

NATIVE AMERICAN SPIRITUALITY AND NATURAL LANDSCAPE IN N. SCOTT MOMADAY'S POETRY

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Abstract

Native Americans are the first people to reside in the United States of America, specifically the northern part of it. One of the famous Native American poets is Scott Momaday. Momaday is a Kiowa Native American poet, storyteller, and novelist. The purpose of this research is to explain traditions, and the significance of natural landscape in Scott Momaday's poetry, focused on words, images and metaphors by means of descriptive qualitative method. The researchers endeavor to apply a concept of Shamanism in Momaday's poetry. Shamanism is an ancient healing tradition, and a way of life. It is a way to connect with nature and all the creations. Every plant for native Americans symbolizes a certain thing, cherries symbolize mercy, and they can heal wounds by the ointment. The data are taken from the poems related to nature and tradition as in *The Earth, Eagle Feather Fan, The Delight Song of Tsoai-Talee, and Angle of Geese*. The results show that natural landscape and traditions are linked to spirituality. For Native Americans, there is no difference between animate and inanimate objects; everything in this life has a soul.

Keywords: *animals; custom; Native Americans; nature; traditions*

1. Introduction

Native Americans are the western half of the world's population, as they live in the north of the United States of America. The first who inhabit the continent were the American Indians, and they were very interested in literature and loved it, as many of their poets emerged, including the poet Scott Momaday (2020), to convey their culture to the world through poetry, plays, and novels. The research argues that Momaday's poetry is filled with native American traditions, values of nature, mythologies, and customs (Berner, 1999: p. 6).

Native Americans are divided into many tribes, and all the tribes have customs, traditions, and a name that indicate these tribes. Among these tribes is the tribe of the poet Scott Momaday, which is called Kiowa. These tribes want to protect their traditions and customs, so they always stay together (Charles, 2007, p. 47).

The researchers try to investigate tradition and nature as depicted in the poetry of Scott Momaday, to explain and show the importance of nature, mythologies, and traditions in Natives. The best example of nature used in poetry is through Native Americans because they pay great attention to nature and some of them worship it.

For them, nature is part of their soul, as they give it a high spiritual value because they see it as a reason for their psychological and physical happiness, as when they want to recover from diseases, they sit in nature, where they feel that nature is life for them, and they see it as a kind woman to them, so they call it "Motherland" (Cohen, 2018: p. 339).

Natives have no religion, as they are pagans, but some of them became Christian when white Americans came to them and spoke to them about religion, they told them that the Christian religion is the right religion because Native Americans did not recognize the existence of the Lord.

Natives are very interested in animals, as we notice that their clothes are made of animal skins and feathers because this thing exists in their culture, in addition to that each animal they have symbolizes a certain thing, for example, a horse for them symbolizes strength because through it they fought the Americans, as the war resulted because of competition for Resources and agricultural lands because the American Indians were continuing to farm and had many crops (Resch, 2005: p. 131).

They deal with the term anthropology, which studies the evolution of man and even his culture, as well as studies myths because they believe very much in myths, especially those that are unique and rare. One of their myths, as conveyed by the Powhatan, is that the story of creation for some of them begins with a rabbit, not a human. They believe that a rabbit is a great figure who can do anything and has the tremendous ability to avail thumping powers (Oberg & Olsen-Harbich, 2022: p. 8).

This research paper is divided into five sections: Section one is an introduction to Native American Traditions and Nature in N. Scott Momaday's Poetry in general. Section two talks about the biography of Scott Momaday as a man and as a writer. Section three is concerned with Native American traditions, which involve their legends, customs, images of animals, and also nature. Section four is dedicated to Momaday's poetry which involves some poems of him. Finally, section five is the conclusion of this research.

