Ground-plots of Invention: Poetics of the Material and Difficult Thinking in *The Faerie Queene*

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A garden does not have to represent change because, by its very nature, it changes according to the time of day, the season and weather [….] Art, placed outdoors, is exposed to the action of wind and rain, altered by sunlight [….] The garden is a privileged genre in the Renaissance because it is the ultimate expression […] of the principle of the mobile work of art. (Michel Jeanneret)

Gardens of early modern poetry are inevitable repetitions of that first garden, Eden. Their belated manifestations might be wistful, hubristic, joyful, desperate, deceiving, or a mixture of all or any as the case may be. A. B. Giamatti argued decades ago that the garden’s simulacral status, ever potentially false, allows it to represent—and in the case of Spenser, resolve—“the conflicting forces” that underlie poets’ works.[[1]](#endnote-1) Yet, as this essay’s epigraph suggests, gardens rarely represent with fidelity or fixity. The art of the garden, produced and situated outdoors, both suffers and exhibits change, and so provokes recognition of the persistent interaction between art and nature, the conceptual and material, the universal and contingent. Gardens are concerned, consequently, not merely with the legitimacy of representation, but moreover with its production and operation; with the work of invention, which includes the experience of reading them.

*The Faerie Queene*’s gardens function as explicit moving images, the centers of their Books and the problems they pose, and allow Spenser to test the process and ambitions of his art. They are at once peripheral narrative episodes and densely self-reflective scenes of *poiesis*. [[2]](#endnote-2) This certainly makes them sites of conflicting forces, but also makes the issue of resolution, or synthesis, much knottier than Giamatti allowed. His emphasis on resolution follows C. S. Lewis, whose fine judgment—that Spenser’s “clashing antitheses […] meet and resolve themselves into higher unities”—is rooted in eighteenth century readings, an heir of the Kantian revolution and movement towards transcendental idealism.[[3]](#endnote-3) Yet the idea of resolution is much older than this, and crucial to my discussion because it is how allegorical poetry, and specifically, Spenserian allegory, is seen to operate. Resolution points to reduction: formally, the ascendance of an abstraction over a poetic image, and metaphysically and epistemologically, the ascendance of the immutable order of ideas and intellect over the mutable order of things and matter. Theorists of allegory and readers of Spenser variously emphasize the triumphant violence of allegorical capture, or the poem’s sporadic escape from allegory in moments of ordinariness or pleasure: a perfectly totalitarian system or a system in erratic self-combat, cosmos or teetering chaos.[[4]](#endnote-4) More precisely, Spenser’s perceived commitment to Platonic metaphysics and abstract thought has suggested a movement away from embodied experience towards transcendent forms. Scholars analyzing Spenser’s Platonism tend to neglect that Plato’s dialogues (e.g. *Parmenides*, even *Phaedo*) increasingly admit the reciprocity of the One and the Many, the contradictory coreliance of universal and particular, i.e. a Spenserian commitment to Platonic metaphysics is unavoidably a commitment to the material.[[5]](#endnote-5) Critics frequently describe the conceptual necessity that haunts action in *The Faerie Queene*, which, with its drive toward abstraction, ‘[subordinates] consciousness to essence, persons to personification’.[[6]](#endnote-6) As Jeff Dolven once put it, the poem’s “characters are concepts”, and must be reducible to “emblematic fixity”.[[7]](#endnote-7) In brief, Spenser criticism is preoccupied with outlining rigid concepts or systems, and including to a greater or lesser extent the exclusions—suppressions, concealments, assimilations—upon which these depend. Spenserian allegory thus becomes the resolution of narrative poetry into abstraction; critics differ on the scope and success of such resolutions, and on the moral, socipolitical, ecological and theological implications, if any, of narrative waste (that which fails to be resolved).

Conviction in the pre-eminence of allegoric resolution, both “unyielding” and “unifying”, is appealing and not unwarranted. Tasso, a vital precedent for Spenser, warned poets against troubling the relation between image, or “outwardly” manifestations, and universal truth for fear that it would leave readers uncertain of their moral obligations. He recommended that readers’ minds be drawn directly up to poetry’s “example”, so that their intellect might replicate the “patterns” they encounter—courage, temperance, prudence—within themselves.[[8]](#endnote-8) Poets are to prescribe, not probe, and readers are to learn through direct imitation and habituation rather than trial. As Tasso implied, understanding allegory as the conversion of narrative into abstraction is pedagogically useful—predictable and reproducible. Yet, years ago, Walter Stephens showed significant ways in which *Gerusalemme Liberata* is irreconcilable to Tasso’s declared intentions for it, including of being read for “pattern” alone. More recently, Sarah van der Laan demonstrates how romance is made a constitutive part of Tasso’s heroic poetry, a “building block of epic.”[[9]](#endnote-9) Tasso’s prescriptions are impossible to trace in his own art without considerable costs.

As Spenser studies has shown, however, the costs of allegory—narrative particularities, semantic rivalries, experience—can be variously accommodated by systemic explanations, precisely because they are produced by the imagined system itself. For example, *The Faerie Queene* as an imperfect system striving for ideal unity, absorbing or expelling heterogeneous particulars; or, as a system in moral confusion, “pathologically self-conscious” about its violence, dwelling on its “failure to sustain the hierarchies” that it produces, and offering some kind of auto-critique; or, most disturbingly, a poem so “in favour of system” that, rather than mystifying its workings, invites us to acknowledge its foundational and operative violence and assent to its terms anyway.[[10]](#endnote-10) These interpretive visions are distinct, but share a basic understanding of our task: to complete the poem’s system, to make it cohere. Allegory conceived of oppositionally—as a perverse ideal system periodically suppressing the material particulars on which it depends—has rich implications for analyzing oppression within and beyond *The Faerie Queene.* Socially constructed concepts such as race and gender, disposed into specious hierarchies and falsely presented as universal, are applied with violence to people; (deceptively) metaphysical cruelty thus shapes and inheres in history and allegory becomes akin to something like gender- and race-making. This valuable mode of critique informs my account.[[11]](#endnote-11)

Yet I propose a different way of thinking with and against the poem, one that foregrounds not the simple opposition or domination of narrative matter by abstract idea, but the reciprocal interplay between these poles. While this dynamic and mutually constitutive process is frequently put to hostile use—contradiction presented under the falseaspect of unity, for example—it is not *inherently* violent. To recognize that the relation between extremes is not inherently violent is to see that it might be turned to other ends, to counter-totalities. This isn’t a glib invocation of domination as a forebear of justice, but an attempt to assert the worth of thinking within and through the limits of allegory, which is capable of inciting more than classificatory and reificatory thought. What is usually described as allegory’s violence is the forgetting or feigning of the material moment of production in a concept—the elision of its relations of production. Yet it is possible, as T. W. Adorno advanced, to attempt to retrieve the experience that a concept supresses, and so to construct a moving concept, one that is both critical and speculative. This is to say: to attempt a kind of thinking that resists a too thoroughgoing subsumption of its objects, that shows howit fails to exhaust them, *and* that reimagines its objects under different conditions.[[12]](#endnote-12) I do not suggest, therefore, that Spenserian allegory is against the notion of systematicity in general, so much as suggesting that it does not immovably express a particular kind. Critical perceptions of ordinariness and pleasure, in other words, are not just accidental or illicit irruptions, but a proper part of the potentiality of Spenserian allegory. Spectral possibility cleaves to every ruthless poetic unity; every lure to resolve one way expresses besides another. To stay with contradiction and attendant possibility—and to build with it—is as much a part of the work of interpretation as is the drive to presumed coherence founded on assumed intention; the structures of allegory are provisional, entangled with the activity of thinking.

I pay close attention in this essay to three gardens—the temple of Venus, the Bower of Bliss and the garden of Adonis—that hover between example and experience. Spenser’s preferred noun, “ensample,” indicates this doubleness in evoking both “pattern,” and a piece of the “particular,” abstract *and* concrete. In referring to his art as a “*continued* Allegory, or *darke* conceit” (Letter to Raleigh), Spenser suggests that his poetry isn’t fixed or reducible to a specific system. (Allegory is by usual definition continuous, and the continued continuity is already surprising, hinting at an unresolved dialectic.). As Contemplation pronounces, “So darke are earthly thinges compard to things diuine” (*FQ* I.x.67); the modifiers—“darke,” “earthly”—suggest a version of Spenserian allegory that is mobile and material, that cannot shed or surpass its constitutive “darkness,” even as its darkness cannot stand without the thought of “things divine.”[[13]](#endnote-13) I do not wish, in arguing for Spenser’s poetics of the material, to suggest that we can dispose of abstraction altogether, or that we should read literally. To do so would adhere to the narrowly conceived Platonic model of idea vs. matter, or worse, the topographical model of surface vs. depth. I attend instead to the material of the poem—which necessarily includes the experience of reading it—of which abstraction is a part. Rather than resolving image into abstraction or erecting static concepts above narrative (and assuming that these are the poem’s aims and our duty), we might loosen, unpick and interpret the abstractions we encounter or infer, and analyze what their sedimentations disclose. This may sound frustrating in comparison to the methods outlined above, precisely because it isn’t reproducible in the same way. It does not advocate a substitution of concepts and thinking with narrative and experience, but aims instead to attend to the ways in which concept and experience are mutually ensnared. My analysis is informed by Adorno’s materialism, including such key ideas as immanent critique, the entanglement of thought and experience, the propensity of desmystificatory modes of thought to revert in turn to a kind of mystification, and the consequent priority of facing—and thinking through—rather than effacing, contradictions that cannot be eliminated.[[14]](#endnote-14) In my account of Spenser’s gardens, *The Faerie* *Queene* reveals that a mode of thinking that divorces itself from experience in order to control it detrimentally affects thought, no less than experience, because it tends to generate unanimity alone, and with ease. This, according to the poem, can be spiritually dangerous.

