

Questioning Nature: A Study of Death and Isolation in Selected Nature Poems by Robert Frost

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Abstract—This study aims to discuss the themes of death and isolation in selected nature poems by Robert Frost, the reasons behind this odd employment of nature, the relationship between death and isolation, and how one begets the other. The assumptions and principles of psychoanalytical and biographical approaches provide the theoretical framework for this dissertation, namely, through examining the life of Frost, as well as psychic exhaustion and traumas which reveal the unconscious motives behind his use of the themes of death and isolation in his nature poems. To answer the study's questions, it focuses on studying those poems by going over the symbols and figures of speech that present the challenging, gloomy picture of nature, which single out Frost from other American and English poets' images of nature.

Index Terms—death, isolation, nature poetry, psychic exhaustion, Frost

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to shed light on Robert Frost's employment of nature and its elements to reflect on isolation and death, to which end he draws upon scenes of dramatic struggle and apprehension towards nature. Such natural elements can be the scenery of the changing of the seasons, as well as the darkness on winter nights and its cruelty. The study tries to identify the connection between nature, death, and isolation in the poetry of Frost's, while relying on psychoanalytical, and biographical theories, as well as analytically examining some literary tools, like symbolism and figures of speech. The starting point is to understand the connection between death and nature that can be found in selected poems of Frost, where the issue of existence is his primary concern. He realizes that all the living, weak or strong, invariably meet their demise with death; that nature is capable of annihilating human existence; and that man always tries to coexist with nature, fight death and isolation, and work to dispel his belief in the eternity of life.

Frost doesn't portray nature to show the beauty of the pastoral settings as other poets do, but he rather focuses on the conflicts between humanity and the natural world, and the effects of his own experiences which gave birth to his dark employment of nature to express the themes of death and isolation.

The significance of the study lies in its purpose to reveal Frost's unrivaled employment of nature to present the themes of death and isolation. It also lies in being the first to connect death and isolation through the lens of psychoanalytic and biographical theories. In addition, the study tries to find out the relationship between death and isolation in Frost's life and the selected nature poems.

For many years, poets have utilized images of nature in their poetry, and Frost is no exception.

Death, too, is a recurrent theme in Frost's poetry, seen from a different perspective in each poem. The perspectives are always enveloped with the visions of what makes it an experience like no other for all living beings. Death poetry is poetry that creates a wide spectrum of ideas that present a persuasive message to the audience without instilling fear or negative reactions in them. Frost elaborates on death poetry to present his experienced horrors of death; he describes it in many ways, such as killing people's personal identity, stifling their emotions and feelings, and inducing a desire of living eternally. Frost indeed has a strange fascination with death (Benin, 2020, pp. 5-6), and it is seen as equivalent to isolation. From the perspective of many critics, Frost, throughout his life, tended to be isolated in thought and action, and the element of isolation in his poetry is immensely striking.

Isolation poetry is the poetry that illustrates the theme of detachment, solitude, and loneliness that exist in our society, and this type of poetry is deeply connected with the nature of human society, how people interact with others, and the general difficulty in communication they experience, which tends to shut them off from each other. Frost's view of isolation is "revealed by his personal experiences with the loss of loved ones and his lack of appreciation from his

society” (Al-Zubaydai, 2009, p.38). Dark mysteries and doubts are what bring about this infusing sense of isolation; being isolated, the characters reflect on metaphysical questions in domestic as well as pastoral locales, and the aura of isolation is professionally mixed with fear, which might be understood as Frost's own feeling towards the surrounding settings and the circumstances he has gone through over the course of his life. Frost intermittently alternates between the use of sleep and death, and his presentation of death adds to its general definition as being an important stage that has many effects on his characters' lives. Also, it is the idea of putting human suffering into moulds where a person confirms their general manner of behavioural inflicting pain on another person who, in turn, may fall victim to the everlasting attempt to achieve coexistence with their circumambient environment. This is crucial for our existence, as human psychology studies tell us that people suffer in the attempt to achieve equilibrium between many of their conflicting dichotomies, like good and evil, malice and loyalty and love and hatred.

II. QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1-How does Frost employ nature to express the themes of death and isolation in selected nature poems?
- 2-How does Frost use nature in an unrivalled way to express his splenetic view of life?
- 3- How do Frost's reflections on nature, death, and isolation influence his poems?

III. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

A. *Death in Robert Frost's Selected Poems*

Frost's poems which discuss the theme of death are not general or public, for they represent Frost's awful autobiographies about death indirectly. Furthermore, they are real and express truths that can't be ignored. Looking at *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, the theme of death is presented by a central human experience, an experience that obliges the human to obey or surrender to oblivion. The poet uses dark imagery to portray death and uses a lot of kinetic imagery:

“The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep.”

The analysis of Frost's poetry finds that it includes death and terror without being terrifying in itself; it presents the idea deeply and reasonably without making us feel terrified or less confident. It matches the line of our senses of the same experience of death and its effects on the human soul. According to Poirier, Frost's poems are “neither complicated nor make our life complicated. Indeed, Frost's poems suggest ordinary sensemaking processes in an amazing poetic way” (Poirier, 1977, p. 8). Frost's *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* gives the reader the freedom to understand his imagery of nature or woods as a piece of beauty, or being full of obstacles like frozen woods, or dark woods as an end to life. The reader can feel free to express and explain the woods as they desire. Some interpret woods as an extended metaphor for the end of life, but some see the woods as a crisp or clear image filling up with snow:

“To watch his woods, fill up with snow
The woods are lovely dark and deep”

According to Faulkner (1963), Frost gives the speaker the right to dig into the natural world, wandering between the dark frozen woods and the smooth falling of snow. This picture expresses a mixture of beauty and cruelty in the woods. In this vein, the reader will use their senses, their moods, and their psychological state to express the poem:

“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.”

It can be seen that some of the lines of this poem are visualized to show the image of death by using words like dark, frozen, edge, and sleep. Even those words can be seen differently, but they are used to express the imagery of death smoothly, not in a terrifying manner. Death doesn't have to be the end of life; there is the continuation of life and more realities about life and death:

“And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep.”

It is revealed that the word ‘sleep’ in this poem is a solitary activity that is used as a metaphor for death. In this activity, the speaker is all alone. Whether it is the last destination or it is the chance at the respite of tired individuals, the reader has the right to understand the hidden depths of Frost, as well as the depths of life. In some of Frost's poems, winter or snow have a real relationship to death, not by highlighting words like ‘death,’ ‘grave,’ ‘ghost’ and ‘tomb,’ but by dealing totally with the theme of death or life and death. A lot of Frost's poems are titled with words of that conjure images of death, like *The Death of the Hired Man*, *Home Burial*, *Ghost House*, *Goodbye* and *The Spoils of the Dead*. Reddy (2014), suggests that Frost develops the theme of death by using the tone of melancholy content through his poems; he uses the sad and beautiful pictures of his images of nature, homes, roads, fences and so on. Frost also insists

on creating a strong relationship between death, rebirth and regrowth of nature and man (pp. 111-115). One of the poems that include the theme of death is *Home Burial*, in which the young wife has a different reaction towards her child's death as compared to that of her husband; she can't reconcile with the death of her child, and her husband becomes a total stranger to her because of his cold reaction towards it. They can't share the grief as a family, which is supposed to unify them in their feeling towards their child's death. The difference in reaction between the two makes them separated and unable to return to their normal experience of life. It is obvious that the wife lives under the burden of grief because of her child's death, while the husband appears cold in his reaction. Indeed, the effect of the death of the child results in the death of emotions between the spouses because of their different intensity of grief on the emotional level. The husband successfully fails to express his sadness as if his emotions are dead:

“The little graveyard where my people are
Tell me about if it's something human
Let me into your grief, I am not so much
If you had any feelings you that dug
With your own hand How could how could you? his little grave,
A man can't speak of his own child that's dead.”

Regarding the psychoanalytical view, we can clearly see that the husband's reaction exaggerates the theme of death's effects on his wife's psyche; his dead emotions extend to the child's death. The experience of death affects particularly the couple's emotional and sexual relationship, and there is an obvious physical and psychological detachment between the two; the wife is obliged to be isolated by death.

