

# Waiting for a miracle: a survey of Stanley Kubrick's unrealized projects

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## Abstract

A survey of Stanley Kubrick's unfinished films generally includes *Napoleon*, *Aryan Papers* and *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*. A few extra projects are commonly included as well: *One-Eyed Jacks*, *The German Lieutenant* and *The Burning Secret*. Three more scripts have enjoyed media recognition recently, after the announcement of their tentative production: *Lunatic at Large*, *The Down Slope* and *God Fearing Man*. But this only scratches the surface of the extensive range of cinematic interests that Kubrick manifested. The following article lists all the projects the director considered, developed and abandoned in his career. A study of Kubrick's work that encompasses his unsuccessful endeavors could help us better understand his tastes, methodology and the necessary ingredients that would make a good film according to Stanley Kubrick.

**Keywords:** Kubrick; unfinished films; unrealized projects

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Filippo Ulivieri is an independent scholar and author. He has extensively researched the life and works of Stanley Kubrick: his features on the director's career have appeared in several international newspapers and magazines. He is the author of *Stanley Kubrick and Me: Thirty Years at His Side*, the biography of Kubrick's personal assistant Emilio D'Alessandro (Il Saggiatore, 2012; Arcade Publishing, 2016), and co-scenarist of Alex Infascelli's documentary *S is for Stanley* (2015).

Stanley Kubrick made only thirteen films in fifty years. This does not mean he didn't consider more projects or that he didn't spend considerable time trying to develop a new film. What follows is an attempt to build a comprehensive list of possible films in which Kubrick expressed an interest and, in many cases, worked on (the list is at the bottom of the article). In fact, despite the recent scholarly work that benefited from historical archives and the considerable interest from the general public in the topic, no systematic study of Kubrick's unrealized projects has been attempted so far.<sup>1</sup> My sources are the interviews I did with James B. Harris, Kubrick's producing partner from 1955 to 1962, Jan Harlan, his executive producer from 1970, and Anthony Frewin, his assistant from 1979.<sup>2</sup> Back issues of American and English newspapers and Hollywood trade publications provide precise dates and historical context. I also reviewed the literature and documents held in several institutions, including the Stanley Kubrick Archive.

My list features fifty-five distinct unrealized or unfinished projects. A "project" is defined here as a literary property or a specific subject, and is included when linked to a reliable source, regardless of how much work was put into it and for how long. Since the list shows that Kubrick constantly focused on more than one project at a time, it is not always easy to determine the intensity of his attraction for the material, nor does a large time span necessarily establish a high level of activity. Also, what complicates matter is that, as Jan Harlan stresses, Kubrick "was ready [to start a production] all the time! He was constantly on a high on something," even if his excitement typically didn't last long: "he read a book, thought it was fantastic and then well, not really, and then comes the next book."<sup>3</sup>

Methodology-wise, besides obviously including scripts that exist or existed and books that he optioned or bought the rights to, I thus chose to run the risk of being slightly over-inclusive by also including projects about which very little is still known or where there is contradictory evidence between what I found in the press and what Kubrick's collaborators remember. I purposely decided not to include any unsolicited project in the list – i.e. screenplays or novels that Kubrick received for consideration. They are mentioned only when they help illustrate a specific interest that caught Kubrick's attention, and the remainder is discussed in a separate paragraph for the sake of completion and to correct inaccuracies in the Kubrick literature.

In short, my aim is to examine the director's catholic range of interests and his recurring thematic fascinations to see how they influenced and intersected with his finished films. This review of Kubrick's unsuccessful endeavors will clearly show how his *modus operandi* in selecting published material was absolutely consistent. It will also reveal the kind of stories that enthused him, namely those featuring crime, violence, dysfunctional relationships and military combat. Most important, by trying to explain the longer and longer gaps between his films, this survey will investigate what went into Kubrick's decision process before he rolled the cameras.

I have divided Kubrick's career in two sections, the first when he worked in partnership with James B. Harris, and the second when he worked alone. A final paragraph recalls the long and winding road Kubrick took towards making film dealing with the horrors of Nazi Germany; this case history helps explain why his projects could fail.

## 1 Harris-Kubrick 'Non-Pictures'

James B. Harris made the significant observation to me when he said that it was always Kubrick who brought a literary property to his attention.<sup>4</sup> *The Killing* (1956) was possibly their only project that didn't originate from

<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Peter Krämer for thoroughly discussing my research and sharing his insights with me. I also wish to thank Richard Daniels for his invaluable comments and suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> Tony Frewin started working for Kubrick in 1965. In 1979 he was assigned the task to find books, contact authors, do research, etc. He also set up a company to manage readers that Kubrick anonymously hired to write reports on scripts and books in order to hopefully speed up the search for a good story (*Stanley Kubrick's Boxes* (Jon Ronson, 2008)).

<sup>3</sup> Filippo Ulivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Kubrick, who admittedly never read a book for pleasure until well out of school (Lyon 1964: 147) must have caught up pretty quickly because, when Harris met him in early 1955, he was already very well-read and jumped at the chance of "educating" Harris on the works of Jim Thompson, Calder Willingham, Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, etc. (Filippo Ulivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, May 4, 2010. To grasp the extent of Kubrick's literary interest: Herr 2000, Frewin 2005).

Kubrick – *Clean Break* (Lionel White, 1955) was found by Harris while perusing a bookstore in search for an interesting story. *Ergo*, all the entries in the first part of my list are clues to what drove Stanley Kubrick in his quest for a new film.

As soon as they began working on *Clean Break*, Harris and Kubrick also considered three novels: *The Snatchers* (1955) again by Lionel White, *So Help Me God* (1955) by Felix Jackson, and *Natural Child* (1952) by Calder Willingham. However, the Production Code Administration advised against all three because their main plot points – kidnapping, anti-Communist witch-hunt and abortion – were unlikely to be approved (Cocks 2004: 148-9). Also taken into brief consideration was Jim Thompson's *The Killer Inside Me* (1952), about a deputy sheriff who loses his sanity in a spiral of violence and sadistic sex. Kubrick, who thought the novel was "Probably the most chilling and believable first-person story of a criminally warped mind I have ever encountered," talked about directing it while working with Thompson on *Clean Break* (Polito 1996: 428).<sup>5</sup> Before leaving for California to shoot *The Killing*, Harris commissioned Thompson to write a novella, mostly as a way to help the writer who was in financial difficulties. Thompson came up with *Lunatic at Large*, seventy pages about a soldier and a psychopathic female with homicidal tendencies (Polito 1996: 396).<sup>6</sup> We do not know if it was met with Kubrick's favour; he had certainly lost interest in it by 1962 when he replied approvingly to Anthony Harvey, then editor on *Lolita* (1962), who was interested in buying the story.<sup>7</sup>

With *The Killing* in the can, Kubrick contacted Shelby Foote because he was impressed by his novel *Shiloh* (1952). When they met in February 1956, Foote discovered that Kubrick and Harris had acquired the rights to another novel of his, *Love in a Dry Season* (1951), (Chapman 2006: 168),<sup>8</sup> about a sordid triangle between a married nymphomaniac, a travelling salesman and the spinster daughter of the town's leading cotton merchant.<sup>9</sup> According to Harris, not much work was done on this story (if any),<sup>10</sup> and Kubrick preferred to have Foote concentrate on writing about a late-Civil War incident involving John Singleton Mosby, a daring Confederate cavalry leader. Foote began work in late April and by June *The Down Slope* was finished. The story was written in novel form and it was left to Kubrick to translate it into movie terms (Kibler 1971).

But Kubrick had received an interesting offer from MGM's head of production, and with *The Killing* still waiting for distribution by United Artists, Harris and Kubrick had jumped on the opportunity of a deal with another studio (LoBrutto 1997: 129). When Kubrick's first choice, *Paths of Glory* (Humphrey Cobb, 1935), was not green-lit, the two browsed the studio's property department in search of a subject. Kubrick selected *The Burning Secret*, a 1913 coming-of-age novella by Stefan Zweig, told against a background of seduction, betrayal and sexual awareness. Harris found the story "very weak (...) it's a one-line joke, so to speak, and I wasn't in favor even developing it, but Kubrick was insistent on it. I think he had a great appreciation for Stefan Zweig."<sup>11</sup> Kubrick had in fact an appreciation of Austrian literature in general. This is shown by his desire to adapt a short story by Schnitzler, "The Death of a Bachelor" (1902). It revolves around three middle-aged men

<sup>5</sup> Kubrick's quotation was a promotional blurb printed on the cover of the Gold Medal Books edition, 1965.

<sup>6</sup> Contract for the novella was signed by Harris on June 6, 1955. Harris admits that unfortunately, after it was delivered, the manuscript was somehow misplaced and went missing (Goldstein 1990). The manuscript apparently resurfaced in 2004 and it is now one of the projects that the company of *Full Metal Jacket* associate producer, Philip Hobbs, has been trying to realize since 2004 (Rich 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Stanley Kubrick, letter to Anthony Harvey, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Harvey mss., 1928-2002. Courtesy, The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

<sup>8</sup> The first article that reports the purchase is Anon. (April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1956). "Harris and Kubrick to Film 'Dry' Novel." *Daily Variety*: 6.

