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Title Vision of the Future in Arkady and Boris Strugatsky's *Roadside Picnic* and Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker*

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Abstract: This article is a comparative analysis of the artistic visions of the not-too-distant future in the science fiction novel *Roadside Picnic* by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky and its loose film adaptation, entitled *Stalker*, directed by Andrei Tarkovsky. The major theme of Strugatsky brothers' book is humankind's inability to take the chance of drawing benefits from making contact with extraterrestrial civilization. As the so-called *stalker* (a criminal who is going to the forbidden Zone, left by aliens, in order to steal the artifacts or lead his clients to allegedly wish-granted place), the main protagonist remains the personification of this condition. Although Tarkovsky derives eponymous character of his adaptation from its literary source, he changes this person's role. While Strugatsky's *stalker* tries to find his way to Absolute involuntarily and subconsciously, his film equivalent treats his occupation as a kind of mission – he wants to be someone who participates in connecting the people with something sacred and metaphysical. Although both stories take place in the devastated industrial setting, the Tarkovsky's vision is more symbolical and metaphorical than Strugatsky's. It's also more clearly related to religious themes (mostly of Christian and Taoist origin) but in a non-orthodox kind of way.