

Constantine II was also “Arthur’s grandfather”¹⁷; then the grandfather’s and grandson’s achievements reflected the radiance of each other.

Another important aspect of Spenser’s presentation of construction as a continuous enterprise is the rebuilding of existing cities or edifices. The Briton monarch who had undertaken rebuilding is Lud. Brutus’s construction of the capital city of Troynouant is literally continued by Lud. He rebuilt the walls of Troynouant and built Ludgate: ‘The ruin’d wals he did reedifye / Of Troynovant’ and he also ‘built that gate which of his name is hight’ (II. x. 46. 4–6). After his death, Lud was ‘entombed solemnly’ by Ludgate (II. x. 46. 7). He literally became part of what he constructed. Steggle convincingly demonstrates that Spenser omits certain details in Geoffrey and invents the detail about Lud’s buried site so that he ‘turns a dictatorial, peripatetic, feast-loving warlord into a model of civic decency, with special reference to building and rebuilding’.¹⁸ He also observes Spenser’s ‘insistence on London as a collaborative, ongoing project’.¹⁹ Such insistence, I argue, is not limited to the capital city but is on the national level. As the above details about other cities indicate, it is not one particular city but the whole country that is considered as ‘a collaborative, ongoing project’.

For the presentation of the multi-generation building enterprise of Britain, Spenser resorts to his sources and his own originality. When consulting different chronicles—William Caxton’s *Chronicles of England*, Stow’s *Annales of England*, and Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*—he selects positive details and omits negative ones. He also creatively invents certain details to present better images of several building monarchs and to maximize their accomplishments in construction of the nation.

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ORLANDO’S BEARD AND LOVE CURES IN *AS YOU LIKE IT*

In a contra-blazon, Rosalind disputes Orlando’s claim to be a lover: ‘A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not—but I pardon you for that, for simply your having in beard is a younger brother’s revenue’ (*As You Like It*, III. ii.356–60).

Her comment about his lack of beard sticks out, as it is not normally listed as one of the physical symptoms of obsessive love, which are principally about the figure (lean), the demeanour (drooping), the countenance (pale), and the eyes (blue-circled).¹ The Oxford edition thinks that her ‘remark is general, but Rosalind is being somewhat daring here: she knows that Orlando is a youngest son, but there’s no reason that Ganymede should’.² The Arden and Cambridge editions agree (the Arden adding, somewhat obliquely, that ‘class was an element in the regulations governing the wearing of beards at Lincoln’s Inn in the sixteenth century’).³

But might the comment be interpreted in the light of Rosalind’s offer to cure Orlando? A beard was commonly held in medical treatises on the treatment of love melancholy to indicate strong virility (hairy men, it was said, being fuller of the hot humour which produces semen): ‘a woman cannot endure a man that hath but little Beard; not so much, for that they are commonly cold and impotent, as that, so much resembling eunuches, they are for the most part inclined to basenesse, cruelty, and deceitfulness’.⁴ Rosalind’s comment is thus a double insult: Orlando is either not unmanned by love (his beard is not ‘neglected’), or, even worse, too unmanly to love (‘having no beard’, as the second folio puts it). No wonder she backtracks

¹ A. du Laurens, *A Discourse ... of Melancholike Diseases* (1599), 118–19; J. Ferrand, *Erōtomania, or a Treatise Discoursing of the Essence ... and Cure of Love* (1610), trans. E. Chilmead (1640), 120–7.

² W. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. A. Brissenden (Oxford, 1994).

³ W. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. J. Dusinberre (London, 2006); W. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. M. Hattaway (Cambridge, 2021).

⁴ Ferrand, *Erōtomania*, 143; W. Fisher, ‘The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, liv (2001), 173–5.

¹⁷ Hamilton, ‘Notes’, 257.

¹⁸ Steggle, ‘Spenser’s Ludgate’, 35.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

hastily—and he takes up her challenge to prove which is stronger, his passion or her cure!

