

SONNET CXXVII

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name:
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slandered with a bastard shame,
For since each hand hath put on Nature's power,
Fairing the foul with Art's false borrowed face,
Sweet beauty hath no name no holy bower,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my Mistress' eyes are Raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem,
At such who not born fair no beauty lack,
Sland'ring Creation with a false esteem,
 Yet so they mourn becoming of their woe,
 That every tongue says beauty should look so.

Sonnet 127 marks the first appearance of an impulse that is designated for the purification of an inner aspect of the intellect faculty. The Black Lady symbolically represents this evolutionary impulse needed for the activation of the "black faculty".

In accordance with Shakespeare's presentation, the methodology of activation of the black faculty was introduced in Europe in the Middle Ages. (Coincidentally, it was in the Middle Ages that the cult of the Black Madonna appeared in Europe.) In other words, this inner faculty was still latent prior to that time. The first two lines of the Sonnet refer to this fact, i.e., in the olden days "black beauty" was not known or recognized. ("in the old age black was not counted fair, or if it were, it bore not beauty's name"). Once this particular faculty became operational, some corrupted forms of it started to spread around ("but now is black beauty's successive heir, and beauty slandered with a bastard shame"). Some people tried to mimic the black beauty's natural power by inventing the black art, and in this way they give it a bad name ("for since each hand hath put on nature's power, fairing the foul with art's false borrowed face"). The next line of the Sonnet makes a reference to the cult of the Black Madonnas, i.e., the black beauty should not be personalized or worshiped ("sweet beauty hath no name no holy bower"). Therefore, any attempts at portraying it or worshipping it are the marks of profanation ("but is profaned, if not lives in disgrace"). The poet explains that the Lady's eyes became black because they are lamenting those who ignore their developmental potential ("her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem, at such who not born fair no beauty lack"). Being driven by their selfish desires, those people remain in an ignorant state ("slandering creation with a false esteem"). The Black Lady is mourning because those ignorant people, instead of learning, started to worship her ("that every tongue says beauty should look so").

(Excerpt from "Shakespeare Sonnets or How heavy do I journey on the way" by Wes Jamroz)