THE MORAL VALUES IN SOME OF ROBERT FROST’S POEMS

A THESIS

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The Writer

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This thesis is written to explain the moral values found in some Robert Frost’s poems. Some of Robert Frost’s poems that analyzed are; The Road not Taken, Neither Out Far nor in Deep, Birches, Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening, Nothing Gold can Stay, The Oven Bird, Acquainted with The Night and Fire and Ice.

The research method used in this thesis is the library research based on the poems and supported by information and opinions given by the previous researcher about the poet and his works.

As the title is “The Moral Values in Some of Robert Frost’s Poems”, this paper also contains the kinds of poetry and the elements of poetry.

By explaining about the poetry, I hope that this thesis can give many useful for everyone who wants to improve his/her knowledge in understanding poetry.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Analysis

Literature is a world that full of beauty. In literary works, we can find human emotions, such as happiness, sadness, love, worry, and etc. Emotions represent the essential part of literary works and written in an artistic way. The writers of literature express their thought, feelings, emotions and attitudes towards life (Sinha, 1977:1).

Beside beauty, literature is also a reflection of someone’s experience and this experience makes the literary works interesting. Literature is writing which expresses and communication thoughts, feelings and attitudes toward life. Literature is supposed to be an imaginative creation which is far from factual truth.

In literature, there are three majors groups or genre. They are novel, drama and poetry. Each of them has much in common though they are rather different in form. Novel is a narrative kind of fictitious writing and drama is aimed at presenting on the stage. While poetry is the expression of imaginative experience, valid, simply, such as communicable given by language which employ every available and appropriate device.

Sometimes defining poetry is difficult because the meaning has varied from one place to another. Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1890) said that poetry is the rhythmical creation of beauty. Its sole arbiter is with intellectual or with the conscious it has only collateral relation, unless incidentally it has no concern with truth and beauty. And
according to Robert Frost, poetry is a rhythmical composition of words expressing attitude, designed to surprise and delight and to arouse an emotional response (Kennedy, 1978:5).

In this thesis, I would like to analyze some of Robert Frost’s poems about despair in human’s life. Despair is to be hopeless; to have no hope; to give up all hope or expectation. Despair has a close relation with human life; everyone in this world should have passed this step before he gets the true happiness. While Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California in March 26, 1874 and he was an American poet. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. Many of his poems deal with the human life and commonly use the simple words in natural fact as the characteristic for a poet from the first 20th century. Therefore I have made them as the reasons to analyze Robert Frost’s poems.

1.2 The Problems of The Analysis

I analyses some of Robert Frost’s poems. The focus of the analysis is Robert Frost’s view on human despair.

- How the despair happen on a human?
- How to manage the despair well?
- How is Robert Frost’s way in expressing the despair on some of his poems?

1.3 The Objectives of the Analysis
• To know how the despair can happen.
• To know how to manage the despair.
• To know how Robert Frost’s way in expressing the despair on some of his poem.

1.4 The Scope of The Analysis

In this thesis I would like to focus the analysis about the despair expressed in some of Robert Frost’s poems, namely: The Road Not Taken, Stopping by Woods in the Evening, The Oven Bird, Fire and Ice, and Acquainted with the Night

1.5 The Significance of The Analysis

• To give the more knowledge about poetry.
• To know the characteristics of poetry.
• To show that reading and understand a poem is not difficult as people thought.
• To know how Robert Frost expressed his idea about despair on some of his poems.
• To be a reference for others who wants to write about poetry.
1.6 The Review of Related Literature

  Wellek and Warren compile this book with materials of basic knowledge and principles of literary study. It is more for the purpose of providing basic explanation and ground principles of literary works.

  This book contains the detail of different literary types and some important topics on the history of English literature added by the writer to increase the usefulness of the book. It is written for those who are interested in literature and the study of literary works.

  This book contains the whole of Robert Frost’s works, starting from poems, prose, and plays. Actually this is an interesting book for the reader in order to know Frost’s works furthermore.

  This book is about literature. It guides us to understand more about literature especially in fiction, poetry, and drama. Thus it is good enough to read in other to enrich our knowledge about literature.
CHAPTER II

THE RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 The Method of Study

In analyzing the poems, I use the library research and am done based on that poem itself and supported by much information and opinions given by the previous researcher about the poet and his works. Data are collected from library research, by using the poems themselves as the primary sources; opinion and criticism from earlier investigator as well as biography of Robert Frost are included as secondary sources. It is applied by reading and studying some books concerned with the topic of the problem. As Nawawi (1991:30) says:


There are three methods of collecting the data; they are interview, observation, and analysis on written documents such as quotation, notes, memorandum, publication and official reports, diaries, and written answer to questioner and survey.

Since the data of this analysis are collected from Robert Frost’s poems so I decided that the method of collecting the data using analysis on written documents. Then, as the sample of the analysis, five poems of Robert Frost are taken by applying purposive sample method as proposed by Sutopo (2006:64):
“karena pengambilan cuplikannya didasarkan atas berbagai pertimbangan tertentu, maka pengertianya sejajar dengan jenis teknik cuplikan yang dikenal sebagai purposive sampling, dengan kecendrungan peneliti untuk memilih informannya berdasarkan posisi dengan akses tertentu yang dianggap memiliki informasi yang berkaitan dengan permasalahannya secara mendalam dan dapat dipercaya untuk menjadi sumber data yang mantap.”

2.2 The Technique for Collecting Data

The data of this thesis are the text poems contain of the despair of human life, such as depression, pessimism and hopelessness that are found in five poems from Robert Frost’s selected poems as the data source.

The titles of five poems are:

1) The Road Not Taken
2) Neither Out Far Nor In Deep
3) Birches
4) Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening
5) Nothing Gold Can Stay
6) The Oven Bird
7) Acquainted With The Night
8) Fire and Ice

In collecting the required data, there are several steps that should be done:

- Collecting all relevant information from the library resources.
• Writing down the important points from the collections, rereading them and trying to understand the problems related to the writer and separate them according to their priority.
• Rechecking the whole data to decrease or to avoid falsity.

2.3 The Technique for Analysis Data

In analyzing literary works, there are two approaches which can be used: intrinsic and extrinsic approach. The intrinsic approach analyses literary work based on the text and the structural points of literary works or in other words, it analyzed the inside elements of poetry. While the extrinsic approach analyzed it based on the external factors which influence it. Sometimes while analyzing literary works based on the extrinsic approach, one can allow his feeling or imagination freer rein.

In this analysis, I added some other steps in order to make this analysis systematic and easier. They are:

• Reading the poems of Robert Frost to identify the kinds of the poetries.
• Deciding the poems that want to analyze.
• Analyzing the selected poems.
• Studying the words that used in the poems that show the human despair.
• Conclude the result of the analysis.
CHAPTER III
A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF POETRY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

3.1 The Definition of Poetry

Etymologically, the word “poetry” derived from the Greek word poiein means to make or to construct. Poietis means the maker, and then we have the work poet and poetess, the writer. Poietis means the making and it becomes poetry, the art of a poet. Poem is a piece of writing in verse form. Verse is a regular metric line.

Defining poetry is difficult because the meaning has varied from one place to another. The great philosopher Aristotle defines poetry as an imitation of life. Wordsworth states that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. Poetry becomes less frightening if we realize that it is always concerned with ordinary human concerns, with the daily matters of everybody life.

Below are some definitions of poetry by some well known writer:

S.T. Coleridge: Poetry is the product of the poet’s imagination and the best words in the best order.

Ralph Waldo Emerson: Poetry is the perpetual endeavor to express the spirit of thing, to pass the brute body and search the life and reason which cause it to be existed. For it isn’t meter, but a meter making argument (idea) that, make a poem. The
poet has a new thought. He has a whole new experience to unfold. He will be the richest in his fortune.

**Edgar Allan Poe**: Poetry is the rhythmical creation of beauty. Its sole arbiter is with intellectual or with the conscious it has only collateral relation. Unless incidentally it has no concern with truth and beauty.

**William Wordsworth**: Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.

**A.E. Housman**: Poetry is not the thing said but the way of saying it (in other word meaning is of important, form is all important).

**Samuel Johnson**: Poetry is the art of writing pleasure with truth by calling imagination to help reason.

**L. Byron**: Poetry is the lava of imagination whose eruption prevents the earthquake.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley**: Poetry is the record of the best and the happiest moment and the best mind.

**Lucelles Ubercombie**: Poetry is the expression of imaginative experience, valid, simply, such as communicable given by language which employ every available and appropriate device.

And according to **Robert Frost**, poetry is a rhythmical composition of words expressing attitude, designed to surprise and delight and to arouse an emotional response (Kennedy, 1978:5).

### 3.2 The Kinds of Poetry
There are some kinds of poetry that will be explained in this thesis, namely; ode, elegy, ballad, epic, and dramatic monologue.

- **Ode**

  Ode is a lyric adopted from the Greek but altered greatly in form by various English poets, and tends to be rather formal, often in varied or irregular meter, and usually between fifty and two hundred lines long.

  Ode is an elaborate and elevated lyric poem, extending over quite a few stanzas, and addressed to a person or thing or to an abstraction (e.g. ‘melancholy’). In its more straightforward form it simply praises the subject, but as it developed in the romantic period the typical ode became more hesitant and philosophical.

  An ode is always addressed to somebody (or something) who seems to transcend the problems of life, and thus stands as a symbol of perfection. An ode becomes more complicated, however, if the poet begins to question the status of the object addressed.

  In analyzing the ode, look first at how elevated language is used to create a sense of something that transcends the mundane. Then look for the opposing images that create a sense of the harsher realities of life. The poem is likely to become complicated – with difficult ideas, an involved argument and a variety of images in each stanza – as the poet attempts to convey his awareness of the gap between the ideal and the reality of life.
For example:

**Ode to Intimation Immortality**
There was time when meadow, grave, and stream
The earth and very common sight
To me did seem
Appareled in celestial light
The glory and the freshness of a dream

By: W. Wordsworth

- **Elegy**

Elegy is written to express feeling of sorrow or loss, often to commemorate someone’s death. Elegy, originally, in classical Greek and Roman literature, a poem composed of distich, or couplets. Classical elegies addressed various subjects, including love, lamentation, and politics, and were characterized by their metric form. Ancient poets who used the elegiac form include the Alexandrian Callimachus and the Roman Catullus.

In modern poetry (since the 16th century) elegies have been characterized not by their form but by their content, which is invariably melancholy and centers on death. The best-known elegy in English is Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard (1751), by the English poet Thomas Gray, which treats not just a single death but the human condition as well.

A distinct category of elegy, the pastoral elegy, has its roots in Greek and Sicilian poetry of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. Using formal conventions, which developed gradually over centuries, pastoral elegists mourn a subject by representing the mourner and the subject as shepherds in a pastoral setting. The most famous
example of the pastoral elegy is Lycidas (1638), by the English poet John Milton. In music the term elegy is frequently applied to a mournful composition.

