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Towards a Digital *Arcadia*: *Wrath* and *Anger* in Sidney's Romance¹

Abstract

As a tribute to Karl Heinz Göller's interest in early modern English fiction, this paper takes issue with Anna Wierzbicka's claim of a "shift from the Shakespearean *wrath* to modern *anger*" which "both reflects, and constitutes an aspect of, the democratisation of society and the passing of the feudal order"². Investigating the use of *wrath* and *anger* in the two versions of Sidney's *Arcadia*, it confirms an earlier insight that the genre of prose fiction, for instance, prefers *anger* to *wrath* already in Elizabethan times. Moreover, it is shown that the rise of *anger* is an ongoing process in the period. Together with the decline of *wrath*, it is related not so much to "democratisation" as to individualization and civilization. These are prerequisites of democratization, but certainly not identical with it.

Keywords: anger, Elizabethan fiction, emotion lexicon, Anna Wierzbicka, wrath.

I have recently stumbled over a remark by Anna Wierzbicka, about a "shift from the Shakespearean *wrath* to modern *anger*" which "both reflects, and constitutes an aspect of, the democratisation of society and the passing of the feudal order"³. I had found that Shakespeare actually uses slightly more *anger* than *wrath*. I had

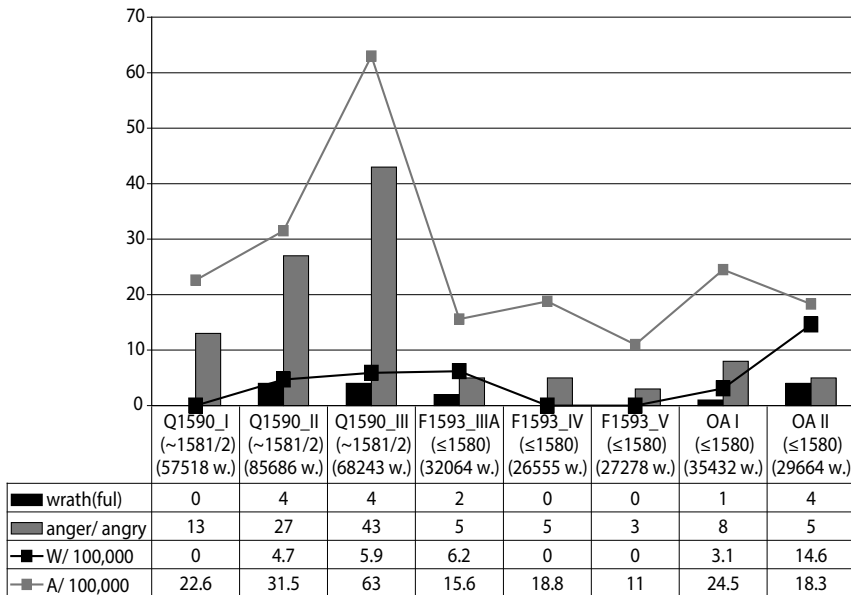
¹ Among the participants in this symposium, my acquaintance with Karl Heinz is perhaps of longest standing. We first met sometime between 1963 and 1966. I have always respected him as a brilliant teacher and organizer, but it is only in Cracow and thanks to Cracow that we became friends. And *we* refers not just to Karl Heinz and myself but also to our wives, Jutta and Leticia. If, then, my link to Karl Heinz is quite solid, the link of my topic to Karl Heinz's scholarly work is much more tenuous. It reminds me of an old academic joke: a biology student preparing for his viva has managed to swot up only on worms. Inevitably, the first question is about "the elephant". His answer: Elephants have trunks, which look like worms, and the following species of worms can be distinguished. Similarly, I could say: Göller has written on early modern English fiction, *Arcadia* is part of early modern English fiction. *Wrath* and *anger* do occur in *Arcadia* in many contexts.

