

Shah Sawar<sup>1</sup> Shah Fahad<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *The use of Symbolism has an important role in poetry because it makes the work gorgeous and beautiful. Robert Lee Frost's poems "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night" are full of figures of speech and elements of Symbolism. The research is small-scale and based on the elements of symbolism. The researchers, through a qualitative method of close reading the theoretical framework of Symbolism, mainly focus on the text of poems to analyze the elements of Symbolism in the selected poems. The researchers have found it in abundance because it explains the double meanings of the words. Besides, it highlights how the poet uses the elements of symbolism and how he decorates his poems by using these elements.*

**Key Words:** Symbolism, Decoration of Poetry, Importance of Double Meaning

### Introduction

#### Background of the Study

The current research work explores the elements of symbolism in the selected poems of an American poet, Robert Lee Frost. Symbolism is an artistic and poetic movement or style using symbolic images and indirect suggestions to express mystical ideas, emotions, and state of mind. A symbol is something that stands for or suggests something else; it represents something beyond literal meaning. In literature, a symbol can be a word, object, action, character, or concept that embodies and evokes a range of additional meanings and significance. For example, the setting sun is used by Emily Dickinson as a symbol of death in her poem "Because I Could Not Stop For Death", and John Keats symbolizes 'music' by word 'poetry' in his poem "The Poetry of the Earth".

#### Significance of Symbolism

Poets use different literary devices to make their work more charming and appealing. Symbolism is one such device that is used by most of the poets. It takes something that is usually concrete and associates or affixes it to something else in order to give it a new and more significant meaning. In other words, symbolism allows a writer to convey something to their audience in a poetic way instead of saying it outright. It allows writers to express complex ideas while giving the reader a visual and sensory experience. The poets known for symbolism in their poetry are Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allen Poe, John Keats, Langston Hughes and William Blake.

#### Biography of Robert Lee Frost

Robert Lee Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California, United States of America. His father, Prescott Frost Jr., was a teacher and journalist by profession. Robert Lee Frost went to Dartmouth College, Hanover and Harvard University but got no degree. He is popularly known as a poet and playwright. His notable works are "A Boy's Will", "North Of The Boston", "A Further Range", "A Witness Tree", "New Hampshire: A Poem With Notes And Grace Notes", "A Masque of Reason" and "A Way Out: A One-Act Play". He won the "Congressional Gold Medal" and was the only poet to receive the "Pulitzer Prize for Poetry" four times. He was also named the "Poet Laureate of Vermont" on July 22, 1961, by the

<sup>1</sup> BS English, University of Swabi, Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup> BS English, University of Swabi, Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

state legislature through a Joint Resolution. He was a father to six children. Frost's life was plagued by grief and loss. He lost his father when he was only eleven. Only two of his children, Lesley and Irma, outlived their father. Irma was committed to a mental hospital, and his wife, Elinor, experienced bouts of depression. A biographical touch can also be found in his poetry. He died on January 29, 1963, and was buried in Bennington Old Cemetery in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S. To convey his thoughts and ideas, Frost uses literary devices that turn into visual and sensual imagery, metaphor and similes, but his use of symbolism creates a unique style. He uses nature as a source of symbolism, e.g., roads, darkness, screaming, etc. Frost's poetry contains recurring themes of nature, rural life, mortality, isolation, human love and self-realization.

### Statement of the Problem

The domain of poetry differs from that of prose. In poetry, the poets use various figures of speech in order to make it more effective, attractive, appealing, charming and passionate. To understand the text of poetical work, the major task for the reader is to understand the figurative language used by poets. The current research work focuses on exploring and highlighting the literary device of symbolism in the selected poems of Robert Lee Frost.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To peruse the text of the related poems and explore symbolism.
2. To explore the symbols which are primarily represented by objects used.
3. To find out the distinctive qualities of Robert Lee Frost in the guise of symbolism.

### Research Questions

1. How far does the text of selected poems contain the elements of symbolism?
2. What is expressed through the vehicle of symbolism?

### Rationale to the Study

Frost's poems have been widely analysed from different angles. The literature review of the current research work highlights the aspects of Frost's poems, which have previously been researched from different perspectives. The literature review establishes that there is a chasm in previous works done by the researchers, and the research at hand will bridge the gap that was left unattended. The mystery of symbolism has not been fully explored. The researchers in the current work will dissect the zone of symbolism in the selected poems of Robert Frost.

### Significance of the Research

The research work will add to the existing stock of knowledge of the poems. This research work is a partial fulfilment for the award of a degree. The work will also be a source of guidance and literature review for the researchers in future. The research work will provide readers with a richer experience of the text of the poems.

### Literature Review

The concept of symbolism in literature is rooted in the idea that language and literature are inherently symbolic. Symbolism as a literary movement gained prominence in the late nineteenth century as a reaction against the descriptive methods of naturalistic writers like Emilie Zola. Arthur Symons, a key figure in this movement, asserted that symbolism is the essence of language and literature, and it entails suggesting, evoking, and communicating indirectly through symbols rather than relying on explicit descriptions.

