


TWO ESSAYS ON MAIAKOVSKII'S VERSE

ROBIN AIZLEWOOD

**School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University College London**



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Foreword

These two essays are concerned to examine and illuminate the role of verse form in Maiakovskii's poetics; as he himself so eloquently and convincingly describes in 'Kak delat' stikhi', rhythm — or more generally verse form — is the 'hum' ('gul') that lies at the base of his poetry. The two essays, though originally undertaken separately, have been written with the other one, and the broader picture, in mind. They have key points of contact and complement each other so that, when placed together, they make something that becomes more than the sum of the two parts. In addition, both essays have an ongoing engagement with the insights into Maiakovskii's poetry of Roman Jakobson, drawing on and developing his seminal interpretation.

The first essay, 'How Maiakovskii's Ivan is Made: Measure in *150000000*', shows how an aspect of verse form, in this case measure (*razmer*), can be exploited in such a way that the poem becomes in effect an exercise in measure 'as such'. *150000000* represents the high point in Maiakovskii's poetic practice in this area, in terms of both formal handling and semantics. Measure here not only participates in the semantics of the poem through its associative function (semantic aureoles), but also — and most distinctively — has an iconic function in the formation of the hero Ivan.

While this essay concentrates on verse form in the composition of one work, the second, longer essay, 'Maiakovskii's Hexameter', has a different focus and larger perspective. It has what at first sight may seem a surprising subject: the hexameter, a classical form, in the poetry of the iconoclastic Futurist and metrical innovator Maiakovskii. Although in quantitative terms the hexameter plays only a very minor role in Maiakovskii's verse, it nevertheless stands out for its use in his major works from *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* (1913) through to *150000000* (1919–20). The study of the formal character of Maiakovskii's hexameter provides a fascinating insight into his versification and its relation to the Russian tradition. As with measure in *150000000*, there is a combination of fine sophistication with boldness, freedom and innovation: whether or not Maiakovskii is to one's taste, his handling of verse form is remarkable. But the interest of Maiakovskii's hexameter lies not just in its formal character. Beyond the detail of the particular, often very striking instances of its use, its role in the overall context of Maiakovskii's work is crucial. It is central to an understanding of key themes and problematics of his work: constraint and liberation, largeness, the myth of man, the persona and the collective, the lyric and the civic, the heroic and the elegiac. A study of Maiakovskii's hexameter takes one to the heart of his poetic world and its architectonics, allowing one to see his work as a whole and to trace the trajectory of its development. Once again, but in a very different perspective to that of the first essay, the fundamental role of verse form in Maiakovskii's poetics is illuminated.

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How Maiakovskii's Ivan is Made:
Measure in *150000000*

How Maiakovskii's Ivan is Made: Measure in *150000000*

Just as *Pro eto* is announced in the first issue of *Lef* as an 'exercise in polyphonic rhythm' (XII, 449),¹ so *150000000* could be called an exercise in measure (*razmer*). Or, to use the programmatic Futurist terminology, it could be called an exercise in measure 'as such' ('*kak takovoi*'), in measure as 'self-sufficient', 'self-valuing' ('*samovityi*', '*samotsennyi*'). This is measure in a primary, literal sense as the quantitative measure (length) of verse lines, whereas the usual sense of measures as the species of metrical genera, e.g. iambic pentameter, becomes secondary.

The definition of *150000000* as a poem of measure, both metrically and more generally, is of course suggested in the title itself. Moreover, the reinterpretation of the title in the very first line:

0221221f 150 000 000 мастера этой поэмы имя. (II, 115)²

allows for measure to be seen as the constructive, generative principle of the work,³ which accords with Maiakovskii's account of the generation of verse in the article 'Kak delat' stikhi'. In other words in *150000000* it is measure which is the dominant in the famous 'rhythmical hum' ('*gul*') that for Maiakovskii lies at the base of any poem (see XII, 100).⁴

The interest of a metrical analysis of *150000000* was noted long ago (in the 1930s) by Vladimir Trenin, who briefly identified certain leitmotifs in the poem's metrical composition, highlighting in particular the *piatislozhnik*. Trenin also placed the poem in the context of Maiakovskii's ROSTA and other work of the period, in particular through the use of popular models, from popular songs to the *raeshnik*.⁵ Here, after outlining the main features of the metrical composition, I will focus principally on the first two chapters. It is in these two chapters that the hero of the poem, Ivan, is put together or made, and they represent the high point in Maiakovskii's poetic practice in the area of measure, in terms of both formal handling and semantic functions.

The study of Maiakovskii's verse invites consideration of the semantic functions of verse form, not just compositional (highlighting, linking etc.) and associative functions (semantic aureoles), but also in respect of an iconic function. In the case of Maiakovskii the possibility of such a function is well grounded. Firstly, there is the orientation in Futurist poetics towards an iconic interpretation of the sign.⁶ Secondly, Maiakovskii himself implies such a function, both in his theoretical pronouncements, as in 'Kak delat' stikhi', and in his poetry, as, for example, in the opening stanza of *150000000*: 'Пуля — ритм. / Рифма — огонь из здания в здание', initially 'Пуля — размер' (II, 115, 457). And thirdly, it is possible to trace in his verse, in broad or narrow context, distinctive associations between elements of verse form and content which can be explained not just through historically determined associations of semantic aureoles but also, and maybe primarily, through the structure of the verse.⁷ For example,

in *150000000*, and elsewhere too, it is possible to note an association of long lines (long/large measure) with the motif of large numbers, above all with the motif of 'millions', which in context can readily be interpreted as having an iconic aspect according to the principle of similarity of features. At the same time, however, the standard caution that this does not mean that long measures must always have one and the same function, maybe even within the same work, still applies.

1. *Metrical Composition*

The poem has three main metrical themes: i) long line verse, some of it based more or less closely on the hexameter but with other metrical variations too; ii) accentual verse, with Maiakovskii's standard four-stress form in the leading role; and iii) alternating four-ictus and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik* (which incorporates the well-known motif of the *piatislozhnik*). In the first two chapters there is also a number of other metrical forms, most notably two-ictus measures. The metrical composition of the seven chapters and the poem as a whole, in percentages of the relevant total, is given in Table 1.

150000000 presents certain problems of metrical classification, which to a large extent, however, relate to the poem's key motif of extending beyond

Table 1: Metrical Composition of *150000000*

	Chapters							Total	Lines
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII		
Long line verse	20.0	16.2	11.1	31.5	2.8	2.2	4.4	9.7	84
An7*	—	4.6	—	—	—	—	—	0.7	6
DkAm73*	—	—	7.8	—	—	—	—	1.4	12
Accentual verse	66.7	54.6	46.4	68.5	68.3	90.3	95.6	68.5	595
Dk43An	—	—	42.5	—	28.9	7.5	—	21.3	165
An3	8.8	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.9	8
Am4	4.4	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.5	4
Dk2	—	6.2	—	—	—	—	—	0.9	8
D2	—	13.8	—	—	—	—	—	2.1	18
Am2	—	1.5	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	2
<i>Udarnik</i> **	—	7.7	—	—	—	—	—	1.2	10
Unrhymed	+	+	+	+	—	—	—		
Lines	90	130	153	54	180	186	68		869

* The anapaestic heptameter and alternating seven- and three-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* are listed separately but are counted as a subset of long line verse.

** The *udarnik* metre of the drum song has lines of two to four stresses/ictuses.

limits. The most problematic issue of classification concerns the long lines. Long line verse is a distinct theme, even the definitive theme of the poem, which serves as the leitmotif of the hero, Ivan. It needs to be classified separately, and yet cannot overall be classified more specifically nor, at the margins, be demarcated unambiguously. Although the starting point for the long lines is the hexameter, from the very beginning the hexameter's scheme is extended and expanded. Maiakovskii's use of this form before *15000000* is also best characterized as a long line form based more or less closely on the hexameter.⁸ But here the developing tendency is for the hexameter to be left far behind. It is therefore impossible to classify this verse overall as hexameter, even if in context the derivation from that form may still be more or less apparent. On the other hand, for the purposes of this study, it does not in general make good sense to classify some lines as hexameter, and others as not, because there may be no clear dividing line.⁹ There are in fact two passages of long line verse which do observe, at least very nearly, a fixed scheme, though not that of the hexameter (these forms — anapaestic heptameter and alternating seven- and three-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* — are listed as a subset of long line verse in Table 1). But although there are distinct passages of long line verse, it is a feature of this verse here and elsewhere that long lines may appear in ones or twos amongst other, shorter lines. Even given the marked theme of long lines in the poem, there may be a problem over whether occasional long lines should be classified as such, or else might be classified within accentual verse. Equally, in a strong long line context, it may be appropriate to include five-stress lines too, although in general long lines (after the hexameter) are best considered to start at six stresses. However, in certain circumstances the inclusion of yet shorter lines than this may also be appropriate: this is because Maiakovskii plays on division into hemistichs and may include such lines as independent lines within a long line passage, in which case it would seem to make sense to include these lines in the overall classification of long line verse. In one case, the combination of long and shorter lines forms a distinct passage of alternating seven-ictus and three-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*.

In the case of the accentual verse, which serves as the main narrative measure, there is a general tendency towards four-stress verse, which is standard for Maiakovskii. Of the 595 lines classified under accentual verse, 67.9% have four stresses and a further 19.2% have three stresses.¹⁰ In many places the tendency towards four-stress verse can become even more marked, with a run of stanzas where four-stress lines account for 75% to 100% of the total. On occasion, regularity in terms of line length organization may be accompanied by the rhythmical regularity of lines that conform to *dol'nik* metre. In general in this poem such passages are best seen as rhythmically regular, rather than as a shift into the four-ictus *dol'nik* metre. However, in the first two chapters, in the context of polymetric composition and also given the demarcation of some stanzas as 'songs', the issue can become more difficult to decide. There is no problem about classifying two such

songs: two quatrains of anapaestic trimeter (with one monosyllabic interval) and a quatrain of ampibrachic tetrameter. But in Chapter 2 a quatrain with the rhythmical pattern of 0222/0212/0222/0212, which is not explicitly demarcated, has not been separately classified, although such an interpretation is possible. An interesting case of a slightly different kind concerns the maintenance of a trochaic rhythm for seven lines immediately following the famous drum song towards the end of Chapter 2 (the last line of the second stanza has an iambic rhythm). These two stanzas could be interpreted as free trochee, a form which Maiakovskii first uses in a developed way in 1920 in 'Tretii internatsional', but there is no compositional break between these stanzas and the accentual verse that follows and the rhythmical transition is made very smoothly. A final input into the accentual verse may be the influence of the *raeshnik*, with its rhyming couplets that can use short lines or lines of different length, such as shorter lines with four-stress (or longer) ones. However, the influence of this form, which in context can be assimilated quite readily into accentual verse, is less explicit than in *Misteriia-buff* and the verse for the ROSTA windows.

The third main metrical theme is the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*. This form does not appear until Chapter 3 and is specifically linked to America and the American President Woodrow Wilson, becoming his leitmotif. Maiakovskii uses the same form elsewhere at this time: for example, in ROSTA verses based on popular models such as 'Oktiabr'skie itogi v romansakh' or 'Larchik prosto ne otkryvaetsia' (1919),¹¹ and in his popular comic satirical 'Skazka o dezertire...' (1920–23). As the opening of Chapter 4 makes clear, by referring to the preceding chapter as 'laughing', the same associations are being drawn on here. However, the use of the form is more complex than in 'Skazka o dezertire...'. Through the extensive, but not constant, use of hemistichs in the four-ictus odd lines (also a feature of this form elsewhere), Maiakovskii incorporates into the anapaestic *dol'nik* the leitmotif highlighted by Trenin, and also by critics at the time, namely the so-called *piatislozhnik* first developed by Kol'tsov on the basis of the 5 + 5 folk metre.¹² In this way he incorporates — or insinuates — a Russian folk motif into Wilson's measure: to use the imagery of the poem, as a wooden horse into Troy. Just as with the hexameter, Maiakovskii's use of the *piatislozhnik* is based on the scheme rather than strictly adhering to it, and it is rhymed.¹³ In the context of the anapaestic *dol'nik* the hemistichs can turn into anapaestic dimeters, as in the second hemistich below:

011m	Русских
	в город тот
22m	не везет пароход,
212m	не для нас дворцов этажи.
21m	Я один там был,
011m	в барах ел и пил,
2012m	попивал в барах с янками джин. (II, 130)

Overall it is difficult if not impossible to demarcate the *piatislozhnik* unambiguously as a discrete form within the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*. An unrhymed segment in Chapter 3 may be interpreted as *piatislozhnik*: 'Что за улица? // Что на ней стоит?' (II, 131), and a line in Chapter 5, as we shall see later, may also be interpreted as such, but in Table 1 the *piatislozhnik* is not listed separately.

Finally, in addition to the unrhymed segment just mentioned, there are further lines which stand outside the stanza fabric of the verse. In the first two chapters these principally carry the refrains 'идем' (and extensions thereof) and the cheery 'го-го'; they will be considered later on.

A brief consideration of the dynamics of the metrical composition through the poem highlights certain key features. Firstly, the opening two chapters are marked out in a number of ways: by polymetric diversity, by the prominence of long lines, and by the absence of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*. After these two chapters the poem's composition simplifies. The third main theme, the American, Woodrow Wilson theme, is introduced, but at the same time polymetric diversity recedes. While the third chapter is marked by the prominence of the Wilson theme, the fourth, shortest chapter is marked by the prominence of long lines which lead to the appearance of Ivan in America. Thereafter, the process of simplification develops further: first with the relegation of long lines to a minor position, then with the relegation and eventual disappearance of the Wilson motif.

