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**Trends in the representation of Native Americans in
'Western movies': case study:-The Stagecoach
-The Searchers
-The Revenant**

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master in Language and Communication

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of our investigation, and that due reference of acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

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June 2022

Dedication

preparing this research is the end of my childhood dream and the beginning of new chapter in my life as an English graduate. Me and Douaa began this journey with a huge amount energy and happiness, did our best to give the perfect dissertation, However, by the end we faced a nightmare which flipped our happiness to the darkest sadness ever. Thank to god , we found people who supported us to re do the work and made us regain our confidence.

The first thanks go to Allah almighty, then to my parents who were there for me in each second when I was writing and rewriting my work, who made me believe that I can do it no matter what happen.

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Finally, I would like to thank the person I worked with on this thesis, Douaa, to all our fights and laughs, we did it.

Imene Hiaddihine

Dedication

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A special feeling of gratitude for the soul of my Grandparents. I will be forever grateful for their love.

16/12/2021_ 18/04/2022

Though you're not here

but

you're in every page

Douaa Khedaa

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Abstract

For decades, Hollywood has portrayed Native Americans as villains, battling against white people, who are invariably the heroes. The portrayal of Native Americans in films has sparked outrage among native peoples, resulting in a widespread misunderstanding of their history and culture and that led to accusing the American film industry by been biased. Due to several historical events, the views toward natives have changed through time and this was shown in the latest productions and in the popular view of the society. The following study carries a comparison between three different movies '*The Stagecoach, The Searchers, and The Revenant*' where the first two movies represent a negative representation of natives and the third one was a try to correct the stream and an attempt toward objectivity. In doing so, we will try to prove that western movies are biased and that it has an effect on the way we see things in reality, relying on the theories of postcolonialism and Orientalism.

Keywords: Movies, Native Americans, Representation, Bias, *The Stagecoach, The Searchers, The Revenant*.

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Introduction

‘ The media is the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses’.

Malcom X

Over time, the means of communication have changed impressively. We went from rudimentary technology, to having everything at the tips of our fingers. ¹The term media is the plural of medium, which refers to the communication channels that disseminate news, music, movies, education, promotional messages and other data in some way, shape or form to large numbers of people. Media can be broken down into “Traditional media” that includes print media and “Modern media” that are concerned with broadcast media. The Internet has also emerged as a major player, as a rapidly growing number of people globally get their news, movies, etc. online. Print Media is the oldest type; it includes all types of publications: Newspapers, Journals, Magazines, books and reports. Broadcast Media refers to radio and TV, which came into the scene at the beginning and middle of the 20th century, respectively. Finally, the Internet has grown in importance over the past twenty years. Specifically, Websites and Blogs are rapidly emerging as viable and major channels of communication as more, and more people seek news, entertainment, and educational material online.

Mass media has an effect on many aspects of human life. Which include individual views and beliefs. These effects are measurable; they can be positive or

¹ The definition is taken from: Schmid, Beat. "The concept of media." (1997).

negative, abrupt or gradual, short-term or long lasting. As a society, we consume information regularly and we rely on it as a day-to-day source of news and entertainment. We often assume that what we are consuming is quite reliable. However, this assumption is not accurate, as media bias is rampant across all the three main media channels: broadcast, published, and most definitely, the internet. For this reason, it is crucial to learn how to consume information with a more critical eye. Broadly, looking at the definition of bias as the prejudice or preconceived notion against a person, group or the tendency to lean towards or against something. More narrowly, ²media bias could be defined as the unjust favoritism and reporting of a certain idea or standpoint.

In one form or another, the media influences the majority of the population in the United States, especially with the advancement of technology. The impacts of mass media are profound. Media affects our beliefs, assumptions, public ideology, as well as our experiences.³ Hopper and Philo documented the following in their research:

... [we] found a relationship between the prior exposure to information, often related to strength of attitude, on the subject and the degree to which the information impacted on beliefs and opinions. Those who had been least exposed to either subject were most open to adjusting their views and, conversely, those who arrived at the groups with most exposure were least likely to have their opinions changed by the new information. This was the case even if the information they had been exposed to was polarized, or inaccurate. (p. 332)

Bias is not only found in the news but also in entertainment outlets such as films. Movies, as any other form of art, reflects the culture of the society and at the same time, contributes to that culture; it shapes the society's values, beliefs, and social structure and assists in transmitting culture to mass audiences. However, the influence that films have on us is not always positive. Especially, when it helps in spreading prejudices and

² The definition can be found in: Baker, Brent H. "Media Bias." *Student News Daily*, 2017.

³ The statement can be found in: Hopper, Trevor, and Andrew Powell. "Making sense of research into the organizational and social aspects of management accounting: a review of its underlying assumptions." *Journal of management Studies* 22.5 (1985): 429-465.

stereotypes so much that they become normal for us. The three most common biases found in entertainment are political, racial, and gender biases. Racial stereotyping is quite popular in the entertainment media. ⁴The mass media helps to reproduce racial stereotypes and spread those ideologies (Abraham, 184). For example, in movies, the minority characters are shown as their respective stereotypes. In one specific example, the media manifests bias and prejudice in representations of Native Americans. Throughout history, Native Americans have remained one of America's most marginalized minorities.⁵ As with any minority population, the American Indian population's challenges, struggles and progressive strides are reflected in popular culture. Hollywood and the American film industry have long represented Indians unevenly. In much the same way American colonists forced Indians off their native land, filmmakers have often relegated Native American characters to minor roles, displaying stereotypical, historically inaccurate behavior. That is not to say that American Indians have not been present in films. On the contrary, they existed as staple characters for a large portion of the twentieth century, especially in the popular Western genre. This marginalizing of the population has been manifested in the creation of harmful stereotypes.

This can directly correlate with how individuals may perceive certain groups of people, as the only media coverage a person receives can be very limited and may not reflect the whole story or situation; stories are often covered to reflect a particular perspective to target a specific demographic. With depictions of Native Americans as savages, that is, as bare, shoeless, irrational warriors, who when they are not running

⁴ The original statesmen is extracted from: Guo, Lei, and Summer Harlow. "User-generated racism: An analysis of stereotypes of African Americans, Latinos, and Asians in YouTube videos." *Howard Journal of Communications* 25.3 (2014): 281-302.

⁵ The source of this ideas is found in: Boyd, Julia. "An examination of native Americans in film and rise of native filmmakers." *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications* 6.1 (2015).

through the woods and yelling are most likely obsessed with scalping and removing all white people from the land.

What happens to people's beliefs? People start to perceive Natives as savages and criminals. Furthermore, it became apparent that bias and discrimination regarding race have been longstanding issues within several aspects of mainstream media, not only news reporting, but even entertainment programming. Scholars Peter Rollins and John E. O'Connor have noted that Native Americans have long been depicted as noble savages through a number of mediums:

⁶"The image of the Indian in dramatic, violent and exotic terms was incorporated in the reports of missionaries and soldiers, in philosophic treatises, in histories and in the first American bestsellers, the captivity narratives of the seventeenth-and eighteenth centuries. Although the image of the Indian varied in these early descriptions, one is struck by the tone of admiration and frequent references to honor and nobility even in the context of cruelty and savagery (Rollins and O'Connor X)"

The film industry in the United States experienced an increase in the variety of its Native American portrayals. Two of the most widely known films were *The Stagecoach* 1939 and *The Searchers* 1956 of, which were created by "White" Hollywood film maker John Ford for a mainstream audience and largely focused on "historical" depictions of Native Americans. Both of them are set shortly after the American Civil War in the mid-to late nineteenth century. The two movies presented the stereotypical image of the indigenous people known as the "Noble" or "Bloodthirsty" Indians. In that period, it was impossible for the non-White people in the film to play roles other than those representing the stereotypes, therefore, the Black people often played musicians or servants, while Native Americans played the good, bad or even the drunk Indians as the counterparts to the white heroes or heroines. *The*

⁶ The statement can be found in: Rollins, Peter, ed. *Hollywood's Indian: The portrayal of the Native American in film*. University Press of Kentucky, 2011.

Revenant from 2015, on the other hand, offers a positive picture about Native Americans. It gives much more space for a depiction of their way of life, which was quite vivid in the film.

The main concern of this research, entitled “Trends in the representation of Native Americans in Western movies :case study *The Stagecoach, The Searchers, The Revenant*” is to question the objectivity and the credibility of information that are available to viewers of Western movies and how that information impact our beliefs, emotions, and behaviors towards “Others.”

With the increased ability to disseminate information comes the responsibility of presenting images that are accurate and factual. Therefore, our study has mainly three objectives. Firstly, to detect whether Media Bias appears in ‘Entertainment Media ,Movies’ as it does in "News Media". Secondly, to investigate if the image of ‘Natives’ in ‘Western’ movies declares their reality. And lastly; to show the effect of ‘Bias’ in movies on the ‘Other’. The research endeavors to address the following research questions. Initially, does media bias exist "Entertainment Media' or it is only a monopoly to 'News Media'? Then, is there an actual bias in the manner in which Native Americans were presented in ‘Western’ movies? And the last question does this representation have an influence on how people perceive the Natives? The questions are simple to pose but surprisingly difficult to answer. At least, it is difficult to answer well. In consideration of how race is presented in the media historically, it seems that this research would show a correlation that stereotypes are likely still reinforced through news media, whether conscious or not. This study rests on the supposition that America is no longer the land of democracy and justice.

