

The Concept of Nature in the Poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost: A Comparative Study

Muthanna Z. Almiqdady

Department of English Language and Literature, Ajloun National University
Jordan

Abdel-Rahman H. Abu-Melhim

Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Balqa' Applied University,
Jordan

Mahmoud A. Al-Sobh

Department of English Language and Literature, Ajloun National University,
Jordan

Abstract

This research aims to investigate the different meanings for the term “nature”. Moreover, it seeks to identify the major similarities and differences in the use of nature in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. Since this research is theoretical in nature, it depends primarily on reviewing already published works on the topic. The researchers consulted a significant number of published references on the topic as well as specialized literary dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and the internet. The research concludes that the term “nature” has not always had the same meaning or carries the same level of significance. Also, the concept of nature in British literature should be studied, not only as it was employed by English romantic poets, but also as it was used by authors before and after the English Romantic Movement in order to see if nature was used in the same way. Moreover, scholars and literary critics should also research the concept of nature as used in the United States of America before and after Robert frost. Finally, the use of nature in poetry that reflects meditation under the influence of the bible should be explored especially that composed by early colonial poets.

Keywords: Frost, nature, romanticism, transcendentalism, Wordsworth.

Introduction

Poets have long been inspired to tune their lyrics to the variations in landscape, the changes in season, and the natural phenomena around them. The Greek poet Theocritus began writing idylls in the third century B.C.E. to glorify and honor the simplicity of nature-creating such well known characters as Lycidas, who has inspired dozens of poems as the archetypal shepherd, including the famous poem "Lycidas" by John Milton. An idyll was originally a short, peaceful pastoral lyric-, but has come to include poems of epic adventure set in an idealized past, including Lord Alfred Tennyson's take on Arthurian legend, *The Idylls of the King*. The Biblical Song of Songs is also considered an idyll, for it tells its story of love and passion by continuously evoking imagery from the natural world. The more familiar form of surviving pastoral poetry that has retained its integrity is the eclogue, a poem attuned to the natural world and seasons, placed in a pleasant, serene, and rural place, and in which shepherds often converse. The first eclogue was written by Virgil in 37 B.C.E. The eclogue also flourished in the Italian Renaissance, its most notable authors being Dante and Petrarch. It became something of a requirement for young poets, a form they had to master before embarking upon great original work. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* and Edmund Spenser's *The Shepheard's Calendar* are English triumphs of the form, the latter relying on the months of the year to trace the changes in a shepherd's life (Irwin, 1963). In "January," Spenser compares the shepherd's unreturned affection with "the frosty ground," "the frozen trees" and "his own winter beaten flocks" (Moynihan, 1958). In "April", he writes "Like April showers, so streams the trickling tears." It was the tradition of natural poetry that William Wordsworth had in mind when he proposed that poetry "takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility"- (Juhnke, 1964; McBride, 1934; Morse, 1943). "This tranquil state might be most easily inspired if the poet would go out into nature, observe the world around him, and translate those emotions and observations into verse. Later, transcendentalists such as Henry David Thoreau did exactly that in his poem, "Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" (Nye, 2014).

Purpose

This research aims to investigate the different meanings for the term "nature". Moreover, it seeks to identify the major similarities and differences in the use of nature in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. The research discusses how nature is employed by both poets taking in consideration the research questions specified below.

Research Questions

This research will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the different definitions of the term "nature" throughout history?
2. What differentiates Wordsworth attitude towards nature from that of other English romantic poets?
3. What differentiates Frost's attitude towards nature from that of English romantic poets?
4. How did Wordsworth's view of nature differ from that of Frost's?

Importance of the Research

As explained above, nature has always been a source of motivation for poets throughout history even during the Greek and Roman empires. Today, Frost is considered by a number of literary critics as the William Wordsworth of America due to his importance and poetic style. Therefore, this research is important because it sheds light on the similarities and differences between the

two poets in terms of their attitudes towards nature in an attempt to familiarize the readers with the poetic styles of both poets and their view regarding nature as a historically known source of motivation and inspiration.

