

**THE REPRESENTATION OF SHAWNEE CULTURE IN
ARMIN KATCHATORIAN CHARACTER IN *THE DARK
POND* BY JOSEPH BRUCHAC**

THESIS



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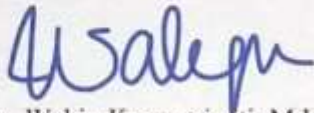
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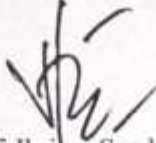
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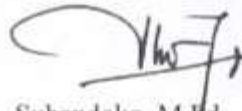
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traditions and culture were not recognized by other communities and eventually faded away. Preserving Native culture is an important thing to do because if the culture goes extinct, the people would lose their real identity. The research was done by American Indian College Fund also shows that students who are involved in their culture would be better academically, and lead more productive lives (collegefund.org). Therefore, it is important to study the existence of Native American i.e. Shawnee culture especially for young generation to know the diversities of culture in this world. One of the way to introduce Native American culture to the general public is through literature.

According to Castells, "culture is the set of values and beliefs that inform, guide and motivate people's behavior." (2009, p.36). Culture is created by society itself and it is a part of their way of life which consists of the language, symbols, values, norms, arts, and traditions. It is the way of life in a society that is also used to express their thoughts. According to Hornby, culture also can be expressed through the media such as literature. (2000, p.783).

Hornby stated that literature is the tool to express people's thoughts, feelings, cultures, etc. (2000, p.783). Literature is also part of culture because it contains values and norms. Therefore, many Native American authors are interested in bringing up Native American culture as a theme in their novels. They want to show that Native American culture is something interesting to know about. Of course, the Authors tell about this culture with other elements such as fantasy so that it is interesting to read. There are many literary work about Native American culture such as *The Sign of the Beaver* by Elizabeth George Speare

around in our heads (1997, p.17). An example is when people say the name of the object like chair and table. The meaning and representation would represent their shape, image, or function, not the actual object. However, the concept is only formed in people's minds as a *mental representation*. Therefore, the concept of people worldwide would be different because they have different ways of thinking. People who can share their thoughts or express their ideas should have a familiar concept to interpret anything in the world in roughly similar ways. Thus, people can build a shared culture of meaning and construct a social world that they inhabit together (Hall, 1997, p.18).

The second is language representation. It has a vital role in constructing meaning. People who have the meaning and concepts in their minds could only exchange through a common language. People can connect those concepts in their minds into specific *signs*. It is the general term for words, sounds, or pictures which has a meaning. Those signs represent the mental concept and the system that can express the meaning of 'language.' However, the meaning of language also depends on the situation and the culture that exists in the place. For example, when Indonesian say "dog," the meaning can be a literal dog or a mockery if they say it angrily (Hall, 1997, p.19). Therefore, the language should synchronize the situation and culture to get the specific meaning and representation.

Hall (1997, p.15) stated three approaches used in the representation: the *reflective approach*, *intentional approach*, and *constructionist approach*. The concept of meaning with a *reflective approach* is constructed by the reality, events, or culture in the real world. The *intentional approach* views the meaning

Experiences in Literature for Children, Ages 9-14 (2013). The research analyzed 90 novels between 2000 and 2010, which had mixed-race characters. One of the novels is *The Dark Pond*. The research examined the multiracial identity of the works of contemporary and historical fiction, which used critical race theory. The result represented some children's literature with mixed-race characters so that young students can share their inspection about themselves and their friends.

The third is a thesis conducted by Mala Himatul Aulia, a State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The title is *Representation of Native American in the Novel The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian (2017)*. It analyzed the characters and the setting in the novel and used representation theory. The result was portraying that Native American is described stereotypically in the novel.

The fourth is a thesis conducted by Tyas Pramono Aji. He was a student of Muhammadiyah University Purwokerto. The title is *The New Representation of Modern Vampire as Represented in Hollywood Movie Twilight First Saga*. It discussed modern vampires and classical vampires based on their appearance, habit and behavior, living place, prey, strength, and weakness.

From those four previous studies above, only two used *The Dark Pond* novel as the focus of studies, and the other used only Representation theory to analyze other novels. However, none of them used New Criticism

Sabattis reveals how many things worms have that humans do not even expect. Armin pondered what the Sabattis said and acknowledged the truth of what the Sabattis said. “If an earthworm is split in two, it will not become two new worms. The worm's head may survive and regenerate its tail if the animal is cut behind the clitellum. But the original tail of the worm will not be able to grow a new head (or the rest of its vital organs) and will instead die.” (Castro, 2013, para. 3). Even though Armin did not believe that the monster was a worm, he had enough knowledge about it. Armin tried to think of another plan about how to kill the giant worm monster. He thought that blowing up the dark pond would not kill the worms but instead cut them into large pieces and regenerate them.

Armin did not think that worms are tough was the problem. He wondered why Sabattis researched about the monster even though Sabattis had a doctorate degree. Sabattis was a little taken aback by Armin's question and tried to get serious. Sabattis answered Armin's question clearly that looking for worms was not part of his research doctorate. Sabattis had a strong desire to become one of the grounds crew members without being noticed by others. Armin still did not understand the reason and kept asking Sabattis because he was very curious about it. His curiosity led Armin to know more about anything, including the old stories which are part of Shawnee culture.

3.1.3 An Observant Kid

Being observant made Armin notice little things around him. This characterization could also be connected with the previous characterization, a

There were none of the animal tracks that did not lead towards the dark pond. It made Armin think that he should observe more about it. He thought there was something in the dark pond which was calm but could quickly sweep away something which came near it. Even the track was showing that the animals disappeared after they came onto the dark pond. Armin felt goosebumps because he saw any kind of animal's track leading to the pond and none of them came back after that.