A clear distinction exists between poetry as pure art form and most so-called didactic poetry, which at its extreme is merely material that has been versified as an aid to memory (such as, "Thirty days hath September") or to make the learning process more pleasant. Where the emphasis is on communication of knowledge for its own sake or on practical instruction, the designation poetry is rather a misnomer. In such works, the rules of ordinary discourse apply, rather than those of poetic art. Clarity, logical arrangement, and completeness of presentation are valued over the poetic projection of human experience, although didactic materials, like any others, can also serve this poetic end if handled properly. This distinction between poetry as art and poetry as versified discourse is part of the larger question of the boundaries of imaginative literature, a problem treated with particular incisiveness by American philosopher Susanne K. Langer. Her book Feeling and Form (1953) discusses the difference between the use of language for ordinary communication, as in expository writing, and its use as an artistic medium.

For example:

**Adonais**

I weep for Adonais – he is dead
O, weep for Adonais! Thought our tears
That not the frost which bind so dear a head
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers
And teach them thine own sorrow, say with me
Died Adnais; till the future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity

**By: P. B. Shelleg**
• **Ballad**

Ballads usually deal with a personal or public disaster, as in “Mary Hamilton”:

A sad tale through the town is gaen  
A sad tale on the morrow  
Oh Mary Hamilton has born a babe  
And slain it in her sorrow

The traditional ballad is a song that tells a story. The theme is often tragic, such as a tale of personal misfortune, or it can recall a public event such as a battle. Supernatural themes are also common. It is an oral form, dating back to the later Middle Ages, and simple in structure: the story is central, and is usually related in fairly plain four–line stanzas.

An unhappy event is put in the form of story and, with the addition of music, some form of harmony is imposed on unharmonious events; the ballad thus represents an attempt to come to terms with the catastrophe. Ballads usually begin abruptly at the point where the tragic event is about to occur. The tale is told with little comment, the meaning being apparent in the description of the action itself.

Literary ballads, however, are more difficult: at the end of the eighteen century poets took the form and typical subject matter of the ballad.

Ballad, short narrative folk song fixes on the most dramatic part of a story, moving to its conclusion by means of dialogue and a series of incidents. The word ballad was first used in a general sense to mean a simple short poem. Such a poem could be narrative or lyric, sung or not sung, crude or polite, sentimental or satiric, religious or secular; it was vaguely associated with dance. The word is still commonly used in this loose fashion. In the field of folklore, however, ballad is applied
specifically to the kind of narrative folk song described in the opening lines. These narrative songs represent a type of literature and music that developed across Europe in the late Middle Ages. Unlike the medieval romances and rhymed tales, ballads tend to have a tight dramatic structure that sometimes omits all preliminary material, all exposition and description, even all motivation, to focus on the climactic scene (as in the British "Lord Randall"). It is as though the ballad presented only the last act of a play, leaving the listener or reader to supply the antecedent material. When the ballad emerged, it was a new form of art and literature, distinct from anything that had gone before.

Ranging from detailed, fully plotted narratives to almost purely lyric songs, the ballads of different lands and eras are remarkably varied. Moreover, within the variants of any particular ballad, great differences in structure may exist. Because it is transmitted orally, each ballad is subject to continual change; for instance, England's "The Waggoner's Lad" began with a full plot, but its American derivative "On Top of Old Smoky" is a near lyric. Generally, the closer a ballad is to polite literature, the more detail it carries. Oral tradition tends to discard nonessential elements.

Romance (literature), literary genre popular in the Middle Ages (5th century to 15th century), dealing, in verse or prose, with legendary, supernatural, or amorous subjects and characters. The name refers to Romance languages and originally denoted any lengthy composition in one of those languages. Later the term was applied to tales specifically concerned with knights, chivalry, and courtly love. The romance and the epic are similar forms, but epics tend to be longer and less concerned with courtly love.
Epic

Epic is the most ambitious kind of poetry deals with great heroes whose action determined the fate of their nation or of mankind. The scope of epic is encyclopedic: it is the big poem that seeks to explain everything. The poet does not just focus on telling the story but attempts to include all his knowledge and the whole of human experience. The poems are made all – inclusive in various ways. Vast areas of learning are reflected in the use of imagery and allusion. Both poems are packed with classical references, reflecting the classical origins of epic. Such knowledge must be incorporated, for the epic is the poem which examines everything, and which intends to demonstrate that all of experience can be assimilated into a pattern, that all of everything makes sense and interconnects.

Epic is a long narrative poem, majestic both in theme and style. Epics deal with legendary or historical events of national or universal significance, involving action of broad sweep and grandeur. Most epics deal with the exploits of a single individual, thereby giving unity to the composition. Typically, an epic includes several features: the introduction of supernatural forces that shape the action; conflict in the form of battles or other physical combat; and stylistic conventions such as an invocation to the Muse, a formal statement of the theme, long lists of the protagonists involved, and set speeches couched in elevated language. Commonplace details of everyday life may appear, but they serve as background for the story and are described in the same lofty style as the rest of the poem.
When we are reading an epic, initially we should submit to and enjoy the story. Then, when it comes to forming a critical response, think first about the significance of the story we have read. After that we can move on to the manner in which it is narrated, noting, for example, the ways in which the style is elevated to suit the author’s ambitious purpose. To read the world’s factual epic in the original we would have to know, Greek, Latin and Italian.

The Greeks distinguished epic from lyric poetry, both by its nature and its manner of delivery; lyric poetry expressed more personal emotion than epic poetry and was sung, whereas epic poetry was recited.

Epic poems are not merely entertaining stories of legendary or historical heroes; they summarize and express the nature or ideals of an entire nation at a significant or crucial period of its history. Examples include the ancient Greek epics by the poet Homer, the Iliad and the Odyssey. The characteristics of the hero of an epic are national rather than individual, and the exercise of those traits in heroic deeds serves to gratify a sense of national pride. At other times epics may synthesize the ideals of a great religious or cultural movement. The Divine Comedy (1307-1321) by the Italian poet Dante Alighieri expresses the faith of medieval Christianity. The Faerie Queene (1590-1609) by the English poet Edmund Spenser represents the spirit of the Renaissance in England and like Paradise Lost (1667) by the English poet John Milton, represents the ideals of Christian humanism.

Here some lines from Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Book IX

*I Now Must Change*

Those notes to tragic foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt
And disobedience, on the part of Heaven
Norm all enacted, distance and distaste
Anger and just rebuke, and judge men given
That brought into this world a world of woe
Sin and her shadow Death, and misery
Death’s harbinger, sad task, yet argument
Not less but more heroic than the wrath
Of stem Achilles on his foe pursued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall, or rage
Of Tumus for Lavinia disespoused
Or Neptune’s ire or Juno’s that so long
Perplexed the Greek and Cytherea’s son
If answerable style I can abstain
Of my celestial Patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation un implored
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
Easy my anprimiere dictated verse

- **Dramatic Monologue**

Dramatic monologue is a poem in which an imaginary speaker addresses an audience. The poem usually takes place at a critical moment in the speaker’s life and offers an indirect revelation of his or her temperament and personality.

Monologues are common in plays and longer poems, but the development of monologue as a distinct kind of poem is associated with the Victorian poet, Robert Browning in “My Last Duchess” (1842) that illustrates the characteristics of the mode: there is an imagined speaker, the Duke, who is addressing a representative of the girl he hopes to marry.

In addition, monologue is colloquial, following the patterns of the speaker’s voice. All dramatic monologues present one person’s response to life. Robert Frost, as example, exploits the mode in monologue through different ways, but the point of all dramatic monologue has in common is that they do not present the poet’s direct view
of life, but take one step back and examine how imagined characters try to impose a shape and interpretation on the world they encounter. As in so much literature, we are concerned with the world’s lack of pattern and man’s attempt to pattern, understand, and find some meaning in experience.

3.3 The Elements of Poetry

There are several elements which make up a good poem. They are would be described below in brief.

- **Theme**

  This is what the poem is all about. The theme of the poem is the central idea that the poet wants to convey. It can be a story, or a thought, or a description of something or someone – anything which is what the poem is all about.

- **Imagery**

  Imagery is a description which make us imagine how thing or sounds or even smell or feel. Some critics have declared that the writer of imagery distinguish their poetry from prose. It’s seemed clear that poets very often do communicate striking and significant sense of impression.

  For instance, when Robert Burn declares “My luve is like a Red Red Rose” in his poem, he clearly does not mean that he has scarlet skin and patal, instead of
imagining a red rose. We understand that women are vivid and beautiful as the flower is. He is comparing a real thing or person with a thing imagined.

- **Simile**

  A simile is generally the comparison of two things essentially unlike, on the basis of a resemblance in one aspect. It is figure in which a similarity between two objects directly expressed. Most similes are introduced by *as, like*, or even by *such a* word as compare, liken, or resemble.

- **Metaphor**

  A metaphor is a method of comparison where the words ‘like’ and ‘as’ are not used. To modify the earlier example, if the statement used had been something like ‘Her laughter, a babbling brook’, then it would be the use of Metaphor.

- **Rhythm**

  This is the music made by the statements of the poem, which includes the syllables in the lines. The best method of understanding this is to read the poem aloud. Listen for the sounds and the music made when we hear the lines spoken aloud. How do the words resonate with each other? How do the words flow when they are linked with one another? Does sound right? Do the words fit with each other? These are the things you consider while studying the rhythm of the poem.
• **Verse**

Verse is a single line of poetry or regular metric line, as a unit of poetry, in which case it has the same significance as stanza or lines, as a name given generally to metrical composition it means rhythmical and frequently metrical and rhymed compositions. *Blank Verse* is made up of unrhymed iambic pentameter lines. *Free Verse* has no identifiable meter, although the lines may have a rhyme-scheme.

• **Stanza**

Stanza is a recurrent grouping of two or more verse, lines in terms of length, metrical form, and often rhymed scheme. A stanza is an arbitrary and regular division of poetry containing feet number of lines. The shortest usual stanza consists of two lines called couplet. Quatrain is a four lines stanza. Sextet is a six lines stanza. Octave is an eight lines stanza.

• **Meter**

This is the basic structural make-up of the poem. Do the syllables match with each other? Every line in the poem must adhere to this structure. A poem is made up of blocks of lines, which convey a single strand of thought. Within those blocks, a structure of syllables which follow the rhythm has to be included. This is the meter or the metrical form of poetry.

• **Rhyme**
A poem may or may not have a rhyme. When you write poetry that has rhyme, it means that the last words of the lines match with each other in some form. Either the last words of the first and second lines would rhyme with each other or the first and the third, second and the fourth and so on. Rhyme is basically similar sounding words like ‘cat’ and ‘hat’, ‘close’ and ‘shows’, ‘house’ and ‘mouse’ etc. Free verse poetry, though, does not follow this system.

- **Alliteration**

  This is also used in several poems for sound effect. Several words in the sentence may begin with the same alphabet or syllable sound. For example, in the sentence "Many minute miniature moments," the sound of the alphabet ‘M’ is repeated in all the four words continuously. When you say those words aloud, the sound effect generated is called Alliteration.

