# LOVE LETTERS BETWEEN THEORY AND LITERATURE

## VIKTOR SHKLOVSKY'S EPISTOLARY NOVEL *ZOO OR LETTERS NOT ABOUT LOVE*

Erika Greber

University of Munich

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*The Russian Formalists are generally perceived as having established a rigid theory discourse, thereby producing or extending the disciplinary division. However, as early as 1922/23 Viktor Shklovsky wrote his remarkable epistolary novel* Zoo, *which unites both discourses.* Zoo *reshapes the traditional epistolary novel in metafictional style and revitalizes it by blurring the borders between documentary and poetic epistolarity. The established view of Shklovsky's novel as an "attempt to put into practice the principles to which he adhered as a critic" repeats the division between the discourses and reconfirms the dubitable hierchy of theory over literature. A more adequate view is gained by the idea of hybridity. Object level and meta level, literature and criticism are being merged. One of the most intriguing aspects of* Zoo *is its new use of the "editing" paratexts that traditionally established the stable division between editor and correspondence and that are now used to deconstruct hierarchies. These paratexts form, also by means of their visual design, some kind of "paraletters" and are part of an epistolary meta-dialogue. With regard to the notion of a "dialogue" between theory and literature, it is highly significant that Shklovsky chose the dialogic genre of the epistolary novel for his critifictional enterprise.*

Keywords: epistolary novel, deconstruction of the epistolary novel, defamiliarization, critifiction, metafiction, irony, Romantic irony, paratext, exile, poetics of displacement

## 1. Theory and Literature: Some Remarks on Historical Contexts (History of Theory and History of Literature)

Russian Formalism is usually remembered for introducing the first systematic categories into the analysis of literature, as well as for setting up a theory of literature in the strict sense of the word. This is why the Formalists are

generally perceived as having extended the gap between the two discourses, or even as having produced it in the first place (in terms of disciplinary division), because they are widely considered to be the founders of modern literary criticism. Essentially, Formalist theory emphasized the notion of the esthetic autonomy of the text. From its outset it was programmatically disinterested in the social and practical functions of the arts. As to the later development of Russian Formalism from the mid 1920s, its unmistakable "social turn" was largely due to the rise of Stalinism and the doctrine of Socialist Realism that soon led to the extinction of all avant-garde ideas in the arts and in criticism. Yet there was another earlier – and, more importantly, voluntary and intrinsic – tendency away from pure form and away from rigid theory: something that is epitomized in Viktor Shklovsky's epistolary novel *Zoo*, written and published in Berlin in 1922–1923.

*Zoo* was his second great literary book and, if he had not already earned a reputation as a theorist by that time, Shklovsky's name would have entered literary history for this radical innovation of the epistolary novel. Within the generic development of the epistolary novel, *Zoo* is the hallmark of modernity. In a reversal of the traditional pattern, it presents a demonstratively improvised plotless montage of heterogeneous materials. Following the logic of prohibition and desire, the amatory theme is inhibited and by that very device reinforced. The most innovative features in Shklovsky's experiment are metafictional self-reflection, paradox, and irony. In short, "*Zoo* effects a perceptible displacement on the genre; after 1923, it will never again be quite the same" (as stated in a major study on the genre; Kauffman xix). As regards genre innovation, *Zoo* is no less avant-garde than other groundbreaking texts of the same years, such as Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) or Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus* (1923), which, however, gained more prominence in world literature. Thus, for historiographers of the epistolary genre, Shklovsky's novel is an indispensable landmark. At the same time, today's average reader will not know the book any more, and the average literary critic will not suspect that it exists at all. The poetic practice and imaginative literary work of the Formalists has unjustly fallen into oblivion – something that tells us less about the literary quality of those neglected texts (even if none can claim the same importance as *Zoo*) and more about today's conception of theory or theoreticity.

