

Tempore et Amore in Shakespeare's Sonnets

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Abstract - Tempore et Amore are two Italian words which stand for Time and Love respectively. This paper gives a manifestation on how these two themes are exemplified in some of Shakespeare's sonnets. The choice words for the title are solely for stylistics purposes, but their English equivalents are retained and utilized in this whole text. This paper likewise wishes to shed light on his sonnets specifically on the themes of Time and Love. These themes and others have a never-ceasing appeal to people during the Renaissance for they stimulate the intellect and sway the emotions. Utilizing the New Criticism Theory stating that a poem's meaning has to be explored by the verbal structure that it employs, this paper is not to present any startling novel revelations about Shakespeare's sonnets but a more generalized analysis of these themes as exemplified in these literary forms. Whatever concerns the form now like meter and rhyme as well as other conventions can be leading aspects of its meaning. The sonnet therefore, having fixed meter and definite rhyme scheme can be analyzed by using this model. Thus, the basic utilization of these two

themes has a significant role to play in that text as illustrated by this contemporary theory.

Keywords - Tempore et Amore, Shakespeare, sonnets

INTRODUCTION

Tempore et Amore are two Italian words which stand for Time and Love respectively. This paper will give a manifestation on how these two themes are exemplified in some of Shakespeare's sonnets. My choice of these two words for the title is solely for stylistics purposes, but their English equivalents are retained and utilized in this whole text.

A review of criticism and scholarly works on Shakespeare has been an interesting concern for me for reasons that these can be valuable tools in my search for that definite goal of finding out the existence of TIME (tempore) and LOVE (amore) in his sonnets. These literary forms in turn leave a distinctive part as Renaissance literary genres. Although several critical approaches to Shakespeare may prove very successful, this paper will at least earn its rightful place as a contribution in the field of literary study. The influence of Shakespeare in the literary world cannot be neglected and many critics always point to how his works have epitomized not only the renaissance but as well as the modern world.

Several criticisms especially on his tragedies, comedies and histories abound but few papers focus on his sonnets. This is why, this paper somehow wishes to shed light on his sonnets specifically on the themes of Time and Love. These themes and others have a never-ceasing appeal to people during the Renaissance for they stimulate the intellect and sway the emotions. The aim of this paper is not to present any startling novel revelations about Shakespeare's sonnets but a more generalized analysis of these themes as exemplified in these literary forms.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

My decision to prove Shakespeare's genius in a particular literary form which is the sonnet seems to be a very ambitious attempt considering that several analyses abound only in individual forms. That is why, I am not writing a comprehensive survey/analysis of the sonnets but rather my concern would be for which this paper can probably claim its significance.

This paper likewise shows how Time and Love are utilized in his sonnets. The account of the occurrence of these two definite concepts and my simple interpretation of these themes in some of his selected sonnets are to be primary considerations. Thus, this paper has the following objectives:

1. to explore Shakespeare's sonnets as a Renaissance literary genre
2. to extract sonnets exemplifying the two themes *TEMPORE ET AMORE* (Time and Love)
3. to approximate the number of times the concepts Time and Love are used in the sonnets
4. to give a brief and simple analysis of these dimensions explored from these selected texts

FRAMEWORK

It has been an accepted fact that a literary work can have more than one probable interpretation. Any analyst/literary critic for that matter has to look for any plausible stylistic technique or device to a particular interpretation. It is in this premise that I find the appropriate reason to meticulously look for the literary theory from which I can anchor my analysis to establish its validity and to link it to my interpretation.

Noguchi (1991) in his work "Validating Linguistic Analysis of Literary Texts" presents the difficulty of how it is to analyze a particular literary text. It is emphasized that validating a link between a stylistic description and a literary meaning has been a vague and tenuous enterprise. An analyst, he suggests has several tasks to bear in mind to approach a particular text. That is, letting the readers find the linkage and the motivation for that linkage and going beyond mere

description and make the important link to literary interpretation. The use of conventional stylistic devices as formal linguistic variables is likewise recommended among other methods of interpretation.

