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## Kubrick in Space

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The pretentiousness of *2001: A Space Odyssey* has been a considerable obstacle to appreciating its status as masterpiece. The collaboration with Arthur C. Clarke and Kubrick's own statements about the film have obviously obscured how deeply it connects to the rest of his work. The diversion provided by the film's technologies that has led to enjoyable but incidental books like *HAL's Legacy* makes it too easily the Kubrick movie to talk about by people who don't know much about movies.<sup>1</sup> Pondering such issues as the meaning of the monolith, whether HAL is really IBM a letter-back-each, or Bowman's journey to star child has kept *2001* criticism in an interpretive dead end for a long time.

Happily, since the 1990s, we have seen great breakthroughs in Kubrick analysis, putting *2001* in its rightful place in close relation to his other films. Most particularly, the stellar work by a pair of Michels, Ciment on *2001* and *The Shining* and Chion on *2001* and *Eyes Wide Shut*, has convincingly demonstrated how valuable *2001* is as a major manifestation of Kubrick styles and obsessions.<sup>2</sup>

Continuing from their inspiration, I want to consider the idea of space in Kubrick. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, as its title indicates directly, is a journey through Space, with a capital S, but like all Kubrick films, it explores space

in other significant ways. I recognize that this is but one way to consider the film, but I'm very much of the Chion point of view that "a book of a thousand pages could not begin to do justice to all the dimensions of *2001*."<sup>3</sup> So this is no more than an attempt to do partial justice to a great film and to an important aspect of Kubrick's artistry.

## Looking at Space

Some aspects of Kubrick's space seem almost obvious, and it may appear that we are moving into generally observed aspects of his work by foregrounding this concern, particularly such matters as decor and traveling shots, which have generated much discussion. But around such subjects, an awareness that larger questions of space were lurking has been suggested by others, even if they haven't followed through on the implications. Alexander Walker, for instance, echoing E. M. Forster on *War and Peace*, says, "Space is also the lord of Kubrick's film."<sup>4</sup> Walker and his collaborators are very good on issues of space, especially about confinement and tracking shots, and a statement like this is fair justification for considering the subject further. When Ciment considers "the confined space which Kubrick's camera endeavors to pulverize," he's also working along the same lines, as he does when referring to a reverse tracking shot in a narrow corridor as "both mastering the space and conveying a sense of confinement within it."<sup>5</sup> Chion aptly sums up Kubrick's work as "an art of space," and it is these aspects of space that I will be attempting to clarify and expand upon.<sup>6</sup>

As space itself overlaps, so shall my areas of exploration—categories with fluid boundaries but useful as ways to start thinking about Kubrickian space. These forms are

1. institutional-official space
2. ritual-game-war space
3. parody space
4. dream space
5. alien space
6. geometrical space
7. ubiquitous space

### *Institutional-Official Space*

In *2001*, institutional-official space is best represented by all things manmade. The space station waiting rooms, the meeting rooms of Dr. Floyd and his colleagues, the working areas of the *Discovery*—all reflect a manufactured, sanctioned, government-like space (figure 10). Even the Louis XVI-style bed-

room in which Bowman lives and ages before his transformation into the “star child” has been recognized as possibly either a constructed-by-aliens observation zoo-like room, a space of confinement, or as a dreamlike vision of a regal deathbed. All suggest familiar Kubrick concerns: banality, repressed violence, a stark contrast between the natural and the manmade, and too much regularity and bureaucratic sensibility to reflect well upon those who constructed these spaces.

This might seem like an extremely unlikely comparison, but the nonfiction films of Frederick Wiseman, many filmed in public institutions, share roughly analogous spatial characteristics (and other qualities as well) with Kubrick’s films. The famous impersonality of the *Discovery* crew (one of whom, HAL, is often identified as the most human figure in the film) is partly a function of their being subordinated to their institutional space. Beyond actors dominated by decor and costume, they are integrated into the space which surrounds them to the point of being stripped of most individual identity. Like their hibernating colleagues, Poole and Bowman are contained by their functions, in spaces designed for them to perform as required. We shouldn’t ignore that many Kubrick characters are government employees—soldiers, scientists, social workers, politicians, astronauts—and one could say of Kubrick as well as of Frederick Wiseman that both regularly present quasi-scientific, military, and technological environments in which individuals function in their institutional roles. Wiseman’s *Primate* (1974) and *Missile* (1987), particularly, are probably most analogous to *2001*, but there are also Wiseman’s military films (*Basic Training I* [1971], *Maneuver* [1979], *Sinai Field Mission* [1978]) which match up nicely to *Paths of Glory* (1957) and *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). And *High School*, released the same year as *2001*, shows students engaging in a mock shuttle mission, visible at first only inside their helmeted spacesuits; in both films, they are “bodies doing a job” (figure 11).