In Frost's *Spoils of the Dead*, his deep understanding of the concept of death is apparent in his sonnet by using similes, imagery, and personification. He uses nature to evoke the theme of death to show that people die without any saying or warning. He hates the spoils of the dead, like all people, and he hates 'people's dying' (Gray, 2014, pp.1-5). We can see that the fairies in this poem may represent children who enjoy themselves in nature. On a summer day, when they discover a dead man, the fairies notice a ring on the dead man's fingers, a hint that the dead man is married and has children. Fairies don't understand why the man died or what happened, and they continue to search for answers.

Frost in his unconsciousness shares his own experience of his father's death when he was just eleven years old. This brings to his awareness the old, awful memories of the incident; he talks about his father's death and how he went without saying why and where was he going away. From the psychoanalytical point of view, Frost provokes his huge expanse of hidden pains, and by passing from his id to his ego and superego, he imitates the fairies' experience with the man's death and provides a fresh example of the effect of death on a child's psyche. Frost's fears of death resulted from the experience with his father's death when he was a little child, his fears being suppressed in his id, and then passing on from the ego to the superego. This extends the spoils of the dead to his real life, and so he reveals them in this poem; Frost wonders how the spoils of death affect others' lives and their psyches in similar cases:

“Two fairies it was
On a still summer day
Flowers-guided it was
That they came as they ran
On something that lay
In the shape of a man.
When this one fell
On the sleep of the dead”

Throughout preparing this study, it can be noticed that Frost shows very dark, psychological shades that emerged from his childhood pains, and the poem is fixated on some past nightmare images which are being recollected from his deep psyche; Frost visualises the little fairies to be victimised by the hard conditions and the spoils of the dead. Another reading of *Spoils of the Dead* may give a hint to Frost's first two children who died of cholera; they were little, weak, and died shortly after they were born, like those little fairies in the poem:

“When you came on death,
I remember that I did.
But I recognised death
With sorrow and dread,
And I hated and hate
The spoils of the dead.”

Going over Frost's *The Death of the Hired Man*, we see that he evokes the theme of death by showing the struggles of the farmer and the farm hands, which is revealed in Warren and Silas's relationship. Through his searching for comfort in fulfilling his broken contract with Warren, Silas died alone. Silas's character personifies the struggle with death alone, despite his efforts to have a family. Another reference to Frost's theme of death is the childless marriage of Mary and Warren, which echoes the death of his six children. In this poem, we get an insight into some of his pain over the death of his children. Some critics assert that Frost pours some of his pains in this poem, which are suppressed in his id, and then they are shifted into the superego by the ego of duty, fulfilment of obligations, and dying alone. The poem

expresses the fears that are hidden in Frost's autobiographies because of his many experiences with death during his early childhood and his youth:

“Mary sat massing on the lamp-flame table
Waiting for Warren when she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with news
And put him on his guard, “Silas is back”
She pushed him outward with her through the door.”

And according to Harold Bloom in the book entitled *Robert Frost*, Silas tries his best not to die alone, by considering Warren's family as his own, even though he never felt for that family because of Warren's lack of empathy for him (Bloom, 2003, p.12). There is immense parallelism to be found in Silas between his attempts to achieve and fulfil his duty and his search for a family. But despite his hard efforts to find a sense of family, he ends up dying alone, and Warren merely declares him “Dead:”

“Warren returned --too soon it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited
“Warren” she questioned.
“Dead” was all he answered”

Another major reference to death in appears in the same poem, in that Warren doesn't feel sympathy for Silas's family's needs. Throughout the poem, on the contrary, Warren's wife Mary exhibits compassion towards Silas's illness, and recognises that it will end with his death. Warren is cold and emotionless towards others, especially towards his wife and Silas. Warren shows no appreciation for Silas's hard work to fulfil his duties as he comes closer to meeting his death. As Silas tries to face his deadly illness, he keeps attached to his profession to fulfil the contract and still has a sense of family, but Warren looks adamant about not accepting the proposal for Silas to come back to work:

“Home,” he mocked gently.
Of course, he's nothing to us, anymore
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think?”

Warren is a rational person in his position against the betrayal of Silas; he never feels sympathy for him or his death. Mary paints a façade and tries to get closer with her husband emotionally despite of the detachment between them, to persuade him not to send Silas away after his last return to the farm. But Warren claims that Silas comes in a time when they don't need him, not caring about his bad condition, his illness and his approaching death. Although Warren announces the death of Silas in a gently way, the event deeply exemplifies the deadly separation in the family about sympathy towards Silas, further cementing the overall detachment in the relationship; Warren symbolizes not only the coldness of a husband but also a person towards the sufferings of others.

