



# Robert Frost's Political Body (Studies in American Literature and Culture)

*Grzegorz Kosci*

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In Robert Frost's poetry lives the figure of an authoritative public body: a physical, human body that personifies classical liberalism. A deep structure, it manifests itself in his images, the characterization of his speakers, their tones of voice, and -- most crucially -- in his sense of poetry's appropriate scope. To glimpse this political body, Grzegorz Kosc interrogates the poet's views on a number of subjects never explored by Frost criticism: Maya monumental art; Shelley's bodies of sensibility and martyrdom; the bodies of US presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft; the association of radical liberalism with bodily deformation; the ulteriority of physical behavior; the popularity of statuettes that supplanted traditional, monumental sculptures of political leaders. For Frost, all these yielded important clues to the writing of a good poem, which had to have the features of a well-shaped, self-disciplined, and stoic body. The final chapter explores the images of Frost's own body used for the frontispieces of the reprint editions of his poetry, images that are the symbols of Frost's aesthetics. Hence the book's title, which not only points to the central structure of Frost's poetry but also suggests that the poet envisioned his own portrait as illustrating the body of political power underlying his aesthetics. Grzegorz Kosc is Assistant Professor at the University of Lodz and the University of Warsaw, Poland. He is former President of the Robert Frost Society.

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