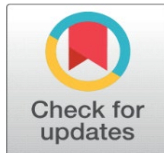
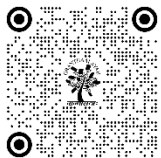


REVISITING SACRED PLACES IN N. SCOTT MOMADAY'S THE WAY TO RAINY MOUNTAIN

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ABSTRACT

Native American literature consistently portrays the ancestral belief in the harmonious organization of the cosmos. [2] N. Scott Momaday through his works broadens the notion of the journey by encompassing culture, imagination, and individual histories. [1] In the Way to Rainy Mountain, he recounts the expedition of Tai-me, the revered Sun Dance doll, and the experiences of Tai-me's community through three distinct perspectives: the mythical, the factual, and the modern. Moreover, the work entails the individual odyssey of the storyteller (Momaday), who embarked on a pilgrimage to the burial site of his Kiowa grandmother, retracing the path earlier travelled by his ancestors. During this journey, Momaday confronted his Kiowa lineage. He elucidates that he holds a deep ancestral belief in the sacredness of all living beings and avers that our minds are inevitably drawn back to certain places; towns and cities, plains and mountains, that, once observed, explored, and inhabited, even for a brief period, remain fixed in our unconscious memory. [3] They become important part of our life; helps shaping our identity, and thus declare, "I am who I am because I have been there, or there". This paper seeks to examine how the narrator's journey prompts the characteristics of the environment, the progression of time, and the resilience of the human spirit.

Keywords: Black Hills, Devil's Tower, Medicine Wheel, Rock Tree, Sacred Images.

1. INTRODUCTION

To Experience the sacred, one needs to be fully aware about the depth of its existence. Sacred places epitomise the soul of the earth, representing it universally and eternally. They serve as its "emblems and protectors". To truly understand the essence of the land, one must search for its sacred sites. The description of sacred place is acquired through certain rituals. [4] The place is sanctified by the recital of rituals, including songs and ceremonies, which evoke both happiness and sadness. It is a solemn act of devotion that involves the commitment of one's thoughts and emotions, as well as the sacrifice of one's life and the acknowledgment of mortality. The terms "sacred" and "sacrifice" are interlinked. Rituals of sacrifice sanctify "the earth". The Language is inseparable from the sacred. All celestial bodies, their manifestations, representations exist within the realm of language and narratives, encompassing chants and prayers.

Mircea Eliade has described the term sacred, as "the revelation of the real, an encounter with that which saves us by giving meaning to our existence". [5] It's a kind of transcendental interaction, characterised by its "reality, salvation and meaning". Sacred ground refers to land that holds significant religious or spiritual significance. It is inherently enigmatic,

and our belief in its existence is equally profound. The devotion that human beings have towards the earth is a recurring theme in Native American oral traditions, recounted across several places and languages. Said, Luther Standing Bear, about aged men and women of the northern plains:

“The act of touching the earth was beneficial for the skin, and the elderly enjoyed taking off their moccasins to walk barefoot on the sacred ground. The birds that flew in the air came to rest upon the earth and it was the final abiding place of all things that lived and grew. [6] The soil is possessed with the properties of soothing, healing, strengthening, and cleansing.” (Momaday, *The Man Made of Words* 115)

“Returning, Remembering and Retelling”, these stages are integral to the literature surrounding sacred journeys in Native American traditions. These journeys themselves exhibit significant variations in circumstances, but paying reverence towards the sacred always includes repetition of “motion, memory, or voice”. The notion of journey has always played a significant role in shaping Native life. In various tribal groups, travel, characterised by stereotyped vision, quests and yearly sustenance migrations, is essential for both physical survival and spiritual well-being. The historical record of past expeditions often, these voyages act as a guide for current endeavours, and the spoken recollection of these travels fixes in one’s memory both a physical terrain and a spiritual environment. The written narratives of Native American people often maintain a correlation in structure and purpose with the earlier oral traditions. Modern journeys are frequently accompanied by historical elements, with the narration often connected to early oral narratives.

