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WROTH'S CLAUSE

BY COLLEEN RUTH ROSENFELD

I. "AND"

Finishing *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania* is a strange experience: "Pamphilia is the Queene of all content; Amphilanthus joying worthily in her; And [.]"¹ The most apparent source of this strangeness—because it introduces blank space rather than a continuative clause—is "the dangling 'And'" with which the volume ends.² Although incompleteness is not unfamiliar to the Sidney circle, the kind of work performed by this coordinating conjunction is unique. While the midsentence break of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* abandons its reader in the midst of a fight and suspends this reader at a moment in which historical mortality meets narrative danger, Lady Mary Wroth's "And" propels her narrative beyond the centripetal tension of its estranged central couple.³ Contentment achieved, we might expect—as Maureen Quilligan has observed—a period of silence to ensue.⁴ The 1621 Folio of the *Arcadia* (published the same year as *The First Part of the Urania*) tells us that "we must be content to suffer" Sidney's abbreviated sentence, the "unfortunate maim" of his midsentence break.⁵ It proceeds, however, by introducing William Alexander's bridge narrative, an attempt to suture that "maim" with words. Wroth's "And," her own exposed *articulus* or "joint," also renounces the silence of contentment.⁶

"And" exceeds the finality of the union between Pamphilia and Amphilanthus and is thus also familiar as a version of Spenserian endlessness. If multiple narrative threads push the union of Florimell and Marinell beyond the bounds of book 4 of the *Faerie Queene*, Wroth's multiplying narrative threads could exhaust themselves in this reunion.⁷ The narrative emphatically insists "now all is finished," but the succeeding clauses of "still continuing . . . pleasure" turn demonstrative closure into lingering and straggling extenuation (*U*, 661).⁸ At least one of *The First Part's* early readers, completing this final sentence by hand, detailing marriage and childbirth in just a few more, thought that Pamphilia's contentment was stronger than Wroth's syntactical addition.

“So my history has an End. Finis,” this version concludes.⁹ Wroth is not—as Spenser is—playing the part of self-conscious romance narrator keeping track of too many story lines. The kind of endlessness that the “dangling ‘And’” points to is stylistic—what the editors of *The Second Part* describe as Wroth’s “trailing sequence of full or partially reduced clauses strung together with coordinating conjunctions”—rather than narrative—the loose ends of plot.¹⁰ Wroth’s stylistic endlessness is, in fact, not only proleptic of the narratives of separation and estrangement that occupy *The Second Part*. Stylistic endlessness is also generative of plot. Wroth’s clausal style produces “And [.]” as an indication that, in spite of all professions of “nothing amisse” in an apparent kingdom of contentment, something is missing (*U*, 661).

Wroth’s “And” pulls together Sidneian incompleteness and Spenserian endlessness in a break that points to its own mending as superfluous continuation.¹¹ “And” also suggests that Wroth’s prose style exerts a kind of control over her narrative: “And” introduces yet another additive clause of the sort so characteristic of Wroth’s style and, in doing so, unravels narrative closure. Syntactically, as a coordinating conjunction, “And” does not indicate an adversative turn by the errant Amphilanthus—as we might expect from “But.” Nor does it—as “Although” would—anticipate a concessive exception to Pamphilia’s contentment. It is in this purely additive quality, the rejection of syntactical logic in favor of syntactically organized excess, that the proliferation of Wroth’s prose comes closest to Patricia Parker’s early description of “dilation” as an “expansion, or dispersal in space but also a postponement in time,” a kind of *copia* associated with both garrulity and female corporeality.¹² Parker’s account understands “dilation” as always “circumscribed finally by a *telos*,” an end that she characterizes as “mastery” and—in an image that couples narrative control with punctuation—the “point.”¹³ In addition to the finalizing revision of “So my history has an End. Finis,” Susan Light records two instances in which owners of Wroth’s romance either placed a “point” just before the “dangling ‘And’” or erased the “And,” inserting a “point” in its place.¹⁴ These points, though less obtrusive than the “*telos*” of marriage and progeny, perform the same kind of work at the level of syntax and are as much a response to Wroth’s style as to her narrative. These revisions perform the very circumscription associated with containing dilation.

Both Parker and Wroth’s earliest editors assume that, on a structural level, the sentence with its “point” is the primary unit of composition. This insistence on the inevitability of pointed closure mandates that Wroth’s “And” be erased, effaced, or retrospectively categorized as

someone else's "mistake."¹⁵ Thus, Josephine Roberts concludes that "And" is the accidental printing of a manuscript catchword in spite of the fact that Wroth's "corrected" copy of the 1621 edition does not exhibit the same inked revisions inscribed throughout.¹⁶ Wroth's printer appears to have been confused: the blank space closing the book remains, atypically, blank—without "The Ende," without "FINIS" or an ornament.¹⁷ Most of Wroth's scholars understand "And" as an homage to her uncle and yet this account equates imitation with fixed memorialization, foregoing the possibility that Wroth's "And" might transform (rather than simply iterate) incompleteness.¹⁸ Without denying the influence of Sidney's rupture, I would suggest that Wroth transforms this crisis of incompleteness into the climactic distillation of a prose style that both denies the period as its unit of construction and reimagines itself in terms of unsubordinated clauses always vulnerable to amputation. The "dangling 'And'" prioritizes the tenuousness of connective tissue over the periodic *telos*.

Parker's description of the "double movement" between "textual expansion" and "closure or point" enables something like a gendered version of subversion and containment, "an allowed expansion or proliferation of the alien, multiform, and multilingual in order finally to dramatize the very process of its containment."¹⁹ A dominant strain of Wroth criticism has proceeded from assumptions similar to Parker's: Wroth scholarship and its preoccupation with defining female subjectivity has tended to insist on a contained space as the necessary, if problematic, condition for female authorship in the seventeenth century.²⁰ This line of criticism often conflates Wroth with her central heroine, examining Pamphilia's cabinet, for example, as emblematic of "a contained woman writer" and her "contained subjectivity," female protection of private spaces as the patrolling of boundaries, the family (both within the fiction and the historical Sidneys) as a place in which "a female identity is speakable," and finally, the "discursive space" opened up by Wroth's notorious sexual transgressions.²¹ With respect to her style, Gavin Alexander similarly conflates endlessness with circularity and circumscription: he writes, "the structures of circular containment, of endlessness, which she imposes on her writings, are contrived, but they are not empty: they condition her writing, and make it possible."²² If we shift our evidence of style from a "core of images" to the texture of Wroth's prose, we will find that the stylistic impulse toward containment is only one of the spatial dynamics suggested by Wroth's clauses and it is one that consistently gives way to "And."²³