It is time to rediscover the "other" side of Formalism: the practical foundation of Formalist theory and the literary outcome generated by the Formalists. This begins with their close and creative connection to the pre- and post-revolutionary avant-gardes (in particular, Russian Futurism is unthinkable without Formalism); it culminates in the 1920s in their own literary works (ranging from historical novels, short stories, essays, and memoirs to children's literature and screenplays), and it extends to their impact on contemporary literary production due to their engagement as teachers of literature courses[1] (from which emerged the first interesting post-revolutionary literary group, the Serapion Brothers; cf. Greber, "The metafictional turn"). Beyond all these practical activities that resulted in close relations between literature and theory, it should be emphasized that

the style of theorizing itself had nothing academic at all; on the contrary, early Formalism had begun as a challenge to established academic philology. Shklovsky's first paper, "The Resurrection of the Word" (1914) – the manifesto of the Formalist movement to come,[2] has more in common with the writings of a Futurist poet than with those of a literary critic. Characteristically, later official summaries of the history of Russian Formalism show that Shklovsky's work was particularly criticized for his rather unsystematic, nonacademic style of argumentation. However, what seems a fault in terms of pure theory may be a virtue from the perspective of transdisciplinary thought. At any rate, Shklovsky's approach was not streamlined theory alone, which explains why the figurehead of a school of theory can be brought up at a conference dedicated to the hybridization of theory and literature.

Shklovsky's *Zoo* is certainly evidence for the thesis that "theory and literature have evolved on the same historic trajectory ever since the very emergence of their disciplinary existence" (as outlined in the invitation to our colloquium). The poetics of *Zoo* harkens back to Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* as well as German Romanticism and anticipates postmodern ideas of playful mergings of criticism and fiction.

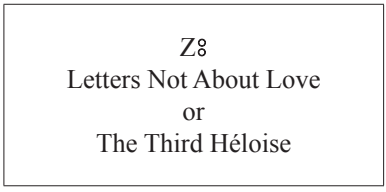
Shklovsky's era still lacks the wonderful term "critifiction" (coined by the French-American writer and literary critic Raymond Federman)[3] – an ingenious linguistic hybrid for naming the hybridization of discourses. One could argue that Shklovsky practices a kind of "critifiction" *avant la lettre*. Yet the preconditions for hybridization are quite different in the two cases. It follows from what has been said about the status of Formalism as the founder of literary criticism in today's sense that mixing the discourses before their strict separation is a different matter from doing the same thereafter. Only after Formalism – or more correctly, only after the canonization of Formalism as a strict and rigid discourse of theory, and after the formation of definite disciplinary borders – can the idea of hybrid "critifiction" develop its ultimate attraction and claim programmatic status. For Formalism, the agenda was different yet. Shklovsky's novel, we might say, interfered with the purity of separate discourses, which meant that the author had to go both backwards and forwards. Just recently he had helped to finally establish scholarship on art as a discipline in its own right, and now he was about to intertwine scholarship and art. This transgression was also sharply felt by his fellow formalists, as a review by Yuri Tynyanov shows.[4]

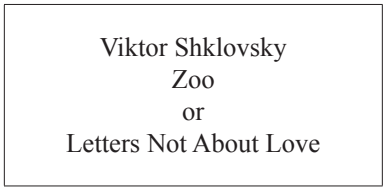
All in all, viewed within the history of the interrelation of theory and literature, the moment of *Zoo* is truly historic.

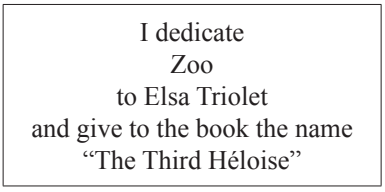
## 2. The epistolary constellation in *Zoo*

