

DISORDERED VERSE VS. EARLY ROMANIAN *VERS LIBRE*

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Abstract The article is devoted to the Romanian *vers libre* genesis and its identification among disordered verse forms in the Romanian poetry of the beginning of the 20th century. Our investigations are based on the innovative methods of verse analysis suggested by the Russian poetic science which are based on the quantitative analysis. By means of statistical analysis of the disordered oeuvres – verses without rhyme, meter and formal stanza – we found out that not all oeuvres with such features may be referred to as *vers libre*. Among such forms there are the oeuvres which do have some systematic characteristics coinciding with classical, tonic or heteromorphic forms.

Keywords *Vers libre*, disordered verse, classical versification, tonic versification, heteromorphic verse.

Vers libre is a way of poetic thought organization characterized by the division into verse lines according to the intonation-syntactic principle and rejection “of all secondary indications of verse language: rhyme, syllabo-tonic meter, isotony, isosyllabism - and regular stanzas.”¹

The main feature of *vers libre* is the division of the text into syntactically homogeneous, lines that are autonomous in meaning. It is a dimensionless and disordered verse with unequal lines, characteristic of inner verse organization that creates inner poetic rhythm. This interpretation indicates that *vers libre* could come into being only in a highly developed national verse system at the end of the 19th –

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¹ Original text: “... от всех вторичных стихообразующих признаков: рифмы, силлабо-тонического метра, изотонии, изосилабизма и регулярной строфики [... от vseh vtorichnykh stikhoobrazuiushchikh priznakov: rifmy, sillabo-tonicheskogo metra, izotonii, izosilabizma i reguliarnoi strofikii]” (Translation mine) Yuriy Orliiski, *Stikh i proza v russkoi literature* (Moskow: Russkiy gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet, 2002), 322.

the beginning of the 20th century. This poetic form was created by French poets-symbolists at the end of the 19th century, and the term “*vers libre*”, as a verse exempt from the severe rules of canonical versification was used for the first time by the French symbolist poet and art critic Gustave Kahn in the foreword to the collection *Premiers poèmes* (1897; “First Poems”).

The French analogue of *vers libre* was accepted by Romanian poetry. Romanian poetic science states the appearance of *vers libre* at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in the poetry of the symbolists, and the initiator of such forms is considered to be A. Macedonski, who was not only a poet, but also a verse theoretician, who, in his scientific works, advocated the renovation of poetry and liberation of verse from classical norms. It was in the lyrics of the young Macedonski that the craving for experiment and rejection of canons was testified. According to the observations of the Romanian verse theorists, A. Macedonski’s poem *Hinov* (1879) is the first example of Romanian *vers libre*, which, as V. Streinu asserts, “might claim a certain place in the European chronology of *vers libre*.”² Our previous investigations proved that the poem *Hinov* abounds in varied metric classical forms, which the poet successfully combines with non-metric lines. The work is written unrhymed free dolniks. 63% of the lines have “nonclassical” form, which, undoubtedly, makes the verse closer to *vers libre*. But the availability of a substantial number of metric lines does not give any grounds to regard the poem as *vers libre*. This is a pseudo-*vers libre*, in which the mixing of different classical and nonclassical stylistic forms is distinctly observed.³

The second attempt to introduce *vers libre* into the Romanian versification is traced to the beginning of the 20th century. It belongs to the poet and literary critic O. Densușianu. As an art critic, he popularizes *vers libre* through the journal “*Viața nouă*” (“New Life”) and offers, as an example, certain samples of French *vers libre*. As a poet, he writes under the pseudonym Ervin, who, according to our observations, created free metric forms using the technique of the typographic fragmentation of a classical poem.⁴

The most decisive step in implementing the *vers libre* was taken by the Avant-Garde poets, Tristan Tzara in particular, who creates “amorphous meters, with rhymes and assonances, moulded into such versification which negates the

² Original text: “...putând să aspire chiar la un loc de evidență în cronologia europeană” (Translation mine) Vladimir Streinu, *Versificația modernă* (București: Editura pentru Literatură, 1966), 175.

³ See Kristiniia Paladian, “Pochiatky verlibru v ukrainskii ta rumunskii poezii,” in *Ukrainistika: minulost, přítomnost, budoucnost III: literatura, kultura*, ed. Halyna Myronova, Oxana Čmelíková (Gazdošová), Petr Kalina, Krystyna Kuznietsova, Ihor Shysterov (Brno: Jan Sojnek – Galium, 2015), 208.

