

### SEMANTIC VARIETY OF APHORISMS IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

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*The article deals with the determination of the boundaries of the notion "aphorism", the generalization of the theoretical material regarding the nature of aphorism, semantic peculiarities and thematic variety of aphorisms belonging to English literature, particularly, to famous William Shakespeare's sonnets.*

Since ancient times the aphorism has been a peculiar way and a result of human cognition of different life's phenomena and the world in general. Though aphorisms have always been an object of philosophical and philological comprehension, the commonly accepted definition of the notion "aphorism" doesn't exist [8; 9; 10; 12]. In everyday life the word "aphorism" is used to define any laconic and vivid utterance of a well-known author or an anonymous one (including those of folklore origin [11]). Having analysed all the definitions in various dictionaries [2; 14] we can sum up: the aphorism is a laconic, stylistically vivid utterance (belonging to a well-known author or anonymous) that expresses a complete thought or a statement on a commonly important issue [3], very often a philosophical one, and implies the semantics of generalizing [13; 15].

William Shakespeare's sonnets are known all over the world. Some lines (as intertextual elements) are often quoted, others are not so popular, but undoubtedly should be called aphorisms too (due to their correspondence to the definition of the notion). But first of all it is necessary to define the notion "a sonnet" and have a brief review of this part of W. Shakespeare's creative activity. Sonnet is a verse that consists of 14 lines: 2 quatrains и 2 treastises with a special type of rhyme. W. Shakespeare has written 154 sonnets; the better part of them date back to 1592–1599. For the first time the sonnets were edited in 1609. The sonnets' titles are represented by numbers, for example: Sonnet 23, Sonnet 66, etc. [1, p. 182–201]. All sonnets are divided into several thematic groups: dedication to a friend, the sorrow of falling apart, joys and beauty of love, friendship ordeals, melancholy, etc. Some of the researchers consider the sonnets to be purely autobiographical, others suppose them to be just W. Shakespeare's practicing in a unique and extremely popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> century style.

The article deals with the results of the research in which 60 sonnets have been analysed. As a result 81 aphorisms were found (of course, only a few of them will be set as the examples). It is necessary to point out semantic variety of the aphorisms, but practically all of them deal with such topics as Love, Death, Time, Fame, Immortality, Good and Evil. The aphorisms are divided into several thematic groups and the prevailing themes are determined (their percentage in relation to the total number). It is necessary to mention that very often aphorisms as intertextual elements are transformed in this or that way [4; 5]. So, it was taken into consideration in the process of singling out the aphorisms out of the sonnets.

**Love (32%):** ...*despite thy wrong, my love shall in my verse ever live young.* (Sonnet 19) – the aphorism: *Love shall in verse ever live young; ...from sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate; for thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings, that then I scorn to change my state with kings.* (Sonnet 29) – the aphorism: *Sweet love such wealth brings, that then one scorns to*

*change his state with kings; Eternal love doesn't give to necessary wrinkles place.* (Sonnet 108); *Love makes antiquity for aye his page.* (Sonnet 108).

**Death (6%):** *This thought is as a death which cannot choose but weep to have that which it fears to lose.* (Sonnet 64) – the aphorism: *Death cannot choose; ...sunset fadeth in the west, which by and by black night doth take away, death's second self, that seals up all in rest.* (Sonnet 73) – the aphorism: *Death seals up all in rest, All this the world well knows; yet none knows well to shun the heaven that leads men to hell.* (Sonnet 129) – the aphorism: *None knows well to shun the heaven that leads men to hell.*

**Time (15%):** ...*taught me thus to ruminate, that time will come and take my love away.* (Sonnet 64) – the aphorism: *Time will come and take love away; ...swift-footed time... o, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow, nor draw no lines...* (Sonnet 19) – the aphorism: *Time, carve not with thy hours love's fair brow; Your name from hence immortal life shall have, though I...* (Sonnet 81) – the aphorism: *Name immortal life shall have; Not marble, nor the gilded monuments shall outlive this powerful rhyme; but you shall shine...* (Sonnet 55) – the aphorism: *Not marble, nor the gilded monuments shall outlive powerful rhyme; ...Some say thy fault is youth, some wantonness; some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport.* (Sonnet 96) – the aphorism: *Youth is fault and wantonness, grace and gentle sport; To me, fair friend, you never can be old...* (Sonnet 104) – the aphorism: *A fair friend can never be old.*

**Human soul. Good and Evil in Human Soul (28%):** ...*hast done: roses have thorns, and...* (Sonnet 35) – the aphorism: *Roses have thorns* (very similar to an English proverb *All roses have thorns* [6; 7]); *All men make faults, and even I in this...* (Sonnet 35) – the aphorisms: *All men make faults; My spirit is thine, the better part of me...* (Sonnet 74) – the aphorism: *Spirit is the better part; ...my deeds must not be shown; unless this general evil they maintain, all men are bad and their badness reign.* (Sonnet 121) – the aphorism: *All men are bad and their badness reign; Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth...* (Sonnet 146) – the aphorism: *Soul is the centre of sinful earth; O, absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove, were it not thy sour leisure...* (Sonnet 39) – the aphorism: *O, absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove.*

**Power, wars and politics (2%):** *When wasteful war shall statues overturn, and broils root...* (Sonnet 55) – the aphorism: *Wasteful war shall statues overturn; As on the finger of a throned queen the basest jewel will be well esteem'd, so are the errors...* (Sonnet 96) – the aphorism: *On the finger of a throned queen the basest jewel will be well esteem'd.*

**Art. Fame and memory (6%):** *That you...might show how far a modern quill doth come too short, speaking of worse...* (Sonnet 83) – the aphorism: *A modern quill doth come too short; From hence your memory death cannot take, although...* (Sonnet 81) – the aphorism: *Memory death cannot take; ...root out the work of masonry, nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn the living record of your memory.* (Sonnet 55) – the aphorism: *Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn the living record of memory; ...you pace forth; your praise shall still find room even in the eyes of all posterity that wear this world...* (Sonnet 55) – the aphorism: *Praise shall still find room in the eyes of posterity; Art is made tongue-tied by authority.* (Sonnet 66).

**Beauty (4%):** ...*eyes ...constant stars, in them I read such art, as truth and beauty shall together thrive, if from thyself to store thou wouldst convert...* (Sonnet 14) – The aphorism: *Truth and beauty should together thrive.*

So, the biggest thematic groups of the aphorisms analysed in the article are "Love" (32%) and "Human soul. Good and Evil in human soul" (28%). The most insignificant in quantity is the group "Power, wars and politics" (less than 2%).

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