Armin remembered that he was with the female fox earlier. After seeing all of the animal tracks led into the pond, he must be wondered about the female fox. After that, Armin realized that the female fox was gone. Armin thought that the female fox could sense danger because she did not go to the pond as the other animal did. Instead, she blocked Armin's path before he walked nearer the dark pond. "In some myths, foxes are wise and benevolent. In others, they are connected to fire and the sun. Sometimes, Fox is a minor and clever spirit who helps people and animals in need or punishes those who are arrogant." (Simard, 2017, para. 2). The female fox must have wanted to help Armin to make him realize the direction he walked. She helped Armin by asking him to play with the stick and followed her to go upslope. After Armin realized that the animals in the downslope were disappeared in the dark pond, he thought that he should go far from it. He looked into his surroundings and found the female fox's track which went to the upslope. Therefore Armin followed it.

So, by midday, I found myself sitting on the hill above the dark pond, which lay so innocently below the cliff. After getting to within a half-mile of it, I had begun to circle in. Not going in a straight line, I'd

pretty strange to him. It was as if he had never heard a sound like that before, even though he had quite a lot of knowledge about animals. The lonely night was distracted by the screams. The way Armin told about the scream showed that it was shrieked aloud. Armin felt that it was dangerous for him to keep being there and half-conscious. Therefore he hit his head onto the tree trunk to make himself fully conscious then begin to think about what he had heard. He was surprised by the flash of light because he remembered that he was alone and in the forest at night. Armin's reflex was to stay silent and do nothing even though he was terrified and wanted to run away from there. Even though he was in an intense situation, he kept observing the situation to make him reckless. Therefore, he could deftly guard himself and prevent being seriously injured when he was attacked by the panicked deer that ran blindly.

Then that cry was suddenly choked off. I listened for the sound of growling, the sound of something breathing hard as it fed. I knew that last cry must have come from the throat of one of the panicked deer when it blundered into whatever awful creature was out there. But all I heard were the sounds of the other deer as their flight took them farther and farther away until they could no longer be heard. I strained to listen. I wasn't sure that I really heard it. It might have been nothing more than my imagination filling in my expectations. But I thought I could hear the soft sound of a body being dragged away through deep snow. (Bruchac, 2004, p.61-62).

The quotation shows that Armin focused on observing what he heard. He thought that something that had screamed at the beginning prey on the deer and made it cry loudly. However, the deer stopped crying after a while. It must have died. The deer that was desperately crying because of it blundered and ended up being a meal. Armin focused on what he heard and did not do a reckless thing

could enter the correct combination just by looking at the finger movements of Mrs. Phelps just once. He decided to keep silent while entering the particular collection room because he did not want his friends and Mrs. Phelps to catch him. After he was in the room, he looked around to see what kind of book was there. He was intrigued to see that the collection of books related to the northern mountains was in the Adirondack region.

I'd been seeing footprints in the snow for half a mile by the time I reached the hilltop. The tracks had come in off that branch trail that led to the highway parking spot. I recognized them as most likely Mitch's from the size of the print and the shape of the treads. But aside from the tracks, I saw no sign of anyone. I heard nothing more than the huffing of my own breath and the muffled thudding of my own running feet. (Bruchac, 2004, p.118).

The quotation above shows that Armin paid attention to anything around him to search for Sabattis's presence. He looked at the road he passed and found footprints were leading to the parking spot. He knew it was Sabattis' footprints because there would be no other human footprints in the forest near the dark pond other than Mitch (Sabattis). Armin looked for any other clues to know the situation in the forest. However, he did not find anything. He felt that the situation was quiet and calm, like only Armin lived there and nothing else. Therefore, he should still observe the situation more.

I stopped and shone my flashlight down onto the ground. Mitch's tracks led down the hill. I imagined him making his way down to the pond, using the infrared scope to see his way in the dark, carrying whatever it was he had brought with him to pour or spray into the pond and kill it—Ready for anything. Then I imagined him walking down that slope in another way, moving against his own will, caught by that thing's spell. (Bruchac, 2004, p.118-119).

made it so. It is a sacred thing. Regardless of your school policies, you cannot require him to cut his hair.” (Bruchac, 2004, p.30)

The quotation above shows that Armin followed Shawnee tradition of not cutting his hair. He represented Shawnee tradition which is part of Shawnee culture. Armin remembered the first day he entered North Mountain School. There were school rules that students must follow. Long hair was usually not allowed in every school, as Armin said that he always brought a letter to the principal to allow him to have long hair in the previous school.

Many tribes have their opinion about the symbol of cutting hair. “The cut hair represents the time with their loved one, which is over and gone, and the new growth is the life after. When Native Americans cut their hair, the hair is often treated with respect.” (Rubio, 2016, para. 7). Armin did not want to cut his hair because he was in good condition and was not in any accident. Besides that, it might make bad things happen to him. Therefore, he needed to ask the principal for permission to keep his long hair.

Armin knew that all schools had their own rules, including not to have long hair. Because of that, he attempted to keep his long hair and gave a petition letter from his mother to the headmaster. Armin and his mother wanted the headmaster to allow Armin to keep his long hair. The letter explained that the tradition of keeping long hair was from the Great Spirit, Kiji Maneto. “Kiji Maneto (Gitchi Manitou) is the great creator god of the Anishinaabe and many neighboring Algonquian tribes. The name means Great Spirit, a common phrase used to address God in many Native American cultures.” (native-languages.org, para 1). Armin, whom his mother helped, wanted to keep his long hair to preserve

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