Jeanneret’s description of Renaissance gardens with which I began should now take on a new force. Gardens experience and express change which makes them especially vivid instances of the poem’s mediated material and its persistent return to the question of how noumenal traces might be felt in the world. The three gardens invite comparison because they are neither undifferentiated parts of the narrative, nor isolated as discrete allegories. They are more usefully thought of as sites of poetic invention and occasions for readerly invention, for readers within and of the poem. The gardens cue too many clashes of thought and judgment between characters, place and readers to be conceived of as perfectly systemic, although they critique and recover abstraction as a possibility. I should note that the gardens as I analyze them are out of order as they appear: Books IV, II and III. This is in the service of argument: the first two examples have more in common—we experience them with other characters—while the third, the garden of Adonis, is quite different. I show how episodes IV and II offer subtle critiques of martial abstraction (presenting alternatives *via* negation), whereas III is especially difficult, nonhuman and unique in positively exhibiting a materialist model of thinking. As it is neither my intention to offer a lens that can be applied indifferently across the poem, nor to produce a chronological reading, it isn’t a problem that the garden of Adonis is situated between the gardens of Acrasia and Venus. It doesn’t convince me of linear progression—that Spenser developed II into III in 1590, and reverted to IV in 1596—as all three remain in the 1596 version, and poem is irreducible to part. I prefer to see the garden of Adonis as the perplexing center of *The Faerie Queene*, which offers an aporetic way of thinking rather than an invariant method of reading.

This essay proceeds in four parts. In the first, I discuss two separate but synchronous meanings of the concept of “invention” at play in the sixteenth century. The two senses are significant because they reveal a broad cultural concern with, and dispute over, the relationship between intellect and world in poetic thinking and making at the level of a single word. In parts two and three, I analyze the gardens of Venus and Acrasia, respectively, and show that they variously critique practices of thinking as falsely resolving abstraction. The first links thought’s complacency to the evasion of feeling; the second shows the furtive affinity between thought and feeling that attempt to refuse the other. The poem exhibits, therefore, equal alarm towards the temptation to *transcendence* as the temptation to *sensuality*, which Spenser has more often been seen to warn us against. My analyses should make us rethink both Spenser’s investment in abstract thought, and the assumed link between abstract thought and didactic clarity. In the final part, I turn to the garden of Adonis, which expresses a distinctive sort of thinking in the form of material “inclination.” Startlingly resistant to being made an object of knowledge, but equally irreducible to feeling, it is both about and a case of uniquely Spenserian *poiesis*, better illuminated by Aristotle’s concept of ῥοπή, or inclination, than the typically acknowledged Lucretian *clinamen*.[[15]](#endnote-15) In *The Faerie Queene*, “inclination” is challenging: a nonhuman instance and an avowedly contradictory, *moving* concept that makes visible the limits and potentials of conceptual thinking. In this particular vegetal capacity and stance, I argue, Spenser gives us an unexpected mood or spirit in which to think and read. I use “spirit,” distinct from “method,” because it partially describes “inclination”: that is, the movement of creation to its proper place, its coincidence with creating Spirit.

**I. Two Senses of Invention**

Roland Greene writes that at the beginning of the early modern period, as the classical concept of invention is revitalized and reinterpreted, “the principle of reality against which human capacity asserts itself is matter, or the raw things or facts of the world.”[[16]](#endnote-16) In 1553, for example, Thomas Wilson notes that the first thing for an orator to consider is “the findyng out of apte matter, called otherwise Invencion.”[[17]](#endnote-17) Wilson’s description draws on Cicero’s treatment of invention, which, as Greene observes, is “fundamentally materialist,” and begins at the relation between *materia* and *inventio*: “In his art there is, first, *materia* or matter […] [R]hetoric takes place in an ontological setting conditioned by an existing matter.”[[18]](#endnote-18) On the one hand, invention as a stage in rhetorical procedure shapes the sense of invention as “discovery” —Wilson’s “findyng out”—which suggests a model of making (thinking, reading, writing) that prioritizes and is guided by matter. On the other hand, in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, invention also begins to become a metonym for “human capacities,” mind-centered, rather than matter-centered, and a purposive act of creation that controls matter.[[19]](#endnote-19) This new sense of invention posits, in turn, a new model of making that subordinates matter to mind, and more specifically, to instrumental reason. Rather than matter shaping invention, invention masters, distorts and discards matter. It is obviously not that one sense of invention simply comes to replace the other; rather, both exist in tension with one another, each implying a different relation between subject and world. In its centering of the human as desiring control and producing order, the emergent second sense is especially compatible with usual definitions of allegory as abstract capture. Ontologically, it asserts an autonomous subject, and epistemologically, a closed system of meaning. Hence, Angus Fletcher’s dictum that allegories are the natural mirrors of ideology, most recently reiterated by Gordon Teskey, who argues that Spenserian allegory calls us “away from the immediate, material world” into the realm of “pure ideas and thought.”[[20]](#endnote-20)

Sixteenth-century accounts of *poiesis* were more suggestive than definitive, however, tricky to categorize as one style of invention or the other. Take those of Philip Sidney and Tasso, who use garden-making as a fundamental metaphor. (The boundaries are blurred already: we might plant and clip a garden, but must be guided by season, sunlight, species’ needs.) Sidney’s poet-gardener is one who works “hand in hand with nature,” forming verse out of her fallen, “brazen” stuff, but alsoone that “freely rang[es] only within the zodiac of his own wit”. His bold claim that “poets *only* deliver a golden [world],” like and unlike nature’s world of brass, emphasizes invention that is restorative, or newly creative in aspiration. He believes, optimistically, that certain forms of “erected wit” “maketh us know what perfection is,” although we are obstructed by our “infected will”. Nevertheless, Sidney’s claim that the poet is not “tied’” to the “subjection” of nature, but “lifted up with the vigour of his own invention [to] grow in effect another nature” is a radical one that speaks to the newer, dominant sense of *inventio*, even as it acknowledges the matter that precedes it.[[21]](#endnote-21) In comparison, Tasso’s “great poet” appears to offer a counterpoint in proceeding by analogy, composing poetry that “resembles the plan of the universe”:

[T]he world that contains so many diverse things in its womb is one, and one the bond that links its many parts and ties them together in discordant concord…just so, I judge the great poet (who is called divine for no other reason than that he resembles the supreme Artificer in his workings as he comes to participate in his divinity) can form a poem…as in a little world.[[22]](#endnote-22)

*Poiesis* guided by the world sounds a lot like the older kind of *inventio*, conditioned by existing *materia*. Yet note the emphasis on the universe’s “plan”: the assurance in concord is unexplained. Tasso’s call for the imitation of this order might be matter driven, but the initial *production* of order—in the appraisal of the universe—suggests the rule of human mind. In brief, Tasso’s mode of making is “findying out”, or revelatory, if this is what the world is like but, if not, it is projective.[[23]](#endnote-23)

What constitutes invention? Are both accounts driven by the human mind? But just as Sidney and Tasso veer away from the world and towards the creating individual, they coincide in another critical turn. Tasso parenthetically justifies why poets are “called divine”: “for no other reason than that he resembles the supreme Artificer in his workings as he comes to participate in his divinity.” Sidney, too, prays that it not “be deemed too saucy a comparison to balance the highest point of man's wit with the efficacy of nature; but rather give right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker…when *with the force of a divine breath he bringeth things forth* [in poetry].” The poet’s erected wit, which seemed to have been lifted far above nature is, at its best, participant in nature’s efficacy, in divine spirit. Moreover, Sidney reminds us that poetic invention belongs to both writers and readers of verse, those “imaginative ground-plots.”[[24]](#endnote-24) A ground-plot is itself a telling term for verse, signalling both a plot of ground—the material—and an ordering plan—the metaphysical. Although their accounts differ in many respects, both Sidney and Tasso imply that thinking and making are not encompassed by the intellect alone: they are not self-identical. If they claim to be, invention risks the vital encounter with nature and Spirit.

