

Approaching Acrasia : the Representation of an Allegorical Figure in Book II of The Faerie Queene

著者	Iki Yasuhiko
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Approaching Acrasia

— the Representation of an Allegorical Figure in Book II of *The Faerie Queene* —

Yasuhiko Iki

It is a commonplace experience for us to find much difficulty in visualizing personifications as we read an allegorical work. In the case of Acrasia, who is the antagonist to the Knight of Temperance in the Second Book of *The Faerie Queene*, there arises some difficulty when we first try to picture her in detail. It is only in the last phase of the quest of Guyon that we can build a complete image. Acrasia is referred to throughout the story, and her importance as the antagonist is continuously present in our mind from the beginning to the end of the adventure. From the initial stages of the story, her vaguely formed figure sticks to the mind of the readers, and remains indistinct throughout, crystallizing little by little, till her whole image can finally be visualized in the last episode. This woman radiates a sinister charm and reflects an aura of the sensuous image from the Bower of Bliss, and her allure is mingled with the magical power of the Bower. This paper aims to clarify how Acrasia bears an allegorical meaning, how her image is gradually visualized, and how she performs her role as an allegorical figure in the story.

I

Needless to say, the naming of a character is quite important in any literary work, let alone an allegory. What name a poet gives him or her can prescribe his or her personality, and, in the case of an allegorical character, the appellation itself reveals his or her attributes. From where and why did Spenser take the name Acrasia? Italian romantic epics in the Renaissance period are often thought to be an important repository for Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. In one of those romantic epics, *L'Italia liberata dai Goti* by Giangiorgio Trissino, appears a witch called Acratia. One can surmise that the poet obtained the name Acrasia from Trissino. The more important question, however, is: why did Spenser select that name from many others? In selecting this appellation, the principal concern of the poet was its allegorical significance.

The name Acrasia derives from the medieval Latin 'acrasia,' which can be traced back to two Greek words, ἀκρᾶσιᾶ and ἀκρασιᾶ. The former means 'ill-temperature, badly mixed quality' and the latter 'impotence, want of self-command'. These two senses of 'acrasia' function as the basic

core of the meaning, while other senses which result from the actions of the knight of Temperance accrue to it with the development of the story.

Then, what is the content of the virtue of the hero Guyon? The 'temperance' of Spenser differs so much from that of Aristotle, whose moral conceptions in *Nichomachean Ethics*, professes the poet, are the models of the virtues of the titular heroes in *The Faerie Queene*. According to Aristotle, a temperate man is a man who can assume an adamant attitude to a vice because he does not have an aptitude for the allurements it offers, while a continent man vacillates between temptations and obligations.² Guyon often shows his inclination towards temptations, so he seems to be what Aristotle would call a continent man rather than a temperate man. He continues to fight against his enemies even though at times he almost succumbs to dangerous situations because of his inclinations. He consequently has the potentiality for developing himself through experiencing many adventures, and is quite far from being a flat character. As the antagonist to such a hero, Acrasia has the corresponding possibility to reveal herself through making her figure less and less vague. Unlike other antagonists in *The Faerie Queene*, Acrasia is a figure whose image must be revised throughout by the frequent references to her in the Book.

Nothing can be created from a vacuum. Whether it is a character, a plot, or a situation, there will be a model for a poet to use. The author chooses out of many models an appropriate one for his intention, makes a partial revision of it, and obtains what he wants for his work. In such a case, what kind of traditional images does Acrasia inherit?

We can assume that the idea of an evil witch is the core image of Acrasia. In the onset of the Second Book, we encounter Amavia on the brink of her death. Her dying words describe Acrasia as a witch who has so far destroyed many knights. She lives on 'a wandring Island, that doth ronne/ And stray in perilous gulfe' (1.51). Her dwelling is ironically called the Bower of Bliss. She does what comes naturally.

Her blisse is all in pleasure and delight,
Wherewith she makes her louers drunken mad,
And then with words and weedes of wondrous might,
On them she workes her will to vses bad. (1.52)³

The witch leads a life of pleasure, and enslaves men to sexual desire. Mordant, the husband of Amavia, became 'thralled to her will, / In chaines of lust and lewd desires ybound' (1.54) and was killed ultimately. In 'The letter to Sir Walter Raleigh', also, Acrasia is referred to as 'an Enchaunteresse'.

