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## FILM AS SOFT POWER

### Abstract

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*In scientific literature, the concepts of power and authority are often equated. Nevertheless, we are talking about different, but also interconnected terms. We define power as a relationship of superiority and subordination, a means by which others are forced to do something they would not otherwise do, that is, as a repressive power of imposing force, behind which the state usually stands. Power represents the possibility and ability to influence someone to do something, that is, the ability to achieve the intended goals. Unlike 'hard power', which is aggressive and violent because it is based on repression, coercion, threat, force, 'soft power' is based on attraction, trust and conviction in what the power points out and presents in order to ensure its reception, consent, consensus and legitimacy. In this sense, film is an expression of the existence of 'soft power' because it can carry with it certain ideas, ideologies, cultural and political values that are accepted. As an example of the dispersion of 'soft power', we cite the ideology and politics of Yugoslav partisan films, the films of the Yugoslav 'black wave', the film Titanic, and the American cultural industry of Hollywood western films.*

**Keywords:** *film, soft power, hard power, partisan films, black wave films, Titanic, western films.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Unlike 'hard power', which is based solely on repression, blackmail, threats, pressure, sanctions, punishments, force, violence, and even terror, 'soft power' is based on attraction and acceptance. That is why its reception is effective because it is attractive and desired. With their thematic contents and dispersive ideas and values, films belong to the area of spreading 'soft power'. For reference, we will mention partisan films, "black wave" films, "Titanic" and western films.

Although the conceptual, ideological and value contents in these films are different, they still contain and present essential components of 'soft power'. Hence, their strength in different social environments is evident.

## HARD AND SOFT POWER

Power is an important concept of philosophy, political science and sociology. It is usually understood as the ability to impose and realize will, desires and interests.

At one time, Jean-Jacques Rousseau said: "The strongest is never strong enough to be always the master, unless he transforms strength into right and obedience into duty."<sup>1</sup>

However, repression, force or even violence and terror are not enough to impose and maintain a certain intention, and even rule: consensus, consent, acceptance and legitimacy of that intention and rule are also needed. In the modern language and vocabulary of political science and sociology, in addition to repression, force, violence and even terror, as manifestations of the existence of 'hard power', there is also 'soft power'. It is not based on coercion, force and violence, but on attraction. Soft power is based "on such sources as the appeal of one's ideas or the ability to set political priorities in a way that shapes the desires of others" and thereby "produces desired outcomes."<sup>2</sup>

Based on attractiveness, desirability and acceptance, soft power is used to gain *consent, agreement and consensus*.

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<sup>1</sup> Ž. Ž. Ruso (1949), *Društveni ugovor*, Beograd: Prosveta, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Dž. Naj (2006), *Kako razumevati međunarodne odnose*, Beograd: Stubovi kulture, 94; J. S. Jr. Nye (2012), *Budućnost moći*, Zagreb: Mate, xxii. The concept of a dichotomous division of power into 'hard' and 'soft power' has been met with certain criticism. Despite that, it is still increasingly accepted in contemporary political science literature. These two types of power are spoken about more and increasingly often.

This shows that in everyday life, but also in political life, *socialization* becomes very important. Socialization is a process of learning culture, a process that leads to the formation of a personality capable of performing numerous personal and social roles: child, family member, adult, spouse, parent, friend and colleague, member of a profession, work organization, national community, political parties, interest groups, sports, cultural, recreational and many other groups and organizations where needs, interests and desires are met. Socialization is a process through which a person in a certain social environment adopts the ideas, knowledge, habits, skills, attitudes and values necessary for his existence in the social environment. Socialization is the process by which a person learns culture; through socialization he becomes a socially 'normal' person. A person becomes a member of society and a personality precisely by learning and adopting culture, and the process by which he adopts culture is called socialization. This process can be understood as the process of 'transforming' a child as a biological individual into a personality, as a social individual.

In society, people also adopt political values, and the process by which political culture is adopted is called *political socialization*. Political culture represents a part of general culture that includes ideas, values, norms, opinions, attitudes, convictions and symbols related to society, politics and political organization.

The field of politics is not only a 'political' field, but also an economic, social, cultural and psychological field. Politics is also a 'pedagogical' sphere of political and social socialization. From the point of view of the political order, political socialization is the process of integration into the existing order, 'taming' of revolt, resistance and conflict. From the point of view of individuals, political socialization is the process of shaping them by integration and conformity. Political socialization is not only a process of social individualization, but also a process of individual socialization, as well as conformation and integration of individuals and social groups. Political socialization is a form, expression and manifestation of the existence of power.

Considering the existence of the complexity of social life, there are many forms and types of power. From the point of view of our discursive analysis and explication of the film as soft power, we will indicate conditional, compensatory and conditioned power.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> J. K. Galbraith (1987), *Anatomija moći*, Zagreb: Stvarnost.

