rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual

e1380

Article – Free Thematics

Anomalous zones and desolate spaces in *Stalker* and *Dead man's letters*

Zonas anômalas e espaços desolados em *Stalker* e *Cartas de um homem morto*

Zonas anómalas y espacios desolados en *Stalker* y *Cartas de un hombre muerto*

George Alexandre Ayres de Menezes Mousinho [I]

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, SC, Brasil
https:// orcid.org/0000-0001-6947-6451

Abstract: The historical backdrop of the Soviet Union during the geopolitically intense decades of the Cold War allowed little artistic production concerning apocalyptic themes due to the country's domestic policies. Yet filmmakers such as Andrei Tarkovsky and Konstantin Lopushansky directed the films *Stalker* (1979) and *Dead man's letters (*1986), respectively. Both works represent post-disaster worlds in which the existence of their characters is submitted to a desolate environment in which spaces are restricted, forbidden, destroyed, or otherwise antagonistic to social development and public health. Although the two films depict dystopian scenarios, the way their particular narratives structurally construct post-apocalyptic settings deserves examination. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the formal elements in the two films that enable the portrayal of decayed spaces and hostile zones of exclusion as thematic elements of a post-apocalyptic imagination. I have conducted this study using a methodological approach that is based on scene analysis and is aided by the use of images that contribute to a discussion involving film techniques, which in turn allowed me to find particularities, similarities, and contrasts that help understand the films' thematic, as well as contextual, undertones.

Keywords: Cinema; Dystopia; Zones of exclusion; World-end narratives.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

Resumo: O contexto histórico da União Soviética durante as décadas de tensão geopolítica da Guerra Fria restringiu a produção artística ligada a temáticas de caráter apocalíptico devido às políticas domésticas do país. Porém, cineastas como Andrei Tarkovsky e Konstantin Lopushansky dirigiram, respectivamente, os filmes *Stalker* (1979) e *Cartas de um homem morto* (1986). Ambas as obras retratam mundos pós-catástrofe nos quais a existência de seus personagens é submetida a um ambiente devastado no qual espaços são restritos, proibitivos, devastados, ou em geral hostis a um desenvolvimento social e à saúde pública. Embora representem cenários distópicos, como suas narrativas constroem configurações pós-apocalípticas em suas particularidades merece ser investigado. O objetivo deste artigo é examinar os elementos formais dos dois filmes que possibilitam a representação de espaços em ruínas e de zonas de exclusão como elementos temáticos de um imaginário pós-apocalíptico. Realizei este estudo através de uma metodologia baseada em análise de cenas com o auxílio de imagens que fomentam uma discussão sobre recursos cinematográficos empregados, permitindo identificar particularidades, convergências e contrastes que contribuem para a compreensão das nuances temáticas e contextuais das obras.

Palavras-chave: Cinema; Distopia; Zonas de exclusão; Narrativas do fim.

Resumen: El contexto histórico de la Unión Soviética, durante las décadas de intensa tensión geopolítica de la Guerra Fría, permitió poca producción artística vinculada a temáticas de naturaleza apocalíptica debido a las políticas internas del país. Sin embargo, cineastas como Andrei Tarkovski y Konstantin Lopushansky dirigieron, respectivamente, *Stalker* (1979) y *Cartas de un Hombre Muerto* (1986). Ambas películas representan mundos poscatástrofe donde la existencia de sus personajes es sometida a un ambiente desolado en el que los espacios son restringidos, prohibitivos, devastados u, en general, hostiles al desarrollo social y a la salud pública. Aunque retratan escenarios distópicos, la manera en que sus narrativas construyen configuraciones posapocalípticas en sus particularidades merece ser investigada. El objetivo de este artículo es examinar los elementos formales de ambos filmes que posibilitan la representación de espacios en ruinas y zonas de exclusión como elementos temáticos de un imaginario postapocalíptico. El estudio se realizó utilizando una metodología basada en el análisis de escenas con el apoyo de imágenes que contribuyen a una discusión sobre los recursos técnicos empleados, lo cual permite identificar particularidades, convergencias y contrastes que favorecen la comprensión de los matices temáticos y contextuales de las obras.

Palabras clave: Película; Distopía; Zonas de exclusión; Narrativas del fin.

Introduction

Russian historian Vladislav Zubok (2009) argues that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought the Soviet authorities under the fearful impression that "[t]he strategic military balance hugely favoured the United States," and that "the Soviets had no nuclear strategic forces to retaliate in case of an American first strike" (Zubok, 2009, p. 123). That belief was nurtured in the Kremlin in order to build a powerful atomic project; and by 1953, the Soviets were on a par with the United States in nuclear weapon production. A new problem of national defence had thus arisen: Stalin's successor Georgy Malenkov believed that nuclear attacks and civilisation's demise – that is, the demise of hegemonic forces of the time – were imminent, and that the nation should take appropriate precautions against a possible nuclear war. Such measures would include the construction of underground shelters, something that had already been under way in U.S. territories. As pointed out by Zubok (2009, p. 126),

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

> [Vyacheslav] Molotov and [Nikita] Khrushchev [then former First Deputy Premier and Prime Minister, respectively], however, used Malenkov's departure from the party line to charge him with ideological heresy. They claimed that his pessimistic conclusion would demoralize Soviet people and allies around the world, because it disputed the inevitability of the triumph of Communism over capitalism.

