# Deleuze and Tarkovsky: the Time-Image and Post-War Soviet Cinema History.

Lindsay Powell-Jones

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# Summary

This thesis is the first sustained encounter between Andrei Tarkovsky's seven feature films and Gilles Deleuze's two-volume work on cinema (*Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* [2005a] and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* [2005b]). This is also the first single-author study to offer an appraisal of the historical shifts that Tarkovsky's films negotiated across his career that also uses Deleuze's methodology for film analysis. In doing so, I bring Deleuze's ideas into contact with the so-called Khrushchev 'Thaw' cinema of the 50s and 60s, the development of the Soviet space programme, Stagnation, and the escalation of nuclear threat following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. By accommodating a more localised, national context than he undertook in his own readings of *Mirror*, *Solaris*, and *Stalker,* I re-conceive Deleuze's conclusions about the shift from classical to modern cinema, and the crisis of the action-image, within the context of Socialist Realism and Soviet cinema. This adds another dimension to the rapidly expanding body of work on Deleuze and cinemas by bringing his ideas into contact with a post-war Soviet cinema that he did not discuss.

# Declaration

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

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## Statement 1

This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD.

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## Statement 2

This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. The views expressed are my own.

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## Statement 3

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available online in the University's Open Access repository and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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# Contents

# Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Fabio Vighi for his help in developing this thesis, and for his ongoing faith that it would turn out okay. Without his experience and enthusiasm, patience and editorial skills, this work might not have been possible.

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# Note on translations

When a Russian surname ends in -ii or -yi this is replaced by a single -y (e.g. Trotsky instead of Trotskii), and all Christian names end in a single -i. In doing so I follow most English language texts on Russian cinema, which use the Library of Congress system of transliteration.

I use the spelling 'Andrei Tarkovsky' because this is the most commonly used English version of his name.

With film titles I have given the English version in text, unless it is commonly known by its original title (e.g. *Je t'aime, je t'aime* or *Nostalghia*). Where possible, I have included the title of the film in its original language in the filmography.

# Introduction

> What are the determining factors of cinema, and what emerges from them? What are its potential, means, images – not only formally, but even spiritually? And in what material does the director work? (Tarkovsky 2010: 62)

This thesis is the first sustained encounter between Andrei Tarkovsky's seven feature films and the film-philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, as it is described in *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (2005a) and *Cinema 2: The Time Image* (2005b).[1] By staging this encounter, the aim of my thesis is to show how Deleuze's cinema concepts can work alongside a biographical and historical account of a single director. The aim is therefore twofold: firstly, I offer an extended and original analysis of Tarkovsky's cinema through a Deleuzian approach; secondly, and by implication, I attempt to recalibrate Deleuze's cinematic theory by developing a set of historical and biographical considerations on film-making that were generally neglected by Deleuze himself. My constructive interrogation of Deleuze's ideas about cinema clearly emerges in my critique of his Western European focus – a critique I develop by mapping his theory against the context of post-war Soviet history.[2] In rethinking Deleuze through Tarkovsky, I add to the rapidly expanding body of critical work on cinemas not discussed by Deleuze, and provide the first

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[1] The editions of Deleuze's cinema books that I use throughout this thesis were translated from the original French into English by Hugh Tomlinson: *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (2005a) and *Cinema 2: The Time Image* (2005b). Unless otherwise stated, when I refer to one of Tarkovsky's seven feature films I use the Artificial Eye collection: *The Andrei Tarkovsky Collection* (2011). These are the best quality editions of his films currently available on Region 2 DVD with English subtitles. Where relevant, I have referred to different editions of these films based on descriptions of different editions given by Tarkovsky himself either in interviews, his diaries, or *Sculpting in Time* (2010), or by Tarkovsky scholars (either English language work, or translations of Russian scholarship). Many of the other Soviet and Russian films that I discuss throughout this thesis are not currently available on either DVD or Blu-ray, so I have provided synopses of those films where appropriate, drawing on descriptions given by Soviet and Russian film historians.

[2] My focus is interpreting Tarkovsky's films within a biographical and historical framework. The historical framework that I use includes the histories of Russian and Soviet cinema, from pre-Revolutionary Russian up to cinema of the Soviet era, and not including post-Soviet cinema. I refer to films of the Soviet republics only in passing, without aiming at a wider coverage of these interesting cinemas. The complex relationship between the cultural traditions and national identity of each Soviet republic film industry and the predominantly Russian language Soviet cinema, is outside the scope of this thesis. My focus is on the specific industrial, social, political, and cultural conditions that Tarkovsky encountered, and I deal with his own sense of national identity as a Russian Soviet artist in Chapter 2.

single author study from a Deleuzian perspective.[3] The trajectory of this thesis follows the release of Tarkovsky's films, starting with *Ivan's Childhood* (1962), *Andrei Rublev* (1966, USSR release 1971), *Solaris* (1972), *Mirror* (1975), *Stalker* (1979), *Nostalghia* (1983), and finally *The Sacrifice* (1986).[4] The chronological approach allows me to plot these films in the context of their historical co-ordinates, particularly the post-war Thaw, the development of the Soviet space programme, Stagnation, and the escalation of nuclear threat following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. I also map these films alongside biographical developments in Tarkovsky's life like his growing interest in religion and faith, and his defection, and the history of the state-run Soviet film industry as it evolved within his lifetime. Such a procedure will allow me to articulate a Deleuzian reading of the post-war Soviet film industry, which Deleuze himself largely ignored, and to re-encounter his own readings of Tarkovsky's films while offering a new perspective on all seven of Tarkovsky's feature films.

## Deleuze and Film Theory

Deleuze's theory of film contributes an unusual and innovative perspective on the canonical histories and theories of Western twentieth-century film theory. In conversation with Gilbert Cabasso and Fabrice Revault d'Allonnes in 1985, reproduced in *Negotiations* (2005), Deleuze noted that 'cinema critics, the greatest critics anyway, became philosophers the moment they set out to formulate an aesthetics of cinema. They weren't trained as philosophers, but that's what they became' (Deleuze 1995: 57). He had in mind the grand film theories of the 1960s, like Jean Mitry's two volume treatise, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema* (1963-65), journals such as *Cahiers du cinéma, Positif, Études*

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[3] Other authors have written articles about Tarkovsky using Deleuze, and I will refer to these where appropriate throughout this thesis. But a book-length single author study using Deleuze's taxonomy does not exist. Partial exceptions to this might be Nadine Boljkovac's *Gilles Deleuze and an Ethics of Cinema* (2013), which focuses on work by two authors: Chris Marker and Alain Resnais, and Emma Wilson's *Memory and Survival: The French Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski*, which engages with Deleuze's discussions of the time-image alongside recent work in trauma theory. There are many studies dedicated to Tarkovsky, and I refer to the available English language or translated texts throughout this thesis. Notably, Deleuze is used at strategic points in Nariman Skakov's *The Cinema of Tarkovsky* (2012), but not in a systematic way.

[4] I have decided not to discuss Tarkovsky's student film, *The Steamroller and the Violin* (1960). The film is the story of a growing friendship between a young musician, Sasha, and Sergei, a steamroller driver working near Sasha's apartment block. As befits a graduation work, this film is clearly intended to show off the young director's creative potential and technical expertise. It is important for showing what he could do stylistically, but it does not significantly anticipate his later work.

*cinématographiques, Cinémaction, Trafic,* philosophically-inclined film essayists and writers on cinema, like André Bazin, Siegfried Kracauer, and writers such as Lotte Eisner, Jean Epstein, Umberto Eco, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Sergei Eisenstein, who made significant contributions to thought on film aesthetics. Their approach might be characterised as belonging first of all to film studies rather than to philosophy, but Deleuze hoped to blur the lines between the film theorist and the philosopher, and even philosopher and filmmaker, as he insisted in his foreword to the *The Movement-Image*: 'It is not sufficient to compare the great directors of the cinema with painters, architects or even musicians. They must also be compared with thinkers' (2005a: xii).

By describing directors as 'thinkers', Deleuze makes the striking argument that the work of great directors can claim the same status as philosophical thought. This is an idea that he would return to in his 1991 collaboration with Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* which argues that a new style of art, a new scientific, political, or philosophical paradigm, involves showing glimpses of the chaos beyond conventions and general opinion, without giving way to it:

> People are constantly putting up an umbrella that shelters them and on the underside of which they draw a firmament and write their conventions and opinions. But poets, artists, make a slit in the umbrella, they tear open the firmament itself, to let in a bit of free and windy chaos and to frame in a sudden light a vision that appears through the rent - Wordsworth's spring or Cézanne's apple, the silhouettes of Macbeth or Ahab. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 203-4)

For Deleuze and Guattari, the immobile patterns of thought that are formed by convention and the repetition of clichés inhibit creativity and change. Cinema and individual directors are of such interest to Deleuze because they make tears in the firmament on the underside of the umbrella. As such, they are 'thinkers'. In the cinema books, such thinkers include Robert Bresson, Alexander Dovzhenko, Carl Theodor Dreyer, Eisenstein, Federico Fellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Alfred Hitchcock, Werner Herzog, Akira Kurosawa, Yasujirō Ozu, Pasolini, Vsevolod Pudovkin, Alain Resnais, Glauber Rocha, Mikhail

Romm, Tarkovsky, Dziga Vertov, Jean Vigo, Orson Welles, Wim Wenders, and others.

As D. N. Rodowick points out in the preface to *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* (2003), Anglo-American readers of both philosophy and film studies have treated these books as anomalies, with very few philosophers able to match the range of Deleuze's film viewing and broad and deep knowledge of the history of film theory, and few film theorists able to follow - or willing to follow - the range of his philosophical arguments (2003: x). For those film theorists who continue an interdisciplinary commitment to film and concepts and methods derived from literary semiology or Lacanian psychoanalysis, a reluctance to engage with Deleuze's film concepts might have stemmed from his attempted demolition of the Saussurean and Lacanian foundations on which their work is based, especially in the work done in collaboration with Félix Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* (2004) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004b).[5]

In his contribution to Gregory Flaxman's edited collection, *The Brain is the Screen* (2000), András Bálint Kovács suggests that the timing of Deleuze's work partly explains the difficulties that Anglo-American film studies experienced accommodating his philosophy:

> Deleuze's cinema books appeared at a time when film studies had just reached the state of an 'established science.' The institutions growing up around this discipline were just beginning to firm up, certain accepted methods of analysis were gradually acquiring wide currency, and the production of cinema studies was becoming a 'major industry' on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the major symptoms of this process was a turn away from 'pure theory,' which was paralleled by a renaissance of historical research. (Kovács 2000: 154)

As Rodowick also discusses in his article 'An Elegy for Theory' (2007), the evolution of cinema studies from the 1980s has been marked by a retreat from theory. The Post-Theory debate, launched by David

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[5] In *Deleuze & Cinema: The Film Concepts* (2011), Felicity Colman provides an overview of Deleuze's criticism of semiotic analysis (2011: 106-107). For more on Deleuze's relationship with psychoanalysis, see my introduction to *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Religion* (forthcoming from Bloomsbury Press, expected early 2016).

Bordwell and Noel Carroll, rejected the methodological incoherence of the 1970s 'Grand Theories' like Lacanian psychoanalysis, Althusserian Marxism, Saussure and semiology, and insisted on grounding theory in the context of empirical historical research.[6] In many ways, as Rodowick admits, this debate has had several salutary effects, not least a re-invigoration of a neoformalist attention to film form and historical research (2007: 91).[7] This is beneficial because there is a danger of side-lining a film's particularities in favor of mapping it onto the concepts of a particular theory. On the other hand, if the practice of film analysis becomes little more than the study of the historical context of the deployment and combination of a film's formal devices, then it loses sight of some fundamental questions: what is cinema? and, how do films 'screen the world'?

Motivated by the desire to illustrate the continuing relevance of Deleuze for film studies at a time when acknowledging historical context is increasingly important, Rodowick suggests that the cinema books be taken as a challenge to the historical development of Anglophone film theory (2003: xi). Not least because Deleuze does in fact describe a theory of historical context, as I discuss in Chapter 1. The challenge raised by an ever growing catalogue of books within Deleuze studies is not to accept his film-philosophy completely, but to reinvigorate it in different contexts, using the tools of contemporary film theory. Foremost in the field is David Martin-Jones with *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts* (2006), and *Deleuze and World Cinemas* (2011). Other notable texts include *Quebec National Cinema* by Bill Marshall (2001), *Time Frames: Japanese Cinema and the Unfolding of History* (2007) by Scott Nygren, *Deleuze and Horror Film* (2006) by Anna Powell, *Untimely Bollywood* by Amit S. Rai (2009), *Melancholy Drift: Marking Time in Chinese Cinema* by Jean Ma (2010), *New Argentine Cinema* (2012) by Jens Andermann, *Iranian Cinema and Philosophy* by Farhang Erfani (2012), and David Deamer's *Deleuze, Japanese Cinema, and the Atom Bomb* (2014). As this list shows, work on Deleuze and cinema is increasingly turning to film history and cinemas that Deleuze either neglected, or which did not exist at the time he was writing. As a result of the broader perspective they develop, many of these

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[6] See David Bordwell and Noel Carroll's *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (1996).
[7] 'Neoformalism concerns itself with a film's narrative and stylistic form, the historical context of a film's form, and the activity of the viewer in making sense of films' (Kuhn and Westwell 2012: 280). See also Kristin Thompson's *Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* (1988).

authors take issue with what they perceive as Deleuze's homogenising Eurocentric focus, especially his positioning of the Second World War as the dividing line between movement-image and time-image (as I discuss in Chapter 1). Such critical use of Deleuze's work inevitably builds on the foundations laid down by those scholars who initially opened up Deleuze's film-philosophy through elucidatory accounts. These include Rodowick's *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* (2003), Ronald Bogue's *Deleuze on Cinema* (2003), Paola Marrati's *Gilles Deleuze: Cinema and Philosophy* (2003), Adrian Parr's *The Deleuze Dictionary* (2010), Felicity Colman's *Deleuze & Cinema: The Film Concepts* (2011), and Richard Rushton's *Cinema after Deleuze* (2012). My thesis can be understood as an attempt to form a middle level, grounded approach that sits between Deleuze's philosophical theory and the prominent tendencies within Anglo-American film theory, including recourse to primary and secondary source material, and examination of film texts in their social and economic, technological and production contexts.

## Deleuze and the Single Author Study

This thesis provides critical accounts of Tarkovsky's films, using a Deleuzian framework of film analysis, and interpreting each film within a biographical and historical framework. This focus on a single author inevitably raises questions about authorship and the role of the 'auteur', both as a contentious theory in the history of film studies, and as an issue that needs to addressed in Deleuze's own methodology.

Auteur theory holds that a film reflects the director's individual style and complete control over production. The origins of the theory lie in the critical output of the *Cahiers du Cinema*, the French language film magazine founded in 1951. Film critics who wrote for the journal included François Trauffaut, André Astruc, and André Bazin, who celebrated the director as an artist whose personal and creative vision could be read across their body of work. Bazin's article 'Le Journal d'un curé de campagne and the Stylistics of Robert Bresson', is exemplary of this celebration of the authorial signature: 'the technique of Bresson's direction cannot adequately be judged except at the level of his

aesthetic intention' (Bazin 2005: 138). The auteur theory expounded by the critics of *Cahiers* also made its way abroad in 1950s and 60s Britain as Lindsay Anderson undertook to translate articles from Cahiers in the journal *Sequence*, while Andrew Sarris popularised the idea of auteurism in the American magazine *Film Culture* (see Caughie 2001: 61: 86).

From being the main approach to film analysis in the early 1960s, in the 1970s attempts were made to replace the relatively impressionistic approach of *Cahiers* with the more rigorous methods of structuralism. Pauline Keal's quarrels with Sarrel had considerable bearing on the argument. Her essay 'Circles and Squares' suggested that the 'auteur theory is an attempt by adult males to justify staying inside the small range of experience of their boyhood and adolescence' (quoted in Gerstner and Staiger 2003: 9). There are 'bad' critics such as Sarris, according to Keal, who lack rigor and are undisciplined. The auteur approach would also become ideologically suspect, seen as an attempt to depoliticise film, abstracting it from its social and cultural context. The French literary theorist Roland Barthes announced the 'death of the author', claiming that meaning in cultural texts arose from a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and political discourses: 'To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing' (quoted in Burke 1998: 24). Taking a psychoanalytical approach, Peter Wollen argued against authorial intentionality and suggested instead a system of analysis that allowed for unconscious and unintended meanings in film texts to be identified and analysed. In *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, Wollen wrote that 'style is something unconscious, inaccessible to choice and decision' (Wollen 2013: 207).

In Chapter 1, I argue that Deleuze's account of cinema was indebted to the contemporary French film theory scene cultivated by *Cahiers*. The range of his film viewing and his knowledge of film history belongs to that context of film theory, as does his distinction between workmanlike directors and the well-crafted films of true 'auteurs' like Bresson, Godard, Welles etc. But while his cinema books celebrate a hierarchy of particular directors, his unique methodology undermines any straightforward notion of authorship. As Ian Buchanan writes in *A Deleuzian Century?,* Deleuze is interested in a taxonomy of images and signs over and above any notion of authorship:

Deleuze forces us to recognise that auteur theory does not centre aesthetic consciousness in the person of the director, but in the "swarm" of stylistic and thematic associations that percolate through the names and forms operating in the given work "signed" by an auteur. (Buchanan 1999: 265)

While the work of a single director like Godard, Welles, and Hitchcock, remains crucial to Deleuze, his focus was on the potential complexity of any given cinematic image. Deleuze went so far as to treat entire films as expressing one type of sign, as when he discusses Resnais's and Robbe-Grillet's *Last Year at Marienbad* solely in relation to his concept of 'peaks of present', or Herzog's *Heart of Glass* as an example of 'crystalline narration'.

My own original methodology does not aim to resurrect auteur theory. While it is the nature of a single author study to reinstate the author as the 'locus' of a set of films, I do not intend to make grand claims for authorial intentionality, nor do I depoliticise Tarkovsky's films by ignoring social and cultural context. Instead, I see the industrial conditions of cinema as something that produced a productive tension between the director and his material. I am not interested in the unconscious elements of his cinema, but in how his unique personal and creative vision for cinema worked with the legacy of a national past, the industrial conditions of Soviet cinema, the political climate, social change, and the influence of his contemporaries in the Soviet Union and abroad. This can be categorised as an auteur-structuralist methodology, drawing on aspects of both approaches to authorship without drawing a hard line between the two. Such an approach does not preclude the study of images and signs across films and cinemas, instead it offers the methodology for a systematic analysis of a single author using Deleuzian cinema theory. As I explain in more detail in the conclusion of this thesis, this offers a new theoretical springboard for Deleuzian analysis, either for more in-depth analysis of the directors that Deleuze did write about (eg Eisenstein, Welles, Ozu) or for analysis of directors that he did not or could not have written about.

**Deleuze and Tarkovsky**

It might seem that by looking at the films of Andrei Tarkovsky my thesis re-treads old ground rather than contributing towards an expansion of the cinemas that Deleuze wrote about. With the ever-increasing availability of world cinemas (on DVD, Blu-ray, Netflix etc.), why return to a filmmaker who Deleuze actually engaged with? I argue that more work is necessary because Deleuze operated from a lack of understanding of the specific cultural and historical contexts within which Tarkovsky's films were made. The early Russian cinema of Vertov, Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovzhenko is widely represented in Deleuze's *The Movement Image* to exemplify the key components of the movement-image, but his discussion of post-war Soviet film is limited to Tarkovsky alone, and excludes his final films *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice*.[8] Deleuze makes no mention of the Soviet post-war new-wave, of which Tarkovsky was just one contributor, as I discuss in Chapter 1. Given the difficulty of obtaining films by Tarkovsky's contemporaries even today, the disappearance of Soviet cinema in favour of predominantly European and American modern films in *The Time Image* is perfectly understandable. The Anglophone history of world cinemas has been slow to pay attention to the Soviet new-wave, a fact that is only now being rectified by Soviet film historians like Birgit Beumers, Jamie Miller, Peter Kenez, Denise J. Youngblood, and Josephine Woll. But, following the publication and translation of several key biographies and critical accounts of his films, Tarkovsky's cinema can now be better understood in a biographical and historical context.

Critical accounts of Tarkovsky's films, with which I establish a dialogue throughout, include Mark Le Fanu's *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky* (1987), Soviet critic Maya Turovskaya's *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry* (1989), Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie's *Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue* (1994), Robert Bird's *Andrei Tarkovsky: Elements of Cinema* (2010) and *Andrei Rublev* (2004), Sean Martin's *Andrei*

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[8] Notably, Deleuze uses the writings of Eisenstein on cinema to illustrate the difference between an intellectual 'shock to thought', and the 'nooshock' , which, in Deleuze's philosophy, lies at the heart of thought, and which he finds articulated in the writing of Antonin Artaud. Each of these concepts, and their relation to Deleuze's writing on Eisenstein, are discussed in more detail within Chapter 3. Later, Deleuze also discusses Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, and Tarkovsky's mentor, Mikhail Romm, in *The Movement Image* (2005b: 183-84). He makes a small mention of Sergei Paradjanov, an Armenian film director and artist who worked in the Soviet Union (2005b: 27).

*Tarkovsky* (2011), and Nariman Skakov's *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky* (2012). In addition, the publication of Tarkovsky's own collection of writings, prepared in collaboration with Olga Surkova, published in Germany as *Die versiegelt Zeit* and in Britain as *Sculpting in Time* in 1986, and his diaries, first published in 1989 in German, with the first English edition appearing in 1991 (both translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair) have opened up an opportunity to extend Deleuze's reading of Tarkovsky's films to include historical, biographical, and production context. Such context offers a fresh perspective on Deleuze's film-philosophy, and a confrontation with its blind spots.

The chapters of this thesis treat each film in order of their release, from *Ivan's Childhood* (1962), to *The Sacrifice* (1986). Chapter 1 begins by exploring the ground and procedure for this project as I address the viability of foregrounding the Second World War as the dividing line between two kinds of cinema: films of the movement-image and films of the time-image. To do so, I engage with existing debates on the problem of the Second World War in Deleuze's cinema books and his neglect of some of the world's largest film industries, such as India and Japan (Martin-Jones 2011; Deamer 2013). The ambition of this chapter is to show that the time-images of the so-called Khrushchev 'Thaw' cinema of the 50s and 60s did not only develop in response to the causalities and destruction of the Second World War (as Deleuze's treatment of the war would seem to suggest). These time-images emerged alongside political change, material changes in the film industry, and changes in considerations of national identity specific to the post-Stalin era.

The chapter continues by reconsidering Deleuze's concept of the 'crisis of the action-image' in relation to Socialist Realism and the Thaw in Soviet cinema, before discussing how this relates to Tarkovsky's *Ivan's Childhood*. It then concludes with an analysis of Tarkovsky's second film, *Andrei Rublev*. In this final section I look at the manner in which *Andrei Rublev* builds on the cultural dimensions of the Thaw - particularly the looser limits on artistic expression - by escaping the narrative structure and character types of Socialist Realism. This is done through the meandering journey, visions and dreams of the main character Andrei, a Deleuzian 'seer' who embarks on a spiritual journey, acting as witness to the actions of those around him. I show how both films are the product of a newly

hopeful generation of filmmakers whose aims were to bring fresh methods to bear on a period that had been overshadowed by the limitations of Socialist Realism. The focus of my reading of both films is the link between the action-image and history, specifically how the Thaw challenged the action-images and characters of Socialist Realism as it was applied to cinema.

In Chapter 2, I chart the cultural impact of successful Soviet space flights on Tarkovsky's *Solaris*. As I show, Tarkovsky was part of a generational group that witnessed the dawn of the space era and Khruschev's liberalisation, and who became known by the name of *shestidesiatniki* (roughly applicable to those who in 1960 were in their twenties). My analysis is the first sustained attempt to understand the visual language of *Solaris* - its rockets, futuristic cities and cosmonauts - within the context of Soviet space flight, and the interplay between science, politics and culture during the Khrushchev era. My aim is to examine the ways in which the film both draws on and challenges the canon of visual representation of cosmonauts through the character Kris, partly in response to the disintegration of belief in this canon within Soviet society.[9] I argue that in cutting loose the sensori-motor schema of the heroic, rational, action-orientated cosmonaut of myth, Tarkovsky enables his characters to perceive duration differently, and to ask questions about the nature of time and human consciousness. The chapter then refines Deleuze's analysis of the crystal-images in *Mirror* by looking at the specific historical and deeply personal biographical context that Tarkovsky drew on to explore the idea of time in which slippage occurs between memories of the past and the present. The central thread of this chapter is the same as the one that preceded it: to suggest ways to incorporate Deleuze's cinema concepts within a historical account of Soviet culture, society, and history.

Chapters 3 and 4 privilege a more theoretical approach, while retaining the broader aim of treating Tarkovsky's films as products of specific industrial conditions, aesthetic traditions like Socialist Realism, and historical contexts. My approach remains consistent with previous chapters, but in addition to historically contextualising his films, I pay special attention to the theoretical concepts that

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[9] There is some confusion over the correct naming of characters in Solaris, which varies, often quite dramatically. Kris Kelvin is given as Chris, Kris, or Kelvin; Hari as Harey or Kari; and Berton as Burton. I follow Johnson and Petrie who use the closest approximation to the Russian forms: Kris, Hari, and Berton.

take up the latter half of *The Time-Image*. Tarkovsky's final films lend themselves to that kind of analysis because the role of religion and spiritual belief become increasingly more important to his life and his film making. For instance, the Stalker is the first of several iterations of the Russian cultural and religious phenomenon of holy foolishness (*iurodstvo*). As I discuss in Chapter 3, this interest in spirituality and belief might seem difficult to reconcile with Deleuze's largely antagonistic relationship with religion, but while Deleuze does not address religion *per se* in the cinema books, spirit and spirituality have an important role to play in his film-philosophy. In conversation with Deleuze, Pascal Bonitzer and Jean Narboni suggest that what really interests Deleuze is what they call the 'vertical motions' of film: 'the élan, the ascent of Spirit' of Bresson and Dryer, as opposed to the horizontal motion in the linking of actions in American cinema (Deleuze 1995: 48). The parameters of this spiritual cinema, as it exists in Deleuze's philosophy, provide the specific focus of Chapter 3. In this chapter I explore Deleuze's references to belief and the 'Catholic quality' of cinema, and how this connects to Tarkovsky's own thoughts on belief and spirituality as well as his formal techniques in *Stalker*. I argue that Tarkovsky's growing interest in religion and spirituality are part of his broader belief in as-yet-uncomprehended, as-yet-unrealised modes of thought, reflected both in the 'vertical motions' of his films, and in the long-takes and depth of field that open up his final films to what Deleuze calls the unthinkable or 'unthought': 'an "unknown body" which we have in the back of our heads, like the unthought in thought, the birth of the visible which is still hidden from view' (2005b: 194).

In my analysis of both *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice*, I engage closely with their context of production and with biographical information. Building on the concepts outlined in relation to *Stalker*, in my fourth and final chapter I explore Tarkovsky's growing interest in religion and belief in the context of the Cold War and his planned and eventual defection. My analysis of *Nostalghia* will focus on the conditions of *Nostalghia's* 'intercultural' production (a Soviet/Italian co production), and the issues related to living and speaking in another country. I argue that this is a film about the limits of what can be thought, that works at the edge of an unthought, building a language - both cinematic and linguistic

- in which to think it. Turning to his final film, I then focus on Tarkovsky's interest in religion and the occult. *The Sacrifice* confirms the tendency of his late cinema to try to apprehend the limits of thought both though narrative and his characteristic long takes. This concern with the limits of thought is symbolised in both *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice* as images of nuclear war and the Last Judgement, which unsettle the lives of his characters. In approaching Tarkovsky's two final films from this perspective, I also bring out the spiritual notions in Deleuze philosophy, arguing that Tarkovsky's notions of the infinite, of the absolute, and of God, are not incompatible with the inherently experimental character of Deleuze's philosophy, which in turn emerges from his appropriation of modern philosophers such as Leibniz, Hume, and especially Spinoza. In this respect, my final chapter draws on Joshua Ramey's *The Hermetic Deleuze* (2012)*,* in order to help dispel any secular anxiety over such an approach, not least the negative and polemical take on Deleuzian spirituality put forward by Alain Badiou and developed by Peter Hallward.

My aim is to offer an extended and original analysis of Tarkovsky's cinema through a Deleuzian approach. I hope also to offer a new approach to Deleuze's concepts by mapping the emergence of time-images in Soviet cinema using a more localised, detailed history that Deleuze himself attempted. I have highlighted several texts that use Deleuze's film philosophy alongside historical, social, and political accounts. My thesis follows a similar line of inquiry, arguing that while Deleuze's cinema books put forward several propositional claims - the crisis of the action-image, the emergence of the time-image - these need not be fallible, and can be backed up with empirical and causal explanation. The innovation of my work lies in my application of this method to a single author, and the expansion of Deleuze's own reading of Soviet film to include the post-war period. I address each film chronologically, from his first film *Ivan's Childhood*, typical of the Thaw period, to his final, profoundly spiritual Swedish film *The Sacrifice*, made in exile. In order to do this, the chapter that follows will expand on two problems touched on in this introduction: the role of the Second World War in Deleuze's cinema books, and the impact of the Thaw on post-war Soviet cinema.

# Chapter 1: Socialist Realism and the Crisis of the Action-Image

Cinema is evolving, its form becoming more complex, its arguments deeper [...] The collective consciousness propagated by the new socialist ideology has been forced by the pressure of real life to give way to personal self-awareness. The opportunity is now there for film-maker and audience to engage in constructive and purposeful dialogue. (Tarkovsky 2010: 84-5)

## Introduction

Socialist Realism is distinct from social realism, which is a much more generic definition. It is a form of realism in the arts officially adopted by the USSR and satellite communist regimes from the mid-1930s through to the collapse of the Soviet system in the late 1980s, though it had already weakened by the start of the 1970s. The main feature of Socialist Realism was the glorification of communist values through a supposedly realistic depiction of the proletariat. After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet state's insistence on the strict observance of official ideology and Socialist Realism was somewhat softened under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev. As I shall explain, it was during this brief period, known as 'Khruschev's Thaw', that a group of talented filmmakers were able to extend the range of themes and subjects of Soviet film, launching a creative impetus that extended even into Leonid Brezhnev's period of 'Stagnation'. The development of the Soviet film industry during this period, and Tarkovsky's place within it, is the focus of this chapter. Such an overview allows me to reconsider Deleuze's concept of the 'crisis of the action-image' in relation to Socialist Realism and the Thaw in Soviet cinema. In doing so, I argue that the dominance of the action-image in Soviet cinema is unsettled not only by the events of the Second World War, but by the post-Stalin liberation of Soviet film from the traditional Socialist Realist canons of film plot, the new striving for imaginative self-expression from two waves of VGIK (the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography, now Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography) graduates, and the emergence of new technologies and techniques capable of putting across these ideas. This chapter is therefore historically focused, and contains information on the evolution of the Soviet film industry as well as descriptions of films made by Tarkovsky's contemporaries. This history forms

the background of my reading of the time-images and seers of *Ivan's Childhood* (1962) and *Andrei Rublev* (1966, USSR release 1971), and aspects of it are re-visited in later chapters. Before my analysis of these two films, I appraise Deleuze's positioning of the Second World War as the dividing line between two kinds of cinema, and then explore the usefulness of his movement-image/time-image distinction in relation to Socialist Realism and the Thaw.

### Deleuze and the Second World War

Drawing on French philosopher Henri Bergson's theory of perception, Deleuze argues that the mechanism of cinema illustrates perception's inherent distortions of time and movement. He is interested in Bergson's theory that although time and movement are indivisible, perception attempts to divide them into positions or instants. For example, Muybridge's static stills of a galloping horse distort movement by dividing it into a series of immobile units of 'gallop time' (Bogue 2003: 22-23). In these images, time is represented indirectly through successive segments of action. Expanding on Bergson's work, Deleuze theorises that some films are dominated by the 'sensori-motor schema', where the movement of images on screen are organised in a way that presents an 'indirect image of time', where time is edited to present a circuit of action and reaction. As Rushton explains, '[time] is indirect because its form presupposes that the world can, if certain actions are performed, be brought to a right, proper and stable order' (2012: 4). For example, the plot of a film might be organised around the prospect of a world 'out of joint', and where actions are performed to provide a solution to this problem. Deleuze calls this the cinema of the movement-image, which remains the dominant mode of cinematic presentation.

Deleuze also argues that cinema has the potential to present a new way of thinking about time and movement, and considers the ways in which great directors might do this through the process of framings, montage, and long, medium and close-up shots. *The Time-Image* discusses how film can show different forms of 'direct images of time', where time is layered, or forms crystalline circuits. Unlike films of the movement-image, time-images describe a situation where description, narrative, and

questions of 'truth' become unclear. In this situation, the movement-image linkage of perception and action images is broken, and characters find themselves unable to work out the right and proper actions to resolve a problem.

In many ways, this analysis of cinema outlines a historical account of the time-image, as if the time-image's emergence was coincident with transformations in society that came about only after the Second World War. Deleuze's two cinema books chart a fundamental shift from a pre-war cinema that defined itself primarily through motion, to a post-war cinema that concerned itself more directly with time. The Second World War, by and large, marks this crucial turning point in cinema. This shift is predominantly described from a Western European perspective, picturing a theatre of conflict between the Western European Axis powers, and largely ignoring the Soviet–Japanese War (1945). Deleuze's account of cinema extrapolates a history of the Second World War that ignores national histories and atrocities that occurred outside of his Western European experience, taking for granted a Western European perspective on historical events grouped under the phrase 'Second World War'. For instance, the Soviet phrase 'Great Patriotic War' was used to describe a different national history of the 1940s. The phrase first appeared in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* on 23 June 1941, a day after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union (Roberts 2006: 376). By referencing the Russian resistance against Napoleon I, known as the Patriotic War of 1812, the phrase was intended to unify the Soviet state against the Nazi invasion. It does not cover the initial phase of World War II during which the Soviet Union, then still in a non-aggression pact with Germany, occupied six European countries, namely Poland (1939), Finland (1939), the Baltic states (1940), Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (1940). It does encompass the nearly 900-day siege of the Baltic port city of Leningrad, during which more than one million Russian civilians died from starvation, cold, and German shells. When Deleuze writes of a post-war cinema, he has in mind a Western European cinema transformed by the fascist occupation of France and the bombing of Italian cities, and makes no mention of the Eastern European experience of war.

