The Poet Won't Die: Authorial Death in Varlam Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*

Nora Furlong
Bard College

There's a moment in "Berries," the tenth story in Varlam Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*, when the reader is gutted and left clinging to some sick heat around their navel, while the writer strolls off. It occurs in a matter of words; Rybakov, the narrator's fellow prisoner in the Kolyma labor camp, is creeping towards a cluster of "enchanted berries" in the forbidden zone, when the "dry crack of a shot" fells him.[1] As explicit as the murder is, there is a brief inability on the part of the reader to comprehend what has just been described. The body is surveyed for a sentence, depicted as "small" as compared to the mountains, and archived by the witness as a corpse among corpses, held almost intimately by the hummocks and the designation of death. The murder is of no matter; Seroshapka, the guard, fires the second shot as protocol demands, the narrator collects Rybakov's supplies for his own use, and the prisoners are counted and sent back to the camp.

Misery sheds its histrionic connotation and is scoffed at, desecrated, and ultimately redemptive in *Kolyma Tales*; torture becomes increasingly mundane in each narrative reiteration, and the tortured becomes so acclimated that physical importance fades, and another, artistic, immortality seems attainable. This perspective begins to take effect through the rendition of horror as habitual; Shalamov's manner of writing is an act of witnessing, not glorification. There is an unwillingness or inability on the part of the narrator, and the author behind him, to add the expected pathos to the representation of the Gulag, an environment that physically and emotionally wrecked all those who were lucky, or perhaps unlucky, to live through it. The interplay between Shalamov as survivor, writer, and inhabitant of memory is the foundation for the ceaseless and appalling product that is *Kolyma Tales*, but a kind of blasé bitterness is felt throughout the work towards this very collaboration of Shalamov's selves. It is as if he is at once kicking, and screaming, and staying very still as he returns to Kolyma, as he reoccupies the emaciated and imprisoned self, a self that was stripped of identity and rendered insignificant. Both helpful and harrowing, this

1. Varlam Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, (New York: Penguin Press, 1994) 59.

delineation as a nugatory figure in the scheme of the Stalinist landscape allowed Shalamov to create narrators who take on the role of the universal and abstract inmate, and articulate their experiences as needed.

"Berries" doesn't end with the death of Rybakov. The tip of Seroshapka's rifle taps our narrator's shoulder, and the killer tells him, "I wanted to get you, but you wouldn't cross the line, you bastard!"[2] This jest finishes the piece and does so both to emphasize and negate the illustrated horror. If the story closed on the antepenultimate word, "line," the reader would be offered a kind of neatness, a metaphor of the nonsensicality of Gulag violence; Rybakov is killed for stepping over an arbitrarily created boundary, an action that could be likened to the at once capricious and methodical system of incarceration as carried out under Stalin's regime. "Line" as a conclusion also coincides with the very structure of Shalamov's description; the murder, clinically depicted, is given a mere line to occur, causing the reader's initial stupor of disbelief and rendering killing as a non-event––as something to be witnessed, taken stock of, and moved on from. But Shalamov finishes "Berries" with "bastard" because as well as attempting to portray cruelty and violence as banal, he also refuses to offer this portrayal as didactic and purposefully poignant. Leaving the reader with an admonition pokes fun at the sick feeling caused by Rybakov's murder, as if Shalamov is telling us we must get over it and get over it quickly. There can be none of the routine pity typically associated with death, for death as Shalamov offers it is the routine. Shalamov seems to hold the life of a Gulag inmate in his palm, gently turning it to catch the light, so that the clothes stolen from corpses, dogs killed for dinner, and the bitterness, the only thing that remains in the flesh, are seen. *Kolyma Tales* neither attempts to leave one wretched or informed; it is experience as experienced.

Born in 1907 to a mother who liked poetry and a father who was a priest, Varlam Shalamov claimed he lost his faith and became an atheist at the age of 13.[3] This was far before the POHO (Regional Department of People's Education) prevented Shalamov from continuing his education after graduating from the gymnasium of St. Alexander. But, if so inclined, one could say that Shalamov, from childhood, had a mark against him, a mark of affiliation with the bourgeoisie and clergy that mattered in class-conscious Stalinist Russia. Despite the newly-installed administrative measures banning or persecuting those demonstrably associated with the Orthodox church, Shalamov entered Moscow State University through an open competition in 1926. He studied in the department of Soviet Law, consumed Boris Pasternak and Andrei Bely to sate his literary interests, and became involved with a Trotsky-affiliated group. He was first arrested in 1929; some offer "reasons unknown," others point to his distribution of Lenin's "Letter to Congress" and expression of "anti-Stalin views at a demonstration" as the reason why. In any case, he was sentenced to three years of hard labor for being a "dangerous element" of society.[4]

