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Auszug aus:

Paket: William Shakespeare: Sonnets

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Thema:	William Shakespeare – Sonnet 12
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TMD:

Kurzvorstellung des Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• William Shakespeare (1564-1616), poet and playwright, is nowadays considered as the greatest and most important English writer.• Apart from many plays like <i>Macbeth</i>, <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>King Lear</i> and various poems, he also wrote 154 sonnets that appeared in 1609 in a collection called <i>Shake-Speares Sonnets</i>. In this material, his <i>Sonnet 12</i> will be analyzed.
Übersicht über die Teile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The text of the sonnet• Interpretation, additional remarks
Information zum Dokument	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ca. 2 Seiten, Größe ca. 55,5 KByte

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William Shakespeare

Sonnet 12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
5 When lofty trees I see barren of leaves
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
10 That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And die as fast as they see others grow;
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

Interpretation

This material deals with Shakespeare's *Sonnet 12*.

In analyzing this sonnet by Shakespeare, it is first important to give some general information about the literary genre of sonnets and especially some details about the Shakespearean sonnet.

One can state that, in general, sonnets consist of 14 verses. In its original form these 14 verses are divided into two quatrains (ll. 1-8) followed by two tercets (ll. 9-14). Originally, we have a thesis in the first quatrain, an antithesis in the second quatrain and a synthesis in the two tercets.

In the English, or in the Shakespearean sonnet, one can observe some differences. It consists of three quatrains (ll. 1-12) and one couplet (ll. 13-14). Here we mostly find a thesis in the two first quatrains, an antithesis in the third quatrain and a synthesis, or a conclusion, in the couplet. These four stanzas are composed in iambic pentameter. The usual rhyme scheme in English sonnets is abab cdcd efef gg. So we find cross rhymes in the three quatrains and a rhyming couplet in the last two lines of the sonnet. Because the lyric of Shakespeare became typical for this sonnet structure, the English sonnet is often also called Shakespearean sonnet.

After listing the criteria of the Shakespearean sonnet, one should apply these characteristics to the text that is to be analyzed.

In *Sonnet 12* we can find three quatrains: from line 1 to line 4 (abab), from line 5 to line 8 (cdcd) and from line 9 to line 12 (efef). The couplet we find in the last two lines (gg). So we find in *Sonnet 12* the typical structure of the English sonnet.

After that, the sonnet should be analyzed regarding to its content.

The first quatrain deals with the topic of time. We find many signs that indicate the course of time: "the clock that tells the time" (l. 1), "the brave day sunk in hideous night" (l. 2), "the



Thema:

William Shakespeare – Sonnet 16

TMD: 17866

Kurzvorstellung des Materials:

- William Shakespeare (1564-1616), poet and playwright, is nowadays considered as the greatest and most important English writer.
- Apart from many plays like *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear* and various poems, he also wrote 154 sonnets that appeared in 1609 in a collection called *Shake-Speares Sonnets*. In this material, his *Sonnet 16* will be analyzed.

Übersicht über die Teile

- The text of the sonnet
- Interpretation, additional remarks

Information zum Dokument

- Ca. 2,5 Seiten, Größe ca. 57 KByte

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William Shakespeare

Sonnet 16

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
5 Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens yet unset
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers,
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair,
10 Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still,
And you must live, drawn by your own sweet skill.

Interpretation

This material deals with Shakespeare's *Sonnet 16*.

In analyzing this sonnet by Shakespeare, it is first important to give some general information about the literary genre of sonnets and especially some details about the Shakespearean sonnet.

One can state that, in general, sonnets consist of 14 verses. In its original form these 14 verses are divided into two quatrains (ll. 1-8) followed by two tercets (ll. 9-14). Originally, we have a thesis in the first quatrain, an antithesis in the second quatrain and a synthesis in the two tercets.

In the English, or in the Shakespearean sonnet, one can observe some differences. It consists of three quatrains (ll. 1-12) and one couplet (ll. 13-14). Here we mostly find a thesis in the two first quatrains, an antithesis in the third quatrain and a synthesis, or a conclusion, in the couplet. These four stanzas are composed in iambic pentameter. The usual rhyme scheme in English sonnets is abab cdcd efef gg. So we find cross rhymes in the three quatrains and a rhyming couplet in the last two lines of the sonnet. Because the lyric of Shakespeare became typical for this sonnet structure, the English sonnet is often also called Shakespearean sonnet.

After listing the criteria of the Shakespearean sonnet, one should apply these characteristics to the text that is to be analyzed.

In *Sonnet 16* we can find three quatrains: from line 1 to line 4 (abab), from line 5 to line 8 (cdcd) and from line 9 to line 12 (efef). The couplet we find in the last two lines (gg). Because of this, we find in *Sonnet 16* the typical structure of the English sonnet. We can also find the typical rhyme scheme of the English sonnet (abab cdcd efef gg) in this sonnet by Shakespeare.

