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Irruptions of the Sacred in a “World of Shit”: Profanity, Sacred Words, and Cinematic Hierophanies in Stanley Kubrick’s *Full Metal Jacket* (1987)

Abstract

Full Metal Jacket remains embedded in the consciousness of the popular culture mainly because of its abundance of profane language, violent imagery, and salacious set pieces. The juxtaposition of profane language and imagery with sacred language and religious symbolism reveals that Kubrick’s Vietnam film has powerful religious overtones that comprise an important element of the film’s critique of *homo religiosus* and the modern human condition. By continually juxtaposing the sacred and profane, Kubrick created “cinematic hierophanies” that advanced a cultural critique that inventively integrated ideas from some of the mid-20th Century’s greatest interpreters of myths -- Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell, and Mircea Eliade.

Keywords

Vietnam War, Jung, Campbell, Eliade, Religion, Sacred, Profane

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Therefore the aforesaid pope commanded the king and people of the Franks that Pepin, who was exercising royal power, should be called king.... Pepin was proclaimed king, and Childeric, who was falsely called king, was shaved and sent into a monastery.

-- The Annals of Lorsch, c. AD 750¹

"[T]he man who has made his choice in favor of a profane life never succeeds in completely doing away with religious behavior."

-- Mircea Eliade, 1959²

"I told him about a dinner I'd had a few nights before with a director, a man whose history had set new industry standards for wretched excess....Stanley shook his head sadly. "You see, Michael. These guys don't know how to live like monks."

-- Michael Herr, 1987³

Toward the end of Carl Jung's long life (1875-1961), the eminent psychologist and interpreter of myths, dreams, and symbols had decided that the only events in his life worth describing to others were those in which the "imperishable world irrupted into the transitory one."⁴ Stanley Kubrick might have had this particular sentiment in mind while making *Full Metal Jacket*. A crucial -- perhaps even notorious -- characteristic of Kubrick's penultimate film is the abundant use of profanity.⁵ But less noticeable is the purposeful manner in which sacred language intrudes into the dialogue, especially in close proximity to profane language. Kubrick uses this device, along with powerful visual salvos, to portray the complex interplay of the sacred and the profane. The film's concern with sacred and profane language, therefore, provides a key to Kubrick's creative

process, the cultural and social commentary that is inherent in the film, and the inventive way in which he integrates the ideas of the mid-20th Century's greatest interpreters of myths -- Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell, and Mircea Eliade -- into *Full Metal Jacket*.⁶ This essay does not set out to cover every aspect of the film's Jungian elements -- or those related to Campbell or Eliade -- in a comprehensive manner. Its main purpose, rather, is to identify salient elements of their ideas in order to gain a better understanding of Kubrick's creative process and intentions as they relate to *Full Metal Jacket*.

As many critics have pointed out, Kubrick's Vietnam movie is, for all intents and purposes, two very different movies spliced together. Scholarly and critical evaluation of the split is beyond the scope of this paper, but at the very least, the contrast underscores the dualistic theme of the film. The first part, lasting approximately forty-five minutes, deals entirely with the highly structured experience of Marine boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina. It ends when Private Lawrence -- the hapless, naïve, and uncoordinated recruit who gets the nickname "Gomer Pyle" -- murders Sergeant Hartman and then turns his rifle on himself. The film then breaks abruptly to a narratively unstructured and morally anarchic Vietnam setting, where the remaining one hour and eight minutes unfolds.