Navarre Scott Momaday (1934_) is an American Indian (Trimble, 1973: p. 10). He was born on the 27th of February 1934, specifically in the Kiowa Indian Hospital, which is located in the city of Lawton, southwest Oklahoma, as it is a country in the nation of Kiowa, and he was the only child of his father, who is known as Alfred Morris Momaday (1913 - 1981). Scott Momaday was born between "the great World Wars," this is what he said himself (Lincoln, 2023: p. 240). Scott Momaday is a top-notch poet, artist, novelist, nonfiction writer, editor, essayist, and autobiographer (Cullum, 2004: p. 200).

Momaday lived his first year at his grandparents' home in Kiowa, where he was born and raised. His father also moved to Arizona. His father was a painter, his mother Mayme Natachee (1913 - 1996) wrote children's books, and during Momaday's youth, they taught about reservation, showcasing the traditions of their tribe and even those of the tribes of the Southwest, including the Navajo, Apache, and Pueblo.

Scott Momaday sees himself as a Kiowa, although he is a Cherokee on his mother's side, but also a Kiowa on his father's side. Momaday graduated from the University of New Mexico, earned his MA and Ph.D. in English literature from Stanford University, and now teaches at the University of Arizona. The first woman Momaday married was Gaye Mangold (1959 -1977), but on July 21, 1979, he married Regina Heitzer (1944_). Momaday has four daughters (Velie, 1991: p. 204).

A major theme in Momaday's work is the Kiowa trying to spread the traditions, culture, and beliefs of his tribe and indigenous tribes to the world through his works as well as the human relationship on the ground and the nature of reality (Elsmore, 1993: p. 21). So,

he said that the Indian "ought to educate the white man. We ought to reconstruct our institutions within the dominant society, so that the Indian values are available to the dominant society" (Momaday, 1997, p. 12).

Scott Momaday's most important literary work is the novel "*House Made of Dawn*" (1968). It is the reason he became the first Native American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1969 (Dennis, Hirschfelder, & Molin, 2022) and through which he opened the door for other American Indians to be recognized by both publishers and critics. Momaday also has a great essay which is "The Man Made of Words" (1997). The famous poet, publisher, and critic Joseph Bruchac (1942_) called him "one of the most important contemporary statements about the American Indian writer" (Cullum, 2004: p.200).

We note that Momaday's poetry has a play on syllables, and this thing became the basis of his poetry after he was influenced by his mentor, Yvor Winters (1900 - 1968), during his graduate studies at Stanford, as he has great influence on the techniques and poetic tools in Momaday's poetry. We find this manipulation in both of his very popular poems, *The Angle of the Geese* (1974) and *The Bear* (2020). These poems are syllabic poems. In each of the four lines, the first and third lines contain five syllables, and the second and fourth lines contain seven syllables (Cullum, 2004, p.200).

Momaday has a multi-ethnic experience because he mixed with many multinationals while he traveled through most parts of the world and met a lot of people (Momaday). He has a vision of the place of Indians in American society, in addition to his great interest in nature and its beauty, as we notice this interest in his works, as he has a complete poem that talks about nature, which is *The Earth* (1959) (Momaday, 1997: p. 11).

He believes that imagining landscapes with the mind's eye is a means of self-knowledge, as he believes that one's idea of one's self is related to nature, because he sees the earth as a repository of heritage from which one can draw strength, and this vision gave strength to his poetic way of looking at things, as he looks at things from an angle, he connects it with nature and the spiritual serenity that an individual can obtain from contemplating nature (Momaday, 1997: p. 13).

He has a theory about language, where he sees it as a tool for cultural survival, as he believes that one word has power in itself, and considers the word to be a sacred thing because it can save a person from trouble if he uses it correctly, and it can also get him in trouble if he uses it wrongly, and we note in his writings, he focuses on the strength of his written language and even his oral language (Brígido-Corachán, 2012,: p. 59).

