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**Messianism, Utopianism and Imperialism in**  
**Stanley Kubrick's Film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968)**

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## *Dedications*

*I dedicate my dissertation work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, to my sister Sabrina and my brother Djamel, and I thank them for their words of encouragement. To my grandparents, to my uncles and aunts, to all my cousins.*

*I also dedicate this dissertation to all my friends who have supported me throughout the process, I will always appreciate all they have done. To all my teachers who contributed in my work especially Mr Benmechiche Hacène.*

*In memory of my aunts Zahra and Djamila.*

***Lilia BESSALEM***

## *Dedications*

*This dissertation is dedicated to my parents who supported me. I would like to dedicate also this piece of work to:*

*My sister and my brother.*

*My husband Chemseddine Hakem and my step family.*

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## **Abstract**

*Movies were the prime battleground for the ideological conflict between Liberalism and Communism during the Cold War era. A period in which ideas became weapons. This struggle led to the technological conflict between USA and USSR in Space. In an effort to better understand this, our dissertation purports to evaluate the concepts of Messianism, Utopianism and Imperialism through the medium of film “2001: A Space Odyssey”. Kubrick shows the world position of USA as the leader of humanity, and acknowledges the movie’s importance as a tool of communication. For our dissertation, we have appealed to Karl Mannheim’s “Ideology and Utopia” (1949). Mannheim asserts that one’s ideology is influenced by the historical context and the social group to which he belongs. Kubrick’s ideas in the film were influenced by the Cold War era and the environment in which they were produced. In fact, these ideas reflected the American Ideology. We came to the conclusion that firstly, the film contains a spiritual aspect. Secondly, USA used film industry to present space as a perfect place to reach the utopian dream. Finally, the movie is used for the American political and technological purposes.*

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## **I- General Introduction**

Cinema is an institution that plays an ideological role. Its ideological aim serves social and political purposes. Ideology in cinema treats the view of a given society as natural and normal; particularly, the American one. Hollywood film industry influenced the global cinema. It makes people feel connected with American success and ideology. Indeed, these films focused on the social and historical events of the era when they were produced.

From Columbus discovery of the New World, America was seen as an ideal land of hope and opportunities, a land of immigration and civilization. Philip Jenkins in his book *A History of the United States* considered the New World as a new unoccupied land to settle. It gave the opportunity for the colonizers to regard it as a “*terra nullius*”<sup>1</sup>, a land that belongs to nobody and which is open to the world. However, Europeans sought political and religious liberty for themselves as well as for the coming generations. These aims were similar to the religious wars known as “The Crusades”,<sup>2</sup> in which Christians aimed to occupy the Holy Land in the Middle East. They were expelled from Jerusalem, they considered themselves as pioneers in the Promised Land, just as the European Pilgrims who came to open the American frontier, and believed that America is the new Promised Land which can replace the old one in Jerusalem. Many immigrants considered America as the new Eden. For instance, the famous Spanish priest Bartolomé De Las Casas sailed to the New World in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>3</sup> in order to spread the Christian faith. He considered the land as a new Promised Land, his mission was to convey a message of God. He was famous in defending the Indians’ rights in America and aimed to civilize the New World. The first puritans immigrated to the American soil considered themselves as the elected people of God. For this reason, American cinema had always depicted Americans as magical believers and passionate of religion. They were convinced of being the New Messiah to save humanity from sins.



Regarding the ancient Greek influence over the world, the Renaissance Movement began with new discoveries and explorations of new continents. This movement was characterized by the revival of the feelings that America inherited the Greek democracy. They wanted to be the new ideal leaders of the world after the discovery of the new land, claiming their society to be the perfect and Utopian one. In 1751, Benjamin Franklin, a member of the founding Fathers, led the American revolution against the British Empire and contributed to the establishment of the USA. The Founding Fathers drafted the declaration of independence of the thirteen colonies that became known as the USA. Benjamin traced the American destiny to found new cities and utopias <sup>4</sup>. He imagined the American land as an earthly paradise full of opportunities and absolute freedom.

At the beginning of the age of Enlightenment, the age of reason, thinkers came to a conclusion that since people can be considered as creative, humanity could be improved through rational change. Indeed, Enlightenment ideas were combined to form one worldview which influenced European and American thinkers. Colonialism pushed American patriots to construct the foundations of an independent country which led to the American Revolution (1765-1783) and the Declaration of religious and political Independence. Expanding westward to the pacific, Americans have developed new ideas and gave birth to new philosophies such as “Manifest Destiny”. They justified the expansion with the ideology of this philosophy. The latter considered the American institutions as morally superior and the Americans are committed to free people in the Western Hemisphere from the tyranny of the European monarchies. They believed that they were destined by God to work on this ideal and prosperous land. Accordingly, the fact that America is separated geographically from Europe, it gained the opportunity to cultivate the new nation in isolation. America adopted isolationist policy during the 1800’s. It was viable in 1823 when the US President James Monroe established the American foreign policy called the “Monroe Doctrine”. This doctrine opposes the interference of European powers in America.

During the twentieth century, Americans had emphasized on representing their identity through the medium of film. Hollywood film industry focused on the social force within the United States, it showed new ways for Americans to live in community. Meanwhile, the Americans' traditional perspectives concerning their foreign policy had been broken. They had been provoked to enter both the first and the second World Wars. After World War two, humanity had entered a new space age. Europeans as well as Americans feared about the Soviet Union's power and advancement. America needed to spread its democracy throughout the world. It shaped its foreign policy and the way Americans perceive the world. Its main purpose was the expansion of western values which served American interests.

The effects of Second World War influenced on film production, and resulted in Hollywood's involvement in the war. Cold War focused on who will lead first space exploration which symbolizes one's ideological and technological superiority over the other. While the USSR was the first to conquer space, the US was the first to land man on the moon. The Soviet Union's "Sputnik 1" was the first artificial satellite launched by the USSR on October 4<sup>th</sup> 1957. This flight was a starting point for the space exploration. Thus, it provoked the United States to enter in a Cold War against the Soviet Union. The USA believed itself not only the world's leader on the Earth but also in Space<sup>5</sup>. As the 1960s marked the decade of the advancement in technology, the USA expanded to Space in order to expand its civilization, because the expansion of civilization is related to the nation's progress. The aim of this Space Frontier was to construct a new national identity to the United States.

As Cinema started to develop, films became an ideological weapon that film makers use to represent any society's position. The movies were among the participants in the war of ideas between Communism and Capitalism. No film is free from ideological bias because every film maker tries to glorify and express the power and the greatness of his society. The New Hollywood filmmakers such as Stanley Kubrick contributed to world cinema in the 20<sup>th</sup>

century. Kubrick is considered as one of the most influential directors in the history of American cinema. His films present perceptive political messages. “*2001: A Space Odyssey*” (1968) highlights the US space exploration in the Cold War era. Kubrick uses cinema as propaganda to distort and misrepresent the Soviet Union. In the movie, Communism is seen like a disease that would spread as a virus.

*2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) is a science fiction movie based on the short story “*The Sentinel*” written by a science fiction writer Arthur C Clarke. It is about technological development and the human evolution in extraterrestrial life. The film is an allegory on the American power over the Russian one. America challenges Russia to achieve a dominant power in the world in terms of science and technology.

This dissertation aims at the exploration of the ideological assumptions that inform the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) directed by Stanley Kubrick. We intend to examine the way Messianism, Utopianism and Imperialism are displayed in relation to the period of the making of the film.

## **1- Literature Review:**

Most commentators on the movie focused on the movie’s most visual and technical dimensions. Carl Freedman sees the film primarily as an allegory. It allegorizes the events of Homer’s *Odyssey* and Darwin’s narrative of evolution from worm to ape. For Leonard F. Wheat the movie is the masterpiece of the science fiction cinema, “*the grandest motion picture ever filmed*”.<sup>6</sup>

*2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) is considered as a silent film, even though this silence is filled with the astronauts’ breathing and the whirring of machinery; Damon Krukowski has commented on the film’s soundtrack

The bulk of the movie takes place not only without music but without speech (...) only in the middle of the film is there any dialogue, and most of that is marked by

the false and cautiously formal speech of a press conference; that is, it is speech that craves its opposite - speech designed not to communicate <sup>7</sup>.

Moreover, dialogue exists only to show people talking to one another, without regard to content “*This points to a salient characteristic of Kubrick's film, one that might help keep it a mystery but also perhaps a muddle: it is absent of meaningful speech. But then there's the eloquent music - and the silence*” <sup>8</sup>.

The film concentrates more in detail on the function of the music selected from the works of Johann Strauss and Richard Strauss, Aram Khatchaturian and György Ligeti; “*by using music which sounds like noise*”, Irena Paulus states:

Kubrick denies musicality but also its sounding as a noise, which is a continuation of Ligeti's way of thinking. Musical space is also extremely unusual: instead of keeping the usual range and “behaviour” there is a denial of its most important elements \_ melody, harmony, tonality, rhythm <sup>9</sup>.

According to Nathaniel D. May, the film is a wide look at man’s exploration of space. The scenery and backdrops are extremely grandiose highlighting man’s place in universe. He speaks about the artificial intelligence and the human machine interfacing. In 2010, it was named the best film by all time by The Moving Art Film Journal. In 2012, editions of Sound and Sight Magazine ranked “*2001: A Space Odyssey*” sixth in the top ten films of all times <sup>10</sup>.

## **2- Issue and Working Hypothesis:**

From all that has been said above, it is noticeable that many critics have dealt with the film from different angles. They were mainly concerned with Stanley Kubrick's use of technical crafting of the film and its artistic side. Being an American filmmaker, Kubrick was influenced by the American ideology. Nonetheless, to the best of our knowledge, the thematic aspects of the movie were overlooked in terms of analyzing the religious and political contexts. The main focus of this dissertation is to highlight the religious, ideological and political interpretations of Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Thus our attempt through this work is to focus on the messianic, utopian and imperial notions which influence the US ideological perspective. To achieve our task, we will make appeal to Karl Mannheim's key concepts about Ideology mainly the chapter "*Ideology and Utopia*" which is appropriate for the analysis of the selected themes presented in the film.