After that, the sonnet should be analyzed regarding to its content.



Thema:

William Shakespeare – Sonnet 18

TMD: 26268

Kurzvorstellung des Materials:

- William Shakespeare (1564-1616), poet and playwright, is nowadays considered as one of the greatest and most important English writers.
- Apart from many plays like *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear* and various poems, he also wrote 154 sonnets that appeared in 1609 in a collection called *Shake-Speares Sonnets*.
- In this material, his *Sonnet 18*, which is probably one of the most famous and best-known sonnets, will be analysed.

Übersicht über die Teile

- The text of the sonnet
- Interpretation, additional remarks

Information zum Dokument

- Ca. 3 Seiten, Größe ca. 60,5 KByte

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William Shakespeare Sonnet 18

1 Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
2 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
3 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
4 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
5 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
6 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
7 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
8 By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
9 But thy eternal summer shall not fade
10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
11 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
12 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
13 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
14 So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Interpretation

This material deals with Shakespeare's famous *Sonnet 18*.

In analyzing this sonnet by Shakespeare, it is first important to give some general information about the literary genre of sonnets and also about the Shakespearean sonnet in particular.

One can state that, in general, sonnets consist of 14 verses. In its original form these 14 verses are divided into two quatrains (ll. 1-8) followed by two tercets (ll. 9-14). Originally, we have a thesis in the first quatrain, an antithesis in the second quatrain and a synthesis in the two tercets.

In the English, or in the Shakespearean sonnet, one can observe some differences. It consists of three quatrains (ll. 1-12) and one couplet (ll. 13-14). Here we mostly find a thesis in the two first quatrains, an antithesis in the third quatrain and a synthesis, or a conclusion, in the couplet. These four stanzas are composed in iambic pentameter. The usual rhyme scheme in English sonnets is abab cdcd efef gg. So we find cross rhymes in the three quatrains and a rhyming couplet in the last two lines of the sonnet. Because the lyric of Shakespeare became typical for this sonnet structure, the English sonnet is often also called Shakespearean sonnet.

After listing the criteria of the Shakespearean sonnet, one should apply these characteristics to the text that is to be analyzed.

In *Sonnet 18* we can find three quatrains: from line 1 to line 4 (abab), from line 5 to line 8 (cdcd) and from line 9 to line 12 (efef). The couplet we find in the last two lines (gg). Because of this, we find in *Sonnet 18* the typical structure of the English sonnet. We can also find the typical rhyme scheme of the English sonnet (abab cdcd efef gg) in this sonnet by Shakespeare.



Thema:

William Shakespeare – Sonnet 120

TMD: 5049

Kurzvorstellung des Materials:

- This sonnet is taken from the collection “Shake-speares Sonnets” (1609) which comprises 154 poems of the famous author and playwright.
- Shakespeare’s sonnets are considered very modern, not only due to formal criteria (as addressing a man instead of a woman in sonnets 1-126), but also due to their topics (like jealousy, being walked out on, growing old etc.)
- The lifetime of Shakespeare (1564-1616), which is known as the Elizabethan Age, is characterized by a pursuit of perfection that results from a fear of chaos. This can also be seen in the structure of the author’s work.

Übersicht über die Teile

- The sonnet
- The ‘transparent interpretation’

Information zum Dokument

- ca. 2,5 pages, ca. 58 kbyte

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William Shakespeare – Sonnet 120

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.

For if you were by my unkindness shaken
As I by yours, you've pass'd a hell of time,
And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffered in your crime.

O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits,
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!

But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

Interpretation

As given in the title, this text is counted among the poetic genre of sonnets.

One way of analyzing a text is to classify the literary genre first and to give some general information about its formalities¹.

A sonnet in general consists of 14 verses that are divided into 4 stanzas. In its original Italian form the first two of these are quatrains (ll. 1-8), followed by two tercets (ll. 9-14). A sonnet of that time is usually composed according to embracing rhyme scheme (abba) and the verses follow iambic measure, i.e. the first syllable is not stressed, the second is, the third is not and so on. Regarding the subject matter, there is originally a thesis in the first quatrain, an antithesis in the second quatrain and a synthesis in the final tercets.

Second, one can apply these criteria to the text in question and note commonalities and differences.

The so-called Shakespearean sonnet, however, has some different characteristics. It consists of three quatrains (ll. 1-12) and one couplet (ll. 13-14). The rhyme scheme is as follows: abab – cdcd – efef – gg. Concerning the measure, we find iambic pentameters. Moreover, there usually is a thesis in the two first quatrains, an antithesis in the third quatrain and a synthesis or conclusion in the couplet.

Looking at these formal criteria, we can conclude that the poem is a Shakespearean sonnet.

Next, the sonnet should be analyzed regarding to its content. A good way of doing that is e.g. to search for key words, themes, comparisons and moods in each stanza.

¹ Of course, the very first step would be to look up vocabulary that is not known and to make sure the content is understood.

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