2. *How Ivan is Made*

It is in the opening two chapters that the hero Ivan is made. Ivan can be defined very simply: he is a collective, composite hero of very large size (in Russian also *razmer*). In the words of the poem: 'Россия вся, единый Иван' (II, 127). These words, towards the end of Chapter 2, are the first mention of Ivan. He does not spring forth fully formed, but is put together over the first two chapters out of all the parts — people, animals, things etc. — that join to make up the revolutionary force represented by the poem's title. He is made up of everyone and everything, from the smallest to the largest. As such a collective, composite hero of very large size, Ivan can be directly related in context to the level of measure according to the principle of external or structural similarity, while the process of his formation is paralleled in the poem's composition over the first two chapters.

The opening stanza, which uses the hexameter as its point of departure, sets up the whole poem:

0221221f 150 000 000 мастера этой поэмы имя.

010212d Пуля — ритм.

Рифма — огонь из здания в здание.

022312f 150 000 000 говорят губами моими.
 32122- Ротационкой шагов
 в бульжном верже площадей
 -222d напечатано это издание. (II, 115)

As we shall see, both of Ivan's defining features, his size and his composite, collective nature, are embodied in the stanza's composition, but no less important for an understanding of the poem are the associations of the measure, in particular within Maiakovskii's own verse. Roman Jakobson recalled that while Maiakovskii was working on *150000000* in 1919 he asked what the rhythm of this opening was called, and he — Jakobson — defined it for the poet as the hexameter,¹⁴ though it is more than likely that Maiakovskii was playing at being ignorant of such things, a pose which he readily affected. In fact, this is far from the first use of a verse form based on the hexameter. It is used, in a variety of functions, in major earlier works too: *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia, Oblako v shtanakh, Voina i mir* and *Chelovek*, i.e. in all the major pre-revolutionary works apart from *Fleita-pozvonochnik*. It is also used to set the tone in the opening of the first version of *Misteriia-buff* (1918), although thereafter it does not play any significant part in the play and does not figure in the second version of 1920–21. In the years around the Revolution Maiakovskii associates hexameter verse with the theme of man's heroic potential on earth.¹⁵ Of particular relevance to *150000000* are the brief occurrence of the hexameter in the hymn to the new, collective man in the final part of *Voina i mir*, and especially the hymn to man in the person of the lyric hero himself in the first part of *Chelovek*. In *Chelovek*, however, the hexameter theme of man's heroic potential is ultimately subverted into an ironic elegiac key, as the tragic experience of life through love leads only to eternal suffering. The return to the hexameter in *150000000* therefore establishes an immediate and direct link to these earlier works, as Maiakovskii once again seeks to elaborate a myth of man, this time on a collective base, as adumbrated in *Voina i mir*. According to Jakobson, when Maiakovskii was working on *Chelovek* he said that he wanted to present 'simply man, man in general, but not Andreevan abstractions — the real Ivan, who moves his hands, eats cabbage soup...'. If these words link Maiakovskii's lyric persona in *Chelovek* to the collective hero Ivan of *150000000*, then, equally, in *150000000* Ivan acquires some familiar features of the poet's lyric 'I'.¹⁶ This is much clearer in earlier variants, especially at the point in Chapter 2 when the new divine man is called forth in a stanza based on the hexameter:

0212132m Новое имя
 вырвись
 лети
 в пространство мирового жилья

- 32212f Тысячелетнее
низкое небо
сгинь синезадо
- 011000m Это Я
я, я
я
я
я
- 124f земли вдохновенный ассенизатор (II, 460)

Similarly, the original definition of Ivan was phrased first as 'И вот мы все единый Иван' and then as 'И вот я весь единый Иван' (II, 457). While Maiakovskii's professed intentions in *Chelovek* and the earlier variants of *150000000* provide further evidence for linking the two poems, there is a tension or ambiguity as well: Maiakovskii's lyric persona in *Chelovek* cannot be reduced to a simple Ivan, and the removal of such an explicit first person presence from *150000000* is also telling. But leaving these variants aside, the hexameter opening of the poem already carries the implicit links — and tensions — between *150000000* and Maiakovskii's earlier work and locates the poem at the very heart of his poetic project, the myth of man. It is notable too that the last occurrence of the hexameter theme, in the couplet that introduces the solemn requiem which provides the poem's finale, echoes but also reverses the tone of the final, ironically elegiac stanza of *Chelovek*.

In addition, Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter in his hymns to man relates to his view, expressed in 'Kak delat' stikhi', that 'long measures' are appropriate for a 'heroic' or 'grand' tone (XII, 102). Such associations are of course entirely appropriate here, and the series of songs that builds up in the first two chapters has the hexameter hymn at its head. But it is striking also that the original, classical and epic, associations of the hexameter (relevant too, but in a different key, to *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*) are unexpectedly reactivated, although with delay. The motif of Troy arises in the fifth chapter, but these associations only come fully and retrospectively to the fore in the poem's finale, when the poem is declared to be both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (II, 164).

The hexameter is literally the poem's point of departure, out of which come lines of varying length, with an increasing variety of rhythm (intervals) and anacrusis (and here as elsewhere Maiakovskii rhymes the hexameter). These variations develop in such a way that the verse increasingly goes beyond the limits of the measure, leaving the hexameter far behind. What is said about the epic history of Troy at the beginning of Chapter 5 — 'история Трои/до неузнаваемости раздутая' (II, 142) — could apply equally well to the hexameter measure. This motif of going beyond the limits, of reaching out into unknown dimensions, is a key motif of the poem that relates to one of Maiakovskii's most fundamental preoccupations, highlighted by Jakobson: the desire to escape confinement and overcome set limits.¹⁷

The very first line of the poem not only establishes the association of long lines and size through the motif of millions, but also realizes the motif

of going beyond limits by extending beyond the six-ictus limit of the hexameter after the word 'поэмы':

0221221f 150 000 000 мастера этой поэмы имя. (II, 115)

Up to 'поэмы' the line forms a classical hexameter, even with a feminine clausula, and according to Jakobson Maiakovskii paused in his reading at this point in the line before continuing beyond the hexameter's limit.¹⁸

As well as being very large and potentially beyond measure, the second distinctive feature of Ivan is that he is a collective, composite hero. This feature is of course also present in the structure of the hexameter, which is made up of two hemistichs. In his earlier use of the hexameter Maiakovskii had already developed a number of variations in his composition of verse based on the measure (there is already a double hexameter in *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*), but here the principle of composite construction is developed to its maximum and becomes the main constructive principle of the first two chapters. Inasmuch as we are dealing with essentially the same features on both the semantic and formal levels, the iconic and compositional levels effectively coincide.

Yet again this motif is made explicit and developed in the composition of the very first stanza. After the extension beyond the hexameter's limit in the first line, the most remarkable feature of this stanza is the fourth line:

32122- Ротационкой шагов
 в булыжном верже площадей
 -222d напечатано это издание. (II, 115)

From the point of view of stanzaic organization, fixed by the rhyme, this line ends on 'издание'. In this way Maiakovskii produces a hexameter and a half, a hexameter 'plus' (to borrow a notion from Chapter 2), since 'Ротационкой шагов / в булыжном верже площадей' is already a full example of the hexameter (with initial stress omission), and so the continuation 'напечатано это издание' can be interpreted in a number of ways: it can be a repeat second hemistich, and/or an independent, self-sufficient hemistich, and/or a continuation of the measure beyond its expected limits. Thus the motif of going beyond limits is reinforced, only here it is taken further than in the first line. But in addition Maiakovskii achieves further effects. Firstly, he establishes the means for constructing a more complex whole than that represented by the ordinary hexameter. Secondly, since 'Ротационкой шагов / в булыжном верже площадей' is still perceived as a complete line of verse, he introduces the motif of the independence of the constituent parts and the possibility, by implication, of giving independence to what is normally incomplete on its own, the hemistich (this effect is marked by the graphical lay-out of the step-ladder here, with the final hemistich left-aligned, while in the original edition the column lay-out was still being used). And thirdly, he also creates the possibility of moving from long lines to shorter ones.

All these motifs are developed further in the second stanza and at the start of the third:

- 121222021f Кто спросит луну?
 Кто солнце к ответу притянет —
 чего
 ночи и дни чините!?¹⁹
- 02122d Кто назовет земли гениального автора?
 012123f Так
 и этой
 моей
 ПОЭМЫ
 НИКТО НЕ СОЧИНИТЕЛЬ.
- 222122f И идея одна у нее —
 сиять в наступающее завтра.
- 22212212f В ЭТОМ САМОМ ГОДУ,
 В ЭТОТ ДЕНЬ И ЧАС,
 ПОД ЗЕМЛЕЙ,
 НА ЗЕМЛЕ,
 ПО НЕБУ
 И ВЫШЕ —
- 13222f такие появились
 плакаты,
 летучки,
 афиши... (II, 115–16)

The first line already expands the possibilities from the opening stanza so that it becomes hard to relate the line to the hexameter. The second line is a shorter, five-stress (five-ictus) line, and although the third and fourth lines both have a six-stress (six-ictus) form, the third line splits into unequal parts and has a final interval of three syllables, while the fourth line has a two-syllable anacrusis. The graphical lay-out also plays its part, as the first line of the third stanza, a couplet, illustrates. This line cannot easily be divided into hemistichs, although the first step could form a hexameter hemistich, but rather the *six* steps stand parallel not only syntactically but also metrically, and in this way the constituent parts from hemistich to metrical word acquire equal prominence. The graphical reading is then reinforced when this couplet is followed by the insertion of a graphical form, a poster (which can be read as a quatrain and a couplet) calling everyone to a meeting, to come out and march.²⁰

Between the opening and the finale of the first chapter, as the poem recounts the gathering and march of all and sundry, from animals to vehicles to roads, the main narrative measure is Maiakovskii's standard, predominantly four-stress accentual verse. Alongside and in part incorporated into this verse, there are three long lines, for example:

зверей,
 домашних животных,
 022231f сотни губерний,
 со всем, что построилось,
 стоит,
 живет в них,
 01132211412d все, что может двигаться,
 и все, что не движется,
 все, что еле двигалось,
 пресмыкая,
 ползая,
 плавая —
 022d лавою все это,
 лавою! (II, 120)

In the first line the motif of millions is multiplied to billions and then trillions and although the step-ladder lay-out presents this as two lines, in fact it forms a single, double line of no less than twelve stresses that divides 5 + 7 (and the third line has eleven stresses). While this first line is a double measure, 'лавою все это, / лавою!', rather than being a hemistich, has become an independent unit, a metrical line in its own right. At the same time the number and variety of the constituent parts reaches an extreme.

The next quatrain continues with an initial long, nine-stress line that divides 5 + 4, but then shifts into accentual (four- and three-stress) verse, again creating a link between the long lines and the predominantly four-stress accentual verse. Then in the final couplet of the chapter the refrains reach a culmination when both the 'го-го' chant and 'Идемидем' are incorporated into the stanzaic verse, thereby both rounding the chapter off and adumbrating the shift of compositional emphasis towards the motif of including everything in a single composite whole:

131m Го, го
 го, го, го, го,
 го, го!
 3123m Идемидем!
 Сквозь белую гвардию снегов! (II, 120)

In the second chapter the interpretation of separate measures as constituent parts of a single composite whole is developed as the key compositional principle. The main body of the chapter, in which this compositional theme is played out, is a series of songs. Before that an introductory passage articulates the key themes. The chapter opens with a stanza of accentual verse that presages the arrival of Ivan at the end ('Чего полезли губерний туши // из веками намеченных губернаторами зон? // Что, слушая, небес зияют уши? // Кого озирает горизонт?' (II, 121)),

then moves into two stanzas that combine six-stress and longer lines with shorter ones:

- 212312f Оттого
 сегодня
 на нас устремлены
 глаза всего света
- 113023m и уши всех напряжены,
 наше малейшее лова,
- 21f чтобы видеть это,
212m чтобы слушать эти слова:
032152m это —
 революции воля,
 брошенная за последний предел,
- 01221- это —
 митинг,
 в махины машинных тел,
-1211f вмешавший людей и зверьи туши,
01113113m это —
 руки,
 лапы,
 клешни,
 рычаги,
 туда,
 где воздух поредел,
- 125f вонзенные в клятвенном единодушье. (II, 121)

The key motifs of extension beyond limits, hyperbolized to the 'final limit', the combination of the smallest and the extreme, and the combination of all and everything in a single composite whole are all articulated here. On the formal level, the means of combination of long, four-stress, and shorter lines is repeated from the end of the first chapter. Of particular interest is the long second line of the second stanza, which splits into five-stress and four-stress segments that, through the possible alignment of 'тел' with the rhyme 'предел'—'поредел', gives the segments potential dual status as both independent units and parts of a long line.

After an introductory couplet of four-stress verse the song sequence now begins; it occupies nearly the whole of the chapter and culminates in the naming of Ivan and the famous drum song. As Trenin noted, the anapaestic motif from the marching song of the roads in Chapter 1 is picked up and expanded in the six lines of anapaestic heptameter with which the songs begin:²³

- 2222322d Мы пришли сквозь столицы,
 сквозь тундры прорвались,
 прошагали сквозь грязи и лужищи.

- 2232424d Мы пришли миллионы,
миллионы трудящихся,
миллионы работающих и служащих.
- 2222323f Мы пришли из квартир,
мы сбежали со складов,
из пассажей, пожаром озаренных.
- 2232234f Мы пришли миллионы,
миллионы вещей,
изуродованных,
сломанных,
разоренных.
- 2122211d Мы спустились с гор,
мы из леса сползлись,
от полей, годами глоданных.
- 2232221f Мы пришли,
миллионы,
миллионы скотов,
одичавших,
тупых,
голодных. (II, 122)

In terms of measure, this passage stands out for the maintenance of a full seven-stress (seven-ictus) form, arranged as 2 + 2 + 3, over six lines, the most extended such period in the poem. In addition, the motif of length extends to the intervals, for although the passage can be classified for the sake of convenience as anapaestic heptameter, there is a developing rhythm over the first four lines of longer intervals towards the end of the line, with four three-syllable and three four-syllable intervals in the second halves of these lines.²⁴ In accordance with the emphasis on length/size, the motif of millions stands out, multiplied not mathematically into billions and trillions but through its repetition, seven times in all, and three times in the second line.