*Zoo* is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable and ingenuous epistolary novels ever written, for the very reason that it manages a crossover between theory and literature as well as between fiction and life, including a cross-cultural dialogue about Russia and Europe. The text is rare in its

combination of deep emotion and sharp reflection: a moving evocation of the pain of exile and unrequited love and, at the same time, a witty metaliterary play. *Zoo* reshapes the traditional epistolary novel in a metafictional style. It revitalizes it by blurring the borders between documentary and poetic epistolarity. This can be taken quite literally in view of the textual genesis: the novel is said to mix fictional letters with real ones, letters that were or might have been exchanged (in a rather one-sided correspondence) between the young critic and the lady he courted, between the novelistic "I" and his beloved Alya, alias Viktor Shklovsky and Elsa Triolet (a Russian emigrant like himself and a future French writer; she was 27, and he was 30).[5] Shklovsky composed this little book in Berlin after fleeing the Soviet Union, and it is a document of his own intermediary existence in the limbo of exile, as well as a kind of ethnography of "Russian Berlin." Ultimately, the text is structured by a poetics of displacement. To take the work simply as an autobiography would be to underestimate its theoretical drive. It is saturated with theory, not just in the sense that it discusses Formalist ideas (which it does occasionally, as could be expected in a text whose protagonist is a theorist), but in the sense that it is constructed on such principles or, more precisely, that it performs them.




A closer look at the cover and the title pages (Fig. 1–3, see Appendix, p. 321) is very informative. Double play with alphabets and languages highlights the intercultural and intertextual aspects of the novel. The German component is printed in Latin letters: ZOO, the zoological garden in the midst of Berlin and a central interchange for urban transport. The Berlin *Tiergarten* was located in the Russian section of the city nicknamed *Charlottengrad*, but beyond such factual aspects it is recurrently used in its symbolic meaning of captivity (the emigrant as an ape, the lover as an ape). Despite such foreseeable topoi, the theme of the menagerie is expounded in an interesting way.[6] The other components of the title are of direct relevance to the epistolary discourse. The formula of the *Third Héloise* establishes a parallel to Rousseau's epistolary novel *Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloise* and its respective source, the medieval forerunner of all epistolary romances, the letters by Héloise to Abelard. Here, too, originates the motif of "letters not about

love." In addition, the archliterary name is charged with real life by means of a pun: Héloise – Ėloiza – Ėl'za. The accidental similarity between the Russian and the French name varieties is highly symbolic for the strand in the book that is connected to the French lifestyle as opposed to the Russian, one of the topics of estrangement. In the eyes of her would-be lover, the beloved lady is becoming too much of a Frenchwoman, whereas he himself is becoming increasingly aware of his Russianness and his inability and unwillingness to adapt to Western ("European") ways. Shklovsky discusses the old dichotomy of Russia vs. the West in terms of several oppositions that run through the émigré community. The Russian-German theme dominates because of Berlin as the place of émigré life, but what really counts is the different measure of "Europeanness" that forms the dividing line between the couple "not in love." The emotional distance and estrangement between the correspondents is continually interpreted in terms of cultural difference (French vs. Russian or European vs. Russian; cf. Letters 16, 17). With respect to acculturation, Shklovsky's story is definitively not a love story.

While the name of the female addressee is freely translatable and exchangeable between Russian and French cultures and literatures, the name of the author evidently has a different status. The cultural dilemma is already symbolized in the cover graphics (designed by El Lissitzky, Fig. 1), in which the name *Viktor Shklovsky* is inscribed and hidden in the letter Z of Z⚮, as if encaged in the grids of the Berlin Zoo and entrapped behind the bars of Latinity. The word *Zoo* is (unlike *Héloise)* not transcribed into Cyrillic. The printed normal title page (Fig. 2) also displays the alphabetical alienness of ZOO.

The dedication page (Fig. 3) is interesting because it is the paratextual space where the two writer roles overlap ambiguously (intratextual first person writer and extratextual author).