He encourages people to develop language in a way that elevates it and makes it affects people when reading positively. Momaday says, "We enable ourselves to use language to its highest potential. It enables us to realize a reality beyond the ordinary; it enables us to create and to re-create ourselves in story and literature. It is the possible accomplishment of immortality" (Brígido-Corachán, 2012: p. 67). In the sense that he employs his written language in storytelling to preserve the transmission of the culture of his Kiowa tribe, as his strong language lies in his selection of words that can inspire feelings and be a powerful tool for understanding reality, shaping it, and consolidating what it wants in the minds of readers (Brígido-Corachán, 2012: p. 67).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Native American Traditions

Native Americans are the first people to inhabit the far Pacific Ocean and the continental United States, and they are known as the indigenous people of the country. The

history of indigenous people spans thousands of years, predating the Last Glacial Age, which occurred around 24,000 years ago. As a result, they possess a rich tapestry of customs and traditions (Bellwood, 2022: p.129). Native Americans have many tribes, and each tribe has certain customs and traditions, but some of them are similar in many traditions, including reverence for nature, belief in myths, love of animals, and distinctive clothes (Utter, 2001: p.32).

Native Americans have many traditions, including the clothes that they wear, where they are emphasizing to be in a certain shape, especially from animals, where they use bird feathers to make their hats, and these feathers are often from an eagle. The tribes honor each brave person by putting a new feather to his hat, but each tribe has a hat that distinguishes it, and these hats are not just an ornament, rather it is a symbol of courage, generosity, and even spirituality for them, as they put these hats on top of their heads in religious rituals, as well as these hats symbolize leadership, as in some tribes the leader is the only one who puts a feather hat over his head to indicate his leadership. Native Americans use animal skins to make their clothes, and the tents in which they sleep, and these skins are often made from deer (Sheumaker, 2008: p. 26).

For Native Americans, the horse symbolizes strength, courage, chivalry, and control because its rider is in control, and the bat symbolizes death because its movement occurs at night. The wolf indicates intelligence and leadership, and the turtle indicates acting wisely and always persevering.

Native Americans use bird feathers not only for their hats but for several purposes, as they consider it a repellent of evil spirits and negative energy, as well as they believe that feathers give them luck and happiness, in addition to using it to make fire. Animals for Native Americans were not only for clothes and food, but also their myths about them, where each animal symbolized a certain thing, and even their stories were mostly about animals, where animals appear in their songs, arts, and dances when they perform certain festivals, where they wear some animal masks to attract the attention of viewers at the festival (Sheumaker, 2008, p. 26).

Native Americans are very interested in songs, music, dances, and arts, as they are creative in these things because it is considered an important part of their culture and this is evident in their poetry as it is an oral tradition linked to ethnology in the sense that it is transmitted through generations through spoken communication, that is, through speech. We see a lot of diversity in it, as we find songs for love, death, and war, in addition to a lot of things, but he often focuses on emotion as a large part of it, even in novels and stories.

Native Americans believe in spirituality, and we find them very spiritual, but not like the way we are used to, but rather through nature, where they sanctify nature and some of them worship it. They call her "Mother Nature" because for them she is like a woman who is kind to them in everything (Schmidt & Thom, 1994, p. 120).

Each part of nature represents something for Native Americans, as the flower, despite its smallness, considers it a gift from the earth, containing a spirit that the earth gave it as a gift to it. They consider nature to be the one that gives souls to everything, so we see that some of them worship plants because they come from the earth.

Native Americans take their strength from nature, as nature for them is power and energy, and not only that, but also when they get sick, they do not go to the doctor, but rather they set in nature, because for them it is spiritual and physical healing, and they believe that it prolongs their lives. Plants for Native Americans have a certain symbolism. For

example, the cherry tree symbolizes mercy, purity, and healing, as it provides an ointment to heal wounds.

Carter Curtis Revard (1931 – 2022) is an American poet, writer, and scholar. He also looks at nature as a very sacred and spiritual thing, as he sees the beauty of nature in everything, not only flowers and fruits, but even rocks, and we see this in one of his poems, which is *An Eagle Nation* (1993). The poet wants to praise the unity of nature, explaining that while every snowflake may be unique, "they melt to waterdrops identified / each one with every other." He ends his poem with an exhortation to drink water, such as "sparkling champagne" (Otfinoski, 2010: p. 19):

its snowy bubbles briskly
dancing upon our tongues...
within our heads,
but not with grief,
not with regret, only the knowledge
that we'll have our differences, and may
we thank God for them every day (Otfinoski, 2010, p. 19).