<sup>9</sup> Plot as summarized in Anon, (September 1951). "Love in a Dry Season." *Kirkus Reviews*. <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/shelby-foote/love-in-a-dry-season/> (last accessed 14-03-17). Harris remembers the plot turning exclusively around the spinster: "it's about a bookish girl who falls in love with a young, dashing man and has an opportunity to get away from her dominating father, but the man never shows up and she gets back to her rather sad life" (Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26, 2010). This may indicate that Kubrick wanted to focus on this half of the story.

<sup>10</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26, 2010. It is unlikely that a script ever existed: Harris does not have a copy in his possessions and none is to be found at the Stanley Kubrick Archive in London. Also, Foote never talked about it and only addressed his work for Kubrick as limited to *The Down Slope* (Coleman et al. 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Kubrick worked on the adaptation with Calder Willingham but it is unclear if a script was completed. According to Harris, "it took quite some time to develop *The Burning Secret* script because Calder Willingham was busy working on *The Bridge of the River Kwai* (David Lean, 1957), and he was in Ceylon at the time, so we had to wait for him to come back from Ceylon."

who receive a posthumous letter from a friend who confesses he has had affairs with all their wives. Harris remembers discussing the story many times with Kubrick, and, though they didn't purchase the rights, "that was our favorite of all the Zweig and Schnitzler and everything."<sup>12</sup>

In this period, Kubrick also commissioned an original story, *The Unfaithful Wife*, from Calder Willingham, after he had to abandon *The Burning Secret* at MGM and possibly as an alternative to "The Death of a Bachelor".<sup>13</sup> Before *Paths of Glory* (1957), Harris and Kubrick also worked on a crime drama set in Los Angeles airport and in Paris, titled *The Blind Mirror* (Krämer 2016). It revolves around a stolen Van Gogh painting and features such sensational elements as shotguns, knife killings, a *femme fatale* and a midget. Because only some notes survive, it is not clear who the author was and whether the script was for a feature film or an episode for a TV series.<sup>14</sup>

Kubrick and Harris were in fact flirting with television in this period. Both were very impressed with Ernie Kovacs's performance in *Operation Mad Ball* (Richard Quine, 1957) and thought his character, a burnt out commandant of a boys' military academy, could appear in a show in which his authority would be repeatedly deflated. Kubrick was supposed to direct the pilot episode, which was to be scripted by Kovacs himself. In the end, Harris and Kubrick "didn't respond to the script and the project was dropped."<sup>15</sup>

The idea of inducing laughs from the military system would famously result in *Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964), but Kubrick always had a penchant for turning serious subject matters into comedies. In February 1958 he stated he intended to do a comedy remake of the French Foreign Legion classic *Beau Geste* (P. C. Wren, 1924), starring Jerry Lewis as the younger brother and Ernie Kovacs once again as the heavy sergeant,<sup>16</sup> and a couple of years later he wanted to adapt Ian Fleming's Bond novel *From Russia, With Love* (1957) as a comedy.<sup>17</sup>

When Harris and Kubrick returned to the U.S. after shooting *Paths of Glory*, they selected *I Stole \$16,000,000*, the autobiography of Herbert Emerson Wilson, a priest turned safe-cracker. In October 1957, rights to the book were assigned to Bryna Productions, Kirk Douglas's production company, with Douglas supposed to play the lead. In January 1958, Harris and Kubrick traveled to Tijuana to meet Wilson, who was a fugitive at the time and could not enter the USA without landing in jail. Over the course of the next year and a half, Kubrick developed a number of scripts, none of which was deemed satisfactory, in cooperation with Jim Thompson and other writers.<sup>18</sup>

Kubrick had gone back to work on *The Down Slope*, too: in February 1958 he contacted Gregory Peck as a possible leading actor. Peck, himself a Civil War enthusiast and impressed by Kubrick's library on the subject,<sup>19</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Anon. (October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1956). "Films on Television." *The New York Times* p. 16. This report says the project was yet untitled. Later it was mentioned in the press as *An Unfaithful Wife* or *The Unfaithful Wife*. I was not able to properly discern what this project was: I doubt it was the chosen film title for *The Burning Secret*, because both the projects are distinctly mentioned in the article as two different Willingham-penned scripts; nor could it have been a story by Schnitzler, because Harris-Kubrick contacted actress Lisa Kirk for the titular role and Schnitzler's stories usually feature leading male characters (Parsons 1956). Harris unfortunately doesn't remember, and from a preliminary inquiry to the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Georgia that hosts the Calder Willingham Papers, there is nothing related to either "unfaithful wife" or Lisa Kirk.

<sup>14</sup> Two titles are given in the notepad, "Airport" and "Thieves Market", but the notes only cover the first, and it is not clear if they refer to different parts of the same story or two different episodes in a series. Uncatalogued "Unfinished Projects" boxes, SKA, University of the Arts London, Archives and Special Collections Centre.

<sup>15</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Also LoBrutto 1997: 155.

<sup>16</sup> Bacon, James (February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1958). AP wire story. *Associated Press*; retrieved as (2 February 1958). "Jackpot on Second Try." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*: 4D.

<sup>17</sup> "Way before *Dr. Strangelove*, Stanley wanted to make *From Russia, With Love* as a comedy. This was in 1960-61, the rights were available, and certainly not expensive, it was before the [film] series of James Bond" (Harris 1999).

<sup>18</sup> Polito 1996: 428-32, Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26, 2010. Despite Polito mentions Lionel White as a possible author of a draft entitled *The Theft*, Harris doesn't remember they hired White. A script entitled *Stanley Kubrick's God Fearing Man* is in possession of the Kubrick Estate ((2004). "Stanley Kubrick." *Kinematograph* (20): 292. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Filmmuseum), but Harris is quite sure the only title they used for the project was *I Stole \$16,000,000*. Again, this project is now under development at Phil Hobbs's company (Rich 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Peck called it "one of the largest private collections of Civil War books and mementos" he knew (Parsons 1958).

readily entered in a co-production deal between Harris-Kubrick and his own company (Weiler 1958a). The project, retitled *The Virginia Riders* in May (Pryor 1958b) and *Fourth Virginia Cavalry* in September (Godbout 1958),<sup>20</sup> unfortunately faced competition from two more films about Mosby's rangers (Pryor 1958a), and in October Peck confirmed he was still committed to film "a Civil War subject, but not necessarily about Colonel Mosby, as was previously announced" (Weiler 1958b). Harris explains that the impeding factor wasn't just the competition: Peck lost interest in Kubrick's script, "he was not pleased with it, so [he] dropped out."<sup>21</sup>

Always a multitasking company, in March 1958 Harris-Kubrick acquired the screen rights to *The Last Parallel* (1957), the diary of a Marine in Korea, written by Martin Russ from his own experience. While Russ was writing the screenplay, Kubrick and Harris sent the book to Marlon Brando, hoping he would play the lead (Pryor 1958c). But, as Harris puts it, "the script didn't turn out to be up to our expectations" and the chance evaporated.<sup>22</sup> After a series of mutual suggestions for possible films, Brando tried to engage Kubrick to work with him on his own project at Paramount, *One-Eyed Jacks*, but their relationship was tense and after six months Kubrick quit his position and left the direction in Brando's hands.<sup>23</sup>

At the end of the year, Harris-Kubrick registered the title *Sick, Sick, Sick*,<sup>24</sup> borrowed from a newly published collection of comic strips by *Village Voice* cartoonist Jules Feiffer. The strips explored characters coping with frustrated love in Greenwich Village, the H-bomb tests, and psychosomatic illnesses. Kubrick wrote to Feiffer expressing "unqualified admiration for the scenic structure of your 'strips' and the eminently speakable and funny dialog," and stated that he wished to further "our contacts with an eye toward doing a film along the moods and themes you have so brilliantly accomplished."<sup>25</sup> Feiffer was summoned to Los Angeles and Harris remembers "entertaining him when I was living at the beach in Santa Monica."<sup>26</sup> I contacted Feiffer to inquire about the outcome and he replied succinctly: "I remember nothing about my meetings with Stanley, other than that we liked and admired each other, and could agree on nothing..."<sup>27</sup> – indeed a perfect closing line for one of his caustic strips.

During 1958, Kubrick developed a Second World War script with Richard Adams, titled *The German Lieutenant*, which was intended to star Alan Ladd and Orson Welles (Archerd 1959).<sup>28</sup> After a few months of pre-production, involving location scouting in Germany, the project was abandoned in February 1959, most likely because Kubrick was hired to direct *Spartacus* (1960), a solid offer that put a welcome end to this year long frustratingly idle period (Krämer 2016). This script, which was the first materialization of Kubrick's interest in World War II, was sold to Jack Palance.<sup>29</sup>

Contemporaneous with their work on *Lolita*, in June 1959 Harris and Kubrick registered with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) *Laughter in the Dark* (1932), an earlier novel by Vladimir Nabokov dealing with a similar theme: an older man's obsession for a younger girl.<sup>30</sup> Although Harris remembers that

<sup>20</sup> (2004). "Stanley Kubrick." *Kinematograph* (20): 292. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Filmmuseum lists it as "The Seventh Virginia Cavalry" on p. 292, but I was not able to find any document with such a name in the material held at the SKA.

