CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

IMPORTANCE OF 'NATURE' WRITING IN THE CURRENT SCENARIO

Rendering the richness of the oral tradition into written literature, Momaday has not only achieved satisfaction of his self but also conveyed the treasure of wisdom of the ancient folk. What he coveys through the works discussed has the potential to wake the modern man from the slumber of his smugness and complacence. The analysis chapters bring out the inevitable bond one establishes with ‘nature’ to achieve self fulfilment. All the three protagonists, Momaday, Abel and Set attain their communal identity first in order to reconstruct their individual identity. ‘Nature’ serves as a mediator between the memories of these characters and their ancestors. The different elements in ‘nature’—landscape, animals and plant life—enhance this process of rebirth.

Jung has studied in detail the rebirth of an individual. According to him there are four kinds of rebirths namely metempsychosis, reincarnation, resurrection and rebirth. The final one is the only category which happens within the individual life span.

This word has a special flavour; its whole atmosphere suggests the idea of renovation, renewal, or eve of improvement brought about by magical means. Rebirth may be a renewal without any change of being, inasmuch as the personality which is renewed is not changed in its essential nature, but only its functions, or parts of the personality, are subjected to
healing, strengthening, or improvement. Thus even bodily ills may be healed through rebirth ceremonies. (Jung 114)

The regaining of tribal identity by the protagonists facilitates their rebirth. ‘Nature’ had built herself into their consciousness through various manifestations while they were growing children. Taken away from such environs, they fall into spiritual loneliness the panacea for which lies in restoration of their links with native ‘nature.’ As demonstrated by the analyses in the preceding chapters ‘nature’ acts as curative agent endowing them with identity and enriching their consciousness.

Aesthetics constitutes one of the most important aspects of our everyday life. Aesthetic preferences are highly indicative of a person’s identity—not only that which is attained but also that which is in the making. For example, choosing particular shapes for day to day items such as pens or clothes and their colours. Our planet is made of colours and the blending they make by themselves in phenomena like the rainbow and the aurora, or the sky at sunrise and sun dusk makes us all wonder. In recent times, the concept and perception of colour has attracted research attention in a considerable way. Edward O. Wilson in his bestselling book Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge argues that colour vocabulary in various languages makes out a strong case for the idea of “gene-culture coevolution.” He adds: “scientists have traced it all the way from the genes that prescribe colour perception to the final expression of color perception in language” (173).

V.S Ramachandran gives an account of the emergence of colour vision.
When our shrewlike ancestors became diurnal, evolving into pro-simians and monkeys, they began to develop extrasophisticated visuomotor capacities for precisely grasping and manipulating branches, twigs and leaves. Furthermore, the shift in diet from tiny nocturnal insects to real, yellow, and blue fruits, as well as to leaves whose nutritional value was colour coded in various shades of green, yellow, propelled the emergence of a sophisticated system for color vision. (42)

Both the observations present the idea of colour, by extension aesthetics, as an evolutionary product and not just cultural as held by many. In the light of the analysis of Momaday’s works, it can be stated that the restorative capability of ‘nature’ can no longer be simply considered a hundred percent esoteric phenomenon. The two scientists, the first an evolutionary biologist and the second a neuroscientist and an Adjunct Professor of Biology, suggest that identification of natural causes for certain aesthetic-mystical experiences seems an imminent possibility. If ‘nature’ and evolution have had a making role in *homo sapiens* and their cultural products, it makes sense to go back to nature to reactivate processes to unlearn and relearn towards recuperation and restoration as illustrated by the protagonists selected for study.

Aesthetic choice and judgement are no mere matter of taste and appreciation but crucial to creating one’s identity and in making moral decisions. It enables us to perceive and enjoy all art forms as well as evaluate and understand life experiences.
We make art, and do so to make ourselves. And to do this well, we need to learn from the master artist, ‘nature.’

According to researchers in the University of Sheffield, “the tranquil environmental scenes containing natural features, such as the sea, cause distinct brain areas to become connected with one another whilst man-made environments, such as motorways, disrupt the brain connections.” Michael Hunter from Sheffield Cognition and Neuroimaging Laboratory says that “people experience tranquillity as a state of calmness and reflection, which is restorative compared with the stressful effects of sustained attention in day-to-day life” (Tranquil Scenes 13). These observations too reveal the need to reconnect with ‘nature’ and validate what Momaday conveys through his narratives.

In the origin myth of the Kiowas, they were delighted to see many things around them. This delight that his ancestors had felt created a strong longing in Momaday to see the different ‘colours’ in ‘nature.’ Despite being a highly established creative writer, he is proud of being a painter. His close observation of the forms and changes of colours in each moment and each season constitutes the larger part of the narratives of his memoirs.

The sun was going down, and now the sky was red and purple in the west. For a few minutes the buildings of the town of Mountain View were edged with orange light, especially the underside of a water tank and the white wall of a silo; then the buildings backed off into the dusk and there was a blur upon them (TN 72).
There are innumerable expressions like this in his narratives. In *House Made of Dawn*, Abel has a strong aversion to white colour for it appears to him as colourless. In Jungian terms the negative aspect of white colour is ‘emptiness.’ The white walls of the prison, the albino and even the dim colours of the machines and buildings in the city disturbed his mind. But back home, the colours of the land rejuvenate his senses. He spends the whole day from dawn to dusk watching the sun painting the landscapes with different shades of colours with its rays.

The colourful wilderness amazes Set a great deal. The artistic quality in him is restored once again when he sees ‘nature’ both as the canvas and the painter. He is inspired by the irresistibility and spontaneity of ‘nature’ the painter. The artist in him establishes a link with his late father through the colour of the catlinite found in his native land.

We are all attracted to ‘nature’s’ beauty. But to what extent do we dwell upon the role of ‘nature’ in our day to day life? We may never notice the sun rise every day but there are occasions when a narrow beam of sun light shakes you up from your depression and gives you hope. Momaday’s idea of looking at land in “as many angles” as possible provides the readers with new horizons of exploration of nature’s beauty.