With reference to the problem of fictionality, there is a notable asymmetry between the female and male correspondence partner. For *her* positions, there exists a neat semiotic differentiation by name: Elsa is the extratextual real person, and Alya the intratextual personage. Of course, their interrelation is well enough established, not only by plot coincidences, but also by a meta-remark: "Al, Al, El, they shout – trying to pronounce your name" (Letter 13, *Zoo, or, Letters* 48). At least there is the fiction that there is some fictional difference. However, no such useful name label denotes the intratextual author-lover, no name but the "I" (he never signs his letters), and of course this is simultaneously the "I" and the authorial signature underlying the autobiographical pact. (This non-differentiation makes it difficult, by the way, for the analyst to speak clearly about the text.)

The paratextual demarcation of authorial positions is continued in the body of the text, where the few letters by Alya are framed by authorial introductions so that they look like insertions rather than autonomous or equal enunciations. With respect to the entire work, it is therefore justified to speak of a male subject and female object. The correspondence is appropriated by one side. Only on such a condition is it possible to "dedicate" the book to somebody who was originally involved herself (allegedly) in writing parts of it.

Shklovsky does not hide the artificiality of the composition. On the contrary, he displays the constructedness of images. In one instance, even the autobiographical illusion is destroyed – by a reference to the editing process, that is, by using a relict of the conventional epistolary novel, the *Herausgeberfiktion*. The fictional editor reconstructs a gap in the correspondence: "Written, it would seem, in response to a comment apparently made by telephone, since the dossier contains nothing in writing along these lines" (Editorial to Letter 12, *Zoo, or, Letters* 44). Formulations such as "apparently" or "it would seem" mark the passage as pure speculation.

Such an exhibition of arbitrariness corresponds to the nonrepresentational concept of art for which Shklovsky proposed the image of the "sketched window" – well before Magritte (Letter 22).[7] The secret of *Zoo* is its duplicity: in one moment one sees the window, in the next moment the sketch or the sketchedness – a kind of flicker effect (Kauffman 22, after Sheldon, *Victor Shklovsky*). By definition, one can never know whether Alya's fictional letters were identical to Elsa's real ones (though Shklovsky's contemporaries as well as later critics took the appearance at face value and ascribed the female letters to Elsa, as did Elsa Triolet herself in later autobiographical statements; cf. Triolet 15).[8]

The novel includes a few letters to further addressees in Moscow and Petersburg/Petrograd. Shklovsky tries to seduce not only his lady but other readers, including the state and party leaders that caused him to flee Russia and who, after "receiving" the novel's last letter, allowed him to return home.[9] Thus, the letters are aimed towards intra- and extratextual readers – exceeding the usual double addressedness of epistolary novels (by which all letters are read by the personages at the plot level and by the book readers; cf. Altman, *Epistolarity*).[10] In a way, this resembles radical metalepsis, a "strange loop" that leads out of the book into reality. Because of its real-fictitious duplicity, the text has a complicated history of editions, revisions, additions, and cuts.[11]

Altogether, this is a very complex multipolar and at the same time monopolar epistolary novel. By no means, however, does the "umbrella" organized by the authorial function impose homogenization or monologism because the "I" itself is multivoiced: a lover "torn" by love and melancholy, an author engaged in intertextual dialogue, and a scholar interested in metafictional play, whereby all of these hypostases are united by a deep (Romantic) irony.

## 3. Formalist Theory Wrapped up in/as Literature?

The main parallel between Formalist theory and the Formalist novel is, of course, the concept of genre innovation by defamiliarization (or *enstrangement*, to use the newly coined translation of Shklovsky's term *ostranenie*)[12] and by laying bare the device. In this respect, *Zoo* appears like a *Tristram Shandy* projected into epistolarity.[13]

The title exhibits the basic strategy of negation: if traditional epistolary novels are nothing other than letters about love, the label "not about love"

promises something new. The motivation for this negation proves to be very entertaining: the lover must avoid the topic because Alya resists his love and forbids him to write about love. He seeks to obey her verdict by writing about anything – about Berlin, about literature, about letter writing, including, of course, the verdict not to write about love – only to come across metaphors and patterns "which return him inexorably to the forbidden theme" (Sheldon, "Introduction" xxviii; the function of any inhibition in literature is, as is well known, its violation – the law of *sjuzhet*).

