

Auto-Biographies and Soviet Trauma: The Case of Ol'ga Adamova-Sliozberg. Preliminary Remarks

The present article proposes a first reconstruction of the complex editorial path of Ol'ga Adamova-Sliozberg's memoirs *Put'* [Path]. The ultimate goal of the research is to provide a coherent analytical rendering of the genesis and textual dynamics of the work and to understand whether some authorial and editorial choices may be seen as traces of trauma. Bearing in mind the perspective of trauma – considered here as a potentially useful interpretative key in cases where textual or structural clues can be detected – it is possible to read the cultural documents linked to the memory of Soviet repression also in terms of their linguistic and compositional signals. Thus, the philological work on the texts by authors who underwent repression may help to get a clearer understanding of the relation between trauma and representation in autobiographical works.

In the immense production of memoirs related to personal experience within the repressive Soviet system, the auto / biographical legacy of Ol'ga Adamova-Sliozberg (1902-91)¹ is particularly important from both a cultural and an academic point of view in regards to the analysis of the impact of trauma on literary writing, as it presents a whole range of potentially relevant characteristics, which were indicated several years ago as

being specific of the genre to which it belongs:

The memoirs of the Gulag are an unusual corpus of writings, due to the combination of the autobiographical element, the urgency of the testimony and the effect of the trauma on the narrative: another distinguishing feature is the influence of the clandestine circulation of these texts on the style, which one hopes will be thoroughly investigated (Gullotta 2011: 241).

Having trained as an economist and not destined to become a literary writer, Adamova-

¹ A series of contributions of a merely biographical or purely introductory nature have been dedicated to Adamova-Sliozberg – whose testimony is a direct source of historical-literary reconstructions (Solženitsyn 2001, Applebaum 2017) – in Russia and Italy (Korzhasin 1993, Magnanini 2004, Fici 2013, Chudakova 2015; Sicari 2019, 2021).

Slizberg left a relatively circumscribed legacy, both in terms of genre and volume, the whole being reduced, essentially, to memoirs written over a long period of time (*Put'*) [Path], with the first written work dating between 1946 and 1958 (Vilenskii 2001: 253). This text, which began to circulate in samizdat from at least 1956, has been published since 1989 in journals, anthologies or as a book in its own right, in partial, supplemented or 'complete' editions that are not without interesting textual differences, some of which will be assessed in this article (Adamova-Slizberg 1989, 1993, 2002, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2019; Vilenskii 1989, 2004).²

Put' is also the title of a small collection of poems 'written' by Adamova-Slizberg 'in her head' over the course of the twenty or so years of her confinement within the 'zone' (Adamova-Slizberg 1992, 2001, 2006; Vilenskii 2005, Panikarov et al.

2010, Deriabina et al. 2023) and also partially included within the memoirs which share the same title.

Subsequently, at a time coinciding with the twilight of her existence, the author worked on writing further short memoiristic portraits, dedicated to single members or moments of her family, which were often included as an appendix to the book editions of *Put'* under the comprehensive title of *Rasskazy o moei sem'e* [Tales about my family].

To complete the data of Adamova-Slizberg's biographical journey, *Put'* (which inevitably focused on the author's fate and, more importantly, on the collective fate of fellow Soviet citizens, and particularly women, between 1935 and 1956) is joined by the author's participation in at least two documentaries dedicated to the collective oral reconstruction of the experience of detention in the Soviet Union (Goldovskaia 1988),³ and by the

² The success of the text, which also inspired theatrical performances (Nepachareva 2004), is illustrated by its translation into several languages: as part of Vilenskii's anthology, in French (Adamova-Slizberg et al. 1997), English (Vilensky 1999), German (Adamova-Slizberg 2009), Czech (Babka et al. 2009) and Polish (Wileński 2011); as a book in its own right, in Italian (Adamova-Slizberg 2003) and English (Adamova-Slizberg 2011).

³ The website of Memorial Italia (<https://www.memorial-italia.it/luogo-dogne-luce-muto/>) shows a link to a documentary which can be found on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/8SEOmBeZRWw> [accessed 19 December 2024]), which – as stated there – was curated by Memorial and directed by Daria Chubova. Entitled *...luogo d'ogne luce muto*, it is divided into three episodes ('La collettiviz-

testimony of her relatives, particularly her children Aleksandr Zakgeim and El'ga Silina (Zakgeim 1992, Zakgeim *et al.* 2006, Krugovych 2016, Silina 2020) and great-grandson Fëdor Katasonov (Ivanushkina 2016, Fedor 2018, Gordeeva 2021, Kornii 2022).⁴

zazione e la fame 1932-1933'; 'La costruzione del canale Stalin 1932-1937'; '1937'). Adamova-Sliozberg appears in the closing minutes of the third episode (1:49:13 to 1:49:50), recounting 'the episode of the mirror', seen for the first time after four years of confinement, in which she sees her mother's reflection. This anecdote had already been told, albeit in different words, in both Goldovskaia's documentary and in *Put'*.

⁴ A defence expert in the deeply controversial and highly unjust trial against Iurii Dmitriev, Katasonov – who spoke at the trial in his capacity as paediatrician – clearly explained how he sees a strong link between the preservation of the memory of the Gulag experienced by his great-grandmother and the authoritarian deviations and political persecution that characterise Russia today: 'В моей бабушкиной книжке есть её подруга по тюрьме Женя Быховская, которая пропадает в какой-то момент, ничего не известно, что с ней стало дальше, и Дмитриев нашёл её в списках. Она расстреляна была в Сандармохе в Соловецком этапе. Поэтому в каком-то смысле Дмитриев связан и со мной, и с моей семьёй, и с нашим преданием. Я не знал, честно говоря, ничего про него до тех пор, пока не началось это дело, и мне позвонил Юра Самодуров, дядюшка мой, и сказал, что в деле ищут экспертов педиатров, которые могут прокомментировать' [In my grand-

This contribution takes the form of a preliminary investigation aimed at probing the possible existence of an implicit traumatic dimension in the writing of Adamova-Sliozberg and, in view of a more articulate and systematic analysis of the phenomenon, it proposes firstly to reconstruct and arrange the complex editorial path – and stratification – revealed by *Put'*, in the conviction that this is a critical step, necessary to achieve a coherent analytical rendering of the genesis and textual dynamics of the work. Bearing in mind the perspective of trauma – not considered here as certain, but as a potentially useful interpretative key in cases where textual or structural clues (such as editorial discontinuities, recurring ellipses, marked stylistic variations or anomalies in the construction of the discourse) can

mother's book there is her prison friend Zhenia Bykhovskaia, who disappears at some point; nothing is known about what happened to her afterward, and Dmitriev found her on the lists. She was shot in Sandarmokh, part of the 'Solovki transport'. Therefore, in a way, Dmitriev is connected to me, my family, and our history. Honestly, I didn't know anything about him until this case started, and my uncle, Iura Samodurov, called me and said that the case was looking for pediatric experts who could provide commentary] (Gordeeva 2021). On Sandarmokh and the persecutory court case of Iurii Dmitriev, see Flige 2022.

be detected – it is possible to read the cultural documents linked to the memory of Soviet repression also in terms of their linguistic and compositional signals. Six aspects of particular relevance are identified in the case of the study of Adamova-Sliozberg's written production, all of which are present or can be traced from the text and its context of production: 1) the biography of the author and her family, before, during and after repression; 2) the places and periods of detention, with the corresponding disciplinary conditions; 3) the circumstances and initial aims of the drafting of the writing; 4) the period and the methods actually used for writing; 5) the forms of circulation and reception of the text, from the samizdat versions to the printed editions; 6) the presence of postmemory (Hirsch 2012), understood as transgenerational transmission of trauma.