In N. Scott Momaday’s “The Way to Rainy Mountain”, he not only demonstrates the several movements he has outlined, but also discusses the connection between these movements in both the work itself and his comments on it. The work explores the various stages of a journey and how they intertwine with the human spirit. It provides a straightforward account of Momaday’s trek to his grandmother’s tomb, retracing the road taken by his Kiowa ancestors over three centuries ago as they migrated from the “Yellowstone River” to Oklahoma. Thus, we have both the individual and the collective aspects of pilgrimage. In addition, we incorporate the spiritual odyssey of the narrator as he gradually gains a fresh comprehension of his own identity entirety across the work. The transition is achieved, in part, through the complex composition of the piece, which features three distinct voices in the main section that Momaday refers to as “the mythical, the historical, and the immediate.” The initial section of work is classified as a “translation” of the customary Kiowa narrative, while the subsequent two sections are categorised as “commentary” - the first being “documentary” and the second being “privately reminiscent” (Momaday, *The Man Made of Words* 5). However, as the novel unfolds, these boundaries progressively fade away, exposing a convergence in the narrator’s life between the mythical, the historical, and the personal. The clear distinction gradually dissolves into a continuous relationship, and one of the journeys in Rainy Mountain is towards a novel comprehension of language. In his epilogue, Momaday refers to this “journey as a quest, a departure.” Momaday asserts that the cycle will persist, stating, “The journey recounted here is constantly renewed whenever the miracle is remembered” (Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* 4). His journey is part of a long history of similar journeys for meaning and insight; it aligns itself with that background.

The prayer from the “Night Chant” of the Navajo commences with a tribute to “Tsegi”, a place characterised by its rocky terrain, which is considered as the ancestral homeland. It is impossible to envision a more significant or influential prayer, or a term or expression that is more fundamental.

“House made of Dawn,
House made of evening light,
House made of dark cloud,
House made of male rain,
House made of dark mist,
House made of female rain,
House made of pollen,
House made of grasshoppers,
Dark Cloud is at the door.
The Trail out of it is dark cloud.

The zigzag lightning stands High upon it.” (Momaday, *The Man Made of Words* 116)

Where there is sacred, there is sacrilege, which is the act of stealing or violating what is considered sacred. Stealing the sacred deprives us of our essence, our purpose, and our existence. We are capable of committing sacrilege, which is a sin. In his narrative, Momaday recalls his own journey to Rainy Mountain with the purpose of visiting his grandmother Aho’s burial site. [8] He commenced his journey from the western region of Montana; covering over the expansive plains of Wyoming and continued into the Black Hills. From there, he headed southwards towards southern plains until he reached cemetery located at “Rainy Mountain” in Oklahoma. He had a desire to revisit the main points of that ancient

journey and from there descends to the plains. He travelled north to the Montana-Wyoming border with his close friend Chuck. [9] He expected to traverse the Kiowa migratory path at the "Bighorn Medicine Wheel", located at an elevation in the "Bighorn Mountains". Momaday and his friend slowly climbed to an altitude of eight thousand feet on a well-kept, meandering highway. Ascended steeply, reaching the timberline; with early October, the plain below was warm during midday, but the air in the mountain was cold, and ground was covered with snow. [10] They deviated from the paved road to a muddy path that extended three miles towards the "Medicine Wheel". It was an intimidating road with its small, meandering paths, high gradients, and slick surface; in some places, the edges dropped off into deep ravines. Simultaneously, a remarkable event occurred: they transitioned from society to wilderness. Unexpectedly, the world remained in its initial state. A large white-tailed deer crossed their path directly ahead, walking leisurely into a cluster of pine trees. While driving across his tracks, they noticed four deer on the opposite bank observing them with friendly black eyes, showing curiosity. There was no sign of caution, dread, or estrangement. They interpreted deer's presence as a positive sign, feeling that their demeanour invited them into their untamed environment. Soon encountered a divergence in the road, they mistakenly chose the wrong path. Exposed to a cold and strong wind at the barren peaks of the Bighorn Mountains; they glimpsed the Medicine Wheel from a deep saddle. It was around two miles distant. Upon their return to the automobile, they observed another vehicle coming; the Volkswagen bus was very old and requires repairment. A lean, bearded man with heavy glasses appeared. He was dressed in a woolen cap, a down parka, and pants along with hiking boots. "I am searching for the Medicine Wheel", he stated, both acknowledged him with a nod. The traveller introduced himself as Jurg, a Swiss traveller, who had been journeying through North American continent for several months. They told the traveller to come with them, and then descended into the saddle. They proceeded on foot to the Medicine Wheel from that point.