Instead, Deleuze posits a new kind of cinema that begins with Italian Neorealism, and is developed through the French New Wave, New German Cinema, with some reference to the New York school.[10] He goes so far as to suggest that at the end of the Second World War, under Charles de Gaulle, France needed to sustain a properly French 'dream' of heroic resistance that was not favourable to a renewal of the cinematic image (2005a: 215). Neorealist film on the other hand, was able to establish itself during the immediate post-war period by capitalising on a period of political and social ferment to create a new way of making films (2005a: 216).

As I suggested in the introduction to this thesis, this account of cinema begins to seem less anomalous when read alongside other important French film writers. Deleuze's historical account of modern cinema is very much a part of the contemporary French film theory scene, which was in turn cultivated by screenings at the *Cinémathèque Française*, which provided access to the classical and modern cinema that Deleuze discusses (Colman 2011: 3). His focus on Neorealism as the founding moment of modern cinema is embedded in the Parisian *cinephilic* culture of the film magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* and the intellectual legacy of one of its three founders, André Bazin. Deleuze's response to Henri Bergson's concept of duration in the *Matter and Memory* (2004, first published 1896) is continuous with questions and problems raised by Bazin. For example, in 'The Evolution of the Language of Cinema', Bazin argues that the 1940s and 1950s marked an evolution from a form of editing perfected by American cinema, towards 'a regeneration of realism in storytelling' in which cinema became 'capable once more of bringing together real time, in which things exist, along with the duration of the action, for which classical editing had insidiously substituted mental and abstract time' (Bazin 2005: 39). Equally, the scope of Deleuze's books resemble another film theory of the 1960s: Jean Mitry's *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema* (2000, first published 1963), which anticipates Deleuze's own two volumes in so far as both attempt a categorisation of the signs of cinema, and references a similar canon of films

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[10] Notable directors from the Italian Neorealism of the late 1940s and early 1950s include Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica and Giuseppe De Santis. The French New Wave (*nouvelle vague*) blossomed for a brief period between 1959 and 1963, and included Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut and Claude Chabrol. New German cinema delineates a loose grouping of West German films between the 1960s to the early 1960s, and included filmmakers such as Jürgen Syberberg, Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Wim Wenders. By New York school, in this context Deleuze means Sidney Lumet and John Cassavetes.

while attempting to describe the capacities of cinema. In this sense, Deleuze's historical approach to the cinema can be considered, as both Colman and Rodowick have also suggested, as the last grand gesture of a French intellectual tradition dominated by these two pillars of French film theory; Bazin and Mitry.[11]

Deleuze's focus on the Second World War in the cinema books also has a historical explanation, just as *Anti-Oedipus* was both a reaction to theoretical and institutional struggles taking place in French psychoanalysis and psychiatry, and an attempt to formulate a coherent response to the events of May 68.[12] Deleuze's political and intellectual formation took shape during the war and its aftermath - the defeat, occupation, and liberation of France. As Guattari explained in an interview following the publication of *Anti-Oedipus* in France in 1972, both he and Deleuze emerged from the war with a profound scepticism towards all forms of organised politics: 'We are part of a generation whose political consciousness was born in the enthusiasm and naivety of the Liberation, with its conspirational mythology of fascism' (quoted in Buchanan 2008: 9). Michel Foucault suggests as much in his introduction to *Anti-Oedipus,* in which he identifies fascism as the major adversary of Deleuze and Guattari's Schizoanalysis project: 'the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behaviour, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us' (Deleuze 2004a: xiv-xv). In the wake of the Second World War, Deleuze was acutely aware of the low points of the movement-image, and how it had been utilised by nationalism and fascism. In *The Time-Image*, he writes of the rise of Hitler and the tyranny of Stalin as instrumental to a loss of faith in the classical form of cinema (2005b: 159). For Deleuze, what the time image promised was its ability to circumvent the 'bad cinema' of fascism.

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[11] On the relationship between Deleuze and *Cahiers du Cinéma*, Colman writes: 'While [he] was not always in accord with *Cahiers*' writers, their ideas provide impetus and orientation for many of his arguments on the nature of the cinema. The influence of *Cahiers* upon Deleuze is extensive, to the point where Deleuze frequently utilizes exactly the same scene analysis as those film theorists he references' (Colman 2011: 4). Rodowick also writes: 'For anyone familiar with the breadth and diversity in journals like *Cahiers du Cinéma, Positif, Études cinématographiques, Cinémaction, Trafic*, and many others – Deleuze's approach seems mainstream in many respects […] they are very much a part of the complexity of debate in the current French film theory scene and continuous with a series of questions and problems that have defined the history of European film theory form filmology through Bazin, Metz, Umberto Eco, Pier Pablo Pasolini, and into the contemporary period' (Rodowick 2003: xii-xiii).

[12] For more on Deleuze and the events of May 68, see Ian Buchanan's *Deleuze and Guattari's 'Anti-Oedipus': A Reader's Guide* (2008a: 7-12).

While understandable in this context, there are some clear problems with Deleuze's approach. In his preface to the English edition of *The Movement Image*, Deleuze reminds us that he is not writing a history of cinema, but rather a categorisation of signs, but he frequently discusses his subject matter in historical terms. Noting this trend, Kovács points out that Deleuze's reading of cinema is often linear, and suggests that the cinema books are written from the perspective of modern film. Kovács writes: 'even though he never says outright that film history is tantamount to the emergence of modern cinema, that this is the "aim" of film history, Deleuze's entire taxonomy anticipates the shift from classical to modern' (2000: 156). This has led Kovács to suggest that Deleuze's signs are not categorised according to two different kinds of narrative, but instead describe a chronological evolution of signs within cinema. As such 'Deleuze's categories find their place not only in a kind of "periodic table of the elements" but also in a historical world that suggests a cinematic trajectory' (Kovács 2000: 155). Jacques Rancière finds this aspect of Deleuze's theory of cinema troubling. Deleuze's relation between cinema and history is dismissed by Ranciére as a fiction. He argues that both the time-image and the movement-image composed cinema from its conception, and they remain 'indifferent to the tribulations of the times and the horrors of war' (Ranciére 2006: 114).

In *Deleuze and World Cinemas* (2011), David Martin-Jones revisits the historical break on the grounds of Deleuze's homogenising Eurocentric focus.[13] Through his analysis of modern cinemas that Deleuze did not address, Martin-Jones re-conceives Deleuze's conclusions about the shift from classical to modern cinema outside of the post-war European context. He points to the emergence of modern cinemas in India, China, Japan, South Korea and South America, and suggests that the central positioning of the Second World War as the dividing line between movement-image and time-image is too simplistic. For Martin-Jones, Deleuze's use of the war as a demarcation line was 'more a product of the types of cinema he focused upon than a universally influential historical event' (2011: 204). More critically, in 'What did cinema do in "the war", Deleuze?' (2010) Julian Reid not only questions why the war should be used as an explanation of historical change within cinema, he also asks why Deleuze's

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[13] See also *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts* (Martin-Jones 2006).

understanding of war in the cinema books is so simplistic compared to the historical theory of war developed in his other work.[14] Also tackling the problem of the war in Deleuze's work, David Deamer's article 'Cinema, Chronos/Cronos' brings Deleuzian scholarship to account for its tendency to hierarchy that is not present in the cinema books, and for privileging the time-image while speaking of the movement-image in terms of its complicity with ideology (2009: 168). Deamer also claims that this is coupled with a refusal to engage properly with the issue of history:

> A trend exists in what might be called the Deleuzian community with regards to the cinema books. This is the attempt to pass over, avoid or downplay Deleuze's claim that the Second World War can be seen as the founding division between the movement-image and the time-image. Indeed, this account of the emergence of the time-image seems to be something of an embarrassment to Deleuzians if the way in which it has been consistently sidestepped is considered. (2009: 167)

Rather than positing a hierarchy in which the movement-image is replaced by the time-image, Deamer argues that Deleuze considers the emergence of one or the other as an ongoing process of re- and de-territorialisation of the cinematic image.[15] This is his position when he writes that 'the time-image has always been with cinema and can emerge whenever and wherever the circumstances present themselves' (2009: 172). In *Deleuze, Japanese Cinema and the Atom Bomb* (2014) Deamer reiterates this argument, but also reminds us that Deleuze did, albeit briefly, propose other events that were as significant as the war (2014: 17-18). Deamer includes the changes taking place in France in '68, and Deleuze's incomplete analysis of the rise of African political cinema (more fully explored by Rodowick in *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* [2003: 139-168]). In addition, he might have mentioned Deleuze's

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[14] Reid cites the understanding of war developed in 'On Nomadology,' written with Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Reid 2010).

[15] The concept of a 'territory' in Deleuze and Guattari's work concomitantly accompanies the concepts of 'deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation' (see Message 2005: 274). Here, Deamer uses the term to suggest that a film is a territory or assemblage formed of constantly changing elements that come together for various reasons at different times, even within the same film.

treatment of the crisis of the American dream and his discussion of the New American cinema of Sidney Lumet (*Twelve Angry Men* [1957], *Serpico* [1973]), *Dog Dog Afternoon* [1975], *Bye Bye Braveman* [1968], *The Anderson Tapes* [1971], *Network* [1976]), John Cassavetes (*The Killing of a Chinese Bookie* [1976], *Too Late Blues* [1961]), Martin Scorsese (*Taxi Driver* [1976]), and Robert Altman (*Quintet, A Wedding* [1978], *Nashville*[1975]*, A Perfect Couple* [1979]0.[16]

Deamer points to a fundamental tension between the two accounts that Deleuze articulates in the cinema books. Deleuze argues: 'what has seemed fundamental to us in this system of images and signs is the distinction between two kinds of images with their corresponding signs, movement-images and time-images' (2005b: 252), and elsewhere 'there are many possible transformations, almost imperceptible passages, and also combinations between the movement-image and the time-image' (Deleuze 2005b: 259). Deamer's response is to situate Deleuze's cinema books within an understanding of all cinema as a 'heterogeneous world cinema':

> In the *Cinema* books Deleuze employs a number of philosophies, the approach is heterogeneous and self-disturbs every binary it may appear to reify; the method cuts up cinema and connects films in any number of ways, many contradictory; and there is no centre, there is no 'norm' by which to posit an 'other' […] the point is, however, that Deleuze's *Cinema* books can be seen and used in such a way that escapes the very Eurocentricism of which they can be accused. (Deamer 2014: 20)

Deamer's reading is a response to the secondary English language texts on Japanese cinema that he is forced to engage with, which tend to essentialise Japanese cinema, treating its filmmakers in isolation from the dominant Western cinemas of America and Europe. Instead of considering Japanese cinema as a closed system, Deamer draws on the first chapter of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* to treat cinema as a machinic assemblage that works across multiple sites. In Deamer's reading, a film may

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[16] Each of these films is discussed by Deleuze in the chapter 'The Crisis of The Action Image' (2005a: 211-15).

express a broad set of functions or principles:

> Cinema is composed of little machines, that compose slightly bigger machines, and bigger machines still. And little film machines can be joined with other little machines – philosophies, theories, books and other films – for productive readings, "a productive use of the... machine" […] the task of a Deleuzian encounter with film is to put it together with other machines' (Deamer 2014: 25).

This methodology treats films as assemblages, which are collections of heterogeneous elements brought together in particular relations. This might include the material elements of composition used in the film ('silence and sound, voice, effects, music'), but also the ways that these material elements connect to discursive assemblages ('feeling, reaction and thought in the spectator') to form one system within the systems of world cinema (Deamer 2014: 22). His point is that the filmic assemblage works across multiple sites, intersecting and transforming, creating territories and unmaking them, opening up possibilities for different ways of thinking (what Deleuze calls lines of flight) and then closing them again. Tom Conley makes a similar argument in *Deleuze and the Filmic Diagram* (2011), but extends the idea to talk about diagrams: 'To thematise or to make abstraction of Deleuze's film-writing might betray the force of the 'mapping' or of the *diagram* that inheres in its form' (2011: 172). The cinematic diagram would be 'the "little machine" that plots and enables critical transformation' (2011: 173). By treating what he calls Deleuze's cineosis (defined as 'a series of created concepts which, taken together, have a certain consistency') as a way to accentuate heterogeneity, Deamer tries to bypass the risk of imposing a Western philosophical method onto Japanese cinema (2014: 23). This doesn't solve the problems in Deleuze's work, but it creates the conditions to re-encounter the displaced Japanese nuclear event within Japanese cinema.

It is clear that Deleuze's thinking regarding time and movement in cinema was based upon his observation of primarily American and European examples. Given the influence of the intellectual

legacy of French film theory, as exemplified by Bazin and Mitry, this focus is in itself unsurprising. As I have shown, this Eurocentrism has already received focused attention elsewhere (Kovács 2000; Ranciére 2006; Martin-Jones 2011; Deamer 2014), which leads to the question as to why I should use Deleuze to consider Tarkovsky, and his place in post-war Soviet cinema. I argue that if Deleuze's cinema books are already grounded in a historical approach, then it should be possible to develop this historically grounded mode of analysis to start thinking about other cinemas. This is also Chris Berry's justification for using Deleuze to approach the films of Jia Zhangke in *Futures of Chinese Cinema* (2009):

> Deleuze's binary is also grounded in history. He associates his movement-image with the pre-war Hollywood system and the time-image with the post-war era, and possibly also with postmodern disillusion. Maybe this can direct our attention away from time as transcendent, and the dangerous conceptual and ideological baggage of absolutism, mastery and escape from history that often goes along with that. Instead, perhaps we can develop this historically grounded mode to start thinking about a number of different historically and socially specific understandings of temporality. What if we [. . .] asked about cinema's role in the construction of different temporalities in different societies, politics, cultures, classes and so forth? (Berry 2009: 113)

My use of Deleuze's movement-image/time-image distinction in relation to post-war Soviet cinema attempts to follow Berry's suggestion, and resonates with much of the existing Deleuzian work on cinema. I will argue that Tarkovsky's use of the features of a modern cinema of the time-image was made possible by changes in considerations of national identity specific to the post-Stalin era, but also relate to certain biographical circumstances, material changes in the Soviet film industry, and a relaxation of the social and political situation in the Soviet Union that finally permitted the Soviet film industry to address the aftermath of the Second World War. In my analysis of Tarkovsky's first two films, I show how these circumstances inform the ways in which his characters act - or rather, fail to act

- as well as his treatment of narrative time. In order to lay the groundwork for this analysis, the next two sections of this chapter explore Deleuze's concept of the 'crisis of the action image' in relation to the history of Socialist Realist film and the subsequent Thaw in Soviet cinema. Across this thesis, I show that his films are assemblages that works across multiple sites, intersecting with and transforming Socialist Realism, and opening up possibilities for different ways of thinking. In this respect, by engaging Deleuze's ideas with Tarkovsky's films, this thesis attempts to use Deleuze alongside a historically grounded exploration of Soviet cinema.

### Socialist Realism

The 1930s were marked by terror, arrests and executions as Stalin undertook an internal cleansing of the Party apparatus of any rivals to his power. By 1932 the Cultural Revolution, which replaced the relative cultural pluralism of the 1920s, had led to all art movements being streamlined into huge artistic unions that made it easier to implement party ideology. In August 1934, Andrei Zhdanov convened the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers and, with the help of Maxim Gorky, Karl Radek, Nikolai Bukharin, and A.I. Stetsky, outlined the doctrine of 'Socialist Realism' that these unions would enforce:

> Comrade Stalin has called our writers engineers of human souls. What does this mean? What duties does the title confer upon you? In the first place, it means knowing life so as to be able to depict it truthfully in works of art, not to depict it in a dead, scholastic way, not simply as 'objective reality', but to depict reality in its revolutionary development […] To be an engineer of human souls means standing with both feet firmly planted on the basis of real life. And this in its turn denotes a rupture with romanticism of the old type, which depicted a non-existent life and non-existent heroes, leading the reader away from the antagonisms and oppression of real life into a world of the impossible, into a world of utopian dreams. Our literature, which stands with both feet firmly planted on a materialist basis, cannot be hostile to romanticism, but

it must be a romanticism of a new type, revolutionary romanticism […] This will be no utopian

dream, for our tomorrow is already being prepared for today by dint of our conscious planned

work. (Zhdanov 1935: 21-22)

According to Zhdanov, the state valued the artist who could create an image of the world in the

process of revolutionary development. Art would present the bright future of the socialist cause, and

its protagonists would enact great feats in the name of communism: 'A heroic epoch gives birth to

heroic literature; heroic people call into being heroic artists' (Zhdanov 1935: 12). Socialist Realism

presented life at it 'should be' rather than how it actually appeared. In practice, this meant that the arts

were required to support the state's social, political and economic goals, in a form that was easily

intelligible.[17]

The decisive event in the history of Soviet film production had already taken place six years

earlier at a conference organized by the *agitprop* section (i.e., department for agitation and propaganda)

of the Central Committee in March 1928. As Peter Kenez describes it, this conference placed great

emphasis on film as a propaganda tool: 'Here, the Bolsheviks decided to end the heterogeneous

character of Soviet film and impose a 'correct' line […] the main thesis of the final resolution of the

conference was that Soviet directors must make films that were accessible to the millions' (Kenez 2009:

94). The assumption accompanying this thesis was that such films would become an instrument for

Communist education. As a result of this conference, in the spring of 1930, the cinema industry was

re-structured with the elimination of Sovkino (the State Committee for Cinematography) and the

creation of Soyuzkino, with Boris Shumyatsky as the head between 1930-1938 (following the arrest and

execution of his predecessor, Mikhail Riutin).[18] Shumyatsky would play a leading role in the production

and release of films that were intended to both educate and entertain a mass audience. Under his

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[17] In the broader Soviet context, the 1930s saw a shift towards the command economy and the idea of planning. Planning production, distribution, and exchange, as well as the threat of fascism, dominate all of the speeches given at the congress. For more specific information about the impact of thematic planning on Soviet film, see Jamie Miller's *Soviet Cinema: Politics and Persuasion Under Stalin* (2010: 91-105).

[18] Riutin was arrested and executed in 1937 for issuing a lengthy appeal to party members that criticised many of Stalin's economic policies.

leadership, Soyuzkino would produce adventure films, popular musical comedies, historical costume dramas celebrating heroes from the Soviet past, and revolutionary films that revised the history of the Revolution and the Civil War. As Beumers writes in her history of Russian film, films that appealed to the consciousness of the people with an engaging plot were the staple diet of the 1930s: 'the culmination of personal happiness often lay in meeting a nice man (or woman) and – infallibly, an encounter with Stalin, direct or indirect, that allowed them to understand the meaning of communism' (Beumers 2009: 81-82).

Film production continued throughout the Second World War at an impressive rate. Notable films from these years, such as Fridrikh Ermler's *She Defends the Motherland* (or *No Greater Love,* 1943), *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) by Eisenstein, *Peter The First* (1937) by Vladimir Petrov, *Minin and Pozharsky* (1939) by Vsevolod Pudovkin and Mikhail Doller, and the very popular *Chapaev* (1934) by the Vasilyev brothers, depicted the attractiveness of the Soviet Union, especially its industrial projects, military effectiveness and collective utopianism. The Soviet studios would also produce a remarkable number of wartime newsreels as thousands of cameramen deployed to the Western front to film the war effort. As Kenez explains, the film industry formed a small but significant part of the Soviet mobilization of society and industry towards war: 'The Soviet leaders had an exceptionally clear understanding of the importance of film as a propaganda device, and therefore they never stinted on spending scarce resources even at the most difficult moments. Even at the darkest period of the war, filmmaking never stopped and only barely slowed down' (1992: 156).[19]

Unexpectedly, the war had a beneficial impact on Soviet films in terms of increased artistic freedom. While filmmakers were recruited into contributing to the war effort, censorship was dramatically streamlined. Kenez goes so far as to write that the war was a liberating experience for filmmakers: 'Films once again expressed genuine feeling and real pathos: the hatred for the enemy, the

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[19] Soviet film historian Denise Youngblood provides figures for this period: 'By mid-1942, the newly relocated studios [from the Kiev studio, lost when the city was invaded in 1941, to the Alma-Ata, now Kazakhstan] began releasing films, and by the end of the war, Soviet filmmakers had completed 102 fiction films, an impressive number given the dire circumstances. Of the 70 titles that can be counted as full-length feature films, 48 (nearly 70 percent) focused on subjects directly related ot the war. This single-minded concentration reflects the fact that the USSR did not have the luxury of fighting the war in other countries as did its allies. By way of contrast, less than one-third of Hollywood's feature film production in the three-year period 1942-45 concerned the war' (Youngblood 2007: 57).

call for sacrifice and heroism, and the sorrow for the abused Soviet people were heartfelt. The directors believed in what they were saying. The period of the war was a small oasis of freedom in the film history of the Stalinist years' (2009: 182). Towards the end of Stalin's life however, intervention had become all-encompassing and minute. Despite being of enormous interest to scholars of Soviet film, films from this period remain largely unavailable on DVD or Blu-ray to audiences in the West, with the exception of some of Eisenstein's films. From the descriptions available (Beumers 2009: 75-111; Youngblood 2007: 82-107; Kenez 2009: 205-222; Miller 2010) Socialist Realist films from the end of the war seem stylistically conventional and generally optimistic. They aimed to realise a kind of revolutionary humanism, following the creative programme described by Gorky at the All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers:

> Life, as asserted by socialist realism, is deeds, creativeness, the aim of which is the uninterrupted development of the priceless individual faculties of man, with a view to his victory over the forces of nature, for the sake of his health and longevity, for the supreme joy of living on an earth which, in conformity with the steady growth of his requirements, he wishes to mould throughout into a beautiful dwelling place for mankind, united into a single family (Gorky 1935: 65-66).

Unlike the montage movement that preceded it, these films were stripped of all formalism or stylistic complexities in order to be easily understood by a broader spectrum of citizens. Socialist Realism was intended to both entertain the masses and further the goals of the Soviet Union. It affirmed a consciously socialist concept of man as active, equal to the utopian task before him, emphasising the value and agency of a socialist nation. In practice, this was a stereotyped and schematic aesthetic. As Beumers writes, Socialist Realist films paint a bright picture of life 'which varnishes reality and leads people into the illusion of happy life in the present rather than the future [...] Stalin-era films showed the perfect communist ideals as if they had already been achieved and the war as if it had already been

won' (2009: 110-11).

From a Deleuzian perspective, the situations and character behaviours of Socialist Realist film emphasise the function of the action-image, which is at the centre of Deleuze's description of the movement-image, along with the perception-image; the affection-image; the impulse-image; reflection-images; and mental-images. The action-image is a situation where the function of the movement-image is at its most efficient. All that is perceived, felt and thought all exist, in a certain sense, for action. The sensori-motor schema - in which a character sees, feels, thinks, reacts to a situation, and acts accordingly - is the governing concept of the action-image. It has two forms: the large form and the small form. The large form (SAS') describes how situations are established, the actions that are derived from them, and the establishment of an altered situation. The small form (ASA') describes how action reveals aspects of a situation, making new actions possible. Both forms offer ways of conceiving and seeing the action of a story. Their application are illustrated by Deleuze in *The Movement Image* through a discussion of the differences between the films of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Romm (2005a: 183-88). He writes that Pudovkin was interested in the small form:

> However great the milieu presented, St Petersburg or the Mongolian plains, whatever the grandeur of the revolutionary action to be achieved, we move from a scene where modes of behaviour disclose an aspect of the situation, to another scene, each one marking a determined moment of conciousness, and connecting up with the others to form the progression of a consciousness which becomes equal to the whole [*ensemble*] of the disclosed situation. (Deleuze 2005a: 184)

Equally, in Romm's *Ordinary Fascism* (1965) fascism was shown as a 'situation which discloses itself

through ordinary behaviour' (2005a: 184).[20] With Dovzhenko, the whole is already present in the earth and in nature, so his cinema is a cinema of the large form: SAS' (2005a: 184). Finally, Eisenstein's montage demands a far more complex circuit, encompassing both forms, and playing at the limits of the action-image (2005a: 185-88).

In both forms of the action-image, action rotates around the modification or clarification of a situation or 'milieu' This idea of a milieu in Deleuze's work is somewhat close to Benedict Anderson's concept of an 'imagined community' (2006). It is a setting or situation that expresses an assemblage of ideas and symbols or 'grand narrative' that defines ways of thinking and acting. In this setting or situation, the idea of realistic character behaviour becomes something other than what we might expect. It is not realism in the accepted sense of the social realism of British kitchen sink dramas, or the realism advocated by Bazin and the Italian neo-realists, or the method acting of Robert de Niro, Al Pacino, Jack Nicholson, or James Dean. It is realist because it corresponds to the rules and series of conventions of the milieu. This is what Deleuze characterises as the realism of the large form: 'What constitutes realism is simply this: milieu and modes of behaviour, milieu which actualise and modes of behaviour which embody. The action-image is the relation between the two and all the varieties of this relation. It is this model which produces the universal triumph of the American cinema' (2005a: 145). In the same way, Socialist Realism determined the ways in which people acted and the ways in which they were capable of action: the existing situation, its shortcoming and reinvention (SAS') and some aspect of man's struggle toward socialist progress and a better life (ASA'): 'Life, as asserted by socialist realism, is deeds, creativeness, the aim of which is the uninterrupted development of the priceless individual faculties of man' (Gorky 1935: 66). The narrative forms and character types of the propaganda films of the Socialist Realist Soviet war films and historical dramas can be understood in terms of the duel at the heart of the action-image: the triumph of the values and heroism of a socialist

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[20] There is a problem here with Deleuze's narrative. As I shall show, Romm became a mentor to a new generation of filmmakers during the Thaw. Of course, action-images didn't go away after the war, but Deleuze uses a film from this period alongside those of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovzhenko, without addressing the time gap. Unfortunately this film is not currently available to me, but this could be an area for future research, as I discuss in the conclusion of this thesis.

regime (often embodied in an individual's actions) over its enemies. Crucially, in Deleuze's narrative of cinema the 'crisis of the action-image' and the disintegration of the situations and character behaviours dominated by action, calls the logic of the milieu into question, leading to the creation of pure optical and sound situations, which are the conditions for the time-image. In the next section, I argue that this crisis, and the subsequent transformation of Soviet cinema, came about with Stalin's death, and during the cultural Thaw of the Nikita Khrushchev era.

### The Thaw

Loosely book-ended by Stalin's death (1953) and Khruschev's removal from office (1964), the Thaw years were characterized by a short-lived period of relative political and cultural relaxation. Following Stalin's death in 1953, Khruschev denounced the Stalin cult during his so called 'Secret Speech' of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. His period of office as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) from 1956 to 1964 is commonly associated with liberalising reforms that aimed not only to change the Soviet Union's relationship with other countries, but also to change the relationship between the Soviet state and the Soviet people.

In literature, a wave of memoirs and fictional autobiographies was published during this time, written by men who had fought at the front but remained silent during Stalin's lifetime.[21] By the 1960s new words like 'trench truth' and 'de-heroicising' had entered into popular discourse (Woll 2000: 63). Khrushchev placed emphasis on improving leisure facilities, which meant that filmmakers benefited from investment in cinema infrastructure and cinemas. The cinema network expanded with new cinemas and better production facilities, and ticket sales rose (Beumers 2009: 115). Many of the films produced under these conditions were characterised by a call for a sincere and truthful depiction of complex and flawed individuals. In the context of Khrushchev's policy of de-Stalinisation, filmmakers moved away from the glorification of Stalin and present day socialism that had crippled innovation in the previous decades, and focused instead on the problems of a post-war Soviet Union. Their films

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[21] See *The Interval of Freedom: Soviet Literature During the Thaw*, 1954-1957, by George Gibean (1960).

would mark the end of the so called *malokartin'e* (or film famine) that had prevailed during the last years of Stalin's life (compared to the much higher figures of the late 1920s, early 1930s).[22] Two generations of filmmakers would both respond to this change and help to engender it. The first wave finished their training at VGIK in the early 1950s.[23] This wave included Grigorii Chukhrai,[24] Marlen Khutsiev,[25] Aleksandr Alov and Vladimir Naumov,[26] Sergei Parajanov,[27] and Eldar Ryazanov.[28] Within a few years a second group graduated from VGIK, which included Kira Muratova,[29] Nikita Mikhalkov,[30] Andrei Konchalovsky,[31] Larisa Shepitko,[32] Elem Klimov,[33] Andrei Tarkovsky, and Georgiy Daneliya.[34]

One of the most innovative films of this period was by another VGIK graduate, Mikhail Kalatozov. Kalatozov's *The Cranes are Flying* (1957) is often considered an early indicator of the Soviet Thaw, and proved influential for many directors, including a young Tarkovsky. Kalatozov had retired from the industry following the ban of his previous film *Nail in the Boot* (1932), but with the mobilisation of the film industry towards the war effort he returned to directing films under more favourable conditions. Revolving around the lives of two lovers Boris and Veronika, *Cranes* dealt with the social and emotional problems that arose after the war. These included the failure of soldiers to return from the war, the psychological and physical wounds of those who did return, the faith or faithlessness of the women who waited for them, as well as the poverty and violence experienced by those civilians left at home. At the end of the film Veronika (played brilliantly by Tatyana Samojlova) learns that Boris was killed during the war, but the film ends on a hopeful and patriotic note, with

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[22] By the end of the war, the film industry was paralysed by state-sanctioned control. At its peak, this control resulted in a substantial drop in film production, as limitations were placed on what was good and acceptable (Beumers 2009: 109). Towards the end of his life, Stalin was given an ever more exclusive role, not only in dictating what was shown in cinemas, but also in his appearance on screen. (Youngblood 2007: 90).

[23] VGIK was not only a leading film school, for a long time it was the only available state film school in the USSR. From the beginning, the majority of the school's faculty were leading Soviet film artists, like Mikhail Romm, professor from 1962.

[24] Films include *The Forty-first* (1956) and *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959).

[25] Films include *I am Twenty* (19965) and *July Rain* (1966).

[26] Alov and Naumov co-created *Teheran 43*, a 1981 USSR-France-Switzerland drama film.

[27] Films include *The Colour of Pomegranates* (1968) and *Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors* (1965).

[28] Ryazanov comedies, satirizing the daily life of the country, are very famous throughout the former Soviet Union. Films include *Carnival Night* (1955), *Hussar Ballad* (1962), *Beware of the Car* (1966).

[29] Films include *Brief Encounters* (1967) and *Our Honest Bread* (with Oleksandr Muratov) (1964).

[30] Director of *At Home among Strangers* (1974). Nikita's older brother is the filmmaker Andrei Konchalovsky.

[31] Known for his collaboration with Tarkovsky on *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev*, and for his Hollywood action films *Runaway Train* (1985) and *Tango & Cash* (1989).

[32] Films include *Wings* (1966) and *The Ascent* (1977).

[33] Films include *Come and See* (1985) and *Adventures of a Dentist* (1965).

[34] Films include *Walking the Streets of Moscow* (1963) and *Thirty Three* (1965).

Veronika handing out flowers to the returning soldiers. *Cranes* also showcased the fine mobile camera work of cinematographer Sergei Urusevsky, which gave Kalatozov considerable freedom to follow the movements of the two lovers Boris and Veronika through Moscow streets, up staircases, through flooded forests. The sometimes frantic mobility of Urusevsky's camera, as well as Expressionist use of light and shadow, would complement Kalatozov's use of dream and hallucinatory sequences, as the camera would spin and bank left or right during moments of violent emotion. Although he would later create more technically brilliant films, notably *I am Cuba* (*Soy Cuba*, 1964), *Cranes* would serve as a transition film, marking the beginning of the Thaw.

Another film of note from this period was Grigor Chukhrai's *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959). This film follows the journey of a Red Army soldier Alyosha, who is given two days leave as a reward for a heroic (albeit accidental) act at the front. He travels to his home town to see his mother, but is delayed by a series of encounters along the way: a Private Pavlov asks him to take two bars of soap to his wife as a present, a soldier who has lost his leg admits that he is afraid to return to his wife, and a young woman called Shura travels with him for a time. Alyosha takes so long helping each of these people that when he finally arrives home he is only able to spend a few minutes with his mother before making his way back to his unit. The voice over tells us that he died soon after, that he could have gone far in life if he had lived, and that he will always be remembered as a soldier. Although it does not criticise the war directly, *Ballad of a Soldier* attempts to show the inner lives of people negatively affected by the war. The woman who was to receive the soap is found living with another man, and so Alyosha gives the gift to her husband's invalid father instead. The soldier who has lost his leg is ashamed to return to his wife, but changes his mind and is greeted by a loving woman. Alyosha's mother waits for him in her village, but he never returns from the war after his brief visit. The faithful wife/mother, the unfaithful wife, the injured veteran, and the men who never return from the war, these were all familiar themes during the Thaw. Unlike the characters of Socialist Realist war films - for example, the charismatic Chapaev - Alyosha is not considered heroic for his exploits on the front, which are accidental and fairly comic, but because of the humanity of his interactions with other people.