Theoretical Framework: Arthur Symons and the Theory of Symbolism Arthur Symons (1865-1945) played a pivotal role in introducing symbolism into the English-speaking world. In his seminal work "The Symbolist Movement in Literature" (1899), Symons argued that symbolism is the core of language and



literature. He contended that our first words were symbolic, and truly imaginative writers have been symbolists. Symbolism, according to Symons, restores purity to the arts by summoning emotional and intellectual associations through symbols rather than being bound by the "old bondage of rhetoric."

Symons' theory of symbolism can be summarized by several key principles:

- Symbols reveal and conceal, blending the visible and the invisible.
- Symbols encompass the particular and the universal, the finite and the infinite.
- Symbols communicate indirectly, invoking emotional and intellectual associations that resist precise enumeration or naming.
- Symbolism involves suggesting and evoking rather than explicitly stating or describing.

Related Literature Review To provide a broader perspective on symbolism in literature, we will explore related literature from various scholars who have examined symbolism in the works of specific authors and in literature more broadly.

Robert Frost and Symbolism W.T. Adi (2020) conducted research on Robert Frost's use of symbols and themes. His study revealed that Frost's poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" utilized symbols related to nature and everyday life while exploring the theme of a journey. Adi also emphasized the biographical perspective in understanding Frost's use of symbols and themes.

M. Borroff (1992) discussed sound symbolism as drama in the poetry of Robert Frost. He highlighted the importance of sound symbolism in Frost's work and its impact on the portrayal of fear, particularly the fear of death. Borroff delved into the linguistic aspects of sound symbolism and its role in Frost's poetry.

John Ciardi (1958) analyzed Robert Frost's use of sound symbolism, emphasizing its significance in both theoretical and practical criticism. Ciardi discussed the ways in which sound symbolism is employed in Frost's poetry, complementing traditional analyses. He examined specific poems and their use of sound effects.

P.S. Dahal (2013) explored the world of nature and human experience in Robert Frost's poetry. Dahal argued that Frost's use of nature as a backdrop in his poems reflected the meaning and values of life. He discussed Frost's constant vision of nature and the use of nature as symbols in his poetry to convey deep emotions and insights.

Y. Manova-Georgieva (2017) conducted a study on symbolism in William Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," focusing on the significance of proper names as symbols. She analyzed the concealed meanings of proper names in the novel, emphasizing their importance in creating and characterizing literary images.

This comprehensive review of the theoretical framework of symbolism in literature, as defined by Arthur Symons, provides a deeper understanding of the essence of language and literature. Symons' principles of symbolism, emphasizing suggestion, evocation, and indirect communication through symbols, underscore the importance of this literary movement.

The related literature reviewed in this essay illustrates how symbolism has been applied to the works of specific authors, such as Robert Frost and William Thackeray. These studies emphasize the multifaceted nature of symbolism, its use of sound, nature, and proper names as symbols, and its role in conveying profound meanings in literature.

In conclusion, symbolism remains a fundamental aspect of literature, allowing writers to blend the visible and the invisible, the particular and the universal, and to communicate indirectly through symbols. This enduring literary movement continues to enrich our understanding of language, literature, and the complexities of human experience.

## Research Methodology

### Nature of the Research Methodology

This research work is qualitative and interpretive in nature. The text of the selected poems will be explored through textual analysis to find elements of symbolism in the selected poems.

## Objective of the Study

The poems by Robert Lee Foster, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night", will be the object of the study. The text of the poems will be the main focus of this research work.

## Method of Research

Textual analysis will be the method for exploring the text of the selected poems for the elements of symbolism.

## Data Analysis

Symbolism in Two Poems: "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night"  
Introduction: This analysis delves into two poems, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night," by Robert Frost, exploring the symbolic elements within them. These poems are known for their intricate use of symbolism, which enriches the reader's understanding of the poet's thoughts and emotions. In both poems, the use of symbolism plays a vital role in conveying deeper themes and emotions.

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" The poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" comprises four quatrains, each written in iambic tetrameter with a consistent rhyme scheme. The poem's structure, meter, and rhyme create a rhythmic quality, mirroring the steady plod of a horse.

## Symbolism in the Poem

### Wood

The woods in the poem symbolize a sense of peace and escape from the worries and troubles of modern society. The poet finds solace and tranquillity in the woods, representing a form of paradise.

### Snow

Snow is a symbol of purity and positivity in the poem. It conveys a sense of innocence and beauty in life. The white colour of snow is associated with positivity, as it represents a fresh start or a clean slate.

### Darkness

While darkness is often associated with evil or danger, in this poem, it symbolizes an undisturbed atmosphere in the woods. It also carries an element of mystery, hinting at hidden secrets within the woods.

### House and Village

The house and village represent the busyness and routine of modern society. The poet suggests that people have confined themselves to a life that lacks peace and satisfaction. The woods, in contrast, symbolize an escape from this modern lifestyle.