All these aspects are recognisable in the case in hand, but they will not be treated uniformly: the analysis proposed here focuses particularly on the editorial path and linguistic dynamics of the text. The twofold philological task undertaken here is, on one hand, to investigate certain aspects of the author's gestation and drafting of her memoirs over the years, and, on the

other, to reconstruct the main biographical stages as they emerge from the various forms of self-portrayal that she elaborated. To simplify the identification of printed and archival materials relating to *Put'*, which are useful for biographical reconstruction and the argumentation of textual differences, a table with an indication of the published sources and of the typescripts preserved in the Fund 202 (opis' 1) of the Moscow branch of Memorial is proposed here, with a single corresponding abbreviation:⁵

- DRN: first partial printed edition published in *Druzhba Narodov* (Adamova-Sliozberg 1989).⁶
- VIL-1: first complete printed edition published in the first edition of the anthology edited by Semen Vilenskii, *Dodnes' tiagoteet* [It Still Anguishes Me]; there are 38 chapters plus a

⁵ The table is limited to materials often cited in this article. For an even more complete reference, please see the final bibliography.

⁶ A fragment of *Put'*, entitled 'Iz perezhitogo' [From Lived Experience], was published in *Zvezda* (Adamova-Sliozberg 1990). According to an unpublished typescript by Adamova-Sliozberg's daughter (Silina 2019: 99), whom I thank for sending it to me, individual chapters of the text also have appeared in issue 5 (1990) of *Raduga* and issue 9 (2011) of *Niva*.

short biographical-introductory text by the author dating back to 1988 (Vilenskii 1989).

- VOZ-1: first book edition, edited by the publisher Vozvrashchenie; it consists of 41 chapters (the chapter 'Skelet v shkafu' [A Skeleton in the Closet], found in all other complete printed editions, is missing) plus an introductory text. It is also the first edition that mentions the *Rasskazy o moei sem'e* in the appendix, with seven depictions of family members of anecdotes (*Son* is missing) (Adamova-Sliozberg, 1993);⁷
- VOZ-2: second book edition, edited by the publisher Vozvrashchenie (Adamova-Sliozberg 2002).
- VIL-2: second edition of VIL-1 (Vilenskii 2004).⁸

⁷ It is also available online on the vgulage.name platform (<https://vgulage.name/books/adamova-sliozberg-o-l-put-2/>).

⁸ The text is identical to that of VIL-1: 'Первый том «Доднесь тяготееет» выходит вторым изданием. Вносить какие-либо изменения в тексты уже ушедших авторов – а таких абсолютное большинство – мы не посчитали возможным' [The first volume of *Dodnes' tiagoteet* is being released as a second edition. We did not consider it possible to make any changes to the texts of authors who have already passed away – and such are the overwhelming majority] (Vilenskii 2004: 6). The textual references in this contribution are taken from this second edition, availa-

- VOZ-5: fifth book edition, edited by the publisher Vozvrashchenie (Adamova-Sliozberg 2015).
- AST: sixth book edition, edited by the publisher AST (Adamova-Sliozberg 2019).
- DELO-1: 191 typewritten pages containing 36 pieces, plus an introductory text (Delo 1).
- DELO-2: 223 typewritten pages containing 43 pieces, plus an introductory text and two appendices: 'Nadezhda Vasil'evna Grankina' and 'Vstrecha s drugom iunosti' (Delo 2).
- DELO-3: 189 typewritten pages containing 36 pieces, plus an introductory text and two appendices: 'Igor' Adrianovich Khorin' and an untitled text dated 1966 (Delo 3).
- DELO-4: 237 typewritten pages containing 43 pieces, plus an introductory text (Delo 4).
- DELO-5: 227 typewritten pages containing 42 pieces, plus an introductory text (Delo 5).

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ble online at [imwerden.de](https://imwerden.de/pdf/dodnes_tyagoteet_tom1_2004__ocr.pdf) (https://imwerden.de/pdf/dodnes_tyagoteet_tom1_2004__ocr.pdf). An anthological and partial version of the text has also been published on other occasions (Adamova-Sliozberg 1990, Vilenskii 2001).

With regard to the time of genesis and composition of *Put'*, the elements available are sufficient to shed light on some facts. Adamova-Sliozberg began planning her memoirs during the Kazan' period, between the early summer of 1938 and the spring of 1939, but had already started to mentally compose poems in the meantime, some of which would become part of her memoirs. From this point of view, Adamova-Sliozberg's written testimony is situated at the level of 'text 0, a draft elaborated by the subconscious before being written down, a sort of pre-text conceived in the very moment in which the subject experiences the reality that will become the subject of their writing' (Pieralli 2013: 225).

As several later accounts show, Adamova-Sliozberg had begun writing her memoirs (conceptually planned, as she recalls in her book, already at the time of her confinement in Kazan') between 1946 and 1949, after the first release from the camp. Fearing a second arrest, Adamova-Sliozberg had hidden the pages containing the text inside bottles buried in the grounds of her family dacha, but when she returned from the camps for good, the exact location of the hiding place could not be identified, resulting in the permanent loss of

the first draft of the initial chapters of *Put'*, later rewritten from the author's memory. No complete written confirmation of this circumstance by the author herself actually seems to exist, only the account passed on by her family.⁹ The author men-