⁴ See Paladian “Pochiatky,” 209.

availability of versification itself.⁵ Modern methods of investigation showed that the ways of T. Tzara's versification are based on the technique of syntagmatic combinations, in which the classical structures emerge, as an inclination towards orderliness.⁶

The introduction into Romanian literature of *vers libre* proper is date to the '20s of the 20th century as a consequence of the Romanian literature synchronizing with the European one. The best samples of Romanian *vers libre* are considered to be the poems of Lucian Blaga. As worded by V. Streinu, L. Blaga made his debut through the "typographic verse" based on which the poem was broken apart almost to the limit of its disappearance into prose, from which it differs only through the graphic location of the lines. The theorist recommends regarding such oeuvres as "space prose", which gradually changed into true *vers libre* in the subsequent collections.⁷ The skill of the poet's way of versification was approached by L. Galdi. Unlike V. Streinu, who regarded all of the poet's disordered oeuvres as *vers libre*, L. Galdi fixed, especially in a debut collection, the predominance of the anisometric syllabo-tonic meters, built on the basis of syntactic lines.⁸ Our investigations showed the heterogeneity of L. Blaga's versification technique. Each collection manifests the poet's inclination towards certain systems of versification. We must admit that certain experiments in the realm of syllabo-tonic versification, which we observed in the debut collection,⁹ resulted in the discovery of "pure" *vers libre* in *În marea trecere* (1924; "On the Great Passage"). The poems from the collection are characterized by arrhythmic, astrophic and unrhymed natures, there is a rejection of syllabo-tonic forms, which are not interspersed in the composition of the poem. *Vers libre* prevails in the collection "On the Great Passage", but it is not the dominant form of L. Blaga's versification.¹⁰

Thus, the real *vers libre* is characterized as an asymmetric construction, with disordered character, a wavy graphic pattern with a sharp change between short and long lines and absence of rhyme and astrophic structures. The non-trivial

⁵ Original text: "...măsurii amorfice, cu rime și asonanțe implicate într-o versificație care-și interzice conștiința de ea însăși" (Translation mine) Streinu, *Versificația modernă*, 197.

⁶ See Kristiniia Paladian, "Interaction of classical and non-classical forms in Tristan Tzara's poetry," in *Les Cahiers / Notebooks / Caietele TRISTAN TZARA. TOME 5*, ed. Vasile Robciuc, Crina-Laura Luca (Moinești: Docuprint, 2015), 147.

⁷ See Streinu, *Versificația modernă*, 244.

⁸ See Ladislau Galdi, *Introducere în istoria versului românesc* (București: Minerva, 1971), 361-363.

⁹ See Cristiniia Paladian, "Versificația lui Lucian Blaga: «Poemele luminii»," *Glasul Bucovinei* 98, no.2 (2018): 43-51.

¹⁰ See Cristiniia Paladian, "Modernism și tradiționalism în lirica lui Lucian Blaga," in *Schimbarea lingvistică și schimbarea lingvisticii*, ed. Sanda-Maria Ardeleanu, Halyna Zahaiska, Cristiniia Paladian, Albumița-Muguraș Constantinescu, Dorel Fînar (Cernăuți: Universitatea Națională din Cernăuți, 2020), 471.

graphics of the text enhance the role of the intonation filling of the poem, making it closer to the natural, colloquial speech and rendering the poem with a specific rhythm, which appears due to the peculiar semantic filling of the line or a separate word.

It is these features that encouraged the majority of the Romanian verse scholars to regard all oeuvres with disordered structures as *vers libre*. However, modern poetic research and quantitative methods of studying poetry provide the opportunity to more accurately identify the individual verse creating technique of poets. The theoretic and methodological basis of our investigation is the innovative methods of verse analysis suggested by the Russian poetic sciences,¹¹ which are based on statistical calculations, which are commonly accepted in the modern European verse study. The algorithm for the study of works with an unknown system of versification presupposes the study of verse lines according to “1) number of syllables (syllabic system of versification); 2) number of stress (tonic system); 3) length of inter-ictus intervals (syllabo-tonic system of versification); and also (less often) 4) vowel length (metric versification system) and 5) (even less common) metrically predictable arrangement of alliterated consonants (Germanic alliterative verse).¹²” If one of the enumerated parameters regularity comes up higher than 75%, all oeuvre may be referred to the respective system of versification.¹³

By means of statistical analysis, the Romanian poetry from the beginning of the 20th century has been investigated and we found out that not all oeuvres with non-trivial structure may be referred to as *vers libre*. Among such forms there are poems which have certain features of systematizing which coincide with syllabo-

