

## **‘When Forty Years Shall Besiege Thy Brow’: A Gerontological Approach to Shakespeare’s *Sonnets***

**Dr. Dhriti Ray Dalai**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
Faculty of Arts  
Banaras Hindu University  
Varanasi-221005

### **Abstract**

Literature is supposed to enshrine the best that has been said and thought in the world. Challenging this Arnoldian dictum are the Disability theorists and activists, who claim how the ‘disabled’ have always had ‘a bad literary press’. William Shakespeare’s plays too have come under the lens, and the Bard censured and vilified for his promotion of ‘handicapism’, i.e., ‘discrimination against the disabled’, in them. My paper would seek to read the *Sonnets* (1609) of Shakespeare, not in continuation of this censoring attitude, but as a cultural text propositioning a unique and curious dialectical stance to the question of ageing, articulated by one who was himself positioned at a vulnerable cusp of change, from ‘youth’ to ‘feeble age’.

**Keywords:** Gerontology, Sonnets, Fair Friend, Disability, Impairment, Handicapism, Stylometric Studies, Athleticism, Ableist, Twilight Period, Sensual Fault.

### **Introduction**

Escalating scholarly attention is being paid to William Shakespeare’s plays like *King Lear* and *Richard III* because of their treatment and representation of ‘disability’. It is inferred how the Bard deliberately portrayed Richard III as ‘disabled’, to accentuate the evil nature of the King, all the while playing on the Elizabethan audience’s negative perception of ‘disability’. This is what is precisely deduced by later day disability theorists like Shari Thurer, from reading numerous historical and literary representations: “Physical deformity and any outer defect has come to symbolize an inner defect<sup>1</sup>.” My paper is an attempt to produce a new interpretative reading of Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* (1609), as a key Renaissance cultural product containing within the age’s, understanding or lack thereof of the process of ageing, which ultimately leads to various forms of physical infirmities and ‘disability’.

The paper is an engagement with the discourse of Gerontology or Old Age Studies, and a subsequent application of its theories to the *Sonnets* of Shakespeare as they react and respond to

the process of ageing. Shakespeare maps within these poems the various stages of human life in a bodily form, from the nascent stage to the penultimate, moving through time and caught in a flux. We not only undertake to understand how early modern European cultures understood physical ability or vigor, but also initiate an interface between literature/humanities and science. Martha Holstein decries how “the study of literature has not been integrated into gerontological research and education<sup>2</sup>.” This critical oversight can be remedied if one provides literary examples to supplement the understanding of students of gerontology and geriatrics. Likewise, one’s literary study would be enhanced by learning about life processes from a scientific or sociological perspective.

### Analysis

Conventionally, Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* are read as documenting a dialectical opposition between a ‘fair friend’ and a ‘dark lady’ and their involvement with the poet-speaker. We are conditioned to believe that the first 126 sonnets are addressed to the ‘fair friend’ whereas sonnets numbering 127 -152 are in reference to this ‘dark lady’. Within the first 126 sonnets, we may discern something hitherto overlooked. We validate a difference between the ‘fair friend’ and the poet-speaker not on the basis of their relationship of dependence through the patron–poet dynamics, not on the basis of class, economic or social difference, but on the basis of physical and cultural aspects of ageing that separate the two. We seek, through this paper, to foreground the difference between the two men structured around notions of ‘fair youth’ and ‘feeble age’. This contrast is projected by the poet-speaker not only to augment the sense of his own reduced status as an ageing individual but to corroborate the social image of the old, the decrepit as one whose life is in eclipse.

Shakespeare would not have been alone in contemplating on the ageing body or the process of ageing even, as he had his literary predecessors in Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Francis Bacon, Roger Bacon, to name just a few. Raquel Homet corroborates how “since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the reflection upon old age reappeared in literature, retrieving philosophical and medical theories from antiquity. This vision existed side by side with the Biblical imaginary of the saintly elder, enriched with the Greco-Roman concept of the old sage and the visionary. Finally, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the burning anxiety to live contributed to the fostering of a new or renewed reflection upon old age, not exempt from fear<sup>3</sup>.”

