Tribhuwan University

The Indeterminacy: A Deconstructionist Study of Frost Poetry

A dissertation submitted to
the Department of English, P.N. Campus, Pokhara in Partial Fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in English

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April, 2009

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A Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr. **Kumar Chandra Subedi** has prepared this dissertation entitled **The Indeterminacy: A Deconstructionist Study of Frost Poetry** under my guidance and supervision. I, therefore, forward to consider it for final evaluation, approval and acceptance.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most sincere thanks go to Mr. Nagendra Bhandari, a Lecturer at the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus who kindly accepted to supervise me with my dissertation. It is because of his invaluable suggestions and guidance that it became possible to prepare this work in this form.

I am highly thankful to Dr. Man Bahadur K.C., the Head of the department who provided a decent atmosphere to the students to prepare a research paper.

Besides, I feel highly obliged to all the teachers at the department and my friends who assisted me in preparing this research paper in some or the other way.

Finally, my brother Amrit Subedi deserves a special thank for his help in getting the work typed. Similarly all the people who directly or indirectly supported in preparing this dissertation are duly acknowledged.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Robert Lee Frost is one of the prominent figures of 20th century American poetry who explains his own feelings in relation to the natural world through the use of extended metaphors. Frost's poems show deep appreciation of natural world and sensibility about the human aspirations. His images ☐ woods, stars, houses, brooks etc. are usually taken from everyday life. With his down-to-earth approach to his subjects, readers find it easy to follow the poet into deeper truths, without being burdened with pedantry. Often Frost uses the rhythms and vocabulary of ordinary speech or even the looser free verse of dialogue.

His deceptively simple works often having rural setting explore the relationship between individuals and between people and nature. Frost, one of the widely read poets, though concentrates on the ordinary subject matter, his emotional range is wide and deep, and his poems often shift dramatically from a tone of humorous banter and general depiction to the passionate expression of tragic experience. It is the typical of him to represent the human situation through the images brought from the natural world. Frost poetry predominantly is the pattern that provides to man's existence and serves as a way of rediscovering the basic, enduring truth about human life and also shows a very strong association to death.

Frost's poems describing relatively ordinary scenes of events often conclude by raising much larger issues about the meaning of life and death and the nature of reality. It is the great of Frost to touch upon the more serious issues of life by employing very common language with down to earth images. Of course, it is possible, that apple, country road, stone, woods etc. may be treated in such a way that

they symbolize something other than themselves but if they symbolize something greater than themselves then the poem is about something greater then itself and then the poet is valued for his/her creation. Yvor Winters in this light in "Robert Frost: Or, the Spiritual Drifter as Poet" states:

> The poet deliberately employs the connotative content of language as well as the denotative: so that what he must do is make a rational statement about an experience, at the same time employing his language in such a manner as to communicate the emotion which ought to be communicated by that rational understanding of the particular subject. In so far as he is able to do this the poem will be good; in so far as the subject itself is important, the poem will be great. That is, a poem which merely describes stone may be excellent but will certainly be minor; where as a poem which deals with man's contemplation of death and eternity, or with a formative decision of same kind, may be great. (Winters 60)

Frost depicts human life full of gloom and miseries. His vision of life is gloomy and his poetry is the manifestation of desperate reality of human life where he finds darkness everywhere. Frost always wonders what death would be like as he seems to be quite tired of his life. Malcolm Cowley commenting on such underlying tenet of Frost poetry says: "Frost is a modern poet, whose sensibilities were suspended between life and death. His attitudes towards nature, for instance, demonstrate in the earlier work, a tough minded trust in natural purpose; in same later poems however tends to be more antagonistic than beneficent" (Cowley 453).

Romantic poets of the 1800s believed people could live in harmony with nature. But to Frost, the purpose of people and nature are never the same, and so

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nature's meaning can never be known. He holds, to be obsessive in the attempt to probe for nature's secret is futile and foolish. Humanity's best chance for peacefulness comes from working usefully and productively amid the external forces of nature. So he clearly reveals the human predicaments. The mission of his poetry is to develop a human act which has meaning in terms of the world man really lives in. Nina Baym, talking about Frost's poetry writes:

> The aim of Frost poetry is to find out what kind of world it really is. The world Frost discovers and he depicts the making of this discovery in many nature lyrics, is not friendly to man's great hopes dreams and needs. But to despair in it is not the human answer to the grim world discovered the aims to tell that the human life of staying. (Baym 428)

In the likely manner Marion Montgomery in his critical essay "Robert Frost and His use of Barriers: Man Vs Nature toward God" says:

> From the publication of *A Boy's Will* down to the present time Frost has indicated a realization that nature, natura naturata, not only will, but sometimes seems intended to, hurt those who love it. The immediate natural world even seems to be moving toward chaos, intending to take man along with it if he isn't careful. (Montgomery 340)

When we make a close study of Frost poetry we can see his consistent view towards human nature yet he seems to have moved around nature outside. He presents a pessimistic vision in majority of his poems when his speakers seem to be very much fed up with their lives and always are in the position of meditation making a deep thought about the life, and wondering about death.

Robert Frost contemplates on death because he wants to escape from the mundane complexities of modern life and wants to have a restful life. He finds himself to have led a pretty mundane existence. He sees depression, melancholy and loneliness hovering him which make him contemplate on death as he finds this world hostile to him. He sees mystery in death. Beside, his lonely life following the death of his all near and near ones caused consternation in Frost because of which too he can't help wondering about the allure of death. He takes death as an alternative of life. In other words, he sees life in what we call death.

Frost view of man's nature is consistent through his poetry. Each man is, in a sense, a stranger to this world. He is not to question why he is alone or why the world seems to be against him. He is to begin the breathless opening and closing of the mind, the hand, the heart, the eye upon the world, glowing as he does so. As he grows he understands himself more and as he understands himself he also understands more of the world and of his fellow men and he doesn't find this world suitable to live in, and wonders how the escaping this chaotic and hostile world would be.

No matter what has been said about Frost poetry, it is always unstable in terms of its meaning and multidimensional in its thematic aspects. However it's great of Frost writing that it leaves room for every one who goes through his poetry. Nevertheless it is not rigid enough to seek univocal appreciation. Frost poetry never leaves the readers in the situation that they think they have been able to perceive a reliable meaning from it .It rather leaves us in a state of sheer perplexity with its infinite meanings. We can not trace the actual and intended meaning out of his writings. Moreover in a close study of his poetry we come to infer that it is not only equipped with the state of indeterminacy but also bears inner contradictions, paradoxes and conflicts in abundance. It pays no heed to the use of words as

privileged or subordinate and does not seem to have left any foot prints to trigger the authorial intention. These things logically lead us to the question, 'why does Frost poetry embody indeterminacy, contradictions, and paradoxes?'

Frost poetry embodies indeterminacy, contradictions, paradoxes simply because it is the product in language which never gives fixed and reliable meaning. Language is not that systematic and rule governed entity to convey any precise message. It is, as Jacks Derrida opines, the play of signifiers. We seek solid and stable meaning but we can never really find it because we can never get beyond the play of signs that is language. What we take to be meaning is really only the mental trace left behind by the play of the signs. So is the case with Frost poetry.

This study, in this regard, will strive to cast light upon these issues with some selected poems by Robert Frost published in different volumes at different times in an effort to have a broad analysis of literary texts through a deconstructionist approach as developed by Derrida. Other theories related with deconstruction like Structuralism and The American New Criticism will also be taken into consideration

There have been a number of studies on Frost poetry at different times. But the significance of this paper lies in its endevour to seek the deconstructive reading, an unexplored path to approach Frost poetry. This shows how Frost poetry leaves the reader in the state of sheer indeterminacy, and how a deconstructive approach helps us improve our ability to think more critically.

This study is divided into five different chapters with a brief introduction to poet, his poetry and the issue raised in the search in chapter one, and The Review of Literature in chapter two which incorporates the responses to Frost poetry from the earlier times to the present- providing a general bird's eye view to the past critical

observations to his poetry. Similarly chapter three, The Deconstructive Approach is the tool analysis providing details of deconstruction theory, and chapter four is Textual Analysis seeking deconstructive elements in "The Road Not Taken", "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening", "Nothing Gold Can Stay", "Mending Wall" and "Design". Chapter five attempts to conclude the discussion of the earlier chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Unlike his contemporaries Robert Frost chose not to experiment with new verse forms but to employ traditional pattern with thematic aspects as he chooses the old fashioned way to be new. Despite the surface cheerfulness and descriptive accuracy of his poems, he presents a dark, sober vision of life, and there is obviously a thoughtful quality of his work. Many of Frost poems, the celebrated ones, include an element of melancholy and regret, sadness and longing that reflect what might be called the darker side of the poet. Therefore, many critics believe that Frost poetry is regarded as poetry that contemplates on death but at the same time it is recognized for its thematic appreciation of nature. This is why Frost poetry is easy and simple on the surface level, but in reality he is very complex and intricate poet. In this regard C.A Sheppard says:

> Frost's Language is simple, down to earth, and conventionally informal but the insight t carries is so humane and deep. What is significant about Frost is that he never stuns the reader with any individual word, line or metaphor but what he manages is a cumulative force which depends on every unostentatious line of the poem. (Sheppard 140)

Though he seems to be a nature poet and tends to restrict himself to country scenes, he is something more than that of being a nature poet because he responds the terror and tragedy of common life with his grave images, yet, seems to be talking about the wonderful creation of nature. Marion Montgomery distinguishing Frostian trend with that of Wordsworthian writes:

The casual reader of Frost poetry is likely to think of Frost as a nature poet in the tradition of Wordsworth. In a sense nature is his subject, but to Frost it is never an impulse from the vernal wood. His best poetry is concerned with the drama of man in nature whereas Wordsworth is generally best when emotionally displaying the panorama of the natural world. (Montgomery 339)

Finding some similar trends between Frost and Wordsworth Montgomery further says:

Whenever Frost talks directly or indirectly of natural objects or creatures, we feel that he is really looking at man out of the corner of his mouth. In all his poems Frost is describing the animal and vegetable natures in man, not reading man's nature into the animal and vegetable worlds, as Wordsworth was inclined to do. (342)

The predominant theme of Frost poetry is the pattern that provides to mans existence as most of his poems serve as a way of rediscovering the basic, enduring truth about humanity. For Frost death, depression and melancholy are the basic enduring entities to govern human life. He always associates the possibilities of death in every walks of human life as death for him is the ultimate destination of human life. Donald G Sheechy in this connection states:

Frosts vindictiveness was extreme, obsessive and compulsive. It was nasty, sometimes petty, .and sometimes ridiculous. His poems can be best understood as inner dialogue held to resolve inner conflicts. Frost attitude towards publicity, marriage, suicide and religion are based on neurotic development .(Sheechy 406)

Frost poems move from delight to wisdom as he has said about poetry that it starts in delights and ends in wisdom. Oliver comments: "His poems do move from delight to wisdom. They are not worried into existence but rather like the piece of ice on a hot stove to ride on their own melting" (Oliver 381). Praising this art of Frost poetry, Oliver Further claims, "The flavor of New England life, an insight into New England character, and surprising penetrations into life's complexities are in his poems. He uses the fact that becomes metaphor and symbol that Frost is penetrating into value and experience." (Oliver 380).

