



REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND UNIVERSAL POETRY OF ROBERT FROST

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Abstract

This article intends to test if American poet laureate Robert Lee Frost is a regional, national and universal poet. On the one hand, ethnic origin, local pride and on the other, criticism of particular local characteristics and conditions. Frost wrote mostly rural landscapes and characters and the casual reader might mistake him for a nature poet. He can be described as an commentator of nature and people. This displays that he is a very good viewer of nature and folk. He always seeks to bridge the gap between humans and nature because he thinks that there is a close link between people and nature. His poetry is well known for being "Deceptively simple"— what appears on the surface is not the in-depth concept that forms the poem's heart. The themes include nature, loneliness and isolation, love, self-discovery and social critique. Frost shows the symbolic nature of nature. Nature represents the people and all living beings that are obliged to approve and follow the laws of nature. Although he is part of the modern age, his poems has many features of romantic era. By means of his regional voice, his New England background and his inclination to expand his view a yond his hometown, this made him national poet to his natives. It expresses an attitude that makes one to think that despite the locality of his environment, style and character, he was able to tap into humanitarian and universal tendencies in his poems by others.

Keywords: nature, poem, people, human, regional, national, universal.

Introduction

Robert Lee Frost (26 March, 1874 – 29 January, 1963) was an American poet. His works were first printed in England before being printed in America. Recognised for his realistic portrayal of rustic life and his ability to express local colloquialisms. Frost oftenly wrote about the setting of rustic New England way of living in the early 20th century to criticize difficult societal and critical-minded themes.

Regularly privileged throughout his lifespan, Frost is the only bard to have received four Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry. He arose as one of the few "literary figures of the American public, almost an artistic institution". He received in 1960 the Congressional Gold Medal for his poetry. On 22 July, 1961, Frost was honoured with the title of Vermont's Poet Laureate. He was a exclusive visitor at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy, thanks to his excellent political acumen and a strong zeal of patriotism. Bloom jots down,

"Frost had been the first poet ever to deliver a poem at an American presidential inauguration." (p.56)



Figure 1: Robert Frost with president John F. Kennedy

According to *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, the word "region" was used in English in the 14th century through the French, who obtained the word from the Latin "region" which means "border" or "county" and merely means "administered area" ("regere" for ruler). The adjective "area" indicates the feeling of possession or feature of a geographical area of a country. Further, the meaning of term is associated with separate speech and uses an area. Regional literature then emphasized frameworks, discourses, customs and events from a particular region or region. And is considered a regional text, the foregoing will affect the personality of the characters and how they think, feel, and talk with the world. "The moors" in *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, "Wessex" in Hardy and "Mississippi" in Faulkner, for example, all these have an effect on characters' dispositions and personalities. The term "regionalism" also indicates a bias in support of an area. Local flavors and colors that create the precious legacies of a particular culture. When these things are held characteristic is that national localism then turns into the nationalism; it is the dignity of the whole country, despite variable ethnicity, religion, customs and habits; it turned out to be a mosaic celebration cultural structure of the nation.

New England's nature and people form a great part of Frost's poems. Henry Adams perceives Frost's modernist dilemma as:

[t]he child born in 1900 would, then, be born into a new world which would not be a unity

but multiple. Adams tried to imagine it, and an education that would fit it. He found himself in a land where no one had ever penetrated before; where order was an accidental relation obnoxious to nature; artificial compulsion imposed on motion; against which every free energy of the universe revolted; and which, being merely occasional, resolved itself back into anarchy at last. (p.458)

The expression of nature in his poetry is more complete than that in the poems of romantics. He always tries to create a link among nature and people. The symbols used in his poems reveals many hidden layers of meaning, linked to human life.

The poem "The Road Not Taken" portrays that Frost has a deep link to nature. Here, the word 'Road' represents 'life'. The deeper intent of the title "The Road Not Taken" suggests the choice that we cannot choose in life. Here the poet makes use of natural images such as "road", "yellow wood", "grassy", "leaves", etc. By means of these expressions, he wants to tell the harsh truth of life. In this poem, the traveler finds himself in the road at a fork. He confronts problems when he has to pick a path and hesitates on deciding the correct path. "Yellow wood" hints to the autumn jungle with fallen leaves. He describes an entire world having old people like poet. Then other word "grassy" hints that it has not been walkable by persons. The poet delineates his emotions about this path that he left a long ago. In the final stanza, the poet writes:

"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence;
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference." (Lines 16-20)

The choice one has picked now demonstrates one's upcoming target. If one makes the incorrect choice, yoner is not any possibility of moving backward. So persons have to be astute and attentive to make the correct accord among choices at every stage of existence.

