



Understanding Geo-centrism, Naturalism and Collectivism through Indigenous Literatures



26 - 28 December 2023

Call for Papers

*"She kept a pot of stew on the stove
all day for anyone to eat.*

*She never went to church but said
you could be a good person anyway.*

*She fed hoboes during the „30s,
her back porch a regular stop-over.*

*Every person has rights no matter
what color. Be respectful."*



These memorable lines of the native American poet Denis Low speak a lot about the life and philosophy of the indigenous communities. These contrast starkly with the non-indigenous super civilized world. Today it is not the question of saving a nation, a religion or a language. We have entered into an era of more serious threats to the entire planet which is a home to not just human beings but to myriad species of animals and plants. The idea of homocentric world has created a myth of man being the master of the earth. This has led to an uncontrolled exploitation of natural treasures which unfortunately we have named as “resources”. Accumulation of wealth and production of surplus to further multiply it has led to an unending cut throat competition between countries, communities and individuals.

Global pursuit of land – grabbing and ascertaining command over the natural resources for a nation has resulted in bloody wars and destruction of natural and man - made capital. The emergence of the capitalist world order and its expansion has created a world which is divided and disjointed. The human race is also divided into races, religions, nationalities and communities. This segregation has endowed human beings with multiple contending identities and there are conflicts of preserving individual identities rather than saving human race .There are hierarchies which govern and create an order of power structures that dictate. The ruling establishments work day in and day out to maintain the status quo whereas the masses reel under monstrous suppression and exploitation.

Though material gain and scientific advancement has made life easier for this generation but there is also a sense of being hollow from inside. Individualism has led to creation of islands. Every man is an island unto him/herself. This isolation has resulted from the idea of private individual and ownership of property which is a serious fallacy. In this world there is a regular rise in the number of prison houses. For punishment one is subjected to long durations of isolation and solitary confinement is considered one of the most severe punishments. But often one realizes that the isolation can exist even outside a prison. There are invisible walls that surround us. This is a truth of this super-civilized society.

In this background if one were to visit the indigenous communities of the world through their literatures composed in their native tongues or in English and other languages of the world, one would be happily surprised to see a new vision of life which might usher in a renaissance of human civilization. Indigenous societies living in their remote, less exposed habitats present an alternative world view which rests on Geocentrism, Naturalism and Collectivism. The fallacious understanding of the super civilized world as masters of the earth does not exist here. Homocentric world is not the world view of the indigenous people. For them earth is central, not man. They treat earth as their mother and believe in using nature's components sparingly just to fulfill their needs not following the capitalist principle of producing surplus.

The concept of individual property does not hold the sway in indigenous community. They believe in collective

command of the gifts of nature and so the ownership right rests with community. There are community guidelines of the use of land, water, forest produce and other available treasures of nature which are derived from some natural object which is the center of their faith. The mythological deities have little space in the indigenous belief system. They worship nature, sun, moon, trees, rivers, ancestors and sometimes even certain animals. Naturalism is the order among the indigenous communities. In an era of ghastly conflicts in the name of religion when religious identities are invoked to gain political power at international level and also within a country, naturalism could offer a viable alternative.

As we try to understand the issues of the contemporary world in the light of the literature of the indigenous peoples of the world there is a fresh breeze of hope which presents an alternative to the existing world order. It might appear to be a utopia but alternatives are generated out of utopian ideas only. In the era of monarchy even the idea of democracy would have appeared a utopian idea. In fact, the attempt to understand the Geo-centrism, Naturalism and Collectivism is also an attempt to make democracy more rooted and mass-based. Indigenous people form about eight percent of the population in India. At the global level they number around 400 million. They are scattered in some seventy two countries and speak a large number of languages which are limited to their locale. However, many indigenous communities have people who have acquired a capacity to compose in languages which they have learnt through education and interaction with non-indigenous populations.

This rich body of literature has a great scope of exploration. It would be interesting to study this literature, now available in English translation also, to understand the concept of Geocentrism, Naturalism and Collectivism.

Original research papers conforming to the IX edition of the MLA Handbook in all matters of citation of references and creation of bibliography are invited on the theme of the conference. Besides research papers on sub themes listed below are also welcome. The list of sub themes is only suggestive. Scholars are free to choose any other theme which fits in the framework of the conference theme.

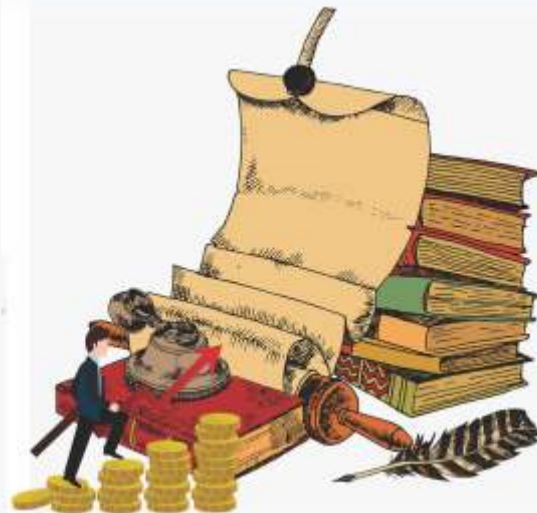


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6. Indigenous versus Capitalist economic model
7. Social organization among indigenous communities
8. Language, style and imagery in indigenous



Important Dates

Submission of Paper Abstracts & Registration Forms: 15th November 2023

Complete Research Paper: 30th November 2023

email id: mlsurase2023@gmail.com

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Registration Fee

Before the Conference: Rs. 2000/-

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2. Registration fee covers Food and accommodation

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