Power based on punishment and punishing those who do not want it, but must accept it, is called *condign power*. It provides an unpleasant consequence to those who are subject to it. It is based on the fear of punishment for not accepting it, because not accepting it would be very unpleasant and painful. For example, the slaves rowing the galleys would like to be freed from that hard work. But the thought of being punished for 'slacking off' or disobeying is reason enough to accept the painful, unpleasant and difficult effort. Or, individuals refraining from expressing their negative judgment about certain personalities (e.g. 'leaders') and phenomena because that act would get them 'slapped them on the nose', drive them to prison for a 'verbal offense' or lead to the loss of civil rights, and even of life. In the geopolitical example of Republika Srpska and FR Yugoslavia, the condign power was manifested through the so-called the 'humanitarian intervention' carried out by the powerful states of the Anglo-Saxon West and the NATO pact. The rejection of the imperative request of the Anglo-Saxon West, the USA and the NATO pact to deploy NATO forces in Kosovo, which meant a humiliating occupation was presented as a valid reason for the bombing. In this way, the West replaced one form of punishment (occupation) with another form of conventional punishment (bombing).

Power that is based on rewards and praise is called *compensatory power*. According to that logic 'if you are good, you will get a reward' to those who accept it and who want to submit to it and to whom it provides a positive reward in the form of money or payment in kind, decorations, professions or status, it is called compensatory power. In the rural economies of pre-modern societies, the acceptance of compensatory power was rewarded in the form of payment in kind, the granting of the right to cultivate the land or the right to use the feudal lord's harvest. In modern societies, acceptance of compensatory power is rewarded with cash contributions, salary, and status advancement. We can easily recognize the existence of this type of power in our midst of the party, political and state corruption, and on examples of status advancements based on party polity and party corruption, loyalty and discipline that enable completely incompetent and unprofessional persons to be 'someone and something': to get good jobs and incomes, or to be rewarded by moving up the status ladder and becoming 'bosses', directors, ministers, that is, they will become 'competent persons'. And in geopolitical relations between states, this type of power is a very common occurrence, which provides 'friendly states' with certain credits, privileges

and assistance. As an example, it is enough to take the absolute support of the United States of America for the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and its attitude towards the Palestinians.

Power that changes the beliefs and convictions of those who want to submit is called *conditioned power*. It is soft power that has a clear and more or less recognizable ideological, ideational, political and propaganda background. It often has the function of ‘brainwashing’.

The difference between condign power and compensatory power is that condign power is based on punishment and fear. It is coercive, while compensatory power is based on reward and praise. And what is common to both types of power is that the one over whom the power is exercised knows about their existence, knows they exist, knows about his behavior and knows why they accept that power; the act of submission is visible: in the case of conditional power – because they *have* to (due to the threat of punishment) and in the case of compensatory power – because they *want* to (due to the promise of reward). Unlike these forms of power in which the individual knows he is subject to them, with conditional power, power is exercised even though this power is less visible and even invisible. For those subject to it, conditioned power changes values, convictions, beliefs and attitudes. It includes family socialization, education and educational institutions, religious education, state, party, political and ideological persuasion and conditioning of consciousness, cultural, sports and other institutions and organizations, media coverage and propaganda, etc.

On the example of the socialization process in the family, a clear distinction between condign, compensatory and conditioned power will be observed. As a socialization process, the educational process is based on the aforementioned forms of power. Let’s take a family for example. When parents condition their children to a certain opinion or behavior, when they tell them to do what is expected of them and if they do, the children will receive some reward in return. In such situations, compensatory power is used unconsciously or consciously as the basis of the socialization procedure. When they are constantly told to pay attention to something, to do and do what they should do, to take care of “this and that” (“watch this, watch that”, “don’t do this, don’t do that”, “do this or that”, “it’s for your own good”), then parents use conditioned power to condition the consciousness, thinking and behavior of children. And when children are aware they have to accept parental instructions, attitudes, patterns, opinions and demands, even if it doesn’t suit them, then

they accept conditional power. And this is also the case in peer groups, marriage, work and professional groups, the army, the party, the state and relations between states and the like.

And in global geopolitical relations, the dispersion of power is realized by strategies of hard and soft power, that is, strategies of the so-called 'stick and carrot'. In its neo-colonial and neo-imperial practice, the West uses hard and soft power. If we take the political history and geopolitics of the West as an example, we cannot help but mention its murderous domain, that is, the dispersion of hard power. Precisely, the "murderous West" is "prone to carnage that wiped out entire civilizations from the face of the earth." In all of history, "no civilization has caused so much death as Western civilization". And the list of killing peoples, ravaging continents, destroying civilizations and plundering resources is very long. The West "possesses monstrous features" and "exploitative features" that were expressed in the "crusades", colonialism and imperialism, the First and Second World Wars, fascism, Nazism, and other "deadly regimes."<sup>4</sup>

The West still has the ability to dominate and control which, indeed, has been greatly eroded in the modern age. In this sense it uses different means, hard and soft power.

Rigid, hard power is violent, condign or coercive power. Soft power is co-operative, non-violent power that 'conquers' the soul, heart and mind of people and is a widely dispersive power: the power of culture, popular culture, pop and rock music, 'scientific' and professional debates, conferences and round tables, student trips, scholarships and programs of scientific and professional cooperation, school plans and programs, documentary and propaganda programs, journalism, media, press, radio and television, films and TV series, cartoons, propaganda, 'soft' political campaigns, works of art, fashion, libraries and bookstores, production of popular literature, books and texts, donations, consumerist and hedonistic culture, the Internet, etc.