Many elements of *Full Metal Jacket* support a reading of the film as a Jungian parable about humanity's struggle to integrate the dark and irrational

subconscious force into the conscious self. Jung called this the Shadow Force, and deduced its existence through his interpretation of symbols in dreams and myths. Early in the project, Kubrick and co-screenwriter Michael Herr organized the film around the Shadow, or what Herr describes as "the most accessible" of the Jungian archetypes. The film is less than coy on this subject when Private Joker, with a mass grave of civilians as a backdrop, explains to an angry colonel the meaning of "Born to Kill" written on his helmet, and the peace symbol pinned to his flak jacket. "I think I was trying to suggest something about the duality of man, sir," he says. "You know, the Jungian thing, sir." The colonel replies that all he ever wanted is for his Marines to follow his orders "as they would the word of God." Much of the religious symbolism in the film supports a Jungian reading, insofar as Jung's work emphasized that the human psyche is religious by nature and "spontaneously produces images with a religious content."⁷ But the film's narrative structure, as well as its concern with the sacred and the profane, suggests that Kubrick was interested in approaching the subject of dualism from *outside* the Jungian perspective, as well.

The influence of mythologist Joseph Campbell (1926-1987) on Kubrick, for example, is well documented. Arthur C. Clarke, who co-wrote the screenplay for *2001: A Space Odyssey*, recalled that he and Kubrick "set out with the deliberate intention of making a myth." Kubrick, who had given him Campbell's *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* to study during the project's development, was

intent on creating “a smashing theme of mythic grandeur.”⁸ Given his interest in myths -- and his reputation as an autodidact and intellectual -- it is not surprising that Kubrick was acutely aware of Jung and Campbell. Nor is it surprising that Campbell, who was deeply influenced by Jung, was also concerned with paradoxes and the reconciliation of opposites. *Full Metal Jacket's* overt Jungian theme, rich symbolism, and the closeness with which it tracks Campbell's archetypal “monomyth,” signal Kubrick's clear return to the mythic approach of his *2001:A Space Odyssey*-days.⁹

Full Metal Jacket's debt to Jung and Campbell is perhaps more obvious than that which it owes to yet another prominent mythologist of the mid-twentieth century, Mircea Eliade (1907-1986). Like Jung and Campbell, Eliade was a celebrated interpreter of archaic myths and their relationship to beliefs and practices in the modern world. In 1974, the *New York Times Book Review* described Eliade as “by nearly unanimous consent the most influential student of religion in the world today.”¹⁰ Around that same time, Religious Studies scholar Richard Comstock published a short article in *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* arguing that much of *2001* correlates with Eliade's mythic schema.¹¹

One purpose of this study is to demonstrate that Comstock's proposition, while plausible regarding *2001*, is undeniably applicable to *Full Metal Jacket*. But

Kubrick's Vietnam War movie doesn't journey outward, into the heavens, to seek answers. Instead, *Full Metal Jacket* explores the deepest recesses of human psychology and is grounded in the complex ironies of terrestrial existence. It employs a mythic structure wherein the overt theme of reconciling opposites is partly Jungian, and the story arc reflects Campbell, although the film's particular concern with the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane suggests the influence of Eliade. The Romanian-born Eliade was tremendously prolific and influential over his long career as a novelist, writer, and historian of religion. Like Jung and Campbell, Eliade was concerned with the reconciliation and integration of opposites.¹²

Eliade was particularly attuned to the paradox of the sacred manifesting itself in the profane as what he called "hierophanies," or "irruptions of the sacred." According to Eliade, "[m]an becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane."¹³ All religions, according to Eliade – from the simplest to the most complex – are based on hierophanies. These occurrences, however, are paradoxical because the sacred is a "manifestation of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world, in objects that are an integral part of our natural, 'profane' world."¹⁴ Eliade describes a world in which "the sacred hides itself in the very process of revealing itself."¹⁵ The sacred, which he described as "the meaningful"

and “the real,” manifests in the “false, illusory, [and] misleading” profane. Yet hierophanies, and the sacred power they represent, are necessary for providing “religious man” with a “true orientation” in the world.¹⁶ Eliade argued that, as descendants of *homo religiosus*, even modern people have an innate need to experience the sacred.¹⁷

By depicting a reality in which the sacred persistently manifests itself throughout a profane context, Kubrick transforms the hierophany into a cinematic device and employs it as a parallel to the more obvious references to Jung and Campbell. In a certain sense, Kubrick has constructed *Full Metal Jacket* as a series of cinematic hierophanies in which, as Eliade would put it, “*something sacred shows itself to us.*”¹⁸ Consequently, *Full Metal Jacket* winks knowingly at Eliade, while simultaneously paying homage to him and the other two premier mythologists of Kubrick’s formative and most fecund periods.

