

Native American Representation in *New Moon*:
History Repeating Itself

by

Shanna de Caluwé

Bachelor of Arts

Radboud University

2021

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	5
Chapter 2: Native American Representation Throughout the Years	12
Chapter 3: Native American Representation in <i>New Moon</i>	18
Works Cited	29

Shanna de Caluwé



Mirte Liebrechts MA

Bachelor's thesis

15 June 2021

Words: 7999

Native American Representation in *New Moon*: History Repeating Itself

The *Twilight* saga is a series of originally four young adult fiction, written by Stephenie Meyer between 2005 and 2020. She created a supernatural world that became extremely popular. The main character Bella falls in love with the vampire Edward and her best friend Jacob turns out to be a werewolf. The special supernatural traits of these characters make them interesting objects of research, because these characteristics must have origins somewhere. The first encounter with a character in a book establishes how the reader imagines this person. Often, we first come across the description of the physical attributes of the character and throughout the story we get to know them more. In Meyer's *New Moon*, the second instalment in the series, Bella visits her friend Jacob, whom we already encountered in the first book:

“Bella!” His excited grin stretched wide across his face, the bright teeth standing in vivid contrast to the deep russet colour of his skin. I'd never seen his hair out of its usual ponytail before. It fell back like black satin curtains on either side of his broad face. Jacob had grown into some of his potential in the last eight months. He'd passed that point where the soft muscles of childhood hardened into the solid, lanky build of a teenager; the tendons and veins had become prominent under the red-brown skin of his

arms, his hands. His face was still sweet like I remembered it, though it had hardened, too – the planes of his cheekbones sharper, his jaw squared off, all childish roundness gone. (Meyer, ch. 5)

This paragraph will be returned to later on, as it describes traits that are specific to the Native American character. In this thesis, the Native American characters will be analysed in terms of how they are represented and at the same time construct an image people who exist in reality.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as an introduction to the research, in which I will elaborate on the object of my research and the demarcations of the present study. Then, I will elaborate on the choice of case study and present the research questions that guide the analysis. Next, the larger field of research is established, together with a literature review to indicate the relevance of this thesis. Lastly, I will present the research method and the structure of the following chapters.

The Research Object. The research object for this thesis is the book *New Moon*, from Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga. It is the second instalment in the series and was published in 2006. The book continues the story of Bella and Edward, who fell in love in the previous book titled *Twilight*. Their relationship is unconventional because Edward is a vampire, whereas Bella is human. After Edward's brother attacked Bella when he lost control over his bloodlust, their family leaves town to protect Bella. To distract herself from her heartbreak, Bella starts to spend time with her friend Jacob, who is Native American, part of the Quileute Tribe. Throughout the story, Jacob changes and Bella suspects he is hiding something from her. One day, Bella arrives on the reservation and learns that Jacob is a werewolf, just like the other teenage boys with whom he hangs out. Bella learns that legends of the Quileute tribe

about werewolves are true. The story continues with Bella and Jacob spending a lot of time together, but her and Edward eventually get back together.

From the four main books, *New Moon* is the best choice to analyse the representation of Native Americans. The focus moves away from Edward and Bella's love story in the first book, onto Jacob, for some time. Bella spends more time with Jacob and his friends, so the reader engages more with the Native American characters. Moreover, in this instalment, the fact that Jacob is a werewolf is brought to light and the fact that he is Native American becomes more prominent.

This research was inspired by the debate surrounding the entire *Twilight* series, which has been reopened after the publishing of a new instalment in 2020. The major criticism is on the way that Meyer represents Native Americans. One of the major reproaches is that she is a white woman writing about a Native American tribe that she is not a part of. This goes hand in hand with the comments about how she misrepresents the Quileute tribe in various ways. Criticism is voiced on websites like Film Daze, where an article states that "harmful power structures exist behind even the most seemingly innocent young adult novels, and *Twilight* is no exception" (Vassar). The critique was voiced in relation to both the books and the movies. Someone involved in the *Twilight* movies is Native American actor Tyson Houseman, who played one of the wolves and regrets not stepping out of the problematic *Twilight* universe. He says: "I played a shape-shifting werewolf who was a member of a fictionalized version of the Quileute Tribe, a real Native American tribe in Washington" (Houseman). He also states that he was aware of the *Twilight* saga's problematic portrayal of Native Americans and the appropriation of real Quileute myths and traditions, that are turned into fantasy (Houseman). In relation to this, he mentions that he still wanted to do it because it was a "huge opportunity" for a Native American actor like himself. (Houseman). He continues saying that indigenous actors face struggles of misrepresentation all the time. From racist typecasting, to

insensitive and false historical research, which Houseman knows from his acting experience (Houseman).

This statement by Houseman gives an insight into the criticism that surrounds the series. Relating this back to the books, it is interesting to actually analyse the discourse in the text. The tribe that Meyer writes about, the so called Quileute Tribe exists in real life. According to the official website of the Quileute Tribe, they are located in Washington. It says that: “The Quileute Tribe has lived and hunted in this area for thousands of years. Although the village of La Push is only about one square mile, the Tribe’s original territory stretched along the shores of the Pacific from the glaciers of Mount Olympus to the rivers of the rain forests” (“Quileute Tribe”). By using the tribe’s name, Meyer represents real people. Inspired by the condemnation of Native American presentation in the *Twilight* series, this thesis will provide understanding into the way that the Native American characters in *New Moon* are represented, and how the image of them is constructed.