² A. Wierzbicka, J. Harkins, *Introduction* [in:] *Emotions in Crosslinguistic Perspective*, eds. J. Harkins, A. Wierzbicka, Berlin 2001, p. 17.

³ *Ibid.*

just fallen in love with the Google Ngram Viewer, which told me that many Elizabethan writers, including Sidney, use far more *anger* than *wrath*, that the triumph of *anger* over *wrath* begins well before Shakespeare, and that the use of *anger* vs. *wrath* depended to a large extent on genre. Fiction (i.e. prose fiction) and to a lesser extent drama prefer *anger*. Poetry prefers *wrath* well into the 19th century. E.g. the table at the bottom of Fig. 1, figures in the table gives you a total of 109 instances of *anger/angry* against only 15 of *wrath(ful)*.

Fig. 1: *Anger and Wrath in Sidney's Arcadia*



With these discoveries I began to doubt Wierzbicka's explanation. For Sidney and *Arcadia* may be many things, but they are hardly "democratic". I found Wierzbicka's thesis highly thought-provoking, but her account is too simple. A closer analysis of *Arcadia* might give us a more accurate picture. It may be useful to give a short summary of the story first: two cousins, Princes Pyrocles of Macedonia and Musidorus of Thessaly, grow up together at the court of Thessaly. On their way back to Macedonia they are shipwrecked and ultimately land in Arcadia, where they fall in love with princesses Philoclea and Pamela, the daughters of the Prince (or "Duke") of that country, Basilius. In order to win the ladies' love, the princes disguise themselves: Pyrocles as an Amazon, calling himself "Cleophila" in the earlier version of *Arcadia* and "Zelmane" in the later version. Musidorus becomes "Dorus", a simple shepherd. After these complications we are treated to a wooing-in-disguise plot which in its tone and atmosphere resembles many Shakespearean comedies and romances but which, *Arcadia* being a piece of narrative, is much more intricate than the "two hours' traffic" (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Prologue) of a stage play can ever be.

As I just hinted, there is not only one *Arcadia*, but two – or one-and-a-half, to be more exact. I try to illustrate some of the differences in Fig. 1. In the legend you find “Q1590”, “F1593” and “OA”, below these you find dates in parentheses. “OA” stands for “Old *Arcadia*”, a complete version of which was printed only in 1912, as Volume IV of Feuillerat’s edition of *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*. In Sidney’s time it circulated only in manuscripts among Sidney’s friends – quite a few manuscripts, actually. The date below “(≤1580)” indicates that the “Old *Arcadia*” was written in or before 1580. 1590 and 1593 are the years when the first editions were printed (as opposed to written). The dates below, “(~1581/2)” and again “(≤1580)”, indicate when, according to the best available opinion, the texts of these editions were composed. Perhaps confusingly, the version printed first was written last, and parts of the version written first were printed later. A friend of Sidney’s, Fulke Greville, obviated plans to publish the “Old *Arcadia*” in 1590, four years after Sidney’s death. Instead, he furthered the publication of the incomplete “New *Arcadia*”, of which he seems to have held the only copy. Apparently the 1590 quarto was quite successful, although a book ending in the middle of a sentence is necessarily unsatisfactory. This may have stimulated interest and helped publication of the folio of 1593, a composite text which, as can be seen from the dates in parentheses, adds that part of *OA* which Sidney had not found time to revise. So, the composite *Arcadia* of 1593 is a highly heterogeneous story full of contradictions, but it has a happy ending in which Pyrocles marries Philoclea and Musidorus marries Pamela – shortly after the men have been sentenced to death by Pyrocles’ father, who is convinced that they have killed Basilius, the father of the two princesses.

Back to Fig. 1: The third line of the legend gives the size of the various parts, expressed in the number of words. You will find that in large part revision meant expansion. Volume I of the New *Arcadia* is about half as long again as Volume I of the Old *Arcadia*, and Volume II of the New *Arcadia* has almost three times as many words as Volume II of the Old *Arcadia*. This shows the importance of relative frequency: *anger* in the parts written later (~1581/1582) is more frequent than in the earlier parts (written in or before 1580) even in relative terms. The number of *anger* instances is thus not merely a function of the length of the texts.

