurt any but those that did wrong to others".⁷⁰

Historical precedence of how Puck is portrayed, it sounds like he was the period equivalent of a super hero.

While Robin Goodfellow acquired a benign disposition in the early 1600s, even dangerous spirits such as will o' the wisps were not portrayed as demonic in cheap

print. Robin himself appeared as an *ignis fatuus* in one early ballad, and again in one of the tales in the 1628 collection; but in both cases his intentions were comic rather than malign.⁷¹ A later ballad offered a more sinister depiction of a walking flame:

A small deluding light,
Presents itself in sight,
And leads him with delight,
Through uncouth paths all night,
All weary rent, and torn he'll see,
What cunning, merry mad blades we be.

There was no suggestion, however, that the “deluding light” was satanic. Moreover, the unlucky wayfarer appeared to survive the encounter, and the deceiving spirit was placed in a larger narrative in which Robin Goodfellow appeared again, acting as the protector of honest men and women.⁷²

Precedence for how Will o' Wisps, were dealt with. I still think they're worth playing with.

These fictional representations of fairies were not, in themselves, incompatible with reformed Christianity. After all, Protestants assumed that the danger of fairies lay in the propagation of idolatry and superstition: to accept fairies as real threatened true religion, but to enjoy them in fictions was less perilous. Nonetheless, this does not explain why Robin Goodfellow and will o' the wisps were not portrayed as demons in cheap print. **The simplest explanation is that these creatures were not demonised in popular culture.** Other sources tend to support this view. In 1619, the Leicestershire cunning woman Joan Willimot admitted that she performed magic using a fairy, and successfully deflected suggestions that the creature was demonic.⁷³ Ann Jeffries was equally adamant that she cured diseases through the ministration of fairies in 1645, and appears to have shared this belief with other members of her community.⁷⁴

Shakespeare

Accounts of fairy beliefs in the later seventeenth century support the same broad conclusion. In 1677, John Webster described a cunning man who healed the sick through the administration of a white powder. The man claimed that he had obtained this substance from the queen of the fairies, whom he met in a great hall concealed within a hillside. He was accused of conjuration and brought to trial. Here, he maintained his story, and in the absence of any evidence of demonism he was acquitted. Webster noted various theories in circulation about the true origin of the white powder, which apparently possessed the medicinal qualities that the man claimed. Some believed that it was, indeed, a gift from fairyland; others, including Webster himself, felt that the man had obtained it from a travelling chemist. But none of Webster's informants suggested that it came from the Devil.⁷⁵

In a quite different context, the papers of the Oxford antiquarian and magician Elias Ashmole indicate strongly that fairies were not viewed as demons. Ashmole recorded a series of spells and conjurations involving fairies that implied a detailed understanding of their nature. These included the recipe for an ointment made from herbs taken from “the side of a hill where fairies use to be, and the grass of a fairy throne”. He believed that it was possible to bind the spirits into his service, providing that they were not already indentured to another magician. In two lengthy and highly contractual conjurations, Ashmole set out the terms under which the creatures would attend and obey him. In one of these, he appeared to address the fairy, named as “Elibigathan”, as a fellow Christian. He reminded the spirit that it would stand “before the Lord of Hosts at the dreadful day of judgement, before whose glorious presence both thou and I and all

other Christian creatures must and shall appear”.⁷⁶ In common with the more humble conjurers who sought to command fairies in Restoration England, it seems that Ashmole did not regard them as demonic.

As Ashmole’s activities suggest, the reformation of spirits failed to abolish or reclassify fairies. It did, however, exclude them firmly from the orthodox understanding of the Christian cosmos. This began a long process by which they were removed from the world of lived experience into the realm of fantasy – or, in the language of early modern sceptics, the “fables” of maidservants and old wives. For English Protestants, it made sense to demonise those beliefs that allowed people to accept fairies as real: they belonged to the cobweb of lies in which Satan entangled unwary souls. But fairies themselves could be dismissed in many ways, and ultimately it mattered little which. So fairies were seldom transformed into demons, either in the minds of reformed Christians or the population as a whole. They survived at the margins of acceptable belief, until larger developments in English culture gradually brushed them away. Around 1690, the antiquarian John Aubrey noted wistfully that the rise of literacy had “put all the old fables out of doors, and the divine art of printing frightened away Robin Goodfellow and the fairies”. It was probably changes such as these, rather than fear of the Devil, that finally exiled fairies from the supernatural world.