There now follows a whole series of measures, including discrete ones which in their combination give further rise to the perception of a mathematical, numerical basis to the composition. This feature can be related to the general Futurist interest in numbers and the mathematical, which is most prominent, of course, in Khlebnikov; but it is notable that in Maiakovskii it is here realized precisely on the metrical level. The transition from long lines is made in a stanza that begins as a continuation of the anapaestic momentum and reaches a line of a single word in the third line:

- 22235f Мы пришли,
миллионы,
безбожников,
язычников
и атеистов —

- 10021(1)d биясь
 лбом,
 ржавым железом,
 полем —
 все
- 0d истово
 022d господу богу помолимся. (II, 122–23)

The transition is brilliantly achieved through the shortening of the steps (already under way in the last line of the anapaestic heptameter), the reduction of the first line to five stresses, and then the striking zero intervals at the start of the second line. The motif of extension beyond limits is very interestingly developed in the rhyme here. The short third line both creates a stanza that embodies the compositional principle of free combination of small and large and yet, remarkably, manages to introduce a new variation on the motif of extension through the unusual heterosyllabic rhyme 'атеистов'—'истово', where the extra syllable is not in penultimate position (as in the typical Maiakovskian rhyme 'глоданных'—'голодных' in the preceding anapaestic passage) but is added on. The other rhyme is a compound rhyme, 'полем — / все'—'помолимся' or even 'железом, / полем — / все'—'помолимся'; Maiakovskii had long used compound rhymes which involved not just unstressed or weakly stressed words but also fully stressed ones, but the striking feature here is that the composition of the rhyme goes over a strong syntactic break, marked by the dash, and also a graphical break.

The development over the next eight stanzas is based on four-stress (four-ictus) verse, short, two-ictus verse, and the mixture or combination of the two, which could be characterized as based on the functions of multiplication or addition ($2 \times 2 = 4$, or $2 + 2 = 4$; compare the $5 + 5$ structure of the *piatislozhnik*), as well as free variation. The first stanza, which asserts man as the new god, has such a regular rhythm (dactylic in the odd lines and matching dactylic *dol'nik* in the even lines) in a four-stress form that it must be perceived as a quatrain with an aabb rhyme scheme, rather than as two couplets, thereby extending the theme of combination within unity to the stanzaic level. The theme of the collective participation in man as god is developed in a stanza of two-ictus *dol'nik*, then a quatrain of accentual verse with a 4124 stress profile, then another quatrain of two-ictus *dol'nik*, then another quatrain of accentual verse with a 5444 stress profile (maintaining the presence of lines longer than four stresses). The tone intensifies in a return to two-ictus verse, now dactylic dimeter ('Жажда, пой! ...'). The motif of combination by mathematical function (multiplication or addition) is explicitly realized when the dactylic dimeter carries on into the first half of a third quatrain before doubling into four-stress verse:

02f Самое это!
 02m С доньшка душ!
 0121f жаром,
 жженьем,
 железом,
 светом,
 0000m жарь,
 жги,
 режь,
 рушь! (II, 124)

The following stanza shifts to a freer variation with a stress scheme of 5633, but with a continuation from the preceding verse through a two-stress segment at the start of each line:

01333f Наши ноги —
 поездов молниеносные проходы.
 011151m Наши руки —
 пыль сдувающие веера полян.
 014f Наши плавники — пароходы.
 014m Наши крылья — аэроплан. (II, 124)

While each line has a two-stress initial segment (counting the stress on 'Наши'), there is also variety in the way the lines divide. Apart from the two-stress segments, there are two one-stress segments, a three-stress and a four-stress one, and as a whole these form one six-stress, one five-stress, and two three-stress lines; the next stanza, which reverts to four-stress verse, contains a parallel motif of testing out a full range: 'всего мирозданья проверяя реестр' (II, 124). This and the following stanzas (eight quatrains and a final couplet) play through the variations again, but with the centre of gravity shifting towards greater length: there are ten lines of two-ictus verse, a tendency towards five-stress lines alongside four-stress ones, and also two quatrains that open with a couplet of long lines (three six-stress lines and one seven-stress one). Almost at the end of the passage the distinctive mathematical device of doubling from two-ictus to four-ictus verse is repeated:

12d Как нами написано, —
 002m мир будет таков
 1222f и в среду,
 и в прошлом,
 и ныне,
 и присно,
 1231m и завтра,
 и дальше
 во веки веков! (II, 126)

Given the context of two-ictus verse based on *dol'nik*/ternary metre, the first two lines are readily interpreted as amphibrachic dimeter (with a hypermetrical stress at the start of the second line), especially as the third line is also amphibrachic in rhythm.

In the culminating stanza that precedes the naming of the hero the key compositional features that go to make up Ivan as a large and collective/composite hero are all present, as are the accompanying motifs of millions, extension ('plus') and multiplication:

0120m	Залпом глоток гремим гимн!
-2011f	Миллион плюс!
	Умножим на сто!
1322023f	По улицам!
	На крыши!
	За солнца!
	В миры —
	слов звонконогие гимнасты! (II, 126)

Here the principle of combination (and 'plus') extends to the rhyme in a type that Shtokmar named 'summative':²⁵ 'гимн' plus 'на сто' = 'гимнасты'; and in this way it also extends to the higher level of the stanza, since two independent four-stress lines are combined into one long line (the device of 'summative' rhyme is repeated in the introductory couplet to the poem's requiem finale). With this culminating stanza Ivan can be said to have been definitively formed, the compositional themes have been fully realized on the level of measure. He can now be named and given a final, summary definition: 'Россия / вся / единый Иван' (II, 127).

Following this definition the compositional focus shifts to other levels. First the marching refrain reaches its culmination, with the principle of addition/multiplication extending from the lexical to the semantic levels as the speed increases exponentially to that of lightning:

1x	Идем!
3x	Идемидем!
22x	Не идем, а летим!
21x	Не летим, а молньимся,
022x	души зефирами вымыв! (II, 127)

This then leads via a final-initial rhyme ('вымыв'—'мимо') into the celebrated drum song ('Мимо / баров и бань. // Бей, барабан! / Барабан, барабань! ...' (II, 127)), so eloquently celebrated by Jakobson,²⁶ in which the centre of attention is the sound and the drum rhythm. The pounding drum rhythm is generated by a metre, allowing for intervals of zero to two syllables, that can quite appropriately be named '*udarnik*'; it is used elsewhere by Maiakovskii in 'Nash marsh' and 'Barabannaia pesnia', and also in *Pro eto*.²⁷

The last twenty lines maintain a largely four-stress verse, though curiously, as mentioned earlier, a free trochaic rhythm is maintained for the first seven lines. The chapter ends with the utopian vision of moving, as light, into boundless dimensions: 'пойдем излучаться в несметных просторах' (II, 128).

In conclusion, it is interesting to look at the moment near the end of Chapter 5 when Ivan is 'unmade', when he is split in two by Wilson's sabre. At the climactic moment Wilson's alternating four-ictus and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*, subject to a certain reduction and deformation, is juxtaposed to a couplet of very long lines:

- 0112d Смерил глазом.
 Смешок по усам его.
- 0112d Взвил плечом шитье эполетово:
2122d «Чтобы я —
 о господи! —
 этого самого?
- 211d Чтобы я
 не смог
 вот этого?!»
- 2211212f И казалось —
 растет могильный холм
 посреди ветров обываний.
- 012222222f Ляжет в гроб,
 и отныне
 никто,
 никогда,
 ничего
 не услышит
 о нашем Иване.
- 0141m Сабля взвизгнула.
 От плеча
 и вниз
- 221m на четыре версты прорез.
- 011011m Встал Вильсон и ждет —
 кровь должна б,
 а из
- 0121m раны
 вдруг
 человек полез. (II, 150–51)

Whereas at the outset in Chapter 3 Wilson's measure was almost always maintained correctly, though with the complication of the incorporation of the *piatislozhnik* in many odd lines, subsequently it can become less regular. For example, while the first line here could be interpreted as a four-ictus line

with zero anacrusis, in context one is drawn to perceive it as a three-ictus line with a hypermetrical stress on the first syllable. In contrast to this reduction, Ivan's couplet is marked by extreme length.

When Ivan, the composite and collective hero, is split in two, his constituent parts come forth, an effect that is likened to the Trojan horse ('Прислали из северной Трои...человека-коня' (II, 151)):

2(1)d И пошло ж идти!
 0221d Люди,
 дома,
 броненосцы,
 лошади
 121f в прорез пролезают узкий.
 021d С пением лезут.
 В музыке. (II, 151)

On the level of measure, out of the composite and long measure that formed Ivan, there come forth the independent constituent parts, 'with singing' (compare the songs of Chapter 2). The first couplet consists of two unequal lines: interestingly, the first line corresponds in form to a *piatislozhnik* hemistich, which may thus be realized as the Trojan horse in Wilson's measure, and the second is a four-stress line, the standard Maiakovskian form. The second couplet consists of two three-stress (three-ictus) lines, a hexameter (with a monosyllabic anacrusis) split in two. Thus Ivan is not only made in measure but also unmade in measure.

As a postscript, it is fitting to recall Marina Tsvetaeva's essay 'Epos i lirika sovremennoi Rossii', which draws quite heavily on *150000000* in its interpretation of Maiakovskii in comparison with Pasternak. Of particular relevance are the following words, which echo the passage from *150000000* just discussed but also, for Tsvetaeva, have a far wider relevance for an understanding of Maiakovskii and the strengths and shortcomings of his worldview: 'Из кожи Маяковского лез только боец, лез только размер'.²⁸

NOTES

- 1 All references to Maiakovskii's work are to Vladimir Maiakovskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v trinadtsati tomakh*, Moscow, 1955–61, citing volume and page number only. Translations from Maiakovskii and other sources are my own.
- 2 The rhythm of lines is represented numerically, with the first figure showing the number of unstressed syllables before the first stress and subsequent figures showing the number of unstressed syllables between stresses, while the clausula is given as masculine, feminine, dactylic or unrhymed (x); where an alternative interpretation is possible, this is given after a slash (/).
- 3 The relationship between the title and the opening line recalls Pasternak's well-known interpretation of *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* that 'the title was not the name [*imia*] of the work's creator but the family name [*familiia*] of its content'

- (Boris Pasternak, *Okhrannaia gramota*, in his *Sochineniia*, ed. G.P. Struve and B.A. Filippov, 4 vols, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1958–61, 2, *Proza 1915–1958. Povesti, rasskazy, avtobiograficheskie proizvedeniia*, pp. 203–93 (p. 273)). In this case, Maiakovskii is seeking to assert the reverse shift, and the poem was published anonymously (not that anyone was fooled).
- 4 In 'Kak delat' stikhi' Maiakovskii writes that 'measure comes about as the rhythmical hum is covered by words' (XII, 102), but in context this refers more particularly to the length of the individual line; in a broader sense measure forms part of the definition of the rhythmical 'hum' (see Robin Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning in the Poetry of Vladimir Maiakovskii: Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia; Oblako v shtanakh; Fleita-pozvonochnik; Chelovek; Liubliu; Pro eto*, London, 1989, pp. 10–12).
 - 5 V.V. Trenin, 'K istorii poemy "150 000 000"', in his *V masterskoi stikha Maiakovskogo*, 3rd ed., Moscow, 1991, pp. 193–239 (pp. 207–11); and *V masterskoi stikha Maiakovskogo*, *ibid.*, pp. 5–192 (pp. 89–92).
 - 6 For the definitive articulation of the fundamental premises of Futurist poetics, see I.P. Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl i evoliutsiia poeticheskikh sistem*, Moscow, 1977, pp. 103–18.
 - 7 For a study along these lines of the 'single text' of *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* and the five major love poems, see Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*.
 - 8 See the accompanying essay, 'Maiakovskii's Hexameter'; see also Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 30–32; Richard Burgi, *A History of the Russian Hexameter*, Hamden, Connecticut, 1954, pp. 172–74; V.V. Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"', in *Poetics. Poetyka. Poetika*, 2, ed. Roman Jakobson et al., Warsaw, 1966, pp. 243–76; concerning derivatives of the Russian hexameter, though not Maiakovskii's hexameter verse, see M.L. Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra. (O granitsakh semanticheskogo oreola)', in *Res philologica: Filologicheskie issledovaniia. Pamiati akademika Georgiia Vladimirovicha Stepanova*, ed. D.S. Likhachev et al., Moscow-Leningrad, 1990, pp. 330–42.
 - 9 For the purposes of the accompanying essay 'Maiakovskii's Hexameter', the long lines in the first chapter, where the derivation from the hexameter is clearest, and the final long lines in the poem which have a special function introducing the requiem, are taken in order to characterize Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter in the poem.
 - 10 On line length in Maiakovskii's accentual verse, see M.L. Gasparov, *Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 410–14.
 - 11 See Trenin, 'K istorii poemy "150 000 000"', pp. 209–10.
 - 12 On the *piatislozhnik*, see James Bailey, 'Literary Usage of a Russian Folk Song Meter', *Slavic and East European Journal*, 14, 4, 1970, pp. 436–52; James Bailey, *Three Russian Lyric Folk Song Meters*, Columbus, Ohio, 1993, pp. 149–83; A.N. Bezzubov, 'Piatislozhnik', in *Issledovaniia po teorii stikha*, ed. V.E. Kholshchevnikov et al., Leningrad, 1978, pp. 104–17.
 - 13 See Trenin, *V masterskoi stikha Maiakovskogo*, pp. 90–92.
 - 14 This recollection is quoted in Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"', p. 255.
 - 15 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 161–63.
 - 16 Roman Jakobson, 'O pokolenii, rastrativshem svoikh poetov' (1931), in his *Selected Writings*, V, *On Verse, Its Masters and Explorers*, prepared for publication by Stephen Rudy and Martha Taylor, The Hague, 1979, pp. 355–81 (p. 358).