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. 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. (*TWM* 83)

Each one must respond to and explore ‘nature’ for himself. Human consciousness is a
product of thousands of years of interactive sensitivity between man and ‘nature.’ Sensory
inputs from man-made environment, as mentioned above, only “disrupt.” This being
the case, it becomes imperative that one needs to reconnect with ‘nature’ if spiritual
requirements are to be met. Consciousness cannot derive peace out of sensory inputs
from fabricated environments far removed from the reality of ‘nature.’ It will feel at
home only on restoration of original links with ‘nature.’

Momaday, Abel and Set enjoy the rhythm of ‘nature’ by observing her and
also by singing and running. By making poems, singing the night chant and running,
the three find their own rhythm in synchrony with the rhythmic movement of ‘nature.’
As ‘nature’ is said to be created out of the five elements, it is possible to see ‘nature’
as sum total of rhythms. From the rhythmic movement of the minute particles like
electrons and protons in their orbits and the rhythmic movements of the planets and
stars the universe is formed. And this very rhythm of the universe is mentioned in the
vedic literature as ‘Om,’ which contains the three phonemes /a/, /u/ and /m/ indicating
the creation, time span, and closure of the universe. The three sounds are considered
the beginning, the middle and the end sounds using different parts of the mouth, from
the throat to the lips. The sound of ‘Om’ is thus considered the primordial sacred
sound for, it denotes the phenomenon of creation of the universe. The Gospel According to
St. John begins as follows. “In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” The universe itself had begun in sound — the big bang — a sensory phenomenon. Religious accounts, as all of us know, cannot be treated as literal truth. But it should not be forgotten that such accounts served a purpose and continue to do so. Wilson observes:

Repeated from one generation to the next, submission to the group and its moral codes is solidified in official doctrine and personal belief. But it is not ordained by God or plucked from the air as self evident truth. It evolves as a necessary device of survival in social organisms. (268)

Spiritual and religious beliefs were in fact programmes written by the master programmer, Evolution. We have evolved no doubt but also carry within us survival mechanisms designed for primitive situations, reason enough to attempt to understand this aspect of human personality. It is a good sign that psychology first and now brain and evolutionary sciences are showing interest in the spiritual nature of human beings. Wilson is optimistic about science providing answers to questions that have been around for millennia.

You say that science cannot explain spiritual phenomena. Why not? The brain sciences are making important advances in the analysis of complex operations of the mind. There is no apparent reason why they cannot in time provide a material account of the emotions and ratiocination that compose spiritual thought. (269)
In such an eventuality, works such as Momaday’s will offer perspectives enabling enlightened comprehension of the human condition. Consciousness itself would not have been possible without input by the senses. Momaday’s works carry spiritual and sensory richness and dwell on the interactivity between the two aspects. The route to the senses must be kept open and unimpeded for an individual to become whole.

‘Freedom’ of body, mind and soul is what the three protagonists attain at the end. This characteristic of freedom is in their blood as they belong to the nomadic tribe of Kiowas. In the Prologue to *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, Momaday proudly describes his ancestors as “great adventurers” who set off on a great journey, finally letting free their “nomadic soul” (3-4). The Kiowas were originally mountain people and their mobility on the mountains was limited by the difficult, demanding terrain. When they moved to the plains they “acquired horses” (4) for great mobility. Hunting buffalos on horseback gave them a feeling of independence and power.

Like the Kiowas searched for the land of their destiny, Momaday travels fifteen hundred miles tracing the migratory path of his ancestors. The journey plays a pivotal role in letting his self free. According to him “there is perfect freedom in the mountains” (*TWRM* Introd.7). He enjoys spending a lot of time on the mountains, mesas, canyons and the plains.

The character of the landscape changed from hour to hour in the day, and from day to day, season to season. Nothing there of the earth could be taken for granted; you felt that Creation was going on in your sight.
You see things in the high air that you do not see farther down in the lowlands. In the plains you can see farther than you have ever seen, and that is to gain a great freedom (TN 122).

It is the freedom of the senses he tells us about. His observation of ‘nature’ is not limited to a period of time or a particular landscape. Only a keen observer can derive the ecstasy of seeing the process of creation in front of his eyes. Freedom of mind is achieved when he lets loose his imagination in the form of creative writing. And finally he could free his soul by experiencing the holiness of Sun, tai-me, talyi-da-i, and the mystic union with Tsaoi.

The freedom Abel achieves is manifested in his dawn run. The sights and sounds of the open fields and the valley have given intimations of approaching freedom. As a child he had freedom of movement. He used to get the chance of hunting with elders. Life then was not complicated and troubles were nearly absent. But the moment he thinks of his life in the city, anxiety rushes into him. As his initial hunches had indicated, it was difficult for him to get along in the city life. Nothing was going right for him in the city. He tried his best to lead a peaceful life but in vain. There were restrictions of all kinds. In the city he was under control and surveillance, by his boss at the job and by the police. He found himself a stranger in a strange land in contrast to the freedom he has at his disposal in his native land.

Set too achieves the same freedom of body, mind and soul. His achievement of freedom is also manifested in the form of his running—running for its own sake and not with any destination in mind. When he is broken down mentally, the four walls of his
studio suffocate him. He is found lying in his own urine and vomit on the studio floor. After having suffered such abjection, it is a liberating experience for him when he beholds the vastness of the plains. His running is an experience of freedom and an instance of the ritual of regaining his lost strength.

The struggle between the conscious and the unconscious is another feature common to Momaday and his characters. According to Jung, ‘self’ is the sum total of the conscious and the unconscious. The two intersect and interact to achieve a balance which is individuation. Freud considers this the necessary developmental process in a person. The longing in Momaday to create a strong tribal identity irrespective of his mixed Anglo-native American background shows the struggle between the conscious and the unconscious in him. The memoirs demonstrate efforts to connect himself with the objects, flora, fauna, landscape, memories and ancestors of his tribe. The juxtaposition of the personal narrative and the folk tale in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* is a written expression of the individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. The balance between the two is made possible only after he establishes himself as a storyteller of his tribe. Among the twenty four stories he has narrated, the last four depict incidents associated with Mammedaty and Aho, his grandfather and grandmother. Momaday makes these narratives using his memory and imagination lending the characters legendary and mythical significance. By this travelling back in his psyche Momaday attains unified self by creating the identity for himself as a Kiowa storyteller.