Both Frost poetry and his critical pronouncement had about them an authority which by 1930 dominated the literary scene. Though he wrote steadily and reached a wider and wider range of listeners and readers, he remained outside the passionate ring of new believers. Unlike Eliot, who seemed to undergo evolution and reorganization with each new poem and Unlike Pound who concentrated all his disparate self in a devotion towards a single poem of epic scope, Frost seemed to harden into a static new creation of himself, it was always the same self being recreated the old character, who most of the time stands to represent a common human who is going on a journey of life and Robert Frost himself at other times who unrelentingly projects total consciousness of his limitations and the limits to his understanding of the vast and baffling problems with which he was surrounded by. Apart from this, he is a New England farmer continually depicting the New England countryside and landscape. James M. Cox, therefore, holds:

During the twenties, Eliot-creating the illusion that he was moving through stages on a journey towards same kind of truth-had left the emptiness of Prufrock's world, passed through "The Waste Land", and turned from the poetry of 'despair' towards the poetry of 'belief'. In the same period, Frost, in New Hampshire (1923) and again in West Running Book (1928), began to

create the   illusion of a New England farmer poet writing the poetry of

opinion. While Eliot   was discovering symbols for his age in the ancient a

myth of creation and fertility, Frost was creating the myth of Robert Frost.

(Cox 5)

The history of Frost criticism, as a matter of fact, is the part of Frost's identity.
The criticism and the poetry mutually define each other. In the case of Eliot and
modern poetry in general, criticism began with interpretation largely because this was
the requirement the poetry placed upon the reader. Explanation and paraphrase
become so much a part of modern criticism precisely because, in the absence of literal
statement and logical syntax, reconstruction of the' meaning' of the poem became
imperative. Despite critical insistence that paraphrase is a 'heresy' and that a poem
'must not mean but be', the chief irony of modern criticism lies in the fact that it
interprets, explains, allegorizes and paraphrases. However, Frost poetry invariably
produces a different critical response. Basically narrative and dramatic in structure,
his poems seem astonishingly clear at first encounter, so clear that the two aspects of
his form which always invite attention are the speaker and his story. If Eliot criticism
began with attention to form and meaning, criticism of Frost is going to end there.

Besides, Frost criticism deals with the basic problems and basic facts of
modern life. The ache of modernism finds its fullest expression in his poetry. The
modern note of frustration, loneliness, isolation and disillusionment governing the
modern human life, strike him from time to time which ultimately leave Frost to
contemplate on the termination of his life. Regarding this William Bridgewater and
Seymour Kurtz opine: "His poems are concerned with man's reaction to the
complexities of life and his ultimate acceptance of his burdens" (Bridgewater and
Kurtz 776).

Frost shows a deep respect to God, on his being just and merciful. Commenting on Frost's view about God Montgomery concludes:

> To Frost, God is still "that which man is sure cares, and will save him, no matter how many times or how completely he has failed." Heaven, Paul agrees in so many words, is like Silas' home something man hasn't to deserve (Death of a hired man) Justice, Frost says, is only to the deserving, but mercy is for the undeserving. And those who demand justice because of the limitations imposed upon them will receive justice, those who with courage in the heart move toward understanding through faith and reason may except God's mercy. (353)

Leonard Unger about spiritualism in Frost lyric poems comments: "His lyric poems are the expression of self discovery even in Psychological self- education concerning his own ties to his beloved, to strangers, to nature to the universe to god. Ulterior concern is always with psychic and spiritual salvation" (Unger 155-156).

Frost's projection of the sense of alienation makes the readers feel that every one in the world is in isolation though they seem to be living in a crowd. W. G. O' Donnel in his essay "Robert Frost and New England: A Revaluation" about Frost's inclination towards alienation mentions,"Frost insistently projects the theme of alienation, of man's isolation from his fellow man. The old- style farmer in 'Mending Wall' not only refuses to pull down the useless barriers but, to make the matter worse, insists upon having the last words: 'Good fences make good neighbours" (O'Donnell 52).

Regarding the projection of alienation with reference to Whitman, Donnel further States:

Nothing could be farther a field than to conclude that Frost admires the alienation which he interprets so vividly, or that he hopes to see it prevail. There are those who hold that a writer should capture every such perception of fact by a fiery denunciation. But in *North of Boston* Frost is a poet, not a pamphleteer. And he must in any case be himself; one can not expect him to adopt the rhetoric and explicit method of Whitman. Democracy and America find representative voices in both Frost and Whitman; both writers are concern with brotherhood and fellowship although each approaches the problem in an individual fashion. (52)

Frost poetry can also be seen as an implicit dialogue between nature and an individual. Persona in most of the poems reveals his/her anxieties in an expressive manner in front of nature as if the nature is patient enough to listen to him. Regarding 'dialogue' and 'nature' in Frost poetry Harold H. Watts in his essay "Robert Frost and the Interrupted Dialogue" comments, "The bulk of his poetry is a dialogue in which the two speakers are Robert Frost himself and the entity which we call nature or process. It is a dialogue in which Frost puts a variety of questions to the doorsteps and receives a variety of answers" (Watts 105).

Frost poetry is equally crafted with psychological implications. Robyn V. Young about Frost poetry pertaining to psychological expression states:

"The Road Not Taken" and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" are two of many Frost poems in which the speaker faces a dilemma of choosing between the knowledge represented by wild nature or mundane life, represented by a clearing of town. In the former the speaker chooses a road less traveled by, while the latter piece perhaps Frost's most frequently discussed work ends inconclusively. (Young 191)

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Therefore with the study of above listed critics and their views regarding Frost poetry, it can be generalized that Robert Frost is a nature poet who draws his subject matter from natural word and all the way from natural word he comes to the human world. He universalizes human values with his very grave but seemingly simple imagery. Whatever Frost's relation to his own age may be, his achievement in the end, is measured by the intrinsic value of the poems rather than their relevance to the contemporary world. The kind of poetry he has written can best be understood by observing the method by which he has sought to make the present moment represent all other times, and the particular place he describes the human situation as it has always existed.

The bulk of the aforementioned critics have sought to explore Frost as a nature poet, a religious poet, a pastoral poet, a modern poet, a realist, a spiritual differ etc. But we can hardly find any occasion to see the indeterminacy in his poetry. It is a fact that Frost Poetry is equally good to see through the prospective of many other critical theories especially like Formalism, Psychoanalysis, and Structuralism etc. However, to establish a more convincing fact that Frost Poetry is uniquely suited to have a closer study of any literary text vis-à-vis the deconstructionist approach will, of course, be a notable job. As Frost leaves spaces for every one who goes through his poem to seek an understanding of their own, the attempt to explore the deconstructive reading of Frost poetry will undoubtedly, be a worth justifying one. Therefore unlike the contemporary views up on Frost poetry this dissertation is all set to make a unique endeavour to seek a deconstructionist approach to his poetry by selecting his a few widely analyzed representative poems.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DECONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH

The twentieth century saw the emergence of different new forms of criticism and innovative theories in literature. The dominant forms of criticism before the World War II were Russian formalism, psychological criticism, archetypal criticism and new criticism. After the Second World War there appeared some other types of criticism such as structuralist criticism, new forms of feminist criticism and varieties of reader response criticism.

Deconstruction was initiated by Jacques Derrida in France, who, in a series of books published in the late 1960, launched a major critique of traditional western metaphysics. He claimed that Western philosophy had become rooted in a tradition which sought truth and certainty of meaning by privileging certain types of interpretations and repressing others; he emphasized, language and its limitlessness of interpretation. Though initiated by Derrida, deconstruction was subsequently taken up by many other literary critics including Paul de Man and J. Hills Miller.

Deconstruction that came as a reaction to the structuralist criticism denies any final explication or statement of meaning in a text. It questions the presence of any objective structure or context in a text and describes the text as always in a state of change, furnishing only provisional meanings. Meaning can point to an indefinite number of other meanings. Thus deconstruction takes apart any meaning to reveal contradictory structures hidden within. M. H. Abrams says, " Typically, a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meanings into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities (Abrams 55).

