

Text explication and facets of poetic genre

Literature, William Shakespeare



Text Explication and Facets of Poetic Genre Sonnet 60 by William Shakespeare Professor C. Soldan Poetry is "the art of rhythmical composition, written or spoken, for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative, or elevated thoughts". This paper will focus on poet William Shakespeare (1564-1616) who was famous in the Renaissance Period prior to the year 1750. Shakespeare was found to have 154 written sonnets, which dealt with themes such as the time, love, beauty and mortality. However, a personal favourite of Shakespeare's sonnets is sonnet 60, a sonnet that falls under the theme of passing time and addresses the "fair youth" whom is spoke to or about in a large percentage of Shakespearean sonnets. This sonnet will be critically analyzed and poetic genre will be analyzed. Part One - Explication The first quatrain of Sonnet 60 begins by using imagery to compare one's life to the waves of the ocean, and how these waves crash against the "pebbled shore" which is similar to the way that the minutes of our lives quicken as we age. Shakespeare continues by using the pebbles along the shore to resemble the hardships that people will face throughout a lifetime. To end the first quatrain, he explains that the waves of the ocean will always continue to crash in the same way that troubling events in one's life will continue to occur, the movement of the waves or actions of the human do not change as time passes. The second quatrain is used to describe how an individual's childhood begins, from the stage of being born until they begin to crawl and develop, in the same way that a sun starts as being bright and the main source of light but gradually becomes dimmer and shadows arise. Shakespeare is comparing the passing of time in one's life to the way that the sun moves, as it rises to light the world and is then dimmed

by the night. It is believed that he is trying to explain it in the sense that we are fighting to keep our youth as is the sun trying to keep its light, however time has begun to defeat us. Furthermore, in the third quatrain Shakespeare compares time to a monster. The monster is described to be killing the beauty and peacefulness of youth. In addition, this monster is said to be changing the beauty of youth by replacing beauty with " parallels on the brow", or wrinkles. In the outstanding couplet, Shakespeare attempts to challenge time. He indicates that even though time may change the physical beauty and youthfulness of the one(s) he loves, he will continue to love them as he always has. The narrator ends by stating that time will continue to pass yet he hopes that his words will stay the same throughout time.

Part Two - Facets of Poetic Form Sonnet 60 written by poet William Shakespeare consists of three quatrains and a concluding couplet. The rhyme scheme for this sonnet is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG, which is a perfect example of the 4-4-4-2 Shakespearean sonnet form. The rhyme scheme present in this sonnet is known as end rhyme, a rhyme scheme in which the rhyming words are at the end of each line. When analyzing the type of rhyme, quatrain one (lines 1-4) is considered to be a compound rhyme, quatrain two contains compound rhyme as well as imperfect rhyme. The imperfect rhyme is found with the word crown'd and confound, words that sound similar but do not look the same and contain a difference in metrical feet. The third quatrain, lines nine and eleven are compound rhyme while lines ten and twelve are feminine rhyme. The ending couplet is a compound rhyme. Sonnet 60 is written mainly in Iambic Pentameter, however it also includes multiple troches, which are used throughout the sonnet to help develop the main theme. A

prime example of this use for troches is shown within the first two lines of the sonnet and is used in order to draw attention to the waves moving quickly and the attacks on time. Furthermore, troches are also present in the beginning of lines six and seven to draw attention to the theme of birth, more specifically the waves nearing the shore and children quickly growing. The non-linear pattern in the second quatrain assist in drawing attention to the slowness and recurring breaks which mimics life as time passes. Most importantly, all three quatrains convey the main theme of the sonnet within the meter— the theme of passing time. Furthermore, Shakespeare uses a great deal of personification throughout Sonnet 60 in order to draw the reader even further into the poem. The main usage for personification is time. Shakespeare begins to personify time at the end of the second quatrain by using a capital T for the word time, which would in turn make the word a proper noun. He furthers this by referring to time as “ He” which creates time into a living thing. Additionally, Shakespeare states in line 11 that Time “ Feeds on the rarities of nature’s truth” which is indicating that Time has the ability to eat as a human would. The personification used throughout this sonnet gives time a much deeper meaning and makes the theme of passing time much more open to the reader. William Shakespeare's Sonnet 60 deals with the passing of time and its effects on the youthfulness of ones life. This sonnet uses the imagery of waves beating against the shore to show the efforts to delay Time and longer enjoy the youth of ones life. Through the significant use of rhyme, personification and imagery, Shakespeare attempts to explain the importance of time and ones youthfulness to the reader. I believe that Sonnet 60 was written

exceptionally well by including many different figures of speech that allowed for the effective production of the theme. A variety of tones allowed for an open mind while reading, but in contrast the use of rhyme and creative metaphors caused the reader to become involved with the poem. In the end, even though time is unchangeable, Shakespeare proves that his affection for the one he loves will stay strong, even though time will change ones outer beauty. Works Cited " poetry." Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary. 07 Oct. 2012. . " Sonnet 60." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 22 July 2004. Web. 10 Oct. 2012 < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonnet_60>. Mabillard, Amanda. " How to analyze a shakespearean sonnet" Shakespeare Online. 20 Nov 2009. 10 Oct 2012 .