What is today referred to as *soft power* was earlier referred to as *propaganda*. That name has since acquired a pejorative meaning.

By the term soft power we mean the spread of ideas and attractive values and that should 'win the soul' of a person. But in fact, we are talking about its propaganda. In its essence, propaganda (lat. *propaganda*, *propagare* – to spread) is nothing but the process and procedure of spreading certain ideas, ideologies, doctrines, values, understandings,

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<sup>4</sup> P-R. Droa (2010), *Zapad objašnjen svima*, Beograd: Geopoetika izdavaštvo.

attitudes and opinions. The goal of it is to systematically influence attitudes, opinions and behavior of persons. Persuasiveness, i.e., *persuasion*, *view*, *belief*, *conviction*, is a fundamental and essential property of propaganda.<sup>5</sup>

Persuasiveness is also an important characteristic of soft power, as a set of what is presented as something that is *convincing*, *attractive* and should be *accepted*. These are the contents of soft power.

Thus, it is shown that propaganda is a process of spreading the content of soft power, i.e., persuasion whose goal is to convince “by establishing a connection between the rhetorical and ideological register.” This means persuasiveness is “the mainstay of the propaganda effect: in it lies the intention of the propagandist to direct the behavior of the audience in accordance with predetermined goals by influencing attitudes, to varying degrees.” Precisely, “influence on behavior is the main goal of propaganda”, and “modification, either strengthening or changing attitudes, is only an intermediate operation. When possible, stimulating behavior is achieved with as little intervention as possible in the audience’s attitudinal structure.” Thus, propaganda is connected “with other communicational phenomena”, and “compared to the previous one, communication is a process of symbolic production of meaning and, based on that, the constitution of meaning.” In it, reality is socially constructed, according to which actors have a whole range of options for choosing action strategies. Propaganda narrows this range and symbolic interaction is reduced to a training ground for placing the intentions of the creator of the message.”<sup>6</sup>

Propaganda includes various contents whose range is ‘narrowed’ as necessary in order to be acceptable. The leaders and political oligarchies of totalitarian states knew this well. Before the Second World War, Adolf Hitler said about propaganda: “The perspicacity of the masses is very limited. The understanding is little, but therefore the forgetfulness is great.” That is why he considered and emphasized that effective and successful “propaganda must be reduced to only a few essential points that should be repeated in the form of slogans for as long as it takes for even the last person to be able to imagine what is desired when they hear those words.” Goebbels, who is known for saying that “a lie repeated

<sup>5</sup> The term propaganda traces its heritage to the catholic religious tradition. Pope Urban VIII founded the *Congregatio de propaganda fide* in 1623. as an association for the spreading of the catholic faith.

<sup>6</sup> S. Miliwojević (1993), “Propaganda”, u: *Enciklopedija političke kulture* (Glavni redaktor Milan Matić), Beograd: Savremena administracija, 941-942.



a thousand times remains a lie, a lie repeated a million times becomes the truth”, emphasized that “propaganda must be clear, simple, perhaps even primitive” because “the people are generally still more primitive than we can imagine. That is why the very essence of propaganda is simplicity and constant repetition.”<sup>7</sup>

Realization of the interests of dominant subjects of power is achieved not only by coercion, but also by securing the consent of subordinates in relation to a dominant group. This is the hegemony that Antonion Gramsci talked about.

This Italian intellectual emphasized the role of cultural hegemony not only in social changes, but also in the process of establishment of government. This concept can also be applied to the understanding of geopolitical relations.

Gramsci emphasized that the repressive feature of the state was one dimension of its nature and that the other is contained in its socializing function.

The area of the state and society, within which coercion is carried out, is the political society, composed of public institutions (government, parliament, assembly, judiciary, military, police, prison) through which rule is directly applied; the political society is usually said to be the state or the ‘night watchman’. However, state power cannot be based solely on repression and *hard power* of action. Indeed, such states and such power exist. But the effectiveness of action also depends on civil society, as that important area for ensuring hegemonic ideological, propaganda, spiritual and political action; civil society is made up of numerous private institutions (family, school, media, cultural, sports, scientific and other institutions) that achieve supremacy, consent, and consensus. It belongs to that area where different ideas and ideologies confront each other, provides consensus and, as we would say today, spreads or establishes soft power and establishes hegemony. In it, ruling groups and dominant subjects of power aspire to maintain ideological and political dominance and subordinate groups to conquer it. Cultural hegemony is the basis of the unification of tastes, attitudes, opinions and behavior of persons, as well as the change of identity. In this way, the basis of the conquest of political power: no matter how repressive, ruling must also include the phenomena of consent, consensus, consensual, socialization.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> D. Ganzer (2018), *Protivzakoniti ratovi: kako zemlje NATO-a podrivaju Ujedinjene nacije: hronika koja počinje od Kube i završava Sirijom*, Beograd: Laguna, 248.

