

# A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE STATUE SCENE IN ANDREI TARKOVSKY'S NOSTALGHIA USING ROLAND BARTHES FIVE NARRATIVE CODES

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## Abstract

Andrei Tarkovsky is one of the most prominent directors in the world of movies. People recognize him for his poetic visual style and images that are out of this world. His Italian movie *Nostalghia* (1983) was a big step forward in his career. It was about exile, remembrance, and spirituality. The statue sequence is one of the most perplexing portions of the movie. It's when visual imagery, cultural symbolism, and metaphysical tension all come together. This study analyzed the situation through the lens of Roland Barthes's concept of the five narrative codes. The study utilized a qualitative research design and a close reading methodology to analyze visual composition, aural design, dialogue, and symbolic layering. We delineated and elucidated each of Barthes's narrative codes. The hermeneutic code revealed enigmas and narrative delays; the proairetic code illustrated gestures and movements that engendered anticipation; the semic code demonstrated how lighting, gestures, and auditory motifs could convey varied meanings; the symbolic code elucidated the interpretation of binary oppositions such as life/death and homeland/exile; and the cultural code contextualized the scene within broader intertextual frameworks, including Russian memory, and Italian artistic heritage. The findings confirmed that Barthes's framework effectively clarified the scene's complex structure while simultaneously revealing its limitations. It was hard to put some feelings into words, like quietness, stillness, and the materiality of stone. This is in line with Barthes's concept of opaque meaning and Tarkovsky's metaphysical aesthetics. The study found that the statue scene served as both a coded text and an emotive, spiritual tableau. These findings improve semiotic methods in Tarkovsky studies and show how important it is to combine structural and emotional interpretations when analyzing movies.

**Keywords:** Tarkovsky, *Nostalghia*, Barthes, semiotics, analysing films

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Andrei Tarkovsky is a well-known figure in the history of global cinema because of his unique lyrical cinematic language and highly spiritual vision (Johnson & Petrie, 1994; Bird, 2008). He directed the breakthrough movie *Nostalghia* (1983) in Italy. The movie is about spirituality, memory, and exile (Johnson, 2011; Green, 1993). People recognize Tarkovsky's style for its sluggish pace, extended shots, and pictures that are rich with significance. They work together to create an experience that goes beyond merely delivering a tale and connects people with big philosophical themes (Barker, 2009; Bird, 2008). Globan (2023) and Kononenko (2023) state that his movies, like *Nostalghia*, usually deal with spiritual and transcendent topics, frequently from the point of view of children. The screen also magically changes, and the motion has a melodic quality that does not generate any noise. The themes of home and memory are central to his work, and viewers often interpret them in a disturbing way (McFadden, 2012). The statue scene is a place where visual imagery, cultural symbolism, and metaphysical tension all come together. It is also one of the most confusing and conceptually dense passages of *Nostalghia* (Robinson, 2006). To comprehend the scene's many significations, a semiotic analysis is needed. Film scholars have widely used semiotic approaches to analyze ideological structures, narrative and lexical code application, and audience emotional resonance via visual imagery (Zaluczkowska, 2023; Senje, 2023; Xiao, 2024; Ventsel, 2025). Utilizing semiotics in cinema analysis allows for the examination of the film's connotative meanings and its valuation as a creative visual artifact (Plalamattom, 2024).

Roland Barthes's theory of the five narrative codes has been applied to a diverse array of cultural texts (Jamil, Mubashir, & Ahmad, 2024; Barthes, 1974; Putri & Inayah, 2022; Aminu, 2021; Durmuş, 2024), demonstrating the theory's versatility. These codes hermeneutic, proairetic, semic, symbolic, and cultural facilitate comprehension of meaning construction in narratives (Mullah, 2024; Booryazadeh, 2013). A number of cinematic studies have investigated the symbolic aspects of visual and narrative components by using Barthes's semiotic concepts, such as denotation, connotation, and myth; they include Khofifah (2025), Alifia (2024), Sawitri (2024), and Indriyani (2019). This research expands upon the theoretical framework by analyzing the statue scene in Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* using Barthes's notion of the five narrative codes (Barthes, 1974). The primary objectives are: (1) to examine the scene's structure and ascertain the function of each code (hermeneutic, proairetic, semic, symbolic, and cultural); (2) to identify the philosophical, cultural, and symbolic significances of the statue and contextualize them within prior methodologies in film semiotics (Bellour, 2000; Heath, 1975; Metz, 1971); and

(3) to introduce narrative semiotics into Tarkovsky scholarship, where semiotic interpretations have been notably underutilized despite the director's extensive symbolic heritage (Johnson & Petrie, 1994; Bird, 2008).