- **Symbolism**

  Often poems will convey ideas and thoughts using symbols. A symbol can stand for many things at one time and leads the reader out of a systematic and structured method of looking at things. Often a symbol used in the poem will be used to create such an effect.
CHAPTER IV
THE ANALYSIS OF MORAL VALUES IN SOME OF ROBERT FROST’S POEMS

4.1 The Road Not Taken

This is the first poem I want to analyze. This poem was written in 1916 and talked about a choice between two roads, two ideas, and two possibilities of action that narrator faced. It deals with the choice between two roads and with the results of the choice which the narrator made.

Below is the poem:

The Road Not Taken
Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both.
And be the one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in undergrowth;
Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,
And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black,
Oh, I kept another for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

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.
The first stanza tells us about a traveler who can not make up his mind easily because there are two roads in front of him. It is, of course, impossible for him to choose both roads. He must choose one road and forget another. He must, therefore, consider and think deeply which road he must take. It seems that he does not want to make a wrong choice, although he can not take the road in an easy way. Below is the first stanza:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both.  
And be the one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in undergrowth;

Before making a decision, he makes an observation first. He stands for a while and thinks deeply. If the word “road” is interpreted as a way of life, it means the narrator tells us that there are two ways of life he must choose. This stanza advices us to think a lot before decide our own ways of life.

Then the second stanza gives us a description about the first road. He is not familiar with the road. He just can see some physical evidences of the road. It makes him to think hardly and consider the road again. If this way of life is good enough to be chosen, but he can not see many people choose it as their own way of life. Below is the second stanza:

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that, the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,
Actually, it tells us about the condition of the road. It is claimed better than any road. The road is grassy and seems good to be walked through and it is used by many people. Since I said the word “road” is interpreted as a way of life, it means that this road is the best choice for people. Many people suggest this way of life because it is good for everybody and the narrator also offers this way. Then the traveler does not want to decide his choice in hurry. He still has another road which must be observed beside this road. It means that he does not straightforwardly choose it, but he wants to observe the other road first in order to get the best road for him.

Next in the third stanza, the narrator still observes the roads. He pays attention deeply to the second road. From the physical evidences, it signifies that no one ever choose the road. It means that no one takes the road and there is no footstep on the road. It means that the second choice of the way of life is never taken by the people. Because of this, he again thinks deeply and considers this way of life, whether it is good for him or not at all. He has an option, he regards that he can go back to the first one but actually he can not do that. He has decided to choose the second road to pass. It means he chooses the second way of life although no one takes this choice. Beside he can not go back to the first choice, he regards his choice is better for him and he sure with his decision very much. Because he has decided it, he must leave the first one and thinks that he will not go back anytime. Below is the third stanza:

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black,
Oh, I kept another for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.
The fourth stanza represents the narrator’s conclusion that tells us the incident took place long time ago. At the time he chose the road that only few people had chosen the road, but his choice has mad everything different. In this stanza, he tells his experience and wants to share it with the others. He wants every one knows what he has felt in his life. He says that he has chosen the second road which is there in the wood. He is sure to take it as his own way of life although he is offered to choose between two ways of life. Actually it makes his life be different and more valuable.

Below is the fourth stanza:

I shall be telling this with a sigh
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

Actually he is faced into a hard situation where he must choose one of two roads which are laid in the world. There are two ways of life in front of him, so he must choose one of them as his own way of life. Both of them are not familiar with him, but finally he sure to choose different choice than another.

In fact, there are some words in the poem that we must explain in order to make it clearly understandable. The first one is “wood”. This word is appropriately interpreted as “human life in general”. The second one is “road” which may be interpreted as “a way of life”, while the third one is “difference” which may be interpreted as “of great value”.

Based on the explanation above, we may conclude that this poem tells about narrators experience in his life. There are two ways of life he has to choose for his profession. After thinking deeply he finally decided to choose the profession as his
way of life that is not popular because only few people who have chosen it. This is described in the two last lines when the narrator says:

    I took the one less traveled by,
    And that has made all difference.

Although the narrator has chosen the profession that is not popular, he has been successful in his life. His voice is of great value.

There are some moral values we can find in this poem. The first one is that we must thinking deeply before making a crucial decision. We will feel regret if we make a wrong decision. Our success or failure depends on our decision. Another moral value is that we must have a belief that we have made a right decision. This belief will make us be confident to carry out our tasks in our life, because the more confident we feel, the more successful we get.

We may assume that this poem is about the author’s own past experience. A poet has been a rare profession until now. The number of successful poets in one generation in a country is only a few, and Robert Frost was successful in his profession and his choice was of great value.

This is actually homework for us. There are so many professions and of course it makes us be confused to choose the best one for us. For this reason, we must think it about it wisely. Whenever we are faced into a hard choice, the first step we must do is to observe it carefully and then we must convince ourselves to take the decision by increasing our confidence. If those things are done well, I believe our life will be worthy not only for us but also for the people around us.

4.2 Neither Out Far nor in Deep
Robert Frost is one of the poets who use a simple images and figures. He does not want to put any difficult words in order he can represent his idea well to the readers through his poems.

In “Neither out Far or in Deep”, the narrator uses simple images and figures. The plain sense, the rhyme scheme, the rhythm and the images; are seems to be simple. Actually this poem is disarming us. Its figures and symbols are quite conventional, made so by repeated use and time. This means to beautify the poem in order easy to be read and understood.

It also seems that nothing special from this poem, but deeply we concern, it tells about humanity. This is such dignity man as a man. Many of us are still in hubbub and asking who we are, what we are and why we are here. This kind of questions always come and accompanies us as a human being. The talking is about the limitation the human has. The author such wants to critic the people because of their great demands although the final answer is small.

Below is the poem:

Neither Out Far nor In Deep
The people along the sand
All turn and look one way.
They turn their back on the land.
They look at the sea all day.

As long as it takes to pass
A ship keeps raising its hull;
The wetter ground like glass
Reflects a standing gull

The land may vary more;
But wherever the truth may be –
The water comes ashore,
And the people look at the sea.
They cannot look out far.
They cannot look in deep.
But when was that ever a bar
To any what they keep?

The first stanza tells us about the people who standing on the shores. They are standing there because they are looking for a way to get back to the land. Finally they have vision and find one way. They decided to pass it to go back to the land to see the sea. The people on the shore turn back to the land to see the sea all day. They turn by passing a way. When they pass the way, the ship keeps raising its hull. The land may vary more for them and the truth is like the water comes ashore. They look at the sea but they can not look out far and they also can not look in deep.

The people along the sand
All turn and look one way.
They turn their back on the land.
They look at the sea all day.

The way is laid on the land. I assume the word “a way” here is as a device to reach something in their life. They turn back to the land because they want to see the sea. A question appears: why they must see the sea? I assume that the sea is limitless and mysterious; the sea is unpredictable, wide and long. Besides the sea is an exciting thing to be explored and known and also wide enough to be known. Here, I believe that the word “sea” interprets “life”. Life is mysterious and also has secret. No one knows the secret of life. No one can guess what life is or ever to determine the life itself.

In the second stanza, the people are walking along the way. When they pass it, they still sea a ship in the sea. But they just can see the hull of the ship. And they then
still continue their journey to the land through the way. The way they walk by is wet because of the sea water. Their journey through the way reflects as a standing gull which waits for its freedom.

As long as it takes to pass
A ship keeps raising its hull;
The wetter ground like glass
Reflects a standing gull

The third stanza tells us about the hope which people have. I interpret hope from the sentence “the water comes ashore”. In the first stanza, the people turn back to the land through a way. They do this because they want to find the truth. The truth itself is something they want to scrutinize. They regard that they still have time to find it. Therefore, they still have hopes. They hope to find it while they are staring at the sea. They hope that they can find the truth in their life. Below is the third stanza:

The land may vary more;
But wherever the truth may be –
The water comes ashore,
And the people look at the sea.

The usage of the word “sea” is repeated from the first stanza in this third stanza: “and the people look at the sea”. It means that the sea is important to see. Actually the narrator wants to say that life is very important to be looked at and understood. He wants the people realize that life is so wide. No one knows life even his own life. He just knows that he has destiny which must be faced.

Then, in the fourth stanza, the narrator wants to warn people. He says that everything they ask as questions, the final answer is small. Because the final answer is small, he asks why the people still hope too much for the life itself. Actually it is such

a warning for us. The narrator wants to warn us to be wise in asking questions and realize that the final answer which we looking for are small.

The depression found in this poem can be seen in the first stanza, where narrator express his worry by standing along the sand near by the sea and looked to the sea. The narrator uses the simple words but if we read again it has deep meaning that he feels depression in looking for something that important for him. After long time stared at the sea, he turn back, realize that he will not find something which he looking for just by stared at the sea.

Here is the first stanza that shows depression:

The people along the sand  
All turn and look one way  
They turn their back on the land  
They look at the sea all day.

From the whole poem above, I get the point that is whatever we ask more, whatever we are afraid of; actually we can not make sure of something. We can only make estimation. I believe that the people in this poem are trying to find the truth. They scrutinize the truth by turning back to the way because it gives them a hope in finding the truth. But finally, whatever their great progress, the answer is small and simple. This is so interesting for me. By knowing the answer, actually we are invited to think why the answer should be like that; small and simple. We are asking to have wisdom in facing our life that we must be wise for being a human in this world.
Let see the sentence “they cannot look out fat; they cannot look in deep”, it states that there is a limitation for us. We have restriction in thinking or even in doing something. It seems that the author wants to remind the people in the poem particularly and the whole man in the world commonly that actually humans have their limits. Because of that, we should wise enough to think and also in doing the action in solving the problems.

The narrator also wants to remind us, that we are still a human, whatever we do, we are still human who are looking for the truth in this wide life. But finally we will find the answer whenever we go back to the land because from this place we can find the truth. I assume the word “land” in the poem interprets faith. It is clear for us that the narrator wants us to back to our faith particularly when we want to find the truth.

The moral value that I get from this poem is about patience and self awareness. We often have questions for us and we give them to other people. This means that we need truth in us. We need something that can convince us to have an action. We sometimes have too much demand from our questions but finally the final answer is simple. Since the final answer is simple, we should wise enough in doing our action. We must wait patiently and just believe that nothing is instant in this world.

4.3 Birches

In the poem Birches by Robert Frost, Frost portrays the images of a child growing to adulthood through the symbolism of aging birch trees. Through these images readers are able to see the reality of the real world compared to there carefree
childhood. The image of life through tribulation is the main focal point of the poem and the second point of the poem is if one could revert back to the simpler times of childhood. The language of the poem is entirely arranged through images, although it contains some diction it lacks sound devices, metaphors, and similes compared to other published works by Frost.