One aspect of institutional space is the office, and Kubrick always excelled at presenting the work space in all of its ironic, oppressive ordinariness. Ullman’s office in *The Shining* (1980), site of Jack’s interview, with its tiny ax clearly visible in his pencil holder, has to be close to the top of this list, but nearly all Kubrick films have some form of getting down to work in spaces which define the enterprise more than the individuals, who are often left to perform repetitive, mechanical activities. General Mireau, in *Paths of Glory*, trudging through the trenches like it’s another day at the office; Kong in the cockpit of his military B-52; Ripper’s office at the air base, its bank of computers just outside the front door (*Dr. Strangelove* [1964] is entirely made up of institutional spaces); Lady Lyndon, in *Barry Lyndon* (1975), signing check after check like an automaton; all work and no play making Jack a dull boy—all of these instances point us back to the *Discovery* crew, mixing work and play in the same spaces. Chess playing with HAL is first a recreational game and then a deadly one, played out in the same space (figure 24). Kubrick presents the spaceship as work space, making it more ordinary and more fantastic at the same time.

The attention to work decor and office embellishment becomes a sign of underlying human traits that are subordinated to (or repressed by) the space which envelops them. People will be dominated, controlled, made to look small by the strongly prevailing institutional environments. The house, the room, the office will win.

### *Ritual-Game-War Space*

The role of the game, especially chess, has been widely recognized, but perhaps the construction of the game space hasn't. We can find ample evidence that Kubrick's films construct this space and that not only is there a game space, there are games of space.

Consider the game aspect to camera movement. The justly famous circular tracking shots when we first see the interior of the *Discovery* are game-like on so many levels—they seem a magic trick and an example of the pleasure of technical prowess that recalls Orson Welles's comment that a film studio was "the biggest electric train set a boy ever had." This is clearly not accomplished by digital effects or compositing. Because we go full circle without a cut, we can't help but wonder how it's done, and the general elaborateness to Kubrick's tracking shots induce this wonder of how has he pulled it off?—as do so many other camera movements throughout his films (recall the opening credit sequence of *The Shining* when the camera continues into space when we thought we were earthbound). The first level of game space is the game of movement—rigid yet free, constricted yet brilliantly daring.

Camera movements representing game moves, chesslike and authorial, are a component of Kubrick game space too. The game is in the calculation, the awareness that the movement is planned, though the characters being filmed don't know it. "Caught in a maze" is a spatial condition and an oft-used description of the plight of Kubrick's characters, for whom, of course, wrong moves abound.

Game space is repeatable: we can return and play again, perhaps with new contestants or the same ones again. *The Shining* is the ultimate repeatable game space, but the narrative repetition, the circularity, of Kubrick films has always emphasized the sense that playing games, repeating duels, fighting battles, is all that people do. The returns of the monolith or the cut from bone to space station are not just narrative repetitions—they signal that the game is about to start over, just as General Turgidson, in *Dr. Strangelove*, is planning how to start over as soon as survivors can leave the mine shafts after impending nuclear annihilation.

Chion in his book about *Eyes Wide Shut* introduces another inviting element to the tracking-shot space, which he says "often seems to mean: there is no living space for two men. I appropriate the space I cross: I clear the space before me."<sup>7</sup> A characteristic Kubrick tracking shot is of a character appearing to play in a violent way or practicing for a bout—the shadowboxing of Poole

in the first interior tracking shots on the *Discovery*, for example—and these shots are repeated in some form across most Kubrick films. Shadowboxing can be taken almost literally—mock punching inner demons, past and future selves, and attempting to escape the captivity of the shot by rebelling against it. From Kubrick's first films about boxing (the early short film *Day of the Fight* [1951] and his second feature, *Killer's Kiss* [1955]), this punching has been a sign of imprisonment (figure 18).