My final example before moving on to *Ivan's Childhood* is a late Thaw film by the Ukrainian director Larisa Shepitko, who only directed five features during her career.[35] *Wings* (1966), a film about a much decorated female fighter pilot of the Second World War, was her first feature film after graduating from VGIK. Shepitko's heroine, Nadezha Stepanovna Petrukhina, becomes the principle of a vocational training institute twenty years after the war, but finds it difficult to connect with her daughter and the people around her:

> As written by Natalia Riazantseva and Valentin Ezhov and as played with wonderful subtlety by Maia Bulgakova, Petrukhina explodes the Soviet clichés of the conventionally 'tough but fair' heroine, who wins reluctant respect and admiration despite her sternness. This woman is disliked. Her amalgam of competence and awkwardness alienates rather than endears, and although she means well, she is unable to shed her officious manner […] professional gratification, maternity, friendship – *Wings* undercut one truism after another. But Shepitko reserved her most radial reinterpretation for Petrukhina's war experience. The heroine of *Wings* did not sacrifice herself for the security of later generations. She did not survive the trauma of the war in order to enjoy contentment. Rather, war exhilarated Petrukhina. (Woll 2000: 218)

*Wings* was not circulated widely, and only about eight million viewers saw it (compared to the box-office frontrunner for that year, Leonid Gaidai's romantic comedy *The Prisoner of the Caucasus, or the Further adventures of Shurik,* which drew 76 million viewers [Woll 2000: 217]). The film is notable for its revisionist treatment of the war, and the complexity of its heroine. Compared to *The Cranes are Flying* and *Ballad of a Soldier,* which retained a hopeful and patriotic tone despite all of the upheaval caused by the war, *Wings* offered little reassurance to its viewers.

Unlike the Socialist Realist aesthetic of Soviet films in previous decades, which described life as it 'should be' rather than how it actually appeared, the filmmakers that I have described each attempted

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[35] Larisa Shepitko was killed in a car crash with four members of her shooting team in 1979.

to address more difficult themes, such as the role of women and veterans following the upheaval of war. As I shall discuss in the next section, Tarkovsky's *Ivan's Childhood* was one of several Soviet films of its period that looked at the human cost of war and did not glorify the war experience. Such films were made possible partly by the political situation, but were also a consequence of the Socialist Realist template's inability to express the post-war situation. Following the death of Stalin and the consequent dismantling of the Stalinist cult of personality, filmmakers needed to re-assess their definitions of heroism. Very gradually, the sharp outlines of character associated with Socialist Realism began to blur and people on screen started to resemble something closer to human beings. The remainder of this chapter critically examines whether these conditions facilitated the disintegration of the sensory-motor link of the Socialist Realist action-image, and the emergence of the pure optical and sound situations in Tarkovsky's films. To do this, this chapter will focus on Tarkovsky's films that were most directly influenced by the Thaw new-wave: *Ivan's Childhood*, and then *Andrei Rublev*.

### *Ivan's Childhood* and the Thaw

Tarkovsky was not the first director assigned to *Ivan's Childhood*. Initially the directorial project of Eduard Abalov, the film (then known as *Ivan*) was shut down by the Mosfilm studio in October 1960. Based on Yuri Bogomolov's novella *Ivan* (1957), the original screenplay related the experiences of a 12-year-old orphan named Ivan Bondarev, who takes part in (and survives) reconnaissance missions during the Second World War. The reason for Abalov's dismissal was, Robert Bird relates, the low quality of his work rather than ideological problems. On Abalov's dismissal from the film, Bird writes: 'The rushes from Abalov's shoot proved unacceptable for the [Mosfilm's First Creative] Unit's artistic counsel, which fired the hapless Abalov and his director of photography S. Galadzh in December 1960. Against the wishes of Bogomolov, who campaigned for "one of the experienced directors who know the war situation well", the studio leadership assigned the project to the brash young Tarkovsky' (2010:

26).[36]

Unlike the rational spaces used by Socialist Realism (the battlefield, cultivated fields, and orderly factories), the landscape of *Ivan's Childhood* is desolate, uncultivated, and littered with the remnants of broken machines. Bombed and ruined spaces are parted from their normal determinations and subject to irrational-linkages (a house becomes a cemetery, the living intermingle with the dead). The landscape is dark, mostly silent, burnt and dead, reflecting the bleak mood of the young protagonist. The casting of Moscow schoolboy Kolya Burlyaev as the young protagonist Ivan is typical of the dramatic change of tone that Tarkovsky and screenwriter collaborator Konchalovsky implemented on their arrival on the project. Commenting on a folder of pictures for screen-tests that were available to her, Turovskaya writes:

> One set of photographs is of actors tested for the part of Ivan. Among the five faces there are very young boys, some older ones, peasant faces and more intellectual ones, fair and dark boys. But not one of them bears any resemblance to that expression of inner conflict that quality of apartness, that the director found in the face of Moscow schoolboy Kolya Burlyaev. (1989: 30)

Shifting the perspective of the film from Bogomolov's narrator Galtsev, and adding four original dream sequences, Tarkovsky and Konchalovsky altered the entire concept of Ivan's heroic missions. Whereas in the original conception of the film, Ivan's story unfolded in a straightforward way by following his reconnaissance missions into German territory, *Ivan's Childhood* explores idle periods, charging intervals with, as Tarkovsky says, a 'disturbing, pent up intensity' (2010: 17). With the exception of the romantic interludes centring on the nurse Masha, the focus is shifted to Ivan's psychological state, showing how his consciousness intermingles 'real' and 'dream' worlds. For example, after we learn of Ivan's death at the hands of the Germans, Tarkovsky cuts to a dream sequence where we see Ivan drinking water from a bucket, waving at his mother, playing hide and seek with other children, and then running along a

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[36] This account is supported by Maya Turovskaya's description of the production history of *Ivan's Childhood* and Tarkovsky's clashes with Bogomolov (1989: 29-35).

sunlit beach. In another dream, associations are suggested by horses, wet with rain, grazing on a cartload of apples strewn on a sunlit beach. Tarkovsky refused to draw any neat conclusions in these sequences, forcing the spectator to interpret the images on screen and piece together the information presented to them. He writes of *Ivan's Childhood*: 'we connected the episodes to each other based on poetic associations. The montage was inspired by emotions, not by the direct sequence of events' (Tarkovsky 1962).

Finding little of interest in 'the detached, detailed, leisurely narrative' of Bogomolov's original story, Tarkovsky writes that he was drawn instead to the character of Ivan and his psychological state in the intervals between missions (2010: 16). *Ivan's Childhood* shifts Ivan's heroic missions off-screen in order to focus on those moments when he loses his ability to function, and when he experiences states of dislocation and disintegration. For example, in the third memory sequence, in which Ivan fantasises about hunting and killing German soldiers, Ivan's memories of warfare assert themselves as visions in the present, distorting the space around him. Faced with even a fantasy of a German soldier Ivan collapses in tears. In an earlier scene Ivan wanders through the skeletal remains of a bombed house, a tiny figure framed by a circle of sharp charred planks of wood that resemble stakes or rows of sharpened teeth. Cinematographer Vladim Yusov's striking contrasts of light and shadow in such scenes is reminiscent of Urusevsky's work in *The Cranes are Flying*, which sought to show the interior turmoil of its characters through a stylised, Expressionist *mise-en-scène*. In these scenes, Tarkovsky offers a psychological portrait of a young protagonist – his traumatic memories, dreams and fantasies - which are all in tune with the non-heroic mood of Soviet war films of the Thaw period. Jean-Paul Sartre, in an open letter to Mario Alicata, the editor of *L'Unitá*, spoke of the film's shift from Socialist Realism to 'socialist surrealism' (1963).

What is essential in these examples is the difference between the kind of actions and situations that unfold in Socialist Realist films, and the narrative organisation of *Ivan's Childhood*. To clarify this point, it is worth briefly comparing Ivan to the heroine of the Socialist Realist film *She Defends the Motherland*, in which the concept of vengeance is treated quite differently. Like so many other films it

starts with a happy situation that is transformed by the action of war. The heroine, who has very few characteristics other than patriotic fervour, performs a series of effective partisan actions. Finally the village is liberated from the German soldiers, and its inhabitants gain a better understanding of socialist principles in a typical SAS' structure. As Kenez explains, '*She Defends the Motherland* is an artistically primitive film with the simplest political message' (2009: 176). While a character like Pasha is able to complete a series of actions in order to enact her vengeance, all neatly resolved within the broader framework of Socialist Realist ideology, Ivan encounters a situation that is not easily solved, where the enemy only exists in his hallucinations, and most of the film is focused on his inactivity. War films might have had moments of inactivity before, and the best have placed value in moments outside of the action, but Tarkovsky goes so far as to suppress action, to undo the drama of the plot or story. *Ivan's Childhood* unravels sensory-motor situations typical of Socialist Realism.

Overcoming the action-led focus of his source material, Tarkovsky's depiction of war turned out to be very different from those films made during the frightening and culturally repressive years that preceded the Thaw. Tarkovsky writes that his approach to the war film genre was the product of his own experience of war:

> The search for a new formal structure is always determined by thoughts that demand a new means of expression. For example, it is impossible today to see the war through the eyes of those who consciously experienced it. In my film, I try to see it through the eyes of a person my age. I am judging the past from a contemporary point of view. I am illustrating what I could have experienced if I had taken part. I have witnessed how war can mentally cripple someone. And today, the problem of war has to be solved again by my generation; it is the most relevant of all topics, but our new point of view forces us to find new forms for it.
> (Tarkovsky 2006: 7-8)

Under the influence of her first impressions of *Ivan's Childhood* in the early spring of 1962, Turovskaya

also stressed that this approach was a product of historical change:

> Why is it that at some moments in history the cinema feels the need for a poetic treatment of its raw material? It seems to me that this need is particularly sharply felt during periods of historical change, when our 'normal', accepted notions and perceptions become inadequate in the face of changing realities, and new perceptions have to be developed. (1989: 10)

Turovskaya and Tarkovsky both raise the central proposition of Deleuze's cinema books, which is that there exists a cultural 'image of thought', constituted from a particular milieu, of which cinema produces a corresponding image. The films that Deleuze discusses in his cinema books are used as evidence of a change in the image of thought within the countries whose cinemas he discusses. I argue that the mode of thought (or milieu) that Tarkovsky challenged is the cultural practice of Socialist Realism outlined by Zhdanov and Gorky and imposed by the Soviet system. He did not do this in isolation because the Thaw encouraged a measure of boldness across Soviet cinema, during which character and situation moved closer to complex narrative and characterisation. The novelty here, compared to Deleuze's assessment of the crisis of the action-image in other European cinemas, is that the image of thought of Socialist Realism was an enforced practice. It was an ideology written into every aspect of a film by thematic planning (Miller 2010: 91-105), and imposed by censorship (Kenez 2009: 127-42).

Changes in Soviet society, and more specifically within the Soviet film industry, made a new kind of film making possible. Thaw filmmakers like Tarkovsky would exploit these new circumstances to experiment with new kinds of poetic cinema, undoing the Socialist Realist system of actions and perceptions, in order to rediscover the war for a new generation. Deleuze describes this kind of cinema as being distinct from the sensory-motor situations of the action-image in the old realism: 'There is always a moment when the cinema meets the unforeseeable or the improvisation, the irreducibility of a present living under the present of narration, and the camera cannot even begin its work without

engendering its own improvisations, both as obstacles and as indispensable means' (2005b: 210). The first things to be compromised in Tarkovsky's cinema were the sensory-motor links that produced the action-image, as they proved incompatible with the contemporary passion for truthful depictions of complex characters, expressed in a variety of artistic forms during the Thaw.

### *Andrei Rublev* and Stagnation

Unlike the shift that took place during the Thaw, the next historical period in Soviet history shattered any hopes for further liberalisation of cultural politics. The period under Leonid Brezhnev's leadership is commonly referred to as 'the era of Stagnation', a description coined by Mikhail Gorbachev and still used by Soviet historians (Beumers 2009; Kenez 2009; Laver 1997; Tompson 2003; Stites 1992; Youngblood 2010). The start of the Stagnation is difficult to define, but several events seem to mark a consistent and widespread clampdown on the arts. These include Khrushchev's deposition on 14th October 1964 and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, as well as the arrest and trial of Andrei Siniavsky and Yuli Daniel for the publication of anti-Soviet material abroad in 1966, which demonstrated a tightening of control over culture. In retrospect, this era is considered to have been characterised by a much more aggressive policy towards consolidating communist rule (Laver: 1997; Tompson: 2003).

The years 1967-70 also marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and so the film market was saturated with historical sagas filled with pathos and a heroic grandeur that aimed to record the development of a Soviet people in both their military and industrial success (Youngblood 142-45). In *Soviet Film Music* (1997) Tatiana Egorova describes the cultivation of a 'Soviet variety' of the American Western: 'The modernized revolutionary Western, with its free, entertaining manner, which tickled spectators with a well spun plot, kept to the old legends of a new power conquering different regions of the former Czarist empire, and of the Cheka fighting the White Guards and nationalist gangs during the Civil War' (1997: 217). Box office hits from this period also drew on other genres that had been unusual for Soviet cinema's scope: adventure films, spy thrillers like *Tehran 43* (1981),

melodramas like *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* (1979), and disaster films. The major blockbuster of this time was the adventure film *Pirates of the Twentieth Century* (1980), directed by television director Boris Durov and scripted by Stanislav Govorukhin. That this Soviet cinema of the action-image flourished well into the 70s and 80s could be attributed to both its genuine popularity, as well as the unique circumstances of regulation and censorship that existed in the USSR at the time. With the frequent bans of films, and filmmakers unsure of the permissible limits of their material in relation to politics, social commentary, even laughter, many filmmakers stuck to 'safe material'. Alternatively, Beumer's suggests that films like Andrei Smirnov's *Belorussian Station* (1970) regressed to the moral values and certainty of Socialist Realist heroism in reaction to the 'entropy and degradation of values during the Stagnation era' (Beumers 2009: 173).

In her analysis of film music during Stagnation, Egorova explores the forced co-existence in the same period - sometimes in the same film - between the outmoded, stable musical clichés of Socialist Realism and the latest advances of modern music inspired by foreigners like Visconti, Fellini, and Bergman, who paid much attention to music (1997: 213). Popular films existed alongside what Beumers calls the 'auteur' films that were released for international festival screenings but remained undistributed or in low distribution at home. This paradoxical combination is characteristic of the strained co-existence of two stylistic models in Soviet cinema of this time: the dominant, strictly regulated mainstream genre commercial films that had monetary success, and the semi-official auteur films that experimented with these forms and appealed to philosophical and spiritual problems (2009: 181-83). These included Elem Klimov's *Rasputin* (1975, released 1981), Kira Muratov's *Brief Encounters* (1967, released 1986), and Tarkovsky and Konchalovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (1966, released 1971). These films emphasised personal histories, the individual artistic impulse, and spiritual matters. They were successful abroad, but encountered difficulties in the atmosphere of Stagnation, as Beumers explains: 'The filmmaker assumed the role of a preacher, as no moral guidance was provided by a state exclusively concerned with political and ideological matters [...] The role of a preacher also exposed the filmmakers to criticism from the Party, which claimed that role for itself' (2009: 165). Russian critic

Alexander Timofeevsky writes of the stagnation as a 'period of dissidents' in which 'everyone had to take sides in the universal opposition between the individual and the state – the opposition that would define the spiritual climate of the country for a long time to come' (1994: 28).

Completed in mid-1966, *Andrei Rublev* was being made at the tail end of the Thaw period, retaining the optimism of that period, but also subject to the politics of Stagnation. Completed after Khrushchev was removed from power and the Thaw ended, the film was shelved for over three years. During this time, Tarkovsky deflected and acceded to numerous demands for cuts from Mosfilm censors already nervous from a lack of clear ideological directives (see Johnson and Petrie 1994: 82-85). Despite receiving the FIPRESCI International Critics Prize for its screenplay at Cannes, *Andrei Rublev* was eventually released at home with little fanfare. 'There is no announcement in any paper about *Rublyov* being on', Tarkovsky complained in his diary, 'not a single poster in the city. Yet it's impossible to get tickets. All sorts of people keep telephoning, stunned by it, to say thank you' (1994: 46). This long delay, and the perceived political aspect of the film, ensured that *Andrei Rublev* acquired a measure of mystique for both Soviet and Western audiences:

> For its first viewers […] *Andrei Rublev* was an eagerly anticipated forbidden fruit and a courageous intervention in contemporary ideological discourse, its miraculous aura stemmed less from the film itself than from the very improbability of its existence in the atheist USSR, and it was the stubborn controversy over its release which contributed most to Tarkovsky's image as a suffering artist. (Bird 2004: 7)[37]

*Andrei Rublev* however, is more than a simple parable about the artist and his creativity in repressive

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[37] In their attempt to dispel some of the mythology that surrounds Tarkovsky, Johnson and Petrie suggest that the delay of the film's release had little do with allegorical comment on the tortured artist in the Soviet Union, unconscious or otherwise. They argue that the delay was due to the film's length, alleged 'naturalism' and the unusual portrayal of Andrei Rublev and the Middle Ages (1994: 80). The charge of naturalism centred on the violence and nudity in the central three episodes: the pagan festival, the blinding of the artisans, and the sack of Vladimir. This was exacerbated by a newspaper article called '… And the Cow Caught Fire' which accused Tarkovsky of burning a live cow for the scene of the Tartar raid in a cruel act of 'extreme naturalism' (Bird 2004: 32-33). Tarkovsky has claimed that the cow was not physically harmed because he had protected it with a coat of asbestos, but one might wonder at the distress it must have suffered during the stunt. Similarly, Tarkovsky also filmed a horse intended for the slaughter house being killed on set.

times. It was a self-conscious reaction against a broader Soviet tradition of Socialist Realist historical drama of the kind made by Sergei Bondarchuk, whose eight hour film (released in four parts) *War and Peace* (1965-67) proved to be the most expensive film ever made in the Soviet Union and the epitome of Soviet orthodoxy.[38] Tarkovsky avoids historically accurate clothing, as well as sets and landscapes that would anchor the film within a specific time period: 'historical facts, people, artifacts [sic], had to be seen not as the stuff of future memorials, but as something living, breathing, even everyday' (Tarkovsky 2010: 35).[39] Where Socialist Realism defined a heroic milieu that shaped the action of a character (in the form of the proletariat's struggle toward socialist progress), Tarkovsky played down the social and historical significance of 'the people' and individual heroic actions despite the existence of acceptable Marxist 'enemies' in the film: the Tartars (a term used to describe a Turkic people living in Asia and Europe), the rulers, and the Church. The critic Vladimir Solovyov complained about the hero's 'absence', was 'disgusted by the physiological naturalism' and upset with the 'unconnectedness of its poetics' (quoted in Johnsons and Petrie 1994: 85).

Solovyov's complaint centres on the fact that there is no clear path of action that the protagonist must follow. The unconventional narrative structure and characterisation of the main protagonist was at odds with the conventions of Socialist Realism, which called for linear and chronological filmic narratives that were easily understood by the Soviet public. In *Andrei Rublev* each episode is also linked by Andrei's presence, but episodes are not unified through sensori-motor actions that could tie together the narrative. Instead, Rublev's journey opens up like a theological debate as he contemplates the violence of the world outside of his monastery and tries to reconcile this with his conception of the divine through a series of chance encounters and visions. This is explored across eight episodes, in addition to the prologue and epilogue that frame the film. The first being the exodus

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[38] Tarkovsky had a stormy personal and professional relationship with Bondarchuk. In an interview with Angus MacKinnon, Tarkovsky spoke of how Bondarchuk fought 'like a tiger' against giving *Nostalghia* an award at Cannes festival in 1983 (2006: 156). According to Boyadzhieva's gossipy biography of Tarkovsky, he had an affair with Bondarchuk's daughter, Natalya, while she played the role of Hari in Solaris (2012: 192).

[39] Despite his avoidance of specific historical details, Andrei directly encounters social and political changes, observing the divisive politics of the Russian princes, the violence of Mongol-Tartar domination of the Russian lands, and the burgeoning intellectual culture of the church. For more on how *Andrei Rublev* references the history of early Russia, see Robert Bird's *Andrei Rublev* (2004: 12-23).

of Andrei (Anatoly Solonitsyn) and his companions, Danil (Nikolai Grinko) and Kyrill (Ivan Lapikov), from the monastery, the last showing the casting of a bell under the orders of a young boy Boriska (Nikolai Burlyayev). The progression of these episodes is neither straightforward, nor chronological. Two episodes, where Andrei speaks with the deceased Theophanes the Greek (Nikolai Sergeyev), are dreamlike, while it is not always certain whether certain episodes – like the theatrical depiction of the crucifixion, and the blinding of the masons - are a memory, vision, or fantasy. There are very few establishing shots, and the few causal links between individual episodes are often poetic images of flight or white liquids spilled into rivers. Characters like Danil disappear and reappear without explanation, gesturing towards events or causes outside of the frame of the film. Bird also notes that many scenes end with characters proceeding to the right 'as if in a universal migration to some off-screen destination' (2004: 38). The most stable elements of each episode are the river that is seen flowing at the beginning and end of most episodes, and the wandering figure of Andrei. As Bird notes, the role of the protagonist here is as 'witness' rather than active participant in events:

> Andrei's point of view is privileged only insofar as he remains a spectator alongside the viewer, immune to the allure of action. We are never quite sure what he sees and how he sees it, and so we can neither be sure that we are seeing properly either. Nonetheless we feel an almost ethical imperative to *keep watching*. Perhaps this is the key to Tarkovsky's personal aura: that he encouraged beaten and distracted people to *look*, both at the world outside and at their inner selves. It reminds us of the original meaning of the word 'martyr', the one Tarkovsky may really have in mind when he began his diary: 'witness'. Tarkovsky's films bear witness to his world and posit the spectator also as *witness*. (2004: 10)

Although there are important differences between Deleuze and Tarkovsky's ideas - for instance, Tarkovsky's emphasis on beauty, which is absent from Deleuze's work - Tarkovsky's depiction of such characters is a reflection of the larger concern of all of his films, which is the act of learning to see

beyond the limits of the sensori-motor situation, or in any case making seeing or 'witnessing' the central experience, which is, for Deleuze, the distinctive feature of the time-image. In her perceptive reading of the film, Turovskaya writes that Andrei's role is that of an 'observer, mediating upon what happens, and if he *is* involved, it is only in a secondary way since his purpose in the film is something other' (1989: 37). Deleuze calls such characters 'seers', whose sensori-motor action is replaced by a voyage or chance encounters (Deleuze 2005a: 212) or a motor helplessness (2005b: 3). Andrei is a character moved by chance encounters, who 'shifts, runs and becomes animated in vain' and sees things that are 'no longer subject to the rules of a response or an action' (Deleuze 2005b: 3). For instance, during the third episode 'The Holiday. 1408' he inexplicably rushes away from his companions to follow a nocturnal pagan ritual, swayed or prompted by caprice. Without motive other than curiosity, he follows a crowd of naked men, women and children who run past smouldering fires down to the river, observes a woman being pulled into the bushes by a man, and the strange movement of a huge white figure walking on stilts through the trees. Andrei is soon caught by three men and tied to a post in a mimicry of the crucifixion. A woman approaches him and asks 'is loving a sin', then kisses him passionately. He escapes, but encounters the woman again. Cut to the morning, and Andrei picks his way through the ashes of the fires, and returns to his companions shamefaced. As they paddle away down the river the pagan woman is seen being chased by guardsmen and monks. Despite his nocturnal encounter with the woman Andrei will only watch the struggle, finally averting his eyes as she swims past their boat. In an earlier scene, 'The Jester. Summer 1400", the three monks enter a hut to escape a downpour, and along with a group of peasants watch the dance of a folk entertainer who sings a bawdy song and accompanies himself on the tambourine. The camera pans unhurriedly around the hut, showing the solid and lived in physical milieu of the film, as well as the different aspects of the peasants who share the hut with the three monks. Kirill has vanished from the room by the time the camera comes to a halt. Soon Andrei observes two men fighting in the mud through the window. The camera follows his gaze and cuts to outside of the hut. As the fight ends four horsemen appear from off-screen. Presently the men approach the hut and arrest the jester, bashing his head against a tree.

Kirill re-appears, and guiltily ushers his companions out of the hut. All eyes are on Andrei and his companions as they hurry away. This is the first of many violent episodes that Andrei is passively witness to, each of which show that this is not a heroic historical story about the agency of socialist man, but rather a story about Andrei's faults and weaknesses. The act of seeing does not lead directly to action, as it does in the Socialist Realist cinema of the movement-image, but to an exploration of inactivity. In this way, Andrei becomes less an agent of the story and more of an observer or 'seer', seeking to understand a problem that has no easy answer. Because Andrei's role is passive, the narrative of the film does not (it *cannot*) play out according to either the ASA' or SAS' formulae.

In *Sculpting in Time*, Tarkovsky describes characters like Andrei as martyrs (or witnesses) who attempt to articulate change and the future to come:

> When the conflict [between the old and the new] at last takes place, their contemporaries, shaken and moved, erect a monument to the man who gave expression, when it was still young, vital and full of hope, to this force which brought about the conflict and which has now become the clear and unequivocal symbol of a triumphant move forward. Then the artist and thinker becomes the ideologue, the apologist for his time, the catalyst of predetermined change. The greatness and ambiguity of art […] has to do with moral and ethical upheaval. (Tarkovsky 2010: 54)

This is reflective of a broader trend of film making in the Soviet Union that focused on spiritual journeys, but is also indicative of Tarkovsky's own profoundly optimistic understanding of the role of the artist: 'They range themselves at the sites of possible or impending historical cataclysms, like warning signs at the edge of precipices or quagmires. They define, hyperbolise and transform the dialectical embryo of danger threatening society, and almost always become the herald of a clash between old and new' (Tarkovsky 2010: 53). The journey of the seer often goes beyond the characters' field of knowledge, and even beyond the conditions of action, but is always indicative of a change in

the knowledges and discourses that are possible within a particular milieu. The character Andrei might act as an allegory for this process - perhaps standing in for the director himself - but Tarkovsky also uses him to challenge the milieu and modes of behaviour of Socialist Realist film. The film's denouement is decisive in this sense, as it sets the camera up in direct relation to the work of the icon-painter. Heretofore shot entirely in black and white, in this epilogue a colour shot of embers dissolves into details from Rublev's icons, including *The Entry into Jerusalem, The Nativity of Christ, The Raising of Lazarus, The Transfiguration, The Baptism of Christ, The Annunciation, The Savour in the Wood,* and *The Old Testament Trinity* (Bird 2004: 59). The effect might be idolatrous, as icons were never meant to be contemplated in this way, but Rublev's icons here represent a leap forward in artistic expression that emerges from a brutish and grey medieval world.[40] As the Russian Orthodox theologian Pavel Florensky wrote: 'the Rublev icon shows in the most astonishing way this new vision of the Holy Trinity, a new revelation shining through the veils of what are now the old and clearly less significant forms (1996: 84). This is the model of the kind of art that Tarkovsky wanted to make, in opposition to the action-images of Socialist Realism, charting a new cinematic language in line with the aspirations and legacy of the Thaw.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have started engaging with Deleuze's cinema project as structured around two dominant forms of cinema that emerged during the mid-twentieth century: the time-image and the movement-image. I have suggested a methodology that uses Deleuze's concept of the 'crisis of the action image' in relation to the history of Socialist Realist film and the subsequent Thaw in Soviet cinema. The focus of my reading of both *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev* was how the innovations of the Thaw challenged the action-images and characters of Socialist Realism. As a result of this perspective, I have argued that despite the continued dominance of action-image cinema in the Soviet

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[40] For more on how Russian icons were made, and how they should be viewed, see Florensky's *Iconostasis* (1996). Tarkovsky was aware of Florensky, and quotes him in *Sculpting in Time* (2010: 82).

Union during the Thaw and Stagnation, Tarkovsky made two films that reflect two components of Deleuze's modern cinema: the break in the sensory-motor link, and more profoundly, the emergence of the seer as witness to this transformation. In doing so I have expanded Deleuze's own reading of Soviet film to include the post-war period, and offered a new perspective on Tarkovsky's first two films.

# Chapter 2: National History and the Crystal-Image

> All the Russian geniuses thought their greatness could not have grown out of soil that was flat and senseless, and so they called their country great and its future messianic. (Tarkovsky 1994: 181)

## Introduction

On 4th October 1957, at the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union secretly launched Sputnik, Earth's first artificial moon. In the next few years the Soviets would send the first animal into space, the first man (Yuri Gagarin), and the first woman (Valentina Tereshkova). During the late 1960s the number of Soviet space launches surpassed the combined launch rate of all other countries in the world (Tarasenko 1994: 1). On July 20th 1969, the United States landed a manned mission on the moon in a direct response to Soviet scientific aspiration and achievement. Although they were closely linked to the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles (see Siddiqi 2011: 47-76), Soviet space triumphs offered more than the technological realisation of military aims. The Soviet space programme captured both the imagination of the people at home, and served as a worldwide propaganda tool for socialism.

Solaris is more closely aligned with the cultural heritage of this Soviet space programme than is commonly assumed.[41] Tarkovsky was a young man when Sputnik launched, and lived through a period in which space travel, rockets, and cosmonauts were fixated on by the public. Many of the first Soviet cosmonauts came from the very same age group as Tarkovsky, the so-called *shestidesyatniki* who were born mostly before the war, many raised without a father who was serving or had been killed on the front, too young to really remember the excesses of Stalinism, and who would also live through the rising living standards and exuberantly optimistic views of the future that marked the Khrushchev

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[41] Johnson and Petrie focus instead on the antagonistic view points of the novel's author Lem, and Tarkovsky's adaptation (1994: 98-110), while Mark Le Fanu examines the film's use of religious imagery, particularly of resurrection (1987: 64-66). Skakov chooses to focus on Tarkovsky's counterpoise of *Solaris* and *Earth* (2012: 74-99), while Martin speculates whether the film was a portrayal of Tarkovsky's own marriage and relationship with his parents, anticipating the autobiographical elements of *Mirror* (2011: 109-110). Notably, Slavoj Žižek looks at the film in the context of feminism and psychoanalysis in his article 'The Thing from Inner Space' (1994), while Mark Riley's Deleuzian reading in 'Disorientation, Duration and Tarkovsky' posits a schizoanalytic approach to *Solaris* (2008: 52-63).

Thaw. As I will show, by the time he came to make *Solaris,* this mythology was starting to wane, with the optimism of the Soviet space age giving way to pessimism and irony.

In the last chapter I argued that cinema of the movement-image always entailed an encompassing milieu of forces and the related actions of an individual or individuals, and that a milieu was established by Socialist Realism in terms of the ways in which its characters acted and the aims and consequences of their action. Finally, I suggested that this structure was brought into question by the Thaw. That is not to say that the movement-image went away. In this chapter I argue that in many ways it adapted to new circumstances, restored to its grandeur by the mythology of Soviet space exploration. The Socialist Realist dream might have weakened in the context of Khruschev's de-Stalinisation, but popular culture composed a variation on its themes.[42] Slava Gerovitch argues, for instance, that Khruschev's cultural policy of de-Stalinisation drew on quite traditional, Stalinist rituals of hero-worshipping and mass celebration (2011: 105). The cosmonaut myth in particular played a major role in Khruschev's attempts to de-Stalinise Soviet society by breaking from the past and reconnecting revolutionary aspirations to new symbols. The dream of founding a new socialist civilisation was displaced to space, refuelling utopian hopes, while the idealised images of heroic leaders were transformed by the mythology of the cosmonauts.

This chapter begins with brief history of this space race as it existed in Soviet popular culture with the aim of showing how *Solaris* both draws on and subverts this mythology. As with *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev,* Tarkovsky's third film was released at a moment of change. While drawing on the iconography of the Thaw's optimism for space exploration, *Solaris* reflects Stagnation's growing loss of faith in the agency of the Soviet space programme (especially following an American landing on the moon), as well as the myths that surrounded its cosmonauts. In *Solaris* the action-form has entered into a crisis, and this is reflected in Kris' behaviour on-board the planet. Unlike the action-led cosmonaut of mythology, he inhabits a kind of sensori-motor limbo, unable to act or react to either

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[42] Robert Kluge's *Der sowjetische Traum vom Fliegen. Analyseversuch eines gesellschaftlichen Phänomens* (*The Soviet Dream of Flying: An Attempt at Analysing a Societal Phenomenon*) also highlights the historical continuity between the aviation culture of the Stalin era and the post Stalinist cult of space flight, but unfortunately it is not currently translated into English. See also Scott W. Palmer's *Dictatorship of the Air: Aviation Culture and the Fate of Russian Culture* (2006).

people or the situation he finds himself in. The main consequence of his failure to act is the loosening of the sensori-motor system, which means that he encounters time in its full force: what Deleuze describes as a 'crystal-image'.

The second half of this chapter turns to Deleuze's description of *Mirror* as a crystal that 'turns on itself, like a homing device that searches an opaque environment: what is Russia, what is Russia' (2005b: 73). I suggest that it is possible to re-interrogate and re-evaluate the crystal-image as it appears in Tarkovsky's film by exploring its relation to the complex web of national circumstances that appear within its crystalline narration. The crystal-image as it is formed in *Mirror* encompasses many of the memorable crossroads of Soviet life, as well as the private reminiscences of its creator and his family. I argue that the narrative encounters between mother and wife, child and father, which take place in *Mirror* offer up a series of situations that crystallize three historical moments: pre-war, war-time, and post-war.

Consistent with the approach of my last chapter, the overall aim of this chapter is to show how the features of the time-image in *Solaris* and *Mirror* negotiate the specific Soviet history of the Thaw and Stagnation.

## *Solaris* and the Soviet Space Race

The rivalries that ignited the space age have been well documented, with a relatively clear division between those works published before 1988, and those published after, when the doors of the Soviet archives started to open.[43] Popular histories like Asif A. Siddiqi's *The Soviet Space Race with Apollo* (2000), and Matthew Brzezinski's *Red Moon Rising* (2007), have revealed new information about entire programmes, personalities, and even space missions that were not known outside of Soviet military and government before the turn of the 1990s. Alexander Levitsky's introduction to the anthology *Worlds Apart: An Anthology of Russian Fantasy and Science Fiction* (2007) places the technological achievements of

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[43] Asif A. Siddiqi provides a thorough account of both Russian and American works, while offering a detailed account of the institutional underpinnings of the Soviet space programme (Siddiqi: 2000).