Research Question. There thus is critique on the way that Meyer represents Native Americans in her novels. This thesis will not so much focus on that she is speaking for others, as this is a matter for Native American people to speak on. Rather, the underlying dynamics of the representation of Native Americans in the book *New Moon* will be analysed.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, representation is “the way that someone or something is shown or described” (“Representation”). Another side to the definition of representation is as follows: “a person or organization that speaks, acts, or is present officially for someone else” (“Representation”). Taking this part of the definition that focusses on a person “speaking for someone else” is very interesting to look at in relation to representation in popular culture. Artists inevitably speak for someone else. Think of male directors writing female characters, or white authors writing about people of colour. The representation of

someone other than the self is present in almost all products of popular culture. When these people that are being represented are distant from who the person writing the characters is, it is interesting to investigate how the images are formed.

The main research question of this thesis therefore is: “How are Native Americans represented in Stephenie Meyer’s *New Moon* from 2006?” To discuss this, there are three sub-questions. The first one is: “How were Native Americans represented in popular culture throughout history?”, which will be the focus of the second chapter. Next, the second question goes as follows: “Can these past representations of Native Americans in be traced in *New Moon*?” Lastly, theories concerning “othering” practices will be used to answer the question “What are the underlying structures of the representation practices in *New Moon*?” These two questions will be answered in the third chapter.

The Larger Field of Research. Approaches to issues like these can be found in a post-colonial theoretical framework, which show how ideas from the colonial era still prevail. The term post-colonialism refers to “a complex set of discourses which focus on the historical, economic, political and other cultural legacies of imperialist expansion” (Walton 308). However, the term post-colonialism implies certain values that are not necessarily always the case and/or seen as valid by everybody. According to Tyson Houseman, referred to above, there is a problem with the term post-colonialism. He states that in the word, in reference to North-America, “the ‘post-’ implies that we are past the stages of colonization, while in reality Indigenous society is still experiencing the oppressive and damaging effects of colonization today” (Houseman). Presumably, this is reflective of a larger sentiment. This indicates that post-colonialism as a term does not necessarily imply that colonial legacies have been completely eradicated from society, it actually indicates how these legacies are still present.

Post-colonial theories are useful to analyse the case study. Some theories help to support this view on post-colonialism, as they indeed show that the legacies of colonialism are still present, in this case in popular culture. Theories concerning “the Other” can serve to analyse the underlying structures of practices of representation. One theoretician who has written about “the Other” is Homi K. Bhabha, who relates it specifically to the stereotype and colonial discourse in his essay called “The Other Question: The Stereotype and Colonial Discourse”. In this essay, he expands on the creation of the “colonized” as the “other” in the same system as the colonizers. This will prove useful to analyse the construction of the stereotypical portrayals that Meyer might engage with, which will help to investigate the underlying structures that might stem from the colonial discourse. The point mentioned before, of Meyer speaking about “the Other”, is something that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has extensively discussed in her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?”, which focusses on the voice of the subaltern, “the Other”. Spivak focuses on the hegemonic structures and the reproduction of those structures. The last important theoretician that will be used to analyse *New Moon* is Stuart Hall. He has extensively written about representation and signifying practices. Two prevailing essays on this subject are “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” and “The Work of Representation.” which are of use when looking at the intricacies of representation itself. Further on, the theory by Bhabha and Hall’s “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” will be elaborated more in relation to *New Moon*.

Literature Review. In the general research field of Native American representation, there are various authors who have also focussed on popular culture, especially on movies. For example, in Peter C. Rollins’ and John E. O’Connor’s book called *Hollywood’s Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, various movies are discussed in relation to Native American portrayal. For example, one chapter takes the movie *Dances with Wolves* and relates it to the myth of the American hero, the “Indian” (Baird 153-170). Analyses like these

show various approaches that can be taken to Native American representation, both historical and ideological. Stereotypes of Native Americans have a clear historical background in the colonial discourse; this is something that Ramón Grosfoguel discusses in his article called “The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic Racism/Sexism and the Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16th Century” (Grosfoguel 79-84). Next to that, Lucy A. Ganje discusses the commodification of Native American culture in her article called “Marketing the Sacred: Commodifying Native-American Cultural Images”. She focusses on how imagery and culture of Indigenous peoples are used in various ways, by non-native people, to market things, and on the damaging effects this can have on the communities concerned (Ganje 91-106). Moreover, Carla Freccero discusses an aspect that is relevant to the connection that is made between the “Indian” and wolves. In her text “A Race of Wolves” she discusses the historical connection between race and species. (Freccero 110-123). Lastly, Kim Chandler Johnson and John Terrence Eck wrote about modern stereotypes of Native Americans in an institutional manner, namely about the causes and legal and societal solutions concerning them, in their text called “Eliminating Indian Stereotypes: Causes and Legal and Societal Solutions” (Johnson and Eck 65-109).