In the case of Abel, the struggle is between tradition and modernity. He sets off to the city twice, hoping for positive change. Whereas other tribal men like him
could slowly adapt to the changes in religion and culture which confronted them in the city, Abel found the same very difficult. The more he pushed himself to adjust, the more his unconscious pulled him back to traditional ways. He goes through severe mental trauma and commits many a mistake before finally finding a balance through the ritual of dawn run. An identical progression towards balance is also witnessed in Set which is discussed in the fourth chapter.

It is important to differentiate Momaday’s works from the mainstream literary narratives. Journey and progression are the defining elements of any fictional narrative. Most narratives deal with the formation of the individual self through interaction with the social environment. Social issues come to the fore in such novels. To cite a popular example, Dickens’ *Great Expectations* deals with the theme of the gap between expectations and reality. The protagonist’s problem is to find a way out of this difficult situation by learning, maturing and accepting life. Paulo Coelo’s *Alchemist*, a recent work dealing with human expectations underlines the futility of such a search. Santiago, the protagonist embarks upon a journey to discover a treasure. On reaching the spot and digging, he finds only the roots of a tree. What is brought out is the futility of such aspirations and the transient nature of life. But the journey or the search also enables understanding of the paradox of the need for both hoping and failing.

Momaday’s narratives move towards synthesis. The retrospections in the protagonists seemingly have their antecedents in their recent past. But on a closer look it is revealed that the writer in fact makes us travel in ecological time—to those primitive sensory connections between human consciousness and ‘nature.’
The protagonists are transported to that ancient paradigm involving the progression from sensory experience to perception and then to concepts. Momaday’s works are explorations of the deep emotional correspondences the characters have with the environment.

Nature’s role as a constant comfort provider to the depressed protagonist is the peculiar feature of Momaday’s works. One can say it is the Native American cultural background that inclines the protagonists to depend on ‘nature’ for healing their mind and soul. The protagonists of most of the Native American novels overcome the confusions and frustrations in their life only when they try to reconnect to the lost link with the ancestors. *Ceremony, Winter in the Blood,* and *The Surrounded* are examples of such novels. This connectedness one can establish only when he understands his own concord with ‘nature.’

Connecting the folk stories and the memoirs has special importance in this study, as the former suggests the collective impressions of author’s community and the latter the personal perceptions as a member of the community. Psychologists agree that a person is influenced both by his individual and communal histories. In Freudian terms, Momaday’s works can be explored as suppressed feelings hidden in his unconscious. Indeed, Momaday acknowledges this fact in the case of Set, though not in the case of Abel. The folk background of the author, his personal experiences, and those of his characters constitute what exactly he means by ‘nature.’ Beyond the physical needs, ‘nature’ plays the role of an initiator in his search for identity, serves as a spiritual
source and provides inspiration for his creative activity; altogether, ‘nature’ is what leads him to self fulfilment.

Momaday is leading a multifaceted life now; enjoying his roles as professor of English literature, Pulitzer prize winning author and a pioneer in native American writing, a respected ghost dancer in his Kiowa community, founder of the Rainy Mountain Foundation and Buffalo Trust — non profit organisations to conserve native American cultures. According to Morgan “N. Scott Momaday’s legacy reaches far beyond regional and national boundaries. His works, in all their many forms, and his other endeavours have had, and will continue to have, universal significance. His voice is for all peoples, all places, and all times” (56). The phenomenon that is Momaday demonstrates a noticeable capacity for synthesis. It is relevant to refer to Wilson’s rather prophetic statement which emphasizes the importance of bringing together knowledge from different fields of intellectual labour.

We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom. The world henceforth will be run by synthesizers, people able to put together the right information at the right time, think critically about it, make important choices wisely. (294)

The globalized world and the prevalence of multicultural situations and contexts definitely require the kind of talent and capacity described by Wilson. Under the circumstances, literary works such as Momaday’s hold tremendous relevance to negotiating the contemporary emotional and intellectual terrain.
The rebirth of Momaday, Abel and Set coincide with their reunion with family, clan, rituals associated with it and at last the whole of humanity. When Abel comes back to his town the only family member waiting for him is his grandfather Francisco. Set is overwhelmed to find his kin in Oklahoma. “To Indians tribe means family, clan, community, ceremonial exchanges with nature, and an animate regard for all creation as sensible and powerful” (Lincoln 8).

There are differences between Abel and Set. Abel is fully a tribe man whereas Set had stayed with parents only up to the age of seven. His knowledge of tribal living is what he gleans from his memories of the stories told by his father. In this comparison, Abel comes across as a person who is self-reliant while Set is dependent on support by his relatives and medicine men for recovery. As an artist, Set’s situation is more complex than Abel’s. It follows naturally that the process of self recovery is equally complex.

The loss of identity can occur to a group or a person owing to cultural shift. Here, the entire Native Indian community is represented by Momaday, Abel and Set. The Native American life style was appreciated by Washington Irving and Benjamin Franklin. A complete going back to primitive way of living is untenable and in a way unattainable. We can derive, from certain ways of their living, lessons forgotten but needed now to put our lives in order. The travel back to and sojourn in the primitive past is meaningful only when we use them for repair and restoration of the self.

By interpreting the tribal literatures all over the world, we are looking for some important ethical ingredients of life lost somewhere in the middle of the process of
civilization. A sense of connectedness to others is seen in its intensity only among the
tribals. According to Bevis, “the first assumption of tribalism is that the individual is
completed only in relation to others, that man is a political animal (lives through a
relationship to a village-state), and the group which completes his ‘being’ is
organized in some meaningful way” (20 ). Moon, a psychologist, says:

We in America have a wealth of indigenous myths which have for centuries
carried the meaning of man, but this richness we have largely ignored as we
have ignored most values offered by the American Indian (3).

The memoirs depict Momaday’s achievement of understanding and internalization of
tribal living and values.

A part of my life happened to take place at Jemez. I existed in that
landscape, and then my existence was indivisible with it. I placed my
shadow there in the hills, my voice in the wind that ran there, in those
old mornings. It may be that the old people there watch for me in the
streets; it may be so (TN 142).