It is principally through language that Eliade’s concepts reveal themselves in *Full Metal Jacket*. There are two broad categories of language in the film’s dialogue that merit the viewer’s attention: sacred words and profanity. For the purposes of this analysis, *sacred* implies an association with deities, religious ideas, and activities. *Profane* implies a narrower definition than simply non-religious. It refers more specifically to irreverent and blasphemous content, and to obscenities that refer to the sexual and the scatological.¹⁹ A sacred word appears in

the dialogue, on average, about every two and a half minutes. A profane term appears, on average, nearly twice per minute.*

Like the first segment of the film, the Vietnam footage contains an abundance of profane dialogue. Of the 206 incidents, 109 occur at Parris Island. The remaining ninety-seven occur in Vietnam. At Parris Island, there is an average of about two and a half obscenities per minute. In Vietnam, the average is about one and a half. In other words, by this measure Parris Island is about forty percent more verbally profane than Vietnam. Parris Island is not only linguistically more *profane* than Vietnam, it also linguistically more *sacred* than Vietnam. Compared to the boot camp scenes, the dialogue in the Vietnam odyssey is nearly devoid of sacred references. There are, by my count, thirty-four sacred words spoken by Marines in Private Joker's boot camp experience.²⁰ If we take these thirty-four occurrences over the forty-five minutes at Parris Island, the result is an average of one sacred "irruption" every one minute and nineteen seconds.

Kubrick amplifies the linguistic contrast with striking visual reinforcements. The *visual* environments of Parris Island and Vietnam contrast sharply, with Vietnam being more obviously and strikingly profane than the Parris Island location. When indoors at Parris Island, the Marines inhabit barracks that are polished, uncluttered, and have an antiseptic appearance. Outdoors, the Marines train on grounds that are spacious, covered with well-manicured grass,

* 206 profanities and forty-six sacred words in 113 minutes (minus end credits).

and suggest an orderly, pastoral environment. [Figs. 1 & 2] Much of Vietnam, on the other hand, is a ruin of burning, shattered urban Hellscares. In the countryside, the fields become a mass grave for lye-covered victims of Viet Cong atrocities, or a place where arbitrary death rains down from a passing helicopter manned by a psychotic gunman. [Figs. 3 - 6]

Five specific Parris Island scenes reveal the salience of the contrast between the profane and the sacred manifestations that intrude. The first is the “Rifleman’s Creed”



Fig. 1 (All figures c. 1987 by Warner Bros.)



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6.

scene that occurs about three minutes after Sergeant Hartman chokes Private Pyle into near unconsciousness. The choking scene makes only an oblique religious reference when the menacing Hartman shouts at Pyle, "Get on your knees!" [Fig. 7] The



Fig. 7.

“Rifleman’s Creed” scene makes the prayer reference explicit. Prior to the actual intonation, the sergeant officiates a pseudo-sacramental rite that weds the recruits to their rifles. Once they are “married” and in their bunks, Hartman barks the one word order: “Pray!” Kubrick’s departure from the source novel reveals his intent. In the book, the Sergeant orders the recruits to “sing,” rather than “pray.” They sing a part of the Marine Corps hymn that contains no sacred words.²¹

A scene with similarly compelling sacred overtones occurs at eighteen minutes into the film. In this scene, Hartman wakes the recruits for Sunday “divine worship,” and ends up slapping Private Joker for not believing in the Virgin Mary. In a subsequent scene that occurs at approximately thirty-two minutes into the film, the Sergeant leads the recruits in a Christmas Day rendition of “Happy Birthday” to Jesus. After the song, the observance continues as Hartman declares that “God has a hard-on for Marines” -- and concludes by describing how the Marine Corps propitiates God by keeping Heaven “packed with so many fresh souls.” The fourth scene comes at graduation, when Hartman tells his Marines that, even in death, they will “live forever” because the Marine Corps “lives forever.” The final sacred reference comes in the latrine, when Private Pyle recites a fragment of the “Rifleman’s Creed” just before murdering the sergeant and then himself. Kubrick makes the viewer wait no longer than thirteen minutes between these scenes. The *shortest* wait is thirty seconds, while

the *average* interval is five minutes between these examples of what Eliade might have called cinematic "irruptions of the sacred."²²