Martin (1998) reiterates Noguchi's views in his assertion that in literary practice/research, a literary theory is relevant. This can be done through a consideration of the principles governing practice. That is, interpretation of literary texts needs to come up with "sufficiently exact standards" to deserve recognition.

Many theories on literary interpretation may prove the validity of any literary text but at this point I have strong preference for the New Criticism Theory. This theory assumes that the poem's meaning resides in the words actually appearing on the page, in the order, in which they appear to establish the poem's meaning in order to understand it. This means that the autonomy of the text is of prior importance leading to the idea that a poem's form is a very significant factor to establish its meaning. Whatever concerns the form now like meter and rhyme as well as other conventions can be leading aspects of its meaning. Another aspect of this theory is that the poem's meaning has to be explored by verbal structure that it employs. Wimsat (in Martin, 1998) posits in "The Verbal Icon" that the meaning of a text could only be known by an examination of the text itself, and that no extra-textual evidence could be used to delimit the implications of the text for a modern reader. The sonnet therefore, having fixed meter and definite rhyme scheme can be analyzed by using this model. Basically, if a particular word/concept dominates the poem, it has a significant role to play in that text as illustrated by this contemporary theory.

Themes of time and love. Literary critics highlight Shakespeare as the Renaissance man for being so much concerned with the affairs of the age. Samuel Johnson, in his work "Preface to Shakespeare", also written during this period emphasizes his importance in this period. He calls him as a man not for a season but for all time. Not only this, he describes Shakespeare as the poet of nature, holding up a mirror to manners and to life. The characters are genuine progeny of common humanity. This sums up the idea that he is a genius beyond compare -- he can reveal and write about the varied facets of a human being which includes his feelings of LOVE and concerns as TIME and how these affect him.

It must be noted too that Shakespeare delights not only in Love and Time as evident themes in his poems. His delight in “beauty and wit as in nimbleness of the mind are manifested too. One literary critic asserts that such delight was characteristic of the age as well as of Shakespeare himself. He stresses that his bounding energy of the Renaissance and the sense that all human faculties were emancipated resulted in great achievements. As a great representative of his time too, he chose as the subject of his poems Love among any other things.

In an internet review, these themes comprise an era where Shakespeare thrived and as mirrored in his representative works. Man’s potential is limitless: he can even bypass the Church to reach salvation; rise of the middle class; passion; an imagination for new worlds and scientific discovery; expanding individualism; and enthusiasm for religious mysticism. At a closer and deeper perspective, Shakespeare’s sonnets are indeed literary genres where Time and Love are major considerations. Elizabeth for a historical fact too, a reign where Shakespeare exists became the cornerstone from which his literary works are anchored.

Tillyard’s “Elizabethan World Picture” and “Spencer’s Shakespeare and The Nature of Man” discuss that the universe was thought to be ordered either as a great chain of being, hierarchically arranged, with hierarchies within hierarchies, or a set of parallel planes with correspondences between those of similar place in every plane, or as a dance to music, harmonious and rhythmic movement. Shatter to order, and what is man left but himself – “ a unique, independent being, self-reliant, individualistic”, but as what Shakespeare emphasizes repetitively, liable to be overcome as by appetite, an universal wolf ... must make perforce an universal prey and last eat up himself.

These lines as explained by Tillyard are the shattering of the universal order and one which is ever present in Shakespeare’s works. This is so because to the Elizabethans, the brain was

*Like the body ... divided into a triple hierarchy.
The lowest contained the five senses. The Middle contained first the second the fancy, and the third the memory. This middle area supplied the common sense, which received and summarized the reports of the five senses, materials for the highest to work on. The highest contained the supreme human faculty, the reason, by which man is separated from*

the beasts and allied to God and the angels, with its two parts, the understanding (or wit) and the will..

Those are points from Elizabethan legacy from which Shakespeare's works are reflected from. As what Bergeron asserts in his book "SHAKESPEARE: A Study and Research Guide", much effort has gone into getting a reliable picture of the social, political, intellectual and the cultural life of the Shakespearean Era – the Elizabethan reign. Shakespeare too seems to be very much preoccupied with the concern of human nature as G. Wilson Knight states "those positive qualities in man, those directions taken by human action, which to the imaginative understanding clearly receive high poetic honors in him." His concern is not solely on the positive qualities only but as well as the negative qualities in man as exemplified in his tragic heroes.

