



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2015; 1(10): 629-630
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 28-07-2015
Accepted: 29-08-2015

VN Sudheer
Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
Sreenivasa Institute of
Technology and Management
Studies, Chittoor
Andhra Pradesh 517 127

Dr. P Kusuma Harinath
Associate Professor,
Department of English,
S.V. University, Tirupati
Andhra Pradesh

Correspondence
VN Sudheer
Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
Sreenivasa Institute of
Technology and Management
Studies, Chittoor
Andhra Pradesh 517 127

Naturalistic art in the poems of Robert Frost

VN Sudheer, P Kusuma Harinath

Abstract

Frost is a great lover of Nature. His love for nature is primarily owing to his mood and secondarily to his background. He was a farmer and a poet. Frost looked Nature as a realist and classicist. This paper speaks purely about the naturalistic elements in the poems of "Mowing", "A Boy's Will", "Tuft of Flowers", "Mending Wall" and "After Apple-Picking". These poems almost speak about the pulsing life to inanimate objects and feeling for objects as well as sense of kinship with nature.

Keywords: New England, philosophical, Pre-Raphaelite poets, realist and classicist, Panorama, kinship etc.

Introduction

Most of the ancient English poets especially Wordsworth, Shelly and Robert Frost used to write poems about their experiences, society, and nature. But we find most of the naturalistic elements in the poems of Robert Frost. His poetry generally gives an impression of thought provoking and more resemblance of human beings living in a traditional society. He projects his amicability and relationship towards nature is very energetic to describe.

Frost is highly regarded for his elaborated representations of rural life and his command over his American colloquial speech. His works frequently spends in settings from rural life in New England in the twentieth century using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes.

Many of Frost's poems are on philosophic tone. His poems resemble all 'isms' of philosophy. His topics were from himself, from his own knowledge and emotion. "He is quite consciously and definitely putting New England rural life into verse. He is not using themes that nobody could have cribbed out of Ovid" says Harold Bloom.

Naturalistic Art

Keats and W.H. Davies and the great Pre-Raphaelite poets merely observed and recorded the beauties of Nature. For them, a thing of beauty was a joy forever, and Nature was a fountain of Beauty. Some others like Shelley, Whitman and Dos posses stood on a height to observe the Panorama of Nature and Society together. Some others like Wordsworth and Hardy spiritualized or personified Nature. To them, Nature spoke a significant language and stirred within them profound philosophical reflections. In this group we can also be placed writers like Poe, Melville and Henry James. But Frost's approach to Nature was fusion of all these. Sometimes he simply observed and recorded beauties of Nature; at times he found spiritual echoes in it, still at some other times he found Nature a mirror of man's soul. But he never saw Nature away from Nature. He himself has said: "I guess I am not a nature poet. I have written no poems without a human being in them."

As Niche has pointed out: "Frost is ultimately not very much concerned with developing a philosophically consistent concept of nature what really interests him is not definitions but attitudes, not what nature is in it but how man responds to it in a world we never made."

Frost's attitude to nature has nothing of the excited delight with which a city-dweller views nature on, an occasional escapade into the country. He does not see the country with eyes of the carefree vagabond or the city sick romantic who finds it as charming and refreshing as a new mistress. "It is no spirit of nature which sends Frost's rain or wind; he never sees in the natural world the pervading spirit.

Wordsworth saw the mountain is not a personality as it is for Wordsworth in "The Prelude" and in other poems says Marion Montgomery; Frost did not idealize or glorify the objects of nature. He saw them as things with which land on which man acts in course of the daily work of gaining a livelihood. He rarely makes his lesson or his philosophy of nature as overt and obvious as Wordsworth sometimes did." His attitude towards nature is realistic rather than romantic. Nevertheless, he has Wordsworthian simplicity of style in his descriptions of Nature.

The sonnet "Mowing", which included in "A Boy's Will", is a subtle poem in which the poet describes one of the basic and most important activities in the field of agriculture – mowing with the help of a scythe. In this poem, the poet asks what the movements of the scythe can mean and then goes on to answer the question obliquely in the course of this sonnet. Though the poem was dated back to Frost's early years, still the poet approaches his mature style and the spirit. The basic theme of the poem lies in the objects of Nature. The grass, the woods, the mower, scythe, hay, sunlight, the snake, the flowers are all the ingredients of nature. The poem is fully rhythmic:

The fact is the sweetest dream that labour knows,
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

"Mowing" is significant as Frost's attempt in the lyrical mode, yet retaining all the trappings of the dramatic form. "The Tuft of Flowers" is a nature poem in which the poet takes us into the heart of a romantic landscape. Somebody had gone to the place earlier than the poet and had mowed the grass before the sun rose. Before the poet arrived on the scene the grass had been cut. While he looked at the scene alone a butterfly passed near him. The butterfly was looking for the tuft of flowers on which he had rested the day earlier. But today he found that the flowers lay watered. Then he looked for some other perch and he saw a tuft of flowers which had been left untouched by the person who came earlier than the poet. The poet also looked in the direction of the tuft of flowers and then develops a kinship between the poet and the butterfly. The poem gives the following message to us:

"Man work together", I told him from the heart,
"Whether they work together or apart".

One of the poem's distinctive qualities is its local color. As in other poems of Frost, one finds, nature, landscape and its inhabitants in this poem also. The poem is rich in aphoristic wisdom. The description of the tuft of flowers which the butterfly and the poet look at some distance is noteworthy.

"A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Besides a ready brook the scythe had bared"

This poem proves the maximum that Frost's poems 'begin in pleasure but end in wisdom'. The poem holds our complete attention because the reader never feels even for a moment that Frost has some palpable design on us.

"Mending Wall" and "After Apple-Picking" give an almost pulsing life to inanimate objects. They display a feeling for objects as well as sense of kinship with nature. In a sense, the wall, the byre, the cart, the scythe is as alive to Frost as his men and women, birds and animals, trees and flowers. Yet

his response to nature, as the late F.O. Matthiessen points out in an unpublished lecture, is entirely realistic; he neither romanticizes nature nor loads it with the kind of bloomed significance which we find in some of Hardy's poems and novels.

Frost often writes about inanimate objects as if they were alive. "Mending Wall" begins:

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the Sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

Everything here is tangible, concrete and the moral which Frost draws out of his poem is not only arbitrarily imposed but is present in indirect speech and so has none of the imperiousness which one finds where is not drawn out of the subject but clumsily pinned on to it.

Conclusion

Frost is a great lover of Nature. His love for nature is primarily owing to his mood and secondarily to his background. He was a farmer and a poet. "Nature had been his stationary companion since his youth as it had been with Wordsworth." He followed in it throughout his life. But most of the romantic poets loved Nature for its own sake, for its colors and went to it with a bumping heat as though caught it, where as Frost looked Nature as a realist and classicist.

Reference

1. Bloom Harold. The Twentieth Century American Literature, Chelsea House of Library of Literary Criticism, Chelsea House publishers, New York, 3, 42.
2. Saradhi KP. Robert Frost: Selected Poems, Lakshmi Narayana Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 3, 49.
3. Niche George Human values in the poetry of Robert Frost, A study of a poet's convictions", Duke Univ. Press, 1960, 92.
4. Montgomery Mason: Robert Frost and His use of Barriers: Man Vs Nature toward God, South Atlantic Quarterly 1958; 57:53.