

Shakespeare's Sonnets' Sequence and the Theme of Eternity

Aqeel Muslim Mohd Al-Mamouri^a, Muslim Mohd. Al-Mamouri^b, Ali Ahmed Mohammed^c, ^{a,b}Al-Mustaqbal University College, ^cGeneral Directorate of Education/Babylon, Iraq,

This research deals with the sonnets as poems of fourteen lines with a distinctive rhyming pattern. The iambic pentameter is used in these poems. There are two basic types of sonnets: the Italian (Petrarchan) Sonnet and the English (Shakespearean) Sonnet. Shakespeare has a sequence of 154 sonnets, the first group (1-126) addressed to his friend the Earl of Southampton, the fair lord; and the second group (127-154) to the dark lady. Shakespeare wanted to eternalise his friend through his writing. His poems included the theme of immortality through love, time, children, and the problems of life. The research also focuses on the sonnet, meaning, development, types, and it concerned with Shakespeare's sonnet: structure and themes and the immortality in the sonnet sequence.

Keywords: *The sonnet, Types, Structure, Themes, Immortality*

Introduction

The publication of Shakespeare's was two fashionably erotic narrative poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece and his Sonnets. The Sonnets describe the devotion of a character, often identified as the poet himself, to a young man whose beauty and virtue he praises and to a mysterious and faithless dark lady who the poet is infatuated. The ensuing triangular situation, resulting from the attractive of the poet's friend to the dark lady, is treated with passionate intensity and psychological insight. They are prized for their exploration of love in all its aspects, and a poem such as "Sonnet 18" is one of the most famous love poems of all time. While the poem is familiar, it is less well known that it is an exquisite celebration of a young man's beauty. The fact that 126 of 154 Sonnets are apparently addressed by a male poet to another man has caused some critical discomfort over the years. However, Shakespeare's modern reputation is based mainly on the 38 plays that he wrote, modified, or collaborated. Although generally popular in his day, these plays were frequently little esteemed by his educated contemporaries, who considered English plays of their day to be only vulgar entertainment.

The Sonnet: Meaning, Development and Types

A sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines with a specific rhyme scheme and meter (usually iambic pentameter). This format of poetry forces the poet to wrap his thoughts in a small, neat package. It originated in Sicily, Italy, in the 13th century with the sonnet (which means a little song), which could be read or sung with the accompaniment of a lute. English poets imitated the Italian poets in writing poems. They called their poems sonnets, a term coined from the sonnet. Frequently, the theme of the sonnet was love. The theme also sometimes centred on religion, politics, or other topics.

Poets often write their sonnets as part of a series, with each sonnet being a sequel to the previous one. For example, William Shakespeare (1564-1616) wrote a series of 154 sonnets on the theme of love, beauty, children, immortality and other problems of life.

It took several hundred years for the sonnet to take the hold in England. Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard (Earl of Surrey) young poets, who credited with bringing the form to England while they were studying and travelling in Italy in the mid-1500s. The Petrarchan sonnet (also called Italian sonnet) has a sestet structure; an octave (8-line stanza) and a sestet (6-line stanza). The break between the two stanzas is called the volta, or turning point, and at this time, something in the poem's argument changes. There are several variations of the Petrarchan rhyme scheme especially for the last stanza, but it tends to be: abba in the octave, and cd cd cd or cde cde in the sestet (Mohammed, 1985). Very fine sonnets were published by Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, and the form began to gain popularity. One of the best poems is "Whose List to Hunt" by Thomas Wyatt. The Italian form was changed by Wyatt and Surrey (Mohammed, 1985). The Shakespearean sonnet is the result of that change. The Shakespearean sonnet (also called Elizabethan or English sonnet) is consisting of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) and one couplet, and its rhyme scheme tends to be: ab ab cd cd ef ef gg. The closing couplet marks the Shakespearean sonnet's volta or turning point (Pericles, 1993).

Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, John Donne, and others used the sonnet form in the 16th century. Spenserian sonnet is a third category of the sonnet, and it is a result of changes made by Spenser. The Spenserian sonnet: Edmund Spenser invented this pattern of the sonnet. Spenserian sonnet used in the Fairie Queen. This sonnet is written with the pattern ab abbc bc, cdee using five rhymes. In the first two quatrains, one idea presented, a second at the third quatrain. Between the eighth and the ninth line, there is a stanza break. The beginning of the third quatrain of Spenser's sonnet is the ninth line, and he often started it with or yet. It seems to indicate a volta, where it would be in an Italian sonnet. There is no turn at all, but the actual turn occurs at the beginning of the couplet, like the Shakespearean sonnet. The Shakespearean and the Petrarchan forms gained the popularity more than the



Spenserian sonnet. An essential figure in the history of the sonnet is John Milton, though few other poets were writing sonnet during his life. Milton's writings in the 17th century, followed the style of Spenser, Shakespeare and Donne.

Death, commonly viewed as an all-powerful force against life, is otherwise described in John Donne's holy sonnet. As found in any English sonnet, there is a rhyme scheme and a standard meter. Although the standard meter is the iambic pentameter, as in most English sonnets, the rhyme scheme differs a little from the usual, consisting of abba abba cddc ae. Sonnets convey various thoughts and feelings to the reader through the different moods set by the author. In this case, the speaker having to confront death and defeat it sets the mood. Throughout existence, there have been many theories regarding what role death plays in the lives of those who experience it. Some think death is the ultimate controller of all living things, while others believe it is nothing more than the act of dying once your time has come. Donne, on the other hand, has his philosophy (William, 1985).

The Italian rhyme scheme kept in the Miltonic sonnet. The way of the construction of the octave and sestet changed. Here the sonnet no longer breaks at the octave but flows over and jumps from line to line into sestet. The theme of the typical sonnet also changed by Milton. He moved into longer intellectual and religious concerns, and development began by Donne.

The form becomes almost extinct after Milton. Historians draw our attention only to a single sonnet written by Thomas Gray, "On the Death of Mr Richard West".

The sonnet remained an unpopular form for an extended period. But the sonnet was revived again in the romantic period, which is generally considered to span the years of 1789-1832. Credit was given to several poets, for calling attention to the sonnet during this time. William Lisle Bowles is the son of a Vicar, toured northern England in 1780, published an influential collection of sonnets which admired by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, and a large public. An influential female sonnet writer is Charlott Smith. Helen Maria Williams is a famous figure who also influenced Wordsworth. Helen Maria Williams was a religious dissenter and supporter of abolitionism and ideals of the French Revolution. She was even imprisoned in Paris during the Reign of Terror. Wordsworth wrote a poem for her in 1787. He is credited for bringing the sonnet back to life and restoring its immense popularity during this period, although many sonnet writers of his day influenced him. During this period, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats also led the list of sonnet writers. In the 19th century a brother and sister, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Christina Rossetti helped to maintain the sonnet's presence. The family literature, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and George Meredith one two other poets of this period. They wrote sonnet sequences (series of related sonnets) about romantic relationships. The Browning sonnet which was produced by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861), one about the intense love she felt for her husband, poet Robert

Browning. She called this series sonnet From the Portuguese, a little based on the pet name Robert gave her "My little Portugee". "Sonnet 43" was the next to the last sonnet in this series. In composing her sonnet, she had two types of sonnet formats from which to choose: the Italian model popularised by Petrarch (1304-1374) and the English model popularised by Shakespeare (1564-1616). She chose Petrarch's model.

Browning's sonnets from the Portuguese express passionate design and Meredith's modern love charts a disintegrating relationship between men and women (Elizabeth Barret Brownings's Sonnet, 43).

The Non-Traditional sonnet is written in free verse, which means it needs not to be written in any particular meter, and it most likely does not rhyme. A non-traditional sonnet will almost always still be 14 lines and contain some sort of Volta, or turning point, but it need not be broken into stanzas of a specific length. It might not be broken into stanzas at all.

The Shakespearean and Petrarchan forms and used more. In the 19th century, a prominent figure was Gerard Manley Hopkins. He may have been the most original sonneteer of this period. He was not widely known during his life. His innovations to the sonnet are thought to have influenced modern poets.