Shalamov refused to sign his name to his conviction, a manner of resistance against "absurd accusation" reminiscent of Evgenia Ginzburg and Narodnaya Volya; he later explained this as an attempt to continue the socialist revolutionary tradition.[5] It seems the young Shalamov was aware of the role of the unjustly condemned in both a political and literary landscape, and later created and desecrated the figure of the universal convict in *Kolyma Tales*. After his release in 1931, sev-

2. Varlam Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, (New York: Penguin Press, 1994), 60.
3. Anastasiya Osipova, "The Forced Conversion of Varlam Shalamov," (Los Angeles Review of Books, 2019), 3.
4. Irina Sirontskaya, *My Friend Varlam Shalamov*, (Moscow: Russian Fund for the Humanities, 2006), 16.
5. Valery Yesipov, "Cerebration or Genuflection? (Varlam Shalamov and Alexander Solzhenitsin)," (Russkij Sever [The Russian North] No.4, 2002), 17.

eral of Shalamov's essays on literary criticism were published. He met and married Galina Ignatievna Gudz and they had a daughter, only for him to be rearrested at the inception of the Great Purge on similarly worded, arbitrary causes, this time sentenced to five years in Kolyma, the "land of white death." A ten-year sentence, added for an escape attempt and a reference to Ivan Bunin as a "great Russian writer," meant that Shalamov's incarceration lasted until 1951.

The labor experienced by Shalamov was debilitating; he reached a state of devitalization which rendered his body a *dokhodyaga*. Derived from the Russian verb доходить, "to reach," the phrase was used to describe the prisoners who were the most far gone in their state of starvation; they would soon "reach" death.[6] Upon release, "the little that was left" of Shalamov returned to a world he feared, and to which he would "add one more fear."[7] But he worked as a medical assistant, remarried, saw his masterwork *Kolyma Tales* published without his consent in Europe and the United States by way of *tamizdat*, sued those who had published it, received awards for this work, and wrote poems, autobiographies, and stories. His health deteriorated; Shalamov's former emaciation lingered, causing Ménière's disease, loss of coordination, and a heart attack. The last years of Shalamov's life were spent in an institution for elderly and disabled writers, deprived, as his friend and biographer Elena Zakharova put it, of the "right to die with dignity."[8] He died in 1982, and, upon Zakharova's insistence, was given Orthodox funeral rites. The "cathartic shame" of perestroika witnessed the publication of *Kolyma Tales* in Russian, in Russia, but Shalamov was by then dead, no longer dying. And yet…

RELIVING AND RECREATING DEATH

Shalamov, as an ex-convict and an author, acquired a kind of life after death. In a segment of his autobiographies, Shalamov describes the feeling of having "died in the mines…in 1938."[9] This cerebral death – the result of a *dokhodyaga's* 14-hour work days and constant state of malnourishment – meant that Shalamov reentered society as one who has "transcended death…[returning] to humanity as a witness."[10] The role of the writer-as-witness is examined in his essay "On Prose," wherein Shalamov relates the artist's rendition of the Gulag to the very corporal condition of the inmate, questioning whether the survivor's body can or should create. An occupation of the *dokhodyaga* state and its physical effects – pellagra, scurvy, frostbite, dysentery – warps the body into a reluctantly animated corpse, with a scabrous hide and aphasic stare, a ghost, a goner. The world that Shalamov, a rehabilitated dead man, entered after release was not a heaven or hell – he felt that he had already endured the latter – but rather for him a state of living "in spite of one's own death."[11] His paradoxical identity as a survivor, as one who has reascended from an underworld, with "newly-grown skin, bones, and muscles," was exemplified by Shalamov's struggle with "the right to write":

> *If something is to be written, then it can only be the words that the "Kolyma glove" could have written – the glove of a worker, a palm full of blisters, worn with the crowbar to the very blood, with fingers permanently bent around the shaft*

6. Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History*, (New York, Doubleday, 2003), 79.
7. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales* "An Epitaph," 311-312.
8. Sirontskaya, *My Friend* 16.
9. Harriat Hustis and Maria Mostyka, "The Starving Artist: Life, Death, and the Role of the Storyteller in Varlam Shalamov's 'The Snake Charmer' and 'Cherry Brandy,'" (The Slavic and East European Journal, vol. 58, no. 3, 2014), 469.
10. Steven Banes, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and Shaping of Soviet Society* (Princeton, 2011), 183.
11. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales* "An Epitaph," 311-312.

