Studia Metrica et Poetica 11.2, 2024, 93–121

Ancient Greco-Roman meters and stanzas in Russian poetry: origin and development

Mihhail Lotman*

Abstract: The basis of the metrical repertoire of Russian poetry is made up of meters of ancient Greco-Roman origin, which came through the intermediary of German poetry. The basic stanzaic models also originated from there. Meters and stanzas transplanted directly from the ancient tradition are quantitatively marginal but are important from the point of view of self-evaluation of culture.

The article analyses the structure and functions of hexameter and the major ancient strophes, beginning with Church Slavonic quantitative hexameters and ending with the development of the basic form of hexameter in the early 19th century. At the same time, issues that were at the centre of the debate about Russian hexameter are considered: the problem of accentuation, spondee, and caesura.

Keywords: a priori metrics, a posteriori metrics, generative approach, hexameter, Church Slavonic hexameter, Russian hexameter, ancient stanzas

In memory of Mikhail Leonovich Gasparov

0. The problem

The basis of the metrical repertoire of Russian literary poetry are the syllabic-accentual meters of Greco-Roman origin, introduced as a result of the so-called "Trediakovsky-Lomonosov reform" in the 1730s. All other metrical forms (Slavic, Germanic, Oriental, as well as "international free verse", see Gasparov 2003: 224–229) occupy a peripheral position within the poetic culture and are typically perceived through the lens of syllabic-accentual versification. A particularly illustrative case is the trochaic tetrameter, which is used both in Russian folk poetry and in a wide range of other poetic traditions. In literary poetry, this meter is shaped by the general rules of Russian

* Author's address: Mihhail Lotman, Department of Semiotics, University of Tartu, Jakobi 2, 51014 Tartu, Estonia, e-mail: mihhail.lotman@gmail.com. This article is an updated version of the author's earlier publications in Russian (Lotman 2008).

https://doi.org/10.12697/smp.2024.11.2.04

syllabic-accentual versification, while connections with folk traditions, or with Spanish, or Finnish, and other verse traditions are made either at the expense of additional characteristics in the field of rhythm, rhyme or catalexis, or by stylistic means unrelated to the structure of the verse.

The poetic forms of ancient Greco-Roman origin can be divided into two fundamentally different types. The first (and primary) type includes those that were previously adapted in German poetry, so that what was borrowed was not so much a specific metrical scheme as the general principle of its formation (for example, the iambic tetrameter as one of the iambic meters), on the other hand, the system of versification and, sometimes, even the rhythm. Usually, these verse forms were no longer perceived as ancient. For example, the iambic tetrameter in Russian poetry of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries is a syllabic-accentual meter which, if it retains any memory of its origins, is more reminiscent of German poetry of the post-Opitz period rather than the ancient iambic dimeter. The second type includes forms that, if not directly borrowed from the ancient poetic practice, at least never lost their connection with it. These are, first of all, classical hexameter and the elegiac distich, as well as ancient stanzaic forms, which gave rise to various types of logaoedic verse in Russian poetry. The focus of this work is on meters of the second type, with particular attention given to hexameter, from its earliest examples to the situation at the beginning of the 19th century. A brief overview of the history of the emergence of the Sapphic stanza and the Asclepiad is primarily illustrative.

The problems of this article lie at the intersection of the theory of verse and literary history, respectively, and its aims are twofold. From the point of view of versification, it is primarily concerned with the mechanisms of conveying ancient meters and stanzas by means of fundamentally different linguistic material. From the historical and literary point of view, the study focuses on the development of models of Russian verse that convey the ancient form, as well as reflection on these models.

1. Two metrics

There are two main approaches to explicating poetic meter, which we may call the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* approaches. From the perspective of the *a priori* approach, poetic meter (however one interprets this term) precedes the poetic text and is realised in it; the competent reader recognises this meter, while the researcher describes it. For example, iambic tetrameter precedes Pushkin's "Eugene Onegin", and hexameter precedes Nikolai Gnedich's translation of the

"Iliad" . The *a priori* approach is inherent in most schools of poetic thought, from traditional "school metrics" to generative metrics.

For the *a posteriori* approach, meter does not precede the text but constitutes an immanent property of it. The competent reader recognises this property in one way or another (whether consciously or intuitively), and the researcher explicates it. In its most extreme form, this implies that no two or more different texts can share the same metrical structure. Whereas in the *a priori* approach to meter, the primary task of the researcher is typology, with the *a posteriori* approach, it is decoding and reconstruction. It should be noted that the *a posteriori* approach has never been fully implemented in its pure form; nevertheless, the attempts to develop it are remarkable. Foremost among these are the works of Boris Tomashevsky, who argues that the meter is not "imposed" on the language externally but is embedded in the "rhythmicised material" itself (Tomashevsky 1959: 4; cf. also Tomashevsky 1923, 1929, 1957, 1959; Bukhstab 1973; Lotman 1999). For example, it would be inaccurate to claim that Russian and English iamb are the same meter, since the "rhythmicised material" of the English language differs significantly from that of Russian. These ideas, with one important exception, have received little development either in his own writings or in those by his followers. The exception is the early work on verse theory by Andrei Kolmogorov and his students. Thus, in an article devoted to the description of Mayakovsky's rhythmics, Kolmogorov gives the following definition of poetic meter, which has become popular:

> By meter, I mean a regularity of rhythm that is sufficiently definite to evoke: (a) an expectation of its confirmation in subsequent lines, and (b) a specific experience of "disruption" when it is violated. (Kolmogorov 1963: 64).

Ultimately, the difference between *a priori* and *a posteriori* metrics comes down to the problem of the relationship between meter and rhythm. If, for the *a priori* approach, meter is primary, and rhythm is its realisation, then for the *a posteriori* approach, rhythm is the primary reality, while poetic meter is a secondary formation in relation to it ("regularity of rhythm", and so on). Unfortunately, the definition of meter proposed by Kolmogorov remained largely declarative in his works, and we do not find any real attempts to identify meter as a regularity of rhythm extracted from texts. Furthermore, in later publications, Kolmogorov and his students came to a fundamentally different interpretation of meter, one closely aligned with generative metrics (see especially Kolmogorov, Prokhorov 1968).

A radically distinct program of *a posteriori* metrics was proposed by Sergei Gindin in a series of short publications in the late 1960s and early 1970s (1969,

1970). The methodological basis of these works was American linguistic structuralism with its pronounced focus on decipherment. Whereas the basis of European structuralism was Saussure's antinomy of *langue* and *parole* (applied to verse theory as the opposition of meter and rhythm), American structuralism employed the analogous pair of "grammar-text". Descriptive grammar is constructed on the basis of texts and is, naturally, secondary to them; moreover, grammar in comparison with the text is a phenomenon of a fundamentally different level from the text: from this point of view it belongs not to the object language, but to the metalanguage. In the same way, poetic meter, unlike rhythm, is a meta-construct in relation to the text, being a research construct, and not a given of verse.

Although the *a posteriori* approach has not yet been able to develop effective methods of analysis, this does not diminish its methodological significance. However, it seems promising to transfer the problem from the sphere of pure methodology to the ontological plane and to focus not on two different approaches to meter, but on two fundamentally different types of poetic meter. In certain cases, we encounter well-defined structures that are unambiguously interpreted by both the author and the readers, who readily recognise the given meter. Such cases can be described as explicit meter.[1] In other cases, the metrical structure is not clearly recognisable, leading to ambiguous or even contradictory interpretations; here, we can speak of implicit meter.

The distinction between explicit and implicit meters is often reflected in their terminology. Explicit meters are usually referred to by conventional general names (for instance, iamb, trochee), whereas implicit forms often lack widely accepted names or are referred to descriptively (for example, "Russian fairy-tale meter", "Bylina verse", "Mayakovsky's verse", or even "The verse meter of 'Songs of the Western Slavs'").[2]

There are cases, however, where a single text exhibits two types of metrical structure, typically with one being deliberate and explicit, while the other is

---

[1] Compare Viktor Zhirmunsky's thesis of poetic rhythm as an apperception of meter: "Without meter there is no rhythm: rhythm arises only through the apperception of a given alternation of stress as metrically regular" (Zhirmunsky 1975a: 63). Although the above quotation refers only to syllabic-accentual versification, it is obvious that what is said, applies *mutatis mutandis* to the perception of explicit meter in any system of versification: meter precedes rhythm.