Soviet space exploration in the context of Russian cultural history, taking the theme of flight from its emergence in the Romantic period in the tales of Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, and Ivan Turgenev, through other key literary texts, up to its realisation in the flight of Sputnik. Levitsky's huge anthology proves that space flight existed in the Soviet popular imagination before Sputnik, but still no one anticipated the enormity of the political and cultural repercussions of this satellite's first flight. In Andrews and Siddiqi's volume of articles on space exploration and Soviet culture, *Into the Cosmos* (2011)*,* Alexei Kojevnikov writes about the sensation that Sputnik caused:

> Overnight, *Sputnik* became the chief world media sensation and a public fixation. The dream about the cosmos entered a different cultural realm – no longer a monopoly of science-fiction fans and a few engineers, but a matter of primary attention for the political establishment, mass culture and media, countless children and their teachers, and much of the general population across the globe. Rocketry and space travel became relevant for various areas of cultural life, endowed with many new and changing meanings and uses. (2011: 21)

Spurred by a handful of visionary engineers devoted to rockets and the cause of space exploration - men like Valentin Glushko and Sergei Korolev - Khrushchev expected minor scientific dividends from the launch of Sputnik. It was after all, a sideshow to the mass development of ICBMs. What Khrushchev could not anticipate was how the space programme would become a binding force between the culture, society and politics of his era. The space programme quickly became part of his critical cultural strategy in the process of de-Stalinisation (see Gerovitch 2011:79), and its success was also used to bolster atheist agitation against the religiosity that persisted amongst a significant percentage of the Soviet population.[44] Space flight also became an important propaganda tool for socialism on the global scene. Following the launch of Sputnik, and the following successes with

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[44] See Victoria Smolkin-Rochrock's article 'Cosmic Enlightenment: Scientific Atheism and the Soviet Conquest of Space' (2011: 159-95). She writes: ' The philosophical significance of man's new ability to leave the Earth – the cosmonaut's literal "storming of the heavens" - was intended to deal the final blow to religion, which, against Marxist predictions, continued to frame the everyday cosmologies of many Soviet citizens' (2011: 161).

manned space flight, the Soviets could be counted alongside, if not ahead of, the United States in terms of technology.

In the year proceeding Sputnik's launch, Ivan Efremov published *The Andromeda Nebula* (1956), a humanist socialist utopian text that imagines communication with alien races several centuries distant. The huge success of this book provided the impetus for cosmic themed science fiction during the Thaw period. Combined with the space flights, *The Andromeda Nebula* unleashed a flood of science fiction books that answered a thirst for stories about the frontiers of science and rapid technological advances. Stites charts this rise in *Russian Popular Culture* (1992):

> Scientists with imaginative minds lent their technical know-how to the genre. Science and engineering students devoured it with a thirst made sharper by the new military technology, freer scientific enquiry in the mid 1950s, and the space sagas of the time, especially Sputnik and the 1961 Gagarin flight. Foreign science fiction made its way rapidly into this burgeoning market and the translated works of [Isaac] Asimov, [Robert] Heinlein, and [Ray] Bradbury took their place beside the old favorite [sic] classics of [H.G.] Wells and [Jules] Verne. (1992: 129)

Myth and reality would collide as Sputnik inaugurated a successful decade of Soviet space flight alongside a rapid rise in the quantity of science fiction stories, which continued to flourish in the Brezhnev era. The popularity of science fiction marked an important convergence of popular and official taste. Here, the condition of what 'ought to be' and 'what was' in socialist rhetoric were closer than they had ever been. Science fiction was Socialist Realism at its most convincing.[45]

Notable science fiction writers of this time were the brothers Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, Illya

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[45] These new science fiction books were more scientifically literate than those of earlier periods, and about half the readers were in the 15-25 bracket, mostly male. Women were scientists and explorers in these texts, and less crudely portrayed than in Western science fiction, but they remained distinctly subordinate to men, while non-Russian ethnic minorities were integrated naturally into the stories without prejudice (Stites 1992: 153). Compare this to the early 1930s, when utopian science fiction was suppressed because of its dangerous comparisons to the present and its revolutionary idealism. On this era Levitsky writes: 'The political reality of Soviet Russia made it soon impossible for Russian writers to publish works of fiction with a gloomy view of the future because any admonitory utopia would simply undercut the very foundation of Soviet rhetorical persuasion' (2007: 32).

Varshavsky, Valentina Zhuravloyova, E. Parnov, Stanislaw Lem, and M. Emtsev. By far the most popular science fiction writers throughout the Brezhnev era, the Strugatsky brothers dealt with scientific and metaphysical questions through technological advances. As dealt with in the next chapter, Tarkovsky's *Stalker* is an adaptation of their book *A Roadside Picnic* (1971). Tompson writes in *The Soviet Union under Brezhnev* (2003) that these writers tackled the impact of future technologies in a serious way: 'As in the West, [Soviet] science fiction was largely concerned with technological development and its potential – whether that potential was life-enhancing or life-denying' (Tompson 2003: 102). The 60s also witnessed the publication of an impressive twenty-five volume anthology of contemporary science fiction, *Biblioteka sovremennoi fantastiki,* which included both Western and Soviet science fiction writers (Levitsky 2007: 34).

Many Soviet science fiction films of the 60s offered allegorical tales of competition: North and South power blocks in Mikhail Karyukov and Aleksandr Kozyr's *The Heavens Call* (1959); capitalist and communist viewpoints in Vladimir Chebotaryov and Gennadi Kazansky's *The Amphibian Man* (1962), or imagined Soviet scientific prowess in reaching Mars or Venus ahead of any other country, as in Pavel Klushantsev's *Planet of the Storms* (1962). Less concerned with fantastic tales of mutated spiders, alien invasions and body snatchers as was happening in America and Japan, Soviet science fiction films were focused on promoting the USSR space programme. Such films were technically brilliant, although much of their metaphoric nature was lost in subsequent re-edits made for Western audiences. For instance, in 1962 Roger Corman acquired rights to *The Heavens Call*, and along with the young Francis Ford Coppola produced an English-language re-edit of the film for American release, entitled *Battle Beyond the Sun*. They re-dubbed the film into English, removed any references to politics, replaced scenes showing models and images of Soviet spacecraft with scenes showing ones from NASA, and inserted scenes with monsters. In the case of *Planet of the Storms*, the film was released twice in America, under the titles *Voyage to the Prehistoric Planet* (1965), with additional scenes featuring Basil Rathbone, and *Voyage to the Planet of the Prehistoric Women* (1967), with new scenes of bikini-clad alien women added by

Peter Bogdanovich (Johnston 2011: 83-84).[46]

*Andrei Rublev* had been completed, but not yet released when, in October 1968, Tarkovsky approached the Mosfilm studio with an application for a screen adaptation of Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris* (1961). Lem's novel is set on a sentient planet, and chronicles the ultimate futility of attempted communications with extra-terrestrial life. Each of the scientists living within the scientific facility on the surface of the planet is tormented by so called 'visitors' who seem to manifest their repressed, guilty desires in human form. Kris, a psychologist who arrives at the station, meets a manifestation of his wife Hari, and confronts his own guilt about her suicide. Deeply upset by the ocean's activities, Kris comes to the conclusion that the extra-terrestrial mind is too different from the human mind for any real communication to take place. The novel ends with Kris waiting for another manifestation of his wife to appear, in hopeless expectation of further torture, mockery, and 'cruel miracles' (Lem 1970: 204).

Following the harsh realism, epic scope, and controversy of *Andrei Rublev*, Tarkovsky's application for a science fiction film should be understood in the context of Tarkovsky's ongoing problems with the cinema administration. All of his film proposals were being turned down, including his favourite project *Bright, Bright Day*, an autobiographical film that would later become *Mirror* (Johnson and Petrie 1999: 98). Turovskaya speculates that Tarkovsky's turn to the popular, mass form of science fiction was a safe choice: 'He knew as well as anyone that a film without an audience, however good it might look on screen, has not come to life: it is the audience that brings it into being' (1989: 52). In his published diaries Tarkovsky writes bitterly about the respective delays of the two films: 'Lots of people accepted *Rublyov* because it has been kept on ice for so long. *Solaris* hasn't been kept on ice, which is why so many of my good friends are furious' (1994: 57). This turn to a popular genre, perhaps out of desperation, might explain why *Solaris* turned out to be Tarkovsky's least

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[46] On Western adaptations, Keith Johnston writes in *Science Fiction Film: A Critical Introduction* (2011): 'Western audiences were exposed to the technical skills of these Soviet science fictions (particularly the impressive special effects work on space stations, rocketships and robots) but in heavily edited, dubbed versions that had been refashioned for US and UK audiences by independent producers.' (Johnston 2011: 83-84).

favourite film, at least in retrospect.[47]

As I have shown, during the Thaw the space programme had become a crucial part of Khruschev's cultural strategy. The legacy of his vision of the Soviet space programme has concrete expression in the sets of *Solaris,* which is littered with references to the mythology of space exploration. An early sequence shows documentary footage of pilot Henri Berton (Vladislav Dvorzhetsky) describing his flight over the surface of the planet Solaris. The room in which Berton is interrogated presents a technologically advanced Soviet society and space programme, but it is decorated with portraits of legendary heroes from the history of Soviet space exploration, notably Konstantin Tsiolkovsky and Yuri Gagarin.[48] These figures are always in shot as Berton recounts the things that he saw on the planet surface. Later in the film, when Kris launches one version of Hari (Natalia Bondarchuk) into space, the nose cone of the rocket that he uses recalls contemporaneous Soviet rocket design more than it projects a vision of future space flight.[49] On the walls of Kris's (Donatas Banionis) father's house, there are illustrations of early balloon flights, drawing on the theme of flight that Levitsky's anthology traced throughout Russian culture. Depictions of this history are, for Tarkovsky, driven by his own self-conscious role as a Soviet artist, drawing on Russian and Soviet cultural history. In an interview, he said: 'you cannot withdraw from your Russian skin, from the links that you attach to your country, from the things you like, from what has previously been done in your country's cinema and in its art, and therefore, from your native land' (Ciment, Schnitzer, and Schnitzer 2006: 21). From one film to the next, as Bird remarks, Tarkovsky attempts to access a 'Soviet imaginary' (Bird 2010: 129).

Tarkovsky might have drawn on this canon of visual representation, but he disavowed any intention to glorify state space exploration. In direct opposition to Stanley Kubrick's 1968 vision of space in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (which Tarkovsky loathed), *Solaris* eschewed futuristic set design and

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[47] In an interview from 1981, Tarkovsky said: 'I do feel that *Solaris* is the least successful of my films because I was never able to eliminate the science-fiction element' (Christie 2006: 66).

[48] Konstantin Tsiolkovsky is a celebrated scientist and inventor, considered the father of modern rocketry. His works inspired leading Soviet rocket engineers such as Sergey Korolyov and Valentin Glushko. Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin was a Russian-Soviet pilot and cosmonaut. He was the first human to journey into outer space.

[49] In his account of visiting the set, Akira Kurosawa was astounded to learn that the cost of this rocket was six hundred million yen (Kurosawa 1977).

furnishings in favour of abandoned canals filled with decrepit technology and rooms decorated with relics of earth. In doing so, his film is consistent with a widespread loss of faith in scientific aspiration and Soviet advances into space. The production of *Solaris* coincided with the ignominious end to the 'race to the moon' in 1969, which signalled a loss of prestige to the Soviet space programme. One popular joke from the time goes like this: 'Armenian Radio asked the question: Why is it that the Soviet Union is not sending cosmonauts to the Moon? Answer: There is a fear that they will emigrate' (quoted in Bartos 2001: 114). The year that *Solaris* was released was also marked by a cooling of the hostility between the Soviet Union and America that had played such a key role in the Soviet bid to prove their parity with other world powers. The Soviet Union and America signed a series of agreements that would ease the relations between the two governments. These included agreements on the use of outer space, science and technology, and a limitation of defensive weapons. As well as establishing commercial links (the much publicised granting of a licence to Moscow to produce Pepsi-Cola in the Soviet Union), both powers agreed to work towards the promotion of mutual cultural, economic and technical links. This was part of an easing of relations known as *détente*, a temporary thaw in the Cold War. As Siddiqi writes, despite the conception of huge projects - such as the construction of giant space stations in Earth's orbit, and long-term exploration of Mars - the Soviet space project was derailed. He writes: 'The early 1970s in the Soviet piloted space programme was a period characterised by a noticeable lack of confidence' (2000: 799).

Accompanying this pessimism was a widespread disintegration of belief in the cosmonaut mythology. During the Khruschev era the public image of the cosmonaut as a symbol of technological progress and shining example of socialist heroism was heavily sponsored from above, promoted in the media, and reached all aspects of Soviet culture. Cosmonauts like Gagarin, and later German Titov, then the first twins in space, Andrian Nikolaev and Pavel Popovich, and then the first woman in space, Tereshkova, had all fulfilled a symbolic function. They were young, energetic men and women, groomed as ideological icons of communism. Their mission was not to recruit new cosmonauts, but to set a moral example and embody the prestige of the Soviet state and beyond this, the future of

socialism. As Sylvester writes in her article on Soviet cosmonauts, this was a heavily gendered mythology. Tereshkova was presented to the world as 'both a master of technology and a feminine flower in the garden of cosmonauts' (2011: 195) while the popular mythology of Gagarin spun a tale of honesty, openness, masculinity, obligation and duty. By the time Tarkovsky applied to do a screen adaptation of Lem's novel, the popular mythology of Gagarin had already taken on a more cynical view: Gagarin as womaniser, as colossal drunk. After Gagarin's death on March 27th 1968, rumours spread that Gagarin was not the first cosmonaut to leave the Earth's atmosphere, and that he was a stand-in for a critically injured cosmonaut from a training test.[50] The treatment of cosmonauts in the media had not yet passed into the ironic, as in Vladimir Voinovich's satirical novella *Moscow 2042* (1982),[51] or Il'ia Kabakov's 1981-88 installation *The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment*,[52] but the template for the paradigm of heroic space traveller was starting to unravel.

In the context of declining belief in the iconography of the space age, and in the wake of the film experimentation of the Thaw period, Tarkovsky's encounter with science fiction makes for an uncertain film, less concerned with heroic expansion of socialism into space or allegorical tales of competition than on human dilemmas. The conflict between Earth and the cosmos permeates the entire film, shifting the film away from Lem's technological approach to an exploration of family relationships and human love, as well as humanity's inescapable links with nature and home. As such, it begins with a celebration of Earth's beauty, and perfunctory attention is paid to the journey through space.[53] Once on board the station, and faced with a duplicate of his wife who had committed suicide

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[50] In his 1999 article 'Space Dramas: We Knew Nothing of Some. Others Didn't Occur', Leonard Nikishin maintains that Valentin Bondarenk, Pyotr Dolgov, Vladimir Komarov, Viktov Patsaev, Vladislav Volkov, and George Dobrovolsky were all killed in training exercises (article quoted in Bartos 2001: 94). With Gagarin's death, unexplained in the official press release in Pravda, stories about the circumstances of his death became more and more fantastic. Jenks writes: 'Almost immediately there emerged a legend that Gagarin had been seized by angels – or that he was the victim of an alien abduction. Many in the military continued to blame Gagarin's lack of preparation and carelessness, thus deflecting blame away from themselves and onto Gagrin. Another popular version claimed that Gagarin took a drunken flight to watch a soccer match in Alma-Alta and crashed on the return. Some people swear they saw him at the match' (Jenks 2011: 128-9).

[51] In this book, the alter ego of the author travels to the future, where he sees how communism has been built up in Moscow.

[52] Ilya Kabakov's 1988 installation, *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Apartment*, presents an isolated dreamer who develops an impossible project - to fly alone in outer space. Having built a makeshift slingshot, the hero catapults through the ceiling of his room and vanishes into space.

[53] Compared to, for example, Kubrick's journeys in *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

ten year earlier, Kris does very little. Instead of engaging with the problem of the planet and its visitors, he quickly realises that his attempts to resolve the situation through action (by killing his visitor) will fail. Kris even ceases to have the ability to perform any actions necessary to solving the problem. In the library Sartorius confronts Kris about his inactivity: 'Well, are you working a lot? Forgive me, but aside from the romance with your ex-wife, nothing seems to interest you. You spend all day lounging in a bed of noble thoughts, and that's how you carry out your duty'. An action-image film might have reflected the myth of the cosmonaut and depicted Kris quite differently. As it stands, as in *Andrei Rublev*, *Solaris* is concerned with a character who sees rather than acts. Kris is a seer rather than a doer, struck by a kind of neurotic passivity. Although shorter than his later films (as discussed in more detail in Chapter 4), Tarkovsky's characteristically long takes in *Solaris* draw attention to this inactivity, allowing the viewer to contemplate the image as it unfolds in time, undermining the logic of continuity editing that groups shots in patterns motivated by sensori-motor situations (rational links and chronological time).

In Tarkovsky's hands, the cosmonaut is not an avatar of the future, but a captive of memory. He is a seer trapped in the disjointed world of the time-image, reflecting Tarkovsky's ongoing fascination with the ways in which cinema is connected to memory:

> The present slips and vanishes like sand between the fingers, acquiring material weight only in its recollection. King Solomon's rings bore the inscription, 'All will pass'; by contrast, I want to draw attention to how time in its moral implication is in fact turned back. Time cannot vanish without trace for it is a subjective, spiritual category; and the time we have lived settles in our soul as an experience placed within time. (2010: 58)

While he may draw on the future focused mythology of Soviet space travel in his sets - the rocket, portraits, and paintings - Tarkovsky's focus is on escaping the psychological and metaphysical gravity of memory. For example, when left alone for the first time, no longer impelled by an urge to be beside her husband, the visitor Hari sits and contemplates a reproduction of Bruegel's *The Hunters in the Snow* while

listening to Bach's Chorale Prelude. The camera follows her gaze and several fragments of the painting are meticulously explored through unhurried tracking shots. These images are accompanied by non-diegetic sounds of Earth: water dripping, the sound of birds and human voices. The sound of the prelude is also interspersed with the noise of the forest, the singing of a Russian folk chorus, and the chimes of bells. The parallel development of the two distinct musical themes suggest that the two are co-present in this moment, just as the fake and the actual Hari are co-present in front of the painting because the visitor is not simply acting like Hari, she is experiencing or imagining her memories. Later, as Hari begins to experience other memories, the distinction between the real Hari and her re-production disintegrates further. When Hari finds a photograph of herself she fails to recognise it until she sees herself looking at it in a mirror. She remembers that Kris's mother 'hated' her. Kris tries to insist that his mother died before he met Hari, but he means *this* Hari, not the one whose memories she is beginning to share. To emphasise the point, this conversation takes place in front of a mirror, and the camera tracks in until we only see their conversation in a reflection. Later, as Kris hallucinates or feverishly dreams, Hari removes her shawl, and the panning camera reveals Kris's mother completing the same gesture. She exits the frame, and is replaced by Hari crossing to the bathroom. The panning camera finds another Hari by the window, then another who looks directly at the camera as yet another Hari walks past. An alternative version of this scene placed Kris and his bed in a specially constructed room where the walls, floor and ceiling were all covered in mirrors. Kris is refracted and distorted, while multiple reflections of Hari fill the room.[54] The Bruegel painting contemplated by Hari also acts as a reflection, extending the theme of mirrors to the broader exploration of resemblance and correspondences.

In each of these scenes the mirror as a cinematic device shatters the primacy of the actual image. As Rodowick describes, 'the actual refers to the state of things – the physical and the real – as described in space through perception. The virtual', continues Rodowick, 'is subjective, that is, mental and imaginary, sought out in time through memory' (1997: 92). All of these circuits of reflection in

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[54] This footage can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaZmrFQsDuA. Accessed 26/10/15.

*Solaris* renounce a causal and progressive linearity of time, and focus instead on the temporality of human memory. Tarkovsky treats the Solaris station as a proliferation of reflections, coalescences of the present and memory of the past. Deleuze describes such a process as a 'double movement of liberation and capture':

> In Bergsonian terms, the real object is reflected in a mirror-image as in the virtual object which, from its side and simultaneously, envelops or reflects the real: there is "coalescence" between the two. There is a formation of an image with two sides, actual and virtual. It is as if an image in a mirror, a photo or a postcard came to life, assumed independence and passed into the actual, even if this meant that the actual image returned into the mirror and resumed its place in the postcard or photo. (2005b: 66)

In the examples that I have given, the story of *Solaris* enters into the duration of what Deleuze calls the 'crystal-image' (2005b: 125).[55] In order to explain this concept, Deleuze discusses several examples of exemplary crystal-images in *The Time Image*: *Citizen Kane* and *The Lady from Shanghai* by Welles, Herzog's *Heart of Glass*, and Tarkovsky's *Solaris* and *Mirror* (2005b: 66-94). In these films crystalline narration implies the collapse of the sensori-motor scheme, and with it the notion of time as being locked into a certain past and a clear present. Appealing to Bergson's writing on time, Deleuze describes crystalline-narration as a form of narration in which optical and sound perception enter into a relation with virtual elements like memories and dreams. A new kind of narration arises from this:

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[55] The musical dramaturgy of *Solaris* also plays a role in the construction of this crystalline narration. Composer Eduard Artemyev experiments with natural noises to create an Earth symphony, while the mysterious and incomprehensible force of the planet Solaris is predominantly expressed through electronic sounds. The station's leitmotiv is barely perceptible at first, but grows in definition as Kris becomes more familiar with the station, even changing tone according to the mood of a scene. Although he does not talk about music in relation to the crystal-image, Deleuze had a great deal to say about sound in his cinema books. He was particularly concerned with the separation and de-familiarisation of sight and sound (such as the voice-off, or those moments when image and sound tracks become independent from each other or act in counterpoint), which he considered to be central to the modern cinema. In *Solaris*, the parallel development of the two distinct themes, each alone, yet interacting so closely that they become indiscernible, form a 'sound-crystal' This is a Deleuzian concept, briefly mentioned in 'The Crystals of Time', that seems appropriate to Artemyev's method of juxtaposition and fusion of themes. Artemov creates a crystal of musical time from the leitmotifs of the present (of the Solaris planet) and the recollection of the past (of Russia, Earth).

> Narration ceases to be truthful, that, is, to claim to be true, and becomes fundamentally falsifying. This is not at all a case of 'each has its own truth', a variability of content. It is a power of the false which replaces and supersedes the form of the true, because it poses the simultaneity of incompossible presents, or the existence of not necessarily true pasts. (Deleuze 2005b: 127)

For Deleuze, the 'power of the false' in cinema involves a Nietzschean rejection of a dominant totalising truth (a point that I re-visit in chapter 3), and the creation of multiple mediating viewpoints (Deleuze 2005b: 122-50; Bogue 2003: 147-50). In a 'true narrative' there is a fixed past and present, and when a character remembers something they leap back into a fixed point in the past. In a 'true narrative', even where there are conflicting narratives of the past, there is always a 'true' one. In contrast, a false narrative does not abide by the standard division of the true and the false, reality and fiction, past and present. Images are produced in such a way that these concepts are rendered un-decidable, just as Kris can no longer distinguish between the Hari of his memories and dreams, and the visitor in his room:

> Hari: Do I look a lot like her?
>
> Kris: No, you looked like her. But now you - and not her - are the real Hari.

Although he was talking about Chinese cinema, *Solaris* similarly captures what Ban Wang has described as 'a rupture in the collectively shared sense of time, a lack of consensus ensuring the figuration of past, present, and future. It signals a serious problem in the understanding of the past and its connection to the current reality as a living, continuous history' (Wang 2004: 6). I have argued that by cutting loose the causal, sensori-motor schema of the heroic, rational, action-orientated cosmonaut whose actions might have defined and led the plot, as well as the future orientated rhetoric of Socialist

Realism and science fiction, Tarkovsky enables his characters to perceive duration differently, and to ask questions about the nature of time and human consciousness.

The Soviet space flight mythology was conceived as futuristic, but it was composed of many of the requisite components of the old propaganda discourses. It had a duel role: to convey political and ideological messages to the masses, and to boost the legitimacy of space flight as an indispensable part of Communist expansion. The utopian promise that space travel would herald in a new and hopeful age was developed against the historical background of the Cold War and the space race as threat and rivalry between the Soviet Union and America provided the forward momentum that fuelled technological leaps. Kubric's *2001: A Space Odyssey* ascribed to this truth, building a narrative around the human mind's forward progress and evolution. It is, in a way, more Socialist Realist than Tarkovsky's *Solaris*, which offers instead a confused state of mind inhabiting the borderlines between present and past. Deriving in no small part from the atmosphere of uncertainty in which the film is made, the assurance of the progressive march of socialism - even as far as the cosmos - has been dispelled. Tarkovsky abandons the public persona of the cosmonaut that would be familiar to any Soviet citizen who read the newspapers, listened to the radio, or went to the cinema. Instead of showing a hero who conquers outer space and its alien inhabitants, Tarkovsky draws on the declining belief in the iconography of the cosmonaut to create an important component of the time image: 'the seer', trapped in the temporality of the crystal image.

## *Mirror* and National History

In Tarkovsky's next film*, Mirror* (1975), the narrator's memory is used to reconstruct a broader national past that incorporates the Spanish Civil War, the Stalinist 1930s, the Second World War and the Sino-Russian conflict. In one of the best accounts of the film, Turovskaya writes that the film was not only about the memories of a filmmaker; it was the biography of a generation:

> For my generation, the film also holds the elusive charm of recognition; since we share so many of the protagonist's memories, it could just as well have been called 'We Remember'. Those dark hallways in the wooden village houses that smelled of resin, dust and paraffin; the lace curtains blowing in the wind; the narrow glass chimney of the table-lamp […] this semi-urban, semi-rural existence led by those with a little house in the woods outside Moscow or another city, the fragile pre-war days of our childhood, are conveyed in Rerbegr's camerawork with a rare and almost magical solidity […] The age of flying balloons and Zeppelins is as much a part of our childhood as the news from the front in Spain, the first bombings of Madrid and Spanish children being sent away to safety. (Turovskaya 1989: 65-67)

Initially conceived as a novella about the war-time evacuation, and then as an interview with his mother, Tarkovsky always intended for the story to undermine the linear chronology of past, present and future in favour of a past as it is shared, told, imagined and dreamt.[56] He wrote in *Sculpting in Time*:

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[56] Tarkovsky wrote in *Sculpting in Time*: 'Several years before making [*Mirror*] I had decided simply to put on paper the memories that plagued me' (2010: 128). Konchalovsky records that he returned from an absence of four hours (Tarkovsky was staying with him at the time) to find an empty bottle of vodka and several typed pages by the typewriter. The story was about some childhood recollections, and a story about a shell-shocked military instructor (Synessios 2001: 11). When lecturing about film directing at the Advanced Courses for Scriptwriters and Directors in Moscow, this is how he described to his students the circumstances surrounding his development of *Mirror*: 'I only knew that I kept dreaming the same dream about the house where I was born. I dreamed of the house. And then as if I was walking into it, or rather, not into it but around it all the time. These dreams were terribly real, although I knew even then that I was only dreaming. And it was always the same dream, because it took part in the same place. I believed that this feeling carried some material sense, something very important, for why should such a dream pursue a man so' (quoted in Synessios 2001: 11).

I wanted to intersperse the childhood episodes of the novella with fragments of a straight interview with my mother, thus juxtaposing two comparative perceptions of the past (mother's and narrator's) which would take shape for the audience in the interaction of two different projections of that past in the memories of two people very close to each other but of different generations. I still think that way could have led us to interesting, unpredictable results.

(Tarkovsky 2010: 129)

The final version of the film retains this focus on the interaction between of past and present, and on historical and remembered time. *Mirror* is, in a loose sense, a time-travel film in the vein of Resnais' *Je t'aime, je t'aime* (1968). Like Resnais' protagonist, Tarkovsky's narrator travels mentally through time, as both a witness and as a participant, but Tarkovsky blurs the boundaries between characters to show that, from the narrator's perspective, personal memories are not organised into distinct temporal layers. For example, in a pre-war sequence Maria lies in a field with her husband and observes her future self. Tarkovsky combines three points of time within this space: the young woman expecting her first child (the narrator's mother), the old woman she sees leading three children by the hand (played by Tarkovsky's mother), and a young woman again, now abandoned by her husband. In another scene, the mother walks towards a mirror and sees an older version of herself in the reflection. In such moments, *Mirror* questions how time is presented and asks how we are meant to 'inhabit' it. By showing the narrator's experience of the past in this way, Tarkovsky asks what does it means to remember in the present? How do we live in relation to history and memory?

This treatment of the past was very far from the monumental portrayal of past conflicts encouraged by Brezhnev during Stagnation. In her history of Russian war films, Youngblood records that during the 60s Brezhnevian cultural politics tried to transform the Great Patriotic from a national trauma to a grand adventure of heroic exploits depicting the superiority of communism over the capitalist West (see Youngblood 2007: 142-63). Several recommendations raised by the artistic council at Mosfilm show how far *Mirror* diverged from what was officially expected from a Soviet historical

film: 'The war is not shown as promised, i.e. as a liberating mission. Highlight the patriotism of the Soviet people', 'The mother's life is not adequately paralleled with the life of the nation' (quoted in Synessios 2001: 34). As John Dunlop records in 'Russian Nationalist Themes in Soviet Films of the 1970s and 1980s', a special joint session of representatives from Goskino and the Union of Filmmakers was convoked in early 1975 to examine *Mirror* and three other films exhibiting 'certain tendencies':

> At the joint session, it was Tarkovsky's film which attracted most of the attention and virtually all of the negative comments. While the majority of the speakers focused on *The Mirror*'s allegedly "elitist" character and its foreignness to the Soviet masses, some, as V. Baskakov, chose to highlight its political failings: "...the film lacks precision in depicting the relation of an individual to the epoch in which he lives..." the epoch to which Mr Baskakov was referring is the period from the mid 1930s to the end of the Second World War, on which the film concentrates. (Dunlop 2003: 239)

While *Mirror* was not banned outright, it was classified as belonging to the limited second category of distribution by the artistic council - a standard procedure that determined the number of prints and the number of cinemas it would be projected in. Other films that were concerned with the juxtaposition of history and memory such as Alexei Gherman's *Trial on the Road* (1972, released 1986), or used historical newsreel footage of the Second World War like Elem Klimov's *Rasputin* (1975, released 1981), were similarly subjected to scrutiny and bans during Stagnation. The problem with *Mirror* lay in the fact that instead of using history to depict reality in its revolutionary development, Tarkovsky had staged another critical reflection on the nature of time.

The dominance of the old school style of film making notwithstanding, the fact that *Mirror* was released at all meant that there was still room for the themes and artistic sensibilities that characterised the Thaw. By the time Tarkovsky completed *Mirror*, Brezhnev's attempted revival of the patriotic film

was losing traction, partly inspired by the spectacular failure of Yury Ozerov's eight-hour, five-part epic *Liberation* (1968-71; released 1970-72). Intended to be the Great Patriotic War's *War and Peace*, commissioned for the twenty-fifth anniversary of Victory Day in 1970, *Liberation* was paradigmatic of the official interpretation of the war. However, as Youngblood records, the final attendance figures were very low (28 million) (2007: 162). The patriotic film culture, and its shrill grandiosity, gave way once more to less heroic heroes like those of Bondarchuk's *They Fought for the Motherland*, commissioned to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of Victory Day in 1975:

> *They Fought for the Motherland* differs in scale from Bondarchuk's directorial début, *The Fate of a Man*, but it also differs in humanity from *Liberation* […] *They Fought for the Motherland* depicts a self-contained heroism that is much more moving than the bombast of *Liberation. They Fought for the Motherland,* which drew an audience of 40.6 million, was named best picture of the year in *Soviet Screen's* survey, and readers also selected [the star] Vasily Shukshin as best actor. Given that 1975 marked the high-water mark of the war cult, the popularity of this movie's not-very-heroic heroes is noteworthy. (Youngblood 2007: 170)

Although linked to wider concerns like the 1930s, the Spanish Civil War etc., Tarkovsky's *Mirror* can also be seen as part of a concurrent attempt to expand the genre of films about the Second World War to appeal specifically to the post-war generation, connecting the present day with the past by showing the impact of the war on present-day citizens. Youngblood cites two films from the period that demonstrate this trend: Sergei Kolosov's *Remember your Name* (1974), told through multiple flashbacks of the narrator in Auschwitz, and Leonid Bykov's *There the Soldiers Went* (1976, released 1977), which films the visit of several children to a memorial to remember their parents, killed during the war (2007: 170-71). *Mirror* also focuses on the continuing impact of the past on the present, using flashbacks and documentary footage, drawing on the legacy of the Thaw while navigating the constraints of the Brezhnevian treatment of the past.

Trying to understand the exact nature of his cinematic approach to the past, Turovskaya refers to Tarkovsky's 'chronotypes' (literally time-space, from the Greek *chronos* and *topos*), a term given by Mikhail Bakhtin to what he called 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (Bakhtin 2004: 84). Synessios also draws on the term chronotype to explain *Mirror*:

> [The chronotype] is particularly apt for *Mirror*, whose polyphonic nature arises from the diversity and interrelation of its temporal and spatial realities (a vivid example is the merging of time and space in the film's final sequence). For Bahktin, as for Tarkovsky, time and space are not abstract concepts but forms of the most immediate reality. Tarkovsky represents not only historical time, but time as it lives in each substance, thing and person: he reveals both the passing of time and time as duration' (Synessios 2001: 70)

Like the 'chronotype', Deleuze uses the time-image as a concept to describe the ways in which time can be expressed cinematically in a way that does not represent successive or chronological time.[57] As Tom Conley puts it in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, experienced as pure-duration, time-images draw attention to the qualities of their 'own optical and aural properties as much as the signs or matter that they present' (2005: 280). In the regime of the time-image, a sense of chronological time ceases to exist. Time in the time-image expresses a 'whole' that changes, but has no beginning or end points. Gregg Redner writes that the time-image 'suggests that time does not provide a vessel in which life is lived but, rather, that life is something that is lived first and then only quantified later' (2011: 148). Or as Turovskaya puts it in her description of cinematic time in Tarkovsky's work: 'The "subject time" into which is fitted this or that aspect of an individual's or a people's history is always, in [Tarkovsky's] work, synchronous with the *whole* of time, stretching away in all directions untrammelled by limitations' (1989: 90).