I have already mentioned that Spenser owes much to Italian romantic epics in the way of devel-

oping his stories in *The Faerie Queene*. He is not only profoundly influenced by their method of interweaving plural narrative threads but he also finds the models for some of his characters there. In the case of Acrasia, he may have acquired much from Alcina in *Orlando furioso* by Ludovico Ariosto, Acratia in *L'Italia liberata dai Goti* by Trissino, and Armida in *Gerusalemme liberata* by Torquato Tasso. Of these three enchantresses, who is thought to be most important? The question is too hard to answer, because Trissino was enormously influenced by Ariosto, Tasso read and was familiar with both of them, and Spenser may have drawn on them all.

II

The sacrifice first described in the Second Book is of the couple of Mordant and Amavia. The pair, whose respective allegorical meanings are 'that death does giue' and 'that loues to liue' (1.55), represents the danger of passion inflamed to extremes. Abandonment to an excessive form of love causes their destruction. Both victims show 'the image of mortalitie,/ And feeble nature cloth'd with fleshly tyre' (1.57). Acrasia takes advantage of the inherent weakness of human nature. Her inclination is to cause men to indulge in sexual pleasure. The reason why Cymochles, who is stirred to vengeance for his brother Pyrochles, fails to achieve his aim, is that his instinct is taken advantage of by one of Acrasia's agents, Phaedria. Cymochles, whom Pyrochles' squire finds enjoying lascivious entertainment from Acrasia's damsels, leaves the Bower of Bliss to seek revenge, but on his way is trapped by Phaedria, who knows his weak point quite well. Thus Acrasia uses her agents to bring disaster to her intended victims.

Abandonment to extreme passion is a sickly state of mind in the sense that it lacks balance. Acrasia is a morbid being from the etymological point of view as her name represents a bad mixture of humours. To this imbalanced Acrasia opposed are the figures of Belphoebe and Alma.

Belphoebe, a beautiful maiden similar to Diana the goddess of chastity, is far from anything morbid. She is rather the symbol of the healthy state of man, representing a good balance of humours as expressed in the fourth line of the following stanza.⁴

Her face so faire as flesh it seemed not,
 But heauenly pourtraict of bright Angels hew,
 Cleare as the skie, withouten blame or blot,
 Through goodly mixture of complexions dew;
 And in her cheekes the vermeill red did shew
 Like roses in a bed of lillies shed,
 The which ambrosiall odours from them threw,

And gazers sense with double pleasure fed,

Hable to heale the sicke, and to reuiue the ded. (3.22)

Belphoebe is more than the symbol of health because she has the sacred power to heal sick persons and to revive the dead.

Like her, Alma is a maiden whose shining beauty, refinement and chastity are beyond comparison. She lives away from the influence of lust, 'Cupid's wanton rage' (9.18). Her castle allegorizes the human body, and this is the so-called allegorical core of this Book of Temperance. It is besieged by an enemy led by Maleger, another agent of Acrasia, who offers a great contrast to Alma. Maleger is a pallid monster resembling a sick person whose body is reduced to skin and bones, and the etymology of his name, 'mal = evil + aeger = sick, sorrowful, pensif, or heave,' shows what he is. He shares an imbalance of humour with Acrasia, and is as deadly a foe to Guyon as Acrasia is.

But the most explicitly expressed agent of Acrasia is Phaedria. As the origin of her name, 'φαιδρος = glittering, cheerful', suggests,⁶ she is merry, wanton and lascivious. She shares such attributes with her mistress, and proclaims her relation with Acrasia. She seduces Cymochles, as is shown before, with her allurements on his way to inflicting vengeance, and interferes with him in achieving that purpose. Asked of her name by Cymochles,

Vaine man (said she) that wouldest be reckoned

A stranger in thy home, and ignoraunt

Of *Phaedria* (for so my name is red)

Of *Phaedria*, thine owne fellow seruaunt;

For thou to serue *Acrasia* thy selfe doest vaunt. (6.9)

She has the power to 'quench his flamed mind/ With one sweet drop of sensuall delight' (8), and lured Cymochles to lie down on a bed of grass under a tree.