Research Limitations

This research is limited to the discussion of the concept of nature in the poetry of only two poets William Wordsworth and Robert Frost. It discusses nature in America through Frosts attitude towards it and attempts to see if that can be explained in relation to the Transcendentalism Movement in America pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson. This paper compares that to Wordsworth's attitude towards nature in relation to the English Romantic Movement in the 18th century. In addition, it is limited to only two poems: One poem by each poet specifically "Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by Wordsworth and "Stopping by woods on a Snowy Evening" by Frost.

Methodology

Since this paper is theoretical in nature, it depends primarily on reviewing already published works on the topic of research. The researchers consulted a significant number of published references on the topic. Other sources of information including the internet were consulted. Moreover, specialized literary dictionaries and encyclopaedias were used to obtain relevant information regarding this subject. Wordsworth's "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud" and Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy evening" were used as illustrative examples.

Information related to the topic of nature was collected from major websites that specialize in literary topics, such as www.poets.org, archive.thedailystar.net, www.wikipedia.com, and www.shmoop.com. This information was carefully reviewed and evaluated by the researchers in terms of its significance to the topic of research. The data collected from a certain website were compared to data available on other literary websites. Information was then categorised and adopted by the researchers. The concept of nature was carefully examined in terms of its use by William Wordsworth in relation to how it was used by English romantic poets in generalising "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud" as an illustrative example. On the other hand, the concept of nature was also explored thoroughly as it was used by Robert Frost in the United States of America. Frost's use of nature was carefully examined in terms of how nature was used by American poets during his time and by American poets who preceded him. Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a snowy Evening" was used as an illustrative example. Frost's use of nature was then compared carefully to Wordsworth's use of the same concept. A serious effort was made to investigate if nature in America was used in exactly the same way as it was used in England. Moreover, the concept of nature in Frost's poetry was carefully examined and closely studied in relation to the transcendentalist movement that became popular in the United States during the 1840s.

Explication

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

The Daffodils (Dance, Dance Revolution): In the first line, the daffodils are like little yellow people who keep the speaker company when he is feeling lonely. The happiness of the daffodils can always cheer him up, and he can tell that they are happy because they dance. Some variation of the word "dance" occurs in each of the four stanzas (see appendix 2). Also, the speaker is taken aback by how many daffodils there are. We often think of daffodils as a flower that people

plant in their gardens in the springtime, so it would be surprising to come upon thousands of them by an isolated lake.

Lines 3-4: The daffodils are personified as a crowd of people. This personification will continue throughout the poem.

Lines 6: Daffodils cannot actually "dance," so Wordsworth is ascribing to them an action that is associated with people.

Line 9: The speaker says that the line of daffodils is "never-ending," but we know this can't be strictly true: all good things come to an end. This is an example of hyperbole, or exaggeration.

Lines 12: The personification of the daffodils becomes more specific. The "heads" of the daffodils are the part of the flower with the petals. It is larger and heavier than the stem, and so it bobs in a breeze.

Lines 13-14: The waves also get in on some of the dancing (and personification) action, but the daffodils are not to be out-done – they are happier than the waves.

Lines 21-24: Wordsworth imagines the daffodils in his spiritual vision, for which he uses the metaphor of an "inward eye." His heart dances like a person, too.

Clouds, Sky, and Heavens: "I wandered lonely as a Cloud" has the remote, otherworldly atmosphere that is suggested by the title. The speaker feels like a cloud, distant and separated from the world below. But this distance becomes a good thing when he comes upon the daffodils, which are like little stars. It's as if the problem at the beginning is that he hasn't ascended high enough.

Lines 1-2: The beginning of the poem makes a simile between the speaker's wandering and the "lonely" distant movements of a single cloud. Clouds can't be lonely, so we have another example of personification.

Lines 7-8: The second stanza begins with a simile comparing the shape and number of the daffodils to the band of stars that we call the Milky Way galaxy.