The Shakespearean Sonnet Structure and Themes

There is no octave-sestet structure in the Shakespearean sonnet. One consisting of three quatrains and they end with a rhymed couplet. The rhyme scheme is abab cdcd efef gg. The Shakespearean sonnet with its three quatrains and final couplet was explained by Mark Strand and Evan Boland as that: it allows the fairly free association of images to develop lyrically towards a conclusion. The introducer of the subject in the Shakespearean sonnet is the first quatrain. The developer of the subject or an introducer of conflict are the second and the third quatrains. The poet can resolve the conflict or offer a comment or summary statement in the final couplet. The three quatrains were as three points to an argument, as talked by others. No matter how one looks at the three quatrains, the ending couplet demands a story conclusion, and the subject matter should fit (Barber, 1987).

The central theme of the sonnet was taken collectively. Is Shakespeare's deep love for, and his profound admiration for the Earl of Southampton? The first one hundred and twenty-six sonnets contain many tributes to the Earl of Southampton, and they express Shakespeare's profound attachment to him. However, a few of them contain his grievances against that eminent personage. Shakespeare's adulterous love affair with the dark lady (adulterous because Shakespeare was a married man and had a wife living back at home in the town of

Stratford on-Aron), is another theme. This theme emerged mainly in the sonnets of the second group (127-152). The sonnets presented a situation for the reader.

It seems that the Earl of Southampton began to feel attracted by Shakespeare's mistress (the dark lady) and that, in the course of time, was able to win her heart and take her away from Shakespeare. The Earl of Southampton became guilty of betraying Shakespeare's trust in him. Shakespeare was offended by the Earl of Southampton's behaviour. Shakespeare thought the young lord had let him down badly and that his mistress too, had played his false. Thus, he severely condemns the dark lady for her betrayal. This is shown in the sonnets of the second group. Shakespeare still loves her passionately and sensually. He continues his love and admiration to his friend, and this is shown in the sonnets of the first group.

The power of time is an important theme, which seems to become a magnificent obsession for Shakespeare as his friendship with the Earl of Southampton and his love for the dark lady had become. There is another theme which is also quite important and receives a lot of emphasis from Shakespeare. The other theme is the greatness of Shakespeare's poetic genius. Shakespeare expresses a very high opinion about the sonnets which he has written, telling his friend several times, and with great force. These sonnets would preserve his friend's youth and beauty forever, and that these sonnets are therefore more powerful even than time. Given this variety and multiplicity of themes, these sonnets are for us a rich storehouse, and a precious treasure of ideas and feelings (Rajinder, 2008).

The rhyme scheme is distinctive, the pattern of the rhyme (ab ab cd cd ef ef gg) distinguishes the Shakespearean sonnet from the Petrarchan, which uses a different pattern. The rhyme marks out the separate elements of argument by providing cohesion in each thought.

The style is marked by intensity: the language is heightened, the structure is tightly patterned, and metrical rhymes are carefully controlled. This means that there is an economy in the form. The technique of the sonnets that the readers must be active. Shakespeare expects his readers to make connections to be limited with the argument and to reassess accepted knowledge in the light of the final couplet.

The themes provide emphasis, but Shakespeare looks at these themes with a new perspective. He tries to give a contradictory argument, after that the poet tries to reconcile the conflicting ideas. The form of the sonnet has long been related to the theme of love and Shakespeare's sequence also uses this theme as its running thread. He treats the theme broadly, however, dealing with relationships (with his patron: sonnet 102; his lover: sonnet 18) and analysing the complexity of emotions and attitudes (the nature of love: sonnet 16; the passing of beauty: sonnet 12; death: sonnet 123). Most of the sonnets have a sad tone, and these focus on the restrictions time places on all human relationships. In addressing the nature of man's

mortality, Shakespeare regards means in which men can challenge time through marriage (sonnet 11), children (sonnet 1 and 6), love (sonnets 105, 116 and 123) even though the sonnets themselves, which will inevitably outlive him (Sonnets 55, 60 and 63).

The theme of mutability is nearly related to his understanding of the ever-changing process of life (sonnet 60): deceptive appearances, illusion and the unpredictable nature of the imagination all features in his observations. Underlying everything is an understanding of the instability of life (Andrwe, 1999).