In the October Eclogue of *The Shepherdes Calender* (1579), E. K. describes poetry thus: “so worthy and commendable an arte: Or rather no arte, but a divine gift and heavenly instinct not to bee gotten by laboure and learning, but adorned with both: and poured into the witte by a certaine *ἐνθουσιασμòς*, and celestiall inspiration.”[[25]](#endnote-25) His account of *poiesis* decenters the subject. It joins artistic inspiration to divine breath, and is conceived, through *metanoia*, not as skill or design, but a celestial-material (“poured into”) gift that mingles with one’s “witte.” It is tough to reconcile E. K.’s account of poetry with allegory that reliably reproduces ideology. Ross Lerner perceptively links the *Calender’s* description of *enthusiasmos* to the self-annihilation of fanaticism.[[26]](#endnote-26) Yet, for my purposes, the “Argument” describes not the total emptying of the subject, but invention’s double nature (inward skill, outward gift) and consequent unpredictability. This is the ingenuity of Spenser’s garden of Adonis, the difficulty of thinking when thought is neither abandoned to environment and experience, nor entirely removed from and in control of them. By first attending to the epistemological ventures of Scudamour and Guyon, I offer new readings of Venus’ Garden and the Bower of Bliss that clarify the extraordinary third.

**II. Resolution: The Temple of Venus**

We first meet the knight Scudamour in Book III, having failed to rescue Amoret from torture at the hands of Busirane. The flashback to their initial meeting in Book IV, then, should provide a bit of amorous relief; Scudamour’s account, however, is framed more as martial victory than falling in love (*FQ* IV.i.2.4-7; IV.x.arg). His name, “shield of love,” evokes many possible relations between love and war, but his recollection prioritizes a defense against erotic experience. Scudamour values the *telos* of conquest over the *aporia* of desire, and this hierarchy governs his mode of thinking. That a martial framework defines his every encounter is reinforced through his peculiar representation as a knight who never removes his armor, including when asleep (IV.v.39). Scudamour’s tale nods at first to the day he “learned to haue loued,” but is swiftly redefined as an “aduenture” and “brave [chivalric] emprise” (IV.x.1-5). He abstracts from the garden a unified vision of *Concord*, and subsumes, with slick ease, the garden’s strange delights—including the wonder of falling in love—into a dreary totality of his own. His interpretive conquests result not in the happy state of rest he seeks, but in frustration and trial.

Spenser’s paradises have long captured readers in their abundance, but Venus’ garden is thin.

For all that nature by her mother wit

Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,

Was there, and all that nature did omit,

Art playing second natures part, supplyed it. (IV.x.21.6-9)

Scudamour’s description is ghosted by Sidney’s text, almost rehearsed in its resemblance to the familiar poet-gardener, who “goeth hand in hand with nature” *and* grows “in effect another nature”. “Nature” and her “wit” are hewn from “earth” and “substance,” form from matter. “Nature” and “Art” are as sisters, working in concert and imbued with creative intelligence; Art is Nature’s understudy and her supplement. The account, however, is framed by Scudamour relating the vision according to his “simple doome,” or judgment, which suggests that the “wit” he attributes to “Nature” and the accord he lends art are in fact his own (IV.x.21.3). He glances at the garden’s allure, claiming that anything one might wish for there was, “and did fraile sense entice” (22.8-9). And yet he names enticement without any sense of having been enticed. His gestures to totality are laughably breezy: ‘all that’ recurs ten times across fifty stanzas. We do not see him in a “creeping slomber,” like Cymochles in the Bower, nor “creeping” toward a sudden release of wrath, like Guyon (II.v.30; II.xii.76). He is moved, instead, to evaluate:

In such luxurious plentie of all pleasure,  
It seem'd a second paradise to ghesse,  
So lauishly enricht with natures threasure,  
That if the happie soules, which doe possesse  
Th'Elysian fields, and liue in lasting blesse,  
Should happen this with liuing eye to see,  
They soone would loath their lesser happinesse,  
And wish to life return'd againe to bee,  
That in this ioyous place they mote haue ioyance free.

Fresh shadowes, fit to shroud from sunny ray;  
Faire lawnds, to take the sunne in season dew;  
Sweet springs, in which a thousand Nymphs did play;  
Soft rombling brookes, that gentle slomber drew;  
High reared mounts, the lands about to vew;  
Low looking dales, disloignd from common gaze;  
Delightfull bowres, to solace louers trew;  
False Labyrinthes, fond runners eyes to daze;  
All which by nature made did nature selfe amaze. (IV.x.23-24)

The garden is a glorious iteration of Eden, a “second paradise”, reinforced by Scudamour’s claim that the souls of Elysium would wish to live again to there dwell (though readers of the *Odyssey* might notice that this isn’t a high bar). The first stanza is tautological, repeating the ideas of “plenty” and “all”, “life”, “liue” and “liuing”, “happie”, “happinesse” and “blesse”, and collapsing into an alexandrine that laboriously links “joyous place” with joyful inhabitants. The succeeding stanza, too, has no effect in particular on the speaker, but is delightfully paratactic, filled with loosely pastoral tropes that recall both the pagan Happy Garden and the Earthly Paradise.[[27]](#endnote-27) Scudamour, in brief, appears to recount some sort of conventional literary experience in lieu of his own. The penultimate lines juxtapose nature and art and their respective effects, consolation and confusion, but the chiasmic conclusion resolves them almost instantly; Nature’s reign, previously implied, is now established. Indeed, the “false labyrinth” is re-formed and reflected within Nature’s punning “amazement”, extracted from Art and placed within her ambit.

The radical agency that Sidney attributed to art is ironed out as art is pressed into equivalence with nature. Despite the stanza’s sense of an ending, Scudamour’s sense impressions do not correspond to his conclusions. His privileging of common literary experience over other perceptual directions enacts what Dolven identifies as the principle of familiarity in *example* as a pedagogical tool. The most effective examples, he writes, following Puttenham, “will therefore be the most familiar, the subjects of the greatest cultural consensus; they will function best as evidence if they are self-evident.”[[28]](#endnote-28) Scudamour’s mode of reading draws on the humanist fondness for example; it bends toward maxim, chiefly to the order of *Concord* as the natural explanation and end. Put differently, he is the Erasmian, school-boyish “busy bee”, flitting through the wide “garden of literature,” but reducing every flower to a cup of *identical* nectar, “concord.”[[29]](#endnote-29) And yet, despite all the trappings of example, the speaker’s account remains unconvincing. It exposes, instead, the agenda driving this interpretation—which is repackaged as a universal perspective—and intimates the perils of such reading.

Scudamour’s craving for accord is glimpsed early on in his reaction to the pairs of friends at play in the garden, far more personal than his account of place. In explicitly contrasting himself, “that neuer tasted blis,” to the “endlesse happinesse” of the pairs, the knight admits to the “enuye” that moves him (IV.x.28). Thus, as he hurriedly affixes explanatory principles to all he encounters, he prepares both himself and readers to readily “discover” a diffuse sense of *concordia* *discors*, which he declares unequivocally in the stanzas that follow: “*Concord* she cleeped was in common reed” (IV.x.34.1). Scudamour’s method of invention is now aligned with Tasso’s revelatory model, the “discovery” of the single bond that binds the world. In revealing the tenacious self-interest of his reading, however, the episode suggests that Scudamour’s approach is more accurately understood as projection that, suppressing its own production, masquerades as discovery. Spenser thereby engages and critiques Tasso’s elliptical, analogical account of *poiesis*: he cautions against contented claims to numinous clarity—to thought’s complacent agreement with itself—especially in relation to justifying one’s actions. Scudamour’s insistence on concord allows him to naturalize (just as “art” is naturalized) his chivalric desire for victory. It enables him to establish that “it fitteth best, / For *Cupids* man with *Venus* mayd to hold” (54.6-7). More poignantly, it allows him to lay claim to the “sweet rest and quiet” that concord is said to give, and so evade further epistemological labour (34.9). Yet Belphoebe’s critique of courtly bliss in Book II provides a cautionary reminder that “[w]here ease abounds, yt’s eath to doe amis; / But he who his limbs with labours, *and his mind / Behaves with cares*, cannot so easie mis” (II.iii.40). *The Faerie Queene* requires repeated and communal toil, as Scudamour’s frequent need of aid reiterates; although his vision of Venus’ garden neatly places his seizure of Amoret within the broader paradigm of concord, he is not awarded the rest that would suggest that he has read aright. His commitment to this model of invention facilitates the avoidance of interpretive *impasse*.

When confronted with the veiled statue of Venus, Scudamour handily descries “amiable grace” and favorable laughter, despite Amoret’s disquieting pleas for release (IV.x.56). On observing that all about the Goddess’ “necke and shoulders flew / A flocke of litle loues,” Scudamour concludes that “*Cupid* their eldest brother” is away, enjoying his kingdom “with Lordly sway” (42). This is certainly *one* sort of “Cupid”, and one that licenses Scudamour’s own sense of mastery, being “Cupid’s man”. But the Proem to this Legend affords another instance of Cupid as Venus’ “dearling doue” (Pro.5.2), while Book II reminds us of “*Cupido* on *Idaean* hill”, sans bow, at play (II.viii.6); in the Mutabilitie cantos, personified “Life” itself—a lusty boy bedecked with flowers—is compared to *Dan Cupid* (7.7.46): perhaps there is something of Cupid in those fluttering amoretti about Venus’ neck that Scudamour simply does not see. He pauses neither over her mysterious veil, nor the serpent at her feet, but declares that the “cause” was “hard to know” (41.2). The shrugging reference to etiology confirms that dismissal stands in for the difficulty of thinking. We might remember that Homer has the same verb μναομαι for “to have fully in mind,” “to turn one’s attention to” and “to woo.” Both knowing and wooing involve movements from known to unknown, actual to possible, that are incompatible with Scudamour’s craving for knowledgeas acquired and unchanging. His disinterest in *knowing* has implications for him as a thinker and lover.

