kind of freedom it promises or for their maintaining by isolating an impossible
dream (the perfect workers' state), or is it an indictment of the bad faith of these
trespassers, squabbling idealists and intellectuals who are unable to reconcile
themselves with a different (Stalinist?) ideal.

Tarkovsky, perhaps, is able to continue working because his 'dissent' is such a
multilayered angst. As in his previous films, the imagery of Stalker crosses
Western influences with Russian epiphanies, cultural whimsicalities with
personal mysteries. Solaris incorporated rather than challenged 2001, and one
scene here - a woman in fur, a sleek black sports car, and behind the grey
unfocused geometry of another depressing industrial view - is evocative of
nothing so much as the ennui of Antoniom. But what, in the end, signals the
more rigorous nature of Stalker is that the vaguely humanist saving graces of the
other films have shrivelled to no more than a few notations: in particular, the
brief, barely audible strains of some popular classics - the 'Ode to Joy' and
(perhaps) the 'Bolero' - that counterpoint the clatter of trains passing by.

Richard Combs, Monthly Film Bulletin, January 1981

Ian Christie is a film historian, curator, broadcaster and consultant. He has
written and edited books on Powell and Pressburger, Russian cinema, Scorcese
and Gilliam; and worked on exhibitions ranging from Film as Film (Hayward,
1979), Eisenstein. His Life and Art (MoMA Oxford, 1988; Hayward, 1989) and
Twilight of the Tsars (Hayward, 1991) to Spellbound (Hayward, 1996) and Modernism:
Designing a New World (V&A, 2006). During the 1980s and 90s, he programmed
a number of Russian film seasons and events, interviewing Tarkovsky at the NFT
in 1981 and editing Maya Turovskaya’s pioneering study for UK publication in
1989. He has since worked on pre- and post-Soviet cinema, as well as on
Eisenstein. A Fellow of the British Academy, he is Professor of Film and Media
History at Birkbeck College, director of the London Screen Study Collection and
vice-president of Europa-Cinemas, of which he was a co-founder. His current
work includes studying the cultural impact of film in the digital era and the
history of production design.

Professor Anatol Lieven is chair of international relations and terrorism studies
at King’s College London, and a senior fellow of the New America Foundation in
Washington DC. He spent most of his career as a British journalist in South Asia
and the former Soviet Union, and is author of several books on the latter region,
including Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power? (Yale University Press 1998) and
Ukraine and Russia: A Fraternal Rivalry (USIP, 1999). His latest book, Ethical Realism: A
Vision for America’s Role in the World, co-authored with John Hulsman, was
published in September 2006 by Pantheon. His previous book was America Right
or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism (2004). He holds a BA in history and
a PhD in political science from the University of Cambridge. Anatol Lieven is
currently writing a book on Pakistan.

Evgeny Tsyymbal is a documentary filmmaker, writer and film historian.
Tsyymbal began his career at the Mosfilm Studios in Moscow in the 1970s where
he worked as an assistant director to Andrei Tarkovsky, Nikita Mikhalkov, Larisa
Shepitko and Eldar Ryazanov. Amongst others, Tsyymbal embarked on his own
directorial journey with a variety of short films, and achieved critical acclaim
with the BAFTA-winning short film Defence Council Sedov (1988), based on a real
story that happened in Stalin’s Russia and made in the style of the 1930s
documentary. He crossed over to documentary filmmaking, with works such as
In Memory: Alexander Kaistanovsky (1996), 1001 Stories about Cinema: Vladimir
Namenkov (1998) and the award-winning Stalker’s Dreams (1998). Recent works
include the documentary films Ordinary Bolshevism (1999) and Dziga and his
Brothers (2002). Tsyymbal also works as a scriptwriter, historian and critic.