This is why Knight adds too that these values are assailed by negation, love by hate, order by disorder, among others. To top it all, a certain professor T. M. Raysor crowns Shakespeare's works in his statement saying that "in the history of English Literary Criticism, there is no work which surpasses in interest than Coleridge's lectures upon Shakespeare." My contentions are: Why Shakespeare among the other writers? What is in him that prompted Coleridge to write such lectures? The answer is illustrated in this excerpt by him:

A friend of mine has seen it stated somewhere, or heard it said, that Shakespeare had not made Constance, in King John, speak the language of nature, when she exclaims on the loss of Arthur,

*Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me;
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form:
Then have I reason to be fond of grief.*

(King John, Act 11, Scene IV)

Within three months after he had repeated this opinion (not thinking for himself) that these lines were out of nature, my friend

died. I called upon his mother, an affectionate, but ignorant woman, who had scarcely heard the name of Shakespeare, much less read any of his plays. Like Philip, I endeavored to console her, and among other things I told her, in the anguish of her sorrow, that she seemed to be fond of grief as she had been of her son. What was her reply? Almost a prose parody on the very language of Shakespeare – the same thoughts in nearly the same words, but with a different arrangement. An attestation like this is worth a thousand criticisms.

I may say that this statement from Coleridge proves of his insistence on his view that “the Englishmen who without reverence, who without a proud and affectionate reverence, can utter the name of Shakespeare, stands disqualified of the office.” Coleridge’s illustrations simply show that no Englishman in this regard has the reason not to know Shakespeare as a pillar in literature during that Age – age where topmost human concerns are highlighted such as the emotion Love and the recognition of Time involved in every human affair.

Shakespeare’s sonnets. Poetry is always a matter of reinventing the language and seeing anew the historical reality that the language is used to express or evoke (Abad, 2001). These words of Abad keep on ringing in my ears as I read materials on Shakespeare’s sonnets. Although, as far as his criticism is concerned, no distinct approach can prove substantial unless otherwise cited or reinforced by known and unknown writers of whatever movement or period.

Shakespeare’s sonnets as poetry forms have been considered as embodiments of a particular literary age – the Renaissance Age or the Elizabethan period to be specific for that matter. Basically, its relevance/significance cannot be refuted as having served historical truth – representative of the age when they were written.

The sonnets of Shakespeare have been the source of literary controversy for many years especially on the certainty of whom and for whom these sonnets are addressed to. Two facts stand out among that many readings made. One is that, these sonnets are dedicated to “Mr. W. H.” who is in the same source the friend and rival poet and the “Dark Lady” who is believed to be one of Elizabeth’s ladies-in-waiting. An internet article on “Mr. W. H.” is worth mentioning because it gives varied information about who “Mr. W. H.” is. It says “Mr. W. H.” is William Hall, the one who acquired the sonnets from Thomas Thorpe

to be published. Another is that "Mr. W. H." is William Herbert, the third Earl of Pembroke and the "Friend" to whom the sonnets are addressed and another is that, "Mr. W. H." as William Wriothesly, the third Earl of Southhampton and was courted by Edward de Vere as a husband for his daughter, Elizabeth.

On the other hand, the "Dark Lady" holds also a mysterious identity. She according to A. L. Rowse, a historian, is Aemilia Lanyer. Another version identifies the "Dark Lady" as Anne Vavasour, who was de Vere's mistress for a time during his five year separation from his wife, Anne (Cecil) de Vere, daughter of William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Anne Vavasour (an internet source) come to Queen Elizabeth to start her career as an aristocratic courtesan when she was 16 or barely 17 years old. This critic believes that the "Dark Lady" is Vavasour because of her dark hair and eyes, and irreverent personality, which fits both the physical profile and temperament that describes the "Dark Lady" (Sonnet 27). Several criticisms on the sonnets project diverse revelations on who really the "Dark Lady" is. Ian Wilson, a renowned Shakespeare critic in his work "Shakespeare's Dark Lady" reveals all the evidence that has led him to solve an enduring mystery by identifying Shakespeare's Dark Lady as the powerful Elizabethan courtesan, Lady Penelope Rich also a cousin to Elizabeth. However, at this point let me reiterate that the concern of this paper is to shed light on two important themes Time and Love in Shakespeare's sonnets.