At the exact moment at which he beholds Amoret, his “hart gan throb”, comically, “in doubt, what best were to be donne” (53.1-2). His response is construed not as *admiratio* or *paradoxon*, the “wonder” of falling in love, but *aporia*—Puttenham’s Doubter—which Scudamour promptly subjects to the chivalric code and snuffs out: “Tho shaking off all doubt[…]Which Ladies love I heard had never wonne / Mongst men of worth” (53.6-8). The specificity and involuntariness of erotic *mania*—a heaven-sent blessing, according to Plato’s Socrates—is eluded, as Scudamour’s will takes center stage.[[30]](#endnote-30) His reaction, throbbing doubt, recalls the shuddering (*ephrize*) of Socrates’ picture of erotic madness before it is quashed. This response does not display a victory of thinking over feeling so much as the avoidance of both. In Gilles Deleuze’s account, Glaucon, in Book 7 of Plato’s *Republic*, asks, implicitly, whether “we truly think” only when “we do not recognize”. Plato suggests that real thinking is forced out of an encounter with unrecognition, an affective disturbance or sensory conflict that makes powerless our usual habits of recalling and conceiving.[[31]](#endnote-31) The garden of Venus provides an occasion for Scudamour to be stalled by experience, forced to think rather than instantly taxonomize—an occasion he sidesteps.

Puttenham explains that the Doubter is very like the Wonderer, which is to say that when Scudamour casts off doubt, the possibility of being transformed by love goes right along with it.[[32]](#endnote-32) Think of Arthur, “ravished with delight” at the sight of Gloriana, or Artegall’s passion “fierce” in Britomart’s presence (I.ix.14.6; IV.vi.33.8). Scudamour’s singleness of purpose and perspective indicates the extent to which he controls a moment that should be textured by the difficulty of experience. His will to know evinces the newer sense of invention as imposition on the world, although he presents it as a revelatory. His use of unifying reason lends the impression of mastery, but his swift abstraction, or drawing away (*abstrahere*) from the garden’s particularities is the easy way out. Spenser is notoriously mistrustful of rest born of ease, and narratively speaking, Scudamour’s thinking is falsified. The cares and ambivalences evaded in Venus’ paradise return to plague him and his beloved. In his resolve to classify within the conceit of *Concord*, to say what something falls under, rather than what it might be, Scudamour insulates himself from erotic and divine inspiration. The mode of abstraction regarded by this knight as epistemological gain is revealed by Venus’ garden to be manifold loss.

**III. Refusal: The Bower of Bliss**

The Bower of Bliss, abode of the enchantress Acrasia (*akrasia*), shows even more so than the temple of Venus that it exceeds the diagnoses of the poem’s titular knights. Approaching *The Faerie Queene* as prompting multiple interpretive possibilities, rather than reifying it as an image of thought, helps us see the insufficiency of explaining it according to individual characters. Book II’s infamous end has the knight of Temperance destroy its *locus amoenus* in the name of virtue. The episode is known for its piercing depiction of erotic excess to which Spenserian “hard” temperance is “inimical.”[[33]](#endnote-33) Lewis maintained that this garden showed “the whole sexual nature in disease”, while Durling countered that it is man’s “entire soul—reason, spirit, and appetite”, that is infected.[[34]](#endnote-34) The Bower, in other words, presents a temptation to sensuality that Guyon and his accompanying Palmer rightly raze. I show, in contrast, that for a garden allegedly mired in the material world, the Bower betrays a pronounced discomfort with defining attributes of the material: time and mutability. In the attempt to deny these forces, the Bower reverts, frantic and etiolated, to the metaphysical. Conversely, in abandoning himself to annihilating his opposite, Guyon’s abstract order of Temperance lapses into the material. I demonstrate, therefore, that Guyon’s model of temperance *shares* a thirst for invulnerable fixity with the very place he seeks to obliterate; this clandestine affinity has passed unnoticed in criticism.

As is well known, Spenser imitates Tasso’s account of Armida’s palace in the *Liberata* (xv-xvi), a crucial difference being that the Bower emerges almost entirely from the perspectives of Guyon and the Palmer.[[35]](#endnote-35) Moreover, Acrasia’s space, unlike Armida’s, seems virtually defenseless. The gates “euer open stood to all,” the fence is “weake and thin,” and the porter, false *Genius*, is said to hold a staff for “more formalitee” (II.xii.46.2, 43.4, 48.9). And yet, we are led to believe that it must be able to enclose and exclude because it is said to hold “unruly beasts…without,” and “entred guests to keepe within” (43.2-3). The collective noun “guests” is peculiar, as if the Bower’s visitors are required to suffer its hospitality and couldn’t possibly be anything other than agreeable. It is also a highly selective garden, a place “*pickt out by choice* of best alyve,” in which “the Heauens *always Ioviall*” look on continually; it admits no “scorching heat, nor cold intemperate / T’afflict the creatures, which therein did dwell” (51; emphasis added). On the one hand, place is agential, caring for its parts; on the other, the heavens’ inertial happiness is somewhat sinister. The pun on “still”—both “continually” and “immobile”—and repeated negative constructions impart an air of stagnation. The “sweet spirit and holesom smell” in stanza 51’s final line trails into stanza 52’s opening, “More sweet and holesom,” which is unusual in Spenser’s poetry. The concatenation and the recurrence of “sweet” some twenty times in the canto is overpowering, sickly. Rest is induced through repetition, and the cloying, unchanging clime.

As with the garden of Venus, the Bower, too, is compared to Eden. The opening lines of stanzas 50 and 53, between which this comparison lies, reiterate that this is Guyon’s point of view (“they behold”; “Much wondred Guyon”). “Or” is used anaphorically to assert the Bower’s superiority to five *loci amoeni*, the final example being “*Eden* selfe, if ought with *Eden* mote compayre” (52.9). Crucially, each of the examples, barring Parnassus, comes to know sin and death. Yet as Donne’s “Twickenham Garden” memorably reminds us, the authenticating mark of paradise after Eden is loss: “And that this place may thoroughly be thought / True Paradise, I have the serpent brought” (8-9). The more we are assured of its sweet stasis, the more dubious the Bower grows. The concluding, correcting conditional*,* “if ought with *Eden*”, betrays a surge of guilt about blaspheming; unlike Scudamour’s hesitant mood, Guyon is convinced both of his comparison and its illegitimacy. Following the self-emendation, he responds:

Much wondred *Guyon* at the fayre aspect

Of that sweet place, yet suffred no delight

To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect,

But passed forth […]

Brydling his will and maystering his might: (xii.53.1-5).

Guyon actively avoids being affected, although his initial wonder suggests that he can be. The verb “suffred” confirms that he does not “allow” delight to transform him, but it also connotes “to endure,” or “submit,” as if presented with a trial he rebuffs. His hostile reaction seems the result of his comparison of the garden to Eden. As Book II’s Proem promises, the “great rule” of Temperance “appears” in this knight. But Spenserian allegory, attuned as it is to semblances, cannot but be aware that the appearance of temperance is not necessarily equal to temperance.[[36]](#endnote-36) The Bower of Bliss, “poured forth with plentifull dispence,” is cast into direct conflict with Guyon, staging an ambivalent struggle between what Sidney might have named the “erected wit” of the garden and the will of its visitor. On first entrance, the narrator reveals that “nought feard [the Bower] force […] But wisdoms power, and temperaunces might” (43.5-6). The deliberate contrast between “force”, and “power” and “might,” suggests that the latter terms *do not* refer to physical violence. This makes Guyon’s brutal manifestation of temperance all the more unsettling – we are told, early on, that it doesn’t bother this garden.

Guyon’s vengeful detachment is striking. The Bower, above all in its intricate pentatonic symphony (II.xii.70-1), exemplifies Sidneyan *poiesis*; both draw, in their delightful generativity, on Neoplatonic accounts of the operations of music and magic.[[37]](#endnote-37) Marsilio Ficino, for example, claimed that music “floods us with a wonderful pleasure: by its nature, both spiritual and material, it at once seizes, and claims as its own, man in entirety.” Music and poetry are not distilled into matter and spirit, but strike “the junction of the soul and body” and affect heart and mind: they work through the mutual dependency of cogitation and feeling.[[38]](#endnote-38) Yet while Sidney supposed that poetry’s transformative powers could function without consent, unmoved Guyon implies that Spenserian verse requires receptivity. And as Guyon “[masters] his might,” he is not merely insulated from but viciously opposed to the stirring forces at work around him. That is, he will attempt to destroy them. The point here is less to do with the Bower’s moral orientation, than it is to recognize that its capacity to move depends on the willingness of its visitors. Guyon’s mounting hostilities suggest that he is unlikely to be affected by any environment at all.