When zooming in from the general research field of Native American representation, onto the *Twilight* saga, some academics have chosen the series as a case study. Jennifer Pearson writes about the representation of Native Americans in the entire *Twilight* saga. Interestingly, she argues that the series is dynamic enough “to offer readers a deeper understanding of Meyer’s Quileute characters” and that the series is “actually fairly positive and unbiased in regards to the Quileute people” (Pearson). This thesis will explore the way Meyer represents these people by retracing historical representations and connecting this to theories concerning the underlying structures, rather than debating whether the representation is positive or negative. Another writer, Brianna Burke, has discussed the representation of

Native Americans in the *Twilight* saga specifically, in her article called “The Great American Love Affair: Indians in the *Twilight* Saga”, which she does by focussing on the well-worn stereotypes that have been around since Columbus colonized the Americas (Burke 207-220).

Relevance. However, the research that has been conducted on the *Twilight* saga leaves room for a deeper analysis that will look at the underlying structures of the use of stereotypes. The focus has mainly been on how Meyer represents Native Americans and on the stereotypical tropes she uses. This thesis will also explore this point by making the comparison with the history of Native American representation in popular culture. What it will add is more related to underlying practices and structures that are part and parcel of representation, namely “othering” practices. This will provide a theoretical depth to the stereotypical representation, it will show where they come from and what their implications are.

Research Methods. The research method suitable to analyse *New Moon* is discourse analysis. This can be used to pick apart the themes that make up the Native American representation. The knowledge that is produced cannot be understood outside of the discourses that they are produced by. This means that to understand the way in which Meyer represents Native Americans, it is necessary to analyse certain discourses used and to see where they came from. It is in these discourses that “society generates its regimes or general politics of truth which exercise power over subjects” (Walton 300). Analysing the discourses in *New Moon* will thus show that knowledge on certain topics (Native American people here), being correct or incorrect, is produced through the way in which they are represented.

To give a discourse analysis of *New Moon*, the most relevant aspects and tropes of the portrayal of Native Americans will be analysed. This will include the plotlines regarding the Native characters, the role they have in the book, the physical and emotional characteristics, and the relations to other characters.

Structure. In the second chapter, the focus will be on representations of Native Americans in popular culture throughout the years. In chapter three, *New Moon* will be analysed with regards to “trends” that may be present in the representation throughout the years, as well as the underlying structures of this representation when looking at the theories concerning “the other”. This part will be divided in accordance with the different elements of discourse analysis mentioned above. The various aspects will be picked apart firstly to see if there are elements of the trends in representation, then to look at the theoretical “othering” elements. In the conclusion, the implications of the way in which Native American are represented are illustrated.

CHAPTER 2: NATIVE AMERICAN REPRESENTATION THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

This second chapter focuses on representations of Native Americans throughout history, especially in popular culture, which will serve as a basis to compare *New Moon*'s way of representing Native Americans. To do so, firstly a historical background will be sketched, which relates to the stereotypes that have been present throughout history. Hereafter, well-known examples will be given that illustrate the use of these stereotypes in popular culture. Lastly, a perspective will be provided on the reception of these products that represent Native Americans.

Historical background of Native American stereotypes. Since colonial times and Christopher Columbus arriving in the Americas, indigenous populations have experienced various forms of destruction. Next to a genocide, the population was affected by an epistemicide; the destruction of their indigenous knowledge and practices. In the Americas, the knowledge and spirituality that pertained to the Native Americans was largely destroyed as a technique of domination; they were not allowed to practice their own ways of life (Grosfoguel 79-80).

The genocide and epistemicide felt justified for the colonizers. According to Ramón Grosfoguel, this was grounded in racism that was based in Christianity. Columbus thought of the indigenous population in the Americas as “people without religion”, as he questioned the theology, the religious beliefs, of the other. Columbus took this “discourse of religion” into the realm of philosophical anthropology, which allowed for the colonizers to distinguish different degrees of humanity that fixed peoples’ identities in what later would later be known as “races” (Grosfoguel 81). This “religious racism” reasoned that there was a distinction between people with religion and people without religion, which equalled to people with a soul and people without a soul. Jews and Muslims practiced the “wrong” religion, but they still practiced a religion so they had a soul. The indigenous population of the Americas however, did not practice a religion, according to how this concept was recognized by the colonizers, and thus had no souls. This led to the reasoning: if you do not have a religion, you do not have a God, if you do not have a God, you do not have a soul, and if you do not have a soul, you are not human but animal-like (Grosfoguel 81). The “Indians” not having a soul justified, in the eyes of the God in which the colonizers believed, so in the eyes of the colonizers themselves, their enslavement and killing (Grosfoguel 82). Some also believed that the Natives did have a soul, so it would be a sin to enslave them. The “solution” for this was to Christianize them; essentially still subjecting them to an epistemicide (Grosfoguel 83). Later on, this concept of “people without a soul” became “people without human biology and genes”; colour racism took over (Grosfoguel 83-84).

This process is one of the elements that helped construct a certain view of Native Americans. They were thought to have no soul and to be animal-like. This train of thought is what essentially not only led to their vile treatment, but also was a way to justify it.

Use of Native American stereotypes in popular culture. With this information about the dehumanization of Native Americans, it becomes clear that many stereotypes fall back on this

idea of the indigenous population being completely “other” from the colonizers. The concepts of the “Indian” that are most well-known are those of the savage, the mystical environmentalist and the exotic (Ganje 94). The physical part of the stereotypes often relies on exaggerated features, which has always been a way to assert dominance over people (Ganje 100). Indigenous populations were presented to be non-humans, justifying the way they were treated without guilt (Johnson and Eck 68).

