

Mădălina Prodan¹

Stereotyping the Indian: Visual Misrepresentations in the City of Dreams/Nightmares²

Abstract: Filmic representations of Native Americans stem directly from the previous literary delineations of the original inhabitants of the American continent. Consequently, the stereotypes which dominated the delineation of Indianness in texts were translated to the new medium at the dawn of the century. The constitutive elements of the cinematic Indian (the Instant Indian Kit) will be extensively dealt with. The second aim of this essay is to analyze how various stereotypes permeated the filmic representations of Native Americans in different periods, from the silent films up to the contemporary blockbusters, such as: the Stoic Warrior, the Wise Elder and the Vanishing Indian. I will also attempt a close examination of the predominance or coexistence of the divergent stereotypes of the noble and ignoble savage in films released in different periods.

Key words: film, Native American, (mis)representation, dominant discourse

¹ Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

² This work was supported by the European Social Fund in Romania, under the responsibility of the Managing Authority for the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 [Grant POSDRU/88/1.5/S/47646]