Paula Gunn Allen (1939 – 2008) is a Native American poet, novelist, and literary critic. The poet was like her peers from the Native Americans, where she was very interested in myths and sanctified them, as Native Americans were interested in myths, which convey the goal of living in a positive way and reverence for the land, and their myths were transmitted through the oral tradition, as this was the reason for the development of their skills in rhetoric, and the poet Paula says, (Lowinsky, 2016, p. 195)

"There is a spirit that pervades everything, that is capable of powerful song and radiant movement, and that moves in and out of mind. The colors of this spirit are multitudinous, a glowing, pulsing rainbow. Old Spider Woman is one name of this quintessential spirit" (Lowinsky, 2016: p. 195).

Paula explains to us one of the famous myths, "*The Devil and Grandmother Spider*". As the Cherokee tribe believes that darkness dominated the world until the spider grandmother stole the sun and made light permeate life, in addition to that, they believe that the spider grandmother is the one who saves them from chaos, and we see that the spider grandmother in the Hopi legend is a deity, as her threads connect the north and southeast and west (Lowinsky, 2016: p. 196).

Leslie Marmon Silko (1948_) is a Native American writer. The poet spoke about the belief of Native Americans in the issue of self-transformation, as this thing is common to them, as they believe that the power of humans can be transformed into the power of animals, such as the power of the bear, where the poet said in her poem "**Story from Bear Country**" (1981) (Hassan & Sadek, 2015, p. 65):

The problem is you will never want to return
Their beauty will overcome your memory like winter sun
Melting ice shadows from snow
And you will remain with them locked
forever inside yourself, your eyes will see you
dark, shaggy, and thick (Hassan & Sadek, 2015: p. 65).

The poet Leslie wants to explain the spiritual transformation that some people may go through, as the poem narrates the adoption of three bears by a boy, and that their beauty overcame his memory, as the poet spoke in the poem about bears, where the bears made every effort to transform the boy into their kingdom, and not only the boy, but the bears invite people to join to their world, and some people join their world and leave their families, and even their human souls. The poem states that the people who follow the bears do not wish to return to their human world, as they find the animal world more comfortable and peaceful than their human world (Hassan & Sadek, 2015: p. 65).

Native Americans were interested in agriculture, as agriculture for them is a very important thing, from which they get food, and not only that, but also the relationship of spiritual cultivation for them, as everything for them has a spiritual aspect, so we find them planting many flowers, including sunflowers, in addition to the crops from which they get their food is like beans, squash, and corn, as ethnological studies indicate that Native American women gather food, while men dedicate their time to hunting fish and animals, as hunting is one of their traditions.

One of the habits of Native Americans in marriage is that the man gives continuous gifts to the bride until she agrees to marry him. In addition to that, they have a habit, which is that if the man's wife dies, the family of his wife who died gives him another girl from the family. In many tribes, the widow often marries her husband's brother, and also in many tribes, the exchange between wives was a natural matter, as when someone liked someone's wife, they exchanged wives, and in some tribes, brothers shared wives.

3. Research Method

The preparation of this paper has entailed close reading and a hybrid approach to critical accurate analysis of Scott Momaday's poetry. This research is a descriptive qualitative study that aims to describe words, images and metaphors used to express traditions and natural landscape. The main data is collected from Scott Momaday's *Earth keeper: reflections on the American land*. By means of in-depth analysis of selected poems of Momaday's poetry, we can see the value of Native American traditions and natural landscape playing a very important role in Momaday's poetry to establish and embed native roots to their lands once through animals or lands. Natives try to survive by attaching themselves to their lands firmly.

