

The present dissertation examines the poetry of Robert Frost from a comparative perspective, and studies the American poet, in comparison with both the Romantic and Modernist poets in an attempt to determine how "romantic " or "modernist" Frost's poetry is. Our approach takes its bearings from what is known as ecocriticism, or the interconnectedness between culture and nature. Applying this new theoretical framework, we develop in three separate chapters the background to Frost's poetry with reference to nature writing, and the convergences as well as the divergences of Frost's poetry from that of the Romantics and Modernists. The first chapter is a diachronic survey of the tradition of nature writing in American literature from the Colonial Period until the Twentieth Century, and provides a point of reference to better appreciate the evolution of this literary tradition. While mapping out the different historical moments where the use or the interpretation of nature has been altered, we have had the opportunity to evaluate Frost's specific views on nature compared with his predecessors and contemporaries. Most of the theoretical lore presented in this chapter is then re-used in the next two chapters to investigate Frost's stand on Romantic and Modernist poets, respectively. The second chapter is concerned with establishing the link between Frost and the Romantics, and investigating whether Frost belongs to the Pastoral tradition or not. For that purpose, Frost is compared and contrasted with to such poets as Wordsworth, Emerson, Thoreau and it concludes that despite some affinities Frost seems to have developed his own brand of "Romanticism". Chapter three seeks to demonstrate that Frost is not all that different from other modernists, like Eliot or Pound in his quest of an individual artistic talent. Frost is compared to Robinson Jeffers and Gary Snyder, and the argument that sustains the whole is that Frost's poetry emerges as an embodiment of an ecological thought, even if it distances itself from the linguistic and artistic complexities of his contemporaries. The conservative and traditional image of Frost the farmer-poet is abrogated and that of Frost as a contemporary eco-poet is appropriated for present-day ecocritics