### Horse

The horse, incapable of thinking, symbolizes the poet's soul. When the poet stops in the woods, it signifies that his soul is engaged in deep contemplation and reflection.

### Frozen and Darkest Evening

"Frozen" and "Darkest Evening" are symbols of death. The winter season, often associated with death, is portrayed as a time of stillness and darkness, prompting the poet to reflect on the finite nature of life.

### Sleep

Sleep is a symbol of death in the poem. The poet emphasizes that before death (sleep), he has responsibilities and promises to fulfil in life.

### Promises

"Promises" represent the poet's obligations and responsibilities in life, particularly for the benefit of loved ones, such as children.



## Analysis

The poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is a reflection on the contrast between the tranquil, symbolic woods and the poet's responsibilities in the world. It suggests a momentary escape from the demands of modern life but also serves as a reminder of the poet's duties and obligations. The use of symbolism enhances the poem's depth, allowing readers to explore the dual nature of life's responsibilities and the desire for moments of solitude and reflection.

"Acquainted with the Night" This poem is structured as a terrarium, featuring successive tercets with a concluding couplet. The poem is written in iambic pentameter, creating a rhythmic and structured pattern that reflects the theme of isolation and despair.

## Symbolism in the Poem 2

### Night

Night is a central symbol in the poem. It represents the narrator's isolation and despair. The night is associated with darkness, suffering, and loneliness, reflecting the poet's deep sense of melancholy.

### Rain

Rain symbolizes the poet's tears and emotional turmoil. The poet walks out in the rain and returns home in the rain, suggesting an unending cycle of sadness and despair.

### Light

Light represents the simplicity and safety of normal life, which the poet has left behind. It also highlights the contrast between the poet's inner turmoil and the external world's joys.

### Night Watchman

The night watchman symbolizes fleeting moments of merriment and happiness that the poet encounters, but that do not provide lasting solace.

### People's Voices

The voices of people in the poem symbolize moments of excitement and hope, which are ultimately unfulfilled. The voices do not console the poet but serve as a reminder of his isolation.

### Luminary Clock (Moon)

The luminary clock, or moon, represents a distant and unchanging entity that watches over the poet. It signifies the passage of time, neither right nor wrong and emphasizes the poet's sense of isolation and disconnection from the world.

## Analysis

"Acquainted with the Night" is a poignant exploration of the poet's isolation and inner turmoil. The symbolism within the poem underscores the narrator's sense of despair, loneliness, and detachment from the world. The night, rain, and other symbols serve as powerful metaphors for the poet's emotional state and his disconnected relationship with society.

## Conclusion

The analysis of these two poems, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night," reveals the profound use of symbolism by Robert Frost. In both poems, symbolism adds layers of meaning, allowing readers to engage with the themes of peace, isolation, despair, and the contrasts between the inner and outer worlds. Frost's masterful use of symbolism enriches the reader's experience, making these poems enduring classics in the world of literature.

## Findings

After a thorough analysis of the poems "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night", the researchers have derived the following findings.

- Woods are symbolized by the poet, who says that it is like a paradise.
- Snow is the symbol of peacefulness because the white colour is considered for peace.
- Horse personifies the soul. The poet says their horse is work for the soul.
- Frozen symbolizes winter or death.
- Dark and deep symbolize the temptation and threat.
- Promises convey the message to perform the responsibility and work on the task.
- The house and village symbolize modern society and busy routines.
- Night symbolizes the darkness, suffering and despair.
- Rain represents the tears of the poet.
- Light is used for the simple and safe side where no one else is.
- People's voices are used for the inner suffering of the poet.
- The Luminary clock represents the moon and God.

## Conclusions

Conclusions made on the basis of findings are listed below;

### Answer 1

As far as question No.1 is concerned, "How far does the text of selected poems contain the elements of Symbolism?" It is concluded that elements of symbolism exist, such as;

- Woods symbolize the poet, who says that it is like a paradise.
- Snow is the symbol of peacefulness because the white colour is considered for peace.
- Horse personifies the soul. The poet says their horse works for the soul.
- Frozen is symbolized as winter or death.
- Dark and deep symbolize the temptation and threat.
- Promises convey the message that to perform the responsibility and work.
- The house and village symbolize modern society and busy routines.
- Night symbolizes the darkness, suffering and despair.
- Rain represents the tears of the poet.
- Light is used for the simple and safe side where no one else is.
- People's voices are used for the inner suffering of the poet.
- The Luminary clock represents the moon and God.

### Answer 2

As far as question No.2, "What is expressed through the use of symbolism?" It is concluded that symbolism conveys a double meaning, beautifying the work of the writer and pleasing the reader.

## Recommendations

After a thorough analysis of the poems "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "Acquainted with the Night", the following recommendations are made;

- Symbolic Techniques in the Selected Poems of Robert Lee Frost.
- Literary Devices in the Selected Poems of Robert Lee Frost.
- Poetic Devices in the Selected Poems of the Robert Lee Frost.

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