This “dread of old age” in the minds of the people from the medieval to the Renaissance, “set in very early even when people were still in good physical and mental shape and had excellent prospect of enjoying several additional decades of life<sup>4</sup>.” Joel T Rosenthal documents the range of age that comprised ‘old age’ in the Western societies across this time frame thus: “Many saw its frosty touch by age 30 or 35, few argued to postpone it until 50 or much beyond. This view from the wrong end of the telescope was a commonplace through Europe, and it made individuals prone to adapt their self-perception to fit the external, literary scheme<sup>5</sup>.”

Shakespeare, if we are to go by the efficacy of recent stylometric studies, would have been 40 around the time of composition of the ‘fair youth’ sonnets, excluding the procreation

sonnets from 1- 17. Still, there is a hint of the anxiety that worked in the mind of the poet with the number 40 and its symbolic representation of the onset of old age as early as in sonnet no. 2: “When forty winters shall besiege thy brow, / And dig deep trenches in thy beauty’s field, / Thy youth’s proud livery, so gazed on now, / Will be a totter’d weed of small worth held<sup>6</sup>.” There are numerous examples in the *Sonnets* where we find the poet-speaker at a juncture where he has been “with Time’s injurious hand crusht and o’erworn<sup>7</sup>”. The idea being that Time can recall the gifts of youth and beauty after a definite period of time. These gifts which are now at the possession of the ‘fair youth’ have been stripped off the poet-speaker.

Childhood adolescence, youth and old age were pretty much familiar entities to the Renaissance man, and each segment comprised of its own dominion, characteristics and attributes. Most often than not, life’s progress in the Elizabethan age was symbolically portrayed as “a double set of stairs to be ascended briefly towards mid-life, but- invariably- descended thereafter<sup>8</sup>.” Shakespeare’s deliberation on the ‘seven ages of man’ captures in a sense the Elizabethan model of life – “... one man in his time plays many parts, / His acts being seven ages<sup>9</sup>.” The seven stages in a man’s life begins from being an infant, then the whining schoolboy, the lover boy, the soldier ‘seeking the bubble reputation even in the canon’s mouth’, the justice of peace, ‘full of wise saws and modern instances’, the old man with his big manly voice turning again towards childish treble, and finally mere oblivion, ‘sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything<sup>10</sup>.’ In the seven-stage model, the pinnacle is reached in middle age as the individual moves from the family to the civic sphere and severe old age is a decline into second childhood.

The projection of the ‘self’ of the forty year old poet-speaker in opposition to the young ‘fair friend’ is through a body embattered by the tyranny of time. For disability theorists like Richard Jenkins, *impairment*, that is, “the absence or defect of a limb, organ or bodily mechanism<sup>11</sup>” has three categories: “1. those people whose impairment occurred or was diagnosed at birth, or during early childhood, 2. those whose impairment resulted from subsequent illness or injury and, 3. the largest proportion of the disabled population, those whose impairment is part of the ‘normal’ ageing process<sup>12</sup>.” *Disablement* or *disability* would be then the “reduction or loss of function or ability consequent upon impairment<sup>13</sup>.” And interestingly enough, Shakespeare is predating such theorizations, when he invokes this particular category of *impairment* brought on by age, and consequently rendering the poet-speaker ‘disabled’- “and strength by limping Sway disabled<sup>14</sup>.” The sonneteer subsequently goes on to validate the society’s devaluation of the ageing and the aged through negative visual and verbal imageries. The poet-speaker in his advanced age is typically one with “deep sunken eyes”, “blood gone cold”, “of wrinkles”, “sable curls all silver’d o’er with white”, and at a stage “when body’s work’s expired<sup>15</sup>.”

The impact of Time on man’s self-image is drawn on through stereotypical imageries. “Nativity, once in the main of light, / Crawls to maturity ,wherewith being crown’d, / Crooked eclipses ‘gainst his glory fight, / And Time that gave doth now his gift confound. / Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth, / And delves the parallels in beauty’s brow<sup>16</sup>.” It would seem to us that Shakespeare is laying the blame on Time for the changes in the poet-speaker’s physical and physiological aspects as he advances in years. But in reality, this reduced status of the ageing

man is consequent upon the dominant culture's emphasis on youth, beauty, autonomy, self-control and the ability to be productive, biologically and socially. This bias against the elderly population is resultant of the social understanding, and has a direct impact on the psychology of the ageing individual, who constructs a negative view of himself/herself.