## **3- Methodological outline:**

This dissertation starts with an Introduction in which the problematic is identified; it is followed by a brief review of literature carried out on the film. The Method and Materials consist of the summary of the theory and the outline of the film. The Results part presents the findings. This Discussion section is divided into three main chapters, the first one examines the theme of Messianism as a religious perspective taken from the film; the second one will be concerned with America as Utopia, and the last chapter will deal with the US self construction as a world power in terms of Imperialism. Finally, the work will be ended with a Conclusion.

### Endnotes:

- [1] Philip Jenkins, *A History of the United States* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 3.
- [2] Christopher Tyerman, *The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc, 2004).
- [3] Paul S. Vickery, "Bartolomé De Las Casas: Prophet of the New World," in *Mediterranean Studies* (2000), accessed November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41166913>.
- [4] HTI@osu, *Manifest Destiny and Westward Expansion*, <https://hti.osu.edu/history-lesson-plans/united-states-history/manifest-destiny-westward-expansion>.
- [5] George Abbey and Neal Lane, *American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, United States Space Policy: Challenges and Opportunities Gone Astray, <http://hdl.handle.net/1911/91891>.
- [6] Carl Freedman, "Superman among the stars," p. 160, accessed June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4240986>.
- [7] Damon Krukowski, "Damon Krukowski listens to 2001: A Space Odyssey", *Film Society of Lincoln Center*, accessed June 04<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43754775>.
- [8] Ibid., 16.
- [9] Irena Paulus, "Stanley Kubrick's Revolution in the Usage of Film Music: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968), Croatian Musical Society," p 113, accessed June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25594489>..
- [10] Nathaniel D. May, "*Transhumanism in Film*" (Thesis of Master Arts Degree., University of Winston-Salem North Carolina, August 2014).

## **II-Methods and Materials:**

### **1- Methods:**

For the theoretical basis of the discussion, we rely on Karl Mannheim's book "*Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*" (1949). Our work focuses on the chapter "Ideology and Utopia"<sup>11</sup>. Mannheim defines Ideology as a mode of thought that obscures the real condition of society to the group holding the thought, thereby stabilizing the shared social reality. It is associated with groups that have a dominant position in society. For him, Ideology must be analyzed in a social and historical context; therefore, this analysis shows two distinct meanings of the term "Ideology", particular and total. Mannheim traces the origin of the term from a "particular" view which gave way to a "total" conception of Ideology. The latter influences somehow the way particular individuals interpret the world. He recognized that every individual's beliefs have been formed from his social position.

In the chapter "Ideology and Utopia", Mannheim deals with the construction of knowledge in a given society. His goal is to deduce how people interpret the world's events. He has stressed the relationship between thought and social reality. His views make it appropriate to our research, in a way that he focuses on the role that ideology plays in the representation of the workings of the social world in which we live.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the disillusionment of the two World Wars, the Great Depression, and the Cold War have influenced many filmmakers in their dealing with politics. Mannheim had predicted the coming of the opposing of people's thoughts and the ideological conflicts to control the world. After the Second World War, the USA based on liberal perspective and USSR based on communist one, had risen as the two powerful forces that sought to dominate the world. Mannheim stresses the ideological thinking in society as dependent on the social position of the different political forces. He claims that not only our adversaries' viewpoints are considered as ideological, but our own as well are ideological.

Thus, American filmmakers have taken their films as a way to popularize their ways of thinking. They are influenced by the American politics and its position in the world.

According to Mannheim, each individual in a given society is influenced by the group thought. This group is presented as the ruling and rising strata. It aims to construct a collective view of reality, and seeks to preserve the current social order.

In applying the theory of “Ideology” to the issue, we deduce that Stanley Kubrick in his *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) sends a political and ideological message to the audience about the American society in which the film has been produced.

## **2- Materials:**

### **The Crew of Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*:**

- **SCRIPT:** Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke, based on Clarke’s story “*The Sentinel*”.
- **Direction:** Stanley Kubrick.
- **Cinematographer:** Geoffrey Unsworth; Additional cinematography: John Alcott.
- **Production design:** Tony Masters, Harry Lange, Ernie Archer.
- **Special photographic effects design and direction:** Stanley Kubrick.
- **Special photographic effect supervision:** Wally Veevers, Douglas Trumbull, Con Pederson, Tom Howard.
- **Editing:** Ray Lovejoy.
- **Music:** Richard Strauss, Johann Strauss, Aram Khatchaturian, György Ligeti.
- **Costumes:** Hardy Amies.

**Cast:** Keir Dullea(*David Bowman*), Gary Lockwood(*Frank Poole*), William Sylvester(*Dr. Heywood Floyd*), Daniel Richter(*Moon-Watcher*), Douglas Rain(*Voice of Hal 9000*), Leonard Rossiter(*Smyslov*), Margaret Tyzack(*Elena*), Robert



Beatty(*Halvorsen*), Sean Sullivan(*Michaels*), Frank Miller(*Mission Control*), Penny Brahms(*Stewardess*), Alan Gifford(*Poole's Father*).

Arthur C. Clarke's short story "*The Sentinel*" was a short story adapted into a movie entitled "*2001: A Space Odyssey*"<sup>12</sup>. It is a science fiction movie directed by Stanley Kubrick. It received mainstream attention in 1968. This movie which parallels the Apollo Program, celebrates technology and explores the unknown. Kubrick's movie is produced in the height of space race between the USSR and the USA. The film is structured into three episodes: "The dawn of man", "Jupiter mission 18 months later", "Jupiter and beyond the infinite".

The dawn of man opens in prehistoric past, millions of years ago in an African desert where the human itself was born. When the sun rises the first appearance was the animal bones spread over rocks. This was the first sign of life. There was a peaceful tribe of ape men who were vegetarians. They had not yet developed the tools to defend or protect themselves nor to kill or attack tapirs. They were unable even to defend themselves from other predators. All of a sudden, the ape men tribe starts making a series of short sharp sounds around the watering hole led by tall and bright ape man that came to drink. By screaming aggressively, the ape manages to frighten the other apes and dominate the territory. During their first night, the apes were hiding all together sleeping in fear after they saw a leopard guarding the dead zebra. On the second day, the hominid tribe is awakened by awkward and humming sounds. Surprisingly it was a tall, black and rectangular monolith. After a long hesitation the apes touched the monolith with their fingers. Just after a while, the sun rises behind the monolith and beneath the crescent of the moon. Later in the afternoon, the leader of ape men was looking for food, playing with bones of animal skeletons.

When the monolith shone, it was accompanied by a tone of STRAUSS "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" which symbolizes power. The ape took a bone and started to shatter the skeleton, and then broke down his head aggressively. In one brilliant shift image, the tapir fell down to

the ground. Now the ape had become carnivorous. He is now able to hunt and kill. It was the starting point of intelligence of the human kind. The day after, when another ape tribe came to drink from the watering hole, the carnivorous tribe didn't allow them; so they dominated the weaponless tribe. The armed ape that learnt to make tools to dominate the animal world moved a new step toward humanity. The hominid leader threw the bone into the air, the bone was turning end over end.

The second sequence is untitled. It is a cut of four million years that separate "*the dawn of man*" and the "*lunar journey*". Four million years later in the year 2000, two different sorts of satellites were turning around the earth: one was cylindrical while the other was rectangular. A Pan American spaceship went from earth, through space, toward the moon. The images are accompanied by "*Blue Danube Waltz*" lyrics of Richard Strauss to highlight the harmonious order of space. Dr Floyd, a transformed ape man of the twentieth century is a scientific administrator, who speaks cordially with Soviet scientists "Elena and Smyslov". However, rapidly their conversation became cold because the Russian crew was very inquisitive about the odd things that were happening at American space station. Floyd joined another American spaceship and led conferences under high security. He talked about an important discovery, probably a second monolith. Dr Floyd and his crew boarded their moon bus to the location of the second monolith. They were rapidly annoyed by awkward radio sounds and bluish light just when they took a picture of that strange structure. The ray of the sunlight and the crescent passed through the monolith. A cut image made a shift from the "*Moon mission*" to "*Jupiter mission*".

The second episode is "*The Jupiter Mission 18 Month Later*". This manned mission aimed to follow the path of the radio signals and search for the origins of the monolith. Their spaceship is named "Discovery". Its shape resembles the bone thrown to space by the ape man at the end of the first sequence. Within the spaceship in the bright white side, the

astronauts were watching a BBC News Program entitled "*The World Tonight*". This program consists in an interview with the Jupiter crew before their departure and illustrated most of the facts about the journey of the five men and HAL9000 a super computer. Computers referred to artificial intelligence. Machines are able to think just as man does. HAL is a personification whose function is to maintain and control the systems of the "Discovery One" spacecraft, but in the end betrayed the crew. Three of the astronauts were hibernating in electronic capsule bed until they were needed at the end of the mission. When they were asked about hibernation, Dave answered: "well, this was done in order to achieve the maximum conservation of our life support capabilities, basically food and air. Now the three hibernating crew members represent the survey team. And their efforts won't be utilized until we're approaching Jupiter".

The astronauts were less necessary than the super computer HAL, which is totally programmed to run the mission effectively. However, it was also programmed to lie, even to hide the truth of the discovery of the monolith on the moon. HAL started talking about it when Dave was showing him the drawings of the crew, then realized that he couldn't talk about it and that is when he screwed up. After HAL is shut down, the recording by Dr Floyd plays when they have reached Jupiter space telling the crew for the first time about the monolith, which was known only to the computer HAL9000. The latter was afraid that the end of the Jupiter mission would mean his own disconnection; HAL could not detect his own errors. Dave and Frank talked together out of ear-shot of HAL, they thought the computer could not hear them, they were thinking about excluding and disconnecting HAL from their crew, but they did not realize that HAL was not out of visual shot.

The third episode is entitled "*The Intermission*". After the intermission, Poole was working outside the spaceship. He left the Pad in his spacesuit to replace the AE 35 Unit. HAL murdered Poole by snapping his oxygen lines and making his breathing heavy. Frank

tried hard to save himself to connect again his air but failed and floats off into space. Dave Bowman asked HAL what was going wrong but HAL pretended coldly “I’m sorry Dave, I don’t have enough information”. Meanwhile, Dave took his spacesuit. He wanted to recover or get back Poole who was already dead. While Dave was absent, HAL started to cut off the life of the three hibernated men. The statistical jiggly lines on the screen became linear, signaling their death.”Computer malfunction, life function critical, and finally, life functions terminated. Returning from outside, Dave ordered HAL to come on board again.