The principal research questions directing this investigation are:

1. **How do Roland Barthes's five narrative codes elucidate the semiotic and metaphysical aspects of the statue scene in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*?**
2. **In what manner does this analysis correlate with established theoretical frameworks in film semiotics and Tarkovsky's cinematic poetics?**

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research design

Roland Barthes's semiotic framework served as the primary analytical lens in this qualitative study (Barthes, 1974; Jamil, Mubashir, & Ahmad, 2024; Putri & Inayah, 2022; Durmuş, 2024). A thorough examination of the film was carried out, with a focus on the visual imagery, dialogue, and sound in the *Nostalgia* statue sequence (Johnson, 2011; Johnson & Petrie, 1994; Bird, 2008). Deconstructing the scene's symbolic, cultural, and narrative frames was made possible by this interpretative technique, which allowed the research to go beyond simple descriptive observation (Bellour, 2000; Heath, 1975; Metz, 1971).

### 2.2. Tools for analysis

- The study was informed by Roland Barthes's five narrative codes (Barthes, 1974; Jamil et al., 2024; Putri & Inayah, 2022; Durmuş, 2024):
- Hermeneutic code - questions, puzzles, and narrative delays that were made in the statue scene.
- Proairetic code—series of activities and the expectations they created for the audience.
- Semic code—visual and aural indicators (lighting, gestures, sound motifs) and their associated meanings (Senje, 2023; Xiao, 2024).
- Symbolic code—binary oppositions like presence/absence, life/death, and homeland/exile that are important to Tarkovsky's poetry (Green, 1993; Bird, 2008).
- Referential/Cultural code—intertextual, philosophical, and cultural elements that gave the images meaning (for example, Christian iconography), Russian Russian cultural memory, Italian artistic heritage) (Robinson, 2006; Ventsel, 2025).

### 2.3. Procedures

- The research adhered to the following structured steps:
- Repeatedly seeing the statue situation to identify formal and symbolic distinctions (Johnson & Petrie, 1994).
- Marking essential visual and aural elements, such camera movement, *mise-en-scène*, discourse, and sound design (Barker, 2009).
- Coding and interpreting these elements according to Barthes's five narrative codes, leading to diverse interpretations of the situation (Barthes, 1974; Jamil et al., 2024).
- A juxtaposition with contemporary studies on semiotics and Tarkovsky to validate and augment the interpretive findings (Zaluckowska, 2023; Bellour, 2000; Heath, 1975; Metz, 1971).

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

**3.1. Foundations: Semiotics, Structuralism and Narrative Codes** - Semiotics emerged from Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralist linguistics and Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic sign model, creating a basis for a discipline dedicated to the analysis of signification and meaning-making across many media (Chandler, 2022; Buckland, 1999, 2000). Roland Barthes significantly expanded this discipline by extending semiological analysis to include visual images, narratives, and cultural texts, emphasizing the intricate dynamics of denotation, connotation, and myth as multifaceted processes of meaning. Barthes (1966/2004) established the framework of five narrative codes—hermeneutic, proairetic, semic, symbolic, and cultural—in *S/Z*, illustrating their interrelation within the dialectic of "readerly" and "writerly" texts (Lauridsen, n.d.). These codes offered a systematic framework for analyzing how texts generated enigmas, structured behaviors, cultivated associated meanings, created oppositions, and referenced cultural knowledge. Later works, such as "The Third Meaning," showed that Barthes was moving toward the picture's more cryptic or emotional side, which was an indication of his idea of the *punctum* in *Camera Lucida* (Oxman, n.d.). This foundational legacy therefore established the theoretical basis for later semiotic inquiries, including the present analysis of Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*.