The Vietnam section of the film lasts one hour and eight minutes (minus credits), or about twenty-three minutes longer than the Parris Island segment. Adhering to the standards established earlier for quantifying sacred references, there are only twelve such events in the entire second part of the film.* The contrast is substantial, with a ratio of one event of this type in Vietnam for about every three at Parris Island. Their frequency is an average of one sacred reference about every five minutes and forty seconds. The average at Parris Island is one every one minute and nineteen seconds. By this measure, the sacred reveals itself at Parris Island more than four times as often as it does in Vietnam. Qualitative assessments can be subjective, but the sacred references in the Vietnam dialogue are neither as ornate nor as intense as at Parris Island.

The creation of sacred space was another archetypal phenomenon that concerned Eliade, who wrote, "to organize a space is to repeat the paradigmatic work of the gods."²³ The intermingling of language and location to suggest consecrated space begins in *Full Metal Jacket's* opening haircut montage – a scene that does not appear in the novel and was invented entirely for the film. The recruits are having their heads shaved like new monks entering a monastery or, perhaps sheared like sacrificial lambs being readied for the slaughter. The

* "Tet" (4), "God (3), "holiday" (2)," "Amen," "pilgrim," and "praying."

sound track slyly implies the frontier myth, a sacred mission,^{*} and monastic celibacy, as it plays the period – and explicitly anti-communist -- country-western song “[Goodbye my Darling], Hello Vietnam.” The sergeant later reinforces the notion of celibacy by informing the recruits that their access to “Mary Jane Rottencrotch” and her “pretty pink panties” has been revoked. In the source novel, the barracks are the sergeant’s “palace.”²⁴ Kubrick subtly directs us to a more sacred milieu.

Kubrick makes the association with the sacred clear in the very next scene. Here, in an antiseptic barracks dormitory, the recruits stand at attention at the foot of their bunks. Sergeant Hartman walks up and down the rows inspecting the new arrivals. He tells the recruits he will make them into “ministers of death praying for war.” He then unleashes his first onslaught of insults, obscenities, and corporal punishment, including the aforementioned choking scene. From the very beginning of the film, scenes like this create tension and confusion, in part, by forcing a contrast between the sacred and the profane and obscuring the common boundaries between them.

In his study of Kubrick as an adapter of novels for the screen, Greg Jenkins demonstrates how the film “intensifies” Hartman and gives him an “expanded presence.”²⁵ Because Hartman so frequently crosses over between the sacred and the profane, he amplifies the contrast between the two realms.

^{*} “America has heard the bugle call. And you know it involves us, one and all.”

Certainly Hartman uses beatings and threats to maintain control over the recruits and the sacred space they inhabit, but he also has a monopoly over the use of sacred language. The recruits use it a mere five times, and only with Hartman’s permission.* Only Pyle dares to pray without being ordered — but this is a symptom of his psychosis immediately before he murders Hartman in the same latrine that the sergeant had earlier ordered Joker and Cowboy to clean so well that “the Virgin Mary herself would be proud to go in there and take a dump.” Kubrick moves the location of the murder from where it occurs in Hasford’s novel (the bunk bay), to a nearly literal “world of shit”** that Hartman had



Fig. 8.

ordered his recruits to turn into a virtual shrine to the mother of Jesus. Through the intermingling of sacred language, profane places, and violence, [Figs. 8-10] Kubrick reveals the ironic manner in which the borders between the sacred and

* Four times during the “Rifleman’s Creed” and once on Christmas.