- 17 See Jakobson, 'O pokolenii', pp. 358–59; Krystyna Pomorska, 'Majakovskij's Cosmic Myth', in *Myth in Literature*, ed. Andrej Kodjak et al., Columbus, Ohio, 1985, pp. 170–87 (pp. 177–78).
- 18 This recollection is quoted in Burgi, *A History of the Russian Hexameter*, p. 173.
- 19 Here and subsequently, marked stresses are taken from the *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*.
- 20 Typographical devices and the incorporation of the visual into poetry were prominent in early Futurism, and are a mark of its iconic orientation, while at this time Maiakovskii was combining drawing and text in his ROSTA work. In terms of the motifs discussed here, it is perhaps notable that the interpretation of the poster as formed into a quatrain and a couplet rests on the incorporation of its separate parts — text, signatures, and subtext — into a whole.
- 21 Maiakovskii's English was decidedly limited, but it is at least tempting to speculate on the possibility of an intended cross-language pun on English 'go' here, albeit not for the ear, adumbrating the use of this device in *Bania* in Mr Pont Kich's speech (see Hugh McLean, 'On Mr Pont Kič and his Ruptured Russian, on Sur-English, Vladimir Majakovskij, the Beasts at Dinner, and Related Subjects', in *For Roman Jakobson. Essays on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday, 11 October 1956*, comp. Morris Halle et al., The Hague, 1956, pp. 332–43).
- 22 Vladimir Maiakovskii, *150.000.000*, Moscow, 1921, p. 8.
- 23 Trenin, 'K istorii poemy "150 000 000"', p. 208.
- 24 There is an interesting association of the motif of a long-striding collective hero, clearly adumbrating Ivan, with a rhythm of longer intervals in Part II of *Oblako v shtanakh*, in the passage which starts 'Нам, здоровенным, / с шагом саженьим' (see Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 105–08).
- 25 М.Р. Shtokmar, *Rifma Maiakovskogo*, Moscow, 1958, p. 96.
- 26 Roman Jakobson, 'The Drum Lines in Majakovskij's 150000000' (1971), *Selected Writings*, V, pp. 413–15.
- 27 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, p. 257; in his pioneering study of the *taktovik* Gasparov identified such verse as a separate type (Gasparov, *Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, pp. 301–09).
- 28 Marina Tsvetaeva, 'Epos i lirika sovremennoi Rossii. Vladimir Maiakovskii i Boris Pasternak', *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. A. Saakiantz and L. Mnukhin, 7 vols, Moscow, 1994–95, 5, *Avtobiograficheskaia proza. Stat'i. Esse. Perevody*, pp. 375–96 (p. 392).

Maiakovskii's Hexameter

Maiakovskii's Hexameter

It would appear that Roman Jakobson was the first to define the presence of the hexameter in Maiakovskii's verse. Jakobson recalled that while Maiakovskii was working on *150000000* in 1919 he asked what the rhythm of the poem's opening was called, and he — Jakobson — defined it for the poet as the hexameter. Jakobson's recollection is cited in Ivanov's pioneering study of the metrical composition of *Chelovek*, which also features the hexameter (Jakobson's input to this study is acknowledged with gratitude).¹ Another significant recollection is quoted in Richard Burgi's study of the Russian hexameter. Jakobson recorded how Maiakovskii read the first line of *150000000* with a marked pause before the final word:²

0221221f 150 000 000 мастера этой поэмы имя. (II, 115)³

Although Jakobson did not himself develop these recollections, they serve as an excellent and protean starting point for a study of Maiakovskii's hexameter. As Ivanov points out, Maiakovskii's question to Jakobson implies that the poet was aware that he was using a form that already existed in the verse tradition,⁴ even if he supposedly did not know what it was called. It is more than likely that Maiakovskii was playing at being ignorant of such things, a pose which he readily affected. It is sufficient to recall his disingenuous statement in 'Kak delat' stikhi' that he did not 'know either iambs or trochees' and had 'never identified them' because he had 'never had anything to do' with them, where the disingenuity is compounded by an introductory assertion that he is being straight with his reader (XII, 86), not to mention that the poem 'Sergeiu Eseninu', which serves as his example in the article, is written in free trochees.⁵ At any rate Maiakovskii was familiar with the hexameter in practice, if not in name, having used it in all his earlier major works with the exception of *Fleita-pozvonochnik*. But behind the professed ignorance of the name there may also lie an awareness of the looseness or creative freedom in his treatment of the hexameter. All this is well illustrated by the second of Jakobson's recollections, concerning Maiakovskii's reading of the opening line of *150000000*: up to the last word of the line 'имя', before which Maiakovskii paused, this forms a classical hexameter, with a feminine clausula. In other words it is clear that Maiakovskii was perfectly familiar with the scheme of the hexameter, but in this case did not stay within it. As we shall see, this feature is quite typical and also varied in its manifestation; and, while it may have contributed to the delayed or only partial recognition of the hexameter's presence in Maiakovskii's verse, it has been reflected in approaches to the topic too. Ivanov used the terms 'hexameter-like' and 'quasi-hexameter', while in my own earlier study of the metrical composition of Maiakovskii's *Tragediia* and five major love poems I used the hybrid term 'hexametral'; in his account of Maiakovskii's accentual verse Gasparov briefly mentions the presence of rhythms 'reminiscent of the hexameter'; similarly, in his brief comment on the opening stanza of *150000000* Burgi identifies the

rhythm of the first line as 'pure hexameter' but that of the next lines as 'reminiscent of the hexameter cadence'.⁶ Also of interest is the notion of a 'derivative' of the hexameter, which has been introduced by Gasparov, although not in relation to Maiakovskii's hexameter.⁷

While Maiakovskii's hexameter has been studied as part of the metrical composition of certain individual works,⁸ it has not been studied as a subject in its own right. Yet it undoubtedly merits this, and in a number of respects. These can be summarized under two headings. Firstly, there is the question of how in poetic and, more especially, metrical terms to account for its presence in Maiakovskii's verse; in connection with this there is a number of more general points of metrical interest. Secondly, there is the question of the key role the hexameter plays in the semantics of Maiakovskii's poetry, not just in some of the major works but also in the architectonics of his work as a whole. In this context, as we shall see, a study of Maiakovskii's hexameter engages key aspects of Jakobson's seminal interpretation of Maiakovskii's poetry and its fundamental problematics.

The very presence in Maiakovskii's work of such a form as the hexameter, and the related form of the elegiac couplet, would seem surprising, even incongruous, and certainly intriguing. Maiakovskii, one of the signatories of the Futurist manifesto 'Poshchchina obshchestvennomu vkusu' in 1912, is demonstratively oriented towards the new, the overthrow of tradition and traditional forms, and his particular image can be very much that of the 'hun'. Thus it would seem unexpected to find him using a form with such classical associations, a factor which may indeed have played its part alongside his creative handling of the hexameter in obstructing perception of its presence. As an additional element of the unexpected, one can suppose that, given his familiarity with the form, he was familiar with translations from classical literature too. But, apart from his own self-presentation, as in the professed ignorance of the hexameter, Maiakovskii's relation to tradition is of course more complex. On the one hand, for all its proclaimed rejection of what came — even immediately — before, Futurism must be seen in the context of Russian Modernism and the defining presence of Symbolism, from which it both draws and departs. On the other hand, in terms of overarching affinities, the most fruitful approach has been to follow Tynianov and look back past the nineteenth century to earlier, even archaic traditions. Tynianov himself noted affinities with the eighteenth century, in particular in Maiakovskii's combination of high and low, while Smirnov has shown extensive analogies between Futurism and the Baroque. Yet more archaic parallels have long been noted and have been the subject of some specialist study, and a systematic interpretation of Maiakovskii in relation to medieval and archaic poetics and worldview has recently been put forward by Weiskopf.⁹ In this connection Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter might be seen as a further manifestation of the archaic (or high, eighteenth century) orientation of his poetry. In less broad terms, as we shall see, the heroic associations of the

hexameter fit well into such a strand in his poetry, but before that there may be some playfulness and Futurist *épatage* involved.

The question of how to interpret the hexameter's presence in Maiakovskii's verse can be approached in a more specific way at the metrical level. A starting point is the character of Maiakovskii's verse itself. Jakobson famously heralded Maiakovskii's liberation of the word from the 'Procrustean bed of the rhythmical inertia of syllabo-tonic verse' (a statement which, given the time of writing in the early 1920s, effectively refers to Maiakovskii's verse up to about 1920).¹⁰ In the light of Gasparov's studies which disclosed the workings of Maiakovskii's verse, it has long been unnecessary to treat it almost as a thing apart in the overall picture of Russian verse.¹¹ In the broad picture the 'liberation' achieved by Maiakovskii does not stand alone but forms part of the general development of tonic verse in the early twentieth century. Accentual verse was already being developed in early Symbolism and was quite prominent in early Futurism as a whole; Maiakovskii's *dol'nik*, which he principally develops in the 1920s, fits fair and square into the general development of this form; and, again mainly in the 1920s, he uses a range of syllabo-tonic forms too.¹² But this still leaves a more informed sense of the specificity, and even certain incongruities, of his verse. As far as this study is concerned, the most distinctive feature is that heralded by Jakobson. It is not so much the presence of accentual verse, but the fact that in Maiakovskii's poetry of the 1910s accentual verse dominates almost to the exclusion of everything else, although towards the end of this period some metrical diversification is already apparent. This places Maiakovskii largely outside the mainstream of Russian verse, in terms of the so-called 'classical' tradition of syllabo-tonic verse, and also a stage or more beyond the main development of tonic verse in the form of the *dol'nik*. Yet this is precisely the period of his use of the hexameter. Now, although the hexameter is classical — in one sense — in terms of its associations, its metrical scheme is in effect that of the *dol'nik*, and so it too lies outside the Russian classical, syllabo-tonic tradition. One can see, therefore, that its status in Maiakovskii's verse can be ambiguous, either as a form that could be assimilated or as something different or 'other': on the one hand it has an affinity to tonic verse, but on the other hand there is still a gap between it and accentual verse. If one translates this ambiguity into how Maiakovskii may use the hexameter, it can be either as the form as such or else as a form that he creatively adapts and assimilates.

This situation relates in a number of interesting ways to the hexameter's place in the Russian verse tradition. As a rule it has not been assimilated other than in translations or stylizations from classical literature and in the related form of the elegiac couplet. Equally, there has been a tension between the tonic potential of the metre and its development in a predominantly syllabo-tonic tradition. Thus on the whole the rhythmical possibilities of the hexameter as a *dol'nik* metre were avoided in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the dominant tendency approached a dactylic base (notable exceptions being Trediakovskii, Zhukovskii in idylls and tales, and Fet), while in the early

twentieth century there was a general tendency in translations and stylizations towards close reproduction of classical models.¹³ On the other hand, the hexameter is also associated with the generation of derived forms or forms which are perceived as bearing a relation to it. These are what Gasparov has studied as 'derivatives' of the hexameter, which feature variation from the norm of the hexameter in rhythm, length, anacrusis, clausula and/or rhyme. Such derivatives involve variation in one or maybe more features, for example: in length, in the direction of dactylic pentameter, or in anacrusis, as with Merzliakov's amphibrachic hexameter. Gasparov explores the degree and kind of variation possible without loss of association with the hexameter.¹⁴ But, as we shall see, Maiakovskii's hexameter represents something of an extreme and special case: it may go beyond what Gasparov establishes as the limits of tolerance, and in a combination of features all at once. Yet this is against the background of an underlying hexameter presence, which may be manifested in correct lines alongside ones that derive, deviate or depart from a hexameter base. We are certainly dealing with the hexameter, but in his creative adaptation of it Maiakovskii may extend beyond the bounds of the measure. Rather than revising some of Gasparov's conclusions, however, we are left with an appreciation of the originality of Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter and a renewed sense of the particular character of his verse.

Maiakovskii's hexameter can also be placed in the context of the development of extra-long measures in the early twentieth century. Such forms were developed especially by Bal'mont, Briusov and Severianin.¹⁵ They could extend into lines of seven, eight and more feet (ictuses) with a composite construction of two, three or even more hemistichs; in the main the metres are binary, although Briusov and Bal'mont also use ternary. Maiakovskii's youthful interest in Symbolist poetry, including Bal'mont, is attested in 'Ia sam' (I, 17); as for his attitude to the Ego-Futurist Severianin, this ranged from enthusiasm to rivalry and disdain.¹⁶ Maiakovskii's development of the hexameter can therefore be seen as a polemical move to appropriate these poets' metrical innovation, in terms of both long lines and composite construction, but to realize it in a different form. Paradoxically, the traditional hexameter offered such a possibility. One might even suggest a certain perverse symmetry in this association of Maiakovskii and the hexameter, both, though in different ways, 'outside' the mainstream of Russian verse. Certainly a further polemical point is that Maiakovskii was appropriating and adapting a form which had principally been developed only in translations and stylizations rather than in original verse. This fact has an additional dimension, at the level of the opposition between Symbolist and Futurist poetics: whereas translation and translations were a central part of Symbolist poetics, they were generally eschewed in early Futurism.¹⁷ Similarly, while Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter may in places approach stylization, this can be with negative or parodic intent.