In the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening", the poet makes use of the word "wood" with the meaning "deep forest". The speaker halts next to a forest and goes on to observe the innate comeliness of this snowy forest. In the stanza, the speaker's foal finds it eccentric why its owner stopped by this forest in place of the farm. Here he makes use of the phrase "darkest evening", which can mean that the speaker is melancholic for some reason or it is the durable night of the year. He wishes to have a quiet time in a calm place to enjoy the snowfall, clear his brain and spend a night surrounded by innate comeliness. In the final stanza,

"The woods are lovely, dark, and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep." (Lines 13-16)

Towards the end of the line, the speaker has a durable craving to be in the night, quiet and quiet wood. But simultaneously, he felt he had to return to community, society and folk. He still had obligations to uphold, chores and duties.

"Mending Wall" is other poem about two neighbors mending the wall separating their property. Every spring, the wall stones begin to drop. Here, the poet wishes to show that nature does not like any borders or any separation. Though none of these pests harm their pines and apples. The narrator does not agree to uphold the wall. But the neighbor sensed its meaning and said,

"Good fences make good neighbors." (Line 27)

Here, one observes a clear disagreement between nature and humans. The narrator is a young modern thinker. But his neighbor still holds the old ideals and is resistant to change. In the spring, the rocks falling off the wall show that nature resists all divisions and separations. But man creates fake walls or barriers. Here, the "wall" stands for all types of man-made hindrances. It shows divisions among countries, communities, breeds, religious beliefs and also disrupt collective forbearing and global fraternity by

building civil, constitutional and commercial confines.

The poem "Birches" itself is the name of a tree. The entire poem surrounds birch tree, the poet's nostalgia for its childhood and the philosophical problems of existence. Here, the swaying birch tree revokes the poet's boyhood memories. The poet is very attached to nature and the "the birch tree" here acts as a bridge between boyhood and adulthood. Swinging in the birch trees was a popular kill-time of rustic New England children where the poet spent his boyhood. He sees swaying birch trees as to free oneself from the harsh and bitter reality of adulthood. This a fleeting condolences where the reality of existence is harsh and rough. In the poem, he tries to show his thoughts with nature,

"And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having my lashed opened."
(Lines 44-47)

The poet appears to flee in a sense when he finds calm in the swaying birch trees. From another point of view, one finds that it is also practical. Because he loves his existence and this shows his duty and responsibility towards his existence. In the poem,

".....Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better."
(Lines 52-53)

Here, his emotion is as if he wants to move 'towards' the sky by mounting a birch tree but simultaneously, he also wishes to go back to earth. Frost doesn't wish death and heaven. Instead, he wishes to live in that precarious world where the earth and the heaven can be together. He says,

"I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over."
(Lines 48-49)

Frost thinks that existence is much more pleasant and agreeable than paradise. When 40

years old, he wrote the poem to show emotions of a midlife man who both sees at his death and adulthood. Finally, "Birches" hints an examination of the poet's relation with the truth.

"After Apple Picking" represents another sign of alienation. Nature has traditionally been recognised for both attractive and effective shapes and meanings in which its rustic chores are performed openly and in chorus, yet Frost delineates the exact contrary. The readers can infer from the title of the poem that it is full of with such images, elements, and related chores. However, the obvious reality is that yonder is only one persona. This character seems indifferent to fruit collecting. In reality, he separates himself from the worldly society as though there were no correspondence and accord between himself and his surrounding,

"My long two-pointed ladder's sticking
through a tree

Toward heaven still,

And there's a barrel that I didn't fill

Beside it, and there may be two or three

Apples I didn't pick upon some bough

But I am done with apple-picking now." (Lines
1-6)

This lonesome persona is objecting,

"Of apple-picking: I am overtried

Of the great harvest I myself desired." (Lines
28-29)