Below is the poem:

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy’s been swinging them.
But swinging doesn’t bend them down to stay
As ice-storm do. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many colored
as the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun’s warmth makes them shed crystal shells
shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust-
such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
you’d think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
and they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
so low for long, they never right themselves:
you may see their trunks arching in the woods
years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
before them over their heads to dry in the sun.
but I was going to say when truth broke in
with all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
as he went out and in to fetch the cows
some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
whose only play was he found himself,
summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father’s trees
by riding them down over and over again
until he took the stiffness out of them,
and not one but hung limp, not one was left
for him to conquer. He learned all there was
to learn about not launching out too soon
and so not carrying the tree away
clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
to the top branches, climbing carefully
with the same pains you use to fill a cup
up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
kicking his way down through the air to the ground.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It’s when I’m weary of considerations,
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 lashed across it open.
I’d like to get away from earth awhile
and then comeback to it and begin over.
May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth’s the right place for love:
I don’t know where it’s likely to go better.
I’d like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than is a swinger of birches.

Robert Frost’s “Birches” is 59 lines of blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter, that divides into three sections. The first 20 lines graphically describe the slender, flexible trees and how they may become bent temporarily by "some boy's . . . swinging [on] them" or permanently by ice storms.
The first half of the poems’ images is of life, coming of age, and death. The first three lines in the poem represent the image of childhood and adulthood. "When I see birches bend to left and right Across the lines of straighter darker trees, I like to think some boy's been swinging them." Childhood is represented when the branches swing Frost thinks there is a boy swinging on them. Adulthood is represented by straighter darker trees because darker is a reference to older trees just by the nature of the color as compared to a birch tree which is white or light in color. "But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay. Ice storms do. Often you must have seen them Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning after a rain. They click upon themselves as the breeze rises, and turn many-colored as the stir cracks and crazes their enamel." The ice storms symbolize the difficult times in life or the coming of age through time and weathering just like a person. The word “loaded” describes about the burden of being old compared to youthfulness just like the burden of the ice on the trees. “Shattering and avalanching on the snow such heaps of broken glass to be swept away” is a representation of the final stage in life and that is death. The shattering of the branches is like the death of a person and the sweeping away of the branches is like a funeral.

The main image of the poem is of a series of birch trees that have been bowed down so that they no longer stand up straight but rather are arched over. While the poet quickly establishes that he knows the real reason that this has happened - ice storms have weighed down the branches of the birch trees, causing them to bend over - he prefers instead to imagine that something else entirely has happened: a young boy has climbed to the top of the trees and pulled them down, riding the trees as they
droop down and then spring back up over and over again until they become arched over. This tension between what has actually happened and what the poet would like to have happened, between the real world and the world of the imagination, runs throughout Frost's poetry and gives the poem philosophical dimension and meaning far greater than that of a simple meditation on birch trees.

In the poem, the act of swinging on birches is presented as a way to escape the hard rationality or “Truth” of the adult world, if only for a moment. As the boy climbs up the tree, he is climbing toward “heaven” and a place where his imagination can be free. The narrator explains that climbing a birch is an opportunity to “get away from earth awhile / and then come back to it and begin over.” A swinger is still grounded in the earth through the roots of the tree as he climbs, but he is able to reach beyond his normal life on the earth and reach for a higher plane of existence.

Significantly, the narrator’s desire to escape from the rational world is inconclusive. He wants to escape as a boy climbing toward heaven, but he also wants to return to the earth: both “going and coming back.” The freedom of imagination is appealing and wondrous, but the narrator still cannot avoid returning to “Truth” and his responsibilities on the ground; the escape is only a temporary one.

4.4 Stopping by Woods on A Snowy Evening

This poem was written in 1923. It consists of four stanzas and each stanza consists of four lines. The language is simple. I do not find the usage of complicated
words that can make us confuse in reading and understanding the poem. The only thing that appears is the usage of simple image and figures.

In order to understand the poem well, below is the poem:

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening
Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake
The only other sound’s the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake

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

This poem tells about a man with his little horse stops at the wood to see the snow fall. He stops his horse at desolate place. In this place he finds no houses or even a farmhouse. He lies between the wood and the frozen lake. The condition of the wood is cold and deserted. The only sounds are the shaking of harness bells of the horse and the freeze wind which blows slowly. He wants to stay long but he still has promises to be kept.

The first stanza tells us that a man stops for a while to enjoy the beauty of the wood which is covered with snow. He stops because the snow has attracted him much.
In the wood he does not find any house and it seems that he knows the wood well.

Below is the first stanza:

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

In the second stanza, he says that he does not find any farmhouse in the wood. It seems that the wood is isolated. Only he and his horse are there, so he talks to his horse. He says to him to think it queer. The word “queer” is rarely used by animal. It is used for people. So, this is unusual thing whenever the narrator uses queer to the horse. I assume it has another intention by using the sentence “my little horse must think it queer”. It seems that the narrator takes the control of his horse to stop at any place he wants. Below is the second stanza:

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year

He actually stops between the wood and the frozen lake. In this place, of course the weather is so cold but the man decides to stop at the place. Beside the place is cold, it is also lack of lives. He can only see the trees and feels the cold snow. In the third stanza, his horse gives the man a sign. He confuses with the man why they stop at the cold place. The horse tries to realize the man by shaking his harness bell. He acts as if he asks it is a mistake if the man stops at an isolated and cold place. Not only his bell’s sound breaks the loneliness but also the cold wind blows slowly among the
trees. The sound such try to remind him that he is actually there in a wrong place and situation. Below is the third stanza:

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound’s the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

If we take a look from the previous stanza, the third stanza still relates with the second one. In this stanza, the horse tries to remind the man why they stop at a cold place meanwhile they can find a warm place. I have a vision about the meaning of horse. I assume the horse interprets himself. It is such a personification that things or animals can acts as a human. I assume the talking is between the man and his feeling or heart.

In the fourth stanza, the man realizes that he actually has another task to do. He admires the wood well by saying the wood is lovely, dark, and deep. He admires the beauty snow which covers the whole wood but he must keep his promises. Not only one promise but also promises he must keep. He must leave the wood with its beauty to continue his journey. He still has distance to go by and so with the promises which must be kept.

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.

In this stanza, I would focus on the sentence “and miles to go before I sleep”. This sentence means he, the man, still has distance to do. He regards his journey is still long. The word “miles” signifies the distance. Besides, his journey is not complete enough. That is why he must complete it.
The sentence above is repeated twice. I assume it has a meaning. It is a kind of warning for him. He warns himself that he must keep all of his promises. Besides he must continue his walk because he still has distance to be traveled by. He regards that keeping promises is the most important thing than enjoyment of life.

Last stanza of this poem expresses pessimism. It can be seen from the sentences that tells us that the narrator really wants to enjoy the snowfall in the woods because for him, it would be lovely to watch it in the dark and deep woods. Then he feels pessimism that he can not to watch the snowfall because he remember that he has a promise that more important to do so that he must continue his journey without spend much time in the woods. His destination is still far away miles from the woods, it make him could not stay there with his horse to watch the snowfall that lovely for him. Here is the last 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.

This poem actually tells about attitude towards life. Some people may conduct and do as they want without thinking anybody else. Some of them may regard this life is a duty; so that life must be run goodly otherwise he or she will not feel sorry in his or her life especially whenever he or she gets old. This attitude usually determines someone in the future. If we just act as usual and depend on the happiness, it means that we like to enjoy life without thinking what is next, or may be what will be happen if we can not feel the happiness in the next time of our life, especially in the olden age.
Some people may be having a different thought than the first before. They regard that something which someone has started must be ended well. As long as he lives, he must try as best as he can do to defend his choice. Not only defend but he must raise his choice to be a better one; so that there is proud in his life whenever he gets old or even he has passed away.

Actually the whole poem gives us a clear illustration of value keeping promise. The moral value I can take from this poem is about responsibility. The man here, I assume is the narrator himself. The narrator says that he continues hi journey to keep hi promises. He regards that keeping is important than enjoying the snowfall in the wood. It seems that he is reluctant to leave the wood which is lovely and cold. He is willing to leave the lovely wood just to continue his voyage. He is impelled to move on by the realization of duties (promise) and distance (miles to go). While he is responsible to keep it, he is still has distance to go.

I conclude that this poem teaches us to put responsibility more than everything. The author wants to tell us that it is more than responsible. It is more than just keep the promise but to finish it while we still have ways to go. The two last sentence not only warn the author but also it goes to us for thinking that keeping promise is the most important thing than enjoy our timeless.

4.5 Nothing Gold Can Stay

"Nothing Gold Can Stay" is one of Robert Frost's most famous poems. Written in 1923, this poem was published in The Yale Review in October of that year. It was later published in a collection called 'New Hampshire' (1923), which featured other
notable poems of Frost such as Two Look at Two and Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening. Some say the poem helped Frost to win a Pulitzer Prize. Only eight lines long, this poem is still considered one of Frost's best. "Nothing Gold Can Stay" is also featured in the novel The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton and its film adaptation.

Below is the poem:

Nature's first green is gold
Her hardest hue to hold
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Honestly, it seems to me that while he may be writing about life, death, virginity, change, etc., there am a deeper metaphor regarding seasons that makes this poem truly blissful. The first green of nature in “nature’s first green is old” is obviously the first spring, the birth and renewal of the world; a new year, a new season of fertility. Of course, the gold- besides explaining the color New England willows shimmer- symbolizes how valuable spring is, how rich and vivid it looks compared to the harsh winter that just passed by. Of course, the liveliness of the plants and people in spring will soon die away until the next year. It only lasts for a few short months.
The next two lines are basically redundant, just explaining his message again:

spring begins with blossoming flowers, things all over are being renewed again, but soon they all change as spring leads into summer, then fall, and then death in winter. The cycle continues for the entire 'day,' or year, before it can begin again. Nothing gold can stay—spring, the season of youth and rebirth, only lasts for so long.

Childhoods soon turns to adulthood in the fall and then winter strikes when the leaves wither away—people eventually live through their cycle of life and are taken from the earth, as are the leaves, to make room for a new generation the next spring. So, in a way, Robert Frost is connecting seasons to the cycle of life, and explaining how childhood—nature's first golden shade of green—won't last forever, no matter how rich and beautiful it may seem.

The first literal take on the poem can be of course this cycle of life which cannot be stopped "leaf subsides to leaf" basically refers day to day. Everything changes over time and so naturally it can barely stay the same of "an hour". The word “gold” interprets beauty, treasures, and happiness and with the imagery of leaves it can conjure up images of fall. The seasons change so it will not always be fall, also it can reference to fall of mankind as in the Garden of Eden which "sank to grief". “Gold” can symbolize the Garden of Eden a time of innocence and happiness, a paradise, but eventually this innocence is lost when knowledge is gained and the golden paradise is gone for them. "Nature" can also be seen as human nature which ties in with the fall of mankind; at first they are youthful which is represented by the "first green" and "early leaf's flower" which are simplistic and beautiful as well as young. This also
ties in with the golden age a time for innocent happiness but it to fell. The innocence fades when life happens. It is not a constant and will not remain but there is always the possibility of it returning. There could be a new innocence in another circumstance or event of life.

The poem begins at once in paradox: "**green is gold . . . leaves a flower.**" At once, common knowledge, precise observation, and the implications of ancient associations are brought into conflicting play. “**Green**” is the first mark of spring, the assurance of life; yet in fact the first flush of vegetation for the New England birch and the willow is not green but the haze of delicate gold. Hence green is a theory or sign of spring; gold is the fact. “**Gold**”, precious and permanent as a metal, is here not considered as a metal but as a color. Its hue is described as hard to hold, as evanescent as wealth itself.