In fact, full end-stops—pointed circumscriptions—are not often meaningful measurements of Wroth's prose. The Newberry manuscript of *The Second Part* suggests that she rarely came to a full "point."²⁴ Wroth's dilation is not periodic; her primary unit of composition was the clause. George Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie*, includes the "clause" among his three units of auricular composition (along with the sentence and the word).²⁵ Among the figures associated with the clausal unit, Puttenham includes *aposiopesis*—"the figure of silence, or of interruption, indifferently" (A, 178)—suggesting that this figure and its clausal oriented companions lend beauty not only to "the whole body of a tale" but also "euery clause by it selfe" (A, 172).²⁶ The *Urania's* additive joints produce a primary sense of movement that hinges on the connectives between these clauses. Against the dominating impulse of these "trailing" clauses, Wroth supplies pairs of what her editors describe as "the two-member construct . . . local effects of correspondence and formal resposion that cross-cut and offset the asymmetry and potential amorphousness" of her additive clauses.²⁷ The "two-member constructs" create momentary suspension, clauses which temporarily look backward rather than forward, before another "and" draws the reader onward. Perhaps most familiar as the Gorgian schemes that underpin Isocratic structure and also come to be the defining—if overwhelming—characteristic of the Euphuistic mode, these constructs are grammatical structures and rhetorical figures that suggest the briefest balance in the midst of a seemingly endless succession of clauses.²⁸ These constructs are not so frequent that one would characterize Wroth's prose as "balanced." They remain, rather, a force that acts against the dominant mode of succession and responds to the potentially endless stream of individual clauses, and their individually coordinating connectives, by suggesting that, in the midst of this stream, two or three clauses contain an organizing principle different from those that surround them. Stylistically, Wroth's "dilation" does not culminate in a "point"; circumscription only emerges as a dialectic and these balancing boundaries—grammatical, rhetorical, temporal—are always permeable.

By arguing that Wroth worked with clauses, I am also suggesting that Wroth thought with clauses and, more importantly, that the *Urania* employs this central clausal tension toward "a mimesis of thinking."²⁹ Jeff Dolven has argued that Spenser's stanza functions as a tool by which the poet both thinks through and represents as thought the material of his poem. Dolven describes the two conventionally crucial moments of the Spenserian stanza—the medial couplet and the final

hexameter—as providing, respectively, an unfolding analogous to Ramus’s “dichotomizing analysis” and a sententious moment of “dialectical ratiocination”: “the Spenserian stanza might likewise be understood as an engine for deriving some kind of concrete result in the form of that sententious hexameter: for making, out of thinking, a thought.”³⁰ This is not, of course, to say that the stanza is a perfect engine. It provides, rather, a kind of formal drama in which thinking approaches thought, more or less uncomfortably. I would like to suggest that the central tension in Wroth’s clausal style—between an endless stream of loosely connected, independent clauses and the larger units—akin to classical *membra*—into which they sometimes organize themselves—restages this “contest . . . between thinking and thought.”³¹ We might clarify the function of the clause (as opposed to the stanza) in this contest by turning to the classic distinction between the Ciceronian period and the clausal brevity of its Attic descendants. Morris Croll’s early description of this difference is useful here: he writes that Stoic brevity “break[s] up the long musical periods of public discourse into short, incisive members, connected with each other by only the slightest of ligatures, each one carrying a stronger emphasis, conveying a sharper meaning than it would have if it were more strictly subordinated to the general effect of a whole period.”³² In his discussion of “Appropriateness,” Croll (via Justus Lipsius) distinguishes the clausal style “that portrays the process of acquiring the truth” from the periodic style that portrays “the secure possession of it.”³³ In Wroth’s staging of this contest, representations of thought give way rather quickly to their aggregative counterparts. If the Spenserian stanza always, finally, posits a thought, Wroth’s clauses always dispel that thought by breaking down the circumscription of its rhetorical boundaries and—even in the final moment of *The First Part*—Wroth’s clauses return to thinking.

In the *Urania*, this “mimesis of thinking” turns the central clausal tension of Wroth’s style into a figure for alternative shapes of mind posed by her characters as they gain knowledge about themselves and attempt to rearticulate themselves in terms of this newly conceived knowledge. The provocation of “And [.]” is, in part, its suggestion of the mind, incomplete in its knowledge. This figuration of Wroth’s style links the compositional unit with the mind by way of spatial analogy. As the work of Parker and Mary Thomas Crane has demonstrated, rhetorical figures, words, and conceptions of space are mutually defining features of early modern discourse.³⁴ Renaissance rhetorics suggest that certain figures, as they disrupt or invert a perceived syntactical order, threaten cultural hierarchies that depend on a similarly sequen-

tial logic.³⁵ Style constructs space in so far as Renaissance minds were conditioned to conceive of units of construction—be they rhetorical (for instance, the chiasmic line), grammatical (the sentence) or formal (the sonnet)—as asserting a linguistic integrity patrolled by “partitions” that are at once made up of words and places from which words might be wrested.³⁶ Rhetorics taught their students to draw the words of propositions through different *loci* or “places” of Reason in order to amplify their arguments.³⁷ These “places” emerge as literal to varying degrees. Thomas Wilson describes “A Place” as “the restyng corner of an argumente.”³⁸ In *The Arte of Reason, rightly termed, Witcraft*, Ralph Lever develops a systematic investigation of words that divides the properties of words into “storehouses,” each of which is made up of several “roomes.” He instructs, “yee must drawe the wordes of your question through the places,” in search for fit spaces.³⁹ These questions determine the perimeters of individual rooms.

A question often raised in these “storehouses” asks about the word’s “contrarie.”⁴⁰ Wroth’s own attention to “contraries” emerges from her incorporation of Gorgian schemes but also, perhaps, from a familial interest in neo-stoicism: antithesis is stylistically promiscuous, disrupting an otherwise pronounced division between the euphuistic mode and the Attic style. “Contraries” also confound any set division between the structures that determine thinking and the structures that determine speaking: they are a place of logic and a figure of speech. Cicero, Quintilian, as well as Renaissance rhetorics describe “contraries” as among the greatest ornaments of diction.⁴¹ Erasmus suggests their opposition as a defining structural principle of the commonplace book; Augustine, of the world as it exists through time.⁴² In order to investigate the “dangling ‘And’s’” stylistic undoing of Pamphilia’s “content,” I will draw this word through a room, the perimeters of which are defined by the word’s dynamic interaction with its contrary, the word with which it is paired from the very first page of Wroth’s romance, “perplexed.” I will argue that when Wroth’s employment of these words is at its most self-conscious, their dynamic rehearses the defining clausal tension of Wroth’s style. At these moments, the “contented” and “perplexed” minds are represented by the clausal constructions with which Wroth articulates them, and style itself becomes an experiment in epistemology. Is the mind—and is the clause—defined in terms of its boundaries, what lies within and what without, or in terms of its interweaving parts?

II. "THEN WAS I CONTENTED, NOW PERPLEXED."

"Content" comes from the Latin verb *contineo*, "to hold together, bound, limit, enclose, surround."⁴³ Even in classical Latin the perfect passive participle of this verb, *contentus*, also serves as an adjective meaning "satisfying oneself within" or "satisfied," persisting in both capacities and enforcing an etymological link between "enclosed" and "satisfied." The figurative meaning remains closely tied to the verbal force of "contain." While modern speakers of English can easily distinguish between "con'tent" (as a mental disposition) and "content" (as the matter contained) by our stress patterns, this distinction appears to have gained ground in the nineteenth century and, even at the end of the century, was a mark of social class and age.⁴⁴ Wroth often makes use of this ambiguity with the pun, reinforcing the etymological link as a prominent connotation of her lexicon.⁴⁵ The spatial connotations of the "contented" mind manifest themselves in moments of rhetorical balance—for example, the reformation of the once prideful Nereana into a woman, "contented with patience, and patiently contented" (*U*, 334). The quiet and ease that characterize the "contented" mind are closely linked, then, to a spatial sense of containment.