of a shovel. This glove could not have written a story. These fingers cannot straighten up to pick up a pen and write about themselves.[12]

This "Kolyma glove," the hand of the *dokhodyaga*, is a coriaceous thing. As much as this devastated flesh hinders composition, Shalamov argues that it is only this flesh that is deserving of this act of retelling; "tales of the Gulag both must and shouldn't be written," for the only worthy writers are those unable to write. In order to represent the experience, a reenactment of the condition seems necessary; Shalamov must redon the "Kolyma glove" when writing the story of the Gulag. It is a somatic occupation of memory, a manner of reliving in order to create. As insistent as Shalamov is in the quote above in denying the ability of description to both the current and recovered goner, he persisted in reinhabiting his sick self, in writing and witnessing. After having *Kolyma Tales* ignored and "demoted to the genre of testimony" in Russia, Shalamov – stating that "it is enough to die to be printed,"[13] – understood that his work was meant for posterity. In the limbo between two deaths, Shalamov, impossibly and necessarily, remember and relived, in order to create; "art" as Shalamov said, "is a way of life, not a way of understanding life…it is a document…a prose lived through like a document."[14]

Although Shalamov interacts with his text in a far different way than other Gulag documentarians, poets, and memoirists, some comparisons can still be made. A fundamental element of art produced in reaction to trauma is the quality of delay. Appearing belatedly due to conditions of censorship, the threat of exile, imprisonment, or death, this genre acts as a kind of legacy to experience, and is at once complicated by and owes its existence to memory. This means a later revival of the period, a process that often relies on the accession of memory in a corporal manner. The artist somatically relives so as to aesthetically reconstruct their experience, and the horror expresses its incessance; an old wound throbs again. Although agonizing, it accomplishes what the artist has set out to do: the art has acted as a reminder, a sudden shudder of recollection, a statement of survival.

Perhaps the most prominent example of creation through recollection is the work of Anna Akhmatova, one of the foremost Russian artists of the 20th century. When writing "Requiem," she was said to "bur[n] the paper on which composed drafts of the poem, after learning it by heart,"[15] at once a demonstration of the extremity of Stalinist oppression and the necessity of recollection. Akhmatova was forced to exist in a constant reiteration of her words, reliving the experiences that begot them and undergoing a perpetual half-memorized life of terror. She felt a responsibility as a poet and, ergo, documentarian, to bear witness to atrocity so as to later persist in the creation and revelation of it through poeticized memory. This sense of duty can be recognized in the preface of "Requiem," wherein Akhmatova recounts a conversation between herself and a woman standing in a Leningrad prison line:

"Then a woman standing behind
me, who of course had
never heard my name, stirred from
her own, though common to all of
us, stupor and asked in my ear
(there, all spoke in a whisper):
—Could you describe this?
And I said:
—I can.
Then, something akin to a smile

12. Varlam Shalamov, *Collected Works in Four Volumes* "The Glove," (New York: Penguin Press, 1972), 51.
13. Varlam Shalamov, "A Letter to an Old Friend,"(Moscow: Krasny Sever, 1966), 8.
14. Varlam Shalamov, "On Prose," (Academic Studies Press: Late and Post-Soviet Russian Literature: A Reader Volume 2, 2014) 111-126.
15. Martin Puchner, *Writing Poetry Under Stalin: Samizdat and Memorization*, (Literary Hub, 2017) 6.

slipped across what once had been her face.[16]

Akhmatova's word "describe" is a revelation of a sacrosanct aspect of her artistry; the ability to represent and evoke the emotions of a lived experience. Akhmatova, in recognition of her role, understands the succor she can, and contestably must, provide. If she is to avoid description, others will lack a nuanced understanding of the traumatic period. By describing her experience, she refuses to let the experience, and in a way herself, die.