How do I know the number of words? The 2½ Books of the New *Arcadia* as well as its continuation in F1593 are accessible in downloadable electronic form: Sidney, *The “New Arcadia”* (tr. Risa Bear, [RB]) and “The last part of Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*. From the Folio of 1593” (F2). Both URLs can be found in the bibliography.⁴

There is also a modern-spelling edition of the “Old *Arcadia*” edited by Katherine Duncan-Jones for the Oxford World’s Classics accessible at Questia <<http://www.questia.com/read/59540112/the-countess-of-pembroke-s-arcadia-the-old-arcadia>>. Accessible but not quite: you can search it for any string you like, but the return will only be “snippets”, something like a concordance. Until recently a full concordance,

⁴ Given the frequent changes in URLs, there is of course no guarantee that the looked-for text will be found!

but lately⁵ I got returns saying “17 results”, though I was shown at most ten of them. That doesn’t matter in the case of *wrath* with only 7 (really six) results in the Old *Arcadia*, but it does matter in the case of *anger*, where it says “Search results (17)”, but you are allowed to see only ten of them, “in order of relevancy” – whatever relevancy means. Luckily, this restriction was introduced only recently, so I am fairly confident I have a complete collection of *anger* and *angry* even in the Old *Arcadia*.

Having said this much about the Old and the New *Arcadia*, I can now say something about *wrath* and *anger* in *Arcadia*. I begin with *wrath*, because it is simpler: there is less of it. I start with a simple but highly informative question: who is the Experiencer of wrath, who shows wrath? A full list of *wrath* in the whole of *Arcadia* is given in Table 1.

Table 1. *wrath* in Sidney’s *Arcadia*

	RB	Text	KDJ
1.		...first magistracy showed against Apollo the heat of his anger. But, said he, if you had heard or seen such violence of his wrath as I even yesterday, and the other day, have, you would tremble at the recital of his name. The duke and all the rest straight...	59 (1 st Ecl.) (F.IV 62)
2.	II 3, 2 (F.I, 160)	...by sea towards Byzantium, where at that time his court was. But when the conspired heavens had gotten this subject of their wrath upon so fit a place as the sea was, they straight began to breathe out in boisterous winds some part of their malice against...	92 (II) (F.IV 100)
3.	II 26, 2 (F.I 314)	...leave no rageful violence unattempted while their cholier is nourished with resistance, so, when the {very subject / subject} of their wrath is unlooked for offered to their hands, it makes them at least take a pause before they determine cruelty. Cleophila (whose...	113 (II) (F.IV 123)
4.	II 26, 4 (F.I 316)	...valiant mens courages can be inflamed to the mischief of one hurtless woman, I refuse not to make my life a sacrifice to your wrath . Exercise in me your indignation, so it go no further. I am content to pay the great favours I have received among you with...	114 (II) (F.IV 124)
5.	II 12, st.3 (F.I 228)	...idly sit, above, And virtue do in greatest need neglect. {Boulon. / Basilius} O man, take heed how thou the gods do move To { causeful / irefull} wrath which thou canst not resist. Blasphemous words the speaker vain do prove. Alas, while we are wrapped in foggy mist Of our...	130 (2 nd Ecl.) (F.IV 141)
6.		...bear part with the complaints of his unhappy charge. For if it be so, that the heavens have at all times a measure of their wrathful harms, surely so many have come to my blissless lot that the rest of the world hath too small a proportion to make with cause...	159 (III) (F.IV 171)
7.		...service bent To such an end as he might be abused. Yet, like a coward fearing strangers pride, He made the simple wench his wrath abide. With chumpish looks, hard words, and secret nips, Grumbling at her when she his kindness sought, Asking her how...	217 (3 rd Ecl.) (F.IV 233)
8.	III 28,4 (F.I 514)	miserable end of his brother, fuller of despite the wrath, & yet fuller of wrath then sorrow, looking with a	–

⁵ The paper was read on 26 April 2014.