¹¹ See Mikhail Gasparov, and Tatiana Skulacheva, “Ritm i sintaksis v svobodnom stikhe,” in *Statti o lingvistike stikha*, ed. Mikhail Gasparov, Tatiana Skulacheva (Moskva: Yazyki slavianskoi kulture, 2004), 170–201; Tatiana Skulacheva, “Metody opredeleniia metra v neklasicheskom stikhe,” *Izvestiia RAN*, no 2 (2012): 42–55; Tatiana Skulacheva, “Metody analiza stikha pri neizvestnoi sisteme stikhoslozheniia,” *Vestnik OGU* 172, no 11 (November 2014): 41–46.

¹² Original text: “... 1) количество слогов (силлабическая система стихосложения; 2) количество ударений (тоническая система); 3) длина междуударного интервала (силлабо-тоническая система стихосложения); а также (реже) 4) долгота гласных (метрическая система стихосложения) и 5) (еще реже) метрически предсказуемое расположение аллитерованных согласных (германский аллитерационный стих) [... 1) kolichestvo slogov (sillabicheskaia sistema stikhoslozheniia; 2) kolichestvo udareniy (tonicheskaiia sistema); 3) dlina mezhdudarnogo intervala (sillabo-tonicheskaiia sistema stikhoslozheniia); а takzhe (rezhe) 4) dolgota glasnykh (metricheskaiia sistema stikhoslozheniia) i 5) (eshche rezhe) metricheski predskazuemoe raspolozhenie alliterovanykh soglasnykh (germanskiy alliteratsionnyi stikh)” (Translation mine) Skulacheva, “Metody analiza stikha,” 41.

¹³ See Skulacheva “Metody analiza stikha,” 43.

tonic meters (iambus, trochee and amphibrach), heteromorphic forms and meters of tonic versification (dolnik, taktovik, accent verse).

1. Syllabo-tonic disordered forms

Syllabo-tonic disorderliness is represented by the alternation of verses with different number of feet in the line. Those are poems in which, in order to create novelty in the structure of the oeuvres, the poets resorted to different usages of verses of different numbers of meters, placing them at random in the text.

In the traditional versification, we distinguish forms with different feet in lines, but with an orderly alternation of lines with an unequal number of meters and disordered forms with different numbers of feet, in which the succession of the lines with unequal range of meters is arbitrary. The Russian verse theorist M. Gasparov names disordered structures “free forms” and distinguishes free meters of the traditional type which are characteristic to the classical versification and the free meters of the non-traditional type which are found in the poetry of the beginning of the 20th century.¹⁴ According to his observations, free meters of the non-traditional type are built according to the principle of contrast, the constant shift between short and long lines, the scope of feet in these verses is rather large and includes both short 1- and 2-metre lines, and long from 7- to 10-meter verses. These are oeuvres with regular syllabo-tonic lines, but with an arbitrary, very shattered number of feet in the verse.

In the Romanian poetry, free syllabo-tonic forms were actively used by I. Minulescu, L. Blaga and T. Arghezi. Among such forms, the most often used ones were free iamboes, though we observe experiments with free trochees, especially in the case of I. Minulescu, and even with amphibrachs, two poems from both I. Minulescu and T. Arghezi, one from L. Blaga.

Free syllabo-tonic forms may be subdivided into two types: structures built on the basis of a certain meter, in which the rhythmic inertia of the text is felt, and proper free structure with an unlimited range of feet, in which the rhythmic chanting is lost, which makes such forms closer to the *vers libre*.

To the first type we refer the oeuvres by I. Minulescu and T. Arghezi, built through the technique of the typographical breaking up of the classical verse into separate short lines, sometimes adding syllables or a line. Among such structures, there are verses in which the dominant meter is felt and the lines, mostly, may be rewritten isometrically.

Let us cite as an example a fragment of the poem *Romanță fără muzică* (“Romance without Music”):

¹⁴ See Mikhail Gasparov, *Russkiy stikh nachala XX veka v kommentariiakh* (Moskva: Fortuna Limited, 2001), 125.