One could also argue that part of Shklovsky's defamiliarization program is something like familiarization, in the sense that he takes up familiar topoi and makes them even more intense, through realization of the metaphor – with a similar effect of "making it new." A case in point is the twin motif of "being torn" by love and the tearing of letters:

> I write you every night, then I tear up the letter and throw it in the wastebasket. The letters revive, mend, and I write them again. You receive everything I've written.
>
> In your wastebasket for broken toys [are the men who adore you] …
>
> Only I, torn and shredded like a letter, keep climbing out of the wastebasket for your broken toys. I will survive dozens more of your passing fancies; every day you tear me up and every night I revive, like the letters. (excerpt from Letter 13, *Zoo, or, Letters* 48)

A radically new device is the crossed-out letter (Fig. 4, see App., p. 322). The reader is advised not to read this letter – which is said to be the best letter of the whole book, written by Alya – but to skip it and read it at the end. "By crossing out her letter, Shklovsky highlights the materiality of the text, combines the verbal and visual, and turns the tables by taking revenge on Alya for the injunction she took on him" (Kauffman 20). Ironically, the very passage that tells the reader not to read the extinguished letter is itself crossed out together with the letter.[14] The gesture of crossing out something that still remains visible and readable, the idea of making a text simultaneously present and absent, anticipates a central figure of deconstruction.[15] Structurally, the creation of an alternative ending after the "last letter" results in a similar crossing out the last word of the novel – such a book has no last word.

Of course, generic revitalization through metafictional irony has found a perfectly suitable object in the epistolary novel. The epistolary genre has a constitutive tendency towards self-reflection: in any epistolary novel, letter writers write about letter writing. Shklovsky simply turned the screw and intensified the meta-epistolary drive, combining it with the old self-reflexive devices known from the Sternian tradition as well as with recent Formalist ideas.

Is *Zoo* something like Formalist theory in a literary package? Any mechanical concept of that relationship would be inappropriate. The established view of Shklovsky's novel as an "attempt to put into practice the principles to which he adhered as a critic"[16] repeats the division between the discourses and reconfirms the dubitable hierarchy of theory over litera-

ture. A more adequate view is gained by reference to the key concept of the colloquium: the idea of hybridity, that is, an equal or even indistinguishable interaction between the two poles. Object level and meta level are dissolved into one literary whole, and literature and criticism are merged ("critifiction"). As has been demonstrated, the "I" acts as editor *and* correspondent, as critic *and* writer *and* lover.

## 4. Dialogization of a Dialogic Genre: Paratexts as Paraletters

Regarding the notion of a "dialogue" between theory and literature, any expectation of neatly distributed roles or textual genres would be too simple. There is no dichotomy of scholarly letters and *belles-lettres*. The dialogue is deeply dialogized and hybridized (in a Bakhtinian sense, even if this may appear unexpected in view of Shklovsky's early Formalist positions).[17]

This is why I think it is less fruitful to focus, as previous critics did, on those letters that explicitly thematize Formalist ideas. Naturally it is amusing and very instructive to read those letters, especially the 22nd letter with its self-reflective *mise en abyme* in the manner of Romantic irony, in which Shklovsky mentions his projected novel *Zoo* as an experiment in Formalist poetics. However, from the perspective of dialogue, it is necessary to shift from content to form – quite in the spirit of Shklovsky himself – and to see how those concepts are presented to the reader(s) and how scholarship is framed or is used as a frame.

Therefore I would like to focus once more on the paratexts,[18] especially on the passages preceding each letter. This is a very intricate phenomenon, and I would like to propose a new thesis. In *Zoo*, the function of these introductory passages is reversed: the "editing" paratexts that traditionally establish a stable division between editor (or critic) and correspondents (letter writers) are now used for the deconstruction of hierarchies.