Traveling through space in this manner ritualizes it and creates repetitive cycles—the characters have been there before, or they are replacing those who did the same, or they are giving way to future versions of themselves. (One witty and easily overlooked version of this is our first tracking-shot view of Poole, already horizontal and shown with his three hibernating colleagues. All four will, of course, soon be dead.) Soldiers in sing-song chants in *Full Metal Jacket*, gangsters heading to place bets in *The Killing*, Jack pondering his “all work and no play” novel in *The Shining*—all move forward through tracking-shot space, making these time-traveling movements equivalent to moving through life and into death itself.

Games, of course, turn violent and deadly, but so does game space. Ping-Pong in *Lolita* (1962) turns to gun play, the Korova Milkbar in *A Clockwork Orange* is both preparation for violence and later a site of violence itself, as are numerous other resplendent recreational spaces. The bar/ballroom of *The Shining*, the orgy house of *Eyes Wide Shut*, the casino/game room/castle spaces of *Barry Lyndon* are gloriously beautiful and terrifyingly base, tipping from fun to horror at any moment. From recreation to being trapped or engaged in struggle is a small trip, and let's not forget the War Room in *Strangelove* (“you can't fight in here, this is the War Room”), which, together with 2001's *Discovery*, wins the prize for the most elaborately beautiful space in which to die, with perhaps an escapee or two to survive and replay the scene.

### Parody Space

Elements of parody figure largely in Kubrick's work, and that space would be treated in this manner makes sense. Starting with decor again, there is a too-muchness, an obsessiveness, that makes spaces seem extreme, not just beautiful and repellent (though certainly those), but also ironic, comic, and exaggerations of more ordinary spaces.<sup>8</sup> For all of the praise of its realism which 2001 has received over the years, we should recognize its spatial construction goes well beyond anything we might call cinematic “realism.” Some characteristic ways this is expressed are in the overly symmetrical compositions, the somewhat too-smooth camera movements, the overcleanliness of spaces, and one wants to add overspatiality itself, in the sense that awareness of space is hyped up by the sense of there being so much of it, so very visible. We can see space—not just outer space, but the space of a room, the space the camera moves through, the space of space, as it were. In 2001, it is the largeness of

the universe, the size and emptiness of space, which presents the paradox of parody space—there's more and less of it at the same time. As Ciment says, despite "a desire to open up his sets as far as possible . . . they nevertheless remain prisons."<sup>9</sup>

There are many scenes in Kubrick's films played out in bathrooms (*Full Metal Jacket* and *The Shining* are among the major examples), and *2001* provides written instructions for how one uses a toilet in space (figures 26–30). Here the reference to the toilet plays against the sanitized, antiseptic, white spaces that make up the decor of much of the film. Being too clean as a way to hide the dirty business really going on is a parodic use of space, the contradiction of clean and dirty one of the structured paradoxes (Susan White expands on this in her chapter in this collection). Clean and dirty, bright and dark, the edginess of Poole's death in the silence of space and HAL's silent killing of the hibernating astronauts are parts of the same contradiction. Here, what should be loud is quiet, and Kubrick pushes the opposites of sound and space to a parodic extreme. In a similar vein is the exaggerated use of signs, evident in *Dr. Strangelove* and most obvious in the "Life Functions Terminated" graph, when HAL kills the astronauts, and the "Explosive Bolts" sign, which points to Bowman's salvation in allowing him to return to the ship to destroy HAL (figure 12). Again these act as extreme, almost parodic images that in fact point to serious, even deadly events.

In Tuan's *Space and Place*, he says, "Freedom implies space," and it is this implication which suggests how parody space is constructed in Kubrick—but *implies* doesn't mean *creates*, so the distance between the two becomes an element of parody.<sup>10</sup> The implication of freedom not allowed leaves a comic tension. Those who express power by constructing or inhabiting large, ornate, beautiful spaces don't operate freely within them: they are constrained by everything, including the baseness of their own impulses, the camera movements which entrap them, and technology beyond their control. This is both horrible and funny.