<sup>8</sup> B. Kovačević (1986), *Gramsci i marksizam (Konceptija hegemonije Antonija Gramscija)*, Banja Luka: Glas; B. Kovačević (2019), *Neoliberalna hegemonija*, Banja Luka: Evropski defendologija



When this concept of hegemony is transferred to the discursive analysis of geopolitical relations, it means that in addition to the existence of hard power manifested through, first of all, military potential, rigid economic power and sanctions, the realization of the interests of the dominant subject of power or the one who pretends to be. It also implies the use of soft power instruments. Aviation can do its job, just as the media and propaganda agencies, diplomacy, so-called 'do their job' 'non-governmental' and other organizations, churches, cultural, scientific and sports organizations and associations, etc. No matter how powerful it is, without instruments, organizations and institutions of soft power dispersion, aviation, as a militant, militaristic and bellicose expression of the existence of hard power, cannot be successful. Hard power is connected with soft power.

The field of politics is not only the area of manifestation of force and hard power, but also the area of manifestation of *consent* and *acceptance* of the values of soft power. Whether countries are more or less *democratic* or more or less *totalitarian* depends on their presence in politics and geopolitics.

## FILM'S SOFT POWER

Regardless of types and genre differences, films contain a certain aesthetic and ideological, and some also (geo)political and ideological dimensions. This is their so-called soft power. To illustrate the areas of soft power in film as widely as possible, we will point out a few referent examples: partisan films, films of the so-called "black wave", the movie *Titanic*, and American western movies.

As war films and extremely popular, *partisan films* mostly represented screened propaganda ideological projects of the socialist state, primarily related to the Second World War. They are imbued with ideology: the importance of national liberation; partisan struggle against the occupier; the fascist enemy and 'his servants'; the partisans led by

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centar za naučna, politička, ekonomska, socijalna, bezbjednosna, sociološka i kriminološka istraživanja Banja Luka. Leaning on Marx's concept of superstructure and ideology and Gramsci's concept of hegemony, the French philosopher Louis Pierre Althusser talks about the distinction between *state repressive apparatuses* of hard power (government, administration, army, police, courts, prisons) and *state ideological apparatus* as a space for spreading the ideology of soft power (religious, educational institutions, family, law, unions, institutions of the political system, and political parties, media, culture). *State repressive apparatuses* belong to the public and *state ideological apparatuses* belong to the private sphere. L. Altiser (2015), *Ideologija i državni ideološki aparati (Beleške za istraživanje)*, Beograd: Karpos, 26-28.

Josip Broz (a former Austrian corporal who shot at Serbs in the First World War and became the partisan supreme commander in the Second World War, and established the Goli Otok camp after the war); the suffering of the partisans and the fight for the wounded, harmony, equality and hyper-idealized “brotherhood and unity”; personified in the film characters of the then very popular actors, the Serb Velimir Bata Živojinović and the Croat Boris Dvornik. The party-state leadership considered film the most important art of all arts and its influence on film production was quite obvious. They saw in the film a powerful means of propagating the values of socialism, socialist self-management, the power of the working class and the vanguardism of the Party headed by the undisputed leader – Tito.

All that ideological farce and propaganda cosmetics of fake *Potemkin villages* happened in Yugoslavia as a totalitarian state. That is, a state with an autocratic regime, which falsely presented itself as a democratic and socialist state. In such a totalitarian state led by Josip Broz, there was complete domination and strict control of the party state over society: economy, politics, ideology, culture, science, sports, individuals and social groups. There was strong censorship in it and there was no space for the existence of autonomous critical thinking and public opinion, artistic and academic freedom. There was neither human right nor freedom. That’s why there was a prison system modeled after the Soviet GULAG.<sup>9</sup>

To completely prevent the creation of any kind of critical space and to maintain it by all possible means, the repressive totalitarian regime established the *Goli Otok* political camp as a system of several constructed camps. Dissidents, ‘enemies of the people’ and ‘enemies of the regime and acts and character of Comrade Tito’ were imprisoned and killed there: ‘dissidents’, ‘informbirovs’, ‘leftists’, ‘rightists’, ‘counter-revolutionaries’, ‘liberals’, etc. Although the exact number of people who went through the harsh system of the *Goli Otok* camp is unknown, the number is certainly not small. Some believe that by 1978 (!) that number was around 32,000, of which over 300 prisoners died.

<sup>9</sup> In the USSR, the GULAG (Главное управление лагерей складов или Главное управление исправительно-трудовых лагерей и колоний) represented a system of 53 camps and 423 labor colonies. It existed from March 25, 1930, until January 13, 1960. Solzhenitsyn cites the research of statistics professor Kurganov who calculated that 66.6 million people were killed, sickened, died and displaced in the GULAG. “Whether it’s ours or someone else’s, how can one not be speechless” – says Solzhenitsyn. A. Solženjicin (1988), *Arhipelag Gulag 1918-1956*, t. I, Beograd: Rad, 137-138.

Opposing the ideological and propaganda film varnish, films that belong to the so-called *black wave* appear in Yugoslav cinematography and refer to the period between the 60s and 70s of the 20th century. According to some, it refers to the period from 1958-1973, and according to others to the period from 1961-1972. Regardless of these insignificant differences, everyone agrees the period of the cinematographic black wave is extremely significant from a political and social point of view.

