

# CHAPTER I

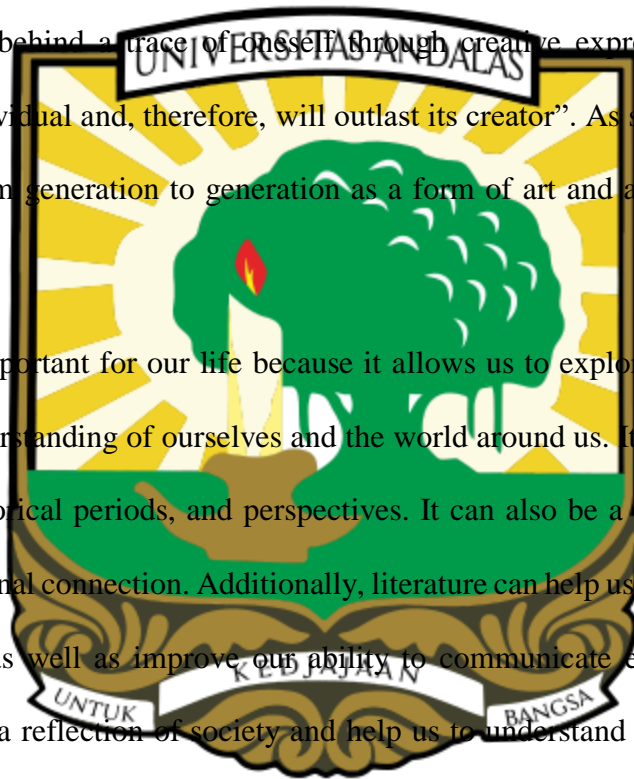
## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Literature is a form of written or spoken artistic expression that uses language to explore themes, stories, and ideas. It encompasses a wide range of genres, including poetry, novels, plays, and short stories. According to *Mario Klarer* (1), “Underlying literary production is certainly the human wish to leave behind a trace of oneself through creative expression, which will exist detached from the individual and, therefore, will outlast its creator”. As such, literary works have been passed down from generation to generation as a form of art and as a medium to deliver a message.

Literature is important for our life because it allows us to explore the human experience and gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. It can provide insight into different cultures, historical periods, and perspectives. It can also be a source of entertainment, inspiration, and emotional connection. Additionally, literature can help us develop critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as improve our ability to communicate effectively. Furthermore, literature can serve as a reflection of society and help us to understand social issues and human behavior.

Out of the many forms and genres of literary works, poetry is one of the oldest and most complex ones. Poetry does not only have themes and messages but also puts emphasis on figurative language and rhymes. As a form of literary expression poetry uses language to evoke emotion, create imagery, and convey ideas in a condensed and often highly musical form. It encompasses a wide range of styles, including traditional rhymed and metered verse, as well as free verse and



experimental forms. Klarer (27) explains that “the majority of poetry definitions are limited to characteristics such as verse, rhyme, and meter”. However, Klarer also states that since these criteria cannot be applied to modern prose poetry, experimental poetry, or free verse, “the use of syntactic structures and rhetorical figures to achieve poetic expressions should also be included as the characteristics of poetry” (27).

Poetry has complex elements such as themes, figurative language, rhyme, and messages. As such, it takes some effort to fully understand the meaning of certain lines and the alternative interpretation of a poem. It entirely depends on the reader to grasp the meaning of poems, as imagination, experience, understanding, and individual perspective all play a role in fully comprehending poetry. The complexity and the power of poetry to express and invoke emotions make it a valuable subject to be analyzed.

One of the ways to understand a poem is by conducting an intrinsic analysis. Intrinsic analysis in literary studies is a method of evaluating a work of literature based on its internal elements, such as characterization, themes, symbols, imagery, structure, and style. The focus is on interpreting the meaning and significance of the text from within, rather than looking at external factors such as historical context or the author's biographical information. As Wellek (139) explains, “the natural and sensible starting point for work in literary scholarship in the interpretation and analysis of the works of literature themselves.”

One of the most significant poets in English literature is Robert Frost. Robert Lee Frost, known as Robert Frost, was an American poet whose works are famous for being short on words but long on wit, containing wisdom about social and philosophical issues. Frost is best known for his epigrammatic summarization of general characters. He has wise utterances on various problems



we face in our daily lives. Especially given his lack of experience with city folk and urban living, his perspective on the world is untainted (Miller 1).