The humor of *2001*, often lost sight of, is many times a humor of parody space. A circular interior spaceship path that can be traversed in a single shot, space that can be turned upside down, the hugeness and strangeness of the monolith appearances and the portentous manner in which they're photographed—the bizarre nature of these spaces is a quality of their parodic nature. Even the bone that becomes a space station in the film's (and cinema's) most famous edit, is as humorous as it is portentous (figures 3 and 4).

Kubrick's self-references to *2001* in subsequent films are self-parody of a subtle sort. The appearance of the *2001* album cover in *A Clockwork Orange* is parody enough, but it comes at the conclusion of an elaborate tracking shot of Alex's entrance to the music store, which has the humorous trademark quality which harks back, fanfare music included, to the movie it is referencing. And the monolith speakers rolled in at the end of the same film, symmetrically placed, are a spatial visual joke and a parodic self-reference.

As Tuan says, “The world feels spacious and friendly when it accommodates our desires, and cramped when it frustrates them.”<sup>11</sup> Kubrick stretches this notion further by frustrating desires in open spaces and accommodating them in cramped spaces—variations on our earlier take on dirty and clean. Maybe the parody versions of the *Discovery* spaceship in films like *Alien* and *Dark Star* were made possible because *2001* leaves itself, in its parodic extreme, so ripe for further development, the qualities of being excessive, imitative, and slightly in bad taste ready to be taken a few steps further along.

### *Dream Space*

*2001* is literally unworldly and, especially by the time of the “Stargate” sequence, can leave a viewer to wonder how much of the film represents itself as if in a dream. Whether dream or nightmare, the sense of a shift into subjectivity characterizes a construction of space. It is not so important from a narrative sense, I would say, whether certain sequences may be read as dreamlike, as it is significant that a dream space, unlike a “real” or “physical” space, characterizes the Kubrick world. It is also possible to see these as hypothetical or proposed spaces, or spaces as seen by disembodied narrative positions.

My favorite argument that alludes to this is by Chion, who presents a compelling case that *Eyes Wide Shut* is an “imaginary sequel to *2001*” and that the film is a vision of another star child, “the child about to be born at the conclusion of the film.”<sup>12</sup> *The Shining*, from its opening fly-over credits, also presents this kind of somebody’s-point-of-view-but-whose quality. While we might want to read these weird spatial manipulations as authorial (or third person), they may also be as subjective as Kubrick ever gets. Kubrick is not a director who uses conventional point-of-view shots, therefore, the suggestion of point of view through other means, other eyes, gives the impression of a dream. We see as if we’re participating in some sort of hallucination. Bowman’s return through the airlock is not simply nightmarish as an event—the silence and then the breathing, coupled with just enough visual subjectivity, makes the scene primal, birthlike, and hallucinatory, as of course is the “Stargate” sequence. No more hallucinatory and dreamlike a segment has ever appeared in a mainstream film. *2001*’s early reputation as a “trip” movie was not entirely undeserved.

Dream space in Kubrick also extends to the too-slow sense of movement, the disembodied quality of frequent stillness. The hibernating astronauts, whom HAL will kill, expressionless and never moving, are akin to the frozen death moments of Jack Torrance and Private Pyle—dead but somehow still haunting those living. Jack alive before and dead before, Pyle but one of the earliest dead, will come back again, as a presence in the second half of *Full Metal Jacket*, like the ghosts of the Overlook Hotel in *The Shining*. Rebirth and return imply a never-ending frozen dream state—ambiguous time return-

ing as dream. Alex imagining himself a Roman soldier flogging Christ in *A Clockwork Orange* is analogous to the link between the apes and astronauts in *2001*. Chion argues that Bill Harford (Tom Cruise) in *Eyes Wide Shut* is being pushed out by the spirit of his yet unborn son (whom Chion suggests will be conceived just after the movie ends). There is even a suggestion in *The Shining*—at least in a scene cut from the film that shows Danny, after Jack's death, throwing a ball against a wall just as Jack did—that his son will continue in his path.