Lucy Ganje argues that images of Native American people, their spirituality, places and objects sell. The images appeal to people because taking on different identities is a popular pastime. People who “put on these masks” have an opportunity to become something they are not (Ganje 94). “Indianness” has become a branding device and a marketing strategy that allows people to “claim” an identity and pretend they are something other than themselves. They “play” Indian. However, to use “Indianness” as a marketing strategy, the “brand” had to be transformed from the negative perception, to a more positive view. The image of the Lakota warrior, the archetypal Native American, became most well-known. In this stereotype, the Native American was presented for their “good and gentle nobility” and their “fine physiques”; a strong warrior (Ganje 91-94).

This does not mean however, that these images can be justified. This is argued by Johnson and Eck, as they state that “the image of Indians as warlike, created by white settlers to justify exploitation, creeps into all elements of society” (72). Non-native people encounter these images throughout their lives, in sport mascots, advertisements, movies, literature and children’s toys (Johnson and Eck 66). Children’s stories revolve around an Indian character, no specifics of tribe, place or time period, often wearing “fringed buckskins, beaded moccasins and feathered headbands” and attacking “peaceful” settlers with a bow and arrow (Johnson and Eck 74-75). In sports, the image of the Native American’s and their culture is reduced to merely a stereotype, which manifests itself in various ways. Supporters of teams

(which until very recently had offensive names like “Washington Redskins”) have pieces of clothing with “Indian-head” logos on it and refer to themselves as “Sioux” (a collective name for various Native tribes) without any sense of irony (Ganje 104). Sport fanatics call themselves “chiefs” and “Indians”, they use imitations of objects that are crucial parts of indigenous cultures like tomahawks and war bonnets. Their actions include imitating war chants, shouting things like “scalp them” - and imitating dances (Johnson and Eck 71).

Next to these examples of children’s stories and sport clubs, popular media also plays a crucial role in the representation of Native Americans. Many movies have used a certain image of the “Indian”. Peter Rollins and John O’Connor discuss the various representations of the American Indian in movies, as it turns out that the Native American community is disappointed with the “meager attempts to portray life” as actually lived by indigenous people (Rollins and O’Connor 2). One example of a well-known movie is *Dances With Wolves*, from 1990, which is discussed by Robert Baird. *Dances With Wolves* portrays a desire of “becoming American” and here the true American is the Native American. One conclusion that the movie explicitly draws is that there is a big gap between the white man and the Native. Various scenes in the movie of night time campfires serve to summon “the primitive, the animistic, the predatory”, for example a scene in which the Native people celebrate a “massacre”. The white protagonist is shocked by the celebration. Even though *Dances With Wolves* serves to portray this desire of “becoming American”, things like this end up posing the white man against the Native man; there is a gap between the civilized and the “primitive, animistic and predatory” (Baird 165-166).

Reception of products that represent Native Americans. The ways in which these Native American representations are received is mostly negative, with mentions of misrepresentation and generalization at the core. Crucial here is that, even though there is tremendous effort coming from civil rights groups and Indigenous leaders, many people continue to tolerate

discrimination and racism towards Native Americans. This is disheartening for many Native Americans, as sensitivity from the public towards issues concerning other ethnic groups is increasing (Johnson and Eck 71). The consequences of the created stereotypes are far-reaching and are linked to many (institutional) problems concerning the Indigenous society (Johnson and Eck 66). For example, the Dakota Access Pipeline construction that began in 2016, which constitutes a serious threat to the region's water, ancient burial grounds and important cultural sites, as it runs through Sioux territory. Many protesters were arrested and to this day, five years later, indigenous leaders and others concerned are fighting the construction, urging the Biden and Harris administration to shut it down. Recently, celebrities got involved in the plea, which shows that Native American issues are seemingly gaining more attention (Lakhani).

Misrepresentation plays a huge part in issues like these, as seen from the examples and the origin of certain stereotypes. A prominent consequence of this misrepresentation is that non-Native people only see Native cultures through a "small-window"; what outsiders are presented with in popular culture, forms their understanding of the entire indigenous population. It creates an inability to understand the bigger picture, since non-Native people only know the stereotypes and continue to contribute to the cultural violation of the people it concerns (Ganje 104). With the history of making the American Indian people disappear during the colonial times, both literally but also culturally, this environment was created to form an own "understanding" of their culture and history which sought to fit the identity the settlers wished to construct (Ganje 98).

Part and parcel of this process is also the generalization of the indigenous population. One image of the Native American was created, not taking into account the differences between regions, tribes and individuals. For example, in children's books, the "Indian" is not attempted to be representative of a specific identified tribe, or even a specific period in time

(Johnson and Eck 74-75). Ganje states that “cultural identity is a complex and often deeply felt connection and belonging. One can have the racial identity of “Indian”, but a cultural identity is a different matter” (103-104). This means that the “Indian” as one identity is essentially incorrect, as it generalizes the various different cultural identities present in the entire community. Specific cultural identities are expressed in many ways, like participating in ceremonies, understanding or speaking the language, participating in practices of the tribal community, knowing one’s ancestry and much more. Heritage like this is a sacred matter, and they feel deeply towards the importance of this type of identity. In the already present struggle of maintaining and regaining their culture after suffering great losses, many Native Americans resent the way that they are represented, as it appropriates their images, stories and history (Ganje 103-104).