In the past, poets used to symbolically and metaphorically represent current events that directly or indirectly involve humans in the poem. However, this is not the case for Robert Frost's works. Although nature is always involved in his poetry, natures irrelevant to the message of the poem. Most of the time, nature is used as satire, irony, and metaphor in Robert Frost's poems (Yi Huang130).

In our daily life, is it not uncommon to encounter a challenge that may make us stuck and ponder how to face it, causing us to afraid to take and make a decision, a dilemma that may to become a burden but eventually become a lesson in our life when we overcome it. This is where Robert Frost portray internal conflict where we can be doubtful with ourselves, fearful to see what ahead of us, and feeling guilty for our own choice, but at the same time those internal conflicts happens because irony, it happens because we want and expect something but we did the opposite of it and became the problem instead.



Robert Frost is best known for his nature poems, such as *The Road Not Taken* and *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, which have become synonymous with the American literary canon. Robert Frost's distinguishing feature is his consistency in using deep meaning and figurative language to create a poetic sense that always includes his background and the universal. In one sense, his poetry expresses rural New England's detachment from the "modern", emphasizing the absolute absence of meaningful references to modern realities such as industrialization, urbanization, and wealth distribution (Agustin2). We are now living in an era where

industrialization has grown so much and nature has experienced so much damage. Considering that Robert Frost often discussed the themes of nature in his works, exploring his poems might bring new insights that are relevant to our modern society.

Out of all of Robert Frost's works, there are five remarkably written poems that explore nature as their theme. They are *A Prayer In Spring* (1915), *An Old Man's Winter Night* (1916), *Fire and Ice* (1920), *Stopping By Woods On a Snowy Evening* (1923), and *A Minor Bird* (1923). These five poems use elements of nature such as animals, plants, weather, and seasons in their imagery. Based on the elaboration above, the writer decides to do an intrinsic analysis of Robert Frost's selected poems to find the messages of his poems and the irony that related about inner conflict.

## 1.2 Identification of the Problems

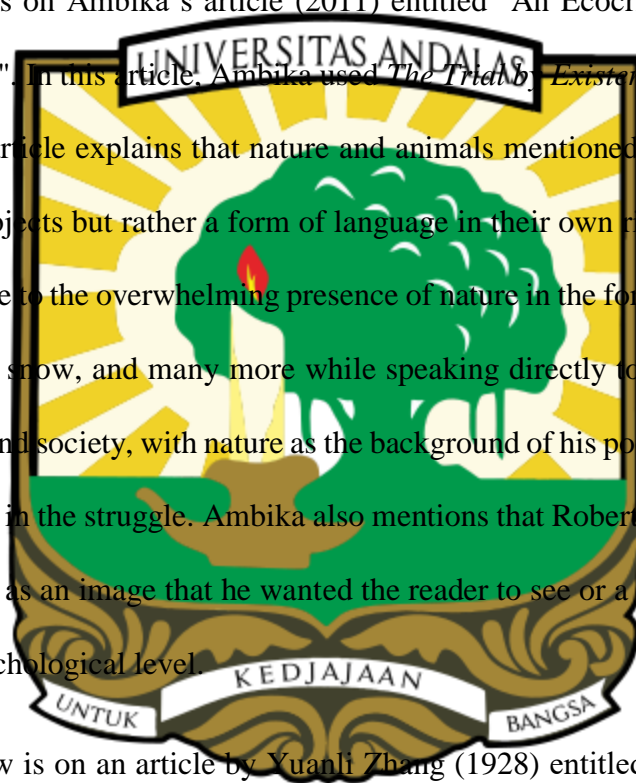
Most of Robert Frost's poems are depict with a self-narrating where the reader indirectly elaborates the issues that related about the poem's messages. As in all metaphysical poetry, Robert Frost's poems are made up of lines and hidden meanings that metaphorically describes his life, purpose, and obligations. The interpretation progresses from simple to mysterious until the poem's final line reveals the whole meaning. This research aims to examine the poem's deep meaning and help readers understand more about irony of inner conflicts in Robert Frost's poems.



### 1.3 Review of Related Literature

Most of Robert Frost's works have been the object of many studies in literary research. In this subchapter, the writer will review and compare several articles that analyze poems with the same theme to support this research.