Substitution and replacement in Kubrick leave a trail of multiple personalities or repeated cycles—the same character reliving experiences or old spirits returning. Bowman seeing himself in the bedroom at the end of *2001* can be read literally, or as a dream, or as another kind of perception. Peter Sellers in *Lolita*, his multiple manifestations, perhaps all versions of Quilty or all visions of Humbert's, suggest what Chion calls in *2001* “replacements in space.”<sup>13</sup> Replacements look like dreams, spirits, hallucinations, and although seemingly a realistic filmmaker (especially in the war and period films, as well as *2001*), Kubrick is far more a filmmaker of dream states—paranoia, fear, violent nightmares, and horror. The room of mannequins in *Killer's Kiss* is among his first dream spaces (figure 36). And the dream of movement through the streets, photographed in negative in that film, has also been noted as foreshadowing the “Stargate” sequence in *2001*—a confusion of the human and the hallucinatory mechanical which extends all the way to the costumed, masked orgy participants in his last film. Identities shift, characters merge, we're not sure when we're awake or sleeping, alive or dead. Dark empty space will lead to death and/or rebirth.

### *Alien Space*

Otherworldliness may appear dreamlike, but it can also be taken literally. Kubrick can make the earth alien or the edges of space routinely banal and earthly. It is particularly the alien landscape, or the earth as planet-like-many-others which he has expressed many times.

Gliding rapidly over barren ground suggests primordial Earth, or Earth without humans, a planet like any other. Flying closely over Colorado at the start of *The Shining* or closely over Russia at the end of *Strangelove*, the landscapes are devoid of people, as it was before we were here, or as it might look when we're done destroying each other. And Randy Rasmussen has suggested that the “reworked terrestrial sequences” of the “Stargate” sequence “convey an alien planet.”<sup>14</sup>

The magical alignment which begins *2001* treats the Earth as a planet, as one place among many, no more or less. The beautiful opening vistas of “The Dawn of Man” subordinate the appearance of near-humans to the almost Mars-like (or at least non-Earth-like) terror of hostile environments,



of isolated water pools and still-prehistoric predators. As triumphant as the moment of bone-tool wielding is, marking the significant early moment of the Kubrick chronicles of violence, it also signals the moment that we leave Earth. Certainly, in relation to humans, Earth is the dominant location. But often the connection of Kubrick's characters is with the solidity of being bound to Earth, whether it's Jack Torrance in his VW heading for the otherworldly Overlook Hotel, or Kong's lone plane moving over the Earth for a brief last time before it is destroyed. When we're told in *Barry Lyndon* that the battle we're witnessing was never recorded, the many soldiers about to die do so in a kind of historical silence akin to Poole's death in space—worlds go on as if they never existed.

In the war films (and, in a sense, most Kubrick films are war films), alien landscapes abound. Looking up the periscope in *Paths of Glory*, a hostile and empty terrain could as well be any time and most any planet. When snow engulfs the space around the Overlook and Jack freezes (again), it seems as though the world returns to the way it was before humans attempted a foothold; and the mushroom cloud coda to *Strangelove*, however ironic the song over it may be in suggesting cyclical repetition, also signals the return to an uninhabited planet, back to something like where it started. The star child is no less otherworldly and alien. It's not an Earth child, is it? And it has the promise of rebirth, not the actualization, as does Alice Harford's final pronouncement at the end of *Eyes Wide Shut*, suggesting that they engage in the activity that will lead to birth. Babies hold promise, but when babies grow up, they become Alex, Johnny Clay, General Ripper, Jack Torrance, etc., etc.—all temporary inhabitants of worlds which will be there when they're not, worlds populated by their perpetual replacements.

### *Geometrical Space*

The geometry of Kubrick is generally straight lines and right angles—the geometry of the hotel corridor and the labyrinth. Visual symmetry marks off a walled, enclosed space, confined and made even more geometrical by the limits of the frame. Chion correctly labels space in Kubrick as *centripetal*, “attracting attention to what is at its center,” rather than *centrifugal* as in the work of directors like Alfred Hitchcock and Robert Bresson, who direct interest beyond the frame.<sup>15</sup> This force to the center also serves to create geometrical space—space which is laid out in an orderly, arranged fashion. While the occasional hand-held shots, generally during violence (e.g., the Cat Lady scene in *A Clockwork Orange*), can introduce a bit of nongeometric chaos, these are very much the exceptions. Instead, the perfect straight-line movement out from Alex's face at the start of *Clockwork* is itself as regular as clockwork, as geometrical in laying out the space of the Korova Milkbar, the movement and the room matching each other for symmetry. The Torrance family's

incredible straight-line walk through the lobby of the Overlook is first of all geometrical in its precise straight movement, and it is reinforced by the geometry of the Indian-influenced patterns as they march past.