4. Results and Discussion

As we have mentioned before, Native Americans have many traditions, including that they take great care of their clothes and are keen to have special and attention-grabbing shapes, because they say that clothes are one of the means of transmitting their culture. Spirituality is in everything they have, especially nature, because it gives them inner peace, and they say that nature has a great spirit and power that flows through everything in life, such as snow, flowers, and winds. They believe so much in legends and pass them on orally through the generations. They love animals very much and revere them because, for them, each animal symbolizes something. In this section, the researcher is going to discuss these matters that we talked about practically in the poems of the poet Scott Momaday (Resch, 2005, p. 131).

Our poet Scott Momaday talks about many and varied topics in his poems, especially in that he uses animals that are unique to them, nature with all its aesthetics and spirituality, and the traditions of Native Americans. (Elsmore, 1993, p. 58).

The task of the research is to study certain poems, such as "The Earth" (1959) is one of Scott Momaday's famous poems. In this poem, the poet talks about love, but not love in terms of relationships with people, but relationships with places. The poet wants to implant a certain idea in our minds, which is the deep imagination, as he mainly teaches imagination to allow the person to interact with the natural landscapes because we will not be alone as long as we are connected with nature and interact with it.

The poet talks about the land and its relationship with a man and motivates people to think about the land and imagine it, to search for its history, and to have a spiritual and moral sense towards it, as the poet says that Native Americans have a strange imaginative sense, and this sense is determined by the person's cultural and ethnic experience. The poet insists on the existence of a spiritual and moral relationship that Native Americans hold towards the land and that they are convinced that the land is vital and that there are moral duties related to man and the landscape. The poet says that the earth restores us to our humanity and that Native Americans need now more than ever to imagine everything related to the sky and the earth.

The poet says that we should think and focus on everything on the earth, and not only see them with a normal vision, but rather see them, feel them, and realize them with all our senses, even if we see them over and over again. The poet explains that he adores the earth very much, sanctifies it, and wants people to sanctify it as well, as it is the main source of inner peace and positive energy, which whenever they lack, they return by sitting in the green nature. Therefore, the poet says, people should delve deeper into nature with all its small details, including flowers, trees, and grass.

We notice in this stanza that there is a simple sense of Sufism, as Sufism is a practice that some people follow to reach a high degree of faith and to be closer to God. Sufism has stages, and one of these stages is that a person purifies his soul, and we find this with our poet and Native Americans, who purify their soul, not through worship, but through nature and the earth when they sit in it and meditate on the creatures and search for everything on the earth and love it, as that Native Americans have a great curiosity about everything on the earth:

Once in his life, a man ought to concentrate his mind upon
the remembered earth, I believe. He ought to give himself up
to a particular landscape in his experience, to look at it from
as many angles as he can, to wonder about it,
to dwell upon it (Vizenor, 1993: p. 53).

The poet says that a person must imagine the details of nature accurately, as he must imagine that he is touching the earth and landscapes with his hands and sensing them, and imagines the sounds that come from nature, such as the sound of wind, air, trees when moved by the wind, and even the sounds of creatures such as the chirping of birds in the morning and the sounds of animals in the morning. And that our day does not pass as an ordinary day, but we must focus on everything that passes in the day, and the simplest thing is the glow of noon and all the colors of dawn and dusk when they change colors to move from one state to another with the change of time. All of them are simple and ordinary things for us, but the poet sees them as things of beauty and his holiness are great, and wants us to see them like him:

He ought to imagine that he touches it with his hands at
every season and listens to the sounds that are made upon it.

He ought to imagine the creatures there and all the faintest
motions of the wind. He ought to recollect the glare of noon
And all the colors of the dawn and dusk (Lincoln, 2007: p. 36).

