

Remembering and Forgetting in Shakespeare Sonnets

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Abstract : Humans use language to externalize their mental perceptions and conceptions and thereby set up an interdependent consciousness about the concrete and abstract spheres of their existence. Language also represents a recording device whereby they capture the transient moment in their lives. Literature with its various manifestations help keep the individual and collective memories alive. Works of the English literature's prototypical figure, William Shakespeare provides the best illustration of this fact. Shakespeare's sonnets abound in prescient insights about the intricacies of human relations. Though they have been the concern of scholars' investigations for centuries, many of their thematic potentialities are yet to be tapped. The present study aspires to highlight the theme of remembering and forgetting in some of these sonnets as reverse faces of the same coin. Using close reading it is intended to demonstrate how Shakespeare, through imagery and literary tropes, plays with the issues of mortality and immortality, and how he has reaffirmed that literature can provide a locus for perennial presence despite the temporariness of individuals' existence.

Keywords : forgetting, immortality, literature, remembering, Shakespeare, sonnet

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