A question remains, “is there a right way to represent Native Americans and engage with their culture?” Lucy Ganje makes the point that instead of appropriating Native American culture for our own gain, there are different ways to engage with the same topics. It would be better to support the indigenous population by honouring their sovereignty and treaty rights, which have been lost over time. Moreover, people should support the efforts of the Native community in regaining their culture in the forms of revitalizing their languages, trying to understand their economic and resource management and assisting in repatriating their sacred objects. This is a way to “honour their future as well as their past” (Ganje 105). Ganje argues for respecting the cultures of Native Americans, and especially listening to them. In popular culture, this can be carried out too, for example by having representation of Native Americans, directed by Native Americans. An example is the movie *Halpate* from 2020, directed by Adam Piron, who is Kiowa and Mohawk and Adam Khalil, who is Ojibway. The movie provides an insight into the ancient tradition of alligator wrestling by the

Seminole tribe (Luther). This is a different side of Native American representation, where it comes from indigenous people themselves and accurately portrays their culture.

CHAPTER 3: NATIVE AMERICAN REPRESENTATION IN *NEW MOON*

The previous chapter shows how stereotypes and typical representations have been formed on colonial ideologies that have essentially dehumanized indigenous populations. In this chapter, Stephenie Meyer's *New Moon* will be analysed to see if any of these trends can be traced in this book. Various elements of the discourse will firstly be discussed and connected to representation in the past. After discussing these aspects, theories concerning "othering" practices, stereotypes and representation will be implemented on the findings, to uncover the underlying structures of the way in which Native Americans are represented.

The Quileute Legends. An important part of the discourse about Native Americans in *New Moon* are their "tribal legends". The Quileute legends play a big part in explaining the history of vampires and werewolves. The werewolf part of their legends is interchangeably connected with their identity. Jacob tells the legend of why some of the Quileutes are werewolves: "Another legend claims that we descend from wolves – and that the wolves are our brothers still", "the wolves that turn into men, like our ancestors" (Meyer ch. 12). Additionally, part of their legends in the book are about the "cold ones", the vampires: "the blood-drinkers that were enemies of their tribe" (Meyer ch. 3).

The use of the name of a real tribe implies that the book also reflects their beliefs. As seen before, the critique surrounding the series suggests this is not the case. According to the official website of the Quileute tribe, there is indeed a legend that involves wolves: "the Quileutes were changed from wolves by a wandering transformer" ("Culture"). The Quileutes were thus transformed from wolves into men, there is no legend that says that the tribe

changes back into wolves; there are no werewolves in their tales. Moreover, the “cold ones” do not exist in Quileute legends, nor does anything similar to it (“Culture”).

Legends are sacred to indigenous peoples, which Meyer also implies in *New Moon* as Jacob mentions: “Everything they need to know has been passed down from father to son for generations” (Meyer ch. 15). It is knowledge that is supposedly integral to the lives of the Quileutes. However, what happens in *New Moon* is that the legends that are sacred to the actual Quileute tribe are changed. They were appropriated to fit the narrative that the writer created. The knowledge, spirituality, traditions and beliefs of the Quileutes are changed. As seen in the previous chapter, the Native Americans have experienced an epistemicide that caused loss of traditional beliefs. By once again changing and appropriating their culture, the consequences are similar to the epistemicide that already caused so much loss of knowledge. *Werewolves*. The creation of “the werewolf” by changing Quileute legends is also significant in how Native Americans are perceived by outsiders. The wolves in *New Moon* are the men from the reservation. Bella describes them as very big and intimidating: “There was a distinctly canine cast to the shape of it, the way it moved. I could only think of one possibility, locked in horror as I was. Yet I’d never imagined that a wolf could get so big” (Meyer ch. 10). In a later encounter, Bella says: “The wolf’s muzzle wrinkled back over his teeth, and another growl rolled through his colossal chest. His dark, enraged eyes focussed on me” (Meyer ch. 14).

In *New Moon*, the wolves are frightening and intimidating. This does not only apply to the wolves themselves, because they are interchangeably connected to the Native American characters. Freccero calls werewolves “mergers of dog and man” (110). The wolf connotes various qualities: they are wild, noble, have primitive strength and natural dignity, but yet they are capable of an inhuman savagery (Freccero 118). Moreover, symbolically the wolf is a

stranger, the “Other”, a “wild outsider who continues to be wild and does not succumb to domestication and incorporation” (Freccero 118).

The Native American as the animal is linked to the historical connection between species and race, in which people have long compared groups of humans that they regarded as inferior to them with non-humans (Freccero 111). This was prevalent in the colonial era and its religious racism, where the indigenous population of the Americas was regarded as animal-like, because they “had no soul”. Portraying the Native Americans as werewolves, even though this is not in correspondence with their own legends, almost seems to put them back in this animal-like state, the lesser human, like taking steps back in history. Moreover, it puts them in the symbolic role of the “Other”, as the wolf symbolizes the outsider.

Physical characteristics. Another way in which the discourse around the Native American characters in *New Moon* is created, is through their physical appearance. The reader encounters them through Bella’s perspective, when she describes Jacob in the beginning of the book: he had “bright teeth standing in vivid contrast to the deep russet colour of his skin” and his hair “fell back like black curtains on either side of his broad face”, “the soft muscles of childhood hardened into a solid, lanky build of a teenager”, and the “planes of his cheekbones sharper, his jaw squared off” (Meyer ch. 5). Next to Jacob, Bella also encounters other men from the tribe, she describes them as: “Three tall men with dark faces” (Meyer ch. 3). There is one woman from the tribe she meets: “She was beautiful in an exotic way – perfect copper skin, glistening black hair, eyelashes like feather dusters” (Meyer ch. 6). Overall, the physical characteristics of the men are that they are tall and broad, all with black hair and russet skin, which the woman also has.