Another highlight of death appears in Frost's poem *Design* when the speaker of the poem asks about the design of darkness, which had led the spider to kill the moth at night. This indeed paints a picture of what humans do to others, and how they react to nature. Frost also uses symbolism and imagery to evoke his theme of death in this poem; he utilises symbols to suffuse the poem with his ideas and themes, like “that of the white, fat and cruel spider, the white flower which has healing properties, and the white, dead moth that was killed by the spider” (Ferguson, 2004, pp.173-190). The poet, here, uses the elements of nature to express the theme of death, and he wonders about the role of God as a creator, and how God creates cruel as well as innocent creatures. Frost uses juxtaposition to emphasise this theme; the purity of the colour white further underscores the idea of death:

“I found a dimpled spider, fat and white, on a white
heal-all, holding up a moth! Like a white piece of rigid
Stain cloth... Assorted characters of death and blight!
Mixed ready to begin the morning rights, Like the ingredients
of witches, broth a snow-drop spider, a flower like a forth,
and dead wings carried like a paper kite.”

According to Frost, the poem is implying that the designer of the world created it to inspire fear, terror and death. The spider symbolises the human which reflects fear and the theme of death in nature and life. The spider, flower and moth combined represent the mysterious existence of the pure, innocent side of the world, as well as the ominous and the evil. The three creatures are brought together in the colour white to symbolise purity and clarity and be in opposition against evil and mystery. The moth is looking for sustenance in the form of the nectar in the white flower, and the spider is looking for its sustenance: the moth:

“What had that flower to do with being white ,
The wayside blue and Innocent heal-all?
Nature provides an example of being
Independent God designed us to survive
Upon each other.”

The poem gives an example of the chaotic and dark world we live in. In other words, it symbolises the full image of life through its scenes of weakness and strength, purity and wickedness, innocence and evil, decay and prosperity, life

and death. According to the poem, life can be sealed in death and destruction because the design of God brings these contradictions together to bring about the scene of a cruel and heroic death. Yet, Frost resists the idea of frightening the reader:

“What but the design of darkness to appal?
If design governs in a thing so small.”

Frost supposes that the reader will find the different elements that are present in the human psyche, like fear, decay, innocence, and purity to be clearly visible through the poem's scenery. Nevertheless, the chain of life and death may instil a bright view in the reader, applying their own experience to this non-stop chain of life and death.

Another poem that explains Frost's contemplation of death is *Birches*, where Frost uses his powers of imagination and observation to create an obvious and deep painting of the shadows of death (Holt, 1988, pp.11-20). The birches swing back and forth in the woods, in the middle of the storm, bending and swinging between life and death. Another important detail in the poem is the swinging of the boy on birch trees, the oscillating motion standing as a symbol of man's swinging between life and death. The poem creatively compares the swinging movement of both the boy and the tree, and it implies that they are in a very similar situation; both are rocking back and forth between life and death.

“When less birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees
So was I once myself a swing of birches
And then come back to it and begin over
That would be good both going and coming back!
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches”

Through the application of the psychoanalytic and biographical approaches, we notice that the speaker in the poem is swinging between their ideal imagining of the world and their reality; their weaknesses and their strengths; as well as life and death. Frost imparts to the poem a lot of his own experiences with death; he moves between his fears and sorrows that are caused by death and his willingness to be alive and happy. In his dramatic monologue in *Birches*, Frost displays the human effort to achieve the balance between living peacefully and accepting death as the absolute end of life.

In *An Old Man's Winter Night*, Frost sensitively conjures the idea of death. In the poem, an old man lives alone in a house, and the time in which the poem takes place is the dark winter. The man's old age is responsible for his unawareness of his current condition, unable to remember anything. He sits alone outside, looking at the moon. The old man attempts to escape his loneliness, as well as the fact he can't remember anything about his life, and decides to go to sleep. The phrase “easing his heavy breathing” leads readers to think that he passed away. In this poem, Frost gives the reader a chance to wonder about the real meaning therein, and he, unintentionally, correlates the poem with his experiences of death.