Such a refusal to address possible future nuclear attacks was also inspired by strategic manoeuvres of political discourse: "any concern about nuclear weapons, they argued, could be interpreted by the enemy as a sign of weakness. In his next public speech, Malenkov admitted that a nuclear war would actually lead to the 'collapse of the whole capitalist system'" (Zubok, 2009, p. 126). In order to dispel any further internal paranoia, Minister of Defence Rodion Malinovsky would later accuse US authorities of building fallout shelters so that companies responsible for them could profit from the population's fear, as noted by Leon Gouré (1962, p. 2).

That political climate marked a new era for artistic production in the USSR. The Thaw, as the post-Stalin period of political openness to science and art is known, allowed science fiction to thrive again, if only to a certain extent. Scientific feats drove this new era of Soviet Communism, and the policies for artistic production also underwent a change, though not all for the better, since Khrushchev aimed to project the image of a nation under renovation and an open set of internal policies – policies of public image which were akin to said manoeuvres that tried to avoid any signs of national weakness, for both domestic and foreign affairs. Consequently, artists were not wholly free to explore daunting themes; Khrushchev himself announced that he would not allow "liberal literature" that could inspire subversion in the party and the general population (Csicsery-Ronay Jr., 2004, p. 341). Such a suggestion of censorship affected science fiction writers, many of whom were "persecuted for their writing, either overtly prevented from publishing altogether, or forced to publish work that was fatally compromised" (Csicsery-Ronay Jr. 2004, p. 338).

As a result, apocalyptic fiction was scarcely produced in the USSR, both before and after the embracing of the Glasnost philosophy of public openness. Two of the most prominent names are Boris and Arkady Strutgatsky, whose major contribution is the novel *Roadside picnic* (1972). Other authors and works that would explore such themes would be few and far between, including the short animation *There will come soft rains*

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

(1984), directed by Nazim Tulyakhodzayev and inspired by Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, or the spy novel *The energy is under our dominion* (1950), by Valentin Ivanov. The issue of the bomb would only be addressed in works such as the space fiction short story "The heart of the serpent" (1958), by Ivan Yefremov, and Anatoly Dnieprov's "The Maxwell equations" (1960). Such a scarcity of works regarding an issue that was one of the main objects of opposition between two global powers during over of four decades is a testament to how evaded the apocalyptic imagination was in the USSR.

The present paper aims to investigate two Soviet films that were produced in the latter decades of the Cold War in order to understand their use of spaces in the construction of tension and zones of exclusion in an apocalyptic setting: Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979) and Konstantin Lopushansky's *Dead man's letters* (1986). The paper shall discuss their particularities, similarities, and contrasts in such constructions. As part of my methodology, I will employ graphic evidence from a few stills in order to demonstrate the visual aspects that support my arguments and will approach fundamental technical elements of editing/rhythm, cinematography, and shot composition as instruments of analysis, while choosing one particular section – or rather a cohesive set of sequences – from each work to delve into with more detail. These respective sections will be based on the climactic and temporal tension within the overall narrative structure, so there is more plurality in the combined formal elements open to investigation. Such potentialities are considered in my methodological approach, which sets out to build an argumentation around the films' construction of spatial tension through the investigation of shot composition, framing, movement, as well as time and rhythm; but also considering what Jacques Aumont and Michel Marie (2002) would call an analysis that locates the film in a "precise moment of cinema's history" (p. 183, my translation[1]). However, unlike the tendency, brought up by the authors, for such research to carry a more historical than analytical profile (Aumont; Marie, 2002, p. 197), this paper attempts to understand representational aspects of the films *through* style, form, and visual discourse. By understanding the environment and artistic propensities associated with a certain film or filmmaker (Aumont; Marie, 2002, p. 181), tapping into the meaning-making possibilities and the technical particularities for critical work becomes more accessible, especially as such a delicate theme as an apocalyptic imagination is at play. There is, therefore, an effort here to align a technical analysis of the films with their historical contexts, bringing the thematic expressions embedded in their structure as representational evidence. Taking this approach into account, the two sections of this

[1] From the original: "[…] *un moment précis de l'histoire du cinéma*".

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

paper – focused on the two works in chronological order – will develop close-reading-style argumentation directed at my aims, established after brief moments of scene description that will contain details about the film crews' use of the aforementioned techniques, which might highlight the thematic issues brought here.

It is important to note that both films operate within chronotopical portrayals of an amalgam of issues from their respective historical moments and speculative imaginations. Following this logic, this paper subscribes to an understanding that the "intersecting points between cinema and history […] occur at the junction where History is being made and where it is perceived as an account of our era or as an explanation of the development of societies," which corroborates the view of cinema as "a *historical agent*," whose "dynamic and social power, the forms its influence assumes, and its variable readings" interchangeably belong to a film's respective time of production and then flows out of it (Ferro; Greene, 1988, pp. 14-19, author's emphasis). As the eventual historical reimaginations are identified in both works, they are submitted to shifting perspectives. The dramatic exploration of nuclear devastation and its social effects found in *Dead man's letters* respond to strong anxieties of the Soviet late-1980s crisis and the then recently exposed and feared power of nuclear weapons, but it arrives in the 2020s as a fictional account of social fragmentation in portrayals of urban decay and geopolitical crises, while comprehending the relevance of the Cold War nuclear projects and the collapse of the Soviet Union in retrospect. Similarly, the supernaturally gifted child in *Stalker* could serve as an opposing element for the composition of a decaying society that proposes a message of hope in a wider plot construction of the film, given a different and more microcosmic interpretive focus; but it can also be seen as a testament to the fantastic in Tarkovsky's cinema that takes into account the tensions of its time and negotiates an aesthetics of decadence with the religiousness in the ultimate message of the plot under a representational logic that accompanies its structure. And that plurality takes into account a dialogic flow of interpretation, since "film is valuable not only because of what it reveals but also because of the sociohistorical approach that it justifies" (Ferro; Greene, 1988, p. 29).