*The Faerie Queene* registers the possibility of the impervious reader, those who cannot “in their frosen hearts feele kindly flame” (IV.Proem), readers upon whom the poem’s power depends. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates describes nonlovers as people who are masters of themselves; Guyon, knight of Temperance and “maydenhead,” exemplifies this stance (II.ii.42.4). But Socrates denies that this kind of control is either desirable or possible: the affection of the nonlover mixed with “mortal prudence [or self control]” (σωφροσύνῃ θνητῇ, *sōphrosynēi thnētēi*) follows miserly rules of conduct and begets a “narrowness” commonly praised as “virtue.” *Sophrosyne* becomes *castitas* and *temperentia* in Latin; Guyon’s self-mastery, his eagerness to transcend his environment (“Now gins this goodly frame of Temperance / Fairely to rise”), is subject to just this critique (II.xii.1.1-2). Socrates’ radical counsel is that you keep to yourself, preserve the sovereignty of mind, at the cost of keeping out the gods.[[39]](#endnote-39) Just so, in suggesting that poetry’s efficacy requires a corresponding receptivity from readers, Spenser presents us with a kind of poetic Arminianism. To be vulnerable to the Bower’s delectations, to experience, is of greater importance than invulnerability in the name of virtue. This is not to say that the Bower is secretly virtuous or has access to privileged meaning. Indeed, the garden and Guyon mutually expose one another’s deficiencies and erupt in a violent close. As critics acknowledge, this canto’s power is premised upon Guyon’s demolition distressing us, less a singular act than a series of attacks, from the garden’s porter to the comely dame (Excesse) to its individual structures and designs. His interpretive response feels jarringly different from ours; but this affective disjunction conceals a *critical affinity* between Temperance’s knight and the garden itself, most perceptible in the “louely lay.”

Spenser’s song presents the topos *carpe florem* with greater urgency than its original in the *Liberata*. It seeks to suspend time, in concert with the “always *Joviall*” heavens and the all-pervasive “sweetness.” Yet, while the garden’s lack of seasonal change is given, the lay charges us to act, to seize and eternize the present:

Ah see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee

Doth first peepe forth with bashfull modestee,

That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may;

Lo see soone after, how more bold and free

Her bared bosome she doth broad display;

Loe see soone after, how she fades, and falles away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,

Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,

Ne more doth flourish after first decay…

Gather therefore the Rose, whilest yet is prime,

For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:

Gather the Rose of love, whilest yet is time,

Whilest louing thou mayst loued be with equall crime. (xii.74-75)

Contra Tasso, Spenser’s song is endued with (and aware of) sinfulness, clinched by the notorious alexandrine. The Rose’s prime corresponds not to peeping bud, nor the falling bloom of the hexameter, but the “bold and free,” display of the present moment. The injunction to gather strives to squeeze out both naissance and decay, as if one might evade mutability, and so mortality. The pun on “deflower” asks that we pluck the Rose ourselves, before time does, as if this will prevent it from fading, resting unnaturally in a present that parodies divine time. The concluding line is glaringly different from its source. Here are Tasso’s and Edward Fairfax’s versions: “*amiamo or quando* / *esser si puote riamato amando*,” and “Louing, be lou’d; embrasing, be embras’d.”[[40]](#endnote-40) Esolen’s modern translation offers “and love while you yourself can be loved too” (XVI.15.8). With bitter clarity, Spenser turns Tasso’s mutual love into “equall crime”, recasting the first clause as a stagnant, perpetual play of sinfulness. In *The Faerie Queene*,in which the love-wound is generative and the love-quest potentially redemptive, this is a chilling thought. The weight of these lines will haunt *Paradise Lost*, as Milton’s Eve endorses Adam’s decision to fall with spurious logic: “linked in love so dear,/ To undergo with me one guilt, one crime” (9.970-1).

The metaphor of time’s “Rose” deployed to reify the present congeals, appropriately, into “a bed of Roses” gathered upon which Acrasia is laid (77.1). As with Scudamour’s pervasive vision of concord, the Song of the Rose offers an epistemological consolation: the invocation of the present as the eternal, a falsely immediate golden world. Yet, as Milton’s “On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity” reminds us, “this must not yet be so”: there is no easy recovery. The Bower’s song asks that we force an age of gold by fetishizing the present and neglecting the world; it is not transformative. We might wonder, too, why Spenser’s Bower seems convinced of the criminality of reciprocal love, particularly when Tasso had drawn an ethical lesson out of the same. This peculiar conviction appears to stem from an assumption about love’s alliance with fixity, and its irreconcilability to temporal change. The lay’s *pathos* derives from the confession of its motive anxiety and the exposure of its strategies. Yet it neither considers the gains of temporal loss, nor imagines that the meaning and value of the present might be contingent upon past and futurity.

In other words, the Bower’s problem has less to do with physicality *per se*, despite this being what its antagonists imply, and despite analogous protests from critics who find it too enmeshed in matter. The fact is, change is of the essence of the material, and the Bower’s distaste for change makes it *less* comfortable with the conditions of materiality. Flesh and matter are characterized by their capacity for change; change is fundamental to both fallen human life and its potential for redemption. Consequently, the Song of the Rose’s thirst for temporal fixity—a form of “rest” as illusory as Scudamour’s concord—directly parallels Temperance’s destructive reason. Both impulses crave mastery and stasis, the one directed at time and the other, matter. The complicity between opposites, temperate knight and wicked garden, explicitly recalls Adorno and Horkheimer’s account of the relation between enlightenment and myth. This isn’t a useless similitude—they trace their thesis back to Homer and begin with Francis Bacon:

[…] with every step enlightenment entangles itself more deeply in mythology. Receiving all its subject matter from myths, in order to destroy them, it falls as judge under the spell of myth. It seeks to escape the trial of fate…by itself exacting retribution on that trial.[[41]](#endnote-41)

Guyon is to the Bower as enlightenment is to mythology. In his remoteness, reification and judgment, Guyon falls under the Bower’s spell, reproducing its structures in his destruction. The enchanted garden presents Temperance’s trial, and the knight responds with spectacular abandon, exacting vengeance upon it. This is epitomized early on in his encounter with *Excesse*. What do we witness when he “violently” casts the cup from her “tender hond”, causing the liquor to “[stain] all the lond?” (xii.57.1-5): Excesse’s excess, or Temperance’s? Stephen Greenblatt’s claim, that Spenser secures the “self only through a restraint that involves the destruction of something intensely beautiful,” is only half-true.[[42]](#endnote-42) Greenblatt illuminates the contradictoriness of what he names “restraint,” not the management of will, but the enforcement of might. But the self is not secured; through the leveling rule of abstraction, it replicates the structures of the place it purports to raze. In its refusal to admit time, the Bower rejects what Jeanneret praised in the Renaissance garden—the expression of mobility. In its craving for fixity, it discloses the damage done by a specific kind of fearful desire.[[43]](#endnote-43) And in its rival, the knight of Temperance, it exposes the equal damage done by the stingy elusion of all desire, expressed as contempt for life. Guyon’s unreflective violence preserves the Bower’s fantasy of stasis and suppresses the relation between them. Indeed, this relation expands to include other martial protagonists—the knight of Justice, for example—who frighteningly asserts that ‘all change is perilous’ (V.ii.36) in his efforts to prevent an organized uprising and justify colonial violence.

In part one, I showed how Venus’ garden—through inassimilable elements that force unrecognition—hints at the ontological loss that accompanies the presumed gains of unbending abstraction, of Scudamour’s chivalric triumph. In this section, I illustrated how Book II’s final canto stages not so much a clash in thinking as a furtive kinship, which calls into question the eponymous knight’s manifestation of virtue. If militantly abstract epistemology—often associated with male knights—is both attended by ontological diminishment and tends to revert to precisely the sort of enchantment it abhors, we might now re-examine Spenser’s investment in this style of thought. It would be foolish to argue that he rejects it, given its profusion and exploited potential for ruthless efficiency at various points in the poem. And yet, in the gardens of Books II and IV, he subjects the method for which he is typically known to the possibility of serious and sustained critique that can only be shaped by attending to the poem’s material, including the possibilities awakened through our experience of reading it.

**IV. Inclination: The Garden(s) of Adonis**

In the preceding examples, the questing knights sought monologic visions of each garden, respectively resolving and rejecting particularities of experience. The gaps, collisions and collusions between the kinds of thought implied by character and place formed the basis of critique and permitted the imagining of better possibilities. My final example, the garden(s) of Adonis, announces itself to be different. Spenser evokes it on three occasions: in *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, in the myth of Promethean creation featuring the meeting of Elf and Fay (Book II), and in the argument of Book III, canto vi. The first two references describe it in the plural sense, whereas the intricate account in Book III is in the singular. The garden’s inconstant plurality might recall the cultic gardens of Adonis of antiquity, or might be the result of textual error. Nonetheless, the discontinuity accentuates its teeming variety and changefulness in terms of topography, philosophical implications and epistemological demands.

In Julian and Plato, the diminutive gardens of Adonis are associated with fragility and triviality: festive, commemorative, but fast-fading.[[44]](#endnote-44) They evoke the Bower’s song: Adonis, plucked in the bloom of his youth. Yet Spenser, in contrast to sources of antiquity, celebrates mutability and endeavours at more than some sort of literary legerdemain that achieves intransience by making Adonis, an exemplary figure of fruitlessness, its generative core. One can hardly refute the garden’s visionary quality, its sense of remoteness from the poem of which it forms a part. And yet it is more than a “desperately ingenious” attempt with which to accommodate the uncertainties of human life.[[45]](#endnote-45) It is not only an offer of consolation or aesthetic resolution—though it can certainly be taken as such—but also a provocation to think through the poem’s contradictions, to recognize its extremities as both distinct and mutually constitutive, to imagine possibilities of reconciliation that are not mere unification.