And her sweet selfe without dread, or disdaine,

She set beside, laying his head disarm'd

In her loose lap, it softly to sustaine,

Where soone he slumbred, fearing not be harm'd,

The whiles with a loud lay she thus him sweetly charm'd. (6.14)

The pose she adopts with the knight is quite similar to the picture of Acrasia and Verdant after their love-making in the Bower of Bliss in the last canto. She lives on a floating island, which shows her inconstant and fickle nature. As is also surmised from the fact that she again tries to tempt Guyon on his voyage to the island of Acrasia, she acts as a vanguard to defend her mistress

Acrasia.

III

Guyon's voyage across the ocean seeking Acrasia reminds us of a long tradition of European literature originating with the *Odyssey*. Guyon crosses the sea with the Palmer and an oarsman. They continue their voyage encountering, and narrowly escaping, many dangers, of which the whirlpool and the shoal owe much to Homer. Spenser may have invented the sea monsters and ominous seabirds which are the vanguards to protect Acrasia from her enemies.⁷

The earthly paradise or blessed island beyond the sea is an old motif in literature, and the underworld which Odysseus visits in the *Odyssey* is one of its variants. The navigation of Carlo and Ubaldo in Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* did not influence that of Guyon. The voyage the two knights make is not dangerous at all, and rather gives the poet an occasion for depicting some places along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Bower of Bliss which is much influenced by Tasso's garden of Armida is the earthly paradise, but it is not a real paradise, but a false one. The idea of Nature versus Art, which plays an important part in this canto, also derives from Tasso, as is clear if we compare the following two passages.

And that, which all faire workes doth most aggrace,
 The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place. (12.58)
 e quel che 'l bello e 'l caro accresce a l' opre,
 l' arte, che tutto fa, nulla si scopre. (*Gerusalemme lib.*, 16.9)⁸

It has been argued that Spenser only imitated Tasso ('seppe copiare il suo modello'). Today, however, it is generally acknowledged that there is some originality in these passages which were once thought to be a mere literal translation.¹⁰

The Bower of Bliss is a beautiful garden where everything is made to please our senses, an artificially wrought snare which the witch has set. There the charming power makes our reason numb and enslaved. It is a far more dangerous trap than the others she set, as Spenser forewarned at an earlier stage.

A harder lesson, to learne Continence
 In ioyous pleasure, then in grieuous paine:
 For sweetnesse doth allure the weaker sence
 So strongly, that vneathes it can refraine
 From that, which feeble nature couets faine. (6.1)

The Bower, in comparison with the garden of Armida, has a far weaker physical defence against enemies. The palace of Armida is on the top of a high mountain whose sides are covered with snow and ice, and on the way to it are placed a boa, a lion and a host of savage beasts. The palace itself is built as a labyrinth, hard for enemies to find their way inside.

In Spenser, the Bower is surrounded with a double fence, but it is easy to get over.

Yet was the fence thereof but weake and thin;
Nought feard their force, that fortilage to win,
But wisdomes powre, and temperaunces might,
By which the mightiest things efforced bin:
And eke the gate was wrought of substaunce light,
Rather for pleasure, then for battery or fight. (12.43)

The purpose of the fence is rather to keep the charmed slaves within than to keep off violent enemies away. It actualizes the poet's moral that everyone falls easily into a snare Acrasia sets and cannot escape from it. We are reminded of the text, 'Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction.' (Matt., 7.13)

Acrasia's temptation works on our senses. The seduction into pleasure is, as is seen in the first stanza quoted from the sixth canto, more fatal than an attack made upon us by violence. Human beings, allured to sensual pleasure, tend to abandon themselves to lust. Such abandonment results in the loss of reason and ultimately in frenzy.

The first gate the hero must enter is made of ivory, with which we associate the ivory gate sending false dreams in *Aeneid*.¹¹ Upon the ivory door of the Bower is inscribed the tale of Media, which allegorizes the madness into which Love leads men and the danger and devilishness of women. This forecasts the seriousness of the danger which Acrasia's allurements entails. Here at the ivory gate Guyon is offered a bowl of wine by 'Pleasures porter' (12.48) falsely called Genius the god of reproduction, but he hurls it down on the ground.

There is one more gate set by Acrasia for degrading on-coming enemies. They have to get through the second gate where they are again given a cup of wine by a comely dame 'Clad in faire weeds, but fowle disordered, / And garments loose, that seemed vnmeet for womanhed.' (55) The knight throws away the offered cup again and goes his way. Had he accepted either enticement, he would have lost his reason and fallen a victim to Acrasia.