**3.2. From Text to Screen: Film Semiotics and Narratology** - Film theory had rapidly integrated semiotic inquiry during the latter half of the twentieth century, particularly through Christian Metz's articulation of cinematic language and his development of the "large syntagmatic category," which framed film as a system of signifying units (Metz, 1971; Heath, 1975). Raymond Bellour's meticulous, frame-by-frame analyses had further institutionalized the practice of close reading as a methodological norm within film semiotics (Bellour, 2000). Heath (1975) and Dayan (as discussed by Lauridsen, n.d.) had elaborated textual analysis into detailed interpretative practices, while David Bordwell (2013) had provided a complementary cognitive account of how films cued spectators to construct coherent stories. Warren Buckland (1999, 2000) had bridged cognitive film theory and semiotics, arguing that viewers actively constructed meaning through inferential processes informed

by both narrative cues and semiotic codes. Manfred Jahn (2021/2022) had contributed a narratological toolkit emphasizing focalization, the filmic composition device, and inside/outside perspectives that had offered pragmatic descriptors particularly suited for scene-specific analysis. Collectively, these traditions had treated film as a woven discourse (textus), open to both structural and interpretive analysis across levels of mise-en-scène, sound, montage, and intertextual reference. These approaches had proven especially relevant to the close reading of Tarkovsky's cinema, where symbolic density and narrative indeterminacy converged.

**3.3. Applied Studies: Codes, Signs and Genres Across Media** - A substantial body of practical research has assessed semiotic frameworks in cinematic, television, and paratextual situations. For example, Aminu (2021) analyzed the film *Black Panther* using Peirce's categories of icon, index, and symbol, concluding that its cultural meanings mostly included icons and symbols. Putri and Inayah (2022) used Barthes's triadic model of denotation, connotation, and myth to examine meaning in *Aladdin*, while Durmuş (2024) utilized Barthesian analysis on the *Black Panther* film poster, asserting that visual rhetoric depicted technological modernity as cultural myth. Research on *Mulan* (Sinuraya et al., 2022), *Layangan Putus* (Kartini, 2022), and *Over the Moon* (Liani et al., n.d.) has shown the applicability of Barthesian semiotics in films, animated features, and streaming series from various nations. These investigations have repeatedly shown the process by which moral, ideological, and cultural content became naturalized via established norms.

Murtagh et al. (2008) demonstrated the ability of computational approaches to quantify the structure of cinematic screenplays, including *Casablanca* and *CSI*, so validating that semiotic notions such as codes and beats can be statistically assessed. Boz (2025) used structural-semiotic analysis on *Total Recall* (2012), correlating genre codes with post-apocalyptic ideology, while Yılmaz and Göker (2025) utilized semiology to elucidate propaganda roles in Eastern European film during World War II. Dhote (n.d.) analyzed the symbolic translation between text and cinema in *The Guide*, emphasizing intermedial shifts in connotation and myth. These research have shown two critical points: first, that semiotic codes are universally relevant across all genres and cultural settings; second, that close readings have more relevance when contextualized within intertextual and ideological frameworks.

**3.4. Beyond the Screen: Statues, Sculpture, and Interpersonal Meaning** - Renowned cinematographers all across the world associate Andrei Tarkovsky's name with excellence. His distinctive lyrical cinematic language and deep philosophical themes have won him a lot of praise (Johnson & Petrie, 1994; Bird, 2008). While he was a resident in Italy, he filmed one of his most renowned pictures, *Nostalghia* (1983). There is much discussion on themes including exile, memory, and spirituality (Johnson, 2011; Green, 1993). Tarkovsky is known for his use of long shots, slow motion, and symbolic imagery. All of these things come together to provide an interaction that is more than just a tale; it makes you think philosophically (Barker, 2009; Bird, 2008). Like in *Nostalghia*, his films often include the viewpoints of youngsters on timeless topics of religion and enlightenment. Globan (2023) and Kononenko (2023) also note that they show a remarkable change in perception and a deftness in their tiny actions. Despite the fact that the majority of people find his artwork repulsive, the house and memories have equal significance (McFadden, 2012). The scene with the statue is the most interesting and crucial part of *Nostalghia*. At its center lies the story's philosophical struggle, cultural symbolism, and visual imagery (Robinson, 2006). The event's complex meaning can only be understood via a semiotic study. Zaluzkowska (2023), Senje (2023), Xiao (2024), and Ventsel (2025) are only a few of the semiotic studies in cinema that have explored narrative and linguistic codes, ideological structures, and the ways in which visual imagery provokes emotional emotions in viewers. Semiotics provides a framework for analyzing films that helps us understand their symbolic meanings and value them as visual art (Plalamattom, 2024).