The death of fairies. Do Theseus and Egeus, represent the start of this movement?

Notes

1. Churchyard, *Churchyards Challenge*, 180–2; and Spenser, *Fairie Queene*, book 1, canto 9: 35–54. Spenser’s Redcross Knight is tempted to suicide by the solitary figure of Despair, and rescued by faith personified by Lady Una.
2. Scot, *Discoverie*, book 7, chapter 15.
3. Holland, *Treatise*, 8.
4. Harsnett, *Declaration*, 135–6.
5. Holland, *Treatise*, 8.
6. Briggs, *Anatomy of Puck*.
7. Purkiss, *Fairies and Fairy Stories*, 168; and Marshall, “Protestants and Fairies”, 148.
8. Wilby, “The Witch’s Familiar”; and Wilby, *Cunning Folk*, especially part one. See also Gregory, “Witchcraft”.
9. For Satan as a spirit of temptation, see Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism*; and Oldridge, *The Devil*.
10. Hutton, “Early Modern British Fairy Tradition”, 1147. Hutton argues that popular traditions about fairies were systematised in late medieval literature, and this literature subsequently interacted with wider culture in the early modern period.
11. Bicknoll, *A Swoord*, 8.
12. R. B., *A New Yeares Gifte*, G3v.
13. Goodwin, *Babels Balm*, 102.
14. Guild, *Ignis Fatuus*. Guild subtitled his text *The Elf-Fire of Purgatory*.
15. Flecknoe, *Aenigmatical Characters*, 17; and Heyrick, *New Atlantis*, 15–6.
16. Webster, *Displaying*, 175–6.
17. Downe, *Certaine Treatises*, 63.
18. Heyrick, *New Atlantis*, 15.
19. Johnstone, *The Devil*, especially 44–8.
20. Edmond Bicknoll, *A Swoord*, 8.
21. Scot, *Discoverie*, book 1, chapter 2.
22. Napier, *A Plaine Discouery*, 221.
23. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part four, chapter 47.

24. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part three, chapter 38. Hobbes argued from his reading of scripture that “by Satan is meant any earthly enemy of the church”.
25. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, part 1, sec. 2, member 1, sub. 2.
26. Tyndale, *Exposition*, prologue.
27. Rous, *Meditations*, 316.
28. Washbourne, *Divine Poems* (1654), 126.
29. Baxter, *Crucifying of the World*, 157.
30. Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667), book 9, 639–41.
31. James VI of Scotland, *Daemonologie* (1597), book 3, chapter 5. For James’ more sceptical attitudes later in life, see Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Basil Blackwell: 1984), 18–20; and Levack, *Witch-Hunting in Scotland* (Routledge: 2008), 48–54.
32. Roche, *Eustathia*, E3r.
33. Vaughan, *The Souls Exercise*, 113.
34. For the controversy over spectral apparitions see Clark, “Reformation of the Eyes”.
35. Smith, *Christian Religion’s Appeal*, 45.
36. The author of the annotations was probably John Humphries, who purchased the book in 1708. The passage concerned was “How the Devil can deceive people and beget children”, in Luther, *Colloquia Mensalia* (1652), 386.
37. For the problematic status of ghosts, and their subsequent demonisation, see Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead*, chapter 6.
38. Perkins, *Discourse*, 176.
39. Lavater, *Of Ghostes*, 51.
40. Burton, *Anatomy*, part 1, sec. 2, member 1, sub. 2.
41. Blount, *A Natural History*, 306; *Shepherd’s New Kalender*, 37–8.
42. Both pamphlets are available, with commentary, in Gibson, ed., *Early Modern Witches*, 29, 291–2.
43. For the full context of this episode, see Marshall, “Ann Jeffries and the Fairies”; quotation 132.
44. Pitt, *An Account of one Ann Jeffries*, 5.
45. For the background to this case and a reconstruction of the sequence of events, see Gibson, *Early Modern Witches*, 276–9.
46. Malcolm Gaskill makes this connection in his study of the East Anglian witch trials. See Gaskill, *Witchfinders*, 167.
47. Nor did it help that Jeffries’ fairies had royalist leanings. Jeffries herself championed the Book of Common Prayer after its suppression by the Parliament. For these aspects of the case, see Marshall, “Ann Jeffries and the Fairies”, 130–1.
48. James Sharpe has advanced this possibility. He suggests that the belief in good fairies that assisted cunning folk may have been “paralleled by beliefs about malevolent spirits who helped malefic witches”. James Sharpe, “The Witch’s Familiar”, 228.
49. Gifford, *Dialogue Concerning Witches*, Br.
50. Gifford, *Discourse of the Subtill Practises*, G3r. Reginald Scot and Samuel Harsnett also listed “the puckle” among the bogeys of popular belief.
51. Jonson’s *Sad Shepherd* was published posthumously in 1641. Puck Hairy’s soliloquy comprises the first scene of act three.
52. Marshall, “Protestants and Fairies”, 149.
53. These depositions were reproduced in Ewen, *Witch Hunting*, 291–313.
54. Gibson, *Early Modern Witches*, 53, 63.
55. Harsnett, *Declaration*, 138.
56. Ady, *Candle in the Dark*, 129.
57. Gifford, *Discourse of the Subtill Practises*, Cr, C2v. On this point, it is notable that Gifford followed the publication of Scot’s more sceptical *Discoverie* by only three years.
58. Gifford, *Discourse of the Subtill Practises*, G3r; Gifford, *Dialogue* (1593), Br.
59. Gifford, *Discourse of the Subtill Practises*, G2v-4G3r; Gifford, *Dialogue*, Br-v.
60. For a discussion of these points in Gifford’s demonology, see McGinnis, *George Gifford*, chapter five.