Therefore, this paper tackles the films in their corpus as counteranalyses of historical tapestries and political climates into which they came to be, while also exploring their technical singularities and the logic that unveils a set of tropes and contextual commentary, using the element of space as an analytical confluence. The technical elements shall be focused on as fundamental components of the films' artistic profiles as well, since meaning here is taken as emerging from cinema language and "the

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

correspondences between a conceptual map [in this case, the post-disaster worlds imagined in the films] and a set of signs [audiovisual systems]" (Hall, 2013, p. 5), which opens up the windows of the moving image to a gaze that considers the representational power that binds such works to the growing anxieties pertaining to the Cold War and an imagination of disaster. And that is the reasoning behind the choices of the corpus as well as the process of positioning them in a historicised framework of representation and discourse (Hall, 2013, p. 31). Such a framework recognises the narrative construction of a film as illustrative of contextual issues, and the materiality of its setting (spaces and compositional elements) and agents (actors) as the moving force towards the development of its thematic message. Ultimately, the following analysis will adopt the aforementioned principles, while understanding that its conclusion lies in the synthesis of a comparative assessment of both *Stalker* and *Dead man's letters*, and an interpretive adaptation to our own contemporary imaginations of disaster as well.

Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker*

Soviet director Andrei Tarkovsky had already made a name for himself with films like *Andrey Rublyev* (1966), *Solaris* (1972), and *Mirror* (1975), when the idea for adapting the Strutgatskys' novel *Roadside Picnic* came around and, after a tumultuous production, resulted in *Stalker,* in mid-1979. In *Sculpting in Time* (1989), he views the filmmaker as an artistic representative of their people: "the artist is indeed *vox populi*. That is why he is called to serve his own talent, which means serving people" (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 164, author's emphasis). He states that "because of his special awareness of his time and of the world in which he lives, the artist becomes the voice of those who cannot formulate or express their view of reality" (p. 164). In this sense, Tarkovsky was involved with his national and sociocultural circumstances, with the spirit of artistic production as national contribution. He borrows from socialist philosopher Alexander Herzen's idea of the need for national representation of an artist's time in their work (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 166).

Stalker tells the tale of three main characters – plus two background characters – who traverse a devastated landscape in order to reach a mystical place simply called the Zone. Alexander Kaidanovsky plays the protagonist, merely named Stalker. He is one of few people to take other adventurers to the Zone, an unstable area where people are allegedly granted their innermost wishes. Two other characters come in, the Writer and the Professor, respectively played by Nikolai Grinko and Anatoly Solonitsyn, both of

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

whom had worked with Tarkovsky before in films like *Solaris*. The Stalker lives in a house in a crumbling city with his unnamed wife and his little daughter Monkey, a disabled girl who is later shown to possess psychic talents. The Writer and the Professor have hired the protagonist to take them to the Zone, and the film portrays their journey to and from the place.

In regard to film form, Tarkovsky addressed the ways in which time is expressed in motion pictures, and how each shot contains a temporal structure that is particular to the action within the frame and conveys an inner reality of the film's fictional world. The director remarks that "[e]diting entails assembling smaller and larger pieces, each of which carries a different time. And their assembly creates a new awareness of the existence of that time, emerging as a result of the intervals, of what is cut out, carved off in the process" (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 119). But in *Stalker* – as in other films directed by him, such as *Solaris* and *The Sacrifice* (1986) – such a temporal structure and its cohesion are articulated not only through the shot-to-shot links and transitions, but also through the movement of the camera during the shots and through the action taking place within it. The director argues that "[t]he distinctive time running through the shots makes the rhythm of the picture; and rhythm is determined not by the length of the edited pieces, but by the pressure of the time that runs through them" (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 117). As such, it is imperative to notice how time runs through the film so that the shifts in narrative mood transpire, be it through examining shot-to-shot interactions or through understanding the cinematography of one particular shot and how time flows in its duration, as well as identifying the rhythm changes that occur in different sections of the film, and how that representation of time can express an apocalyptic atmosphere.

In the film, lengthy shots abound and therefore little of the diegetic time passes when cuts do occur. That is to say, there are few ellipses in editing, and most transitions are done through either slow camera movements – panning or tracking shots – or subtle cuts for shift in angles and perspectives. The initial sequence demonstrates this idea (*Stalker*, 1979, 00h04min30s). The darkened corners of the frame accentuate the double doors that give way to the Stalker's room wherein he sleeps with his wife (Image 1). Only the room itself is lit, and the entirety of the door frame is within the frame of the shot. The camera slowly moves in, and a little over a minute is needed for the frame to comprise the whole room, drastically changing the tone of the scene through a widened perception of space and lighting (Image 2). The gradual revelation of spaces is present throughout the film, and it shows how crucial the imprisonment of the frame – following Ismail

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

Xavier's notion of *enclausuramento* of cinema's photography (Xavier, 2006, p. 21) – is to storytelling.



Image 1: The frame approaches the Stalker's room.
Source: Still from *Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979).



Image 2: The increasing exploration of space is accompanied by the increasingly brighter lighting.
Source: Still from *Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979).