Claire S. Schen, in her work on the concept of age, distinguishes between "chronological age", "functional age", and "cultural age". According to her, chronological age is, "the actual age in years<sup>17</sup>." Thus our poet-speaker, having experienced forty winters, is aged forty. King Lear's claim in Act IV of the tragedy situates him as being an eighty year old man: "I am a very foolish fond old man, / Fourscore and upward, not an hour more or less<sup>18</sup>." Functional old age implies, "a decline in physical abilities and overall health<sup>19</sup>" brought on by age. Prospero at one point in *The Tempest* complains how his brain is troubled due to his advanced age: "... I am vexed;/ Bear with my weakness; my old brain is troubled: /Be not disturb'd with my infirmity<sup>20</sup>." We mark defiance though, in the voice of our poet-speaker as he grapples with the notion of change- "My glass shall not persuade me I am old<sup>21</sup>." But then, how can he overlook his wrinkled appearance, white hair, sunken eyes, and a limp? These obvious manifestations of age, are grasped by society as signs of reduced 'abilities' of the ageing individual, thus rendering him to the *margins* of human existence. This is where the ageing individual experiences the phenomenon of cultural age, i.e. "a stage in life where various variables come into play, determining the role and function of an old person<sup>22</sup>" within his or her community. Our poet-speaker faces the prospect of such a marginalized existence with a concomitant diminished social role as a man and also as a poet: "Why is my verse so barren of new pride, / So far from variation or quick change?<sup>23</sup>" – inferring how, a younger 'rival poet' is outstaging him, outsmarting him with his quick poetic maneuverings, denied to the old ageing master. Does not Francis Bacon in his seminal essay, 'Of Youth and Age', similarly proclaim how "young men are fitter to invent than to judge"<sup>24</sup>? How far is it justifiable that the society would scorn a sizeable proportion of population because of a natural progression? And how far is this discrimination to be tolerated by this segment which resists the imposition of a set standard of 'ability'? "So should my papers (yellowed with their age)/ Be scorned like old men of less truth than tongue?<sup>25</sup>" resists our poet-speaker against his culture's tendency to discriminate against the old, the ageing. Even in sonnet no 44, the poet-speaker describes his thoughts as 'nimble', a credit to his active mind, which shows no obvious sings of ageing, slowing, slackening, but rather in possession of an ability to be imaginative, to be creative: "For nimble thought can jump both sea and land, / As soon as think the place where he would be<sup>26</sup>." But still why is he made to subscribe to the society's overview, that he has passed his prime just because he has reached a certain age, and which means there is a simultaneous loss of all physical and mental abilities? He is mirroring the social expectation when he writes: "In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,/ That on the ashes of his youth doth lie<sup>27</sup>." It is true that at this juncture, he has lost many of his acquaintances and friends to death, leaving him to lead a solitary life as an outcast: "I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought, / And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste: / Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow, / For precious friends hid in death's dateless night<sup>28</sup>." The idea that 'old age' is 'functional' rather than a 'chronological' condition, is supported by few markers like loss of employment, retirement, loss of spouse, loss of friends, dependence and debility<sup>29</sup>.

Much before these theorizations in the field of gerontology, the Bard provides the readers of his time as well as posterity, literary examples of the phenomena of ageing, and its impact on the psyche of man.