61. Bernard, *Guide to Grand-Jury Men*, 218.
62. Gaule, *Select Cases*, 106–7.
63. Holland, *Treatise*, 8; Cooper, *Mystery of Witch-Craft*, 123; Gaule, *Select Cases*, 49–50.
64. In the first book of *A Guide to Grand Jury-Men*, for example, Bernard emphasised Satan’s ability to exploit popular misconceptions about witchcraft that distracted people from the true nature of his power. He also stressed that evil spirits did not cause the harm that they took credit for, and their true influence lay in the propagation of sin. See especially, Bernard, *Guide to Grand-Jury Men*, 80–82.
65. Gaule, *Select Cases*, 49–50, 112.
66. *Brideling, Sadling and Ryding*, 13.
67. *Tarltons Newes*, A3.
68. *Robin Goodfellow*, 12–5, 22–4, 29–31.
69. *Fairy Queene*.
70. *Robin Goodfellow*, 21–2.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Fairy Queene*.
73. Gibson, *Early Modern Witches*, 291–2.
74. Marshall, “Anne Jeffries and the Fairies”, 131–2.
75. Webster, *Displaying*, 300–2.
76. *Bodleian Library*, Oxford, MS Ashmole 1406, 50v, 52v.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Bibliography

- Ady, T. *A Candle in the Dark*. 1655.
- Baxter, R. *The Crucifying of the World through the Cross of Christ*. 1658.
- Bernard, R. *A Guide to Grand-Jury Men*. 1627.
- Bicknoll, E. *A Swoord Agaynst Swearing*. 1579.
- Blount, T. *A Natural History: Containing Many not Common Observations*. 1696.
- Bodleian Library. Papers of Elias Ashmole*. Oxford, MS: Ashmole, 1406.
- The Brideling, Sadling and Ryding, of a Rich Churle in Hampshire*, 1594.
- Briggs, K. *The Anatomy of Puck: An Examination of Fairy Beliefs among Shakespeare’s Contemporaries and Successors*. 1st ed. Routledge, 2003. 1959.
- Burton, R. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. 1621.
- Churchyard, T. *Churchyards Challenge*. 1593.
- Clark, S. “The Reformation of the Eyes: Apparitions and Optics in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Europe.” *Journal of Religious History* 27, no. 2 (2003): 143–160. doi:10.1111/1467-9809.00168.
- Cooper, T. *The Mystery of Witch-Craft*. 1617.
- Dorson, R. M. *The British Folklorists: A History*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Downe, J. *Certaine Treatises of the Late Reverend and Learned Divine*. 1633.
- Ewen, C. L. *Witch Hunting and Witch Trials*. New York: Dial Press, 1929.
- The Fairy Queene*, 1648.
- Flecknoe, R. *Aenigmatical Characters*. 1665.
- Gaskill, M. *Witchfinders: A Seventeenth-Century English Tragedy*. London: John Murray, 2005.
- Gaule, J. *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts*. 1646.
- Gibson, M., ed. *Early Modern Witches: Witchcraft Cases in Contemporary Writing*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Gifford, G. *A Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devilles by Witches*. 1587.