⁹ 'Начиная с 1946 года, в те три года до ссылки, которые она нелегально прожила в Москве под гнетом непрекращающейся угрозы ареста, она начала писать. Это было без преувеличения смертельно опасно, и мама тайно зарывала написанное в землю на даче. Но сейчас, в 1955 году, зарытые бутылки с листками найти не удалось. Она начала сначала' [She began to write in 1946, during those three years before her exile, which she spent illegally in Moscow under the constant threat of arrest. To write was literally life-threatening, therefore my mother secretly buried what she wrote in the ground at the dacha. But in 1955 the buried bottles with the sheets could not be found. She started again from the beginning] (Zakgeim *et al.* 2006: 59); 'Первый вариант книги она сделала еще в 1946—1949 годах, когда вырвалась с Колымы. Писать о лагерях было большой смелостью, поскольку при освобождении давали подписку о неразглашении, и в любой момент маму могли арестовать повторно. Рукописи мы помещали в бутылки и закапывали на даче. Когда мама вернулась через пять лет после второго ареста, мы ничего не нашли. Но она очень легко все восстановила и дописывала книгу еще 36 лет, до конца жизни' [She made the first version of the book back in 1946–1949, when she escaped from Kolyma. Writing about the camps required great courage, because upon release one had to sign a

tions the concealment of the text in her introduction to VIL-2, but makes no reference to the loss of the first originals: 'Отсюда мои записки, начатые еще в 1946 году, не раз зарытые в землю в бутылках и снова вырытые, продолженные в эпоху застоя без надежды увидеть их напечатанными' [Here are my notes, begun back in 1946, repeatedly buried in bottles in the ground and dug up again, continued during the era of Stagnation without any hope of seeing them printed] (Vilenskii 2004: 11). The same consideration can be made with regard to a text from 1990 ('Mne 88 let' [I am 88 years old], DELO-6: f. 11)¹⁰ in which Adamova-Sliozberg speaks about the beginning of the process of writing the text.

secrecy pledge, therefore my mother could have been arrested again at any moment. We placed the manuscripts in bottles and buried them at the dacha. When my mother returned five years after her second arrest, we found nothing. But she very easily restored everything and continued writing the book for another 36 years, until the end of her life] (Silina 2020: 33). This reconstruction has been passed down and preserved through the generations to her great-grandson Fedor Katasonov (Fedor 2018).

¹⁰ The text, originally titled 'Materinskoe gore' [The Grief of a Mother], would later be published in the *Rasskazy o moei sem'e* series under the title 'Deti' [Children].

She mentions the bottles, but makes no reference to no longer being able to locate them and having to rewrite the first chapters from scratch.¹¹

Adamova-Sliozberg resumed writing in Karaganda (1954-55), but we do not know exactly what she wrote and until what point she continued her writing

¹¹ 'Я очень рада, что написала о пережитом под живым впечатлением, начав писать еще в 1946 году, освободившись после первого ареста, отсидев в тюрьмах и лагерях восемь лет и проведя два года без права выезда на Колыме. Писала я ночами, дрожа от страха — ведь при освобождении с нас брали подписку о неразглашении. *Утром засовывала написанное в бутылку, запечатывала сургучом и закапывала в землю*' [I am very glad that I wrote about my experiences while they were still vivid, having started writing back in 1946, after being released from my first arrest, having spent eight years in prisons and camps, and two years in Kolyma without the right to leave. I wrote at night, trembling with fear — after all, upon our release we had to sign a pledge of secrecy. *In the morning, I would put what I had written into a bottle, seal it with wax, and bury it in the ground*] (the sentence in italics was deleted when the text was published; DELO-6: f. 11). The purpose of the reconstruction here is not to cast doubt on the truth of the account by Adamova-Sliozberg's relatives, but to emphasise the author's decision not to reveal this episode – far from marginal with regard to the genesis of her writing, at least of the first part of her memoirs – in texts or paratexts attributable to her.

(the only thing we are certain of, as we shall see later, is the composition of the chapter 'Liza'). The second writing period was witnessed by Korzhavin, also in Karaganda at that time 'в некоторой полуссылке' [In some sort of half-exile] ('Мемуары Ольги Львовны Адамовой-Слиозберг я читал одним из первых, по мере их написания' [I was among the first to read the memoirs of Olga Lvovna Adamova-Sliozberg, as they were written]), who confirms that he distributed the text – which had, by then, become to all intents and purposes a samizdat text – in his intellectual circles: 'в 50-е — 60-е годы, я показывал эти мемуары многим профессиональным литераторам' [In the 1950s and 1960s I showed these memoirs to many professional writers] (Korzhavin 1993: 3). Most certainly in 1963 (therefore, in the wake of the publication of *Odin den' Ivana Denisovicha* [One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich], 1962) the 'manuscript' was delivered to the editorial department of the publisher Sovetskii pisatel' (Adamova-Sliozberg 2022: 277) and was reviewed, probably for internal use, positively by Frida Vigdorova (18 November 1963) and the editor-in-chief of the publisher Fedor Koluntsev (27 July 1964). By this time, the

Khrushchevian thaw was coming to an end, and the publication of the text was postponed.

A first, albeit partial, printed version of *Put'* appeared in 1989 in *Druzhba Narodov*. VIL-1, the first 'complete' version (the only one published while the author was still alive) appeared that same year, as the première text of the first edition (published by Sovetskii pisatel') of the anthology *Dodnes' tiagoteet*, edited by Vilenskii. *Vozvrashchenie* published five editions of the book between 1993 and 2015. In 2019, the text was published as a book by Ast. All of the book editions are divided into 42 chapters, with the exception of the first, VOZ-1, which, for reasons unknown to me, lacks the chapter 'Skelet v shkafu' (also included in VIL-1). From 2009 onwards, the editing of the text began to offer the tripartition of the memoirs, maintaining this format until 2019 (1. from the eve of the first arrest to the transfer to Magadan; 2. the entire experience at Kolyma; 3. from the first return to rehabilitation).

Bearing in mind the differences between the various editions, not only in structure but also in content – and particularly between VIL-1, VIL-2 and VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5, as will be discussed here – it would be helpful to understand which text should

be considered as the author's final version, especially for the purpose of identifying the linguistic traits that reveal a possible trauma, to be explored in future contributions. It is definitely VIL-1, published when Adamova-Sliozberg was still alive. The textual differences and additions in the posthumous book editions are, however, so significant and substantial that they must also be attributed to the drafting process and the will of the author herself, although it is not always clear when they were actually written. We are aware that, at least until mid-July 1991, the author was struggling with the writing of *Rasskazy o moei sem'e*. Certainly, and this is also confirmed by her family, Adamova-Sliozberg rethought and reworked her literary testament until the latter years of her life:

мама увидела опубликованной большую часть написанного и в конце жизни подготовила к печати полную книгу своих воспоминаний [...] До самого конца жизни мама продолжала работать над готовящейся к отдельному изданию книгой. Последние главы написаны в середине июля 1991 года. Через месяц мама с энтузиаз-

мом восприняла крах ГКЧП. А в декабре ее не стало [Mum saw most of what she had written published, and at the end of her life prepared for publication a complete version of her memoirs [...] Until the very end of her life, mum continued to work on the book, which was being prepared for publication as a separate book. The final chapters were written in mid-July 1991. A month later, mum enthusiastically welcomed the collapse of the State Emergency Committee. And in December passed away] (Zakgeim et al. 2006: 59, 61).