Like *Solaris, Mirror* experiments with the concept of the irreducibility of the past and the

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[57] I must save for another occasion what seems to me an extremely interesting comparison to be made here between Deleuze's work on cinema and Bakhtin's concept of the 'chronotype'.

present in order to explore the nature of time and our perception of it. Deleuze writes:

> [*Mirror* is] a turning crystal, with two sides if we relate it to the invisible adult character (his mother, his wife), with four sides if we relate it to the two visible couples (his mother and the child he was, his wife and the child he has). The crystal turns on itself, like a homing device that searches an opaque environment: what is Russia, what is Russia' (Deleuze 2005b: 73).

Deleuze proposes that the crystal-image appears where the image on screen expresses a time-image composed of different layers of time, or crystalline circuits of time. *Mirror* envisions time as a circuit in which virtual states - such as memories, thoughts and dreams - are inextricably linked to the present. Tarkovsky's use of actors who play dual roles especially signals a dream-logic that upsets chronological time in such a way that the past appears to contract into the present moment. This is a conception of time in which we are contemporaries with the children we have been, with our parents, and the other times past. This is perfectly expressed in the final scene, which takes place within the pre-war landscape surrounding the family's dacha, where parents, children and grandmother are all present in an illusion of the simultaneity of time. In order to build this final scene, Tarkovsky went to extraordinary lengths. The dacha of his childhood was reconstructed from photographs on the remains of the original location, and the field in front of the house was planted with white-flowering buckwheat that he remembered from his childhood. Images from photographs of the Tarkovsky family taken by family friend, Lev Gornung, permeate the film. Synessios writes in her book on *Mirror*: 'Tarkovsky not only re-created the structures, but also the clothes, the objects, the poses, the quality of light, and the invisible tensions and connections that exist between the people pictured: the Tarkovsky family' (Synessios 2001: 42). As a result of this care, Tarkovsky's crystal-images in *Mirror* are deeply personal, and entrenched in the objects and environment of his childhood.

These personal reminiscences are linked to wider national concerns. For example, the long printing works sequence takes place in the 1930s, during a bloody period of Stalinist repression of

political opposition in the Soviet Union (commonly referred to as 'Stalin's Terror' or the 'Great Terror'). At the start of this sequence the narrator Alexei speaks to his mother on the phone, and she learns that her friend Liza has died; they had worked together before the war. The film switches to that time: Maria (Margarita Terekhova) rushes to the printing works to check some proofs, fearing that she has made a typesetting mistake.[58] After checking the proofs she walks back to her office as the poem 'From Morning on I waited Yesterday' by Arseniy Tarkovsky is heard in voice over:

> From morning on I waited yesterday,
>
> They knew you wouldn't come, they guessed.
>
> You remember what a lovely day it was?
>
> A holiday! I didn't need a coat.
>
> You came today, and it turned out
>
> A sullen, leaden day,
>
> And it was raining, and somehow late,
>
> And branches cold with running drops.
>
> Word cannot soothe, nor kerchief wipe away.
>
> (Quoted in Tarkovsky 2010: 123, translated by Kitty Hunter-Blair)

Tarkovsky's use of his father's poem is very deliberate. The poem confuses present and past tense: 'From morning on I waited yesterday', evoking the intensity of a remembered past as it intrudes on the present. The sequence is in black and white, and Maria's movement through the printing works is slowed down, as if this action takes place in a dream. The scene ends abruptly with a dream-like logic of substitution, cutting to a colour shot of a burning dacha. Tarkovsky then cuts to the present where

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[58] Tarkovsky's mother was a proofreader at the Model Printing Press No.1 and worked there until the day she retired (Turovskaya 1989: 160).

the narrator tells his estranged wife, Natalia (also played by Terekhova) that she reminds him of his mother. Natalia stares at her reflection in a mirror and says 'Apparently that was why we divorced. I notice with horror how much Ignat is becoming like you'. The actor Margarita Terekhova is both the narrator's mother, Maria, and his estranged wife, Natalia. Ignat Daniltsev is both the narrator's son, Ignat, and the narrator himself as a child.

For Deleuze, crystalline narration reflects on and demonstrates an awareness of time; its possible constitution, and the implications for thought. In other words, the crystal-image encourages a way of thinking about time that interrupts, distorts, and perverts chronological cause and effect, thereby making possible a sense of time that is not the measure of action. As Adrian Parr explores in *Deleuze and Memorial Culture* (2008), this understanding of the movement of memory also poses a very real challenge to representations of the past:

> Memory is dynamic and its movement is largely ungraspable. It can open up new linguistic, economic, historical, and energetic combinations that either normalize or reinvent how the social field organizes itself […] A body doesn't remember a defined slice of time, for memory is in excess of the chronological compartmentalizing of discrete temporal units. (Parr 2008:1)

In this sense, when it is functioning at its best, the crystal-image can offer a direct challenge to a teleological account of history. Tarkovsky's crystalline narration does this by experimenting with a national history that incorporates events of massive scale and consequence in order to contemplate the effect of memories of the past on the present. In the sequence about Spanish immigrants, archival footage relating to Spain and the Spanish civil war is juxtaposed with striking images of a record breaking Soviet ascent to the stratosphere in 1934, and the welcome parade given to Valeri Chkalov, who achieved the first flight over the North Pole to Vancouver Island in 1937. Later, shots of a Brueghelian snowy landscape are interspersed with war-time and post-war footage - the atomic bomb over Hiroshima, a still of a man on crutches, the Moscow victory Parade of 1945, a dummy of Hitler's

corpse, the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution in China - as well as footage of men crossing the Sivash lagoon in the Crimea. The still and documentary footage interjected in unexpected patterns throughout *Mirror* are not easily framed by an ideological or psychological framework as they circle around the Second World War, but neither glorify it nor attack it. This footage is necessarily drawn from a 'national' memory, albeit a shifting and complex one that encompasses elements as diverse as the Spanish Civil War and the bombings of Hiroshima. All of this footage was an integral part of Tarkovsky's own, and his country's experience, and to reflect this he conflates personal and historical time.

The relationship between personal and national memory has a particular resonance in a sequence within Alexei's apartment. Ignat, the narrator's son (who also looks like a young Tarkovsky) wanders around the apartment in an unbroken shot that eventually pans to an older woman sitting at a table, being served tea by a maid. The apparition's manners and appearance suggest that she comes from another time-period, and her appearance is signalled as being concrete by the distinct sound of her teaspoon stirring her tea. She asks him to read a passage from Pushkin's response to Chaadaev's 'First Philosophical Letter', in which Pushkin ascribed the problems of Russian society to its embrace of Byzantine Christianity over the civilising influence of the Catholic Church (Synessions 2001: 61). Ignat sighs before reading the text, as if he has read it many times before. It reads as follows:

> The division of churches separated us from Europe. We remained excluded from every great event that had shaken it. However, we had our own special destiny. Russia, with her immense territory, had swallowed up the Mongol invasion. The Tartars didn't dare cross our western borders. They retreated to their wilderness and Christian civilisation had been saved. To attain that goal we had to lead a special kind of life which, while leaving us Christians, had made us alien to the Christian world. As for our historic insignificance, I cannot agree with you on that. Don't you find anything significant at all in today's situation in Russia that would strike a future historian? Although I'm heartily attached to our sovereign, I'm far from delighted with

everything I see around me. As a man of letters, I'm being annoyed, insulted, but I swear that nothing in the world would have made me change my home country or have any other history than the history of our forebears, such as it was given us by God.

As the camera moves from the woman's face back to Ignat's it reveals that he is standing beneath a picture of his grandmother (played by Tarkovsky's mother). At that moment he reads 'nothing in the world would have made me change my home country or have any other history than the history of our forebears, such as it was given us by God'. Then the doorbell rings, and Ignat opens the door to a woman that the viewer should recognise as his grandmother. They do not recognise each other. Ignat closes the door and walks back, only to find that the other woman has vanished from the apartment. The camera cuts to a close up of the polished table where she was sat as the heat mark from the now-absent tea cup shrink and vanishes.

What is confusing in this scene is the dislocation between the discontinuity in the family narrative implied by the meeting with the grandmother, and the reading of Pushkin, which resonates as both an echo of *Andrei Rublev*'s crude depictions of Tatar-Mongol marauders, and as a mediation on the influence of Russia's national past on the present. Pushkin's 1836 reply to Chaadayev was a key text in the Slavophile controversy raging in the second quarter of the nineteenth century over whether Russia should adopt a Western cultural and political model or look to its own traditions (Johnson and Petrie 1994: 124). Tarkovsky draws parallels with this scene throughout the film: the footage of Mao's Cultural Revolution, and the clashes in the disputed territory of Damansky Island in 1969, both comment on Russia's place in twentieth century international affairs, dramatising the cultural and military threat to Russia from the East. They present, in Synessios' words, 'another reflection of Russia's mission to keep the Mongols contained' (2001: 61-62). The heat mark of the woman's tea cup, which lingers after the apparition has vanished, suggests that the past has a concrete presence in the present. More than this, the scene invokes going into a national past, circling a history of two Soviet generations, his own and his parents, pre- and post-war, as well as the history of Russia, and major

events that impacted on the Soviet Union. The contact between Ignat and his grandmother seems to be of secondary importance to the ghostly apparition, but the apartment hosts a number of time dimensions, and in their meeting the two family members - and their position in causal, family time - find themselves out of joint. There are substantial traces or echoes of the past that prove indiscernible from the present, like the presence of the apparition signalled by the enduring heat mark on the table. These traces interrupt recognition in the present, as shown by Ignat's failure to recognise his grandmother. By drawing parallels with contemporary events and people, *Mirror* also suggests that time repeats an endless reconstitution of the past. All of this play with narrative time might not correspond exactly to Deleuze's notion of a crystal-image, but it does correspond to a Deleuzian understanding of memory as dynamic and in excess of chronological or causal segments.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that both *Solaris* and *Mirror* draw on specific historical contexts to explore an idea of time in which slippage occurs between memories of the past and the present. In *Solaris*, there is a loss of faith in technological progress, heroic action, and a disregard for the future of socialism. The weakening of these aspects frees the narrative from the fixed pathways of causality and sequence, which in turn entails a concomitant alteration in the function of the characters - from cosmonauts endowed with agency and the confidence in the Socialist future, to Kris, a 'seer' deprived of the power to affect the course of events. This accords with Martin-Jones's conception of the seer as a character that encounters a national history in the making: 'These are characters directly encountering contemporary social and political mutations, and who are mutating along with these historically shifting contexts [...] the seer provides a way of showing the sudden loss of a coherent whole (encompassing situation) that occurs during a time of national mutation' (2011: 74). The breakdown of the sensori-motor schema also means that straightforward notions of causal time collapse in favour of a new perspective: a crystalline circuit of the time-image is created. Building on this idea, I then demonstrated how Tarkovsky's exploration of the time and memory is continued in his next film, *Mirror*. In *Mirror*,

the nature of memory, and how it connects with national history, is reflected in the narrative's crystalline structure. Side-stepping the constraints of contemporary cultural politics that surrounded depictions of the past, *Mirror* interweaves different temporal strands, broadly divided up into the film's present of 1975, sometime during the Second World War, and the 1930s.

The overall aim of this chapter has been the same as the one that preceded it: to re-think how both films negotiate the change from the action-images of Socialist Realism to a cinema of seers and crystal-images, within the context of a specifically Soviet national history.

# Chapter 3: *Stalker* and the 'Catholic Quality' of Cinema

> The actions of the man of faith can be totally absurd, not at all rational or thought out. For me, spirituality has always escaped conscious behaviour. "Ridiculous," "displaced" actions are a superior form of spirituality […] these acts are not done gratuitously but in order to escape from the world as it exists today, as it has been built up, unable to produce a spiritual man. The important thing, the thing that guides all of Stalker's actions, is this force that leads him away from being common, that renders him ridiculous, idiotic, but that reveals to him his own singularity, his spirituality. This unconscious force is his faith. (Tarkovsky 2006: 168-9)

## Introduction

In the last two chapters I incorporated Deleuze's cinema concepts within a historical account of Soviet culture, society, and history. This has been driven partly by Tarkovsky's own pre-occupation with personal and cultural memory, and partly by a desire to re-invigorate Deleuze's film concepts and his own readings of Tarkovsky's films by using them alongside the specific cultural and historical contexts within which Tarkovsky's films operated. This chapter could continue with this historical approach in a quite straightforward way. Tarkovsky's *Stalker* has often been interpreted as a commentary on the Soviet Union through its references to the Gulag, picking up on such 'clues' as the fact that the term 'Zone' has been used to describe Stalin's prison camps, that the Stalker's head is shaven, and that he comments to his wife that he is 'imprisoned everywhere', as well as the military presence outside of the barbed wire that surrounds the Zone. David Gillespie (2003: 175), Slavoj Žižek (1999), and Jeremy Mark Robinson (2007: 443) each draw out connections to the Gulag in their analysis of S*talker,* while Fredric Jameson refers to the Zone as 'a kind of magical Gulag in a real physical place' (1995: 91). The Zone has also been read as an environmentalist parable on the dangers of nuclear power. Ostensibly inspired by Tarkovsky's treatment of nuclear disaster, a Ukrainian video game developer named GSC Game World created a series of first-person shooter survival horror video games called *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Shadow of Chernobyl*, *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Clear Sky,* and *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Call of Pripyat.* Turovskaya found that her viewing of the film radically changed after the Chernobyl disaster that

occurred seven years after its release: 'Previously the word 'zone' had for Russians an association with the camps and Siberia; but in 1986 it was to acquire exactly the same meaning as it has in the film, i.e. the site of catastrophe' (1989: 115). Without trying to read the film retrospectively, Tarkovsky's cinematic treatment of the Zone may have been inspired by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, or by an explosion at the Mayak nuclear waste facility near Chelyabinsk in 1957, which created a vast ecological nightmare. In each of these cases, *Stalker* is presented as a parable or an allegory for political persecution or nuclear disaster (or both at once).

Scholars have tended to focus on the film's menacing images: the police, the gates, and the power station. A notable exception to this trend is Nariman Skakov's close analysis of the film's quotations of Christian scripture (2012: 147-59). In his reading, Skakov reveals the depth of Tarkovsky's references to orthodox and non-orthodox images of faith and spirituality, suggesting an alternative reading to those given by Gillespie, Žižek, Robinson, and Jameson. In sympathy with Skakov's approach, I also focus on *Stalker's* Christian, Taoist, and esoteric messages. I argue that the film is most productively read in terms of Tarkovsky's spiritual belief (both orthodox, and unorthodox) in the context of Stagnation. Throughout this chapter it will be clear that Tarkovsky's own writing and responses in interviews support such an analysis. For example, in an interview with Aldo Tassone Tarkovsky identified the main theme of *Stalker* as the absence of belief in the modern world: 'The Stalker needs to find people who believe in something, in a world that no longer believes in anything' (Tassone 2006: 56).

In order to account for this understanding of belief, this chapter introduces several new concepts from *The Time Image*. The transition to the time-image as it is signalled by the loss of agency and causality has been explored in previous chapters, but I have so far neglected the resultant new relation between image, 'belief', and 'thought' posited by Deleuze in the second half of *The Time-Image*. In this chapter and the next, I argue that Tarkovsky's late films lend themselves to an analysis that uses these concepts since the role of belief becomes increasingly more important to his film making,

beginning with *Stalker*, and then developed in *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice* (discussed in chapter 4).

I will argue that while the Socialist Realist form posited a fundamentally affirmative attitude to the world based upon faith in the value of positive action, *Stalker* explores themes of disaffection, alienation, and demoralisation, which make action less and less possible. I argue that this apparent shift is the culmination of the collective loss of belief in historical agency driven by the historical circumstances that I have described - above all, the Thaw - and a related scepticism towards the overarching cultural-political ideology of Socialist Realism. In his role as a holy fool, the Stalker is the first of three characters who cease to believe in the old linkages of action and reaction, and who try to express a new relation to the world - Domenico and Alexander complete the trinity. To make this argument, I will demonstrate that the Stalker tries to overcome what Deleuze identifies as a loss of 'belief in the world'. This concept of 'belief' corresponds to a certain 'Catholic quality' that Deleuze believed inspired filmmakers as diverse as Eisenstein, Jean-Luc Godard, and Glauber Rocha (Deleuze 2005b: 166-67). This might seem contradictory, and I will define the term further, but when Deleuze talks about a 'Catholic' quality to certain films, he is talking about how the concept of faith determines a mode of existence. Equally, when he wrote about a kind of Catholic 'belief' he was thinking about what thought is and how it is practised. These two key points will be explained in more detail in the first section of this chapter, entitled 'The 'Catholic quality' in cinema'.

I then draw on the chapter entitled 'The Powers of the False' (also from *The Time Image*) in order to explore further the traditional Russian character of the holy fool in *Stalker*, in anticipation of this character's re-appearance in Tarkovsky's final two films. In this chapter Deleuze suggests that the greatness of the modern cinema of the time-image lies in its ability to display and explore a shift from 'true' to 'false' narration. Drawing on Nietzsche, Deleuze argues that the idea of 'truth' is compromised in modern cinema because it does not judge the world from the perspective of a particular idea - like the American dream or Socialism - but instead practices what I would call, following Deleuze, an aesthetics of the false. I will demonstrate that the character of the holy fool is

paradigmatic of this aesthetic as such characters create a world in which a kind of indetermination and nonsense are required for there to be thought.

Finally, this chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of Susan Sontag's article 'Spiritual Style in the films of Robert Bresson' and Paul Shrader's 1973 book *Transcendental Film Style.* These essays approach the sacred in film, and are useful to identify stylistic elements of spiritual film. Each point to a spiritual quality that films aspire to. Through a discussion of the long tracking shots and depth of field in *Stalker* I will show how these important texts on belief and film link to what I have said about Deleuze and 'Catholicism' in relation to Tarkovsky's *Stalker.*

By the end of this chapter I will have explored Deleuze's references to Catholicism, and how this connects to Tarkovsky's own thoughts on belief and spirituality as well as his formal techniques. I will argue that *Stalker* reflects a loss of belief in the power of 'revolutionary cinema' and the connection between perception and action. Instead, it evokes in the viewer a sense of ineffable mystery, the manifestation of a wholly different order, or a reality that does not belong to our world. From this perspective, Tarkovsky's film is one of potential transformations and metamorphosis, concepts which repeat the interests of the latter half of Deleuze's *The Time Image.*

## The 'Catholic quality' in cinema

In the chapter entitled 'Thought and Cinema' in *The Time-Image,* Deleuze discusses the special relationship that cinema has with belief, and the 'Catholic quality' in cinema that 'has continued to inspire a great number of authors' (2005b: 165). As I have shown elsewhere, Deleuze's interest in univocity brought him into regular contact with Christian theology (Shults and Powell-Jones 2016) However, these claims regarding the Catholic quality of cinema are strange because his writing on religion had tended to emphasise mutual antagonism. One of the pillars of the Schizoanalysis project was the rejection of the all-powerful father/God-figure which, according to the Oedipal model, is the

focus of resentment and supplication. In *A Thousand Plateaux* Deleuze and Guattari gleefully label God 'a lobster, or a double pincer, a double bind' (2004b: 4).[59] 'Religions', he argued in *Two Regimes of Madness*, 'are worth much less than the nobility and the courage of the atheisms that they inspire' (Deleuze 2007: 364). But at a pivotal moment in the cinema books he calls upon an explicitly Catholic conception of faith. Christian faith and the revolutionary faith that carried forward the Soviet cinema of the movement image are, for Deleuze, less opposed than we might expect. In point of fact, this 'Catholic' quality that he speaks of could equally have been described as a 'Marxist' quality. As Farhang Erfani notes in *Iranian Cinema and Philosophy*, it could also have been a Muslim quality: 'there is a Muslim quality to cinema, [...] we go to the movies instead of Cathedrals (or mosques) because our relationship to the world is one of belief, of faith' (2012: 32). It is not a matter of being Catholic, Muslim, *or* Marxist*,* because Deleuze is interested in the more general belief system that these terms suggest. Deleuze chooses to use the specific term 'Catholicism' here because he is thinking of a specific statement made by the French art historian Élie Faure: 'Is there not in Catholicism a grand *mise-en-scéne*, but also in the cinema, a cult which takes over the circuit of the cathedrals, as Elie Faure said' (Deleuze 2005b: 195). In *The Time Image* he asked the reader to consider 'how we are still pious': '*whether we are Christians or atheists*, in our universal schizophrenia, we need reasons to believe in this world' (my emphasis, 2005b: 165).

To detail this relationship between belief and thought in cinema, Deleuze turned to classical film theory. He wrote of the 'dialectical automaton' pioneered by Eisenstein, who theorised that spectators could be willed to change their way of thinking through montage.[60] Deleuze used this term 'automaton' here to talk about how the human mind is directly affected by what appears on screen and develops according to the logical rules on display there. Other types of automata appear throughout the cinema books, including the 'spiritual automaton', the 'experimental dummy', and the 'mechanical man' Significantly, in *The Time Image* he wrote of the 'mummy', 'marionette', or the 'somnambulist' dispossessed of his own thoughts, or worse, 'the dummy of every kind of propaganda', 'the spiritual

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[59] For an explanation of 'the lobster god' see Christopher Ben Simpson's *Deleuze and Theology* (2012: 78-82).
[60] This is described by Eisenstein in *Film Form* (1949).

automaton [become] fascist man' (2005b: 159). Deleuze used each case to explain how the mind, as much as the body, is influenced by objects that are exterior to it. He wrote: 'Machines can take hold so fully on man that it awakens the most ancient powers, and the moving machine becomes one with the psychological automaton pure and simple, at the service of a frightening new order' (Deleuze 2005b: 252-53). This loss of self had been a central motif to Georges Duhamel's condemnation of cinema: 'I no longer think what I want, the moving images are substituting for my own thoughts' (quoted in Deleuze 2005b: 161). In relation to cinema's effect on the mind, the influence of Faure is again important here. As early as 1919, Faurer described the subordination of the human brain to the time of the moving image:

> It is in fact its material automatism which gives rise inside these images to this new universe which it gradually imposes on our intellectual automatism. Thus there appears, in a blinding light, the subordination of the human soul to the tools which it creates, and vice versa. (Quoted in Deleuze 2005b: 298)

According to Deleuze, this notion was to find a more explicit formulation in the texts written by Antonin Artaud. Deleuze writes that Artaud saw cinema as 'a matter of neuro-physiological vibrations, and that the image must produce a shock, a nerve-wave that which gives rise to thought, "for thought is a matron who has not always existed"' (2005b: 160).

What interested Deleuze in his reappraisal of these film theorists was their recognition of movement as the fundamental quality of cinema, and its ability to catch up the spectator in the process of these moving images as they appear on screen. He draws on Eisenstein, Artaud, and Faurer because they all claimed that cinema could communicate a shock that arouses thought or a new perception of the world within the viewer: 'they believed that cinema was capable of imposing the shock, and imposing it on the masses, the people' (Deleuze 2005b: 152). The very purpose of cinema, for Eisenstein, was to underwrite the myth of 'the people'. Cinema's role was to raise the consciousness of

'the people', sorting out its collective identity, and to thereby constitute them as political subjects. For Deleuze, such an ability was not necessarily negative. He believed that cinema could force the spectator to perceive more than what interests him/her, offering them a perception that is based on more than the immediate needs of a living being. This is of course drawn from his reading of Henri Bergson's *Matter and Memory,* in which perception and memory of what has been perceived is subordinate to the demands of the action being made in the present. As Bogue writes: 'For Deleuze, thinking differently is fundamentally a matter of seeing differently' (Bogue 2010: 182). This matter of 'thinking differently' is what he meant whenever he wrote of cinema's 'revolutionary potential'. However, this very same potential was, according to Deleuze, utilised for more extreme means with the onset of the Second World War. He maintained that belief in the revolutionary potential of cinema - its ability to influence the mind and push it towards new horizons - was no longer possible. Cinema no longer had the possibility of thinking as its object: 'How strangely the declarations, of Eisenstein, of Gance, ring today; we put them to one side like declarations worthy of a museum, all the hopes put into cinema, art of the masses and new thought' (Deleuze 2005b: 159). So what did Deleuze mean when he extols modern cinema's capacity to restore our belief in the world? When Deleuze writes about belief in cinema he diverts the course of the cinema books from a Bergsonian reflection on the nature of perception towards the kind of philosophical enquiry that would inform his next project, *What is Philosophy?*. The second half of the *The Time Image* is less concerned with the mechanisms of cinema than with the future of Deleuze's philosophy in its relationship to art. Increasingly, Deleuze is no longer concerned with cinema directly, but how cinema's aesthetic development might serve as a reference point for philosophical thought.

This change to a distinctly Nietzschean ontology in *The Time Image* also changes the stakes of Deleuze's distinction between classical and modern cinema. Classical cinema is now mapped against a system of knowledge of 'judgement' (see Rushton 2012: 101-7; Rodowick 2003: 134-35). As a movement-image film progresses the protagonist knows how to choose between good and evil, right and wrong, because they invoke a judgement based on a higher authority or cause within the

parameters of a milieu, as I described in Chapter 1. The narration of the movement-image film subscribes entirely to this picture of the world. For example, in a film like *She Defends the Motherland* a judgement based on socialist principles never falters as a way of distinguishing between good and evil. The hero's sensori-motor action in a Socialist Realist film is 'judged' in relation to the principles of socialism. Because thematic planning and censorship played such a central role in the construction of these films, Socialist Realism could not help but defer to a higher authority or cause. Movement image films might well complicate this dynamic, introducing elements of what Deleuze called a different kind of thought, but by the end of the film its protagonist knows how to judge which actions were good and which bad. What the time-image offers by contrast - in the wake of the disillusionments of the Second World War - is a different way of thinking. The central premise of the chapter 'Thought and Cinema' in *The Time Image* is that a modern cinema dispossessed by judgement and 'truthful narration' must turn instead to a model of thinking based on 'belief in the world' (2005b: 167). As Ropars-Wuilleumier has correctly identified, in the latter half of *The Time Image* Deleuze has moved out of a Bergsonian ontology into a directly Nietzschean one (Ropars-Wuilleumier 1994: 256).

When Deleuze wrote about 'belief' in this way, he wrote about an affirmation of the possibility of an encounter with something uncharted and incomprehensible. Deleuze's approach here was guided by his book on Nietzsche as well as his collaborations with Guattari.[61] 'Thinking', wrote Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, means '*discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*' (his emphasis, 2006: 94). This idea was an important one for Deleuze. It informed his understanding of 'lines of flight' and the unravelling of the unified self in 'bodies without organs' in his collaboration with Guattari in the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project (composed of *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaux*). He had this conception of thought in mind when, in *What is Philosophy*, he wrote (in collaboration with Guattari) that the point of philosophy is to traverse existing boundaries: 'to think is always to follow the witch's flight' (1994: 41). The 'thinker' (and, as I wrote in the introduction to this thesis, for Deleuze the great

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[61] Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962) played an important role in the French-led revival of Nietzsche's philosophy at the time of its release. See *Nietzsche's Aesthetic Turn: Reading Nietzsche after Heidegger, Deleuze, Derrida* (1994) by James J. Winchester.

filmmakers are all 'thinkers') crosses certain limits. As Brian Massumi wrote in his foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*, they lean further towards the absurd, madness, and towards chaos: 'Filmmakers and painters are philosophical thinkers to the extent that they explore the potentials of their respective mediums and break away from the beaten paths' (Massumi 1992: 6). This process is what Ronald Bogue has characterised as an ethics of 'choosing to choose – to think differently' (see Bogue 2010).

Like Deleuze, Tarkovsky argued that cinema replaces the time of the human brain with the time of the moving cinema image. What the viewer seeks in the cinema, he argued, is 'time lost or spent or not yet had. He goes there for living experience' (2010: 63). In an interview with Bachmann, he stated that 'looking around me, and also looking back, art cannot really affect social development. It can only influence the development of minds' (Bachmann 2006: 95). At the same time, he made a number of declarations about the 'spiritual mission' or vocation of cinema: '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. In that sense the artist is indeed *vox populi*. That is why he is called to serve his own talent, which means serving his people' (2010: 164). Although he disliked dialectical montage, Tarkovsky's faith in the artist as *vox populi* was less opposed to the revolutionary belief of Eisenstein than he liked to believe.[62] Thinking back to my earlier definition of the term, there is a 'Catholic' quality to both because of their shared belief in cinema's ability to intervene in the very brain of a human being, and to intervene between this human brain and the world. Both wanted to set this relationship right, to rectify it, or even radically change it. Both wanted to renew a sense of there being a world that can be re-made. Except that while Eisenstein envisioned a cinema that testified to the existence of 'the people' unified by a single ideology, Tarkovsky did not affirm a people in their collective becoming or their system of judgement. As I will show, he substituted the judge for the mystic or 'holy fool' in order to trace new linkages.

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[62] On his dislike of montage Tarkovsky wrote: 'I am radically opposed to the way Eisenstein used the frame to codify intellectual formula' (Tarkovsky 2010: 183).

### The Holy Fool

A holy fool is traditionally a person who feigns madness or folly as an ascetic feat of self-humiliation. The general terms of their enigmatic code of behaviour are outlined in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians:

> We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we are laborworking with our own hands. When reviled we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things. (I Corinthians 4:10-13)

Ewa Thompson's *Understanding Russia: The Holy Fool in Russian Culture* (1987) (the first book-length study in English on this subject), and Sergei Ivanov's *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond* (2006), both treat the phenomenon of holy foolery as a Russian cultural phenomenon. They argue that holy foolishness, or *iurodstvo*, is a consistent yet evolving particularity of Russian Orthodox Christianity, and more broadly, of Russian cultural identity. Notable examples of stylizations of the holy fool include *Deathless Golovan* (1880) by Nikolai Leskov, Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot* (1869)*,* Maria Lebiadkina in *The Possessed* (1872), and Nikolka in Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* (first performed, 1874). Traces of the holy fool can also be found within the Soviet period in Pasternak's Iuri Zhivago (*Doctor Zhivago*, 1957) and Solzhenitsyn's Ivan Denisovich (*One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, 1962).

    With *Stalker*, Tarkovsky transposed the traditional figure of the holy fool into a science fiction

setting. [63] The story was drawn from the novella *Roadside Picnic* (1971) by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, which follows the story of Redrick (Red) Schuhart, a so-called 'Stalker', who is compelled to venture illegally into a dangerous and malignant area called 'the Zone' to collect artefacts left behind by alien visitors. The title of the book comes from a character's theory that these artefacts are the accidental and casual pollution left over from alien 'visitations', like the bottles and sweet wrappers discarded after a picnic: 'A roadside picnic, on some road in the cosmos' (Strugatsky 2007: 103). Within the Zone there is also an object called the 'Golden Ball' that will grant a person's deepest, most innermost wishes. It is in search of this object that Red enters the Zone along with Arthur, who he intends to sacrifice to the traps of the Zone so that he can pass safely in order to wish for the recovery of his mutated daughter. Too late, Red discovers that Arthur's wish would have been 'Happiness for everybody, free, and no one will go away unsatisfied' (2007: 145).

A comparison between the text of the novel and the finished film shows that while Tarkovsky's film retains many aspects of the original text, he imposed his own re-interpretation of the story through the transformation of the Stalker's character from a tough poacher into a holy fool. Tarkovsky's diary entries suggest that he initially worked closely with the two brothers on the screenplay, despite some bad-tempered remarks on their management of money (Tarkovsky 1994: 155) and Arkady's drinking (1994: 278). This relationship seems to have deteriorated once filming got under way. For instance, the brothers were not involved with substantial re-writes during filming or the dubbing stage. The actor Nikolai Grinko quotes the brothers at the *Stalker* premier telling the audience not to believe the credits: 'We are not the scriptwriters, he did it all – alone' (quoted in Johnson and Petrie 1994: 138), while Turovskaya recalls that the screenplay was so far removed from the finished

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[63] In a 2014 article called 'The Holy Fool in Late Tarkovsky', Robert O. Efird makes a similar argument. However, his article is more focused on Tarkovsky's last two films, and does not explore *Stalker* in as much detail. While Deleuze's work is not the focus of his argument, he does reference the cinema books briefly when he argues that the protagonists of Tarkovsky's final three films 'retain "the consolation of the sublime"' and that 'Deleuze would largely deny such characters' (2014:19). It's not entirely clear what Efird means by this, but he seems to be referencing the section *in The Time Image* where Deleuze invokes his own interpretation of the Kantian sublime in relation to Sergei Eisenstein, Abel Gance, and F. W. Murnau: 'The cinematographic image must have a shock effect on thought, and force thought to think itself as much as thinking the whole. This is the very definition of the sublime' (Deleuze 2005b: 153). I will return to this point in the final section of this chapter in relation to Susan Sontag and Paul Schrader's discussion of the spiritual and transcendental in film.

film that the brothers were offered the chance to have it published as a new piece of work (1989: 107). Despite the brothers' dissatisfaction, there are still many similarities between the original text and the finished film: the film is set in the near future, the Zone is the result of an alien visitation; the Stalker's daughter suffers from a degenerative mutation caused by her father's incursions into the Zone; and the characters must pass through the dangerous 'meat-grinder' in order to reach their destination. The main narrative also remains much the same: several characters enter the Zone in search of a wish fulfilling power, but the Scientist and the Writer were Tarkovsky's own invention, and the golden ball becomes a room. Other, smaller details also remain, like throwing a monkey nut to test an area of the Zone up ahead (Strugatsky 2007: 22-23). However, Tarkovsky did exclude most of the material that took place outside of the Zone in the original text, leaving only the bar and the Stalker's home. By changing the golden ball to a room within a secret laboratory littered with equipment and dead bodies, he also invoked spectres of Hiroshima and the Cold War. The biggest difference between the text and the film is Tarkovsky's shift of focus away from Red's life outside of the Zone, and his choice to focus instead on the excursions that take place at the start and end of the original text. The character Red is also radically changed. In the brothers' original screenplay the stalker's wife says of her marriage to Red: 'You know, my mother was dead against it. He was a real tough, the whole street was terrified of him. He was handsome, and sure of himself'. In Tarkovsky's film this became: 'You know, my mother was dead against it. You've probably realised what he's like. One of God's holy fools... the whole street used to snigger at him. He was so pathetic, such a mess' (quoted in Turovskaya: 1989: 108). In a diary entry from 28 December 1977 Tarkovsky wrote of the screenplay: 'Arkady and Boris are trying to rewrite it at the moment, because of the new Stalker, who, instead of being some kind of drug dealer or poacher, has to be a slave, a believer, a pagan of the Zone' (1994: 147). This version of the Stalker lives in poverty, withdrawn to the fringes of society. He is called (disparagingly) '*iurodivyi*' by the Writer, and '*blazhennyi*' or 'blessed' by his wife in reference to the famous Russian holy fool, Vasilii Blazhennyi.[64] Such a complete change in the main character could not fail to change the whole meaning of the film.