In an exciting and courageous sequence, Dave succeeded to enter from the emergency door, then de-brained and disconnected HAL from his functions. The latter protests with Dave that his work will be back to normal; his voice was receding gradually and returns to infancy. HAL brain returned to a second childhood, and then started to sing with his lowering voice “Dai- sy Dai- sy”.

The last episode is “*Jupiter and beyond the infinity*”. After the disconnection of HAL Dave continued his mission alone, fled to Jupiter. He reached the outer limits of Jupiter where he discovered a third monolith. He left the spaceship in one of the space pods to pursue the monolith orbiting Jupiter. The pod is sent into a tunnel of light moving faster and faster. During this scene he was transformed, an image showed his eye changing colors at each time he blinks it, then Bowman’s eye started to recover its original color. Bowman returned to reality after the epileptic state. In the surrealistic ending of the movie, the pod came to rest in a white cosmic bedroom. Bowman was trembling when he was looking from the window of the pod. The bedroom is furnished with mirrors and wall paintings. The second time Bowman appeared, he was aged with grey hair and wrinkles. Bowman enters a spacious marble bathroom; he noticed that he had quickly aged after his voyage. Bowman’s third stage of changing was an elderly white –haired gentleman dining elegantly, Bowman falls down the win glass. The fourth stage of Bowman was in a bed ridden, a dying man looking 100 years

old, he raised up his hand toward another mysterious monolith then transformed into a fetus called a Star Child while the music swells to its conclusion.

**Endnotes:**

[11] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, “Ideology and Utopia”, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shills( London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1949), 49- 97.

[12] *2001: A Space Odyssey*, DVD, directed by Stanley Kubrick (Hollywood: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc), 1968.

### III- Results:

Throughout the dissertation and analysis of Stanley Kubrick's movie, we have analyzed the way Kubrick depicts the image of America. We have linked the work to Mannheim's "*Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*" (1949), particularly the chapter "Ideology and Utopia" as a theoretical framework to show the way Kubrick, as an American citizen, presents Americans in his film. According to Mannheim, Ideology must be analyzed in a social and historical context. In this way, every filmmaker is influenced by a certain ideology, so we have detected Kubrick's ideology depending on his film's context in which it was produced.

In the first section of the work, we came to the conclusion that the film contains a spiritual aspect. Kubrick uses scientific facts to refer to religion through the use of the black Monolith. The Americans see this latter as a celestial object that represents divine inspiration. It has also been interpreted as an evolutionary Darwinian process. Americans in this way are presented as the followers of Jesus Christ, and the child at the end of the film is interpreted as a return of Messiah. In the second section, we came to the conclusion that America used film industry to present Space as the perfect and ideal place, and Americans are depicted in the film as the only ones who reached this utopian area. In fact, Kubrick uses the American ideology to interpret the American powerful leadership of the spacecraft. According to Mannheim, the individual imposes his own interpretation as natural to the world. This interpretation turns into an ideology. Concerning the last section, we concluded that *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) had been used for political and technological purposes. It was propaganda used by the USA for its favour and came as a result of several historical events. The movie supported the American advancement and technological progress during the Cold War times. It presented America as the most powerful nation to break the bonds of frontiers much further, to space frontier.

Finally, having analyzed *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), we came to the conclusion that the Cold War era shaped the American cinema as well as the film genres produced by Hollywood Industry.

#### **IV- Discussion:**

In this part of our work, we discuss the issue in the light of Mannheim's theory of Ideology in "*Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*" (1949) mainly in the chapter "Ideology and Utopia". In the first chapter entitled "Messianism in *2001: A Space Odyssey*", Kubrick presents religion in a scientific way. As long as America uses technology, it never excludes religion from its traditional perspectives. This chapter focuses on the fact that Americans are the only ones who can follow the mission of Christ because Kubrick depicts them as the people elect. The second chapter entitled "Utopianism in *2001: A Space Odyssey*" deals with the utopian thought and its place in the American society, this time in a new discovered place by Americans, which is Space. Kubrick presents the USA as a model of a political organization and the technologically most advanced nation which is destined to lead the world into new utopias. In the last chapter entitled "Imperialism in *2001: A Space Odyssey*", Kubrick's thoughts are demonstrated within the movie. The film's purpose is to spread the American ideology and diminish the Russian one during the Cold War era.

## **Chapter One: Messianism in 2001: A Space Odyssey**

### **1- Definition of Messianism:**

The term messianism is etymologically derived from the word Messiah and from the Jewish Mashiah the anointed of God<sup>13</sup>. It is also used to describe at the same time a high priest or a Jewish monarch. They were endowed with high dignity, freedom and were expected to bring peace and justice. In the book of Enoch the word Messiah is recognized with the historic person of the coming Savior. Christos was interpreted as the renewal of the world. The term Messiah changed its meaning through times from the whole to restricted and specific one.

The concept of messianism has developed over time with different portraits of Messiah. For instance in Judaism, the Messiah will be the future Jewish king. In both Christianity and Islam Jesus is considered the Messiah is called the Christ, he is said to be the Savior and redeemer of the Jewish people and humanity at the end of times<sup>14</sup>.

**a. In Judaism:** Messiah from the Hebrew “Mashiah”, the term came to refer to a Jewish king. According to traditional rabbinic teaching; the Jewish Messiah will gather all the Jews in the Israeli land to live in peace.

**b. In Christianity:** the Messiah is called Christ the savior and the only one who will save the Jewish people and mankind from the power of the evil. Christians feel certain that the messianic prophecies were achieved in his mission, death resurrection and belief that the rest of the prophecies will be accomplished in the second coming of Christ.

**c. In Islam:** Messiah in Arabic “Al Massih” is believed to be anointed from his birth by Allah with the specific task to be the king and the prophet of the Muslims. In Islam, Mohammed is the messenger of Allah and “Al Mahdi” is believed to be the one that will establish the truth and fight against oppression, injustice as well as kill the faked “Messiah Al Dajjal” who will appear like a human at the end of times claiming that he is the Messiah.



After destroying the anti Christ, Jesus will be then a just king and reestablish justice and peace in the whole world.

## **2- Modern Messianism :**

According to W. Bacon, Christians believe that Jesus was given an identical position similar to that of God<sup>15</sup>. During the spread of Christianity , there was a need of changing Christian dogma with new ideas of each new age .Some believers are satisfied with traditional Christology .Many crude thoughts do not correspond to modern man's ideas ,thus they cannot supply the content of the beliefs about Jesus.

According to Shirley Jackson Case, The earliest Gospel tradition is no doubt stating that the prediction of the returning of Jesus to life after his death fell upon deaf ears<sup>16</sup> .The discipleship to which Jesus called the humanity was to serve others ,be unselfish by giving more importance to other people's needs than their owns. The power of Jesus personality and his messages continue to inspire promoting modern man to the worthiest spiritual achievements and persuading the humanity to realize in their lives an honest experience of God. Jesus is and has always been the great Savior .Today Christians self control is inherited from Christ Jesus and consider him important in different situations in their lives.

At the beginning of the film, Kubrick characterizes the evolutionary process of human being by the intellectual development of apes in discovering the bone as a weapon. In fact, he equates the sequence of throwing the bone in the air with the spacecraft on its way to moon, referring to the progress of human history particularly the spiritual growth over times.

Stanley Kubrick commented on his film "*2001: A Space Odyssey*": "*the God is at the heart of the film*". He symbolizes the presence of god by the appearance of the black monolith throughout the three parts of the film. The Monolith represented the transition in the history of

human evolution from ape man to civilized people. Somehow the Monolith related the four episodes of the movie. At each time it appeared, man had moved and known a new step of evolution. Thus the Monolith is a tool of used for the sake of civilization and advancing intelligent life. He added: "*David Bowman becomes an enhanced human being, a star child, a superhuman .....returning to earth prepared for the next leap forward of man's evolutionary destiny*". Kubrick relates religion to science and technology rather than the spirituality in his film.

"2001: A Space Odyssey" represents man's endless search for spiritual meaning and self renewal. Man seems to have come to the end of a long journey; he increased as much as possible his power over nature. He had reached its limits in the evolutionary process in a long indirect manner and has come back to his very basic conditions. Man continues to invent, create and discover, yet he is not able to fulfill and renew himself. Bowman was conscious about the danger presented by HAL, by then he challenged technology and disconnected the computer. Dave's spirituality had triumphed over materials and machines. Briefly, man is always ready for a new step in the evolutionary process to experience again new ideas and the excitement of meaningful life. This movie attempts to recreate the conditions from which human being appeared for the first time. It starts from hominids until their life attained a situation where there is no change or development i.e. a state of boredom. The evolution of tools notably the murderous supercomputer HAL9000, which recalls Homer's murderous one eyed Cyclop, represents a future stage of evolution and a betrayal to man's hopes at the same time. At the end, HAL didn't triumph he was defeated by a member of human species, Dave Bowman. The homo machine turns out to be an evolutionary wrong turn and the mistake should be corrected before the rise of the genuine man of the future just as Bowman did when he disconnected HAL from all his functions.

Far from the era of primates, the film briskly moves from the old past to the future. Life in *2001* is completely different from that of the primates. Our focus is on the last part of the film. The hero is converted first into an old man then into a new born infant. The hero is sent back to the earth in the form of a baby. The message this new born leads us to think and question about the rebirth and the coming back of the Christ Jesus. Evolution may lead to a reign of technocracy or rule by tools in a world where the spiritual dimension or religion is absent. Technology sometimes leads humanity to physical and moral corruption and they need to return to their infancy. It is clear that to be a super human, man must reject superstition and abandon the belief in God. If science and technology continue their improvement the Star Child will lose interest in God, thus God will become irrelevant. The artificial intelligence we create leads somehow to end the religion and the belief in science which may place humanity in a position subjection to artificial intelligence HAL9000. Heywood Floyd represents in the movie the lower man who is grasped by superstition and creates God in his own image, in the sense that Floyd is the one who decides and responsible for the construction of the Discovery with his super computer HAL9000. Scared by the advancement of HAL, Dave Bowman disconnected and disabled HAL from all his functions, he decided to continue his journey alone.