The first review is on Ambika's article (2011) entitled "An Ecocritical Reading of Robert Frost's Selected Poems". In this article, Ambika used *The Trial and Existence* (1960) as one of their selected poems. This article explains that nature and animals mentioned in Robert Frost's works are not the primary subjects but rather a form of language in their own right. Frost's poems leave a lasting impression due to the overwhelming presence of nature in the form of mountains, valleys, roads, flowers, woods, snow, and many more while speaking directly to nature. Frost's vision is more focused on man and society, with nature as the background of his poems to reveal his concept of human relationships in the struggle. Ambika also mentions that Robert Frost sees everything as symbolic, using nature as an image that he wanted the reader to see or a metaphor that he wanted us to relate to on a psychological level.



The second review is on an article by Yuanli Zhang (1928) entitled "Analysis on Nature in Robert Frost's Poetry" which analyzes the three perspectives of Robert Frost's works from the intentions, the theme, and the rhymes of the poems. One of his analyses talks about the nature of the poetry *A Winter Eden* (1928). The poem is about the place of winter in the cycle of the seasons and how winter symbolizes the cycle of life that humans experience. From this poem, the reader may find beauty in the snowy woods or imagine the song of a bird. This is contrary to *Stopping by The Woods on a Snowy Evening* (1923), where winter is described as cold, dark, and uncertainty.

This article illustrates how the same theme in Robert Frost's different works could be interpreted differently from a particular perspective.

Another review is on a study by Rinda Sonia (2020) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Poetry Entitled "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost". She found that figurative language is one of the most important elements in writing poetry. The poet must be able to choose an appropriate word to describe something clearly in the reader's mind. Therefore, imagination plays major role in order to achieve the desired effect. Such words can be variate from animal, environmental, object, and tool. Several methods are involved such as symbol, personification, repetition, simile, hyperbole, and contradiction or irony. The study concludes that the most dominant figurative language Robert Frost uses in his poem is symbol and personification.

In addition, an article by Damanhuri (2011) entitled "*To Earth and Wind and Window Flower*" also focuses on the intrinsic element of the poem. He analyzes imagery and figurative language from the poem's structure. He also defines the meaning of the lines that contain imageries, figurative language and the meaning. According to the findings of this study, imagery and figurative language uses in Robert Frost's poems, one of them *Wind and Window Flower* (1915), which contain visual imagery, auditory imagery, imagery and figurative language, metaphor, personification and hyperbole are a dominant intrinsic point of view.

Last but not least, an article by Reny Heryanti (2012) entitled "The Meaning and Irony in Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*" discusses about how irony play important rule in expressing a poet's feeling, it is also said that human being live in age of irony. It is because irony appears in





many aspect of life. When irony works that's where it will help to understand mutually for both speaker and hearer, because they know the utterance in the poem.

entitled "Figure of Speech in Robert Frost's Poems" by Darmawati Sihite (2018), this article explains of figure of speech that being used in Robert Frost's poems and how many

Previous researches are a valuable source for understanding both the works of Robert Frost and the theory of intrinsic analysis. Based on those reviews, the writer concludes that this study is different from those previous researches because the writer focuses on how Robert Frost used nature for imagery in his 5 poems.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

This research is expected to answer the following questions:

1. What are the irony contained in Robert Frost's poems *A Prayer In Spring* (1915), *An Old Man's Winter Night* (1916), *Fire and Ice* (1920), *Stopping By Woods On Snowy Evening* (1923), and *A Minor Bird* (1923)?
2. What messages does Robert Frost send to the readers through his poems using irony used in *A Prayer In Spring* (1915), *An Old Man's Winter Night* (1916), *Fire and Ice* (1920), *Stopping By Woods On Snowy Evening* (1923), and *A Minor Bird* (1923)?

#### 1.5 Scope of the Research

The purpose of this research is to understand the irony used in Robert Frost's poems and their messages, which will be analyzed using Brook's theory about irony. It can be helpful for the reader

to understand more about Robert Frost's poems. In addition, the study will also analyze the message that Robert Frost tries to deliver to the reader through his poems.

## 1.6 The objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the meaning behind the lines in the selected poems by Robert Frost. As social beings, humans are complicated creatures. They are so easy to change their mind, sometimes can be confusing or straightforward, and they always come and go, which is why Robert Frost created a form of *satires* and metaphors in his poems about it. This research will explain the meaning of *A Prayer In Spring* (1915), *An Old Man's Winter Night* (1916), *Fire and Ice* (1920), *Stopping By Woods On Snowy Evening* (1923), and *A Minor Bird* (1923). Then, the writer will analyze the messages contained in the poems to complete the analysis.