[2] Of course, this should not be understood in an absolute sense: the names of many explicit forms of ancient origin contain the name of the author who used them for the first time, according to tradition, first used them (Asclepiad, Sapphic stanza, and so on). On the other hand, Mikhail Gasparov has pointed out that the descriptive names of poetic forms sometimes only hide the incompetence of the authors who use them.

implicit and unconscious. In such instances, we refer to a primary meter (PM) and a secondary meter (SM).[3] At the same time, PM and SM can even be realised in different systems of versification. Thus, in Mayakovsky's poetry, there is a significant group of texts in which the secondary structure of free iambs or trochees is superimposed on the primary structure of accentual verse.[4] In a number of Russian imitations of ancient poetic forms, SM is also found; however, in comparison with Mayakovsky's verse, the ratio of PM and SM in such cases is fundamentally different.

2. Hexameter

In all modern European literatures, hexameter is not only the most common meter of ancient origin, but also the most representative: it is easily recognisable and is always associated with classical antiquity. From the point of view of comparative verse studies, hexameter is of interest as a form with an exceptionally stable metrical structure,[5] implemented in the most different prosodic structures and systems of versification.[6] The fate of the iambic trimeter is fundamentally different, giving rise to a variety of metrical forms:

---

[3] PM and SM should not be confused with the concepts of primary and secondary rhythm proposed by Mikhail Gasparov: although the latter may be the result of SM (for example, in peons), in general such a connection is not mandatory.

[4] See Lotman 1986. It is noteworthy that while most authors who claimed a special system of Mayakovsky's verse did not include any traditional forms, Mikhail Gasparov, who has described in detail Mayakovsky's free binary meters, comes to the opposite conclusion: "the studied meters in Mayakovsky's verse are indeed trochee and iamb" (Gasparov 1965: 88); in both cases, it is a question of unambiguous interpretation. In 1964, Viktor Zhirmunsky first revealed the "dual metrical interpretation of Mayakovsky's accentual verses": "The possibility of a dual metrical interpretation of the accentual verse, its ambivalence, [...] creates [...] a completely original interference of two metrical models: one is subordinate to the other, being dominant, but at the same time it stands out for its particular rhythms, which [...] noticeably deviate from the dominant type" (Zhirmunsky 1975b: 568). However, Zhirmunsky does not even attempt to formulate the principles of interaction between the two types of metrical structures.

[5] This article does not engage with the question of the origin of hexameter. Paul Kiparsky derives hexameter from the Proto-Indo-European iambic octosyllabic verse (Kiparsky 2018, compare also Golston 2021). The issue of the derivates of hexameter is beyond the scope of this publication as well (see Gasparov 1990, 1999, Shapir 1994, Lotman 2011).

[6] For example, in Estonian poetry we find at least four different variants of the syllabic-quantitative hexameter alone; in addition, both the accentual-syllabic and the quantitative-syllabic-accentual system of versification are used (Lotman, Lotman 2012).

the French alexandrine, the English iambic pentameter, the Italian and Polish 11-syllable, the Polish 13-syllable, and so on; if we limit ourselves only to its Russian adaptations, these include – in chronological order – the syllabic 11-syllable and 13-syllable forms, the rhymed iambic hexameter, the blank iambic pentameter with free alternation of masculine and feminine endings, and the blank iambic pentameter with dactylic endings (Gasparov 1966; 2003: 65–68). Unlike the hexameter, reflexes of the trimeter often lose their ancient halo and acquire entirely different semantic connotations. In the Russian tradition, blank iambic pentameter with masculine and feminine endings is associated, first of all, not with ancient, but with Shakespearean verse. On the contrary, the same meter with consistent dactylic verse-endings was specifically (re)created as an equivalent of the ancient trimeter (Gasparov 1966).

The model of hexameter (as well as that of any explicit meter) consists of three components: descriptions of metrical structure, versification system, and prosodic structure.[7]

Any hexametric text (in any language) is based on the following Metric Structure (MR):

(MR) &ABBABABBABABBAB&,

where 'A' and 'B' are abstract metrical positions, and '&' is the delimiter of the verse line (the problems associated with verse-ending will not be discussed here[8]).

The system of versification is determined by Correspondence Rules (CR), which establish a correspondence between metrical positions and elements of the language. From the point of view of the aesthetics of verse, the Correspondence Rules perform a double function: first, they correlate the verse line with the underlying meter, and, second, they provide the possibility of rhythm variations. It is important to note that the invariability of the hexameter in various poetic systems is ensured not only by the commonality of the meter, but also by the structure of the Correspondence Rules. The latter are determined by at least two principles, one of which, the syllabic principle, is common to all national forms of the hexameter.

---

[7] The theoretical and methodological foundations of this work are substantiated in Lotman 1976 and 1987. For significant specifications see Lotman 1998 and 2000.

[8] For this, see Lotman 1976.

Such stability of the syllabic principle is all the more remarkable since in the system of Correspondence Rules of most national forms of the hexameter it serves to ensure rhythmic variability rather than invariability. Therefore, the syllabic principle in the hexameter often goes unrecognised: when discussing metrical or accentual hexameters, what is actually meant are quantitative-syllabic or accentual-syllabic verse forms. It should be emphasised that the syllabic principle in the hexameter is not only historically stable, but also primary in terms of the verse structure itself: all other principles are valid only to the extent permitted by the syllabic principle. The invariability of the rhythm of a hexametric line, on the other hand, is determined by quantitative or accentual principles, or sometimes by their combined effect.

In the most general form, the Correspondence Rules in force in the vast majority of national forms of the hexameter can be formulated as follows:

(CR1) (1) $A \rightarrow x$
(2) $B \rightarrow x$,
(3a) $B/B\_A \rightarrow x$, or
(3b) $B/B\_A \rightarrow \varnothing$
} syllabic principle,

where 'x' is an arbitrary syllable and '∅' is the absence of a syllable.

Note: Rule (3b) does not generally apply to the fifth character B preceding A (that is, the so-called spondaic verses with the contraction in the fifth foot are avoided). However, this rule has never been absolute.

The syllabic principle operates in all forms of hexameter, but with the exception of individual experiments (see Lotman 1987: 63), it must be fulfilled with either the quantitative or accentual principles.

(CR2) (1) $A \rightarrow -$
(2) $B \rightarrow \cup$ if (CR1) (3a),
(3) $B \rightarrow -$ if (CR1) (3b)
} the quantitative principle,

where '–' and '∪' are respectively a heavy and a light syllable.

(CR3) (1) $A \rightarrow \acute{x}$ – accentual principle

where '$\acute{x}$' is a stressed syllable.

Thus, the whole variety of national forms of hexameter is distributed among the three main systems of versification: quantitative-syllabic (CR1+CR2), accentual-syllabic (CR1+CR3), quantitative-accentual-syllabic (CR1+CR2+CR3) and various transitional forms between them.

2.1. Church Slavonic syllabic-quantitative hexameter

The traditions of the Russian hexameter were established by Vasily Trediakovsky in the 1750s, who mainly derived them from the versification principles of Johann Christoph Gottsched. His range of expertise included (in addition to classical ancient verse) samples of the "accentual" hexameter found in Lomonosov's "Letter on the Rules of Russian Versification" (1739),[9] as well as Church Slavonic examples from the grammars of Lavrentij Zizanij and Meletius Smotrytsky. However, neither Lomonosov's verses were the first Russian hexameters, nor Zizanij's verse the first Church Slavonic hexameter. The first Russian hexameter dates from 1704, while the first Church Slavonic one, according to František Václav Mareš (1958), was created sometime between 863 and 885:

> In the Greek Biblical text there is one metrical verse – a hexameter; this passage is in the Epistle of Paul to Titus (I, 12) in the quotation [...] from [...] Epimenides. This passage is translated into Old Church Slavonic also in metrical hexameter:
>
> – ∪∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪̲
>
> **крітѣнє прісно лъжъніці зълі звѣріє, жтровъи праздьнъи**

František Mareš considers this verse to be syllabic-quantitative, and he explains the "excess" of vowels by the fact that in weak positions the reduced vowels ("ultra-short" in his terminology) were not considered. The role of stress is not quite clear, it probably had no formative significance (compare **жтровъи**).

---

[9] In his "Epistle..." Lomonosov gives two examples of a hexameter, the first consisting of one verse, the second of two. It is curious that in the first he has indicated the long and short syllables: "Ѣжѣль бо̄йтсѧ, ктѡ нѣ ста̄л бы сі̄лѣн бѣзмѣрнѡ" (Lomonosov 1952 [1739]: 14), and in the second (optionally) the stresses: "Бре́вна катайте наверх, каменья и го́ры валите, / Лес бросайте, живучий выжав дух, задавите" (Lomonosov 1952: 15; cf. Drage 2009: 34–35). There is obviously no point in attaching too much importance to this circumstance, since a few pages earlier Lomonosov states: "In the Russian language, only those syllables are long that have strength above them, while the rest are all short" (Lomonosov 1952: 10); nevertheless, one cannot help but note that the second example sounds significantly better.