In the second couplet of the heavily end-stopped poem, paradox is emphasized again, this time in the terms of **“leaf”** and **“flower”** instead of green and gold. The earliest leaf unfolds in beauty like a flower; but in spite of its appearance, it is leaf, with all the special function of its being, instead of flower. Yet as apparent flower (the comparison is metaphoric rather than a simile—that is, leaf is flower, not leaf resembles or is like flower), the leaf exists in disguise only a moment and then moves on to its true state as leaf. In terms of the two parallel paradoxes, we find the green which appears as gold becoming the real green of leaf; the leaf which appears to be flower with all the possible color of flower becomes the true green of leaf. Our expectations are borne out: apparent gold shifts to green; apparent flower subsides into
leaf. But in each case an emotional loss is involved in the changed conditions. The hue of gold with all its value associations of richness and color cannot be preserved. Nor can flower, delicate and evanescent in its beauty, last long; hence we are touched by melancholy when gold changes to green and flower changes to leaf (actually "subsides" or sinks or falls into leaf). Yet in terms of the poem, the thing which metamorphoses into its true self (gold to green of life and flower into leaf which gives life to the tree or plant) undergoes only an apparent or seeming fall. The subsiding is like the jut of water in "West-Running Brook," a fall which is a rise into a new value. It is with this movement of paradox that Frost arrives at the final term of his argument, developing the parallel between acts within nature and acts within myth. "So Eden sank to grief" with the same imperceptible movement that transformed gold to green and made flower subside to leaf. By analogy the third term in the poem takes on the character of the first two; gold is green; flower is leaf; Eden is grief. In every case the second element is actually a value, a part of a natural process by which the cycle of fuller life is completed.

Thus by the very movement and order of the poem, we are induced to accept each change as a shift to good rather than as a decrease in value; yet each change involves a seeming diminution, a fall stressed in the verbs "subsides" and "sank" as well as in the implicit loss in color and beauty. The sense of a fall which is actually a part of an inherent order of nature, of the nature of the object, rather than being forced unintelligibly and externally, is reinforced as the final natural metaphor recapitulates the first three movements of the argument: "So dawn goes down to day." The pattern of paradox is assured; the fall is really no fall to be mourned. It is a Felix culpa and
light-bringing. Our whole human experience makes us aware that dawn is tentative, lovely, but incomplete and evanescent. Our expectation is that dawn does not "go down" to day, but comes up, as in Kipling's famous phrase, "like thunder," into the satisfying warmth of sunlight and full life. The hesitant perfections of gold, of flower, of Eden, and finally of dawn are linked to parallel terms which are set in verbal contexts of diminished value. Yet in each case the parallel term is potentially of larger worth. If the reader accepts green leaf and the full sunlight of day as finally more attractive than the transitory golden flower and the rose flush of a brief dawn, he must also accept the Edenic sinking into grief as a rise into a larger life. In each case the temporary and partial becomes more long-lived and complete; the natural cycle that turns from flower to leaf, from dawn to day, balances each loss by a real gain. Eden's fall is a blessing in the same fashion, an entry into fuller life and greater light. Frost, both through language and through structure, has emphasized in "Nothing Gold Can Stay" not merely the melancholy of transitory beauty—of Paradise—but an affirmation of the fortunate fall.

Here is Frost's most evocative use of the *Felix culpa* metaphor. The subsidence, the sinking, the going down is, by the logic of the poem, a blessed increase if we are to follow the cycle of flower, leaf, bud, fruit, into the full life that includes loss, grief, and change.

The two last lines are also representing pessimism. The narrator said that everything would be flowed as the water but it keeps reminding him that nothing is
eternal in this life. It makes him be pessimism to face his life, through all the problem
has. Here are the lines:

So dawn goes dawn to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

4.6 The Oven Bird

The whole of this poem tells about the activity of the oven bird. In
www.aboutbirds.org/oven_bird.htm, this kind of birds is mostly finding in Eastern
North America. They live in the forest and so far they are known as commonest
woodland birds. They like to sing and they sing scarcely ceases before another begins.
They usually sing in April to October, whenever the season changes.

When a bird starts to sing, the other birds will follow him and they begin to
call back and forth one another. It is because the bird is obviously moved by spirit
which demands utterance. When the bird is about to sing, flying up from the ground,
how cautiously he hops from branch to branch and with crest slightly erect, walks
carefully along the limb, when suddenly overcome by the music in his soul, he throws
fear to the winds and lifts up voice in a crescendo chant which vibrates through the
woods.

Actually, the song of the bird’s striving. Before the season really changes, he
still works while he sings by pecking the wood. This means that the oven bird is hard
worker and thus that narrator wants to tell that he is a hard worker too.

There is a bird which is known by anyone. The bird is included into woodland
bird. He likes to sing much in spring. He states the condition of the wood where the
pear and cherry bloom on sunny days. He sees the old leaves fall while the highway is full of dust. In this case, the bird knows that he can stop singing.

Below is the poem:

The Oven Bird
There is a singer everyone has heard,
Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,
Who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.
He says that leaves are old and that for flowers
Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten.
He says the early petal-fall is past,
When pear and cherry bloom went down in showers
On sunny days a moment overcast;
And comes that other fall we name the fall.
He says the highway dust is over all.
The bird would cease and be as other birds
But that he knows in singing not to sing.
The question that he frames in all but words
is what to make of a diminished thing.

Then, I will try to analyze this poem. I am currently studying Frost and I think the meaning of this poem relates to Frost's view of making the most of what is left. I think Frost reflects in this poem and the theme is the death of his children. When Frost talks about the "early petal fall" this could relates to the death of his children, who died towards the end of summer.

I think the meaning is a much simpler one personally. The inability for man and natures are to coincide. The oven bird is a leader, like a signpost for all other nature. It is well known, bright, happy, and brings life and vitality to its surroundings.

Note that this poem is a sonnet, 14 lines, and split into 2 sections; the octave and the sextet. There is a tone change between sections whereby the octave is about nature. The sestet is about a decline, where mankind interrupts the beauty and vitality of nature and the oven bird.
Line one to three tells about the bird.

There is a singer everyone has heard,
Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,
who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.

The bird always sings and makes a sound by pecking the wood. This really makes the situation in the wood seems vociferous. Beside the song of the bird is melodious, the sound of the stalk adds the serenity of the situation of the woods. The word “singer” here refers to the bird. The narrator says that every one has heard the singer and also the song. The chant is melodious and burst forth and also crescendos. The bird likes to peck the limb and flying up around the stalk in the wood. His pecking is also a song because his pecking makes a good rhythm.

In addition, these lines give a clear illustration of the narrator. The narrator works all day. He works with his spirit and his spirit leads him to work. His work is useful for himself. By working, he still has bustle and thus makes him happy.

Then, line four and five are still talk about the nature. It is possible and as a part of destiny that the old leaves will fall and thus signs the autumn. And then while the spring comes, that’s the time for flowers and all plants to grow well.

He says that leaves are old and that for flowers
Mid – summer is to spring as one to ten.

In these lines, he reveals the natural phenomenon. He realizes that the phenomenon can be happen with him. He believes one day he will not work again. May be in that time he will not live anymore and it means he stops doing all of his activities including for working forever. That’s why he still tries and does some efforts.
for himself even though he is already an old man. Besides he still has time to have the efforts before he really dies.

Below are the next four lines:

He says the early petal – fall is fats,
When pear and cherry bloom when down showers
On sunny days a moment overcast;
And comes that other fall we name the fall.

The four lines also talks about nature. As we know, every plant will grow well and bloom in the spring. In this season, the rainfall is enough to water the plant. The plants are also helped by the sun shine. I convince that the word “shower” refers to sun shine. This explanation is powered by the word “sunny days”. This phenomenon only happens in spring.

The word “petal – fall” has relation with the word “fall” in the next line. The first fall, still refers to the autumn as the continuation of the previous lines. The word “he says” actually belongs to the birds. He watches this natural phenomenon carefully. He believes that everything in this world has its own destiny. But he looks at this phenomenon and regards that it is too fast, that season changes and finally the winter come. The same case happens with the narrator. He is now an old man and he knows he will die someday. He finally the same as the old leaves, will fall to the ground and be one with the soil and it indicates he dies.

The next five lines are also having relation with the four lines above:

He says the highway dust is over all.
The bird would cease and be as other birds
But that he knows in singing not to sing.
The question that he frames in all but words
Is what to make of a diminished thing.
When the season really changes, of course the bird will stop and gather with the other birds to move to another safer place. The season that I mean here is winter. At least, the bird has tried to do anything he could do before the season changes. When the time comes, we will not hear him singing again because he has moved with the other birds to a safer and warm place.

Hopelessness found in this poem is in line four and five. It tells about nature. It possible and as a part of destiny that the old leaves will fall and thus signs the autumn. And then while the spring comes, that the time for flowers to grow well, not only for flower but all plants will grow well.

These lines use simple words but of course it has deep meaning. Through these lines, the narrator expresses his hopelessness that as a human he would be died someday. As a hard worker he feels hopeless that one day he will not work again. May be in that time he will not live anymore and it means he stops doing everything forever.

He says that leaves are old and that for flowers
Mid – summer is to spring as one to ten.

From the explanation above, I get the point that this kind bird is a hard worker. He uses his much time to work. While he is working, he is accompanied with his chant that he sings. I believe the chant which melodious and crescendo is a spirit for his soul. It is a spirit to stay at work.

The value that I found in this poem is that the narrator actually is a hard worker. The poem tells about the bird which is striving in the little space of time whenever the season begins to change to winter. Honestly the bird is drafting of
narrator’s life. He still works hard in his limited time. His spirit guides him keep on striving to work. He regards that every second he has is valuable and important. And thus he wants his life is valuable and full of meaning. This is not only useful for him but also for the people around him.

The poem teaches us to work hard. We may not stay that we are running out of time. We may not say we can do anything. We must fight and strive. Even though the time we have is little, try to work hard and give the best. Let our spirit guide us strive and do an effort. Let’s think that every second we have is so valuable.

4.7 Acquainted With The Night

This poem was written in 1928. All the words in the poem are all common sense. The rhyme scheme of the poem is different; it goes \textit{ab, ab, cb, cd, cd, ad, aa}. Not only the rhyme scheme is different and makes the poem good and unique but also the rhythm, beat, and sounds.

The poem tells about loneliness. The man feels lonely in facing his life. He is also isolated from the society and moves alone without any friend of him accompanies him to walk through the street of the city. A man has been acquainted with the night because he has walked out in the rain through the furthest light of the city. He also has passed a watchman on his journey. Then he stops because interrupted cry from another street. It does not call him back or say good bye. He still stands at luminary clock and proclaims the time is neither wrong nor right because he has been acquainted with the night.