A further question concerns the possible differences between the samizdat version, which circulated in the late 1950s and 1960s, and at least VIL-1. In my opinion, the samizdat drafts preserved by Memorial – which, according to their description, date back to the late 1980s – already allow some assumptions to be drawn from the paratextual elements produced in the 1960s. I refer both to the two reviews 'for internal use' written for the publisher *Sovetskii pisatel'*, and to the first of two letters written by Solzhenitsyn

to Adamova-Sliozberg on 27 December 1967 (VOZ-2: 280-81). Quite apart from the flattering assessment of the work as a whole, both reviews insist that the author, in view of the printed publication, should have ‘уничтожить хронологический разрыв, заполнить пустоту между главой “Скелет в шкафу” и заключительным куском (1949-й год)’ [eliminated the chronological gap and filled the void between the chapter ‘Skelet v shkaфу’ and the final bit (1949)], a sentence which we find extremely interesting and which Vigdorova follows up with an equally valuable completion: ‘Читатель вправе знать, как героиня “Пути” вернулась домой, как сложилась ее жизнь после второго ареста’ [The reader has the right to know how the protagonist of *Put’* returned home and how her life turned out after her second arrest]. This would seem to mean that, until 1964, from the point of view of the narrative, the work stopped at 1949, the second arrest. The indication of the year in brackets in the quotation also refers directly to the chapter entitled ‘1949 god. Kamera No. 105 v Butyrskoi tiur’mе’ [1949. Room n. 105 in the Butyrka Prison], with the title remaining the same for DRN and VIL-1 but then becoming absent, re-

placed by the chapter ‘Povtorny arest’ [Repeated Arrest] (followed by seven other chapters) and narratively developing almost twice the content of the previous version.

Solzhenitsyn’s letter dated 1967 offers us further insights into the editorial process. His reading was particularly attentive and interested in view of his ongoing work on *The Gulag Archipelago*. In addition to his praise of the author, there is a whole series of comments, suggestions, contradictions, clarifications and requests. This series of data enriches our ability to compare the structure of the proto-samizdat edition to the versions printed from the late 1980s onwards. For example, the sentence ‘В Суздале по Вашим датам Вы пробыли 1, а не 2 месяца (10 мая - нач. июня)’ [According to the dates you wrote, you spent 1 month in Suzdal’, not 2 months (May 10 - early June)] tells us that, in the samizdat version in Solzhenitsyn’s possession, the beginning of June is indicated as the *ad quem* termination of the experience in Suzdal’, while in all the versions printed in Russia (including DRN), the date is stated as being 10 July 1939.¹² All

¹² Archival sources and, strangely enough, even translations, partially diverge on this point. The correct ‘10 July’ is found in three versions (DELO-1: f.

the chapters that Solzhenitsyn mentions by title and praises are in the first two parts of the posthumous tripartition (e.g. ‘Basia’ [Basia], ‘Nenavist’ [Envy], ‘Altunin i otlichnaia velikolepnaia ‘Zoloto’ [Altunin and the Amazing Fantastic ‘Zoloto’]). The requests by the author of *The Gulag Archipelago* include the following: ‘Моя личная просьба: если можно — расшифруйте мне такие фамилии: Мария Вартанян, Лиза Цветкова, Женья Соболев (и Петров), Мотья “Эдисончик”’ [I have a personal request: if possible, decipher the following names for me: Maria Vartanian, Liza Tsvetkova, Zhenia Sobol’ (and Petrov), Motia-‘Edisonchik’], which is interesting because only Motia-

73, DELO-4: f. 79, DELO-5: f. 79), while in the other two we find ‘10 June’ (DELO-2: f. 74, DELO-3: f. 68). As regards the translations, the French (Adamova-Sliozberg *et al.* 1997: 71) and Italian (Adamova-Sliozberg 2003: 83) versions state June, while the German translation (2009) correctly states July. The French translator, who only had VIL-1 at her disposal, completely omitted the chapter ‘Ania Bublik’ (not only the chapter is absent, the narration is interrupted in the place where the chapter should be and resumes, incoherently, afterwards), while the Italian translator mentions in the introduction (Adamova-Sliozberg 2003: X) that their base version ‘is that of 1989, with some integrations from later editions’, up to VOZ-2.

‘Edisonchik’ and Liza Tsvetkova appear in the various printed editions. Indeed, and this fact is preserved in the author’s typescripts, in the early samizdat versions Adamova-Sliozberg had hidden many of the characters’ real names behind pseudonyms. In this specific case, these are all central figures in the first chapters, relating to the Lubianka and Butyrka prisons. Vartanian (actually Varganian: DELO-2, DELO-3) is Daniĕlian (actually Danielian for DELO-1 – which, however, as usual, corrects the previous Varganian in pen – DELO-4 and DELO-5); Sobol’ (again in DELO-2 and DELO-3, which, however, present a note in the margin certifying the true identity and year of birth as 1898) is Gol’tsman (DELO-1 again presents the correction in pen, while DELO-4 and DELO-5 already state the correct wording); the writer Petrov, Gol’tsman’s husband, is actually Ivan Filipchenko (again DELO-1 makes a correction in pen, DELO-2 and DELO-3 refer to the authentic name in a footnote; DELO-4 and DELO-5 already reveal the real identity). Solzhenitsyn evidently reads an anti-graph of DELO-2 and DELO-3, a version not yet corrected in the margin.

Rationalised Chronology of 'The Way of the Cross'

Born in Samara, on the River Volga, on 1 August 1902 into a family of Jewish tailors, Adamova-Sliozberg always considered herself alien to any religious sentiment: 'Я — еврейка. Я — человек русской культуры. [...] Еврейского языка не знаю. Религиозность мне чужда' [I am Jewish. I am a person of Russian culture. [...] I do not speak Hebrew. Religiosity is alien to me] (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 227). Her mother, Nadezhda Il'inichna (Shneider), a key point of reference for Ol'ga during her worst years, was born in Moscow; her father, Lev Aro-novich, born in Smolensk, moved to Moscow at the age of 13. El'ga Silina recalls that:

Мамины предки имели право жить вне черты оседлости и поселились сначала в Москве, но после покушения на царя, в котором участвовал еврей, из Москвы изгнали всех евреев. Так семья Слиозберг оказалась в Самаре, где в 1902 году и родилась моя мама Ольга Львовна [My mother's ancestors had the right to live outside the Pale of Settlement and initially

settled in Moscow, but after the assassination attempt on the Tsar, in which a Jew participated, all Jews were expelled from Moscow. So the Sliozberg family ended up in Samara, where my mother, Olga L'vovna, was born in 1902] (Silina 2020: 28).