"Perplexed" presents an alternative conception of space in the seventeenth century. "Perplexed" comes from the Latin adjective, *perplexus*, literally meaning "interwoven, entangled, involved, intricate."⁴⁶ The figurative meaning, similar to our modern understanding of the adjective "unintelligible," is also available in classical Latin. The English word, however, reverses the etymological projection from literal to figurative: "the chronological order of the senses in Eng[lish] reverses the logical and historical development in L[atin]."⁴⁷ That is, "perplexed" first indicates "bewildered" and then comes to mean "tangled." Moreover, this transition appears to have occurred circa the seventeenth century. At least as early as 1578, *plexus* comes to signify interweaving structures within the human body.⁴⁸ With respect to the brain, Thomas Bartholinus describes in his *Anatomy* (1668), "the *Rete mirabile* or *wonderful Net*, which some call *Plexus retiformis*, is so called by reason of its artificial and wonderful structure, for it shews like many Nets heaped together."⁴⁹ The "perplexed" mind conceives of itself in terms of this entangled structure. This interwoven mind manifests itself in the more prominent tendency of Wroth's prose to move between trailing clauses by way of participles and conjunctions and to obscure measure and proportion by piling on clauses. For example, when Antissia (suspicious of her rival), "perplexed with love, jealousy, and losse as she beleev'd, made this Sonnet, looking upon

the Sunne, which was then of a good height" (*U*, 114). Unsurprisingly, Antissia's attempt to articulate her "perplexed" condition "in some kind of measure" (*U*, 114) fails: the final line of her sonnet, "And more I study, more I still undoe" exceeds the sonnet's measure in her subsequent gasp, "'Undoe,' cried she, 'alas I am undone, ruind, destroyd, all spoild by being forsaken'" (*U*, 114). "Perplexed with love, jealousie, and losse," Antissia's clauses move in steady succession, repeating and refiguring the poem's final beats, exceeding the form's "measure."

Where "contented" describes the mind in terms of its boundaries, "perplexed" assumes a mind composed of interweaving parts. The *Urania's* initial pairing of these two minds attempts to use antithesis to reconcile an apparent break in the temporal experience of the titular heroine's consciousness. Urania has recently discovered that she is not, as she thought, "a Shepherdes, and Daughter to a Shepherd" (*U*, 1). An allusion to the opening lines of Virgil's *First Eclogue* places Urania "under the shade of a well-spread beech" and figures her new found ignorance, "not being certaine of mine owne estate or birth," in terms of Meliboeus's loss of land (*U*, 1).⁵⁰ A series of rhetorical questions structure her subsequent lament over both her previous self, now lost, and the ignorance that characterizes her current position; these questions refigure the Virgilian dialogue as one between the newly "perplexed" Urania and the formerly "contented" Urania (*U*, 1). Wroth's identification of Urania with the lucky (and hauntingly insensitive) Tityrus as well as his dispossessed interlocutor points to Urania's internalization of the land dispute: Urania understands herself as exiled from a former state of seemingly complete knowledge and the former Urania, "contented" within her "estate," lurks throughout the lament as the counterpoint to her now "perplexed" self, dispossessed of her former "estate" (*U*, 1).⁵¹

Urania's lament reaches a kind of climax in the final series of these questions and in her attempt to describe the selves which stand on either side of the epistemological break. Urania seizes upon her reception of a new piece of knowledge—that she is not daughter to the shepherd that has raised her—as the instrument of this epistemological rupture:

Why was I not stil continued in the beleefe I was, as I appeare, a Shepherdes, and Daughter to a Shepherd? My ambition then went no higher then this estate, now flies it to knowledge; then was I contented, now perplexed. O ignorance. (*U*, 1)

This passage is, in one sense, an example of the tightly controlled balance of which Wroth's prose is capable. The comparative clause, "as I appeare," doubles back on the stream, asking its reader to compare Urania's appearance with her former "beleefe" that this appearance was a legible sign of her identity. The easy swing between then and now, as well as Urania's increasing economy of diction, suggests growing control over her language. Finally, the rhythm with which the thought concludes—a kind of *clausula*—finishes this move between past and present with the measured certainty of five iambs. The lament, however, does not stop here. Urania moves from the regulated efficiency of "then was I contented, now perplexed" to the unregulated burst of passion explicit in "O ignorance." This transition suggests that the comparative construction, parallel clauses, and metrical pattern are working hard to contain something that, nonetheless, emerges in a moment of passion reaching outside of syntax: "O."

Wroth's prose appears suspicious of its own balancing constructions and it performs this suspicion in the temporal ambiguity of its verbs: "Why was I not stil continued in the beleefe I was, as I appeare." "Stil" strives to traverse the epistemological break dividing current and former selves with a temporal insistence on the continuity of the self through time. This temporal continuity is also spatial. The self "stil" continued remains stationary, contained within her "estate" and "contented." While "stil" would seem to insist on the desire to believe "as I appeare," the initial instance of the past tense, "Why was I not stil," wrests belief back into the past and challenges the adverbial force of "stil." Urania cannot articulate a self that is "stil continued," even as the hypothetical object of lament. Furthermore, the comparative clauses suggest an imperfect chiasmus: "in the beleefe I was, as I appeare." While Urania desires a state in which belief is legible by means of appearance, the syntax of the sentence renders the object of a prepositional phrase ("in the beleefe") and a verb ("appeare") unlikely chiastic companions. The visual impact of the chiasmic center—"I was, as I"—produces an unstable fulcrum that tilts the paired clauses toward the past tense as the syntax of an articulated self-being, away from the present condition of seeming.

Unable to articulate the self in a moment of unprecedented sensibility of her own ignorance, Urania attempts to make sense of this discontinuity by turning from lamenting the object of loss to describing either side of the epistemological break: "My ambition then went no higher then this estate, now flies it to a knowledge; then was I contented, now perplexed." As in the previous moment, a comparative

clause, “then this estate,” disrupts the parallel motion between “then” and “now.” As both temporal marker and conjunctive particle, “then” confuses the temporality of Urania’s descriptions and her increasing economy becomes something like an anxious rejection of syntax when she describes her current state as, simply, “now perplexed.” Both the metrical pattern and the elided verb reinforce themselves in the pronounced contraction of “perplexed” and together they point to a rhetorical affinity between Urania’s attempt to control her current perplexity and an abbreviated speech act. This attempted reconciliation employs balanced constructions as a means of circumscribing the “perplexed” self within the stylistic boundaries of the “contented” mind. Urania’s ambition seeks “a knowledge”: the difference between former and current minds is the difference between a “contented” mind that believes it contains all the pieces of knowledge relevant to its composition and a “perplexed” mind that, because of a new piece of knowledge, is sensible to this illusion of containment. If these constructions attempt to reconstitute this illusion stylistically by erecting rhetorical perimeters, Urania’s “O” refigures these boundaries as permeable.