The crossed-out Letter 19 is even triply preceded: it has a preface (*predislovie*), and both the letter and the preface are introduced by such a passage. It is common practice to call these passages "epigraphs" (Sheldon, "Introduction" xxix; Kauffmann 22), but this is certainly a misleading term. The relationship of these pieces to the letters is more like a commenting or even teasing foreword, or like a trailer; one might call them editorials. In reprints and translations, these texts are printed in italics; in the original Berlin edition, they were set apart and framed by squares. In comparisons between the Berlin edition and the later Soviet editions,[19] this aspect is usually neglected, although it is relevant in terms of epistolarity. Fig. 5 presents some examples (the passages to be quoted below, see App., p. 322).

Some of the editorials are dutiful synopses of what follows in the letter, and some are ironic anti-statements (on the whole, the ironic mode is predominant). For example, in the editorial to the aforementioned letter, the very theoretical input is mocked:

Letter Twenty-Two

*Unexpected and, in my opinion, utterly superfluous. The content of this letter obviously escaped from some other book by the same author, but perhaps the compiler of the book deemed the letter indispensable for reasons of variety. The letter crossed in the mail with the letter [from Alya] about Tahiti.* (*Zoo, or, Letters* 79)

The irony is accompanied by a deliberate obfuscation and proliferation of subject positions: who is the "I" that places itself as judge above the author-scholar and the compiler-editor?

In narratological terms, these paratexts clearly belong to the level of the editing process. This led critics to assume a clear role distribution between epistolary and editorial texts and functions and a distinct demarcation of lover's voice and editor's voice,[20] whereby the "ironic detachment" was ascribed to the editor (Kauffman 22). But on closer examination it becomes clear that the editor's voice is deeply entangled in the amorous conflict and represents by no means a detached position, let alone a scholarly meta-position.

Letter Thirteen

*Written between six and ten a.m. That excess time made the letter long. It has three parts. The only important thing in it is the observation that the women in a certain Berlin* Nachtlokal *know how to hold a fork.* (47)

Letter Twenty-Five

*About spring, the* Prager Diele*, Ehrenburg, and pipes. About time, which passes, and lips, which renew themselves – about a certain heart that is being worn to a frazzle while the lips in question are merely losing their paint. About my heart.* (90)

It is a highly ambivalent voice, belonging to more than one discourse. In fact, the editorials display a second dialogue in which the editor reacts to the letter writers, including himself, and addresses the reader, sending him or her an epistolary message.[21]

In a similar fashion, the entire book was provided with editorials, with a series of prefaces to each edition. These texts are not only addressed to the actual book readers (among them, the Soviet politicians); Shklovsky conducts a dialogue – in the second person! – with his own past, with his former book, and with Elsa – a letter sent from Russia to France.

The editorials are reminiscent of the ironic footnotes in Rousseau's epistolary novel. Basically, however, such paratexts stem from early novelistic conventions in which they precede the chapters and/or form the table of contents. Mock versions begin long before *Tristram Shandy*; they can be found as early as in *Don Quijote*, in which several chapter summaries do not give correct information about the contents, but are metafictional gimmicks.[22] *Zoo* presents a new combination: Shklovsky combines the device

of the summary from the classic novel with the construction of a fictional editor (*Herausgeberfiktion*) from the epistolary novel. The resulting hybrid type of epistolarized paratexts could be called the "paraletter." This idea is reinforced by the visual presentation of the editorials: The layout chosen for the first edition (not reproduced in any later edition) made these "paraletters" indeed look like letters in small envelopes. These paraletters are an intricate double-voiced element in the epistolary meta-dialogue.

With regard to the notion of a "dialogue" between theory and literature, it is highly significant that Shklovsky chose the dialogic genre of the epistolary novel for his critifictional enterprise.

## NOTES

[1] Taking place at the Petersburg (or, at that time, Petrograd) Institute of Art History 1920/21, these were, so to speak, "creative writing" courses *avant la lettre*.