Momaday gives a highly poetic account of his response to the landscape. Joseph
Carroll, a literary Darwinist, disagrees with the ecocritical concept that literature is a
product of the ecosystem. “Literature is produced by the psyche, not the ecosystem,
and the psyche has been produced by natural selection” (87). But he argues that
“responsiveness to the sense of place is an elemental component of the evolved
human psyche” (Ibid 86). The foregoing analyses prove that Momaday and his characters
are adept at entertaining this “sense of place” in their surrender to and meditation upon ‘nature.’ It is not mere physical presence amidst ‘nature’ that does the trick but tuning one’s responses. Momaday’s words capture succinctly the need for developing responses that can lead to complete investment of one’s self in the interaction with ‘nature.’

The restoration of Abel, Set and Momaday needed a coming back to their land and a dynamic activation of their sense of place. Abel and Set go through mental and physical breakdown while Momaday’s is a conscious journey he undertakes to attain self-fulfilment. The narrative figures have specific characteristics of their own. Abel is an illiterate common man, Set a successful painter and Momaday a writer.

It is unusual, even odd, to be treating on a similar plane personal and fictional narratives. But Momaday warrants this approach as the juxtaposition is intentional. He is in fact inviting us to notice the compatibility and correspondences between life and literature and infer the process that translates actual experiences into literary works. The reconfiguring and recomposition of the self is sure the stuff of literature and equally the stuff of life.

We have already referred to Bevis’ argument that the rebirth of the protagonists can happen only when they arrive at their aboriginal landscape. Matthias Shubnell takes a similar view of Momaday’s works. He says, “if House Made of Dawn illustrated the tragic consequences of an Indian’s confusion over his place and self, and The Way to Rainy Mountain reflected Momaday’s own exploration of his racial heritage, The Names illustrates his personal quest for an American Indian identity” (38).
The place of origin is very important to man as, like the womb, it gives comfort and security. One’s native place thus plays a crucial role in constituting the sense of home. The place of birth and childhood construct the basic personality features of a man and the natural setting forms a specific culture which in turn contributes to the making of one’s peculiar identity. Bachelard considers the place of origin the source of past memories (8). It is only when the protagonists reach their native lands life changing memories surface in the consciousness of the characters. Home, as suggested by the present study is not a specific place. It is a concept, an idea which configures itself in one’s psychic make up. The place where one is born and grows gains prominence as it gets associated with certain fundamental, foundational structures of consciousness and the cognitive processes that caused them.

In the physical structure of the body we find traces of earlier stages of evolution and we may expect the human psyche also to conform in its make-up to the law of phylogeny. (Jung 180)

When a person finds himself at the cross roads of life, completely befuddled, it becomes inevitable that he retraces his steps to his origins: a sentiment powerfully expressed by The Beatles when they sang together for the last time from the terrace of the Apple Recording Company building the number “Get back to where you once belonged” on 30th January, 1969. It is like an equivalent to gene therapy at a psycho-spiritual level. Revisiting native place reconnects the person with those initial structures of consciousness which in turn enable him to find ‘home’ within himself and sustain it.
Set is confused about his identity which, for it to be fulfilling, has to have strong relations to land, people, and art. This confusion is what caused his physical and mental breakdown. The violence in him toward others is indicative of his mental instability. It is probable that the presence of violence in him led to Set bringing together animals and humans in his paintings without being conscious of it.

In the recent decades, the emotional quotient of human beings has been the object of much research. It was a paradigm shift in man’s notion of individual well being. Earlier decades elevated a man of high intelligent quotient, most of the time ignoring his emotional fitness. In the current era, social adaptability of man is directly linked to his spiritual and emotional fitness.

Science developed in opposition to religion, because religion has been exploited by people in power. Scientific and technological development helped fight the tyranny of and oppression by religion. While religion has not exactly lost its privileged position, science has come to be perceived as a kind of saviour. “Scientism is the view that empirical natural science has authority over other interpretation of reality and life, such as religious, spiritual, philosophical, mythical or humanistic expectations” (Verzchurant et. al. xxv ). But scientific materialism as a form of philosophy has in no way helped man know himself and attain self fulfilment. Neither religion nor science has provided complete answers.

It is important to see the differences in the perspectives of Eurocentric thinking and Native American thinking. In the current era of globalisation, European thought patterns are more familiar to the world than tribal thinking all over world. The surprising
factor is that the aboriginal belief systems are explored and studied all over the world but the studies and discussions always stay with the researchers and fail to reach the public. Schermer points out the need for understanding the different gods and belief systems. According to him each religion has its own characteristics:

Some with many deities, others with one (Judaism), still others with the One divided into the Three (Christianity); some sects of Buddhism with none; some ancient religions (as in Homeric Greece) with multiple gods; some with the gods inhabiting a different space from humans (heaven and earth; within the village and the distant mountains); within time and outside of time (Jesus incarnate and the Father eternal); some with God as masculine, some feminine. (48)

Schermer elaborates on the notion of different gods in different places with regard to the geographical pattern of the places. The characteristics of the gods differ according to the territorial difference or the need of the people. He argues:

Think about it. If you were meandering around Greece, you might find a goddess behind a bush (Aphrodite? Diana?); a god on a mountain who made lightning (Zeus); or else a sun god (Apollo) who reliably drove his chariot across the sky. But if you were escaping Egypt and wandering through the desert, God might approach you with a firm voice and tell you ‘I am whom I am’ so that your tribe could have strong leadership. As a poor man or woman in Jerusalem and threatened daily by abusive Roman soldiers you might see God in a compassionate
Christ who came to redeem you. And if you were a Native American, finding solace and survival in the wilderness or the plains, you could see God as a spirit present in everything around you. Yet it is the same God. We all feel that unity even if we differ theologically (48).

The fundamental teachings of religions dwell on the relationship between human and human and human and nonhuman environment. Religion too started as a way of making sense of man and his place in the universe and it would be unfair to hold that it caused only ignorance and curtailment of freedom. The evolutionary usefulness of the idea of religion cannot be overlooked.