"The Onset" is Frost's most famous and best poem. Poem expressing a poet's perspective on the concept of life and death. The poet also expressed his feelings about winter and spring. For the poet, winter is the cause of destruction in nature and spring is the time to regenerate everything around us, but this process cannot be changed and the process of birth and death cannot be changed because of it. is a natural process. Therefore, everyone around us should acknowledge the concept of existence and death with an open mind. As poem suggests,

"Always the same, when on a fated night
At last the gathered snow lets down as white
As may be in dark woods, and with a song
It shall not make again all winter long
Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground,
I almost stumble looking up and round,
As one who overtaken by the end
Gives up his errand, and lets death descend
Upon him where he is, with nothing done
To evil, no important triumph won,
More than if life had never been
begun."(Lines 1-11)

"Home Burial" poem, by Robert Frost, is rooted in a modern idea of self-centredness. In this poem, the woman is too restless is a shield for pragmatic husbands because they have two opposing views on life. Woman overwhelmed by the pain of her newborn baby. The death of the child, not forgetting that her husband dug his child's grave in their small cemetery and tombed him himself. But for her husband, it seems like a natural act for him to dig his own son's grave. He comes to receive his son's death as an accident and to make his wife acknowledge this mishap, the husband gave some arguments. He says,

'I can repeat the very words you were saying:

"Three foggy mornings and one rainy day

Will rot the best birch fence a man can build."

Think of it, talk like that at such a time!

What had how long it takes a birch to rot

To do with what was in the darkened parlor?

You *couldn't* care! The nearest friends can go

With anyone to death, comes so far short

They might as well not try to go at all.

No, from the time when one is sick to death,

One is alone, and he dies more alone.

Friends make pretense of following to the
grave,

But before one is in it, their minds are turned

And making the best of their way back to life

And living people, and things they understand.

But the world's evil. I won't have grief so

If I can change it. Oh, I won't, I won't!

'There, you have said it all and you feel better.

You won't go now. You're crying. Close the door.

The heart's gone out of it: why keep it up.

Amy! There's someone coming down the road!' (Lines 95-115)

So the husband talks about the selfish disposition of modern man, betraying even the dead. All human compassion has disappeared and selfishness has been substituted. Thus, this poem is a domestic modern epillion, exposing to us certain modern crises. The title of the poem itself presents the results of self-centredness; the ruin of the relation because it was the reason of turning their "home" into a cemetery.

McMichael said that

Frost's uneasiness and suspicion with nature really reflect deep moral uncertainties, and his poetry, for all its apparent simplicity, often probes mysteries of darkness and irrationality in the bleak and chaotic landscapes of an indifferent universe where men and women stand alone, bereft, unaided and perplexed. (p.1514)

Macgowan suggests a nonnonsense of confusion in Frost's poetry:

This 'confusion' is often very close to the surface of a Frost poem, and is examined in poems which explore the human relationship to nature, and definitions of home, marriage, community, and even sanity, often illustrating a quite desperation in the attempt to impose order upon a finally alien world capable of sudden and unpredictable actions. (p.173)

Smythe says,

Robert Frost gained some renown as a world traveller for the

cause of poetry ... he was the bestselling poet of this

century. (p.14)

Untermeyer says,

If we probe into Frost's statement that a poem begins in delight

and end in wisdom, we find the assertion is more an expressive

than a pragmatic theory of poetry. It is to be sure, a description

of his concept of creative process. (p.136)

Conclusion

Regional literature stresses context, discourse, rituals, and happenings of a particular territory. It is considered part of the region of the text, the foregoing will affect the attitudes expressed in the speaker's job and position. When certain local issues are beneficially analyzed in regionalism and then incorporated into global humanism; or to a minor degree, national pride like everyone else, unmindful of contrary ethnicities, religions, customs and habits; it became a festivity of the nation's montage cultural structure; and it appears more usually with Robert Frost.

The nature and folk of New England bring much bookly data of frost's regional habitat and civilisation encouraged him to jot down poetry describing his regional culture, but he expressed opposition to certain attitudes or situations in the area. Images and subjects taken from agrarian New England, local dialect and style; however, his observations are somewhat cynical and ironically end up constructing a literature that have a tendency to crack local barriers. He searches the unfamiliar British life over his dramatic poetry and explores aspects of modern psychology following New England-specific and local features while remaining purposeful and sometimes pragmatic attitudes, thus shifting debate to the universal context.

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