The role and significance of the hexameter in Maiakovskii's poetry are out of all proportion to its prominence in quantitative terms, for we will be

looking at a body of material that comprises less than 200 lines. The centre of Maiakovskii's poetry is his large works, and it is striking, as mentioned at the outset, that hexameter verse features in all the major works of the 1910s, with the exception only of the shortest and least wide-ranging of them, *Fleita-pozvonochnik* (1915). It plays a special role in both *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* (1913) and *Oblako v shtanakh* (1914–15), but its most important use is in the major works of the years around the Revolution, *Voina i mir* (1916), *Chelovek* (1916–17), *Misteriia-buff* (1918) and *150000000* (1919–20). The hexameter's role is especially significant in *Chelovek* and *150000000*: here, as we shall see, it stands at the very centre of Maiakovskii's poetry. Against the background of the dominance of accentual verse in this period and in these works it is a unique metrical theme. While there are other individual significant metrical themes in certain of these works, for example, the iamb in *Chelovek* and the *piatislozhnik* in *150000000*, and a couple of very minor themes which occur in two of them, for example, the iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura, there is no other such recurrent theme to set alongside the accentual verse. Moreover, the hexameter's significance is underlined by its compositional highlighting, in the opening and/or at the work's climax or finale.

Although hexameter verse is principally a feature of the major works, it is found in a few short poems as well. Maiakovskii's approach to the hexameter can be seen in three poems of 1913, 'Neskol'ko slov obo mne samom' from the cycle 'Ia', 'Ot ustalosti' and 'My' (only the last will be considered an example of hexameter verse proper). There is the intriguing four-line poem 'Izdevatel'stva' (1916), which is based on the elegiac couplet. Then in three other poems of 1916–17, 'Nadoelo' (1916), 'Sebe, liubimomu, posviashchaet eti stroki avtor' (1916) and 'Revoliutsiia. Poetokhronika' (1917), a brief hexameter theme links to the major works of the period. No less striking than the hexameter's special role in Maiakovskii's verse up to *150000000* is its almost complete disappearance thereafter, and already in the second version of *Misteriia-buff* (1920–21): there are just two further clear uses of the form, in 'Moi mai' of 1922 and much later in 'My' of 1929 (the same title as one of the early poems).

The rest of this study will have two parts: first an outline of the formal character of Maiakovskii's hexameter, and then a detailed consideration of its use and significance in his work.

1. *Maiakovskii's hexameter: formal character*

The hexameter in Russian verse has the scheme of a six-ictus dactylic *dol'nik*, with a central caesura, an obligatory final disyllabic interval, and an unrhymed feminine clausula; the related elegiac couplet combines a standard hexameter with a pentameter that consists of two three-ictus hemistichs but with a zero interval over the caesura, and alternating feminine and masculine clausulae. In

broad terms Maiakovskii's hexameter verse is a long line form based more or less closely on this scheme (these schemes). The scheme(s) may be applicable either more or less as such, or as an underlying point of reference, or as a point of departure (in relating Maiakovskii's hexameter to the traditional scheme, however, we will ignore the requirement for a final disyllabic interval). This means that there may be problems both of interpretation/classification and of description. For the purposes of interpretation, the closeness to the hexameter will depend on the context. In the case of isolated lines the underlying scheme needs to be quite clearly recognizable, whereas in a strong hexameter context there is more scope for variation in length, rhythm and/or anacrusis. Inevitably there are cases where doubt arises, and there is of course an element of approximation in the statistical description of such verse. But overall the room for uncertainty and alternative interpretation is not large and the picture that emerges is perfectly reliable.

An example of a problem of interpretation/classification is provided by the opening two lines of the Epilogue in *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*:

111101/	Я это все писал
31101f	о вас, бедных крысах.
121321d	Жалел — у меня нет груди: я кормил бы вас доброй нененькой.
121f	Теперь я немного высох,
01/2d	я — блаженненький. (I, 172)

There is some compositional expectation of the hexameter, since the Prologue opened with the hexameter and Act II has just ended with a more extended passage of it: the second line, although it has a monosyllabic anacrusis, does have a six-ictus (six-stress) form with a strong central break, but the rhythm of the first line, with largely monosyllabic intervals, is altogether uncharacteristic. The last two lines of the stanza are short and confirm the deflated tone; perhaps the doubt over interpretation of the first two lines fits this, and they have not been included in the classification.

As far as problems of description are concerned, these arise where Maiakovskii's adaptation or assimilation of the hexameter moves the verse towards the accentual system, so that it becomes difficult to describe in terms of a *dol'nik* scheme. In the early works, *Misteriia-buff* and the two later poems from the 1920s the hexameter is generally close enough to the scheme to allow for it to be described as such without too much difficulty, but the situation is more complex in *Chelovek* and especially *150000000*. The opening two lines of the first chapter of *Chelovek*, 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', demonstrate the problem there:

042145m	Знаю, не призовут мое имя
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грешники,
 задыхающиеся в аду.
 42144f Под аплодисменты попов
 мой занавес не опустится на Голгофе. (I, 246)

These are six-stress and five-stress lines with such an irregular rhythm that a *dol'nik* scheme is not readily applicable, but they form part of an extended passage with a clear hexameter theme that draws closer to the scheme of the hexameter proper. In context, this development has a compositional function, and after the opening chapter the hexameter verse generally stays close to its underlying scheme (and can be described accordingly). How then is one to describe the hexameter of the poem overall, in terms of a *dol'nik* scheme or as for accentual verse? Neither solution is ideal. For the purposes of uniformity within this study, however, even this looser hexameter verse in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' will be described in terms of the basic scheme, but in the following way: irregular, longer intervals will be treated as such, rather than attempting to posit stress omission, and line length will be counted accordingly. Elsewhere too, i.e. not just in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', there may be the odd irregular, longer interval which it makes sense in context to treat as such. Equally, in a few lines it is appropriate to treat a trisyllabic opening as arising from omission of the first stress. But there is only one example, over an interval of five syllables in the late poem 'My', where it has been considered clearly appropriate to interpret stress omission in the main body of the line; it is worth noting as well that there are just two doubtful cases, involving intervals of four syllables, which it has been decided not to interpret as stress omission, although such an interpretation is possible. Finally, in three early lines (one in 'My' and two in *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*) it is possible to interpret the presence of hypermetrical stressing.

The situation in *150000000* is more problematic still, since the compositional movement reverses that of *Chelovek*: the hexameter serves as the point of departure, and the verse moves away from it as Maiakovskii develops lines of varying length, rhythm and anacrusis. These variations develop in such a way that the verse increasingly goes beyond the limits of the measure, leaving the hexameter far behind to create a more general long line theme. What is said about the epic history of Troy at the beginning of Chapter 5 — 'история Трои/до неузнаваемости раздутая' (II, 142) — could apply equally well to the hexameter. It is therefore impossible to classify the long line verse overall as hexameter, even if in context the derivation may still be more or less apparent or could be constructed. On the other hand, it does not in general make good sense to classify some lines as hexameter, and others as not, because there may be no clear dividing line. However, there would seem to be a sense of the hexameter's specific presence extending from the opening stanza through the first chapter, which is not maintained in the second chapter (other than in a certain ongoing reminiscence of the poem's opening). Thereafter the occasional line in the long line verse

may be close to the hexameter in form, but it makes little sense to distinguish such lines. Equally, it is not appropriate to include the long lines of the poem as a whole within the scope of this study. So for the purposes of illustrating how Maiakovskii uses the hexameter in *150000000* the material will be limited to the long lines from the first chapter, with just one addition in the form of the last two long lines in the poem: these introduce the requiem in the final chapter, which thus invokes the elegiac variation of the hexameter. Even limiting the material in this way, there is still the same problem of description as in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', but again for the purposes of uniformity this verse will be described in the same way as there.

The problem of incorporating the hexameter into Maiakovskii's verse is immediately evident in the area of rhyme, since the traditional hexameter is unrhymed, while rhyme and stanza organization are a constant, almost obligatory factor of the organization of Maiakovskii's verse. As he says in 'Kak delat' stikhi': 'without rhyme, understanding rhyme broadly, verse will fall apart' (XII, 105). Maiakovskii's system takes precedence: his hexameter is rhymed and incorporated into his standard stanza, the quatrain with alternating rhyme scheme. Historically, however, experiments with the hexameter in European and also Russian verse have involved rhyme, and Gasparov shows that the presence of rhyme does not necessarily exclude a sense of derivation from the hexameter; what matters is that the rhyming clausulae should be uniform in length, thereby avoiding the sense of stanzaic organization.¹⁸ Thus Maiakovskii's hexameter, with the combination of rhyme and stanzaic organization, should effectively be beyond the limits of tolerance and in this respect is anomalous. On the other hand, the hexameter's anomalous status within Maiakovskii's verse itself is manifested in the fact that there are occasional unrhymed hexameters (in *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* and *Chelovek*). It is perhaps more striking that this is the case than that, once the hexameter is incorporated, it should be rhymed contrary to its standard character.

The hexameter also possesses another unique characteristic in terms of Maiakovskii's verse. Whereas the basic compositional unit in his verse is the stanza, in the 1910s almost exclusively the quatrain, in the case of his hexameter verse the basic compositional unit is the metrical line. This fact may relate to the hexameter's normal status as unrhymed. There are whole quatrains of hexameter verse, but also single lines or segments of two or three lines in stanzas with shorter lines. Such a feature has a dual, potentially contradictory effect. On the one hand, it allows for the possible perception of hexameter verse as arising out of the surrounding accentual verse, almost as a metrical tendency within it, and therefore not generically distinct. On the other hand, it may in context serve to demarcate the hexameter, where the transition from the hexameter to, say, four-stress verse is clearly perceived as a metrical shift. It is worth noting that the leading, four-stress form in Maiakovskii's accentual verse is precisely the length (four ictuses) which Gasparov shows to be antithetical to association with the hexameter.¹⁹

Particular problems are created here with five-stress/five-ictus lines, which may be perceived as a kind of transitional form that is aligned either with the hexameter or the surrounding accentual verse. In a clear and strong hexameter context five-stress/five-ictus lines might readily be subsumed within the bounds of hexameter verse, but elsewhere this might not be the case.

Because of the way that Maiakovskii uses the hexameter, basing himself only more or less closely on its scheme, the formal character of the verse is most appropriately described in terms of the constituent factors of line length, rhythm, anacrusis and clausula (this parallels the description of his accentual verse). The description follows the criteria, with qualifications, outlined above.²⁰ In the tables figures are given for the main works separately, for the five short early poems (1913–17) together, and similarly for the two short poems of the 1920s.

Line length (Table 1)

Given the broad definition of Maiakovskii's hexameter as a long line form based more or less closely on the hexameter, one would expect a certain variation around the basic six-ictus scheme. As just mentioned, in context this may include shorter five-ictus (five-stress) lines but not four-ictus (four-stress) ones. As for longer lines, we have already seen from the opening line of *150000000* how Maiakovskii extends the measure, and in a hexameter context it makes sense to include not just the quite frequent seven-ictus (seven-stress) lines but also the occasional eight-ictus (eight-stress) and longer lines, which can take the form of composite hexameters, hexameters and a half or even double hexameters. The way that the verse is organized around a six-ictus/six-stress leading form is analogous to the line length organization in Maiakovskii's accentual verse, which is based on the leading or subsequently dominant role of four-stress lines, but not a fixed line length. However, although the hexameter can readily encompass derivatives of five-ictus length, Gasparov notes that deviations from the six-ictus norm in the direction of greater length are virtually unexplored.²¹ Maiakovskii, however, goes much further in his development of line length variation and composite construction; this is already present in the earliest poems but reaches a maximum in *150000000*. In this respect he is especially innovative, while at the same time drawing on, and competing with, the development of long line forms in the period.

As Table 1 shows, the special character of *150000000* is particularly apparent in the line length: everywhere else the six-ictus (six-stress) form accounts for at least a half of all lines, though only in *Misteriia-buff* does it exceed three quarters of the total. However, if one looks at the proportion of five-ictus (five-stress), six-ictus (six-stress) and seven-ictus (seven-stress) lines taken together then this is typically 80% or more, while in *150000000* it is still only a half. There is a clear contrast between *Chelovek* and *150000000*, which reflects the different compositional movements in the

Table 1: Length

	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	3	Total
VM	1	–	–	–	1	2	10	2	–	16
Oblako	–	–	1	1	1	4	11	3	–	21
ViM	–	–	–	2	–	1	8	1	–	12
Chelovek	–	–	–	1	1	2	28	7	–	39
M-B	1	–	–	–	–	1	9	–	–	11
150	1	1	–	4	3	1	7	2	1	20
Poems (1913–17)	–	–	1	1	2	6	12	2	–	24
Poems (1922–29)	–	–	–	–	–	2	11	8	–	21
Total	3	1	2	9	8	19	96	25	1	164

two poems. The single three-ictus (three-stress) line in *150000000* arises when, in the context of composite construction, a hemistich becomes an independent metrical line. The prominence of five-ictus (five-stress) lines in the poems of the 1920s is in fact entirely due to 'My', the second, late poem of the two.

Rhythm (Table 2)

If we were concerned with Maiakovskii's verse of the 1920s, then the *dol'nik* scheme of the hexameter would exist in his verse alongside a variety of *dol'nik* measures, most typically the four-ictus *dol'nik*. However, through most of the 1910s (after the earliest poems) the *dol'nik* only has a marginal metrical presence in Maiakovskii's system, a fact which in turn has a bearing on the ambiguous position of the hexameter. On the other hand it is curious that the *dol'nik* comes back into use just as the hexameter disappears, although it should be remembered that *dol'nik* rhythm is prominent in his accentual verse.

Maiakovskii's hexameter generally displays a strong central word break, in effect a caesura, and in describing the rhythm in terms of a *dol'nik* scheme the profile of closeness to the hexameter and hence of recognizability is enhanced if a certain freedom is allowed over the caesura, where this is clearly located, or between segments in compound lines. This would be parallel to the degree of freedom manifested in the anacrusis. In this Maiakovskii once again draws on existing innovative practice in the period, especially that of Bal'mont and Severianin, who developed a range of variations in augmentation and truncation over the caesura.²² First, then, one could allow the possibility of a longer, trisyllabic interval over the caesura (compare the variation of a dactylic caesura in the iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura in *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*).²³ This occurs in eleven lines which are

otherwise rhythmically correct, and they have been counted as such in Table 2; six of these lines are in *Chelovek*, which makes for a significant difference in the rhythmical profile there. In addition, and more interestingly, the qualification can be extended to allow a zero interval over the caesura too, as in the elegiac couplet, the related form to the hexameter. In keeping with the degree of freedom Maiakovskii adopts in respect of other features, such a zero interval occurs more widely between segments and not necessarily in the context of the second line of a couplet, or the even lines of a quatrain; in *Chelovek* there are even two isolated lines with this form. Overall there are fifteen lines with such a zero interval, although in six of these there are irregular intervals as well.