### **3- Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Middle East:**

#### **a- The Holy War:**

It is a conflict resulting from the differences in religions, each religion aims to dominate the other ones; the Crusades are considered one of such conflicts, the crusaders used to teach the native people of the land they invade; for instance, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century Europeans invaded the Middle East for religious expansion and domination of the holy land <sup>17</sup>. They considered the image of the Cross as a sign of obedience through physical sacrifice and faith, a mark of those who consider themselves as the warriors and knights of Christ <sup>18</sup>. This image can be

referred to the image of the monolith in the film as a sign of faith. Americans emerged as the leaders of humanity and considered themselves as the knights who were able to follow the message of Messiah.

### **b- The Crusades:**

The crusade is a military and religious expedition undertaken by the Christian forces of Europe in order to capture the Holy land from the Muslims who had occupied it in the Middle East. By the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Western Europe had emerged as a noticeable power; truly, in 1095, the Pope Urban II who was the head of the Roman Catholic Church gave rise to the Crusades by calling on the western Christians to recapture the Holy land “Jerusalem” from the Muslim soil <sup>19</sup>, and presented his ideology, leadership and power over the other religions. In fact, those Christians fought against the Muslims to protect their religion over the world. It is obvious that the Christians sought to dominate the world and aimed to impose Christianity on all humanity. In the modern times, precisely in the twentieth century, Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) is the best example of America in showing its religion as being the most dominant one on the world. Americans wanted to take the place of the crusaders; they consider themselves as the elected people to save humanity from the evil.

Tyerman Christopher highlights the history of the Crusades in “*The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction*” (2004). At the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when Jerusalem was under the Christian hands, the pilgrim trade was destroyed and the operations practiced in the holy land became part of chivalric training <sup>20</sup>. Moreover, after the failures of 1191-1192 even the attention given to Jerusalem shifted from the holy land to the business land <sup>21</sup> because no attention was given to faith. In fact, the Crusaders, the Muslims and the Jews had lost their religious goals to own Jerusalem; their only interest was mainly to occupy the land for business affairs, wealth and power but not for religious practices. Mannheim particularly emphasized this fact that “*since the problem has been torn out of its purely religious context*

*(...) even the scale of values by which we measure truth and falsity, reality and unreality have been profoundly transformed.”<sup>22</sup>*

The Ottomans are viewed as imperialists by the fact of their tyranny; this view is combined from their union with the Islamic values and customs <sup>23</sup>. Americans today are viewed as the substitutes of the Ottomans. They aim to replace the Ottoman power based on Islamic beliefs by the American one based on Christian beliefs.

Since Kubrick is an American filmmaker, he presents his film adopting American ideology. Kubrick put his thoughts into practice in his film, so these thoughts can be considered as an ideology. Therefore, he gives the superficial truth of the American character as devoted to religion in order to persuade the audience that America is a religious nation; this is what Mannheim calls “false consciousness.” According to Mannheim, *“all thought labeled as "ideology" is regarded as futile when it comes to practice, and the only reliable access to reality is to be sought in practical activity.”* <sup>24</sup> Indeed, Kubrick presents America as the dominant power in the world and space, so its religion must be powerful as well.

#### **4- The USA as the New World:**

##### **a- Religious colonization:**

America, the New World, was colonized by numerous European countries. Following Columbus’s encounter with America in 1492, many emerging European states such as Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland and England managed to spread their religion over the newly discovered area. Thus, America became the asylum for many Europeans. These Europeans came for political and religious freedom for themselves as well as for their children. They even established their own governments and churches in America in order to completely dominate the land and make it their own. They aimed also to practise their ideologies on Native Indians.

Most settlers were English Protestants. Their mission was to fulfil their religious purposes in order to spread their religion over the world. Therefore, these missions evolved into a geographical expansion to dominate the targeted parts of the world. America was one of the places the English Protestants have appointed to transform it into a protestant nation. These English colonisers settled their colonies in the northeast of America calling it New England. In fact, the settlers may have chosen the sea region in order to carry on trade and business which became a source of great wealth and power to England.

One of the most important tools the English used to spread their faith was the education of religion to children; therefore, the teaching of faith entered into colleges and schools in order to strengthen the puritan beliefs in the New England <sup>25</sup>. So the Bible became the centre of interest precisely the English version.

#### **b- America as a Promised Land:**

*“The holy land retained its primacy as a goal of holy war.”* <sup>26</sup>

The crusaders made the lands they attacked for religious aspiration sacred. Their aim to occupy the holy land was to live in the land where Christ and his saints had lived.

Moses brought the Israelites out of Egypt because of their sin. God had given them the way to the promised land “Canaan”, and Jesus Christ was sent by God to save Israel from the sin they had committed in their lives in the remaining promised land. However, many authors and historians and even filmmakers believe that America is the New Promised land. Kubrick is fascinated by this idea.

America represents the land of freedom, and Europeans were the first explorers of the land. They brought their families there for religious, economic and political liberty. America is considered as the Promised Land for these immigrants to build their worship of God and search for salvation on a fresh soil as America. They wanted to replace the old holy land during the Crusades. They thought that America is their new conquest to own a land which

had never been used by others. Accordingly, Kubrick shows America as the chosen land, so undoubtedly the Americans are the chosen people.

According to the American author Mary Antin, this New World is the new Promised Land while the old world “Russia” is Egypt from which Israel was excluded. She found those Jews who didn’t have a country as privileged citizens in America <sup>27</sup>. Kubrick may refer to space as a promised land for Americans. The latter challenged Russia to capture this outer world. Compared the conflict over Jerusalem to the conflict during the Cold War, Kubrick may refer Russia to Egypt and America to Jerusalem, in this case America is the sacred land and Egypt is the land of sin. Thus, Kubrick considers space exploration as a way to near God.

According to the ideology of the English colonizers, North America was seen as England’s Canaan, and the English people came as an instrument of Indian salvation<sup>28</sup>; indeed, they thought that God had given the English the Promised Land in the New World as a New Jerusalem.

According to the judgment of the Old Testament, the English merchant venturer Sir George Peckham compared the English prerogatives in North America to the Israelites in Canaan <sup>29</sup>. Thus, after the discovery of the New World many had believed that God had promised people of a new holy land, a virgin land, a land of freedom and liberty waiting for generations to come and occupy it. So when Europeans began to invade the continent, they started to feel themselves as if God had chosen them to spread their religion and paved their way to the New World.

In 1845, the journalist John L. O’Sullivan invented the phrase “Manifest Destiny” to put European nations on notice that the US were proud to defend the lands of the Western Hemisphere from any further colonization. O’Sullivan argued and assumed that Americans were God’s chosen people. Accordingly, the possession of the land was a right that God had given to the whites, “*God blessed them [Adam and Eve] and God said to them: Be fertile and*

*increase, fill the earth and master it; rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth.*”<sup>30</sup> In 1630, John Cotton interpreted this passage from Genesis as if Americans were the only race which could have the right to possess a land and work upon it<sup>31</sup>. Their duty was to take it from any foreign peoples. Kubrick emphasizes the same view, but this time he shows the American identity in space. Indeed, he focuses on the fact that if Americans can control the world on earth they can control Space as well, and this is shown in the scene of Floyd’s meeting with the Soviet scientists “Elena and Smislov”. From their conversation, we notice that Americans have discovered an important religious object in Space. This discovery would lead America to be the most dominant nation in the world and in Space.

### **5- American Pioneers:**

During the period of the Great Migration to America, the first settlers considered themselves as pioneers. The image they have of themselves, having the desire to own their land. The establishment of the first Jewish community on the North American continent in September 1654<sup>32</sup> was a great event in the American identity. It was a period of exploration and pioneering; thus, the Jewish people performed pioneering in the field of religion presenting the beliefs of ethical monotheism as dominant in the Western World. Mannheim in fact considered the pioneers’ points of view dominate the others in a society:

In the development of a new point of view one party plays the pioneering role, while other parties (...) must of necessity themselves make use of this point of view. This is the case with the notion of ideology.<sup>33</sup>

Kubrick in his film refers to Americans in space as pioneers. They are the first who conquered space before the other races. They seem to prepare the way for other nations to follow them. Kubrick in this way presents his thoughts according to the era of the cold war. Mannheim asserts that ideology is relative to the person or the group holding it:



The ideas expressed by the subject are thus regarded as functions of his existence. This means that opinions, statements, propositions, and systems of ideas are (...) interpreted in the light of the life-situation of the one who expresses them. It signifies further that the specific character and life-situation of the subject influence his opinions, perceptions and interpretations.<sup>34</sup>

Kubrick considers Americans as heroes and pioneers of the American civilization; their image is illustrated in the film as followers of Jesus to fulfil the messianic prophecy because America is a country where the individual exercises his religion freely.

## **6- Religion, Politics and Science:**

Speaking about religion, the first amendment to the US constitution guaranteed Americans freedom and religious choice. Americans are still religious; they believe in God, practice religion and consider it as something very important in their lives. Today the majority of these latter who profess religion consider themselves as strong adherents when religious stance shapes the political positions on matters such as abortion laws. Religion is always here to provide them with purposes. American politicians see themselves as political Messiah in the sense that the political leaders asked the citizens to pray during World War two. They always say “God bless America”.

“*2001: A Space Odyssey*” emerged in an era of experimentation, said Robert Kolker<sup>35</sup> in his New Essays. Since its emergence, Cinema helped people to transfer their opinions and tendencies. Cinema is one media where important phenomena in society come closer. Therefore they are not extraneous to either science or religion they represent and put on the screen the great ideals. But scientific and religious contents are transformed and modified by the principles of cinematographic language. In the present film “*2001: A Space Odyssey*” religious and existential themes are shown through science fictional themes. There had been many studies that focused on the relationship between science and religion. *2001* highlights some significant examples of how the screen has offered an opportunity for debating the

relationship or link between science and religion. After HAL warns Frank that he checkmated himself, Frank Poole assumes that HAL is right then he resigns, this is a symbol of human failure and abdication to machines. The movie has a spiritual and religious power; it traces the human evolution from ape to mankind. The monolith plays a significant role. It is seen as God sent to transform the primitive apes into clever beings. When the apes touched the monolith it was as God touching Adam. Kubrick made reference to this image from the biblical story of Adam eating the forbidden fruit from the Eden; in the movie it is shown through Poole eating the forbidden fruit of technology, this foreshadows technological winning over human being.