The crisis erupts when the knight encounters two naked girls bathing in the fountain. This episode is also modelled on *Gerusalemme liberata*. In the fountain, the girls, while bathing, wrestle and play wantonly. Guyon almost succumbs to the formidable agents whom Acrasia places in front

of him. This suggests that the force of temptation which the knight finally must face will be redoubtable. The two girls reveal their naked bodies, one of them, seeing Guyon, 'her two lilly paps aloft displayd, / And all, that might his melting hart entise / To her delights, she vnto him bewrayd' and 'The rest hid vnderneath, him more desirous made.' (66) The girls, glad of the knight's response, continue their endeavour to seduce him, showing off their charm coquettishly.

Now when they spide the knight to slacke his pace,
Them to behold, and in his sparkling face
The secret signes of kindled lust appeare,
Their wanton meriments they did encrease,
And to him beckned, to approach more neare,

And shewd him many sights, that courage cold could reare. (12.68)

Acrasia's stratagem almost succeeds, but the Palmer saves the hero from this predicament. Caviled at by the Palmer, Guyon regains reason and they proceed on.

Approaching the Bower of Bliss, they hear a beautiful harmonious sound, which consists of the songs of birds, human voices, the sounds of musical instruments, winds, and the falling of water. This strange harmony, like the voice of Sirens, appeals to the sense of hearing. It entices hearers into losing their reason.

After that enchanting melody, Guyon and the Palmer hear the song of someone, the theme of which is the so-called 'carpe diem'. It recommends that we should enjoy present moment as time, and our life, passes so quickly. It is thought to be a direct translation from the song a bird sings in Tasso.¹²

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
Ne more doth flourish after first decay,
That earst was sought to decke both bed and bowre,
Of many a Ladie, and many a Paramowre:
Gather therefore the Rose, whilst yet is prime,
For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:
Gather the Rose of love, whilst yet is time,

Whilst louing thou mayst loued be with equall crime. (12.75)

This song not only charms the auditory sense. It carries conviction because the first two lines present an aspect of the reality of human life, a truth that time passes quickly and our life is only ephemeral.

When the song is over, Acrasia's natural shape is finally revealed before us.

There, whence that Musick seemed heard to bee,
Was the faire Witch her selfe now solacing,
With a new Louer, whom through sorcerie
And witchcraft, she from farre did thither bring:
There she had him now layd a slombering,
In secret shade, after long wanton ioyes:
Whilst round about them pleasauntly did sing
Many faire Ladies, and lasciuious boyes,
That euer mixt their song with light licentious toyes.

And all that while, right ouer him she hong,
With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,
As seeking medicine, whence she was stong,
Or greedily depasturing delight:
And oft inclining downe with kisses light,
For feare of waking him, his lips bedewd,
And through his humid eyes did sucke his spright,
Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;

Wherewith she sighed soft, as if his case she rewd. (12.72-73)

For the first time in the story, her figure is clearly visualized, even though her features are less particularized than are Alcina's in *Orlando furioso*. But the description here, together with that made four stanzas later, is concise. One of the supposed sources in Italian romantic epics is more expatiated. In contrast to the brief physical description of Acrasia by Spenser, Ariosto spends over five stanzas on her features. So, before considering the image of Acrasia, let us compare the minute description of Alcina's physical features.

She is beautiful just as the sun is more beautiful than any star ('sì come è bello il sol piu d'ogni stella', 7.10). Her hair shines like pure gold, her cheeks are as if they were roses and white magnolias, her forehead ivory. This detailed depiction extends to her brows, eyes, nose, mouth, dimples, lips, neck, breasts, and nipples. The delineation culminates in the following passage.

Mostran le braccia sua misura giusta;
e la candida man spesso si vede
lunghezza alquanto e di larghezza angusta,

dove ne nodo appar, ne vena escede.
 Si vede al fin de la persona augusta
 il breve, asciuto e ritondetto piede.
 Gli angelici sembianti nati in cielo
 non si ponno celar sotto alcun velo. (7.15)¹³

(Her arms show just proportion; and the white hand is often revealed, which is a little long and slender, where a knot does not appear, nor a vein comes out. At the end of the dignified body is seen the short, thin, slender foot. The angelic features born in the heaven cannot be hidden under any veil.)