This journey was undertaken by his Kiowa ancestors in the past. During their migration, they transformed into a community residing on the vast grasslands known as "the Great Plains". Their culture was final one to develop in Northern America. For ages, they were tribes residing in the mountains and engaged in hunting. Their primitive nomadic lifestyle, reached its peak when they ventured into the vast Great Plains and obtained horses. This relocation marks a period of prosperity and success in their life. Initially, they were a group of individuals facing difficult conditions, frequently experiencing hunger and cold, always struggling to merely stay alive. For a century, the centaurs and buffalo hunters were the dominant rulers of the land, characterised by their audacious nature and their deep indebtedness for freedom and vast expanses.

The perception of inhabitants infused with spirituality captivated him, and it resonated with his personal encounters. He was up in the American Southwest, a region characterised by its profound spiritual essence. There exists a connection between "Chartres" and the ancient relics of "Giusewa", as well as certain historical "moradas" of the penitents in northern New Mexico. One carries a spiritual burden as they journey; he, unknowingly, was mentally preparing himself for the experiences he would encounter in Russia. Upon Momaday's initial arrival in Russia, he immediately sensed the formidable might arising from the nation. In that frigid and unforgiving terrain, he observed a resilience and determination in the individuals residing there, reminiscent of the fortitude displayed by other communities, including his own Native American heritage. The ability to endure and persevere might be considered a defining characteristic of the Russian people. In Russia, there exists a profound spiritual coherence that serves as the foundation for all other manifestations of existence. It is ironic that this essential characteristic has persisted mostly within the religious institution, which was repressed by the communist state for the majority of this century. On a winter evening, shortly after he first arrived in Moscow, he was leisurely walking in the "Lenin Hills", which are currently referred to as the "Sparrow Hills," located near the university. It was one of those Russian nights characterised by the seemingly endless presence of light in the northern sky. Unexpectedly, the forest appeared to be teeming with individuals, their outlines moving resolutely towards the river. Out of curiosity, he joined them. They arrived at a tiny church, specifically the chapel of the Trinity. Upon entering, he discovered himself in an unimaginable situation. Candles illuminated the entire space, casting a radiant glow on the iconography adorning every wall. Resonating from the area behind the altar, there was not just ordinary singing, but a profound and heartfelt expression of song, a sacred melody that transcended boundaries and connected many realms via the power of the human voice. Individuals were fervently and energetically praying openly and making the sign of the cross with deep conviction. The priest appeared to possess a profound and commanding influence over a powerful surge of devotion. He served as the conductor of an exceptional and distinct and sacred event. Even after two decades, this vision of complete awe and intense dedication stays clearly in his memory. As he saw the countenances of the participants, many of whom appeared aged and burdened by the struggles of existence, he concluded that this gathering comprised those who possess a deep connection with the divine. After a span of twenty years, Momaday revisited Russia, specifically "Zagorsk", which is considered the epicenter of Russian Orthodoxy and, arguably,

the embodiment of the Russia he had encountered two decades ago - a nation deeply devoted to their faith. "Zagorsk" stands out as a distinctive location in the field of religious geography. It is among the magnificent architectural marvels of the globe. Furthermore, it is a revered location, characterised by deep sanctity and spirituality. He was pleased to be present once more, two decades later. These locations evoke a sense of awe and respect in him; "inspiration" may be a more fitting term. His visit to Zagorsk left him feeling rejuvenated in his spirit. He found himself in the near presence of one of the world's marvels. In such esteemed situation, he witnessed the manifestation of unwavering faith and determination in the countenances and utterances of the pilgrims, which has endured through several instances of oppression and hardship over successive generations. At this location, he had perceived, as one is compelled to do, the continuing resilience of the Russian character. According to him, this is a specific location on the earth where the notions of survival and rejuvenation are inseparable.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER

Yellowstone appeared to be a majestic place, situated at a high altitude, characterised by its expansive lakes, dense forests, steep canyons, and impressive waterfalls. However, despite its beauty, one may feel a sense of entrapment in that place. The horizon in every direction is nearby, with the towering barrier of the trees and the profound clefts of darkness. The mountains offer a complete sense of liberty, yet it is exclusive to the eagle, elk, badger, and bear. The Kiowas determined their height by the range of their vision, and they were hunched over and visually impaired in the woods. The highland meadows slope downward towards the east, forming a staircase-like path leading to the plain. During the month of July, the mountainside of the "Rocky Mountains" is abundant with flourishing vegetation such as flax and buckwheat, stonecrop, and larkspur. The Earth undergoes geological processes and the boundary of the land expands. The presence of tree clusters and distant grazing animals extends the visual field and stimulates observation in the mind. During the day, the sun traverses a lengthier trajectory, while the expanse of the sky is incomparable in its vastness. The expansive clouds that glide across the sky are silhouettes that traverse the field like liquid, separating illumination. Further south, in the territory inhabited by the Crows and Blackfoot tribes, the plain appears golden in colour. The hills are enveloped by sweet clover, which intertwines and spreads to protect and secure the soil. The Kiowas halted at that location, as it marked the point where they needed to alter the course of their existence. The sun is situated in its natural habitat on the plains. Indeed, it possesses the distinct qualities of a deity. Upon arriving in the land of the Crows, the Kiowas observed the shadowy slopes of the hills during the early morning, visible across the "Bighorn River". They also noticed the abundance of sunlight on the grain shelves and witnessed the ancient deity moving in accordance with the solstices. They have not yet changed their direction to the south into the low-lying area. They need to acclimatise to the harsh winter in the north and continue looking at the mountains for a little longer. "Tai-me" was carried in a ceremonial parade towards the east.

2. SACRED IMAGES

Momaday's work reflects his interest in the art of prehistoric times, specifically rock drawings and engravings, as he considers it an important aspect in understanding and valuing human history. As a painter, he aims to comprehend the ancient and holy link between artist and his art. Understanding this association provides us with a means to discover ourselves in this world, to contemplate the trajectory of our existence from birth to death, and from the beginning to the furthest point in time and beyond. Joseph Campbell, a scholar of mythology, stated that "a culture's myths, and rituals are shaped by the creative vision of its artists and seers". Prehistoric art presents us with symbols that represent our existence. We explore the unfamiliar. We come into contact with the sacred, and we experience a profound sense of reverence, a sacred awe. That may be our most innate and imaginative feeling.

While his tour in Spain, he desired to see the Altamira caverns and witness the amazing creatures depicted on the ceiling, similar to how nine-year-old Maria Sanz de Sautuola had seen them in 1879. Here is the story: Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola was a young guy from Santander with a keen interest in prehistory and a background in science. While on his summer estate at Puente de San Miguel, a sharecropper informed Marcelino that he had found a cave in the vicinity. Don Marcelino visited the cave in 1875, observed some ordinary drawings, and was unconvinced. This was one more cave in a terrain full of caverns. Four years later, Don Marcelino revisited Altamira with his daughter, Maria, for the second time. They used a carbide lamp to enter the room, today called the "Hall of the Bisons". Maria was the first to observe the low ceiling, stained with ocher that filled the entire vault. The peculiar animals were grazing endlessly. They appeared from the darkness, seems to be alive, moving in the flickering light, she was the first one to view them in 17,000 years. He arrived

in Altamira and entered a little green door on a mountainside in Cantabria. For Momaday it was a transition from time into timelessness when he saw paintings of animals such as bison, boar, horse, deer, and goat. When anyone observe them, he can tell that they are carefully arranged by artists who cherished them, evoking feelings of admiration and respect. In the 19th century, Native Americans viewed the buffalo and horse as integral to their connection with the wilderness and the essence of existence. Similar to the paintings of the most skilled artist in each era, they are very fundamental as to be profound.

In 1995, the French government revealed the finding of a Palaeolithic cave in Avignon by a local official named Jean-Marie Chauvet. The 30,000-year-old paintings are splendid. Animals depicted here are not like the species found in Altamira; instead, they are violent, deadly, and frightening. Woolly rhinoceroses, cave bears, and lions are present. The Altamira artist likely had a deep connection with the animals he depicted, viewing them as sacred beings that connected him to the earth. The Chauvet artist likely had good knowledge of these animals because of his love and respect but he feared them. They were either deities or divine messengers, and were sacred. The southwestern region of the North America is marked by several places such as Barrier Canyon, Books Cliffs, and the Malpais, where rock art with anthropomorphic shapes reflects the shamanistic and ceremonial aspects of prehistoric art. Here are narratives recounted. These are stories which get us completely engaged though their meaning may not be completely understandable, but they are profoundly emotional and originate from the deepest parts of our collective memory. The enigmatic figures in the great gallery at Barrier Canyon are likely considered sacred, viewed by the artist with reverence and holy dread. These paintings and engravings from the south-west mark the inception of art in America and the start of American literature.