Similarly Terry Eagleton holding deconstruction as a philosophy with an instinct to emphasize problematic relationship writes:

> Deconstruction, a philosophically grounded to thought, emphasizes a problematic relationship between the linguistic signifier and the transcendent signified. It challenges and ultimately decenters hierarchies of thought of expression based on binary oppositions which privilege one term over its ostensible opposite. Likewise this approach focuses on the marginal terms excluded from the discourse in order to recognize the way in which the text subverts its own meaning. Additionally, it recognizes that all signifiers derive their meaning from the traces of other signifiers and concentrates on the play of signifiers creating a theoretical endless chain which frustrates attempts at closure. (Eagleton 133)

Deconstruction opposes logocentrism, the notion that written language contains a self- evident meaning that point to unchanging meaning authenticated by the whole of western tradition. The critics of deconstruction show the problem and loopholes of structuralism. They rapture the established hierarchy and reject the concept of totality of meaning but accept the plurality in it. So the center, their tendency of making binary opposition as truth value, and creating center by means of putting one item in the hierarchy at the center and others at margin. It is argued that deconstruction has been domesticated by American academic, and made into a sophisticated, wittier and more idiosyncratic version of the kind of textual reading associated with New Criticism.

Deconstruction has a good deal to offer us as it can improve our ability to think critically and to see more readily the ways in which our experience is

determined by ideologies of which we are unaware because they are built into language. And because deconstruction offers these advantages, it can be a very useful tool for Marxism, feminism, and other theories that attempt to make us aware of the oppressive role ideology can play in our lives. In order to understand how deconstruction revels the hidden work of ideology in our daily experience of ourselves and our world, we must first understand deconstruction's view of language because according to Derrida, language is not the reliable tool of communication we believe it to be, but rather a fluid, ambiguous domain of complex experience in which ideologies program us without our being aware of them

3.1   Deconstructing language, Our World, and Human Identity

Deconstruction is a kind of skeptical reaction to the concepts of language established by structuralism, a theory based on the idea that language functions through systematic rules and structures. The meaning in language emerges from structure, difference and relation with each other. The structuralists hold language is definable because it is a rule governed entity. Therefore, language is constructed in a particular order and that order is directed by systematic rules. It is a kind of structure that is built with signs. The systematic order of these signs results in structure and the structure is capable of generating fixed and precise meanings which can be differential among signs. The prominent figure of structuralist criticism is Ferdinand de Saussure, a French speaking Swiss linguist, whose idea about the structuralism is that language is a rule governed entity functioning through a certain kind of structure and the structure involves certain basic rules and patterns. The most important idea that he has put forth in his essay 'General Course in Linguistic' is that all the languages in the world are the sum total and aggregate of sign. All languages are structured in signs. He says a sign is made up of two elements – signifier and

signified. A sign involves a kind of graphics like sound graphics, transcriptives or object and some which lay in writing, some in sound, some in graphology or some in object etc. There is something representative for the implication of sign and signifier in its reference and meaning. Language is a sign derived by signified upon signifier. All the words are signs which stand for something else. When we utter a word that is produced as sign is attached with signifier and signified. Hazard Adams in this respect says:

> Saussure's treatment of the linguistic sign as composed of 'signifier' and 'signified', his emphasis on the arbitrary nature of the sign and his characterization of language as a system of differences flow through the work of all structuralist and post structuralists theories. He sought to establish linguistics as a science. (Adams 717).

Deconstruction, on the other hand, came out of this structuralist cozy and scientific assertion about the norms and beliefs that language can be interpreted and defined as if it were a systematic entity. The structuralists hold that language is composed of signs in which a tangible relation lies between signifier and signified. The deconstructionists, however, say that there is no such a firm and stable relation between signifier and signified. The essence of deconstruction has greatly been contributed by Jacques Derrida's essay "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences". This was the most important work that contributed greatly to the post structuralist approach as regard Signifier and signified, and their relation. Derrida says the process of making meaning through signifier is a never ending process. A cat is 'cat' not only because it is not rat, mat, hat ...etc. but also because it is not house, tree, pea… etc. Therefore the process of making meaning by contrastive relation is almost endless because the significance (signified) is not everything else except itself.

The idea that the meaning can be made clear with differential processing is bewildering. It is much confusing on one hand and endless on the other. Derrida says in the structuralist approach the meaning of a sign is cleared through other signs, but this is not clear. E.g. if a cat means a four footed animal that catches rats it is not clear, other four footed animals may also catch rats. If you say 'a cat is a four footed animal with paws and moustache that catches rats' this again becomes confusing because there are many four footed animals with paws and moustache. Therefore we can never reach to a complete and correct signified using different signs. The more we find something missing the longer our meaning becomes. That's why Derrida says the signifier and signified can't be described certainly or distinctly in the process of meaning making and thus no totalization of meaning is possible. Derrida states:

> Totalization can be judged impossible in the classical style: one then refers to the empirical endeavour of either a subject or a finite richness which it can never master. There is too much more than one can say. But non totalization can also be determined in an another way: no longer from the standpoint of the concept finitude as relegation to the empirical, but from the standpoint of the concept of *play*. If totalization no longer has any meaning, it is not because the infiniteness of a field cannot be covered by a finite glance or finite discourse but because of the nature of the field – that is, language and a finite language- excludes totalization. This field is in effect that of *play*, that is to say, a field of infinite substitution only because it is finite, that is to say, because instead of being an inexhaustible field, as in the classical hypothesis, instead of being too large, there is something missing from it. (Adams 1123)

So deconstructing the structuralist concept of language, deconstruction asserts that signs themselves are used as signifiers therefore there is no demarcation between

signs and signifiers. That's the assertion of linguistic signs as signifier and signified is a fallacy. It is puzzling because the same signifier is sometimes used as signified and vice versa. The meaning is scattered and dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers and can't easily be nailed down. It is never fully present in any signs along but it is rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together. Therefore, the meaning is not fixed and its not solid entity either. There is both presence and absence of truth to a certain degree. A certain degree of truth and significance can be represented by signifier but rest is absent. In order to fulfill the absence another sign is brought which also has both presence and absence of truth, another sign if brought, this also consists the same degree of absence and presence of truth. Therefore it is a never ending process with the constant flickering of truth in presence and absence and we can't come to the perfect meaning.

Derrida talks of the terms difference and deffrance. The difference between 'difference' and 'diffrance' lies in the fact that there is not only differential relationship but also the defrance, the process of delay. Once we get a certain aspect of meaning, we have to rely on another signifier to know the another aspect which also doesn't complete it. Therefore It is just like the rely race where you run a certain distance and pass the stick to another runner to cover rest part. The process of making meaning is also like that which is not immediately complete. Therefore, there is a delay in the process of meaning making where the signifier has to pass on its responsibility to another sign that also has to rely on another. So there lies a delay, taking much time and the meaning is not available instantly. Therefore this is not an easy and reliable job to make a meaning through signifiers. Derrida in his essay 'Difference' regarding this mentions:

The first consequence to be drawn from this is that the signified concept is never present in and of itself, in a sufficient presence that would refer only to itself. Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refer to the other, to other concept, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play, *difference*, is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general. For the same reason, *difference*, which is not a concept, is not simply a word, that is, what is generally represented as the calm, present, and self-referential unity of concept and phonic material. The difference of which Sassure speaks is itself, therefore, neither a concept nor a word among others. (Panndey 677)

Besides while deconstructing language deconstruction also focuses on binary oppositions in which it seeks to rupture the hierarchy created between them by establishing how the subordinate in the pair can also be as important as the privileged one. It rejects one to be the central and the other to be the marginalized. It holds we should consider the language the way in which these opposites are not really opposites.

According to deconstruction, when one is born, he/she is born with language. So every human being is being embedded with language. Language creates their being and their knowledge and their identity. It is again the language that has a lot to do to shape the cultural ideologies, beliefs, and principles in the society and it is through language that these ideologies, beliefs, and principles are passed on. But human language is full of instability, biases, ambiguity and thrives for subjectivity. Since the language consists of these trends, philosophy, cultural ideology, principals and beliefs cannot be free of these things. Lois Tyson says:

Deconstruction asserts that our experience of ourselves and our world is produced by the language we speak, and because all language is an unstable, ambiguous force-field of competing ideologies, we ourselves are unstable ambiguous force-field of competing ideologies. The self image of a stable identity that many of us have is really just a comforting self delusion, which we produce in collision with our culture, for culture, too, wants to see itself as stable coherent when in reality it is highly unstable and fragmented. We don't really have an identity because the word identity implies we consist of one, singular self, but in fact we are multiple and fragmented, consisting at any moment of any number of conflicting beliefs, desires, fears, anxieties and intentions.(Tyson 257)

Commenting Derrida's radical view about reading and his inclination towards dismantling the conventional logics Eagleton says: "Derrida is clearly out to do more than develop new techniques of reading: deconstruction is, for him, an attempt to dismantle the logic by which a particular system of thought and behind that a whole system of politics structures and social institutions maintain its force" (Eagleton 148).

Thus, structuralists argued that our view of the world and our identity are constructed by the language we speak. Since language, they supposed, is stable, innate and coherent, our world, our identity and our consciousness are stable, coherent and precisely structured too. But deconstruction poses a radical disagreement to this orderly vision of language, human world and human identity.

3.2   Deconstructing Literature

While deconstruction is a tactic of decentering, a way of reading which first makes us aware of the centrality of the central term and then attempts to subverts the

central; term so that the marginalized term can also become the central one, the new criticism is generating a literary text an objective discipline where the organic unit in the text may reflect the fragmented society. The new critical approach holds meaning of a text should be sought within the text not outside. Deconstruction sees a text full of ambiguities and asserts that the ambiguities can never be disambiguated whereas the new critical approach says that the ambiguities existing in the text should be disambiguated while analyzing it.

The critics of deconstruction celebrate the texts' self- destruction as a never ending free play of language but the critics of new criticism take the text as a self sufficient entity. To them a poem or any text is the thing on itself and the reader must concentrate all attention on it and illuminate on it. The function of critics is to evaluate the text as a work of art for which they must devote themselves to close textual study, unhampered by any extraneous concerns.