Although the elapsed narrative time is slow in the beginning of the film, rhythm and time pressure within the shot pick up as the three men begin their journey to the Zone. But even during the moments of intense action, there is little change in camera movement speed. There is a subtlety in panning rhythm that stays consistent, which helps maintain the mood of stasis suggested by the shot. The only changes that affect rhythm and time pressure are the frequency of movement and the length of the shot itself.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

Consequently, editing and movement are the defining factors in constructing the particular temporal frame of *Stalker*'s diegesis. Panning and tracking shots are extensively used in the film as a gradual mechanism of spatial continuity – even with little use of the cut – and dramatic enhancement when certain aspects of acting are to be emphasised. Lengthy sections such as the five-minute sequence shot during their path into the main room of the Zone underscore the spatial situation of the trio. During the shot in question, they have reached their destination but are in disagreement as to whether or not they should go forward with their "innermost wishes." After a heated argument, the three men sit down, physically and emotionally drained, and the camera gently moves away from them, revealing the decayed foundations of such a ghostly building as a quasi-supernatural rain starts pouring down from the ceiling, indicating a much-needed cooldown as well as a testament to the inexplicable properties of the Zone (*Stalker*, 1979, 02h22min30s). Such moments demonstrate how the film's extended time frames and unhurried camera movements serve to enhance the perceptions of graphic continuity and highlight elements in the frame – in this case, the place, the performers and their interactions.

Speaking of elements in the frame, the visual discourse reveals features of setting and the employment of post-apocalyptic themes approached here. The world of *Stalker* is mysterious: the eerie descriptions of its properties and its history, as well as its vestiges of a wartime afterworld are effects that can be examined not only through verbally conveyed information, but through elements on screen. In order to better illustrate points about the composition of the shot and its relation to the thematic construction of modern apocalyptic imagery, one section of the film has been selected: the sequences from the main characters' departure from the city until their arrival in the Zone (*Stalker*, 1979, 00h22min00s-00h42min55s). By this point, the film's image has been covered in a sepia filter, which creates an industrial quality that prevails throughout the urban scenes (Image 3). The rusty character of the image is intensified by the presence of discarded objects lying about their surroundings, such as wood logs, furniture, abandoned vehicles, broken machinery, and general debris. This is further demonstrated by the use of empty buildings where the characters hide from the authorities. In fact, the presence of an undescribed form of police force is an indication of some sort of curfew established in the place. Such observations are important for understanding how *Stalker*'s narrative features converge with the idea of a collapsed world, disturbed by a cataclysmic event that, besides creating an anomalous zone, also begets a dystopian society in which individuals are shot at for trying to leave its urban

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

limits and enter the Zone (*Stalker*, 1979, 00h31min17s). Such information is barely hinted at through dialogue lines but stands out through the visual discourse of the film.



Image 3: Light and shadow contrast in medium shot.
Source: Still from *Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979).

Then the transition in setting, colour, and lighting occurs. Sepia-tinted images of dark, damp, littered streets give way to coloured and brighter shots of greener and foggier landscapes along the railroad through which they travel on a draisine towards their arrival (Image 4). The on-screen elements in different tones of colour can modify the way performances stand out or the way space is portrayed; something that Tarkovsky personally valued (1989, p. 138). That differentiation is an indissociable part of *Stalker*'s film language, for the meaning of the film is segmented through graphic alterations over the original image that produce what Noël Burch (1981) would identify as "autonomous structures" (pp. 55-6). Such autonomous structures expressed by colour and contrast refinement affect the perception of time, partitioning the film's events into different sequences: the initial preparations for the trip and the escape from the police is sepia-tinted, whereas the awaited arrival in the Zone is fully coloured; similarly, the Stalker's dreams are sepia-tinted, and so is his return to the city.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380



Image 4: Higher image contrast in coloured rural scene.
Source: Still from *Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979).

The Zone is thus the element in *Stalker* that most significantly embodies the post-apocalyptic themes that I aim to address in this paper. When discussing zones of conflict in cinema, Adrian Ivakhiv (2013) suggests that "the Stalker is not one who actually stalks an animal or another human being. He is not a hunter; if anything, he is more hunted, a *becoming-hunted* […] The Stalker's journey into the Zone is a journey into a world that stalks him" (Ivakhiv, 2013, p. 241, author's emphasis). The Zone is a volatile space: a space of transition, of uncertainty, and disruption. Disruption of physics – the rain pouring down from a ceiling –, societal disruption – law-enforcing institutions violently react against its existence –, disruption in social microcosms – the Stalker's job and adventures are the reason why his wife is unhappy in their marriage and supposedly why their child Monkey has been afflicted –, as well as a disruption in film language – the shift in colour modes during the trips through the Zone. This is a space of danger and chaos, wherein anything good or bad can happen as it responds to the visitor's wishes and intentions. Ivakhiv (2013) adds that it is a space of "convergence of *their* worlds, *our* worlds, and *another* world in which neither of us can tread safely and surely" (Ivakhiv, 2013, p. 241, author's emphasis).

Such a representation of an unstable, dangerous, and transient space converges with the concept of an irradiated zone, where the boundaries of natural radiation are exacerbated by human intervention, be it through the use of nuclear weaponry or failure in the use of nuclear material for civil purposes. Fallout radiation was a relatively unknown phenomenon in the 1970s and 1980s, and its effects were as mysterious outside of the specialised scientific community as the fictional concept of being stalked by an anomalous force. In *Voices from Chernobyl*, Svetlana Alexievich

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

(2005) interviews several people who were victims of the Chernobyl NPP disaster a mere seven years after *Stalker*'s release. One of the interviewees reports: "We weren't too afraid of this radiation. When we couldn't see it, and we didn't know what it was, maybe we were a little afraid, but once we'd seen it, we weren't so afraid" (Alexievich, 2005, p. 28). Another interviewee reveals that the authorities had been cryptic about the situation, and that workers who helped clean up debris from the power plant were denied any information about radiation (p. 7). The presence of the military serves as another convergence of meaning with the representation of the Zone in *Stalker*: the potential anomalous effects of the area may harm the general population, and spatial restriction generates violators that amplify the mythos of the place and may disrupt social order and defy authorities.