Completely contrary to the ideological matrix of partisan fillings and creating an idolatrous attitude towards the socialist state and its fundamental pillars, the films of the black wave show the 'dark side' of Yugoslavia as a propagated idealized model of the socialist society. Contrary to the socialist ideological and propaganda cinematography that falsely portrayed society glorifying its institutions and "values", the cinematography of the "black wave" strongly criticizes the state of society, the dominant ideology, false propaganda, politics and power of the regime of the totalitarian socialist state, problematizes the cult of Tito's personality by comparing with other totalitarian leaders. This cinematography appeared in the time of student demonstrations and youth rebellion against the repressive totalitarian state regime, alienation and social marginalization, dealing with the "ordinary little man" and the cracks of the society in which he lives. They were quite realistically showing the reverse side of the society in which that man really lives. That dark side of the idealized socialist reality, which was shown in the films of the black wave, was imbued with misery and poverty, psycho-social pathology (alienation, anxiety, depression and neuroticism of young people, disappointment, daily humiliations, dissatisfaction, drug addiction and alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, crime, corruption, aggression, violence and murder, prostitution, sex, promiscuity, homosexuality, etc.). The films of the black wave were quite realistic because they strongly criticized the false ideal image of the *Potemkin villages* of Yugoslavia at that time. They were showing the social and political reality as it actually is.

As another example of the spread of soft power, we will take the film *Titanic*. It can be said to have played a major role in the realization of Western cultural socialization, hegemony and cultural imperialism. Anthony Giddens points out that the film's popularity lies in the fact that it contained ideas and values intended for a global audience. One of the important themes of the film refers to "the possibility of achieving romantic love, despite class differences and family traditions." Although

these ideas, values and norms, are accepted in many Western countries, they are not in the majority. Intended to influence attitudes about personal and marital relationships in those parts of the world where rigid traditional values still dominate, the Western values spread through the films of the cultural industry. It is shown that the West can precisely influence changes in those traditional values. Western-produced television shows and movies dominate the global media, promoting certain political, social, and economic attitudes that reflect the Western worldview. In this regard, critics of globalization believe it creates and imposes a "global culture" that will "overrun the strength of local customs and traditions." Thus, "globalization represents a form of "cultural imperialism." The values, style and views of the world characteristic of The West are expanding so aggressively that they will suffocate national cultures."<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of the existence of negative radical attitudes towards globalization and the spread of Western culture on the *global* and *local*, i.e. *globalization space*, it is nevertheless evident that this culture, thanks to many media and means, is spreading very moderately. By spreading soft power in fact, it strongly influences the change of traditional relations between people, social classes, ethnic groups. It brings with it new and different values that break traditional rigidity and autarky, bringing them closer to the modern way of life and world view. The intention of the cultural industry of the West refers to the world accepting all its segments (language, literature, music, architecture, science, education, fashion, theater, digital technological products, etc.). In this way, the rest of the world accepts the *American way of life as its own way of life*. By unifying and imposing value systems, tastes, needs and services and selling them to the rest of the world, American corporations would make enormous profits and America would strengthen its global hegemony.

As an example of the dispersion of conditioned, soft power, we will take the Hollywood *western films* that were produced on a distinctly Manichean principle. When the main actor points out in the film that "only a dead Indian is a good Indian", and that there are "good" and "bad guys", he is actually not only expressing his Manichaeism, but also a misanthropic genocidal attitude as an expression of film propaganda.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> E. Gidens (2005), *Sociologija*, Beograd: Ekonomski fakultet, 69-70.

<sup>11</sup> The West will adopt the same attitude in its films, TV shows, journalistic and propaganda articles, in which it will maintain a positive attitude toward itself. It takes a negative attitude towards those who criticize it, targets them and those who are uninterested in it at will, in accordance with the imperative instrument of stick or carrot. In addition to other examples, to illustrate this assertion of the existence and dispersion of soft power through various media. The attitude of

The plot in western films refers to the Wild West of the United States of America, but also Canada and Mexico. The time of the event is the second half of the 19th century and the period between 1860 and 1900.

The most common iconography of western movies shows cowboys, gunslingers and bounty hunters with big hats, shirts and scarves around their necks, deerskin pants with a belt with bullets and a revolver, and spurs on their legs. They skillfully ride horses on which there is a saddle, saddlebags and a gun. The films show vivid landscapes of 'wild nature' and areas of 'enemy territory' inhabited by Indians, dusty roads on which traveler and mail coaches rush. They show isolated forts, Indian villages, ranches and small towns with a store, a sheriff's office with a jail, a barn. In already more civilized and developed urban areas, there is a bank, a church and a school.