Deconstruction seeks to see a text from all the possible angles but assert none of the ways should be taken as granted to nail down the meaning of the text. The new critics, however, believe, the external ways to look into the text like moral and religious considerations, social political and environmental conditions, the details of the author's biography are all irrelevant and are obstacles in the way of a real understanding of a work of literature. The literary critic must rid himself of all such extrinsic bias and prejudice. The critic must approach the text with an open mind, read to study it as "it is in itself". The critic must not allow himself to be hampered and prejudiced by any literary theories either.

The new critical reading believes in the totality of the meaning of the text and even focus on the single meaning of the text and single method of establishing that

meaning. The deconstructive reading never believes in the totality and univocality of the meaning of a text. It rather seeks resort to find plurality of meaning and does not take any one as privileged and the other as subordinate one. Lois Tyson concludes;

> For deconstruction it means that the New Criticism is in collusion with the text to hide the self- contradictions that reveal the limitations of its ideological framework. To find that ideological framework deconstruction looks for meanings in the text that conflict with its main theme focusing on self contradictions of which the text seems unaware. (Tyson 260)

3.3   Deconstruction as a Literary Criticism

Deconstruction is a method of critical analysis that seeks to challenge certain perceived assumptions. Properly speaking, as a method of literary criticism, it assumes that language refers to only to itself rather than to an extra textual reality and asserts multiple conflicting interpretations of a text and bases such interpretations on the philosophical, political or social implications of the use of language in the text rather than the author's intentions M.H. Abrams in this regard holds:

> Deconstruction as applied in the criticism of literature, designates a theory and practice of reading which questions and claims to "subvert" "undermine" the assumption that the system of language provide grounds that are adequate to establish the boundaries, the coherent or unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text.(Abrams 55)

Like wise Terry Eagleton about deconstruction as a literary criticism further explains, "The tactic of deconstructive criticism is to show how the texts come to embrace their own ruling system of logic" (Eagleton 133).

The deconstructive point of vantage is the axial proposition that 'there is nothing beyond the text'. One cannot go beyond the sequence of verbal signs to anything that is outside of, and is independent of the system of language that constitutes the text. As a literary criticism, deconstruction sees a text as constituted by the play of language that subverts all the grounds, boundaries and coherence and dissipates the definiteness of its structure thus giving meaning in an endless chain or imparts incompatibility, undecidability and indeterminacy to meanings. It is directed to undermine the western metaphysics by deconstructing the ideologically imposed hierarchies and by demonstrating logo centric dependence upon a 'presence' which neglects an idealistic desire to control the play of language or specifically of signifiers making them subject to extra systematic "transcendental signified".

The deconstructive method of analysis of a literary text seeks resort to be explicitly critical of structuralist concept of language as a closed system of signs and of the differential relationship between signs that make meaning possible. To oppose this view Derrida, the pioneer of deconstruction, coins a term "Difference", a double meaner which simultaneously hints towards difference between signifiers and deferral of supposed meaning. What the post structuralist approach seeks to state, in fact, is the meaning which for the structuralist is almost possible because of the differential relationships between linguistic instances is never present and is always delayed by the play of signifiers. The signifier in any text reduced to the system of signs does not lead us to a single signified but to a batch of signifiers, any one of which might lead us to other signifiers, which emerge whenever we try to pin down the relation between signifier and signified.

Likewise the other attempt made by deconstructive approach while subverting the notion of substance, closure, totality and system includes deconstructing of the

binary opposition upon which the whole logo centric western philosophies base their ideas. These oppositional categories are given value in terms of binaristic significance they attain in any structure having a definite center such as god/ man, light/darkness, nature/culture, speech/writing etc. The western metaphysics gives primacy to former category and tends to take the latter as derivative. Taking one instance of speech/writing Derrida holds that the logocentric tendency of western theory of language, or general philosophy presupposes on fusion between the signifier and the signified. Derrida gives primacy to writing, where the realization of meaning is always postponed by the very fact that it will always be read and re-interpreted to speech or doubles the gap between signifier and signified.

Therefore, to cut the long matter short, deconstruction as a means of literary criticism, discards the hierarchical formulations of relationship by reversing them and by drawing our attention to the free play of element within such formulations that subverts all the notions of hierarchy. Such free play of words leaves the reader in bafflement with the infinite possibilities of meaning.

Moreover, the basic tenets of deconstructive criticism like concept of pluralism, an attempt to bring the marginalized term(vis-à-vis language, culture, metaphysics, religion etc.) to the forefront, subversion of hierarchy between so called privileged and subordinate etc. in fact, gained immense popularity and worldwide response giving rise to some other prominent literary criticisms during the late 20th century including Feminism, Lesbian, Gay and Queer Criticism, Marxism, Postcolonial criticism etc.

Some of the major things that deconstruction as a method of literary criticism looks for in a text include rejection of primacy of Theory, decentering of subject and author, reading and writing etc.

3.3.1   Rejection of Primacy of Theory

In the western philosophy theories are always kept in the center. Theories are privileged and have directive roles in the activities of writers, critics etc. The deconstructionists think that the theories of the past since Plato onwards are about some certain transcendental terms and concepts. These theories have directed the themes of the contemporary writers through the idea of distant past. The ideas of those contemporary writers are judged in terms of those ideas belonging to the distant past which are already fossilized. The central concept of god, universal soul, truth etc. which are always directing the concept of people should no more be pursued. Such kind of direction and control of thought should be avoided while making philosophy or criticism. These things are just the concepts which are never present any where and to hold these as primary things for notion is a fallacy which is asserted in the particular text. We readers, while reading a text, should avoid such kind of things. Derrida says structuralism is based on the idea of center, that is to say there is center (base) which influences the structure. Derrida refutes such kind of firm concept of center by saying 'where is the center?' Inside the structure or outside the structure? If the center is inside the structure, it is separated from the rest that is to say if we locate center inside the structure, it becomes different from the rest and if the center lies outside the structure, it is no longer a center. There lies no center beyond the structure. Therefore, the center is something like the concept of god lying in morality. But god himself, sometimes, lies out of morality. The center of morality and moral laws is god but neither the moral laws are finding obligatory to god nor god is following them.

God can't be accused of violating the law even if he does. Even when the god kills somebody or his enemy, he is not accused of murder. Derrida says the center of the moral law is god and god lies outside it. Therefore, in structuralist approach it's difficult to know where center lies as it talks of center. That is why the concept of god, immortal soul etc. which are supposed to be the central guiding concepts of western philosophy are to be abandoned and discarded. Therefore the post structuralist approach of criticism speaks of the decentralization of such concepts as transcendental, perfect and ideal entities. The belief that the theories should be based on center and built in structural foundation, and the difference between center and periphery are bitterly criticized and refused by the post structuralists. So therefore deconstruction as a means of literary criticism seeks to subvert the concept of center and margin.

3.3.2   Decentering of Subject and Author

Traditionally the author of a particular text was supposed to be the key figure in generating the meaning. But the deconstructionist notion denies the belief that an author is a man/woman endowed with purposefulness, coherent identity whose designs and intentions effectuate the form and meaning of the text. The belief or notion that the writer is a key figure with the determinative human subjects has been refused. The authors used to be attached with different kinds of greatness and nobility like a man/woman of determinative quality, important and creative key figure of the text, a man of coherent behavior and thoughts etc. in his work but these kind beliefs or attitudes towards the author are refused by the deconstructionists. . Probably an author may not know that he/she is presenting the conventional ideas, but he/she is presenting such ideas as his/her mind is already guided by these ideas which are prevailing in the society. Roland Barthes in his essay "The Death of the Author" says:

We know now that a text consists not of a line of words, releasing a single "theological" meaning (the 'message' of the Author), but of a multi-dimensional space in which are married and contested several writings, none of which is original: the text is a fabric of quotations, resulting from a thousand sources of culture. (Adams 1132)

Traditionally the judgment of a work was to be matched with writers' intention but the deconstructionists say that there is nothing original in the text by a particular author. All the ideas that are in the text are stated or discovered by some body else. The writer is not the creator of the text but just the collector. He/she collects the ideas, structures and situations that were created by somebody else and present somewhere. Besides, the author's ideas, beliefs, attitudes etc. are conditioned and shaped by a particular culture, society, politics, religion etc. Therefore, his/her ideas are not his/her own. An author is nothing than a conveyer of contemporary ideas unknowingly. Probably an author may not know that he/she is presenting the conventional ideas, but he/she is presenting such ideas as his/her mind is already guided by these kind of ideas which are prevailing in the society. The ideas that are scattered in the society are picked up by the writers. Therefore, the author doesn't create but just recreates or imitates and borrows the ideas and structure prevailing in the society. Michel Focault in one of his essays says an author constructs power of what is marginalized and is dominated in the society. Generally it so happens that the official ideas are picked up by the writers. Therefore, the author doesn't create but just recreates or imitates and borrows the idea and structure prevailing in the society. In this regard, an author is a collector of the things that were already in use. So Ronald Barthes says when the reader is born, the author is dead. The sole authority of the text lies in the reader. The interpretation should be directed by the concept aroused in the

reader. Therefore deconstruction as the method of criticism refuses the prominence, nobility etc. to the author. It holds the author is just the borrower, conveyer but not a creator of original ideas. He/she is merely a linguistic product.

3.3.3   Reading text and Writing

Deconstruction has rejected the prominence of reading to writing. Writing is signified through reading. When the act of writing ends, the act of reading commences and the sole authority of it is laid to the reader. What a reader reads is not a literary work, it is a text and a text is nothing than the collection of differential signs given as the reading material for some time. Similarly, the post structuralists prefer discourse to the text. By discourse they simply mean verbal material and it simply is a social parlance of language in use, product and manifestation of timeless linguistic system but not the manifestation of thinking, knowing and speaking of subject. In text too, what is there is language in use and common parlance. It is also the product of manifest linguistic system or what are practical in linguistic system. It is also not the product of speaking and thinking of the subject because the author has not produced it but he/she has presented it which already existed somewhere. It is borrowed by the writer and presented to the reader. Therefore the status of author as creator and generator of meaning in a text is refused in the deconstructionist approach of criticism. The deconstructionists even further have coined an appropriate term 'ecriture'. An ecriture is the use of language in which all the distinctions and boundaries of all disciplines of language like philosophy, history etc. are all erased. Therefore a text is an ecriture- a joint product of linguistic signs pertaining to general subject. To name a particular spices of text as a particular genre is a fallacy. This is what the deconstructionists, regarding a text, say. The concepts and signs that are used in different disciplines are scattered in the society which are just picked up by the

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author. An ecriture is a product of such common signs pertaining to the different subjects and no subject is pure and unaffected by the other. There is a kind of exchange among all these so called subjects. Therefore instead of dividing these subjects in different delimitations, it's good to say to ecriture.