In these lines, the poet wants to make clear that the earth is the place where we lived and was raised in it when we were young, playing with each other in large groups, and when we grew up and parted when each person went to make his future, all that was on the earth, as he describes it as the great spirit and that it is an integral part of us. It is what gives us security. Momaday connects earth with the mother, as Native Americans, as we mentioned earlier, say that the earth and nature is a kind woman to us for what she gives us many things and they call it "motherland" where they say that it is true that we have a biological mother, but our real mother is the earth (Schmidt & Thom, 1994, p. 120).

The poet says that we adhere to our national identity and our traditions and wants to reflect the culture of his tribe Kiowa through the use of land and nature and convey it in a written form through this poem and likens it to Bristlecone because this tree is known and perennial and this tree symbolizes Native Americans for longevity and the continuation of resistance to all difficult circumstances. For his tribe to be known to all, and for it to continue generation after generation like this, it should be well known. He talks about the land of his homeland, Oklahoma, as it is called "red land" because its soil has a red color, so they were called "Red Indians":

For we are held by more than the force of gravity to the earth.
It is the entity from which we are sprung, and that into which
we are dissolved in time. The blood of the whole human race
is invested in it. We are moored there, rooted as surely, as deeply
as are the ancient redwoods and bristlecone (Trimble, 1973, p. 37).

The poem *Eagle Feather Fan* (1969) is one of Scott Momaday's poems that is considered evidence for traditions. The poet talks about the importance of animals and says, while holding the eagle in his hands, that this beautiful bird is the source of my strength, because Native Americans consider the eagle a leader, as they use its feathers in their sacred celebrations, as its feathers are an important part of their clothes because it symbolizes for their wisdom, strength, and authority, in addition to its feathers. By using it for healing, because the legend they have says that the eagle feathers have a high healing power to treat diseases, and this is called Shamanism.

Shamanism is a spiritual and supernatural tradition followed by some people, the most prominent of whom are Native Americans, to heal the sick in a primitive way through spirituality. Its principle also states that images of animals are conjured as if they were entrusted with the task of sending messages from humans to the gods. Shamanism is one of the methods of Native Americans in expelling evil spirits and they also use it to bring good luck (Winkelman, 2010, p. 3).

The poet says that the eagle is strong, because of its relationship with God, as Momaday and Native Americans believe that the eagle is a mediator between God, humans, heaven, and earth. Eagle feathers are very beautiful, and as we know that Native Americans are very interested in aesthetic things, so they carry them when they dance, in addition to believing that the eagle will carry prayers through its feathers from people to God:

The eagle is my power
And my fan is an eagle.

It is strong and beautiful.

In my hand. And it is real (Bruchac, 1983: p. 162).

In this stanza, the poet talks about the traditional parties that Native Americans perform. He says that every afternoon they sing and dance. When they dance, they carry a fan of an eagle's wings in their hands, and they spin in their dance like an eagle spin in the sky. The poet says that when I dance, I feel that my hands are swaying in the air as if I am flying just like an eagle when it flies and sways in the sky. They call this dance the eagle dance and consider it a sacred dance for them, in addition to their use of drums because it is considered among their traditions at parties:

My hand veers into the thin air

Of the summits. All morning

It scuds on the cold currents;

All afternoon it circles

To the singing, to the drums (Bruchac, 1983: p. 162).

The poem *The Delight Song of Tsoai-Talee* (1992) is one of Scott Momaday's most spontaneous lyric poems. In the title of the poem, we see the name of Tsoai-Talee, which means "rock-tree boy", and this name was given to Momaday when he was very young, no more than a year old, by an old man close to his father called Pohd-lohk (1863 _ 1939). This man gave Momaday the name when they took him to a place very sacred to the traditions of Momaday tribe called Devils Tower, and his tribe called this place "rock-tree", and because of this, the man gave him this name. From the title of the poem, we conclude that this poem belongs to the traditions of our poet Momaday and his distinctive tribe (Momaday, 2020, p. 105).