From childhood, Adamova-Sliozberg knew about the horrors of the anti-Semitic pogroms of the time of Nicholas II from the stories told by her grandfather Aron. This feeling of fear intensified in 1913 with the Beilis trial: 'Одно из самых страшных впечатлений, повлиявших на мою детскую душу, было "дело Бейлиса"' [One of the most terrible impressions that influenced my soul when I was a child the was 'Beilis affair'] (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 254). After finishing school, in 1919 she moved to Moscow, where she attended university and graduated with a degree in Economics. In Moscow she met Iudel' Ruvimovich Zakgeim (neither Iudel' nor Adamova-Sliozberg ever joined the Communist Party) whom she married in 1928 (Vilenskii 2004: 10). Iudel' was born in Vitebsk in 1898 to a very religious family where 'говорили только по-

еврейски' [spoke only Hebrew] (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 233).¹³

¹³ 'Отец был атеистом, но интересовался различными религиями и хорошо в них разбирался, и еще во время обучения его пригласили читать лекции по истории религий' [My father was an atheist, but he was interested in various religions and was well versed in them, and was invited to give lectures on the history of religions already at the time when he was a student] (Silina 2020: 28). Adamova-Sliozberg dedicated one of the sketches in *Rasskazy o moei sem'e* to her first husband's family, focusing particularly on the figure of his father ('Мой свекор Рувим Евсеевич Закгейм был молчаливый еврей, погруженный в священные книги' [My father-in-law, Ruvim Evseevich Zakgeim, was a silent Jew, immersed in sacred books], Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 251). To prevent his son from attending school on Saturdays, Ruvim Evseevich initially denied Iudel' the chance of enrolling in a Russian institute, until a teacher, realising the boy's talents, convinced his father to do so. Iudel' found Russian hard, especially written Russian. His wife writes: 'Я впоследствии нашла его гимназический табель. По всем предметам 5, по русскому — 2 или 3. Однако года за два он овладел русским языком' [I later found his high school report card. He got 5s in all subjects, but a 2 or 3 in Russian. However, in about two years he had mastered the Russian language] (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 233). Their daughter also mentions this aspect: 'Когда выехал из черты оседлости, русского он не знал. Но папа был очень способным, довольно быстро выучил язык и в 1922 году поступил в Академию коммунистического воспитания им. Н. К. Крупской' [When he left the Pale of Settlement, he

In 1925, Iudel' began teaching Notions of political science at the Faculty of Biology at Moscow University and, in around 1931, took the chair of Dialectics of nature, despite not yet having the necessary academic qualification, which he would only acquire in 1935 thanks partly to the help from Adamova-Sliozberg in writing his doctoral dissertation (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 234-35; Silina 2020: 229). Passionate about medicine, from 1925 Zakgeim organised a study group on the history of medicine, attended by various doctors and academics (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 237). The group would continue to meet with some regularity for about ten years, until Iudel' (along with most of its members) was arrested on 10 March 1936, charged with being part of an organisation preparing an assassination attempt on Stalin.¹⁴ At the time

did not know Russian. But Dad was very bright, he learned the language fairly quickly, and in 1922 he entered the Academy of Communist Education 'N.K. Krupskaja' (Silina 2020: 28).

¹⁴ 'Его обвинили в том, что он троцкист-террорист, участвующий в заговоре против Сталина. У них в университете действовал своего рода кружок, где обсуждали политическую ситуацию в стране. Туда входили не только студенты, но и преподаватели' [He was accused of being a Trotskyist terrorist involved in a conspiracy against Stalin. There was a sort of circle

of Zakgeim's arrest, Adamova-Sliozberg was employed at the General Directorate of the leather industry. On 27 April 1936, Adamova-Sliozberg too was arrested, charged with conspiracy against the life of Kaganovich. As her daughter recalls: 'В обвинительном заключении у мамы было написано: "Могла слышать антисоветские разговоры и не донесла", а также что она участвовала в заговоре об убийстве Кагановича' [In my mum's indictment was written: 'She could have overheard anti-Soviet conversations and did not report them', and also that she participated in a conspiracy to assassinate Kaganovich] (Silina 2020: 31). This marked the beginning of the family's long struggle to prevent Adamova-Sliozberg and Iudel's children from being placed in an orphanage as 'children of enemies of the people', and to have custody given, as would indeed happen, first to their grandmother Nadezhda, and later to their aunt Elena.¹⁵ Iudel's agony

at the university where they discussed the political situation in the country. It included not only students but also faculty members] (Silina 2020: 29).

¹⁵ All this is told by Adamova-Sliozberg in *Rasskazy o moei sem'e*, particularly in the chapters 'Bor'ba rodnykh za moikh detei' [My Parents' Fight for My Children] and 'Elena L'vovna Sliozberg' (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 238-45).

lasted only a few months: while the family received the fateful notification of a sentence of '10 years without the right to correspondence', he was actually shot in Moscow as early as 4 October 1936.

The beginning of Adamova-Sliozberg's way of the cross ('Nachalo krestnogo puti' [The Beginning of the Way of the Cross] is the title of the second chapter of her memoirs) winds through stations whose names and dates (sometimes even times of arrival and departure) are almost always indicated in *Put'* with absolute precision. On the day of her arrest, Adamova-Sliozberg was taken to Lubianka prison, where she was interrogated three times during her four-month stay, always for sev-

Elena, a doctor, was her older sister; her son Vadim, the Dima remembered by Adamova-Sliozberg, is the father of Iurii Samodurov, one of the founders of Memorial (1989) and director of the Sakharov Centre from 1996 to 2008. Samodurov himself recounts his link to Adamova-Sliozberg in a documentary on the history and persecution of Memorial, highlighting how this experience influenced his later choices in the field of dissent (Gol'dentsvaig 2021). Adamova-Sliozberg's Moscow household also included the second of her sisters, Paulina, a singer, married to Vladimir Arkad'evich Tronin. Her younger brother, Mikhail L'vovich, a physicist, was living at the time in Leningrad (Pamiat' n.d.).

eral hours, without ever admitting her guilt. In August 1936, she was transferred to Butyrka prison in Moscow, to cell number 105, where she remained for three months. The trial was scheduled for 15 November, at Lubianka, and lasted about 15 minutes. In the end, Adamova-Sliozberg was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in strict solitary confinement and a further four years' disqualification from political rights. After two days spent at Lubianka prison, her journey to the Solovki islands began. The train journey and the crossing of the White Sea on a steamer named SLON took four days.

Regarding the date of the next leg of the transfer to Kazan' prison ('В июне 1938 года нас повезли в Казань') [In June 1938 we were taken to Kazan'], the information is only included in VIL-1 and VIL-2 (Vilenskii 2004: 47). The reference is at the end of the 'Solovki' chapter and the transition to the chapter entitled 'Kazanskaia t'iurma' [The Prison in Kazan']. If we compare VIL-1 (the first printed version that can be considered sufficiently complete and the only one that is not posthumous) with the book editions, we can see that the former has an additional intermediate chapter ('Ania Bublik'), which is structurally absent

in the book editions, but interpolated in the 'Solovki' chapter, the difference being that, in VOZ-1, the narration is placed at the end of the chapter, whereas in the others, e.g. VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, it is situated within it. These are structurally different versions: this is confirmed by a further chronological fact, dating back to the spring of 1938, when the author-protagonist learns from two prisoners that 'женская тюрьма на Соловках ликвидируется, и всех заключенных перевозят на материк. То же ожидало и нас' [the women's prison on Solovki is being closed and all the prisoners are being transported to the mainland. The same destiny awaited us]. The next sentence ('Я мысленно оглядела полтора года, прожитые на Соловках') [I mentally looked back over the year and a half that I spent on Solovki] is in fact included in VIL-1 and VOZ-1 but – again – absent in VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, which close the chapter with the sentence I quoted, followed by the chapter on Kazan' prison. This creates a clear break, a gap, both chronologically and descriptively (an unusual element in Adamova-Sliozberg's very detailed account), between the two stages. From this point of view, VIL-1 ends the chapter, before the sen-

tence concerning the move to Kazan' 'in June 1938', with the poem 'Bespokoinaia belaia noch' [A Restless White Night] written in two quatrains, which become three in VOZ-1, followed by the episode concerning 'Ania Bublik' (which, as mentioned, forms the next chapter in VIL-1).¹⁶ The poem is also found in VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, but with four quatrains, and is placed in the first third of the 'Solovki' chapter, immediately after the reflection, almost identically present in the various versions, during sleepless nights,