In this way, we can say, the deconstruction is the approach that refuses all the solid norms and foundation of language in a literary text. It tends to look for the state of compatibility to the notion that all those solid forms, shapes of language are conventionally established, but in opposition. It opposes the establishment or construction. All solid forms, concrete shape as regards language and writing are refused by the deconstructive approach of criticism

CHAPTER FOUR

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

As discussed in the previous chapter, deconstruction as a means of literary criticism seeks to establish the concept like language is dynamic, ambiguous, and unstable, continually disseminating possible meanings. Similarly, it reiterates existence has no center, no stable meaning, no fixed ground and human beings are fragmented battlefields for competing ideologies whose only identities are the ones we invent and choose to believe. As the language we speak or use is dynamic, ambiguous and unstable, so is the literature because it is composed in the language. "Meaning in the literary text therefore is not a stable element residing in it for the reader to uncover but it is created by the reader of their own in the act of reading. Like all other texts literary text too consists of a multiplicity of overlapping and conflicting meanings" (Tyson 258).

The State of Indeterminacy, The Inherent Contradiction, The Subversion of Primacy and No Credibility to Authorial Intention come along with Frost poetry while analyzing it through the deconstructive angle.

4.1   The State of Indeterminacy

The state of indeterminacy while going through a literary text simply means that the meaning of the text is really an indefinite, undecidable, plural, conflicting array of possible meanings and that the text, therefore, has no meaning, in the traditional sense of the word, at all. The state of indeterminacy or undecidability in other word, however, does not mean that the reader is unable to choose among possible interpretations but he/she is perplexed as to which one to pick up because the reader and text are interwoven threads in the perpetually working loom of language.

Specific meanings are just moments of meaning that give way, inevitably, to more meaning. For this we'll have to note all the various interpretations that the text seems to offer, try to show how these interpretations conflict with one another and show how these different interpretations show the possibility of infinite chain other interpretations.

Frost's "The Road Not Taken" on the surface seems very obvious poem to convey its meaning. There is a traveler who is walking through the way of a deep forest. While walking, the traveler arrives at such a place where the way divided into two. He becomes sorry for one of the ways (roads) as he cannot travel the both. He stands there long and looks as far as he can on the both roads. He needs to decide which way to go to continue his journey. After much mental debate, the traveler chooses the road which is less traveled and he makes a claim that he has made the better choice to take the road less traveled because its grassy and it wanted wear. However, he thinks that the diverged roads are not very much different from each other. He realizes that they were really about the same as he says not exactly that same but only about the same.

> And both that morning equally lay
>
> In leaves no step had trodden black.
>
> Oh, I kept the first for another day!
>
> Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
>
> I doubted if I should ever come back. (10-15)

This stanza continues with the cognition about the possible differences between the two roads. He notices that the leaves were fresh fallen on them and both of them had not been walked on though he chooses to pick up the less traveled one.

But again he claims that maybe he would come back and also walk the first one sometime as he says: "I kept the first one for another day" (13). But he doubts he will be able to do so as the road he took may lead him to different direction and it may be impossible to come back as time also is very short

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.   (15-20)

In this stanza, the last five lines of the poem, the traveler contemplates on his experience when he would complete his journey and tell about it to different people. He says after a long time from now he would be telling about his journey that he came across a fork while walking through a wood and decided to take the road which was less traveled by. He would be so much tired that he would describe all this with a sigh. He would say that it is because of his choice to take the road to travel, he has been different from the other people who generally prefer to take the much traveled one.

The poem can also be read against a literary and pictorial tradition that might be called, "The choice of the two paths", reaching not only back to the Gospels and beyond them to the Greek but to ancient English verse as well. In the art the same choice was often represented by the letter "Y" with the trunk of the letter representing the careless years of childhood and the two paths branching off at when the child is expected to exercise discretion. In one

design the 'two paths' are shown in great detail. On the one side a thin line of pious folk ascend a hill past several churches and chapels, and so the skyward to the Heavenly city where an angle stands proffering a crown. On the other side a crowd of men and women are engaged in feasting music, love making, and other carnal pleasures while closed behind them yawns the farming mouth of hell in which sinners are writhing. (Montiero 121)

The poem could also be read as the statement of some self pity on poet's part, a feeling perhaps that he has been cheated and misunderstood because he took the unpopular path. To support this tone one might point to the last stanza. The speaker will some day, sighing, tell others that he took the unknown road when faced with a choice. The reading, however, misses much of the significance of the second stanza, the speaker states that there was really not much difference in the two roads; neither had really been worn by traffic, though one had been given more wear than the other. It sounds that the speaker's tone, now begins to change He seems to be less confused and scared than he was earlier. The first glimpse of his change in tone is in the eighth verse where he says "be cause it was grassy and wanted wear". It also shows that the speaker may not want to be like everybody else, a follower, but instead, chose a different road and be himself a leader.   This verse also says that the road wanted wear, like he was drawn to the path, not just out if his own desire to be different, but may be out of some pity. The pity being that the road is traveled less not because it is not appealing but because people are too afraid to be different.

 "In leaves no step had trodden black" (12) leaves the reader with much more confusion again which could possibly mean to interpret that few people who did choose to take the road less traveled did not come across any difficulties or obstacles but it is just opposite to the case of the speaker in the poem. He then goes on to say:

"Oh, I kept the fist for another day" (13) from which readers are sure about the rightness of the decision he took. He thinks that he may come back and take the road that has not been taken.

In the third stanza again, he says that both roads lay in leaves that on one had trampled down. In other words, both roads were in about the same condition. It is what the man does with his choice that makes the difference. The tone of the last stanza, then, is simply matter of fact rather than self- pitying. One can not know when he/she makes choice, what result that the decision will bring. Rather than being sorry that he took the untravelled road, the poet seems to be saying that he would probably do the same thing again. The speaker's tone seems to have changed again with a bit more confidence. This confidence, shown in verse eighteen, when the speaker repeats the first verse, but the word 'yellow' invites reader to have varieties of some more understandings. It could, in first stanza, mean the colour of the trees and in the third stanza they are no longer yellow. And this brings another break in the process of perceiving the poem as a meaningful entity.

> I shall be telling this with a sigh
>
> somewhere ages and ages hence:
>
> Two roads diverged in a wood, and
>
> I took the one less traveled by,
>
> And that has made all the difference.

Another interesting part of the poem is how it describes the woods. It describes the uncertainty of the speaker, and implies that he may be scared to choose a path. Evidently he does not want to decide upon the wrong road and mess up his life. The reader may determine that as he stands before these two roads he is very confused and

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even frightened as which road to pick up. All he can do is look as far down each road as possible, and hope that he decides upon the right one. This is exactly what he does when he looks down the first road, at the end of the first stanza. The second stanza starts off with the speaker talking about the other path, and just as fair on this path he took exactly every step analyzing this road as he did the other.

The speaker ends the poem by stating that he chose the untravelled road, and that his choice has had a great significance with a situation that each person has to face many times in their lives. That situation being that everyone has to struggle to try and put their life on them to what they believe to be happiness. As generally believed, one of Frost's commonest subjects is the choice that people are faced with; two roads, two ideas, two possibilities of action. But this poem reverses this idea as the fixed meaning could not be determined.

Yet the poem equally tells different tale: that our life- shaping choices are practical, that we are fundamentally out of control. This possible glimpse asserts the contrary to what we know of this poem. Another look at the poem may reveal that the two roads may stand for life and death. When the poet says the roads were "really about the same."(10) The poet does not find so much difference between life and death. So therefore, this is pretty obvious that the poem has dismantled the concept of life and death as binary oppositions.

A politician may find the two roads as the Democratic and the Republican parties that lead him or her to the white House. If the person is able to reach the White House he/she may wonder about the road not taken and about what would have happened if the road not taken had been taken. Similarly, if the person is not able to

reach the white House- the ultimate destination, he/she may contemplate the choice left behind .

> Frost is too ambivalent in his description of the difference between the two roads and has challenged the existence of a less traveled road. The subtraction of a less traveled road from "The Road not taken" produces an equation with an infinite number of interpretations for answers. The interpretations, however, seems to be as diverse and original as the explicators themselves. (Amuka 106)

Therefore, the poem is not suggesting any determinate and fixed meaning. Meaning in the poem for reader is just like peeling the onion and never getting a kernel. That is to say that we don't claim the poem has meaning as such but merely readers find the possibility of meaninglessness as they are baffled by endless ways to speak of the meaning. Since the mood of the poem does not bear any particular relation to the generalized meaning of the poem, it leaves the reader in the state of sheer indeterminacy.

Similarly Frost's another most anthologized poem **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"** reinforces this idea.

Apparently, the poem seems to be about a traveller who has gone on a journey riding his horse. He is traveling through a dense forest. The time is winter evening and there is snowfall and the woods have been covered with snow and the traveller can't help stopping for a moment to enjoy the beautiful scenery. So he stops the horse and looks around, enjoying. There is a lake on one side and the forest on the other. The snow is falling like soft cotton and the lake is almost frozen. It is now very dark, quiet and there is only a sound of wind and a sound made by flakes of snow while

falling. Since the traveller keeps observing around, the horse feels strange and gets confused as whether the master had really stopped him there. So, in the manner of asking if there is some mistake because the master has stopped him at an unusual place where there is no farmhouse nearby, the horse shakes its harness bells. Then the traveller becomes conscious that he has a long way to go before he gets home. The speaker becomes conscious of his situation and decides to move ahead though the woods were lovely to look at. He realizes that he has to fulfill the promises and commitments that he has made before and has miles of distance to go.