In this poem, the poet uses the pronoun (I) and the auxiliary verb (am) because he wants to show how much he loves himself, his upbringing, and his tribe and is very proud of them. He says in his poem how distinguished he is from others because of the traditions of his tribe and his distinguished family, as he tries to consolidate his origins in our minds and compares himself to several things through his poem, including the roar of the rain, where the rain falls abundantly, and it has a beautiful voice when it falls, so he associates it with himself, as the poet has a beautiful voice when reading poems that affect the heart of the listener.

Likewise, he compares himself to snow when we see its luster in the winter, as there are many snow crumbs, but we rarely find crumbs of snow that shine and are attractive to our eyes when we see them. They are rare, and I am among those rare, so we see him using pictures of picturesque nature because of his love for them and to make us contemplate them.

We also see another analogy, which is the reflection of the moon in the lake, so the poet wants to make it clear that my image and the image of my tribe will not be erased from the world, as it is everywhere, even if some want to erase it, you will find it reflected in pictures, magazines, and everything that is distinguished and known.

The other analogy is with the four colors of flame, which is yellow because it symbolizes creativity and intelligence, and our poet is creative in what he does to highlight himself and his intelligence, and we see his intelligence through his interviews and even through his works. The red color symbolizes courage, strength, and passion, as Momaday is a person who loves everyone, especially his family. The blue color symbolizes imagination and

spirituality, as the poet always encourages us to imagine nature, and because he is a spiritual person, he deliberately used the symbolism of this color. Finally, the violet color symbolizes self-respect and inner peace, because our poet respects himself a lot and has a great inner peace that he derives from nature:

I am the roaring of the rain
I am the glitter on the crust of the snow
I am the long track of the moon in a lake
I am a flame of four colors (Lown & Steinbergh, 1996: p. 15).

The poet begins by likening himself to a dazzling animal for himself and for all Native American tribes, which is the deer, so he says that he is like a deer when it stands far away in the first darkness of the night after sunset. Momaday chose this animal for its symbolism to them, as it symbolizes hunting, honor, strength, and longevity, and because our poet was very interested in hunting, so he chose this animal. Some Native Americans believe that the deer is a messenger from God to them, so they sanctify it and put it as their emblem, and this is what we call "Totemism".

A totemism is every entity that plays the role of an emblem or symbol for a particular tribe, and they sanctify it because they consider it the protector. It is a belief system that enhances our aesthetic and religious feelings, or it is the mystical relationship with a spiritual being, whether this object is a plant or an animal. This term was launched by the Anglo-Irish teacher, translator, and priest James Long (1793-1822) (Cometan, 2019: p. 51).

The poet likens himself to a field of woody shrubs, namely sumac, which he chose precisely because its colors become bright in the fall. He was not content with it but also chose pomme blanche, these are two French words that mean white apples. He wants to say that the happier a person is, the more colorful the world becomes for him.

The poet here recalls the geese and that its symbolism is self-esteem and loftiness, as the poet wants to say that I will remain tall as long as I live. Momaday also wrote a complete poem entitled *Angle of Geese* (1974), and we will analyze some of this poem as well in our research. We notice that the poet frequently invokes this title in his poems and novels because they refer to nature since ancient times.

We see the poet using the wolf animal in his poem, as the poet compares it to himself with persistence and determination, because the wolf is a very strong animal, especially when it is hungry. It does anything to get its food, meaning that it insists on doing whatever it wants. The poet is trying to tell us, through that image, to do what we can to get what we wish for, as I did by conveying the traditions of my tribe through novels, poems, and whatsoever:

I am a deer standing away in the dusk
I am a field of sumac and pomme blanche
I am an angle of geese in the winter sky
I am the hunger of a young wolf
I am the whole dream of these things (Lown & Steinbergh, 1996, p. 15).

In this stanza, the poet wants us to be alive. What he means is that we stand in a good relationship with the earth, because he has a great spiritual relationship with the earth, and he sees its beauty reflected through his calmness and his control over his anger, and this mental clarity he derived from it. This type of poetry is an expression of the deep connection

between man, earth, spirituality, and beauty. The poet emphasizes what he has said by repeating lines in this stanza, this a process called "Refrain":

see, I am alive, I am alive
I stand in good relation to the Gods
I stand in good relation to the earth
I stand in good relation to everything that is beautiful...
You see, I am alive, I am alive (Lown & Steinbergh, 1996, p. 15).