God or no God, heaven or no heaven, hell or no hell the spiritual nature of human beings is real. Momaday’s works repeatedly emphasise the importance of finding spiritual fulfilment. By concentrating on the essential connections between human consciousness and the landscape in which it sprouted and grew, Momaday is able to present in a secular perspective what otherwise would be a typical religious experience. Religion demands unquestioning faith and surrender thus lessening the anthropocentric value of human existence. Man simply is a cog in the intelligent design behind the cosmos or it could be argued that he enjoys an exalted position as God has made him in His own image. The debate between science and creation science is an ongoing one and there is vociferous support in the US to give Creationism, the status of science. Science and religion have not met so far though it is true that we need both. Here is where perspectives of the nature of Momaday’s have a crucial role to play in bringing together knowledge from domains antithetically related thus far.
American Indians have been converted by Spanish missionaries from the 15th century onwards. The churches they follow are Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, and the Peyote cult of Native American church. They try to bring back the old practices like Sun Dance ceremony. Vine Deloria, says that mostly this “massive shift” to “traditional healing ceremonies” are triggered by the clergy itself (253). According to him the reasons behind the shift are national, ecological and spiritual.

*The Ancient Child* was written twenty years after the publication of *House Made of Dawn*. A comparison of the two novels reveals changes in religious beliefs that have taken place in the intervening period of twenty years. *House Made of Dawn* has descriptions of Jemez Catholicism and the Peyote Cult. Walatowa, the setting of the novel, is based on the Jemez Pueblo where Momaday spent his childhood. He calls the people of Walatowa Tanoans since they speak the Tanoan language. *House Made of Dawn* is set in the 1940s and 50s when Jemez Catholicism was a mix of the Kachino Cult of Pueblos and the Catholicism of Conquistadors and Spanish Missionaries. No Christian tradition was left out then. While Christianity and the peyote cult coexist in *House Made of Dawn*, *The Ancient Child* gives greater presence to the peyote cult in comparison to Christianity. Thus the two novels together demonstrate the dramatic changes in the belief system of the Native Americans in a span of twenty years.

On the reservations we are seeing amazing resiliency in restoring the old ceremonies. A massive shift in allegiance is occurring in most tribes away from Christianity and secularism and back towards the
traditional ways. A surprisingly high percentage of native American clergy are also doing traditional ceremonies and urban area churches are often the scene of traditional healing ceremonies. (Deloria 253)

*House Made of Dawn* portrays the change of attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Tanoan religion between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, Fr. Olguin, priest at Jemez is in possession of a journal written in 1870s by his predecessor Fray Nicolas. The journal reveals that Nicolas considered Tanoan rituals devil worship. He had wanted the Holy Spirit to strike his sacristan Francisco dead, for he dared to dance inside the kiva. That the attitude has undergone a significant change is made clear when Fr. Olguin takes Angela to a festival of the Natives. The attitude now is integrative. In another instance the narrator says that “the people of the town…do not hanker after progress and have never changed their essential way of life. Their invaders were a long time in conquering them, and now, after four centuries of Christianity, they still pray in Tanoan to the old deities of earth and sky” (56).

Lattin explores the mythic vision in *House Made of Dawn* and the Chicano novel *Bless Me, Ultima*. Lattin finds out that many other protagonists in the Native American Novels reject Christianity in their search for mythic vision. According to Lattin, the protagonist attains his identity only when he rejects Christianity. Lattin points out the change of the narrator in *Winter in the Blood*, a Native American novel. At the end of the novel the narrator learns about his grandfather Yellow Calf.

Yellow Calf’s act of love and his sense of continuity with existence prepare the narrator for his own rebirth. Returning home, he sees a
cow drowning in a pool of sucking mud, risking his own life, he attempts to save the animal by entering the muddy earth. Momentarily entombing himself, the narrator sees clearly the greed and lack of love surrounding his life, and, although he is unable to free the cow, he has freed himself; he returns home to bury his grandmother, realizing that a sense of holiness and meaning can again exist for him. When he honours his grandmother with the pagan custom of burying personal belongings (a tobacco pouch and an arrow head) with her, he affirms the pagan vision of the continuity of life, and he rediscovers the sacred in the secular modern world (627-628).

The sense of belonging he feels towards his land and people is achieved only when he follows the tribal tradition. In both the tribal and Christian religions, there are no evidences of exploitation of ‘nature’ or a divine order to do so. If it is said that ‘nature’ is created for man by divine power, it is indirectly ordered that man should keep it safe. The Names contains instances of adaptation of Christianity to the native tradition: “the Roman catholic churches of the pueblos are so old, many of them seem scarcely to impose an alien aspect upon the native culture; rather, they seem themselves almost to have been appropriated by that culture and to express it in its own terms” (123).

In House Made of Dawn John Big Bluff Tosamah, Pastor and Priest of the Sun conducts the peyote ceremony which is a mixture of both Christian traditions and old peyote traditions. It is evident when the members of the ceremony pray in both Christian and peyote traditions. Yellowbull prays, “come to us in bright colours and
sweet smoke,” Christobal Cruz prays in “Jesus’ name,” Napolian prays to the “Great Spirit” (100) and Ben Benally sings the Navajo Chant “house made of dawn.” In The Ancient Child, the peyote tradition is more prominent than Christian belief. Indians of Rio Grande Valley (now Texas) and northern Mexico have used the peyote for medicine and ritual purposes. The Peyote cult comprises prayers, preaching and baptism. It was banned by the American government but later restored it to its original status (Stewart 153).

Direct ‘nature’ worship exists in almost all parts of the world even today. Sacred groves are worshipped by the tribal people and the mainstream alike. A sacred grove is a small part of ‘nature’ which has earth, plants, trees, stones, animals and birds inside them. Each element of these groves is considered sacred.

In these places ‘nature’ and humanity meet, and people’s deeper motives and aspirations are expressed through what is called ‘the sacred.’ Many of these places are virtually ignored, some receive pilgrims by the million, and yet others are the closely guarded secrets of their custodians. People of faith or religion, or of no particular faith, find inspiration in these places, and they resonate across a wide spectrum of humanity (Verschuuran et.al Introd. 1)

In the state of Kerala in India the sacred grove is known as kavu, consisting of large trees, creepers, and animals and birds, occupying a very small area. The naga or snake is worshipped here by offering milk. Occasionally pooja or ritual is conducted by sacrificing roosters to the goddess residing in the grove. The sacred groves attached to the Hindu temples usually have erect stone tablets with snake deities sculpted in
relief. Sacred natural sites are found all over the world; “Ulrun (Ayers Rock), Mato Tipila (Devil’s Tower), Mt Kilimanjaro, Mt Kailash, Sagarmatha/ Chomolongma ( Mt Everest), Lake Titicaca, Lake Baikel, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra rivers” (Ibid. 1)

Archetypes are the most wonderful evidences for the existence of common spiritual expressions of humanity. For example, the sun and moon play a significant role in all the religions, whether minor or major. The traditional calendar systems are based on either the sun or the moon. The rituals and ceremonies and the daily life of man are directly linked to the appearance of these celestial phenomena. The fasting season of Ramdan in Islam starts according to the appearance of the moon.