Enormous studies during the past decades have been done on Media Bias, yet little work has been carried out as regards the particular topic of how Native American people and culture are represented in films, as well as examine any contrasts or comparisons between the different films. Therefore, our aim is to further research this gap and provide an understanding of Media Bias generally and Media Bias in ‘Western’ movies.

CHAPTER ONE
BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL
FRAME

As an activity or process to express thoughts and feelings or provide information to people.⁷ Media can be said that communication is an act of transmitting information and news from one place to another, from one person to another. Most communication methods have been developed alongside technology. At the beginning of the 21st, century technological progress and the rapid growth flows of data have helped to create today's mass media. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to theoretical background to media, its evolution, function, forms, and influence. Then it investigates the American entertainment media and film industry in Hollywood. Finally, the chapter closes with a definition 'Postcolonial theory' that is used in the analysis.

I. MEDIA

⁸'By media we mean the channels, the methods or forums used for disseminating information, providing entertainment with time motto (*sic*) to create awareness among the masses'' (Mehsood.2006).

⁹The term media, which is the plural of medium, refers to the diversified and large-scale communication devices for information, news, music, movies, education, promotional messages and other data transmission to the large audience. It comes from the Latin meaning 'middle ground or intermediate'. Traditionally, it should therefore be treated as a plural noun in all its senses in English and be used with a plural rather than a singular verb. In practice, however, it refers collectively to 'television, radio, and the press. And it is now allowed in standard English to use it either as singular or a plural noun.

⁷ This definition can be found in: Vivian, John, and Peter J. Maurin. *The media of mass communication*. Toronto, ON, Canada: Pearson Canada, 2012.

⁸ The statement can be found: Shabir, Ghulam, et al. "Mass Media, Communication and Globalization with the perspective of 21st century." *New Media and Mass Communication* 34 (2015): 11-15.

⁹ The ideas of this part are extracted from: Kumar, Dibyanshu. *Technological Innovations in Media and Communications*. KK Publications, 2022.

The historical relevance of the media precedes the Internet era. If media mean a form of communication, they have been an integral part of human history since the beginning because gestures, voice, and writing has always structured human communication. The first form of written form of news are newspapers; which emerged in the seventeenth century with the first published weekly in Germany in 1609, but it took until the nineteenth century to reach a broad readership. The invention of the printing press gave rise to some of the first forms of mass communication, hence transforming the way the world received printed materials.

The phrase 'The Media' began to be used in the 1920s. The notion of 'Mass Media' was generally restricted to print media up until the post war era, when television, and video were introduced, this is where the history of media and mass communication study begins, and where it gets quite complicated. New media technologies enabled the public to get access to knowledge and information that had previously been out of reach.

A. THE EVOLUTION OF MEDIA

Mass media evolved out as one of the direst necessities of mankind in order to stay informed and connected in a way that get beyond the capability of their physical senses. As it is demonstrated in the table below,¹⁰ Lehman-Wilzig and Cohen-Avigdor proposed a natural life cycle model of new media evolution, a six-phase model that summaries transformations elongated the journey; namely birth (technical invention), penetration, growth, maturity, self-defence, and -adaptation, convergence or obsolescence. These steps are collected in the following table:

¹⁰ This idea is found in: Lehman-Wilzig, Sam, and Nava Cohen-Avigdor. "The natural life cycle of new media evolution: Inter-media struggle for survival in the internet age." *New Media & Society* 6.6 (2004): 707-730.

Phase	Description
Birth	Most new media are ‘continuous innovation’ types (Atkin and LaRose) direct descendants of previous media seriously lacking something. the rise of any new medium draws on an existing technology or medium
Market penetration	Eventually, the new mass medium enters the media environment, developing new uses, and attracting users.
Growth	The growth of mass media reflects the continuous advancements in technology, and any new mass medium usually has difficulty finding its ‘natural voice’ so , Developers and users learn to exploit, apply, expand the unique capabilities of the medium
Maturation	The rapid development of technology allows the invention of new medium , and each new medium (or adapting to the old media) has found stability and status in the communication environment and market.
Defensive resistance	Sooner or later an established medium will be threatened by other , The process of revolutionary technology has led to an endless competition between traditional media and new media, with each media trying to protect its own audience.
Adaptation, convergence, or obsolescence	This stage constitutes the outcome of the previous stage. There are three broad possibilities.

	<p>Adaptation: Traditional media adapts to new situations by developing different functions and/or retaining (finding) its (new) audience. Convergence: Traditional media cannot survive independently, but maintain their functions by merging or integrating with new media.</p> <p>Obsolete: Traditional media cannot successfully adapt to change; it declines or disappears</p>
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Table 1. Lehman-Wilzig, Sam, and Nava Cohen-Avigdor. "The natural life cycle of new media evolution: Inter-media struggle for survival in the internet age." *New Media & Society* 6.6 (2004): 707-730.

In order to facilitate its application to different media and historical backgrounds, the natural life cycle model of Lehman-Wilzig and Cohen-Avigdor can be easily condensed into three stages, as it is shown in the table bellow:

<p>Birth</p> <p>Market penetration</p> <p>Growth</p>	<p>Emergence</p> <p>The emergence of new communication technologies (such as film, television or radio) requires a series of challenges to be dealt with in the only possible way: trial and error. At this stage, new media appears in the media ecology.</p>
<p>Maturation</p>	<p>Dominance</p> <p>In the media ecology, there are some dominant species In their golden age, they were able to impose their own power on the</p>

<p>Defensive resistance</p>	<p>rest. Usually at this stage, the media is characterized by stability and balance, but on the contrary, any new media will always be affected by the tension and imbalance caused by other media</p>
<p>Adaptation , convergence or obsolescence</p>	<p>Survival or extinction</p> <p>The third phase is a significant challenge to the longevity of the media. The media ecology undergoes changes that may result from new technological inventions, economic conditions or social practices</p>

Table 2. Lehman-Wilzig, Sam, and Nava Cohen-Avigdor. "The natural life cycle of new media evolution: Inter-media struggle for survival in the internet age." *New Media & Society* 6.6 (2004): 707-730.

B. THE FORMS OF MEDIA

The invention of paper and printing, and later newspapers, were the first steps towards mass communication. However, it was the invention of the radio by Marconi in 1901, which made sending of human voices over long distances possible. With the advent of the transistor in 1947, radio became the most common medium for transmitting voice messages. Today, television, which can transmit both sound and images, can be found practically everywhere. Though time, media has become an umbrella term for the several types of mediums that enrich us with knowledge and vital information. We witness every day how these new technologies and media outlets have changed the way we perceive the world around us, and aid us in our day-to-day dilemmas, making things more accessible and extremely convenient. It is the visual, print, and auditory mediums that run through society, namely television, newspapers (magazines, tabloids, and newsletters), radio, and the Internet. These mediums, from

traditional to new, are widely used and play different roles when it comes to communicating to the audiences at large, as well as altering their perceptions, and each has its own definition and details.

Print media plays a significant role in the development of communication. Even after the advent of electronic media like radio and television, the print media has not lost its charm or relevance. It has made a significant contribution to the dissemination of information and the transmission of knowledge. Nowadays, print media is faster than all ever before due to amazing advances in technology in recent years. Print media as a traditional media of development communication is broadly any written or pictorial form of communication produced mechanically or electronically using printing, photocopying, or digital methods for making numerous copies using automated procedures. More narrowly, any form of 'ink and paper' communication that is not hand-written or hand-typed. The two most common print media are newspapers and magazines.

¹¹ Newspapers are a worldwide medium that have been around far back to Julius Caesar's time. With the industrial revolution, newspapers were made possible to print and were used as a means of communicating, which kick started journalism. Newspapers are the most popular forms of print media. It is divided into various segments containing current events, sports, food, entertainment, fashion, finances, politics, advertisements, informative articles, and so on. Besides the contents, newspapers itself are also divided into several types: International newspapers, Weekly newspapers, Sunday newspapers, National newspaper and Local newspaper.

Books are the earliest kind of print media that are still utilized as a mean of communication and knowledge. They give an opportunity to writers to spread their knowledge about a particular subject to the whole world. They are a diverse platform

¹¹ This part is inspired from: Merrin, William. *Media Studies 2.0*. Routledge, 2014.

comprising varied topics that include literature, history, fiction stories, and many more, that not only increase our knowledge but also entertain us. All books are classified as either fiction or nonfiction and within these two categories there are dozens of more particular types, or genres. Nonfiction books contain factual information, such as biographies and history books. The two types of books can be further divided into many sub-types, called genres.

Magazines, just like the newspaper, has a complex history molded by the cultures in which it evolved. The early magazine was unlike any other previous publication. The arrival of the 20th century brought with it new types of magazines, including literary magazines, pulp magazines, fan magazines, teen magazines, and celebrity magazines, news, business, and picture magazines. In time, these types of publications came to dominate the industry and attract vast readership.

Broadcasting can be defined as instant dissemination of information through wireless means to the public at large. Radio and TV are the twin broadcast media, which have established themselves all over the world, the former as a means of transmission of sound and the latter as a means of transmission of moving pictures and sound. These two mediums are presented as the most powerful ones ;¹²Radio and television are the most effective tools in communication for the support of development' (Hussain,Nazari and Hassan). Following the same idea; ¹³Verhoeven argued :'both-radio and Tv have proved that to be a profound means of communication and potentially capable of leaving a tremendous effect on society'. Broadcasting emerged as a result of early wireless communications experiments done in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

¹² Nazari, Mohammad Reza, and Abu Hassan Hasbullah. "Radio as an educational media: Impact on agricultural development." *The journal of the South East Asia research centre for communication and humanities* 2 (2010): 13-20.