From an ideological point of view in western films, in the ethnocentric, Indian-phobic ideological matrix in western films, stereotypical Manichean conflicts and wars against Indians are most impressively depicted. On one side, the 'good guys' whose morality and code of honor are on the side of 'law' and 'order'; and on the other, the 'bad guys' – criminals, bandits, unruly 'southerners', Indians – who are on the complete opposite side of the law. In the earlier period, American

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the West towards the Serbs in the previous war in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Bosnia and Herzegovina can be used for this. To influence world public opinion through media and diplomatic propaganda spreading dispersive soft power, the West portrayed Serbia and Serbs in an extremely negative way. In very pronounced media violence and aggressive media-propaganda 'gleichschalt' and spinning, and in accordance with Orwellian news, Serbs are labeled, demonized, stigmatized and targeted as exclusive culprits, as non-human. That is why every measure available to the interventionist West could be implemented and justified against them, and which in such rigid and a priori directed propaganda achieved the dispersion of soft power. They emphasized Serbia was a "genocidal", "oppressive nation", "occupier", "aggressor", a nation with a "barbaric spirit." For Bill Clinton Serbia is "the heart of European darkness"; for Tony Blair – the war against Serbia is "a war of Good against Evil, of civilization against barbarism"; Helmut Kohl emphasized Serbia should be destroyed as "the last oasis of communism"; Klaus Kinkel – that she should be "brought to her knees"; D. James Baker – "turn into a pariah", Wesley Clark – "turn into dust and ashes", and Michale Rose and Jamie Shayne – "returned to the stone age." Politicians, diplomats, journalists and quasi-intellectuals raced to accuse the Serbs of being a "grumpy, wayward, disobedient people", of "belonging to another civilization outside of the European motherland", of being "bandits", "rednecks", "butchers from the East", "Byzantines", "Balkans", "war criminals", "disturbing factor", "uncooperative", "enemies of democracy", "people who trample on human rights", "genocidal." Thus, in a primitive and uncultured way, Richard Holbrooke will say of the Serbs that they are "criminal assholes", Madeleine Albright – that they are "disgusting", Jacques Chirac, that they are "without law and religion, bandits and terrorists", David Obi – that they are "pigs", Laurent Fabius – "garbage and Warren Minor Christopher – "immoral race." Of course, they were not the only ones in the area of pathological hatred and Serbophobia, and they were not the only ones who demonized the Serbs. There were other politicians, diplomats, and even 'intellectuals'.

westerns show the violence of the Wild West, emphasizing the values of honor and morality, keeping 'order and law', dedication and integration into a 'good' society.

This is American messianism imbued with certain values. In the need to shape a national identity, they show the conflict between the primitive, traditional and outdated, on the one hand, and the advanced, civilized and modern on the other. That is the conflict between undisciplined and unpolished savages and civilized civil persons. Of course, although, from a historical point of view, many things in the fables are completely incorrect and invented, the goal is to show that in the conflict 'good' wins over 'evil', 'justice' over 'injustice', 'law and order' over lawlessness, 'civilized' over 'primitive'. Thus, "Hollywood, which has the means of material production, also has the means of intellectual production. It rules as a producer of ideas and regulates their spread."<sup>12</sup>

The spread of such ideas is nothing more than the propaganda spread of soft power. It quite understandably carries a clear ideological message that anything can happen to all those who do not accept American hegemony as American messianism.

In the same semantic matrix of the powerful states of the West, that is, the so-called 'international communities', build a global concept of the new world order. Through it they achieve their dominance. In that process and according to their own interests, they use all means of hard and soft power: economy, politics, diplomacy, military, culture, media (especially television), Internet. Their use and usage is manipulative: with a propaganda semantic message, they justify the (neo)imperial policy of the designers of the global *new world order*. Trying to succeed in this, they use, explicitly or implicitly, the mechanism of Manichaeism.

In the philosophical sense, the term Manichaeism implies dualism according to which two opposite principles rule the world: the principle of good and the principle of evil. In the political sense, this term refers to ideological and political propaganda that divides the political and social community into two separate parts, i.e. to: 'us' and 'them', 'loyal' and 'disloyal', 'fit' and 'unfit', 'friends' and 'enemies' of politics, systems, regimes. The political practice of Manichaeism and political rule rests on the image of a diabolical enemy. It is based on the classical principle of *divide et impera* (lat. "divide and rule"). Precisely because it rests on the image of a diabolical enemy, Manichaean politics finds in the 'enemy' the one and only culprit and cause of all troubles

<sup>12</sup> G. Aristarko (1971), *Marks, film i filmska kritika*, Beograd: Institut za film, 16.

and dangers. "People from the opposite side must be destroyed morally" by "declaring themselves criminals and inhumane, absolutely worthless, because otherwise we ourselves would be criminals and monsters." This is how the Nazi ideologist Carl Schmitt emphasized and after him, in a similar way, many other ideologues and practitioners of totalitarian parties and states.

Manichaeism, racist and chauvinist political observation of phenomena necessarily leads to a bellicose understanding of the world. Man's social life is a bellicose life: man has almost always found himself in war and war in him. Man has almost always found himself in such a social, political, spiritual, psychological and ideological space that could be brought under the Hobbesian definition that man is a wolf to man (lat. *homo homini lupus est*); and the state of war of all against all (*bellum omnium contra omnes*). Man constantly lives in an age of political war. The war age is an age in which people are ultimately divided into 'us' and 'them', into 'friends' and 'enemies', 'loyal' and 'disloyal.' Then they persecute and make war. The term enemy is a bellicose term because it belongs to the concept of war. Antagonisms, conflicts and war are present. There is also an enemy, regardless of whether it is a war between states and an ideological, political, civil and ethnic war in one country. There are no political and state conflicts, conflicts and sharpened antagonisms without enemies; there is no war without an enemy and where it exists, it is necessary to destroy it. Destruction of the enemy or his defeat is the basic meaning and goal of warfare, both military and ideological and political. After all, human history, and the violent history of the West in particular, show this quite illustratively.