Recent trends in psychology regard spirituality as one of the many intelligences. It is largely believed that spiritual belief can solve many issues regarding health of body and mind. Howard Gardner defines intelligence as “a computational capacity—a capacity to process a certain kind of information—that originates in human biology and human psychology.” According to him “intelligence entails the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequences in a particular cultural setting or community” (6). “We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems that we face in the world” (Ibid 24).

Robert Emmons, a professor in psychology, has proved spiritual intelligence as one of the intelligences based on the eight criteria given by Gardner.
1. An identifiable core operation or set of operations.

2. An evolutionary history and evolutionary plausibility.

3. A characteristic pattern of development.

4. Potential isolation by brain damage.

5. The existence of persons distinguished by the exceptional presence or absence of the ability.

6. Susceptibility to encoding in a symbol system.

7. Support from experimental psychological investigations.

8. Support from psychometric findings.

According to Emmons spiritual intelligence passes all the eight criteria.

Being religious does not guarantee high SQ. Many humanists and atheists have very high SQ while active and vociferous religious people have very low SQ. Zohar cites Michael Peringer, a neuropsychologist and Ramachandran to establish that even in ordinary people the God spot is active which is “located among neural connections in the temporal lobes of the brain” (Zohar 11).

Each of us forms a character through a combination of experience and vision, a tension between what we actually do and the bigger, better things that we might do. On the pure ego level we are I-centered, selfish, materially ambitious, and so on. But we do have transpersonal
visions of goodness, beauty, perfection, generosity, sacrifice and so on. SQ helps us to outgrow our immediate ego selves and to reach beyond to those deeper layers of potentiality that lie hidden within us. It helps us to live life at a deeper level of meaning. (Ibid 14)

Emmons claims that “a set of skills and abilities are associated with spirituality which are relevant to intelligence.” At a minimum, spiritually intelligent individuals are characterized by (a) the capacity for transcendence (b) the ability to enter into heightened spiritual states of consciousness (c) the ability to invest everyday activities, events, and relationships with a sense of the sacred (d) the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems in living (10). One more ability was also described by Emmons, ‘being virtuous,’ but later removed from the list.

Transcendence and mysticism the first two core components of spiritual intelligence deal with the capacity of the person to engage in heightened or extraordinary forms of consciousness… . Transcendence connotes a rising above or going beyond the ordinary limits of physicality. It may be described as rising above our natural world to relate with a divine being, or it may refer to going beyond our physical state to effect a heightened awareness of ourselves… . Mysticism is the awareness of an ultimate reality that takes the form of a sense of oneness or unity in which all boundaries disappear and objects are unified into a totality. (Emmons 9)
All the three characters go through these transcendental mystic experiences. Sanctification is the third characteristic of the spiritually intelligent individual. According to Emmons “to sanctify means to set apart for a special purpose—for a holy or a godly purpose.” ‘Nature’ worship is a major aspect of the tradition of these characters who see divinity in the surroundings. The fourth characteristic is “the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems in living that encompasses religious and spiritual coping” (10). By visiting shrines, singing the Navajo Night Chant and also observing other rituals of the tribe the protagonists gain access to spiritual dimensions of human existence and release themselves from their predicaments.

Based on the description and analysis of the experiences of the writer and the two protagonists in the selected works and the traits of spiritual intelligence listed, it can be categorically stated that Native Americans are endowed with greater capacity for spiritual competence. This is illustrated in their transcendence—the ability to respond to natural phenomena, gain perception and then move to a working idea/concept to regulate their lives. But in valuing spirituality one should not be misled into falling into the trap of escapist forays in expectation of easy blessing and redemption. In fact, while discussing the concept of spiritual intelligence, Emmons warns against the negative impact on unsuspecting people of religiosity and spirituality, especially against the danger of getting cocooned within one’s self. (18)

Met with either ignorant submission or outright rejection all along, this facet of human experience needs to be approached with new theoretical frameworks. The fields of psychology, anthropology, evolutionary biology and neurosciences do
intersect in a way that throws up promises in interpreting phenomena such as the ones identified in the present study. There are signs and emerging evidence to argue strongly for the possibility of biological and material basis for spiritual experiences involving transcendence and transformation.

In times of environmental crisis the existence of both the humans and ‘nature’ is at stake. This realization needs more of emotional intelligence and a fine sensibility rather than a pure scientific understanding. By looking at ‘nature’ aesthetically and spiritually one can nurture a reverential and symbiotic attitude towards ‘nature’ which can work to the advantage of environmental sustainability. If everyone on earth adopts this attitude it will foster not only the well being of ‘nature’ but also that of mankind.

The beginning of the twenty first century witnessed people being frightened by the extreme changes in climate. Scientists have found out that the warming of the earth has gone up by about 1.4 degree Fahrenheit since the industrial revolution. This is because of the high emission of carbon dioxide in to the atmosphere which traps the heat inside the gas layers in the atmosphere causing global warming. Statistics on the prevailing conditions repeatedly suggest extremities in seasons and the earth becoming an uninhabitable planet in future.

The floods battered New England, then Nashville, then Arkansas, then Oklahoma, and were followed by a deluge in Pakistan that has upended the lives of 20 million people.
The summer’s heat waves baked the eastern United States, parts of Africa and eastern Asia, and above all Russia, which lost millions of acres of wheat and thousands of lives in a drought worse than any other in the historical record. (Gillis 9)

Natural disasters always come as a bolt from the blue. The recent deluge in Uttarakhand, India took the lives of thousands. But is it just natural disaster? The chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is ready to accept man’s folly of constructing buildings on the flood plain areas. This is not the first time the people of Uttarakhand have been surprised by nature’s wrath. ‘Nature’ did give sufficient warning in 2010, when in heavy rain, “at least 41 people were killed overnight as incessant rains wreaked havoc in the hill state of Uttarakhand triggering landslips and floods which rendered hundreds homeless” (Banerjee 13). The warning was not paid heed to and people have paid much more heavily this time. But going by the history of mass behaviour it is quite likely that the typical callousness will return soon and exploitation will continue. Nothing short of a complete change in mind set can be a positive step in arresting the trend of mindless greed responsible for destruction of ‘nature.’