However, the significance of a zero interval over the caesura is somewhat problematic. As we shall see, there is an elegiac motif in Maiakovskii's hexameter which can be linked to this formal effect, and in the key works *Chelovek* and *150000000* it is. Yet the reverse is not always discernibly the case, since the presence of a zero interval over the caesura is not always linked to an elegiac motif; in fact, typically it is not. There is no entirely satisfactory explanation, or at least not an explanation that can cover all the works, although a certain looseness in Maiakovskii's use of the form, treating the hexameter and elegiac couplet as a composite source, is in keeping with all the other aspects of his hexameter verse. From the theoretical point of view, one might even contend that there is nothing troubling in the lack of certainty over the link between the formal feature of the zero interval over the caesura and its associations, since paradoxically this serves to demonstrate the conventionality of all such associations. By extension too, this might be related to the tendency to disrupt traditional or conventional articulation of meaning which is characteristic of Futurist poetics in general.²⁴

Another interesting feature is the presence in thirteen lines of a zero interval that is not over the caesura; in three of these lines, in 'My' and *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* (i.e. all in 1913), a zero interval arises from what may be interpreted as hypermetrical stressing, but elsewhere this is not the case. This suggests a possible interpretation as spondaic rhythm, not in syllabo-tonic translation of the greco-roman hexameter into a foot containing two consecutive stressed syllables (as can be created in a way by hypermetrical stressing) but through a zero interval between metrical stresses. In addition, it may be that there is some relation or elision with the zero interval over the caesura. Certainly, as we shall see, the two effects can be juxtaposed, and in the context of Maiakovskii's composite lines may anyway be hard to distinguish. One explanation might still be that Maiakovskii simply incorporates a range of intervals, including zero ones, as found in his accentual verse; and yet, however surprising it may seem, the possibility of some relation to the spondee in the greco-roman hexameter is hard to dismiss. The spondee is avoided in Russian verse, and was the subject of debate in relation to the hexameter in the 1810s.²⁵ But it has been the object of occasional experimentation, and Maiakovskii does utilize a spondaic effect elsewhere.

Table 2: Rhythm

	Correct	Incorrect	Total
VM	15	1	16
Oblako	17	4	21
ViM	8	4	12
Chelovek	25	14	39
M-B	8	3	11
150	11	9	20
Poems (1913–17)	19	5	24
Poems (1922–29)	16	5	21
Total	119	45	164

In particular, he has a metre which allows for intervals of zero to two syllables that can quite aptly be named 'udarnik'.²⁶ It is used to create a heavy rhythm associated with pounding, powerful sound: for example, in 'Nash marsh', 'Barabannaia pesnia' and the drum song in *150000000*, also in *Pro eto* and, most interestingly, in 'Moi mai' where it alternates with stanzas that include the hexameter.

With these qualifications concerning interval over the caesura, Table 2 shows that the hexameter verse in most of the works falls predominantly into a correct *dol'nik* rhythm; in actual fact there is a clear tendency towards disyllabic intervals and even ternary rhythm. In *Chelovek* and *150000000* the profile is notably less regular: in the latter the extension beyond the hexameter is very evident, with only just over half the lines covered having a *dol'nik* rhythm. But even so the compositional movement in the two poems produces a more similar effect here, which serves to emphasize the extension of length as the key factor in *150000000*. The tendency towards a ternary rhythm provides a most interesting example of affinity — rather than the opposite — between the hexameter, with its marked tendency towards the dactyl, and Maiakovskii's accentual verse where a ternary inertia stands as the model of rhythmical regularity;²⁷ similarly, Maiakovskii's *dol'nik* is characterized by a tendency towards ternary rhythm.²⁸ As far as derivatives are concerned, Gasparov does note an experimental quatrain by Kviatkovskii with a *taktovik* range of intervals of one to three syllables (the hexameter was also taken up by another Constructivist, Sel'vinskii). In general, however, the dominance of disyllabic intervals within the basic *dol'nik* scheme is a key criterion for a derivative to preserve associations with the hexameter.²⁹ In this respect, therefore, Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter is certainly very original, with its scope for rhythmical variation, and yet it also stays sufficiently close to the hexameter through the tendency to maintain the dominance of disyllabic intervals. Indeed, allowing for the qualifications

that produce a more regular profile, the scope for variation is typically less than in the line length: this accords with the evidence of the derivatives that the tolerance for deviation in rhythm is more restricted.

Anacrusis (Table 3)

As Table 3 shows, the anacrusis in Maiakovskii's hexameter is predominantly or mainly dactylic (zero) in accordance with the scheme of the hexameter (the five lines with initial stress omission are listed here under the zero anacrusis). Gasparov has shown that amphibrachic and even anapaestic derivatives are tolerated and do not break the hexameter associations, whether as occasional variations or fixed anacrusis.³⁰ Yet again the two main works where the variation is most striking are *Chelovek* and *150000000*: in context, this feature is related to the compositional movements in those two poems that have already been outlined. More generally, the variation in anacrusis can be compared to Maiakovskii's practice elsewhere: for example, in *Pro eto* he establishes a clear amphibrachic base to the four-ictus *dol'nik*, but with the variation of zero anacrusis as well (17.0% in the main body of the poem).³¹

Table 3: Anacrusis

	0	1	2	4	Total
VM	10	5	1	–	16
Oblako	19	1	1	–	21
ViM	9	3	–	–	12
Chelovek	24	7	7	1	39
M-B	10	1	–	–	11
150	12	2	6	–	20
Poems (1913–17)	13	9	2	–	24
Poems (1922–29)	17	4	–	–	21
Total	114	32	17	1	164

Clausula (Table 4)

In *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* and *Oblako v shtanakh*, as well as in the other short early poems, only masculine and feminine clausulae are found (see Table 4), most often in an alternating pattern with masculine clausulae in the even lines. This alternation is the same as in the elegiac couplet, but it is also the most common pattern in Maiakovskii's verse (and Russian verse). Thereafter, dactylic clausulae are found as well, and there are examples of compound rhymes and some other special rhyming effects too. The difference

Table 4: Clausula

	m	f	d	Total
VM	8	8	—	16
Oblako	10	11	—	21
ViM	4	6	2	12
Chelovek	17	13	9	39
M-B	5	6	—	11
150	2	12	6	20
Poems (1913–17)	7	17	—	24
Poems (1922–29)	16	5	—	21
Total	69	78	17	164

in profile between *Chelovek* and *150000000* is quite striking: here it is hard to draw any clear conclusions, although the greater length of clausula in *150000000* could be related to the theme of extension.

2. *Maiakovskii's hexameter: history and significance*

Before Maiakovskii's first major work *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*, which was performed in December 1913, there are three short poems written earlier in 1913 where long lines of *dol'nik*/ternary can give rise to what Gasparov calls 'rhythms reminiscent of the hexameter'.³² In the last poem of the cycle 'Ia', 'Neskol'ko slov obo mne samom', six-ictus *dol'nik* lines alternate with shorter five-, four- and three-ictus ones: this could be characterized as free *dol'nik*. In 'Ot ustalosti' there are some six-ictus lines but five-ictus ones, mainly regular dactyls, dominate: this could be considered close to a derivative of the hexameter. But it is in the third poem, 'My', that Maiakovskii first properly approaches his kind of hexameter verse, extending into longer lines:

02222022m Лезем земле под ресницами вылезших пальм
выколоть бельма пустынь,
122232m на ссохшихся губах каналов —
дредноутов улыбки поймать.
0(0) Стынь, злоба!
222122222m На костер разожженных созвездий
взвесь не позволю мою одичавшую дряхлую мать.
110221f Дорога — рог ада — пьяни грузовозов храпы!
13212m Дымящиеся ноздри вулканов хмелем расширь!
022222f Перья линяющих ангелов бросим любимым на шляпы,

possible polemical dimension relating to the use of long line forms at the time: in this connection stylization has the potential to become appropriation. Whether as parody or appropriation, the unexpected or incongruous adoption of such a voice by a Futurist poet and signatory of 'Poshchechina obshchestvennomu vkusu' has a nice visual equivalent in the famous photograph of Maiakovskii in a frock coat and top hat which is signed 'Futurist Vladimir Maiakovskii'.³⁶ At any rate the perception of this verse as hexameter has indeed been obstructed, rather in accordance with the opening assertion of an anticipated lack of comprehension:

022222f	Вам ли понять, почему я, спокойный, насмешек грозою
022121m	душу на блюде несу к обеду идущих лет.
122122f	С небритой щеки площадей стекая ненужной слезою,
0122m	я, быть может, последний поэт. (I, 153)

The opening two lines are regular hexameters and the third line varies only in the anacrusis, before the shift out of the hexameter into a four-stress final line; it is also interesting to note the use of the ending '-ою' to create a feminine clausula in the odd lines. While there is a marked incongruity between the hexameter's classical associations and an image such as the 'unshaven cheek of the squares', the motif of the tear adumbrates the play's ending and the elegiac strand that will play an important role in Maiakovskii's hexameter. In addition, such incongruity between the form's high associations and low imagery might be seen as yet another example of the combination of high and low which is a distinctive feature of Maiakovskii's poetics.

Hexameter verse recurs in three brief segments in Act I, but the most interesting use is in the finale of Act II. The rebellion of things at the end of Act I has brought a new order, but suffering still persists and eventually the Poet has to take on the role of scapegoat and bearer of humanity's tears. There is a deeper ambiguity or complexity in the use of the hexameter here. It is hard to interpret it as a voice that has been playfully or provocatively adopted, still less parodied; if it is still a mask, then it may be closer to the mask in tragedy. The Poet realizes that he cannot take up his throne like a Greek: 'Думал — / радостный буду. // Блестящий глазами / сяду на трон, / изнеженный телом грек' (I, 170). Instead he must go to the north and back to the origins of religion: in spatial terms this is in the opposite direction to the classical home of the hexameter, while it is in effect backward in time rather than forward as at the outset. In all this there is a duality in

relation to the hexameter, as it were both rejection and adoption. The hexameter voice nevertheless associates the Poet Vladimir Maiakovskii with a tradition that stretches back to classical times and beyond, while his use of the form is idiosyncratic and varied, compared to the traditional profile of the opening:

002122m Я
 с ношей моей
 иду,
 спотыкаюсь,
 ползу
 022222- дальше
 на север,
 туда,
 где в тисках бесконечной тоски
 -02010221m пальцами волн
 вечно
 грудь рвет
 океан-изувер.
 02122012m Я добреду —
 усталый,
 в последнем бреду
 брошу вашу слезу
 021221m темному богу грез
 у истока звериных вер. (I, 170–71)

The second line here is a remarkable double hexameter, while the third line too is extended, but the use of zero intervals between segments, as in the elegiac couplet, is also striking. They occur between the two halves of the second line, within the second half of this line after the first two-ictus segment, and also within the third line, and they are accompanied by a clear elegiac motif. There are also zero intervals at the beginning of the first line, with the graphical highlighting of 'Я', and again in the second line ('грудь рвет'), which in context may be interpreted as arising out of hypermetrical stressing. Looking ahead to the later significance of the hexameter, the image of the ocean held in the 'vice of endless sadness' is curious. Although the measure is extended, in this long, double line it could be perceived as just a repetition of itself, whereas in *150000000* extension into longer lines functions differently and is associated with escape from bounded space.

Maiakovskii's familiarity with the elegiac couplet proper is confirmed by a short, four-line poem of 1916, 'Izdevatel'stva':

122121f Павлиным хвостом распущу фантазию
 в пестром цикле,

The repeated exclamation 'да!' links to the other exclamations in this passage, most of which stand clearly outside the stanza fabric as 'prose', and here they can be interpreted as extraneous to the hexameter (and for the purposes of description they have been excluded). The first two lines are regular and, without the exclamations, the other lines would very nearly be so too: in terms of the hexameter, the third line has an omitted first stress and would have a longer interval over the caesura, while the last line would be regular except for its asymmetric division. This underlines the hexameter's role as adopted voice, a voice that is put on, and it is subsequently described by the poet as 'quiet':

022122f Мария!
 (1122122) Как в заживевшее ухо втиснуть им тихое слово?
(I, 192)

Here the appeal to Maria stands unambiguously in front of and outside the hexameter. The incongruity between the hexameter's classical associations and the content of lines such as these is striking, and in the tension between life and art which runs through the poem the hexameter seems to be an inappropriate vehicle for the poet's feelings.

The most important period for the use of the hexameter in Maiakovskii's verse is the years around the Revolution. It features briefly in *Voina i mir* (1916) and the first version of *Misteriia-buff* (1918), but most importantly in *Chelovek* (1916–17) and *150000000* (1919–20). Linked to its role in these major works, it is also found in three shorter poems of the period, 'Nadoelo' (1916), 'Sebe, liubimomu, posviashchaet eti stroki avtor' (1916) and 'Revoliutsiia. Poetokhronika' (17 April 1917).