Below is the poem:
Acquainted With the Night
I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain – and back in rain.
I have out walked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet.
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,
But not to call me back or say good – by;
And further still at an unearthly height,
One luminary clock against the sky
Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

In the first stanza, the narrator tells us about his journey. I pay my attention to the sentence “I have been acquainted with the night”. The word “acquainted” is usually used whenever we are introduced with someone, such: “I am acquainted with Mary”. But the narrator says that he has been acquainted with the night. It is an unusual one. And then the narrator uses “I have” in the beginning of the sentences. It almost sounds flat, but actually it is not flat because the word “acquainted with the night” is an unusual expression. Also the repetition of words and grammatical structure makes for special emphasis. Furthermore, when he says “I have walked out” turns into “I have out walked the furthest city light”, we realize that we are being told the special journey, not just a literal walk around.

Then he says that he has walked out for distance along the street and he walks in the rain. It gives us a sense of mystery. I assume that the rain has meaning. The rain usually relates with sad and sorrow. It can be interpreted as being lonely. Then I
assume that the narrator walks in the night for distance in the street lonely. It means that he faces his life alone without anyone with him.

Another perception about this first stanza, said that the man has an experience with something dark in the way of grief, ignorance, loss of faith or loneliness is dark. Thus I assume that he becomes alone and avoids any contact with the people. He becomes a closed personality.

Here is the first stanza:

I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain – and back in rain.
I have out walked the furthest city light.

Then the second stanza resembles the previous stanza but it is more expansive. He continues telling his journey. He walks through the saddest lane. Actually the lane can not literary be sad. The saddest implies that sad people live in the lane, or the man feels sad when he thinks of the people who live in lane. During his journey he meets the watchman. Perhaps the watchman is one of the people who are living in the lane. He does not want to stare at him. He precisely avoids his glance because he does not want the watchman sees him with his sad feeling. He decides not to tell his sad with him. He feels that he does not want to explain his sorrow. This indicates that he is not only walking alone but also isolates himself from his fellows. That is he feels isolated and therefore shuns contact.

Actually the man runs his life alone. He has sad feeling as a bad experience. He is alone and isolated from the people. He does not want to share his sad feeling to anyone. He does not want to tell it because he feels unwilling. He will take his sad feeling as long as he can and as long as he lives. It seems that he ignores the society.
Here is the second stanza:

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

The third stanza tells us about his stopping. He suddenly stops from his walking because he realizes that he has walked for distance in the street alone. He is alone along the night. Beside lonely, he stops because he hears sound of cry. He hears it thoroughly and makes sure that it comes from the other street. It comes from the houses which are laid over the street where he stands.

This stanza seems that the society ignores him. In the previous stanza, he ignores the society and in this stanza the society ignores him. If the society cares to him, it is of course the cry goes to call him back. But it is not. There is a suggestion that the man almost does not exist at all, even in his own perception: “I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet”. A paraphrase of “stopped the sound of feet” means to stop producing the noise of footsteps. Thus by standing still he becomes inaudible not only to the city dwellers but also to himself.

The “interrupted cry” is sorrowful. The cry is mysterious because its cause, its source, its message, or why it is interrupted is in blank one. So far it is not know the cause of the cry. These make him stop his walking.

He still hears the cry thoroughly. He feels that is a call for him to back. But unfortunately it is not. The cry is not signify as a call for him to back. Even though like that, the cry is also not signify farewell for him.

In the fourth stanza, he still stands in the street and muse his journey. The sense of mystery comes out by referring to a clock “at unearthly height”. May be this
is a real clock, perhaps with an illuminated face, high on a church or town hall, but it
seems more likely that this “luminary” clock is something beyond “the furthest city
light”, probably it is a metaphor, describing the full moon, which is literally
“unearthly”. Its unearthliness is emphasized by the unusual use of the unusual word
“luminary”. It is usually a noun meaning source of illumination, but here it is used as
an adjective. That’s why I assume that “luminary clock” is the full moon light. Here
is the fourth stanza:

But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height
One luminary clock against the sky,

In the last stanza he states a statement about the time. Then put a complete
sentence, repeats the first line exactly and it restores the tone of assurance. I am sure
the narrator wants to say that he is alone and has no one to communicate. The sense of
loneliness implies the isolation from people and in the poem the sense of loneliness of
the narrator may be not only from other people but also from himself (from a sense of
individual purpose) and also from meaningless universe. Whenever he says that he has
been acquainted with the night, he does not says it sadly. Even though he is also and
isolated from the people, he does not feel sad. He believes that the time foe him can be
right or on the other hand can be wrong. Below is the last stanza:

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

The first stanza also has shown the hopelessness of the narrator. In this stanza,
it clear that the narrator feels hopeless because he has been acquainted with the night
without a friend with him. He has walked for long distance under the rain. In this
stanza, I assume that “rain” interprets the loneliness. The narrator walks in the night for distance in the street lonely. It means that he faces his life alone without anyone with him so that he feels hopeless. Below is the first stanza:

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain – and back in rain.  
I have out walked the furthest city light.

I have an idea from the whole poem. Actually it is about loneliness and isolation. Being alone and isolated are the things we hope we do not have in our life. But in the poem, the man is really alone and he is isolated from other people. Even though like that, he does not want to blame himself of being lonely. He precisely states that the time can be right or wrong. Whatever the perception of the time, he must face his life because his life must go on.

We know that the man is alone. But whenever he says “I have been acquainted with the night”, we see such arrogance. We feel the narrator is selfish enough to state the he has been introduced with the night. I assume the man in the poem refers to the author. We feel that the narrator is egoist by saying it. He is almost entirely self-centered and detached. He does not seem to be impelled but he certainly denies any contact with other human being. The “One luminary clock against the sky” (line 12) suggest because of its “unearthly light” (line 11) the isolation of the narrator and therefore of man in general in the universe. I assume the word “night” interprets the void in which man exist.

The moral value that I found in the person is do not blame but it must be used wisely. The clock can be correct or not but the time we have is a circulation of life. Whatever we feel as our experience in the different time of our life, we should not
blame it. We are too naïf if we blame the time while we do not have self-introspection because self-introspection is important in order our life goes right. This is such finding the truth in real life. So, we must submerge into self beyond all confusion in other we will not feel alone and isolated to the others. Beside that, we also must open our selves to the others because we can not live without society around us. We live in an environment; automatically we must have contact with the others, in any condition and situation.

Sometimes we of course feel alone. It seems that we are isolated from the people and thus we do not want to tell our feeling with them. We also try in order we feel especially our sad experience is not known by the people. But, we should not soluble in our loneliness because we have other tasks to done. Don’t let it makes us feel down and have no spirit and sink in sorrow. We must run our time wisely. We must smart enough to use our time goodly, otherwise we feel down and sink in sorrow. Therefore, I ask all of us to use our time wisely and goodly in order we do not feel regret and finally blame the time.

4.8 Fire and Ice

This short poem outlines the familiar question about the fate of the world, wondering if it is more likely to be destroyed by fire or ice. People are on both sides of the debate, and Frost introduces the narrator to provide his personal take on the question of the end of the world. The narrator first concludes that the world must end in fire after considering his personal experience with desire and passion, the emotions of fire. Yet, after considering his experience with “ice,” or hatred, the narrator
acknowledges that ice would be equally destructive. This poem is written in 1923. Only nine lines long, this little poem is a brilliant example of Frost’s concisely ironic literary style. The poem varies between two meter lengths (either eight syllables or four syllables) and uses three sets of interwoven rhymes, based on “-ire,” “-ice,” and “-ate.” Below is the poem:

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

In the first two lines of the poem, Frost creates a clear dichotomy between fire and ice and the two groups of people that believe in each element. By using the term “some” instead of “I” or “an individual,” Frost asserts that the distinction between the two elements is a universal truth, not just an idea promoted by an individual. In addition to the unavoidable contradiction between fire and ice, these first lines also outline the claim that the world will end as a direct result of one of these elements. It is unclear which element will destroy the world, but it is significant to note that fire and ice are the only options. The poem does not allow for any other possibilities in terms of the world’s fate, just as there are not any other opinions allowed in the black-and-white debate between fire and ice.

Interestingly, the two possibilities for the world’s destruction correspond directly to a common scientific debate during the time Frost wrote the poem. Some scientists believed that the world would be incinerated from its fiery core, while others
were convinced that a coming ice age would destroy all living things on the earth’s surface. Instead of maintaining a strictly scientific perspective on this debate, Frost introduces a more emotional side, associating passionate desire with fire and hatred with ice. Within this metaphorical view of the two elements, the “world” can be recognized as a metaphor for a relationship. Too much fire and passion can quickly consume a relationship, while cold indifference and hate can be equally destructive.

Although the first two lines of the poem insist that there can only be a single choice between fire and ice, the narrator undercuts this requirement by acknowledging that both elements could successfully destroy the world. Moreover, the fact that he has had personal experience with both (in the form of desire and hate) reveals that fire and ice are not mutually exclusive, as the first two lines of the poem insist. In fact, though the narrator first concludes that the world will end in fire, he ultimately admits that the world could just as easily end in ice; fire and ice, it seems, are strikingly similar.

There is also hopelessness in this poem. “I think I know enough of hate to say that for destruction ice” represents that the narrator feels hopeless and give up in life. He doesn’t matter whether the world end in fire or ice. Although he can see that nowadays the world slowly destructs by ice. I assume that the narrator is in a relationship that has much trouble. He has hopeless that his relationship can be go on. However he had been seen that “ice” has destructed the relationship.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions
For literature students it is important to know about literary works. There are three genres in literature; they are novel, drama and poetry. Poetry, according to Robert Frost, is a rhythmical composition of words expressing attitude, designed to surprise and delight and to arouse an emotional response (Kennedy, 1978:5). Poetry has some type; they are ode, elegy, ballad, epic, and dramatic monologue. And of course, poetry also has some elements to support it, namely; theme, imagery, simile and metaphor, rhythm, verse, stanza, meter, rhyme, alliteration and symbolism.

This thesis analyzes that there are some moral values in some of Robert Frost’s poems. It means that he wrote the poem with the purpose to deliver a message for the people about everything that express in his poems. Some poems that I analyze in this thesis namely; The Road Not Taken, Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening, Neither out Far or in Deep, The Oven Bird and Acquainted with the Night. In all these poems, we can find the moral values that very useful for us.

5.2 Suggestions
By writing this thesis, I as the writer expect that the readers are more eager to study about the literature, especially in understanding poetry. It is also necessary to improve writing about the meaning of a poem. However, it is not enough to study about literature without understanding the literary work.
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Robert Frost

Robert Frost (1941)

Robert Lee Frost
March 26, 1874
San Francisco, California, United States

January 29, 1963 (aged 88)
Boston, Massachusetts, United States

Poet, Playwright

Robert Lee Frost (March 26, 1874 – January 29, 1963) was an American poet. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. Work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes. A popular and often-quoted poet, Frost was honored frequently during his lifetime, receiving four Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry.

Early years

Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California to journalist William Prescott Frost, Jr., and Isabelle Moodie. His mother was of Scottish descent, and his
father descended from Nicholas Frost of Tiverton, Devon, England, who had sailed to New Hampshire in 1634 on the Wolfrana.