A labyrinth is as geometrical as a space can be. It exaggerates and complicates the line. Many have suggested that all of Kubrick's films are labyrinthine in structure, and, in *The Shining*, he uses a literal labyrinth, exaggerating it further, emphasizing its organization, first by showing us an impossible shot of the Overlook's labyrinth from Jack's point of view, and then by trapping Jack himself in its impossible lines.

In *2001*, Kubrick makes the circle a straight line through the magic of weightlessness, a circular walk laid out linearly without interruption. Geometrical space is everywhere, to the depths of HAL's memory core. Kubrick's beautiful space vehicles are impositions of geometry in space, just as the alignments of stars, planets, and moons suggest geometry on as grand a scale as there is, a cosmic spatial organization.

There is a geometry as well to Kubrick's regular structure of replacement, perhaps a narrative and temporal geometry (like his inclination toward three-part narrative structures) that has a spatial dimension as well as superimposition. Chion points out that Bowman and HAL are superimposed several times, either by reflecting Bowman's first appearance in what we come to learn is HAL's eye, or cutting from one to the other before their big battle (figures 13 and 14).<sup>16</sup> In battles of winners and losers, the equality Kubrick offers is regularly spatial. The amazing epilogue to *Barry Lyndon*, "they are all equal now," has visual expression in Kubrick: all are equal in their equivalent visual treatment, photographed the same way, so that one replaces or appears superimposed upon the other.

The symmetrical tracking shot is Kubrick at his (and cinema's) most geometrical, and the straight line of many of his tracking shots is unique to his spatial vision. Few directors, except perhaps Alain Resnais in *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) or Tom Tykwer in *Run Lola Run* (1998), filmmakers who share Kubrick's serious penchant for movements and geometries of the straight line, can equal this geometric perfection. Kubrick can take tracking literally: movements seem anchored in a direct line, as if there were really a metal track on the floor. Maybe we'll turn a corner or change direction but, like Major Kong's plane switching targets in *Dr. Strangelove*, that will mean we are now only on another straight line. The trench and the hallway mark a movement that is inexorably straight. Unlike Max Ophuls (one of Kubrick's favorite directors), whose tracking shots are choreographed to look free and unpredictable—though they took great planning—Kubrick determinedly marches toward a likely destination, turning corners at right angles if necessary, and leading you just where you know you will go. The geometry is so stringent because the movement is almost always following a single character, who occupies a constant space in the arrangement of the frame. Danny on his tricycle, soldiers on the march, Johnny Clay at the racetrack, Kong in flight—all have their paths inscribed, the distances they must travel are determined.

The labyrinth is the model most often applied to Kubrick's camera and narrative movements, and anywhere his camera moves is turned into patterned, geometric spatial configurations.

### *Ubiquitous Space*

There is geometrical space, a disembodied space, in Kubrick. When Chion describes HAL as "panoptic and invisible"—all seeing and barely seen—he links this to the multiple parts played by Peter Sellers in *Lolita* and *Strange-love*.<sup>17</sup> Calculation and arrangement (and therefore geometry) are behind ubiquity, and seeing the laying out of ubiquitous space as having strong connections to the daring behind multiple roles is an important insight. Multiple roles have long been viewed as a gimmick or parodic element, but Chion provides the key for seeing their function as so much larger and more significant. The multiple roles become another form of rebirth: replacement and linkage. More than just the reappearance of the actor, a "character" returns transformed and occupying usually a seemingly impossible space for the character to occupy. The reappearance needs explanation, and one such explanation is that the spaces of reappearance are part of the same space: ubiquitous space.