Man invented machines to help him to make his work easy. It is also predicted that the gap between computer and human capabilities is narrowing down. When the machines take over human activities, including cognition, then it is possible that qualities that made man human may disappear altogether. Mankind going after the technologically-made-utopia is like one making his own coffin. It might or might not turn out to be real but the apocalyptic apprehensiveness in the human psyche at the present is real.
Jung was of the opinion that man as he embraced modern values fully forgot the ancient wisdom. He suggests that humanity may be moving fast towards disintegration.

Through scientific understanding, our world has become dehumanized. Man feels himself isolated in the cosmos. He is no longer involved in nature and has lost his emotional participation in natural events, which hitherto had a symbolic meaning for him. Thunder is no longer the voice of a god, nor lightning his avenging missile. No river contains a spirit, no tree means a man’s life, no snake is the embodiment of wisdom, and no mountain still harbours a great demon. Neither do things speak to him nor can he speak to things, like stones, springs, plants, and animals...his immediate communication with nature is gone forever and the emotional energy it generated has sunk into the unconscious. (in Sabini 80)

In the bewitching world of science and technology, people are thrilled to watch the fast developments in communication network, electronic gadgets, fast locomotion, new medicines and transportation, what more to say, we are on to anti-aging cream and even changing our destiny by changing our gene pattern. A University of Michigan study claims a walk in nature promotes significant learning whereas the same in the city gives an overload of information making learning difficult. Relaxing with pod/video is considered to be fatiguing. (The Hindu 13)

It makes one wonder whether we are caught in the blind eye factor of the tragic heroes of the plays of Ancient Greece regarding the approaching environmental
catastrophes. Apocalyptic thinking does attract people into formation of cults that fix dates for the end of the world and promise rescue by divine power or flying saucers. The Mayan calendar did its part recently. These notwithstanding, a certain amount of cautionary thinking is highly relevant to the present. While environmental activists and spiritual leaders lament the gradual death of earth, anti-environmentalists assert man’s power in inventing alternative energy sources. Anti-environmentalists argue that resources change from time to time, and that there is no need for mankind to indulge in panic thinking about depletion.

Ecocriticism which can be broadly defined as the interdisciplinary study of literature and environment has, in spite of charges of carrying ideological underpinnings, awakened interest in ecology and environment. It has brought together botany, environmental science, anthropology and also other related disciplines. The field has thrown up concepts like ecological values, environmental justice, greening of earth etc. It is supported by organizations like Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment and the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment.

The grassroots environmental organisation Sierra Club was founded in 1892, at San Francisco, California by John Muir. Its motto is: “To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives” (www.sierraclub.org). Its ‘nature’ oriented living style and other
recreational activities have given momentum to the establishment of other similar clubs. All these organizations have the common motive of leading a harmonious existence with ‘nature’ by preserving it and not by exploiting. What started as romanticizing of ‘nature’ in writings has gradually evolved to confront us as existential issues. Audubon Society is another such environmental organization founded in 1905.

The diminishing biodiversity, increasing human population, vanishing rainforests and marsh lands, rise in global temperature, depleting foodstocks, decreasing marine livestock, the possibility of the melting of icebergs and glaziers, all these point to imminent catastrophe. But there are people who think otherwise and term the call for caution “environmental alarmism.” Michael Crichton’s State of Fear is one such exercise. It might be little premature to claim that the writing is on the wall but at the same time it would not be insensible to think of its likely appearance sometime in the future.

Wilson ends his bestselling book on a note of caution. He cites the arithmetical riddle of the lily pond.

A lily pad is placed in a pond. Each day thereafter the pad and all of its descendents double. On the thirtieth day the pond is covered completely by lily pads, which can grow no more. On which day was the pond half full and half empty? The twenty-ninth day. (313)

Have we already arrived at the twenty-ninth day? While the end may be hypothetical, the question is real. The earth may come to pass and the Will Smith-Jaden Smith starrer After Earth become a reality. But much before such an eventuality, we are faced with
the question of tampering with ‘nature,’ the designer and enabler of human consciousness. The present study establishes the importance of native landscape in repairing and rejuvenating consciousness and giving one home. Hence it can be said that with certainty that when we tamper with ‘nature,’ we tamper with our own mind. If life-generating landscapes keep disappearing we will have no place to come to resulting in existential loneliness.

We are entering a new area of existentialism, not the absurdist existentialism of Kierkegaard and Sartre, giving complete autonomy to the individual, but the concept that only unified learning, universally shared, makes accurate foresight and wise choice possible.

(Wilson 325)

It is high time that we used multidisciplinary learning to effect shift in awareness so that nature-man relationship, so far characterised by parasitism, (the culprit always being the latter) be transformed into one that is symbiotic. Only by doing so can a possible eco-spiritual disaster be averted.

Jim Charles has brought out the potential of Momaday’s The Way to Rainy Mountain to help his students in ‘discovering their self.’ After a reading of the text, students were asked to write on their ancestors or past incidents to which they were closely connected. The writings demonstrated that the students depended on the knowledge of their ancestors to make sense of their own life. Charles selected eighth graders from Pamela Franklin’s English class in North Carolina. He arrives at the conclusion
that the “students develop a deep sense of pride in their families; they gain respect for their elders; they recognise heroism displayed by family members” (67).

In the first conference of ASLE Buell observed that teaching environmental literature to students who have no connection with real environment is much debatable. A man born and brought up in rural environs and another having urban background have different perspectives. While the former has access to panoramic views of green landscapes, the latter has skyscrapers, a fast moving and a mechanised world. Buell recommends a lot of academic field trips for promoting environmental awareness in urban students.