În seara când ne-om întâlni -	la4 ¹⁵
Căci va veni și seara-aceea -	la4
În seara-aceea voi aprinde trei candelabre de argint	la8
Și-ți voi citi	la2
Capitole din epopeea	la4
Amantelor din Siracuza,	la4
Citera,	la1
Lesbos	Ta1
Și Corint...	Ta2
Și-n seara când ne-om întâlni	la4
Te-oi întreba,	la2
Ca și pe multele pe care le-am întrebat 'nainte ta:	la8
- Voiești sau nu să fii a mea? ¹⁶	la4

This poem is built on the basis of iambic octameter, but its segment in the oeuvre constitutes only 20% of the lines. The main form is divided into separate parts which create short verses with different numbers of meters. Alongside this, we should mention that these “torn” lines obtain independence, which is emphasized by the fact that they are “full” and begin with capital letters. When analysing metrically we fix trochaic meters, which arose as a result of the allocation of the previous line. If we rewrite the verses “*Citera, Lesbos și Corint*” in a single line, we obtain the iambic tetrameter. Thus, the graphic pattern of the text shows the structure freed from the strict rules of versification, but the intonation points to the rhythmic cadence of the verse.

Closer to *vers libre* are the forms of another type, in which there is an unlimited scope of meter. Such forms are characteristic to L. Blaga’s poetry, who created free meters by means of non-trivial graphics, rejecting the marking of the beginning of the line with the capital letter and using narrative and spoken intonation¹⁷. Sometimes, in order to create novelty and to emphasise the intonation filling of the oeuvre, the poet uses enjambement, which breaks the rhythmic scansion of the poem, which leads to the appearance of the prose intonation, characteristic to everyday life, credulous, intimate wording. This idea is supported by the following example, a fragment of the poem *Primăvara* (“Spring”):

¹⁵ Abbreviations denote: la4 – iambic tetrameter, la8 – iambic octameter, la2 – iambic dimeter, la1 – iambic monometer, T1 – trochaic monometer, T2 – trochaic dimeter.

¹⁶ Ion Minulescu, *Romanțe pentru mai târziu* (București: Litera, 2009), 93.

¹⁷ See Paladian, “Modernism,” 473.

Visător cu degetele-i lungi pătrunde vântul	T7 ¹⁸
printre ramuri și pe fire de păianjen	T6
cântă bietul ca pe-o harfă.	T4
Albi pe fruntea ta-și deschid subțirele pleoape	T7
trandafirii,	T2
fragezi ca florii unor tăinute presimțiri,	T8
tremurând de neastâmpărul ce-ți joacă	T6
viu și cald în vine ¹⁹	T3

In the given example, the verses have trochaic character, none of the meters being the main in the oeuvre. Alternation of anisometric lines is not subjected to any regularity, the poem is unrhymed, and the organization into irregular stanzas is presupposed by the intonation and content ending of the text. In the oeuvre, we find verse enjambements, which break up the metric pattern of the rhythm set by the poet. Enjambement mostly appears in the long 9-meter and 10-meter verses, it serves as a strong device of intonation foregrounding of the separated fragment of a phrase and levels the rhythmic inertia of the oeuvre making it closer to the natural, colloquial speech, characteristic to *vers libre*. At the same time, in the above cited example, the syntactic completion of the line, which is the key feature of *vers libre*, is absent. Thus, it is disordered or free trochee of the non-traditional type.

2. Heteromorphic forms

To heteromorphic verse we refer disordered structures in which different syllabo-tonic rhythms are unsystematically combined, in which verses exist on the same level and cannot be isolated from one another, that is, they cannot be regarded as polymetric structures, which consist of metrically homogeneous blocks. Such free combinations of different heterometric forms in one oeuvre, M. Gasparov names “overmicropolymetrics”, and notes that in such oeuvres “show completely different attitude towards verse lines of classical meters – as towards undivided (on the feet, etc.) primary elements of a poetic text, the combinations of which give new and still new verseforms.”²⁰ Yu. Orliński argues

¹⁸ Abbreviations denote: T7 – trochaic heptameter, T6 – trochaic hexameter, T4 – trochaic tetrameter, T8 – trochaic octameter, T3 – trochaic trimeter.

¹⁹ Lucian Blaga, *Opere. I. Poezii* (București: Academia Română, Fundația Națională pentru Știință și Artă, 2012), 41.

²⁰ Original text: “... намечается совсем новое отношение к строкам классических размеров — как к неразложимым (на стопы и пр.) первоэлементам стихотворного текста, комбинации которых дают новые и новые стихотворные формы [... namechaetsa sovsem novoe otnoshenie k strokam klassicheskikh razmerov - kak k nerazlozhimym (na stopy i pr.)”

that Gasparov's definition concerns the oeuvres with traditional organization into stanza and does not suit the definition of the poems in which all poetic parameters are disordered. Yu. Orbitski suggests naming such structures 'heteromorphic' and emphasizes that in such poems "there is a constant change in the current constructive laws of the poetic structure."²¹ In the context of heteromorphic forms, Yu. Orbitski distinguishes both disordered and, as a rule, non-locational (unlike classical polimetrics) usage in one oeuvre the lines written with different syllabo-tonic meters and heteromorphic structures in which syllabo-tonic lines alternate with different tonic lines and even with *vers libre*.