¹³ Okunola, Akinbode. "The Effect of Broadcast Digitalization on Agricultural Information Dissemination in Nigeria." *International Journal of Agricultural Science, Research and Technology in Extension and Education Systems* 5.4 (2015): 231-234.

Radio, at its most basic level, is communication via the use of radio waves. This encompasses both radio for person-to-person communication and radio for mass communication. Radio marked a turning point in the way information was conveyed or transferred, because it used sound to capture the attention of audiences. It was and continues to be one of the most successful communications mediums in transmitting vocal news.

With the emergence of television, it became so entrenched in modern life that some people find it impossible to imagine living without it. Major international events such as the assassination of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King in the 1960s, the Challenger shuttle explosion in 1986, the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, and the effect and aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 have all been shown on television, uniting millions of people in shared tragedy and hope. In comparison to radio, television has a further privilege of 'seeing' rather than 'listening' only.

The Internet has come a long way in a short period. During the growth of the Internet, all lifestyles and cultural and economic structures of communities have changed. Media was one of them. These included an intensification of competition among the 'old' media, such as newspapers and broadcasters, a consolidation of ownership, and continuing technological diversification. Many established media corporations are shifting from traditional methods to be developed one's like e-commerce and creating web domains.

C. THE FUNCTION OF MEDIA

Mass media's motto is raising awareness, informing people about current events and human activities, as well as providing entertainment. Therefore, media does not serve only one purpose. However, it serves many functions. We have occasion to notice only two: it informs and entertains. In the 'propaganda model' (PM) of mass media in

Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media (1988), Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman proclaimed that:

¹⁴‘The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behaviour that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society.’ (Chomsky and Herman 1)

People seek information to satisfy their curiosity, feed their minds, and understand the world around them. As time passes by, Newspapers, radio and TV never failed to provide us with news from around the world and keep us informed. Therefore, the plethora of information is now impressive. In addition to disseminating information, news media provided us with information and also assisted us in comprehending current events, ideas, policy changes, etc.

Besides informing, comes entertaining. On our day-to-day routines, we turn to media during our leisure time to escape from boredom. For instance, we watch sports, go to the movies, play video games, check YouTube videos, and listen to music. We rely on media to take us places we can not afford to go or imagine, acquaints us with bits of culture, and gossip, and makes us laugh.

D. THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA

Almost everyone uses media on a daily basis, whether it's television, radio, print, or movies. Not only is the majority of the population exposed to media, Americans, for example, spend at least several hours each day in some form of media. All the time Americans spend in media begs the question, is it going to have any further effects on them?

Broadcasting media is believed to have a significant influence on our lifestyles. The majority of people admitted it. The influence as a whole of the media has grown dramatically over time and will continue to grow as the media improves. Both news and

¹⁴ The statement is extracted from: Herman, Edward, and Noam Chomsky. "17 A Propaganda Model." *Media and cultural studies: Keywords* 204 (2012).

entertainment mass media, including films, have the power to affect or boost audience or individual perspectives.

Films play a key role in reflecting a society's culture and at the same time, contribute to this culture by transmitting other world's cultures to the audience. Besides their major contribution to our society's influences, films also have the power to affect our minds and open our eyes to the world's problems and heated issues. Thanks to the growing film industry, directors and producers are able to convey messages to their audiences, influencing their thoughts and behaviors.

Film and television have the unique ability and power to entertain large audiences. They have been a source of information for many people. ¹⁵Miller argued that 'Hollywood films became a major transmitter of "assimilationist"; values and helped to reinforce a narrow conception of American life to which all groups were expected to conform'(11). Hollywood movies played a major role in defining the ideal image of an American. The movie industry determined how Americans should behave, what they should believe in, and how they should look like.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA:MYTHOLOGY OF THE WESTERN GENRE IN HOLLYWOOD

The entertainment film industry in the United States began in the early twentieth century. The rise of Hollywood as a global industry did not happen overnight; it took time. Hollywood movies attempted to depict cultural shifts, technological progress, and political conflicts that American society witnessed. Burrowes stated while looking at how Hollywood was able to accomplish this ¹⁶'they are good at making movies and more importantly, they are really good at selling them. Hollywood's success didn't

¹⁵ The statement is taken from: Vrasidas, Charalambos. "The White Man's Indian: Stereotypes in Film and Beyond." (1997).

¹⁶ The statment is taken from: Ibbi, Andrew Ali. "Hollywood, the American image and the global film industry." *CINEJ Cinema Journal* 3.1 (2013): 93-106.

happen because they were making movies for everyone – it happened because they could convince you that the movie was for you’ (Burrowes). Hollywood films offer insight into the cultural and social history of the United States and serve as a means of cultural exchange between countries.

Hollywood movies have always attempted to establish a positive image for the United States, as Bi stated, ¹⁷‘Hollywood movies seek to build a national image characterized by freedom, equality, prosperity and other positive aspects. Concepts such as “freedom” and “equality” are reinforced through storylines’ (p.96). In simple terms, it aimed to show America as a utopian society, a society that has been a source of inspiration and influence over the culture of people around the world.

Western movies are one of the oldest and most famous genres in the American film industry. Their most productive era was from the 1930s up to the 1960s. Mainly, their stories are based on the strife between two sides over dominance. The Western was a type of American famous mythologies. It is believed that The Western myths reflected the values, beliefs, and even social structure of white society. Westerns have for so long been seen as a key to understanding and unlocking the fundamental aspects of American identity. ¹⁸Joan Mellen stated that ‘Westerns appeal so much to us [i.e.Americans] because they are explorations of who we are, dramas in which America’s soul, the national identity, hangs in the balance’(471).

In the name of civilization, The conquest of the territorial rights of the frontier's original inhabitants was mainly the image that Westerns sought to present. In Westerns, The Frontier was commonly a place where a European civilization came into conflict with "brutality", providing a setting in which the amusement of violent conflict could be

¹⁷ The statement is taken from: Ibbi, Andrew Ali. "Hollywood, the American image and the global film industry." *CINEJ Cinema Journal* 3.1 (2013): 93-106.

¹⁸ The statement is taken from: Crowdus, Gary, and Edward Asner, eds. *The political companion to American film*. Lakeview, 1994.

justified without questioning the moral values. Barbara Mortimer defines the Frontier as¹⁹ ‘an undeveloped borderland of interaction between competing societies, which, from the perspective of whites, is unowned and therefore contested ground’ (p.3). The Frontier was populated by multiple races (Indians, Blacks, Asians, Mexicans), all of whom were attempting to carve out a place for themselves.

The Western movies pushed the viewers to establish an unreal nation that sought to replace those that were already in existence. In his book *The American West in Film. Critical Approaches to the Western*,²⁰ Tuska identified seven basic plots around which the Western developed. One of these plots was the "Indian story". In fact, in Hollywood movies in general, and the Western genre in particular, Indian natives were depicted as Others. There are several representations and depictions of Indians in westerns. Yet “savage” and “noble savage” stereotypes have been dominant representations of Indians since before the advent of film.²¹ Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, the author of *Celluloid Indians*, notes that Cooper is the main creator of the two most pervasive stereotypes: the noble savage and the bloodthirsty savage, or more generally and simplistically, the good and bad Indian (Kilpatrick 2). Native Americans are commonly portrayed as either helpful or antagonistic. Those who are helpful are depicted as the white hero's sidekick. On the other hand, the hostile savage is out to sabotage the protagonist's plans.

III. THE THEORY OF POSTCOLONIALISM AND THE OTHERNESS

This research paper takes Postcolonialism as a theoretical perspective. In fact, Postcolonialism is a deconstruction intended to expose the real intentions of the colonial conception and articulate the mute opinion of the “Others”. The term Postcolonialism is

¹⁹ This information is taken from: Arlene, H. U. I. "The Racial Frontier in John Ford's *The Searchers*." *Revista complutense de historia de América* 30 (2004): 187-207.

²⁰ The idea is taken from: Vrasidas, Charalambos. "The White Man's Indian: Stereotypes in Film and Beyond." (1997).

²¹ The declaration can be found: Boyd, Julia. "An examination of native Americans in film and rise of native filmmakers." *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications* 6.1 (2015).

a heated topic according to Ania Loomba. She argues that ²²‘since the colonisers and the colonised people now live all around the world even though the age of colonial rule is over, one could say that the world is still postcolonial’ (28-29). Adding to that; she stated that Some have proposed that instead of thinking of postcolonialism as something that happened after colonialism, we should think of it as the contestant of colonial dominance and the legacy of colonialism (32-33). Overall, Postcolonialism attempts to change people's views of the relationship between the Western world and non-western, to live and experience things from the Other side of the story. The idea behind postcolonialism is that all cultures should be treated equally and that everyone should enjoy the same level of cultural well-distinguish. Unfortunately, this is no longer the case.

The process of "the Other" grew alongside the colonization expansion in the nineteenth century. The colonizers worked hard to impose their own identity, culture, and linguistic parameters, as well as to maintain their dominance. The concept of Otherness is based upon a split between opposites: if the Western is organized, logical, masculine, and good, then the Other is chaotic, irrational, feminine, and bad.