DIMINISHING AND HABITUATING DEATH

Akhmatova's process of reliving is relevant, but this "sacrosanct aspect," is not as applicable to Shalamov's mode of creation. In Irina Sirotinskaya's "The Years We Talked," a collection of memories of her meetings and friendship with Shalamov, she recounts that, in response to a question of how people should live their lives, he "added an eleventh commandment – thou shalt not teach."[17] In keeping with his rejection of art as didactic, of art "[not having] the right to preach…[as it] neither ennobles nor improves people,"[18] one may understand Shalamov's prose as a record of experience, a witnessed life, which cannot claim inherent purpose or worth. Here, perhaps, Osip Mandelstam's lines – " I sense all that I have witnessed / And I rehearse it without purpose"[19] – are more prescient than Akhmatova's, as they convey both the weight of the artist's experience – their life being something significant enough to "sense," – as well as the understanding that an aesthetic representation, a "rehearsal" of that which has been "witnessed" is ultimately purposeless. This doesn't wholly negate Shalamov's statements on the necessity of writing one's life, statements which shouldn't be ignored in the examination of his prose, yet the unwillingness to sentimentalize is important. Suffering as rendered by Shalamov is banal and routine, and the monotony of misery at once subdues and emphasizes the horror of his illustrations.

The element of banality which so influences the cruel life experienced by the inmates in *Kolyma Tales* is most palpable in "Dry Rations," Shalamov's story of four prisoners and their work of felling trees at the Duskania spring. The task and its quota are impossible, but to the group it resembles a vacation; no morbidly grueling work in the mines and the ability to "[rest] more and [pay] more attention to the sun, the forest, and the pale-blue tall sky."[20] This bliss is tangible, yet restrained; the convicts are still controlled, most obviously by the amount of food allotted to the prisoners – the "dry rations." The title of the story is "Сухим пайком" in the original Russian, the exact translation being "By dry rations," which, as scholar Svetlana Boym explains, is an "elliptical adverbial construction indicat[ing] a mode of existence."[21] Rationing functions in the camp as a form of rationalizing terror and oppression; the convicts fuss over the cooking, giddy to prepare the food themselves despite the appallingly small portions, and a kind

16. Kemball, Robin, and Anna Akhmatova, "Anna Akhmatova's 'Requiem, 1935-1940,'" The Russian Review 33, no. 3 (1974): 303–312.
17. Sirontskaya, *My Friend*, 16.
18. Shalamov, "A Letter," 8.
19. Peter Barnes translation of Osip Mandelstam's poetry, *Poems of Osip Mandelstam*, (New Directions Publishing, 2014), 60.
20. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, 41.
21. Svetlana Boym, "'Banality of Evil,' Mimicry, and the Soviet Subject: Varlam Shalamov and Hannah Arendt," (Slavic Review, vol. 67, no. 2, 2008), 89.

of "spiritual calm" is felt in this "dungeon's supreme freedom."[22]There is in the story, as per usual, a moment of intense atrocity that demonstrates the habitual acceptance of camp cruelty. A foreman visits the prisoners, and upon surveying their work, tells them that they have not fulfilled their quota and will need to return to camp, to the mines, to, in a sense, an even more pronounced threat of death. Ivan Ivanovich – the ultimate archetype – "[doesn't] ask any more questions" and hangs himself "in the tree fork without even using a rope."[23] As in "Berries," the act of killing is clinically presented and elicits only curious indifference; the speaker merely remarks that he's "never seen that kind of suicide before." As in "Berries," the visual is grotesque yet is not offered as such; Shalamov makes no attempt to permit the natural sentimental quality of death. Instead, he offers another grisly jest: "Fedya Shapov and I didn't know what to do – Ivan Ivanovich had some good foot rags that weren't torn."[24] The narrator divvies up the "dead man's clothing" between himself and the youngest convict, Fedya, while the remaining member of the group, Savelev, "just keeps walking around Ivan Ivanovich's body…"[25] He is struck by this death, a rare reaction in Kolyma. Suicide distinguishes itself as a kind of death worthy of contemplation.

In response to Ivanovich's suicide, Savelev is "forced to make decisions of his own," and he self-mutilates by cutting four fingers off of his left hand. This is again rendered as a non-event, yet the culmination of "Dry Rations" differentiates the story from Shalamov's other descriptions of violence. In an earlier conversation, seemingly innocuous as another indication of the inhumanity of camp conditions, Savelev explains to Fedya what "dressed appropriately for the season" means when written on an inmate's report:

> *'Well, they can't list every piece of summer or winter clothing you have on. If it's winter, they can't write that you were sent to work without a coat or mittens. How often did you stay in camp because there were no mittens?'*[26]

Fedya says never. The phrase is a bureaucratic expression used to cover the administration's practice of providing an inappropriate amount of clothing for the inmates based on the climate. The story moves on, and after the suicide of Ivanovich and the self-harm of Savelev, Shalamov ends with an even more horrific scene, worse because it's quieter; the narrator and Fedya return to camp, and the former, waking in the middle of the night, finds Fedya sitting and writing a letter. Looking "over his shoulder," the speaker reads, " 'Mama…Mama, I'm all right. Mama, I'm dressed appropriately for the season…'"[27] The lament of the three "Mama's" is as gutting as the hanging without a rope and the four bloody fingers in the dirt. It seems that Fedya, in Boym's words, has experienced an "initiation into the banality of evil" and now uses the oppressor's language to acquiesce to and acknowledge violence as prosaic.[28] To Shalamov, death has become so common it's comic; Fedya is, humorously enough, "dressed appropriately," for he is wearing the clothes stripped from Ivanovich's corpse. When trauma is the routine, pain becomes playful.

22. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, 40.
23. Ibid, 45.
24. Ibid, 45.
25. Ibid, 46.
26. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, 42.
27. Ibid, 47.
28. Boym, "Banality of Evil," 89.

AUTHORIAL AFTERLIFE

A form of immortality is attainable for the artist through their art, a form presented in "Cherry Brandy," Shalamov's "cross on the grave"[29] for Osip Mandelstam. "The poet was dying" begins the story, which examines a period of delirium experienced by a dokhodyaga whose mind is curiously aware of life seeping out of his body and of his approaching death. Mandelstam's name is never ascribed to the dying inmate, but his poem at the inception of the piece solidifies Shalamov's later testimony that "Cherry Brandy" was written to "leave a witness" to the poet's death. Shalamov was able to write this story because he himself had occupied this state; his imprisonment was largely spent as a *dokhodyaga*, "a pellagra patient of a classical, textbook kind, knight of the three 'D's' – dementia, dysentery, and dystrophy."[30] To inhabit the mind of a goner was therefore viable, but the piece's function as an ode translates it into a dual form of narrative substitution; as analyzed by Harriet Hustis and Maria Mostyka, Shalamov substitutes himself, "(a writer and poet who survived) for Mandelstam (a poet who did not), [revealing] his own unique conception of what it means to write a 'realist' prose that 'bears witness' to the truth of the camps."[31] Both the somatic and mental condition is occupied by Shalamov, and as he simultaneously relives his own dying state and imagines this state as experienced by Mandelstam, Shalamov extends a revelation. The *dokhodyaga* experiences an equilibrium of life and death, and their fundamentally contrary natures are challenged – "Life was entering into him and passing out of him, and he was dying"[32] – to present the inimitable condition of living death. This synchrony and iteration is compared by the speaker to his understanding of poetry, to the "immortality of verse, its life-giving function," and he becomes aware that he continues, and will continue, to live because of poetry:

> *Life entered by herself, mistress in her own home. He had not called her, but she entered his body, his brain; she came like verse, like inspiration….Poetry was the life-giving force by which he had lived…He had not lived for poetry; he had lived through poetry.*[33]

This revelation is tender; it arises both as a result of, and a kind of penetration through, the indifferent delirium of starvation, causing the dying poet to "[rejoice] that he had learned this final truth."[34] As in other stories, the last few lines of the piece are somewhat amusing; after the poet dies, his neighbors cleverly make the "dead man raise his hand like a puppet" whenever the guards give out bread rations, so as to get it for themselves[35]. This final image is morbidly funny. It acts as an ironic confirmation of two central motifs presented by Shalamov throughout *Kolyma Tales*: death becomes droll and dead men move.

The perpetuation of life through poetry is aided by narrative substitution; having died, the poet continues to live through the artistic representation of himself as fashioned by Shalamov. He perseveres through the poeticization of life and lives again, a fate that Shalamov perhaps hoped for himself. The dead man's hand, within the paradigm of Shalamov's "Kolyma glove," is reanimated as an allusion to the necessary process of reliving in order to create. As he redons this glove and this body of the *dokhodyaga*, substituting himself for

29. Hustis, "The Starving Artist,'" 469.
30. Shalamov, "On Prose," 111-126.
31. Hustis, "The Starving Artist,'" 469.
32. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, 70.
33. Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales*, 71.
34. Ibid, 72.
35. Ibid, 75.

Mandelstam and presenting the "truth" of living through poetry, through writing, through art, Shalamov touches death. He writes as an occupier of, and a witness to, suffering, thus affirming the position of art as a testament and document. Shalamov, akin to Akhmatova, is evincing that he "can describe this, and…will."