In the past, representations of Native Americans were exaggerated as a strategy of domination, as can be seen in the previous chapter. Moreover, they were often presented as

having exotic qualities and fine physiques. In *New Moon*, the physical qualities do not necessarily seem to be exaggerated; the way Meyer describes them is quite general, making all of them seem very similar to each other. They have characteristic black hair and copper skin and fine physiques, which was indeed part of representations in the past. The description of the woman does adhere to practices of representation in the past: the word exotic is literally used to describe her.

The fine physiques of the Native men in *New Moon* are part of what has been used as a branding device of “Indianness” in the past. It adheres to this creation of the specific brand, the Lakota warrior. Moreover, the use of the word “exotic” portrays the Native American as the “Other”. In the Cambridge Dictionary, exotic is defined as “unusual and exciting because of coming (or seeming to come) from far away, especially a tropical country” (“Exotic”). Using this word to describe a person implies that they seem to be, from somewhere else. The use of this term to describe someone from the indigenous population of a country, indicates that they are seen as “Other” in their own country.

Behaviour and personality. Next to the physical characteristics of the Native American characters in *New Moon*, their personality and behaviour are also crucial in the creation of their identity. The first central element in their personality is a degree of recklessness/fearlessness. The Quileutes start fires on the sea cliffs, and they dive from these same cliffs as “recreation” (Meyer ch. 3 and ch. 7). Moreover, in various instances one of the boys got in trouble at school. He stirred up trouble by asking out “a senior’s steady girlfriend” and another time he got grounded for fighting at school (Meyer ch. 6 and ch. 9). Next to this, Jacob’s personality changed significantly once he became a werewolf: “The open, friendly smile was gone like the hair, the warmth in his dark eyes altered to a brooding resentment that was instantly disturbing. There was a darkness in Jacob now. Like my sun had imploded” (Meyer ch. 11). Next to this, a prominent feat in the Quileute characters is how familiar they

are with the forest. This is emphasised multiple times. One time, Bella observes one of Jacob's friends moving "swiftly" through the forest, Bella's father confirms this when he speaks of the Quileute boys: "You were right – they do know the forest better than we do" (Meyer ch. 3).

In various ways, these behaviour and personality traits are a continuation of typical representations of Native Americans in the past. Characteristics that were central were the savage with warlike qualities, but also the mystical environmentalist. The recklessness and fearlessness of the Native characters in *New Moon* seem a milder version of the warlike qualities of the savage. They seek thrills as entertainment, and get in trouble with authority. Moreover, the change in personality that Jacob has once he becomes a werewolf, confirms how this pushes them back in to the role of the savage. The werewolf serves as vessel for this behaviour; they are pushed back into an animal-like state, a savage, which is then a part of their identity. Lastly, the fact that they are so comfortable in the forest connects back to the "Indian" as a "mystical environmentalist". They are one with nature, more so than the other characters. This is explained through a concept of racial theory called Culture/Nature. For white people "culture" was opposed to "nature", while for non-white people "culture" coincided with "nature". White people believed that they overcame "nature" by developing "culture", but for non-white people these concepts remained interchangeable. According to this racial theory, remaining close to nature implied savagery and acting on instinct, which once again allows the discourse to put Native Americans back in the role of the "savage" (Hall, "The Spectacle of the 'Other'" 243-244).

Contrast with the vampires. Native American characters being much more comfortable in nature than the other characters is not the only thing they differ in. In *New Moon*, there is a strong contrast between "vampires" and "werewolves". There are of course the physical

differences, Edward was “hard and cold – and perfect – as an ice sculpture”, which is completely different from Jacob’s warmth that comes with being a werewolf (Meyer ch. 2).

A big difference in this discourse is where the characters live, which reflects a gap in wealth. According to Bella, Edward has a lot of money and it “meant next to nothing to Edward or the rest of the Cullens” (Meyer ch. 1). The family lives in a huge mansion, with big windows and a large staircase up to the front door (Meyer ch. 1). Jacob on the other hand, lives with just his dad in a “small wooden place with narrow windows” with “dull red paint making it resemble a tiny barn” (Meyer ch. 5). There is a huge contrast in how and where they live. Edward lives with his stable family in a huge mansion, they are all very wealthy. Jacob lives with just his father, in a tiny house and they are not wealthy at all. A dynamic is created between a broken home with one parent, and a stable family.

Another point on which the characters are contrasted against each other, is in the way in which they conduct themselves. As seen previously, Jacob, and the other Native American characters, are quite hot-headed. They get in trouble at school and do reckless things, but they also change into werewolves whenever the emotions get too high. Their families are loud and chatty, as Bella describes whenever they get together on the reservation: “It was loud and confusing as everyone talked over everyone else” (Meyer ch. 6). Edward on the other hand is wealthy and classy: he plays the piano, his family went to college and are all calm and collected and he has superior self-control (he can refrain from his instinct that urges him to drink Bella’s blood) (Meyer ch. 1).