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[64] I owe this translation and reference to Robert I. Efird's text 'The Holy Fool in Late Tarkovsky' (2014: 4).

It also marked a change of emphasis in Tarkovsky's work, replacing his concern with memory with the first iteration of the 'holy fool' archetype that would dominate his final three films.

In his writing Tarkovsky was often explicit in drawing parallels between the tradition of the holy fool and the Stalker, then later Domenico and Alexander. He wrote of such characters as being chosen and called by god:

> They are possessed of the gift that was recognised in old Russia as the mark of the "holy fool", that pilgrim or ragged beggar whose very presence affected people living "normal" lives and whose soothsaying and self-negation was always at variance with the ideas and established rules of the world at large. (Tarkovsky 2010: 227).

In interviews Tarkovsky spoke of the Stalker's function as being a Christ-like figure in search of spiritual truths: 'he's a prophet who believes that humanity will perish for lack of a spiritual life. Actually, this story is about the crisis of one of the world's last remaining idealists' (Tassone 2006: 59). As one study of Tarkovsky's late films puts it, 'the eponymous Stalker […] presents an easily recognizable, explicit transposition of the traditional holy fool into a more or less contemporary, albeit dystopian setting' (Efird: 3: 2014).

Traditionally, the holy fool must assume the appearance of madness or stupidity in order to achieve and maintain a state of humility. Self-abasement and deliberate provocation are both part of the performance.[65] The Stalker fulfils this role in several ways. He abases himself by lying partly immersed in the natural elements of the Zone, such as water or mud, embracing the Zone with abandon. He preaches a form of salvation of the self through total annihilation: 'Let them be helpless like children, because weakness is a great thing, and strength is nothing [...] Hardness and strength are death's companions. Pliancy and weakness are expressions of the freshness of being because what has hardened will never win'. Kaidanovsky's performance is eccentric, tormented, and on occasion

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[65] See *Symeon the Holy Fool* (1996) by Derek Krueger, particularly pp. 57-72.

hysterical. He is on the verge of tears as the Writer and the Scientist accuse him, beat him, and ridicule him, but he still entreats them to enter the Room. In a speech given at the threshold of the Room, he describes how he has given himself up to the Zone entirely in order to give others hope, echoing the self-deprecation of the holy fool described by St. Paul: 'Yes, you're right, I'm a louse. I haven't done any good in this world, and I can't do any [...] I bring people like me, desperate and tormented. People who have nothing else to hope for. And I can help them! No one else can help them, only I, the louse, can'. As Turovskaya pointed out in her review of the film, there is a very strong tradition in Russian culture of 'the hero who is humiliated and despised' (1989: 108). Following the same trajectory as Prince Myshkin or Don Quixote, the Stalker is driven by a spirituality or faith that renders him ridiculous in the eyes of those around him. In an interview with Laurence Cossé Tarkovsky said: 'The hero, the Stalker, moves in the same trajectory as Don Quixote or Prince Myshkin, these characters we call "idealists" in novels' (2006: 169).[66] There are also indicators that the Stalker's performance is somewhat deceptive, another typical feature of the holy fool (who play acts at being mad). After being forced to enter the meat-grinder the writer accuses him of playing God with their lives. He points out that the only proof of the Room's effectiveness is the Stalker's story about Porcupine. In an interview with Tassone, Tarkovsky said that the Zone should be considered a product of the Stalker's imagination: 'We thought about it this way: he was the one who created that place, to bring people and show them around, to convince them of the reality of his creation […] I entirely accept the idea that this world was created by the Stalker in order to instil faith – faith in his reality' (Tassone: 2006: 61-61).

The Stalker's plaintive cry: 'You have to believe' is central to the film. This is why there is nothing coincidental about the Christian associations found throughout the film. The motif of the trinity that was evident in the partnership of the three monks Andrei, Daniil and Kirill is here repeated in the character of the Stalker, the Writer and the Scientist. The writer weaves together a crown of branches and places it on his head in mockery of the Stalker's faith, while a fragment of the Ghent

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[66] On Don Quixote, Tarkovsky writes: '[he] became a symbol of nobility, selfless generosity and fidelity' (2010: 52). Taking into account such comments, the copy of *Don Quixote* that appears in the library in *Solaris* takes on a special significance. Its appearance both suggests the false realities of the mind, and the 'nobility' of Kris's fidelity to Hari. In this sense, Kris is an early pre-cursor to the holy fools of Tarkovsky's later films.

alter-piece (an early 15th century Early Flemish polyptych panel painting) is filmed beneath the water outside of the Room. Many of the Stalker's monologues contain religious messages. He quotes from the Bible (Luke 24: 13-18), describing the meeting on the Road to Emmaus of two disciples with Christ, who they fail to recognise. The camera stops on the Writer's face with the words 'But their eyes were holden that they should not know him'.

Although there are explicit Christian messages here, their usage is never straightforward, nor are Christian images the only images of faith used. When he arrives in the Zone, the Stalker kneels reverently in the grass, before sprawling in the undergrowth as if in a trance. The Christian pose gives way to something more unorthodox, even esoteric. At the time he was making *Stalker,* Tarkovsky's diaries also recorded a growing interest in Rudolf Steiner (an Austrian philosopher and esotericist) and Eastern philosophy (1994: 156, 218-19, 337-38). This second influence can be seen in the soundtrack's use of string instruments like the vine or *tampur,* which Tatiana Egorova has identified as being strongly influenced by Zen-Buddhism (Egorova 1997: 250-52). The Stalker's litany on weakness is also an unacknowledged paraphrase from the Tao Te Ching:

> Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water, but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail. For they can find no way of altering it. That the yielding conquers the resistant and the soft conquers the hard is a fact known by all men, yet utilised by none. Yet it is reference to this that the Sage said 'only he who has accepted the dirt of the country can be lord of its soil-shores; only he who takes upon himself the evils of the country can become a king among those that dwell under heaven' Straight words seem crooked. (Tzu 1997: 92)

Tarkovsky's use of Christian and Zen-Buddhist symbols is fairly erratic, and gestures instead to a more general search for meaning, or a supplication towards belief. Johnson and Petrie suggest that the overall pattern of the film tends towards 'a general framework in which faith, spirituality, and art (none of

them seen as exclusively Christian attributes) are set against materialism, cynicism, and disbelief' (1994: 146). Tarkovsky's own superstition led him to continually apprehend mysteries in the world around him. On Monkey's psychokinetic powers, he said in an interview: 'I expect something like that […] to happen at any time' (Strick 2006: 72). Vladimir Sharun, the sound designer who worked on *Stalker*, claimed that Tarkovsky believed in psychic powers and UFOs (quoted in Tyrkin 2001). Tarkovsky seemed more concerned with a generalised spiritual emptiness in contemporary society than proposing specific Christian remedies.

The question of faith at the centre of the film is inspired by what Deleuze called its 'Catholic' quality. As I have already argued, this does not necessarily mean that this is a religious film, although Tarkovsky does use Christian imagery in all of his films. When Deleuze talks about belief he means liberating the cinema image from the sensory-motor link as well as the system of judgement in order to see what cinema can do without them. When he talks about 'Catholic' belief, he seems to mean the way in which belief in something like God - or the Zone – determines a mode of existence, but might also open up new ways of thinking about the world. To believe in the Zone, as the Stalker entreats his followers, opens up and transforms thought. As Tarkovsky writes: 'Every art carries within it a religious purpose [...] because it does not conceive logically, nor does it formulate the logic of behaviour, but it does seem to express the postulate of faith' (Ishimov and Shejko: 2006: 136)

To read the film in this way is entirely consistent with Tarkovsky's own writing on *Stalker*. On the final enigmatic scene where the Stalker's daughter pushes a glass off a table using telekinetic powers, he has this to say: '[these powers] represent new perspectives, new spiritual powers that are as yet unknown to us, as well as new physical forces' (Tassone 2006: 59). In the same interview he also states that she represents 'hope, quite simply' (Tassone 2006: 59). Notably, while the scene preceding this was shot in monochrome, the girl, Monkey, appears in full colour. Tarkovsky had made the same transition earlier, moving from the monochrome world outside of the Zone, to the vivid colours of within it. The change to colour links the girl and the Zone, as if they share in the same supernatural force. Because Tarkovsky worked with a very restricted colour scheme in Stalker, often using only

browns, black and grey, any sequence in colour worked to highlight the strange and the ambiguous, as if colour manifests the presence of the sacred. In another example, after a physical struggle outside of the Room, the three men sit together silently on a pile of rocks. While they sit there, the scene takes on a blue hue, then colour drains out of the world into sepia tones. A curtain of rain falls suddenly. This rain, and the inexplicable sudden gusts of wind that rush across the fields and the trees are not mere happen-stance, as Tarkovsky very pointedly draws our attention to them, nor are they symbolic or indicative of 'the pervasive Holy Ghost' as Mark Cousins posits in *The Story of Film* (2004: 307). In themselves, these moments mean nothing, but if we consider the Zone to be entirely the product of the Stalker's imagination, then what Tarkovsky expresses in such moments is a confrontation with belief. *Stalker* expresses the drama of two men in whom the organ of belief has atrophied, men who would *like* to believe but cannot, and who are looking for a way of dealing with the tragedy of the loss of faith. To trust in the Zone is a choice to trust in the possibilities of the unpredictable and unknowable. It is a leap beyond reason and into the absurd. They have a choice either to believe that the Stalker, in his role as a holy fool, has some kind of shamanistic understanding of the alien and shifting landscape of the Zone, or to give up hope of believing in anything. The wind is just the wind, or it is an expression of faith.

## The Powers of the False

Deleuze's closest engagement with Soviet cinema happens when he refers to classical cinema theories that believed that a shock in thought could be communicated directly, physiologically and mentally, to the spectator. He adds, 'this pretension of the cinema, at least among [its] greatest pioneers, only raises a smile today (2005b: 152), before arguing that if Eisenstein's films created automata in *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) or *October* (1928), they were equally used in *Triumph of the Will* (1935). While admitting that Eisenstein's belief in a revolutionary cinema has remained unrealised, or worse, been allied with a fascism, Deleuze does seek to reclaim this theory for a modern cinema. He argues that in classical cinema the thought opened by shock simply travelled along a given path. For example, in Eisenstein's

dialectical materialism certain revolutionary ideas emerge from the collision of the montage sequence. In modern cinema on the other hand, this path is not defined. For Deleuze in his cinema books, modern cinema has a philosophical legacy: to inspire new ways of thinking about the world rather than directing thought along customary pathways.

A character like the Stalker serves a particular function in this new type of narration that Deleuze found operating in the cinema of the time-image. As previous chapters have shown, all of Tarkovsky's films include examples of what Deleuze called 'seers'. These are characters who each make the concept of 'truth' useless for distinguishing the imaginary and the real with regards to perception, and for discerning the true and the false with regards to the past. In *Solaris* especially, the imaginary starts to become valid for itself. Prompting this change was the shift from a perspective where each individual is defined in relation to an order or structure of relations (for Deleuze, this involves both a mode of behaviour and a way of filming the world that are based on a defined field or milieu of tensions and oppositions), to a perspective in which there are an infinite set of possible relations. As I have already explained, in the former, thinking is a matter of judgement, in the latter, thinking becomes a matter of refraining from judgement (see also Rushton 2012: 101-4). In Tarkovsky's films every model of truth and agency defined by Socialist Realism collapses in favour of the general principle of the false 'and its artistic, creative power' (2005b: 127). His films substitute the figure of the judge for characters who align themselves with experimental modes of existence, like the Stalker, or later Domenico, Gorchakov, and Alexander (as discussed in chapter 4). That the actions of such characters borders on the absurd is recognised by Deleuze when he writes of the figure of the fool in *The Time Image* and through his focus on characters like Welles's Falstaff and Don Quixote (from his unfinished Spanish film): 'we need an ethic or a faith, which makes fools laugh; it is not to believe in something else, but a need to believe in this world, of which fools are a part' (2995b: 167).

Along each stage of his commentary on Nietzsche, Deleuze refers to a film character (drawn from the films of Welles, Godard, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Jacques Doillon, Jean Rouch etc.), with each example offering a new element or technique to resolve the crisis of truth that he locates at the heart

of cinema of the time-image. This characters encounter a world in which straightforward notions of truth collapse in favour of a new perspective, with the correlative potential for new values and new modes of existence. In order to further illustrate his point, he tells the fable of the scorpion and the frog: a scorpion asks a frog to carry him over a river. The frog is afraid of being stung during the trip, but the scorpion argues that if it stung the frog then both would sink both would drown. The frog agrees and begins carrying the scorpion across the river, but midway across the scorpion stings the frog, dooming them both. When asked why, the scorpion points out that it is a fundamental part of his nature to sting the frog even if it means death by drowning (2005b: 135). Deleuze uses this parable to argue against according value to truth, by which he means the perimeters in which an action is judged to be good and fitting. The parable describes the type of force 'which no longer knows how to metamorphose itself according to the variations of what it can affect and what it can be affected by' (Deleuze 2005b: 135). The scorpion is the truthful man, who judges the world from the perspective of supposedly higher values. His is a will to dominate, an exhaustive force that does not seem able to transform itself, and that can only destroy and kill. The scorpion also expresses aspects of the man of vengeance, who no longer believes in the truth but acts out of a destructive self-hatred (see Deleuze 2005b: 136). His point is to contrast a dominating, 'base' kind of will, with a more 'noble' creative life, the 'artist' who lives an 'outpouring, ascending life, the kind which knows how to transform itself, to metamorphose itself according to the forces it encounters [...] always increasing the power to live, always opening new "possibilities"' (Deleuze 2005b: 137).

As Greg Lambert writes, the entire argument of 'The Powers of the False' is that the cinema of the time-image initiates a Nietzschean critique of the will to truth:

> The domain of cinema with its production of movement- and time-images, its creation of perspective or 'point-of-view,' and its invention of story with its objective and subjective façades are taken up by Deleuze as the place where the problems or truth and falsehood are equated to the technical problems of narration in cinema: What is a story? What is a character?

What is the real? What is the past? (Lambert 2002: 92-93)

Deleuze's implicit claim is that the film's characters do more than 'represent' Nietzchean themes. As Lambert argues, Deleuze adopts this Nietzschean account to narrate the history of cinema 'not to develop a relationship in cinema by analogy or metaphor', rather, 'cinema takes up the problem of truth and attempts to resolve it by purely cinematic means and Deleuze simply traces its 'problem-solving' faculty step by step' (Lambert 2002: 92-93).

Similarly, there is a Nietzscheanism in *Stalker,* as if Tarkovsky were covering again the principle points of his critique of the will to truth. In *Stalker* he establishes a set of characters much like Deleuze's own trinity - the man of truth, man of vengeance, and the artist - and then puts them in relation to one another within the Zone. The Scientist enters the Zone having decided that the Room will eventually be used by the worst kinds of human beings:

Do you realise what will happen when everyone believes in the room? And all come rushing here? It's only a matter of time. If not today, then tomorrow! And not just tens of them, thousands! Unfulfilled emperors, great inquisitors, fuhrers. Self appointed benefactors of the human race! And they'll come not for money or inspiration, but to change the world!

He claims to judge the Room in the name of higher values, and tries to destroy it. That this impulse is motivated by revenge is shown through the mysterious phone call from his colleague, who insists that the Scientist's refusal to forgive him for sleeping with his wife 20 years ago is the real motivation behind his construction of the bomb. The Scientist invokes the law for judging, but gives himself the right to judge without law. He invokes moral judgement, taking himself to be a *higher man*, judging life by his own standards and by his own authority. Deleuze finds a similar will to power expressed in Banister from *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947), Quinlan in *Touch of Evil* (1958), and Arkadin in *Mr Arkadin* (1955). Such characters only know how to destroy or kill before destroying themselves. The scientist's colleague

on the phone warns him of the sting to the scorpion's tail: 'I already see you hanging from your braces in your prison cell'.

Through his character the Writer, Tarkovsky constructs the characteristic attributes that Deleuze finds operating in the 'sick man': 'the man sick with himself', who 'judges life from the perspective of his sickness, his degeneration and his exhaustion' (2005b: 136). The Writer is shown from the very beginning of the film to be sick and weary of the world. He enters the Zone in search of God, because without God 'the world is absolutely dull, and that is why there's neither telepathy, nor ghosts, nor flying saucers ... and there cannot be anything of the kind. Iron laws control the world and it's intolerably boring. And these laws, alas, cannot be broken. They're not able to'. We know that the Writer is talented, but that he has been used up and exhausted by the expectations of the people who read his books. It seems to him that if he enters the room, he'll be able to write again. Standing beside a well in the 'dune room' after passing through the meat-grinder, he delivers a long monologue full of self-loathing, but also with complete honesty, about his life and his work. In interviews Tarkovsky claimed that he had more sympathy for this character, because he at least tries to find a way out of his predicament (Tassone 2006: 61). However, as he traverses the Zone, it becomes clear that he is a cynic who filters the world through his own sickness. As he weaves together a crown of branches, he dismisses the Scientist's fears: 'a human being is not capable of such hatred or love... that would extend over the whole of mankind. Well, money, a woman, maybe a desire for revenge, let my boss be run over by a car, that I can understand. But ruling over the world! A just society! God's kingdom on Earth'. Although he cannot believe in an authority that would judge or dominate life as the Scientist or 'truthful man' does, he cannot move beyond his own sickness. The crown recalls Christian faith, but in the hands of the Writer it becomes a mockery of faith, and a symbol of his own inability to genuinely believe in anything. Neither man enters the Zone. The Writer and the Stalker prove to be men of truth and judgement, both tribunal and sick.

Unlike the Scientist and the Writer, in Nietzschean parlance the Stalker is allied with a will to create. Weak and despised, yet spiritually strong in the tradition of the holy fool ('one of the last

idealists', as Tarkovsky called him in the interview with Tassone), he affirms a radical transformation of the self that makes it susceptible to different states of being: 'hardness and strength are death's companions. Pliancy and weakness are expressions of the freshness of being, because what is hard will never win'. Bogue describes such an attitude in his article 'To choose to choose – to believe in this world':

> The single aim of philosophy and cinema is to think differently, to unchain the sequences of inevitabilities governed by received opinion and belief, and then to reconnect the pieces in contingent yet necessary Markov chains. Thinking differently entails choosing to choose, adopting a way of living that allows a belief in the world's "possibilities in movements and intensities to give birth once again to new modes of existence". (Bogue 2010: 129)

## 'Catholic', 'Spiritual' or 'Transcendental' Style?

The question of how to believe runs implicitly through *Stalker*. So far I have demonstrated that this issue of faith is explicitly and insistently raised by its characters through dialogue, but it can also be searched for and revealed through the formal elements of his film. In 'Spiritual style in the films of Robert Bresson' (1964) Susan Sontag identified in Bresson's films certain qualities that she called a 'spiritual style'. Bazin had already described Bresson's *Diary of a Country Priest* (1951), as 'a new dramatic form that is specifically religious, or better still, specifically theological: a phenomenology of salvation and grace' (Bazin 2005: 136). However, like Deleuze's use of the term 'Catholicism' in relation to cinema, Sontag does not consider the spiritual in Bresson to be committed to an explicit religious point of view:

> The form of Bresson's films is designed (like Ozu's) to discipline the emotions at the same time that it arouses them: to induce a certain tranquillity in the spectator, a state of spiritual balance

that is itself the subject of the film […] Bresson's Catholicism is a language for rendering a certain vision of human action, rather than a 'position' that is stated. (Sontag 2009: 41)

Building on Sontag's essay in his book *Transcendental Film Style* (1972), Paul Schrader proposes that Bresson, Yasujiro Ozu, and Carl Theodor Dreyer, all express a uniquely spiritual film style. 'Transcendental style', Schrader writes, 'seeks to maximise the mystery of existence' (1972: 10). For Bresson himself, film making was a means to 'express the ineffable', to give it what he called an 'interior movement', through an economy of style (quoted in Quandt 1998: 3). He used to say 'when one violin is enough, don't use two... one doesn't create by adding, but by subtracting' (quoted in Quandt 1998: 104).

Although very different in terms of their stylistic preferences, Bresson and Tarkovsky were similar filmmakers in that they shared a metaphysical goal (Tarkovsky was also a vocal admirer of Bresson's films).[67] In *Sculpting in Time* Tarkovsky wrote that 'the great function of the artistic image is to be a kind of detector of infinity' (2010: 109). In his discussion of Leonardo Da Vinci's *Young Lady with a Juniper*, he says of the painting: 'A true artistic image gives the beholder a simultaneous experience of the most complex, contradictory, sometimes even mutually exclusive feelings' (2010: 109). The composition of many of the shots in *Stalker* gave the same aim, tightly framing the characters with their backs towards the camera, forcing the viewer to consider what is happening in the larger field of off-screen space. At other times they are placed in deep space, and details within the wider composition vie for the viewers' attention. Both compositions work together as direct visual means of expressing and apprehending what he saw as the spiritual or transcendent nature of the out-of-field.

For example, in an early sequence the Writer walks ahead of his companions towards an empty building. Before he starts walking Tarkovsky echoes a favourite composition from *Andrei Rublev* as the three men stand together looking in different directions. As the Writer starts walking off, the three men

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[67] In an interview with Charles H. de Brantes, Tarkovsky said that he considered Bresson to be 'the best filmmaker in the world' (de Brantes 2006: 182).

remain in their triangle, a shape that is mirrored by three rocks placed within the composition. The camera cuts to directly behind the Writer's head, tightly framed, looking over his shoulder. Another cut to in front of the Writer, who stares directly into the camera, then, as if it were filming from the perspective of an unseen force, the camera pulls back quickly through the doorway of the empty building. The Writer continues staring at the point where the camera had been, but it is now positioned behind his back again, tracking back from his head and shoulders to reveal his full torso. He hurries back to rejoin the same triangle composition with his companions. Instead of seeing these images as individual shots that follow one another (i.e. immobile sections to which movement is added), Tarkovsky wanted the viewer to see this sequence as a single shot. This scene also powerfully emphasises volumes and relief. It does this through the banks of shadows between patches of grass and in the doorway of the building, and through the positioning of both the debris and the three men which, from the observer's viewpoint, all appear to lead upwards towards the vanishing point. The action is set within a field of great depth, held together by these triangles.[68] This kind of sequence shot with depth of field alters the breadth and quantity of information on screen. Viewers have a more active role in interpreting actions taking place within depth of field than when a sequence is edited. The tracking shot also suggests a greater field of view than is shown on screen, because it implies that there is an entire field of vision being explored by the camera that the viewer could explore further if the camera chose to show it. Depth of field and long tracking shots introduce an ambiguity that Tarkovsky saw as being inherent in reality: 'the pattern of life is far more poetic than it is sometimes represented by the determined advocates of naturalism' (2010: 22). This is as opposed to a montage that is biased in what it shows the viewer. Tarkovsky's polemics against Eisenstein clearly placed him in the latter category: 'Eisenstein makes thought into a despot: it leaves no "air"' (2010: 183).[69]

In the sequence that I have described, staging techniques combine to create an unsettling, even

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[68] Such a careful composition is somewhat reminiscent of Ozu, who, like Tarkovsky, positioned his camera so that it would contain all of the compositional elements (see Richie 1974: 157).

[69] As well as this techniques of deep staging and tracking shots, water is also used to suggest a transcendent or metaphysical world beyond the frame. In her brief analysis of Stalker in *Deleuze, Altered States and Film* (2012), Anna Powell identifies an 'abstract, metaphysical quality' to the use of water in Stalker. Wetness here, 'escapes opacity to become translucent in a potent cinematic expression of spiritual insight' (2012: 156).

horrific atmosphere. The camera lurks unseen in the doorway of the building, it smoothly floats and circles the men from a distance, or stares over their shoulders. Artemiev's abstract and strange sounds also suggest another acoustic realm completely detached from the images on screen. Solonitsyn's performance is full of fear, despite there being nothing solid within the diegetic space to be afraid of. As Bird writes in *Andrei Tarkovsky*, the only evidence of supernatural forces that take place on screen are the voice that calls the Writer back from his solo foray and the bird that disappears over the sand dunes. What is more important, he writes, is the character's belief in the uncanny nature of the Zone: 'The promise of meaningfulness in the film (as in the Zone) is no Pascalian wager on the existence of a supernatural realm; the wager is on the physical - and therefore spiritual - receptivity of the spectator' (Bird 2008: 168). The sequence is frightening because terror in *Stalker* lies both within the volumes of the depth of field and outside of the frame, in the sense that they intimate something unseen. Belief in the out-of-field here functions in the same way as the gust of wind I spoke of earlier in this chapter in relation to Deleuze's idea of 'Catholic' cinema. To believe in the Zone is an affirmation of the possibility of an encounter with something uncharted and incomprehensible.

## Conclusion

I have shown that Deleuze appropriates the transcendent terms of the Catholic Church to talk about a specifically cinematic ethics that he calls a 'faith which is opposed to religion' (2005a: 119). Modern cinema, for Deleuze, tries to come as close to the ineffable, invisible and unknowable as words and images can take it. It is in this sense that he sees an intimate relationship between cinema and philosophy. Paying special attention to the theoretical concepts of the latter half of *The Time Image*, I have argued that the overriding narrative logic of *Stalker* is led not by crystalline narration (as previously), but by what Deleuze calls a 'Catholic' - not necessarily religious - faith in the anarchic or foolish agencies of 'the false'. I have explored Deleuze's references to belief and the 'Catholic quality' of cinema, and how this connects to Tarkovsky's own thoughts on belief and spirituality as expressed in interviews, his diaries, and *Sculpting in Time*. I have also shown that Tarkovsky's choice to focus on the

character of the holy fool expresses a Nietzschean affirmation of the powers of the false, by which I mean that such a character expresses a will to becoming in place of a will to power. Becoming here, as always in Deleuze's work, is used in the sense of opening up new possibilities, to be as the Stalker insists, supple rather than rigid. The Russian character of the holy fool, in its iteration as the Stalker, comes to stand for belief in one state of life that affirms the creative powers of the false a state that would judge or dominate life, and thereby exhaust it. Finally, I have looked at Tarkovsky's use of depth of field and long tracking shots to show how the style of the film expresses this Catholic quality.

## Chapter 4: Thought and Agency in Exile

> Has man any hope of survival in the face of all the patent signs of impending apocalyptic silence? perhaps an answer to that question is to be found in the legend of the parched tree, deprived of the water of life, on which I based [The Sacrifice] [...] The Monk, step by step and bucket by bucket, carried water up the hill to water the dry tree, believing implicitly that his act was necessary and never for an instant wavering in his belief in the miraculous power of his own faith in God. (Tarkovsky 2010: 229)

### Introduction

In this final chapter I look at Tarkovsky's first feature film made outside of the Soviet Union, *Nostalghia* (1983), and his final film, *The Sacrifice* (1986). Both films are populated by holy madmen, saints and seers, each driven by Dostoevskian themes of apocalypse, loss of spirituality and hope, and of sacrifice. Each is marked by Tarkovsky's defection from the Soviet Union, planned during the filming of *Nostalghia,* and announced at a press conference in Italy in July 1984.[70] Formulated and created in a Cold War atmosphere, the characters of both films are also haunted by images of disaster and nuclear war. Building on the concepts introduced in my last chapter, I argue that images of the end of the world in both films are symbolic of an encounter with the unknown, or what Deleuze calls the

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[70] Tarkovsky defected in 1984, citing not political differences but artistic constraints. As Johnson and Petrie note, Tarkovsky's diary entries for April 15-16 1981 seem to suggest that he seriously considered defecting while in Italy. They also claim that Olga Surkova (a film critic who helped Tarkovsky write *Sculpting in Time*) confirmed this in conversation with them (1994: 158).

'unthought in thought' or just 'thought'.[71] In *What is Philosophy*, Deleuze and Guattari describe this kind of thought as a moment of trespass and violence that shifts the parameters of human capacities for thought, affect, and agency:

[Thinking] implies a sort of groping experimentation and its layout resorts to measures that are not very respectable, rational, or reasonable. These measures belong to the order of dreams, of pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness and excess. We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are the eyes of the mind. Even Descartes had a dream. To think is always to follow the witch's flight. (1994: 41)

In *The Hermetic Deleuze*, Joshua Ramey notes that thought, for Deleuze, entails a 'spiritual ordeal' and an affirmation of esoteric experimentation that has been missed by most readers of Deleuze. As he puts it, 'With modernity's experimentation, religious faith is no longer the paradigm of belief. The model, rather, becomes the ordeal - at once epistemic and ethical - of living in a world whose ultimate structure remains inaccessible to thought, and yet forces thought to conceive it' (Ramey 2012: 13). Given Tarkovsky's own interest in esoteric practices during this latter stage of his career, I argue that it is appropriate to draw on the experimental 'hermetic' aspects of Deleuze's philosophy to understand the sacrifices of the holy fools: Domenico, Gorchakov, and Alexander. Crucial to the hermetic tradition, and why Deleuze and Tarkovsky can be placed within it, is their belief that experimental modes of existence - exemplified in the rituals and practices of sorcerers, visionaries, dreamers, and holy fools - make possible a way of seeing that will inspire new ways of thinking, a task Deleuze himself characterized as the renewal of 'belief in the world'.

The effects of exile and displacement and the associated problem of translation, are the focus of the first half of this chapter. In *Nostalghia* Tarkovsky not only made the problem of living between two cultures the subject of his film, the entire production was marked by issues related to living and

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[71] As Heidegger put it, 'Man can think in the sense that he possesses the possibility to do so. This possibility alone, however, is no guarantee to us that we are capable of thinking' (quoted in Deleuze 2005b: 152).

speaking in another country and making a film that mediates two means of production, two languages, and two countries. The film reflects on the conditions of its own production and the experience of exile that haunted Tarkovsky as he considered the prospect of his own defection. Because of this, there is a tension between the idea of a Russian national character and culture that had always been important to Tarkovsky's film making, and his own experience of trying to make what he called a 'Russian film' in Italy. It is a film made from the viewpoint of marginality. I will show that it is also a film about the limits of what can already be thought, because thought is not only an individual act but an engagement with the social and cultural memory.[72] *Nostalghia* emphasises communal experience and collective culture - especially the national character of Russian art - and the new kind of thought that takes place at the border between two cultures; a thought that is driven by fascination for and repulsion of the unknown. I discuss this idea through an analysis of the film's major themes: translation, sexuality, and the transformation of the Russian 'dacha' into a fetish object because of its movement between cultures.

Belief, and the 'Catholicism of cinema' discussed in the last chapter, are again the focus of the second half of this chapter. When Deleuze wrote of a 'Catholic belief' in cinema, he meant that cinema traces out unforeseeable dimensions of thought, of which religious practice is just one. In the period of the Cold War when the nuclear threat loomed large, Tarkovsky turned to religion and stranger practices of the occult in his personal life and in his films. He created scenes where the sacred co-exists alongside the profane, where watery images intimate visions and movement across time and space, and where characters seek identification with Christ the crucified, sacrificed figure. Following a discussion of Tarkovsky's complex relationship with religion and esoteric practices, I will discuss how his final films reference occult topics like witchcraft, sorcery, visions, and hallucinations in order to affirm choice, risk, and creative transformation. This is not to suggest that references to such practices are only metaphors for thought – where 'thought' means the encounter with something unintelligible,

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[72] In *The Skin of the Film* (2000) Laura U. Marks argues that the element of communal experience is implicit in Bergson's theory of perception, and necessarily informs the process of cinematic spectatorship as well. The intercultural films that she looks at are motivated to draw attention to this idea: 'Minority cinema makes it clear, by virtue of its critical relationship to dominant languages, that no utterance is individual' (2000: 62).

which it cannot understand without suffering a crisis or catastrophe - but that Tarkovsky shared with

Deleuze a desire to ground cinema and philosophy in a common principle of experimentation and

belief in as-yet-uncomprehended forms of life.

### Between Two Worlds: *Nostalghia*

*Nostalghia* depicts the travels of Russian poet Gorchakov (Oleg Yankotovksy) as he researches the life of an 18th Century Russian serf-composer Pavel Sosnevsky, who went to Bologna to study music.[73] The poet Gorchakov carries with him a letter from the fictional Sosnevsky, which reads 'I would die if I never returned to Russia, if I never saw my homeland, the birches, the air of my childhood'. Gorchakov travels with an Italian interpreter Eugenia (Domiziana Giordano) who takes him to St. Catherine's Pool in the Tuscan countryside.[74] There he encounters Domenico (Erland Josephson) who persuades him to carry a lit candle across the mineral pool in order to avert the end of the world. Throughout the film Gorchakov experiences sepia tinted flashbacks to his Russian dacha and family. In the final scene, Tarkovsky stages a dacha within the walls of an Italian Cathedral, perhaps implying that the protagonist has reconciled an inner conflict between his growing affection for Italy and nostalgic longing for his homeland.

The idea of a Soviet/Italian co-production seems to have first arisen out of Tarkovsky's long-standing friendship with Tonino Guerra and the encouragement of Michelangelo Antonioni.[75] By October 20th 1976, Tarkovsky and Guerra had almost finished a script for a sixty-three-minute film called *Tempo di Vaggio* (*A Time of Travel*), and Guerra was to arrange an invitation for Tarkovsky to spend two months in Italy between the projected run of his stage production of *Hamlet* and the start of filming *Stalker* (Johnson and Petrie 1994: 156). Nothing came of this, and in entries from July 1976

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[73] According to Tarkovsky's diaries, the composer's real life prototype was Maxim Sasontovich Beriozovsky, who was sent to the Musical Academy of Bologna, where he studied under Tartini the Elder, who was a pupil of Mozart. In 1774 Beriozovsky returned to Russia at the wish of Potyomkin, who proposed that he found a musical academy in Kremenschug. On his return to St. Petersburg he started to drink heavily, and in 1777 took his own life (Tarkovsky 1994: 252).