The poem *Angle of Geese* (1974) was written by Momaday, because of his memory of the death of one of his close friends, and also because of his experience going hunting when the goose fell into his arms. We see the poet in this stanza defending his tribe and saying that it is a civilized tribe, and not as some claim by saying that Native Americans are neither civilized nor educated. Here the poet says that he witnessed upon the death of his close friend that the culture of his tribe in grief is very deep and cannot be described in words. And I am more traditional than some of those white Americans who want to distort the image of grief among Native Americans and accuse them of barbaric things such as tearing clothes, cutting hair, etc. Where he says:

Custom intervenes;
We are civil, something more:
more than language means,
The mute presence mulls and marks (Velie,1991: p. 299).

The poet explains the story of the goose in this stanza, saying that when he was young, he went with his father and his father's friends hunting on the first day of November, and they hunted geese by the river, as his father's friends used to do. The hunters agreed to shoot all of them at the same time, and indeed they did when they saw the geese flying in the sky, but only one goose fell. Scott Momaday picked up this goose that had died and Momaday kept looking at the sky to see the rest of the geese flying, he says that this goose has a family and ancestors as well as I have, so that moment when he watches the geese and thinks for him it was longer as if it were an hour:

And one November
It was longer in the watch,
As if forever,
Of the huge ancestral goose (Velie,1991: p. 299).

He wanted to make it clear in his poem that this goose that died is a symbol of nature, and he recalled through it the importance of the goose for Native Americans, as it symbolizes sincere love emanating from the depths of the heart. The geese fly in groups in the sky and the poet relates them to his ancestors and his tribe, how they stand shoulder to shoulder with each other, love each other, and help each other, as they work in groups, just like geese that fly in groups in the sky.

In this stanza, the poet talks about his grief for his childhood friend and describes his feelings to us. He says that everything after his separation has become the same, that even the bright colors in life have become pale for him, and that he is pained by the expression of this sadness. He says that it has become a mere margin of comfort after his separation and before he overcomes the shock of his death (Lincoln, 2007, p. 299):

So much symmetry!
Like the pale angle of time
And eternity.
The great shape labored and fell (Velie, 1991: p. 299).

Momaday continues to talk about his childhood friend in the last stanza, saying that he left behind all the high hopes and big dreams that he had, but on the other hand, he got rid of the harm that might have befallen him at a young age. Momaday was remembering his friend that he had a firm view, meaning a look of determination to fulfill his future wishes and that he was fully prepared to achieve them. His friend had no long life because he was still young, but nature preferred to contain him in her arms and take him into the far darkness, which is the grave, for him to return to his mother of origin, which is the earth.

5. Conclusions

It is noticed through research that our poet Scott Momaday frequently uses images related to the land and traditions in his poems, because he wants to strengthen country's attachment to his homeland, so that he wants his people to remember this thing. The traditions of Native Americans and especially his tribe should not be erased from people's memory. The sense of connection between the earth and Native Americans is spiritually linked where they consider the earth is the source of inner peace. This is clearly demonstrated when he says: I stand in good relation to the earth/ I stand in good relation to everything that is beautiful. Notably, animals have many symbols, just as the eagle symbolizes strength, and the horse symbolizes self-confidence. The article concluded that everything in life for Native Americans has a soul, and for them, there is no difference between anything having a soul and humans. Native Americans are interested in animals to give praise to those animals that once upon a time, they united with the native people where they say we are all one, they have a sense of oneness. As we have seen in his famous poem, "*Angle of Geese*" the poet is identified with deer, goose and wolf. The heavily use of these animals give sense of power, wisdom, leadership and the sense of equality between humans and animals for Native Americans.

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