Everything belonging to her is enchantment, whether she speaks or laughs or sings, whether she only takes one step. As compared with this detailed description of Alcina, the delineation of Acrasia is short and succinct. The poet's concern seems to be rather for the moral nuances the situation of the lovers implies.

It is apparent from those two stanzas quoted from *The Faerie Queene* that Acrasia is not a mere witch but a vampire or succubus who sucks away the spirits of men.¹⁴ In the earlier part of the story the emasculating power of Acrasia is mentioned without any support from vivid imagery ('that with vaine delightes, / And idle pleasures in her *Bowre of Blisse,* / Does charme her louers, and the feeble sprightes / Can call out of the bodies of fraile wightes', 5.27). Now the clearer vision of her as a vampire is given in an impressive picture. Her pose hanging over a young knight called Verdant after exhausting him from the act of love is the same as that of Venus leaning over Adonis in the tapestry hanging in the hall of Malecasta.¹⁵ This picture of Acrasia reclining over the victim emanates the atmosphere of danger in the relation between man and woman, and the impotency of the sleeping Verdant suggests 'a symbolic regression into womb-like intimacy or maternal domination as the means through which castration becomes rebirth'.¹⁶ This effeminizing acts to bring the state of castration to the young knight.

Two more stanzas after the inserted 'carpe diem' song further detail the portrayal of Acrasia displaying her feminine charms.

Vpon a bed of Roses she was layd,
 As faint through heat, or dight to pleasant sin,
 And was arayd, or rather disarayd,
 All in a vele of silke and siluer thin,
 That hid no whit her alablaster skin,
 But rather shewd more white, if more might bee:

More subtle web Arachne can not spin,
Nor the fine nets, which oft we wouen see
Of scorched deaw, do not in th'aire more lightly flee.

Her snowy brest was bare to readie spoyle
Of hungry eies, which n'ote therewith be fild,
And yet through languour of her late sweet toyle,
Few drops, more cleare then Nectar, forth distild,
That like pure Orient perles adowne it trild,
And her faire eyes sweet smyling in delight,
Moystened their fierie beames, with which she thrild
Fraile harts, yet quenched not; like starry light

Which sparckling on the silent waues, does seeme more bright. (12.77-78)

Our sense of sight is struck by the state of Acrasia lying on a bed of roses and showing off her voluptuous beauty. The colour of roses and their fragrance are harmoniously fused into a magical charm. The pose of Acrasia has a positive ruling force over Verdant. The young knight is, as we have already seen, effeminated, castrated by the witch. The image of a spider's web makes us associate Acrasia with a spider. In Spenser the images of a spider or a web always diffuse an ominous atmosphere. Here the image enhances the devilishness of Acrasia.

The afore-mentioned castle of Alma constitutes the allegorical core of the Second Book. The guided tour of the two knights around the inside of the castle is an anatomical study of the human body. The Renaissance Period was an age in which concern for the anatomy of the human body was increasing, and the groundwork of modern anatomy was laid. The period can be called 'the age of dissection'.¹⁷ Looking upon Elizabethan literature from such a point of view brings to our mind a passage in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, where some parts of Venus' body are likened to a deer park.¹⁸ Such a comparison of the female body to a garden is very popular in Renaissance poetry.¹⁹ We also remember a stanza about the garden of Adonis in the Third Book of *The Faerie Queene* itself. The garden of Adonis is one that symbolizes the principle of life ubiquitous in this world, and the following stanza represents a certain part of the female body.²⁰

Right in the midst of that Paradise,
There stood a stately Mount, on whose round top
A gloomy groue of mirtle trees did rise,
Whose shadie boughes sharpe steele did neuer lop,

Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop,
 But like a girlond compassed the hight,
 And from their fruitfull sides sweet gum did drop,
 That all the ground with precious deaw bedight,
 Threw forth most dainty odours, & most sweet delight. (3.6.43)

In terms of such dissection of the human body, we can recognize a reference to the female body in the Bower of Bliss. The Bower, in the words of Waller, 'lies, allegorically, between woman's legs'.²¹ The inquiring journey of Guyon and Arthur through the castle of Alma is a questing trip into 'the uncanny' interior of the human body. Likewise, Guyon seeking Acrasia further and further within the inmost part of the Bower is an explorer of the interior of the human body. The sinister charm of this vampish sorceress allures us into a nightmarish experience from which it is difficult for sensual men to escape.