In the years around the Revolution Maiakovskii associates the hexameter with the theme of man's heroic potential on earth, either through the figure of the poet himself as culture hero, principally in *Chelovek*, or through a collective hero, culminating in the figure of Ivan in *150000000*. Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter in this period clearly relates to his view, expressed in 'Kak delat' stikhi', that 'long measures' are appropriate for a 'heroic' or 'grand' tone (XII, 102). A related motif is that of the association of long lines with large numbers, with 'thousands' in *Chelovek* and with the eponymous 'millions' in *150000000*; in the context of these poems and of Maiakovskii's poetics in general, such an association can be seen to have an iconic aspect on the basis of similarity of features.³⁹ In addition the hexameter is related in this way to the key Maiakovskian preoccupation with size, from his favourite device of hyperbole to the (problematic) interpretation of hugeness itself; in terms of sound, this theme is realized as loudness and hugeness of voice.⁴⁰

The emergence of a heroic hexameter, at much the same time that Maiakovskii appears to mock the elegiac couplet in 'Izdevatel'stva', comes in the final part of *Voina i mir* in a continuous passage of hexameter verse

where the countries of the earth, like Magi, bring gifts of their national attributes to the new, corporate man. Among them Russia brings the power of the voice in hymn:

020022f «ЧЬИХ ГОЛОСОВ МОЩЬ
 в песни звончее сплеталась?!
 112112f Россия
 сердце свое
 раскрыла в пламенном гимне!» (I, 238)

In the light of the discussion of the zero interval earlier, it is interesting to note in the first line a zero interval between the second and third stresses preceding another over the caesura: any elegiac associations can be discounted, but a deliberate spondaic effect is not out of the question. The collective motif is repeated in the hexameter opening of *Misteriia-buff*:

0212023f Это об нас взывала земля голосом пушечного рева.
 012214m Это нами взбухали поля, кровями опоены.
(II, 169)⁴¹

There is a certain looseness here and also a zero interval over the caesura in the first line, but the hexameter theme is clear as it runs through the prologue alongside accentual verse. It does not then recur during the play until the short hymn, declaimed 'solemnly', which introduces the finale (II, 240); this is another example of the hexameter in its framing role. The hymn, however, has a special composition, involving both final-initial rhymes and recurrent overlapping rhymes with 'солнце', which in the first lines impedes the formation of full hexameters:

022 Сон вековой разнесён —
 021 целое море утр.
 012 Хутор мира, цветы!
 0 Ты наш!
 2112 А над нами солнце, солнце и солнце. (II, 240)

Although the first three graphical lines have a clear relation to the hexameter hemistich, the rhyming is so inventive ('разнесён — / це'— 'солнце'; 'утр'— 'Хутор'; 'цветы'— 'Ты') that it is hard to establish how to classify this verse and the clausulae (and it has been omitted from the description). To adapt the image that occurs a few lines later, one might almost suggest that the hexameter's set boundaries are replaced by new rhyming connections:

113(m) Довольно!
 Мир исколесён.

- 012112m Цепь железа сменили цепью любящих рук.
 1031m Игру новую играйте!
 В круг!
 021221f Солнцем играйте. Солнце катайте. Играйте в солнце!
 (II, 240)

At last two lines make full hexameters, which allows retrospectively for an informed sense of how the creativity of the preceding lines works. Rather than the extension beyond limits which is the theme of *150000000*, the utopian impulse here is towards a reorganized control of the earth and heavens.

One or more of the key motifs is present in the brief hexameter themes in the short poems. In 'Nadoelo' the motif of man's heroic potential is subverted, as the poet cannot find any people worth the name, especially 'beautiful people', in the Petrograd of 1916. The motifs of the earth and thousand both feature in the ninth stanza, as, interestingly, does that of tears; the middle two lines here can readily be interpreted as hexameter verse:

- 0212f Брошусь на землю,
 камня корою
 012122f в кровь лицо изотру, слезами асфальт омывая.
 242142f Истомившимися по ласке губами тысячью поцелуев
 покрою
 022f умную морду трамвая. (I, 113)

'Sebe, ljubimomu, posviashchaet eti stroki avtor' develops the Maiakovskian theme of himself as an extraordinary phenomenon (as in *Chelovek*) through a series of hyperbolic and oxymoronic comparisons, starting with 'О, если б был я маленький, как Великий океан'. Yet he ends with the question 'какими Голиафами я зачат — такой большой и такой ненужный?' (I, 126–27), in which the poet's final ambiguity is expressed specifically in relation to size. The poem contains six lines of six or seven stresses (ictuses) with a recognizable hexameter base (and five-stress lines too) in four of the seven stanzas, for example:

- 0212(0)d О, если б был я
 тихий,
 как гром, —
 ныл бы,
 02221m дрожью объял бы земли одряхлевший скит.
 022122f Я
 если всей его мощью
 выреву голос огромный —
 1222121m кометы заломят горящие руки,
 бросятся вниз с тоски. (I, 127)

The alternative, civic strand of the hexameter is found in 'Revoliutsiia. Poetokhronika'. Here a long line theme is developed towards the end in two stanzas about man's collective heroic potential on earth:

- 0220222m Нам,
Поселянам Земли,
каждый Земли Поселянин родной.
- 01321f Все
по станкам,
по конторам,
по шахтам братья.
- 1212m Мы все
на земле
солдаты одной,
- 022f жизнь создающей рати.
- 1212111f Пробеги планет,
держав бытие
подвластны нашим волям.
- 02010112f Наша земля.
Воздух — наш.
Наши звезд алмазные копи.
- 122222f И мы никогда,
никогда!
никому,
никому не позволим!
- 0121- землю нашу ядрами рвать,
-012222f воздух наш раздирать остриями отточенных
копий. (I, 139)

The use of zero intervals is distinctive here, especially in the second stanza.

But the central focus of Maiakovskii's hexameter lies in the poems *150000000* and *Chelovek* and the dialogue between them. This is right at the heart of Maiakovskii's poetic project, the myth of man: in *Chelovek* it is explored through the lyric hero himself and the experience of love, in *150000000* it is explored through the collective hero Ivan and the utopian extension into boundless dimensions: 'это — / революции воля, / брошенная за последний предел' (II, 121); 'пойдем излучаться в несметных просторах' (II, 128); 'неведомые измерения души и земли' (II, 153). In this way the hexameter serves as a metrical focus for the relationship and tensions between the civic and lyric which, as highlighted by Jakobson, are central to the overall dynamic of Maiakovskii's work;⁴² also involved is the question of the epic strand in Maiakovskii, which for Jakobson is always the 'heroic lyric on a huge scale'.⁴³ Moreover, thematically the hexameter is linked to one of Maiakovskii's most fundamental preoccupations, at the centre of his mythology for Jakobson:

this is liberation from confinement and the extension beyond set limits, which links in turn to the problematics of movement and stasis, 'I' and 'not-I', life and death.⁴⁴

The main use of the hexameter in *Chelovek* is concentrated in the opening chapter 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', and it then recurs through the poem, usually in occasional segments of a line or two. In the context of the poem's polymetric composition it is linked to the hero's heroic potential, as Christ-like culture hero; it stands in opposition to the iambic theme, which carries the hero's actual fate as imprisonment, in society, religion and ultimately in millennia of unrequited love. The nature of this opposition is crucial: it is between the heroic associations of the hexameter measure and the extraordinary rhythmical realization of the iambic metre as the experience of constraint. Whereas the hexameter theme is ultimately subverted, the iambic theme intensifies and in *Pro eto* it is the iamb, not the hexameter, that stands for the hero of *Chelovek*.⁴⁵

As already noted, the initial compositional movement in the opening chapter 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' is towards the hexameter from an opening of long lines and irregular rhythm alongside four-stress and three-stress lines. In these first three stanzas the poet hero develops a series of negative parallels with Christ that recall the oxymoronic parallels in 'Sebe liubimomu posviashchaet eti stroki avtor'. The turning point of positive self-affirmation comes in the second half of the fourth stanza:

022221d Как же
 себя мне не петь,
 если весь я —
 сплошная невидаль,
233152f если каждое движение мое -
 огромное,
 необъяснимое чудо. (I, 247)

The first of these two lines is in fact the only regular six-ictus dactylic *dol'nik* in the chapter. In the next three stanzas, as he sings of his hands, mind and then mouth and tongue, Maiakovskii varies once again on a recognizable hexameter base. Significantly, however, the verse shifts out of the hexameter in order to present the hero's key attribute, his heart. There is a revealing anomaly here. Although the hexameter stands as emblem of his heroic potential, it is not directly associated with the heart, the centre of Maiakovskii's lyric universe. The ambiguities associated with the hexameter's position in Maiakovskii's poetry thus receive another twist.

In subsequent chapters occasional hexameters recur. In form they become notably closer to the hexameter base, and they serve as an emblem of the poem's progress, or rather distance, from its heroic opening. At the start of the narrative in the second chapter the hexameter is a 'roar' which wakes up the hero's enemies:

022321f Ревом встревожено логово банкиров, вельмож и
дожей. (I, 250)

Such a description contrasts with the characterization of this voice as a 'quiet word' in *Oblako v shtanakh*, but in view of the subsequent outcome it may be that the roar lacks some conviction. One of the most interesting effects comes at the end of the key chapter 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', in which the poet hero is betrayed by his lover to the so-called 'Povelitel' vsego':

0312m Вижу — подошла.
Склонилась руке.
0222h Губы волосикам,
шепчут над ними они,
04203m «Флейточкой» называют один,
«Облачком» — другой,
02232222d третий — сияньем неведомым
(022222) какого-то,
только что
мною творимого имени. (I, 255)

In the final line *Chelovek* is not named but it is identified through the emblematic hexameter form, which, however, is obscured by the adjectival and adverbial qualification in the middle of the line — without this it would form a perfect dactylic hexameter.

The next hexameter lines, at the start of 'Maiakovskii v nebe', announce the hero's arrival in heaven after his suicide and have an incongruous, humorous ring:

042122m Скидываю на тучу
вещей
и тела усталого
кладь.
32121f Благоприятны места, в которых доселе не был.
(I, 258–59)

The hexameter form is clear, but it has been divested of its worn out associations. In the first line the poet hero throws off the very body which he had proclaimed earlier, while the mock grandeur of 'благоприятны' and the archaic 'доселе' subverts the hexameter's traditional high tone. By the end of this chapter, which reveals the heavens as the centre of a mechanical universe with no place for the heart, the hero falls silent and then asleep, lulled by the seas of eternity:

0111f Стих.
Лучам луны на мели

0122m слег,
 волнение снами сморя.
 021122f Будто на пляже южном,
 только еще онемелей,
 212123m и по мне,
 насквозь излаская,
 катятся вечности моря. (I, 262)

The last two lines of the stanza are hexameters, although the fourth line has both an extended, disyllabic anacrusis and an extended final interval (extension within the bounds of the measure). The hexameter, once a heroic roar, is now associated with silence. Most interestingly, it is also associated with the sea, rather than with the earth and universe that are generally so prominent in Maiakovskii's hexameter verse. As Jakobson showed, the motif of water and the sea — erotic, heroic or tragic — recurs throughout Maiakovskii's poetry; it features in the fragments which lie behind his suicide note, only there, uniquely, the sea is on the way out to sleep: 'море уходит вспять / море уходит спать' (XIII, 138).⁴⁶ But here too, if more in eternal cycle than on the way out, it is also associated with sleep, the sleep which eventually follows the hero's suicide. A far less peaceful image, on the other hand, is that of the ocean at the end of Act II of *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia* to which the Poet must head with his load of tears.

In the final development of the hexameter theme in *Chelovek*, to which we shall return at the end, all heroic potential is ultimately subverted into an ironic elegiac key, as the tragic experience of life through love leads only to eternal suffering.

The return to the hexameter in *150000000* therefore carries implicit links to *Chelovek*, as well as to *Voina i mir* and *Misteriia-buff*. Now Maiakovskii again seeks to elaborate a myth of man on a collective base through the figure of Ivan, the eponymous 150,000000 personified. It is striking too that the original, classical and epic, associations of the hexameter (relevant also, but in a different key, to *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia*) are unexpectedly reactivated, although with delay. The motif of Troy arises in the fifth chapter, but these associations only come fully and retrospectively to the fore in the poem's finale, when the poem is declared to be both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (II, 164). At the same time, in the context of the early nineteenth century debate on the appropriateness of the hexameter *vis-à-vis* forms closer to the native Russian folk epic, it is interesting that Maiakovskii incorporates the hexameter in a poem which aims to be a new folk epic, a revolutionary *bylina*. The hexameter is literally the poem's point of departure, out of which come lines of varying length, rhythm and anacrusis. The variations develop in such a way that the verse increasingly goes beyond the measure, leaving the hexameter far behind, and in this way the poem's exploration of the key theme of going beyond the limits, of reaching out into unknown dimensions, originates in the hexameter.

The hexameter also lies at the basis of the iconic function of measure in the making of the hero Ivan.⁴⁷ The very first line of the poem not only establishes the iconic association of long lines and size through the motif of millions, but also realizes the motif of going beyond limits by extending beyond the six-ictus limit of the hexameter after the word 'ПОЭМЫ':

0221221f 150 000 000 мастера этой поэмы имя. (II, 115)

As well as being very large and potentially beyond measure, the second distinctive feature of the hero Ivan is that he is a collective, composite hero. This feature too is present in the structure of the hexameter, which is made up of two hemistichs. In terms of the making of Ivan, therefore, we are dealing with essentially the same features on both the semantic and formal levels, and the iconic and compositional levels effectively coincide. The motif of composite construction is also realized in the very first stanza. After the extension beyond the hexameter's limit in the first line, the most remarkable feature of this stanza is the fourth line:

32122- Ротационкой шагов
 в булыжном верже площадей
-222d напечатано это издание. (II, 115)

From the point of view of stanzaic organization, fixed by the rhyme, this line ends on 'издание'. In this way Maiakovskii produces a hexameter and a half, since 'Ротационкой шагов / в булыжном верже площадей' is already a full example of the hexameter (with initial stress omission), and so the continuation 'напечатано это издание' can be interpreted in a number of ways: it can be a repeat second hemistich, and/or an independent, self-sufficient hemistich, and/or a continuation of the measure beyond its expected limits. Thus the motif of going beyond limits is reinforced, only here it is taken further than in the first line. But in addition Maiakovskii achieves extra effects. Firstly, he establishes the means for constructing a more complex whole than that represented by the ordinary hexameter. Secondly, since 'Ротационкой шагов / в булыжном верже площадей' is still perceived as a complete line of verse, he introduces the motif of the independence of the constituent parts and the possibility, by implication, of giving independence to what is normally incomplete on its own, the hemistich (this effect is marked by the graphical lay-out of the step-ladder here, with the final hemistich left-aligned, while in the original edition the column lay-out was still being used). And thirdly, he also creates the possibility of moving from long lines to shorter ones.