** While sitting on a toilet, just before the murder, Pyle – in a moment of clarity – declares to Joker, “I am in a world of shit.”

the profane are often indiscernible. Hartman's proclivity for forcing the sacred and the profane into to the same space provides Kubrick with an extremely inventive – and invective -- device for approaching the paradox of the sacred and the profane from an Eliadean perspective.



Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.

Figs. 8-10: Pyle's personal affects, thrown on the floor by Hartman [Fig. 8], contrast with the polished and anti-septic barracks, including the lavatory [Fig. 9]. Hartman's order: Make it so clean that "the Virgin Mary herself would be proud to go in there and take a dump." His murder leaves another "mess" on one of his sanitized/sacralized floors [Fig. 10]. Similar camera angles and positioning reinforce the theme.

It is instructive, by way of contrast with the source novel, to see how Kubrick adapts the use of sacred language and symbols to the Vietnam setting. In one of the film's most famous sequences, Kubrick establishes the Vietnam location by fading from the blood-splattered latrine, where Pyle has just killed the sergeant and himself, to a bustling Da Nang street. A Vietnamese prostitute saunters into the frame hoping to ply her trade outside the "Las Vegas" bar. Private Joker negotiates price while Rafter Man takes pictures. The proper reference now is Sin City and Mary Magdalene, not the celibacy of the barracks and the Virgin Mary. It is an almost purely salacious scene with no sacred words. The only hint of the sacred is a small portrait of Jesus, in the bottom right corner of the frame, near the very end of the scene. Kubrick has signaled that he is moving the viewer into a realm where, if the sacred manifests at all, it will do so only briefly – almost subliminally. [Fig. 11]



Fig. 11.

The streetwalker scene acts as a strong thematic link between Vietnam and the profanity of Parris Island. But soon after, the film quickly retreats from this highly structured approach. The decreasing number and frequency of sacred references in the dialogue is an important signifier of the change. The abundance of such references in the first section of the film gives way to a relative paucity of them in the second, which contains only twelve. For the Americans now in Vietnam, Hollywood and entertainment industry references, with numerous sarcastic references to the Old West and the frontier myth, outnumber sacred ones by more than two-and-a-half to one.* Visual elements underscore the change. A gutted movie theater in Hue, for example, with “The Lone Ranger” on the

* “Ann Margaret” (2), “John Wayne” (or imitations) (6), “Lone Ranger,” “Television,” “movie,” “Indians,” “Poor dumb bastards” (a quote from the film *Patton*), “Mickey Mouse” (18).

marquee, is the backdrop for one of the film's raunchiest scenes, in which the abandoned movie theater is just another place where a whore plies her trade.²⁶

The sniper scene, which Kubrick alters substantially from the source novel, returns to the film's earlier tautness largely because Kubrick redeploys both the visually and verbally sacred. As the squad makes its way through the sniper's building, the interior designs change. The lower floor is a claustrophobic ruin of industrial drabness and squared concrete columns [Fig. 12]. As Joker enters the upper level of the building,



Fig. 12

he passes in front of a metal railing shaped like crosses and inter-locking swastikas – an Eastern religious symbol for millennia before the Nazis appropriated it [Fig. 13]. The pillars become rounded and marble-like. Amid the rubble and flames, a green and red mandala – a Buddhist (and Jungian) symbol of

transcendence often used to establish sacred space -- decorates an interior wall.²⁷

There are large interior doors and windows to



Fig.13.

the outside that, in Eliade's schema, implies transcendence.²⁸ A North Vietnamese flag, hanging upside down, decorates a wall. ** All of this makes clear that the sniper's lair is another of Kubrick's cinematic hierophanies – a profane place transformed by the intrusion of the sacred.