There is a strong sign that the old, isolated man who is separated from his society suffers from the bitterness of isolation, and he tries to accept his awful situation. “it's thus he does it of a winter night” (Rath, 2014, pp. 45-78). Nevertheless, the old man who is keen to have some company, as he is getting old and weak, decides to go to sleep. This serves as a metaphor, as it symbolizes his last sleep, death. In addition, due to suffering from his weakness, loneliness, the awful, dark winter and his loss of memories regarding his life, the old man decides to go to sleep to escape the surrounding darkness; sleep is merely an escape from all the fears around him, and a way to get some rest and forget about his weaknesses and traumas. Furthermore, and from the psychoanalytic point of view, the old man, the old man accepts the bleakness of his life, his loneliness, and the darkness of the winter night and falls asleep as if he is accepting the reality of his situation; his fears start to dwindle, and he decides to go to sleep, happily and alone. This acts as a metaphor that implies that it is only through death that one could truly escape their dark reality and finally be able to forget all the worries of life.

In this poem, Frost deals with human consciousness and views it as a problem or a burden. The old man keeps the world as he keeps his house. Richard Poirier says to clarify the term ‘keeping,’ “one aged man - one man can't keep a house, a farm, a countryside or if he can. It's thus he does it of a winter's night” (Poirier, 1977, p. 161). In the case of the old man, he is denied the concept of ‘keeping’ when he cut his relationship with all his surroundings—both his house and nature. Poirier sees that the poem refers to the cutting off of the man's relationship with life, as well as nature. As an old-aged man, he is approaching his death. ‘Keeping’ in this sense relates to a person's consciousness of the surrounding world. The old man lacks keeping in touch with his entire world, and he knows nothing about what's happening around the house, and he also lacks ‘keeping’ with nature, and thus he expresses pressure and deep feelings which are emphasized in the poem.

Another poem by Frost that clearly illustrates the theme of death is the poem entitled *Death*. Frost uses the poem to let out his grief, his losses, his psychic exhaustion, and how he accepts death and heals from it. Through this poem, Frost addresses human terrors about death, how they try to distance themselves from death, how they avoid it as much as possible, and how it hurts them more than anything else. Frost assures us that death is the ultimate destination of people; it is the end of their pains, their loss, and their sorrows. Frost personifies death as if it is knocking on his door, and he is welcoming death with open arms.

“Death
Scary, isn't it?
At least
That is what everyone tells me
They say their afraid
Of what's bound to happen”

Accepting his destiny, Frost escapes from his intolerable sorrows, losses, and pains, and he asks death to come and put him to rest. He is not afraid any more of death, and he is ready to go without any resistance. It is clear at this point that Frost's psychic exhaustion is not a physical type of fatigue, but rather the depletion of a person of all his energy and motivation to live. A person's brain at such a state almost doesn't want to think or do anything, and it accepts and surrenders itself to things, like death; a person becomes totally exhausted and emotionally fatigued, and Frost is an example of this as seen through his poems:

“I see death
As the end of my pain
The end of my loss
And the end of my sorrow
When death comes
And knocks on my door
I'll welcome it in with open arms
And maybe then
Will I feel ok?
So death
If you can hear me
Come and take me
Because I am ready
And I am not afraid of you”

To sum up, Frost has experienced great losses in his life, like the death of his father, his children, his mother and his beloved wife. Frost is seen to flame his rage in nature to express his own experiences or to evoke the similar experiences of others with death. He changes the stereotypical view of nature; his poems are kind of corrective to the familiar view of nature as the source of healing and joy. He uses nature as a harsh teacher to talk about his idea of death. He also tries hard to present his experiences to his readers, to support them during a fresh state of pain that he has gone through previously. Frost was inspired by other poets of nature, like William Wordsworth and William Shakespeare, but he paints nature dissimilarly as elusive, enigmatic and harsh, which makes Frost a unique poet of his time.

B. Isolation

From a psychoanalytic point of view, there are always psychological barriers between man and God, man and his fellow man, man and society, and man and himself. Those barriers are created by man himself, forcing him to be alone and separated physically and emotionally. Isolation is further increased by fears of being attached to things or people; fears are the real barriers that create isolation. In general, Frost portrays isolation as his ultimate destiny.