Immortality in the Sonnet Sequence

Shakespeare's sonnets were published in 1609. There is a belief that they were written in Shakespeare's career, around the time of King Henry VI (1591); Richard III (1486); Titus Andronicus (1590); Love's Labour's Lost (1598); The Two Gentlemen of Verona (1591); The Comedy of Errors (1599); and The Taming of The Shrew (1594). That is, before 1594, sonnets were written at different times and then. They were brought together in an order that consisted of developing an argument with an underlying sense of continuity.

Shakespeare has a sequence of 154 sonnets. Shakespeare's sonnet series consists of two parts the first part includes sonnets (1-126). These sonnets are concerned with his friend the Earl of Southampton. Critics often call sonnets (1-126) the "fair lord Sonnets" because they tell the story of the poet's growing affection for a young and handsome man. The first group of the sonnets are addressed directly to the fair lord himself, but the sonnets are not sure about the lord himself or the effect he has on the poet's emotional state (Andrew, 1987).

The second group of sonnets begin from sonnet 127 onwards. A sequence contains sonnets about a woman known as the dark lady. Shakespeare shows his mingled emotions for this lady, who does not show the conventional image of the blonde-haired, blue-eyed, pale-skinned beauty celebrated in sonnets by earlier poets. Shakespeare is older than the dark lady. She is not beautiful but promiscuous—the beloved of Shakespeare, the young man, and other men. Many suggestions were made to her identity, including Mary Fitton, Luce Morgan, Emilia Lanier, and Jacqueline Field. Whoever she was, real or imagined, the dark lady prompted some of Shakespeare's sorrowful poetry.

In sonnet (78-86), an important character appeared in the action of the sonnets. This character is called "Rival Poet". Shakespeare's contemporaries who have proposed as the rival poet include George Chapman, Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, Ben Jonson, George Peele, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, Thomas Nashe, Edmund Spenser, and Richard Barnfield. All that is known about the Rival Poet from the sonnets is that Shakespeare considered him presumably a university graduate, which Shakespeare was not.

In brief, the Shakespearean sonnet series consists of two parts, the first part which is the larger one consists of the sonnets (1-126), in this group the poet addresses his love for the young man in a variety of ways. The second part consists of only 28 sonnets, in the sonnet (127-154) the poet addresses his love to his beloved, the dark lady. The dark lady is stolen by Shakespeare's friend, and this is clear in the sonnets (40-42). The poet mentioned his thought about taking his place in his friend's affection, that is apparent in sonnets (71 -78). In the sonnets (110-111), the poet worries that his friend resents his public displays (Sara, 2006).

The first group of the sonnets (1-17) are referred to as the "procreation sonnets", the sonnets open in public, ceremonial tone. They graciously entreat a noble and beautiful young man (the fair youth) to have a child who will preserve his physical virtues after being old or dead. Most of the central themes or key images in the sonnet cycle are first expressed here in stylised terms: beauty's passing, the human desire to preserve beauty against time and decay. The deferential relationship between the fair youth and the poet who speaks the sonnets, the connection among people that the desire to preserve beauty motivates, the power of verse to persuade and memorialise, and (gently expressed) the narcissism and selfishness that underlies the youth's indifference to the poet's requests.

The theme of procreation continues until sonnet 18, after that the poet seems to leave it in favour of a new course. From then on the poet seeks to eternalise the fair lord's beauty in the lines of his verse. Critics can notice that in sonnet (1) as in the following lines:

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die, (ll.1-2)

In these lines, the poet, William Shakespeare seems infatuated with it himself. It is clear that the poet often drew on Greek and Latin myths and legend in his works, critics see a possible allusion to the story of Narcissus in the fair lord's obsession with his appearance.

The fair lord seems not only obsessed with his beauty but also immoderately selfish with it, at least in the eyes of the poet. This is clear in the following two lines from sonnet (2):

How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If then couldst answer this fair child of mine (ll.9-10)

Here, the poet tried to urge his friend to get a child by making use of his beauty and getting married in this way; he will win a much better kind of praise. Then he can justify his old age by getting a beautiful child to represent the achievement. The praise, which he would get, would be better deserved by him.