Guyon and the Palmer stalk Acrasia and throw a net, which captures her so quickly as there should be no moment for Guyon to fix his eyes on the charms of the treacherous witch. The capture of the lovers with a net is a parody of an episode in the *Odyssey* where Venus and Mars are caught with a net by Vulcan on the spot of making love.²² This net immediately reminds us of the thin cloth Acrasia is wearing. Readers may associate her with Venus. After capturing Acrasia, the Palmer restores the beasts into the human forms. This also derives from the episode of Circe in the *Odyssey*.²³ Again appears the impression that the image of Circe fundamentally contributes to the making of Acrasia.

IV

What has been so far observed reveals that the method which Spenser adopts in creating Acrasia is much complicated. In the core of her image is a moral idea, incontinence, which is opposed to that of the hero in this Book. That core is surrounded with a traditional image of a wicked witch. On that image is overlaid the figure of sinister enticing sorceresses of the Italian romantic epics. With the development of the story of Guyon's quest, her agents whom Guyon encounters and conquers gradually modify the figure of Acrasia, hinting at various aspects of her evil. In the last stage of her presentation, the image of the succubus is made explicit concretely. This method of overlaying resembles that of montage. The original vaguely painted image of a witch gradually becomes sharper as we are given a new information about her and are forced to modify our ideas of her. We are, as it were, thrown into a state of expectation as to what she really is until we come to the final stage of the story. Spenser's method is similar to another aspect of his style,

that of introducing a new allegorical figure without revealing his or her name for a long time, thus compelling our interest.

Sir Kenelm Digby once said of the allegory of Spenser that 'although the beginning of his Allegory or mysticall sense, may be obscure, yet in the processe of it, he doth himself declare his own conceptions in such sort as they are obvious to any ordinary capacitie.'²⁴ That is the same method he adopts in creating the image of Acrasia in the Second Book of *The Faerie Queene*. Spenser arouses and maintains our interest in the antagonist by adding details, moral or physical, one by one as his tale develops.

Notes

- 1 A. C. Hamilton, ed., *Spenser: The Faerie Queene* (London, 1987), p.294.
- 2 Edwin Greenlaw, Charles G. Osgood, Frederick M. Padelford, et al, eds., *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition* (Baltimore, 1961), 2, p.420.
- 3 The text of *The Faerie Queene* cited in this thesis is: J. C. Smith, ed., *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1909).
- 4 Hamilton, *ibid.*, p.195.
- 5 *ibid.*, p.276.
- 6 *ibid.*, p.215.
- 7 B. Nellist, 'The Allegory of Guyon's Voyage: An Interpretation' (A.C. Hamilton, ed., *Essential Articles for the Study of Edmund Spenser*, Hamden, Conn., 1972).
- 8 Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata*, a cura di Lanfranco Caretti (Torino, 1993).
- 9 Alberto Castelli. v. Robert M. Durling, 'The Bower of Bliss and Armida's Palace' (Hamilton, *ibid.*, 1972, p.113).
- 10 Durling, *ibid.*
- 11 Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.893-6.
- 12 Hamilton, *ibid.*, 1987, p.295.
- 13 Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, a cura di Cesare Segre (Milano, 1990), 1, p.129. Translations mine.
- 14 Sheila T. Cavanagh, *Wanton Eyes and Chaste Desires: Female Sexuality in The Faerie Queene* (Bloomington, 1994), pp.47-51.
- 15 3.1.36.
- 16 David Lee Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies: The Poetics of the 1590 Faerie Queene* (Princeton, N. J., 1988), p.114.

- 17 Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London, 1995).
- 18 *Venus and Adonis*, ll.229-40.
- 19 John Roe, ed., *William Shakespeare: The Poems* (Cambridge, 1992), p.91.
- 20 Alastair Fowler, *Spenser and the Numbers of Time* (London, 1964), p.137.
- 21 Gary Waller, *Edmund Spenser: A Literary Life* (London, 1994), p.122.
- 22 Homer, *Odyssey*, 8.276-81.
- 23 Homer, *ibid.*, 10. 238-42. V. Douglas Brooks-Davies, *Spenser's Faerie Queene: A Critical Commentary on Books I and II* (Manchester, 1977), p.196.
- 24 *Variorum*, 2, p.472.