This, Frost's one of the most anthologized poems communicates its debate in how it says things as much as in what it says. Frost himself has said about the poem, "This poem is as good as it is dramatic: and in this drama the words have become the flexible actors." This suggests in a pretty obvious way as what Derrida's free play of words, tends to do. So this free play of words in the poem arises a number of ways to the conceptual meaning of the poem yet leaving none to be intended one. This very characteristic of the poem paves a way to encounter the endless chain of probable meanings such as a poem celebration of natural beauty, projection of nature as hostile to human, a poem to inculcate the sense of duty and responsibilities in human beings, a poem of contemplation on death or suicide, the poem as an allegory of life, life journey versus spiritual journey, the poem of hopelessness, melancholy and alienation, a poem of a child's struggle for his primordial stage, a poem connotative of many philosophical issues regarding human life, a poem conveying "the insistent whisper of death at the heart of life" a poem portraying a speaker who stops his sleigh in the midst of a snowy woods only to be called from the inviting gloom by the recollection of practical duties and so forth. Though the poem is very simple in language, it is Frost's really deceptive simplicity with such free play of words

triggering off an infinite chain of understandings and meanings. About the mystery in the poem Reubem Brower says:

> "The dark nowhere of the woods, the seen and heard movement of things, and the lullaby of inner speech are an invitation to sleep-and winter sleep is again close to easeful death.('Dark' and 'deep' are typical Romantic Adjectives.) These poetic suggestions are in the purest sense symbolic: we cannot say in other terms what they are of, though we feel their power .There are critics who have gone much farther in defining what Frost meant: but perhaps sleep is mystery enough. Frost's poem is symbolic in the manner of Keat's 'To Autumn' where the over all meaning is equally visible and equally unnamable."(Brower 157)

Similarly William Pritchard commenting the poem writes: "The concepts of indeterminacy, correspondence, and complementariety are useful for developing a sense of Frostian poetry and of their modernity as illustrated in his famous one: **"**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" (Pritchard 103).

As we go through the poem this way to seek its interpretation, a large number of possible meaning come before us yet none seems to be the final one, leaving the reader in perplexity.

4.2   The Inherent Contradiction

The inherent contradiction simply refers to the paradox, conflict, controversy and problem found inside the text itself. It endeavours to see the lack of agreement and coherence among the words or in the entire internal patterning of the text.

'Design' on the surface, seems to be fairly straightforward sonnet. The speaker describes an unusual event which he has witnessed, a white spider on a white heal- all (a plant which normally has blue flowers) devouring a white mouth. The speaker then goes on to inquire whether this conjunction of white- on- white- on- white is coincidental or intentional, and what this might mean in terms of the structure of reality. However, the title of the poem, 'Design' should alert us to a potential series of contradictions or paradoxes. A design may be defined as the arrangement of elements in a pleasing and or useful configuration: such a definition would certainly cover the white-on white- on white features in the poem, and their usefulness, at least as seen from the spider's point of view. However, a design may also be an intent, a plan to manipulate others to one's own advantage. This is the question asked towards the end of the poem: to whose advantage has been this particular arrangement or rearrangement of elements?

From the perspective of the deconstructive reading the text, these two definitions are in effect opposed. One-the first- implies passivity in the notion of design: the elements are made to correspond to an abstract arrangement, and are moved by an unknown and finally unidentified force or agency. The emphasis in this definition, however, is on the actual physical constellation of the elements: the design as seen by an onlooker. The second definition, on the other hand, implies activity, in that implicit in it or postulated by it is the presence of a designing mind. This may be benign or malign in its intents, though the usual association with this definition is malign at worst, and selfishness, at best, whereas 'design', in its first definition remains relatively neutral.

We are thus confronted with the concept of design that is not simply ambiguous, but contradictory. It is both passive and active, both overt and covert (one

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design can be seen, the other only guessed at), both neutral and charged with (generally negative) associations.

Similarly another poem 'Nothing Gold Can Stay' begins in paradox when the poet writes:

Nature's first green is gold,

Her hardest hue to hold.

Her early leaf's a flower,

But only so an hour.   (1-4)

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 colour. 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 functions 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 colour 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 colour can not 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 (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 jute of water in "West-Running Brook", of all 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 the nature and the acts

within   myth. "So Eden sank to grief" (6) with the same imperceptible movement that

transform gold to green and made flower subside to leaf. By analogy the third term in

the poem takes on the character of the first to; 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. Alfred R. Ferguson about paradox in

the poem comments:

> 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 verb 'subsides'
>
> and 'sank' as well as in the implicit loss in colour 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

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argument: 'so dawn goes down to day'. The pattern of paradox is assured; the fall is really no fall to be mourned. (Ferguson 54)

In the similar fashion, **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"** bears some sort of conflicting elements in it. As illustration, this single poem that has served as the most famous poem by Robert Frost, stages its play of opposites at typically Frostian borders between night and day, storm and hearth, nature and culture, individual and group freedom and responsibility mystery) as complementary counters in the felling(thought) of active mind. The poem is made to make the mind just that. It unsettles certitude even in so small matter as the disposition of accents in the opening line: whose woods these are I think. I know but the 'sound of sense' is uncertain. As an expression of doubtful guessing, "think" opposes "know" with its air of certitude. So the line leaves us in confusion as whether the line might be read to emphasize the doubt or doubt the emphasis whose woods these are I think I know" or with confident knowledge whose woods these are I think I know.

On the other hand Frost's characteristic device is to set up and undermine a case of the pathetic fallacy in such a way that both construction and collapse stay actively in the poem. In this poem, undermining nearly precedes the setting up "My little horse 'must' think it queer" (6). Here 'must' gives the game away, as the speaker (exercising indeterminacy) interferes with the reality he observes, imposing his thoughts and felling on it. Does "darkest" contribute to the pattern? Is the evening literally darkest? Could it be, given the way that snow concentrates light? Or is "darkest" a judgment the speaker projects?

In the next stanza, the speaker's reading into nature intensifies to the point where harness bells actually speak. Then as if to emphasize that such speaking is a

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human addition to speechless scene, we hear that the only other sound is the "sweep" of light wind on softy falling snow. Those two categories of evidence, the self-consciously imposed and therefore suspects yet understandable human one, and the apparently indifferent yet comfortingly beautiful natural one, seem to produce the description of the woods as "lovely" and "dark and deep", a place of both dangerous attraction and self protective threat. The oppositions are equally emphasized by punctuation-a comma after 'lovely' one after 'dark' and the double doubleness of attraction and threat complicates the blunt "But" that beings the next line. Which woods, if any, is being rejected then? How far does recalling that one has "promises to keep" (14) to towards keeping them in fact?

Besides in the poem out of which to make anything significant: regular in their iambic rhythm and suggesting nothing more than they assert, they establish a sound against which the other sound of the following lines can, by contrast, make itself heard. So Frost might have invited his readers to be debating each other instead of simply being pleased with how he has played with the words, in order to get them to note the inherent contradictions of their own.

4.3   The Subversion of Primacy

As the deconstruction endeavours to explore the specific ways in which our language determines our experience, it has borrowed and transformed structuralism's idea that we tend to conceptualize our experience in terms of polar opposites, called binary oppositions. For example, according to structuralism, we understand the word 'good' by contrasting it with the word 'evil'. Similarly, we understand reason as the opposite of emotion, masculine as the opposite of feminine, civilized as the opposite of primitive and so on. However, deconstruction as a means of literary criticism notes

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that these binary oppositions are the hierarchies. That is, one term in the pair is always privileged, or considered superior to the other. In the binary oppositions mentioned above, the first term in each pair is, in Western culture, the privileged term. Therefore, by finding oppositions at work in a cultural production such as a poem, a novel, a film, a conversation, etc., and by identifying which member of the opposition is privileged, one can discover something about the ideology promoted by that production. But deconstruction holds that the hierarchy created between these binary opposition should be subverted and the text should be examined the ways in which the two members of the opposition are not completely opposite to each other.

This binary opposition is usually the key to the text's ideological framework, or at least one of the text's ideological frameworks. Once a New Critical reading is formulated, the binary opposition on which it rests can be deconstructed: that is, it can be examined to find the ways in which the opposing elements in the text overlap or aren't really opposed. And this is how we can learn something about the limitations of the ideologies the text, consciously or unconsciously promotes.

"Mending Wall" seems rather clear that the binary opposition structuring the text can be found in the disagreement between the speaker and his neighbor. The speaker advocates non conformity when the traditional one has followed no longer fits the circumstances in which one finds oneself. The neighbour, without even thinking about what he is doing, advocates conformity to the way things have always been done in the past. Thus the binary opposition structuring the poem is that between nonconformity and conformity. Because we see the situation from the speaker's point of view and our sympathies therefore lie with him, it is safe to say that nonconformity is the privileged term. The main theme, from a New Criticism perspective-or, in deconstructive term, the poem's overt ideological project- might be stated as follows:

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the poem criticizes mindless conformity to obsolete traditions for which the wall is a metaphor.

To be sure that we have identified the poem's ideological project and not just set up easy target that we can then proceed to shoot down, we must find, in New Critical fashion, all the evidence the poem offers in support of the theme we've identified. For example, we accept the speaker's negative views of his neighbor and of obsolete traditions because he clearly shows that the wall has outlived its purpose- "My apple trees will never get across/ And eat the cones under his pines" (25-26) - and because the speaker associates himself with nature where spring refers to a natural event which is generally presumed good, "Spring is the mischief in me" (28). Indeed, our faith in nature's wisdom promotes our initial acceptance of the speaker's viewpoint in the opening four lines, which put nature in opposition to the wall: it is nature that "sends the frozen-ground-swell" to spill "the upper boulders in the sun" (2-3).