Figure 1 taken from the movie: The moment the hominids touch the black monolith

*2001* allegorizes the notion that the next step of evolution beyond the Homo sapiens will involve the symbiosis of humanity and machines. HAL is believed to offer immortality, it will defeat death but mainly will triumph over superstition, technology will win over human. The pursuit of materialist evolution may conclude through the reign of machines.

Science and religion always went hand in hand and function equally well. In his book *“Church and State in the United States”* Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes<sup>36</sup> argues that the two fundamental bulwarks of life are democracy and freedom based on the Christian tradition and hold the religious ideals of the fatherhood of God. Christ is gone to heaven temporarily but he

will come back to judge the world then establish the messianic kingdom and judge the living and the dead at the end of time.

## **7- Messianism as Ideology:**

According to Mannheim, “*All those ideas which do not fit into the current order are ‘situationally transcendent’ or unreal; ideas which correspond to the concretely existing order are designated as ‘adequate’ and situationally congruous.*”<sup>37</sup> Stanley Kubrick’s position and thoughts are reflected in his film *2001*.

“*2001: A Space Odyssey*” conveys Kubrick’s way of thinking. He characterizes the evolutionary process of human beings by the intellectual development of apes in discovering the bone as a weapon. In line with Charles Darwin’s logic about the origin of human species, Kubrick linked the sequence of throwing the bone in the air with the spaceship on its way to the moon to show that man in using his brain is not different from the hominids in the creation process. In fact, the bone is a source of power, dominance, expansion and leadership for the tribe; so does the US spaceship to conquer space as well as lead the world. The bone refers to the progress of human history particularly the spiritual growth to approach God in space.

Stanley Kubrick commented on his film “*2001: A Space Odyssey*” as if God is at the heart of the film. He symbolizes the presence of God by the appearance of the black monolith throughout the three parts of the film. “*David Bowman becomes an enhanced human being, a star child, a superhuman (...).returning to earth prepared for the next leap forward of man’s evolutionary destiny*”<sup>38</sup>, in the sense that to whatever the technology advances religion will always exist. Mannheim gives the notion of any point of view distant from religious elements can transfer the search for reality to actionable practice:

The notion of "false consciousness" already appeared in one of its most modern forms when, having given up its concern with transcendental-religious factors, it

transferred its search for the criterion of reality to the realm of practice and particularly political practice in a manner reminiscent of pragmatism.<sup>39</sup>

A space odyssey represents Man's endless search for spiritual meaning and self renewal. Man seems to come to the end of a long journey. He has increased as much as possible his power over nature. He has reached its limits in the evolutionary process in a long indirect manner and has come back to his very basic conditions. Man continues to invent, create and discover. Yet he is not able to fulfill and make himself new again. Briefly, man is always ready for a new step in the evolutionary process to experience again his new ideas and the excitement of meaningful life. This movie attempts to recreate the conditions from which human being appeared for the first time. It starts from hominids until their life attained a situation where there is no change or development. With the advancement of technology and the US values and beliefs domination, Americans are shown as the elected and chosen people to conquer space and challenge the USSR to control the world in earth as well as in space.

Far from the era of primates, the film brusquely moves from the old past to the future. Life in *2001* is completely different from that of the primates. Kubrick focuses on the last part of the film. The hero is converted first into an old man then into a new born infant. This hero is sent back to the earth as a baby in a womb. The message this new born brings us is that after the failure of machines, the star child asked for rebirth and the coming back to religion mainly Christianity. The American religious leaders, who use the Bible to convince the world that their freedom and liberty relied on Christian faith, America without Bible would not survive; they fought against communism, whose main principle is atheism, through prayer and religion for the sake of preserving Christian civilization. Americans consider that communism is related to materialism though they had known a great advancement in technology. Atheistic Communism leads to violence and oppression. Communist leaders claim to be godless and ordered the persecution of religious leader whatever their religion was, because religion was relied to America self image and representation.

Kubrick believes in the regeneration of societies after the degeneration of the old ones. When man dies, there exists another new born who may replace this dead man; thus, society changes over time. Moreover, Kubrick believes that Jesus Christ is the only man who never dies; his spirit is alive until the resurrection. He is supposed to come back in order to save humanity because he is the son of God. This is illustrated in the Gospel according to John *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.”*<sup>40</sup>

## **8- Conclusion:**

Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) deals with the evolution of humanity towards man's interaction with science as a way to achieve the technological development. He includes religion and spirituality at the heart of the film. He is one who doesn't believe in religion in its spiritual context but he accords it to science in space by using the Monolith as a scientific object which may represent God. Indeed, the film is an excellent example to show Kubrick's way of thinking about religion in general. It deals in fact with things beyond human experience and scientific concepts similar to the mystics because his presentation of astronomy in space is closer to mystical than scientific.

In the 1960's people imagined the space as a place in which everything is perfect and ideal. The USA and the USSR entered in Cold War confrontation for space race. Each of them searches for a new ideal place where individuals can be free from earthly conflicts. We can compare space in 1960's to the Garden Eden of the Primeval History. For Christians for instance, Eden was a place of ideal well being, a typical paradise, and no one dies, no enmity. At a time when Adam and Eve were closer to God until the sudden Fall into sin, so these utopian places became a dream to be achieved by humans in the future.

### Endnotes:

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## Chapter Two: Utopianism in *2001: A Space Odyssey*

### 1- Definition of Utopia:

We shall first of all define the concept of utopia according to Noah Webster's Dictionary of the English Language "*An Imaginary Island, represented by Sir Thomas More, in a work called 'Utopia', as enjoying the greatest perfection to politics, laws, and the like. Hence, a place or state of ideal perfection.*"<sup>41</sup>. From Webster's explanation of the term Utopia may represent a perfect society where everything works in order. He refers in fact to Thomas More's definition of Utopia in his work "*Utopia*" (1516) which is an imaginary place of perfect laws, government and social conditions.

According to M. H. Abrams the term Utopia:

Designates the class of fictional writings that represent an ideal but nonexistent political and social way of life. It derives from Utopia (1515-16), a book written in Latin by the Renaissance humanist Sir Thomas More which describes a perfect commonwealth; More formed his title by conflating the Greek words "eutopia" (good place) and "outopia" (no place).<sup>42</sup> .

Abrams gives his definition of Utopia in a way that it is an unreal place and people keep their thinking about its perfection only in their own imaginations.

We shall now define the concepts of Utopia and Dystopia according to Karl Mannheim (1949). He considers the two terms as *weltanschauung* (worldviews) of the different social classes, and these worldviews are used as a tool to gain control of a society. Mannheim defines the utopian term as: "*those orientations transcending reality will be referred to by us a utopian which, when they pass over into conduct, tend to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time.*"<sup>43</sup>. For him, all the utopian points of view are viewed as unrealizable, "*the contemporary connotation of the term 'utopian' is predominantly that of an idea which is in principle unrealizable.*"<sup>44</sup> What is commonly meant by the term is an imagination of an ideal society which has not yet been realized but is desirable to be realized in the future.



The utopian thoughts were a sacred and ideal earthly paradise in which people hoped to settle in, but the sin committed by Adam and Eve has destroyed people's opportunity to live in such a place. Therefore, they started to offer a vision to the future and look for other utopian societies by imagining how they should be, and thus contribute to bring reality closer to the ideal.

Although visions of utopian societies aim to achieve and realize the better world they dream of, many philosophers expect this world to become hostile due to the advancement of technology for instance. Kubrick in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) presents a fictional and perfect society in space, but this society turns to an imperfect one as Hal ceases from functioning resulting from a technological error made by man. From this scene, we realize that Kubrick highlights that a perfect society is not possible. However, in the last scene of the film, as the baby is in the fetus, Kubrick presents a utopian outlook again which is the hope for the regeneration of society after the death of the precedent one.

## **2- Ideology and Utopia:**

In the study of the selected film, we focus on the relationship between existence and ideas. We focus on Kubrick's thoughts according to the social order of the era. He is influenced by the American ideology which is in its way to lead the world during the 1960's. This view has been developed by Karl Mannheim (1949) in his book *Ideology and Utopia*. He clarifies that man's ideas are conditioned by his existence, and whenever a ruling class presents its order and ideology as the only valid one, it dominates the whole society. This class represents its worldview to control the society, and this is what Mannheim calls "utopia". For him "utopian" is all those thoughts which are able to change the social order, it tries to achieve a construction of an ideal order elsewhere or in the future<sup>45</sup>. This is the case of America as a liberal country associated with the willingness to change and reforms in its politics and society.

With the emergence of cinema in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, films became saturated with ideology and utopia because they are not only representations of images as dreams but are also social and ideological in reality. They reproduce ideologies which depend on the social situations. These films create utopias in the imaginations of the audience so they can shape their identities.

Mannheim developed the way man thinks in a given society. He sets a relationship between ideas and the historical social context in which these ideas are produced. To make reference to the film, the first scene shows how apes think and how they used the bone as a tool for self-defense. It is according to the historical and social contexts in which these apes live. Mannheim indicates that whenever an observer changes his ideas, utopia may become an ideology because history provides a criterion to make us distinguish between utopia in the past and the ideological thoughts, *“Ideas which later turned out to have been only distorted representations of a past or potential social order were ideological, while those which were adequately realized in the succeeding social order were relative utopias.”*<sup>46</sup>. It is through this claim that we realize that the difference between utopia and ideology is focused on how they set their influence on society; whether it tends to bring change or keep the existing order. Consequently, the ideological thought preserves reality as it is whereas the utopian one is interpreted as “a counter-ideology”<sup>47</sup>. It tends to transform reality. Thus the individual must bear in his mind that all other’s beliefs are either ideological in which the members of a given society share the same point of view, or utopian which aims to transform the social order.