Shakespeare moreover integrates the individual perception of ageing with the societal understanding of this particular process and relates it with the notion of stigma which revolves around ideas of isolation and disgrace. Images abound in the *Sonnets* that communicate this overwhelming sense of isolation and disgrace experienced by the poet-speaker. The images revolving around the poet-speaker are mostly of fading warmth and light, as in 'late autumn,' 'dying fire,' 'twilight period': "In me thou see'st the twilight of such day / As after sunset fadeth in the west<sup>30</sup>." As a man, his 'youthful morn hath travelled onto age's steepy night', and he has had 'the treasure of his spring<sup>31</sup>' stolen away. According to the analogical way of thinking 'old age' is often associated with the winter months due to its cold nature which renders everything barren and bare. Articulating a consciousness of physical ruin and decline, the poet-speaker locates autumn or early winter within himself: "That time of year though mayst in me behold / When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang / Upon those boughs which shake against the cold / Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang<sup>32</sup>."

Summer on the other hand symbolized youth and is diametrically opposite in nature to autumn/winter: "For never resting time leads summer on / To hideous winter and confounds him there; / Sap checkt with frost, and lusty leaves quite gone, / Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where<sup>33</sup>." The 'fair friend', in contrast to the poet-speaker, is the world's 'fresh ornament' and 'only herald to the gaudy spring<sup>34</sup>'. His blood is warm and he enjoys the bliss of a 'summer<sup>35</sup>'. Earlier we had marked how the poet-speaker had implied his life to be an autumn facing winter but without the hope of spring; a twilight facing night but without the expectation of dawn; a fire on the verge of extinction in ashes.

Moreover, the 'sweet boy', the 'lovely boy' that is the 'fair friend', is an archetype of all beauty: "Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit / Is poorly imitated after you; / ... / And you in every blessed shape we know<sup>36</sup>." The poet-speaker is a rather pale shadow of his earlier self, a sharp contrast to the perfected existence possible only when young and beautiful. The *Sonnets* document the individual's unequal and unglorified fight against the society's insensitivity and revulsion towards the old and the simultaneous reverence for the young and beautiful.

It is again the young and the beautiful who deserve to procreate and produce beautiful forms. The poet-speaker in the sonnets numbering 1-17, implores the young man to marry and initiate the procreative process, so that there may be a multiplication of the young man's physical form: "From fairest creatures we desire increase, / That thereby beauty's Rose might never die<sup>37</sup>." The young lover, that is Romeo, is similarly portrayed in the prime of his youth, almost revealing in his physical prowess and preparedness for sexual generation, even outside marriage. Act 3, Scene 5 of the play opens in Juliet's chamber, with the lovers having spent a night consummating their love. Such is the state of sexual satiation in Romeo that he can even contemplate death at that particular moment: "Let me be taken, let me be put to death; / I am content...<sup>38</sup>" Where does this leave the ageing man when it comes to performing in the domain

of sex? Do the ageing deserve to fulfill a fundamental biological drive, or are they to beat a hasty and undignified retreat from the social and performative world of sex? The poet-speaker, we find in the latter group of sonnets, is supplanted by the 'fair friend' in the amorous and sexual relationship involving the 'dark lady'. The diabolic woman is successful in tempting and luring the youthful friend into a sexual vortex and the two consequently are like two amorous birds of prey devouring each other in a sexual frenzy. The poet-speaker is reduced to mere philosophical speculations: "... lust / is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame, / Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust<sup>39</sup>." The sexual rejection of the poet-speaker leaves him in a state of absolute dejection, depression and fuelled with a desperate desire for acceptance and inclusion: "So will I pray that thou mayst have thy Will, / If thou turn back, and my loud crying still<sup>40</sup>." Researchers on geriatrics have identified subjugation, subjection to humiliation, social isolation, depression, sexual supplantation, functional disability and cognitive impairment as some of the aspects of old age. Shakespeare's *Sonnets* are thus a powerful literary document mapping the experiences of the elderly in the sixteenth century as they were witnessing almost always a painful succession. How then, we may understand the ways in which the Renaissance men and women expected, hoped for or strived towards happiness, when they went beyond and against the social decree that put a premium on youth, vitality and beauty?

## Conclusion

Shakespeare, we argue, through his *Sonnets*, initiates a discourse on the image of the 'negative body' or 'faltering body' and even presents the imperfect perspectives he has of his own ageing body. Seemingly, the *Sonnets* are a corroboration of the cultural perspectives of that age which saw the ageing lack physical prowess, autonomy, athleticism, youthfulness and beauty and therefore left with nothing to contribute to society. We interject the proposition that the Bard joins in a wider cultural negotiation involving the altering body, and proposes the possibility of society looking beyond an 'able' body, and into alternative notions of self-hood not limited to physical or physiological aspects alone.

