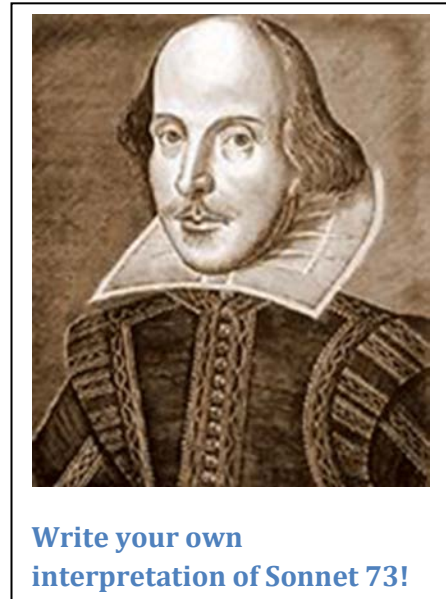


Task 4

- Write a literary interpretation of Sonnet 73. Aim at combining your own personal thoughts and impressions with the knowledge you have gained from the feedbacks and the class discussions.
- Give a first version of your interpretation to a classmate or the teacher, and have it checked for mistakes. This done, prepare a final version of your interpretation to be included in your portfolio.

Das Beispiel von Angelica zeigt, wie die im Unterricht eingeführten Strukturdiagramme in die Interpretation eingeflochten wurden. Angelicas Schlusstext:



Shakespearian Sonnets : Sonnet 73

Final interpretation

First of all I want to point out the structure of this sonnet. It is like all Shakespearian sonnets made up of three quatrains and one couplet, which form the fourteen lines of the sonnet.

Shakespearian Sonnet
1 st quatrain
2 nd quatrain
3 rd quatrain
couplet

Now, I want to give you a personal interpretation of this sonnet, which can not be taken as a general interpretation because it is personally influenced. So, in my opinion:

Shakespeare talks about a situation, where an old (or elderly) person talks about his love to another person. We don't actually know, if the person Shakespeare is talking about a man or a woman, because he only uses personal pronouns, such as "I, You", so we are actually open in our interpretation. I however think he's talking about a man who expresses his feelings towards a woman and I also think that Shakespeare associates this man with himself. The sonnet itself could actually be a love letter, in which the man tries to win back the love of a woman. He himself says that his love has been stronger when he was younger and that it has declined over the years. But he also says that there is still love for this woman in him. In the couplet of this sonnet we find this statement:

"This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which you thou must leave ere long."

Even though this is written as a statement, I think it wants to express a wish and a desperate hope of this man.

In this sonnet, each quatrain discusses the subject of the whole sonnet in its own way. In the 1st quatrain Shakespeare talks about the year of life. He describes the atmosphere of autumn and with this he wants to tell us, that the man is himself in the autumn of his life. Further, I think that Shakespeare doesn't only want to say that the man is in the autumn of his life, but also that his love is only like autumn. This means that the love is no more on the peak of its passion but has already declined. On the other hand, the symbol of autumn also wants to point out that the love is not yet extinguished, because it's not winter yet. Moreover there is still the possibility that the love will grow stronger again, because as we know: spring comes after winter again.

spring	summer	autumn	winter
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The 2nd stanza expresses the subject, talking about a day of life. Also here he places the momentary situation of the man and his love nearly at the last part of the day. Shakespeare describes the moment just before the day turns into night, namely the twilight.

sunrise	morning	midday	afternoon	evening	twilight	sunset
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In the 3rd stanza, which is the last quatrain, the symbol of fire appears and we could say that Shakespeare creates a 'fire of life'. Also with this symbol he says that the love is almost in the last stage of its life, because he says that the fire is only glowing and not burning anymore. In the same four verses Shakespeare says that the fire used to be ablaze when he was younger, so he makes a kind of back flash, remembering the spring of his feelings. He admits that he has grown older and that his love is not as strong as it used to be anymore. Here he uses the symbol of fire even more detailed, because he says that the love has consumed everything what he needs to life (like a fire that has burned all the wood). But he also says that there is still a glowing of the fire existent, so he says that he has still got passion for the woman.

Burning fire (this is no longer existent)
Glowing
Extinct fire (This is described as ashes and compared to a "death bed" in the sonnet.)

Then, as I have mentioned before, the last stanza is the couplet, which usually gives us some kind of conclusion or result. In this sonnet it is this desperate hope of the man that the woman should see that his love is still strong enough to exist. He says that the woman should perceive all his feelings and the reasons why they are not so strong anymore and this should make her love stronger again. He tells her to love what she will lose sooner or later anyway (latest when one of them dies, or sooner, if their feelings die away entirely).