For Mannheim, when the dominant social group succeeds to control society and impose its own interpretations of the social situations, its ideological attitude will be considered as the only acceptable social order, after the realization of the elements oriented towards a new social order, these elements become reality:

It is always the dominant group which is in full accord with the existing order that determines what is to be regarded as Utopian, while the ascendant group which is in conflict with things as they are is the one that determines what is regarded as ideological (...) The Utopias of ascendant classes are often, to a large extent, permeated with ideological elements.<sup>48</sup>

While the other class, which lost their dominant social status, begin to form their own outlooks in order to counter the existing utopia through their ideological elements.

Both Ideology and Utopia involve distortions of reality and truth. When we put out religion, laws, or other restrictions from any ideological outlook the reality transforms. When Kubrick focuses on the technology of the 1960s and how it should become in the future, he forgets about the past and puts his utopian ideas at the heart of the film. He uses Hal 9000 computer as the sixth member of the crew. Kubrick is anxious that one day man would be replaced by the machine, he envisioned the transformation of society in the future but nothing has been achieved to transform the present reality since Hal has stopped from functioning. Thus, at the end of the film, Kubrick opted to forget about the old social order and places religion, based on Christian beliefs, as the best way to construct a new ideal society through the regeneration of humanity. Therefore, the new social order brought new ideologies and new utopian thoughts and dreams.

Utopia may be necessary for the creation of a better world, so humankind is supposed to think about the future otherwise his society will come to an end. This means that the individual has the choice to either dream in order to keep his society alive or to die. Accordingly, utopian thoughts are thoughts which must be realized but have not yet been realized; even though people hope for a good life and still dream, struggle, and produce it. In relation to the film, Dave Bowman, in the last scenes, has kept hope to continue his mission without the dependence on Hal.

The mysterious universe which is Space had been achieved. Space was seen as an imagined place before the Cold War, it became realizable as the Americans challenged the

Russians to explore this part of the universe, so this comes now closer to reality. According to Mannheim “*it is possible that the utopias of to-day may become the realities of to-morrow.*”<sup>49</sup> He asserts that any idea considered as “utopian” is called so according to the historical moment. Whenever utopia encounters with reality, it turns into ideology. Moreover, the space voyages may push forward the frontiers of science and technology in order to regenerate the coming utopias. Indeed, this is the case of space exploration. As science and technology have been advancing, the idea of space as a utopian place has been transformed to an ideology based on American thoughts. Mannheim comes to a conclusion that whenever there will exist a world empty of anything new, in which everything is ended and each moment is a repetition of the existing one, thought will be completely without any ideological and utopian elements.<sup>50</sup>

### **3- Utopian Dream World:**

The fullest description of a utopian society is fundamentally found in those literary works such as *The Iliad* and *Odyssey* which aim and manifest a society of better life. In reality the utopian society does not exist, nothing is ideal. Its contrary is a dystopian society known for its wars, violence, disorder and oppression. Kubrick depicts optimistic expectations toward science and technological progress. Different societies see that the utopian visions helped them to reshape their lives. Their main focus is based on hope and happiness, for illustration we have the example of Sir Thomas More<sup>51</sup> book that speaks about the will and the ambition to resolve the social lacunas. His book derives from his own imagination, describing a world perfect society in idyllic and peaceful nature. To Andreas Voigt, “*Utopias are idealistic pictures of other worlds*”<sup>52</sup>. The most complete discussion about utopia is surely located in Mannheim’s “*Ideology and Utopia*”. According to Mannheim utopia is a prospect of an ideal future supported and controlled by groups in the same society or community who “*bent on changing and destroying existing society, saw only its negative*

*aspects and were blind to the situation as it really was*”,<sup>53</sup> said Freeden. People believe that heaven is located on earth; just they should have common projects, values, goals and visions. People should live in community with opened boundaries. Thus the utopian community supports the pursuit of knowledge, information and innovation.

Surely the example of the utopian society shown in the popular culture of today is with no doubt Stanley Kubrick’s “*2001: A Space Odyssey*”. The movie depicts the United Federation of Planets<sup>54</sup>. In this, we notice the technological advancement of society that made a harmonious society. This Federation helped to overcome poverty and helped them to achieve their personal goals. When HAL 9000 computer is sent to Jupiter, he killed all the members within the spaceship except for Dave Bowman who survived. This later discovered another monolith at Saturn, entered in and transported to elsewhere in the universe. Through this utopian dream of space travelling, Dave went alone, he rejected any governmental or technological help. This is why he became an American hero, he succeeded to the difficult conditions.

#### **4- America as Utopia:**

Utopia in America dates back to the first puritan settlements to the communities of the 1960s. The United States of America is believed to be the earthly paradise. The New World claimed the opening of frontiers and the pursuit of happiness. The following lines deal with American utopian through Stanley Kubrick’s “*2001: A Space Odyssey*”. This political piece addresses an imagined future where human being found new ways to live communally. The movie depicts an extraordinary profound reflection about society and concerns itself with the question of their way of living. All this reflect utopias as human evidences that are not always true. America is considered by Americans as a world of opportunities and absolute freedom. Mainly they are the example of perfection. For instance in the film, the hero Bowman wakes from his dream, then transformed into a fetus, as it is shown in the following page, after being

an old man resting in a death bed, he reappeared again to live in an earthly paradise this happened when he touched the monolith asking from God to renew and regenerate him once again. Technology made the human being dependant on it, this led us to question ourselves what would the future generations look like once combined with the technological innovations?. There may be the appearance of subhuman or superhuman race supposed to fulfill or accomplish the human mission.

During the 1960s utopianism and science fiction revived in the American politics said Peter Fitting<sup>55</sup>. In the sixties the utopian cinema in the USA found a better genre to express their imaginations, this genre represents their view and criticism on capitalism, US politics and their involvements in wars. Americans wished to put in everyone's mind that the USA is the only land of perfect democracy, hope, peace and tranquility. They developed a deeper sense of community, and assure that the utopian dreams inspire us with world without wars and where power does not determine the relations between communities. They are more optimistic and believe in the improvement. Utopianism of the sixties in the USA has clearly stressed on politics. It requires the governance to control the whole world. After disconnecting HAL, Dave continues his mission alone to discover the fourth monolith and gain more expansions. Americans gone beyond earth in question of leadership, now they want to conquer the outer space, open new frontiers even owe new territories as it is shown in the image bellow:



Figure2 taken from the movie: The utopian transformation of Bowman into a Star Child.

### 5- Utopianism as Ideology:

Throughout the twentieth century, the differences between the proponents and opponents of utopianism became apparent and centered the political debates said Ruth Levitas<sup>56</sup>. In his work *"Ideology and Utopia"*, Karl Mannheim attempts to help his fellowmen to avoid disaster, his political passion and positions are expressed in the present book. In addition Mannheim combined the two concepts to develop an objective sociology of knowledge. His position is important for some social groups produce thought system and the momentous sets are ideological and utopian. The ideological mentality represents the powerful social groupings that are not aware of hiding weakness of their position. While the utopian mentality represents secondary social position and get away from a mental connection of a present situation. For Mannheim, Ideology is a negative concept because it is directed to useless status quo. On the other hand, he is ambivalent about utopia, he argues that the loss of utopia would be a disaster, as he believes also that utopia plays a key role in social change for a better life. Mannheim claims that education, social change or economics could show and overwhelm ideological thoughts and take away conditions that produce utopian thinking.

Thus somehow utopia is considered as an important element for civil liberty, civilization as well as for human being. We believe that utopia serves as mirror to modern society. People are excited by a vision of an optimistic future, unity with God for themselves and the coming generations.

In contrast to utopia, dystopia is warning that utopia could lead things to a worst situation. This anti utopian position is derived from the anti communists. The twentieth century merely rejected any kind of hope, it was a failure in several spheres, there were two World Wars, Cold War, rising violence and crimes that led to despair and pessimism. Once utopias came to reality they are no more utopias they turn to an oppressive ideology that frame individuality and dominate softly our mind and way of perceiving things.

## **6- Conclusion:**

Freedom, prosperity and goodwill made America the best nation in the world, a utopian aspiration which has been realized. Stanley Kubrick examines in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) the place that Americans seek to occupy in the universe. Mannheim claims that “*The only form in which the future presents itself to us is that of possibility, while the imperative, the ‘should’, tells us which of these possibilities we should choose*”<sup>57</sup>. His assertion is well demonstrated by Kubrick. The latter shows the way humanity has evolved and suggests how the future stage of human evolution will be like.

Stanley Kubrick’s work is set during the Cold War era. It serves a crucial social and political purpose. He is under the sway of the American political ideology since he supports the American imperialism in space. Moreover, as the role of science and technology has increased, the predictions of new other utopias are in the way to be discovered.



### Endnotes:

- [41] Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (Springfield Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam, State Street, 1865), 1457.
- [42] Meyer Howard, Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Massachusetts: Heinle & Heinle, Thomson Learning, Inc, 1999) Cornell University, 327.
- [43] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 173.
- [44] Ibid., 177.
- [45] Benmechiche Hacène, “Utopia and Dystopia in Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*” (Magister Diss., Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, 2007-2008), 28.
- [46] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 184.
- [47] Benmechiche, *Utopia and Dystopia*, 30.
- [48] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 183.
- [49] Ibid., 183.
- [50] Ibid., 235.
- [51] Constance Furey, “Utopian History”, Brill, accessed July 07<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2355588>.
- [52] Sanford Kessler, “Religious Freedom in Thomas More’s *Utopia*,” Cambridge University Press for the University of Notre Dame du lac on behalf of Review of Politics, accessed Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1408764>.
- [53] Freeden, *Ideology a Very Short Introduction*, 13.
- [54] Federation of Planets
- [55] Peter Fitting, “A Short History of Utopian Studies,” SF-TH Inc, accessed July 22<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25475211>.
- [56] Ruth Levitas, “Sociology and Utopia,” Sage publications, Ltd, accessed 22<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42852063>.

[57] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 234.