Angels and Spirits: You have to read into the poem a bit, but we think that Wordsworth is definitely trying to associate the flowers with angelic or heavenly beings. Maybe he was thinking of Dante's *Paradiso* from *The Divine Comedy*, in which all the angels and blessed souls of heaven form a big flower. However, Wordsworth is a more naturalistic (i.e., strictly realistic) poet than Dante, and so the imagery of angels is extremely subtle.

Line 4: You may have heard the phrase, "heavenly host" in reference to angels or spirits. We think Wordsworth adds the word "host" in order to suggest this connection. Also, the color of the flowers is golden like a halo.

Line 10: Stars are associated with angels, too, so the simile comparing the flowers to "twinkling" stars reinforces the connection.

Line 12: The word "sprightly" is derived from the word "sprite," meaning a local spirit, almost like a fairy.

William Wordsworth is a worshipper of Nature, Nature's devotee or high-priest. His love of Nature was probably truer, and more tender than that of any other English poet, before or since. Nature comes to occupy in his poems a separate or independent status and is not treated in a casual or passing manner as by poets before him.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Woods: The woods in this poem are something to meditate over. Our speaker cannot get enough of them, telling us that "the woods are lovely, dark and deep" (13), as though he were hypnotized. The woods must be so attractive and compelling, because the speaker is compelled to stop and stare at them in the freezing, dark winter evening. There is a mysterious element to these woods as well, and we get the sense that the speaker is not alone, even though he is very much by himself. Whenever we see woods in literature, we almost automatically see them in contrast to civilization (see Appendix 3). If you have read *The Scarlet Letter*, think about the woods Hester Prynne frequents. People also think of woods as being mazelike and full of hidden obstacles, like the Fire Swamp in *The Princess Bride*. These are some pretty intense woods, so the reader can feel free to interpret them how he or she desires. We will offer a few ideas below.

Lines 1,4,7,13: Some interpret the woods as an extended metaphor for death.

Line 4: Here we see woods as a clear and crisp image as our speaker describes them filling up with snow.

The Natural World: Our speaker is digging the natural world. Picture him hanging out with his horse, between a frozen lake and the edge of the woods, while the snows falls gently all around him. The ideas of the village, of a farmhouse, or of the promises he must keep are not nearly as appetizing to our speaker as the cold beauty of the world around him. There's something very lulling about the "easy wind and downy flake", and we get the sense that the natural world is pretty compelling and pretty good at convincing our speaker to forget about civilization. Nature is powerful in this poem (Irwin, 1963).

Lines 6-8: With these lines, we get a crystal clear image of the snowy woods and frozen lake at night.

Line 11: We can almost hear the sound of the wind in the alliteration of "sound's the sweep."

Line 13: While the fact that the woods are "lovely, dark and deep" might not seem visually helpful, this description actually helps us visualize the image of the woods even more clearly.

Others: Alone as alone can be. That's our speaker on this snowy evening. Why then, do we feel like he's not alone? Is it his little horse that seems to have a mind of its own, is it the landowner who is snug in his cozy house in the cozy village, or is it the presence of something else entirely?

Line 2: The "village" can be interpreted as a symbol for society and civilization.

Line 5: Horses have thoughts? We knew it all along. The horse is personified in this line.

Line 6: Farmhouses may not be the most hoppin' places in the world, but they do usually involve people. Because of this, the farmhouse that our speaker mentions seems like a symbol for society and civilization.

Line 10: Giving his harness bells a shake, the horse is personified once more as he asks "if there is some mistake."

Lines 15-16: "Sleep" is a solitary activity, no? In these lines, "sleep" could be interpreted as a metaphor for death.