These boundaries—stylistic representations of the contented mind—materialize within the context of the geographic boundaries used to articulate the virtues of stoic contentment. In her translation of Philippe de Mornay’s *A Discourse of Life and Death*, Mary Sidney Herbert (Wroth’s aunt) draws a parallel between the mind that hopelessly seeks contentment by means of learning and the man who hopelessly seeks the same by way of travel and sea voyage. She defines the illusory promise of “ambition” as “perfect contentment of the goods and honors of this world.”⁵² Her subsequent depiction of the ambitious man’s life interweaves his traveling with covetousness and explicitly links his failure to remain spatially contained with his lack of content:

But in the ende, what is all this contentment? The covetous man makes a thousand voiajes by sea and by lande: runnes a thousand fortunes: escapes a thousand shipwrackes in perpetuall feare and travell. . . . Suppose he hath gained in good quantitie: that hee hath spoiled the whole East of pearles, and drawn dry all the mines of the West: will he therefore bee settled in quiet? can he say that he is content? (*D*, 233)

The man who respects the land’s boundaries as his own is the contented man; the man who travels to find contentment fails. This treatise dismisses the “endlesse travaills of the minde” as it does the “bodely

travels" (*D*, 233): "knowledges bring on the mind an endlesse labour, but no contentment: for the more one knowes, the more he would know" (*D*, 244). The "travails of the mind" disregard epistemological boundaries akin to those that divide land from sea and east from west. As with Sidney Herbert's covetous man, Urania is pained by her ignorance, "such a thought as makes me now aspire unto knowledge" and her "ambition [which] then went no higher then this estate, now flies it to a knowledge" (*U*, 1). Urania's traveling mind opens a text whose own abrupt aposiopesis in the final clause confirms Sidney Herbert's characterization: "knowledges bring on the minde an endlesse labour, but no contentment."

The regulation of the geographic boundaries that contain the contented mind becomes increasingly dogmatic when the boundaries are, specifically, England's borders. In Puttenham's *Arte*, these borders are both geographic and syllabic as he protects the English monosyllabic ideal against the superfluity of foreign languages and metrical practices. In his discussion of classical meter, Puttenham dismisses as arithmetically ridiculous the extended Latin foot: "the word of foure sillables they called a foote of foure times, some or all of them, either long or short: and yet not so content they mounted higher" (*A*, 82). Like Urania's vaulting ambition, this extended foot is, for Puttenham, the sign of men "not so content" that they find the standard feet of two or three syllables of insufficient room. Committed to extolling "our old Saxon English for his many *monosillables*," Puttenham blames the polysyllabic words fashionable in England on both "William the Conqueror" and the "clerks and scholers or secretaries long since, who not content with the vsual Normane or Saxon word, would conuert the very Latine and Greeke word into vulgar French" (*A*, 130). If the Norman invasion marks the initial corruption of Saxon English, even more "peeuish" an "affectation" in Puttenham's eye is that of the scholars who reiterate that invasion as they continue to add syllables superfluous to even the Norman word (*A*, 130). Puttenham's regulation of the integrity of the English monosyllable is akin to his figuration of Elizabeth's protection of England's borders. He praises his queen for stopping the "immeasurable ambition of the Spaniards" which he illustrates with the motto that accompanies the emblem of "a king sitting on horsebacke vpon a *monde* or world, the horse praucing forward with his forelegges as if he would leape of, with this inscription, *Non sufficit orbis*, meaning, as it is to be conceaued, that one whole world could not content him" (*A*, 118). Where Elizabeth patrols England's geographic borders against men whom "one whole world could not

content,” Puttonham regulates the singularity of English sound against men who, “not content,” would impose polysyllabic extensions. We might imagine, then, the final elided syllable of the *clausula*, “[know] ledge; then was I contented, now perplexed,” as a rather anxious attempt to circumscribe the potential extremity of the “perplexed” mind within the rhetorical boundaries of the previously “contented” mind. The act of elision—of syllable and verb—constructs linguistic boundaries that insist on the spatial integrity of the clause and respond to the disruption caused by a new piece of knowledge with a rhetorical act of epistemological sealing.

In the *Urania*, bewildered speakers consistently seize upon the “perplexed” mind as a stylistic alternative to “contented” estates. An early scene of Pamphilia’s distress over Amphilanthus’s double loving figures the careful artifice of the “curiously counterfeited” walks of her land as the object of renunciation (*U*, 90). While the text’s description of Pamphilia begins with a rhetorical balance that, itself, counterfeits her artificial enclosure, Pamphilia’s knowledge quickly rejects both the geographic and stylistic borders of “natural content” (*U*, 91):

Here was a fine grove of Bushes, their roots made rich with the sweetest
flowres for smell, and colour. There a Plaine, here a Wood, fine hills
to behold, as placed, that her sight need not, for natural content, stray
further then due bounds. At their bottomes delicate Valleyes, adorn’d
with severall delightfull objects. But what were all these to a loving
heart? Alas, merely occasions to increase sorrow, Love being so cruell,
as to turne pleasures in this nature, to the contrary course, making
the knowledge of their delights, but serve to set forth the perfecter
mourning, tryumphing in such glory, where his power rules, not onely
over mindes, but on the best of mindes: and this felt the perplexed
Pamphilia, who with a Booke in her hand, not that she troubled it with
reading, but for a colour of her solitarinesse, shee walked beholding
these pleasures, till grieffe brought this Issue. (*U*, 90–91)

The adversative conjunction at the center of this passage rejects the rocking rhythm of alternating dactyls and iambs and initiates the asymmetrical clausal style alluded to in the passage’s unsteady opening shift between “Here” and “their,” “There,” and “here.” The scenery that has been “placed” to perfection constructs “due bounds” that are marked by rhetorical balance and the enclosure of “natural content.” As the “perplexed Pamphilia” surveys this composition, her own “knowledge of their delights” marks the difference between the mind suggested by this landscape and, “to the contrary course,” her own mind, manifested in the trailing clauses, inaugurated by “But” and perpetuated

by a series of loosely connected participles, conjunctions, relative pronouns and appositional subjects. Pamphilia's comprehension of the composition and its "content" becomes, here, the pivotal piece of knowledge by which she marks her own additive distance: "and this felt the perplexed Pamphilia."