The poet continued the same idea in the sonnet (3), but it is stated or expressed differently. The feeling in this sonnet is also very much the same, namely one of admiration for the beauty of the friend in whose honour Shakespeare wrote these sonnets:

So than through windows of thine age shalt see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time (ll.9-10)

These two lines identified that the beauty of the fair lord is a reflection of his mother's beauty, and when his mother looks at him, she recalls the loveliness of her youthful days when she had given birth to him. In the same way, if he begets a child, he would, in his old age, see with his own eyes this golden period of his life even though he would, at that time, be having wrinkles on his forehead.

Nature has endowed the poet's friend with beauty, and it becomes the friend's obligation to reproduce this beauty by having a child as in sonnet (4):

Unthrifty loveliness why dost thou spend
Upon thy self thy beauty's legacy ? (ll.1-2)

The fair lord has bequeathed his beauty from nature, but this beauty is not being properly utilised by him. He did not take any steps to produce similar vision in another human being, so he is wasting his beauty upon himself.

Time brings beauty into existence; also, it acts as a destroyer of that beauty. The flowers fade away and lose their beauty in the course of time. However, the beauty of flowers can be preserved by extracting their essence in a liquid form as in sonnet (5):

Then were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass, (ll.9-10)

Here, the poet tried to tell his friend the same idea that if he does not make benefit from his beauty to beget a child, his beauty will fade away by the passage of time, so his beauty can be preserved by begetting a child.

Sonnet (6) becomes almost mournful at the close when the poet speaks of death killing a human being and making it possible for the worms to eat the dead body in the grave,

Be not self-willed for thou art much too fair,
To be death's conquest and make worms their heir (ll.13-14)

Again, the poet advised his friend to eternalise himself. In such an event, death would be helpless against him. When his end comes, he would be leaving behind his image or images for the coming generation to remember him. Also, the poet wanted his friend not to be obstinate but get married. He is so beautiful that death should not be allowed to obliterate

him and send him to the grave for the worms to feed upon if the poet's friend dies without having begotten a son. He would be forgotten just as the sun is forgotten towards the evening when it is about to set. In sonnet (7), too, there is a sense of melancholy.

So thou, thy self out going in thy noon:
Unlooked on diest unless thou get a son. (ll.13-14)

At that time, human eyes, which had previously looked at the sun dutifully and devotedly, now change their direction and, seeing the sun go downwards, lose their interest in it. In the same way, the poet's friend, would cross the prime of his youth and would die unnoticed and unremembered if he does not produce a son.

Critics noticed in the sonnet (8) that the poet's friend listens to music without feeling delighted by it. Perhaps it seems to him that he is being scolded by the sounds of the music of the poem which are scolding him. He has remained a single entity, whereas he should have played more than one role in life. He should not only have been himself but also a husband and a father. The poet's feeling behind this sonnet is one of regret at the failure of his friend to have played that triple role.

Whose speechless song bring many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee, Thou single wilt prove none. (ll.13-14)

Three different musical sounds combining could be compared to a father, a child and the happy mother who has given birth to that child, just as those sonnets form a delightful pattern, so does this family constitute a pleasing combination. Such a family, though consisting of three persons, seems to be one, and it seems to be sending him a silent but musical message which is that, if he remained single, he would have no real identity in this world because he would not be leaving behind any token for the world to be remembered.

This series of assumptions continued as in the sonnet (9). If the poet's friend does not get married and does not produce a child, the world would after his death, weep over his failure to have done so because he would have left no trace of himself behind him. If a beautiful young man like the poet's friend, does not marry, it means that he feels no love for anybody except himself. Here, again the motion prompting the poem is one of regret.

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumes thy self in single life? (ll.1-2)

This sonnet contains an interesting conceit. If the poet's friend dies without getting married and, therefore, without producing any child, the world would become a widow when he dies.

Shakespeare seems real to have admired, loved and adored the young man (most probably the Earl of Southampton) to whom he has certainly immortalised through them.

