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Review Paper

Dissemination of the Themes Related To Morality with the Help of Nature in The Select Poems of Robert Frost

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ABSTRACT

Nature has always been an important part of literature. Writers have often used nature to display their thoughts about society and to educate them in general. In many of his poems, Robert Frost being an avid worshipper of nature has used it to convey about the themes related to morality like virtue, role of hard work and duty, goodness and fulfilling responsibilities. This article shows how Frost has used nature to make his readers realize the role of ethicality and righteousness in their life. He focuses on the idea that nature should be used to educate and train people to realize their worth and talent. The article concludes by analyzing the fact that nature is not just a source of enjoyment and freedom but also a teacher, mentor and guide of morality and how it can help in taking the humanity to a next level.

1. Introduction

Robert Lee Frost was a famous American poet who is known for his realistic depictions of countryside life. He used simple and everyday language to express his views on typical rural life and natural beauty. He was named poet laureate of Vermont in 1961 and is the only poet to receive four Pulitzer Prizes for poetry. His contribution in literature is praiseworthy. His usage of nature to educate the society about values and manners is noteworthy. He talks about a very serious, deep and complex issue but in a very simple, easy and comprehensive tone. The issues which he takes up to convey his audience compels them to give it a second thought and which somewhere hits them as a hard blow. He tries to teach the humans about their basic errors and tries to stop them from committing that error further in their life.

Frost does not just try to amuse his readers through his description of beautiful, serene landscape but conveys a deeper message about how to take humanity to a totally different and upright level. Superficially, nature in his poems has a power to transport the audience to a different world, but then it also acts as a preacher spreading moral values. On the other hand, he also shows the harsh realities of nature and how it can pose a threat in one's progress. But then he also shows how one can take this nature's threat as a challenge and can use it to overcome one's shortcomings and then do something different and great in one's lives.

It is an undeniable fact that there is very little humanity and morality left in the people of contemporary age and it would keep on diminishing in the subsequent ages. It would be rare to find it as today's generation is barely left with any humaneness, compassion and kindness. Brotherly love, care and sympathy has totally been wiped out of the current scenario. Through few of the poems of the Frost like 'Mending Wall', 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening', 'The Road Not Taken' and 'After Apple-Picking', this article tries to show the need and importance of morality in today's era and how Robert Frost depicts it in his poems.

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1.1 Objective

The main objective of this research article is to manifest the use of nature by Robert Frost in showcasing his ardent role in moralizing the society. Article expounds the fact that real subject of his poems is not just exploring beauty of nature but his poems also talk about taking moral lessons from nature to transform one's life for better.

2. Human Relationships in the poem 'Mending Wall'

In this world of industrialization and urbanization, it feels like human values have gone for a toss. People hardly want to connect with each other. The poem 'Mending Wall' conveys this same moral message that how we have built boundaries between us and alienated ourselves from each other and therefore there is no possibility of communication left. Poem shows how every year in spring the poet and his neighbor meet to mend a wall between their farms. Here comes the role of nature in depicting morality as he says that it seems like even nature does not like borders- *"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."* (Frost, 1-3). Through the poem, he is trying to talk about the boundaries which humans have drawn between each other in society and how they have bound themselves in same limits and narrow parameters.

Frost says that people must try to open with each other as they cannot live without each other. They need each other's support and help. He also conveys the point that rather than sticking to same traditional mores and customs, we must change them for better as his neighbor keeps on saying, " Good fences make good neighbors." (Frost, 27). But we forget this basic idea that for our survival and to keep the world going, we need someone with whom we can communicate and share our problems with. It is important to break free from things which put restrictions in our normal and daily life.

3. Role of duty and responsibility in 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening'

Frost called this poem as 'my best bid for remembrance'. Nature is surely given an elite position in Frost's work and this poem reflects the best nature imagery ever conveyed by him. This poem's beautiful representation of nature can enthrall and mesmerize anyone. It talks about wintry evening, snow, frozen lake and a beautiful landscape having woods which can withhold anybody's attention and interest. But the fact is that poem is not just about appreciating this divine creation, it conveys a way deeper message than its superficial meaning. The narrator uses 'horse' as a metaphor for daily life chores which reminds him of his responsibilities and obligations which he had to complete before death touches him. He has to accomplish and achieve many things in his life before he takes a long sleep.