Drawing on Ernst Cassirer, Colin Burrow argues that the “original fictions” of canto vi—Chrysogonee’s conception and the garden of Adonis—assume the “recessed sanctity” of myth through their temporal relation to the main narrative.[[46]](#endnote-46) This rings true in the wake of the curtailed encounter between Timias and Belphoebe whom we leave behind. And yet these fictions differ. The golden-born fairy is so removed from the world as to conceive without pleasure and deliver without pain (III.vi.27), but “the Gardins of Adonis fraught / With pleasures manifold”, bears both (III.vi.arg). It manifests the seemingly inviolate stasis of myth as well as the weight and motions of time, both recessed and riven. “Fraught” is poised emphatically at the line’s end, relaying a sense of being “laden,” but agonizingly so, unstoppably replete with “pleasures manifold.” “Manifold” signifies the bounty of pleasures; belatedly, but illuminatingly, it comes to be the philosophical term for unorganized sensory particulars before they are unified by the mind’s synthetic activity.

The garden of Adonis exhibits a perspectival resistance that will not lend itself to a single explanatory fiction. It is irreducible to frozen *concept*, related etymologically to “conceit,” or a group of particulars in the grip of unity. And yet it remains densely conceptual. To emphasize its contradictoriness, Spenser does not provide a guest to perform unifying abstraction. The garden of Adonis, though “far renowned by fame,” defies being plotted, placed or classified, but is “wote by triall,” or experience (III.vi.29). It is Venus’ “ioyous Paradize” when she dwells on earth; it is “the first seminary / Of all things, that are borne to liue and dye”; it is Amoret’s nursery, and Cupid’s home. In Book II, it witnesses the creation of Elf and Fay: solitary Elf, “wandring through the world with weary feet,” finds and names Fay, “[o]f whom all *Faeryes* spring, and fetch their lignage right” (II.x.71). The coincidence of discovery and right naming, combined with the reference to both creatures as the first *authors* of elfin and women-kind, recall Adam and Eve. Indeed Elf’s footfalls look forward to—and are recollected in—Milton’s fallen couple, who “with wandring steps and slow” make their solitary way through Eden. The conspicuous absence of the Fall in the tale of Elf and Fay, however, casts the “gardins of Adonis” as postlapsarian. And yet, no sense of “equall crime” troubles this brief, originary fiction. The two are fallen; they fall in love; they found the fairy lineage that is the consummate Spenserian invention. Their acts of discovery and naming enact both senses of invention, old and new, to paradoxically find and create at once. It is important that the fairy union and legacy arise in this garden. It foregrounds the possibility that the garden’s resistance to reification, its want of imposition, its gathering of differences that are in suspended rather than hostile relation to one another are legitimate ways of reading the poem.

The garden is “sited…in fruitfull soyle of old,” both a creating seminary and the residuum of something still more primary (III.vi.31.1). It includes “[a]n huge eternal *Chaos*” that supplies life’s substance, but also “borrow[s] matter” out of it (36.8; 37.2). This is perhaps the most acute instance of self-reflective *poiesis* in *The Faerie Queene*; recalling Sidney and Tasso, Spenser’s verse partakes in nature’s creative forces of turning, troping, mutability. Consequently, destructive Time, the “troubler”, is necessarily the garden’s vital force. Although the gods, particularly “great mother Venus”, lament to see the place “mard, and spoiled” by temporal decay, they cannot “find redresse for such despight”; she, too, is one invention among many (40). The Garden of Adonis is obviously no less contrived than the Bower, or Temple of Venus. Each indexes Edenic aspirations. Yet rather than professing sweetness alone, it splinters into multiple narratives and enfolds multiple creative sources: natural “kinde”, chaotic stuff, *poiesis*, fiat and myth, contend and interweave while, at the same time, retaining distinction. They are coeval possibilities that are neither eliminated nor made identical. This is why the poet writes of the “long worke…. [h]ere to account the endlesse progeny” (30.7)—the difficulty is not merely to do with measure, but also with difference. The garden of Adonis demands more supple thinking; it both invites and foils the inflexibly abstract. Most remarkably, the relation between its divergent elements is not one of dominance. Erected wit proliferates in many directions and will and understanding are stalled from synthesizing; mind does not prevail over but must labour within poetry’s matter. This is uniquely Spenserian allegory, dark and continued: neither merely mimetic of immaterial Ideas and transcendent truth, nor necessarily a conduit to such truth. Luther’s charge, that allegory allows readers to “think that they are in the middle of Paradise and on God’s lap,” could not be less true of this avowedly fallen garden.[[47]](#endnote-47) The allure of the Garden of Adonis lies more in its provocations than its illusions, in its cues than its completions. It asks that we dispense with thought as acquisitive, with invention as mastery, and avoid the fastening of logical principles in the manner of the poem’s knights. It asks that we realize ways in which to engage with poetry that do not rest in unbending abstraction and the assumed exhaustion of the object. At its centre lies a distilled “ensample” of sorts.

The Garden of Adonis names this activity “inclination.” This term appears only twice in Spenser’s oeuvre, both instances in *The Faerie Queene*. The relevant senses of “inclination” relate to tendency or disposition, divided into “[t]he overall or innate disposition of a person or animal; nature, character,” and “a tendency to behave…in a particular way.”[[48]](#endnote-48) The second Spenserian occurrence, in the Legend of Courtesy with regards to its eponymous knight Calidore, is unimportant to my concerns. In brief, Calidore is (ironically) described as being “of courteous inclination” at the precise moment in which he deploys a calculated move designed to seduce Pastorella, dramatizing the divide between intent and expression.[[49]](#endnote-49) In contrast, Spenser’s first use of “inclination”, in the garden of Adonis, invokes the definition now said to be obsolete—the innate disposition of things. This sense, frequently attributed to the influence of planets and humours, draws on Aristotle’s use of the term as found in *De Caelo* and *Physics* (Gr. ῥοπή, “inclination”). Helen Lang defines it thus: “inclination is nothing other than an [intrinsic] ability to be moved toward, or to rest in its proper place: the nature of each element”.[[50]](#endnote-50) Before I consider the central stanza, let us briefly revisit the surrounding matter. While Calidore’s courteous inclination is an art of blandishment and judgment, the garden of Adonis is a repository of contradiction. It contains life that in itself “eternall moisture” does “imply”, but also chaos’ pit from which matter is fetched with violence (‘ketch’, ‘inuade’; III.vi.34, 37). It requires no “Gardiner to sett, or sow”, yet is marked by “wicked *Tyme*” who with his scythe seems much like a gardener (vi.34, 39). A reservoir of loss, it includes Time, is named after the lost lover of Venus, and preserves at its center flowers that were once sad lovers (vi.39; 45). Yet Time—the “great enemy”—is said to “spring” in the garden, as if to suggest some sympathy between the flora and its winged antagonist. The emphasis on loss intimates both desire and the hope for recovery, produced out of lack. “All that to come into the world,” the garden reveals, “desire”. The hyperbaton places the verb at the line’s end so as to suggest simultaneously that things desire to come into the world, and that things in the world are defined by desire (32.2). We learn, moreover, that “here all plenty, and all pleasure flowes, / And sweete loue gentle fitts emongst them throwes.” The absence of any subject in which to anchor pleasure and love suggest that they are material forces, irreducible to effects of creaturely activity. The garden’s vegetation, said to “remember well the mightie word,” first spoken by God, that “bad them to increase and multiply” (34.4-6), makes the flows and fits of love material manifestations of their remembrance.

The vision of life that knows loss and is moved by desire is central to the garden’s law, audaciously stated rather than proved, and describing something like the *conatus* of things: “All things decay in time, and to their end do draw”. In a typically Spenserian twist, “their end” might refer to the end of life, or to their final cause—but which first? The Bower’s wish to eternize the present longs for immutability, for rest. The garden of Adonis, in contrast, shows that attempting to dispatch time and decay would also dispense with desire, hope and creative possibility. At the core of the fallen paradise, we find arboreal “inclination,” presented as a kind of innate disposition and expressive of thinking that differs from the abstract impositions with which we’re familiar:

And in the thickest couert of that shade,

There was a pleasant Arber, not by art,

But of the trees owne inclination made,

Which knitting their rancke braunches part to part,

With wanton yuie twyne entrayld athwart,

And Eglantine, and Caprifole emong,

Fashiond aboue within their inmost part,

That nether Phoebus beams could through them throng,

Nor Aeolus sharp blast could worke them any wrong. (44)

The adjectives “rancke” and “wanton”, coupled with the verb “entrayle”, invoke a similar “arber” in the Bower of Bliss in which Cymochles sojourned. Here, too, they hazard lewdness, but fall short somehow of invoking it. The effect is something like the “mazy error” of rivers in Milton’s Eden, or Eve’s “wanton ringlets” waving (*PL* 4.239, 306). Critics observed decades ago that Milton’s use of language is recognizable as an attempt to recover something of an earlier innocence through the suggestion of specific meaning and unmeaning; error has yet to mean wrongdoing. In the fallen garden of Adonis, however, these words *have* accrued negative significations (not least *via* previous appearances in this very poem). Their presence here indicates risk and hope; thinking that is entangled with experience and desire, but aspiring, wishing for us to read the words differently. Unlike Scudamour’s dodging of erotic *aporia* in Venus’ garden, and Guyon’s destruction of every glimmer of desire within and outside of himself in the Bower—both of which facilitate their abstract thought—the garden of Adonis does not safeguard thinking from desire. The two are not identical but are implicated in one another.