Therefore, the protagonist lives outside of the norms and in close contact with the Zone. For him, the Zone represents a place of peace and quiet, of serene solitude; and when in proximity with it, there is a direct response from the film's discourse through low-key, non-diegetic synthesiser music (*Stalker*, 1979, 00h44min53s). But beyond that, he devotes much of his time to journeying there because he thinks that its mysterious properties can give people hope, that his mission is to "serve people who have lost their hopes and illusions" (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 193). Ultimately, the Stalker recognises that the Zone is filled with strange traps and that it is a complex and ever-changing space (*Stalker*, 1979, 01h02min20s), but sees hope in achieving his innermost desires and helping other people do so.

The fictional scenario of *Stalker* is obscure and the discussions occurring in its narrative are mostly reflective on matters of hope, religious imagery – as the very concept of the protagonist is that of a man of faith (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 193) –, and the frustrations of each character's professions. However, the images of destruction, abandonment, as well as social and environmental disruption, which are common tropes of apocalyptic narratives, are present through visual and aural techniques. Frank Kermode (2000) suggests that nuclear bombs should not be deemed more critical events of collective anxiety than other apocalyptic fears, and that "[t]here is nothing at all distinguishing about eschatological anxiety" (Kermode, 2000, p. 95). Likewise, the mystery of the event that gave birth to the Zone and rendered *Stalker*'s world unsettling and withered does not make the anxieties expressed in the film less related to its time. Furthermore, its scenes and movements exhibit vistas of dereliction and ecological deterioration; a veritable destruction of spaces. The setting is then ostensibly emptied out, yet it is filled with history – rendered through ruins and rubble – and reveals a past that frames human presence

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

in the natural environment as intertwined, as suggested by Fabrícia S. Dantas and Luciano B. Justino (2010, p. 120-121).

Konstantin Lopushansky's *Dead man's letters*

Csiscery-Ronay (2004, p.339) writes about the post-Stalin Soviet period: "The emphasis on science led to the construction of special Science Cities that were to be devoted to scientific research and development (The first and largest of these, Akademgorodok, near Novosibirsk, was established in 1958)". Similarly, cities such as Prypiat were part of that scientific renovation across the Soviet territories. Built in 1970, it was designed to accommodate workers from the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant near the homonymous town in Ukraine. On 26 April 1986, one of the reactors in the power plant underwent a meltdown after a testing error. The event is considered one of the worst nuclear disasters in history. The Chernobyl NPP can be seen as a result of what Rana Mitter and Patrick Major (2012, p. 56) came to describe as "pollution and outdated technology, when the present seemed to be making a mockery of the once-vaunted future" characteristic of the stagnant technological burden of the Soviet Union in its final years. The disaster took place during the turmoil of the Gorbachev era, when measures such as the Glasnost came into play. The contextual irony is that the incident in Chernobyl was resolutely concealed from the general public and the rest of the world until days later, at which point it was claimed that the situation was "under control" when in fact radiation was quickly spreading across Europe (Alexievich, 2005, p. ix).

Dead man's letters – to be referred to as *DML* hereafter – was released amidst such national commotion. Director Konstantin Lopushansky had been Andrei Tarkovsky's apprentice, having worked with him as an assistant producer in *Stalker* (Johnson; Petrie, 1994, p. 16). Lopushansky was inspired by Tarkovsky's "long takes, and the slow-moving camera lingering over the landscape" (p. 16). *DML* tells the story of a band of survivors who live their days out in a museum bunker below a fictional town that has been bombed by nuclear warheads. An unnamed old man – to be called the Scientist henceforth – lives in the bunker with his sick wife Anna and the other survivors, and writes letters to his disappeared son Eric. Such letters are reflections on the collapsing state of the world, on his relationship to Anna, and on his feeling of longing towards Eric. Rolan Bykov plays the main part, and his voice-over narration reads the letters for the viewer.

However much Lopushansky draws on Tarkovsky's directing style, *Stalker*'s narrative lasts for a long period – as a result of Tarkovsky's wish to articulate diegetic

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

time in every shot possible –, whereas *DML* is a considerably shorter film; accordingly, there are differences in editing and time pressure. Elliptical editing is common, and while time within the shot usually runs slowly and often expresses the apathy of the underground life and the characters' hardships of finding the will to survive, time between shots is compressed, and tends to accelerate spatial continuity. There is, however, a prevalence of not only slow-paced, but also lengthy shots that dictate the lethargic passage of time in the narrative, notably in the museum bunker. This is, like *Stalker*, a film that offers a constant and careful revelation of its spaces, situating the viewer in the suffocating tunnel where most of the diegesis takes place.

Camera movement is also subtle, and few cuts set changes in perspective. There are few establishing shots, since the tunnels look alike, and there is virtually no vaster space for viewing familiarity, so spatial continuity goes on with little elliptical editing, and the constant medium shots are responsible for establishing a claustrophobic mood. The lengthier shots also raise a sense of drama. When the Scientist's wife dies, an event that had been suggested since the beginning given Vera Mayorova's performance as a constantly agonising character, other survivors in the bunker dig a grave for her there and then. The shot in which her body is buried develops for over a minute (*DML,* 1986,00h35min12s-00h36min39s), and the camera barely moves, so the silence and stasis of the protagonist are emphasised (Image5). The drama in the characters' actions – the Scientist's inertia, the priest's concentration and ritualization of that moment – are given time to settle and consolidate the built-up sense of tragic quietude.