Teilhard de Chardin wrote of Altamira: "What we really discover is our own childhood, we discover ourselves, the same essential aspirations in the depths of our souls." It is appropriate to say that a child was the first in recorded history to witness these paintings. These polychrome images are simplistic. These archaic images are closely connected to language, which is considered simple and easy. None of us can attain the level of verbal mastery achieved by a child. During his undergraduate days, Momaday discovered the dictionary definition of the word "write" as "to draw or form by scoring or incising a surface", which includes all rock art. We can view the images at Altamira, Lascaux, Chauvet, Barrier Canyon as a form of language, storytelling, and a crucial point in the development of writing. The feeling of that moment is profound. While entering the caves of Altamira through the green door was a transition from time into timelessness. Momaday saw himself on the other side of a vast gap in time, transcending time itself. He was exploring not just his childhood memories to recapture the sense of wonder and joy which he experienced as a child, but also delving into the beginnings of his existence as a human being. To him, it felt like he was seeing a glimpse of infinity. He believes that writing, as he understands it, is approximately 6000 years old. There is no recognised alphabet, script, cyphers, or narrative element present. There are distinct images that have been formed by human hands. Some may consider this text to be crude, but similarly, some of Picasso's finest paintings are also considered rough in a positive way. Picasso reportedly stated that he had dedicated his life to mastering the art of painting in a childlike manner.

Momaday believes that the unifying factor present in all writing and prehistoric rock art is the aspect of storytelling. Man is a narrator. Without a narrative present in the ceiling at Altamira, Picasso's paintings, Emily Dickinson's poems, or Dostoyevsky's novels, these artistic representations of the human spirit lack purpose. The artisans of Altamira, Lascaux, Chauvet, and Barrier Canyon were narrating their tales through art. Momaday emphasis that from every position, we see the ancient paintings are the initial manifestation of art itself. In our essence, we recall our earliest encounters with shape, symmetry, colour, mortality, perspective, beauty, and are once more bestowed with the complete and immediate sensation of awe, wonder, and joy. These sacred images depict the connections of "instinct and thought, stability and creativity, brutality and tenderness, ignorance and insight, mere survival and the ultimate victory". Perceiving them allows us to glimpse into the profound depths of human evolution, revealing insights into eternity.

3. THE MEDICINE WHEEL

"The Medicine wheel" is a circular arrangement of stones, measuring around fifty feet in diameter. The stone spokes radiate outwards. Cairns are positioned at specific points on the diameter, with one at the centre and another slightly beyond the ring towards the southwest. Momaday lacks factual knowledge regarding the originator of the wheel and its intended purpose. But it has been suggested that the structure serves as an "astronomical observatory, a solar calendar, and the architectural blueprint of a Kiowa Sun Dance lodge". Undoubtedly, he is aware that it is a sacred expression; a symbol of human's connection with the universe. A profound tranquility pervaded this place. The intense, snow-laden gust that had caused harm to the body earlier had now passed away altogether. The sun was "warm and bright", and the

surroundings were enveloped by profound silence. Momaday along with his friends walked, and waited for longer moments looking at the wheel across the great distance. They were quiet; there was less information to be shared. However, the essence of the place profoundly moved them. The silence was so profound that it is clearly felt. Looking northward, they had a clear view of Timberline, where the snowy areas and valleys stood out, distinguishing forest “black planes” amidst “the Bighorn peaks”. The mountains descended sharply towards the plains in southern and western directions. Their visibility extended up to thousands of feet downwards and a hundred miles across the vast and shadowy plains.

Prior to their departure, Momaday retrieved an eagle-embellished whistle from his pocket, a gift given to him by his father, and he blew it across the mountains. Though sound was “high and shrill”, yet not disrupting its profound silence. While strolling, they noticed a coyote leisurely crossing his path, heading towards a wall of trees. Meanwhile, “a wild being” appeared briefly before disappearing. Having received a blessing at his entrance, the wilderness now releases him with a blessing. The fences, roads, windmills, and buildings on the plains were insignificant compared to the vastness of the earth and sky. The landscape is characterised by extraordinary purity and immensity, like an ocean. It is an imminent unveiling of infinity. Antelope were abundant in the lush green terrain, feeding alongside horses and cattle. Hawks glided overhead, while crows dispersed in front of us. The locations were American with names such as “Tensleep, Buffalo, Dull Knife, Crazy Woman, and Spotted Horse”.