## Chapter Three: Imperialism in *2001: A Space Odyssey*

### 1- Imperialism: the Concept of “Frontier”:

The concept of “Frontier” can be defined differently. According to the American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster defined the term as “1- *the part of a country which fronts or faces another country*; 2- *the marches*; 3- *the border, confine, or extreme part of a country, bordering on another country*; 4- *a fortified or guarded position*”<sup>58</sup> indeed, it can mean a boundary line which separates two geographical regions.

Frederick Jackson Turner, the famous author of the Frontier in America, presented his frontier Thesis entitled “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, in 1893. His work gave birth to the Western American History.

Turner's definition of Frontier referred to the improvement of the American society. Americanism was kept alive due to the expansion to acquire new native territories. The nation was built and the American identity was formed. Accordingly, he considered the frontier as “*the outer edge of the wave - the meeting between savagery and civilization*”<sup>59</sup>, the frontier can be considered as a kind of interaction between the white civilization and Indians in the Wilderness; this interaction has been done through imperialism in which the whites impose their civilization was imposed on the remaining Indians. Therefore, the expansion of frontier was believed to be the expansion of civilization which created movement and progress in the American society.

In addition, the evolution of American society is represented in the film as the most improved form of social cooperation in human history. Indeed, Kubrick was influenced by Charles Darwin's logic about the human evolution. The latter is linked to external conditions<sup>60</sup> such as climate, food. These conditions are considered as the cause of human

difference from other species. We can take the scene when Kubrick presents the tribe of apes that uses the bones as enlightened and dominant species in the animal world. In fact, the shift from the animal scene to spaceship proves that the apes have evolved a new step toward humanity, and Americans are the new leaders of the world, they have opened the space frontier to control the world from the furthest angle. Kubrick contracts the shift from the apes' evolution to Americans' leadership in spacecraft in order to show the rapid advancement of technology in America. Therefore, new utopias are born and the Americans have broken the existing order which controlled the American society of the time. Mannheim in turn, implies that with the development of utopia the existing order develops too, "*The existing order gives birth to utopias which in turn break the bonds of the existing order, leaving it free to develop in the direction of the next order of existence.*"<sup>61</sup>. It is rather breaking national order to establish cosmic order. Space has been viewed as a utopian place, and Americans have brought new changes to the world of technology in space.

Accordingly, there are different kinds of frontiers. Some are a physical reality others are imaginary. The imaginary ones represent the border between the old as known and the new discoveries and experiences as unknown.<sup>62</sup> When we speak about frontier we truly understand that it involves at least two groups of people, except in Space; but in the 1950s there were two powerful forces, USA and USSR, appeared to confront each other for the invasion of the newly discovered place, the Space.

According to Patricia Nelson Limerick, "*our move into space has opened the greatest frontier of all, the frontier that has no end.*"<sup>63</sup> Americans and Russians have moved from the frontier expansion on the earth to the frontier of space. They aimed to liberate themselves from the cultural domination in order to avoid confrontations with human beings; however, the two rising forces struggled for the achievement of space exploration with the help of

science and technology. Thus, they engaged themselves in the conquest and discovery of a space frontier.

Over the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hollywood makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the historic American frontier and its representations by the American filmmakers. They have employed their political ideology in their films.<sup>64</sup> They have greatly influenced the American people concerning space exploration; Stanley Kubrick is one of them who tried to make the individual involved with politics in order to influence the construction of the American identity through his film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). According to Mannheim:

The concept ‘ideology’ reflects the one discovery which emerged from political conflict, namely, that ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination.<sup>65</sup>

Mannheim tries to relate peoples’ opinions with their own interests in a given period. Indeed, Kubrick characterizes the decade of the Cold War and makes it the primary source of space frontier in American society.

## **2- US Self Construction as a World Power, a Leader of the World and Humanity:**

From the discovery of America, Indians faced dangers from numerous countries. As the frontier was advancing the conflicts were growing over the land and the Native Americans got angrier about the dispossession of their land. Consequently, after the French and Indian war in 1763<sup>66</sup>, a new nation raised to be one of the sovereign powers of the world under the bravery of the American patriotism. The American patriots of the time were eager to get rid of the British imperialism toward a final separation by organizing a revolution in 1775.

In 1776, Thomas Jefferson submitted a draft of the Declaration of Independence to the committee of Congress in order to assert “the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” and overthrow the government of King George III. This Declaration soon became a symbol of liberty in the United States<sup>67</sup>. In 1783, with the signing of the Treaty of

Paris with Britain, the United States formally became a free and independent nation. In addition to this, the American Revolution resulted in transforming all the colonies to states, each one with its own system of government united under the Articles of Confederation. Thus, George III recognized the independence of America.

When the Frontier was announced as closed in 1890 census, from this announcement Turner has developed his work. In Karl Mannheim's *"Ideology and Utopia"* (1949) Louis Wirth provides the book with a preface, he claims that it is only at the end of any action that we realize the value of its meaning and the interest it has to us. We can link Wirth's statement with what Turner suggests. It is that America at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century needed possession of new foreign territories. It continued its expansion until it gained control over numerous lands. Thus, it entered the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a new world power influencing international affairs. It broadened its expansion to space exploration in the 1960's, and this is shown in Kubrick's film.

The US may have been carrying on "Manifest Destiny" policies. It believes that it is supposed to expand its territories to improve its politics, society and economy. The policy in fact was based on the "Monroe Doctrine" established in 1823 by the fifth president of USA James Monroe <sup>68</sup>. It was to defend other nations of the Western Hemisphere from further colonization. Altogether, it aimed to stop the European colonization of the Western Hemisphere, to adopt a political system different from the one of Europe, to protect the West from any interference and to adopt isolationism to keep the existing western colonies safe. Kubrick refers to this fact in the scene when Dr. Floyd meets with the Soviets, he wants to keep the discovery of the monolith secretly because America, as the old America, adopts the isolationist policy in order to keep any other nation out from its national affairs.



Figure 3 taken from the movie: The meeting of Floyd with the soviets Elena and Smyslov.

Consequently, during the years of the First World War, the US isolated themselves from foreign politics. The US president Woodrow Wilson remained neutral but the American citizens showed their sympathies towards Great Britain and France, especially after the sinking of the British ship “Lusitania” in which 128 American passengers were killed. As a result, Wilson played an important role in American history by trying to make America the leader of the world and humanity by his address of the “peace notes” <sup>69</sup> to the European belligerents in order to end the war and declared that America has a duty to establish peace in the world. In 1917, America was forced to get involved in the war, and Wilson declared it as a war for self defense. In January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1918, he asserted his famous 14 points to the Congress,<sup>70</sup> these 14 principles have been addressed to the whole world for peace negotiations. The points may be proposed to make America occupy the leadership of the whole world and make it the most powerful nation which may govern the other countries. Thus, Wilson envisioned a global organization in order to protect states, dominate them and prevent future wars.

### **3- Introduction to Cold War:**

In the 1930s, leaders such as the German dictator Hitler were threatened. Great nations built warships, military navies and aircrafts. The American president warned his people but most Americans neglected him and thought that they should isolate themselves from international issues. The congress passed several laws called Neutrality Acts which provided that the Americans could not sell military equipments, economic aids even food to them. In

1939 war started suddenly in Europe. Hitler's army spread rapidly on Eastern Europe except Britain. Americans at last felt their dangerous position, thing that pushed the American president Roosevelt to persuade the congress to stop for a while the Neutrality Acts. Then he provided to Britain military aids and ships. American foods, weapons and aircrafts crossed the Atlantic Ocean in large quantities and played a key role in helping Britain to battle against Hitler's Germany. When Hitler attacked the Soviet Union, Roosevelt used the Lend Lease scheme to help the Russians. Japanese forces invaded the French colony of Indochina what warned the Americans about Japan. Then in 1941, the USA stopped all shipments of oil. This was disastrous for the Japanese for without this American oil its industries would be dropped.

On December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the American navy base in Hawaii. USA declared war on Japan on December, 8<sup>th</sup>, 1941. Germany then declared war on USA. In one side Japan and Germany were the Axis, in other side USA, Britain and the Soviet Union became known as the Allies. The US government made some strategies to win the war by controlling the wages, producing bombs and other war needs instead of automobiles or washing machines. By 1945, the scientists working on the Manhattan Project produced and tested the world's first atomic bomb. On April, 25<sup>th</sup>, 1945 British and American armies found growing Soviet Union troops on the German Elbe River. When Hitler committed a suicide with a bullet, his armies puts down their weapons, abandons the war and finally surrendered. On July, 16, 1945, the allied scientists working on the Manhattan Project tested the first atomic bomb. It was the most destructive weapon the world had never known before. On August 6 and 9 the Americans dropped the atomic bombs; the first one was in Hiroshima while the second was in Nagasaki, Both cities were destroyed. On August 14, Japan surrendered and world war two came to its end.



#### **4- Cold War: A Conflict of Ideologies:**

The film's release was set in a period of global conflicts. The Cold War intensified between earth's great powers the USA and the USSR. The Monolith found in space may be interpreted as a metaphor for the evolving western humanity. Some orbiting satellites may be considered as space weapons. The Monolith of the moon's mission was warning the crew about the excessive advancement of interplanetary travelling. At the outbreak of World War Two, the USA and the USSR became known as the two strongest competing nations and ideologies in the world<sup>71</sup>. They were called the superpowers. Both of them have their own political, economic and governmental system. On the one hand USSR is a communist country, the government is the only one that decides where people should live and work; Whereas, The USA is a liberal capitalist country, people are the ones who control production of good. After World War Two, Korea was divided into North and South. The North was communist while the South was capitalist. After attacking South Korea, the American President asked his soldiers to help and protect the capitalist South. China sent its troops to join and help North Korea until it ended in 1953. Korea was still separated.

In 1959, Cuba became a communist country. The USSR secretly put missiles there, Worrying that the USSR will attack the USA. The American President Kennedy sent his troops and warships to be all around Cuba. This was called the "*Cuban Missile Crisis*"<sup>72</sup>. The two nations disagreed strongly about the future of post war Europe.