Frost tends to share his experiences of loneliness with his readers; he works alone, walks alone, and lives alone. He aims to show his individual identity in the community, as he values self-sufficiency and individualism by being alone. Frost is seen to look inwards to his inner self not toward the community, and as a result, he suffers from a great deal of isolation.

Poirier (1977) says that a lot of poems, like *Mending wall*, seem to be about nature or the hard farm work, but their meanings look deeper than this. At the surface, “the poem talks about two farmers who keep a wall between their farms despite all circumstances which lead to it falling down” (pp. 306-308). One of the farmers is rebuilding the falling wall as he says, “Good fences make good neighbours.” On the other hand, the other farmer questions the need of keeping a wall between the two neighbours' farms and says, “Why do they make good neighbours?” Indeed, this poem is not simply discussing the importance of a wall between farmers or neighbours, but it discusses deeply the need to break the barriers separating people, minds and nations, and it calls for getting rid of these barriers. Despite the dissimilarity in many aspects between people, like nationality, religion, culture, ideology and race, people still share in their humanity, and barriers should be broken, not built.

Frost's *Mending Wall* provides some insight on how our world is full of walls that separate and isolate us from one another, but it also highlights the fact that these walls are flawed and tend to fall and break, and it is only people's desire to be isolated and detached from each other that keeps them in a state of constant fixing and rebuilding of these weak and feeble walls. It is clear, according to Frost in this poem, that it is not easy to maintain these barriers that separate people, for despite the many differences among people, there is still a unifying factor that cannot be ignored, our humanity. Yet, we wear ourselves in trying to keep these walls up:

“We wear our fingers rough with handling them”

Breaking up barriers removes the difficulty of going further forward in our relationships, habits, or thoughts, but most people prefer not to change and keep staying in the same state of isolation.

Faradiba Nst (2018) says that Frost in this poem gives an example of a group of isolated people who get used to being isolated and never want to change it or break down the borders. Frost also presents some parts of his isolation and his engagement with the farmers who keep up borders and rebuild the fallen down walls (pp. 6-34). Nevertheless, Frost warns of cutting relationships between people and cutting people off from their surrounding nature. He tries to make a balanced thought by keeping up some limits between people and breaking the hard barriers that isolate them in total. The reader has the freedom to create his own personal world without cutting relations with others and being isolated.

“Something there is that does not love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
He says again, “Good fences make good neighbours”

Frost insists on the idea that people have the right to keep limits, but not to refuse change and be isolated. Another example of isolation in Frost’s poetry is in *Desert Places*. Deirdre (2007) states that, “*Desert Places* is one of Frost’s more horrifying poems because it shows us someone who is existentially alone” (p. 221). The poem starts with the speaker’s passing through a field where snow buries the weeds and stubble. This stands for the death of some creatures. The gloomy wintry scene in the poem also represents the loneliness of the woods and the speaker’s own loneliness, and this is seen in empty spaces between stars. The isolation of the speaker is related to man’s inner thoughts and fears of ultimate loneliness.

“The woods around it have it-it is theirs.
All animals are smothered in their lairs.
I am too absent-spirited to count;
The loneliness includes me unawares.”

Fagan says that man’s fear of being homeless and alone is due to some natural force. The ‘home’ in this poem is not only a place to live in, but also a sense of being and existing, a sense of not being alone (Fagan, 2007, p.85).

“I have it in me so much nearer home
To scare me with my desert places”

According to this poem, a person has to adapt and get out of their own inner ‘desert places’ to overcome stagnation, fear and isolation. The imagery of the snowstorm shows universal loneliness common to all people, in addition to their ultimate return to stagnation and depression. The speaker sees the snow falling and the land engulfed by the night; the trees and the animals disappear into the darkness, and this reminds the speaker of his loneliness. The empty landscape screams of human loneliness. It also depicts the ‘desert places’ of man’s own thoughts. We can clearly see that Frost unconsciously brings in some of his own experiences of this particular notion of inner isolated, deserted places into the poem:

“Snow falling and night
Falling fast, oh, fast
But a few weeds and
Stubble showing last.
“The woods around it
Have it –It is theirs
The loneliness Includes
Me unawares.”