Old people and ageing people would always remain a substantial presence in the human population across time, culture and history. Shakespeare adroitly captures the various nuances of such an existence, and poses the question whether the old and the ageing could claim a stake in the public domain and on what grounds. The response of the world to the existence of the ageing and their roles "ranged from contempt and impatience to charity, retirement provisions and pensions, veneration and respect and sometimes even an acceptance that the turnover of power in patriarchal society was a measured march whereby generation eventually succeeded generation<sup>41</sup>."

Effort is being made by our poet as a representative thinker to see things as they really were and the status credited to the ageing needed an urgent reappraisal. There is possibly a certain autobiographical impetus behind this desire to seek a redemptive and integrative role for the ageing in society. In fact, not all the lines from Shakespeare's canon possess a negative

connotation of old age. We have the famous praise of an ageing Cleopatra in the immortal lines, “Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety<sup>42</sup>.” For the Renaissance man, there was the added and definite prospect of gaining knowledge and experience during a lifetime of explorations, expeditions, and exchanges. This plethora of knowledge would set older men apart from the young, who were more or less presumed to be naïve, foolish arrogant, rash and sensual. Thus, the man of the world, that is the poet-speaker, can effectively advise the inexperienced youth to marry into a respectable family and continue the family line, when in reality he is busy being a profitless usurer. It is the ‘fair friend’ who is even guilty of auto-cannibalism: “No love toward others in that bosom sits / That on himself such murd’rous shame commits<sup>43</sup>.” It is the advanced man of age who harps on the need for proper socialization of the young man. An integrated society is imagined and celebrated by the poet-speaker, who sees the individual’s responsibility extend beyond his self, to include his family, class and nation. The ‘sensual fault’ of the friend is but the fault of ‘youth’ and can be cured by the careful and assiduous guidance from those senior to him in years and in life experiences. We note the triumphant claim of the poet-speaker thus: “for to thy sensual fault I bring I sense<sup>44</sup>”, as if issuing a caveat against the dangers of a single irresponsible life of indulgences.

Similarly, the sonneteer can enrich the mind of the young, the uninitiated, with philosophical wisdom that he has acquired over time. The indelible truth of sad human mortality and impermanence is not lost on the poet-speaker otherwise imperceptible to the ‘fair friend’, drunk on youth and beauty: “Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore, / So do our minutes hasten to their end; / Each changing place with that which goes before / In sequent toil all forwards do contend<sup>45</sup>.”

The old and the young are equally doomed to die. Why then this over privileging of the physical body which is bound to be destroyed by time? Why praise that which cannot hold out for long against time and whose perfections are only temporal? The existing idea lurking in the intellectual climate of Renaissance Europe was that the body was impermanent and perishable. Therefore, youth and beauty would also be permeable. Most of the ‘Christian cultures in the West subordinated both mental and physical health to moral soundness<sup>46</sup>.’ And this moral soundness is desired and craved by the poet-speaker as his illusion of the physical, materialistic and carnal world ruptures: “Poor soul; the center of my sinful earth,/My sinful earth whose rebel powers array-/Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,/Painting thy outward walls so costly gay<sup>47</sup>? The moral deeds could outweigh the sinful deeds committed by the body and therefore were more coveted in nature. This vital lesson learnt by the poet-speaker had to be carried forward by the successive generations of Christians as they battled out various forms of the temptations in the earthly life. The young man could likewise be conditioned to retain all that was angelic in him and safeguard against any form of contamination by the demonic, the worser spirits: “The better angel is a man right fair, / The worser spirit a woman color’d ill. / To win me soon to hell, my female evil / Tempteth my better angel from my side<sup>48</sup>.”