The poet continues eternalising his friend in the sonnet (10), by not getting married and, therefore, not producing any children, the poet's friend is only proving to be his enemy. The poet wants his friend to bring about a change in his thinking idea about marriage. Only by having children can the poet's friend preserve his beauty. The emotion behind this sonnet continues to be the one which prompted the preceding sonnets, namely affecting of admiration for the friend's beauty and a desire that the friend should preserve this beauty for all time by getting married and producing children.

Make these another self for love of me
That beauty still may live in thine or thee. (ll.13-14)

The fair lord has to do so for the sake of the poet and to prove his love for him. If he accepts this suggestion, his beauty will continue to live always in his offspring after his death as long as he lives.

In the sonnet (11), if everybody were to adopt the same attitude towards marriage and children, which the poet's friend has adopted, the world would soon come to an end. The poet looks upon his friend as nature's finest specimen of the beauty of man, and the poet wants his friend to produce children so that the number of such models may increase. The poet's feeling of admiration and adoration for his friend is evident once again:

As far as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest, (ll.1-2)

As time passes, the fair lord would go on declining rapidly in his beauty and charm. But his beauty and charm can remain alive, and even increase, in one of the children whom he might produce (after getting married).

Critics referred to the fact that in the sonnet (12) everything declines and come to an end over time. The beauty of the poet's friend would also decline and come to an end one day. However, the poet's friend can continue to live after his death if he gets married and produces children. The feeling, which prompted this sonnet, is once again that of love, which Shakespeare felt for his friend:

Then of thy beauty do I question make
That thou among the wastes of time must go, (ll.9-10)



When the poet witnessed the changes because of the passage of the time, he became doubtful about the durability of his beauty. He began to think that, in the course of time, he grows old and die without being remembered.

If the poet's friend has any regard for his own identity, he will get married to produce a son who would then continue to be a reminder to the world of the friend's beauty. The poet's friend had a father; it would only be logical for the friend to have a son. The feeling behind the sonnet (13) is the poet's ardent love and admiration for his friend, and also his concern that the friend should not be forgotten after his death as in:

Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold? (ll.11-12)

Nobody allows such a beautiful face and figure to crumble and come to an end because honour demands that such a face and figure should be properly guarded against the attack of death which puts a permanent end to the warmth of the human body.

In sonnet (14), the poet is not an astrologer predicting the future by watching the stars. The beautiful eyes of his friend are the stars, by watching and studying them, he can predict that truth and beauty would perish in this world if his friend is not to beget a son to embody and thus continue the truth and beauty which are at present in the friend's possession:

But from thane eyes my knowledge I derive,
And constant stars in them I read such art (ll.9-10)

The eyes of the fair lord are like the stars which here never shift their position in the sky, and his eyes contain the profound message that truth and beauty advance and flourish together in this world. If he changes his outlook upon life and agrees to preserve a memory of his life here by producing a son, truth and beauty shall surely flourish. If he does not do so, then he can make this prophecy when he dies, truth and beauty will also die, and will no longer be found in this world.

Everything in this world has a short duration, and perfection of any kind has only a brief existence. Time seems to the poet to be conspiring with the forces of decay to destroy the beauty of the poet's friend. However, Shakespeare himself would come to rescue his friend and save him from extinction or oblivion by writing these sonnets about him. This is clear in the sonnet (15):

And all in war with time for love of you
As he takes from you, I engraft you new (ll.13-14)

The poet rises in arms against the forces of time because of his love for his friend; and, as time produces to deprive him of his youthful beauty. The poet produces to immortalise the youthful beauty of the fair lord by writing these sonnets.

Having promised his friend immortality through the sonnet (16), Shakespeare here again changes his stance and suggests that his friend should attain immortality by a more effective method which would be to marry and beget children who would, therefore, continue his beauty. Here Shakespeare regards his friend's reproductive powers as more significant than the excellence of his sonnets as the following:

To give a way yourself, keeps yourself still,
And you must live drawn by your own sweet skin (ll.13-14)

By surrendering his bachelorhood, he can preserve his youth and beauty for all time to come through the children produced through marriage. And he must continue to live forever by his power and potency as a husband.