Despite the unquestionable authority of Mareš, his reconstruction should be approached with a degree of caution. The issue here is not only in the "ultra-short" vowels (even though the reduction of these vowels occurred somewhat later, not earlier than the 10th century), but also in a certain inconsistency in the interpretation of vowel lengths. Thus, ѣ ("yat'"), according to all etymological data, should be long (as in **звѣріє**), yet in **крітѣнє** it appears as a short one.

In the medieval Slavonic-Russian writing between the 10th and 15th centuries, the poetic tradition was not formed. Interest in its (re)creation appeared in the 16th century, and it was supposed to be based on quantitative prosody. This prosody existed mainly nominally in the works of Maximus the Greek, Lavrenty Zizanij and Meletius Smotrytsky.[10] Vowels and syllables were divided into long and short ones not so much on the basis of the etymological data of the Church Slavonic language (not to mention its living sound), but in accordance with the rules of Greek (and in the case of Smotrytsky, Latin) grammar. Since neither Zizanij nor Smotrytsky even mention stress as a prosodic factor, their samples should also be considered syllabic-quantitative, at least at the level of design. Meletius Smotrytsky, unlike Zizanij, did not limit himself to the description of the hexameter and individual examples, but also created a hexametric poem, which testifies to the author's undoubted poetic talent.[11]

Сѧ́матски новорастныѧ Мꙋ́сы стопꙋ̀ пѣ́вꙋ,	– – – ∪∪ – – – – – ∪∪ – –
Тща́щꙋсѧ Па́на҃ в҃ ѡ҆бни́тѣ вѣ́чнꙋ заѧти.	– – – – – ∪∪ – – – ∪∪ – –
Хѣ҃ Цр҃ю приймѝ: и҆ бл҃говоли́, Тебе́ є҆ Отцѣ҃	– ∪∪ – – – – – ∪∪ – ∪∪ – ∪
И҆ Дꙋ́хꙋ҃ Свѧ́тꙋ҃ пѣ́ти оꙋ́чи҇ Рωссі́йскій	– – – – – – – – – – – –
ѳ҆д на҃, чи́стыми мѣ́ры Слаѵѣ́ски ѷ́мны.	– – – – – – – – – – – –

[10] Whether Zizanij and Smotrytsky are part of the Russian poetic culture is debatable. Politically they belonged to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, so they should be identified with Belarusian and Ukrainian cultures. Since the Church Slavonic language in which they composed their works was also the cultural language of the Moscow state, they were considered their own in the tradition of Russian poetry. Vasily Trediakovsky, a reformer of Russian verse, regarded Smotrytsky as his predecessor and polemicised with him (Trediakovsky 1963b). See Zizanij 1980 [1596]; available at http://litopys.org.ua/zyzgram/zy.htm; Smotrytsky 1979 [1619], available at http://litopys.org.ua/smotrgram/sm.htm; see also Peretz 1900, Mathauserová 1976.

[11] The following text has been repeatedly quoted by Vasily Trediakovsky, Vladimir Peretz, Boris Tomashevsky and others. Since the prosody of Zizanij and Smotrytsky is purely orthographic, it makes sense to reproduce the typographics of the original. Pages are not indicated, since there is no numeration in the original (the text is also available on the Internet: http://litopys.org.ua/smotrgram/sm248.htm). On the right is the rhythmic scheme of the corresponding verse.

Whereas in the Epistle to Titus the problem is an excess of vowels, in Smotrytsky's poem there is an obvious lack of vowels: there are only seven dactyls for 30 feet; the rest are spondees; the fourth and the fifth verse consist of only spondees.[12] There are other violations of metrical rules as well (Lotman 1987: 42).

It is interesting to note that the verse that sounds best to the modern ear is the one specially constructed by Smotrytsky as incorrect:

Лжи́ви лю́дїе, ле́стни пу́тїе, Гд҃ѹ ме́зост – –|– ∪∪|– –|– ∪∪|– ∪∪|– –

The "irregularity" of this verse is not prosodic, but rhythmic: in it all the boundaries of verse feet coincide with the word boundaries, that is, there is no caesura ("without this, the heroic verse is ugly and displeasing"). This example is another evidence that Smotrytsky relies exclusively, on the one hand, on the ancient rules of metrical verse and, on the other hand, on orthographic prosody, feet consisting of syllables, and syllables consisting of letters ("*стихий или письмен*", 'of elements or writing(s)").[13] He fails to notice the accidentally formed accentual "dactylic-trochaic" hexameter.[14]

In addition to hexameter, Smotrytsky also provides examples of pentameter (considering it, apparently, as an independent meter), the elegiac distich, several examples of iambic verse,[15] as well as the Sapphic stanza, the 11-syllable Phalaecian verse, the Glyconic meter, and the "choriambic-asclepiadic verse".

For a long time, following Trediakovsky, it was believed that the prosodic system developed by Zizanij and Smotrytsky had no lasting influence,[16] but already Vladimir Peretz discovered and published several hexametric poems "composed according to the theory of M. Smotrytsky", found "in a manuscript

---

[12] This is despite the fact that the author twice declares that there should be a dactyl in the fifth foot: "The heroic verse consists of six feet, of which the fifth is dactyl, the sixth is spondee; others are either dactyls or spondees" (Smotrytsky 1979 [1619]).

[13] The opinion of Vladimir Peretz that Smotrytsky "does not distinguish between *sounds* and *letters*" (1901: 13; Peretz's emphasis) is not well-founded: Smotrytsky specifically refers to the letters.

[14] See Peretz 1900: 19. It is also not clear whether Smotrytsky deliberately used rhythmic-syntactic parallelism, strengthened by leonine rhyme.

[15] By "iambic [jamvijskij]" verse, Smotrytsky means the iambic trimeter.

[16] "But no matter how praiseworthy this diligence of Smotrytsky, our learned spiritual people did not accept this composition of his verses: it remained only in his Grammar to show posterity an example" (Trediakovsky 1963a [1755]: 433).

from the very beginning of the 18th century, the time of Peter the Great" (Peretz 1901). Of significant interest are also the alphabet books described by Lyudmila Kovtun (1976): the grammar of Zizanij (and not only that of Smotrytsky) served as a basis for instructional versification. Nevertheless, it is clear that this type of versification was oriented not toward a living tradition but toward bookish knowledge. It was not sensually perceived but purely theoretical. One could say that the principles of *a priori* metrics here are taken to their logical extreme: the description of the meter not only directly precedes the text but forms a kind of symbiosis with it – outside its context, the meter cannot be identified.

2.2. Russian accentual-syllabic hexameter

In 1704, the famous Swedish naturalist and linguist Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld published the following rhymed hexametric couplet:

> As bo wam usta dawat, i Mudrost is wischnijch poslati
> Budu, da wams'che nikto, nje Mogby protiw ghlagholati.[17]

Unlike Zizaniy and Smotrytsky, Sparwenfeld draws not only on scholarly knowledge, but also on a living tradition, though not Slavic-Russian, but Latin-Germanic.[18] This is evidenced by both the syllabic-accentual basis of this text and rhyme: already in medieval Latin hexameters, the rhyme became a common feature, and in the Scandinavian poetic systems of the 16th and 17th centuries, the rhyming hexameter prevailed (Lie 1967: 696–708).

The foundations of the Russian hexameter, both theoretical and practical, were developed by Mikhail Lomonosov and Vasily Trediakovsky. At the same time, both relied primarily on the experience of German poetry, or more

---

[17] Cited in Burgi (1954: 35), including also the information about the circumstances of the creation of this poem. Of particular interest is the system of transliteration used by Sparwenfeld – it clearly distances itself from the Scandinavian and approaches the German-Polish orthography. Nestor Petrovsky "recreates" the Russian form of the text:

> Аз бо вам уста давать, и Мудрость из вышних послати
> Буду да вам же никто не мог бы против глаголати
> (Petrovsky 1914: 537–538).

