

The Gulag in Writings of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Varlam Shalamov: Memory, History, Testimony. Ed. Fabian Heffermehl and Irina Karlsruhn. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2021. xii, 296 pp. Notes. Index. \$126.00, hard bound.
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Given the lack of institutional reckoning with the dark legacy of the Gulag, the processing of its traumatic history resides solely with individuals, in particular victims of the camps who have documented their experiences. In their edited volume, Fabian Heffermehl and Irina Karlsruhn assemble essays analyzing the body of work of two of the most well-known Gulag writers, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Varlam Shalamov. The comparative context aims to present the Gulag survivors' work as testimony attesting to the horrors of the camps and serving as a repository of memory. The volume is divided into three parts: Part One, "Literary Origins," focuses on the early works of Solzhenitsyn and Shalamov, in particular their poetry; Part Two, "Memory and Body" examines the body as an essential component of the two writers' literary inspiration; Part Three, "History and Narrative," explores approaches to analyzing the nexus between history and memory.

The highly researched nature of the subject matter necessarily invites repetition: the "lightening" of the Gulag's harsh realities, the invitation for Shalamov to write *The Gulag Archipelago* alongside Solzhenitsyn, the representation of trauma, and the discordance between the two authors are all common themes. Indeed, the differences between the two are so great that at times it raises the question of the utility of putting them alongside each other, except for the sole reason that they are the most recognized and prolific Gulag authors.

Michael A. Nicholson's opening essay explores the early poetry of Solzhenitsyn and Shalamov, deftly examining how verse served as a creative wellspring for both authors despite their differing trajectories. While many consider *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* to be the beginning of Solzhenitsyn's literary career, Nicholson rightly fills this lacunae by acknowledging the tremendous amount of poetry Solzhenitsyn composed—and memorized—in the camps. Ulrich Schmid's contribution further explores the tension between the camp survivors' poetry and prose. While Solzhenitsyn and Shalamov might be best known for *The Gulag Archipelago* and *Kolyma Tales*, respectively, both chose poetry first as the most appropriate medium to process their experiences. Schmid surmises that the intensity of Shalamov's attacks on Solzhenitsyn spring from the former's philosophy regarding the camps; Shalamov believed the Gulag should "neither be moralized or aestheticized" (54). Yet his attacks belie his own contradictions: "Shalamov scolds poets who want to be innovative in their works—and, at the same time, claims to be the most innovative of all" (57). Like Theodor Adorno's famous question about the possibility of composing poetry after Auschwitz, the close examination of Shalamov and Solzhenitsyn's poetic oeuvre illuminates the many challenges in attempting to do so. Part One concludes with Andrea Gullota's contribution, a fresh exploration of how stylistic devices, particularly repetition, are influenced by PTSD symptoms. Gullota argues that the differences between Shalamov and Solzhenitsyn can be in part explained by their differing experiences of trauma—"acting out" (Shalamov) versus "working through" (Solzhenitsyn).

While united by the title "Memory and Body," the essays in Part Two tackle a variety of topics that at times do not seem cohesive: Luba Jurgenson examines Shalamov's refusal to write *The Gulag Archipelago*, while Fabian Heffermehl's essay explores the tactile techniques of Shalamov's work and their connection to the suffering he experienced in the camps. Franziska Thun-Hohenstein's contribution most directly addresses issues of corporeality, exploring how the body for Shalamov serves as a repository of memory that differs from the brain, one that is

ultimately more permanent and reliable. Irina Sandomirskaia's essay closes out Part Two and again takes up the theme of tactility: "Like the hand that slaps the scoundrel in the face and leaves an imprint on his cheek, so do words not merely reflect things" (198).

Part Three, "History and Narrative," opens with an essay by Irina Karlsruhn examining Solzhenitsyn's role as a historian and his frequent employ of counterfactual statements. Solzhenitsyn, who defined history as the "results from the interaction between the Divine will and the free will of individual humans" (208), penned two essential historical novels, *The Red Wheel* and *The Gulag Archipelago*, which Karlsruhn puts into comparative context. Elena Mikhailik's perceptive essay addresses little-acknowledged factual errors in *The Gulag Archipelago*. While the book is considered a work of history, it did not benefit from careful fact-checking or archival research. Yet, as Mikhailik's essay makes clear, such discrepancies belie the actual goal of the book—to document the devastating effect of the camps on the populace, with *The Gulag Archipelago* representing an anti-history. Josefina Lundblad-Janjić's chapter examines the differing representation of women in *Kolyma Stories* and *The Gulag Archipelago*—the former more nuanced, the latter more comprehensive. The volume closes with a compelling contribution by Leona Toker on questions of audience. While Solzhenitsyn wrote for outsiders and the general public, Shalamov's work was always oriented more towards camp veterans. The "softening" of material about the Gulag on the one hand makes it more digestible for a so-called training audience with no background in the camps, but on the other hand renders a less factually faithful account. Toker argues that Solzhenitsyn was not the only one to soften his work. Shalamov did it too, but in a different way—by distributing atrocities so that intense blows alternate with heroic feats.

Heffermehl and Karlsruhn prove their claim that the authors' Gulag testimonies serve as a body of memory, representing a unique kind of historiography. Yet the essays, while strong independently, can at times feel repetitious or incongruous alongside each other. And while the volume certainly contributes novel interpretations to the field, this particular reader wonders how our understanding of the Gulag could be made more complex by moving beyond the well-trod ground of Solzhenitsyn and Shalamov to explore the writings of a more diverse set of Gulag authors.

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Psychomotor Aesthetics: Movement and Affect in Modern Literature and Film.

By Ana Hedberg Olenina. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. xlv, 366 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Tables. \$125.00, hard bound; \$35.00, paper.

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Aesthetic experience has typically involved an active audience, not a manipulated one. Yet with the rise of modern psychology and modern technology, artists and others saw myriad possibilities for gauging and guiding the response of spectators. The fine line between eliciting a physical or emotional reaction and coercion lies at the heart of Ana Hedberg Olenina's compelling study of the psychophysiological in early twentieth-century literature and film. Interdisciplinary to the core in the way it probes the intersection of art and science, Olenina's analysis of Russian and American "psychomotor aesthetics" and the theory underpinning this artistic turn toward the psychological offers an illuminating prism through which to examine early Soviet art and