Shalamov can and will create, while nonetheless resisting the idea of his art as educative. When faced with this rejection, it becomes difficult to situate *Kolyma Tales* in a genre; Gulag narratives, memoirs of trauma, and documentary prose are often considered to instruct as well as to record. The standards of literary description as well as the standards of literary criticism seem inapplicable to Shalamov's writing, similar to, as his friend and archivist Irina Sirontskaya puts it, how "Hiroshima, Auschwitz, and Kolyma cannot be comprehended within the structure of the psyche."[36] Yet one wants to learn from Shalamov's stories, if only to offer a kind of appreciation through recognition. Sirontskaya, as well as describing how Shalamov spurned the creation of art as the creation of some wisdom, also moderates this by relating how Shalamov "didn't simply speak, didn't think out loud – he taught, preached, prophesied."[37] This takes the pressure off a bit; one might feel rather hopeless after reading Kolyma Tales, and Shalamov's propensity for articulating himself and his experiences aids in the acquisition of the veritable, appalling, and necessary insights. His work shouldn't be understood as a scoffing at other modes of literature, at other renditions of the Gulag (except for perhaps Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who Shalamov thought of as "bogged down in the themes of nineteenth-century literature," a kind of "hell, [which] alas, [came] back!"), but as a necessary thing, an excision of trauma by writing. In his own words, Shalamov's stories "are screamed out;" they revel in the death of the novel as a genre, testify for the millions of prisoners who died in the Gulag penal system, and act as the author's lifeline.[38]

In an insistence of the non-ideological and unsentimental manner of creation, Shalamov seeks out a mode of literature that recognizes its need to "change drastically after the Kolyma," a statement reminiscent of Theodor Adorno's position that art "after Auschwitz is barbaric." [39] The conditions of cruelty as experienced by Shalamov were barbaric; the Gulag's atrocities were so great that an articulation of them compels the artist to feel at once the need to bite their tongue over what Mandelstam called this "speechless time."[40] Shalamov, however, doesn't castigate creation; he aims to offer an occupation of the human condition through art. A rendition of horror, albeit unspeakable, must be written, must be poeticized, must be kept alive. Both the act of creating and the product of creation are means of survival, of living for Shalamov; to tell a story was a way to gain favor and protection in the camp, to remember a word was a joyful indication of something from the past remaining in one's mind, to write and keep writing was a statement of sentience. His last recorded poem:

So free from earthly fuss.
I hug the ground,
Above the planet thus
I fly around.[41]

The terra firma of Kolyma, upon which Shalamov tread as a man, a prisoner stripped of identity, a ghost, and a resurrected artist, was a landscape of nonsensical violence. Released from material misery, Shalamov remains in the artistic atmosphere. Shalamov witnessed, experienced, and rendered death, and yet, lives.

36. Kemball, "Anna Akhmatova's 'Requiem,'" 303–312.
37. Ibid, 303-312.
38. Shalamov, "The Glove," 51.
39. Ibid, 51.
40. Mandelstam, *Poems*, 57.
41. Shalamov, "The Glove," 51.

Works Cited

Anastasiya Osipova, "The Forced Conversion of Varlam Shalamov," (Los Angeles Review of Books, 2019).

Anna Andreevna Akhmatova. Requiem and Poem Without a Hero. Elek Books, 1976.

Anne Applebaum, Gulag: A History (New York, Doubleday, 2003).

Harriet Hustis and Maria Mostyka. "The Starving Artist: Life, Death, and the Role of the Storyteller in Varlam Shalamov's 'The Snake Charmer' and 'Cherry Brandy'" (The Slavic and East European Journal, vol. 58, no. 3, 2014).

Irina Sirontskaya, My Friend Varlam Shalamov, (Moscow: Russian Fund for the Humanities, 2006).

Martin Puchner, Writing Poetry Under Stalin: Samizdat and Memorization, (Literary Hub, 2017).

Peter Barnes translation of Osip Mandelstam's poetry, Poems of Osip Mandelstam, (New Directions Publishing, 2014).

Steven Banes, Death and Redemption: The Gulag and Shaping of Soviet Society (Princeton, 2011).

Svetlana Boym, "'Banality of Evil,' Mimicry, and the Soviet Subject: Varlam Shalamov and Hannah Arendt." (Slavic Review, vol. 67, no. 2, 2008).

Valery Yesipov, "Cerebration or Genuflection? (Varlam Shalamov and Alexander Solzhenitsin)," (Russkij Sever [The Russian North] No.4, 2002).

Varlam Tikhonovich Shalamov. Kolyma Tales. Penguin, 1994.

Varlam Shalamov, Collected Works in Four Volumes (New York: Penguin Press, 1972).