The noun, “inclination,” expresses both the inward tug felt by the trees, *and* their outward, sloping form through which they intertwine to create the arbour. The description is inevitably anthropomorphic, and even once we accept the arboreal agency, the set of verbs attributed to the trees—“made,” “knitting,” “fashioned”—clearly suggests artifice. Once more, an appeal is made for us to think differently, to imagine “the trees owne inclination” as a simultaneous act of creation and recovery. The work of fashioning the arbour is also innate remembrance, related to the currents of love and pleasure in the garden, a material form of desire. The trees in the garden are subject and object, maker and material, and their making is both inborn and artificial. In Kantian terms, “inclination” comes to be understood as narrowly opposed to reason, and Spenser’s attention to vegetal, rather than rational life forms might seem suggestive. Andrew Wadoski pauses over the term, describing it as “the relaxing of the mindto natural instinct”, relating it to “images of *concordia discors*” such as those in Venus’ Temple. Spenser’s inclination, he writes, is “the feeling of something ancient and prior to anything we tangibly know about ourselves” that draws us to the locus of creation.[[51]](#endnote-51) Wadoski links his observations to Teskey’s subtle insights regarding thinking in *The Faerie Queene*, which use Heidegger’s language to explore how Spenser’s poetry encourages one to relax the mind away from itself.[[52]](#endnote-52) This deft connection, however, explains away contradictory difficulties.

If we emphasize the mind alone, we gloss over the presentation of inclination as a material quality; if we prioritise feeling, intuition and instinct, we ignore the carefully preserved language of artifice, of rational design. As I have shown, other images of *concordia*—e.g. Scudamour’s garden of Venus—can be only too human, congealed abstractions that forget or conceal their production. The arbour in the garden of Adonis is not an image of concord in the same way. It is a living constellation of contradiction—it exhibits natural impulse and artifice without either antagonism, disappearance, or reduction to equivalence. Indeed, the garden’s arbour might be distinguished from oft-compared, visionary moments, such as the sight of the graces on Mt. Acidale. The four dancers more ostensibly announce a glimpse of transcendence. They vanish instantly when Calidore “[resolves]…to know” what they are (VI.x.17-18), which is to say not just that they cannot be satisfactorily resolved, but also that their contradictory nature cannot survive *the attempt to be known at all*. In disappearing, they oppose themselves to being thought which makes them a pernicious species of mystification, more readily legible in Heidegger’s idiom. The garden and arbour, in contrast, are not presented as unthinkable, but difficult to think, and resist being exhaustively abstracted—*vanished*, in other words—precisely because they do not disperse their constitutive contradictions.

Spenser’s “inclination” has been termed “deeply orthodox”; I partly agree.[[53]](#endnote-53) The garden’s vegetation, as I’ve observed, remembers as innate desire the Creator’s injunction to increase and multiply. It is, therefore, likely that the specially marked arbour is likewise intelligible in material and theological terms. “Inclination” and its relation to the trees’ “inmost part” recalls the movement of elements described in *Physics*.[[54]](#endnote-54) In *Physics* II, Aristotle depicts the nature of each element to be unique, that is, it belongs to each element to be moved to its proper place.[[55]](#endnote-55)In the Mutabilitie cantos, Dame Nature echoes this sentiment more generally as she asserts that all things   
“[d]oe worke their owne perfection” (VII.vii.58.7.). Spenser suggests, through his use of “inclination” that as fire, by nature, is carried to the empyrean, and river to sea, so created life to creation repaired. It is not equivalent to memory, which is a mental faculty, but is more a kind of material attachment, at once belonging to creation and Creator. It is not explicable *via* Platonic *anamnesis* because it doesn’t represent an innate knowledge of transcendent Forms. It is not the same as Calvin’s conviction that there exists “some sense of Deity” within the mind, although his account of the “occasional renewal and enlargement” of sense-memory is suggestive.[[56]](#endnote-56) Augustine’s description of the “gravitation” of bodies to their “proper place” to convey the force of love in human beings, drawing on Aristotle’s physics, is more clarifying:

Under its own weight a body gravitates to its proper place; that gravitation is not always downward, but rather to that proper place. Fire’s natural path is upward, that of stone is downward… My love is my gravitational force; wherever I am carried, it is love that carries me.[[57]](#endnote-57)

The trees’ own inclination, as gravitation, is visible in their joint invention—the arbour—and unfolds the love of creation towards its maker, forming a unique structure that the pagan gods cannot penetrate (crucially, Phoebus and Aeolus rather than sunlight and wind, ideas, rather than forces). Inclination does not derive from the *clinamen*, or erratic atomic swerve *away*, of Lucretian materialism, but from participation in a force that is both of the trees, and not of them. In the Mutabilitie cantos, resplendent Nature appears on a pavilion formed by the earth, “of her owne motion”, and inclination reappears explicitly as thanksgiving and love: “trees; that… Did seeme to bow their blossoming heads full lowe” (vii.8.5-9).

But Aristotle and Augustine offer only partial illumination. Their accounts help more with the arbour’s “inward” tug of inclination, than with its “outward” slope, that product of “making” and “fashioning.” The trees’ “darke” materiality is iterated in their portrayal and in attendant vines and branches—“thickest covert,” “shade,” “inmost part”—but this densely material image is mediated by the conceit of the “arbour”. The conceit, emerging out of the garden’s materials like the unfinished statues of Michelangelo, lends new meaning to Spenser’s claim of “continued allegory”—a possible solidarity, a possible recognition of the contradictory implicatedness of matter and idea, sustained by the continual labour of thinking.[[58]](#endnote-58) In other words, the garden and its arbour are extraordinary not because they provide unmediated access to transcendence—gravitational certainty—but because they might not. The codependence of artifice and instinct, of invention and the discovery of Spirit, arbour and trees, concept and object, cannot be effaced. These contradictions, moreover, are not in a hostile encounter with one another or an abstracting subject. We, the readers, are stayed from falsely resolving the arbour in an imitation of the illusory rest achieved in the gardens of Venus and Acrasia. It does not afford us a portable method or tacit prescription, neither pure abstraction nor pure intuition; it is, instead, an uncertain, expectant, *kinetic* concept that exhibits its constitutive relations. The arbour conjures, for me, the promise of a mode of thought described by Adorno, that would “unseal the nonconceptual with concepts, without making it their equal.”[[59]](#endnote-59) More powerfully than E. K.’s riddling account of *poiesis* in *The Calender*, the arbour both instantiates and demands thinking that expresses its indebtedness to what is not thought, what is not purely human invention: both the world and Spirit. “Inclination” implies hope and desire, a leaning, but also affords a hovering quality, a kind of waiting. Inclination offers a bending concept, a recognition of the moment in thought at once natural and mediated. Transcendence is *appealed to* from within the world, but isn’t dogmatically or deceptively achieved because of the interplay between contradiction throughout and at the heart of the garden of Adonis.

This twofold emphasis is not orthodox, but potentially radical. The garden foregrounds thinking as movement, demanding work that does not come to rest in false unity, although it can appreciate moments of repose—as I endeavoured to show—in tarrying with each side. In Spenser abstraction is usually achieved through sacrifice: the forcible absorption, concealment, or shattering of contradiction, the particular for the general. As this essay discusses, and as critics have shown, the friction of martial abstraction in the poem points to *real* social and political injustice. Lerner observes that Artegall battles “vaguely Irish and Catholic and Spanish and Muslim enemies in a vaguely Irish landscape”: the knight seeks to dismantle their contradictory particularity and make them legible as unchanging foes, to subjugate them.[[60]](#endnote-60) That the contradictions which suffer violent resolution are consistently religiously, culturally and racially differentiated should not be glossed over. I neither wish to claim for Spenser progressiveness, nor to attribute to his poem a critique of colonialism and race-making. This would be to replace one world-picture with another. I have aimed, instead, to illuminate the turns of thought that might emerge from the poem’s gardens, rather than the reproducible methods of the poem’s knights. I hope, in so doing, to have demonstrated that *The Faerie Queene* affords serious possibilities for critique—and so, reconstitutions—of the abstract thought that undergirds its multiple forms of systemic brutality. In each part, I have read with and against the grain, unpacking the foliation of literal and figural. In the first two episodes, critiques of militant abstraction emerge through the dealings between place and character. In the final one, the perpetual thinking fired by persisting contradictions more explicitly announces that abstraction is neither the end, nor the pinnacle of thought. It foregrounds inclination as materialist thinking, invention that endeavours to show its indebtedness to, and implication in, what is other than itself, even as it exerts transformative power. The garden of Adonis, more so than its siblings and doubles, astonishingly reveals that Spenser’s “continued Allegory, or darke conceit” need not signify stale abstraction, mystification, or fixed systematicity. We can instead seek and produce the continued mediations of darkness and conceit, the ways in which they express and provoke difficult, dialectical, speculative thinking—“endlesse worke”—which both includes abstract thought and can be used to critique and reimagine it. This thinking, I suggest, is worth recovering.