<sup>21</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010; Anon. (May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1958). "Stan Kubrick to Helm Brando in 'Guns Up!'" *Daily Variety* p. 2; Anon. (November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1958). "Kubrick Quits Brando 'Jacks.'" *Daily Variety* p. 1. The film was a loose adaptation of the Western novel *The Authentic Death of Hendry Jones* (Charles Neider, 1956). For an extended chronicle of the work on the screenplay and Kubrick and Brando's relationship (Olivieri 2017).

<sup>24</sup> Anon. (December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1958). "Harris, Kubrick Collab on 'Sick, Sick, Sick.'" *Daily Variety*: 1.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Stanley Kubrick to Jules Feiffer, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1959. Jules Feiffer Papers: 1919-1995, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C.

<sup>26</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Jules Feiffer, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

<sup>28</sup> (2004). "Stanley Kubrick." *Kinematograph* (20): 231, 292. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Filmmuseum.

<sup>29</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26, 2010. To follow the convoluted history of this script, Olivieri 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Anon. (June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1959). "Harris, Kubrick File Another Nabokov Tome." *Daily Variety*: 3; Anon. (March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960). "Author of 'Lolita' to Also Pen Pic Plot." *Daily Variety*: 2.

they did so only as protection for *Lolita*, documents at the Stanley Kubrick Archive reveal a fair amount of work: there is a scene-by-scene treatment penned by Carlo Fiore and a later treatment by Kubrick himself.<sup>31</sup>

In 1959 Harris-Kubrick were developing another TV series, too. Entitled *Three of a Kind*, it was about a secret organization that explores mysteries and fights crime (Krämer 2016). Half-page treatments for twenty-six one-hour episodes were drafted, recounting the adventures of a daredevil American playboy, a misogynist English psychiatrist, a French ex-parachute officer, and “as many [women] as leaves on the trees.” One of the treatments was turned into a seventy-page script by Richard Adams. Twenty additional five-line script ideas were jotted down in case the series was selected for production,<sup>32</sup> which would have made *Three of a Kind* an unusually daring TV presentation for its time, offering action-packed stories with sexually suggestive characterizations.

While busy with *Spartacus* and *Lolita*, Kubrick briefly considered a number of very heterogeneous projects that show his diverse tastes. He thought *Henderson the Rain King* (Saul Bellow, 1959), an allegorical story of a white man who becomes chief of an African tribe, could make a good film.<sup>33</sup> More substantially, Harris and Kubrick inquired into the rights to *The Lion* (Joseph Kessel, 1959), a coming-of-age story about the friendship between a girl and a lion set in Kenya; *La Fête* (Roger Vailland, 1960), an autobiographical story of a libertine hunting for pleasure; and *Notes on a Dark Street* (Edward Adler, 1961), a collection of nightmarish but life-affirming sketches of life among the extremely poor on New York's East Side.<sup>34</sup> Nothing came of these, or of Kubrick's idea of doing a “rethink version” of Max Ophüls's 1949 melodrama *The Reckless Moment* in the early 1960s (Walker 2001).

Between 1961 and 1962 Kubrick was frightened by the prospect of thermonuclear war between the U.S.A. and Russia and made concrete plans to relocate to Australia with his family. He sought out information concerning projects to develop while living there, which included the story of Ned Kelly, a notorious nineteenth century bushranger. Kubrick asked his assistant Ray Lovejoy to find books and articles about him, and showed interest in the lost silent film *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (Charles Tait, 1906).<sup>35</sup> Kubrick also had “some interest” in adapting *Seven Days in May* (Charles W. Bailey II and Fletcher Knebel, 1962), a political thriller about a military plot to take over the government of the United States. He eventually discarded it in favor of *Dr. Strangelove*, on which Kubrick was already at work when *Seven Days in May* was published.<sup>36</sup>

Before embarking on his own directorial career, Harris tried to acquire, while Kubrick was in England preparing *Dr. Strangelove*, the screen rights to *The Passion Flower Hotel* (Rosalind Erskine, 1962), a novel about some young women who decide to sell their services to an all-boys school. “We talked very strongly about doing that film,” Harris remembers, “so we decided... maybe one more together!” But he couldn't make a deal with the owner of the rights and the project wasn't made.<sup>37</sup>

It is worth noting that, with the notable exception of *Lolita*, there are hardly any literary masterpieces among

<sup>31</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015; ‘H-K Disbursements,’ SK/1/2/2/1, SKA.

<sup>32</sup> Uncatalogued “Unfinished Projects” boxes, SKA.

<sup>33</sup> Baxter 1977: 131, from an interview with Gavin Lambert. Baxter also mentions Kubrick's idea of producing *Dr. Brilliant*, a film developed from an original idea by Ian Fleming about the world's greatest criminologist. This would have been in connection with Kubrick being appointed as Head of Production at Universal. Even to Baxter's standards, this seems too far-fetched to be included in my list.

<sup>34</sup> Letter from Elisa Mion to Alfred A. Knopf re *The Lion*, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1959, 257.9, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Records 1873-1996, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin (hereby HRC); Letter from Claire Linn (Story Editor, Harris-Kubrick Pictures) to Alfred A. Knopf re *La Fête*, December 29, 1960, 317.11, HRC; Letter from Thomas Lowry to James B. Harris re *Notes on a Dark Street*, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1962, 351.13, HRC.

<sup>35</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email communication with Mick Broderick, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. And Anon. (March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017). “Reconstructing Strangelove.” *Columbia University Press blog*. <http://www.cupblog.org/?p=20852> (last accessed 31-07-17).

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Stanley Kubrick to Kirk Douglas, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1963, The Kirk Douglas Papers, Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Published online at <http://old.wcfr.commarts.wisc.edu/collections/featured/kirkdouglas/film/sevendays/7days-kubrick.html> (last accessed 14-03-17).

<sup>37</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

the above-mentioned titles. Despite his love for novelists,<sup>38</sup> Kubrick somehow preferred books of lesser quality. As Frewin remembers, he was convinced that “good books make bad films and bad books make good films.”<sup>39</sup> After all, Kubrick's narrative tastes were formed during his

childhood reading in the 1930s [which] was largely limited to the ‘pulp’ – the popular newsstand magazines of the 1930s, such as *Amazing Stories*, *Astounding Stories* (both science fiction), *The Shadow* (detective), *G-8 and His Battle Aces* (spying, aerial combat), *Weird Tales* (occult, supernatural), and similar. (Frewin 2005: 514)

It's easy to see how all Kubrick's projects, made and unmade, fit very well into these genres. In pulp fiction, “while the characterization was deplorable the narrative plotting was, by and large, exemplary. You were hooked” (Frewin 2005: 514). It would seem that, at least in Kubrick's early years, plot was the most important element that a literary source should provide for a film: as he wittily said during the filming of *Killer's Kiss*, “movies should move!” (Chase 1981).

The first part of the list given at the end of this article also shows that almost half the aborted projects happened during the Harris-Kubrick Pictures years, before the completion of *Dr. Strangelove*, with the remaining projects filling the following thirty-five years. I would suggest that what drove Harris and Kubrick was a desire to affirm themselves as a bankable proposition in the film business. They considered and developed many projects simultaneously to maximize their chances, and accepted offers from established actors that could serve their careers well. This frantic quality in their work could be a cause for the failure to develop the projects very far. They shifted their attention to a different project without fixing a disappointing screenplay, or were distracted by “other things [that] interfered.”<sup>40</sup> Also, some of these projects were rather flimsy: as Harris puts it, “sometimes you say things in interviews that are wishful thinking, more than reality.”<sup>41</sup> The bottom line is that the Harris-Kubrick years show transient interests: Kubrick never renewed his intention of filming the stories he abandoned in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>42</sup>

After making *Dr. Strangelove*, Kubrick realized something important: “The problem is to find an obsession. I get a lot of flash things that are interesting only for a couple of weeks. Then I see they're full of holes, I'm not really interested” (Winsten 1964). *Dr. Strangelove* was a real turning point in Kubrick's career. It was the first film that didn't originate from a literary property but “started with an obsessional interest in the whole subject, almost from the point of view of survival rather than art” (Walker 1970). As he had done with the Civil War, Kubrick amassed a considerable library and read up on atomic warfare. He found Peter George's novel, *Red Alert [Two Hours to Doom]* (1958), only at the end of the process (Bean 1963, Alpert 1964). *Dr. Strangelove* was also the film that elevated Kubrick to the realm of the most important American filmmakers, equal to the revered European auteurs. He managed to do what Bergman and Fellini had previously achieved: “a genuinely personal approach” for a film, as he himself put it.<sup>43</sup> From now on, Kubrick focused exclusively on deeply personal projects. A book with a good plot and interesting characters was no longer enough.

<sup>38</sup> “I started out, before I became a film director, always thinking, you know, if I couldn't play on the Yankees I'd like to be a novelist. The people I first admired were not film directors but novelists. Like Conrad” (McGregor 1972).

<sup>39</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010. I believe this is the case with the projects without a proven development: *The Killer Inside Me*, *Lunatic at Large*, *The Unfaithful Wife*, *Beau Geste*, *From Russia*, *With Love*, *Henderson the Rain King*, *The Reckless Moment*.

<sup>42</sup> Some themes explored in these years would return later on, but in a different form: see the life-long interests in the Civil War (again with Shelby Foote's novels, but no further evidence points to *The Doren Slope*) and the Second World War (but *The German Lieutenant* was sold). A partial exception could be *The Last Parallel* that was considered again in the early '80s, although briefly and apparently not in connection with the script developed in 1958 (see later).