From behind a column – and with a mandala as a backdrop -- Joker aims at the sniper, who is crouched on a raised, altar-like platform with steps leading up to it. Joker pulls the trigger, but his rifle jams [Fig. 14]. The sniper turns toward him, revealing that she is a very young woman. She fires at Joker until Rafter Man shoots her. The mortally wounded sniper lies dying near the base of one of the several rounded, cathedral-like columns that signal a transformation

** An upside down flag is an international symbol of distress and also a form of desecration.

from the lower floors [Fig. 15]. The squad looms over her. One Marine lewdly remarks, "No more boom-boom for this baby-san." As she whimpers unintelligibly, Joker's comment reintroduces the sacred. "She's praying," he says. The sniper continues her pleas ("Shoot me. Shoot me."), but the Marines are unsympathetic. Animal Mother, the biggest and most belligerent member of the squad, wants to leave her for "the mother-lovin' rats." Private Joker objects, wins a brief struggle of wills with Animal Mother, struggles within himself, and finally shoots her in the face.



Fig. 14.



Fig. 15.

Even with all the callousness, vulgarity, and violence preceding it, this particular killing unsettles Joker's comrades. As Joker stands over the sniper he has just killed, Rafter Man recommends him for the "Congressional Medal of Ugly." Another Marine says, "Hardcore, man. Fucking hardcore." The ambiguity of this phrase perfectly suits Kubrick's purpose here. "Hardcore" can mean the most committed and faithful expression of a creed or worldview. It can also describe sex acts depicted in an extremely explicit manner. Faced with Private Joker's actions, the squad responds with language that conflates a higher act of mercy and one motivated by the most profane impulse. Perhaps the sacred has revealed itself in the paradox of Joker's mercy killing/act of revenge, but the manifestation is lost on his fellow Marines.

The next scene, which concludes the film, suggests that a seeker like Joker faces an almost insurmountable struggle to live a meaningful and authentic life in a world where, as Mircea Eliade described it, the problem "is not that God is invisible, but that he is unrecognizable. God has made himself impossible to recognize anywhere."²⁹ It is night and, as they march through the burning urban landscape of Hue City, the Marines sing the Mickey Mouse Club theme song. Joker's flat voice-over informs us that he is no longer divided against himself; that he is "in one piece" and "not afraid." The integration of the subconscious Shadow has completed the Jungian schema. Campbell's composite hero has

concluded his journey. But Joker also says that he remains "in a world of shit." In other words, it is the Parris Island latrine recapitulated -- except that it is a shambles, and Mickey Mouse has now replaced the Virgin Mary. Kubrick denies the viewer the experience of Eliade's paradoxical mode of being in which the sacred and profane co-exist without conflict. Instead, the Hellish landscape fades to black with the visual profane and the verbal absurd harmoniously occupying the same space -- with no intrusion of the sacred.³⁰

The end of the picture may be morally ambiguous, but Kubrick's message to the viewer is not. Both Joker and the sniper arrived at that moment because powerful forces had exploited what both Jung and Eliade described as humanity's innate longing for transcendence. Governments, proffering their ideologies as ersatz religions in a desacralized world, manipulated both characters into acts of unspeakable profanity in the name of the sacred. The manipulation could occur with relative ease because, as Eliade put it, the meaning that comes from the genuinely sacred "disappears behind meaningless appearances. Its signs, which no one can read any longer, are hidden *among* and not beneath the trivia of day-to-day life."³¹ Kubrick reminds us that, under such conditions, the appeal of the faux-sacred is nearly irresistible.

And yet throughout *Full Metal Jacket* the sacred intrudes, whether as the thoroughly profane Hartman, a tiny street-corner portrait of Jesus, or in a fragment of the god Vishnu's ominous words -- scrawled on Animal Mother's

helmet -- that recall J. Robert Oppenheimer's thoughts upon the explosion of the first atomic bomb in 1945: "I am become death, destroyer of worlds." The implication brings the theme of the sacred and the profane back to the film's Jungian undercurrent. Above the door at his home in Kusnacht, Jung had inscribed a quotation by Erasmus, but widely attributed to Jung: "Invoked or not, the god will be present." Jung described the phrase as "a Delphic oracle though. It says: yes the god will be on the spot, but in what form and to what purpose?"³² Eliade -- and Kubrick -- might have further inquired, "And will we recognize him -- or he us as beings supposedly created in his own image?"