III. "BUT"

The clausal dynamic that brings the "contented" and "perplexed" minds into stylistic antithesis is analogous to Mary Ellen Lamb's depiction of the narrative aesthetic of the *Urania*. This depiction turns on a tension between "narratives [that] tangle and untangle in knotted cords," requiring their readers "to abandon themselves to the flow of the text" and moments of lyric stasis and paralyzing "anti-narrativity."⁵³ Lamb understands "abundant interiority" as the "end-result" of this narrative structure and describes tangled narrativity as a structure of containment: "in its interlacing narratives, *Urania* as a whole itself resembles an enclosing labyrinth."⁵⁴ "Wroth [as authorial construction] spins out narratives of her constant passion for Amphilanthus to produce the *Urania* as her own enchanted enclosure."⁵⁵ The constancy of this passion is finally defined by the "artful and elegant enclosure containing" it and the text becomes a "prison of the self," in which a "claustrophobic sense of enclosure" pervades that "may, in fact, derive from the very private circumstances of women's writing."⁵⁶ Understanding Wroth's narrative as an "enchanted enclosure," however, promotes a sense of space defined by its boundaries and implicitly privileges moments of narrative stasis and rhetorical balance over the work's more dominant compulsion to move forward within and between the tangles of narrative and the knitting of clauses. "Enclosure" enacts a model of the mind defined by the boundaries that distinguish interior from exterior rather than the knots between clauses, the loose syntactical extensions according to which characters think through narratives of accumulating knowledge.

While we tend to approach narratives as if they are composed of sentences, the *Urania* suggests not only that the clause is the primary structural unit of narrative but that narrative is vulnerable to the exigencies of clausal extenuation. This dynamic is a feature of what Robert Greene depicts as romance's ability to dismantle periodic structure. The premise of the collection of narratives in Greene's *Penelopes Web* is familiar: Penelope buys some time by requesting that her suitors allow her to complete her weaving. Here, the suitors "contented themselves

with this reply” because they assume that her weaving is subject to a *telos*, because “the longest Sommer hath his *Autumne*, the largest sentence his *Period*.”⁵⁷ Penelope, determined to “make her work endles, by vntwisting,” gathers her maids at night but their approaches to this task are distinct (*P*, Bv). The maids are always on the verge of sleep because they are “in quiet by such content” (*P*, B2r). Penelope is not, however, contented by “vntwisting” alone; rather, as she tells them, “desire of content draws mée into a laborinth of restlesse passions” (*P*, B2r). The youngest of her companions, Ismena, attributes this desire to Love, “for there is an Amphibological equiuocation in it which drowneth . . . hearers oft in a laborinth of perplexed concepts” (*P*, B2v). “Amphibological equiuocation” invokes the figure of abuse, *amphibologia*, through which mispunctuation produces grammatical ambiguity. Desiring “to content her Ladies humour,” Ismena elaborates upon this statement “by beguiling the night with prattle, applying as well her fingers to the web as her tongue to the tale” (*P*, B2v). In an effort to “content” the “perplexed” Penelope, Ismena tells a tale intended to “beguile the night” even as the group’s “vntwisting” defies the temporal *telos* assumed by the suitors. This “vntwisting” beguiles the “Period” at the end of the “sentence.”

In Sidney Herbert’s *Discourse of Life and Death*, “*Penelopes* web, wherein we are alwayes doing and undoing” is a figure for navigating through “this life” (*D*, 229) divided into “periods” (*D*, 230), each of which contains its own particular evils and the transitions between which constitute versions of death. In the *Urania*, Wroth’s additive clauses perform this “vntwisting” or “undoing” of the period. In one of many inlaid narratives, Leonius and Veralinda (among the second ring of central couples) encounter Curardinus who begins a story not unlike many of those we have encountered throughout the *Urania*. It features forced marriage, delayed letters, unhappy separation. Wroth, however, draws our attention here to the place of the clause and its conjunction in the process of narration. In the midst of his story, Curardinus recites a moment when, husband absented, the two lovers were allowed to meet secretly. He tells Leonius, “this I injoyed, and might still have done, but—” (*U*, 557). The adversative conjunction promises a turn in the narrative but Curardinus hesitates and, as if reacting to the conjunction itself, “[w]ith that he sigh’d, and look’d so deadly pale, as if that ‘But’ had bene the Axe to take away his life” (*U*, 557). Curardinus fears “But” as an instrument of death. If rhetorical treatises tend to talk about conjunctions as “joints,” this conjunction is

an “Axe,” a tool capable of dismembering both narration and narrator, declaring the ultimate independence of the unit it purports to attach. While Leonius encourages Curardinus to continue, he replies, “Oh my Lord . . . be contented with this you have” (*U*, 557). Curardinus refuses to complete the clause introduced by “but” and asks, instead, that Leonius “be contented” with the abbreviated story. In this representation of narrative incompleteness, Curardinus fears not the misunderstanding that caused separation between himself and his lover but the adversative conjunction that will introduce this misunderstanding into the syntax of his narrative. The conjunction becomes, itself, an agent within the narrative as it threatens the continuation of Curardinus’s bliss.

The capacity for this “But” to function within the narrative as both the object and the instrument of narration turns on the difference between the knowledge Curardinus has as a character within his tale and the knowledge he has as a narrator of his own tale. The following day, Curardinus will continue his story because, “longing for the end,” Leonius “would needes have him goe on” (*U*, 557). Leonius cannot “be contented” after knowing that a “but” exists. When Curardinus picks up the story, he begins by completing the empty clause, “I must beginne againe with ‘But such was my misery,’ as I fell into a great, and strict acquaintance with this Lady, which she did dislike, though not me, as since I understand, but then did believe, by reason of some slight carriages she shewed me, but causlesly I did mistrust her” (*U*, 558). When Curardinus is taken as a character within the tale, his misery is due to the “slight carriages” bestowed upon him by a mildly jealous lover. When he is taken as the narrator, “But such was my misery” revises the bliss “injoyed” into his “misery.” Curardinus-as-narrator fears the adversative conjunction because his ability to speak it is the sign of a pivotal piece of knowledge—that his lady did not dislike him as he thought—the absence of which knowledge, at the time, engendered the ensuing misunderstanding. “But” is equally legible to Leonius as the sign of this missing piece of knowledge, and thus he cannot, as was demanded, “be contented with this you have.”

As both author and object of his tale, Curardinus is in the curious position of confounding the two defining but divergent principles of stylistic identification as articulated by Puttenham. On the one hand, style, as the “continuall course and manner of writing” represents “the matter and disposition of the writers minde” (*A*, 160). In this sense, style is “the image of man” or “*mentis character*” (*A*, 161). On the other hand, according to the principle of decorum, style should

“follow the nature of his [the Poet’s] subject” (A, 161). In this sense, style is “fashioned to the matters,” suited to the subject rather than the speaker (A, 162). Thus, as Curardinus proceeds in his tale telling and as his clauses turn on their adversative hinges, his style becomes representative of both his mind in the moment of telling (and fearful of what this image of his own mind reveals) and his former mind—misinformed, ignorant and resentful. The two coincide—with the result of breaking his narration—at “but,” but they are not synonymous. Attention to Wroth’s clausal unit reveals something about her method of composition. It is piecemeal and pulling forward. More importantly, however, the clause becomes an instrument of reflection for her characters, capable of representing in its tangling the aggregative nature of thinking while also becoming the image of minds in the process of thinking.

