



Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
ISILC Laboratory
POLICA Research Unit
PRFU: H02L01UN070120200001



National Conference on

Mapping (In)Security in Western and Postcolonial Spaces

April 26-27, 2022

**Uncle Sam Behind the Big Screen: Redesigning Indigenous Cultural Identities
and Political Affiliation Through Celluloid Soft Power**

Kefali Walid

Abstract

Since its early days, cinema has been a subject of great desire, admiration and massive turnout as it offers its spectators an unprecedented cultural and emotional experience tampered by ideology and outside the realm of the traditional system of norms and values. Such geographically-irrelevant voyage, armed with a tremendous cultural, psychological and social potential, that captivates the average people, also captivated political and military institutions and decision makers which enlisted the cinema industry and engaged the services of this underestimated soft power to wage political, ideological and cultural battles for the sake of fostering a certain ideology, instilling sentiments of xenocentrism and ethnocentrism for the purpose of remodeling indigenous cultural identities, shaping the vision of the public towards certain events, races, ethnicities and religion via stereotypes and visual stigmas, and finally creating a parallel reality (pseudo-environment) to manufacture consent and dissent towards salient political, economic and cultural issues. This paper will spotlight the different reel mechanisms deployed by imperialists via cinema to alter peoples' cultural identities, political affiliation, and societal values and norms and thereby create a fifth column that conforms to the values disseminated through cinema and designed by propagandists and undermine the indigenous ones which lead eventually to undermining nations' cultural and national security. Furthermore, the paper will uncover the systematic methodology of presenting the superior self and the inferior other and the ensuing racial stigma manifested in symbolic violence. Finally, the paper will crystalize how cinema is being arrayed as a deterrence shield in the vicinity of preemptive war.

Key words: Cinema, Propaganda, Ideology, Cultural Identity, Cultural Security.