Image 5: The motionlessness in Bykov's performance reveals the Scientist's shock and responds to the also slower camera movement. Source: Still from *Dead man's letters* (Konstantin Lopushansky, 1986).

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

Continuity also creates meaning in the film through the graphic constitution of images, specifically lighting and colour. Not unlike the hue and saturation changes of *Stalker*'s filters, *DML* plays with changes in tint as the film goes on. A strong amber filter marks the scenes in the museum bunker, and outdoors sequences are depicted with a lighter tone of yellow, whereas a blue-tinted filter overlays the images of the clinic bunker that he travels to a couple of times. Such techniques offer spatial continuity effects that are akin to hand-coloured silent films of yore, such as Georges Méliès' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), or Abel Gance's *Napoleón* (1927). Furthermore, adding specific tints in *DML* meant establishing locations, as well as the significance of those locations in the narrative. Yellow overlays indicate rust and the aforementioned industrial deterioration that also pervades the urban scenes in *Stalker*. A brighter yellow tone for outdoor locations evokes sunlight, whereas blue in the clinic bunker points to a sombre atmosphere as well as a cleaner environment than the grimy museum bunker and the outside ruins. Lighting works along with colour in these cases: tunnels have dim lighting, especially the clinic; contrast and shadows are toned down outdoors.

The arrangement of on-screen elements creates a sense of precariousness of a post-nuclear life. The process of spatial situation organised by the *mise-en-scène* is gradual in the graphic continuity. Low lighting prevails during the first scenes, and ill people lie about in a cluttered environment, raising an impression of contamination and the impossibility of proper healthcare. Such an impression pervades the sequences set in the museum bunker, as if the Scientist's visits to the clinic are an escape from the powerlessness that he feels towards the local hazardous condition of survival. A sickly woman sleeps – soon revealed to be Anna –, and there are pill bottles and a syringe on a nearby nightstand. This is reminiscent of the camera slowly moving from the Stalker's bed to his nightstand, with pills on it that are probably administered to his ill daughter, Monkey. There is a recurring theme of sickness and physical weakness to match the depiction of a decadent world around its agents.

The film soon introduces the outside world. Through the depiction of the Scientist putting on a hazmat suit to leave the bunker and visit a nearby orphanage, the *mise-en-scène* promptly indicates that the crumbled world outside is too toxic. The revelation of the ruins of an old world is conveyed as the camera zooms out to display the destruction of the city (image 6), reducing the old man's figure to a small hole amidst the debris of a fallen building, almost like a graphic match within the same shot. The powerlessness of the character against the contaminated hostility of such a ravaged vastness can be described by another survivor as "a howl of desolate thinking creatures

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

in the cold and impassive space desert" (*DML,* 1986, 00h55min10s). But the hostility does not exist only as an environmental response. Like in *Stalker*, there are military authorities that prevent civilians from coming up to the irradiated surface by setting up a curfew, creating the film's own exclusionary zone, much like *Stalker*'s Zone and Chernobyl's Zone of Exclusion. In the outside world, several corpses lie about in contrast to the severely ill in the bunker. The film illustrates that the ruined world is deadly, and that one's presence in it should always be ephemerous. The inside means sickness, but also community, and the gathering of efforts to start anew. The outside means environmental and military violence, restriction and oppression, contamination and war.



Image 6: Early section of the shot in which the Scientist's figure is reduced and engulfed by the rubbles of the shattered outside world. Source: Still from *Dead man's letters* (Konstantin Lopushansky, 1986).

In *DML*, such a use of visual elements – as well as the rhythm of editing – for the constitution of its post-apocalyptic images can be better examined in one particular section (*DML,* 1986, 00h43min20s-00h51min10s). After Anna dies and is buried by other survivors, the Scientist lies on her grave and the shock of her death triggers grim memories. He recounts, in a voiceover narration, how the cataclysmic event happened: a computer error committed by a distracted operator. A flashback sequence begins with the depiction of a light bulb failing as darkness takes over the picture (*DML,* 1986, 00h44min03s). A montage sequence of a nuclear warhead taking off is repeated on screen, building the impression that many were detonated. Parents watch the launch with their children from afar, as cries are heard. The mood of tension increases as tunnels are

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

stormed in by people being evacuated by the authorities. This particular part of the sequence culminates in the mushroom clouds themselves, detonated in the night – thus maintaining the dim lighting that is prevalent throughout. The intense musical soundtrack from synthesisers dies down as the explosions almost generate a sense of relief, as though the awaited destruction has finally struck. This is the apocalyptic moment of the film. Cities are shown in flames, the darkness of the buildings' silhouettes contrasted against the bright light of the consuming fire.

The sequence jumps ahead, but still in flashback narrative, as the Scientist looks for his son right after the apocalyptic event. He is frustrated by the authorities' impassivity to help him locate Eric. At this moment, lighting is even dimmer, sirens are heard, and the protagonist's silence is compensated by the constant sound of carts carrying bodies through the tunnel as he sneaks past security to gain access to the sick ward (*DML,* 1986, 00h47min00s, image 7). There is much parallel editing through cross-cutting techniques at this point: while he is underground struggling through the overwhelming crowd, people above scream and fight for supplies and gas masks amongst the debris and the fire, desperate and lost in the convoluted ruins of that new world (00h48min37h). The frantic rhythm of both graphic and sound editing rush the compressed time in the action, as point-of-view shots from the Scientist's perspective show extreme close-ups of agonising faces and physicians performing emergency procedures. The editing returns to images of buildings falling apart under the strength of the fire, and the flashback sequence ends.