The West has always acted in a racist, bellicose and misanthropic manner when it had to, in its wanton looting of resources, colonial, neo-colonial and neo-imperial practices. In this regard, it perceived itself as a kind of *Deus Absconditus* and the supreme natural measure of good and evil. Its obsessive-compulsive exceptionalism and its illusory and false belief in exceptionalism have their origins in the colonialist past and deep conviction that it is absolutely superior to the rest of the world. Therefore, it has the right and moral obligation to lead and dominate.

Because of the propaganda semantic discourse about moral obligation, ethical reasons and God's will, numerous wars are justified, bombings are carried out, massacres and mass genocides are committed. In this way, the West uses a combination of hard and soft power. In the name of semantic narratives about human rights, justice, democracy,



morality, conscience, the West, in fact, also organizes wars in the name of moral choice and principles and values. It is also carried out military operations like the so-called 'humanitarian interventions' by bombing Republika Srpska and Republika Srpska Krajina in 1995 and FR Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in 1999.

The bombing of Republika Srpska and Republika Srpska Krajina, and then the FR Yugoslavia – which is an expression of the manifestation of hard power – was compared by American General Wesley Kanne Clark to the hand of God. This formulation is an expression of the articulation of soft power. In the same sense, former US Secretary of State D. James Baker said: "the USA and NATO are fighting against the enemies of civilization and humanity", which meant that American interests are determined by soft power – philanthropy and civilizational moral duty towards humanity. Thus, in its strange *ethical theocentrism*, the West behaves messianically as a kind of *Deus Absconditus*, thinking and behaving as if it has a mandate from God. As Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "a duty to order the weak and chaotic people." How he "regulates" them can be seen in the geopolitics of the Anglo-Saxon West from the Second World War until today.

Together with NATO – the military organization of the USA, as they point out, they are fighting "against the enemies of civilization and humanity." They are considering it is the "duty" of the Anglo-Saxon West to "regulate weak and chaotic nations." Is the West really capable of doing that so that it would truly suit those "weak" and "chaotic nations" so that the West would acquire the *moral* supremacy of the leader?

For global, "world leadership" it is necessary that, in addition to "material advantages", there are also spiritual, civilizational and cultural advantages, and the faith and conviction that would result from that leadership. "Global leadership requires spiritual, cultural and civilizational primacy in the present and the future." Not only is it necessary for others to believe in the ability of the leader, but he himself must be convinced of the superiority of his own powers and mission. A leader is expected to see further than others, in fact, to possess an unsurpassed ability to accurately perceive the present, but also to predict upcoming events. A leader needs to see through obstacles, not just over them. Moreover, a leader is expected to do what is normally unexpected of those he brings together and leads – the power to create the future. Great expectations result in great disappointments if the (self)elected leader does not fulfill the commitments and promises made. After all, in the

final account of history, leadership is as demanding, overwhelming and difficult as it is pleasant.<sup>13</sup>

If the Anglo-Saxon West, led by the USA, has material primacy, we could not say it also has the necessary spiritual, cultural and civilizational primacy. In fact, we could say it *appropriated* this primacy, thanks primarily to hard power, but also to soft power. That's why it triumphantly gave itself the right to declare itself the torchbearer of the spread of 'democracy', 'human rights' and 'freedom'. Of course, we see how the process of spreading the value mantras that the West talks about is taking place. That self-proclaimed 'leadership' is not based on belief and convincing others, but on force.

Real leadership must be *desired* and *accepted*. It must be an expression and influence of soft power, and be unimposed by *force, violence or terror*, i.e. unimposed by the rigid instruments of hard power. Aviation, wars, so-called humanitarian interventions and carpet bombing innocent civilians as 'collateral damage', instigating ethnic and other conflicts, 'yellow', 'orange' and other colored revolutions and conflicts in sovereign states, imposing genocidal sanctions, blackmail and threats, as well as other mechanisms of hard power dispersion, cannot provide true, authentic and voluntarily accepted leadership. Because leadership does not come from fear. If we bring this analysis into the context of contemporary geopolitical relations, then it means that the expansive, neo-colonial and neo-imperial expansion of the Anglo-Saxon West is based on hard power. The emergence and expansion of BRICS, at least for now, is based on soft power. Until now, the Anglo-Saxon West has imperially destroyed states. The time will necessarily come when different relations will be built in the world, and in which the world will be without the West, at least this (neo)imperial and (neo)colonial Anglo-Saxon West.<sup>14</sup>

Behaving like a kind of *Deus Absconditus*, using rigid hard power, the West simultaneously shows its hypocrisy. In its neo-imperial and neo-colonial geopolitics, the Anglo-Saxon West targets innocent, powerless states and their peoples – which possess significant resources necessary for the same predatory West – falsely accusing them of being 'undemocratic' and 'dictatorial', of 'violating human rights and freedoms', to dispose of chemical and biological weapons, etc. In order

<sup>13</sup> M. Knežević (2005), *Moć zapada: nova stara Evropa. I*, Pančevo: Mali Nemo, 188.