<sup>43</sup> “In making a film, I start with an emotion, a feeling, a sense of a subject or a person or a situation. The theme and technique come as a result of the material passing, as it were, through myself and coming out of the projector lens. It seems to me that simply striving for a genuinely personal approach, whatever it may be, is the goal – Bergman and Fellini, for example, although perhaps as different in their outlook as possible, have achieved this, and I'm sure it is what gives their films an emotional involvement lacking in most work” (Southern 2005: 343). This interview was done in July 1962, a few months after Kubrick had started working on *Dr. Strangelove*. He showed here an almost opposite attitude than the one he had in his earlier attempts.

## 2 Unfulfilled obsessions

In this section we will see how Kubrick's search for an obsession caused a radical decrease in his output. Certainly his longer production schedules had an impact, but a lot of his time was spent in trying to find a way to make a film about one of his recurring interests. In fact, he quickly returned to his pet-projects as soon as he had completed a new film, only to be distracted by an easier one, which transferred from book to shooting script more straightforwardly.

In late 1963, Kubrick began looking around for his next film. He considered the differences between the sexes, overpopulation and again atomic warfare as possible subjects,<sup>44</sup> and he confessed he still had an interest in the Civil War hoping someday to do a film "based on the Mathew Brady's photos."<sup>45</sup> In the end he narrowed his attention to science fiction: in December he inquired about the rights to *Shadow on the Sun* (Gavin Blakeney, 1961), a BBC radio drama series. The plot was worthy of a sci-fi pulp magazine: extraterrestrial lizards invade the Earth and subjugate the human race. Shortly afterwards, he contacted the science fiction writer, Arthur C. Clarke, who replied positively but vetoed other people's ideas and suggested adapting a series of his short stories. Apparently Kubrick was so taken by these lizards anyway that he proceeded with the payment for an option in October 1964, seven months into working with Clarke on *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) (Odino 2018).

With *2001* still in progress, in the summer of 1967 Kubrick began researching his next project, a biographical film about Napoleon Bonaparte, with the aim of having it backed by MGM (Magel 2004). Budgetary concerns and the release of three more films about the French Emperor prevented Kubrick from starting production of *Napoleon*.<sup>46</sup> Kubrick shopped his treatment around the studios that had financed his previous films and, after rejection by Columbia, he successfully negotiated with United Artists in January 1969.<sup>47</sup> Pre-production on *Napoleon* dragged on, and in February 1970 it was announced that Kubrick had signed a deal with Warner Bros. to film Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962).<sup>48</sup>

In the meantime, Kubrick had turned his attention back to Arthur Schnitzler and selected *Traumnovelle* (1926). Even if it is plausible that Kubrick read this story very early on – Kirk Douglas claims it was his psychiatrist who suggested it to Kubrick in 1959 (Douglas 2012: 194), a year that would match quite closely *The Burning Secret* and "The Death of a Bachelor" – the first documented attempt to turn it into a film is dated May 1968 when Kubrick made inquiries about its rights (Castle 2005: 482). The project was announced by Warner Bros. in April 1971,<sup>49</sup> but Kubrick wasn't sure about how to properly adapt it and no further development was made at that time (Ciment 1972).

While he was editing *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), Kubrick resumed work on *Napoleon*, but when Sergei Bondarchuk's *Waterloo* (1970) bombed at the box office things became very difficult again, so that in February 1972 John Calley, production head at Warner Bros., admitted Kubrick's next picture for the company was unlikely to be *Napoleon* (Elliot 1972). Undaunted, Kubrick kept working on the script, seeking the help of Burgess, who was commissioned to write a novel in the structure of a symphony hopefully to compress Bonaparte's entire

<sup>44</sup> Anon. (February 1964). "Hollywood's Man Stanley." *McCall*; Anon. (February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1964). "Direct Hit." *Newsweek* 63(5): 79-80; Odino, Simone (2018).

<sup>45</sup> Anon. (March 1964). "On the Scene: Stanley Kubrick Reel Art's Rectifier." *Playboy*. Mathew Brady was one of the most celebrated 19th century American photographers, usually credited as the father of photojournalism. He extensively covered the Civil War battles and took famous portraits of Abraham Lincoln.

<sup>46</sup> Bonaparte loomed large in Sergey Bondarchuk's *War and Peace* (1966-67), which, at the time of the announcement, was roadshowing in the United States. Dino De Laurentiis had *Waterloo* (1970) in production, again with Bondarchuk directing, and Brian Forbes announced his *Napoleon and Josephine* in December that year: Anon. (July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1968). "'Napoleon' as Kubrick's next; starts in 1969." *Film TV Daily*; Anon. (December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1968). "Kubrick's 'Napoleon' Won't Be Made For MGM." *Daily Variety*: 1-2.

<sup>47</sup> Anon. (January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969). "Kubrick in Deal With UA." *Boxoffice*: SE-2.

<sup>48</sup> Anon. (February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1970). "Kubrick Will Make 'Clockwork' For WB." *Daily Variety*: 1.

<sup>49</sup> Anon. (April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1971). "Kubrick Will Make WB's 'Traumnovelle'." *Daily Variety*: 1.



life using musical motifs. Despite its literary brilliance, Kubrick didn't think the resulting *Napoleon Symphony* (1974) was of any help.<sup>50</sup>

After the production and completion of *Barry Lyndon* (1975), in October 1976 Kubrick sought Burgess's help again for *Traumnovelle* (Biswell 2005: 138).<sup>51</sup> Around this time, Kubrick had the idea of casting Woody Allen, playing 'straight', as the leading character, a New York Jewish doctor.<sup>52</sup>

Kubrick also entered into discussion with John Milius, the American screenwriter of *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and director of *The Wind and the Lion* (1974), about adapting the novel *Night Drop* (S.L.A. Marshall, 1962), a chronicle of the American airborne invasion of Normandy. According to Milius, Kubrick thought "There are only two great books ever written on war, *Night Drop* and the *Iliad*. We're going to do *Night Drop*." Despite their talking about the project for years and Milius writing a script in 1982, the film never materialized.<sup>53</sup>

Following the disappointing box-office results of *Barry Lyndon*, Kubrick summoned Brian Aldiss and discussed with him the possibility of using his short-story, *Super-Toys Last All Summer Long* (1969) as a basis for a science fiction film that would appeal to as large an audience as *Star Wars* (George Lucas, 1977) had done (Feeley 1999). Perhaps influenced by the similar results of *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin, 1973), Kubrick also perused stories that deal with the supernatural and the occult. He toyed with the works of Victorian author Edward Bulwer-Lytton, namely *Zanoni* (1842), about an immortal Rosicrucian brother that falls in love and loses his power, and *A Strange Story* (1862), a quest story about a man of science who confronts the supernatural and is humbled (Frewin 2005: 519). Kubrick also considered Diane Johnson's *The Shadow Knows* (1974) (Williams) before accepting John Calley's suggestion to film *The Shining* (1977) by rising author Stephen King (he started work in 1976, having read the novel in galleys) (Hughes 2017).

When *The Shining* (1980) opened, Kubrick turned back to familiar territory. He pondered the possibility of doing *Napoleon* as a 20-hour TV series (Ciment 1980). He also passed *Traumnovelle* on to a series of writers he knew, namely Michael Herr, Diane Johnson, John le Carré and Terry Southern, with a view to adapting it "as a sex comedy, but with a wild and somber streak running through it. [...] Stanley thought it would be perfect for Steve Martin."<sup>54</sup> Kubrick actually summoned the actor to his house in the holiday season of 1981-82.<sup>55</sup> Motivated by the record-breaking success of *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* (Steven Spielberg, 1982), Kubrick also contacted Brian Aldiss again, acquired the rights to *Super-Toys*, and worked with him until early 1983 (Aldiss 2001: x-xii).<sup>56</sup>

Adding another area of interest to his quest, in the early 1980s Kubrick was taken by the epic sagas of European folklore. A small notebook in the Archive contains notes that Kubrick made about Richard Wagner's epic opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung* (1848-1874) (Kämer 2017). Jan Harlan confirms that Kubrick had a particular interest in *The Rheingold*, which he considered "a political fairytale," presenting an unrealistic yet absolutely

<sup>50</sup> A letter from Stanley Kubrick to Anthony Burgess, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1972, reads: "the MS is not a work that can help me make a film about the life of Napoleon. Despite its considerable accomplishments, it does not, in my view, help solve either of the two major problems: that of considerably editing the events (and possibly restructuring the time sequence) so as to make a good story, without trivializing history or character, nor does it provide much realistic dialogue, unburdened with easily noticeable exposition or historical fact" (Anon., "I Don't Know How to Write this Letter." <http://www.lettersofnote.com/2013/02/i-dont-know-how-to-write-this-letter.html> (last accessed 15-03-17)).

<sup>51</sup> Kubrick sent the novella to Burgess and Burgess replied with interest. Nothing more is known about this attempt.

<sup>52</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>53</sup> Anon. (14 April 1982). Untitled article. *Variety*: 26; Bauer 2000. Interestingly, *The Iliad* was a project that Alexander Singer wanted to do with Kubrick when they were just two New York kids with big dreams. Questioned about it by Alexander Walker in 1970, Kubrick replied: "If I could figure out what to do about the Gods, I think I would be interested in making a movie on *The Iliad*, but I have never quite figured out that one – I don't know how you do without them and I don't know how you do with them for a modern audience" (Walker 1970).