According to the methodology of T. Skulacheva, to heteromorphic structures we refer the oeuvres in which the number of syllabo-tonic lines reaches 75%. Among such structures, we distinguish heterometric forms (90–100% syllabo-tonic lines) and heteromorphic structures, in which 10–25% nonsyllabo-tonic lines appear.

Among the Romanian poets from the beginning of the 20th century, heteromorphic forms can be found in the works of T. Tzara, L. Blaga, T. Arghezi, but the true master in the realm of heteromorphic verse is G. Bacovia. He is the author of the poems written using a new and unique technique of versification. The poet experimented in the realm of syllabo-tonic versification, but never for the unification and establishment of any rhythmic forms. In his poetic heritage, syllabo-tonic meters create complicated, multicomponent, dynamic structures, which are difficult to be referred to a certain meter. In such forms, the poet tries to break the principles of traditional poetry, in the way of shattering the constant poetic laws.

The following can be an example – the poem *Revelion* ("New Year's Eve"):

pervoelementam stikhotvornogo teksta, kombinatsii kotorykh daiut novye i novye stikhotvornye formy.]” (Translation mine) Mikhail Gasparov, *Ocherk_istorii_russkogo_stikha* (Moskva: Fortuna Limited, 2000), 224-225.

²¹ Original text: “... постоянно происходит изменение текущих конструктивных закономерностей стиховой структуры [... postoianno proiskhodit izmenenie tekushchikh zakonomernostei stikhovoi struktury]” (Translation mine) Yuriy Orbitski, “Geteromorphnyi (neuporiadochenyi) stikh v russkoy poezii” *NLO*, no 73, (2005): 2, <http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2005/73/or19-pr.html>.

Colindă plăceri	Am2 ²²
Ninge	T1
În noaptea de Crăciun.	la3
Damigeana cu vin	An2
Harapnice trosnind	la3
De alte vremi...	la2
Să ne vedem în oglindă,	D3
Și noaptea cântătoare	la3
Să ne-adoarmă	la2
Pentru uitare ²³	D2

As we can see, this is an unrhymed and astrophic poem in which each line has a scheme following a certain rhythm. The innovation of the poet is emphasized by the diversity and shattering of meters. As a result of such a change of rhythm, the predictability of the successive line downgrades abruptly, which gives the verse the tension and diversity. Thus, the poet brought to life a new type of verse – the heteromorphic verse – which differs from syllabo-tonics and tonics by the fact that, within it, the constant change of meter does not create metric inertia. This is a blank shattered heteromorphic verse, which is like *vers libre* from without. But, taking into consideration the “metricity” of the poem, which can indeed be felt, it cannot be classified as *vers libre*. Such structures may be regarded as transitional metric forms, or the “metricized periphery of *vers libre*.”

3. Tonic disordered forms

Tonic disorderliness in the poetry of Romanian poets of the beginning of the 20th century is represented by unequal ictus of the tonic versification. According to Yu. Orliitski’s observation, in the traditional poetry, through free meters separate literary genres were created, in which, as a rule, one meter was used for the whole oeuvre, in modern poetry “heterometry are actively used in the tonics in the form of heteroictness.”²⁴

As to the forms of tonic verse, the interpretation of these terms was given by the famous Russian verse scholars V. Brusov, V. Zhirmunskiy and

²² Among the abbreviations are ternary meters: Am2 – amphibrachic dimeter, An2 – anapestic dimeter, D2– dactylic dimeter, D3 – dactylic trimeter.

²³ George Bacovia, *Opere* (București: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1994), 289.

²⁴ Original text: “...гетеростопность активно используется и в тонике в виде гетероиктности [... geterostopnost aktivno ispolzuetsa i v tonike v vide geteroiknosti]” (Translation mine) Orliitski, “Geteromorphnyi (neuporiadochenyi) stikh,” 15.

M. Gasparov. Academician M. Gasparov, in his fundamental works, presented the full and comprehensive information on the basic forms of modern tonic versification. Dolnik is the verse in which the scope of the intervals between the stresses varies in the range of 1 and 2 syllables; taktovik allows three variants: 1, 2 and 3 syllables, more rarely 0, 1 and 2; in the accent verse, the range of inter-ictus intervals is unlimited, from 0 to 4, 5 and more syllables, and the first feature of the accent verse is zero and four syllabled intervals in the verse line²⁵. Thus, in order to reveal the meter of the tonic verse we take into consideration the length of inter-ictus intervals.