This theme is reinforced when the men "have to use a spell" to make the unwilling boulders will fall as soon as the men turn their backs (19). Nature's "children"- the hunters (5-7) and the "Elves" (36) also support the speaker's attitude towards the wall. In addition, we often associates the word wall with the barriers to communication or emotional exchange, and this function is insisted upon, there by reinforcing our rejection of the wall and of the obsolete tradition that keeps it in place: "And on a day we meet…/And set the wall between us once again. / We keep the wall between us as we go" (13-15). Finally, the neighbor is compared to an "old stone savage" who "moves in darkness… / Not of woods only and the shade of trees" (40-42), that is, who is unenlightened. Thus, the neighbor is contrasted sharply with the enlightened speaker, who knows that obsolete traditions should be abandoned.

The binary opposition, nonconformity/conformity, is the one that thematically structures the poem that we have located so far, which, given the nature of the textual evidence we found to support it, could also be expressed as progressivism / conservatism or nature/tradition. And we've determined which members of the oppositions are privileged in the poem: nonconformity, progressivism, and nature. The next step is to deconstruct this opposition by finding everything in the poem that conflicts with or undermines this hierarchy. That is, we must find textual evidence that contradicts the evidence we have just gathered in support of our New Critical reading of the poem's main theme. This contradictory evidence is the kind that tends to be overlooked when one is searching for a unified meaning in a literary text, as the New Critics did. Our goal now is to show that, once we begin to focus on the poem's internal contradictions instead of its unity, the poem reveals that neither side of the binary opposition(s) supporting the main theme can be privileged over the other.

A number of conflicts resolve around the poem's privileging of the speaker's nonconformity over the unthinking conformity of his neighbor, a difference represented by their attitudes towards the wall that separates their property. Siding with the speaker, nature- against tradition-wants the wall down, but so do the hunters, who function not only as emblems of nature but of tradition as well. Because they hunt for sport (they want "the rabbit out of hiding," not necessarily for food, but to "please the yelping dogs" (8-9), the hunters evoke a sporting tradition that has its roots in the traditional hunt of the British landed gentry. Analogously, while magic, in the form of elves, wants the wall down (36), magic, in the form of the magic "spell" (18-19), is invoked to keep the wall up. Furthermore, because elves are mischievous creatures who, according to legend, delight in making trouble for human beings, their desire to have the wall down can just as easily undermine our trust in the project

rather than promote it. In fact, the speaker's use of such an ambiguous term as elves, and his difficulty in finding the right word imply his own unconscious ambivalence towards the wall and towards the tradition it represents, "But it's not elves exactly." (37) This ambivalence is reinforced by the speaker's having repaired the wall on his own in the past and by his having called his neighbor to do so now. These behaviors certainly seem to contradict his nonconformist attitude towards the wall.

A similar problem occurs in the poem's association of primitiveness, in the form of the "old-stone savage" to which the neighbor is compared in line 40, with tradition, which the neighbor also represents. By associating these two elements, the poem creates an uncomfortable and unstable link between the primitive and the traditional. Since the nineteenth century, western culture has cherished the romantic view that the primitive is in harmony with nature, not aligned with tradition against it.

Finally, the main idea criticizes – good fences make good neighbors is actually valid within the action of the poem: it is the activity of mending the wall that brings the men together, presumably inspiring the poem's creation, and lets them be neighbors through the bonding activity of shared work. Evidently, this is the only time the two men meet at all. Even the poem's title suggests this idea if we read mending as an adjective rather than a verb: "Mending Wall" then becomes a wall that mends relationships rather than a wall that is mended.

Now it has been shown how the poem quietly collapses the binary opposition(s) supporting its own main theme, the other step of is to consider the implications of the collapse. It would seem, for example, that the meaning, importance, and power of conformity and the meaning importance, and power of nonconformity are not as easily placed in opposition as "Mending Wall" initially

appears to suggest. The poem calls for a rational abandonment of a seemingly empty

tradition, Yet the values of that tradition, and the dubious nature of the attempt to

abandon it, form a powerful counterweight against that call. Perhaps this conflict in

the text suggests that much of the power of tradition lies in its ability to influence our

attitudes without our being aware of its presence. One reason the unresolvable

conflict between progressivism and conservatism occurs in the poem is that some of

the terms used to evoke their difference- especially nature and primitive-themselves

evoke mixed feelings in our culture. For example, we associate nature with goodness

–innocence, purity, simplicity health, intuitive wisdom- yet nature usually stands in

the way of the scientific and technological progress we value so highly. Mountains are

blown up to build our roads: forests are destroyed to foster our business enterprises;

and air, soil, and water are polluted to promote our industries. Similarly, western

culture associates the primitive with the goodness of nature, yet it also associates the

primitive with ignorance, the unknown, and the sinister, and this association evokes

fear and contempt. And as we have seen, conflicting associations are evoked by the

words magic, elves, and hunters. Perhaps, then, our deconstruction of "Mending

Wall" should make us reconsider other binary oppositions that inform our culture,

such as masculine/feminine, individual/group, and objective/subjective

In "Design" also we can see the play of the binary opposite at work. As

discussed in the previous sub-chapter in connection with the internal contradiction, we

are confronted with the concept of design that is not simply ambiguous, but

contradictory. It is both passive and active, both overt and covert -one design can be

seen, the other only guessed at- both neutral and charged generally with negative

associations. In all such oppositions, deconstructionist theory warns us, the first term

is generally given priority because of the assumptions embedded in the culture. Thus

as we consider these two definitions implied by design we are likely to prefer the first over the second, because the myths and morality of our culture compel us to ally with passivity (this may be seen in the Christian ideal of patience, which etymologically means suffering): with overt intention (hence the emphasis in our culture on confession, including Christian confession, such articulations of intent as declarations of war and Freudian psychoanalysis): and with neutrality (exemplified in our myths surrounding the concept of justice, rational argument, and so on). It is not hard, however, to imagine a culture in which an individual would not survive to anything like a ripe old age if he or she persisted in upholding these particular ideals: for example, Imperial Rome under Nero or Caligula must have created a climate hostile to such principles. So these ideals are not 'natural' they are privileged by our culture.

There is a third sense of design, however, which we might wish to consider as an 'arched sign'. The two other significations may be characterized as 'design in (a particular medium) and destroy: the moth, for whose demises everything else seems to have been arranged. However, there is another, less obvious victim in this 'design' of the poem, namely the reader.

At first sight this may seem a little far-fetched. The reader, surely, is simply the recipient of the text: the reader's task is merely making sense of its content. However, attention paid to the strategies of the poem and to the kind of discourse which it offers will show that the reader's participation in the poem is neither neutral nor innocent.

Let us begin by considering first the fact that this poem is sonnet. We might characterizing the sonnet from as one that is quintessentially 'designed', requiring, as it does (at least in its traditional forms, and 'Design' belongs to these), certain

elements such as an octave and a sestet, a turn of thought at the end of the octave and (especially in the English sonnet) a pithy conclusion, with its suggestion of a universal truth. Thus, the reader is primed, upon recognizing the poem to be a sonnet, to except certain features to occur and they do, with the exception of the universalizing statement of truth at the poem's conclusion. Frost's poem seems to withdraw from any such positive statement.

Second, the aesthetic or functional design described in the poem is one which allows the relationship of white- to- white- to- white to be questioned. The poem thus invites us to invoke the usual cultural associations of the colour white such as innocence and purity, and to reassess them in terms of their configuration in the poem's narrative. Is the heal all simply a neutral or innocent setting for the spider's carnivorous appetite? If so, why is the flower white, when it is normally blue? Is the spider simply a natural creature including its natural appetite? If so, why is it albino in colouring, and located in a white flower? And so on: the questions implicit in the text may be articulated and multiplied further, and they will tend towards asking whether white is not metaphorically or symbolically black, and whether the cover associations of innocence, neutrally or purity do not simply mask a malign and impure motivation or agency. However, if we consider the poem to be also a design upon the text printed on the page, a design in black upon white, a relationship which inverts the one suggested in the poem, but which is hinted at in the development of the poem's argument.

Third, we might wish to consider the relationship of the octave to the sestet in this particular poem. In the octave, we are told a story which is ostensibly the experience of the speaking subject of the text. In the sestet, the speaker asks a series of the questions which culminate in the climactic query as to whether it is evil which

organizes events in our world. The final line retreats a little form this position, finding expression in a question framed as a statement: 'This disguised question (Does design govern in small things?) has no real or satisfying answer. To respond to it in the affirmative is to accept that everything including all events in ones life have been mapped out by some superior forces at some prior time, and that therefore we have no free will or decision- making power of our own. Ours is simply to act out the script written for us and without our knowledge. To answer in the negative, on the other hand, is to align oneself with the view that there is no organization in the universe, and that all events are simply random happenings. The consequence of this is that nothing we do or achieve can have any value or meaning in the larger order of things, because there is no larger order.

The logic of the poems closing rhetorical strategy is thus to create a pair of contradictory antitheses: to deny the proposition of the last line is both to affirm free will and to accept a consequent chaos. To affirm it is to deny free will, and to accept tyrannical order. The poem leads us, therefore, to a logical and rhetorical aporia, on the one hand, and, on the other, to a moral dilemma, since our above (whether defined as Gods will or the operation of some other mysterious, impersonal force), often without our being aware of the internal contradiction that this poses.

This dilemma emerges from the particular kind of discourse of the text. The poem apparently presents in a neutral way a particular observation or experience of reality. However, the terms by which its details transmitted to us are already suffused with ambiguity. For example, the dimpled spider of the first line might suggest simultaneously, on the one hand. Innocence and charm (we value dimples in our culture for these qualities), and predatory patience and voraciousness on the other. Similarly, the adjoining description of the spider as 'fat and white' suggests both well-

being ('fat') and ill- health ('white'), producing the effect to a repellent obesity. This pair of contradictory meaning combines with the earlier one to create a grotesque image of charm and ugliness, innocence and predatoriness, health and ill health.