**3.5. Debates and Expansions: From Structural Codes to Affect** - Debates within film semiotics had underscored both the utility and the limitations of structuralist code analysis. Andrew (1977) had critiqued semiotic studies for their tendency toward "code-listing" and called for approaches attentive to therapeutic and experiential registers, warning against theoretical closure. Oxman (n.d.) had reinterpreted Barthes's intellectual trajectory as a shift from structural decoding toward affective sensing, where the focus had turned to elements of the image that exceeded codification—what Barthes had termed the "obtuse meaning" or later the punctum. Lauridsen (n.d.) had contextualized Barthes's uneven engagement with cinema, emphasizing, however, the enduring value of textual analysis through concepts such as *lexias*, suspended attention, and third meaning. These debates had proven particularly relevant to Tarkovsky, whose cinema had been celebrated for both its coded symbolic binaries (life/death, homeland/exile, presence/absence) and its metaphysical surplus that resisted structural containment. The statue scene in *Nostalghia* therefore emerged as a prime site where codified meaning and affective excess intersected.

**3.6. Pedagogy, Technology and New Semiotic Ecologies** - Semiotic practice had also evolved within the context of new technologies and educational applications. Gülden (2025), for instance, had examined the role of artificial intelligence in design education, showing how tools such as Midjourney reshaped visual ideation and semiotic interpretation. Through iterative prompting, peer critique, and image analysis, students had cultivated new sensitivities to cultural connotation while confronting questions of authorship and originality. Although not directly related to cinema, such studies had revealed how interpretive frameworks adapted within AI-mediated environments an important consideration for contemporary spectatorship, which increasingly involved digitally mediated habits of meaning-making. Similarly, computational work on narrative structures (Murtagh et al., 2008) had demonstrated how semiotics could be enriched by data driven methods without abandoning qualitative close

reading. Together, these developments had highlighted the methodological pluralism of modern semiotic inquiry, expanding its relevance for both traditional film studies and new media analysis.

**3.7. Synthesis: The Literature Enabled a Semiotic Framework for Analyzing Tarkovsky's Nostalgia** – Results from the literature review showed that Barthes's five narrative codes were still applicable to a variety of cultural texts, including literature, mainstream films, posters, and animation (Barthes, 1966/2004; Aminu, 2021; Putri & Inayah, 2022; Durmuş, 2024; Jamil et al., n.d.). Analysis of narrative and symbolic dense moments, like Tarkovsky's statue scene, is best accomplished by scene-specific close reading at the micro-level of composition, sound, and focalization (Bellour, 2000; Heath, 1975; Jahn, 2021/2022). Studies on sculpture and statues have shown that they may convey interpersonal meanings by their shape, materiality, and location. These semiotic abilities were then re-mediated by film through cinematography and music (Bowcher & Liang, 2022; Abamor, n.d.). Simultaneously, theoretical discussions had brought attention to the need to acknowledge the codified and emotive aspects of cinematic meaning (Oxman, n.d.; Lauridsen, n.d.), which allowed room for the obtuse and metaphysical elements that were characteristic of Tarkovsky's filmography. As a conclusion, research on ideology and intertextuality (Boz, 2025; Yılmaz & Göker, 2025; Dhotre, n.d.) has shown how cultural codes connect local symbols, like that of Russia, Christianity, and Italy, to broader political and historical narratives. Collectively, this corpus of research allowed the current investigation into Tarkovsky's metaphysical poetics in *Nostalgia*'s statue scene to approach it as a multi-layered convergence of narrative codes, symbolic binaries, emotional resonances, and intertextual frames.

#### 4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The principal research inquiry of this study sought to explore: How did Roland Barthes's five narrative codes elucidate the semiotic and metaphysical aspects of the statue scene in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*, and how did this examination correlate with established theoretical frameworks in film semiotics and Tarkovsky's cinematic poetics? To tackle this, the research used Barthes's semiotic framework for an in-depth analysis of the statue scene, scrutinizing its visual composition, auditory design, and symbolic stratification.