Now I wish to discuss what a Shakespearean sonnet is before proceeding to the analysis and discussion of the selected sonnets. Sonnets are rhymed poems of fourteen (14) lines. The first eight (8) making up the octet and the last six (6) lines being the sestet. The sonnet traces back its origin from Italy as first used by Petrarch and is imported to English in the 16th century. These literary genres consist of certain formal conventions as iambic pentameter, and have fixed rhyme scheme. Linda Gregerson in her analysis of Sonnet 116 stresses that the sonnets tell a story, or rather refused to tell a story outright but were built around a story that takes place in the space between individual lyrics.

It must be noted too that there are some changes in the English version, especially in the employment of rhyme schemes among other features. As to when these forms are written, there is no exact dates but

most probably written between 1592-1597. The poetic appeal of these forms cannot be undermined because of their underlying mystery and the richness of which paves for more criticisms and researches in such genres.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

J.B. Leishman in his work "Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets" posits that it seems to be generally assumed, that most, perhaps all sonneteers, English, French, and Italian, and perhaps even Petrarch, have a great deal about their own poetry and that Shakespeare was merely saying the sort of things that they said, but saying them better. This simply proves that a wide array of themes are used in his works and these are very rich reflections of human life. My concern however is how Time and Love are given importance in these works. But it would be noted that my work would not further elaborate who are his objects of affection, rather a general view of how he exemplifies such themes in his sonnets.

It can be said that Time occupies specific slots in his works. Although the way he treats time is comparable to an enemy to be defied, never as a power whose laws are to be accepted and submitted to. For him, there is no recognizable distinction, as there seems to have been from long ago, between the Time that destroys the mightiest monuments of bronze or stone and the Time that transfixes the flourish set on Youth. For Shakespeare, Time is like a devouring monster that is swift-footed and that human life's brevity is inherent, as well as the transience of youth and beauty. Thus, objects and subjects of the many figuratively laden – personifications, metaphors, synecdoches, hyperboles, and ironies – language epitomize his works.

Out of the 154 sonnets, Shakespeare repeats and uses the word/concept Time 45 times. By repeating this word in the sonnets simply suggests that he glorifies Time (reasons probably why this term is generally capitalized) and its many facets. Basically, Shakespeare's concern is more on the idea that a human being must be aware that Time is fleeting and must be accorded proper recognition with. While there is Time, any thing under the sun can take its natural course and vice versa. Sonnets 64 and 65 speak about Time in this perspective.

*When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,*

*And brass eternal slave to mortal rage... (Sonnet 64; ll 1-4)
...Nor gates of steel so strong but Time decays?
O, fearful meditation, where alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?(Sonnet
65;ll 8-10)*

The following sonnets focus on Time as always "changing, dimming, and blunting." This implies that time is a tyrant that compels human beings to seize every opportunity within their grasp. Sonnets 1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 30, 38, 49, 57, 60, 63, 64, 65, 73, 76, 100, 108, 109, 115, 116, 117, 124 and 126 contain the concept of Time. The occurrence of Time presupposes that it has somehow rendered its rightful place in these poems and thus qualifies as a theme.

In these sonnets, Shakespeare's allusion to Time is very much evident. It must be noted too that a majority of them centers on how he insists on the nature of its ephemeral duration in relation to Love, Youth, and Beauty among others. To cite a few from the given sonnets, Time has been a conspicuous matter.