[18] Other Russian poems by Sparwenfeld suggest that he was also familiar with the tradition of Russian syllabic versification (see Lyustrov 2006: 11).

precisely, on Johan Gottsched's system.[19] Theoretically, the main question was the scale of correspondence: at what level should the Russian hexameter be equivalent to the ancient one: at the level of verse (poetic line), or at the level of syllables and feet? Zizanij and Smotrytsky did not pose this question at all: since orthographic prosody divided syllables into long and short according to ancient principles, equivalence at the level of syllables automatically ensured (according to the same principles) the equivalence at the level of both feet and verses. According to the simplified understanding of ancient prosody, two short syllables were equated to one long syllable,[20] dactyl and spondee were isometric, and, consequently, verses containing different configurations of these feet were also isometric.

The situation was quite different with the "accentual" hexameter. Both Trediakovsky and, following him, Lomonosov adopted Gottsched's principle: "length = stress".[21] Thus, according to Trediakovsky, "the length and brevity of syllables, in the new Russian versification, is not the same as that the Greeks and Romans used in the composition of verses; but only *accentual*, that is, consisting in a single stress of the voice" (Trediakovsky 1963 [1735]: 368). Lomonosov explained: "In the Russian language, only those syllables are long which carry stress, while all the others are short. This very natural pronunciation clearly shows it to us" (Lomonosov 1952 [1739]: 7–19; 10–11). If this principle had been implemented consistently, then the corresponding model of verse could claim to be isomorphic at the level of syllables, but no longer at the level of feet and, moreover, not at the level of the whole verse: in languages with a strong dynamic stress (stress-timing languages according to Kenneth L. Pike [1945: 35–36]), the rhythmic unit is the accent group, a two-stress spondee cannot be equivalent to a one-stress dactyl.[22]

---

[19] Both were undoubtedly familiar with Gottsched's work (see Burgi 1954: 38; 54ff; compare also Pumpyansky 1941: 230–231; Radishchev called Trediakovsky "the Russian Gottsched"), this is especially important in Trediakovsky's case: in "Argenis", along with "dactylic-trochaic" poems, there are also "amphibrachic-trochaic" and "anapestic-trochaic" verses, apparently following the example of Gottsched.

[20] This understanding is considered simplified because in real practice the total interchangeability of one long and two short syllables is not observed: in the hexameter, two short syllables could be replaced by one long syllable, but not vice versa (that is, the relation is not ∪∪ = –, but ∪∪ → –), while in the tragic trimeter there was an inverse relationship: → – ∪∪.

[21] The stress was equated with length in the Germanic poetic tradition as early as the 17th century (Kaabell 1960: 218), but in Russian poetics it appeared specifically in connection with Gottsched.

[22] In relation to the Russian language, this circumstance was pointed out by Alexander

However, the principle of "long – stressed, short – unstressed" was selectively implemented in the Russian hexameter, resulting in the transformation of the "dactylic-spondaic" meter into a "dactylic-trochaic" one: the ancient quantitative spondee (– –) in this model corresponds not to a sequence of two stressed syllables (x́x́), but to a stressed and unstressed syllable (x́x). It is noteworthy, however, that neither Trediakovsky nor Lomonosov (in contrast to the German authors, compare the polemics of Klopstock and Voss) perceived any problems here at all: from the very beginning of modern Russian poetry, the level of line was regarded as primary. In practice, however, the opposite was true: verse was broken down into feet.

2.2.1. The problem of the accentual spondee

Nevertheless, the issue of the 'accentual spondee' in the hexameter remained unsolved. It became the subject of active discussion in the 1810s when attempts to "rehabilitate" the discredited meter proposed by Trediakovsky were undertaken in the context of searching for a suitable meter for the translating of the Homeric epics (Egunov 1964: 174ff; Etkind 1973: 19–27; Burgi 1954: 87ff). The opinions expressed can be summarised in four main points of view:

(1) A hexameter based on the disordered alternation of different feet is entirely unsuitable for the Russian versification (for example, Samsonov 1818). The equivalent of ancient hexameter should be iambic hexameter (compare the unfinished translation of the "Iliad" by Ermil Kostrov, in Alexandrine verses).

(2) The Russian hexameter, like the ancient original, should be based on the alternation of dactyls and spondees, but should be accentual rather than quantitative. The idea of the absence of spondees in the Russians was refuted by the Tartu (Dorpat) professor Alexander Voeykov both theoretically and practically:

> Пусть говорят галломаны, что мы не имеем спондеев!
> Мы их найдем исчисляя подробно деяния россов:
> *Галл*, *перс*, *прусс*, *хин*, *швед*, *венгр*, турок, сармат и саксонец, –
> Всех победили мы, всех спасли и все охраняем...[23]
> ("Epistle to S. S. Uvarov", Dorpat, 1818; my italics – *M. L.*)

Vostokov, who called the accentual group the prosodic period (Vostokov 1817: 105–106).

[23] Let the Gallomaniacs say that we have no spondees! / We will find them, recounting in detail the deeds of the Russ: / Gaul, Persian, Prussian, Chin, Swede, Hungarian, Turk, Sarmatian, and Saxon – / We defeated them all, saved them all, and protect them all...

In his "spondaism" Voeykov is not consistent: in the fourth verse of the cited excerpt, the second and fourth feet are trochaic, not spondaic. It is clear that equivalence to the ancient verse can only be considered at the syllabic level, and even then, with significant reservations. The problem is that length and stress serve fundamentally different functions in language: length is distinctive, while stress in languages like Russian is also culminative (Trubetzkoy 1969; Jakobson 1973: 242). That is, in ancient Greek or Latin, polysyllabic words can contain a variety of combinations of long and short syllables (for example, words consisting only of short or only long syllables are possible), while in Russian polysyllabic words must contain one and only one stressed syllable.[24] Therefore, the impression created by quantitative and accentual spondees is almost opposite: the former are perceived as compressions of the verse, while the latter gives an impression of heaviness. While in ancient hexameters (both Greek and Latin) a line typically contained an average of 3–5 lexical words (Nováková 1947: 75; Levý 2011 [1963]: 198), then already in the Russian accentual hexameter of the sample of Trediakovsky there are six of them, and in Voeykov's verse their number reaches nine[25].

(3) The Russian hexameter is based on the alternation of accentual dactyls and trochees, because this was also the case in ancient versification. The thesis about the accentual basis of ancient verse has been repeatedly expressed by both German and Russian authors (compare Kabell 1960: 1–46; Egunov 1964: 184). For example, for Nikolai Gnedich, ancient versification was based on the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables: "The essence of ancient versification, like ours, consists in stresses", while length "is only extension", which cannot serve as a constitutive element in either language or in verse (Samsonov 1818: 261; see Gnedich 1818; cf. Egunov 1864: 184, 186).[26]

In the German tradition of interpreting classical versification, a theory of rhythmic stress (ictus[27]) was developed, typically fell on the first long syllable

---

[24] In the Russian language, only the primary stress of a word possesses unequivocal phonological significance. A different matter is with compound words, that is, words that contain more than one root; in some cases, they may carry more than one lexical stress.

[25] For a more detailed analysis of Voeykov's versification, see Lotman 1987: 50–53.

[26] See also the rhetorical exclamation made in a polemic with Alexander Vostokov: "The Greeks and Romans seemed to be birds and did not speak, but sang?.." (Gnedich 1818: 192) and the polemical reply by Dormidont Samsonov, according to whom "the Greeks and Romans were the same people as we are", but, nevertheless, they read their poems "in a chant" (Samsonov 1818: 266).

[27] Rhythmic stress should not be confused with the later structuralist conception of ictus (variants: "potentially stressed position" and "strong time in verse") as an element of meter.

of the foot, making the feet of the accentual dactyl and spondee appear, respectively, as follows: –́∪∪ and –́–. although they do not capture the full richness of ancient verse, they are quite adequate in reflecting its accentual structure.

The inadequacy of this theory is obvious: in Russian accentual and syllabic-accentual versification, the focus is not on rhythmic stress but on ordinary linguistic stress. There were many supporters of the ictus theory in Russian poetry studies during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

(4) A more adequate interpretation of the dactylic-trochaic hexameter was provided by Alexander Vostokov, who distinguished between lexical and syntagmatic stress, and was the first to insist on the special role of the latter in Russian versification. "The versification of each language retains its own characteristics even when it imitates the meters of others" (Vostokov 1817: 55), the peculiarities of the Russian language prevent the clash of stresses: "when <... > two stresses occur at once, e.g., *где́ о́н, поди́ про́чь, ска́зать ва́м*", then one of them "is hidden and gives way to the other: *где̄ о̆н* or *гдӗ о̄н, по̆дй про̄чь, скӑза̄ть вӑм*" (Vostokov 1817: 21–22).[28] Therefore, "out of the 28 feet of Greek versification" in Russian verse, only nine that do not lead to a collision are possible: these are the feet of iambic, trochee, dactyl, amphibrach, anapest and four peonic feet (Vostokov 1817: 23). The trochee replaces the ancient spondee, because, on the one hand, it creates the effect of contraction, on the other hand, it does not lead to a clash of stresses.