<sup>54</sup> Herr 2000: 8; Johnson 1999; Filippo Olivieri, Stefano Armanini, telephone interview with John le Carré, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008; Hill 2001: 259.

<sup>55</sup> Anon. (10 January 1982). "In Short: Trailers." *Newsday*: B7.

<sup>56</sup> It is interesting to note that Kubrick tried to blend his "obsessions" into different projects: when adapting *The Shining* with Diane Johnson he suggested to model the husband-wife relationship of the novel according to elements lifted from *Traumnovelle* (McAvoy 2015: 548-53). Equally, his interest in the Holocaust inspired Brian Aldiss to write sinister scenes of obsolescent robots waiting to be destroyed in concentration camp-like structures (Feeley 1999).

perfect situation for exploring political and social themes. As Harlan puts it, “*Rheingold* is current affairs documentary. [...] Kubrick was interested in these big canvas fairytales [that] are totally unrealistic in their form, but they are real in their substance.”<sup>57</sup> The same can be said for H. Rider Haggard’s *The Saga of Eric Brighteyes* (1890), a Norse epic that Kubrick selected in the summer of 1982. According to Frewin, this haunting tale of magical adventure and a love story of Shakespearean dimensions was a project Kubrick continually returned to in the last twenty years of his life.<sup>58</sup>

In all probability, though, Kubrick’s main interest after *The Shining* was to do a film about the phenomenon of war.<sup>59</sup> He renewed his interest in the Civil War with Shelby Foote’s novel *Shiloh* (1952),<sup>60</sup> and in the Korean War, considering once more to adapt Martin Russ’s *The Last Parallel*.<sup>61</sup> Kubrick also kicked around a film about the battle of Monte Cassino, a costly series of raids during the Italian Campaign.<sup>62</sup> In the end Kubrick singled out the Vietnam War, with *The Short-Timers* (Gustav Hasford, 1978) chosen as the basis for *Full Metal Jacket* (1987).

*Napoleon* was the first project Kubrick turned to after *Full Metal Jacket*.<sup>63</sup> Kubrick then contacted English novelist John le Carré and was disappointed that the rights to his 1986 novel *A Perfect Spy* were sold to the BBC (le Carré 2016: 240-1). Kubrick offered to direct the miniseries himself, but “the BBC looked at his record, for how long he took to make a movie, and how expensive his movies were, and understandably they resisted his approaches.”<sup>64</sup> Two years later, Kubrick tried to have le Carré write a film based on the life of Henri Déricourt, a controversial leader of the French resistance during World War II, possibly adapting Robert Marshall’s *All the King’s Men* (1988), which he had optioned in March 1990.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, le Carré didn’t believe the reality of Déricourt’s story – he defined it “a piece of espionage science fiction” – and wasn’t interested.<sup>66</sup>

Kubrick looked at science fiction again in 1988, renewing his option for the rights of *Shadow on the Sun*

<sup>57</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Frewin produced several synopses and break-downs of the story. According to him, *Eric Brighteyes* “may be ranked with *Napoleon* and *Aryan Papers* in what one might term the Premier League of Unrealised Projects” (Frewin 2005: 517); he said to me, “had Stanley lived, it may very well have been his next project.” Kubrick kept thinking about *Eric Brighteyes* even in the late ’90s. Notes and story breakdowns in the SKA are dated between 1982 and 1986 (Glintonkamp 2013). In the same vein of European folklore, the SKA holds material about Gustav Meyrink’s *The Golem*, a gothic romance set in 1920s Prague Jewish ghetto that features another love triangle with a man torn between two very different women. Frewin doesn’t remember what Kubrick’s precise interest in *The Golem* was, but he doesn’t think the director specifically wanted to film this story and that it could have been background research for something else.

<sup>59</sup> “He was thinking about making a war movie. I said, ‘You already made *Paths of Glory*.’ He said, ‘People think of that as an anti-war movie. I want to make a war movie, just to consider the subject without a moral position, or political position, but as a phenomenon’” (Herr 2001).

<sup>60</sup> An undated adapted screenplay by William Causey Carter is in one of the “Unsolicited Projects” boxes, SK/1/2/12/3, SKA. A letter dated December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1980, in which Carter suggests four incidents that happened during the battle and that can be included in the script, is in SK/1/2/12/1/1/15, SKA.

<sup>61</sup> “Production dump 6” file, SK/16/3/24/4, SKA: script scouting ideas about *The Last Parallel* are dated October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1980.

<sup>62</sup> Kubrick interviewed his personal assistant Emilio D’Alessandro about his childhood war memories, and even researched hotels around Cassino to accommodate cast and crew during location shooting in Italy (D’Alessandro and Olivieri 2016: 252-5).

<sup>63</sup> Heymann 1987. English translation as in Castle 2005. Kubrick’s research on Napoleon Bonaparte is now in the hands of Jan Harlan, who has been trying to have a film made for almost a decade. When questioned about it recently, he confirmed he is working on it under the patronage of Steven Spielberg – “our godfather for this” – with Cary Fukunaga attached to direct. When asked if anything from Kubrick’s script would be used, Harlan stated: “No! You will have to start from scratch. Hopefully it will be really focusing on what Stanley was focusing [...] The lack of statesmanship in our leadership” (Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016).

<sup>64</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Stefano Armanini, telephone interview with John le Carré, September 3, 2008. According to Anthony Frewin, “no way did SK offered to direct *A Perfect Spy*,” though (Filippo Olivieri, email communication with Anthony Frewin, March 19, 2017).

<sup>65</sup> Uncatalogued “Unfinished Projects” boxes, SKA. Kubrick consulted two more books on the subject: *Double Agent? Light on the Secret Agents’ War in France* (1961) and *Déricourt: The Chequered Spy* (1989), both by Jean Overton Fuller. Four volumes of typescript text of the latter with notes and crossings out are in property of the SKA (*Kinematograph* (20): 292. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Filmmuseum). According to Frewin, background research for this project included *Bodyguard of Lies* (Anthony Cave Brown, 1975), too. The material is labelled “Project Déricourt” in the SKA documents, but I chose *All the King’s Men* as the title in my list because this is the book that Kubrick actually optioned.

<sup>66</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Stefano Armanini, telephone interview with John le Carré, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008.

(Odino 2018) and working with Aldiss on *Super-Toys* (Bakewell 1988). He also thought about making another war movie: according to Frewin, “SK thought highly of Curzio Malaparte’s [World War II] novel *Kaputt* [1944] and spent a good few months pondering off and on how to turn it in to a film. Ditto Henri Barbusse’s [World War I] novel *Under Fire: The Story of a Squad* [1916], though I kept telling him he should have a go at *Hell* [1908] instead.”<sup>67</sup>

Finally, he considered a film about Caesar’s invasion of England. As usual, Kubrick began the project by building a library (Frewin 2005: 517). “Stanley was interested in Caesar anyway,” Frewin remembers, “as a statesman, military leader, writer, thinker...” – he was a man, like Napoleon, who changed history – “and he thought the invasion of England was particularly of interest.”<sup>68</sup> The project didn’t materialize and Kubrick reverted once more to previous interests.

Three projects engrossed the director in his last decade. After more work on *Super-Toys* with Aldiss in 1990 (Krämer 2015), the baton was passed to the hands of Ian Watson, who worked the entire year and produced two distinct treatments.<sup>69</sup> In 1992, Kubrick sought the help of Clarke to little success (McAleer 2013: Ebook loc. 8014) and worked on the story by himself until 1994, exchanging notes with Steven Spielberg up to 1996 (Krämer 2015). Parallel to this, in 1994 Sara Maitland was hired to bring more emotion and fairy-tale magic to the script (Struthers 2009), a job she concluded at the end of 1995 (Coffren 1999). The project was put on hold due to its technical complexity, but it is important to note that none of the writers had the feeling that Kubrick was satisfied with their scripts.

Kubrick then decided to focus on *Traumnovelle*. He had renewed his interest in 1991,<sup>70</sup> but actually worked on the adaptation from 1994 onwards with Candia McWilliam, Sara Maitland and Michael Herr, and finally succeeded with Frederic Raphael, with whom he adapted it as *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999) (McWilliam 1999, Maitland 1999, Herr 2000: 17-9, Raphael 1999). This is actually a curious case: *Eyes Wide Shut* is the only film stemming from an obsession that Kubrick managed to make. At the end of our survey, we are confronted with the fact that having an obsession was not a guarantee of success – quite the opposite, one might say: with the exception of *Eyes Wide Shut*, the films that Kubrick did realize in this second phase had a relatively straightforward genesis from book to film, much like those he made with James B. Harris.

What caused increasingly long gaps between the films were diverse factors: new attempts to make the pet-projects, time-consuming research for finding the right alternative book to adapt, and an extended period spent on writing and re-writing the screenplay – something shared by both the made and the unmade films – as if Kubrick was never fully satisfied with what he had on paper to the extent that he kept revising, restructuring or fine-tuning his scripts before, during and even after the shooting while he was editing. In his own jocular words, “The challenge is to find a way to write films with both the depth and the narrative power of *The Brothers Karamazov*” (Moraz 1980).