[74] The character Eugenia was initially introduced for very practical reasons. The presence of an interpreter meant that very little Russian had to be subtitled in the film: 'we decided to give [Gorchakov] interpreters, with a view to distribution: there has to be very little text in Russian' (Tarkovsky: 1994: 192)

[75] Antonioni had attended the 1975 Moscow Film Festival, and announced that he would leave immediately if he was not shown *Mirror* (1994: 115). Tarkovsky's diaries record many visits to Antonioni and his wife during his trip to Italy. Antonioni's wife taught Tarkovsky meditation techniques during his visits, and his diaries record attempts to see 'blue vibrations' (1994: 193).

Tarkovsky complains that Filipp Yermash is trying to sabotage his invitation to work in Italy (1994: 125-6).[76] In April 1979, Tarkovsky records that he and Guerra are trying to write a screenplay for a film: *The End of the World* (1994: 180). Then, in mid-July of that year he travels to Italy for two months to film and edit *Tempo di Vaggio* for Italian television. In this film Tarkovsky is shown visiting potential filming locations and discussing with Guerra his ideas on film and art. Notably, Tarkovsky reveals his admiration of films by, among others, Bresson, Jean Vigo, Antonioni, Fellini, and Bergman.

Back in Moscow, Tarkovsky seeks permission to live abroad for a year with his wife Larissa and youngest son Andrei (Johnson and Petrie 1994: 157). Possibly afraid that he would defect, the authorities insist that his son must remain in the Soviet Union (Tarkovsky 1994: 20-21). In March 1980, he is granted a two-month exit visa, and he arrives in Rome in April. On May 13th Tarkovsky records that an interim agreement has been signed between RAI and Sovinfilm (1994: 247), and that the script was finished on the 18th (1994: 249).[77] In June he records trouble with the film budget, and writes of his growing homesickness: 'It is really not possible for a Russian to live here, not with our Russian nostalgia' (1994: 258-59). Anatoly Solonistyn, who Tarkovsky viewed as an essential component of his Russian film making and who was to play Gorchakov, was declared too ill to play the role (Alexander-Garrett 2012: Monday 4th February).[78] His diaries also record a growing terror of the prohibitions that he felt awaited him back home, and hint towards some preparation for his eventual defection (1994: 276-77). Johnson and Petrie record that he became 'almost paranoid about the lengths to which the Soviet authorities might go in persecuting him, even fearing forced expatriation' (Johnson and Petrie 1994: 46). At the same time, he records a feeling of being torn between two worlds: 'my encounter with another world and another culture and the beginnings of an attachment to them has set up an irritation, barely perceptible, but incurable' (2010: 203). After the film was completed, Tarkovsky repeatedly claimed that this state of mind, caused by living away from home, had been imprinted on the

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[76] Filipp T. Yermash, long-time chairman of the Soviet cinematography committee, and Tarkovsky's nemesis throughout much of his career.

[77] RAI is Italy's public national broadcaster. Sovinfilm was the organisation that mandated all foreign connections for the Soviet film industry (see Tarkovsky's interview with Ishimov and Shejko 2006: 129).

[78] The kindle file of this text does not provide chapter titles, but is divided into dated diary entries. I have not included a page number because most electronic readers include a numbering system that tells users their location in the work that may not appear consistently to other users.

narrative of the film: 'Quite unexpectedly to me, *Nostalghia* conveyed my own state of mind […] I had not expected to be capable of such clear embodiment in a film' (Hoberman and Bachmann 2006: 94).

Many of Tarkovsky's comments in interviews from this time show that he was thinking around the problem of speaking and working in another language. At a RAI press conference in Rome to announce the start of production, he spoke on the problem of translation: 'We Russians can claim to know Dante and Petrarch, just as you Italians can claim to know Pushkin, but this is really impossible – you have to be of the same nationality […] it is not possible to teach one person the culture of another' (Mitchell 2006: 75). When asked if he thought there was such a thing as a national cinematic language he replied: 'if cinema is an art, it naturally has a national language. Art cannot keep from being national. In short, Russian cinema is Russian, and Italian cinema is Italian' (2006: 98). In an appearance at the Blue Bird cinema, owned by the distributor of *Nostalghia*, Ulf Berggren, he announced: 'Pushkin is the greatest of all the poets that I know, but he is impossible to translate: therein lies his greatness. He means nothing to those who do not know Russian' (Alexander-Garrett 2012: Tuesday, 12th March). The national character of his own work was already a central theme in Tarkovsky's writing. In *Sculpting in Time* he constantly returns to a need to be understood by people from his own country, opening the book with letters from Soviet citizens who felt the need to write to him about *Mirror*. He also wrote: 'I've always thought that anybody, and any artist […] must of necessity be a product of the reality that surrounds him' (2010: 165). In an interview with Angus MacKinnon, Tarkovsky insisted that he would continue to make Russian films in whichever country he found himself: 'the stylistic unity, the world I am trying to express – it is my world, and I don't doubt that whether I am filming in Africa or China, it will be clear that the film is made by a Russian artist' (2006: 159-60).

Whether or not it is feasible to talk about national cinema as an expression of a certain cultural, ethnic, or geo-political identity (as discussed in, for example, Higson's 1997 *Waving the Flag: Constructing a National Cinema in Britain*), the parameters of the term 'Russian cinema' are particularly difficult to theorise because of the transnational context of the (former) conglomerate Soviet Union, and the particularities of national cinematographies within the Soviet cinema of the time (Georgia, the Ukraine

etc.). Interestingly, Dušan Radunović approaches Georgian cinema from the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's 'minor literature', arguing that Georgian cinema was a minor cinema working within the major framework of Soviet cinema: 'a certain imago of Georgian culture was constructed in the interstices between the cultures of the Russophonic majority and the Georgian minority' (2014: 50). To be 'minor' in this sense is not an artistic evaluation. For Deleuze and Guattari, a minor literature is the literature of a minority or marginalised group, written not in a minor language, but in a major one: 'How many people today live in a language that it not their own? or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to use?'(1986: 19). They use this concept to explore how Kafka, a Czech Jew, wrote in German. 'Minor cinema' as a concept has since been fleshed out by other commentators (Marshall 2001; Butler 2002; Rodowick 2003; Marks 2000; Martin-Jones 2006; Erfani 2012), who draw on a section in *The Time Image* that talks about the effects of the experience of marginalisation: 'Sometimes the minority film-maker finds himself in the impasse described by Kafka: the impossibility of not "writing", the impossibility of writing in the dominant language, the impossibility of writing differently' (Deleuze 2005b: 209). As it is used by these authors, minor cinema struggles to define itself through the forces of domination and exclusion that occlude it. To be a minority in this sense can mean living between two sets - two countries, two languages, two genders, two religions etc. - but to belong to neither completely. Alison Butler, for example, finds the concept of 'minor' to be a useful strategy for approaching women's cinema: 'Thinking of (some) women's cultural production as 'minor' (in some ways) does not depend on a belief in women's absolute alienation from language and culture, unlike the 'women's writing' theorised by Kristeva and others, but posits instead a mediated and contested relationship' (Butler 2002: 21).

Although voiced and scripted in its native language, dubbing into Russian (and before that Russian inter-titles) meant that Georgian cinema entered into the culture of the Russian majority from its very inception, albeit in a translated and altered form. Radunović writes that national cinema in the Soviet Union, like the Georgian example, was entangled in a mediation between centre and peripheral identities:

Whereas the concept of world cinema emerges as a product of a post-ideological, neo-liberal era, in which distinct national identities are, at least seemingly, negotiated in the global (capitalist) cinematic market, the articulation of individual identities in the Soviet transnational space took place in a considerably more restricted social climate, that of an ideological superstate, in which identities were subjugated to, or instrumentalized by, an overarching ideological principle. (2014: 50)

Before *Nostalghia*, and in *Mirror* especially, Tarkovsky had taken the co-existence of his Russian *natsional'nost'* (national identity/ethnic identity) alongside his Soviet identity for granted. Although he may have stood apart from the mainstream, he situated his work within the tradition of Soviet cinema. In an interview with Ishimov and Shejko he stressed the importance of his Soviet education: 'I was educated in the Soviet Union, my reaction [to the West] cannot help but depend on my education. In general, everything is entirely natural: I am who I am' (2006: 152). At the same time, he would speak passionately of his ties with classic Russian culture:

This culture naturally had its continuation and it has it to this day. I don't think it's dead. I was one of those artists who through their life and work attempted - perhaps even unconsciously - to realise this bond between Russia's past and future. The loss of this bond would be fatal to me, I could not exist without it. It is always the artist who ties the past with the future. He lives not just at a certain instant, he is a medium so to speak, a ferryman from the past into the future. (Illg and Neuger 1987)

Perhaps this was made easier by his position within the 'Russophonic majority', but for Tarkovsky at least, while a supranational 'Soviet' identity was supposed to transcend national divisions, Sovietness did not swallow up or destroy all other forms of identity. As Timothy Johnston writes in *Being Soviet*:

'Residents of the Soviet Union, like most individuals, embraced a number of simultaneous and different identities' (Johnston 2011: xxv). In Tarkovsky's case, his identity as a Russian seemed to be entangled with his identity as a citizen of the Soviet transnational conglomerate. However, with *Nostalghia* he found himself for the first time having to translate this culture, not least because the decision was made early on not to include very much Russian in the film: 'we decided to give [Gorchakov] interpreters, with a view to distribution: there has to be very little text in Russian' (Tarkovsky 1994: 192). As I will show in the next section, Tarkovsky came to feel that he would be permanently engaged with translating his culture and cinematic language back to people who assume the right to know things in their own language.

**Translation**

Prompted by this problem of making himself understood to a primarily non-Russian audience, the problem of translation is brought into sharp focus in *Nostalghia*. In an early scene, Eugenia and Gorchakov discuss the impossibility of translating poetry:

'What are you reading?' Gorchakov asks, unexpectedly.

'Tarkovsky… Poems by Arseny Tarkovsky.' Eugenia looks a little taken aback, as though caught red-handed.

'In Russian?'

'No, it's a translation… A pretty good one…'

'Chuck them out.'

'What for?… Actually, the person who translated them, he's an amazing poet, in his own right…' she says, as though trying to justify herself.

'Poetry can't be translated… Art in general is untranslatable …'

'I can agree with you about poetry… but music? Music, for example?'

Gorchakov sings a Russian song.

'What's that?' asks Eugenia, not comprehending.

'It's a Russian song.'

'Right… but how would we ever have known Tolstoy, Pushkin. How could we even begin to understand Russia,' Eugenia says testily, 'if…'

Gorchakov interrupts her: 'But you don't understand Russia at all.'

'And Dante, Petrarch, Macchiavelli? So Russians don't know Italy!'

'Of course not,' Gorchakov agrees, wearily. 'How could we, poor devils?' (Tarkovsky 1999: 475–76)

Later, by St. Catherine's pool, Eugenia and Gorchakov face in opposite directions as they speak, absorbed in themselves and unaware of the other, reflecting a lack of communication.[79] Gorchakov tells an Italian girl called Angela a joke in Russian. He laughs and says 'But of course you don't understand a thing'. Significantly, Gorchakov does not understand Domenico's use of the word *fede* (faith) until Eugenia translates it for him. Considering the importance of faith in Tarkovsky's previous film *Stalker,* such a misunderstanding is meant to be devastating. Skakov even reads the ruined buildings of the film as metaphors for the impossibility of communication, as if they each recall to mind the destruction of the Tower of Babel (2012: 186-87). Christy L. Burns makes a similar observation in her analysis of the film: 'In *Nostalghia*, the rift in Andrei's psyche is represented by architectural decay, so that interior spaces are porous and open to natural elements' (2011: 2). The point of such scenes is to express the effects of exile and displacement and the associated problem of translation.

An approach to this kind of 'intercultural' production, and the associated theme of miscommunication between different regimes of knowledge, has been suggested by Laura U. Marks. Building on Deleuze's theories, Marks argues that filmmakers seeking to represent their native cultures have had to develop new forms of cinematic expression following the crisis of the action-image. She argues that the Second World War undermined set ideas about nation and nationality by displacing

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[79] This is used to similar effect in *Andrei Rublev* and *Stalker* to show those moments when characters are at odds with one another, either in their conversation or spiritually.

populations, making it possible for cinema to describe conditions of migration, diaspora, and hybridity that characterised the post-war populations of Europe and North America: 'The end of the modern period is characterized not only by industrial ruins but also by the dismantling of colonial power, whose ruins are perpetuated in the lives of the people it displaced' (Marks 2000: 27-28). Despite the fact that Deleuzians have been critical of the comparative framework that Deleuze used in his cinema books (classical and modern, pre- and post-war cinema), and the distinctions that he drew between European, American and non-Western cinemas (see in particular Reid 2013: 78-96), Marks refashions Deleuze's ideas to look at the politics of place and displacement that drive 'intercultural film', for which she gives the following definition:

> "Intercultural" indicates a context that cannot be confined to a single culture. It also suggests movement between one culture and another, thus implying diachrony and the possibility of transformation. "Intercultural" means that a work is not the property of any single culture, but mediates in at least two directions. It accounts for the encounter between different cultural organizations of knowledge, which is one of the sources of intercultural cinema's synthesis of new forms of expression and new kinds of knowledge. (2000: 6-7)

Most of her examples are from the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, but the characteristics of intercultural cinema are not specific to the representation of the experiences of cultural minorities in these countries. It is characterised by experimental styles that attempt to represent 'the experience of living between two or more cultural regimes of knowledge', 'living as a minority', and 'the physical effects of exile, immigration and displacement' (Marks 2000: 1). Marks is concerned with moments in film where a minority speaks - or fails to speak - where the migrant or exile speaks in the language of a country that is not his/her own, and how cultural objects are transitioned between different contexts.

Marks is especially interested in those moments in intercultural cinema that challenge official histories, dominant languages, and identity politics:

In Foucauldian terms, intercultural cinema works at the edge of an unthought, slowly building a language in which to think it. What can already be thought and said threatens to stifle the potential emerging new thoughts. The already sayable against which intercultural cinema struggles is not only official history but often also identity politics, with their tendency towards categorization. (Marks 2000: 29)

Her work on cinema is a reminder that Deleuze shared a range of philosophical, social, and critical concepts with Foucault, and so considered discourse to be both restrictive and enabling. In order to find expression, emerging thoughts must necessarily speak in the terms of existing discourses, but thought must simultaneously break away from these discourses: 'change must be effected in a sort of dance between sedimented, historical discourse and lines of flight, between containment and breaking free' (Marks 2000: 28).

For intercultural films, like *Nostalghia*, this translates to a need to work critically with categories like identity, language, and nation. I have noted where Tarkovsky used the theme of translation to underscore the collective character of expression, and those moments of mistranslation that emphasise the breach between different cultures and languages. There are however, several scenes that unsettle this theory of linguistic division. For instance, in the opening sequence he uses music in such a way that two linguistic systems attempt to overcome their essential separation. Over the sepia tinted black and white shots of a Russian landscape, Verdi's choral work *Messa da Requiem* overlaps for a brief moment with the sound of what Turovskaya identifies as the unaccompanied 'keening death-chant of Russian peasant women' (1989: 119).[80] The chant yields to the requiem as the film fades to black, then cuts to the Tuscan landscape. Tarkovsky's use of folk song here draws on a popular Soviet nostalgic sentiment

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[80] In his book on another VGIK student Vasilii Shukshin, John Givens writes of the rivalry between the urban and cultured Tarkovsky, and Shukshin, who drew on the folk traditions and dialectical turns of speech belonging to his Siberian family and neighbours (Givens 2000: 25). Tarkovsky's own appeal to a genuine folk culture here seems incongruous with the sophisticated means of expression that he used in his films, unless we consider that his vision of folk culture is romanticised, in the sense that the original Romantic forgeries of folk culture were produced for an elite and educated audience.

for a peasant way of life, or what was left of it after collectivisation and anti-religion campaigns.[81] The combination of this folk culture with Italian orchestral music forms part of what Egorova calls the principle of montage underlying the music dramaturgy of Tarkovsky's films, whose purpose in using quotation material (classical music, rural folk songs, Eastern music etc.), as well as natural and synthesised noise, was to activate 'the spectator's associative and imaginative thinking' (1997: 238). Tarkovsky uses music in this sequence to form associative links between otherwise unconnected times, places and cultures. The two counterpoised styles and melodies are here used to anticipate the pull of the main character between his Russian homeland and Italian present, but they also overlap to the point that one kind of music is not hierarchically absorbed by the other, so that both are reciprocally implicated and transformed.

These principles are also evident in Tarkovsky's demand that the title of the film is spelt with a 'h', requiring the word to be pronounced in the Russian manner. 'Nostalghia' is a transliteration of what he felt was a word that the Russians had claimed as their own, for a particularly Russian condition: *nostal'giya*. The manipulation of the sound of the word 'nostalghia', and its written inscription, is purposefully developed to challenge and upset the domination of the Italian language. The title is a form of annunciation that introduces a slippage or experimentation within language, finding ways to alter and recombine elements of it. In doing so, the title expresses the dilemma at the heart of the film: the impossibility of 'true' or invisible translation of sense in the movement between places, cultures, and languages, and the power relations involved in translation. This is consistent with Deleuze and Guattari's contention that the primary function of language, is not to communicate, but to impose power relations. 'There is no [such thing as a] mother tongue [or standard language]', they insist, 'only a power takeover by a dominant language' (2005: 7).

Such moments reveal a dualism at the heart of *Nostalghia*. On the one hand, Gorchakov's conversations with Eugenia state that it is impossible to think outside of the structures – social, cultural

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[81] According to Richard Stites, large segments of the Soviet population continued to prefer traditional forms of culture during the Brezhnev period (1964-1982), including rural prose, folk song, and historical fiction. This was despite the inflow of Western styles and fashion and increase in the urban population (Stites 1992: 148-178).

- which form our experience of reality. Tarkovsky is insistent on the division of cultures and language, which he expresses in an interview with Irena Brezna: 'how can someone live normally, fully, if he breaks with his roots?' (Brezna 2006: 119). On the other hand, the film interrupts and upsets these structures, making them stutter and mutate. There is an unexpected encounter with the unknown (Tarkovsky insists, after all, that it is impossible to truly understand another culture) that defies translation and yet produces unexpected combinations, shifting the parameters of nation and language categories. This is a film about the new kind of thought that takes place at the border of two cultures.

**The Dacha**

In her two essays on Deleuze and translation, Barbara Godard provides an account of how such resistance to categories like nation and language can be used to think about the process of translation as a creative act. Although Deleuze did not deal directly with translation (either in his own work, or in collaboration with Guattari), Godard develops a model where, as she puts it, translation becomes a process of constantly negotiating differences, rather than what Walter Benjamin theorised as 'suprahistorical kinship between languages' in which translation 'ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the innermost relationship of languages' (Benjamin 1996: 257; 255). As such, Deleuzian translation is concerned with a 'force of variation', not constants:

> At stake in translation, as in philosophy, has long been a concern with meaning separated from language, with dualisms, in short. Departing from an idealist philosophy of certain meaning anchored by the unity or totality of either a transcendent Idea or a generalising *Aufhebung*, Deleuze replaces it with a singularity or differentiating event, with the hesitancy and stuttering of the atom, the particle, the zigzag, the flux. […] Any creative act for Deleuze will necessarily call an established truth into question, shaking it from the sedimented taken-for-grantedness in which it draws its power. In many ways this is the mundane task of the translator: he or she cannot help but falsify any text. A translated text is never the same as the original, but that isn't

the point. The point is that the translated text is a new assemblage capable of new truths. It had to pass through a translator, which is to say, through a population of others. Translation produces its own truth – a truth in its own right – outside the polar concerns of fidelity and freedom that are always accountable to an original (Godard 2010: 54, 60)

When we rethink translation in terms of Deleuze's work, translation becomes a process of accepting, even accentuating the problem shared by translation and philosophy, which is the gulf between meaning and words. I have so far argued that this fall or relegation of translation from its sense-for-sense function, is *Nostalghia*'s dominant theme. However, the film is not only preoccupied with linguistic translation as such, but the broader possibility of translating objects, memories and histories. Tarkovsky's portrayal of dacha for instance, one of most enduring images in his films, is treated quite differently in *Nostalghia*. In all of his films, Tarkovsky's camera lingers on such objects that the dacha contains - candles, books, large glass jars, shawls, wooden furniture – to draw attention to both the duration of time within the shot, exaggerated in its length, and the depth of time expressed in the wear and tear of the object. These objects are also used to set off chains of associations or to arouse memories. For instance, in *Mirror* he carefully re-builds his family dacha in order to ask the walls, pictures, and objects to recount the Second World War and the impact that it had on his family. He went so far as to use old wooden logs to create the texture and presence of old age (Synessios 2001: 44). Migrated from film to film, the dacha is used to define a bounded national character, gathering together all of the positive features of the Russian self-image, qualities that were heavily invested in the dacha after the Second World-War. Specifically, in his history of the dacha Stephen Lovell lists these qualities as 'easygoing sociability, open-ended and vodka soaked hospitality, rejection or ignorance of superficial niceties, appetite for physical toil, intuitive feeling for the natural world, and emotional freedom' (Lovell 2003: 5). He also writes that in the postwar era the dacha came to be highly valued for 'the connection they created to a rural way of life that many Soviet urbanites or their parents had only recently relinquished' (2003: 5). As Turovskaya writes, the dachas of Tarkovsky's films held a particular

charm of recognition for Soviet audiences: 'Since we share so many of the protagonist's childhood memories, [*Mirror*] could just as well have been called 'We remember'' (1989: 65)

Gorchakov's flashbacks of the dacha summon up the Russian summer houses of Chekhov's stories, the out-of-town residences of the Soviet privileged class, or even allotment shacks on the outskirts of Soviet cities. A recollection-image like this, in Deleuze's sense, is where a flashback serves as 'a causality or a linearity', as a 'closed circuit which goes from the present to the past, then leads us back to the present' (2005b: 49). This kind of flashback 'is like a sign with the words: "watch out! recollection"' (2005b: 49). The dacha in Tarkovsky's films condenses a history within it, gathering together historical, cultural and spiritual forces with a particular intensity. Its persistent presence in Tarkovsky's films, as well as the objects that reoccur within it (lace curtains, embroidered clothing, glass containers, and the small objects that Tarkovsky associated with home) stamp his films with an authorial signature, in the sense that repeated motifs and themes make a film by Tarkovsky recognisable despite the input from the producer, the cameraman, or even the actors (see Wollen, 1972). It is in this sense of repeated motifs, which are saturated with cultural and historical meaning, that Tarkovsky talks about his way of making a 'Russian film', no matter which country he is working in.

That said, this idea is complicated in *Nostalghia*. In a variation of the translation trope, Gorchakov's reminiscences of his dacha are filmed in such a way that they suggest that the histories and memories encoded in the dacha have degraded and transformed in the process of intercultural displacement. To show this, Tarkovsky employed tinted black and white footage of the dacha to give the impression of sepia photographs. Turovskaya writes that such scenes lack the immediacy of life so striking in his previous films: 'this is not the family home of *Mirror*, unique and authentic; it is more an emblem extracted from that image, an icon of Russian life enshrined in the hero's imagination' (1989: 119). Images of the dacha have become abstracted, emblematic of Russian life, because it has a cultural meaning that does not sit comfortably in the new cultural context. Notably, Gorchakov carries around the key to his dacha, which Eugenia assumes is just another hotel key. The key carries within it a history of the dacha that does not translate for Eugenia. In such moments, the dacha becomes the centre of all

of Tarkovsky's anxieties about translation, of his national culture, even the objects and images that comprise his authorial signature (of which the dacha is one of the most important). The cultural history contained in the dacha decomposes when moved out of the security of its own country of origin. At stake in the presentation of the dacha in *Nostalghia* are the histories and memories that are lost or changed in the movement of displacement. The cross-cultural movement of the dacha seems to be the meaning of the final image of the film, where the lost home emerges from within the ruined cathedral at Galgano. Tarkovsky confesses in *Sculpting in Time* that this image has an element of metaphor: 'It is a constructed image which smacks of literariness: a model of the hero's state, of the division within him' (2010: 216). In this image, Tarkovsky questions whether this shift freezes a lost cultural experience in a fetishised form, or facilitates the ultimately de-fetishising process of cultural transformation. It is not clear which option he prefers, and the film ends with this ambiguous image.

**The Representation of Women**

In *Nostalghia* the kind of new thoughts enabled by the movement between cultures, and the implied possibility of transformation, is also explored in his treatment of the two women: Eugenia and Maria. The first, Eugenia, is a sexually liberated Renaissance portrait of female beauty, a living incarnation of Sandro Botticelli's paintings. The second category is the modest, calm Russian wife Maria, who inhabits the dacha of Gorchakov's memories. Eugenia's role is established early in the film when she enters the church to view Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* ('Our Lady in Childbirth').[82] The church sacristan contrasts her appearance negatively with the genuflections of the female participants of a fertility rite. This contrast is a reminder that Tarkovsky felt that women primarily serve to express an idea of home.[83] In his world view, the mother/wife is idealised as 'feminine', submissive, and compassionate, while the sexually active, provocative woman is vilified as a hysteric. There is certainly something faintly ridiculous about Eugenia. She trips and falls over her clothes in the hotel, takes on

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[82] Translation provided by Robert Bird (Bird 2008: 176).
[83] In an interview with Irena Brezna in an interview Tarkovsky claimed that 'the meaning of female love is self sacrifice', and stated that 'For me there is nothing more unpleasant than a woman with a big career' (Brezna 2006: 104-24).

the pose of a sprinter about to run, and launches herself up a flight of stairs, falling over her high heels. She is petulant, flamboyant, easily affronted, and unrestrained. She is portrayed as being spiritually lost, impulsive without aim.

The sexual politics of *Nostalghia* have proven controversial. From a psychoanalytic point of view, Žižek writes: 'Tarkovsky's universe is permeated by a barely concealed disgust for a provocative woman; to this figure, prone to hysterical incertitudes, he prefers the mother's assuring and stable presence' (1999). Such representations of women have led film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum to describe the sexual politics in *Nostalghia* as 'offensive' and 'Neanderthal' (Rosenbaum 1997). For Johnson and Petrie, living or present women are always problematic for Tarkovsky. Where their role is not to pro-create they appear to be a threat in his world:

> By idealizing women and focusing on their special power to offer emotional and physical comfort to the distraught and suffering heroes (Ivan's mother, Hari, Stalker's wife, Maria, Alexei's wife in memory and dream) and on their miraculous child-bearing ability – both unattainable to men – Tarkovsky does not allow women a normal range of thoughts and feelings. In his world (on the screen and off) women do not change, but are rather caught up in an emotional and physiological time warp, playing out their biologically programmed roles. (1994: 246).

Although the two women are never given any autonomy outside of Gorchakov's conflicting desire for them, certain images in *Nostalghia* suggest that there is more to their representation than these psycho-sexual readings reveal. The two women also personify the clash of culture and language that I have been discussing in this chapter so far. They are as much a part of the duality at the centre the film as the two colour schemes (tinted black and white for the flashbacks, and colour for the present), and the music dramaturgy (a single woman keening and the Verdi orchestra). Gorchakov's wife serves primarily as a cipher for the serene and dignified Russian past of her husband's imagination, while Eugenia's

faltering inability to believe, her liberated sexuality, fashionable style of clothes, and Renaissance beauty, are all aligned by the film with Italy and modernity.

Many of Gorchakov's half-dreams or fantasies are orientated around these two opposing archetypes of women. In one sequence, left alone in his room, Gorchakov opens the window to allow in the sound of the rain. He sits on the bed, then falls backwards as if exhausted, then seems to fall asleep. Just as lighting was used in *Stalker* to highlight the strange and the ambiguous, the room grows dark suddenly. A black dog emerges from the bathroom and settles down beside the bed, knocking over a glass to signal its physical - not hallucinatory - presence, and perhaps to suggest that not everything in this sequence is simply intangible dream or hallucination. The camera then tracks in close to Gorchakov's head, then cuts to a dream sequence or fantasy in which Eugenia and Maria seem to reconcile in an embrace. A cut to Eugenia's face, her hair tumbling down onto Gorchakov like a waterfall, accompanied by the sound of dripping water. Gorchakov clutches at the sheets in passion, then another cut to the two women embracing. Gorchakov then stands and walks away from the bed where his heavily pregnant wife lies. The room darkens until only she and the bed are lit as if suspended in the air, reminiscent of the levitation scene in *Mirror*.

Despite his own rumoured bisexuality (see Johnson and Petrie 1994: 17), Tarkovsky does not locate the erotic in the embrace of the two women, but rather in the encounter with Eugenia. This might suggest that in Tarkovsky's view of women, the wife cannot be both sexual and mother, so Eugenia appears to act as a surrogate so that Maria can be impregnated. Eugenia weeps throughout the sequence because, in Tarkovsky's world, her sexuality means that she can be neither spiritual nor motherly. In such a reading, the woman that cannot be conceived of in this sequence, and who remains un-representable in Tarkovsky's films more broadly, is a synthesis of both categories of maternal and sexual femininity. It seems as if there is an un-namable, un-thinkable, un-representable, 'excessive' woman who must be excluded so that the binary will function.

However, this scene cannot solely be understood within the negative parameters of lack. It is no accident that the embrace of the two women in *Nostalghia* duplicates a scene in Bergman's *Persona*

(1966). In *Persona*, Elizabeth (Liv Ullmann), an actress recovering from a severe emotional breakdown who has retreated into total muteness, is cared for by her nurse Alma (Bibi Andersson) at a remote cottage. Over the course of the film the two women exchange identities. Eugenia's dreamlike encounter with Gorchakov's wife reflects the caresses of Bergman's two female figures, insinuating, in this dream or fantasy at least, a mutual transformation. As Turovskaya suggests, an 'unthought' hovers at the edge of this sequence: 'an echo, a faint reflection of an alien culture' which ever so slightly 'changes nature and gives it an infinitesimal but tangible strangeness' (1989: 124). In such moments the two categories of woman, and the values and countries that they have been associated with, are pushed to the limit of what they can represent. They symbolise the creative potential of life to exceed what it currently is. For instance, Turovskaya speaks of the wife's appearance at the end of the sequence as a 'Russian Madonna' (1989: 124), echoing Eugenia's visit to the Madonna del Parto. The darkening of the room and the appearance of the dog is also suggestive of an experience that belongs to an otherworldly order of dreams and hallucination, anticipating the connection between thought and esoteric experience in Tarkovsky's next film, *The Sacrifice*.

Deleuze was interested in those moments that transgress or push at the edges of thought, and those artists who explore thought. In an interview with Raymond Bellour and François Ewald, reproduced in *Negotiations*, he said: 'I think there's an image of thought that changes a lot, that's changed a lot through history. By image of thought I don't mean its method but something deeper that's always taken for granted, a system of coordinates, dynamics, orientations: what it means to think, and to "orient oneself in thought"'(Deleuze 1995: 148). His writing on the subject is especially evocative when working in collaboration with Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, where they emphasise the strange and unsettling nature of such experiments: 'thought as such begins to exhibit snarls, squeals, stammers; it talks in tongues and screams, which leads it to create, or try to' (Deleuze and Guattari: 1994: 55). As Joshua Ramey argues, this emphasis on experimentation forms a kind of 'mantra' to Deleuze and Guattari's thought: a refrain underlying their work which 'suggests that there is much more at stake than mere metaphor in their description of thought as a "witch's flight"' (2012: 23).

So far, I have looked at how *Nostalghia* articulates the struggle between the already sayable and the new discourses introduced in the making of an intercultural film. The effects of exile and displacement and the associated problem of translation push at the limits of what can already be thought, because thought is not only an individual act but an engagement with the social and cultural memory. In the remainder of this chapter I take seriously Tarkovsky's 'esoteric' interests, and look at how his experimental spirituality imparts to his final films an eschatological ethos of some as-yet-unrealised and as-yet-uncomprehended form of life. Building on the work done in my last chapter on *Stalker*, and drawing on Ramey's work on Deleuze and hermeticism, I argue that Tarkovsky has in common with Deleuze a belief in the outside of thought, which he frames as an experience that takes place at a level of spiritual and physical ordeal. The overall aim of this chapter is to show that both his treatment of translation and culture in *Nostalghia*, and of religion and the occult in *The Sacrifice,* confirm the tendency of his late cinema to try to apprehend the limits of thought.

## The Spiritual Ordeal and the Outside of Thought

Tarkovsky often spoke about religion, and what he thought was meant by the term 'spirituality'. In an interview with Charles H. de Brantes for *France Catholique* in 1986, Tarkovsky confessed that his relationship with the church was necessarily complicated and shaped by his personal circumstances:

> I was formerly living in the USSR. I arrived in Italy, and now I live in France. Thus I unfortunately haven't had the opportunity to have a normal relationship with the church. If I go to Mass in Florence, the service is celebrated by a Greek, then by an Italian, but never by a Russian. It's the Orthodox church, but Greek Orthodox or something […] some relationships with the church demand a settled life, but I feel a little like someone underneath the debris after a bombardment. (de Brantes 2006: 185)

Tarkovsky told another interviewer, 'I consider myself a person of faith, but I do not want to delve

into the nuances and problems of my situation, for it is not so straightforward, not so simple, and not so unambiguous' (Ishimov and Shejko 2006: 153). Tarkovsky's cinema does not depict Christ or God, but it does show a world where his characters encounter miracles, visions, hallucinations, and where he tries to depict the movement of invisible presences through gusts of wind and the movement of inanimate objects (as discussed in chapter 3). Tarkovsky's translator Layla Alexander-Garret records his interest in anthroposophy (a spiritual philosophy, mainly developed by Rudolf Steiner), numerology, mediums, and prophecy. She records that Tarkovsky recounted to her the story of a Moscow séance in which he had seen the ghost of Boris Pasternak, who had predicted that he would only make seven films (Alexander-Garrett 2012: Sunday, 30th September). Recall also Tarkovsky's belief in UFOs, and his statement about the girl in *Stalker*: 'I expect something like that […] to happen at any time' (Strick 2006: 72).