As a linguist and scholar of versification, Vostokov was far ahead of his time: his concept of the "prosodic period" anticipates Lev Shcherba's theory of syntagma (Shcherba 1937) and the typology of linguistic rhythm of Kenneth L. Pike (1945). The further development of the concept of distinguishing between verbal and syntagmatic (phrasal) stress in verse is associated with the work of Viktor Zhirmunsky and, especially, Roman Jakobson (1923, 1973).[29] According to Jakobson, one of the primary functions of Russian stress is distinctive, but this function can only be realised in polysyllabic words. Notably, it is this ability of stress to perform a distinctive function (rather than, for instance, its strength) that is the determining factor in the context of Russian poetic prosody. Hence,

---

[28] Vostokov marks word stresses with stress marks, while to differentiate stress at the level of syntagms, he uses the symbols of syllable length. This circumstance alone unequivocally testifies to the fact that for Vostokov the basis of Russian versification is precisely syntagmatic stresses since the symbols of ancient metrics were also used for the transcription of metrical schemes in syllabic-accentual versification.

[29] The "prosodic period" united by syntagmatic stress is close to the concept of the stress maxima put forward in English poetry by Morris Halle and Samuel J. Keyser (1972); compare also Kiparsky 1975.

two identically sounding phrases, "*С ней у*бежать хотел гусар" and "*С нею* бежать хотел гусар" are fundamentally different from the point of view of poetic rhythm: phrases of the first type often make up a four-foot iambic verse, while such phrases as the second are inadmissible in Russian poetry of the classical period (Jakobson 1973: 242; compare Lotman 1996: 285–290).

Thus, Voeykov's approach to the issue of the Russian spondee is fundamentally flawed: a monosyllabic word in Russian verse can serve as the equivalent of an anceps ("indeterminate") syllable but not a long syllable. Furthermore, an accumulation of monosyllabic words creates an effect of metrical ambiguity.

2.2.2. Caesura

The caesura in hexameter has a special significance from the point of view of cognitive metrics. In Greek hexameter, the feminine caesura, dividing the third foot, predominated, whereas in Latin, the masculine caesura, following the long syllable of the third foot, was more common (Gasparov 1975: 369; see also Drage 2001: 73). Similarly, in Russian hexameter, the masculine caesura is more frequently encountered, though lines with feminine caesurae are also not uncommon.[30] In any case, in Russian verse, as in ancient verse, the hexameter line consists of two unequal halves, as dactylic word boundaries were disapproved of (see Smotrytsky above). The caesura is often emphasized with contraction, meaning the third foot is the preferred position for trochaic substitution (the next most preferred position is also tied to a constant word boundary – the beginning of the line[31]). Here, for example, is the beginning of Trediakovsky's "Telemakhida", where a clear preference is given to masculine caesuras; the first feminine caesura does not appear until the sixth verse:

Древня размера стихом пою отцелюбного сына,
х́х хх́х хх́ / хх́ ххх́хх х́х
Кой, от-природных брегов поплыв и странствуя долго,
х́ ххх́х хх́ / хх́ хх́хх х́х
Был провождаем везде Палладою Ментора в виде:
х́ ххх́х хх́ / хх́хх х́хх х́х
Много ж коль ни-страдал от гневныя он Афродиты,
х́х х́ ххх́ / хх́хх х́ ххх́х
За любострастных сея утех презор с омерзеньми;
х́ ххх́х хх́ / хх́ хх́ ххх́х

[30] Bucolic caesura (more precisely, diaeresis) after the fourth foot is rarely used in the Russian hexameter.

[31] See Gasparov's data in Gasparov 1997: 248.

Но прикровенна премудрость с ним от-всех-бед избавляла...
х́ ххх́х х́х / х́ ххх́ ххх́х

However, the problem of caesura has never been in the focus of attention of Russian poets and critics, so those of them who were only superficially familiar with the theory of ancient versification often did not perceive caesuras and freely allowed dactylic word boundaries on the third foot. Examples of this kind are often found even in the works of Vasily Zhukovsky:

Столько напрасно ут*ративши* лет, полководцы данаев
Хитрым искусством небесной Паллады коня сотворили,
Дивно-огромного, *плотные* ребра из крепкия сосны,
В жертву богам при от*плытии* (так молва разгласила).
Тут избранных мужей, назначенных жребием, тайно
Скрыли они в про*странные* недра чудовища: полно
Сделалось чрево громады одеянных бронею ратных.
(Zhukovsky, "The Destruction of Troy"; my italics – *M. L.*[32])

The dual structure of the line ceases to be perceived, and as a result, the author sometimes loses track of the number of feet. For instance, even in Zhukovsky's works (albeit mostly in humorous poems), we encounter both five-foot and seven-foot lines. In some cases, the "deviating" lines may even prevail; for example, in the poem "To Myself" (1813), out of 16 lines, 12 are five-foot, and only four are six-foot.

In a speech at a meeting of the "Arzamas" literary society (1817), we find a five-foot line as well as three seven-foot lines, which are particularly noticeable since two of them constitute the closing couplet:

Только, что мы ошалели! что лень как короста...
хх х́ ххх́х / х́ ххх́х
Мы написали законы; Зегельхен их переплел и слупил с нас...
х́ ххх́х х́х /х́хх х́ ххх́ ххх́х
О, помолитесь за нас, погруженных бесстыдно в пакость Беседы!..
х́ ххх́х х́ / х́хх х́х х́х х́ ххх́х
Да спадет с нас беседная пакость, как с гуся вода! Да воскреснем.
х́ х́х х́хх х́х / х́х х́ ххх́х

[32] Dactylic word boundaries after the third foot are marked in italics; compare the general abundance of dactylic word boundaries in this passage.

2.2.3. Dactyl and trochee in the "dactylic-trochaic" hexameter

The definition of the Russian hexameter as "dactylic-trochaic", which has become established in the Russian poetic tradition, appears to be a curious anomaly. It was introduced by Lomonosov, according to whom within the meter the feet combine either "ascending" (that is, iambic and anapest), or "descending" (trochee and dactyl) patterns. Lomonosov's influence was so great that in the 18th century the amphibrach, which is neither ascending nor descending meter, disappeared from the consideration of both poets and theorists. Although Lomonosov's theory has long been recognized as untenable, its consequences have proven remarkably enduring, particularly in the characterization of hexameter.

The dactylic and trochaic feet are unequal in Russian hexameter, already because on the fifth foot, with very few exceptions, only dactyl was allowed. Furthermore, in other positions, dactyls serve as the primary, neutral representation of the meter, while trochaic feet are perceived as variations that complicate or diversify the poem's structure. Statistically, two-syllable intervals predominate over monosyllabic ones for all Russian authors (Gasparov 1997: 248); predominantly trochaic verses are rare and usually carry a specific stylistic function. Compare, for instance, Zhukovsky's verse from his translation of an excerpt from the Aeneid, in which all the feet, except the fifth, are trochaic:

Как погибла Троя, как Приамово царство
х́ хх́х х́х х́ хх́хх х́х
(Zhukovsky, "The Destruction of Troy")

Finally, worth mentioning is the only instance in 18th- and 19th-century poetry where a hexameter verse consists of six trochees. This occurs in the concluding part of Zhukovsky's "The War of Mice and Frogs":

<...> поэт наш
Клим по прозванию Бешеный Хвост, на Мурлыкино пузо
х́ ххх́хх х́хх х́ ххх́хх х́х
Взлезши, начал оттуда читать нам надгробное слово,
х́х х́х хх́х хх́ хх́ххх́х
Мы же при каждом стихе хохотали. И вот что прочел он:
х́х хх́х хх́ ххх́х хх́х хх́х
«Жил Мурлыка; был Мурлыка кот сибирский,
х́ хх́х х́ хх́х х́ хх́х
Рост богатырский, сизая шкурка, усы как у турка;
х́ ххх́х х́хх х́х хх́ ххх́х

Был он бешен, на краже помешан, за то и повешен,
х́х хх х́х́х х́х х́ ххх́х
Радуйся, наше подполье!..» Но только успел проповедник
х́хх х́х х́х́х х́х х́ ххх́х
Это слово промолвить, как вдруг наш покойник очнулся.
х́х х́х х́х́х х́ ххх́х х́х́х

The first verse of Klim's funeral oration ("Жил Мурлыка..." etc.) is a six-foot trochee, but it does not end there: metrically, Klim's poem has a dual structure; beneath the hexameter, a two-stress couplet verse of the *rayok* type[33] is distinctly audible:

Жил Мурлыка;
х́ х́х́х
был Мурлыка
х́ х́х́х
кот сибирский,
х́ х́х́х
Рост богатырский,
х́ ххх́х
сизая шкурка,
х́хх х́х
усы как у турка;
х́ ххх́х
Был он бешен,
х́х х́х
на краже помешан,
х́х х́х́х
за то и повешен...
х́ ххх́х

It is noteworthy that this rhythm is interrupted even before the deceased wakes up: the last phrase of Klim's speech, "Радуйся, наше подполье!" ('Rejoice, our underground!'), does not fit into this structure. The stylistic markedness of the entire trochaic verse is obvious.