¹⁶ Of the first five *dela* (the most complete) in Memorial's archives of Adamova-Sliozberg, only in one case (DELO-1: f. 55) is there an indication of the date of transfer to Kazan', recorded, however, at the beginning of the chapter 'Kazanskaia t'iurma' together with the poem (including the title, 'Bessonitsa' [Insomnia]) in six quatrains. In particular, only three (DELO-2, DELO-4, DELO-5) contain the chapter 'Ania Bublik' and only two others (DELO-4, DELO-5) mention the poem 'Bespokoinaia belaia noch' (in both cases in six quatrains). 'Bessonitsa', 'mentally composed' at Solovki in 1937, is found in the book of poems (Adamova-Sliozberg 1992: 14-15) in six quatrains, but with a first verse that is slightly different from all the editions of the memoirs ('Solovetskaia belaia noch'). Compared to the booklet of poetry, the quatrains in VIL-1 are the first and the fourth, with VOZ-1 containing the first, fourth and sixth, and VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST containing the first, fourth, fifth and sixth.

on how 'можно управлять мыслями: одни пускать, другие гнать. Можно не вспоминать, не жалеть, не терзаться чувством вины перед собой, перед мужем, перед матерью за то, что *недоделала что-то*, кого-то обидела, мало любила, мало жалела. Можно... Но очень трудно' [you can control your thoughts: let some in, drive others away. You can stop remembering, stop regretting, stop being tormented by guilt towards yourself, towards your husband, towards your mother *for not having finished something*, for having offended someone, for not having loved enough, for not having pitied enough. You can... But it's very difficult].¹⁷ All this suggests that,

¹⁷ The italics in the sentence are my own: they indicate a verb that is missing in VIL-1, only appearing from VOZ-1. In addition to the sentence quoted by me in the text, VIL-1 and VOZ-3 include, with respect to VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST: 'После *такой* ночи я вставала, как избитая, и входила в норму только после часа гимнастики перед открытым окном' [After *such* a night, I would wake up feeling beaten and only get back to normal after an hour of gymnastics in front of an open window] (the italics are my own). In all the archival editions, both the verb and the following sentence are present, but in one case (DELO-1: f. 48) the verb is deleted, while *takoi* is added in pen; the latter is absent in two versions of the text (DELO-2: f. 50, DELO-3: f. 45) but found in the remaining ones (DELO-4: f. 51, DE-

from VOZ-2 onwards, there was also a substantial editorial intervention in the structure of the work, while the differences between VIL-1 and VOZ-1 might still have been partly introduced by Adamova-Sliozberg or accepted by her.

Returning to the chronology of the ordeal, according to what can be reconstructed from the author's text, Adamova-Sliozberg spent just over ten months in Kazan' prison. She began her transfer by train, with other female prisoners, to Vladimir prison on 10 May 1939, arriving the following day, to be immediately taken on an open truck to Suzdal' prison. She spent two months there and, on

LO-5: f. 51). It should be noted that, immediately after the arrest in 1936, the dominant thought that had plagued the author like a sense of guilt had been precisely the idea of having left something unfinished ('Что-то я не доделала') [not having finished something] and being incapable of precisely defining the missing action ('Нет, не то... Что-то еще я не сделала...') [No, not that... I have not done something yet], immediately after leaving and walking out of the house (corresponding to the threshold between a before and an after, which is typical of a trauma: 'Всё. Отрезана жизнь. Я одна против огромной машины, страшной, злой машины, которая хочет меня уничтожить') [That's it. Life is cut off. I'm alone against a huge machine, a terrible, evil machine that wants to destroy me].

10 July 1939, the final transfer to Kolyma began for her and her group (first on a closed truck and then, after a night spent back at Vladimir prison, on a *teplushka* to the 'east'). On 14 August 1939¹⁸ the prisoners arrived at the sorting centre in Vladivostok,¹⁹ ending up at the

¹⁸ 16 August, according to VIL-1 and VIL-4 (Vilenskii 2004: 64). Archive findings present: '14 August' (DELO-4: f. 84, DELO-5: f. 84), '14 July' (DELO-2: f. 78, DELO-3: f. 73); the first (DELO-1: f. 79), which is presumably the antigraph of VIL-1, corrects the previous '14 July' to '16 August' in ink.

¹⁹ The author, who also mentions a day's stopover spent 'в Свердловске или в Иркутске' [in Sverdlovsk or in Irkutsk], not only indicates the dates of the beginning and end of the transfer (10 July to 14 August 1939), but also establishes the duration of the journey as 34 days. Regardless of the accuracy or otherwise of the calculations (in the following chapter the author speaks, for example, of four years spent in prison at the time of her arrival in Vladivostok, an indication that is understandably conventional and vague, considering that three years and 109 days had passed since her arrest on 27 April 1936), it is worth pointing out here that the precision with which the author wishes to indicate the number of days, sometimes hours, and the exact transcription of dates and times of certain key events, deserves a separate debate in the assessment of the symptoms of trauma; these are all indicative not so much of how memory works, but of the use of memory made by Adamova-Sliozberg during the years of repression, probably with a view to the later drafting of her text.

women's labour camp in El'gen (Dal'stroi). Adamova-Sliozberg was released on 27 April 1944 (exactly eight years after her arrest), but with the obligation of perpetual confinement at Kolyma.

Meanwhile, Adamova-Sliozberg 'learned of her husband's shooting and found the support of a good man, Nikolai Adamov [...] who was also confined after finishing serving his sentence' (Fici 2013: 65). The chapter, of the same name, dedicated to Adamov, is among those that, in terms of structure and content, present an overall difference between VIL-1 on one hand and VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST on the other. In short, in VIL-1, the chapter on Adamov is preceded by the chapter 'Verochka' (which is that immediately after in the book editions) and in a greatly abridged version.²⁰

²⁰ Adamov, the son of a miner from Donbass, a refined intellectual – as Adamova-Sliozberg describes him – had graduated in veterinary medicine in 1927 and was arrested in 1935 for speaking out against Stalin, serving a five-year sentence (from 1937) in Magadan, at the terrible 'Serpentinka' prison camp. Having served his sentence, Adamov worked in Iagodnoe, in the Magadan region, at a freight depot (of which he became the manager), where Adamova-Sliozberg also found employment as a bookkeeper soon after her release.

