



1650

Ist Lieb' ein Feuer? - Annotated Transcription

Sibylle Schwartz

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Schwartz, Sibylle, "Ist Lieb' ein Feuer? - Annotated Transcription" (1650). *Poetry*. 3515.
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/sophpm_poetry/3515

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Selected Poetry

SIBYLLE SCHWARTZ

A German poet of the Baroque era, Sibylle Schwartz was also known as Sibylla Schwarz. Schwartz was born February 14, 1621 in Greifswald, Germany. She was the daughter of Christian Schwartz, mayor of Greifswald, and his wife Regina Schwartz. The first six years of her life were lived out in peace, until the Thirty Years' War reached Greifswald in 1627; then just three later Schwartz' mother died. Poetry became a way through which Schwartz could cope with her emotions and feelings, and much of the anguish and pain that she suffered can be read in the lines of her verse, which deals with many important topics of the era, such as love, war and death.



Tragically, Schwartz fell seriously ill at seventeen years of age and died in July 31, 1638 in her home town of Greifswald, Germany. It was only after her death that her work started to receive the recognition it deserved, and in 1650 her teacher, Samuel Gerlach, published much of her work in a two-part collection.

The following works from Schwartz are two very different pieces. The first, *Ist Lieb' ein Feur?* presses close to the heart of the speaker, providing an insight into a life lived during a war and insights on emotion, how it can be controlled, and subsequently how this emotion can control us if we allow it to. The second piece, *Auff ihren Abscheid auss Greiffswald, Gesang*, concentrates again on the speaker's experience with war. Linguistically speaking, both texts provide a challenge in understanding both vocabulary and grammar; just the age of the texts alone, which derive from the early 17th century, provides the reader with an archaic system of spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. Nevertheless, the texts are rich in 17th century thinking and ideals and they provide significant insights into the times and circumstances surrounding Sibylle Schwartz.

SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

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Ist Lieb' ein Feur?¹

SIBYLLE SCHWARTZ



IST LIEB' EIN FEUR, und kan das Eisen schmiegen,
bin ich voll Feur, und voller Liebes Pein,
wohrvohn² mag doch der Liebsten Hertze seyn?
wans³ eisern wär, so würd eß mir erliegen,
wans gülden⁴ wär, so würd ichs können biegen,
durch meine Gluht; solls aber fleischern seyn,
so schließ ich fort: Eß ist ein fleischern Stein:
doch kan mich nicht ein Stein, wie sie, betriegen⁵.

Ists dan wie Frost, wie kalter Schnee und Eiß,
wie presst sie dann auß mir den Liebesschweiß?
Mich deucht⁶: Ihr Herz ist wie die Loorberblätter⁷,
die nicht berührt ein starcker Donnerkeil⁸,
sie, sie verlacht, Cupido, deine [sic] Pfeil;
und ist befreyt für deinem[sic] Donnerwetter.

¹ Schwarzin, Sibyllen. *Ander Teil Deutscher Poëtischer Gedichten: Nuhn zuhm erstenmahl auf ihren eignen Handschriften herausgegeben und verleget*. Dantzig: Seel. Georg Rheten Witwen, 1650. Print.

² wohrvohn: wovon

³ wans: wenn es

⁴ gülden: golden

⁵ betriegen: betrügen

⁶ mich deucht: *deucht* is the 1st person singular form of *dünken*. In this sense it means "it seems to me."

⁷ Loorberblätter: laurel leaves

⁸ der Donnerkeil: thunderbolt