[33] Rayok or rayoshnik is comic folk verse, sometimes translated as "Rhymed skomorokh verse".

3. Stanzas

The earliest examples of ancient stanzas can be found in Smotrytsky's grammar, where he also gives examples of several logaoedic meters and stanzas: the Sapphic stanza, the Phalaecian hendecasyllable, the Glyconic and the "choriambic Asclepiadic" verse. Smotrytsky drew not only on the grammatical tradition,[34] but also on the scholarly poetry of European humanism. For example, the Swiss naturalist of the 16th century, Conrad Gessner, an outstanding bibliographer and encyclopaedist, was also a polyglot and linguist. His principal work in this field, "Mithridates" (1555), includes, among other things, poetic translations of the Lord's Prayer into twenty-two languages, employing various ancient meters. For example, he translated the Lord's Prayer into German using quantitative hexameters, Phalaecian verses, and iambs (Kaabell 1960: 188–189). In general, the ability to express the same thought in different meters was regarded as a hallmark of humanist erudition. In this sense, not only the technique but also the themes of Smotrytsky's examples deserve attention. For instance, he dedicates his Sapphic stanza to the same theme as the hexameter:

Моу҃со Т҃а́тр Сѧ̂ма́стк Бо́гѹ триеди́нѹ,
До́лжнꙋю да́й че́сть покло́на со ѹ̈мнь,
Чи́стою Слава́нъ, є҆го́, да́вшемѹ ти
Мт҃ро́ю пт҃ти.

Smotrytsky characterizes the Sapphic stanza as follows: "The Sapphic verse consists of five measures: the first is a trochee, the second a spondee, the third a dactyl, and the fourth and fifth are trochees." That is, – ∪ | – – | –∪∪ | – ∪ | – ∪, where | represents the foot boundary. "To this type of verse, after every third line, is added an Adonic verse consisting of two measures: the first is a dactyl, and the second is a spondee." That is: –∪∪ | – –. Thus, Smotrytsky presents a view, common both at the time and later, that the Sapphic stanza consists of various feet, regulated only by their repetition from stanza to stanza. The recognition that the Sapphic stanza represents an internally regulated metrical structure emerged much later (compare Halle 1968; Cole 1972; West 1987: 32–34; Lotman 1998: 236).

The metrical structure of logaoedic verses is more complex than that of the hexameter: rather than repeating feet within a line, either entire lines are repeated (stichic logaoeds, such as the Asclepiad) or entire stanzas (stanzaic

[34] On the sources of Smotrytsky, see Peretz 1900: 25–35.

logaoeds, such as the Sapphic stanza). On the other hand, the Correspondence Rules in logaoedic verse are significantly simpler than in hexameter: each position corresponds to exactly one syllable. Therefore, the hexameter's challenging problem of equivalence does not occur in logaoedics; once equivalence is established at the syllabic level, it is maintained across all other levels.

The Sapphic stanza in Russian poetry is the most popular logaoedic form of ancient origin. Smotrytsky tried to introduce a quantitative form, but this attempt had no lasting impact. On the contrary, the syllabic form transplanted by Symeon of Polotsk from Polish poetry turned out to be relatively productive. The stanza consists of three hendecasyllables (5+6), corresponding to the Sapphic hendecasyllable, and a final pentasyllabic verse, corresponding to the adonic. The Sapphic stanza naturally fit into the repertoire of Russian (and Polish) syllabism: the hendecasyllable (5+6) is the second most common meter, and the final pentasyllabic verse was associated with the initial hemistich of the hendecasyllable. The common paired rhyme performs the same function. Compare a stanza by Symeon of Polotsk:

Радуйся, царю восточныя страны,
Народам многим от Бога посланы.
Царь обладател, дедич милостивый,
христолюбивый.
("Meters on the arrival [..] Tsar and Grand Prince Alexei Mikhailovich…", 1656)

Trediakovsky, in his "New and brief method for composing Russian verse" (1735), presents an example of a reformed Sapphic stanza according to his own rules. If we set aside the awkward justification and cumbersome transcription, the essence of the innovation pertains only to the hendecasyllables (short lines, according to Trediakovsky, are not subject to reform and can remain syllabic). These hendecasyllabic lines now consist of dissimilar trochaic hemistichs, with masculine and feminine endings, respectively: T3m+T3f. The paired rhyme scheme is preserved.

Силы в серебре всяк скупой не знает,
Срамно то когда в землю зарывает;
Тратящ глуп и мот; тем-то в нужде верно,
Кто в нем чив мерно. (Trediakovsky 1963 [1735]: 376)

The further development of the Sapphic stanza is connected with syllabic-accentual versification. The first examples were provided by Alexander Sumarokov, followed by Alexander Radishchev, Alexey Merzlyakov, Alexander

Vostokov, and others. It is interesting to note that for the latter three, the ancient stanzas stood in opposition to the Lomonosov tradition of classical verse and semantically approached folk versification (in Germany, Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock held similar views, believing that with the help of ancient models he was reviving the "Old German polyrhythm"; see also Levý 2011 [1963]: 209).

In interpreting the metrical structure of Sapphic verse, the position of the caesura is of crucial importance. There are two primary positions – conventionally termed, Latin, after the 5th syllable, and Greek, after the 6th syllable. As an example, let us cite two lines from the "Hymn to Venus" imitated by Alexander Sumarokov (1755):

Кои подают от тебя успехи (Xx xxX | xxX xXx)
Не противлюсь сильной, богиня, власти (xxXx Xx | xXx Xx)

The traditional approach, as found, in particular, in Smotrytsky's grammar, considered the Sapphic verse as an unordered set of trochees, dactyls, and spondees. In the accentual version, the structure is simplified, but depending on the position of the caesura, we get either a trochaic hexameter with caesural truncation (T3m+T3f, that is, the Trediakovsky model) or a trochaic pentameter with a caesural extension (T3f+Ia2f).

The Asclepiad appears relatively rarely in the original works of Russian poets. However, it is of particular interest to us due to the fundamental ambivalence of its metrical structure; various interpretations have, in turn, amplified this ambivalence. Smotrytsky describes it as follows: "The Asclepiad contains four measures, the first accepting a spondee, the second and third a choriamb, and the fourth a pyrrhic. Or, which is the same: the first consisting of a spondee, the second of a dactyl and a long syllable, a cut called *Caesura* in Latin at the end of the second measure taking on the third measure, and the fourth and fifth are dactyls."

Thus, Smotrytsky admits the fundamental ambivalence of the meter: from one point of view, the scheme of the Asclepiad looks like this: – – | – ∪ ∪ – | – ∪ ∪ – | ∪ ∪, on the other hand, as follows: – – | – ∪ ∪ | – / – ∪ ∪ | – ∪ ∪, where ' | ' marks the foot boundary, and '/' indicates the caesura. There is a slight inconsistency in the description concerning the number of feet: it speaks of four "measures", whereas the second interpretation suggests five. Notably, Smotrytsky mentions the caesura after the sixth syllable (mandatory for the Asclepiad in antiquity) only in the second case; in the first variant, it is obscured by the foot boundary. Here is Smotrytsky's example:

Ты́ намъ хрїстїанѡ̑, ѡ Дре́во живо́е
цѝтъ бꙋ́ди на дре́вѣ врага̀ побѣ̑жшее.