Although Frost spent much of his time in cities, his poetry, like Wordsworth's reflected his use of rural settings to get his ideas over in what appears to be very simple verse. The following ideas come from Helen Bacon's essay on Frost entitled, *Frost and the Ancient Muses*:

In 1927 Frost said, "I almost think a poem is most valuable for its ulterior meanings. I have developed an ulteriority complex", Bacon then goes on to develop this aspect of Frost's poetry in that in his most deceptively homespun New England poems, there are much deeper meanings, especially encompassing the wider world, very often using Greek myths and Greek and Roman poetry. His early poem, *The Pasture*, has this deeper meaning and Frost uses it throughout his

later poetry. Wordsworth, in contrast, is usually quite easy to read (as is Frost) but does not have the hidden depths of Frost (Faulkner, 1963).

Transcendentalism Legacy

The Transcendental Movement dramatically shaped the direction of American literature, although perhaps not in the ways its adherents had imagined. Many writers were and still are inspired and taught by Emerson and Thoreau in particular, and struck out in new directions because of the literary and philosophical lessons they had learned. Walt Whitman was not the only writer to claim that he was "simmering, simmering, simmering" until reading Emerson brought him "to a boil" (Johnson, 2015). Emily Dickinson's poetic direction was quite different, but she too was a thoughtful reader of Emerson and Fuller. In his own way, even Frederick Douglass incorporated many lessons of transcendental thought from Emerson. This is significant to the present research since it illustrates that various poets treated nature in differing ways depending on how they personally view it.

Other writers would deliberately take their direction away from transcendentalism, toward realism and "anti-transcendentalism" or what Michael Hoffman calls "negative Romanticism". Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville found extraordinarily creative ways to object to many aspects of their transcendental contemporaries, even as they incorporated others. Few American writers since have been completely free of the influence of Emerson and Thoreau, whether in reaction or imitation.

Books have been written on this subject, and this is only an introduction. Perhaps the most visible manifestation of transcendental ideas and form today is in the developing genre of nature writing. With its roots firmly in a world-view adapted from Emerson's *Nature* and the literary inspiration of Thoreau's *Walden* in particular, this interdisciplinary yet literary genre has evolved under the pens of numerous writers, from John Muir and John Burroughs to writers as diverse as Annie Dillard, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Loren Eiseley, Ed Abbey, Gary Snyder, Barbara Kingsolver--and the list expands every year (Woodlief, 2015).

Nature in Romanticism

The Romantic association of nature and spirit expressed itself in one of two ways. The landscape was, on one hand regarded as an extension of the human personality, capable of sympathy with man's emotional state. On the other hand, nature was regarded as a vehicle for spirit just as man; the breath of God fills both man and the earth. Delight in unspoiled scenery and in the (presumably) innocent life of rural dwellers was a popular literary theme. Often combined with this feeling for rural life is a generalized romantic melancholy, a sense that change is imminent and that a way of life is being threatened (Johnson, 2015).

Results and Discussion

In this paper, the researchers will delve into the research questions as directly stated in the research questions section in the first part of this paper. The questions will be answered in the same order in which they appear.

Wordsworth's Attitude towards Nature

This section attempts to answer the second question specified in the research questions section of this research namely "What differentiates Wordsworth attitude towards nature from that of other English romantic poets?".

Since William Wordsworth is known as the father of English romantic poetry, his attitude towards nature is extremely important. The concept of nature is important not only for William Wordsworth, but also for other English romantic poets who lived during the time of Wordsworth and those who lived after him. Nature in itself is a very crucial component of English romanticism making it one of the most significant characteristics of English romantic poetry. This emphasis on nature becomes very obvious when looking at lyrical ballads, the very first volume of poetry composed by William Wordsworth and co-authored by his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and published for the first time in 1798. The second edition of the same volume was published in 1800, while the third and final edition was published in 1802 (Cop, 2014). As mentioned above, the understanding of nature and the meanings associated with it depends primarily on the subject and age in which the natural work appears. This is also true for lyrical ballads. The poems included in this volume celebrate nature and put it before any other consideration. The poems were very simple and lyrical meant to be sung by shepherds who are naturally associated with nature and have a strong bond with it since they spend most of their time with their flocks in the open natural space in the country side of England. The language in the volume is simple to reflect the simplicity of nature itself. In brief, for Wordsworth, nature is something holy and viewed as a teacher since he states specifically "let nature be your teacher"(Cop, 2014). On the other hand, other English romantic poets looked at nature as something enjoyable attempting to imitate Wordsworth's attitude towards it and considering it as a primary source of inspiration for their poetry.