Sonnet 22 (l. 3)

*But when in thee **Time's** furrows I behold...*

Sonnet 5 (l. 5)

*For never-resting **Time** leads summer on..*

Sonnet 11 (l.7)

*If all were minded so, the **times** should cease...*

Sonnet 12 (l. 13)

*And nothing 'gainst **Time's** scythe can make
defense...*

Sonnet 15 (ll. 11 & 13)

*Where wasteful **Time** debateth with Decay...
And all in war and **Time** for love of you...*

Sonnet 16 (ll 2 & 10)

*Make war upon this bloody tyrant **Time**?...
Which this **Time's** pencil, or my pupil pen...*

Sonnet 19 (ll 1 & 13)

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws...

Yet do thy worst old Time; despite thy wrong...

Sonnet 30 (l. 4)

*And with old woes new wail my dear Time's
waste...*

In these sonnets and in the remaining 17 sonnets where Time is mentioned, let me give my general analysis of how it is treated by Shakespeare. Let us take note that Time is always used figuratively, mostly through personification or metaphor. Time is always seen as a realistic entity to be deified and defied. Deify, so as to be glorified in reference to how humans must consider it as a serious matter. That is, making use of it wisely because it's a passing fancy. Defy, in terms of Time's connotation and consider it as a challenge to be fought or reckoned with. Shakespeare seems to be "uncompromisingly idealistic" in his views of Time. He is not closed to the fact that his idea about it as an entity unescapingly occupying every human affair must therefore be perpetually put into a more or less ideal perspective. I believe that it is not necessary to collect and meticulously lay these lines viz. delve deeper on how he metaphorizes and personifies such. A careful look at his sonnets can definitely assure that assertion.

Another point that this paper wants to drive out is the aspect AMORE (love, the most accurate English equivalent of the term). Shakespeare's sonnets are no doubt replication of this renaissance theme Love. In fact, the way love as always presented is always superimposed with his concept of Time. For him, if Time is fleeting so is Love. That is why, Love is very much like Time which needs appropriate recognition for it has something to do with any human skirmish with life. It is not a question whether Shakespeare views love as something ideal but only one thing is certain, he regards LOVE as a powerful emotion that's so intense and inherent in every human being. To borrow Gregerson's (1999) ideas in her Sonnet 116 analysis of Shakespeare's sonnets, she writes ... the story was of love, love unrequited, love requited but unfulfilled, love so fleetingly fulfilled as merely to make suffering keener, love thwarted by the beloved's absence, or aloofness, or prior possession by another.

Gregerson's views and many other Shakespeare critics reinforce my contention on the reliability of Love as well as of Time among the many themes manifested in his sonnets. How he considers both these contesting components in human nature in his words, "... the contest between himself and Time, and to be declaring that what he has really loved in his friend and celebrated in his verse has not been something external, visible and transient, but something inward, invisible and eternal." Shakespeare's love is beyond question, his transitory view of love and how to defy it seems to me a composition inherent in his sonnets. It's not the concern of this paper to discuss outright the kind of love he has but Love per se – intrinsic nature of love. Many sources in fact mention that most of his sonnets focus on the extent of his love to a mysterious Dark Lady. In Ingraffea's (1998) analysis 'the rewards love brings him and happy because his love is content as expressed in almost 85% of the sonnets. In the following Sonnets, 20, 27, 29, 37, 43, 47, 50, 52, 57, 58, and many others, the word Love has been mentioned at least five times or more.

In the sonnets, the word love is used for 234 times. Although, any Shakespeare student is very much aware that out of the 154 sonnets, the first hundred and twenty six are dedicated to a young man of high birth and the remaining of which to the mysterious Dark Lady, one of Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting. What I pointed out in this paper is Shakespeare's obvious allusion to Love as a dominating theme in his sonnets. Like Elizabeth Barrett Browning who appears to be very sentimental about love in her sonnet as follows:

*If thou must love me, let it be for nought
 Except for love's sake only. Do not say
 "I love her for her smile – her look – her way
 Of speaking gently, - for a trick of thought
 That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a day' –
 For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
 Be changed, or change for thee, - and love, so wrought,
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
 A creature might forget to weep, who bore
 Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!*