A similar, but not identical, definition of Asclepiad is given in Nikolai Ostolopov's *Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Poetry* (1821: 53; the article is exemplified by Horace's "Exegi monumentum" translated by Alexander Vostokov): "*The Asclepiad* is composed of a spondee, dactyl, one long syllable and two dactyls, or, which is all the same, of a spondee, a choriamb and two dactyls". That is, the following schemes are proposed as equals: – – |– ∪∪| – | –∪∪ |– ∪∪ and – – | – ∪∪ – |– ∪ ∪ |– ∪∪. Here is an example from Vostokov (translation from Horace, "Odes" 3.30):

Крепче меди себе создал я памятник;
Взял над царскими верх он пирамидами,
Дождь не смоет его, вихрем не сломится,
Цельный выдержит он годы бесчисленны,
Не почует следов быстрого времени.

The metrical structure of the text is much simpler than all the proposed interpretations – it is an anapestic tetrameter with caesuric truncation into two syllables (An2m+D2d), with the usual super-schematic stresses on the first syllable of the verse. Everything else lies not in the field of the metrical structure, but in the field of its interpretation.

4. Concluding remarks

Forms of ancient origin in Russian poetry demonstrate fundamentally different possibilities for realising metrical tasks. However, a common pattern is the discrepancy between the real metrical structure and its theoretical interpretation: the former is always significantly more regular and simpler than the latter. This is especially true for the main syllabic-accentual model. The borrowed scheme serves as the primary, explicit meter, while the poetic texts that supposedly implement this scheme implicitly have a structure that is often of a completely different nature.

Thus, the basis of the Russian hexameter is not the principle of interchangeability between dactylic and trochaic feet (as an equivalent of the interchangeability between quantitative feet of the dactyl and spondee), but the dactylic impulse, while contracted feet, off-scheme stresses, as well as the

relatively few omissions of scheme-based stresses, represent rhythmic variations of the main pattern. The same is generally true for the structure of the examined logaoeds: the basis of the Sapphic hendecasyllable is a syllabic-accentual binary meter, while the Asclepiad is based on a syllabic-accentual ternary meter. Additional constraints are the result of the influence of the secondary meter.

In comparison, for example, with the scheme given by Smotrytsky (–∪ | – – | –∪∪ | –∪ | –∪), which includes feet of trochee, spondee, and dactyl, the modern theory of versification provides a more regular scheme for the Sapphic hendecasyllable:

–∪– ×–∪∪–∪–×

In the context of the dominance of syllabic-accentual versification in Russian poetic culture, the actual practice propels this meter into a more familiar channel, it to trochaic regularity. The trochee here functions as a secondary, implicit meter that is not reflected upon by metrical theory but nevertheless is distinctly felt.

The situation is even more interesting with the Asclepiad, where the interaction of the primary and secondary meters leads to a three-stage gradation of positions: a) positions where the stress of a polysyllabic word is not allowed, b) positions with arbitrary stress, and c) positions where the omission of stress is not allowed.

References

Burgi, Richard 1954. *A History of the Russian Hexameter*. Hamden, Connecticut: The Shoe String Press.

Cole, A. Thomas 1972. Classical Greek and Latin [Versification]. In: Wimsatt, William K. (ed.), *Versification: Major Language Types*. New York: Modern Language Association, 66–88.

Drage, Charles Lovell 2001. Elegicheskij distikh v russkoj poezii. In: Gasparov, Mikhail; Prokhorov, Aleksandr; Skulacheva, Tat'jana (eds.), *Slavjanskij stikh: Lingvisticheskaja i prikladnaja poetika: materialy mezhdunarodnoj konferencii 23–27 iunja 1998 g.* Moskva: Jazyki slavjanskoj kul'tury, 72–85.

Drage, Charles Lovell 2009. Razvitie russkogo epicheskogo daktilicheskogo gekzametra, 1596–1802. In: Prokhorov, Aleksandr; Skulacheva, Tat'jana (eds.), *Slavjanskij stikh VIII: Stikh, jazyk, smysl.* Moskva: Jazyki slavjanskikh kul'tur, 31–41.

Egunov, Andrei 1964. *Gomer v russkikh perevodakh XVIII–XIX vv.* Moskva, Leningrad: Nauka.

Etkind, Efim 1973. *Russkie poety-perevodchiki ot Trediakovskogo do Pushkina*. Leningrad: Nauka.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1966. Antichnyj trimetr i russkij jamb. In: Gasparov, Mikhail (ed.), *Voprosy antichnoj literatury i klassicheskoj filologii*. Moskva: Nauka, 393–410.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1965. Vol'nyj khorej i vol'nyj jamb Majakovskogo. In: *Voprosy jazykoznanija* 3, 76–88.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1975. Prodrom, Tsets i natsional'nye formy geksametra. In: Frejberg, Lidija (ed.), *Antichnost' i Vizantija*. Moskva: Nauka, 362–385.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1990. Derivaty russkogo geksametra: (O granicah semanticheskogo oreola). In: Arutjunova, Nina et al. (eds.), *Res philologica. Filologicheskie issledovanija: Pamjati akademika G. V. Stepanova*. Moskva: Nauka, 330–342.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1997. Russkij geksametr i drugie natsional'nye formy geksametra. In: Gasparov, Mikhail, *Izbrannye trudy, vol. III. O stikhe*. Moskva: Jazyki russkoj kul'tury, 234–258.

Gasparov, Mikhail 1999. "Eto sluchilos' v poslednie gody moguchego Rima..." (derivaty geksametra: detalizacija metra). In: Gasparov, Mikhail, *Metr i smysl. Ob odnom iz mehanizmov kul'turnoj pamjati*. Moskva: RGGU, 217–237.

Gasparov, Mikhail 2003. *Ocherk istorii evropejskogo stikha.* 2nd ed., rev. Moskva: Fortuna Limited.

Gindin, Sergei 1969. Vnutrennjaja semantika ritma i ee matematicheskoe modelirovanie. In: *Problemy prikladnoj lingvistiki. Tezisy mezhvuzovskoj konferentsii. Chast' I*. Moskva: MGPIIJ, 92–96.

Gindin, Sergei 1970a. Puti modelirovanija ritmicheskoj organizatsii teksta. In: *Strukturno-matematicheskie metody modelirovanija jazyka. Tezisy dokladov i soobshchenij. Vsesojuznaja nauchnaja konferentsija. Chast' I*. Kyiv: Izdatel'stvo KGU, 33–35.

Gindin, Sergei 1970b. K osnovanijam deskriptivnoj metriki. In: *Informatsionnye protsessy, evristicheskoe programmirovanie, problemy nejrokibernetiki, modelirovanie avtomatami, raspoznavanija obrazov, problemy semiotiki.* (Materialy V Vsesojuznogo simpoziuma po kibernetike). Tbilisi, 343–344.

Gnedich, Nikolai 1818. Zamechanija na Opyt o Russkom stikhoslozhenii g-na V<ostokova>, i nechto o Prosodii drevnikh. In: *Vestnik Evropy* 99(10), 99–146; (11), 187–221.

Golston, Chris 2021. A Quantitative Tetrameter for Proto-Indo-European. In: Montanari, Franco; Rengakos, Antonios (eds.), *Synchrony and Diachrony of Ancient Greek*. (Trends in Classics Supplementary Volumes 112). Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 439–461. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110719192-034

Halle, Morris; Keyser Samuel Jay 1972. The Iambic Pentameter. In: Wimsatt, William Kurtz (ed.), *Versification: Major Language Types*. New York: Modern Language Association, 217–237.

Halle, Morris 1968. On Meter and Prosody. In: Bierwisch, Manfred; Heidolph, Karl Erich (eds.), *Progress in Linguistics.* The Hague: Mouton, 64–80.

Jakobson, Roman 1923. *O cheshskom stikhe preimushhestvenno v sopostavlenii s russkim*. [Berlin]: OPOJAZ – MLK.

Jakobson, Roman 1973. Ob odnoslozhnykh slovakh v russkom stikhe. In: Jakobson, Roman; van Schooneveld, Cornelis H.; Worth, Dean S. (eds.), *Slavic Poetics: Essays in honor of Kiril Taranovsky*. The Hague, Paris: de Gruyter, 239–252.

Kabell, Aage 1960. *Metrische Studien, II Antiker Form sich nähernd*. Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 6. Uppsala: Lundequistska bokhandeln.

Kiparsky, Paul 1975. Stress, Syntax, and Meter. In: *Language* 51(3), 576–616. https://doi.org/10.2307/412889

Kiparsky, Paul 2018. Indo-European Origins of the Greek Hexameter. In: Gunkel, Dieter; Hackstein, Olav (eds.), *Language and Meter*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 77–128. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004357778_006

Kolmogorov, Andrei 1963. K izucheniju ritmiki Majakovskogo. In: *Voprosy jazykoznanija* 4, 64–71.