9.	III 28,4 (F.I 514)	fuller of despite the wrath, & yet fuller of wrath then sorow, looking with a wofull eye vpon his br	–
10.	III 28,7 (F.I 515)	that reme[m]brance feeding vpo[n] wrath , trod down al co[n]ceits of mercy. [...] she made her sword drink the blood of his hart	–

The first example, only in *OA*, refers to Eros, whose wrath should cause the addressee to “tremble at the recital of his name”. In the second example it is “the heavens” which (or who?) exercise their wrath on Pyrocles and Musidorus, shipwrecking them and thus ultimately bringing them to Arcadia. Exx. 3 and 4 will be discussed at more length in a moment. Exx. 5 and 6 are like 1 and 2: wrath belongs to “the gods” or “the heavens”. Ex. 7 is somewhat unusual, as I will explain in a moment. Exx. 8 and 9 show Anaxius, an extremely arrogant knight, in a mixture of feelings: exceptionally, wrath is not dominant, but second to despite (i.e. contempt, disdain), because Anaxius believes his opponent, Amazon Zelmane (really Prince Pyrocles), to be a woman. Exx. 8 and 9 are closely followed by Ex.10, where Zelmane is in wrath discovering a jewel on Lycurgus (brother to Anaxius), which Pyrocles had given to his love Philoclea and which he

(Q.1) had seene *Lycurgus* with a proud force, & not with out some hurt vnto her, pull away fro[m] *Philoclea* because at entreatie she would not giue it him (I 28.7; F.I: 515).

Then follows our *wrath* quotation (Ex. 10):

that reme[m]brance feeding vpo[n] **wrath**, trod down al co[n]ceits of mercy. [...] she made her sword drink the blood of his hart [...]. (I 28.7; F.I: 515).

Wrath, we may say, usually flows downward, from higher to lower, from stronger to weaker; its goal is the destruction of the opponent. No wonder it is usually gods, natural forces and valiant knights that are credited with wrath. Ex. 7, as I hinted, is an exception, in that the Experiencer is a shepherd's neighbour, presumably a person of low rank and not really aiming at his target's destruction. The target is, after all, his wife. But the word occurs in verse, where metrical considerations will outweigh semantic ones.

More important are Exx. 3 and 4. These are in prose, and the Experiencers are neither gods nor humans of high social rank: they are the rebellious Arcadian plebs, but their aim is certainly destruction. For that reason the term *wrath* is justified, and it underlines Zelmane's courage in facing the “mutinous multitude” (*OA* II: F.IV 117; *NA* II 25.6: F.I 310). The meaning of *wrath* in Ex. 4 is even more pregnant because the passage shows an interesting change from *anger* to *wrath*. Q.2 begins a little before Ex. 4 in the table:

(Q.2) ... ys yt I? O *Arcadians* ageanst whome youre **anger** ys armed? [...] Yf lastly yt bee so, that so many valyant mens Corages can bee inflamed to the myscheef of one hurtles [*NA: silly*] woman, I refuse not to make my lyfe a sacrifice to youre **wrathe**. Exerцыse in mee youre indignation, so yt goo no furer, I am content to pay the great favoures I have receyved

among yow, with the usury of my well deserving lyfe [...] (*OA*: F.IV 123f.; ≈F.I 316 [*NA* II 26.4]).

Wrath is here used not by the narrator in *propria persona* but by one of the main characters in a “pacificatorie oration” (F.I 313, II 26, chapter heading), and it is used for clear rhetorical reasons, in a *captatio benevolentiae*. Zelmane offering herself as “a sacrifice to your wrath” endows the crowd’s mood with something like a religious aura.