The alienation of the Other, as well as the use of opposites like "good" and "evil," or "civilized" and "uncivilized," have their origins in postcolonial relations. One of the earliest scholars who gave an over determined analysis, and new perspectives on the representations of the Other is Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978). His book is regarded as a starting point of postcolonial theory and a new kind of study of colonialism. He argued that since the earlier days of colonialism, representation of the orient in Western created a dichotomy or split between the West and the Others. Western civilization has seen itself superior, as a matter of fact, all information

²² The statement is found in : Chow, Rey. "Between colonizers: Hong Kong's postcolonial self-writing in the 1990s." *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 2.2 (1992): 151-170.

concerning the non-Westerners was always stereotyped because it was generated by Westerners, and this knowledge production played a weighty role in maintaining dominance over the Others.

It is worth noting that Said pointed out in his book the role of new technology and the media in the development of this unjust practice:

²³ 'One aspect of the electronic, post-modern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized moulds' (Said, 26).

So one must bear in mind that the primary source behind the progress and the growth of the concept of the Otherness is mass media since it is the main source of information about Others.

The concept of Otherness was well established in Hollywood, as evidenced by several films from early cinema to the present day. The inaccurate depiction of Native American Indians is surely the most notable case in Hollywood. The concept of West and Others can be explained as follows: There are people of the west and there are the others, Outsiders. The Others are according to the West, in desperate need to be dominated and civilized, and that is exactly what happened to the Native Americans.

Due to its theoretical perspectives, Postcolonialism can be applied as an analytical tool. The focus of the analysis will be on how the indigenous people are portrayed in three films with western themes; *The Stagecoach* (1939), *The Searchers* (1959), and *The Revenant* (2015). The analysis aims to look at how the characters in the films are, how they are presented by the filmmakers; camera angles, speaking roles, etc. Furthermore, the analysis will only consist of what is shown in the film with consideration of historical events that might have had an effect. It would be uncomplicated to properly select an obvious path and the right era that genuinely portrayed the Native Americans,

²³ The declaration is found in : Zhu, Weilie. "Understanding and respect: on establishing a Chinese discourse system for Middle East studies." *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies (in Asia)* 3.1 (2009): 3-17.

as well as to investigate whether there has been any progressive change in how indigenous people are portrayed.

CHAPTER TWO

OTHERNESS IN THE REPRESENTATION OF

NATIVES

The representation of Indians in Hollywood is one of the most famous themes of 'Western' movies that has been filmed. However, by the beginning of this representation; Natives were humiliated. And this was the consequence of 'by whom these movies were created?'. White, non-native filmmakers produced Natives themed movies from their own perspective, simultaneously neglecting the presence of Indigenous and their ability to express themselves. John Ford is one of the famous filmmakers who produced this type of movies; and his two successful production are *The Stagecoach* 1939 and *The Searchers* 1952. Both of these movies had several critics relating to how Natives were represented in them and many research has been done about it. As a completing study of the previous researches, this chapter gives a glance about the historical event and the motives that led to this misinterpretation. Adding to that, it deals with the analysis of the two previous movies in a way that includes the camera, the outfit, the dialogue...etc. Finally, the chapter introduces the outcomes of the films and shows the different stereotypes that kept following the Natives till now days.

I. REAL LIFE OF NATIVES VS THEIR REPRESENTATION

The journeys of discovery took a place in the 16th century; Europeans took several voyages to explore the new world. One of the greatest journeys, is Christopher's Coulombs trip, where he discovered 'The New World' or 'America'. This place attracted Europeans since they thought it is the ideal place for new beginning.

When Europeans put their foot on the new land; they found that they are not the first settlers who arrived. Native Americans or as it was refereed to them 'Indians' are the owners of this land. Two-Hawks stated that:

²⁴'Long before the white man set foot on American soil, the Native Americans had been living on this land. When the Europeans came here, there were probably 10 million Native Americans who had been living north of present-day Mexico'.

The behavior of Natives towards the invaders was mostly friendly and came out of curiosity. Even though they tried to have a nice relation with the Europeans, it could not be that easy because of the differences between them; starting from the language, lifestyle, and traditions.

Natives had a special relation with nature, unlike the Europeans, who thought only about industrial activities to gain money. They believed that the Natives did not make that great use of the land. As a result, they should interfere and use it more productively.

When the invaders set themselves and claimed the land; they began to treat the Natives as 'Things'. Settlers used aggressive expansion policies that focused in weakening The Natives because they have seen them as an obstacle between them and their expansion in the new world. The conflicts began and the invaders they began to describe The Natives as bloodthirsty aggressive warriors.

As the settlers conquered the eastern shore; the conflicts and the hate grow between the two parties. Europeans saw that Indigenous as 'beasts who needed to be religiously expelled'. Race Churchill describe the view on Europeans to natives in his book *Fantasies of the master* . He declared that:

'They acknowledge that there is a great God, but they know him not, wherefore they serve the devil for fear, after the most base manner... They live naked of the body as if the shame of their sin deserved no covering... they esteem it a virtue to lie, deceive, steal...'.²⁵

The view of Europeans towards natives is the outcome of the unfamiliarity to them. Most of the time they saw them as barbaric, uncivilized, wild, and devilish with the

²⁴ The statement of Two Hawks is taken from the following thesis: Radman, Ivica. *Native American Stereotypes in Film and Popular Culture*. Diss. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Department of English Language and Literature, 2013.

²⁵ The statement of Race Churchill can be found in the following reference: Churchill, Ward. *Fantasies of the master race: Literature, cinema, and the colonization of American Indians*. City Lights Books, 1998.

absence of morality. The history of this cultural conflict between The Natives and the settlers began since the coming of Puritans on the Mayflower ship. Puritans believed that Natives were 'heathens and devil worshipers'. They knew how to gain to popular point of view and how to show the process of expansion as a Holy war. This led to a degradation in Natives lifestyle; from the owners of the land to poor workers, from free to colonized, and from traditional worshipers to Protestants by force.

The idea of the colonizers towards natives was always out of superiority; and this was reflected in their literature, speeches, declarations, and even in indirect ways, such as movies. Stereotypical images of Native people in film continue to be discriminated up until the present day. These stereotypes have two things in common:²⁶ they are often negative and inaccurate. Natives are mostly shown in films as a hostile savage, a killer of men, women and children who, out of their savagery, took scalps as trophies.

The negative representation of native existed since ages; and it was shown in literature and art. These stories and plays had little accuracy with real lifestyle of Natives, it only focused on the barbarian part of natives such as slathering skins as a show of power. On the other hand, it always showed the White man as the hero who came to his people from the savage Indians. It also used a weak language from the part of natives that could barely be understandable. This language is used to show the illiteracy of natives. Adding to that, even the words that The White man used to describe the Natives were a collection of pejorative diction such as : savages, barbarians, cannibals.

This tendency of discriminating the natives was not only limited to stories or plays; however, it was also shown in cinematic movies, specifically the movies that were made by non-natives. When western movies first appeared, it did not include any

²⁶ The source of the previous stereotypes is: Francis, Daniel. *The imaginary Indian: The image of the Indian in Canadian culture*. Arsenal Pulp Press, 2012.

Native actors. However, their roles were played by White actors who were provided by tanned skins, braided hair, and Indian clothes. . Indigenous were typically used as bystanders in back settings, while non-native actors took the main parts of Native characters.

Red facing; is a technique used by White filmmakers to make White actors look like natives however; it had another dimension that touches the culture and the identity of Natives. It was coined by Raheja (2010) as he said "red-facing," which refers to on-screen and off-screen Native people performing acts that draw upon Indigenous performance contexts and spiritual traditions but are staged under conditions controlled, more often than not, by white filmmakers using new technologies and often in conflict with Indigenous self-representations'.²⁷

Natives has been stereotyped in Western movies, and their identity has been neglected. According to Kirkpatrick²⁸ (1999), Native American stereotypes in film may be divided into three categories: cerebral, sexual, and spiritual. They can be also characterized as: "stupid," "dumb," "primitive," and "innocent," among other terms. Natives are perceived to be less intellectual than Others based on this description, and they require assistance to show them a better way. Kirkpatrick ²⁹discusses how Indian males are frequently shown as desiring for white women, while Native ladies are regarded as objects of sexual desire, as demonstrated in the "Indian Princess" stereotype.

²⁷ The statmenet is token from: Hearne, Joanna. *Native recognition: Indigenous cinema and the western*. suny Press, 2012.

²⁸The source of the statment is: LeValdo-Gayton, Rhonda. "Jacob as Tonto: Perpetuating stereotypes that further marginalize Natives." *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 26.3 (2011): 250-253.

²⁹ The statement can be found in: Ross, Angela M. *The princess production: Locating Pocahontas in time and place*. The University of Arizona, 2008.

These stereotypes are the outcome of the desires and the motives of the White man; According to Buscome³⁰(2006), there are two sorts of Indians: one that cooperates with white people and is eager to integrate, and the other who resists them and is labeled "savage." The Noble Indian and the Savage Warrior are the two most popular cliches of Indians in movies.

Native females had their own part of the misrepresentation. They were more stereotyped than Native males. Women were mainly themed as White men's sexual desire. The main two stereotypes of females are the Indian princess and the Squaw; a total opposing images. They showed the Indian princesses as more White likely cultured; however the Squaw were more Indian .

II. A STREAM OF NEGATIVITY

One of the main filmmakers who were known for the discrimination of Native Americans in his movies is John Ford. The stream that Ford followed was the same in all of his movies; always touched the culture, the language, the lifestyle, and the presence of natives in society whether males or females. This idea can be shown in the next two Ford's 'movies' '*the stagecoach*' and '*the searchers*'.