In the sonnet (17), the poet once again changes his stance and proceeds from the point of view, which is different from that which he had adopted in the preceding sonnet. He now says that nobody would, in the times to come, believe his account of the beauty and charm of his friend and that people would think that the writer of these sonnets had merely invented this beauty because no real human being can possess the beauty of this unique kind. It would, therefore, be much better if the poet's friend adopts some other means of achieving immortality. The friend should adopt some means by which people would believe that such beauty had existed. That method would be for the poet's friend to marry and to beget a son whose presence among the people would convince them that someone as beautiful as this child must have lived at time and produced an exact copy himself. It is clear that the poet's feeling of admiration for his friend's beauty is the source of inspiration for writing this sonnet:

But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice in it, and in my rhyme. (ll.13-14)

However, if some child of yours were living in those times to come, people would actually believe that a man like you had existed. In this way, you would get double immortality. You would live through your child, and you would continue to live in these sonnets too.

The poet discards his ceremonial tone for a new tone of a personal declaration. Mentioning a child will immortalise the young man's beauty, the poet's verses will serve this role. The poems also render superfluous a woman to bear the fair youth a son. The poet openly declares his attachment to the young man, and because of the ways that the young man

affects the poet increasing the power of the poet's verse but inhibiting the poet's ability to express his love directly the poet's character and suffering also begin to enter the picture. The second group consists of the sonnets (18-25).

Critics notice in the sonnet (18) that the beauty of a day in summer is variable and short-lived. The beauty of Shakespeare's friend, however, is lovelier than this beauty. Shakespeare would immortalise his friend's beauty by means of the sounds which he has written. Shakespeare's emotion in this sonnet is one of joy in his friend's beauty and also one of pride in his own achievement in having written these sonnets:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. (ll.13-14)

Death would not be able to make any such claim because his beauty would increase rather than fade through these sonnets which the poet is writing as a tribute to you. As long as men live in this world, and as long as men have eyes which can see, so long would these sonnets continue to be read, and these sonnets would impart to him immortal life:

Time does a lot of damage to living beings: but the poet forbids time to do any damage to the youth and beauty of his friend. However, if time is bent upon doing some damage to the youth and beauty of his friend, the poet has meant as his disposal to the efforts of time. The poet would himself preserve the youth and beauty of his friend by writing sonnets which would always be perused by the people of this earth. The intensity of the poet's admiration for his friend's youth and beauty, and the intensity of his love for his friend, are evident in the sonnet (19) as in many others:

Yet do thy worst old Time: despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever line young. (ll.13-14)

While creating Shakespeare's friend, nature and originally wanted to bring into existence a woman of unusual beauty. That is the reason why the features, the face, and the countenance of Shakespeare's friend closely resemble those of a woman. However, having started the process of creation, nature changed her mind only at the last moment and, instead of creating a woman, created a man, saying in the sonnet (20) that,

A man is hue all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazed. (ll.7-8)

Shakespeare would not like to describe the beauty of his friend in the manner in which many poets describe beauty. He would like to offer a realistic description of his friend's beauty



whereas there are poets who, to convey an extravagant idea of the beauty of their beloveds, use extravagant comparisons, drawing their simile and metaphors from all kinds of sources, and these vitiating the truth of their descriptions as in the sonnet (21).

O let me true in love but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair, (ll.9-10)

Shakespeare would not regard himself as an older man so long as his friend looks young and beautiful. For this reason, Shakespeare wants his friend to preserve his youth and beauty as long as possible, and on his own as in the sonnet (22):

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as youth and thou are of one date, (ll.1-2)

Conclusion

There are some sonnets in which Shakespeare promises immortality to his friend. Time would, of course, lead ultimately and inevitably to the friend's old age and death. Shakespeare feels certain about the durability of his sonnets which would never cease to be perused and which would, therefore, keep the name and fame of his friend alive forever. These sonnets may be labelled as the eternising sonnets. In other words, Shakespeare imagines that his friend would continue to retain his youth and beauty forever and would always look youthful and beautiful. Shakespeare asserts that his friend would shine more bright in these sonnets than stone memorials and tombs which become covered thickly with dust and dirt in the course of time.



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