We can use time travel in *2001* as an entry point into the idea of ubiquitous space, especially in the penultimate sequence, in which Bowman sees himself in the bedroom. The actor Keir Dullea here plays multiple roles, his self aging before his eyes, multiplied again as he is mutated into the star child, another version, through rebirth, of the same character. (Bowman views himself from nearly his first appearance, so his multiple versions are at least as prevalent in the film as the superimpositions of Bowman and HAL, mentioned earlier.) This is not just Bowman everywhere at the same time; he is occupying positions impossibly simultaneous; ubiquity is no more conventionally physically possible than to "really" occupy dream space. Ubiquity and dreams collide, just as Kubrick's multiple uses of spaces can't be simply sorted out. Bowman looking at himself, transforming into his future self, the multiple spaces he occupies break down the limits of conventional space. This is its own kind of "shining": being able to reappear in different forms in different places, or simultaneously across time. Does Bowman see his older self (figure 15)? When Jack walks into the ballroom in *The Shining*, full of a ghostly party or laden with the bones of dead guests, it can be read as time travel, or alternatively it can be seen as a ubiquity of space, not just everywhere at the same time, but each place containing all of its own times within it.

We can also see ubiquitous space as reminders of other spaces, either the space we are currently occupying as it was or will be at another time (past or future), or the overlapping of this space with others. The jigsaw puzzle of *The Killing*, for example, would seem to suggest fragmented space; instead, it is very much ubiquitous space. We understand the space of the racetrack as no

conventional rendering ever could allow us. Through his own kind of time travel, Kubrick's overlaps and repetitions perform a dense unpacking of space. The many things we see repeatedly (the start of the seventh race, money being thrown out a window, etc.) become extensions of conventional space. Going back isn't just (or quite) going backward in time. The direction of time is less important than the reconstituting of space. The returns signal a kind of go-anywhere, see-everything or, might we say, panoptic vision. A repeated event invokes an extension of space.

One form of bold space in *2001* is a consequence of its three-part structure and the repeated appearances of the monolith, which become a version of the repeated appearances of characters in different stages of their lives and afterlives. Is it the same thing back again, or another version "reborn" of the first? This is the same question we ask of Jack Torrance when we learn of Delbert Grady, and see him reappear in a time when he shouldn't belong. Jack, of course, *is* Delbert Grady, or Grady is Jack, and when we see Jack in the final photograph on the wall back in Grady's time, it is like a monolith's reappearance or another reincarnation of the same character. Kubrick's visual and narrative daring invites us to see these multiple appearances as a ubiquity of space. Returns of the same character or object break us out of conventional spatial perceptions.

The two films with Peter Sellers—*Dr. Strangelove* and *Lolita*—are versions of this same spatial daring. Especially amusing, I would say, are the near-quiet over-the-shoulder shots where a stand-in was used to allow multiple Sellers characters to appear in the same shot. Admirably and boldly, Kubrick doesn't resort to split-screen pastings together, as other multiple-role films do (even other Sellers films, like *The Mouse That Roared* [1959], go this route). In *Strangelove*, Sellers was to have played Major Kong too, so that he would have been in every narrative space, and one can imagine him not just playing three roles, but many more. Would we say Sellers is "reborn" in these other roles? We could as well say what we know, that it is the same person transformed and constructed into an "impossible" space where he can see himself.

In *Lolita*, Sellers's impersonations are initially read as disguised versions of his first character, Claire Quilty, who is killed through the painting in the opening scene and so is "reborn" in flashback in a series of alternate roles. Even the dapper Quilty at the school dance looks a different character than the toga-wearing, burned-out Quilty at the start. Characters in Kubrick films rarely change much over the course of a film. When they do, they do not so much change as transform, don a new guise (as happens regularly, say, in *Barry Lyndon*). So we may wonder, which is the "real" character? Lolita's last appearance as Mrs. Richard Haze is like a jump into a new time frame, and we can never be sure how much of the character Lolita we see throughout the film, like all of Quilty's roles, are imaginings or dreams of Humbert's. Humbert, Bowman, Jack, even Bill Harford in *Eyes Wide Shut* are all subject to these time-traveling, space-shifting, dream-affected reappearances of multiple selves.