At the very beginning of John Ford's film *The Stagecoach* we can see a stagecoach travelling through the landscape followed by cavalry men accompanied by some cheerful music in the background. Then, as soon as they leave the scene, the tone and music change dramatically to a more frightening song accompanied by drum-beatings. This introductory scene actually sets the whole setting for the film that represents the white man as "the good guy" and the Indian as "the bad guy".

A group of travelers who have their own motives for moving to Lordsburg, New Mexico. By the beginning of their trip, they receive news about their leader Geronimo

³⁰ The idea is taken from: Poluha, Lauren Madrid. "Cannibals in paradise: perpetuating and contesting Caribbean island stereotypes in film." *Post Script* 37.2/3 (2018): 96-1.

and their tribe that they are in the beginning of a war. Days later, they approach a ferry land stop, and they found out that it was burned by the Apaches. While they are crossing the river, The Apaches attacks. After long escape; they people on the stagecoach are out of ammo, and it is shown that they are going to be killed by the Apaches. Suddenly; men on a horse came to save them. Finally, ; the travelers reach Lordsburg with some victims, however most of them were safe.

³¹At the very beginning of John Ford's film *The Stagecoach* we can see a stagecoach travelling through the landscape followed by cavalry men accompanied by some cheerful music in the background. Then, as soon as they leave the scene, the tone and music change dramatically to a more frightening song accompanied by drum-beatings. this introductory scene actually sets the whole setting for the film that represents the white man as "the good guy" and the Indian as "the bad guy".

The Native Americans are portrayed entirely negatively in the film; we view them as savages, mute, and employed. A good illustration of this portrayal may be seen in the film's opening scene, when the native American guy stands in the backdrop, totally quiet and silent, like a statue. while the three officers converse over a table at an army camp The camera quickly zooms in on the native man before moving back to the cops. The zoomed-in scene revealed the feathers in his hair and his non-Western facial feature. The filmmaker thus portrays a stereotyped view of how the native should be addressed by showing the native man as stubborn and severe, allowing the westerns to define who they are by what they are not. This idea of ignoring the other which existed in this movie was mentioned by Edward said in his book "Orientalism". ³²According to said, ignoring the other and representing him as a "thing" is a method used to shape the

³¹ The credit of the analysis go back to :Pettersson, Emil. "Native Americans on Screen in 1939 and 2015: A Postcolonial Study on the Portrayal of the Indigenous People of America in Films and How to Adapt it into the EFL Classroom." (2017).

³² This idea is extracted from: Balibar, Etienne. "Difference, otherness, exclusion." *parallax* 11.1 (2005): 19-34. and Said, Edward W. "Orientalism." *Social Theory Re-Wired*. Routledge, 2016. 402-417.

mindset and to give excuses to the colonizers to reach their goals without being accused, this way the powerful part will declare the other part as fully negative and his objective is helping them without giving them a chance to express themselves. Said declared:

“Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. And, sadder still, there always is a chorus of willing intellectuals to say calming words about benign or altruistic empires, as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and the misery and death brought by the latest mission civilizatrice.”(Edward Said- Orientalism).

Following the same idea ;the negative portray of the native Indigenous in movies are still visible and present in other scenes. During their journey, one of the stagecoach passengers mentions Geronimo, the Apache tribe's brave leader. He calls him "that Apache butcher, Geronimo." A suitable name for a butcher." Without having seeing Geronimo and his followers on film, it already feels as if the Native Americans are the antagonists in this scenario. Native Americans are portrayed as butchers, as though they ride around and slaughter people on a daily basis, much like a butcher would slaughter an animal. Furthermore, when the stagecoach arrives at the ferry station, they discover it has been burned down by the Apaches. Again, we don't know why they acted that way or anything about their reasons , all is shown is how brutal and savages the Indigenous, without any exception, are all portrayed as barbarian in all situations. This can be shown in the scene when they arrived to a station, and they saw the bar's owner wife, who is a member of the Apache tribe, then the vendor shouts:

Vendor: "Savage!"

Bar's owner : "That's my wife, Yakima."

Vendor (halfheartedly): "Yes, but she's...she's savage."

Bar's owner (wholeheartedly): "Si senior, she's a little bit savage, I think!"

Even though it is the bar's owner wife acted as if they are under attack and become very upset that he has a *savage wife*. This demonstrates that any Native American, even a woman is considered a savage. It is just like Edward Said argues, that they are all identical in the eyes of the westerners³³ (35-37).adding to that; Movies as a part of media that represent a reflection of the reality that we want to live in. So the representation of the other in movies is not a spontaneous thing, argued Said. He mentioned that:

³⁴Despite the variety and the differences, and however much we proclaim the contrary, what the media produce is neither spontaneous nor completely "free:" "news" does not just happen, pictures and ideas do not merely spring from reality into our eyes and minds, truth is not directly available, we do not have unrestrained variety at our disposal'.

For, like all channels of communication, television, radio, and newspapers follow to certain traditions in order to present information in an understandable manner, and it is these, sometimes more than the reality being transmitted, that are determine the material supplied by the media³⁵. But, the director's use of insulting Indian stereotypes doesn't at all stop here; the identity, culture, and even language of Native Americans remain unclear, and they are only portrayed as savages who seek to kill White people in *The Stagecoach*. In the movie, there was a scene where there was a fight. There was some communication among people in the stagecoach. With some zoomed in scenes ; they were showed as they are suffering to show voices and to save their lives. However, Natives did not have this privilege. They were mostly silent and only shown as savages who can't do anything other than fighting and killing. The chose of filming

³³ The quote is taken from: Said, Edward W. "Orientalism." *Social Theory Re-Wired*. Routledge, 2016. 402-417

³⁴ The quote is taken from: Said, Edward W. "Orientalism." *Social Theory Re-Wired*. Routledge, 2016. 402-417

³⁵ This idea is taken from : Stevenson, Nick. *Understanding media cultures: Social theory and mass communication*. Sage, 2002.

angles had a huge impact in this scene, especially in humiliating the indigenous characters. The main idea that we can understand from this scene; is that John Ford have putted all of his effort to neglect the Native characters. And he did not allow the viewers to receive a correct idea about Natives. Moreover, *The Stagecoach* does not contain any truthful image about indigenous people. For that, this movie can not be taken as a source that gives a credible image about the culture and the identity of Natives; it is mostly set on biased ides.

Following the same stream; ford kept using the same methods that discriminate the natives after two decades, and this is shown clearly in *the searchers*. The storyline of *The Searchers* focused mainly on the period that followed the return of Ethan Edwards (John Wayne) after the civil war in 1868 to his house, which situated in his brother's farm in Texas. Ethan lived with his brother's Aron family, Aaron's wife Martha, their three children Lucy, Ben, and Debbie, and their adopted son, Martin. After his return, he and Martine join a group named Texas Rangers in order to investigate what look to be sheep rustlers. This led to the attack of their house and the kidnap of the girl and the kill of the rest of the family by Comanches. Ethan promised to search for his niece and bringing them safely back home. The excessive search lasted for seven years, by the end they discover that Debbie at that moment is an adult and the wife of Comanche leader Scar. Eventually she was saved and back to her family. As most of the popular movies in the fifties; *The Searchers* shows the aspects of racism and stereotyping in ancient Hollywood. The representation of Natives as savages gathering and killers who frighten people's lives.

From the first glance of this movie; we can notice that the director had made huge barriers between the Natives and The White men. Ford used the 'River' as a symbol of separation between the two groups. This barrier may represent the indigenous

barbarism, therefore the river is there to protect the whites, or it could reflect that they are not a friendly people who can settle disputes via communication. The 'River' itself has different meanings in American culture, in most cases it symbolized the idea of division and liberty.

Native actors never had the chance to represent themselves and their people. The chosen star for the leading Native role 'Scar' in *The Searchers* is the actor Henry Brandon. This actor has no relation with Native figures on the level of culture nor on the level of appearance. Henry is a Jewish actor who has light blue eyes; which we can never find it in Natives people.

An interaction between Ethan and Scar at their first face-to-face meeting reinforces the assumption that Scar is a white guy:

“You talk pretty good American,” Ethan growls, “for a COMANCH.” (Wayne’s own emphasis)

and Scar:

“You speak pretty good Comanch.”

Native females have been discriminated in Western movies. In the path of history; women were a source of fun in Hollywood. As an example on that; Martin Pawley (Jeffery Hunter) hardly insults his Native American wife Martin Pawley (Jeffery Hunter) Who he married by accident. In a scene in the movies Martin and his wife were setting a tent, she was trying to tell him his real name, however; he kept naming her 'look' because whenever he calls her he starts his statement with the word 'look'. If it had been a white lady Martin ‘s wife , there's no way he could have depicted Martin doing such abuse on her and expecting viewers to laugh at the fact. The concept of utilizing

discriminatory language is also connected to cultural prejudice and not allowing others to express themselves in order to get the sympathies of the audience.

Additionally, in *The Searchers*, Native American's culture and language in particular become another comic material. Native Americans are portrayed as if they talk like 'animals'. Most of the times they mumble, chant, yell and shout as they move around as a groups. In the first fight scenes while whites say "' let's go" to begin the battle the Native Americans simply howl like animals. The film treats the native Americans as barbarians, savages and devalues their culture, their identity, and dehumanize them. Adding to that the use of language in presenting names is so inappropriate for example the use of the name *Scar* and *Look* show how the filmmakers did not give any importance to the native characters and treated them as extra.