- Gifford, G. *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes*. 1593.
- Goodwin, G. *Babels Balm: or The Honey-Combe of Romes Religion*. 1624.
- Gregory, A. "Witchcraft, Politics and 'Good Neighbourhood' in Seventeenth-Century Rye." *Past and Present* 133, no. 1 (1991): 31–66. doi:10.1093/past/133.1.31.
- Guild, J. *Ignis Fatuus, or the Elf-Fire of Purgatory*. 1625.
- Harsnett, S. *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*. 1603.
- Heyrick, T. *The New Atlantis*. 1687.
- Hobbes, T. *Leviathan* [ed. Shapiro, Ian]. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.
- Holland, H. *Treatise Against Witchcraft*. 1590.
- Hutton, R. "The Making of the Early Modern British Fairy Tradition." *The Historical Journal* 57, no. 4 (2014): 1135–1156. doi:10.1017/S0018246X14000351.
- James VI of Scotland. *Daemonologie*. 1597.
- Johnstone, N. *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Jonson, B. *The Sad Shepherd: Or A Tale of Robin-Hood*. 1641.
- Larner, C. *Witchcraft and Religion*. London: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Lavater, L. *Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Nyght*. 1572.
- Levack, B. P. *Witch-Hunting in Scotland*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Luther, M. *Colloquia Mensalia*. 1652.
- Marshall, P. *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Marshall, P. "Protestants and Fairies in Early Modern England." In *Living with Religious Diversity in Early Modern Europe*, edited by C. S. Dixon, D. Freist, and M. Greengrass. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009.
- Marshall, P. "Ann Jeffries and the Fairies: Folk belief and the War on Scepticism in Later Stuart England." In *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England*, edited by A. McShane and G. Walker. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- McGinnis, T. S. *George Gifford and the Reformation of the Common Sort*. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2004.
- Milton, J. *Paradise Lost*. 1667.
- Napier, J. *A Plaine Discouery of the Whole Revelation of Saint John set Downe in Two Treatises*. 1593.
- Oldridge, D. *The Devil in Tudor and Stuart England*. 2nd ed. Stroud: History Press, 2010.
- Perkins, W. *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*. 1608.
- Robin Goodfellow his Mad Merry Pranks*, 1628.
- Pitt, M. *An Account of One Ann Jeffries, Now Living in the County of Cornwall*. 1696.
- Purkiss, D. *Fairies and Fairy Stories: A History*, Reprint. Stroud: Penguin, 2000.
- R. B. *A New Yeares Gifte Dedicated to the Popes Holinesse*. 1579.
- Roche, R. *Eustathia*. 1599.
- Rous, F. *Meditations of Instruction, of Exhortation, or Reprofe*. 1616.
- Scot, R. *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*. 1584.
- Sharpe, J. "The Witch's Familiar in Elizabethan England." In *Authority and Consent in Tudor England*, edited by G. W. Bernard and S. J. Gunn. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.
- The Sheepherd's New Kalender*, 1700.
- Smith, H. *Christian Religion's Appeal from the Groundless Prejudices of the Sceptick*. 1675.
- Spenser, E. *The Fairie Queene*. 1590.
- Tarltons Neues Out of Purgatorie*, 1588.
- Tyndale, W. *The Exposition of the Fyrste Epistle of Seynt John*. 1531.
- Vaughan, W. *The Souls Exercise*. 1641.
- Washbourne, T. *Divine Poems*. 1654.
- Webster, J. *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*. 1677.
- Wilby, E. "The Witch's Familiar and the Fairy." *Folklore* 111, no. 2 (2000): 283–305.
- Wilby, E. *Cunning Folk and Familiar Spirits: Shamanistic Visionary Traditions in Early Modern British Witchcraft and Magic*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.