In sum, wrath may be said to be aristocratic, also religious, violent, and destructive. The same is not necessarily true of anger. “Not necessarily true” is an intentionally modest claim, which can be made good with very few examples. Under the circumstances that’s very convenient, because in the whole of the *Arcadia* (the *Arcadias*, rather) there are almost ten times as many instances of *anger* and *angry* as there are of *wrath* and *wrathfull* (as I said before).

To make my modest point, three examples are enough. The first is a passage shared by both *Arcadias* (KDJ 18, F.IV 16; RB I 12.5, F.I 78). Musidorus, discovering that his friend Pyrocles has fallen in love and disguised himself as an Amazon, delivers a long diatribe in which he compares love unfavourably with other passions:

(Q.3) forsooth loue [is] a passion, and the basest and fruitlesst of all passions: feare breedeth wit, **Anger** is the cradle of courage: ioy openeth and enhableth the hart: sorrow, as it closeth, so it draweth it inwarde to looke to the correcting of it selfe; and so all generally haue power towards some good by the direction of right Reason. But this bastarde Loue [...] as it is engendered betwixt lust and idlenes; [...] it vtterly subuertes the course of nature, in making reason giue place to sense, & man to woman (KDJ 18, F IV 16; RB I 12.5, F.I 78).

The diatribe is wonderfully preposterous, especially considering that Musidorus will soon fall a victim to love as well (as we shall see in our third example). Unfortunately we cannot look at this in detail; there is only one sentence really relevant to us: “Anger is the cradle of courage.”⁶ To say that wrath is the cradle of courage would be self-contradictory, given that wrath, as I said, flows from stronger to weaker. Courage has a positive value which does not go well with wrath. Anger may also come to the assistance of waning physical strength (II 19.8; F.II 276), which again is never said of wrath.

There is also “mery anger”, merry wrath again being inconceivable. Philoclea and Pamela talk “with mery anger” when they discover that their bathing in the altogether has been observed by Amphialus, their cousin (II 12.1, F.I 226). The episode is in strong comical contrast to the undressing and bathing itself which has been described in truly glowing, sensuous detail. Zelmane (who is really Pyrocles, remember!) is invited by the ladies to join them but excuses himself with a cold, and he envies the river for the privilege of “fully embracing” them and

⁶ See also II 29.8 (F.I 335) for a similar view.

playing “about every part he could touch” (II 11.4, F.I 217). This episode is unique to the New *Arcadia*.

The last episode to be discussed occurs in both versions, in the composite *Arcadia* even twice, but anger enters only in the “New *Arcadia*”. About half way through *OA* III (F.IV 190; KDJ 177) “Musidorus is restrained from the rape of Pamela only by a timely interruption”⁷, i.e. by the invasion of “a dozen clownish villains”. This episode is shortened and softened in FQ1593 IIIA (F.II 27), i.e. in the “composite” *Arcadia*. But a very similar episode is told in *NA*, at the very beginning of Book III, Ch. 1: Pamela is no longer able to hide her love for Dorus–Musidorus. On this discovery