In VIL-1, the narration of the events of this specific period is substantially interrupted here (with the author going on to inform us that, after living with Adamov for two years, 'В 1946 году благодаря хлопотам моих родных мне разрешили уехать с Колымы' [In 1946, thanks to the efforts of my relatives, I was allowed to leave Kolyma], Vilen-skii 2004: 106), while it is particularly detailed in VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, but without specifying the dates and places that had characterised the first part of the narrative. Adamov is then transferred to Burkhal (‘в 60 километрах от Ягодного’) [60 kilometres away from Iagodnoe], while Adamova-Sliozberg begins teaching Russian literature courses ('Больше всего на свете я люблю русскую литературу' [I love Russian literature more than anything in the world], Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 227)²¹ at a school for adults in Iagodnoe attended by employees of the NKVD ('Я даже не подозревала, что в

²¹ A love of reading and of Russian literature in general is present throughout the book, forming one of its main threads. As her daughter would state years later: 'Мама очень любила литературу, не могла жить без книг' [Mum loved literature very much. she couldn't live without books] (Silina 2020: 32).

России взрослые люди могут быть такими неграмотными') [I didn't even suspect that adults in Russia could be so illiterate]. In 1944, he is forced to leave *Iagodnoe* for having spoken in class about the interest of the 'Germans' Marx and Engels in Russian literature. Adamov and Adamova-Sliozberg then decide to get married and moved to Burkhala together.

Meanwhile, in Moscow, Adamova-Sliozberg's brother Mikhail mobilises his connections to promote his sister's return. She travels to Magadan to get close to Nikishov, director of the Dal'stroi of Kolyma. The arduous journey proves fruitless and Adamova-Sliozberg has to turn back. Later, however, she manages to obtain permission from Nikishov to go to Moscow for a fortnight, after which she is to 'уехать куда-нибудь километров за 200–250 от Москвы' [go somewhere 200–250 kilometres from Moscow]. She leaves Kolyma at the beginning of July 1946,²² setting out on a journey

²² 'В начале июля 1946 года я выехала с Колымы' [At the beginning of July 1946, I left Kolyma] are the opening words of the chapter 'Vozvrashchenie' [The Return] in VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, but no precise date is given in VIL-1 (which indicates a more vague 'В 1946 году благодаря хлопотам моих родных мне разрешили уехать с Колымы' [In 1946, thanks to the efforts

of my relatives, I was allowed to leave Kolyma] at the end of the previous chapter, Vilenskii 2004: 106). In this respect, it is interesting that all the typescripts kept in the archives mention the precise date of '31 August' (DELO-1: f. 140 – but with a pencilled correction changing the month to 'June' – DELO-2: f. 160, DELO-3: 132, DELO-4: f. 167, DELO-5: f. 161). Further on in the same chapter, it is interesting to note that, in the sentence 'После дачи мы переехали в город, в квартиру на Петровке, где я *до замужества* прожила шестнадцать лет' [After the dacha, we moved to the city, to an apartment on Petrovka, where I lived for sixteen years *before getting married*] (Adamova-Sliozberg 2019: 221), the part written by me in italics, has been changed to 'до ареста' [before arrest] in VIL-1 (Vilenskii 2004: 109), in VOZ-1 it is missing ('где я прожила шестнадцать лет' [where I lived for sixteen years]; Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 168) and only from VOZ-2 onwards does it assume its final and correct form (Adamova-Sliozberg 2002). If we turn our attention to the author's typescripts, the matter becomes more complicated, because while in two cases we have the simplified sentence ('где я прожила шестнадцать лет' [where I lived 16 years]; DELO-4: f. 172, DELO-5: f. 166), yet another variant is found in the other three ('где я прожила с семнадцати лет и до ареста, т.е. шестнадцать лет' [where I lived from when I was 17 to the moment of my arrest, a total of 16 years]: DELO-1: ff. 142–14, but included in the next chapter, 'Nikolai Vasil'evich Adamov'; DELO-2: f. 164, DELO-3: f. 136). Considering that the house on Petrovka, where she had lived until her marriage, was her parents' house – and definitely not the one where she had lived from the age of 17 until her arrest, which took place in the house where

that will last a month; Sliozberg's indications turn out to be exact: 'шесть дней паромом, девятнадцать дней поездом, да еще ждали пять дней в порту Находка, пока сформируют эшелон' [six days by ship, *nineteen* days by train, and then we waited *five* days in the port of Nakhodka for the train to be formed] (the italics are my own). On 6 August, she is in Moscow; from there she travels to the family dacha in Zagorianka (30 kilometres north-east of Moscow) to meet her mother and children. Despite being banned from staying in Moscow, she spends three years practically living at her parents' house at 26 Petrovka Street: 'Самое удивительное, что я прожила в Москве на Петровке три года и на меня никто не донес, хотя о моем существовании знали десятки людей. Все эти три года я жила в непрерывном страхе' [The most amazing thing is that I lived in Moscow on Petrovka for three years and no one reported

she and her husband lived on Novaia Bozhedomka Street (Pamiat' n.d.), now Dostoevskii Street (Shmukler 2017) –, it almost seems as if the memory of the past before the trauma has become blurred, as if the author struggles to distinguish the phases, the life lived in her parents' house and the one with her first husband where they were both arrested.

me, even though dozens of people knew about my presence there. I lived in constant fear for all those three years].

Adamova-Sliozberg was arrested a second time on 29 August 1949 as a 'repeat offender'²³ and was taken to Malaia Lubianka prison. At the end of October she was transferred again to cell number 105 at Butyrka prison, the same cell where she had been imprisoned after the first arrest. Her deportation began in mid-December, on a *Stolypin* wagon, to Kazakhstan, stopping in Kuibyshev for about a month. From there, 'в ранних сумерках январского дня' [in the early twilight of a January day], on a freight wagon, at a temperature of minus 30, the female prisoners spent 16 days travelling to Karaganda ('Ехали до Караганды мы шестнадцать дней') [It took us sixteen days to get to Karaganda]. Chapter 'V ssylke' [In Exile], covering the deportation to Karaganda, presents very different wording from VIL-1 and VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST, but with important details

²³ Shortly before, she had also been joined in Moscow by Nikolai, an element that is omitted from almost all the typescripts. While, in VIL-1, the purchase of the tickets to leave Moscow on 30 August 1949 is still attributed to Adamova-Sliozberg, in VOZ-1 it is already attributed to Adamov.