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   A. B. Giamatti, *Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic* (Princeton, 1966), 6; 289 (on the garden’s reconciliatory function). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. See Kenneth Gross, “Green Thoughts in a Green Shade,” *Spenser Studies* 24 (2009), 355-72; A. M. Wadoski, *Spenser’s Gardens: Poetry, Fantasy, and Allegory*, Doctoral Dissertation (Rochester, 2008). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. This neo-Kantian tendency might be distinguished from readings of Kant that would appreciate the reluctance of resolution in his transcendental dialectic. C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in the Medieval Tradition* (Cambridge, 2013), 447. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. See Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca, 1964); Gordon Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca, 1996); Steven Knapp, *Personification and the Sublime: Milton to Coleridge* (Cambridge MA, 1985); Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York, 1984), 239-62; Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago, 2007); Joe Moshenska, “Why Can’t Spenserians Stop Talking About Hegel? A Response to Gordon Teskey,” *Spenser Review* 44 (2014); Kenneth Borris, *Visionary Spenser and the Poetics of Early Modern Platonism* (Oxford, 2017). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See T. W. Adorno, *Metaphysics*, tr. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge, 2000), 15-18. Kat Addis’s essay in this volume, ‘Slavery Logic’, sharply traces Platonic metaphysics’ exploitative dependence on the material in *FQ* VI. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Andrew Escobedo, “Daemon Lovers: Will, Personification, Character,” *Spenser Studies* 22(2007), 203-225 (208). See also *Spenser Studies* 24 on “Spenser and Platonism” (2009). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Dolven (2007), 139. Ross Lerner, “Allegorization and Racialization in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Spenser Studies* 35 (2020), 107-32 reanimates this view. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Torquato Tasso, “Allegory of the Poem” in *Jerusalem Delivered: Gerusalemme liberata*, tr. Anthony Esolen (Baltimore, 2000), 515-16 and *Discourses on the Heroic Poem*, tr. Mariella Cavalchini (Oxford, 1973), 171, 34-51. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Walter Stephens, “Metaphor, Sacrament, and the Problem of Allegory in *Gerusalemme Liberata*”, *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 4 (1991), 217-47; Sarah Van der Laan, “Songs of Experience: Confessions, Penitence, and the Value of Error in Tasso and Spenser”, *PMLA* 130 (2015), 252-68 (261). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. See David Lee Miller, *The Poem’s Two Bodies* (Princeton, 1988), Borris (2017); Dolven, “Panic’s Castle,” *Representations* 120.1 (2012), 1-16 (12);Lerner (2020), 123; Teskey, “Edmund Spenser meets Jacques Derrida: On the Travail of Systems,” *Spenser Review* 43.3.51 (2014). Teskey and Addis foreground mystification and exhibition respectively. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. See, for example, the excellent special issue of *Spenser Studies* on ‘Spenser and Race’ (2021) edited by Dennis Britton and Kimberly Anne Coles. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. See Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen(Cambridge MA, 1993), 123. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. *The Faerie Queene*, eds. A. C. Hamilton et al. (Harlow, 2007). All quotations from *FQ* refer to this edition. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Adorno’s *Negative Dialectics*, tr. E. B. Ashton (London, 1973) and Adorno and Horkheimer’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, tr. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, 2002) have been especially useful in thinking about Spenser*.* Rachel Eisendrath’s wonderful *Poetry in a World of Things* (Chicago, 2018) draws on Adorno’s aesthetics and includes a chapter on *ekphrasis* and objectivity in *TFQ.*III. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. See Anthony Esolen, “Spenserian Chaos: Lucretius in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Spenser Studies* 11 (1994), 31-52 on atomist sexuality; Jonathan Goldberg, *The Seeds of Things: Theorizing Sexuality and Materiality in Renaissance Representations* (New York, 2009), on Lucretian materialism in Spenser’s gardens; Brent Dawson, “The Life of the Mind: George Herbert, Early Modern Meditation, and Materialist Cognition,” *ELH* 86 (2019), 895-918 on *clinamen* as the source of thought. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Roland Greene, *Five Words: Critical Semantics in the Age of Shakespeare and Cervantes* (Chicago, 2013), 20-21. The equation of “things” and “facts” raise many intriguing questions that are beyond the scope of this discussion. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Thomas Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*, ed. T. J. Derrick (New York, 1982), 31. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Greene, 23; See Cicero, *De Inventione*, tr. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge MA, 1949), I.7. Unless otherwise noted, quotations from classical texts and translations correspond to *Loeb Classical Library* editions. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. See Greene, 26. Ascham, for example, is alert to the potentials of invention in reproducing religious and political hegemonies. See *English Work*s, ed. W. A. Wright (Cambridge, 1904), 249. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Fletcher (1964), 368; Teskey, *Spenserian Moments* (Cambridge MA, 2019), 177-8. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Philip Sidney, “The Defence of Poetry,” *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, eds. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford, 1973), 78-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Tasso, *Discourses*, 78. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Wadoski (2008) 3-5 reads these accounts as contrasting.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Sidney, 79, 103. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. *Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William A. Oram et al. (New Haven, 1989), 170. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Lerner, *Unknowing Fanaticism: Reformation Literatures of Self-Annihilation* (New York, 2019), 56-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. See Giamatti, 11-86, on “paradise.” [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Dolven (2007), 156, 148. See also Puttenham, 128-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. “De Copia,” *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 24, ed. C. R. Thompson (Toronto, 1978), 639. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. H. N. Fowler: 244A and 251A-C. My reading of this moment bears some resemblance to Escobedo’s in “The Sincerity of Rapture,” *Spenser Studies* 24(2009), 185-209, but our arguments differ: he seeks to establish a poetics of erotic rapture, while I trace the relation between thinking and feeling, neglected here to the detriment of both. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* tr. Paul Patton (New York, 1994), 138-141. See *Republic*, tr. C. J. Emlyn-Jones, 2 vols. II: vii.523C ff. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Puttenham, 311. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Joshua Scodel, *Excess and Mean in Early Modern Literature* (Princeton, 2002), 84. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Lewis (2013), 415; Robert M. Durling, “The Bower of Bliss and Armida’s Palace,” *Comparative Literature* 6.4 (1954), 335-47 (342). [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. See Durling, *passim* and Lewis (2013), 407. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Wadoski (2008) 134 affirms this distinction. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. See Sidney 92, 102, 120. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Ficino, *Opera Omnia* (Basileae, 1576), 1453, 651, quoted in and translated by D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (University Park, 2000), 9, 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. *Phaedrus*, 232A, 256E, 244A. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Fairfax, *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, ed. Kathleen M. Lea (Oxford, 1981). [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Adorno and Horkheimer, 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago, 1980), 175. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. In *Phaedrus* 240A, Socrates describes the harmful lover as one who would freeze the beloved in time. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. See “The Caesars,” *Julian*, tr. W. C. Wright, 3 vols. II: 329D; *Phaedrus*, 276B. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Colin Burrow, *Epic Romance: Homer to Milton* (Oxford, 1993), 280-1. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, tr. Ralph Manheim, 3 vols. (New Haven, 1955), II.105; Burrow, “Original Fictions: Metamorphoses in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Ovid Renewed*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge, 1988), 99-121, 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, 56 vols. (St. Louis, 1955–86), 5.347. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. See OED, s. v. ‘inclination’, n.1a and b. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. “Inclination” here exposes courtesy’s asymmetries, dependent less on the quality of behaviour than its reception. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Helen S. Lang, *The Order of Nature in Aristotle’s Physics* (Cambridge, 1998), 171. ῥοπή has also been translated as “impetus” and/or “tendency”; Lang argues that “inclination” is a more appropriate rendering to illuminate natural as opposed to violent motion. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Wadoski (2008), 155-6. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Gordon Teskey, “‘And therefore as a stranger give it welcome’: Courtesy and Thinking,” *Spenser Studies* 18 (2003), 343-59. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Wadoski, 156 reads it as anti-rational. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. The term also occurs 7 times in *De Caelo*, tr. W. K. C. Guthrie. See Book II: 1.284a25, 14.297a28, b7, 10, 14; Book III: 2.301a.22, 24, 6.305a25; Book IV: 1.307b33. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Aristotle, *Physics*, tr. Francis M. Cornford, 2 vols. I: ii.1.193b, ii.2.194b. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. See Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, tr. Henry Beveridge, 2 vols. (London, 1953), I:43, 48, 53 (1.3-5). Calvin’s “sense” of Deity or “memory” of his Godhead leads primarily to condemnation by one’s conscience if one does not “consecrate [one’s] life to his service.” [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Augustine, *Confessions*, tr. Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, 2 vols. II: xiii.9.10. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Jeanneret on the Sacro Bosco is suggestive: “archaic art still in symbiosis with nature…solidarity between man and stone.” *Perpetual Motion*, tr. Nidra Poller (Baltimore, 2001), 126. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Lerner (2020), 110. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)