Fagan (2007) also states that the speaker sees the absence of life forms around him as the absence of life itself, or the absence of a world around him (p. 221). The speaker feels extreme loneliness and does not know how to deal with it:

“And lonely as it is that
Loneliness
With no expression,
Nothing to express”

The speaker intensifies his depression and loneliness by observing the falling snow at night and the disappearance of all life forms around him:

“They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
.....
To scare me with my desert place”

It is obvious that the previous lines depict that the speaker is influenced by the scene around him, and this reminds him of his own ‘desert places’. He claims that the empty spaces around him are nothing in comparison to his internal emptiness. And according to the poem, loneliness is depicted as remote places devoid of human habitation, and the falling snow only serves to increase the speaker’s isolation. The common use of the word ‘lonely’ puts further emphasis on the type of depression created by being alone or isolated.

Frost presents us with another example of self-isolation and solitude in his poem *The Lockless Door*. The speaker is alone in a house with a lockless door, and he hears an unexpected knock; he blows out a lit candle, praying that no one will come in and break his silent loneliness, and then proceeds to answer hesitantly, “Come in.” The poem records Frost’s childhood memories: he used to be afraid of the dark, so he would sleep in his mother’s bed. The poem also flashes back to this experience, reflecting his inner fears and sense of being isolated in the lines:

“I went many years,
 But at last, came a knock
 And I thought of the door
 With no lock to lock.
 Back over the skill
 I bade a “come in”
 To whoever the knock
 At the door may have been”

Frost uses the word ‘whoever’ to express his terrors of the unknown, the unknown being the origin of his abstract nature of fear. The speaker may get the chance to leave his house as a result of this simple knock on the door, but he is still afraid of the potential risks this knock might entail, so he misses out on the chance to get out of his isolation and refuses to communicate with others to stay alone in his ‘cage.’ He tells the knocker to ‘come in’ despite the detachment between himself and the world outside his house; he tries to be hospitable, knowing full well that he won’t meet the person who knocks on the door, because he is forced to make contact with others. Because of his age, he has to adapt to others more than to himself. The speaker is obliged to answer the knock, and the person knocking enters the house, thus forcing the speaker to get out of his isolated cage:

“So, at a knock
 I emptied my cage
 To hide in the world
 And alter with age”

This poem gives us a window through which we can see the psyche of the speaker, who has a deep, inner fear of coming out of the caged state of isolation to communicate with the outside world. He augments his psychological problem by bubbling himself inside, isolated from others. Loneliness creates a negative and often self-destructive habit of shutting off others due to aversion, as the speaker's long years of isolation make it terrifying for him to establish any sort of communication with society. The lack of social support, communication and interaction is immensely damaging to individuals and their psyche, and this poem gives one example of an individual’s psychological dilemmas which creates a case of imbalance between self-safety and social communication. Frost points to his self-isolation and his sense of peril and danger that is due to the lack of communication, which either stems from his personal experiences or from the nature of the society in which he lives.

Another memorable, narrative poem by Frost that highlights the idea of isolation is *Storm Fear*. It shows the feelings and doubts of a man who tries to hide inside his own home and protect his own family from a storm. In addition, he is afraid of his isolation. The poem starts by describing the windy, dark night which is personified by attacking the speaker's home and family. The storm asks the family to ‘come out,’ which is a very dangerous proposition; the poem portrays the storm as an enemy who threatens the family's safety, and the speaker and his family must struggle to resist it. The storm, so to speak, is trying to force them to get out of their home and their own state of isolation from others. The speaker's fear appears to originate from his fear of walking straight towards his defeat by the dark forces of nature.

Juhnke (1964) states that the speaker in his poetry keeps alive the possibility that something greater than him sustains order and purpose in the universe (pp. 153-164). In *Storm Fear*, Frost brings attention to the isolation of man away from God and nature, and as he insists to isolate himself from his sins and fears. However, God or the forces of nature are personified in the poem try to get him out of his isolation; to defeat and overcome his fears. It is also worth noting that despite the presence of his family, the father still experiences a sense of isolation. Nevertheless, he feels that his house and his family are his only world, and he doesn’t want to venture beyond this small world; he doesn’t want to confront nature and the world outside. The father tries his best to deter any forces that might endanger the safety of his isolated universe. *Storm Fears* is considered to be a poem of complex physical, psychological and spiritual relationships between man’s inner anxiety, the relationship between man and nature, as well as the relationship between man and God. The poem also paints a picture which combines all of Frost’s previously mentioned experiences of isolation, and it invites the reader—much like his other poems—to compare and relate their own experiences to those of the poet.

