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Bitte wenden!

Thema Nr. 1

Oscar Wilde, "The Harlot's House" (1885)

We caught the tread of dancing feet, We loitered down the moonlit street, And stopped beneath the Harlot's house.

Inside, above the din and fray,
We heard the loud musicians play
The 'Treues Liebes Herz', of Strauss.

Like strange mechanical grotesques, Making fantastic arabesques, The shadows raced across the blind.

We watched the ghostly dancers spin To sound of horn and violin, Like black leaves wheeling in the wind.

Like wire-pulled automatons, Slim silhouetted skeletons

15 Went sidling through the slow quadrille,

Then took each other by the hand, And danced a stately saraband; Their laughter echoed thin and shrill.

Sometimes a clock-work puppet pressed 20 A phantom lover to her breast, Sometimes they seemed to try and sing,

> Sometimes a horrible Marionette Came out, and smoked its cigarette Upon the steps like a live thing.

25 Then turning to my love I said, 'The dead are dancing with the dead, The dust is whirling with the dust.'

But she, she heard the violin, And left my side, and entered in;

30 Love passed into the house of Lust.

Then suddenly the tune went false, The dancers wearied of the waltz, The shadows ceased to wheel and whirl,

And down the long and silent street, 35 The dawn with silver-sandalled feet, Crept like a frightened girl. (Quelle: Oscar Wilde: The Major Works. Hg. Isobel Murray. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. (Oxford World Classics). 539–540.)

- Nehmen Sie eine kurze inhaltliche Zusammenfassung sowie eine formale Analyse von Wildes Gedicht vor!
- 2. Analysieren Sie die Bildlichkeit, die zur Darstellung der Besucher des "Harlot's House" eingesetzt wird, und erläutern Sie deren Bedeutung für das Gedicht!
- 3. Kontextualisieren Sie das Gedicht innerhalb der viktorianischen Lyrik!

Thema Nr. 2

Bei dem hier abgedruckten Textauszug handelt es sich um den Anfang von Joe Ortons Drama Loot (1965).

Act One

A room in McLeavy's house. Afternoon.

Door left with glass panel. Door right. A coffin stands on trestles. McLeavy, in mourning, sits beside an electric fan.

5 Fay, in a nurse's uniform, enters from the left.

Fay Wake up. Stop dreaming. The cars will be here soon.

(She sits.) I've bought you a flower.

McLeavy That's a nice thought. (Taking the flower from her.)

Fay I'm a nice person. One in a million.

10 She removes her slippers, puts on a pair of shoes.

McLeavy Are those Mrs McLeavy's slippers?

Fay Yes. She wouldn't mind my having them.

McLeavy Is the fur genuine?

Fay It's fluff, not fur.

15 McLeavy It looks like fur.

Fay (standing to her feet) No. It's a form of fluff. They manufacture it in Leeds.

She picks up the slippers and takes them to the wardrobe. She tries to open the wardrobe. It is locked. She puts the slippers down.

You realize, of course, that the death of a patient terminates my contract?

20 McLeavy Yes.

Fay When do you wish me to leave?

McLeavy Stay for a few hours. I've grown used to your company.

Fay Impossible. I'm needed at other sickbeds. Complain to the Society if you disagree with the rules.

She picks up his coat, holds it out for him to put on.

You've been a widower for three days. Have you considered a second marriage yet?

McLeavy (struggling into his coat) No.

Fay Why not?

McLeavy I've been so busy with the funeral.

Fay You must find someone to take Mrs McLeavy's place. She wasn't perfect.

30 McLeavy A second wife would be a physical impossibility.

Fay I'll hear none of that. My last husband at sixty came through with flying colours. Three days after our wedding he was performing extraordinary feats.

She takes the coathanger to the wardrobe. She tries to open the wardrobe door, frowns, puts the coathanger beside her slippers.

You must marry a girl with youth and vitality. Someone with a consistent attitude towards religion. That's most important. With her dying breath Mrs McLeavy cast doubt upon the authenticity of the Gospels. What kind of wife is that for you? The leading Catholic layman within a radius of forty miles. Where did you meet such a woman?

McLeavy At an informal get-together run by a Benedictine monk.

40 Fay takes the flower from his hand and pins it on to his coat.

Fay Was she posing as a Catholic?

McLeavy Yes.

Fay She had a deceitful nature. That much is clear. We mustn't let it happen again. I'll sort out some well-meaning young woman. Bring her here. Introduce you. I can visualize her - medium height, slim, fair hair. A regular visitor to some place of worship. And an ex-member of the League of Mary.

McLeavy Someone like yourself?

Fay Exactly. (She takes a clothes brush and brushes him down.) Realize your potential. Marry at once.

McLeavy St Kilda's would be in uproar.

Fay The Fraternity of the Little Sisters is on my side. Mother Agnes-Mary feels you're a challenge. She's treating it as a specifically Catholic problem.