III. THE RESULTS OF EXTREMIST MOVIES

As with any other representation and influence on people, the representation of Natives negatively has its own consequences. The main idea of these results is that the people who have no contact with Natives would believe that, this representation is accurate and correct. And Natives for real have that lifestyle. They would not believe that what they are seeing in movies is what the White man wants them to see, not the pure reality.

Some studies have been done in order to extract the impact of the discrimination of natives such as the study published in *the Journal of Social Issues*; titled:“Frozen in Time’: The Impact of Native American Media Representations on Identity and Self-Understanding.”.the results showed that:

In American media; Natives are mostly neglected. And when they included them, they picture the old historical version of the old Native: wearing buckskin, riding

horses, and living in teepees. Adding to that, when they integrate them in their modern form, they always relate them to poverty, absence of formal education, addiction.... etc. This representation does not reflect the amount of diversity that Natives have because they are always gathered under the same typical umbrella. It is true that natives represent a small part of population of The American society, However, they had a huge role in shaping American history. This study showed that the number of natives in movies and series represents only 0 to 0.4 percent. And in cartoons, they represent only 0.09 percent. And even in video games, they did not get that huge part. Adding to that, most of this representation show no relation with the real life of Natives. The misrepresentation had a huge impact on the life of Natives. Indigenous students in high schools have low self-esteem, adding to that they are always ashamed of the image that the people expect to see them in.

The misrepresentation of natives has existed since the beginnings of portraying them in stories and plays; however it ³⁶took an edge turn when it came to broadcast media because it touches a huge surface of cultures and gave a wrong assumptions about a whole culture and civilization. The aim of this misrepresentation can be tracked back to the motives of the colonizers to justify their acts towards the natives; this trick affected the people who had never had encounter natives before and gave them a wrong assumption about the indigenous . This phenomenon of media bias when it came to the representation of natives did not last long after the twentieth century. Civil right movement rose up and helped natives to regain their voices back. Natives filmmakers and accurate representation of natives has started a new part of shaping the history .

³⁶ The previous result of the study are taken directly from the source: Leavitt, Peter A., et al. "'Frozen in time": The impact of Native American media representations on identity and self-understanding." *Journal of Social Issues* 71.1 (2015): 39-53.

CHAPTER THREE

ATTEMPTES AT OBJECTIVITY IN «*THE*

***REVNANTE*»**

Native Americans have been represented inaccurately in films throughout history and they have remained one of America's most marginalized minorities, especially in the popular Western genre. These types of films in particular created an impression among their large viewing audience wherein people developed a false idea of how the Natives lived. Therefore, American-Indians have had to fight to create a realistic image for themselves and carve a space for expression through films. There was a huge wave of activism and historical events taking place to revert against the discrimination and injustice and people were becoming more aware of the large diversity in the country and the negative ways that many minorities were treated. Hence, this final chapter is an attempt to analyse the representation of Native Americans in *The Revenant*. First, the chapter provides a focus on the historical factors that led to eventually correcting the image of Native Americans in films. Second, it examines the nuanced portrayal of Native Americans in *The Revenant*, which is considerably different from what films from previous decades had shown. Finally, the chapter closes with Native American's contributions and achievements in the United States that most people have ignored.

I. FROM SAVAGES TO HUMANS: A PERIOD OF REPRESENTATIONAL CHANGE:NATIVE AMERICAN ACTIVISM

From the silent film era in the 1910s to the 1920s and '30s, Native American have suffered from stereotypical, narrow, and limiting. Both *The Stagecoache* and *The Searchers*, for example, feature inaccurate portrayals of Native characters. However, as

the 1960s closed, the popularity of Westerns faded and things began to improve and to take a step forward a brighter path for the Native Americans.

The United States marked the 1960s as an era of consciousness and awareness due to the significant historiographical changes that it witnessed. Among these changes and upheaval was “The Civil Rights Movement”, which influenced the development of other social movements and varieties of activism that attempted to secure equality and freedom for the minorities in America. The period that came after the late 1960s is known as the "Self-determination Era.” It is a movement aimed to give Native Americans control over their government and local issues. This act enabled Native Americans to contract for services such as education, law enforcement, social services, and, of course, media. Contracts like these were most often used to gain more power and control.

The 1970s and beyond witnessed the rise of so-called "revisionist Westerns," which indicated once again another significant shift in the United States. According to Spears, ³⁷“the Western is a type of film that primarily appeals to juvenile and unsophisticated minds. As a result, it is natural that a stereotypical villain should have been the main representation of the Indian’ (p. 18). As opposed to most classic Westerns, which feature an evil Indian, a white saviour, and an uncivilized frontier, Revisionist Westerns attempt to present realistic as well as nuanced and accurate depictions of Native Americans. Scholars Margo Kasdan and Susan Trinetta examine revisionism in 1970s films, identifying it as a positive concept.

Around the turn of the 21st century, the United States experienced “culture wars.” This period of time was characterized by an obvious changes in the political and social situations of the United States. There were those who were considered

³⁷ The statement is taken from: Vrasidas, Charalambos. "The White Man's Indian: Stereotypes in Film and Beyond." (1997).

conservative and traditionalist and those who were seen as liberals and progressive. These two groups struggled for dominance and disagreed on a variety of social and political ideas such as racism, feminism, multiculturalism, etc.

Multiculturalism, however, was a much less heated issue than some of the other hotly debated ones. In simpler terms, it is the acceptance and recognition of minority groups cultures. At that, time the nation was diversifying faster than it was predicted because multiculturalism was something that people finally accepted. Multiculturalism arose as a reaction to cultural pluralism and a way of making up for past exclusion, discrimination, and mistreatment of cultural groups .

³⁸ According to Jennifer L. Eagan, Professor of Philosophy and Public Affairs & Administration, California State University, East Bay, Multiculturalism is the acceptance of all the different cultural or racial groups in society. This acknowledgment in fact can take many forms one of them is the recognition of their contributions that were previously ignored. Many times, the only thing people remember about Native Americans are the negative things, due to the white man who unapologetically , destroyed their culture and created negative images that could combat their history.

Ugly stereotypes persisted for years. Therefore, they are vital to the way the Native Americans are viewed today. A lot of time people could hardly remember a positive contribution. They only think about things that are easily recognizable as representing Native Americans, such as their fine artwork. The Southwest is well-known for its turquoise pieces of jewelry. The Northwest Coast is popular for its beautiful woodcarvings. Plains Indians are famous for their exquisite beading.

Apart from art, Native Americans have influenced many aspects of American life. The majority of these aspects existed long before European settlers arrived. Indian

³⁸ The idea of this passage is taken from: Yanow, Dvora. *Constructing race and ethnicity in America: Category-making in public policy and administration*. Routledge, 2015.

beliefs, for example, are inherently ecological. Thousands of years ago there were numerous tribes inhabited North America and lived there, where they formed and built sustainable hunting-and-gathering economies. They saw themselves as part of nature rather than rulers over it. Humanity was revered, as well as animals and plants. Native Americans typically do not kill anything that they cannot use. They would never kill an animal or a fish for the sake of fun. Hunting and fishing were their means for subsistence. The Indians assumed it was insane to waste natural resources, especially for profit. In essence, their close relationship with nature covers a wide range of the world's food supply today.

³⁹‘They acknowledged the earth's power and the reciprocal obligation between hunter and hunted. They acted to appease spirits who endowed the world. Native peoples celebrated the earth's annual rebirth and offer thanks for her first fruit. They ritually prepared the animals they killed, the agriculture fields they tended, and the vegetal and mineral materials they processed’.(Lewis 423)

Natives learned to plant and use many different types of food that many people eat without even realizing it. For example, potatoes, beans, maize, peanuts, pumpkins, tomatoes, squash, peppers, almonds, melons, and sunflower seeds. Thanks to the Native American's farming tactics, the European settlers were able to survive in the New World.

Furthermore, the majority of Native American terms and innovations have become a part of the English language. Some of these include barbecue, caribou, woodchuck, hammock, toboggan, skunk, mahogany, hurricane, and moccasin. Even names of towns, cities, and rivers have Native American origins. Just a few of these include Seattle, Spokane, Yakima, Pocatello, Chinook, Flathead Lake, Milwaukee, Ottawa, Miami, Wichita, and Kalispell. Moreover, ⁴⁰‘in the past Native Americans were speaking over two hundred different languages’ (Vrasidas 64), for this reason, in particular, they

³⁹ The statement can be found: Lewis, David Rich. "Native Americans and the environment: a survey of twentieth-century issues." *American Indian Quarterly* 19.3 (1995): 423-450.

⁴⁰ The statement can be found in :Campbell, Lyle. *American Indian languages: the historical linguistics of Native America*. Vol. 4. Oxford University Press on Demand, 2000.

invented the hand signals system to facilitate communication between different tribal groups and later on between traders. The same thing is done today for those who are deaf and unable to talk. Indeed, the signs are different, but the concept is the same.

All of the above efforts and contributions had helped in the push for a better portrayal of Native Americans in films in the United States. As result, they were depicted in a brighter way, a more humane view, instead of in desperate need of colonization. Historically, depictions of Native Americans in films have been inaccurate and offensive in comparison with the whites.

The American cinema has experienced tremendous upheaval and changes. Therefore, mass consciousness has progressed and people are no longer conditioned to accept and expect everything they see. In order to re-correct the Native American's image, the American film industry helped in rewriting the history of Native Americans and recycling those stereotypes of the bloodthirsty savages. In this case, the question must be asked, what were the adaptations and changes that Hollywood made? The answer to this question paved the way for a new wave of representations and new productions.