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THE BROOD-DEVOURING EARTH: A POSSIBLE SOURCE FOR THE FIRST QUATRAIN OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNET 19

Hailed by Ignatius Donnelly as the most 'heroic', 'swelling', 'original', and 'climactically finished' quatrain in English poetry,¹ the first stanza of Shakespeare's Sonnet 19 is, however, a perplexing one. At first sight (and probably the reading of most), the four end-stopped lines refer to four *exempla* of Time's 'fell arrest' (74.1) of all kinds of creatures:

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood,
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood...²

Verity has fittingly identified in the passage an allusion to Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV.234 (*tempus edax rerum...*),³ which informed so many of Shakespeare's poetical writings and had become proverbial by the late sixteenth century.⁴ Moreover, the stanza should take on more Ovidian resonance if Lever is correct in suggesting *Tristia*, IV.vi.5–6 as a possible source for line 1:

*tempore Poenorum pespescitur ira leonum,
nec feritas animo, quae fuit ante, manet...*
[time quiets the rage of Phoenician lions so that their former wildness abides not in their spirits...]⁵

¹ Cited in H. E. Rollins (ed.), *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Sonnets* (Philadelphia and London, 1944), I, 53.

² All citations from C. Burrow (ed.), *The Oxford Shakespeare: Complete Sonnets and Poems* (Oxford, 2002).

³ H. E. Rollins (ed.), *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Sonnets*, I, 52.

⁴ For the proverb 'Time devours all things', see R. W. Dent, *Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1981), 232.

Furthermore, the legendary phoenix referred to in line 4, presumably from Ovid or from Pliny,⁶ had gained widespread folkloric as well as poetic currency by Shakespeare's time, a fact that has been well recognized by the editors.

Read in the light of all these classical allusions, Shakespeare here seems to be recasting a string of classical imageries into imaginative variations on the Ovidian *topos*, which will turn out to be a foil to the immortality that the poet could promise to his lover. Yet the classical sourcing may be misleading if we take account of the difficulty of line 2. The creatures referred to in lines 1, 3–4 are either characteristically strong ('lion' and 'tiger') or enduring ('phoenix'), and one may reasonably subsume all the three under the earth's *sweet brood*, a rather obscure epithet.⁷ Be that the case, a parallel could hardly be drawn between the second *exemplum* and the other three. Some work of semantically pinning-down, therefore, seems to be warranted.

The editors have either remained silent on the phrase or treated it in passing. Ingram and Redpath, for example, glossed the line as '[Time] cause[s] the earth to re-absorb the creatures which spring from her ('sweet' suggests primarily flowers)'.⁸ G. B. Evans, following this line of interpretation, illustrated how the earth can 'absorb' her creatures with the Christian aphorism 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust' from the Book of Common Prayer.⁹ Ingram and Redpath's reading, one must admit, might be the case. Historically, the meaning of the phrase *earth's brood* and the like could shift from the more general (i) 'mortal creatures' to the more specific, (ii) 'plants, that which grows on the earth', and,

⁵ J. W. Lever, *The Elizabethan Love Sonnet* (London, 1956), 201; Ovid, *Tristia. Ex Ponto*, trans. A. L. Wheeler and rev. G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA, 1924), 184–5.

⁶ *Ov. Met.* XV.392–402; Plin. *HN* X.ii. For the versions available to Shakespeare see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. Golding (London, 2002), 447; *A summarie of the antiquities, and wonders of the worlde, abstracted out of the sixtene first bookes of the excellent historiographer Plinie...*, trans. I. Alday (London, 1566), sig. C6^v.

⁷ Duncan-Jones notes that 'the earth's consumption of her own children was also a commonplace', see K. Duncan-Jones (ed.), *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Nashville, TN, 1997), 148. It is true that the characterisation of the earth that swallows mortal creatures is not uncommon since classical times, but the emphasis is rarely—as far as my knowledge is concerned, never—on temporal transience.

⁸ W. G. Ingram and T. Redpath (eds), *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (London, 1964), 46.

⁹ G. B. Evans (ed.), *The Sonnets* (Cambridge, 1996), 131.