*But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity.*

Shakespeare is more or less weighed in this balance (much like of that of Browning) on how he employs such a theme in his literary poems. Although Browning expresses her love for love's sake, one which is sentimental, romantic, passionate, etc., Shakespeare on the other hand equates his love in relation to time. At some point in his life, he can be in love with love itself but in the framework that unlike time this feeling should somehow transcend beyond time. One renowned Shakespeare critic writes... "like other poets, Shakespeare was also in love with the idea of being in love, so much so that it is the area which is unexplored in his works, who his exact inspiration is, who the real subjects of his works are and what he wishes to reveal with regard to his self-identity and the possibilities and powers derived from life." Because there are 154 sonnets and the agent love is mentioned 234 times presupposes the fact that indeed at one time or the other Shakespeare is in love with love as an appealing force comprising human beings and whatever level/extent this love is expressed in surpasses any other motive for that matter. Love is love and will always be regardless of who the object is. And this remains to be a feeling so strong, so immense, transcending any other human fundamental behavior, action, or emotion. Now let us get a good look at some selected lines where love is utilized and find a conglomerate as to the meanings/levels of Love is concerned.

Sonnet 9 (l. 3)

*No **love** toward others in the bosom sits*

Sonnet 10 (ll. 1, 10, 11)

*For shame, deny that thou bear'st **love** to any
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle **love**?
Make thee another self for **love** of me.*

Sonnet 13 (ll. 1 & 11)

*O, that you were yourself, but, **love**, you are,
O, none but unthrifths! Dear my **love**, you know.*

Sonnet 15 (l. 13)

*And, all in war with Time for **love** of you*

Sonnet 19 (ll. 9 & 14)

*O, carve not with thy hours my **love** antique pen
My **love** shall in my verse ever live young.*

Sonnet 20 (l. 14)

*Mine be thy **love**, and thy **love's** use their treasure.*

Sonnet 21 (ll. 9 & 10)

*O, let me true in **love** but truly write,
And then believe me, my **love** is fair.*

Sonnet 23 (ll. 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, & 14)

*The perfect ceremony of **love's** right
And in mine own **love's** strength seem to decay
O 'erchanged with burden of mine own **love's** might
Who plead for **love**, and look for recompense,
O, learn to read what silent **love** hath writ.
To hear with eyes belongs to **love's** fine wit.*

There are also some sonnets where love is mentioned for more than five (5) times, these are sonnets 10, 23, 31, 32, 40, 42, 72, 116, 136, 142, 148, and 151.

Sonnet 31 (ll. 3, 6, 9 & 10)

*And there reigns love and all love's loving parts,
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye.
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live
Their images I loved I view in thee,*

Sonnet 40 (ll. 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, & 12)

*Take all my **loves**, my **love**, yea take them all;
No **love**, my **love**, that thou mayst true **love** call;
Then if for my **love** thou my **love** receivest,
I cannot blame for my **love** thou usest;
And yet **love** knows it is a greater grief
To bear **love's** wrong than hate's known injury.*

Sonnet 42 (ll. 2, 4, 6, 9, & 14)

*And yet it may be said I **loved** her dearly;
A loss in **love** that touches me more nearly.
Thou dost **love** her, because thou know'st I **love** her
If I lose thee, my loss is my **love's** gain,
Sweet flattery! Then she **loves** but me alone.*

Sonnet 72 (ll. 2, 3, 9, 10, & 14)

What merit lived in me that you should **love**
After my death, dear **love**, forget me quite,
O, lest your true **love** may seem false in this,
That you for **love** speak well of me untrue,
And so should you, to **love** things nothing worth.

Sonnet 116 (ll. 2, 9, 11, & 14)

Admit impediments; **love** is not **love**
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
I never writ, nor no man ever **loved**.

Sonnet 136 (ll. 4, 5, 13 & 14)

Thus far for **love** my **love** – suit, sweet, fulfill.
Will fulfill the treasure of thy **love**
Make but my name thy **love**, and **love** that still,
And then thou **lovest** me for my name is Will.

