SHAKESPEARE, SONNET 130 – COMMENTARY

The sonnet belongs to the sequence dedicated to the “dark lady”. It represents a clear example of Shakespeare’s reversal of the canons of the traditional love sonnet. What strikes the reader’s attention is the use of the word dark connected to the woman. At the beginning, the poem makes clear that she has dark hair and dun colored skin. Clearly the features of this woman goes against the rules of the angelical one typical of Petrarchan sonnets (blonde hair, blue eyes and a pale skin).

Shakespeare ends the poem by saying that is better a true woman with her pro and cons instead of an idealized one that in real life doesn’t exist.

The final message is to show that love is what one feels for a woman who is beautiful in front on the eyes of the lover in spite of her defects.

The readers are in front of two different aspects of Shakespeare’s sonnets, on one side there is the figure of the fair youth a young boy who is gorgeous , more beautiful and precious than a summer’s day and on the other side there is the dark lady different from the angelical figure.