Similarly having seen the poem **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"** from the deconstructive approach it can be dissected into different pairs of binary oppositions. These pairs of binary oppositions can be listed as central and marginal as follows: life and sleep, movement and stoppage, light and darkness, journey to cross and snow future and present, pleasure and lesson, fascination and obligation, beauty and duty etc. Each pair of these binary oppositions carries separate meaning. It does not; however contribute to the single meaning in the text. The established hierarchy between these oppositions the former as central and the latter as the marginal has been presented so as to rupture it as the speaker shows the complete unwillingness to move from stoppage to movement, darkness to light, pleasure to lesson, present to future, fascination to obligation and beauty to duty. Thus, through the total rejection the these aforementioned pairs as privileged and subordinate, the so called central meaning as the conflict between solitude life and social obligation and conflict between duty and beauty has been subverted

4.4   No Credibility to Authorial Intention

Robert Frost drew his images from the New England countryside and his language from New England speech. Although Frost's images and voice often seem familiar and old, his observations have an edge of skepticism and irony that make his work, upon rereading, never as old-fashioned, easy, or carefree as it first appears. In being both traditional and skeptical, Frost's poetry helped provide a link between the American poetry of the 19th century and that of the 20th century.

Robert Frost Usually set amid the natural beauty of rural New England, the concise, direct poetry of American poet Robert Frost conveys a wide range of emotions. Frost won the Pulitzer Prize in poetry four times (1924, 1931, 1937, and 1943) and became known across the country when he recited his poem "The Gift Outright" at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration in January 1961. Frost believes poetry makes one remember what they didn't know they knew.

Reading a Frost poem, one does not find oneself overwhelmed with difficulty in the manner of work by his contemporaries: Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, and T.S. Eliot. Unlike them, Frost's work weaves intricate allusions to science, literature, philosophy and art into patterned rhymes; also, his work adheres to the metrical tradition. On the one hand, then, to read his work is to come across apparently simple tales of rural life written in the plain-spoken language of everyday speech. On the other hand, a close reading of that same work reveals the subtle and complex allusions, as well as an enormous facility and clever play with both the rhyming and metrical traditions of English verse. In his work, Frost incorporates both the intricate play of thought, intellectual fireworks typical of modernist poetry in general, as well as a seemingly simple story about everyday people often inhabitants of rural New England towns Frost's interest and talent in poetry can be tracked back to his boyhood. As the son of an elementary school teacher, he used to sit in his mother's classroom and memorize long passages of prose and poetry, and thus grew to love language and literature. He published his first poem in 1894, but it was not until his stay in England from 1912 to 1915 that he gained public recognition as a poet. After returning from England, he lived most of the rest of his life in rural New England. The walks that he took on his farm allowed him to observe the details of nature and the rural landscape: the flowers and leaves, the streams and brooks, the

changing seasons. Such images, described in simple and direct language, became a hallmark of his poetry. On Frost's being inspired by nature and about his creative potential Harriet Marcelia Lucas says, "Robert frost is a kind of man who can walk up to a fence on his New England farm, lift a foot to the fence rail, look out of his clear blue eyes, and see a poem right there in front of him" (Lucas 151).

The rural environment that Frost knew and loved also included a strong human presence. In fact, it is his awareness of man's relationship with nature that brings us some of Frost's most memorable images—images that not only move us with their serene beauty, but also inspire us by addressing universal questions of life. In "The Road Not Taken," for example, the poet presents a traveler walking through the autumn woods who comes to a fork in the road; his decision about which way to go becomes a symbol for the major turning points that a person confronts in life. In another poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," a rider on horseback contemplates whether he should stop and enjoy the beautiful winter scenery or continue home; his dilemma reflects the universal struggle between freedom and duty; to his regret, the rider realizes that before he can enjoy his freedom, he must fulfill his responsibilities. As we can see, common human experiences, with Frost's unique touch, are elevated to a level of profound meaning. In this way, his poems continue to touch the hearts of readers.

As it has been discussed in a great deal in chapter 3.3.2 about a literary text and its relation to the author, the deconstructionist approach of literary criticism takes no notice of author, his/her biographical influence regarding their work Traditionally the author of a particular text was supposed to be the key figure in generalizing the meaning. But the deconstructionist notion denies the belief that an author is a man/woman endowed with purposefulness, coherent identity whose designs and

intentions effectuate the form and meaning of the text. Lois Tyson says, "In the early decades of twentieth century, students of literature were taught that the author was the primary concern in reading a literary work: our task was to examine the author's life in order to discover what the author meant to communicate-his or her message, theme, or moral-which is called authorial intention." (Tyson 2)

Though it is said that Frost poetry is influenced by his biographical circumstances, no reference regarding this fact can be traced while approaching them. It is, to a large extent, true that Frost alienated himself from the public life especially after the death of his near and dear ones and started writing poetry contemplating his own death. "Stopping by woods on a snowy Evening" is largely regarded as a poem that contemplates death. Since Frost had developed an instinct against belonging to any of the crowds when he wrote most of his famous poem, his poems are associated with loneliness, melancholy and dark and somber vision of life. "The Road Not Taken" is related with Frost's being rueful with his choice to continue his life just unlike his near and dear ones. "Mending Wall" is associated with Frost's notion that everyone one in the world is isolated even if they are in the crowd everywhere. "Design" is regarded as the poem about inevitability of death whereas "Nothing Gold Can Stay" is related with the transitory ness of happiness in human life.

Since none of the aforementioned authorial intentions have been judged handy while making the textual analysis, it simply can be asserted that the authorial intention no more remains instrumental in approaching a text. Frost Poetry, thus, is proven to be the exemplary in this regard.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The plurality of vision manifested as a dominant characteristic of Frost's thought can precisely be furnished to support the fact that his poetry is something more than the concept of nature. Though For Frost, nature is really an image of the whole world of circumstances with in which man finds himself, his use of diction paves way to seek every possible interpretations. Frost poems seem not to have the vehicle of any philosophy of life but they project total consciousness of person's limitations and the limit of his\her understanding of the vast baffling problems with which they are surrounded by. Frost poetry consists a plurality of thought and leaves the reader in a state of sheer indeterminacy. On the one hand he addresses all kinds of people on their own level and each of them discovers a meaning in his poems in accordance with his /her mental development, on the other hand his poetry serves to offer a good deal of deconstructive reading of a linguistic pattern that states that it is impossible for a text to have one fixed meaning and emphasizes the role of the reader in the production of meaning.

Deconstructing a piece of literature is subverting the privileged term by revealing how the repressed marginalized meaning can just be as equally important as the central one. Firstly, it focuses on the binary opposition within a text, like man/woman etc. Next it shows how these opposites are related, how one is central and the other is marginalized. Then it temporally subverts hierarchy and both terms of the opposition are seen dancing in the free play of non-hierarchical non-stable meaning leaving the readers, thus, in a state of sheer perplexity and indeterminacy.

Seen in the deconstructionist light Frost's poems appear to be highly ambiguous and non stable in meanings. The free play of words leaves such an outstanding impression upon the reader that they can not help praising Frost's genius to play with the words. When we focus on the internal contradictions in most of his celebrated poems instead of their unity, they reveal that neither side of the binary oppositions is supporting the other. In other words, though most readers have not been trained to see it, it can be shown how the poems deconstruct themselves.

In the case of "Mending Wall," it seems rather clear that the binary opposition structuring the text can be found in the disagreement between the speaker and his neighbor. The speaker advocates non conformity when the tradition one has followed no longer fits the circumstances in which one finds oneself. The neighbor, without even thinking about what he is doing, advocates conformity to the way things have always been done in the past. Thus the binary opposition structuring the poem is that between nonconformity and conformity. Because we see the situation from the speaker's point of view and our sympathies therefore lie with him, it is safe to say that nonconformity is the privileged term. The main theme, from a New Criticism perspective-or, in deconstructive term, the poem's overt ideological project- might be stated as follows: the poem criticizes mindless conformity to obsolete traditions for which the wall is a metaphor.

Similarly, "The Road Not Taken" subverts the traditional theme of following the widely accepted way of doing things. Frost is too ambivalent in his description of the difference between the two roads and has challenged the existence of a less traveled road. The subtraction of a less traveled road from "The Road not taken" produces an equation with an infinite number of interpretations for answers with what as Derrida calls the free play of words.

In "stopping by woods on a snowy Evening" the harmonious world is challenged. The poem deconstructs itself as the poet no more wants to be in the world full of duties and full of responsibilities though the poet in the New Critical Fashion, seems to be obliged towards his duties and responsibilities. The poem also subverts the conventional way of understanding life as the poet wants to escape the world full of obligations and compulsions which don't allow him to sleep with snowy woods in harmony with them. Social duties and promises pull him back to the painful world of early reality. The internal contradiction of the poems can be experienced as on the one hand the speaker is fascinated by the beautiful landscape, charming on the other hand he is pushed by his inner conscience to think about his further duty and responsibility.

Perhaps no single poem more fully embodies the ambiguous balance between paradisiacal good and the paradoxically more fruitful good than "Nothing Gold Can stay", a poem in which the metaphors cohere with fall of Eden.

Thus, language is not that much reliable tool of communication as we suppose it to be. It is full of ambiguities, fluidities, contradictions, and can not communicate exactly what we want. Since language is full of ambiguities, fluidities, contradictions, a literary text, which is a product of language, can not be free of these qualities. Frost poetry is an embodiment of indeterminacy, paradoxes and contradictions because it is also a product of language .Therefore, while approaching Frost poetry through the deconstructionist method it has been found to be the embodiment of indeterminacy, paradoxes and contradictions that pays no heed to the conventional system in which ideas and beliefs are arranged in a level, and it leaves no foot prints to trigger the authorial intention.

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