The tonic disordered structures of the Romanian authors are represented by free dolnik, free taktovik and free accent verse. Among unequal ictus forms, we observe two vectors of development: on the one hand, orientation towards a certain regularity, to the relative stability of the number of ictus and inter-ictus intervals, to strophic orderliness, and on the other hand, to the weakening of the different ictus verses and inter-ictus intervals in the poem, to astrophic structure i.e., the approach of *vers libre*. That is why among irregular tonic forms we distinguish two types. To the first type we refer free dolniks. Unlike free syllabo-tonic forms, free dolniks are more ordered, asystemic alterations of different ictus verses, predominantly, are compensated by the organization into strophes and rhyme. According to Yu. Orbitski, the main peculiarity of such forms is the tendency towards a spontaneous change of free verse in the oeuvre by the equal ictus, not infrequently several times running.²⁶

Such forms are characteristic to the poetry of T. Tzara and L. Blaga. Undoubtedly innovative phenomenon in the realm of dolnik forms becomes the poetry of L. Blaga. In his free dolniks, we can observe a combination of verses in stanzas of different magnitude and with sporadic rhyming. In such forms, there is a strive for disorderliness, not only on the level of the number of ictus in the verse, but in the selection of the scheme of rhyming and the combination of verses into the stanza. In certain poems, three or more verses are combined by one rhyme, or the rhymed lines are disorderly alternated with blank ones, while in others, the rhyme is unsystematically scattered in the text. The following is an example of the verse *Un om s-apeacă peste margine* ("A Person is Bending Over the Edge"):

²⁵ See Mikhail Gasparov, *Izbrannye trudy. Tom III. O stikhe* (Moskva: Yazyki russkoi kultury, 1997), 54.

²⁶ See Orbitski, "Geteromorphnyi (neuporiadochenyi) stikh," 15.

M-aplec peste margine:	1-2-2 ²⁷	Am2 ²⁸
nu ştiu – e-a mării	1-1-1	la2
ori a bietului gând?	2-2-	An2
Sufletul îmi cade în adânc	-3-3-	T5
alunecând ca un inel	3-3-	la4
dintr-un deget slăbit de boală.	2-2-1-1	Dk3
Vino sfârşit, aşterne cenuşă pe lucruri.	-2-1-2-2-1	Dk4
Nici o cărare nu mai e lungă,	-2-1-2-1	Dk4
nici o chemare nu mă alungă.	-2-1-2-1	Dk4
Vino sfârşit.	-2-	D2
Pe coate încă o dată	1-1-2-1	Dk3
mă mai ridic o şchioapă de la pământ	3-1-4-	Acc3
şi ascult.	2-	An1
Apă bate-ntr-un ţărm.	-1-2-	Dk3
Altceva nimic, nimic,	2-1-1-	T4
nimic. ²⁹	1-	la1

The algorithm of the text analysis presupposes checking the text for the syllabo-tonic or tonic regularity (the number of stress and the number of syllables are counted). After this each line is studied with the taking into consideration the inter-ictus intervals. Then each line is characterized from the point of view of possible coinciding with one of the meters of syllabo-tonic versification (iambus, trochee, dactyl, amphibrach, anapest) or tonic versification (dolnik, taktovik, - accent verse). Of all possible options, the strictest is chosen.³⁰ According to the assertion of T. Skulacheva, the meter may be only in the whole text and in order to identify the meter to which the oeuvre belongs, and, directly, all its lines, one should turn to the statistical analysis, bearing in mind that the conventional number in modern versification which indicates the belonging of the text to a certain meter is 75%.

Thus, in the cited example, we can observe the asystemic alteration of the lines with different metric patterns, among which: Trochee – 2 verses, iambus – 3, Dactyl – 1, Amphibrach – 1, Anapest – 2, Dolnik – 6, Accent verse – 1, all in all 16 verses. In percentage equivalency they denote: Trochee – 12.5%, iambus – 18.75%,

²⁷ In the scheme of tonic line dash (–) means the stressed syllable or ictus, and numbers (1, 2, 3, 4) – the number of syllables between ictuses, as well as in anacrusis and clause.