Sonnet 142 (ll. 1, 7, & 9)

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
And sealed false bonds of **love** as oft as mine.
Be it lawful I **love** thee as thou **lov'st** those

Sonnet 148 (ll. 1, 7, 8, 9, & 13)

O me, what eyes hath **Love** put in my head,
If it be not, then **love** doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's no.
How can it? O, how can **Love's** eye be true,
O cunning **Love**, with tears thou keep'st me blind

Sonnet 151 (ll. 1, 2, 8, & 14)

Love is too young to know what conscience is,
Yet who knows not conscience is born of **love**?
Triumph in **love**; flesh stays no farther reason,
Her "**love**" for whose dear **love** I rise and fall.

Shakespeare's sonnets focus on the extent of his love in many varied forms: the rewards love brings him and how happy he is with the feeling of true love. Aesthetically speaking, he does not limit only to love among other themes but it is just right for me to focus on it as a driving force in almost all of his sonnets. In fact, the citations

done center only on those sonnets where love is used for more than three times or else it will be an extremely difficult work if all of the sonnets are dissected and the word Love is extracted. It is very evident that he values love as a human inherent tendency. Vendler, one of Shakespeare's critics, in her paper, "Synecdoche in the Sonnets" asserts that we can see in the sonnets that Shakespeare has a continued analysis of the power of the mind to greatly restrict or greatly expand the scale of its perceptions, to change its opinions, to clarify the obscure by reinspection, to fantasize, to adjust its fictions to an uncooperative reality, to luxuriate in its own inventions, and above all – as he writes his argument of love – to deepen its investigations of a profound idea while deepening at the same time its power over a flexible and inexhaustible poetic form.

Let me generalize Shakespeare's points about love in the sonnets he wrote pertaining/utilizing love as its object. His love for the Dark Lady, for somebody who is male, a friend, a poet-rival and even for nature encompasses the very nature/composition of his poetic forms. His depressed feeling and jealous heart in Sonnet 29; his extreme appreciation for his love as possessing great powers "to make the world transform from darkness to light" in Sonnet 43; to be with his love, (his lady), his longing to be with her in Sonnet 47; his address to his male friend and comparing him to somebody wealthy and instructs him on wealth in Sonnet 52; his degree of love for his lady and his contentment being with her in Sonnets 37, 50 & 51; his feeling to be with somebody he loves and when they are not together in Sonnets 57 and 58 and as such he is willing to sacrifice just to be with her; his infinite conditions when being in love and that no impediment can alter it in Sonnet 116; his paradoxical reference to love, that is, nothing can dissever in Sonnet 76; and his expression of farewell to his love in Sonnet 71.

To sum up, Shakespeare's sonnets are not only romantic poems expressing Time and Love but if explored in depth are materials so rich, so genuine, and so overwhelming. As one critic emphasizes, Shakespeare is affirming the existence of something unchangeable in a world of change and eternal in transient mortality. This substantiates my proposition that love is a constant given in any human being who is equally propelled by time and gains fulfillment or failure depending on how he deals with such.

There is no doubt that Shakespeare's sonnets are timeless representations of man's classic and universal concerns: TIME and LOVE. The former reflected in many ways and in many dimensions as may be something passionate or intense, the latter, as connotating transience, impermanence and inconstancy of which humans generally abhor and defy. These themes as present in his sonnets qualify them as concerns and definitely become those of the Renaissance' too.

A close study of the sonnets is still very much recommended after this simple and brief analysis. It is somehow clear that at any rate this analysis justifies obscure written truths about Shakespeare's sonnets specifically by unfolding two distinct parameters of Love and Time.

Finally, allow me to borrow Blake's words in his work Jerusalem (Pl. 55: 57 – 63).

Let the indefinite be explored, and Let every Man be Judged.

*By his own Works, Let all Indefiniteness be thrown into Demonstrations
To be pounded to dust and melted in the Furnaces of Affliction:*

*For Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized Particulars
And nor in Generalizing Demonstrations of Rational Power.*

Shakespeare's sonnets – my analysis (my own exercise of rational power) – my personal exploration – my demonstration (my emphasis).

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