While the “dangling ‘And’” with which the volume ends does not, syntactically, have the immediate adversative force of “But,” it is also a coordinating conjunction that points to the syntactical addition of yet another clause. Like Curardinus’s “But,” “And” becomes the sign of a missing piece of knowledge that will disrupt the absolutism of the narrative’s perfectly iambic insistence that “Pamphilia is the Queene of all content” (U, 661). The contentment achieved upon reunion with Amphilanthus is inadvertent—the result of a chance encounter in the woods—and content is, in fact, a word from which Pamphilia would have fled had anyone told her she was going to find it. Pamphilia ventures “abroad” into the woods at the request of sympathetic friends, “yet abroad she went to satisfie their desires, and as it happened to content her selfe, although had any that morning but spoken that word, as if she should be content, it had bin as ill to her, as meriting her disfavour” (U, 659). Presumably, this hypothetical aversion to “content” stems from the fact that Pamphilia would be offended at the idea of being content without her beloved, thought dead. If, however, Pamphilia’s flight from “that word” ultimately lands her “Queene” of it, the final syntactical addition points to itself as the incomplete clause of continued narration, the moment of perplexity that will weave a new piece of knowledge into the *plexus* of the *Urania*. As with Curardinus’s unsatisfying “But,” when Wroth continues her narrative in the second volume, she will begin again with “And.”

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NOTES

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¹ Lady Mary Wroth, *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, ed. Josephine A. Roberts (1995; repr., Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 661.13–14. Hereafter abbreviated *U* and cited parenthetically by page number.

² Roberts, "Textual Introduction," in *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, cxi.

³ Philip Sidney's sentence breaks in the midst of amplifying an appositional construction: "Whereat ashamed, as having never done so much before in his life[.]" (*The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans [London: Penguin, 1977], 595). For a reading of Sidneian incompletion as aposiopesis (breaking speech with silence) as well as the relationship between mortality and incompletion, see Gavin Alexander, "Sidney's Interruptions," *Studies in Philology* 98 (2001): 184–204.

⁴ Maureen Quilligan describes "I am contented" as a sign of closure to both conversation and scene, indicating that Antissia is "momentarily satisfied" ("Lady Mary Wroth: Female Authority and the Family Romance," in *Unfolded Tales: Essays on Renaissance Romance*, ed. Gordon M. Logan and Godon Teskey [Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1989], 266). "I am contented" marks a pronounced completion to the conversation, however superficial the reconciliation implied by this completion: "'I am contented,' said Antissia. So rising, and holding each other by the arme, with as much love, as love in them could joyne, they tooke their way backe towards the Palace" (*U*, 97). "I am content" marks an end to the verbal negotiation of terms before a fight (*U*, 475). Amphilanthus describes "content" as "unspeakable" (*U*, 135).

⁵ Sidney, 864.

⁶ Classical rhetorical discourse commonly refers to conjunctions as "joints." For example, Cicero's Antonius describes those many common words that will have to find similarly flexible images within the memory pallas: "*multa enim sunt verba quae quasi articuli connectunt membra orationis*" [for there are many words which serve as joints connecting the limbs of the sentence] (*De Oratore*, trans. E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vol., Loeb Classical Library (1942; repr., Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1976), 2.88.359).

⁷ Alexander makes a similar point when he argues that "Wroth's text wants to end but cannot," suggesting that "something . . . forbids the appearance of conclusion" ("Constant Works: A Framework for Reading Mary Wroth," *Sidney Newsletter & Journal* 14.2 [1996], 22). For Alexander, this "something" is Wroth's circularity. For a description of Spenserian endlessness, see Jonathan Goldberg, *Endlesse Worke: Spenser and the Structures of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1981).

⁸ Jacqueline T. Miller understands Wroth's engagement with Spenserian endlessness as an act of endless revision frustrated by "visions of fulfilled desire" which disable the achievement of "true closure" ("Lady Mary Wroth in the House of Busirane," in *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman [Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2000], 122–23).

⁹ Susan Light describes and provides images of this addition/edition in "Reading Romances: The Handwritten Ending of Mary Wroth's *Urania* in the UCLA Library Copy," *Sidney Newsletter & Journal* 14.1 (1996): 67. This notation was originally

reported by Renée Pigeon, "Manuscript Notations in an Unrecorded Copy of Lady Mary Wroth's *The Countess of Montgomerie's Urania*," *Notes & Queries* 38 (1991): 81–82. For a reading of Wroth's clausal mark as scribal experimentation with ending in her sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphylanthus*, see Heather Dubrow, "And thus Leave Off: Reevaluating Mary Wroth's Folger Manuscript, V.a.104," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 22 (2003): 273–291.

¹⁰ Suzanne Gosset and Janel Mueller, "Textual Introduction," in *The Second Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, by Wroth, ed. Roberts, Gosset, and Mueller (Tempe: Renaissance English Text Society & Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), xxxiv. For further information on the problems Wroth's style poses for the modern editor, see Gosset, "The Ethic of Post-Mortem Editing," in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts, III: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society 1997–2001*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Tempe: Renaissance English Text Society with Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2004), 147–155. The editors' description of Wroth's prose is similar to characterizations of "native" vernacular prose by George Williamson (and G. P. Krapp before him): "the native tradition in prose . . . is based on the simple colloquial or aggregative sentence with sprawling members, loosely connected by temporal and coordinating conjunctions, unemphatic in effect" (*The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose form from Bacon to Collier* [Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1951], 26). Williamson proceeds to describe the employment of non-classical "stylistic forms" in the Renaissance as "pedestrian" (30). My own reading takes issue with this insistence on the classical aesthetic as the sign of artistic—as opposed to "pedestrian"—prose style though the utter lack of sustained investigation into Wroth's prose style is, I believe, at least in part indebted to a set of assumptions about aesthetic value similar to those held by Williamson.

¹¹ Wroth's engagement with her uncle's text as well as her membership in the Sidney family as an enabling condition of her writing has received a good deal of critical attention. See, for example, Quilligan, "The Constant Subject: Instability and Female Authority in Wroth's *Urania* Poems," in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth-Century English Poetry*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katharine Eisaman Maus (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1990), 307–35; Margaret P. Hannay, "Your virtuous and learned Aunt: The Countess of Pembroke as a Mentor to Mary Wroth," in *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*, ed. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller (Knoxville: The Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1991), 15–34; and Waller, *The Sidney Family Romance: Mary Wroth, William Herbert, and the Early Modern Construction of Gender* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1993). Similarly, Wroth's interest in Spenser is well documented: see Roberts, "Radigund Revisited: Perspectives on Women Rulers in Lady Mary Wroth's *Urania*," in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon*, ed. Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1990), 187–207; Quilligan, "Feminine Endings: The Sexual Politics of Sidney's and Spenser's Rhyming," in *The Renaissance Englishwoman in Print*, 311–26, esp. 320–24; Miller, "Lady Mary Wroth in the House of Busirane"; and Sheila Cavanagh, "Romancing the Epic: Lady Mary Wroth's *Urania* and Literary Traditions," in *Approaches to the Anglo and American Female Epic, 1621–1982*, ed. Bernard Schweizer (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 19–36.

¹² Patricia Parker, "Literary Fat Ladies and the Generation of the Text," in her *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London: Methuen, 1987), 9. I include "early" to distinguish this influential description from her subsequent and significant revision of "dilation" with respect to Shakespeare's plays. See Parker, "Dilation and

Inflation: *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and Shakespearean Increase,” and “*Othello* and *Hamlet*: Spying, Discovery, Secret Faults,” in her *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996), 185–228, 229–272.