Frost's Attitude towards Nature Versus English Romantic Poets

This section answers the third question of this research "What differentiates Frost's attitude towards nature from that of English romantic poets?"

In an attempt to compare Frost's attitude towards nature to the attitude of English romantic poets, it may be fair to claim that his attitude was significantly different.

Using Frost's poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" as an illustrative example, it may be concluded that he looked at nature in a different view point from that held by English romantic poets who resided in England. Frost seemed to be influenced by the transcendentalist movement pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson. Nature to Frost was somehow associated with the spiritual and supernatural. This view goes in line with the view of those who believed in the teaching of Transcendentalism of the 1840s.

Although Frost celebrates nature in a way similar to that of the English romantic poets in his poem used as an illustrative example for purposes of this research, his influence by Transcendentalism becomes clear in the last stanza when he talks about how the woods are lovely, dark and deep, but he adds that he has promises to keep and a long way to go before he sleeps, meaning before he dies. This signifies the relationship that Frost establishes between nature and death and the life here after. This goes along the same lines at Emerson's school of thought represented specifically by the beliefs held by those who follow the Transcendentalist movement (Van Doren, 1923).

Frost's View of Nature Versus Wordsworth's

This last section attempts to make a comparison between Frost and Wordsworth in terms of their attitudes towards nature and how the concept of nature was employed by each attempting to answer the final question “How did Wordsworth’s view of nature differ from that of Frost’s?”.

As hinted to above, Wordsworth, like other English romantic poets during his time, viewed nature as a source of beauty that can be enjoyed. This view and attitude were evident in his poem “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”, used as an illustrative example for purposes of this paper. Furthermore, and just like it was for other English romantic poets, Wordsworth viewed nature as a clear primary source of inspiration in the composition of his poetry. It was also used by Wordsworth as a means through which he can use his imagination that helps him in the creation of his verse. Finally, Wordsworth looked at nature also as a source of knowledge and information. Nature becomes an effective teacher. He specifically says “let nature be your teacher” (Van Doren, 1951).

Frost, on the other hand, viewed nature in a relatively different way. Although he seems to enjoy nature and being in the presence of nature which becomes a spiritual vehicle through which he can reach a higher and more elevated level of religion and spirituality. It seems to be used by Frost as a means for meditation to arrive at certain conclusions that have to do with the creation of the universe and the life here after. Frost’s view of nature seems to be influenced by the Bible and Biblical teachings (Irwin, 1963). This relates it directly to the church and to the Transcendentalist school pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson during the first half of the 19th century.

Conclusion

In light of the four research questions clearly stated in the research questions section of this research, a number of important conclusions can be reached. These conclusions may be summarized as follows:

1. The term “nature” has not always had the same meaning or carries the same level of significance. The meaning of nature has continually changed throughout history. This paper outlined such semantic changes in meaning starting with the Greek and Roman empires leading to the meaning that nature carries and signifies at the present time. The paper also specified how nature was used by English romantic poets with special reference to William Wordsworth compared to how the same concept was used in America with special reference to Robert Frost.
2. Wordsworth’s attitude towards nature can be described as that of a source of inspiration for the composition of verse as well as a source of beauty to be enjoyed. Nature to Wordsworth was something to create a bond with and with which a very affectionate and passionate relationship can be established. In other words, it is something that an intimate relationship can be created with. To Wordsworth, nature can certainly be a source of knowledge and instruction. We can learn a lot from our surrounding environment and the natural things that live in our world. The attitudes of other English romantic poets such as Blake, Shelley and Keats were very similar to that of Wordsworth’s since he was the pioneer of English romantic poetry and the father of English romantic verse.
3. Frost’s attitude towards nature in comparison with Wordsworth’s can be explained in terms of the impact that Transcendentalism had on his views. Although Frost enjoyed nature and employed it in his poetry it was a means of meditation and religious inspiration for him to reach a higher level of spirituality and philosophy towards the life here after including what

happens after death (Ogilvie, 1959; & Pritchard, 1960). In comparison, English romantic poets looked at nature only as a source of inspiration to write poetry and a comfortable place in which a bond can be created and enjoyed with nature.