²⁸ Abbreviations means: la – iambus, T – trochee, D – dactyl, Am – amphibrach, An – anapest, Dk – dolnik, Tk – taktovik, Acc – accent verse. The number alongside the abbreviation shows the number of meters in the verse. The tonic verses are read: Dk3 – three-ictus dolnik, Dk4 – four-ictus dolnik, Acc3 – three-ictus accent verse.

²⁹ Blaga, *Opere*, 101.

³⁰ See Skulacheva, “Metody opredeleniia metra,” 130-131.

Dactyl – 6.25%, Amphibrach – 6.25%, Anapest – 12.5%, Dolnik – 37.5%, Accent verse – 6.25%, all lines – 100%. Quantitative analysis has shown that 56.25% of the poem is written with syllabo-tonic meters. Thus, this poem does not yet belong to the syllabo-tonic versification and cannot be interpreted as heteromorphic verse.

We checked the poem for its coinciding with dolnik. The first feature of dolnik is the availability of one-syllable and two-syllable intervals within one line. But considering the fact that dolnik is formed on the basis of syllabo-tonic verses, it admits in one line either a one syllable interval between the stresses, which identifies it with binary meters or two-syllable intervals, which assimilates dolnik with ternary meters. The investigation of the syllabo-tonic verses under scrutiny shows that the inter-ictus intervals has shown that out of nine lines two do not coincide with those possessing dolnik. In the quoted example, 5 and 6 syllabo-tonic lines are not fully stressed. Poetic science admits the availability of forms with the omission of stress in homogenic forms, so it would be logical to accept not fully stressed lines in free dolnik, but this complicates calculations and contradicts the principle of disorderliness. From this, we can conclude that only seven syllabo-tonic lines are identical with dolniks', which in percentage, represent 43.75%, to which we add dolnik's lines – 37.5% and get 81.25%. Thus, it is blank free dolnik.

The second, most complicated type is free structures with shattered rhythmic, in which asystemic is combined with different ictus lines, with widened amplitude of inter-ictus intervals, with changeable anacrusis and changeable clause. These are mostly blank and astrophic verse. Such an "open" type of verse resembles *vers libre*. But it differs from *vers libre* by the absolute predominance of tonic lines that are only sporadically combined with a small number of accent lines. To such structures we refer blank taktovik and blank accent verse. Such forms are difficult to differentiate from *vers libre*, if we take into account the assertion of Yu. Orlitski (he relies on the works of M. Gasparov) that *vers libre* may be interpreted as a kind of invariant of different types of tonics.³¹

According to M. Gasparov, *vers libre* is "unrhymed, unevenly stressed pure tonic verse" and "the only sign that distinguishes such a verse from prose, remains «...» the set division into commensurate - and correlated with one another segments (lines).³²" This definition points to the idea that to *vers libre* one can refer unrhymed free accent verse. According to Yu. Orlitski, blank accent verse is impossible to be clearly delimited from blank taktovik, so it is most advisable of combining both forms

³¹ See Orlitski, *Stikh i proza*, 325.

³² Original text: "...нерифмованный неравноударный чисто-тонический стих [... nerifmovanyi neravnoudarnyi chisto-tinicheskii stikh]", "...единственным признаком отличающим такой стих от прозы, остается (...) заданное деление на соизмеримые и соотносимые друг с другом отрезки (строки) [... edinstvennym priznakom otlichaiushchim takoi stikh ot prozy, ostaetsa (...) zadannoe delenie na soizmerimye i sootnosimye drug s drugom otrezki (stroki)]" (Translation mine) Gasparov and Skulacheva, "Ritm i sintaksis," 171.

within the frames of the blank accent verse And for demarcation of the white accent verse from *vers libre*, the poetic theorist recommends alongside with thirty percent limits to be guided by intuitive impression about the possibility or impossibility of accent scansion of the text. If a text subjects to accent pronouncing, then this is a blank accent verse, if both accent and “prosaic” pronouncing is identically assumed in the oeuvre, it is transitive metric form with metric dominant.³³

Let us give, as an example, the poem by T. Tzara *Verișoară, fată de pension* (“Cousin, Maiden from the Boarding House”):