[2] Regarding Shklovsky's contribution to the founding of Formalism, there was a controversy between Richard Sheldon and Victor Erlich. However, in today's perspective, "The Resurrection of the Word" is clearly canonized as the starting point.

[3] Cf. his eponymous collection of articles (1993).

[4] For a quote in English translation cf. Sheldon ("Introduction" xxxi) and Kauffman (17).

[5] Elsa Triolet (1896–1970), later the wife of Louis Aragon, wrote more than 30 books, mostly in French. Incidentally, she was the first woman to receive the Prix Goncourt. A good recent article (Tippner, "Aller et retour") compares Shklovsky's and Triolet's poetics of exile.

[6] Cf. Eisen, ch. "The Menagerie" (60–65).

[7] "There are two attitudes toward art. / One is to view the work of art as a window on the world. / Through words and images, these artists want to express what lies beyond words and images. Artists of this type deserve to be called translators. / The other type of attitude is to view art as a world of independently existing things. / Words, and the relationships between words, thoughts and the irony of thoughts, their divergence – these are the content of art. Art, if it can be compared to a window at all, is only a sketched window" (Letter 22, 80).

[8] As a rare exception, Wolffheim considers the female letters to be faked ("fingierte Gegenbriefe," 341). Tippner declares the question of (in)authenticity secondary because all of the female letters exist only by authorization through the male writer anyway. Although this is true, the above idea of principal undecidability would stress the deconstructive and metafictional play with subjectivity (Tippner, "Adressat" 237).

[9] This is a much-abbreviated summary of the complicated political implications, which are still being discussed. For a more polemic view on the case, cf. Sheldon, "Surrender."

[10] The crucial points are, first, that Shklovsky's novel does not have a consistent plot level and, second, that the last letter has a different status. In order to function as a petition, it must be read as part of the entire construction – an "Open Letter" for which the literary context is constitutive. In addition, it may function as a "rhetorical letter" (as we may call it by analogy with the term "rhetorical question"); that is, a letter that has already been answered.

[11] The best survey of the textual history is given in the English translation by Richard Sheldon, who includes and comments on all the variations in the later Soviet editions of *Zoo*.

[12] Cf. Benjamin Sher's new translation of Shklovsky's *Theory of Prose* (viii–ix and 149).

[13] The year before, Shklovsky had written his famous article on Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

[14] This trait of structural irony is neglected in Steiner's otherwise sharp analysis of irony and meta-irony in *Zoo.*

[15] Linda Kauffman was the first to emphasize the deconstructive aspects of *Zoo* (cf. especially pp. 19, 20, 29). For a Derridian view on Shklovsky's defamiliarization, cf. Crawford.

[16] Cf. Thompson's entry in the standard *Handbook of Russian Literature*.

[17] An emphatic Bakhtinian reading of other aspects of *Zoo* was offered by Linda Kauffman.

[18] Paratextuality has moved into center focus of current scholarship (cf. Greber, "Paratext als Paartext"). Tippner explains the "extended perigraphy" of *Zoo* as a scenery of heightened authorial self reflection and a means of distant communication producing epistolary intimacy in the reader-author relationship.

[19] Cf. especially Sheldon's introduction and commentary to the English edition.

[20] "In the ironic epigraphs which preface each letter … he ceases to be the frustrated lover and becomes the writer-technician, sitting at his table like a cobbler and shaping the raw material of his experience with a number of favorite tools" (Sheldon, "Introduction" xxx). "The edito's ironic voice is constantly at odds with the anguished lover's voice" (Kauffman 22).

[21] In places, he uses the manner of a performance, such as presenting a program on stage (e.g. "slushaite…"/ "listen…" in Letter 1); namely, the stage of a varieté theater with himself as the master of ceremonies (cf. letter 22).

[22] Shortly before *Zoo*, Shklovsky had written articles about both classics, though dealing more with plot composition than formal composition.