4. Finally, it may be concluded that although both Wordsworth and Frost celebrated nature and placed it in a very high place on their list of priorities, each of them viewed it in a relatively different manner. Wordsworth viewed nature as a source of inspiration in the composition process of his verse, he looked at it as something to be loved and enjoyed. It was also a means of inspiration and a source that triggers the use of imagination, which was very crucial for the process of composing poetry. In comparison, Frost was obviously influenced by the beliefs and principles of the Transcendentalist movement pioneered by Ralf Waldo Emerson and became popular during the first half of the 19th century in the United States. Nature to Frost was viewed as a means of meditation to take him to a higher level of spirituality. Therefore, Frost viewed nature as something that is related to the holy and divine, while Wordsworth and other English romantic poets simply enjoyed nature and viewed it as a simple source of inspiration to compose verse coupled with its power to be a teacher and to serve as a rich source of human knowledge.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research and the comprehensive discussion of the concept of nature in the previous sections, the researchers may provide the following recommendations that can be implemented for purposes of further research:

1. Professors of English literature should pay the concept of nature a considerable amount of attention in their literature courses prior to teaching topics related to English poetry and prose. The term "English literature" here is used as a cover term to refer to all genres of literature written in the English language regardless of the nationality of the author or the place of publication. A historical overview of the concept of nature should be provided and the various meanings of the term should be explained.
2. The concept of nature in British literature should be studied, not only as it was employed by English romantic poets, but also as it was used by authors before and after the English Romantic Movement in order to see if nature was used in the same way or in a different manner.
3. Scholars and literary critics should also research the concept of nature as used in the United States of America before and after Robert Frost. The concept of nature as used by early American writers such as Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor should be explored and compared to how it was used by authors who come after Robert Frost.
4. The concept of nature as it has been used in English prose should be paid more attention since primary attention has traditionally been paid to the use of nature in poetry.
5. Finally, the use of nature in poetry that reflects meditation under the influence of the bible should be explored especially that composed by early colonial poets as mentioned above. Meditation poetry and the use of nature by poets who employed this particular theme should be compared to the poetry of those poets who belong to the transcendentalist movement.

It is safe to conclude that nature has acquired numerous meanings throughout history. This concept has traditionally been used in creative writing in many different ways and to achieve a number of various literary effects. This use of nature is not by any means limited to English literature, but certainly exceeded that to include the literature of other languages and cultures.

This implies that there are universal meanings and effects associated with the concept of nature throughout the world and over the centuries. Regardless of the various meanings associated with the term nature, and regardless of the numerous functions connected to it in literature, the concept of nature is extremely valuable and plays a great functional role in English literature in general and English poetry in particular.

About the Authors:

Muthanna Z. Almiqdady graduated from the department of English language and literature at Ajloun National University in Jordan receiving his B.A. in English in 2014. In 2015, he joined the M.A. program in English literature at Al Al-Bayt University. His research interests include: English literature and American cultural studies.

Abdel-Rahman H. Abu-Melhim was born on February 14, 1958 in Jerash, Jordan. He is a Jordanian-American, currently teaching as an Associate Professor of English language and literature at Al-Balqa'a Applied University in Jordan. He graduated from Texas A&M University, College Station in 1992. His Ph.D. degree was in English with emphasis on Socio-linguistics. His research interests include: Socio-linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Psycho-linguistics, and Cross-Cultural communication.