¹³ Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies*, 16, 14, 34. Although Parker does not explicitly refer, here, to the “point” as a grammatical unit, her analysis appeals to its range of early modern meanings and her own prose plays with and pushes this semantic flexibility (*Literary Fat Ladies*, 10). On the more explicit play, see Parker, “‘Rude Mechanicals’: A Midsummer Night’s Dream and Shakespearean Joinery,” in her *Shakespeare from the Margins*, 83–115. esp. 96–99.

¹⁴ Light, 70. Light understands the narrative extension to be the reaffirmation of a romance *telos* that ends in marriage and childbirth and she suggests a monarchical bent that would have been pressing to Wroth’s seventeenth-century readers. Naomi J. Miller has described the *Urania*’s displacement of the conventional *telos* of romantic love as the enabling condition for female friendships and the discovery of identity these friendships structure in “Not Much to Be Marked’: Narrative of the Woman’s Part in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*” (*Studies in English Literature* 29 [1989]: 121–37). The inserted points recorded by Light are readily expressive next to narrators, such as Geoffrey Chaucer’s Canon’s Yeoman, who concludes, “And there a poynt, for ended is my tale” (*The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed., ed. Larry D. Benson [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987], 1480). A word about the punctuation of *The First Part*: while no manuscript of the first volume is available to us, a comparison between the Newberry manuscript of *The Second Part* and the 1621 printing of the *Urania* has suggested that Wroth’s first printer added rather more periods to standardize the author’s more general tendency to use commas and colons (Roberts, “Textual Introduction,” cxix). Roberts’s punctuation (cited here) follows the 1621 text with the exception of setting off direct discourse and adding a dash (“-”) to indicate broken speech (Roberts, “Textual Introduction,” cxix–cxx).

¹⁵ Roberts, “Textual Introduction,” cxi.

¹⁶ Roberts, “Textual Introduction,” cx–cxii. Alexander suggests that the fact that no “autograph corrections” are “recorded at this crucial point (and there are three on the previous page) might be taken as overwhelming evidence that the text as we have it is exactly what Wroth expected” (“Constant Works,” 21 n.18). Roberts does note, however, that “the dangling conjunction ‘And’ has been carefully scratched out, but the semi-colon remains.” She continues, “[i]t is impossible to know whether Wroth is responsible for this change since it does not involve the use of ink (as in the case of Wroth’s other corrections), and it could have easily been made by any of the successive owners of the volume” (“Textual Introduction,” cxvi).

¹⁷ See Roberts, “Textual Introduction,” cx–cxii, and “Labyrinths of Desire: Lady Mary Wroth’s Reconstruction of Romance,” *Women’s Studies* 19 (1991): 184.

¹⁸ Graham Parry suggests that Wroth’s *Urania* is a “companion volume” to the 1621 *Arcadia* and understands “this appendage [‘And’] as a memorial to her uncle” (“Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical Society and Literary Society* 16 [1975]: 54, 57). Alexander offers a compelling analysis of Wroth’s imitation but his conclusion that “The Sidneian ‘And’ is imposed, not consequential” has trouble locating the reason behind this imposition: “something (and that something equates itself with Sidney in some way) forbids the appearance of conclusion” (“Constant Works,” 22).

¹⁹ Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies*, 34, 31. Parker refers to this as “at the highest level of generalization . . . the gendered counterpart” of “rehearsal” (31).

²⁰ Naomi J. Miller outlines the controversies among “materialist feminist,” “feminist psychoanalytic” and “feminist historicist” methodologies in relation to which (particularly the historicist) she offers her own, “a feminist reading of figurations of gender,” as a corrective in her *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender* (Kentucky: Univ. Press Kentucky, 1996), 17. See, especially, “Figurations of Gender” (1–17).

²¹ For a reading of the cabinet as emblematic of “the contained woman writer, whose subversions of English patriarchy are paradoxically linked to her support of English Imperialism,” see Bernadette Andrea, “Pamphilia’s Cabinet: Gendered Authorship and Empire in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” *English Literary History* 68 (2001): 344, 345. For Pamphilia’s writing as “one which is circumscribed, fully enabled only in chambers and cabinets, in isolation from society,” see Helen Hackett, “‘Yet Tell Me Some Such Fiction’: Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania* and the ‘Femininity’ of Romance,” in *Women, Texts, and Histories 1575–1760*, ed. Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (London: Routledge, 1992), 52. For the “containing family” in which “a female identity is speakable,” see Quilligan, “Completing the Conversation,” *Shakespeare Studies* 25 (1997): 48. For the attainment of a discursive “space” at the expense of “social movement,” see Quilligan, “Female Authority and the Family Romance,” 280. For genre as a “crowded room” as well as a meta-critical discussion of “space” in the study of women writers, see Rebecca Laroche, “Pamphilia Across a Crowded Room: Mary Wroth’s Entry into Literary History,” *Genre* 30 (1997): 268–69. For a reading of Wroth’s conflicted feelings toward but final reaffirmation of the ideological underpinnings of these “limited spheres of action,” see Carolyn Ruth Swift, “Feminine Identity in Lady Mary Wroth’s Romance *Urania*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 14 (1984): 335. Geraldine Wagner revises this strain by focusing on the proliferation of marginalized female figures rather than the narrative’s more limited central heroines. Describing these women as corporeally transgressive, Wagner argues that they are able “to escape circumscription”: “their speech is a marker of a body that is neither open nor closed, but outside of the terms of such confining discourse” (“Contesting Love’s Tyranny: Socially Outcast Women and the Marginalized Female Body in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” *English Studies* 87 [2006]: 579, 586). The autonomy achieved by these marginalized figures seems, nonetheless, to define itself between alternative terms extracted from “the containing strategies of traditional romance” and thus, they “negotiate a space for themselves between virginity and promiscuity, silence and circulation” or “the space between ideology and lived experience where subjectivity can come into being” (Wagner, 587, 581, 584). Ultimately, then, this “female body . . . infinitely regenerative in its self-contained completeness,” however unconventional, is still defined by way of boundaries (Wagner, 586). For a provocative corrective to this emphasis on enclosed spaces, see Max W. Thomas’s discussion of inscriptions (including among several examples one act of inscription in the *Urania*) as “liminal, both in the sense of being at a limn or threshold and in the sense of limning or drawing” (“Urban Semiosis in Early Modern England,” *Genre* 30 [1997]: 13).

²² Alexander, “Constant Works,” 26. Alexander argues that “virtue as endless, circular constancy is for Wroth a way of containing her writings” (26). Most discussions of Wroth’s style limit themselves to her sonnet sequence but, even or especially there, we hear the same refrain of circularity, circumscription, and containment. See, for example, Madeline Bassnett, “‘Injoying of true joye the most, and, best’: Desire and the Sonnet Sequences of Lady Mary Wroth and Adrienne Rich,” *English Studies in Canada* 30 (2004): 49–66.

²³Alexander, "Constant Works," 19. Discussions of the text which focus on the various modes of paralysis and imprisonment in *The Urania* tend to recapitulate an emphasis on containment, if only implicitly. See, for example, Roberts, "Labyrinths of Desire."