During the early twenty-first century, it was generally believed that the Native Americans are under the threat of extinction. Therefore, the American film industry was in a hurry to produce as many accurate movies as possible. Interesting movies were produced in this humanistic perspective, attempting to present the Indians' point of view. With a cast made up entirely of indigenous peoples from the Americas, *Apocalypto* is a film that was written, directed by Mel Gibson, and released in 2006. It depicted the historical events that occurred in the sixteenth century that reflected 'the wild journey of Mesoamerican tribesmen'. The most important point in this film is its accuracy in the use of the same Native names and character features as back in the sixteenth century.

This did not help only in making the film more realistic, but it served as an inspiration for the upcoming Native American actors who aspire to perform their culture and their identity accurately.

The Revenant is a present time example. The 2015 film portrays Native Americans in a genuine and nuanced light. In its production, the filmmaker sought nothing except authenticity and accuracy.

II. THE REVENANT'S DEPICTION OF NATIVE AMERICANS

Inspired by a real story, *The Revenant* is a Western film that depicts the rough and the tough adventure of a frontiersman. The film is set on the Western frontier in the early nineteenth century. The story starts with Hugh Glass, the protagonist, his little family, and his backstory, which includes a Pawnee wife and a mixed-race son, Hawk. The protagonist is a member of an American West fur trapping expedition. In the early scenes, The group's camp is attacked by the Arikara Indians, who are looking for their chief's daughter who has been abducted. During their wild journey of survival, Glass was attacked and severely wounded by a grizzly bear, his half Native American son Hawk and two other trappers stay behind with the promise to take care of him.

Glass, surprisingly, survives and regains his strength to move. He begins his journey with a strong desire to avenge his son's death. After a long journey through the merciless depths of the wilderness and harsh coldness, he encounters with the Arikara chief's daughter and saves her from the French. After that, he goes to Fort Union in the hopes of finding Fitzgerald and telling everyone what happened. Glass goes on a hunt for Fitzgerald and eventually finds him in the woods. He defeats Fitzgerald after a tough fight and hands him over to the Arikara Indians. They kill him, but Glass is spared because he saved the chief's daughter.

In just under one sitting, *The Revenant* presents a different, brighter narrative and offers something unique from previous films although it is not primarily a Native Americans story. The representation of the story, rather than the story itself, is what makes this film interesting and how it attempts to stick to reality. Furthermore, it takes great care to deliver accurate depictions of native culture, highlight their languages and place Native actors front and center to tell their own stories.

The ultimate aim of *The Revenant* is to combat the idea of savagery and reveal the truth. The director creates understanding and compassion for Native Americans by using scenes that show their point of view. In the film's opening scene, Native Americans attack the camp and engage in a long battle. During the shooting of this scene, everything is shown from the perspective of white characters, as if the Indians are once again the villains. However, the moment the battle ended and the camera switched to the Native Americans' perspective, it is understood that the Native Americans are acting in this manner because they want to find the chief's daughter who has been abducted. This shows that the Arikara only hunt down the westerners to find the daughter and that they are not the savages that the westerners believed them to be.

The Native American characters in this film are portrayed as real people. This can be seen in a scene where the Arikara trades with the French. The Arikara chief responds to the French commander's assertion that they must uphold their agreement:

*You stand there in front of me talking about honor? [...] You
All have stolen everything from us. Everything! The land. The
animals. Two white men snuck into our village and took my
daughter, Powaga. We leave you these pelts because honor
demands it. I take your horses to find my daughter. You are free
to try and stop me* *The Revenant.*

All the features of a White man or an American man precisely are usually described in a positive manner: helpful, rational, virtuous, etc. In other words, he is a normal, brave man. Hollywood often serves to portray the white man in the stories favorably as a hero, who represents the shining future, kills the Indians and the community is safe from the enemies. For instance, John Wayne, the shining actor who rose to fame as an Indian fighter on screen. However, it is not the case in this film, Native Americans are portrayed as honorable people and everything they do has a background story that explains why they act the way they are. It is rather the white Americans that are portrayed as villains. Examples are not hard to find, the primary antagonist in the film is a white man. Fitzgerald is a trapper of Andrew Henry's party, the stoic nature of John Fitzgerald can be tested in his way of using racial slurs in reference to both the Pawnee and Arikara groups. For example, he speaks about Hawk (Glass's son) in the most humiliated ways, referring to him as a "half breed," "little dog," and "little bitch". Fitzgerald's greedy pushed him to do anything to ensure a profit for himself, even if it means getting rid of some of the expedition's members, which we see in the scene where Fitzgerald simply abandoned Glass, and tried to perform a "Mercy Kill" on him. He says:

"I can muzzle you if you like. Take away this suffering quick and easy. No one ever has to know that you give [sic] up. All you have to do is blink if you want me to do that. Save your boy and blink" (The Revenant 0.43.34).

Fitzgerald wasted no chance to express his detest and hatred for the Natives, justifying his violence, exclaiming, "look at 'em, always stealing our shit" (*The Revenant*). Finally, when he is killed by a band of Arikara at the end of the film, the audience feels little to no regret because of his characterization as a cold, cruel monster.

Furthermore, while on his quest for revenge, Glass witnesses one of the French commanders raping the chief's daughter, and his men laughing in the background. Glass sneaks up on the man and saves the girl. It is expected that the prejudices and savagery expressed and depicted in the previous films are allowed to be presented in contemporary films. However, being expressed by a white antagonist whose explicit racism highlights his abominable character, is unusual and rare in western films.

Cultural generalization has been a heated issue in the American film industry. It involves assigning similar characteristics to members of the same group. Native Americans have suffered from Cultural pluralism as Hollywood failed to distinguish between Native American tribes and nations ⁴¹"Language elements, cultural beliefs, and religious rituals of one tribe have been attributed to others – or, more often invented on the set" (Rollins and O'Connor 32). In fact, American Indians are richly diverse, yet their culture has been disrespected by the generalization of the⁴² 'more than 600 Native American societies. In the past, as long as the actor speaks with a non-fluent accent and wears fringe pants he is an "Indian' (Vrasidas 64). Due to the lack of details and overall laziness on the part of Hollywood, Native Americans have been seen as they are all the same and this has produced what Kilpatrick refers to as ⁴³'a very confused image of American Indians' (Killsback.178) and what Schweninger refers to as ⁴⁴'reductive renditions and misunderstandings'(Schweninger 3).

⁴¹ The declaration is taken from:Kroskirty, Paul V., and Margaret C. Field, eds. *Native American language ideologies: Beliefs, practices, and struggles in Indian country*. University of Arizona Press, 2009.

⁴² The statment is taken from:Vrasidas, Charalambos. "The White Man's Indian: Stereotypes in Film and Beyond." (1997).

⁴³ The statment is taken from:Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn. *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film. U of Nebraska Press, 1999.*

⁴⁴ The statment is taken from: Schweninger, Lee. *Imagic Moments: Indigenous North American Film*. University of Georgia Press, 2013.

The Revenant could easily catch the wave and be one of these films. However, the movie's production team worked very hard with a variety of cultural consultants. Filmmakers paid great attention to the authenticity of cultural depictions by hiring Craig Falcon, a cultural education consultant, to be the film's cultural advisor just to avoid cultural inaccuracies and present a distinguished work. He consulted on nearly every element of *The Revenant*, including the style of warrior painting on the film, horses, costumes, and set designers. His input was critical to the film's production team, even the scripts were changed only to fit the people they were attempting to represent. For example, one of the characters in the film, a war chief had the name of Elk Tongue. Falcon believed the name was inappropriate for the character. Later on, he explained his worries to the director and informed him that his Blackfoot name was Elk Dog and that indigenous people are often renamed three or four times over their lifetimes as they grow.

In addition, Jacqueline West designed the costumes for the film. The key concept underlying behind work in *The Revenant* is the strong tie between the characters and nature, and each character is dressed differently according to the characteristics of that relationship. For this reason, the costume design becomes crucial in framing the main character within the story and in supporting the film's attempt to give the Indian tribes a faithful voice.

Another significant element in the film was the use of the native language. For many years, Hollywood has pluralized indigenous tribes as well as language. On the other hand, *The Revenant* use of authentic Native language is remarkable progress for Hollywood. In fact, the movie's opening scene is entirely voiced in Pawnee, and it is not the only time the Native language is used. Instead, viewers hear a mix of Pawnee and Arikara throughout the film. Falcon assisted DiCaprio and Hardy in learning the Arikara

language, and two linguists from Indiana University were called in during post-production to help make the language in the film as genuine as possible.

The film's use of Native American language is associated with positive aspects such as appreciation, morality, and respect, as well as affirming that Native Americans are no longer silent and incapable of communicating with Europeans. Instead, it demonstrates their cleverness. For example, “the Ree,” (are members of the Arikara tribe). In their search for their leader’s daughter, they approach a gang of French trappers to trade pelts in exchange for guns and horses, which will help them find and rescue the chief's daughter. At first, their chief, Elk Dog, uses a translator in order to communicate with the French men. After a quarrel in speech between the two sides, Elk Dog felt humiliated and suddenly switches from using Arikara to French, delivering one of the most powerful quotes of the film: “*You all have stolen everything from us. Everything! The land, the animals*” *The Revenant*. The significance here is that *The Revenant* does not misrepresent the tribal language in any way. On the contrary, the film has sparked widespread interest in the Arikara language and culture, and Iárritu chose to have the Native Americans speak in their own dialects, which include Arikara and Pawnee, in order to better represent their culture. In addition, great care was taken to ensure that the film's language was accurate. This shows a progression in Hollywood⁴⁵ ‘after treating Indians as nature’s noblemen’ to treating them “as actual characters’.