“Humankind is like a household living giddily off vanishing capital” (Wilson 313). This is a challenge requiring a response at once positive and immediate. In times of natural disaster, it has become customary for the media to talk of the fury and the destruction implying a sinister design. We are a technologically advanced race but not to the extent of averting or controlling natural events like floods, storms and hurricanes. But it makes sense to reflect on how much responsible the human mind is for some of the disasters. If ‘nature’ is our nutrient medium then it is our moral-spiritual duty to ensure that our minds reciprocate by behaving as nutrient medium for ‘nature’ to sustain her rhythm. Even as the present study reaches its conclusion, evidence supporting its central argument is emerging. Vasudevan Mukunth reviews in The Hindu a research paper published in the journal Science (1 Aug. 2013) linking environmental changes and interpersonal violence. He quotes from the paper “…for each 1 standard deviation change in climate toward warmer temperatures or more extreme rainfall, median
estimates indicate that the frequency of interpersonal violence rises 4 per cent and the
duration of intergroup conflict rises 14 per cent.” He then quotes one of the authors
Professor Miguel. “Taken together, the findings indicate that the risk of future conflict
and violence is another reason why serious efforts must be made now to deal with
future climate change, through both mitigation and adaptation strategies” (11). The Hindu
supplement Metroplus dated same carries a review article by Ani of a study in
Psychoneuroimmunology, by the UCLA’s Cousins Center, published in the Proceedings
of the National Academy of Sciences. The study lists two types of well-being —
eudaimonic well-being (derived from a “deep sense of purpose and meaning in life”) and
hedonic well-being (derived from “consummatory self-gratification”). The emotional
states in both the categories remain the same. But while the former demonstrates
“favourable gene-expression profiles in their immune cells,” the latter shows “adverse
gene-expression profile” (5). The findings of both the studies have significant
implications for what writers like Momaday reiterate through their creative works.

In this context, works such as Momaday’s carry great relevance and significance
through their portrayal of intense experiences involving ‘nature’-man relationship.
Momaday’s works discussed in the study deal with fundamental primary emotions
and their role in self-fulfilment in highly engaging narratives capable finding parallels
in the reader’s experience. Jung’s observation is relevant here.

The secret of artistic creation and the effectiveness of art is to be found
in a return to the state of participation mystique—to that level of
experience at which it is man who lives, and not the individual, and at
which the weal or woe of the single human being does not count, but only human existence. (in Lodge 187)

Momaday does transport us to that “participation mystique” through his works. Mainstream fiction has become, since Modernism, mostly an exercise in delineating neurosis and other such psychopathological conditions of an urban individual. It is far removed mankind’s primordial roots. Here lies the importance of depiction of tribal consciousness. It cannot be denied that all of us were hunter gatherers, tribals. The imprints cannot have weakened in such a short evolutionary time. Hence, reading and interpreting of literary works such as Momaday’s can be a highly rewarding activity especially in regaining our organismic responses to mother ‘nature.’

Taking into account the current spiritual crisis and environmental concerns Momaday’s works can be studied from perspectives offered by developments in various disciplines. As the present study strongly hints at theoretical frameworks from evolutionary biology (literary Darwinism), cognitive neuroscience and neuropsychology can be fruitfully applied to his works. Such studies, charges of reductionism notwithstanding, will help in bringing back literature studies to the centre of social life. Richard Dawkins, the famous British biologist has stated that “the subjects known as the humanities are taught almost as if Darwin never lived” (qtd. in Eaglestone 141). Unsettling to us, but it must be admitted that he does have a point. Study of Momaday’s works employing frameworks suggested above may provide answer to Dawkins’ challenge.

One of the maladies afflicting the academic world today is the decline of what is termed the reading habit. The word ‘habit’ carries the behaviourist bind and a better
term would be ‘reading culture’ as reading literature is still exploratory and experiential and has not been put on the autopilot of the human brain. But the decline of the reading culture is real and a problem to be looked in the eye.

The literary experience no longer occupies the centre of civilised life: it has been expelled from that position by organised sport, by complicated activities that do more to gratify the ego of the owner of expensive equipment and stimulate the economy than ownership of books; it has had to fight for a place alongside a succession of rivals that demand less mental effort: cinema, radio, TV—how can it be other than a losing battle? (Quinn 253)

But we cannot afford to lose this battle. Art on the screen or the monitor is limited in its ability to reach the inner recesses of the human psyche. This is not to demean such forms of entertainment and it should be admitted that technology has opened up fresh scope for creativity. The issue here is the efficacy of technology-based art forms to engage consciousness on a long term basis. They seem to target cleverness (fit for short term gains) and not wisdom (ideal for long term gains). Transformation of attitudes and mindsets cannot happen if not preceded by long stretches of reflection and introspection the scope for which only a book can offer. With a book you are with yourself for greater lengths of time. We know well, atleast the somewhat sane majority of us, that we remember ourselves in the form of episodic memories that are formed by our ability to associate disparate elements. Episodic memories give us perspectives on life that endow us with staying power. Narratives especially are storehouses rich in case histories of formation of episodic
long-term memories and can lead to awareness, sensitisation and internalisation — definite requirements for bringing about lasting changes in people. To quote Jung again:

Whenever the collective unconscious becomes a living experience and is brought to bear upon the conscious outlook of an age, this event is a creative act which is of importance to everyone living in that age.

(in Lodge 184)

We live in an age where lurking environmental fears are translating themselves into realities. In most such cases, criticism points the finger at human greed and human intervention. Nature’s mind and intentions, despite the scientific advancements, are still mostly unpredictable. But we can definitely do something about our thinking and it is in this space that Momaday’s works gain tremendous relevance.

The idea of qualia, much debated in philosophy is attracting interest from other fields as well. Described as “introspectively available phenomenal aspects of our mental lives” (www.plato.stanford.edu) and the “ineffable raw qualities of experience” (Ramachandran 76) qualia have the potential to offer us insights into the building blocks of consciousness. Readers are drawn to narratives, both fictional and nonfictional, usually for the story value. But in serious literature the interest lies in those intersections between the figural consciousness and the consciousness of the reader. The reader is often stunned into recognition of qualities in him he was not aware hitherto. In other words, narratives can bring to introspection facets of mental lives not available to the reader prior to reading. Momaday’s works selected for the present study are fertile
grounds of qualia. It is not definitely unrealistic to think that study of and research in literature emphasizing this aspect will play a crucial role in the predicted fusion of humanities and sciences.