To better understand what went into finding a way to express one of Kubrick’s obsessions, I will present in the next section what lay behind the third big project of the ’90s, *Aryan Papers* – actually the tip of an enormous iceberg that floated around the director since the 1950s. Before that, I’d like to use my research to demonstrate that a number of projects often linked to Stanley Kubrick are in fact distortion of real facts or completely invented information.

<sup>67</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email communication with Anthony Frewin, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>68</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email communication with Anthony Frewin, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>69</sup> Watson was contracted to write a 12,000-word story in a month, titled *Foxtrof*, and then hired on a weekly basis to work with Kubrick, a job that was concluded with a ninety-page treatment titled *Supertoys* (Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Ian Watson, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017).

<sup>70</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with Leon Vitali, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010. It is interesting to note that Vitali believes “if one ever talks about a life-time project I think for Stanley this was it”, something that echoes similar opinions expressed by others on *Napoleon*, *Aryan Papers*, and *Eric Brighteyes*.

### 3 Unreal unrealized projects

Despite several rebuttals by Jan Harlan, there are two persistent rumors about Kubrick's interest in filming two best-selling books, *Perfume* (Patrick Süskind, 1985) and *Foucault's Pendulum* (Umberto Eco, 1988). The rumor about *Perfume* was already circulating in 1992, and a reporter from *Screen International* decided to reach Kubrick to set the record straight: the director replied and "confirmed that the rumors were just that. He said he has no idea who initiated the news and he has not read the novel" (Klady 1992).<sup>71</sup> According to an editor at Alfred A. Knopf who managed the rights to *Perfume*, Süskind himself may have been the source of the rumour when he stated he did not want the rights to be sold to anyone except Stanley Kubrick or Miloš Forman. The author did consent to sell them only in 2001 (Coeli 2006, Fleming 2001).

A similar thing happened when Umberto Eco signed a deal for *Foucault's Pendulum* with Fine Line Features: Kubrick and Forman's names were again reported as previously interested in the property. A few years later Eco himself confirmed Kubrick's interest in an interview (Dawtre 2000, Padmanabhan 2005). According to Anthony Frewin, who remembers getting a copy of *Pendulum* in but can't remember Kubrick speaking about it, either "he didn't read it, or he read it but didn't like it. [...] Publishers got a lot of mileage out of saying that Kubrick was interested [in one of their books]."<sup>72</sup> That may be the case with *Last Exit to Brooklyn* (Hubert Selby Jr., 1968), too, which was attached to Kubrick's name for the first time in a 1988 interview with producer Bernd Eichinger (Hamilton 1988),<sup>73</sup> who had just bought the rights and whose credits included another of Umberto Eco's novels, *The Name of the Rose* (1980). Frewin says *Last Exit to Brooklyn* was never mentioned to him and adds, "I don't think it's a novel that would have appealed to Stanley."<sup>74</sup>

Leonard J. Leff has claimed that Kubrick turned down an offer to direct *The Pawnbroker* (Edward Wallant, 1961), a novel about a German-Jewish professor who tries to repress the memories of his time as a prisoner of the Nazis, because he thought Rod Steiger, the actor attached to star, was not "all that exciting" (Leff 1996).<sup>75</sup> In reality, Leff misattributed that quote to Kubrick. Letters held at the American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, show that the unflattering comment about Steiger was made by John Boulting, an executive at British Lion to whom Kubrick forwarded a request from Roger Lewis, who was assembling the production. Kubrick recommended the project despite having not read the screenplay or even the book.<sup>76</sup>

Vincent LoBrutto reported that Christiane Kubrick prevented the director from making Terry Southern's *Blue Movie* (1970) (LoBrutto 1997: 329), but Southern himself has denied that Kubrick was ever interested.<sup>77</sup> John Baxter reported that Kubrick considered adapting a biography of Colette in 1991 (Baxter 1977: 360), without giving any source to back his claim: Frewin has never heard of it, but clarifies that Kubrick "thought Colette was an interesting writer and he read a number of Colette's novels. In fact, he was trying to get Vivian interested in turning one of them into a film, directed by her, in the late '70s."<sup>78</sup>

James B. Harris said to me that he was not interested in Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) and Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962), two properties I found mentioned in the press in connection with Harris-Kubrick Pictures (Parsons 1959, Knickerbocker 1962). He believes they both could have been fabricated stories for

<sup>71</sup> In fact, Kubrick might have read *Perfume*, as stated by his daughter Katharina on the *alt.movies.kubrick* forum in January 2004: "My mother and I are huge fans of the book, and we gave Stanley the tapes to listen to. We even suggested actors who might play the lead (Robert Carlyle). He liked it, but was pre-occupied at the time with his current project." Harlan confirmed to me Kubrick never considered it for a film and never inquired about the rights.

<sup>72</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>73</sup> The article merely states that "at different times, directors Brian De Palma and Stanley Kubrick hoped to bring [the novel] to the screen."

<sup>74</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>75</sup> This book has then been therefore included in Geoffrey Cocks's list of Kubrick's unfinished projects (Cocks 2004: 158).

<sup>76</sup> Letter, Stanley Kubrick to John Boulting, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1962, and Boutilings's reply, box 1, Roger Lewis Papers, #3216, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

<sup>77</sup> "Q: Was [Kubrick] ever interested in directing *Blue Movie*? A: No, when he first mentioned it, I assumed that he would be interested in directing it. But it turned out that he has a very ultra-conservative attitude to most things sexual" (Hill 1997: 395).

<sup>78</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

publicity, especially the first one because it involved an offer of “one million capitalistic dollars [that] might [have] meant death for Boris Pasternak” who was “under what amount[ed] to house arrest since he won acclaim in the Free World.”<sup>79</sup> “I have no recollection of making an offer for *Doctor Zhivago*,” Harris told me, “I didn’t have a million dollars anyway!”<sup>80</sup>

Finally, Kubrick’s name has been repeatedly attached to a film version of *The Lord of the Rings* (J.R.R. Tolkien, 1954–1955) starring the Beatles. In fact, he was simply sent the book in 1968 and did not want to do it.<sup>81</sup> Other unsolicited properties that have been mentioned in connection with Kubrick include: *The Getaway* (Jim Thompson, 1958) (Polito 1996: 428), *Sure Hand of God* (Erskine Caldwell, 1949),<sup>82</sup> *What’s New Pussycat?* (Woody Allen, 1965) (Finstad 2005: 314),<sup>83</sup> *Myra Breckinridge* (Gore Vidal, 1967) (Lyons 1967),<sup>84</sup> *The Exorcist* (William Peter Blatty, 1971),<sup>85</sup> *A Piece of Bloody Cake* (Terry Southern, 1974),<sup>86</sup> *Sweeney Todd* (Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler, 1979) (Smith 1980), a biographical screenplay about Edgar Allan Poe penned by Sylvester Stallone in the late 1980s (Smith 1989), a documentary about solitude in the early 1990s,<sup>87</sup> and three novels by John le Carré: *The Little Drummer Girl* (1983) (Sisman 2015: 496),<sup>88</sup> *The Night Manager* (1993)<sup>89</sup> and *The Tailor of Panama* (1996).<sup>90</sup> The only time Kubrick was enthused by a proposal happened when he was offered a film for the United Nations in 1964: he struggled for months to find a suitable story anyway, and finally withdrew from the project (Adams 1964a, Adams 1964b, Odino 2018).

#### 4 A film about Nazi Germany

When questioned by French critic Michel Ciment about his attraction for Germany, Kubrick responded a bit hastily he just “share[d] the fairly widespread fascination with the horror of the Nazi period” (Ciment 1972), but my research shows otherwise. Kubrick manifested a distinct interest in World War II as early as 1958 when he reshaped *The German Lieutenant* by moving the experience Richard Adams went through during the Korean War to a German setting.<sup>91</sup> Simultaneously, Kubrick expressed “extreme interest” in directing *The Bridge at Remagen* (1957), Ken Hechler’s factual account of the first American Army advance over the Rhine (Thompson 1958). The following year, when he was sent Cornelius Ryan’s *The Longest Day* (1959), an account of D-Day from multiple perspectives, he reacted enthusiastically to it.<sup>92</sup> These properties were not pursued

<sup>79</sup> Connolly, Mike (February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1959). Untitled. *Philadelphia Inquirer*: 25. According to the article, the film would have been a coproduction between Harris, Kubrick and Joshua Logan, distributed by Warner Bros.

<sup>80</sup> Filippo Olivieri, telephone interview with James B. Harris, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>81</sup> According to O’Dell, Kubrick said the book was “unfilmable” and even deterred the Beatles from doing it (O’Dell 2002: 91-105).

<sup>82</sup> Anon. (July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1961). “Bufman Will Stage ‘Sure Hand of God?’” *Daily Variety* p. 4. Kubrick was sent a dramatization by Harry Essex.

<sup>83</sup> Warren Beatty proposed Kubrick to direct Allen’s script in November 1963.

<sup>84</sup> Vidal’s agent sent the manuscript to Kubrick.

<sup>85</sup> “One by one the directors on the list were penciled out. Some had commitments that would keep them unavailable for almost a year. Arthur Penn was teaching at Yale. Stanley Kubrick could produce for himself, thank you kindly. And Nichols said he didn’t want to hazard a film whose success might depend upon a child’s performance” (Blatty 1974: 39).