The characters Domenico and Gorchakov each display a strange kind of faith that is consistent with Tarkovsky's own beliefs; a mixture of the Christian Orthodox and the esoteric. In order to save everyone from disaster, Domenico asks Gorchakov to carry a lit candle across St. Catherine's pool. Domenico cannot do it himself because people keep pulling him out of the pool. After asking Eugenia to translate some of the words used by the villagers to describe Domenico, Gorchakov rationalises, 'He's not mad. He has faith'. Later, Domenico sets fire to himself in front of a lethargic audience in Rome's Piazza del Campidoglio.[84] The Christian ethos behind such a sacrifice was made clear in an earlier sequence when Domenico offers Gorchakov bread and wine in an unambiguous reference to the Christian Eucharist. However, as Alina Birzache notes in her analysis of *Nostalghia* in *Religion in Contemporary European Cinema* (2014), the figure of the holy fool is here redefined and used to signify religion beyond the institutional boundaries of the official church: 'Domenico is represented as a lay person who takes upon himself a divine mission prompted by what he considers to be apocalyptical signs' (Birzache 2014: 39). When Gorchakov walks across the length of the pool holding a candle, he measures the length of the space, footstep by footstep, holding a burning candle. Tarkovsky indicates

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[84] Tarkovsky had this particular scenario in his mind for some time. In a diary entry from September 1970 he wrote 'Thank God for people who burn themselves alive in front of an impassive, wordless crowd' (Tarkovsky 1994: 16-17)

time and space by their old measures, candle and foot. There is something ritualistic, even occult, about this sequence, despite the location's Christian associations.[85]

Throughout *The Sacrifice* Tarkovsky uses quotations from Christian art and music. The opening and closing scene is accompanied by the aria *Erbarne dich* from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*:

> Have mercy, my God,
>
> because of my tears
>
> see here, heart and eyes
>
> weep bitterly for you.[86]

In the opening scene this aria accompanies images of Leonardo da Vinci's painting *The Adoration of the Magi*. The camera remains fixed on the Madonna while the credits roll, but then pans up to the tree that shades the virgin and child as she receives gifts from the Magi. Leonardo's tree finds its counterpart when Alexander and his son Little Man prop up a dead tree with stones by the water's edge. In this sequence Alexander recites to his son the opening of the Gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the Word'. Alexander also tells Little Man the legend of Ioann Kolov, pupil of an Orthodox monk named Pamve, who was ordered by his master to climb a mountain every day to water a dead tree that he had planted, until the tree came back to life, which, after three years, it did. Little Man will be seen watering this tree at the end of the film, in the hope that it comes back to life. This is a faith expressed through ritualistic devotion, just like Gorchakov's passage across the pool. What matters is not the objective reality of the dead tree, but Alexander and Little Man's readiness to persist in watering it. Alexander also insists that the world could be changed if a person repeated the exact same action every day, at the same time, like filling a glass of water and pouring it down the toilet.

Ritual, Christian or otherwise, is an important theme in these final films. When Eugenia enters a

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[85] St Catherine is meant to have visited the hot springs, making the pool a shrine, or place of pilgrimage.

[86] The piece that Tarkovsky uses was sung by Julia Hamari, and is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPAiH9XhTHc, accessed 19/8/15.

church and asks what the ritual of the Madonna is supposed to achieve, she is told 'anything you like' by the sacristan. As in *Stalker,* the act of faith is more important than the substance of that faith. This is something that Tarkovsky wrote of in *Sculpting in Time*:

I am interested above all in the character who is capable of sacrificing himself and his way of life – regardless of whether that sacrifice is made in the name of spiritual values, or for the sake of someone else, or of his own salvation, or of all of these things together. Such behaviour precludes, by its very nature, all of those selfish interests that make up a 'normal' rationale for action; it refutes the laws of a materialistic worldview. It is often absurd and unpractical. And yet – or indeed for that very reason – the man who acts in this way brings about fundamental changes in people's lives and in the course of history. The space he lives in becomes a rare, distinctive point of contrast to the empirical concepts of our experience, an area where reality – I would say – is all the more strongly present. (2010: 217)

In 'The Thing from Inner Space', Žižek finds this aspect of Tarkovsky's faith troubling, arguing that unconditional faith is ethically suspect:

Does the need of [sic] unconditional Faith, its redemptive power, not lead to a typically modern result, to the decisionist act of formal Faith indifferent towards its particular content, i.e. to a kind of religious counterpoint of Schmittean political decisionism in which the fact THAT we believe takes precedence over WHAT we believe in? (Žižek 1999).

However, Tarkovsky's faith is the kind that rediscovers the world, so as to give birth to new modes of existence. As I have argued in the last chapter, his cinema involves a re-consideration of human capability through a 'Catholic' - not necessarily religious - faith. As Deleuze summarises in the conclusion to *The Time Image*, the first factor of this is the break of the sensory-motor link, and the

occurrence of situations to which characters can no longer act. This, as Deleuze puts it, means that the film is no longer about 'what are we going to see in the next image?' but, 'what is there to see in the image?' (the image is cut off from its extensions into action, and is now important only for itself) (2005b: 261). Without these extensions into action to orientate them, time and space in this cinema are knocked out of joint: 'space muddles its directions, its orientations and loses all primacy of the vertical axis that could determine them' (2005b: 255). This is a convincing rationale for the many distortions of time and space in *Nostalghia*, notably the model landscape in Domenico's house that plays with perspective, making it seems as if a Russian landscape is embedded within the small room, and then the remarkable long take in which Gorchakov impossibly appears in two places within an unbroken sequence of time, as if the single long take contained two temporal moments. Drawing on Nietzsche, the idea of 'truth' is also compromised, that is, modern cinema does not judge the world from the perspective of a particular idea like the American dream or Socialism. The task of this modern upended cinema, Deleuze continues, is to create a 'spiritual automaton' who thinks instead of acting, whose passivity can be transformed into a creative receptivity that restores our faith in the world. Or to put it another way, to create links with the world that are more complex and flexible than habit and memory allow.[87] Like Tarkovsky, Deleuze recognised that there was something of the holy fool's absurdity in this: 'we need an ethic or a faith, which makes fools laugh' (2005b: 167).

As Ramey points out, Deleuze often suggests that thought itself also requires a kind of conversion or ordeal:

Crucial to the hermetic tradition, and why Deleuze can be placed within it, is the connection Hermes makes of thought to spiritual ordeals: metaphysical insight is gained on the basis of mantic, transformative, and initiatory processes that develop the human capacity to sustain the modes of existence that correspond to otherwise hidden potentials for individual regeneration and cosmic renewal. (Ramey 2012: 26)

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[87] I refer here to the 'habit-memory' of Bergson's *Matter and Memory*.

For Ramey, Deleuze is a contemporary avatar or guide of experimental spirituality. This entails a reconsideration of the boundaries of his thought, unsettling the rigid opposition between modern philosophy and esoteric, let alone 'occult', traditions. Ramey's broader point in making this claim is that the spiritual or 'unthinkable' in Deleuze's work emerges from his appropriation of modern philosophers such as Leibniz, Hume, and especially Spinoza:

> From Deleuze's perspective, modern thought was inspired by certain unthinkable notion[s] of the infinite, of the absolute, and of God, and the analytical rigour of modern philosophy belies an inherently experimental character that should not so quickly be presumed separable from affective and even distinctly spiritual modes of apprehension. (Ramey 2012: 11).

Following Spinoza, Deleuze takes the idea of the infinite as a provocation that invites philosophy to think in ways that are not hierarchical and analogical. Ramey argues that a series of premodern thinkers were similarly engaged within Neoplatonism and Christianity - John Scotus Eriugena, Nicholas of Cusa, Pico della Mirandola, and Giordano Bruno (Ramey 2012: 33). In order to fully comprehend the nature of Deleuze's thought, Ramey argues that these pre-Spinozistic, late-Neoplatonic figures are 'dark precursors' to Deleuze's work, and that it is necessary to look more closely at the roots of his work within this 'minor tradition' (Ramey 2012: 37).

From this perspective, Deleuze's philosophy is one of potential transformations and metamorphosis, concepts which repeat the interests of esoteric traditions. Belief, for Deleuze, also depends on a kind of initiatory ordeal or transformative encounter. Such an ordeal transpires through mantic, initiatory, ascetic, and transformative practices that challenge the 'coordination of the faculties' by 'rending the self from its habits' (Ramey, 2012: 2). In the same way, there is a hermetic strand in Tarkovsky's response to the social and political forces of the moment that pre-occupied him: 'In the face of disaster on that global scale, the one issue that has to be raised, it seems to me, is the question

of a man's personal responsibility, and his willingness for sacrifice' (Tarkovsky 2010: 234). This theme of apocalypse first appears in a diary entry in April 1979, in which Tarkovsky records that he and Tonino Guerra had an idea for a screenplay called 'The End of the World':

> A man incarcerates himself and his family (father, mother, daughter and son) in his house, because he is expecting the end of the world. The wife has another son. The father is a religious man. They spend some forty years shut up together. In the end they are taken away by the police and ambulance service, who somehow found out about their existence. They are in an appalling state. The elder son tells his father that it was a crime to have hidden the real world from him for so many years. When they are taken away the little boy looks around him and asks, "Dad, is it the end of the world?"(1994: 180)

Three days later, Tarkovsky writes that American doctors are on their way to the Soviet Union to treat Brezhnev for brain tumours: 'My God! What happens when he dies? What will take over? Where shall we be heading? God only knows. Only one thing is for certain, and that is that it won't get any better, in fact it can only be worse' (1994: 180). On January 26th, 1980 he writes 'protests are being lodged all over the world. The U.S. Are mobilising. So are we', (1994: 229), then in February: 'These are uncertain times, nothing is stable. What lies ahead? What lies ahead for Russia? Lord save us...' (1994: 234). The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had begun on December 24th 1979, leading to an international outcry, culminating in an embargo on grain imports and a boycott by sixty-four countries of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. In the same year, the United States stationed medium-range missiles in additional NATO nations, including West Germany, adding to the tension between East and West. These circumstances find their expression in both *Nostalghia*, in the undefined sense of imminent disaster, and more concretely in the jet planes and radio broadcasts of *The Sacrifice*. Alexander, at the prodding of his friend Otto, sleeps with a local witch named Maria, and war is miraculously avoided (though the film is unclear on whether or not the threat was real or only in Alexander's head). In an interview with

Mackinnon in 1984, he spoke of his treatment of nuclear war and the Apocalypse as representing the loss of spiritual faith, which is averted by the absurd acts of faith of his characters: "'I am talking about a spiritual crisis: the lack of spirituality in the world needs to be opposed and so the Apocalypse itself is, so to speak, creating a spiritual balance...'" By its imminance? "Yes," Tarkovsky replied emphatically, smiling all the while' (2006: 160). And in another interview: 'Spiritually man is not ready to survive his bombs' (Johnson 2006: 177).

There is, in these later films, a progression towards spiritual activity, dedication, and belief which transcends institutionalised Christianity, which Tarkovsky turns to in response to unsettling political events and the personal experience of moving between one culture and another. There is also a concurrent turn to the absurd in these late films because, like Deleuze, he realised that a kind of indetermination and nonsense are required for thought: 'It is this belief that makes the unthought the specific power of thought, through the absurd, by virtue of the absurd' (Deleuze 2005b: 164). In Tarkovsky's films, these characters enact an encounter with thought, which is conceived in occult or religious terms. They are able to act, unlike the seers of his previous films, but their actions are absurd and senseless. There is little dignity or sense to either Gocharkov or Alexander's ritual actions, especially the almost slapstick quality of Erland Josephson's entrances and exits around the ambulance as Alexander's house burns. This 'holy foolery' resonates with the visionary status of the seer, but the holy fool's absurd actions could also be considered as a fitting persona to signpost the transition from Bergsonian concepts to a Nietzschean ethics (the powers of the false) and concern with belief, that dominates both the latter half of both Deleuze's cinema books and Tarkovsky's late films. This shared trajectory could be because Tarkovsky's final film shared the same dark precursors as Deleuze's work. I have already mentioned his interest in anthroposophy, numerology, mediums, and prophecy, but intriguingly, he considered changing the name of the film from *The Sacrifice* to *The Eternal Return*, drawing on a tradition shared by the Pythagoreans, Stoics, Buddhists, Nietzsche, and Deleuze. Meeting Alexander and his son, Otto gets off his bicycle and the two men discuss Nietzsche and the nature of

belief, with Otto commenting, 'If I truly believe, it will be so'.[88] Tarkovsky, like Deleuze, takes from Nietzsche an ethics that involves the extension of the parameters of what a person is able to do.

### Thought and the Long Take

This progression towards religious - not necessarily Christian - belief is concurrent with another change in Tarkovsky's approach. The two sacrifices or ordeals - Gorchakov's crossing, and the burning of Alexander's house - are unusually long segments of uninterrupted time. There is a progression, from film to film, in which the length of his takes dramatically increases, culminating in the very long takes in *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice*. Johnson and Petrie point out that only one shot in *Ivan's Childhood* lasts as long as 2 minutes, and where *Mirror*'s average shot length is approximately 30 seconds ('with very very few individual shots over 2 minutes'), *Stalker* is well over a minute ('with takes of 2 minutes so frequent as to be almost unnoticeable'). *Stalker*'s longest shot (a 410 second shot) exceeds his previous best set in *Solaris*, by almost 3 minutes. There are even longer shots in *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice*. Gorchakov's crossing of the drained pool at Bagno Vignoni in the finale of *Nostalghia* is 8 minutes 45 seconds long (Johnson and Petrie 1994: 194-5). Tarkovsky described the scene of Gorchakov's crossing as 'display[ing] an entire human life in one shot, without any editing, from beginning to end, from birth to the very moment of death' (quoted in Bird 2010: 192). The first, pre-credit shot of *The Sacrifice* is the longest of Tarkovsky's career, running for 9 minutes 26 seconds, but the outstanding shot of the film is the 6 minute 50 take of the burning house at the conclusion of the film, which Tarkovsky insisted on shooting in one take, with one camera carrying out the complicated camera movements that follow Erland Josephson. Half way through this shot the camera began to lose speed and had to be replaced. Though the shot was completed, it didn't have the single continuous movement that Tarkovsky wanted. His distress was so evident, the cast and crew arranged for the exterior of the house to be re-built, and

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[88] For a discussion of Deleuze's interpretation of difference in the eternal return see Deleuze (2005), Winchester (1994), and Spinks (2005: 82-85).

the scene was re-shot two weeks later. (Johnson and Petrie: 1994: 179).[89]

This episode underlines the importance of sustained camera movement and time to Tarkovsky's cinema. As I have made clear throughout this thesis, the long take was central to his theory of film, as it is expressed most fully in *Sculpting in Time*. Characteristic of his discussions of time in cinema is a refusal to form a narrative using the logic and laws of familiar editing techniques. Rather than building a sequence from two or more shots cut together at certain time intervals, with or without sound transitioning across the cut, Tarkovsky has absolute confidence in being able to build an atmosphere, to put across hurry or slowness, and to pass from one place to another, without the use of montage.[90] The use of shots of long duration and of shooting depth, characteristic of Tarkovsky's cinema, are often combined with metaphysical reflection on their impact on the viewer. He spoke of the effect that the long take has: 'If you extend the normal length of a shot, first you get bored; but if you extend it further still you become interested in it; and if you extend it even more a new quality, a new intensity of attention is born' (quoted in Bird 2010: 197). This 'new intensity of attention' means that once the shot is emancipated from action, new connections and new circuits are connected (with the past, for example, as discussed in Chapter 2). Bird comes close to this when he writes that Tarkovsky 'invests (or 'infects') the material world with an atmosphere of potentiality' (2010: 211). Long takes and depth of field in Tarkovsky's films have the effect of forcing the viewer to conceive of the images shown on screen in a way that is not determined by the sensori-motor schema. They show the world as it is, in its full potential. In Bogue's words:

> The world as bad film is the world of clichés, of deceived opinion (*doxa*), of that which goes
>
> without saying, of static forms and institutions, of intractable facts and inevitable results - in
>
> short, a tired world devoid of possibilities. What the great modern directors restore to it is a

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[89] Some of this is documented in *One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich*, filmed by French filmmaker and multimedia artist Chris Marker. Marker also filmed Tarkovsky's reunion with his mother-in-law and son Andrioushka, who had finally been granted visas to join Tarkovsky and his wife in Paris.

[90] He doesn't stick to this dogmatically; there are instances where he slows down and speeds up a sequence by increasing or reducing the frame rate. Also, he does zoom in within these long sequences, which is, in a way, a form of montage that isolates a space or moment within a sequence. However, the point remains true that montage is subordinate to the passage of time in these long takes.

world within which something new can emerge [...] they affirm the creative potential immanent within the real and thereby exhibit a belief in this world (Bogue 2007: 10)

The long takes of Tarkovsky's films invoke the state of the pious man, challenged to construe that which cannot be comprehended, transforming the world into an object of 'belief'. 'What we need most is a belief in the world', Deleuze said in conversation with Toni Negri, 'we've quite lost the world, it's been taken from us. If you believe in the world you precipitate events, you engender new space-times, however small their surface or volume. It's what you call *Pietas'* (Deleuze 1995: 176). This term *pietas* is translated variously as 'duty', 'religiosity' or 'religious behaviour'. Deleuze's use of it links back to his discussion of cinema's special relationship with belief, and the 'Catholic quality' of modern cinema. Deleuze turns to the terms of religious faith to describe those moments where the mind is exposed to unforeseeable dimensions of thought. On this connection to spiritual or religious faith, Ramey writes:

> The problem is not how to distinguish the religious as opposed to the irreligious, the pious from the impious, but rather to discern the effects of different practices of belief. As Deleuze will put it in *Cinema II*, the criteria of belief in the modern era is not whether it is in the right object, but whether it produces the right effect – whether, that is to say, it renews our belief in the world by expanding our receptivity against the deadening effects of habit and the quest for control. (2012: 13)

The unlinking of the sensori-motor schema is a leap towards belief 'in this world'. Tarkovsky's film's turn to the transcendent is not other-worldly in the sense that Peter Hallward means when, drawing on Badiou's *Deleuze: The Clamour of Being* (2000), he claims that Deleuze's philosophy privileges aristocratic and isolated visionaries whose abstract or virtual power attempts to escape the actual world, rather than change it: 'Deleuze's philosophy is orientated by lines of flight that lead out of the world; though not other-worldly, it is extra-worldly' (Hallward 2006: 3). Hallward tells us that a philosophy based on lines

of flight is indifferent to the world of individuals, classes, and principles (2006: 162), and that the higher exercise of thought, exemplified by the spiritual automaton, is stripped of its capacities for action (2006: 138). In short, Hallward states that Deleuze's work is devoid of politics.[91] Ramey reminds us that for Deleuze, the task of modern philosophy is to rediscover a mode of existence that is not defined by the parameters of arborescent thought.[92] He writes that Deleuze attempts to indicate the contours of 'a renewed spirituality of thought and a new vision of the mutual intercalation of material and spiritual forces [as] part of an attempt to fulfil the task of philosophy in late capitalism, a task Deleuze himself characterized as the renewal of "belief in the world"' (Ramey 2012: 8). In *What is Philosophy*, Deleuze and Guattari recapitulate this point. They argue: 'it may be that living in this world, in this life, becomes our most difficult task, or the task of a mode of existence still to be discovered or our plane of immanence today' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 75). By looking at Tarkovsky's relationship with religion and belief I have argued that his films support a Nietzchean ethics that involves the extension of the parameters of what a person is able to do.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I analysed Tarkovsky's final films, *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice*, in their historical, biographical, and production context. Taking into account *Nostalghia*'s intercultural production, and considerations of national identity specific to the Soviet Union, I argued that this film explores the new kind of thought that takes place at the border of two cultures through its portrayal of translation, the roles of Maria and Eugenia, and the transformation of the summertime dacha. It is to a large degree the production and biographical context which determines the extent to which the film uses these themes to illustrate a fluxing state of national identity, and the associated shifts in the parameters of human capacities for thought, affect, and agency. I also explored Tarkovsky's interest in religion and the occult in his final film, *The Sacrifice,* and argued that his treatment of religion and the occult in relation

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[91] A version of this argument appears in my review of Ramey's *The Hermetic Deleuze* (Powell-Jones 2014).
[92] Arborescent is a term used by the Deleuze and Guattari to characterize thinking marked by binaries and hiarchies of knowledge and rationality that imprison thought. See 'Introduction: Rhizome' in *A Thousand Plateaux* (2004b: 3-29).

to nuclear threat is not incompatible with the inherently experimental character of Deleuze's philosophy. I have argued that both Deleuze and Tarkovsky are thinkers that can be placed within the hermetic tradition on the basis of their apprehension that we live in a world whose ultimate structure cannot be realised, but whose uncanny (even foolish) attributes inspires unforeseen dimensions of thought. Tarkovsky's time-images are a part of what Deleuze describes as a movement into the unthought, defining themselves through their reflection of an unsummonable, inexplicable, undecidable, incommensurable outside. Even though Tarkovsky's cinema has lost the belief in its own 'action-image', these late films affirm choice to trust in the possibilities of the unpredictable and unknowable. Freedom from the motor-unity coordination of the Socialist Realist movement-image opens up new dimensions of thought, which Tarkovsky explores in terms of religious and esoteric experiences.

# Conclusion

This thesis is the first sustained encounter between Tarkovsky's seven feature films and Deleuze's writing on cinema. Engaging with the history of pre- and post-war Soviet cinema, this study has shown the historical shifts that Tarkovsky's films negotiated across his career both within and outside of the Soviet Union. As a result of this broader perspective, I have been able to directly attribute Tarkovsky's time-images to the specific national contexts from which each film emerged. In this way, the historical context of Tarkovsky's seven films is brought to bear on Deleuze's theory, accommodating a more localised, national context than he undertook in his own readings of *Mirror*, *Solaris*, and *Stalker*.

I began this thesis with a discussion of the usefulness of Deleuze's theory in film studies. Along with Rodowick and Colman, I argued that Deleuze's historical approach to cinema should partly be attributed to the legacy of the *Cahiers'* critical line (Coleman 2011: 4; Rodowick 2003: xii-xiii). I also suggested that the Deleuzian scholar must be both philosopher and cinephile to read the cinema books, and that there was a reluctance to really engage with his use of Anglophone film theory in Deleuze studies up until the late 1990s, 2000s. As I explained, in the context of a shift in pedagogic focus in film studies towards a neoformalist attention to film form and historical research, and the turn away from 'pure theory' that happened even as Deleuze published his cinema books, many of Deleuze's points demanded further investigation from a film studies perspective. This is especially true of the historical role of the Second World War in the crisis of the action-image, as he describes it, and the limitations of his focus on mostly Western European cinema. That the time-image exists in Ozu's films before the war, for example, demonstrates the need for a re-appraisal of Deleuze's positioning of the Second World War as the dividing line between movement-image and time-image.

If the cinema books are to have an ongoing role in film studies, then there is a need for Deleuzian analysis to use more context specific analysis than Deleuze undertook. As Martin-Jones has argued, 'it is no longer enough to 'simply posit the time-image as the European other of the American movement image' (2006: 223). This is the challenge being addressed by an ever growing catalogue of books within Deleuze studies. Work on Deleuze and cinema is also increasingly turning to film histories

and cinemas that Deleuze either neglected, or which did not exist at the time he was writing. Such a turn has not only questioned the central importance of the Second World War in the development of the time-image, it has also explored the continued existence of movement-image films in different contexts. My work falls within this area of study. I have argued that while early Soviet cinema is well represented in the cinema books, especially Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko and Romm, the passage from montage to the time-images of Tarkovsky in the post-war Soviet state is side-stepped. Deleuze might have had a broad knowledge of the notable directors from the Italian neorealism of the late 1940s and early 1950s, the French new wave (*nouvelle vague*) that blossomed for a brief period between 1959 and 1963, and the New German cinema between the 1960s and early 1980s, but Tarkovsky is the only member of the Soviet Thaw new wave analysed in the cinema books. Deleuze's description of Tarkovsky's crystal-images in *The Time Image* is especially problematic because his films are treated in isolation from the rest of contemporary Soviet cinema, while the shift from Eisenstein's montage to the experimentation of a film like *Mirror* goes unexplained except as a representative of changes to a totality of 'cinema'. This is a 'cinema' which only encompasses the dominant Western cinemas of America and Europe, with a few exceptions from outside the West (i.e. Ozu, Kurosawa, and Rocha), as opposed to the myriad actually existing 'cinemas' (Martin-Jones 2011: 5). My aim has been to offer an extended and original analysis of Tarkovsky's cinema through a Deleuzian approach, but in order to do this I needed to re-conceive Deleuze's conclusions about the shift from classical to modern cinema within the context of Soviet cinema. A more localised, detailed history of Soviet cinema and its social, cultural, and political context was needed to map the emergence of time-images in Soviet cinema.

By addressing the Soviet crisis of the action image in its historical context, what I have found to be remarkable about the history of Soviet cinema is that the action-image was a forced aesthetic, imposed by the strictures of Socialist Realism. I have argued that it was weakened and brought to a crisis in the context of Khruschev's de-Stalinisation, which revived stylistic experimentation after the film famine of the last years of Stalinist rule. As I explained in Chapter 1, the anti-monumentalism and understatement typical of the so-called Khrushchev 'Thaw' cinema of the 50s and 60s was made possible partly by political change, but was also a consequence of the Socialist Realist template's

inability to express the post-war situation. Unlike the Socialist Realist aesthetic of Soviet films in previous decades (life as it 'should be' rather than how it actually appeared), the loosening of ideological control stimulated explorations of difficult themes of the contemporary moment, such as the changing role of women and the existence of veterans following the upheaval of the Second Word War. Tarkovsky's ideas about cinema were formed in this very specific historical context, under the influence of Thaw films and filmmakers.

This history of the Thaw informed my reading of Tarkovsky's first two films: *Ivan's Childhood* and *Andrei Rublev*. The focus of my reading of both films was how the innovations of the Thaw challenged the action-images and characters of Socialist Realism, even during Leonid Brezhnev's period of 'Stagnation'. As part of this reading, I engaged with existing debates on the problem of the Second World War in Deleuze's cinema books, and argued that a broader consideration of political change, material changes in the film industry, and considerations of national identity specific to the post-Stalin era all inform the ways in which Tarkovsky's characters act (or rather, fail to act) as well as his treatment of narrative time. I argued that *Ivan's Childhood* unravels sensory-motor situations typical of Socialist Realism through its focus on moments of inactivity, and unsettles the Socialist Realist war film template by interrupting the hero's actions with flashbacks, dreams, and hallucinations. I then looked at the unconventional narrative structure and characterisation of the main protagonist of *Andrei Rublev* in the context of Stagnation. Released at a time of political change, *Andrei Rublev* emerged from the wake of the Thaw as a counterpoint to the Socialist agency of historical films like Bondarchuk's *War and Peace* and Ozerov's *Liberation*. Unlike the characters of Socialist Realism, whose actions were determined in relation to goal setting and means, Andrei is unable to move decisively. I have described him as a Deleuzian 'seer', unable to discern exactly how to move or organise his actions according to the sensori-motor schemata.

In Chapter 1 I explained that the cinema of the movement-image always entails an encompassing milieu of forces that determines the agency and means of an individual or individuals. I have argued that a milieu was established by Socialist Realism in terms of the ways in which its characters acted and the aims and consequences of their action. The Thaw brought this milieu into

question, but this does not mean that all of the components of the movement-image went away. I have argued that the action-image was revitalised by the Soviet space programme, especially the heroic, action orientated mythology of the Soviet cosmonaut. However, Tarkovsky's *Solaris* was released just as this mythology started to wane. I argued that this discord in the narrative of Socialist Realist cosmic socialism can be traced in his treatment of Kris and the iconography of the space age. Continuing this focus on the historical context of Tarkovsky's films, I also explored how the features of the time-images in *Mirror* negotiate a complex and shifting Soviet history, taking the temporality of memory as its model as it explores many of the memorable crossroads of Soviet life, as well as the private reminiscences of Tarkovsky and his family. In both films the action-form encounters a crisis, and with this loosening of the sensori-motor system the characters encounter time in its full force: what Deleuze described as a 'crystal-image'. Escaping the narrative structure and character types of Socialist Realism, these films gave visual expression to this crisis through characters and fragmented narrative structures that de-emphasise the sensori-motor function of the movement-image in favour of the temporality of the time-image.

I have argued that Tarkovsky's early films are structured around the loss of faith in the agency of their characters, which finds visual expression in the narrative structure of each film. I have also suggested that his later films are marked by a turn towards alternative belief structures. Tarkovsky's interest in both religion and other, less orthodox forms of belief led him to explore shifts in the parameters of human capacities for thought, affect, and agency. This is where the strength of Deleuze's enquiry into cinema really comes into play, especially the Nietzschean latter half of *The Time Image*. I made this argument in Chapter 3, in which I demonstrated that Tarkovsky had in common with Eisenstein a belief in the utopian promise of cinema's ability to intervene in the very brain of a human being, but that *Stalker* reflects a loss of belief in the power of revolutionary or Socialist Realist cinema, and turns to alternative belief systems. I described this belief in terms of its 'Catholic quality', drawing on Deleuze's use of the term in *The Time Image*. This Catholic quality refers to the way in which belief in something like the Christian God determines a mode of existence, but might also open

up new ways of thinking about the world: 'a cult which takes over the circuit of the cathedrals' (Deleuze 2005b: 195). To believe in the Zone, as the Stalker asks of the Writer and the Scientist, opens up and transforms thought.

Building on the concepts introduced in Chapter 3, in Chapter 4 I argued that Tarkovsky's final films are about the limits of what can be thought, while also enquiring into the nature of belief in the new kind of thought that takes place at these limits. Tarkovsky's interest in belief and modes of spirituality in *Stalker* are part of his broader belief in as-yet-uncomprehended, as-yet-unrealised modes of thought. This interest in the unthought of thought becomes especially important in his final two films, *Nostalghia* and *The Sacrifice* as Tarkovsky's relationship with spirituality and belief was consolidated in the context of the Cold War and his planned and eventual defection. Reflecting on the conditions of its own production, as well as Tarkovsky's planned defection, *Nostalghia* explores the new kind of thought that takes place at the border between two cultures, while *The Sacrifice* explores the role of Christian and occult spirituality in the re-consideration of human capability. Images of the end of the world in both films are symbolic of an encounter with the unknown, and how such encounters extend the potentiality of thought's growth and development. My aim has been to show that these late films are about the creative potential of life to exceed what it currently is. Such films are not concerned with the presence of bodies and their actions, but underplay the mapping of space in terms of location, action in terms of doing, time in terms of getting things done. Where Socialist Realism dictated the conditions of possible experience, Tarkovsky's films embraced the transformative potential of reality in its diversity and concrete (actual) particulars, freeing the cinema image from the universals that governed Soviet cinema of the action-image. This is precisely what Deleuze meant when he wrote about restoring 'belief in the world'. In my account of Soviet cinema, the Thaw made room for such films, even as many of the components of the movement-image persisted in the popular Soviet cinema.

Deleuze's methodology for analysing film and Tarkovsky's cinema have been brought into dialogue in this thesis in an attempt to problematise and expand the understanding of both. Retaining a

historically grounded approach to Tarkovsky's cinema that reflects the methodological mainstream of film studies, this thesis has used Deleuze's ideas to provide another lens through which to view Tarkovsky's films. It has added an additional dimension to the rapidly expanding body of work on Deleuze and cinema by approaching the crisis of the action-image from the perspective of post-war Soviet cinema. One further aim of this thesis was to set out a methodological approach to a single author study using Deleuze's cinema philosophy alongside historically grounded analyses. Future research could use this method to look at other individual filmmakers that Deleuze did not write about, in contexts that he was not familiar with. My own inclination would be to revisit the great filmmakers that Deleuze did discuss in the cinema books, and re-invigorate his readings through full-length studies of their work. For example, Deleuze credits Ozu with the discovery or invention of the time-image. Ozu's pre-war films are absent from *The Movement-Image*, and as Martin-Jones observes, Deleuze 'gives the impression of considering Ozu as an unexplained, isolated precursor to the post-war European shift in thought marked by the time-image' (2011: 205). That he does not discuss Asian cinemas beyond this passing observation has already been addressed by Martin-Jones and David H. Fleming in their collection of articles, *Deleuze and Chinese Cinemas* (2014), but I would like to see the constructive impact on Deleuze's ideas that a closer engagement with Deleuze and Ozu would have. Alternatively, a single author study of Deleuze and Lumet, Lean, Cassavetes, or Scorsese, in the context of his broader engagement with American cinema and the crisis of the American dream, would offer a new perspective on the crisis of the action-image. Building on the work on Soviet cinema that I have done in this thesis, a closer consideration of Deleuze's comments on Soviet filmmaker Mikhail Romm would also be informative. Romm's early films were aggressively propagandistic, especially his political films, which leads Deleuze to group him with the movement-images of Vertov, Eisenstein, Dovzhenko and Pudovkin. However, in his role as a VGIK professor Romm's workshop was a cradle of numerous post-war cinematic talents, including Andrei Konchalovsky, Tarkovsky, and Larisa Shepitko. His 1961 film, *Nine Days of One Year*, was a beacon of the Thaw. Romm's position as a precursor to the post-war shift has not been covered in the present study but is worth further study. A single author study of Eisenstein using Deleuze would also be an interesting project to undertake, given the importance of his

cinema to Deleuze's description of the movement-image. As my own thesis has focused predominantly on Russian films made during the Soviet era, a collection of articles that use Deleuze to look at the particularities of national cinematographies within Soviet cinema would also be a valuable addition to the existing body of work on Deleuze and cinema, as we do not know what further challenges, developments, and reinterpretations these films might offer to Deleuze's concepts. The aim of such an approach would be to test whether Deleuze's work on cinema can carry the weight of film history, and to see how his concepts are formed, deformed, and reformed in the shifting space between film theory and philosophy.

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