and dates from a biographical point of view and as regards the rendering of memory through writing, which can be found in both accounts. The narrative presented in VIL-1 is particularly brief, but provides, for instance, the date of Nikolai Adamov's arrival in Karaganda, indicating it as April 1949 ('В апреле 1949 года ко мне в Караганду приехал мой муж Николай Васильевич Адамов' [In April 1949 my husband Nikolai Vasilevich Adamov came to visit me in Karaganda], Vilenskii 2004: 123). This date is highly unlikely because, according to the timeline that she herself, as we have seen, reported for this journey, she would have arrived in Karaganda no earlier than January-February 1950; indeed, VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST make no mention of the date of Adamov's arrival. They do, however, preserve the memory of the fact that 'Летом на каникулы к нам приезжали мои дети' [My children came to visit us during the summer holidays], something which is not present in VIL-1.²⁴ Similarly, we know from the book editions of

²⁴ The element does not seem to be present even in the typescripts preserved by Memorial. It can be assumed that Adamov arrived in Karaganda in April 1950 and that Adamova-Sliozberg's children visited in the summer of the same year.

her life in Karaganda, of her employment as a seamstress ('ведь всё же я дочь портных') [after all, I am the daughter of tailors] and of her close friendship with Ėmka Mandel' (Naum Korzhavin), Aleksandr Esenin-Vol'pin, Valeriia Gerlin (who had shared a cell with Adamova-Sliozberg at Butyrka prison in 1949) and Iurii Aikhenval'd.²⁵ Nikolai Adamov was arrested again on 29 April 1951. At the end of 1954²⁶ (in the meantime, of course, the busi-

²⁵ See the recollections of Adamova-Sliozberg's children in this regard (Zakgeim et al. 2006: 59-60) and an article devoted to Esenin-Vol'pin's Karaganda period (Gross 2022: 1337-38).

²⁶ The information is present only in VIL-1, VIL-4 and in all the *dela* in the archive. The *dela* do not, however, indicate Dzhezkazgan as the destination, but Moscow ('Наконец, в конце 1954 года с меня тоже сняли ссылку, и я поехала хлопотать в Москву') [Finally, at the end of 1954, my exile was also lifted, and I went to Moscow to petition]. Another difference between VIL-1, VIL-4 and the *dela* on one hand and VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST on the other is that, in the former, the information is placed at the beginning of the chapter 'Reabilitatsiia', while, in the latter, it is in the chapter entitled 'Nikolai Adamov. Konets puti'. DELO-1, as usual, is particularly interesting because it always presents corrections in ink, made by the author herself, after Vilenskii's revision. In this case, first the clarification is made (in italics in the quotation) that 'в начале 1955 я поехала хлопотать в Москву' [At the beginning of

ness with the doctors had broken out and Stalin had died, all these events being detailed in the various editions of *Put'*) she is released from her sentence of perpetual confinement and leaves for Dzhezkazgan, and the prison camp where Adamov is being held. Three years of imprisonment have left him very old and he has become ill with tuberculosis. Adamova-Sliozberg spends a week with him and obtains permission to take him to Karaganda.

It is at this point in the narrative that VOZ-1, VOZ-2, VOZ-5 and AST offer, as opposed to VIL-1, an important element regarding the stages of the writing of Adamova-Sliozberg's memoirs, that 'В этот период в Караганде я вновь начала писать свои воспоминания, прерванные вторым арестом' [During this period in Karaganda, I resumed writing my memoirs, interrupted by the second arrest] (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 219). In particular, the author says that she finished the chapter 'Liza' there, narrating the period of her imprisonment in Kazan' (between June 1938 and 10 May

1939) and that she read it to Adamov (Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 282).

In 1955, Adamova-Sliozberg leaves for Moscow and Adamov travels to Voronezh, both to obtain rehabilitation. Adamov subsequently visits Adamova-Sliozberg in Moscow several times, but without ever managing to actually fit into his wife's circle and family ('в нашей семье он не мог найти себя. Он был чужой в моей среде и остро чувствовал это' [He couldn't find himself in our family. He was a stranger in my environment and felt it acutely], Adamova-Sliozberg 1993: 220). They decide to live separately, writing and meeting from time to time, until Adamova-Sliozberg receives the news of Adamov's death in 1964 (Adamov n.d.).

Adamova-Sliozberg was finally rehabilitated on 6 June 1956; twenty years and forty-one days after her arrest on 27 April 1936, as she herself writes. She died in Moscow on 9 December 1991 (16 days before the end of the USSR), while still working on her memoirs.²⁷

1955, I went to Moscow to petition] and then both statements are deleted, leaving simply 'Наконец, в конце 1954 года с меня тоже сняли ссылку' [Finally, at the end of 1954, my exile was also lifted] (DELO-1: f. 186).

²⁷ *Rasskazy o moei sem'e* contains precise elements in this sense: 'Первого августа 1991 года мне должно исполниться восемьдесят девять лет. Это будет через две недели' [I'm supposed to be 89 on August 1, 1991. That's in two

Conclusions

The investigation carried out in the present study has offered a first systematic reconnaissance of the process of writing, transmission and transformation of Ol'ga Adamova-Sliozberg's collection of memoirs, in the conviction that the comparison between typescript (*samizdat*) and printed versions, starting from the complex editorial stratification of the work, is a necessary prerequisite for a philological analysis that can lead to a symptomatic identification and reading of trauma in writing.

The editorial variants, which are evident from this first comparison between typescripts and printed texts, reveal a work in constant evolution, in which testimonial impulse and documentary intention intersect with conscious narrative and compositional choices that cannot be dismissed as purely 'spontaneous' or 'non-literary'. On the contrary, we find elements that invite us to consider *Put'* as a hybrid textual object, in which the author – despite having no literary training – demonstrates a growing awareness of the testimonial and documentary value

of her writing, so much so that she picks up the material again, corrects it, rewrites and expands it until just a few months before her death.

The polyphonic nature of the collection – understood as the coexistence of different genres, registers and testimonial levels – reflects the complexity of Adamova-Sliozberg's memoirs, which consist of a network of texts and paratexts, direct and indirect voices, poetic fragments and biographical reconstructions, published and archival materials. This structure is not the product of a narrative construction planned according to standard literary models, but the stratified outcome of an expressive need that evolves over time. The body of material, constantly expanded and revised, bears witness not only to a stubborn desire to remember and to make others remember, but also to an arduous path of re-processing trauma, which is sedimented in the very form of the text. In this perspective, *Put'* should be read not only as a memory of survival, but as a field of linguistic and narrative investigation, the analysis of which requires attentive comparative and historically situated reading.

In this context, it is essential to bear in mind that all book editions of the work are posthu-

weeks] (Adamova-Sliozberg 2015: 257; the italics in the quote are my own).

mous, and that their variants – while probably based on materials drafted or approved by the author – require caution in attributing conclusive authority to a single edition. Indeed, the only complete version published in Adamova-Sliozberg's lifetime is VII-1, which is an indispensable point of reference, especially in the light of the unpublished samizdat drafts, the complete comparison of which represents a further step to be taken to fully identify the telltale scriptural signs of the possible trauma experienced by the author.

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