**4.1. Hermeneutic Code: Enigma and Delay** - The hermeneutic code worked because people were continuously wondering what the monument represented and what its tale was. Tarkovsky deliberately prolonged uncertainty for the audience by using a sluggish pace, little dialogue, and elliptical framing instead of addressing their inquiries. This wait was like Barthes's notion of the hermeneutic code, which is a means to build suspense and let people interpret things in different ways (Barthes, 1974). People who witnessed the play had to think about serious things, such "Why is the monument here?" What spiritual or cultural role does it play? Lacking narrative conclusion, echoing Tarkovsky's philosophical poetics of incompleteness (Bird, 2008; Johnson & Petrie, 1994).

**4.2. Proairetic Code: Actions and Expectation** - The proairetic code was shown in the way that motions and activities were carefully ordered in the scenario. The camera pans, the characters' movements, and the changes in the audio all created a rhythm of anticipation that guided the viewer's participation. Every time someone moved closer to the statue, stopped in front of it, and stayed silent, it was like a "actional cue" that led people to expect more information, but then did not provide it to them. Tarkovsky mixed cinematic motion with philosophical suspension in this manner. This tension was similar to Barthes's idea of proairetic structuration, which is a succession of events that are expected but never completely delivered (Heath, 1975; Bellour, 2000).

**4.3. Semic Code: Traits, Motifs, and Associations** - The semic code was strongly present in the associative layering of signs. The dim lighting, echoes of dripping water, and static posture of the statue functioned as semes, attaching meanings of solemnity, decay, and endurance to the scene. Sound motifs, such as the muted resonance of footsteps, reinforced these associative traits, constructing a tonal atmosphere that invited reflection rather than plot advancement. As Senje (2023) and Xiao (2024) have argued in parallel studies of dialogue and affect, such semes cultivate emotional and symbolic density, allowing Tarkovsky's imagery to carry connotative weight beyond its literal depiction.

**4.4. Symbolic Code: Binary Oppositions** - The symbolic code animated the scene through binary tensions central to Tarkovsky's oeuvre: life versus death, presence versus absence, homeland versus exile. The statue, as an immobile object within a fluid cinematic world, embodied the paradox of permanence amid transience. In Barthesian terms, the statue became a site where symbolic oppositions were condensed into a visual figure, allowing spectators to interpret it simultaneously as a marker of death (stone, immobility, coldness) and as a vessel of spiritual persistence (memory, resilience, transcendence) (Green, 1993; Bird, 2008). This duality echoed Tarkovsky's recurring theme of spiritual survival in exile.

**4.5. Cultural/Referential Code: Intertext and Memory** - The cultural code placed the monument in a wide range of intertextual frameworks. Christian iconography, Russian cultural memory, and Italian artistic tradition converged, establishing the monument as a palimpsest of cultural signifiers (Robinson, 2006; Ventsel, 2025). The picture made Russian viewers think of home and Orthodox religion. It made Italian spectators think of Renaissance sculpture and Catholic art. Tarkovsky employed the cultural code in this way to relate exile, memory, and spirituality in a way that could be understood by people from different countries.

**4.6. Integrative Reading** - The five codes showed how the statue scene might be both a story knot and a philosophical picture. Barthes's theory showed how Tarkovsky employed puzzles, actions, related themes, symbolic differences, and links between texts to create a setting that was both confined and open-ended. Structural



codes clarified much of its symbolic profundity; yet, the study validated the claims of Andrew (1977) and Oxman (n.d.) that emotional excess, or "obtuse meaning" or punctum, could not be encapsulated within coding. Tarkovsky wanted to write about how the statue did not move, how the light transformed the texture of the stone, and how the calm made him feel. The research revealed that Barthes's five narrative codes not only clarified the semiotic dynamics of the statue scene but also highlighted Tarkovsky's distinctive blend of symbolic lucidity and metaphysical ambiguity. Utilizing expansive semiotic and narratological frameworks, our research elucidated that the statue scene in *Nostalgia* exemplifies how films may operate as both a coded text and a spiritual experience.