(Q.4) *Dorus* [...] was like one frozen with extremitie of colde, ouer-hastily brought to a great fire, rather oppressed, then relieued with such a lightning of felicitie. But after the strength of nature had made him able to feel the sweetnesse of ioyfulness, that again being a child of Passion, & neuer acquainted with mediocrity, could not set bou[n]ds vpon his happines, nor be co[n]tent to giue Desire a kingdome, but that it must be an vnlimited Monarchy. So that the ground he stood vpon being ouer-high in happines, & slipperie through affection, he could not hold himselfe fro[m] falling into such an error, which with sighs blew all co[m]fort out of his brest, & washt away all cheerfulness of his cheere, with teares. For this fauour filling him with hope, Hope encouraging his desire, & Desire considering nothing, but oportunitie: one time ([...] he [being] left alone with *Pamela*) the sudden occasion called Loue, & that neuer staid to aske Reasons leaue; but made the too-much louing *Dorus* take her in his armes, offering to kisse her, and, as it were, to establish a trophee of his victorie. But she, as if she had bin ready to drinke a wine of excellent tast & colour, which suddenly she perceiued had poison in it, so did she put him away fro[m] her: loking first vnto heauen, as amazed to find herselfe so beguiled in him; then laying the cruel punishment vpon him of **angry** Loue [...], Away (said she) vnworthy man to loue, or to be loued. Assure thy selfe, I hate my selfe for being so deceiued; iudge then what I doo thee, for deceiuing me. Let me see thee no more, the only fall of my iudgement, and staine of my conscience (III 1.1–2, F.I 354–355) .

Angry love is certainly not wrathful love: the harsh language notwithstanding, it does not aim at the target's destruction. And although the target, Musidorus, flees from Pamela's presence, it is not physical fear that makes him flee, but despair at having lost her love. He soon tries to pacify her, “to show his sorrow, & testifie his repentance” (III 1.4, F.I 356). To achieve this, he writes a poem in elegiac quantitative metre “as fittest for mourning” (III 1.4, F.I 356). The writing effort and the placing of the letter in Pamela's chamber are described in loving,

⁷ Lewis C.S., *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century: Excluding Drama* [=The Oxford History of English Literature, 3], Oxford 1954, p. 332.

amusing detail, and so is Pamela's reaction. Her hesitation about reading the letter fills an entire paragraph. After her reading she is uncertain what to think of it, her "Reason" being unable to "moderate the disputation between Fauour & Faultines" (III 2.1, F.I 359). But walking in the country to attend some "rurall sports" to which she has been invited together with Philoclea and Zelmane, she casts "a seeking looke, whether she could see *Dorus*": she is "griued for his absence, hauing giuen the wound to him through her owne harte" (III 2.3, F.I 361). Clearly, the "disputation" has been decided pro "Fauour", against "Faultines".

So much about wrath and anger in *Arcadia*. Now let us return to Wierzbicka's "shift from Shakespearean *wrath* to modern *anger*", the "democratisation of society and the passing of the feudal order". For a proper perspective, we must place the two words in a broader historical context. We find a distinction between *wrath* (a deadly sin) and *anger* (just a "fleischli" perturbation) as early as Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* (late 14th century) and Pecock's *Folewer of the Donet* (mid-15th century). In the Elizabethan period Christian authors distinguish between "the lawfull vse, and the vnlawfull abuse of" anger⁸. A similar distinction concerning wrath seems inconceivable. The distinction between wrath (deadly sin, always bad) and anger (good when directed at the right object) often implies a dig at the Stoics, who, in their "prophanes of Atheisme"⁹, condemn all emotions¹⁰. In the late medieval and early modern periods at any rate, the rise of *anger* and the decline of *wrath* is related not so much to "democratisation" as to individualization and civilization. These are prerequisites of democratization, but certainly not identical with it.

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⁸ J. Downname [also Downham], *A Treatise of Anger*, London 1609, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home> (access: 24.02.2012).

⁹ T. Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholy: Containing the Causes Thereof*, London 1586, p.188, Ch. Xxxiii, *Google Books Search*, (access: 7.09.2012).

¹⁰ H.-J. Diller, *Words for Feelings. Studies in the History of the English Emotion Lexicon* [=Anglistische Forschungen, 446], Heidelberg 2014, p. 253.

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Abbreviations

- F.: Feuillerat's edition of *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, cited by Volume and page.
- KDJ: Katherine Duncan-Jones' edition of the “*Old Arcadia*” in *Oxford World's Classics* (1999), cited by page.
- NA: “*New Arcadia*”.
- OA: “*Old Arcadia*”.
- RB: Risa Bear's transcription of “*New Arcadia*”.