The USA wanted to let Europeans choose their own leaders wishing to be allied with them. During 1946-1947, Soviet Union installed the communist government in Poland, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria<sup>73</sup>. Churchill, in his speech in Missouri on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1946 declared "*from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent*"<sup>74</sup>. This declaration made official the beginning of the cold war. Truman

had a moral duty and believed that USA should protect them from imperialistic communism in 1947. USA adopted actively a “Policy of Containment”<sup>75</sup>. To illustrate from the book itself:

Every political point of view implies at the same time more than the mere affirmation or rejection of an indisputable set of facts. It implies as well a rather comprehensive Weltanschauung. The significance that political leaders attach to the latter is shown by the efforts of all parties to mould the thinking of the masses, not only from a party standpoint, but also from the point of view of a Weltanschauung (...) Political education today signifies further a definite conception of history, a certain mode of interpreting events, and a tendency to seek a philosophical orientation in a definite manner.<sup>76</sup>

Britain informed Washington that Turkey and Greece were under the pressure from the Soviet communism. Truman asked from the Congress and declared what became the “Truman Doctrine”<sup>77</sup>. He said: *“I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures”*<sup>78</sup>.

American actions achieved success in both Turkey and Greece. The Marshall Plan<sup>79</sup> helped the USA to achieve its political objectives in Western Europe. The third Policy of Containment was the creation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization signed on April, 4, 1949<sup>80</sup>. Eisenhower was named the commander of the NATO.

Communist aggression on the capitalists and nuclear war are combined to create the Second Red Scare. It can be started from 1948 to 1957. From the annoying presidential elections to the calm that followed the reelection of Eisenhower. The majority of the country was involved in an anti communist hysteria. Senator Joseph McCarthy was a formidable political leader and the proponent of the red scare. From 1950 to 1952 McCarthy tried to win support by using arguments based on emotion rather than reason<sup>81</sup>. The Red Scare and corruption in the administration reduced Truman’s fame to the extent that he lost the competition. Republicans designated a 39 years old man Richard Nixon as vice president.

The movie *2001* portrays a voyage to space in the empirical terms and raises the conquest of outer space with emphasis on the conquest of inner space. Kubrick offers us a superficial critique of the imperial expansion and the colonial occupation of the sixties. *2001*

warns us that the apotheosis of cold war imperialism may be the nuclear annihilation of the human race.

### **5- Space Exploration:**

In the 1960s, the USSR and the USA showed coexistence between them especially concerning space achievements and exploration<sup>82</sup>. In February, 13, 1961, President Kennedy sends a telegram to Khrushchev where he expressed his congratulations to the Soviet Union about their success to explore space and Venus: *“watch its progress with interest and wish success in other chapter of man’s exploration of the universe”*<sup>83</sup>. Khrushchev responded and expressed his gratitude despite the cold war tensions. The two leaders considered the space exploration as a great human interest and the conflicts between the two were only on earth. For some historians the space exploration was an opportunity for dialogue and peace. When Yuri Gagarin became the first human to space in April 1961, Kennedy congratulated the Soviet Khrushchev stating:

The people of the United States share with the people of Soviet Union their satisfaction for the safe flight of the astronaut in man’s first venture into space ...it is my sincere desire that in the continuing quest for knowledge of outer space, our nation can work together to obtain the greatest benefit to mankind.<sup>84</sup>

In his part, Khrushchev answered by *“I express the hope that the Soviet Union and the United States may work together on the matter of mastering the universe, considering the mastering of the universe is a part of the great task of creating peace without armament and war”*<sup>85</sup>. He also congratulated Kennedy of the first manned space mission.

Both of the two superpowers succeeded to achieve new levels in science and technology for the humanity. In the movies it is depicted when Dr Floyd had spoken cordially with the soviet Elena and Dr Smyslov.

## 6- Imperialism as Ideology:

The story of the USA had always been the migration of European settlers westward. The era of US territorial expansions is also called the age of Manifest Destiny. The 1960s in the USA would be the decade of development. The decolonizing world had known a new era of partnership. The Cold War was ideological confrontation of juxtaposed East and West, between the liberal democracy and Marxism Leninism. According to Mannheim politics is a conflict, mainly the attitude of man towards each other's ideas and statements used to destroy the adversary. The political weapon is the theory of thinking. The world has shifted away from the competitive conflicts between nations and their ideologies towards a space exploration; in fact, Hollywood at that time played an important role in the progression of space travel. "2001: A Space Odyssey" is an example that Kubrick used to combine science, culture and ideology. He aimed to show the position of the western ideologies as the most effective and dominant of the world. Mannheim concept of ideology is an element that concerns the historical emergence and nature of political science. Mannheim's theory helps us to understand the American political situation. He affirms: "*Political pedagogy signifies the transmission of particular attitude towards the world which will permeate all aspects of life*"<sup>86</sup>.

The film begins with the ape sequence. Kubrick's view reflects that there is a genealogical progression of humans from the violent apes to the advancement of computers. The later may replace man as Kubrick presented the computer HAL in his movie. HAL is more human in his actions, in the sense that humans are dependent on machines and technology. This emphasized the shift from the ape's use of bone as a weapon to the space ships where the western science and human civilization were achieved. Thus we may deduce that the basic argument of the film is that mankind will survive the impending collapse of the western civilization. The image below is the computer HAL which can replace the intelligence of humans.

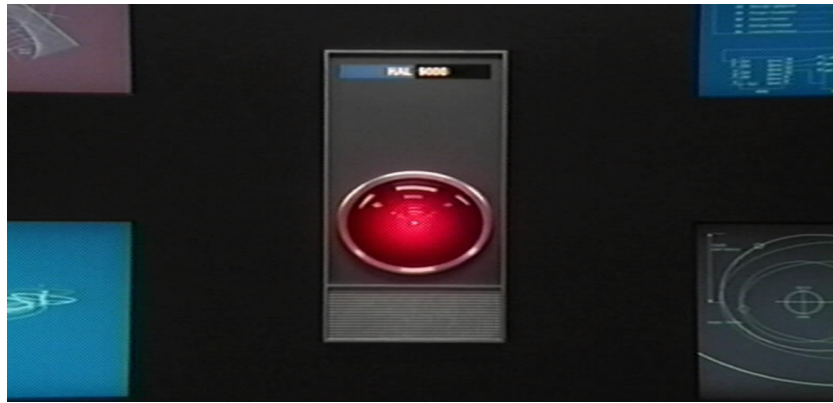


Figure 4 taken from the movie: the intelligent computer HAL 9000

## **7- Conclusion:**

The USA and the USSR leaders acted according to their self interests. For instance the policy of containment was it an attempt to balance the Soviet power and was an ideological response by the USA to counter the Soviet Union and overthrow communism. In our context ideology is a defining element of the Cold War; it helped us to understand why the two superpowers behaved differently. Kubrick mastered how to depict it through scenes just to show what it means to be human and what it means to have forces and be powerful or the leader. The ideological message of this part is that the USA imposed smoothly itself to dominate the East in particular and the whole world in general. It produced nuclear weapons and faced different struggles but always succeeded to achieve its goals. Though all the matters faced in space like the death of his mates and the betrayal of HAL, Dave survived and continued his mission and by then become the hero of the mission and was proud to belong to the USA.

## Endnotes:

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- [59] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), Chapter 1.
- [60] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection by Means of Natural Selection, or the preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859), 3.
- [61] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 179.
- [62] Matti Johansen Richoux, "Frontiers in the American Mind: How Ideas about the Past, the Present and the Future in America are Dominated by Hollywood Frontier Narratives" (Thesis., University of Oslo, 2012), 7.
- [63] Jyotirmaya Tripathy, "Frontier Legacy of America", accessed August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856401>.
- [64] Richoux, *Frontiers in the American Mind*, 15.
- [65] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 36.
- [66] Beard and Beard, *History of the United States*, 51.
- [67] Ibid., 69.
- [68] Baigell, *Territory, Race, Religion*, 7.
- [69] Beard and Beard, *History of the United States*, 324.
- [70] Ibid., 325.
- [71] Bryan O'Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the USA* (Longman, 2004), 104-105.
- [72] The Cuban Missile Crisis: is a confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States of America concerning the deployment of missiles in Cuba during the Cold War. O'Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the USA*, 123.
- [73] Thomas C. Reeves, *Twentieth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 142.
- [74] Ibid, 142.

- [75] Policy of containment: a term coined by Kennan in a historic article in the journal foreign affairs. This meant steady, firm resistance to communist expansion. Reeves, *Twentieth Century America*, 142.
- [76] Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 131.
- [77] Reeves, *Twentieth Century America*, 142.
- [78] Ibid., 142.
- [79] Ibid., 143.
- [80] NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization): is an alliance of nations who agreed to support ne another against threat from Russians and set up combined armed forces to do this. Bryan O’Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the USA*, 141.
- [81] Reeves, *Twentieth Century America*, 151.
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## V- General Conclusion

Throughout the analysis of the film, we have deduced the important role that cinema has played in America, particularly Hollywood. Throughout the study of the movie, we deduced that the primary message of the movie is that Kubrick had interest in religious concepts including the concept of God and the possibility of an afterlife. When Dave was transformed into an old man than into a fetus, it symbolizes the coming and the resurrection of Jesus. At the end of the movie Kubrick strengthened the idea that man can be reborn again as the star child who ascends into cosmos.

In the course of our dissertation, we have shown the way the USA uses cinema as a tool to manipulate the audience and represent the American society as ideal. *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) is a scientific utopian film that concerns the dreams of humankind. These dreams consist of the evolution of mankind in the universe and extraterrestrial life, even artificial intelligence will exist by mean of computers such as HAL. This utopian vision challenges us to think about the future life.

The US films created propaganda against USSR. It defended the American ideology to spread capitalism all over the world. Through his film Stanley Kubrick reflected the social, political and ideological contradictions of the 1960s. The Cold War brought the planet to the brink of nuclear doom. The American nuclear bombs destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki and offered assistance to those countries that were threatened by communist expansion mainly Turkey and Greece. The main argument of Kubrick in his film is that humanity will survive the impending collapse of Western civilization. He also believes that man separated from his primal self has become a mere mechanical force, shown through the computer HAL and the astronauts.



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