

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 123

No! Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:

Thy pyramids built up with newer might

To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;

They are but dressings of a former sight.

5 Our dates¹ are brief, and therefore we admire

What thou dost foist² upon us that is old,

And rather make them born to our desire³

Than think that we before have heard them told⁴.

Thy registers⁵ and thee I both defy,

10 Not wond'ring at the present nor the past,

For thy records and what we see doth lie,

Made more or less⁶ by thy continual haste.

This I do vow and this shall ever be;

I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

(116 words)

¹**dates** lifespans – ²**foist** thrust, palm off – ³**born to our desire** created by our own ambitions – ⁴**told** spoken about – ⁵**registers** historical records, chronicles – ⁶**more or less** of changing appearance and importance