Kolmogorov, Andrei; Prokhorov, Aleksandr 1968. K osnovam russkoj klassicheskoj metriki. In: Mejlakh, Boris (ed.), *Sodruzhestvo nauk i tajny tvorchestva*. Moskva: Isskustvo, 397–432.

Kovtun, Lyudmila 1976 Terminy stikhoslozhenija v russkom azbukovnike. In: Dmitriev, Lev; Lur'e, Jakov; Panchenko Aleksandr (eds), *Kul'turnoe nasledie Drevnej Rusi*. Moskva: Nauka, 269–274.

Levý, Jiří 2011 [1963]. *The Art of Translation*. Tr. by Patrick Corness. Ed. with a critical foreword by Zuzana Jettmarová. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Lie, Hallvard 1967. *Norsk verslære*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Lomonosov, Mikhail 1952 [1739]. Pis'mo o pravilakh rossijskogo stikhotvorstva. In: Lomonosov, Mikhail, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij,* vol. *7*. Moskva, Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 7–19.

Lotman, Maria-Kristiina; Lotman, Mihhail 2012. The derivatives of hexameter in Estonian poetry and their link with the traditional hexameter. In: *Sign Systems Studies* 40, 94–120. https://doi.org/10.12697/SSS.2012.1-2.06

Lotman, Mihhail 1976. Geksametr (Obshhaja teorija i nekotorye aspekty funkcionirovanija v novykh evropejskikh literaturakh). (Predvaritel'noe soobshhenie 1). In*: Studia metrica et poetica* I (Acta et commentationes universitatis Tartuensis 396). Tartu: University of Tartu, 31–54.

Lotman, Mihhail 1986. Problema vol'nykh dvuslozhnikov v poezii V. Majakovskogo (prosodika i ritmika). In: *Trudy po russkoj i slavjanskoj filologii* (Acta et commentationes universitatis Tartuensis 683). Tartu: University of Tartu, 66–78.

Lotman, Mihhail 1987. Geksametr v poeticheskikh sistemakh novoevropejskikh jazykov (Predvaritel'noe soobshhenie 2). In: *Studia metrica et poetica*. Dinamika poeticheskikh sistem. (Acta et commentationes universitatis Tartuensis 780). Tartu: University of Tartu, 40–75.

Lotman, Mihhail 1998. O sistemakh stikhoslozhenija (preimushhestvenno na materiale estonskogo i russkogo stikha). In: *Sign Systems Studies* 26, 201–255. https://doi.org/10.12697/SSS.1998.26.09

Lotman, Mihhail 1999. Pechal'nyj khvost: sootnoshenie metricheskogo i graficheskogo chlenenija i problema razgranichenija javlenij stikha i prozy. In: Bajburin, Al'bert; Belousov, Aleksandr (eds.), *Studia metrica et poetica. Sbornik statej pamjati Petra Aleksandrovicha Rudneva*. Sankt-Peterburg: Akademicheskij proekt, 20–50.

Lotman, Mihhail 2000. Russkij stikh: metrika, sistemy stikhoslozhenija, prosodika (generativnyj podkhod). In: *Sign Systems Studies* 28, 217–241. https://doi.org/10.12697/SSS.2000.28.12

Lotman, Mihhail 2008. Stanovlenie antichnykh razmerov v russkom stikhe: aspekty kognitivnoj metriki. In: Kroó, Katalin; Torop, Peeter (eds.), *Russian Text (19th Century) and Antiquity / Russkij tekst (19 vek) i antichnosť*. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 24–53, 392.

Lotman, Mihhail 2011. Istoricheskaja tipologija russkogo geksametra. In: Lotman, Mihhail; Pszczołowska, Lucylla (eds), *Słowiańska metryka porównawcza IX. Heksametr. Antyczne wzorce wiersza i strofy w literaturach słowiańskich*. Warszawa: Institut Badań Literackich Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 82–166.

Lyustrov, Mikhail 2006. *Russko-shvedskie literaturnye svjazi v XVIII veke. Avtoreferat dissertacii na soiskanie uchenoj stepeni doktora filologicheskih nauk*. Moskva: IMLI RAN.

Mareš, František Václav 1958. Nejstarší doklad slovanské prosodie časoměrné. In: *Slavjanskaja filologija II*. Moskva: Izdateľstvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 308–315.

Mathauserová, Světla 1976. *Drevnerusskie teorii iskusstva slova*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova.

Nováková, Julie 1947. Tři studie o hexametru. In: *Věstník Královské české společnosti nauk,* č. V. Prague: Královská česká společnost nauk.

Ostolopov, Nikolai 1821. *Slovar' drevnej i novoj poezii,* vol. 1. Sankt-Peterburg: Tipografija Imperatorskoj Rossijskoj akademii.

Peretz, Vladimir 1900. *Istoriko-literaturnye issledovanija i materialy. Tom I. Iz istorii russkoj pesni.* Sankt-Peterburg: Tiporafija Vajsberga i Gershunina.

Peretz, Vladimir 1901. *Zametki i materialy dlja istorii pesni v Rossii.* Sankt-Peterburg: Tipografija Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk.

Petrovsky, Nestor 1914. Analecta metrica VI. In: *Russkij filologicheskij vestnik* 71(2), 532–538.

Pike, Kenneth Lee 1945. *The Intonation of American English* (University of Michigan Papers in Linguistics 1). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Pumpyansky, Lev 1941. Trediakovsky. In: Gukovsky, Grigori; Desnitsky, Vasili (eds.), *Istorija russkoj literatury v 10 tomakh, vol. 3: Literatura XVIII veka. Chast' 1*. Moskva, Leningrad: Izdateľstvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 215–263.

Samsonov, Dormidont 1818. Nechto o dolgikh i kratkikh slogakh, o russkikh geksametrakh i jambakh. In: *Vestnik Evropy* 100(15/16), 260–271.

Shcherba. Lev 1937. *Fonetika frantsuzskogo jazyka. Ocherk frantsuzskogo proiznoshenija v sravnenii s russkim*. Leningrad, Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe uchebno-pedagogicheskoe izdateľstvo.

Shapir, Maksim 1994. Geksametr i pentametr v poezii Katenina (O formal'no-semanticheskoj derivatsii stikhotvornykh razmerov). In: *Philologica* 1(1/2), 43–107.

Smotritsky, Meletius 1979 [1619]. *Grammatiki Slavenskija pravilnoe syntagma*. Kyiv: Naukova dumka. http://litopys.org.ua/smotrgram/sm.htm

Tomashevsky, Boris 1923. *Russkoe stikhoslozhenie. Metrika.* Petrograd: Academia.

Tomashevsky, Boris 1929. *O stikhe. Stat'i*. Leningrad: Priboi.

Tomashevsky, Boris 1957. Recenzija na knigu: B. O. Unbegaun. *Russian Versification*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956. In: *Voprosy jazykoznanija* 3, 127–134.

Tomashevsky, Boris 1959. *Stikh i jazyk. Filologicheskie ocherki.* Moskva, Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdateľstvo khudozhestvennoj literatury.

Trediakovsky, Vasili 1963 [1735]. Novyj i kratkij sposob k slozheniju rossijskikh stikhov s opredeleniem do sego nadlezhashhikh znanij. In: *Izbrannye proizvedenija*. Moskva, Leningrad: Sovetskij pisatel', 365–420.

Trediakovsky, Vasili 1963 [1735b]. O drevnem, srednem i novom stikhotvorenii rossijskom. In: *Izbrannye proizvedenija.* Moskva, Leningrad: Sovetskij pisatel', 425–450.

Trubetzkoy, Nikolai 1969. *Principles of Phonology*. Tr. by Christiane A. M. Baltaxe. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Vostokov, Alexandr 1817. *Opyt o russkom stikhoslozhenii*. Sankt-Peterburg: Morskaja tipografija.

West, Martin L. 1987. *Introduction to Greek Metre*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Zhirmunsky, Viktor 1975a [1925]. Vvedenie v metriku. Teorija stikha. In: Zhirmunsky, Viktor, *Teorija stikha.* Leningrad: Sovetskij pisatelj', 5–232.

Zhirmunsky, Viktor 1975b [1964]. Stikhoslozhenie Majakovskogo. In: Zhirmunsky, Viktor, *Teorija stikha.* Leningrad: Sovetskij pisatelj', 539–568.

Zizanij, Lavrentij 1980 [1596]. *Grammatika slovnenska*. Kyiv: Naukova dumka. http://litopys.org.ua/zyzgram/zy.htm