¹A. Ogg (ed.). *A Sourcebook of Mediaeval History*. (New York, 1907), p.107.

²Mircea Eliade. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. (Harcourt, Inc. 1959), p. 23.

³Michael Herr. "The Forward to *Full Metal Jacket*." (August,1987). <[http://www. Visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0079.html](http://www.Visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0079.html)>, n.p. Accessed Dec. 19, 2010.

⁴Quoted in Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*. (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1987), p.23.

⁵See Randy Rasmussen. *Stanley Kubrick: Seven Films Analyzed*. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., Inc. 2001), 288-315 for an interesting analysis of language as a tool of institutional control in *Full Metal Jacket*.

⁶David Desser argues that U.S. Vietnam films since the late 1970s "have at least one overriding commonality: a vision of the war as a problem within American culture. See "Charlie Don't Surf: Race and Culture in the Vietnam War Films" in Michael Anderegg, ed. *Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), pp. 81-102. For a detailed treatment of the relationship between U.S. culture and the war, see Loren Baritz, *Backfire: A History of How American Culture Led Us into Vietnam and Made Us Fight the Way We Did*.(The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

⁷Herr (1987),[n.p.]. Early discussions between Kubrick and Herr focused on Jung's notion of "the Shadow" -- that Kubrick "really wanted to get into his war picture." With this in mind, the standard Jungian interpretation of the film would examine the what Jung called "disassociation," which occurs when the unconscious and conscious are not "integrally

connected" and fail to move "on parallel lines." If they are "split," psychological disturbance follows. Herr summarized this aspect of the picture when he remarked, "War is the ultimate field of Shadow-activity, where all of its other activities lead you. As they expressed it in Vietnam, 'Yea, Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for I am the Evil.' And the Fear, they could have added." On the psyche, see Aniela Jaffé's introduction to C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), p. x.

⁸Richard Comstock. "Myth and Contemporary Cinema." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* vol.43, no.3 (September, 1975), pp. 598-600. Michael Herr recounts how Kubrick, sometime in the 1970s, sent Warner Brothers Studios executive John Calley an unabridged set of Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, insisting that he read it as soon as possible. Frazer's work, originally published in 1890, was a seminal, and controversial, work of comparative religion that secularized the Christian scriptures and profoundly influenced the study of religion in the 20th century. See Michael Herr, *Kubrick*. (New York: Grove Press, 2000).

⁹Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 130 and 229-237. For the mythical archetypes from Campbell that Kubrick folds into the film, see a lengthy section from pp. 49-245. See also Erling B. Holtsmark. "The *Katabasis* Theme in Modern Cinema," in Martin W. Winkler (ed.), *Classical Myth and Culture in the Cinema* (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 44-46.

¹⁰Matei Calinescu, "Imagination and Meaning: Aesthetic Attitudes and Ideas in Mircea Eliade's Thought," *Journal of Religion* v. 57, n.1 (January 1977) pp. 1-15, p.2. For a detailed analysis and interpretation of Eliade's enormous body of work, and its place within a broader religious studies context, see Bryan Rennie, *Reconstructing Eliade: Making Sense of Religion*. (State University of New York Press, 1996).

¹¹Richard Comstock. "Myth and Contemporary Cinema." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* vol.43, no.3 (September, 1975), pp. 598-600. For an overview of scholarly controversies over Eliade's work and significance, see Bryan Rennie (ed.), *Changing Religious Worlds: The Meaning and End of Mircea Eliade*. (State University of New York Press, 2001), *passim*.