Betty Friedan in “The Fountain of Age” portrays the Janus faced portrait of the ageing male. One is that of the weakened face, marked by senescent decline. But the other, is of a robust and vigorous face symbolic of progression and emancipation<sup>49</sup>. The first portrait conforms to the

ageist and ableist assumptions that normally would circulate in any culture that promoted 'ableism', often at the cost of discriminating against the 'disabled' old, The second portrait, we argue, supposes the possibility of considering the ageing not as a burden, not as 'disabled', but truly 'differently abled', in terms of their access to life experiences, knowledge, an integrative approach and heterogeneity which lends vital variety to the human population.

'The Not Dead Yet', was the slogan raised by the late Harriet Mc Bryde Johnson, when she voiced the right of the so called 'disabled' population to live with dignity in an 'ableist' society. It is highly discriminatory to exclude a segment of population just because of their inability to adhere to the 'normative' and strict 'ability' based model of performance proposed by the dominant culture. The old and the ageing are not a liability but surely an asset. They could be debilitated but they are surely not dead yet and deserve to live with dignity and acceptance.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Henderson, George and Willie V. Bryan. (2004). *Psychosocial Aspects of Disability*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Deats, Sara Munson and Lagretta Tallent Lenker (Eds). (1999). *Ageing and Identity: A Humanities Perspective*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Classen, Albrecht (Ed). (2007). *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p.8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.8.

<sup>6</sup> Cook, Time (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Iyengar, Sujata (Ed.). (2015). *Disability, Health and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body*. New York: Routledge, p. 261.

<sup>9</sup> Staunton, Howard (Ed.). (1860). *The Globe Illustrated Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. New York: Gramercy Books, p. 894.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 895.

<sup>11</sup> Kuper, Adam & Jessica Kuper (Eds.). (2005). *The Social Science Encyclopedia*. London and New York: Routledge, p. 234.

<sup>12</sup> Jenkins, Richard. (1991). Disability and Social Stratification. In *The British Journal of Sociology*. No. 42.4. Dec. pp. 557-580. p. 562.

<sup>13</sup> Kuper, Adam & Jessica Kuper (Eds.). (2005). *The Social Science Encyclopedia*. London and New York: Routledge, p. 234.

<sup>14</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 3, 4, 8, 16.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 32.



- 
- <sup>17</sup> Classen, Albrecht (Ed.). (2007). *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 12.
- <sup>18</sup> Staunton, Howard (Ed.). (1860). *The Globe Illustrated Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. New York: Gramercy Books, p.1633.
- <sup>19</sup> Classen, Albrecht (Ed.) (2007). *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 12.
- <sup>20</sup> Staunton, Howard (Ed.). (1860). *The Globe Illustrated Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. New York: Gramercy Books, p.1563.
- <sup>21</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 13.
- <sup>22</sup> Classen, Albrecht (Ed.). (2007). *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 12.
- <sup>23</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 40.
- <sup>24</sup> Bacon, Francis. (1812). *Essays: Moral, Economical and Political*. London: J Carpenter Publisher, p. 214.
- <sup>25</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 11.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 24.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.39.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 17.
- <sup>29</sup> Sussman, Marvin B., et al. (Eds). (1999). *Handbook of Marriage and the Family* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Vol.1. New York: Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, p. 27.
- <sup>30</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 39.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 34.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 39.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 5.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 3.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 5.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 29.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.3.

- 
- <sup>38</sup> Staunton, Howard (Ed.). (1860). *The Globe Illustrated Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. New York: Gramercy Books, p.194.
- <sup>39</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 67.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid, p. 74.
- <sup>41</sup> Classen, Albrecht (Ed.). (2007). *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 13.
- <sup>42</sup> Staunton, Howard (Ed.). (1860). *The Globe Illustrated Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. New York: Gramercy Books, p.2069.
- <sup>43</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 7.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid, p. 20.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.32.
- <sup>46</sup> Iyengar, Sujata (Ed.). (2015). *Disability, Health and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body*. New York: Routledge, p. 5.
- <sup>47</sup> Cook, Tim (Ed.). (1994). *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Ltd, p. 75.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 74.
- <sup>49</sup> Deats, Sara Munson & Lagretta Tallent Lenker (Eds.). (1999). *Ageing and Identity: A Humanities Perspective*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, p. 3.