## 5. RESULTS

The following table synthesizes the findings of this study, which applied Roland Barthes's five narrative codes to the statue scene in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia* (1983). Each code—hermeneutic, proairetic, semic, symbolic, and cultural—provided a unique lens for decoding the scene's layered semiotic and metaphysical dimensions. By examining visual composition, sound design, gestures, and intertextual references, the analysis revealed how Tarkovsky's slow pacing and symbolic density transform the statue into a narrative knot where coded meaning and affective resonance converge. The table also includes an integrative reading that highlights the interplay among codes, as well as a discussion of the affective surplus that exceeds structural codification. Together, these insights demonstrate both the interpretive power of semiotic frameworks and the limits of structuralist analysis when faced with Tarkovsky's metaphysical poetics.

Table 1. Analytical Framework and Findings: Applying Roland Barthes's Five Narrative Codes to the Statue Scene in *Nostalgia*

Analytical Dimension	Core Result	Key Evidence in Scene	Metaphysical / Poetic Implication	Anchoring Scholarship
Hermeneutic code (enigma/ delay)	Meaning is withheld to sustain interpretive openness and existential questioning.	Prolonged stillness; minimal dialogue; elliptical framing that withholds explanatory context.	Suspended resolution invites contemplation of exile, faith, and purpose.	Barthes (1974); Bird (2008); Johnson & Petrie (1994).
Proairetic code (actions/ expectation)	Micro-actions structure anticipation without closure, generating a rhythm of deferred revelation.	Approach–pause–linger patterns; slow pans; sound shifts cue "next" but postpone payoff.	Temporal tension between movement and stasis becomes a spiritual quest rather than plot advance.	Heath (1975); Bellour (2000).
Semic code (traits/ motifs)	Sensory semes accrue meanings of solemnity, endurance, and decay.	Dim, cool lighting; dripping water; stone texture; muted footsteps; fixed posture of statue.	Atmosphere replaces exposition; affective density frames memory and loss.	Senje (2023); Xiao (2024).
Symbolic code (binary oppositions)	Condenses Tarkovskian binaries—life/death, presence/absence, homeland/exile—into one figure.	Immobile stone vs. flowing time and sound; human proximity vs. statue's aloofness.	The statue signifies permanence amid transience: spiritual persistence within bodily/temporal fragility.	Green (1993); Bird (2008).
Cultural/Referential code (intertext)	Interweaves <b>Christian</b> iconography, Russian memory, and Italian artistic heritage.	Iconic statuary framing; <b>churchly acoustics</b> ; Renaissance echoes; nostalgia for homeland.	Transnational palimpsest: exile becomes a dialogue between cultures and faith traditions.	Robinson (2006); Ventsel (2025).
Integrative reading (codes in concert)	The scene is both narrative knot and metaphysical tableau; codes layer to produce density and openness.	Interdependence of enigmas, actions, semes, oppositions, and intertexts across one slow sequence.	Cinema functions as coded text and spiritual experience.	Barthes (1974); Bellour (2000).
Affective surplus / "obtuse meaning"	Residual affect exceeds codification (punctum-like qualities).	Texture of stone under shifting light; charged silences; durational weight.	Marks the limits of structural decoding; aligns with Tarkovsky's metaphysical aesthetics.	Andrew (1977); Oxman (n.d.).

Analytical Dimension	Core Result	Key Evidence in Scene	Metaphysical / Poetic Implication	Anchoring Scholarship
Contribution to Tarkovsky studies	Extends Barthes's codes to Nostalgia, clarifying how symbolic binaries and intertexts operate in a single scene.	Scene-level close reading tied to semiotic categories.	Bridges structural analysis with Tarkovsky's poetics of time, memory, and spirit.	Johnson & Petrie (1994); Bird (2008); Bellour (2000).
Methodological note	Qualitative, code-based close reading validated by intertextual comparison.	Repeated viewings; annotation of image/sound; coding per five codes.	Shows utility and limits of structuralism; invites plural methods (cognitive, cultural).	Buckland (1999, 2000); Metz (1971).
Limitations & next steps	Single-scene scope; interpretive subjectivity; no quantitative corroboration.		Apply codes to other Tarkovskian motifs (water, fire, ruins); integrate cognitive/data-assisted analyses.	Chandler (2022); Murtagh et al. (2008).