²⁴Roberts, "Textual Introduction," cxix. For an alternative view of the clause as essentially a sentence, see Gosset and Mueller, who suggest that Wroth's "continuative constructions" and "relative constructions . . . have the intactness and the independent semantic content of a sentence but also the contingency of a modifying clause in their immediate context" ("Textual Introduction," xxxvii).

²⁵George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Hilton Landrey (1909; repr., Ohio: Kent State Univ. Press, 1970), 172. Hereafter abbreviated A and cited parenthetically by page number.

²⁶For a fuller discussion of aposiopesis, see Alexander, "Sidney's Interruptions."

²⁷Gosset and Mueller, "Textual Introduction," xxxv.

²⁸Gorgian schemes describe figures of repetition and contrast, of parallelism and symmetry that were the stylistic signature of Greek orator, Gorgias of Leontini (5th century BCE). Isocrates (390–338 BCE) is known for transforming these schemes into "a governing principle for periodic rhythm" and the Euphuistic mode is named after John Lyly's roaring success, *Euphuus, the Anatomoy of Wit* (1578). See Williamson, 21. Lyly and his many imitators turned the use of these schemes into a vernacular fad. For a more detailed description of Gorgian schemes and their work within Isocratic and Euphuistic modes, see Williamson, 1–61. For the place of Euphuism within the Romance tradition as well as the popularity of the Euphuistic mode, see Robert B. Heilman, "Greene's Euphuism and some Congeneric Styles," in *Unfolded Tales*, 49–73.

²⁹Jeff Dolven, "The Method of Spenser's Stanza," *Spenser Studies* 19 (2004): 22. See also Gordon Teskey, "'And therefore as a stranger give it welcome': Courtesy and Thinking," *Spenser Studies* 18 (2003): 343–359; and Angus Fletcher, *Colors of the Mind: Conjectures of Thinking in Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991).

³⁰Dolven, 23.

³¹Dolven, 24.

³²Morris Croll, "'Attic' Prose in the Seventeenth Century," in *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm*, ed. J. Max Patrick and Robert O. Evans, with John M. Wallace and R. J. Schoeck (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), 87.

³³Croll, 89.

³⁴See Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins*; and Mary Thomas Crane, *Shakespeare's Brain: Reading with Cognitive Theory* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001).

³⁵For example, Parker's reading of "preposterous" in "Preposterous Estates, Preposterous Events," in *Shakespeare from the Margins*, 20–55.

³⁶For example, Puttenham describes antimetabole (a figure closely related to chiasmus) as "a figure which takes a couple of words . . . and by making them to change and shift one into others place they do very prettily exchange and shift the sence" (A, 217). His illustration of this figure underscores its spatial projection: "We dwell not here to build vs boures, / And halles for pleasure and good cheare: / But halles we build for vs and ours, / To dwell in them whilest we are here" (A, 217). Parker discusses rhetorical partitions in "Literary Fat Ladies and the Generation of the Text," in *Literary Fat Ladies*, 8–35.

³⁷I am appealing to both Ralph Lever's and Thomas Wilson's explicit Englishing (though not translation) of Aristotle. See Thomas Wilson, *The Rule of Reason Conteynyng The Arte of Logique* (1551), ed. Richard S. Sprague (Northridge, CA: San Fernando

Valley State College, 1972); and Ralph Lever, *The Arte of Reason, Rightly Termed, Witcraft Teaching a Perfect Way to Argue and Dispute* (London, 1573).

³⁸ Wilson, 90.

³⁹ Lever, 226. The process of drawing is elsewhere referred to as “deducing”: “they [the storehouses] teache us . . . to deduce one woorde through all the Storehouses. Which though it bée properly placed in some one: yet indirectlye and after a sorte, it maye be deduced and brought through them all” (Lever, 47).

⁴⁰ See Wilson, 129–33; and Lever, esp. 54–55, 202–208.

⁴¹ In *De Oratore*, Cicero praises contraries as a chief ornament, “*Ornant igitur in primis orationem verba relata contrarie*” (2.65.263). See also Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler, 4 vol., Loeb Classical Library (1921; repr., Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), 9.3.81–86; and Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1593; repr., Gainesville: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1954), 160–61.

⁴² See Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, trans. Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette Univ. Press, 1963), 87; and Augustine, *The City of God*, ed. and trans. R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1998), 471.

⁴³ *OED*, 2nd ed., s.v. “content”; *A Latin Dictionary: Lewis and Short*, s.v. “*contineo*.”

⁴⁴ *OED*, 2nd ed., s.v. “content.”

⁴⁵ As, for example, Perissus’s description of Limena, increasingly isolated by an abusive husband, “her delicacy kept like a Diamond in a rotten box” (*U*, 8.35): “with her Servants he first began, finding, or better to say, framing occasions to be rid of them all, placing of his owne about her, which she suffered, onely *contenting* her selfe with the memorie of our Loves; yet wanting the true *content* which was in our conversation” (*U*, 8.38–42; my emphases).

⁴⁶ *OED*, 2nd ed. s.v. “perplex”; *Lewis and Short*, s.v. “*perplexus*.”

⁴⁷ *OED*, 2nd ed. s.v. “perplex.”

⁴⁸ See John Banister, *The Historie of Man Sucked fro the Sappe of the most Approued Anathomistes* (London, 1578), f100r.

⁴⁹ Thomas Bartholin, *Bartholinus anatomy made from the precepts of his father, and from the observations of all modern anatomists, together with his own* (London, 1668), 138. See also the *Plexus Choroides* as a “Webbe or compliction” of the brain in Helkiah Croke, *Mikrokosmographia a description of the body of man* (London, 1615), 466.

⁵⁰ The first lines of Virgil’s poem read, “*Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi siluestrem tenui Musam meditaris auena*” [Tityrus, you, reclining under the cover of a spread out Beech tree, meditate on the woodland Muse with your slender reed] (*Eclogues*, ed. Robert Coleman [1977; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1998], 43; my translation).

⁵¹ Quilligan discusses Urania, “imprecisely located as to class and family” (“The Constant Subject,” 312).

⁵² Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, “A Discourse of Life and Death, Written in French by *Ph. Mornay. Sieur du Plessis Marly*,” in *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert Countess of Pembroke*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan, 2 vol. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 1.232. Hereafter abbreviated “D” and cited parenthetically by page number.

⁵³ Mary Ellen Lamb, “*The Biopolitics of Romance in Mary Wroth’s The Countess of Montgomery’s Urania*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 31 (2001): 107–8. Heilman suggests a similar move between style and narrative when he argues that, “If romance

embodies a dash toward the wonderful and the libertine, euphuism goes along to insist on the inevitable presence of likenesses . . . in euphuistic romance there is always a pulling-apart between opposing ways of managing narrative art” (63).

⁵⁴ Lamb, 118, 121.

⁵⁵ Lamb, 121.

⁵⁶ Lamb, 121, 119.

⁵⁷ Robert Greene, *Penelopes Web* (London: 1601), Bv. Hereafter abbreviated *P* and cited parenthetically by signature.