Mahmoud A. Al-Sobh is currently serving as chairman of the department of English language and literature at Ajloun National University in Jordan. He received his Ph.D. degree in English language curriculum and instruction from Yarmouk University in 2010. Prior to that, he obtained his Master's degree in methods of teaching English as a foreign language from Yarmouk University in 1999 preceded by a Diploma in education with emphasis on methods of teaching English as a foreign language in 1992. His Bachelor's degree was in English language and literature also from Yarmouk University in 1981. His major area of concentration is Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). He published numerous articles in CALL and other related fields in a number of international peer-reviewed academic journals.

References

- Cop, T. (2014). William Wordsworth. Wikipedia. Available at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wordsworth.
- Faulkner, V. (1963). More Frosting on the Woods, *College English*, 24, 1, 560-561.
- Gorder, R. (2014). Romanticism. British Romantic era Poets. Available at www.mariahecarter.com
- Irwin, W. R. (1963). Robert Frost and the Comic Spirit, *American Literature*, 35, 1, 299-310.
- Johnson, J. (2015). The France of Victor Hugo, Unmasking the Bourgeois: The Romantic Era. Available at www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/rschwartz/hist255/jkr/romanticism.html.
- Jones, R. (2014). Transcendentalism. Wikipedia. Available at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendentalism.
- Juhnke, A. K. (1964). Religion in Robert Frost's Poetry: The Play for Self-Possession, *American Literature*, 36, 1, 153-164.
- McBride, D. J. (1934). Robert Frost and the Dark Woods, *The Yale Review*, 20, 1, 514-520.
- Moore, K. (2014). What Is Nature Poetry?. Available at www.wisegeek.com.
- Morse, S. (1943). The Wholeness of Robert Frost, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 19, 1, 412-416.

- Moynihan, W. T. (1958). Fall and Winter in Frost, *Modern Language Notes*, 29, 1, 348-350.
- Nye, N. S. (2014). Nature Poetry. American Poets Magazine, Academy of American Poets. Available at www.poets.org.
- Ogilvie, J. T. (1959). From Woods to Stars: A Pattern of Imagery in Robert Frost's Poetry, *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 58, 1, 64-76.
- Phillips, M. (2014). Robert Frost. Wikipedia. Available at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Frost.
- Pritchard, W. H. (1960). Diminished Nature, *The Massachusetts Review*, 1, 1, 475-592.
- Snow, J. (2014). French Revolution. Wikipedia. Available at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution.
- Van Doren, C. (1923). The Soil of the Puritans, Robert Frost: Quintessence and Subsoil, *The Century Magazine*, 15, 1, 629-636.
- Van Doren, M. (1951). Robert Frost's America, *The Atlantic*, 27, 1, 32-34.
- Woodlief, A. (2015). American Transcendentalism Web, Virginia Commonwealth University. Available at www.vcu.edu/engweb.

Appendix A. Definitions

Nature Poetry

A form of writing that focuses primarily on themes, ideas, emotions, situations, or images that have to do with nature or the wilderness (Moore, 2014).

William Wordsworth (April 7, 1770 – April 23, 1850)

He was a major English Romantic poet who, with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, helped to launch the Romantic Age in English literature with the 1798 joint publication of *Lyrical Ballads* (Cop, 2014).

Robert Frost (March 26, 1874 – January 29, 1963)

He was an American poet, highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. His work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes (Phillips, 2014).

Transcendentalism

Is a religious and philosophical movement that was developed during the late 1820s and 1830s in the Eastern region of the United States as a protest against the general state of spirituality and, in particular, the state of intellectualism at Harvard University and the doctrine of the Unitarian church taught at Harvard Divinity School (Jones, 2014).