Image 7: The culmination of the sequence, when the protagonist enters the clinic and is horrified by the state of the wounded and the sick inside. Source: Still from *Dead man's letters* (Konstantin Lopushansky, 1986).

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

By making use of such depictions, *DML* brings a constant mood of hopelessness and slow decadence of the conditions of survival in a post-nuclear world, but there is ultimately a portrayal of hope in the film – another trope of post-apocalyptic narratives. The Scientist takes responsibility for many duties in the tunnels, including the relief of psychological tensions that the other distressed survivors experience. He feels responsible for his fellow survivors in the museum bunker, for his wife Anna, for his son Eric, and for the children in the nearby orphanage. Such a feeling of responsibility is explained in the flashback sequence examined above, which is the narrative climax in the film's raw depiction of despair as a constant message of the plot.

Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar (1968) argue that "the control of timing which the film-maker gains through editing can be used for more positive purposes than the mere cutting down of unnecessary intervals. It enables him to present a series of consecutive events in such a way that each new development is revealed at the dramatically appropriate moment" (Reisz; Millar, 1968, p. 233). In *DML*, and in that particular sequence, editing operates in the film's temporality as an unravelling of dramatic intensification, culminating in a conceptually amplified sense of loss and destruction. Darkness prevails in the frame, and the frantic changes in setting – the cross-cutting, the extreme close-ups, the recurring shots of nuclear bombs ravaging urban areas – build up the shock. As he comes out of those grim thoughts and memories, the Scientist sets out to help people as best he can, and goes to the orphanage in order to prepare the children there for a quest that is the ultimate action of the film: going outside and beginning again. While the Stalker in Tarkovsky's film saw hope in taking people to the Zone, the Scientist intends to prepare children so they can walk out into the film's own irradiated zone and look for a better place to start anew. The message is almost messianic, as if the protagonist is the messenger and the saviour of a new generation. The end portrays those same children struggling to walk up hills in the hostile outside environment, while an orchestral score plays in the background, enhancing the idea of hope proposed throughout the sequence (Image 8).

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380



Image 8: One of the shots in the final sequence. The children leave their orphanage bunker and look for a new place to restart. Lighting is much brighter than the rest of the film, and the orchestral accompaniment suggest the theme of hope in renewal. Source: Still from *Dead man's letters* (Konstantin Lopushansky, 1986).

That idea of hope that permeates specific moments of the film, especially in the voiceover narrations of the Scientist's letters to Eric, is contrasted with the hopelessness of most scenes in which he interacts with the ravaged world and his weary peers. It is a cyclical chain of events: the death of a world, the death of a son, and ultimately the birth of a new world by a new generation. Claire Curtis (2010) writes that post-apocalyptic "stories are often strange fantasies of destruction and domesticity, of massive violence and then the satisfaction of building a new world" (p. 187). The violent and ghastly depictions of scattered bodies on desolate streets, and graves being dug in the silence of a filthy bunker, are present throughout. On the other hand, survivors in the museum bunker try to protect themselves from the dangers above. The idea of an underground shelter should mean a progressive preparation for a later ascension into the open world and a rebuilding of society, yet the underground survivors in *DML* are often represented in utter disbelief in their abilities to build a new world. Conversely, the Scientist hopes to avoid such fatalistic thoughts, and his move to the orphanage expresses his will for renovation.

Final remarks

Stalker and *Dead man's letters* deal with exclusionary zones, and somewhat antagonistic representations of spaces. Such spaces are usually interpreted by the

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

characters as deadly: life works in mysterious ways in Tarkovsky's Zone, whereas destruction and a military curfew erase the possibility of a stable development of life in Lopushansky's crumbled town. But in the case of the latter, "[t]he Terrors and Decadence are two of the recurring elements in the apocalyptic pattern; Decadence is usually associated with the hope of renovation" (Kermode, 2000, p. 9). That existence of space as a decayed shell of an old world worth reforming is built by recurring images of brutality and war, and of how time halts in such representations of utter destruction. In *Stalker*, contrarily, there is no evident renovation because the new world represents the permanence of an undisclosed rupture. The almost magical circumstances surrounding *Stalker*'s Zone and the strong presence of repressive authorities stop anybody from ever adjusting the social status quo or rebuilding a society. Tarkovsky's representation of the Zone offers these mysteries and miraculous properties as a metaphor for anomalous and untameable spaces, whereas *DML* is emphatic in its promise of a brighter future, expressed also through the glaring lighting of its clear sky in the final sequence.

How, then, do these productions adapt imaginations of disaster and post-disaster into film? The present paper argues that both directors address anxieties about societal collapse in their audiovisual discourses, representing spatial decay as a backdrop for social dissolution. Tarkovsky (1989) describes cinema's use of "materials given by nature itself, by the passage of time, manifested within space, that we observe about us and in which we live" (p. 177). *Stalker* thus uses a collection of spaces that display the passage of time through visual indications of abandonment. In order to achieve this, the director shoots rural and urban areas where derelict remains of human presence could provide the anachronism that would express diegetic scenarios of loss and stagnancy. Lopushansky, on the other hand, resorts to grittier images of urban ruins and grimier indoor environments, and abundant footage that shows the raw effects of nuclear weaponry. Both narratives resort to such images so that themes like hope or renewal can emerge and provide a dramatic contrast. Under that scope, one could say that *Stalker*'s world is geared towards the fantastic, whereas *DML* employs a more realistic tone.