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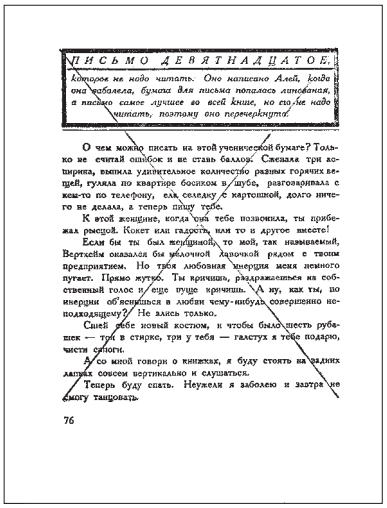
## Appendix


Fig. 1


Fig. 2


Fig. 3



ПИСЬМО ДЕВЯТНАДЦАТОЕ,

которое не надо читать. Оно написано Алей, когда она рисовала, бумага для письма потекла акварелью, а письмо самое лучшее во всей книге, но его не надо читать, поэтому оно перечеркнуто.

О чем можно писать на этой ученической бумаге? Только не считай ошибок и не ставь баллов. Сжевала три вишника, выпила удивительное количество разных горячих вещей, гуляла по квартире босиком в шубе, разговаривала с кем-то по телефону, ела селедку с картошкой, долго ничего не делала, а теперь пишу тебе.

К этой женщине, когда она тебе позвонила, ты прибежал грецкой. Кокет или гадость, или то и другое вместе!

Если бы ты был женщиной, то мой, так называемый, Вертхейм оказался бы молочной лавочкой рядом с твоим предприятием. Но твоя любовная инерция меня немного пугает. Прямо жутко. Ты кричишь, раздражаешься на собственный голос и еще пуще кричишь. А ну, как ты, по инерции объявишься в любви чему-нибудь совершенно неподходящему? Не взись только.

Сшей себе новый костюм, и чтобы было шесть рубашек — три в стирке, три у тебя — галстух я тебе подарю, чисти сапоги.

А со мной говори о книжках, я буду стоять на задних лапах совсем вертикально и слушаться.

Теперь буду спать. Неужели я заболею и завтра не смогу танцовать.

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Fig. 4.1

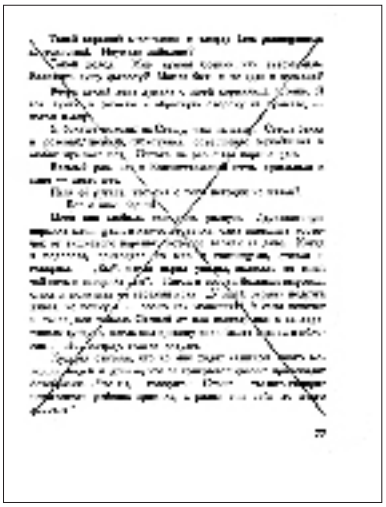

Fig. 4.2

ПИСЬМО ДВАДЦАТЬ ВТОРОЕ,

неожиданное и, по моему, совершенно лишнее. Содержание этого письма, очевидно, убежало из другой книги того же автора, но может быть это письмо показалось необходимым составителю книги для разнообразия. Письмо это разошлось с письмом о Таити.

Fig. 5.1 (Letter No. 22)

ПИСЬМО ТРИНАДЦАТОЕ,

написанное между 6 и 10 часами утра. Изобилие времени сделало письмо длинным. В нем три части. Важно же в нем только упоминание о том, что женщины в берлинском Nachtlokal'е умеют держать вилку.

Fig. 5.2 (Letter No. 13)

ПИСЬМО ДВАДЦАТЬ ПЯТОЕ

О весне, Prager Diele, Эренбурге, трубках, о времени, которое идет, губах, которые обновляются и о сердце, которое истрепывается в то время, как с чужих губ только слезает краска. О моем сердце.

Fig. 5.3 (Letter No. 25)