Romanticism

The Romantic era entails a movement in the literature and art of virtually every country of Europe, the United States, and Latin America that lasted from the late 18th century to the early 19th century. It is characterized by a shift from the structured, intellectual, reasoned approach of the 1700's to use of the imagination, freedom of thought and expression, and an idealization of nature. Certain moods and themes, including libertarianism, nature, exoticism, and supernaturalism often intertwined and, became the concern of almost all 19th-century writers. Inspiration for the romantic approach initially came from two great shapers of thought, French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau and German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. The preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), by English poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge was also of great importance as a manifesto of literary romanticism. The two poets reiterated the importance of feeling and imagination to poetic creation and disclaimed conventional literary forms and subjects. Thus, as romantic literature everywhere developed, imagination was praised over reason, emotions over logic, and intuition over science—making way for a vast body of literature of great sensibility and passion (Gorder, 2014).

The French Revolution

It was a period of radical social and political upheaval in France from 1789 to 1799 that profoundly affected French and modern history, marking the decline of powerful monarchies and churches and the rise of democracy and nationalism (Snow, 2014).

Appendix B. I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

By: William Wordsworth

1 I wandered lonely as a cloud
 2 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 3 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 4 A host, of golden daffodils;
 5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 6 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

7 Continuous as the stars that shine
 8 And twinkle on the milky way,
 9 They stretched in never-ending line
 10 Along the margin of a bay:
 11 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 12 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance

13 The waves beside them danced; but they

14 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
15 A poet could not but be gay,
16 In such a jocund company:
17 I gazed--and gazed--but little thought
18 What wealth the show to me had brought:

19 For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
21 They flash upon that inward eye
22 Which is the bliss of solitude;
23 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
24 And dances with the daffodils.

Appendix C. Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By: Robert frost

1 Whose woods these are I think I know.
2 His house is in the village, though;
3 He will not see me stopping here
4 To watch his woods fill up with snow.
5 My little horse must think it queer
6 To stop without a farmhouse near
7 Between the woods and frozen lake
8 The darkest evening of the year

9 He gives his harness bells a shake
10 To ask if there is some mistake.
11 The only other sound's the sweep
12 Of easy wind and downy flake.
13 The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
14 But I have promises to keep,
15 And miles to go before I sleep,
16 And miles to go before I sleep.

Appendix D. Definitions of Nature

This section attempts to answer the first research question specifically "What are the different definitions of the term "nature" throughout history?"

Origin of Nature (Philosophy)

Middle English, from Middle French, from Latin *natura*, from *natus*, past participle of *nasci* to be born, first known use 14th century.

Nature is a concept with two major sets of inter-related meanings, referring on the one hand to the things which are natural, or subject to the normal working of "**laws of nature**", or on the other

hand to the **essential properties** and **causes** of those things to be what they naturally are, or in other words the **laws of nature** themselves.

Understanding the meaning and significance of nature has been a consistent theme of discussion within the history of **Western Civilization**, in the **philosophical** fields of **metaphysics** and **epistemology**, as well as in **theology** and **science**. The research of natural things and the regular laws which seem to govern them, as opposed to discussion about what it means to be natural, is the area of **natural science**.

The word "nature" derives from **Latinnātūra**, a philosophical term derived from the verb for **birth**, which was used as a translation for the earlier **Ancient Greek** term **phusis** which was derived from the verb for natural growth, for example that of a plant. Already in classical times, philosophical use of these words combined two related meanings which have in common that they refer to the way in which things happen by themselves, "naturally", without "interference" from human deliberation, divine intervention, or anything outside of what is considered normal for the natural things being considered.

Understandings of nature depend on the subject and age of the work where they appear. For example, **Aristotle's** explanation of natural properties differs from what is meant by natural properties in modern philosophical and scientific works, which can also differ from other scientific and conventional usage.

Other Definitions of Nature

1. The material world, especially as surrounding human kind and existing in dependently of human activities.
2. The **natural** world as it exists without human beings or **civilization**.
3. The elements of the **natural** world, as mountains, trees, animals, or rivers.
4. The universe, with all its phenomena. (dictionary.reference.com).
5. The physical world and everything in it (such as plants, animals, mountains, oceans, stars, etc.) that is not made by people
6. The natural forces that control what happens in the world.
7. The way that a person or animal behaves: The character or personality of a person or animal (www.merriam-webster.com).