“When the wind works
 Against us in the dark,
 The beast
 “Come out! Come out!”
 It costs no Inward struggle
 Not to go,
 Ah, no!
 Barn grows far away
 And my heart owns a doubt
 Whether it is in us to raise
 With day
 And save ourselves
 Unaided.”

Thompson (1966) sees that Frost's narrative *Servant to Servants* discusses the theme of isolation. In the poem, a broken farmer's wife is overworked as if she is a servant to servants. The poet recollects his memories of a woman whom he knew in Northern Vermont. The woman suffers greatly due to her isolation, hard work and lack of appreciation from her husband (p. 352). The overworked woman struggles throughout her difficult working days; she is too exhausted to communicate with anyone around her, and no one close to her enough can understand her tragic isolation. She hasn't got any real human relationships. The poem depicts the experience of an individual's hopeless struggle for surviving. Despite the beautiful natural scenes around her, she can't feel any beauty or get any rest. She is separated from nature and others as a result of her being overworked.

The poem uses the technique of the stream of consciousness by going over the woman's monologue; she moves from one point to another in her mind to make excuses for her lack of communication with the man who arrived at the farm. She always finds herself busy, and she is unable to be friendly and social with others. The woman narrates her thoughts, which flow through her conscious mind, springing out of her unconscious, and relates them to her present situation. She has to feed a lot of hungry men, and she describes herself as a servant. Because of her hard work, she lost the desire to communicate with others; she is broken and has no power to break her state of isolation.

Throughout her monologue, the woman shows the lack of an intimate relationship with her husband, the farmer; she is unable to arouse her husband to take an interest in her. She doesn't feel for him anymore, or rather the other way around. There is an inner voice inside her that exhibits her feelings toward her state of isolation. The woman is also seen to be trapped in her life; she can't go beyond the limitations of her circumstances, and when she tries to remove the limitations in her relationship with her husband, he is busy and concerned about his work more than anything else to care. In serving others, the woman loses any sense of self, and by the end, she is not well both physically and psychologically; she is disconnected from herself and is trying to improve her life despite her lack of power and will. The woman is profoundly alone, and she longs for rest and security; she is surrounded by people, but only a few connect with her. She is isolated from herself, her husband, and the world around her:

“I didn't make you know how glad I was
To have you come and camp here on our land
I promised myself to get down some day
And see the way you lived but I don't know!
With a houseful of hungry men to feed
I can't express my feelings, any more
Kept them at home; and in it does seem more human.
But it's not so the place is the asylum,
And you aren't darkening other people's lives
Worse than no good to them, and they no good”

IV. CONCLUSION

Frost's selected poems seem simple at the first, but when one starts reading and interpreting them in depth, “profound psychological meanings appear” (Tezi, 2009, p.139). As a reader of his selected nature poems of Frost, we realised that the concepts of death and isolation are illustrated through his use of terms like dark and cold nights, far away woods, dead people and animals, desert places, and branched roads and empty landscapes, among others. We concluded that Frost has a special adherence to the rural spoken language, yet his poetic language is rich in psychological complexity; it is full of ambiguity, irony, and imagery to express his themes in a unique style of presenting and employing his poetic language.

To sum up, the topics discussed in this study are analogies for people's dilemmas of death, isolation and loneliness found in the selected poems. The poet uses nature metaphorically to reveal its strong connection to the psychology of humans. All the interpretations of the previous poems are merely observations of nature that have psychological and biographical interests; in short, Frost uses nature to send messages of his own (Tezi, 2009, p.141).

Unlike previous poets of nature, Frost employs nature in an exotic unfavourable way to provide a psychoanalytic representation of isolation and death from a different point of view. Furthermore, Frost's dealing with isolation and death has a strong relationship when considering his personal experiences. In some way or another, the speaker's experiences are mere extensions of Frost's own experiences with death and isolation. Frost's representation of these concepts is one that communicates with nature, a kind of meditation. In addition, the reader has the chance to find insights into their own experiences, as well as a way to relieve their stress and fears.

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