Frost's father was a teacher and later an editor of the San Francisco Evening Bulletin (which afterwards merged into the San Francisco Examiner), and an unsuccessful candidate for city tax collector. After his father's death on May 5, 1885, in due time the family moved across the country to Lawrence, Massachusetts under the patronage of (Robert's grandfather) William Frost, Sr., who was an overseer at a New England mill. Frost graduated from Lawrence High School in 1892. Frost's mother joined the Swedenborgian church and had him baptized in it, but he left it as an adult.

Despite his later association with rural life, Frost grew up in the city, and published his first poem in his high school's magazine. He attended Dartmouth College for two months, long enough to be accepted into the Theta Delta Chi fraternity. Frost returned home to teach and to work at various jobs including helping his mother teach her class of unruly boys, delivering newspapers, and working in a factory as a light bulb filament changer. He did not enjoy these jobs at all, feeling his true calling as a poet.

**Adult years**

The Robert Frost Farm in Derry, New Hampshire, where he wrote many of his poems, including "Tree at My Window" and "Mending Wall."

In 1894 he sold his first poem, "My Butterfly: An Elegy" (published in the November 8, 1894 edition of the New York Independent) for fifteen dollars. Proud of this accomplishment he proposed marriage to Elinor Miriam White, but she demurred, wanting to finish college (at St. Lawrence University) before they married. Frost then went on an excursion to the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, and asked Elinor again upon his return. Having graduated she agreed, and they were married at Harvard University, where he attended liberal arts studies for two years.

He did well at Harvard, but left to support his growing family. Grandfather Frost had, shortly before his death, purchased a farm for the young couple in Derry, New Hampshire; and Robert worked the farm for nine years, while writing early in the
mornings and producing many of the poems that would later become famous. Ultimately his farming proved unsuccessful and he returned to education as an English teacher, at Pinkerton Academy from 1906 to 1911, then at the New Hampshire Normal School (now Plymouth State University) in Plymouth, New Hampshire.

In 1912 Frost sailed with his family to Great Britain, living first in Glasgow before settling in Beaconsfield outside London. His first book of poetry, *A Boy's Will*, was published the next year. In England he made some important acquaintances, including Edward Thomas (a member of the group known as the Dymock Poets), T.E. Hulme, and Ezra Pound. Pound would become the first American to write a (favorable) review of Frost's work, though Frost later resented Pound's attempts to manipulate his American prosody. Surrounded by his peers, Frost wrote some of his best work while in England.

As World War I began, Frost returned to America in 1915. He bought a farm in Franconia, New Hampshire, where he launched a career of writing, teaching, and lecturing. This family homestead served as the Frosts' summer home until 1938, and is maintained today as 'The Frost Place', a museum and poetry conference site at Franconia. During the years 1916–20, 1923–24, and 1927–1938, Frost taught English at Amherst College, Massachusetts, notably encouraging his students to account for the sounds of the human voice in their writing.

For forty-two years, from 1921 to 1963, Frost spent almost every summer and fall teaching at the Bread Loaf School of English of Middlebury College, at the mountain campus at Ripton, Vermont. He is credited as a major influence upon the development of the school and its writing programs; the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference gained renown during Frost's time there. The college now owns and maintains his former Ripton farmstead as a national historic site near the Bread Loaf campus. In 1921 Frost accepted a fellowship teaching post at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where he resided until 1927; while there he was awarded a lifetime appointment at the University as a Fellow in Letters. The Robert Frost Ann Arbor home is now situated at The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. Frost returned to Amherst in 1927. In 1940 he bought a 5-acre (2.0 ha) plot in South Miami, Florida, naming it *Pencil Pines*; he spent his winters there for the rest of his life.
Harvard's 1965 alumni directory indicates Frost received an honorary degree there. Though he never graduated from college, Frost received over 40 honorary degrees, including ones from Princeton, Oxford and Cambridge universities; and he was the only person to receive two honorary degrees from Dartmouth College. During his lifetime the Robert Frost Middle School in Fairfax, Virginia, and the main library of Amherst College were named after him.

Frost was 86 when he spoke and performed a reading of his poetry at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy on January 20, 1961. He died in Boston two years later, on January 29, 1963, of complications from prostate surgery. He was buried at the Old Bennington Cemetery in Bennington, Vermont. His epitaph quotes a line from one of his poems: "I had a lover's quarrel with the world."

Frost's poems are critiqued in the Anthology of Modern American Poetry (Oxford University Press) where it is mentioned that behind a sometimes charmingly familiar and rural façade, Frost's poetry frequently presents pessimistic and menacing undertones which often are either unrecognized or unanalyzed.

One of the original collections of Frost materials, to which he himself contributed, is found in the Special Collections department of the Jones Library in Amherst, Massachusetts. The collection consists of approximately twelve thousand items, including original manuscript poems and letters, correspondence, and photographs, as well as audio and visual recordings.

**Personal life**

Robert Frost's personal life was plagued with grief and loss. His father died of tuberculosis in 1885, when Frost was 11, leaving the family with just $8. Frost's mother died of cancer in 1900. In 1920, Frost had to commit his younger sister, Jeanie, to a mental hospital, where she died nine years later. Mental illness apparently ran in Frost's family, as both he and his mother suffered from depression, and his daughter Irma was committed to a mental hospital in 1947. Frost's wife, Elinor, also experienced bouts of depression.
Elinor and Robert Frost had six children: son Elliot (1896–1904, died of cholera), daughter Lesley Frost Ballantine (1899–1983), son Carol (1902–1940, committed suicide), daughter Irma (1903–1967), daughter Marjorie (1905–1934, died as a result of puerperal fever after childbirth), and daughter Elinor Bettina (died three days after birth in 1907). Only Lesley and Irma outlived their father. Frost's wife, who had heart problems throughout her life, developed breast cancer in 1937 and died of heart failure in 1938.

**Selected works**

**Poems**

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Poetry collections

North of Boston (David Nutt, 1914; Holt, 1914)
Mending Wall
Mountain Interval (Holt, 1916)

The Road Not Taken
Selected Poems (Holt, 1923)
Includes poems from first three volumes and the poem The Runaway
New Hampshire (Holt, 1923; Grant Richards, 1924)
Several Short Poems (Holt, 1924)
Selected Poems (Holt, 1928)
West-Running Brook (Holt, 1928? 1929)
The Lovely Shall Be Choosers (Random House, 1929)
Collected Poems of Robert Frost (Holt, 1930; Longmans, Green, 1930)
The Lone Striker (Knopf, 1933)
Selected Poems: Third Edition (Holt, 1934)
Three Poems (Baker Library, Dartmouth College, 1935)
The Gold Hesperidee (Bibliophile Press, 1935)
From Snow to Snow (Holt, 1936)
A Further Range (Holt, 1936; Cape, 1937)
Collected Poems of Robert Frost (Holt, 1939; Longmans, Green, 1939)
A Witness Tree (Holt, 1942; Cape, 1943)
Come In, and Other Poems (1943)
Steeple Bush (Holt, 1947)
Complete Poems of Robert Frost, 1949 (Holt, 1949; Cape, 1951)
Hard Not To Be King (House of Books, 1951)
Aforesaid (Holt, 1954)
A Remembrance Collection of New Poems (Holt, 1959)
You Come Too (Holt, 1959; Bodley Head, 1964)
In the Clearing (Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1962)
The Poetry of Robert Frost (New York, 1969)
A Further Range (published as Further Range in 1926, as New Poems by Holt, 1936; Cape, 1937)

Nothing Gold Can Stay
What Fifty Said

Fire And Ice

A Drumlin Woodchuck

Plays

The Cow's in the Corn: A One Act Irish Play in Rhyme (Slide Mountain Press, 1929).

A Masque of Reason (Holt, 1945).

A Masque of Mercy (Holt, 1947).

Prose


Pulitzer Prizes

1924 for New Hampshire: A Poem with Notes and Grace Notes
1931 for Collected Poems
1937 for A Further Range
APPENDICES II

AMERICAN POETRY IN THE FIRST 20TH CENTURY

Literature written in the English language by inhabitants of the U.S.; it includes the literature written by residents of the 13 original colonies.

THE 20TH CENTURY

With the 20th-century communications revolution—the advent of motion pictures, radio, and, later, television—books became a secondary source of amusement and enlightenment. American society became more mobile and homogeneous, and regionalism, the dominant mode of 19th-century literature, all but vanished, except in the work of some southern writers. At the same time, American writers began to exert a major influence on world literature.

Fiction of the 1920s

The reaction against 19th-century romanticism, already being felt at the turn of the century, was given great impetus by the searing experience of World War I. The horrors and brutal reality of the war had a lasting impact on the American imagination. Novels such as William Faulkner's *Soldiers' Pay* (1926) and Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) portray war as a symbol of human life, savage and ignoble. (The Nobel Prize in literature was awarded to Faulkner in 1949 and Hemingway in 1954.) The fiction of the 20th century emerged from World War I on a realistic and anti-romantic path, and it has seldom strayed significantly since. American writers, especially, became more and more firmly committed to the replacement of sentimentality by new psychological insights. One such writer was Ellen Glasgow, a Virginian, whose novels *Barren Ground* (1925)
and Vein of Iron (1935) are candid examinations of southern traditions, especially as regards the role of women; they have enjoyed a revival of interest in light of the renaissance of feminism that began in the 1960s.

The decade after World War I is often referred to as the Jazz Age or the Roaring Twenties. Rapid changes took place in society, as Americans rebelled against the strictures of Puritanism and the Victorian age. Rapid changes occurred also in literature, most notably in fiction. Most influential was the powerful fiction of Sherwood Anderson, including Winesburg, Ohio (1919), a collection of psychologically penetrating short stories. F. Scott Fitzgerald, disillusioned but at the same time yearning, turned a satiric eye on upper-class society in such novels as This Side of Paradise (1920) and The Great Gatsby (1925); critics have called the latter, a commentary on the American dream of the acquisition of wealth and power, a “perfect” novel. Sinclair Lewis, the first American writer to win a Nobel Prize in literature (1930), brilliantly satirized the “get-rich-quick” business culture of the age in the novels Main Street (1920) and Babbitt (1922). Thornton Wilder, author of The Bridge of San Luis Rey (1927), began a long career as a novelist and playwright, later achieving greatest renown for his innovative drama of small-town life, Our Town (1938).

It was Gertrude Stein, an American author resident in Paris, who gave the name the “lost generation” to the group of rootless young Americans who flocked to Europe after the war. The group included Anderson, Fitzgerald, and Wilder, but the most prominent, who was to become one of the most important American writers of the century, was Hemingway. In addition to his novels about the war, Hemingway wrote books of short stories during the 1920s, including In Our Time (1924) and Men without Women (1927). He epitomized the disillusioned and cynical survivors of the war to end wars, as World War I had been proclaimed. Stein herself was a significant influence on the writers of that generation, not only as a friend but also as a literary stylist in her own right, with her flaunting of tradition and her experiments with language, beginning with the three short novels in Three Lives (1908). More influential, however, was the Irish novelist and poet James Joyce. His use of stream-
of-consciousness narration, symbols, and consciously poetic prose was reflected in virtually all the important American (and European) fiction written after World War I.