<sup>86</sup> Southern mailed a copy to Kubrick, who responded with a friendly and noncommittal “read with interest and pleasure and will advise” (Hill 2001: 216).

<sup>87</sup> Anon. (January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991). Untitled. *Screen International*. “Stanley Kubrick and Ingmar Bergman are among the big names sought to direct six 52-minute documentaries on the subject of solitude.”

<sup>88</sup> Kubrick sent the novel back to le Carré with detailed technical notes correcting the mistakes in the weaponry mentioned in the novel.

<sup>89</sup> Stanley Kubrick Instagram profile. <https://www.instagram.com/p/BKitKwhA0zu/?taken-by=stanleykubrick> (last accessed 14-03-17).

<sup>90</sup> “Personal Library”, SK/1/1, SKA.

<sup>91</sup> *Kinematograph* (20): 292. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Filmmuseum.

<sup>92</sup> Letter from Michael Mindlin, Jr. to Stanley Kubrick, December 7, 1959. SK/8/7/3, SKA.

further, though, neither was *Castle Keep*, a 1965 novel by William Eastlake about the Battle of the Bulge that *Variety* announced as Kubrick's next project in 1966 (Archerd 1966).<sup>93</sup>

Over the years, Kubrick's interest shifted specifically towards Nazi Germany and gradually the Holocaust. Contrary to his usual procedure, he didn't narrow his options. As Jan Harlan fittingly points out, "If you are an artist, and you want to think seriously about such a complex and fundamentally incomprehensible phenomenon (...) then you go on many tracks. You don't decide anything beforehand, it's too complex."<sup>94</sup>

In 1970 one of his ideas was to do a film about show business people in the Third Reich. Kubrick, a film director himself and related to controversial filmmaker Veit Harlan through his wife Christiane, was interested in exploring how an artist might behave under such circumstances. "If I had been in [Veit's] position," Kubrick confessed to his wife, "what would I have done? If I had recognized it in time, would I have been afraid?" (Moeller 2008).

When I came into working with Kubrick – Jan Harlan says – he was very, very taken by the idea of using the UFA studio as a sort of backdrop, and he imagined that he would be having a production meeting with the director, and the script editor, and the designers, you know, 8 o'clock in the morning at Potsdam, and what have you, but everything under the guidance of Goebbels at the same time.<sup>95</sup>

Veit Harlan himself could have been the focus for this idea (Jenny and Wolf 1999). Kubrick personally interviewed Harlan's actress wife Kristina Söderbaum to learn the details about working at UFA, and then sent Jan Harlan to Munich to talk to actor Maximilian Schell. Frustratingly, nothing significant resulted from these attempts – "it was just meaningless," recalls Harlan.<sup>96</sup> Kubrick turned to the literature to seek information about the propaganda machine and asked Alexander Walker to find him people through his connections as a journalist. After suggesting a series of names, in the end Walker wondered if Kubrick had tried Leni Riefenstahl. "She would know, wouldn't she?" remarked Kubrick, "She'd know everything" (Walker 1970). As intriguing a possibility as it is, Kubrick in the end decided not to follow Walker's advice and, as far as we know, he did not contact Riefenstahl.<sup>97</sup> Not surprisingly, the tone of this film would have been black comedy. "You wouldn't go as far as they did in *The Producers* [Mel Brooks, 1968]," Kubrick told Walker, "but commercial Fascism ought to make a very amusing black farce."<sup>98</sup> The Strangelovian defusing of dramatic material to a scathing comedy is here very fitting: Kubrick even contacted Peter Sellers for this project.<sup>99</sup>

After briefly considering Stefan Zweig's *The Royal Game* (1941),<sup>100</sup> around June 1972 Andrew Birkin offered Kubrick the direction of his screenplay of Albert Speer's memoir *Inside the Third Reich: The Secret Diaries* (1970). Kubrick, although positively impressed by Birkin's script, "felt he really couldn't bring himself to make the movie. Why not? As though this should have been obvious, he said, 'Well – I'm Jewish!'"<sup>101</sup> Considering the similarities between Speer and Veit Harlan's positions in the Reich's inner workings, it is difficult to take

<sup>93</sup> A war movie in the middle of the complex making of *2001: A Space Odyssey* would seem unlikely and one could easily dismiss the news as an unsubstantiated rumor, but a letter in the Kubrick Archive shows that Kubrick was reading Paul Carell's book *Hitler Moves East 1941-1943* in 1964 (SK/11/9/75, SKA). Andrew Birkin, then a production assistant, shares a revealing anecdote: "When I was in German Southwest Africa (shooting plates for the Dawn of Man [February-May 1967]) and told [Kubrick] how much Nazi material was readily available in local bookshops, he asked me to buy up everything in sight – at MGM's expense!" (Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Andrew Birkin, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016).

<sup>94</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>95</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>97</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Walker, Alexander (undated). "Kubrick – General Observations at Abbots Mead." Gemona (Udine): Fondo Walker, Cineteca del Friuli.

<sup>99</sup> "Next year, I'm going to work again with Stanley Kubrick on a story about Goebbels and the Nazi party during World War II. It's a project that Stanley wants very much to do" (Siskel 1971).

<sup>100</sup> This is confirmed by both Frewin and Jan Harlan.

<sup>101</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Andrew Birkin, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Kubrick's remark as genuine.<sup>102</sup> Birkin himself believes it "might have been a convenient excuse, either because he thought the script not good enough, or that he was about to embark on *Barry Lyndon*."<sup>103</sup> Whatever the reason, as he had done with Michel Ciment, Kubrick decided not to reveal his intentions.

Veit Harlan was not the only source of inspiration Kubrick had in his family. Fifty loose pages from a novelistic treatment form part of the Stanley Kubrick Archive: they tell the story of an 11-year-old German girl who, in 1943, leaves boarding school in Germany to live with her parents in Amsterdam, where she gradually becomes aware of the persecution of Jews (Krämer 2016). This story is remarkably similar to Christiane Kubrick's own childhood experience: her parents, visiting members of the German Theater, discovered in horror that both the apartments they were given by the Nazi occupation government in The Hague had belonged to Jewish families that were deported in Poland (Cocks 2004: 71-3). The undated treatment changes names and character details, but otherwise it is a deliberate narrative rendering of Christiane's family story: two handwritten notes are even addressed to her.<sup>104</sup>

Jan Harlan confirms a second thread of interest for Kubrick was how daily lives in Germany were affected by the Nazi regime. This is also expressed in a project a Warner Bros. executive described in December 1970:

Stanley wants to do a picture dealing with the basic reasons and motivations of the German people caught up in the rush of German militarism; to follow a group of characters from the time of Hitler's rise to power, through the period of the war, to the advent of Neo-Nazi-ism and present-day Germany. The only source material that even slightly touches on this period in dramatic form that Stanley finds stimulating is Hans Helmut Kirst's NIGHT OF THE GENERALS. I doubt whether we are going to find any basic source material covering the vast area that Stanley wishes to encompass which, at the same time, tells a definitive story. [...] I think that unless we get very lucky with a specific book, our best bet will be to bring in someone like Kirst, have him work with Stanley for a while and go into a treatment, and then have a screenwriter work with them both from thereon in.<sup>105</sup>

Still lacking the elusive specific book or even a good story, in 1976 Jan Harlan tried to do exactly what the Warner Bros. executive had proposed and suggested Isaac Bashevis Singer to Kubrick.<sup>106</sup> Harlan was promptly dispatched to New York to ask the writer "to write an original Shakespearean-type drama with the Holocaust on the background. [Singer] looked at me, quite seriously, and said, 'Well, that's a huge problem, I don't know the first thing about it.'"<sup>107</sup> Kubrick understood Singer's implication, but felt a bit chastised by the suggestion that only first-hand experience empowered an artist to address this topic (Harlan 2005: 509).

After *The Shining*, Kubrick's interest in Nazi Germany rose again, but with a much bleaker tone: talking with Michael Herr about the massive *The Extermination of the European Jews* by Raul Hilberg (1961), he said what he most wanted to do was a film about the Holocaust, "but good luck putting all of *that* into a two-hour movie" (Herr 2000: 7). Another problem that Kubrick saw was that "to make a truly accurate film about the Holocaust, the film would be unwatchable."<sup>108</sup> This view was shared by Hilberg himself, who proposed an oblique approach and offered the story of Adam Czerniakow, the Jewish leader of the Warsaw Ghetto who was forced by the Germans to select Jews for deportation (Cocks 2013).<sup>109</sup> Kubrick didn't like this idea, nonetheless

<sup>102</sup> In fact, Speer's story was even less problematic than Veit Harlan's: Speer maintained his ignorance of the Final Solution in his memoir, but when challenged on the topic by the producers of the film, he was in fact prepared to admit that he might be losing his memory, something Harlan never did (Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Andrew Birkin, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

<sup>103</sup> Filippo Olivieri, email interview with Andrew Birkin, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Uncatalogued "Unfinished Projects" boxes, SKA.

<sup>105</sup> Dan Rissner letter to John Calley, cc to Ted Ashley, Fred Weintraub, and others December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1970. Part of John Calley estate auction. <http://www.julienslive.com/m/lot-details/index/catalog/142/lot/58869/STANLEY-KUBRICK-UNFINISHED-PROJECTS-FILE> (last accessed 15-03-17). Kubrick was sent all the novels by Kirst, and material by Peter Weiss, Rolf Hochhuth and Günter Grass.