The poet was enjoying the process of being with the nature and the woods. He doesn't want to leave and just wants to stay there, but then he realizes that he has many duties which he has to fulfill before he sleeps. So along with making the readers realize this moral theme of fulfilling one's responsibilities and to keep on continuing one's journey, he also projects the psychological dilemma and trauma which one has to go through while choosing between the two things. Therefore, Frost says that in this journey of life we often face conflict between our desires and obligations, we all want peace and rest, but then we have to keep on moving until we achieve our goals:

*"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." (Frost, 13-16)*

4. Importance of being adamant and decisive in 'Road Not Taken'

Undoubtedly, there are many times in our lives when we feel that we are in dilemma, when we are in a tricky situation and feel helpless. Human life is full of sufferings and unlimited problems. There are many points in our lives when we have two things in front of us and we have to choose one. Similarly, this poem also shows the same confusion through pleasant nature imagery that how the narrator finds himself in a tight spot when he comes across a fork which leaves him perplexed over which road to choose to continue his journey.

Narrator was in the woods, surrounded by beautiful setting and saw two grassy roads and somehow he decided to choose one of them as he realizes that he can't take both the paths at the same time. He took the road which was less travelled and that is how he was able to make a difference. *"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I- / I took the one less travelled by, /and that has made all the difference."* (Frost, 16-20). So here nature has played a major role by making writer withstand his decision as poem clearly tells that writer found both the road grassy, exquisite and extremely pleasing as far as he could see standing near the fork, but then he resists his temptation for the road which was more travelled and moves on the road which had less travellers. In reality also we should be adamant about what we want to do in future and how could we diverge ourselves from

the crowd and do something totally new if we want to be noticed in this world full of extremely talented people. We should never lose hope and always have faith in ourselves and make wiser choices and right decisions as they impact us in future.

5. Importance of labour and hard work in 'After Apple-Picking'

Labor and hard work is ultimate sources which can lead to one's success. If one wants to reach greater heights in one's life, one must keep on toiling and make every effort in turning one's dream into a reality. But in fulfilling those dreams we often feel tired, fatigued and exhausted and here we can very well connect with the Tennyson's lines from the poem *'The Lotos-Eaters'- 'Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil'*. (Tennyson, 171)

The poem describes the time of winter and how the apple-picker is tired and doesn't want to pick apples anymore and just wants to rest- *"For I have had too much/ Of apple-picking: I am overtired/ Of the great harvest I myself desired."* (Frost, 27-29). Through the poem, the narrator expresses a desire for rest, which is very evident in lines like *'I am drowsing off'* (Frost, 8) and *'I am overtired'* (Frost, 28).

Also nature plays an important role in the poem as the wintery evening tries it's best to take control of the apple-picker and makes him feel lethargic and drained and stops him from accomplishing his goal. But through the poem, the poet wants to teach his audience about the value of hard work and labor, how it can lead to better opportunities in life and how one should never succumb to the difficulties and complications which come on one's way.

6. Conclusion

Robert Frost is undoubtedly one of the most incredible poets of the modern era. He is famous for his realistic depictions of countryside and wrote mostly about the rural life in New England. Through his writings, he features nature as a fairyland. He takes his readers to the other world through his manifestation of a beautiful landscape, the world which is full of bliss, peace and serenity, the world which could not be touched by any problems, which compels you to admire it and the world which feels like the only truth and prompts you to stay there forever.

Although Frost is one of the best poets when it comes to the portrayal of rural space and nature, but he grew up in the city, yet his poems reveal his deep love and empathy for nature. He presents nature both as posing barriers in one's life and as a medicine in conquering various trials and tribulations which come in one's journey. He found comfort and solace in depicting nature as an asset in his poems.

However, the typical natural setting is not the only central theme in his poems. He uses nature for much more things like how nature can teach us many moral values and guide us towards a right path. He uses nature differently in each of his poems to suggest various versions that life has to go through in the company of nature. He portrays nature as a metaphor for how man can overcome his fears, dilemmas, and just be a good individual after taking inspiration from it.

Frost tells us that how nature tries to control us but on the other hand it can also heal us, take us out of the turbulent times and ambivalence, make us diligent and can play a humongous role in our success and fate. His poems also teach us the role of duty, labor, believing in our potential as well as trust on others. As human beings, we need each other is one of the strongest message of his poems. Therefore, his poems somewhere start with depiction of nature's joy and how graceful and elegant it is but always end with some wisdom and a moral message that every individual should follow to make their lives and this earth a better place to live in.

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