The results suggest that Barthes's five codes, which form a strong framework, may help to make the statue problem a little clearer. Tarkovsky employs the hermeneutic code to induce a state of reflective suspension in the spectator, so prolonging the resolution. Tarkovsky's emphasis on process over result suggests that proairetic coding never reaches an acceptable resolution. It utilizes gestures, cuts in the camera, and pauses to build suspense instead. The semic code speaks about how the director employs color, light, and texture to make the mood sad and sad. The symbolic code says that the director's poetry is full of opposites, like life and death, being there and not being there, and being home and not being home. This cultural code looks at the sculpture through the lenses of Russian history, Christian art, and Italian art history.

This demonstrates that Tarkovsky's work engages with both local and global cultures simultaneously. The analysis further demonstrates that Tarkovsky's works undermine essential structural categories. Barthes asserts that the textural qualities of stone, the weight of silence, and the metaphysical nature of stillness communicate an indeterminate significance, marked by an emotional excess that beyond codification. The conflict between controlled meaning and deep resonance illustrates the core contradiction in Tarkovsky's artistic methodology, as his films operate as structured semiotic texts while concurrently seeking spiritual transcendence. This paper expands the domain of Tarkovsky studies via a semiotic analysis of the statue scene, illustrating how Barthesian codes might elucidate the symbolic logic and metaphysical ambiguity of his film. It also demonstrates the significance of using many methodologies, such as integrating structuralist principles with an emphasis on emotion, embodiment, and intertextuality.

Future research may use comparable frameworks to Tarkovsky's enduring motifs of water, fire, and ruins, or integrate cognitive and computational tools to link symbolic analysis with contemporary narrative strategies. The findings ultimately substantiate that Nostalgia represents film as both a coded narrative framework and a profound spiritual experience.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This research examined the semiotic and metaphysical aspects of the statue scene in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia* by using Roland Barthes's five narrative codes. The investigation used a qualitative, close-reading methodology, revealing that the hermeneutic code operated via enigmas and narrative delays that hindered resolution and necessitated contemplation. The proairetic code manifested in the meticulously arranged motions and camera movements that established anticipation, while the semic code elucidated how lighting, auditory themes, and gestures accumulated associative significations of gravity, perseverance, and deterioration. The symbolic code brought out the binary oppositions that were important to Tarkovsky's poetics, such as life and death, presence and absence, and country and exile. These oppositions were shown via the statue, which was both a permanent and vulnerable figure. The cultural code placed the event in larger intertextual contexts, using Christian symbols, Russian history, and Italian art as overlapping semiotic layers.

These results validated that Barthes's theory elucidated the complex semiotic structure of the scene, while also revealing the constraints of structural coding. Some emotional aspects, including quiet, stillness, and the way light changes the texture of stone, could not be put into words. This is in line with Barthes's idea of "obtuse meaning" (Oxman, n.d.) and Tarkovsky's metaphysical aesthetics (Bird, 2008; Johnson & Petrie, 1994). The analysis determined that the statue scene functioned both as a coded text and a locus of ineffable emotion, reflecting Tarkovsky's ambition to amalgamate material images with spiritual transcendence.

In a larger context, this study advanced existing discussions in film semiotics by illustrating that Barthes's structuralist framework, when used in the analysis of Tarkovsky's movie, exposed both its interpretative efficacy and its constraints. By contrasting coded structures with emotive excess, the research corroborated Andrew's (1977) and Lauridsen's (n.d.) assertions that cinema analysis necessitates a balance between systematic coding

and receptivity to sensory and metaphysical dimensions. Subsequent study may broaden this methodology by using Barthesian semiotics to other Tarkovskian motifs—such as water, fire, or ruins—while also including cognitive and cultural frameworks (Buckland, 2000; Bellour, 2000). By doing this, researchers might close the gap between structural semiotics and Tarkovsky's distinctive cinematic poetics even further, which would help us comprehend how film connects symbolic meaning and spiritual experience.

#### 7. Contribution and Limitations

This research enhances the discipline of cinema semiotics by applying Barthes's five narrative codes (Barthes, 1974) to Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*, a film seldom examined within this theoretical framework. The results provide novel perspectives on the symbolic, philosophical, and cultural aspects of the statue scene, connecting Tarkovsky's cinematic poetics to semiotic theory (Bellour, 2000; Heath, 1975). The study was confined to a certain timeframe, hence limiting the applicability of the results across the whole of the film. Furthermore, as a qualitative semiotic study, the interpretations are inherently subjective and lack quantitative validation (Chandler, 2022; Buckland, 2000).

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