20th-Century Poetry

The founding by the poet and editor Harriet Monroe (1860–1936) of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* (1912) signaled an extraordinary poetic renaissance after a long fallow period. The first phase of the revival was imagism, a movement initiated by the poets Amy Lowell (*Men, Women, and Ghosts*, 1916) and Ezra Pound (*Ripostes*, 1912). Imagists set out to revolutionize poetic style, but two other phases of the poetic revival of the early 20th century were more popular: the work of an Illinois group, including the poets Vachel Lindsay, (*The Congo and Other Poems*, 1914), Edgar Lee Masters (*Spoon River Anthology*, 1915), and Carl Sandburg (*Chicago Poems*, 1915); and the work of a New England group, including Edwin Arlington Robinson (*The Town Down the River*, 1910) and Robert Frost (*North of Boston*, 1914). The works of Frost and Sandburg, during their long careers, became especially beloved and were regarded as the authentic expression of an American poetic spirit. Outside these literary groups, but widely popular and influential, was Edna St. Vincent Millay (*The Ballad of the Harp Weaver*, 1922).

The publication of *The Waste Land* (1922) by T. S. Eliot, an expatriate who lived in London, marked a turning point. The tendency to the esoteric in verse forms, language, and symbolism was augmented by Pound’s *Cantos* (pub. between 1925 and 1960). Both Eliot and Pound, through their poetry as well as their critical writings, had an immense influence on the course of 20th-century poetry. So did the work of William Carlos Williams, whose 40 volumes of prose and poetry, among them *Paterson* (Books I–V, 1946–58), affected the writing of generations of poets.

Experiments with verse employing complex, often difficult imagery and symbolism were also carried on by Hart Crane, best known for his epic *The Bridge* (1930), Wallace Stevens (*The Man with the Blue Guitar*, 1937), and Marianne Moore (*Collected Poems*, 1951). The highly inventive work of e. e. Cummings, from
is 5 (1926) to 73 Poems (1963), played with typographical form and aural imagery. Theodore Roethke managed two styles: free-form for the expression of surrealistic ideas, and a simpler, lyrical form for the expression of more rational modes of thought; both styles are exemplified in his collection The Far Field (posthumously pub. 1964).

Other poets who established a more direct communication with the reader include Robinson Jeffers, whose eloquent lines, as in Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems (1925), express his reverence for nonhuman forms of life; Randall Jarrell, whose poetry, for example, Losses (1948), was formed by grief over World War II; and Archibald MacLeish (Collected Poems, 1917–1952, 1952) and Richard Wilbur (Things of This World, 1956), who in their lyrical, contemplative verse express humanist concerns. The protest poetry of the Beat Generation communicates directly, with great impact. Far different in tone is the strain of southern black oral narrative tradition that can be detected in some of the work of Gwendolyn Brooks (Annie Allen, 1949), Nikki Giovanni (1945– ; Black Feeling, Black Talk, Black Judgments, 1970), and Maya Angelou (Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water ‘fore I Diie, 1971).

With Robert Lowell (Lord Weary's Castle, 1946), there began what has been termed the “confessional” mode in poetry, characterized by explicit references to personal anxieties and disabilities. The verse of Sylvia Plath (Ariel, 1965) and Anne Sexton (Live or Die, 1966, and The Awful Rowing Toward God, 1975) is similarly informed by images of personal torment.

A resurgence of poetry manifested itself from the late 1960s on, as a proliferation of literary magazines provided outlets for work and colleges and universities sponsored poetry workshops and offered courses taught by poets in residence. Among the many contemporary poets—encompassing a wide variety of forms and styles—May Swenson (1919–89), Robert Bly (1926– ), and Galway Kinnell (1927– ) are noted for their clearly defined imagery, often based on the close observation of nature. In contrast, the use by James Merrill (1926–95) of highly
personal images, often inspired by the occult, and the notoriously convoluted syntax employed by John Ashbery (1927– ) make their verse very difficult to apprehend. Merrill's First Poems (1951) were lyric verse influenced by the Anglo-American poet W. H. Auden; he later shifted to a more epic form in The Changing Light at Sandover (1982). Ashberry, inspired by the French surrealist poets, is best known for Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror (1975). Elizabeth Bishop's poems (Collected Poems, 1969) are often vividly descriptive, written in a spare, generally colloquial style that has won her many admirers among fellow poets. The first woman to be chosen U.S. poet laureate, Mona Van Duyn (1921–2004), is noted for the warmth and intellect, the wit and strong emotions of her poetry about parents and children, married life, and love, as in Letters from a Father and Other Poems (1983). Adrienne Rich is both a critic and the author of many volumes of poetry, including The Fact of a Doorframe: Poems Selected and New, 1950–2000 (2002). Rich's writings, often suffused with sexuality, show her commitment to radical feminism. Rita Dove, the nation's first black poet laureate and author of four books of poetry, including Thomas and Beulah (1986; Pulitzer Prize, 1987), is also a novelist, short story writer, and playwright.

20th-Century Nonfiction

A traditional view of American history was presented by the historians Charles Austin Beard and Mary Ritter Beard, in The Rise of American Civilization (1927), and by Samuel Eliot Morison (The Oxford History of the American People, 1965) and Henry Steele Commager (The Search for a Usable Past, 1967). Accounts of specific trends and eras include Anti-Intellectualism in America (1963) by Richard Hofstadter (1916–70), a study of the effects of conservatism; and The Guns of August (1962), about the beginnings of World War I, and A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous Fourteenth Century (1978), by Barbara Tuchman (1912–89).
Brilliant political reporting and analysis was done in the 1930s. Such books as *Inside Europe* (1936), by the journalist John Gunther (1901–70); *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town* (1937), by the novelist Elliot Harold Paul (1891–1958); and *Not Peace but a Sword* (1939), by the foreign correspondent Vincent Sheean (1899–1975), helped prepare Americans for World War II.

After the war, the novelist John Hersey's landmark report *Hiroshima* (1946; updated, 1985) described the effects of the first atomic bomb. Other writers of fiction turned to nonfiction during the postwar period. Truman Capote invented what he called the “nonfiction novel” with *In Cold Blood* (1966), a harrowing account of the murder of a Kansas family. Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night* and *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* (both 1968) describe and interpret headline-making contemporary political protest. A distinctive type of writing, often called the New Journalism, is seen in the work of Tom Wolfe (1931– ). Writing in a personal, humorous, free-flowing style, he has reported on varied aspects of American life from hippie culture (*The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, 1968) to space exploration (*The Right Stuff*, 1975); his “non-journalistic” writings included *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (1987) and *A Man in Full* (1998).

Out of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s came writers whose works reveal the experiences of black Americans. Among these was the dramatist and poet Imamu Amiri Baraka (originally named LeRoi Jones; 1934– ), who also probed the situation in his *Home: Social Essays* (1966) and *Raise, Race, Rays, Raze: Essays Since 1965* (1971). The black nationalist leader Malcolm X (originally named Malcolm Little) wrote his influential *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965) with Alex Haley, who later became famous as the author of the best-selling *Roots* (1976), a semifictional account of Haley's family history from its African beginnings to the present. Maya Angelou, the poet-novelist and children's author, wrote a powerful memoir of her own growing up in the South, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970); other autobiographical volumes followed in 1974, 1976, and 1981.
Other serious concerns addressed by American writers from the 1960s on have been the war in Indochina, the pollution of the environment, and women's rights. Among the books about the American involvement in the Vietnam War are *The Best and the Brightest* (1972) by David Halberstam (1934– ) and *Fire in the Lake: the Vietnamese and the Americans in Vietnam* (1972) by Frances Fitzgerald (1940– ). *Silent Spring* (1962), by the marine biologist and ecologist Rachel Carson, provoked worldwide concern about the effects of pesticides on the environment and led to the banning of DDT in the U.S. A pioneering work on women's role in society was Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963); she was followed by many authors, including Susan Faludi (1959– ), a Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist who wrote the popular *Backlash: the Undeclared War against Women* (1991).

20th-Century Literary Criticism

 Literary criticism in the 20th century began with the neo-humanists, who upheld the classical tradition and called for a firmer ethical basis for art. These theories were expounded by such critics as Paul Elmer More (1864–1937; *Shelburne Essays*, 11 vol., 1904–21), William Crary Brownell (1851–1928; *American Prose Masters*, 1909), and the Harvard University professor Irving Babbitt (*The New Laokoön*, 1910). The appraisal of American writing as a distinct national literature began in the 1920s, introduced by the English novelist D. H. Lawrence in his groundbreaking *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923). The American scholar Vernon Louis Parrington provided a sociopolitical interpretation of American literature in his treatise *Main Currents in American Thought* (3 vol., 1927–30), which won a Pulitzer Prize for history in 1928. A more popular survey of American letters was done by the literary historian Van Wyck Brooks in his series beginning with *The Flowering of New England, 1815–1865* (1936). Coincident with these studies was the assault unleashed by H. L. Mencken in his *American Mercury* reviews, 1924–33, on contemporary tastes and prejudices of what he called the American “monocracy.”

From the professional scholars of literature came, beginning in the late 1930s, the new criticism, a name derived from a 1941 essay by John Crowe Ransom; it
emphasized close analysis of text and structure rather than consideration of social or biographical contexts. Among the critics expounding these tenets were Cleanth Brooks, Kenneth Burke, Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren. Independent of this approach were several notable scholars, including Joseph Wood Krutch, whose essays were collected in *The Modern Temper* (1929) and *The Measure of Man* (1954); and Lionel Trilling, author of one of the most influential of modern critical essays, *The Liberal Imagination* (1950). Also noteworthy were Malcolm Cowley, author of *Exile's Return* (1934); Alfred Kazin, *On Native Grounds* (1942) and *The Inmost Leaf* (1955); and Leslie Fiedler, whose *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960) provided a new interpretation of certain themes and approaches.

Edmund Wilson has been considered a notably well-rounded literary critic and theorist. Independent of mind, widely erudite yet never dryly pedantic, he remained unaligned with formal academic criticism. His best-known works are *Axel's Castle* (1931) and *The Wound and the Bow* (1941).

Since the mid-1960s, academic criticism has become increasingly esoteric, often comprehensible only to scholars. Among the major theoretical influences has been Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction and new historicism. By the 1990s they also included Afrocentrism, gender criticism, postcolonial criticism, and cultural criticism. Perhaps the best-known American literary critics after 1970 were Jacques Derrida and Harold Bloom (1930—), both associated with Yale University. The French-born Derrida devised the approach known as deconstructionism, which holds that written texts seem to refer more to other texts than to some central, fixed reality; therefore, close analysis of their language reveals essential ambiguities of meaning. Bloom maintained in *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973) that writers attempt to overcome the influence exerted by their predecessors through a process he describes as creative misreading of texts. Harvard University professor Helen Vendler (1933—) has won respect for her sensitive analyses of poetry, such as *The Odes of John Keats* (1983).