The contrast can be essentialized in the difference between Edward and Jacob. The former is classy, wealthy, from a stable family and has control over himself. The latter seeks thrills as entertainment, is not wealthy at all, comes from a broken family and loses control over his emotions quite often. This gap between the white man and the Native is not new, as

seen in the previous chapter. This has been present throughout popular culture. In the example of *Dances with Wolves*, the contrast was there between the savage and the civilized. This is exactly what the discourse of contrast also implies in *New Moon*. The vampire is represented as the ultimate form of being civilized. They are the exaggerated version of the white man, especially in contrast with the savage werewolf.

Role in the book. Still, Jacob has a prominent role in the book. To Bella, Jacob is someone she needs and she uses him. After Edward left her, she “needed him too much” and she was “selfish” (Meyer ch. 12). She used Jacob’s friendship to fill the hole that Edward left. Bella says that she feels “much, much healthier around him” and that she “needs him like a drug” (Meyer ch. 7 and ch. 9). She even says to Jacob that she likes him the best and that that will never change (Meyer ch. 9). However, in the end Bella needs to choose between Edward and Jacob. Without a second thought, she picks Edward, even after she was put in danger and he left her heartbroken (Meyer ch. 18). In the end, Bella has used Jacob to make herself feel better and when she does not need him anymore, she drops him.

She indulges in him, but at the same time denies him, she turns him down. Stuart Hall calls this a strategy of disavowal, which is central in fetishization of the “Other”. What is tabooed nevertheless finds a displaced form of representation (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 266-267). This gives the reader access to the identity of the “Other”, as Homi Bhabha describes it (298). This allows the reader to give into the conflicting desires; like Bella, they can indulge in the Native American identity. The Native American characters are used to give into this primal desire to explore tabooed subjects, but through disavowal it keeps the “Other” at a distance after all.

Underlying structures of representation. At the core of how the Native American characters are represented in *New Moon* lie structures of “othering” and stereotypes. Stuart Hall

extensively discusses where the desire to represent the “Other” comes from. A linguistic explanation is that meaning depends on difference between opposites, which is created through binaries (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 234-235). In *New Moon*, this happens in the contrast with the vampires. There are various oppositions like white/non-white, calm/hot-headed, etcetera. Meaning is created through these contrasts between the “Self” and the “Other”. Moreover, in this discourse, the dominant one indicates the power relation. In *New Moon*, the dominant one of the vampire/werewolf binary will always be the vampire. Bella returns to Edward and this discourse captures the inferiority of the Native American in said power dimension (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 235). Moreover, this “difference” is emphasized because the meaning then is created through dialogue with the “Other” (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 235-236). Meyer uses dialogue with the “Other” to create meaning for the “Self”. The Native Americans “serve” to give meaning in Meyer’s book: she has adapted the Quileute legends to what was “needed”, changing them to contain vampires and werewolves. What this marking of “difference” and using it to create meaning leads to, is classification and cultural order. The binary oppositions in *New Moon* ensure that cultures remain stable, they stay in their appointed place. The symbolic boundaries that are created in contrasting the “Other”, the Native American, to the “Self”, the vampire, ensure that they remain in their allotted slot in the power dimension that was already in place (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 236).

The discourse of the “Other” in this binary is based on stereotypes, as they get a hold of a few “simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized characteristics about a person”, which fixes them in the social order to reinforce that hegemonic power of the “Self” (Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’” 258). Homi Bhabha also argues this in relation to the concept of “fixity”, of which the stereotype is the major discursive strategy as a mode of representation. It is a form of knowledge and identification that wavers between something

that is “in place” and something that has to be anxiously repeated (Bhabha 293). Meyer also uses these widely recognized characteristics, the stereotypes, when representing Native Americans. This is evident when comparing it to representation in the past, which proved that common stereotypes were still deployed in *New Moon*. People recognize stereotypes as they are fixed in history, but they also need to be anxiously repeated. Persistently, Meyer repeats the “Otherness” of the Native American by reusing tropes from the colonial discourse, which produces “knowledge” about the “Other” and also serves as an apparatus of power (Bhabha 294-295). The hegemony lies with the “Self”, the non-Native person, who represents the “Other” and reconfirms and legitimizes supremacy and control over the “Other” (Bhabha 295). By using the colonial discourse, it is seen as realism, as this employs a system of representation that is similar to realism. *New Moon* anxiously repeats the fixed stereotypes, which leads to it getting recognized as reality which reinforces power structures once more (Bhabha 295).

Conclusion. This thesis has extensively discussed how Native Americans are represented in Stephenie Meyer’s novel *New Moon*. Firstly, Native American representation in popular culture in the past has shown that there are various trends that have been around since the colonial era. Historically, Native Americans were thought of as animal-like. They were portrayed as being savages who were very different from the white settlers. Next to this, the “Indian” was also used as a branding device, where their fine physiques, warrior qualities and mystical environmentalist stereotypes were prominent. To outsiders, Native American identities were merely reduced to these stereotypes. Native Americans have voiced that portrayals like these are damaging and hurtful. However, *New Moon* still adheres to these trends in representation. The legends of the actual Quileute tribe were appropriated to fit the narrative, once more their culture was violated. The changing of these legends led to the Native characters being put back in the role of the savage, animal-like being, as they are

portrayed as werewolves. Symbolically, they are back to being the “Other”. Their physical characteristics also put them in this role, they are exoticized. Moreover, their behaviour puts them into the role of the savage as well; they are portrayed as reckless with a short temper. Their “oneness” with nature additionally adheres to the branding of the mystical environmentalist, but also to the savage. Next to this, the contrast that is created between the werewolves and the vampires reinforces the gap between the “Self” and the “Other”; the savage versus the civilized. This is enforced through Jacob’s role in the book, who essentially serves to give the reader access to the identity of the “Other”, but always keeping “them” at a distance.