(Newman.72)

Aside from the usage of the Native American language in movies, the presence of the Native Americans in leading roles is marked as big jump from cinematic stereotypes. In *The Revenant*, It is clear from the start that director Iñárritu tried to represent the Native Americans realistically and as authentically as possible; his

⁴⁵ The statment is found in :Newman, K., 1990. *Wild West Movies*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Limited

attention to casting is a break away from whitewashing practices. By casting Native American actors, the film has made great progress.

The film does not only focus on Native Americans and White men. but, Indigenous women play a significant role as well. Previously, Native women were treated miserably and awfully. In *The Revenant*, there are exactly two women portrayed in the film: Hugh Glass's wife (*Glass takes an Indian woman as a wife in a meaningful relationship*) and Powaka, the daughter of a Native American Chief. The search for Powaka parallels Glass's mission to avenge his son. Therefore, she is a central character in the movie. Her presence and depiction as a central character breaks and combats the early stereotypes that have long dominated Hollywood films as either sexual fiends or maidens.

the gross rape scene of Powaka illustrated how Native women were brutlized by the white men. She was forced against the trunk of a tree, bent over, and violated, this scene made the audience fidget uncomfortably as they witnessed the atrocity of rape and the brutality of the French army. But above all, it combated the popular belief that both native women and white women had been mistreated and experienced violence by the indigenous men only. Eventually, Powaka got her revenge and in the end reunited with her family. She had the chance to kill Glass, the man who raped her, to unleash her fury. Instead, she chooses to ride on. The amount of power and strength given to Powaka in this particular scene should not be overlooked, since it is something few filmmakers have done before.

Films usually create a lasting impression on viewers due to their interesting visual effects and emotional features. According to Marshall and Rossman, film ⁴⁶ 'has the

⁴⁶ The declaration can be found in: Silva, Carlos Nunes. "Catherine Marshall & Gretchen B. Rossman (2006). Designing Qualitative Research." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. Vol. 9. No. 3. 2008.

rare ability to portray visual events ostensibly objectively, but always from the filmmaker's perspective'.(p. 120). Many Hollywood films have been accused of racial prejudices and orientalist ideas. As a result, ethnic group representations have always been debatable.

The portrayals of Hollywood have always been questionable. Hollywood and the American film industry have used specific narrative techniques to present many stories about Native Americans. In these stories, the Native American population appeared in the form of villains and animalistic beasts “These misinterpretations and stereotypes continued for years and were used as a justification for ⁴⁷‘aggression and injustice’ against Native people.’(Josephy 32).

In addition, stereotypical images that occurred in Hollywood movies previously have affected the self-esteem and mental health, physical performance, self-doubt of the Native Americans and also contributed to the development of cultural biases and prejudices. It is on this point, ‘*The Revenant*’ has made a big jump in representing Natives. It was clear from the start that the director Iárritu wanted to portray Native Americans as accurately as possible.

The Revenant puts Native Americans as the center and front actors to represent their own story. Lee Schweninger, author of *Imagic Moments: Indigenous North American Film comments on the importance of self-representation when indigenous characters are used in films*. His idea is simple: ‘self-representation is a form of resistance and is necessarily a fundamental aspect of Indigenous film. Naturally, a commitment to self-representation mandates that Indigenous roles be played by Indigenous people’.⁴⁸ (Schweninger 7). The film's mission of cultural representation is

⁴⁷ The statment can be found in: Josephy Jr, Alvin M. "*The American Heritage Book of Indians*." (1961).

⁴⁸ The declaration is taken from: Schweninger, Lee. *Imagic Moments: Indigenous North American Film*. University of Georgia Press, 2013.

well accomplished by casting actors and actresses from various tribal background.

Native Americans demanded nothing less than a positive portrayal of themselves. Positive portrayal does not necessarily depict ideal, charming, or powerful characters, but rather actual human beings. Positive representation is all about showing people exactly as they are, no matter how imperfect they may be. *The Revenant* is a film about a man seeking vengeance for what has been taken from him. Glass lost some. However, the indigenous people lost it all. Just like any nation, Native Americans were seeking revenge to gain back their families, homes, culture, language, identity, and above all, their picture that has been distorted for many years. Despite everything, Native Americans manage to survive and give the viewers an understanding of why they are acting the way they are.

After five Oscar nominations, Leonardo DiCaprio finally had finally won the Best Actor Academy Award for his work in *The Revenant*. In his acceptance speech for Best Actor at the Golden Globes the actor acknowledged the First Nations people, saying:

“I want to share this award with all the First Nations people represented in this film and all the indigenous communities around the world. It is time we recognize your history and protect your indigenous lands from corporate interests and people who are out there to exploit them.”

The manner any race or ethnic group is portrayed in media or art has a huge impact on how society perceives them.

⁴⁹‘Representations are vehicles that drive controlling and alternative images of race, gender, class, and sexuality, the social forces that govern our society. Popular cultural representations are fertile areas of study because they allow us to analyze the myths of our culture’. (Josephy 3).

⁴⁹ The statement is taken from: Josephy Jr, Alvin M. "*The American Heritage Book of Indians*." (1961).

With little exceptions, Native Americans were never treated as human beings with their own history, civilization, and problems. Instead, the audience witnesses them being killed as a result of their "crimes." and, for many years, this depiction has served as the basis for identifying the Natives. What makes this problematic is that this ethnic group is depicted in one way, and even worse, in a way that is not accurate. However, in recent years, the film industry has become more inclusive of different cultures, and *The Revenant* is a prime example of this shift. *The Revenant*, tells a great story about Native Americans' survival. As a film that received a frenzy of media attention, as well as twelve Academy Award nominations, its deliberate choice to change the depiction of Native American people is outstanding.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Media facilitates communication and connects people around the world through different outlets. In today's society, media is an essential part of an individual's routines, especially with a plethora of media outlets and the speed of its accessibility. The task of obtaining accurate and credible information has become increasingly difficult as the number of media outlets has grown.

We count on Media as a source of information and entertainment and we often suppose that what we are consuming is trustworthy and reliable. However, this supposition is not true, as media bias can be found across all media channels. In short, media bias refers to the media exhibiting unjustifiable favoritism.

American media is probably one of the strongest means by which American culture influences the world. Television and popular films hold immense power and have a vast reach. The stories Hollywood selects to tell, and how it presents them play a significant role in how people perceive and empathize with important social issues and diverse communities. In one specific example, the American media manifests bias and prejudice in the representations of Native Americans.

In this dissertation, we have contended to investigate how the Native American characters were portrayed in 'Western' themed films. Our response, as this thesis demonstrates, is based on the analysis of three movies *The Stagecoach*, which is an old film from 1939, *The Searchers* is another Western film from 1956, and *The Revenant*, a newly produced film from 2015.

The analysis' findings show that Indigenous people have been consistently misrepresented in old films through negative stereotypes and historical inaccuracies. The analysis of both *The stagecoach* and *The searchers* is important, either for their success in portraying the Natives negatively or for their persistence for many years, creating the feeling of the Native Americans being the Other, which Said mentioned

before in his book. These misrepresentations have brought more harm than good. They are not only offensive, but they reinforce ignorance, fuel discrimination, and justify violence against Indian peoples. The evident intention of portraying the Native Americans as savages is seen throughout the films in both how the other characters talk about them and when they are shown on screens.

In the recent production, '*The Revenant*', the Native American characters are portrayed realistically and humanly. They have their own language, they have long conversations with each other and most importantly, the reason behind their actions is justified and explained in the film. After all, fairness in representation is all what they were asking for. The film creates compassion for the Native Americans and gives them a voice so that the viewers can feel and empathize them just as much as for the westerners.

The findings of the analysis pave the way for interesting areas in which future researchers can continue to work on, for example, It is crucial to examine the representations and the portrayals of other minorities groups in films such as Blacks, females, Asians, etc because their representations will always be biased as long as films are directed by people who do not belong to minority groups. Another interesting aspect that could be further examined is how the fact that almost every film is written and produced in the United States can have a significant influence on society.

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ABSTRACT

منذ بداية التصوير السنمائي, يتم تصوير الهنود الاصليين من طرف هوليدو على انهم دائما الطرف الشرير الذي يقاتل الابطال البيض. وهذا ما اثار غضب الشعوب الاصلية في القارة الامريكية ، مما أدى إلى سوء فهم واسع النطاق حول تاريخهم وثقافتهم و هذا ما أدى إلى اتهام صناعة السينما الأمريكية بالتحيز. بسبب العديد من الأحداث التاريخية ، حيث تغيرت الآراء تجاه السكان الأصليين عبر الزمن ، وقد ظهر ذلك في أحدث الإنتاجات و في نظرة المجتمع لهم. و تحمل الدراسة التالية مقارنة بين ثلاثة أفلام مختلفة هي : الحنطور,الباحثون, و العائد.حيث يمثل أول فيلمين تمثيلاً سلبياً للسكان الأصليين والثالث كان محاولة لتصحيح التدفق ومحاولة تمثيلهم بموضوعية. و لابرار ذلك ، سنحاول اثبات التحيز في الافلام الغربية و مدى تأثيرها و تناقضها مع حيثيات الواقع اعتمادا على نظريات خاصة نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار و نظرية الاستشراق.