4. THE BLACK HILLS

The Black Hills are remote, antiquated mountain ranges located between South Dakota and Wyoming. They constitute an island, occupying an elongated region of approximately 6000 square miles, among the immense expanse of grasslands comprising the “North Great Plains”. Momaday perceives this mountain on his visit to grandmother's burial site. According to him, the Black Hills serve as a chronological record of geological history, with their underlying rocks being significantly older than the sedimentary strata that make up the majority of the Americas. The Lakotas, also known as the “Teton Sioux”, referred them as “Paha Sapa”, which means “hills that are black”. In addition to the Kiowas and the Sioux, various other tribes regarded the Black Hills as sacred ground, considering it to be of historical importance. The Arapahos and the Cheyennes resided at this place. “Bear Butte”, located near Sturgis, South Dakota, on the northeastern periphery of the “Black Hills”, had a great religious importance for the Cheyenne people as their sacred mountain. Similar to the Medicine Wheel, the place has a profound spiritual intensity. The Indians refrained from camping in the “Black Hills” due to its perceived notion of sacredness. It served as a meeting spot, a place for hunting, but most importantly, it's a protected and sacred site, a place characterised by thunderstorms and lightning, a dwelling place for deities.

5. DEVIL'S TOWER

Devil's Tower, located on the perimeter of the “Black Hills” and the “Bighorn Mountains”, as the initial national monument of the region. The Lakotas referred to it as “Mateo Tepee”, which translates to “Grizzly Bear Lodge”. The Kiowas referred to it as “Tsoai”, which means “Rock Tree”. “Devil's Tower” is a majestic stone which rises above its surrounding timber of the “Black Hills”. Its structure strongly looks similar to the stump of a tree. Made up of rocks (phonolite porphyry columns), measuring 1,000 feet in diameter at the base while 275 feet towards the top. Elevation of 865 feet from the ground and 1,280 feet from the “Belle Fourch River”, flowing underneath the valley; one must witness it to grasp its existence. “There are things in nature that engender an awful quiet in the heart of Man; Devil's Tower is one of them” (Momaday, *The Man Made of Words* 123). He penned these words about two decades ago. They adhere true to his encounter. Every time he sees this “Tsoai”, he keeps amazed by its beauty. Around two centuries ago, the Kiowas discovered this place. They were compelled to narrate a story about it:

“There was a total of eight children playing, consisting of seven sisters and one brother. Instantly, the youngster became speechless; he trembled and started to run upon his hands and feet. His fingers transformed into sharp claws, and his entire body gets covered with fur. Immediately, the boy was transformed into a bear. The seven sisters were terrified; they hurried away, with the bear chasing them. They arrived at the stump of a majestic tree, and the tree spooked to them. It instructed them to ascend upon him, and as they complied, it began to grow towards the sky. The bear chased with the intention of killing them, but they were beyond his grasp. He stood against the tree and vigorously scratched its bark with its sharp claws. The seven sisters ascended into the sky and became the stars that make up the Big Dipper.” (Momaday, *The Man Made of Words* 129)

This narrative, reminiscent of his grandmother's anecdote of a young boy undergoing a transformation into "a bear" and his seven sisters undergoing a transformation into celestial bodies, serves as a prime example of what he considers to be sacred. The anonymous storyteller, who initially shared the narrative, effectively elevated the human predicament to a state of universal relevance. He not only acknowledged the presence of the rock tree, but also established a connection between his community and the celestial bodies.

6. CONCLUSION

Momaday perceived the interdependence of the living world via both a logical and philosophical perspective; his respect for the natural world was profound and fervent. He firmly believes that his tribe is deeply rooted to their environment on a spiritual level. His intense attachment with the surroundings symbolised his understanding of the interconnectedness between diverse living forms. He conceived universe without a "human-centric" perspective. Both Native writers and their ancestors perceived the soil, water, sky, trees, and grass not as foreign entities, but as integral components of a vast world, whereby human beings held a minute and inconsequential role. In the Native American literature, the universe is characterised by the interconnectedness of all its elements.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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