McLeavy She treats washing her feet as a Catholic problem.

Fay She has every right to do so.

McLeavy Don't Protestants have feet then?

Fay The Holy Father hasn't given a ruling on the subject and so, as far as I'm concerned, they haven't. Really, I sometimes wonder whether living with that woman hasn't made a free thinker of you. You must marry again after a decent interval of mourning.

McLeavy What's a decent interval?

Fay A fortnight would be long enough to indicate your grief. We must keep abreast of the times.

(Quelle: Joe Orton, The Complete Plays, New York: Grove Press, 1990. 195-197.)

- Untersuchen Sie das Verhältnis von McLeavy und Fay und arbeiten Sie die Motivationen der beiden Figuren heraus!
- 2. Analysieren Sie das obige Exzerpt mit Blick auf die hier implizit und explizit inszenierten Geschlechterrollen!
- 3. Analysieren Sie die Darstellung von Religion in dieser Passage! Berücksichtigen Sie dabei den Entstehungszeitraum des Texts und ziehen Sie mindestens ein weiteres für den Vergleich relevantes Drama heran!

Thema Nr. 3

Die folgende Textpassage stammt aus dem Roman *Quicksand* (1928) der afrikanisch-amerikanischen Autorin Nella Larsen. Im Zentrum des Romans steht die kritische Thematisierung weiblicher schwarzer Identität. Er setzt sich mit den Erfahrungen der Protagonistin Helga Crane auseinander, die davon geprägt sind, dass sie die Tochter einer dänischen Mutter und eines afrikanisch-amerikanischen Vaters ist. Helga lebt an verschiedenen Orten in den USA, aber auch in Europa. Die Passage bezieht sich auf ihre Zeit in Dänemark, wo sie als junge Frau auf Einladung von Verwandten eine Zeit lang lebt, etliche Freiheiten genießen kann, jedoch nie den Status einer Exotin verliert. Außerdem bezieht sie sich u. a. auf den Erhalt eines Briefes ihrer Freundin Anne, in dem diese ihre bevorstehende Heirat mit einem Mann, Dr. Anderson, ankündigt, für den Helga selbst – wenn auch widersprüchliche – Gefühle hegt.

1 Well into Helga's second year in Denmark, came an indefinite discontent. Not clear, but 2 vague, like a storm gathering far on the horizon. It was long before she would admit that she

3 was less happy than she had been during her first year in Copenhagen, but she knew that it

4 was so. And this subconscious knowledge added to her growing restlessness and little mental

5 insecurity. She desired ardently to combat this wearing down of her satisfaction with her life,

6 with herself. But she didn't know how.

Frankly the question came to this: what was the matter with her? Was there, without her knowing it, some peculiar lack in her? Absurd. But she began to have a feeling of discouragement and hopelessness. Why couldn't she be happy, content, somewhere? Other people managed, somehow, to be. To put it plainly, didn't she know how? Was she incapable of it?

And then on a warm spring day came Anne's letter telling of her coming marriage to Anderson, who retained still his shadowy place in Helga Crane's memory. It added, somehow, to her discontent, and to her growing dissatisfaction with her peacock's life. This, too, annoyed her.

[...]

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18 19 Anne, it seemed, wanted her to come back for the wedding. This, Helga had no intention of doing. True, she had liked and admired Anne better than anyone she had ever known, but even for her she wouldn't cross the ocean.

Go back to America, where they hated Negroes! To America, where Negroes were not people. To America, where Negroes were allowed to be beggars only, of life, of happiness, of security. To America, where everything had been taken from those dark ones, liberty, respect, even the labor of their hands. To America, where if one had Negro blood, one mustn't expect money, education, or, sometimes, even work whereby one might earn bread. Perhaps she was wrong to bother about it now that she was so far away. Helga couldn't, however, help it. Never could she recall the shames and often the absolute horrors of the black man's existence in America without the quickening of her heart's beating and a sensation of disturbing nausea.

28 It was too awful. The sense of dread of it was almost a tangible thing in her throat.

(Quelle: Nella Larsen, Quicksand. Penguin Classics. New York: Penguin Books, 2002. 83-84.)

- Identifizieren Sie die Erzählperspektive und stilistische Merkmale in der Textpassage und analysieren Sie deren Funktion!
- 2. Die Figur der Helga Crane stellt ein Beispiel für den Figurentyp der "tragic mulatta" dar. Erläutern Sie, worin ihr Identitätskonflikt besteht!
- 3. Der Roman *Quicksand* erschien in den 1920er Jahren und markiert damit eine Blüteperiode der afrikanisch-amerikanischen Literaturgeschichte wie auch der amerikanischen Literaturgeschichte überhaupt. Erläutern Sie die Relevanz der 1920er Jahre für die literarischen Produktion in den USA!