¹²Harry Oldmeadow, "Mircea Eliade and Carl Jung: 'Priests without Surplices?'" (a paper first delivered to the Bendigo Jung Society, 1992), p.16. At this point in my research, direct evidence linking Kubrick with Eliade is less conclusive than that for the influence of Jung and Campbell. Jonathan Finney, who re-organized Kubrick's library after his death, reports that there are no titles by Eliade among the books from Kubrick's personal collection. Finney reports that there are no titles by Eliade among the books in Kubrick's large personal collection (most of which is now in the Stanley Kubrick archive at the University of Arts in London). He also reports that there are no titles by either Jung or Campbell, whose influence on Kubrick is well documented. Their absence from the archive would blunt the significance of Eliade's absence, in the sense that *absence* from Kubrick's bookshelves does not necessarily equal *absence of influence* on Kubrick. (Email messages from Jonathan Finney to the author, 10/20/11 and 10/26/11).

¹³Eliade (1959), p. 11.

¹⁴*Ibid*.

- ¹⁵Calinescu (1977), p. 5.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p.6; Micea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, v. 1. (University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. xiii; Eliade (1959), p.23.
- ¹⁷Jung was using the term “homo religiosus” at least as early as 1938. See Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychology and Religion*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 7; On *homo religiosus*, see Rennie (1996), p.42; Quoting Rennie (2001), p. 264.
- ¹⁸Eliade (1959), p. 11.
- ¹⁹The sacred word spoken most frequently in the film is “God,” which occurs seven times. “Jesus,” “Virgin Mary,” and “Tet” occur four times each. The two most common profanities are forms of the word “fuck,” which occur sixty-eight times, and iterations of the word “shit” (“shitty,” “bullshit,” etc.), which occur in the dialogue fifty-nine times. When counted together, “ass” and “asshole” occur twenty-one times. The remaining fifty-seven are other terms that refer to sex, sex organs, sexual preference, masturbation, excrement, and bodily fluids. In terms of frequency, profane language occurs at a greater rate at Parris Island, which is divided between barracks scenes and outdoor training footage. The barracks scenes take up a total of about twenty-seven minutes. The remaining eighteen minutes take place on the grounds. The use of a profane word occurs, on average, every twenty-four seconds outdoors and every twenty-five seconds indoors. In a manner of speaking, then, the interior and exterior places are about equally profane.
- ²⁰“God (4), “Jesus”(4), “Virgin Mary”(4), “live forever”(2), “ministers,” “praying,” “kike,” “pray,” “creed,” “saviors,” “amen,” “miracle,” “Sunday,” “worship,” “Christ,” “divine,” “heathen,” “holy,” “Christmas,” “chaplain,” “heaven,” “souls,” “born again,” Pyle’s last prayer.
- ²¹Gustav Hasford. *The Short Timers*. (London: Century Publishing, 1979), p.10 and Greg Jenkins, *Stanley Kubrick and the Art of Adaptation: Three Novels, Three Films*. (McFarland and Co., Inc., 1997), p.115. Jenkins points out the departure from the novel, but does not examine the religious implications of it.
- ²²Eliade (1959), p. 26.
- ²³Eliade (1959), p. 32.
- ²⁴Hasford (1979), pp. 8 and 10.
- ²⁵Jenkins (1997), p. 117
- ²⁶James Naremore argues that a major theme in *Full Metal Jacket* is to blur the distinctions between war and the entertainment industry. See James Naremore, *On Kubrick*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 220.
- ²⁷Aniela Jaffé, “Symbolism in the Visual Arts,” in Carl Jung (ed.), *Man and His Symbols* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1973, pp. 256-322), p. 268. See also C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), pp. 334-35 and 384-85. Jung,

who spent more than a decade "amassing" data on mandalas, explained that it "signifies the wholeness of the self. This circular image represents the wholeness of the psychic ground...the divinity incarnate in man." Jung defined several meanings, but often the archetype, like the yantra symbol, represents the process by which "order is brought into being."

²⁸Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*. (Harper and Row, 1963), p. 14.

²⁹Calinescu (1977), p.4.

³⁰On the subject of the absurd as it relates to the narrowness of choices for Kubrick's protagonists, see Norman Kagan, *The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick*. Continuum. (New York, N. Y., 1996), p. 233.

³¹Calinescu (1977), p. 6.

³²Oldmeadow (1992), p. 19.

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