Narrative gaps in Kubrick can also be seen as an overlaying of space—spaces made extensions of each other through an otherwise drastic break of time. Clearly, the “Dawn of Man” bone-to-spaceship does this—linking pre-historic Earth to future space travel. Another bold cut in a Kubrick film is the break between the two parts of *Full Metal Jacket*, from death at the training camp to Vietnam. The cut performs a similar function as in *2001*: it ties the spaces together and essentially makes them one space; the raw recruits are also reborn as soldiers. In *Strangelove*, too, we might start by thinking that the three locations—the war room, B-52 bomber, and Burpelson Air Force Base (and the characters contained in each)—are very different, and surely by the end, despite many elliptical cuts between narratives, the equivalencies among the three spaces are far more significant than their differences. We might say as well that in *Eyes Wide Shut* the fantasy/dream space and “real” space by the end of the film are no longer sharply divided.

It is ubiquitous space in *2001* that takes us ever farther from Earth, but, like a Möbius strip, it seems to turn back on itself and return us to where we began. Like HAL recapitulating his beginnings at the moment of his demise, death and rebirth are contained in each other, just as are spaces and characters. So whether the dead seem to live on, or the living make way for their replacements (as in *2001* and, as Chion suggests, in *Eyes Wide Shut*), for Kubrick it is the spaces (and Space) that will always be there, asserting their presence as a powerful force unto themselves.

## Concluding Space

Kubrick’s conception of space is complex and distinctive. We might start to understand his films by noticing visual characteristics, such as tracking shots and symmetries, but the visual style is only a first indication that deeper ideas are at work. Equivalencies and reappearances of characters, patterns of rebirth, parodies of conventional movie genres, and other by-now familiar Kubrick characteristics also have significant spatial consequences. Michel Ciment, talking about tracking shots, for example, argues that their use “adds further to the sense of implacable logic and an almost mathematical progression, and hopefully we have seen this to be the case.”<sup>18</sup> The most distinctive Kubrick devices share this trait, for behind them is the force of an implacable logic, with larger consequences than the devices themselves.

One of the great pleasures of *2001* is the inevitability of the struggle between HAL and Bowman, with the very future of humanity seeming to be at stake. Bowman’s determination to wrest power back from HAL is a kind of “tunnel vision” that seems at odds with HAL’s ability to see and understand everything. But the conflicting visions collapse upon themselves: HAL wasn’t so smart after all, and Bowman’s determination to destroy HAL leads to the Infinite and to rebirth. Even though we love this struggle, its grand designs are

so beyond a simple winning or losing as to make individual outcomes largely beside the point. Like Dax at the end of *Paths of Glory*, or virtually the end of any Kubrick film, there is the pattern repeating, the returning to battle, the ending that is the starting over.

Space, in this sense, is also a great reward that one can take from Kubrick. The spaces he created are stylized, otherworldly, strange, ironic, and often terrifying—not just in terms of visual design, but for the ability they have to convey larger feelings and ideas. He created spaces that contain time and its repetitions and that express grand visions of humanity and its movement through that time. Maybe the pretentiousness of *2001: A Space Odyssey* isn't such a bad thing after all.

### Notes

1. David G. Stork, ed., *HAL's Legacy: 2001's Computer as Dream and Reality* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997).
2. Michel Ciment, *Kubrick: The Definitive Edition*, trans. Gilbert Adair (New York: Faber and Faber, 1999); Michel Chion, *Kubrick's Cinema Odyssey*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (London: BFI, 2001).
3. Chion, *Kubrick's Cinema Odyssey*, vi.
4. Alexander Walker, *Stanley Kubrick, Director* (New York: Norton, 1999), 172.
5. Ciment, *Kubrick*, 75, 114.
6. Chion, *Kubrick's Cinema Odyssey*, 130.
7. Michel Chion, *Eyes Wide Shut*, trans. Trista Selous (London: BFI, 2002), 66.
8. For more on parody in Kubrick, see Stephen Mamber, "In Search of Radical Metacinema," in *Cinema/Comedy/Theory*, ed. Andrew Horton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 79–90.
9. Ciment, *Kubrick*, 75.
10. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 52.
11. *Ibid.*, 65.
12. Chion, *Eyes Wide Shut*, 167.
13. Chion, *Kubrick's Cinema Odyssey*, 171.
14. Randy Rasmussen, *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analyzed* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2001), 104.
15. Chion, 78.
16. *Ibid.*, 86.
17. *Ibid.*, 83.
18. Ciment, *Kubrick*, 136.