Verișoară, fată de pension, îmbrăcată în negru, guler alb,	2-1-4-2-2-1-1-	Acc7
Te iubesc pentru că ești simplă și visezi	2-4-3-	Acc3
Și ești bună, plângi, și rupi scrisori ce nu au înțeles	2-1-1-1-1-3-	T8
Și îți pare rău că ești departe de ai tăi și că înveți	2-1-1-1-3-3-	T9
La Călugărițe unde noaptea nu e cald.	4-1-1-1-1-	T7
Zilele ce au rămas pân’la vacanță iar le numeri	-2-2-3-1-1-1	Tk6
Și îți-aduci aminte de-o gravură spaniolă	2-1-3-3-1	T7
Unde o infantă sau ducesă de Braganza	-3-3-3-1	T7
Stă în rochia-i largă ca un fluture pe o corolă	-1-2-3-5-1	Acc5
Și se-amuză dând mâncare la pisici și așteaptă un cavaler	2-1-1-3-2-4-	Acc6
Pe covor sunt papagali și alte animale mici	2-3-1-3-1-	T8
Păsări ce-au căzut din cer	-3-1-	T4
Și lungit lângă fotoliul ce-i în doliu	2-3-3-1	T6
Jos – subțire și vibrând – stă un ogar	-1-3-0-2-	Acc5
Ca o blană de hermină lunecată de pe umeri.	2-3-3-3-1	T8
Dânsa vrea să o ridice dar	-1-3-1-	T5
Își aduce aminte și își mângâie colerul de pe gât	2-2-3-3-3-	Tk5
Pentru că zărește cavalerul – și atât:	-3-3-3-	T7
Se apropie de bancă sora Beatrice sau Evelina	2-3-1-3-3-1	Dk5
Profesoară de istorie sau de greacă și latină	2-3-4-3-1	Acc4
O, de ce trec zilele așa de rar...	-1-1-3-1-	T6
Frunzele și florile cad ca foile din calendar;	-3-2-1-5-	Acc5
Viața-i tristă, dar e totuși o grădină!	-1-3-3-1	T6
Și Infanta sau Ducesa de Braganza	2-3-3-1	T6
Iar adoarme sau își pierde importanța – căci tu numeri	2-3-3-3-1	T8
Zilele ce-or să rămână – socotind de mâini pân’la vacanță. ³⁴	-2-2-3-1-3-1	Tk6

The graphic demarcation and the syntactic structure of the oeuvre resemble *vers libre*. The poem has a radical, absolutely extraordinary form which is filled with

³³ See Orliński, *Stikh i proza*, 326-327.

³⁴ Tristan Tzara, *Primele poeme* (București: Cartea Românească, 1971), 5.

taktovik and accent lines with zero and 4- and 5-syllable intervals. In the poetry of T. Tzara, certain rhythmic form stability is absent. The poem is characterized by asymmetry and unsystematic combinations of different meters and different metric lines in the chimeric metric character, chaotic rhyming and shattered anacrusis. The statistical analysis of the poem gives us the indices: T – 15 lines, Dk – 1, Tk – 3, Acc – 7, all in all – 26 lines. In the percentage equivalence they show: T – 57.7%, Dk – 3.9%, Tk – 11.3%, Acc – 26.9%, all lines – 100%.

The availability of 26.9 % of accent verse provides the necessary grounds to refer the oeuvre to *vers libre*. However, with such an extraordinary combination of verses, the dominance of trochaic, i.e., syllabo-tonic verses is striking. Such lines do not create rhythmic inertia, they lose their metric filling as they are not sustained by the successive verses. The checking of trochaic lines for any coincidence with dolniks annihilates the metric character of syllabo-tonic verses even further, as binary meters are present in the text in their not fully stressed forms, creating trisyllable intervals between ictuses. Thus, trochaic meters are identified with tonic lines. The sum total of lines in which inter-ictus intervals oscillate in the range from 1 to 3 syllables makes up 73.1%. Thus, it is a blank free accent verse with the elements of tonic orderliness, it is tonic “non-freedom” that differs it from *vers libre*.

Our research shows that disordered verse is the transitive metric form between homogeneous forms of syllabo-tonic and tonic versification and *vers libre* proper. Disordered verse is directed towards violating the traditional versification canons, and, at the same time, it aims to overcome the rigidity of the “negative” *vers libre*. Poetic science defines *vers libre* as a system of versification, which is built on the rejection of all secondary rhythm-forming factors and it may be regarded from the points of view of the structure predictability as a homomorphic verse. Disordered verse tries to violate, to break the fundamental principle of homomorphism itself. Among such forms, there are poems which have certain features of systematization which coincide with syllabo-tonic free iambus, free trochee and free amphibrach, heteromorphic forms and meters of tonic versification – free dolnik, free taktovik and free accent verse. These are blank shattered free forms, which are like *vers libre* from without. But, taking into consideration the metric or tonic orderliness, they cannot be classified as *vers libre*. Such structures may be regarded as transitional metric forms or marginal forms of *vers libre*.

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