<sup>14</sup> З. Милошевић (2012), *Имperiјално разарање државе*, Београд: Институт за политичке студије; З. Милошевић (2014), *Свет без Запада: прилог проучавању политичких процеса у свету и у Србији*, Бијељина: Слобомир П. Универзитет.

to achieve dominance, control and plunder over their resources, and to seize other people's territories, the Anglo-Saxon West instigates colored revolutions, conducts network and hybrid warfare, 'humanitarian' interventions and actual wars.

Capitalism is based on the constant need for military interventions and the so-called ethical bombings whose goal is the maintenance and expansion of the capitalist system in the world. Closely related to that process is the a priori demonization of any transformist and transcendent idea and intention, which the capitalist hard power immediately removes and liquidates as reactionary, anti-democratic and totalitarian. With the United States of America at the helm, the West is waging war against the rest of the world, which does not want to accept its absolute dominance. And, with the construction of the largest American military base in the Balkans, *Bondsteel*, the assumption of effective control of Europe was created. Also, the necessary military interventions in the Middle East, as well as the preventive occupation of Central Asia to confront Russia and China. The well-known event of September 11, 2001 provided the justification for surveillance in geopolitical relations, and justified the strengthening of surveillance over individuals, limiting their individual freedoms. Of course, this would be impossible without the use of manipulative rhetoric like the one from Phaedrus' fable about the wolf and the lamb. It is dedicated to those who *qui fictis causis innocents opprimunt* (lat. "those who oppress the innocent with invented causes"). All forms of revolt should be removed so that the two dogmas of our age remain essential: the neoliberal mantra of the transcendence of the market as destiny and unconditional subordination to the universal unipolarity that emerged victorious from the Cold War.<sup>15</sup>

The hypocrisy of Western, first of all American, political science is present in the discourse on America's war against *the rest of the world*. Behind the discourse on ethics, humanitarianism, spreading democracy and human rights, there is actually nothing but a militant hegemonic imperialist and neo-colonialist motive.

It is characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon West that its attitude towards the others is simultaneously universalistic and imperialistic. Universalistic, because in the West it is thought that the *rest of the world* will accept its modernity, liberalism and capitalism. Imperialistic, because in the West there is a strongly expressed conviction that, as a self-proclaimed *Deus Absconditus*, the West must, as a kind of enlightened

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<sup>15</sup> Д. Фузаро (2013), *Крваве руке неолиберализма*, Интервју, Београд: Печат, бр. 284, 16, 26.

despot, spread its understanding throughout the world through democracy and capitalism, “even by force, if necessary.”<sup>16</sup>

The expansion of the universalistic and imperialistic will of the West, including by force was felt by the Republika Srpska, Republika Srpska Krajina and FR Yugoslavia, as well as a whole series of other countries and their peoples, especially since the Second World War, until today.

## CONCLUSION

Power plays a significant role in the process of socialization and political socialization of persons in societies. Hard power is based on the dispersion of repression, coercion and force, which is particularly visible in the geopolitical relationship of the West towards the rest of the world. Soft power relies on persuasion, faith, attraction, desire and acceptance. Hard power is undesirable because it is aggressive, oppressive, and violent. Soft power is a nonviolent, desirable power. In movies, soft power is quite clearly recognizable.

Belonging to the genre of war films, Yugoslav partisan films carried with them exceptionally positive narratives of strong ideological messages. These are primarily of the partisan national liberation struggle in the future construction of a socialist society based on the power of the working class, the brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav peoples and the avantgarde communist party; at the head with the undisputed leader and son of all Yugoslav peoples – Josip Broz Tito.

The films of the Yugoslav “black wave” exposed the indoctrination and manipulation of the totalitarian regime in Yugoslavia. They showed the ‘other side of the coin’, the dark side of life manifested in the psychopathology and social pathology of everyday life in Yugoslav society.

The film *Titanic* gathered a huge audience around the world because it portrayed the historical tragedy of a large number of passengers on the then new and most modern ship in the world in a fascinating and empathetic way. A special segment of his receptivity refers to the depiction of the possible existence of love between members of different classes, castes and social levels. Their reception will certainly be reflected in changes in value systems when it comes to interpersonal relationships, relationships between men and women and relationships in marriage. All this will lead to a change in traditional values, customs and local cultures in the ideological, cultural and geopolitical space.

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<sup>16</sup> R. Koch, C. Smith (2007), *Samoubojstvo Zapada*, Zagreb: Naklada LJEVAK, 187.

Hollywood Western films depicted the ways in which rustic rural settings were transformed into modern and civilized ones based on respect for 'order' and 'law'. In classic Western movies, the 'good guys' always defeat the 'bad guys'. It provides modern American geopolitics with a global quasi-argument of the repressive imposition of 'democracy' and 'human rights' by means of hard and even soft power.

In the mentioned films, their authors (writers, screenwriters, directors, actors) show values that belong to the area of soft power dispersion. Its goal is to be perceived and received by those who watch them with pleasure. And that is precisely the goal of propaganda soft power.

*Translated by Dajana Lazarević*

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