Previous academic research by Burke is in line with these findings. She also emphasises the Native American characters in *Twilight* being portrayed as savages with short tempers and eagerness to fight. Next to this, she also notes the closeness to nature of the Native American characters and their fine physiques, and that the Indigenous characters are indeed objectified for the reader to indulge in (Burke 209-212). This thesis has added theories by Hall and Bhabha that show the underlying structures the representation. This shows that the Native American in *New Moon* serves as the “Other” to create meaning. Anxiously repeating the fixed stereotypes that stem from colonial discourse reinforces power structures and general politics of truth. In 2020, Meyer published an addition to the series, *Midnight Sun*. It is a retelling of *Twilight* from Edward’s perspective. One of the few accounts of a Native American character may be a preview of what readers might encounter if Meyer decides to rewrite the rest of the series. Edward sees Jacob’s father, Billy, and he makes a comment on “hostility” radiating from Billy. Once again, this implies the return to the savage Native American.

To conclude, Native American representation in *New Moon* draws on stereotypes from the colonial era, which reinforces the idea of the Native American as the “Other” and keeps the hegemonic power structures of knowledge production in place.

Works Cited

- Baird, Robert. "Going Indian: *Dances with Wolves*." *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, edited by Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, The University Press of Kentucky, 1998, pp. 153-169.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "The Other Question: The Stereotype and Colonial Discourse." *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: A Reader*, edited by K.M. Newton, second edition, 1988, pp. 293-301.
- Burke, Brianna. "The Great American Love Affair: Indians in the *Twilight* Saga." *Bringing Light to Twilight: Perspectives on the Pop Culture Phenomenon*, edited by Giselle Liza Anatol, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 207-220.
- "Culture." *Quileute Nation*, Quileute Nation, 2017, <https://quileutenation.org/>.
- "Exotic." *Cambridge Dictionary*, Cambridge University Press, 2021, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/representation>. Accessed 27 May 2021.
- Freccero, Carla. "A Race of Wolves." *Animots: Postanimality in French Thought*, no. 127, USA, Yale University Press, 2015, pp. 110-123.
- Ganje, Lucy A. "Marketing the Sacred: Commodifying Native-American Cultural Images." *Images that Injure*, edited by Susan Dente Ross and Paul Martin Lester, 3rd edition, USA, Greenwood Publishing Group, 2011, pp. 91-106.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. "The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic Racism/Sexism and the Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16th Century." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, vol. 11, no. 1, 22 September 2013.

Hall, Stuart, "The Spectacle of the 'Other'." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, edited by Stuart Hall, London, Sage Publications, 2003, pp. 223-290.

Hall, Stuart. "The Work of Representation." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, edited by Stuart Hall, London, Sage Publications, 2003, pp. 13-75.

Houseman, Tyson. "As a Native Actor, I Applaud Those Who Walked off the Set of Adam Sandler's Racist Movie." *Vice*, Vice Media Group, 29 April 2015, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/kwkkzy/as-a-native-actor-i-applaud-those-who-walked-off-the-set-of-adam-sandlers-racist-movie-971>.

Johnson, Kim Chandler, and John Terrence Eck. "Eliminating Indian Stereotypes: Causes and Legal and Societal Solutions." *American Indian Law Review*, vol. 20, no. 1, USA, University of Oklahoma College of Law, 1995-1996, pp. 65-109.

Lakhani, Nina. "Celebrities call on Biden and Harris to shut down Dakota Access pipeline." *The Guardian*, 9 February 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/09/dakota-access-pipeline-biden-harris-letter-celebrities-indigenous-leaders>.

Luther, Billy. "Native American Heritage Month: 7 Films to Illuminate Diverse Experiences." *Variety Magazine*, 2 November 2020, <https://variety.com/2020/film/news/native-american-heritage-month-films-billy-luther-1234819161/>.

Meyer, Stephenie. *New Moon*. e-book, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 2006.

Pearson, Jennifer. "Representations of Native American Characters in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight Saga." Master's Thesis, East Carolina University, 2011, <https://thescholarship.ecu.edu/handle/10342/3539>.

"Quileute Tribe." *Quileute Nation*, Quileute Nation, 2017, <https://quileutenation.org/>.

"Representation." *Cambridge Dictionary*, Cambridge University Press, 2021, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/representation>. Accessed 26 March 2021.

Rollins, Peter C., and John E. O'Connor. *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*. Kentucky, The University Press of Kentucky, 1998.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, edited by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, New York, Columbia University Press, 1994, pp. 66-111.

Vassar, Shea. "The Twilight Saga's Issue with Indigenous Culture." *Film Daze*, <https://filmdaze.net/twilight-sagas-issue-with-indigenous-culture/>, 20 May 2020.

Walton, David. Glossary. *Doing Cultural Theory*. By Walton. London, Sage Publications, 2012, pp. 296-313.