<sup>106</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>107</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>108</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>109</sup> Hilberg later published this diary (Hilberg 1999).

Frewin remembers doing a lot of research about the Ghetto uprising, finding “quite a few historical accounts about the Warsaw Ghetto, and memoirs of Jewish partisan fighters [...] that were written in Yiddish,” and having them translated into English.<sup>110</sup> More research involved a bookseller who in August 1981 sent Kubrick a list of twenty novels inspired by the Holocaust, apologizing for not being able to find any diaries written by Nazi leaders or sympathizers (Krämer 2015).

Thomas Keneally's *Schindler's Ark* (1982) offered another indirect possibility but didn't pass Kubrick's judgment.<sup>111</sup> After briefly considering *Swing Under the Nazis* (1985), a collection of tales of cultural resistance in Western Europe fought with drums, horns, and guitars<sup>112</sup> – an almost optimistic counterpart to the stories of ruined lives in Germany – perhaps as a reaction to Bashevis Singer's remark, Kubrick began perusing autobiographical accounts of Holocaust survivors, including Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* (1965)<sup>113</sup> and Primo Levi's *If This is a Man* (1947) (Aragno 1999: 28).<sup>114</sup> In the end it was Michael Herr who made the suggestion that met Kubrick's demands when he sent him Louis Begley's *Wartime Lies* (1991) in bound galleys. “There was an element of autobiography here,” Jan Harlan remembers, “Louis Begley was that little boy himself. So Stanley felt encouraged again.”<sup>115</sup> Kubrick optioned the book and started adapting it under the title *Aryan Papers*. When he abandoned the project in November 1993, despite two years of intense work,<sup>116</sup> he still didn't have a proper script (Loewy 2004).<sup>117</sup>

## 5 A magical blend

Plot was not enough. Obsession was not enough. A strong story was often not enough either. Kubrick's decision making process was really complex:

The plot is the most artificial aspect of a story: it would be much more real if it didn't have a plot, for life doesn't seem to go in the form of plots. But it does seem to be a concession [...] You have to keep people's attention – an obvious thing to say, but I think that sometimes, particularly in film that have a more serious purpose, that point is lost. [...] I don't really start anything until I find a story that seems to have enough obsessional quality about it for me in order to want to go ahead with it. [...] Of course, if the plot, by some miraculous accident of fate and talent on the part of the writer, happens to illuminate the theme and offer valid and interesting ways of exploring sub-themes within the plot then you have the magical ingredients with which you can do something really interesting. [...] I always seem to wind up with a story that lends itself to serving as a springboard to do all the things that you really want to do. (Walker 1970)

“The whole problem is finding a story,” Kubrick summarized (Heymann 1987). “A good story is a bizarre blend. It has to keep the public's interest sharp, without betraying the ideas, the philosophy and the theme of the story” (Halberstadt 1987, my translation). It must also develop enough of an obsessional quality for Kubrick to

<sup>110</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>111</sup> According to Frewin, Kubrick read the novel but was not so enthusiastic about it: he shared and echoed Hilberg's searing opinion, that *Schindler's Ark* “is about success.” The book rights were bought by Universal Pictures with Steven Spielberg attached to direct (Maslin 1982).

<sup>112</sup> Kubrick preferred title for this adaptation would have been *Dr. Jazz* (Frewin 2005: 517, Huges 2013).

<sup>113</sup> Filippo Olivieri, interview with Anthony Frewin, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

<sup>114</sup> *If This is a Man* was first published in English in 1959.

<sup>115</sup> Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>116</sup> Kubrick left 147 boxes of location research from Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, East Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Poland and Slovakia; 113 boxes of research materials including German illustrated magazines from the late '30s and '40s (probably costume, prop and set dressing research), 72 boxes of photographs taken from books about World War II arranged by various subjects in relation to the film; photographs and research into securing props and equipment including military hardware; prepared scene breakdowns and a draft shooting schedule and prepared draft budgets. The material totals 272 boxes (SK/18/2, SKA). Kubrick had also already casted the main characters and had gone so far as to do costume test shots of Johanna ter Steege.

<sup>117</sup> Jan Harlan confirms Kubrick “was not happy with his script. His script should not even be read” (Filippo Olivieri, Peter Krämer, interview with Jan Harlan, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016).



set him in motion. It should then lend itself to being a starting point to fulfill his existing ambitions. No wonder he believed “Good stories are rare. Good stories which can be made into a film are even more rare – they are in a way miraculous” (Hopf 1987, my translation). No wonder he made only thirteen films out of around seventy stories and obsessions, either. The longer and longer lapse between his films, he once said, “just shows how long it takes me to fall in love with a story” (Halberstadt 1987). When Kubrick tried to explain what he sought in a new subject, he deliberately used words that suggest something inexplicable: magic, miracle, love. “So, finding a good story that would make a good film is really a miracle. When this miracle comes along, I make a film. But how can one create a miracle? I haven’t managed to do that yet...” (Halberstadt 1987).

## Films and Projects

<i>Fear and Desire</i> (1951-53) [Directed]	<i>Three of a Kind</i> (1959)
<i>Killer's Kiss</i> (1954-55) [D]	<i>Lolita</i> (1958-1962) [D]
<i>The Killing</i> (1955-56) [D]	<i>La Fête</i> (1960)
<i>The Snatchers</i> (1955)	<i>From Russia, With Love</i> (1961)
<i>The Killer Inside Me</i> (1955)	<i>Notes on a Dark Street</i> (1962)
<i>So Help Me God</i> (1955)	<i>Ned Kelly gang</i> (1962)
<i>The Down Slope</i> (1956)	<i>Seven Days in May</i> (1962)
<i>Love in a Dry Season</i> (1956)	<i>The Reckless Moment</i> (1960s)
<i>Lunatic at Large</i> (1956)	<i>Dr. Strangelove</i> (1961-1964) [D]
<i>The Burning Secret</i> (1956)	<i>The Passion Flower Hotel</i> (1963)
<i>Natural Child</i> (1956)	<i>Shadow on the Sun</i> (1963)
<i>The Death of a Bachelor</i> (1956)	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (1964-68) [D]
<i>The Unfaithful Wife</i> (1956)	<i>Castle Keep</i> (1966)
<i>The Blind Mirror</i> (1956)	<i>Napoleon</i> (MGM, 1967-68)
<i>Paths of Glory</i> (1956-57) [D]	<i>Traumnovelle</i> (1968-71)
TV series on <i>Operation Mad Ball</i> (1957)	<i>Napoleon</i> (UA, 1969)
<i>I Stole \$16,000,000</i> (1957-58)	<i>A Clockwork Orange</i> (1970-71) [D]
<i>Beau Geste</i> (1958)	<i>Napoleon</i> (WB, 1970-72)
<i>The Virginia Riders</i> (1958)	<i>Nazi Germany</i>
<i>The Last Parallel</i> (1958)	<i>Nazi film industry</i> (1970-71)
<i>One-Eyed Jacks</i> (1958)	<i>The Night of the Generals</i> (1970)
<i>Sick, Sick, Sick</i> (1958-59)	<i>Girl in Nazi-Occupied Holland</i>
<i>The German Lieutenant</i> (1958-59)	<i>The Royal Game</i> (1970s)
<i>Spartacus</i> (1959-60) [D]	<i>Barry Lyndon</i> (1973-75) [D]
<i>Henderson and the Rain King</i> (1959)	<i>Traumnovelle</i> (1976)
<i>The Lion</i> (1959)	<i>Night Drop</i> (1976)
<i>Laughter in the Dark</i> (1959)	<i>Napoleon</i> (TV series, late '70s)

<i>The Shadow Knows</i> (1976)	<i>The Ring of the Nibelung</i> (early '80s)
<i>Edward Bulwer-Lytton</i> (late '70s)	<i>Eric Brighteyes</i> (1982-86)
<i>Super-Toys Last All Summer Long</i> (1977)	<i>Full Metal Jacket</i> (1983-87) [D]
<i>The Shining</i> (1976-80) [D]	<i>Dr. Jazz</i> (1985)
<i>Traumnovelle</i> (1980-83)	<i>A Perfect Spy</i> (1986)
<i>War Movie</i>	<i>Napoleon</i> (1987)
<i>Shiloh</i> (1980)	<i>Caesar's invasion of England</i> (late '80s)
<i>The Last Parallel</i> (1980)	<i>Shadow on the Sun</i> (1988)
<i>Battle of Monte Cassino</i>	<i>Kaputt</i> (1980s)
<i>Night Drop</i> (1982)	<i>Under Fire: The Story of a Squad</i> (1980s)
<i>The Holocaust</i>	<i>Super-Toys</i> (1988-1990)
<i>Adam Czerniakow</i>	<i>All the King's Men</i> (1990)
<i>Schindler's Ark</i> (1982)	<i>A.I. Artificial Intelligence</i> (1990-95)
<i>The Painted Bird</i>	<i>Aryan Papers</i> (1991-93)
<i>If This is a Man</i>	<i>Eyes Wide Shut</i> (1994-99) [D]
<i>Super-Toys</i> (1982)	

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