There are also formal contrasts that have been observed. *Stalker* establishes photographic amplitude in its framing and an emphasis on the environmental and the atmospheric, inserting its weakened characters in the dilemma of a hostile new world almost embedded in self-conscious, supernatural agency. Conversely, *DML* sets out to frame the *human among the ruins*, employing more close-up and medium shots, and incorporating wider framing of its own anomalous spaces insofar as it is centred around

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

the human figure as a moving part of its dramatic coherence. Editing-wise, both films lean on lengthier shots and more time pressure within the shot, while ellipses are more common in Lopushansky's film than in Tarkovsky's as a means of detailing a sense of routine in the lives of those portrayed in its diegetic world. Climactic or suspense-driven moments of *Stalker* explore compositional elements of the frame in more tension, such as shifts in lightning, colour palette and tint, and the movement of actors in the shot; whereas *Dead man's letters* emphasises the dramatic aspects of its growing action through low angles, low exposure, sharp shadows, and extreme close-ups.

The two films end up addressing, directly or indirectly, the anxieties of a world in which technology had been increasingly becoming a commodity and an object with which to threat and to oppose. Susan Sontag (1965, p. 48) points out that

> there is a historically specifiable twist which intensifies the anxiety, or better, the trauma suffered by everyone in the middle of the 20th century when it became clear that from now on to the end of human history, every person would spend his individual life not only under the threat of individual death, which is certain, but of something almost unsupportable psychologically-collective incineration and extinction which could come any time, virtually without warning.

A widespread trauma persisted throughout the decades following World War II, and if nuclear technology had not already become reason for public apprehension in the USSR with the advent of the hydrogen bomb, Chernobyl consolidated it. After the disaster, "[t]he most secret and impenetrable part of the Soviet system, its nuclear program, became the object of blistering criticism, its heroic and romantic image tarnished beyond repair;" but most drastically, it was a watershed event that "affected the health and well-being of 435,000 people, and the list is not yet finished" (Zubok, 2009, p. 288). It raised concerns about nuclear energy in general, and shortly afterwards, the project of the Perestroika and the entire Soviet Union came to an end, during a year (1991) that some historians consider to be the end of the Cold War.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

References

ALEXIEVICH, Svetlana. **Voices from Chernobyl**. Translated by Keith Gessen. Dalkey: Archive Press, 2005.

AUMONT, Jacques; MARIE, Michel. **L'Analyse des films.** Paris: Nathan Université, 2002.

BURCH, Noël. **Theory of Film Practice**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

CSICSERY-RONAY JR., Istvan. Science Fiction and the Thaw. **Science Fiction Studies**, v. 31, p. 337-44, 2004. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1525/sfs.31.3.337. Access on: Sep. 8th, 2026.

CURTIS, Claire. **Postapocalyptic fiction and the social contract:** "We'll not go home again." Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010.

JUSTINO, Luciano Barbosa; DANTAS, Fabrícia Silva. Ecopoiesis e cinema: O *Stalker* de Tarvkosky. **Revista Cerrados**, Brasília, v. 19, n. 29, p. 117-126, 2010. Retrieved from: https://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/cerrados/article/view/13991. Access on: Sep. 8th, 2026.

DEAD man's letters. Director: Konstantin Lopushansky. Production: Lenfilm. Soviet Union, 1986. DVD, 88 min., sound, colour.

FERRO, Marc; GREENE, Naomi. **Cinema and History**. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988.

HALL, Stuart. The work of representation. In: HALL, Stuart; EVANS, Jessica; NIXON, Sean. **Representation:** Cultural Representations and Signifying. London: Sage, 2013.

KERMODE, Frank. **The sense of an ending:** studies in the Theory of Fiction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

GOURÉ, Leon. **The Soviet Defense Program**. Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1962.

IVAKHIV, Adrian. **Ecologies of the moving image:** cinema, affect, nature. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013.

JOHNSON, Vida T.; PETRIE, Graham. **The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky:** a visual fugue. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

MITTER, Rana; Patrick Major. **Across the blocs:** exploring comparative Cold War Cultural and Social History. New York: Routledge, 2012.

REISZ, Karel; MILLAR, Gavin. **The technique of Film Editing**. London: Focal Press, 1968.

SONTAG, Susan. Imagination of disaster. **Commentary,** p. 42-48, October 1965. Retrieved from: https://www.commentary.org/articles/susan-sontag/the-imagination-of-disaster/. Access on: Sep. 8th, 2026.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.

rebeca
Revista Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual
e1380

STALKER. Director: Andrei Tarkovsky. Production: Mosfilm. Soviet Union, 1979. DVD, 161 min., sound, colour.

TARKOVSKY, Andrei. **Sculpting in time**. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1989.

XAVIER, Ismail. **O discurso cinematográfico:** a opacidade e a transparência. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2006.

ZUBOK, Vladislav. **A failed empire:** The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

[I] George Alexandre Ayres de Menezes Mousinho

Professor do Departamento de Língua e Literatura Estrangeiras e do Programa de Pós-graduação em Inglês da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis, Brasil.

E-mail: ayresmousinho@gmail.com

Informações sobre o artigo

Resultado de projeto de pesquisa:
Resultado parcial de pesquisa de pós-doutorado em desenvolvimento no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Linguística e Literatura da Universidade Federal de Alagoas (Ufal).

Fontes de financiamento:
Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – CAPES, Brasil.

Considerações éticas:
Não se aplica.

Declaração de conflitos de interesse:
Não se aplica.

Apresentação anterior:
Não se aplica.

Artigo recebido em: 12/11/2025. Aprovado em 03/05/2026.

Este texto é publicado em acesso aberto sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v15n1.1380, v. 15, n. 1, pp. 01-23, jan./dez., 2026. Publicação contínua.