After the opening stanza the possibilities of variation, extension and composite construction are all developed further; in particular, compared with earlier poems, composite construction is developed to its maximum and from the hexameter extends to become a key constructive principle of

the first two chapters. Already in the second stanza and at the start of the third there are more variations on or away from the hexameter in rhythm, length and anacrusis. Subsequently, the main body of the first chapter is narrative and uses Maiakovskii's standard form, accentual verse, predominantly four-stress, with the occasional long line. Long hexameter verse returns in the final passage of the chapter, which represents the extreme amplification of the hexameter theme in Maiakovskii's verse:

12222- И все эти
 сто пятьдесят миллионов людей,
 -2133212f биллионы рыбин,
 триллионы насекомых,
 зверей,
 домашних животных,
 022231f сотни губерний,
 со всем, что построилось,
 стоит,
 живет в них,
 01132211412d все, что может двигаться,
 и все, что не движется,
 все, что еле двигалось,
 пресмыкаясь,
 ползая,
 плавая —
 022d лавою все это,
 лавою! (II, 120)

The multiplication of the motif of millions into billions and then trillions is matched by the extension of the first and third lines into extreme length, while the last line, rather than being a hemistich, has become an independent unit, a metrical line in its own right. The two long lines are different: the step-ladder lay-out presents the first as two lines, but together they also form a single, double line made up of five-stress and seven-stress parts; in the third line, on the other hand, there are six steps rather than two halves. There is still a hexameter base here, as the second line reminds us, but in addition to the extension of line length there are also several longer intervals. Such verse is ready to leave the hexameter behind and, when long lines continue in the second chapter and thereafter, it has effectively done so. In the final chapter, however, there is a couplet which introduces the heroic requiem for all those who have given their lives for the future utopia; as with the conclusion to the hexameter theme in *Chelovek*, we shall return to this at the end.

Yet after the concentrated development of the hexameter in Maiakovskii's work around the Revolution, the hexameter theme not so much recedes as disappears. Even though its role in the first version of *Misteriia-buff* is not that prominent, it is particularly striking that

Maiakovskii removes it from the second version. Although the play is still subtitled a 'heroic, epic and satirical depiction of our epoch' (II, 243), the heroic tone of the opening chorus has been replaced by a speech from just one of the Unclean addressing the audience on what they are about to see. Subsequently, in all the rest of Maiakovskii's work one can point to just two clear uses of the form.⁴⁸ One is in 'Moi mai' (1922), where the first, third and fifth stanzas all begin with lines that are recognizably based on the hexameter and repeat the motif of glorifying man on earth. This is the opening stanza:

012222f Всем,
 на улицы вышедшим,
 тело машиной измаяв, —
 012222d всем,
 молящим о празднике
 спинам, землю натруженным, —
 0212f Первое мая!
 Первый из маев
 02222d встретим, товарищи,
 голосом, в пение сдруженным. (IV, 30)

From a formal point of view, the fixed pattern of hexameter lines in symmetrical position at the head of the odd stanzas reflects the fact that Maiakovskii's verse has by now moved towards a polymetric system of discrete measures. As mentioned earlier in relation to the spondee, it is notable that the even stanzas employ a metre which incorporates zero intervals:

020m Вёснами мир мой!
 012m Солнцем снежное тай!
 230f Я рабочий —
 этот май мой!
 212f Я крестьянин —
 это мой май. (IV, 30)

The other example of the hexameter is much later, in the poem 'Мы' of 1929, where the odd stanzas (again) have a recognizable hexameter base:

022222f Мы —
 Эдисоны
 невиданных взлетов,
 энергий
 и светов.
 12122d Но главное в нас —
 и это
 ничем не заслóнится, —

02221f главное в нас
 это — наша
 Страна советов,
 122222f советская воля,
 советское знамя,
 советское солнце. (X, 119)

The heroic collective of inventors echoes motifs from around the Revolution; in particular, it echoes the motif of expansion into unbounded forms of energy in *150000000* and then couples this with a Soviet theme.

This late, solitary revival of the hexameter motif highlights even more clearly the question as to why the hexameter effectively disappears from Maiakovskii's verse after *150000000*. The question can be approached on several levels. On one level, the extension beyond the limits of the hexameter in *150000000* might be interpreted quite literally: Maiakovskii's last major treatment of the form is to leave it behind, and the possibilities of variations on it are, if not exhausted, then transcended. To return to the hexameter would be a step backwards. Such an interpretation has a possible validity as well as attractiveness, but that is all. On another level, the disappearance of the hexameter suggests that a certain kind of heroic mood is lost from Maiakovskii's verse after *150000000*, in fact surprisingly soon after the Revolution (in this connection there is an interesting element of anachronism in Maiakovskii's words about the association of long measures and a heroic tone several years later in 'Kak delat' stikhi').

Such a loss of heroic optimism is striking and feeds into the whole complex question of Maiakovskii and the Revolution. But the most far-reaching insight into Maiakovskii's poetry afforded by a study of his hexameter comes with a broad consideration of its role in the architectonics of his verse. This is further highlighted by the fact that the hexameter's disappearance is followed by the appearance of another metrical theme, the free trochee, which, as Taranovskii showed, is linked to the key Maiakovskian themes of time, death and immortality.⁴⁹ In this way, the transition from the hexameter to the free trochee captures a fundamental shift in Maiakovskii's preoccupation: from the heroic potential of man on earth to the problem of overcoming death, from a more optimistic, utopian impulse to a more pessimistic one, which links to the whole problematics of his work, life and death. One could also point to a certain shift from space to time.

Within this shift, however, there is also some continuity. Thus the long line motif of the hexameter enjoys a certain renewed life in the free trochee, which can extend to very long lines. In the Epilogue 'Proshenie na imia...' of *Pro eto*, for example, the free trochaic lines are at their greatest length precisely where the vision of resurrection is most optimistic. But if the impetus behind the hexameter theme of man's heroic potential on earth is ultimately towards escape from earthbound dimensions and transformation into light, then the resurrection which Maiakovskii attempts to envisage in 'Proshenie na imia...'

is a resurrection in the flesh, into this world — and a world which in its more concrete visualization is ironically close to the present one.⁵⁰

There is another continuity too, which is linked to the elegiac strand in Maiakovskii's hexameter verse. As Jakobson writes in 'O pokolenii, rasstrativshem svoikh poetov', an essay which is both a heroic proclamation of the poet and an elegy, 'towards the end of Maiakovskii's life his ode and satire completely obscured from public view his elegy, which, in point of fact, he identified with the lyrical in general... Maiakovskii's journey along the path of the elegiac poem was completed in 1923';⁵¹ that is, with *Pro eto*. However, in Maiakovskii's hexameter verse there has already been a potential or submerged elegiac note, deriving from the elegiac couplet. This too provides another strand of continuity between the hexameter and the free trochee, which is linked in *Pro eto* to a trochaic pentameter motif that has an elegiac note.

The final use of the hexameter in *150000000* is to introduce the requiem for all the heroes who died in the name of the utopian future. This is a heroic requiem, with a 'roar':

211300m	«Голоса людские, зверьи голоса, рев рек
-022m	ввысь славословием вьем.
012222d	Пойте все и все слушайте мира торжественный реквием. (II, 162)

Maiakovskii here utilizes a rhyme ('рек' + 'вьем' — 'реквием') that Shtokmar called 'summative'⁵² to construct a special kind of heroic elegiac couplet, in which the heroic frames the elegiac. The second line is a regular hexameter, while it is the first line, not the second, that contains the 'elegiac' zero interval, and it occurs between the two parts of the composite line, a hexameter and a half, rather than between hemistichs. At the same time this zero interval is preceded by two other zero intervals within the line that create a strong spondaic effect, while the composite construction of the whole replays in miniature the movement of the poem's opening two chapters.

The elegiac note in *Chelovek* works very differently. As already discussed, unlike in *150000000*, the development of the hexameter in *Chelovek* is not in the direction of extension beyond and out of the measure. On the contrary, the hexameter returns towards its basic scheme: in Jakobson's expression, this is a 'languishing in the confines of the set limit' so inimical to Maiakovskii.⁵³ As we have seen, from the heroic 'roar' asserted at the start of 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' the hexameter moves towards a 'quiet word' and is even associated with silence at the end of 'Maiakovskii v nebe'. But this is not the end of the hexameter theme in *Chelovek*. In the next chapter 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' two separate lines which convey a nostalgia

for the earth as the hero returns have the correct form of the pentameter in the elegiac couplet, for example, the second line here:

1112f Тоска возникла.
 Резче и резче.
 022021d Царственно туча встает,
 дальнее вспыхнет облако,
 02d все мне мерещится
 0231d близость
 какого-то земного облика. (I, 263)

The nostalgia of return, however, turns out to be bitter, since the poet ultimately finds himself imprisoned in millennia of unrequited love. In context, then, the single quatrain of the poem's epilogue 'Poslednee', which marks the demise of any heroic potential with elegiac irony, can be interpreted as based on the elegiac couplet:⁵⁴

012121m Ширь,
 бездомного
 сна
 лоном твоим прими!
 02211m Небо какое теперь?
 Звезде какой?
 032211m Тысячью церковей
 подо мной
 затянул
 и тянет мир:
 23m «Со святыми упокой!» (I, 272)

The odd lines are six-ictus lines (with one irregular interval in the third), the second is a five-ictus line, and the final line is short.

Although the unbounded space of the universe is open to the poet hero, it is not a freedom that has resolved his predicament in love. In this way *Chelovek* anticipates both *150000000* and *Pro eto*. In relation to *150000000*, the dialogue between lyric and civic reaches a stark contradiction, and the utopian vision of *150000000* holds no way out for the poet here. In relation to *Pro eto*, Maiakovskii's 'elegiac poem' is in effect already completed.

NOTES

- 1 V.V. Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"', in *Poetics. Poetyka. Poetika*, 2, ed. Roman Jakobson et al., Warsaw, 1966, pp. 243–76 (p. 255, note 21; p. 276).
- 2 Richard Burgi, *A History of the Russian Hexameter*, Hamden, Connecticut, 1954, p. 173.

- 3 All references to Maiakovskii's work are to Vladimir Maiakovskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v trinadtsati tomakh*, Moscow, 1955–61, citing volume and page number only. The rhythm of lines is represented numerically, with the first figure showing the number of unstressed syllables before the first stress and subsequent figures showing the number of unstressed syllables between stresses, while the clausula is given as masculine, feminine, dactylic, hyperdactylic or unrhymed (x); where an alternative interpretation is possible, this is given after a slash (/). Translations from Maiakovskii and other sources are my own.
- 4 Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"', p. 255, note 21.
- 5 Two interesting points arise here. Firstly, if one can transfer such disingenuity to the question to Jakobson about the hexameter, a question to a friend in private, then one gets a revealing insight into the extent of self-masking that Maiakovskii could undertake. Secondly, the professed inability to identify ['razlichat'] iambs and trochees echoes the famous passage in *Evgenii Onegin* where Pushkin admits that Onegin could not be got 'to distinguish [otlichit] iamb from trochee'.
- 6 Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"', pp. 255–57; Robin Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning in the Poetry of Vladimir Maiakovskii: Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia; Oblako v shtanakh; Fleita-pozvonochnik; Chelovek; Liubliu; Pro eto*, London, 1989; M.L. Gasparov, 'Aktsentnyi stikh rannego Maiakovskogo', *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, 198, *Trudy po znakovym sistemam*, 3, 1967, pp. 324–60 (pp. 345, 351); Burgi, *A History of the Russian Hexameter*, p. 173. Judging from Ivanov's comment (p. 255) that the interpretation of the hexameter's presence in *Chelovek* relates to its use in later poems, neither he nor Jakobson (nor Burgi) had noted its use earlier. Gasparov does not develop his recognition of 'rhythms reminiscent of the hexameter' and, curiously, omits one of the references to the hexameter (in *Oblako v shtanakh*) in the chapter 'Aktsentnyi stikh Maiakovskogo', which largely supersedes the earlier article, in his *Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 398–468 (pp. 450–52). Equally, perhaps out of metrical rigour, he does not follow Ivanov and Jakobson in identifying the hexameter in *Chelovek* and *150000000*; however, he does note the concentration of long lines in the first chapter of *Chelovek* and treats them as a metrical tendency within accentual verse, while implicitly allowing for the alternative interpretation (*Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, pp. 450–51). It is striking that Trenin, unlike Jakobson, did not recognize the hexameter in his otherwise excellent study of *150000000* (V.V. Trenin, 'K istorii poemy "150 000 000"', in his *V masterskoi stikha Maiakovskogo*, 3rd ed., Moscow, 1991, pp. 193–239).
- 7 M.L. Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra. (O granitsakh semanticheskogo oreola)', in *Res philologica: Filologicheskie issledovaniia. Pamiati akademika Georgiia Vladimirovicha Stepanova*, ed. D.S. Likhachev et al., Moscow-Leningrad, 1990, pp. 330–42.
- 8 Specifically: *Chelovek* in Ivanov, 'Ritm poemy Maiakovskogo "Chelovek"'; *Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragediia, Oblako v shtanakh* and *Chelovek* in Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*; and *150000000* in the accompanying essay 'How Maiakovskii's Ivan is Made: Measure in *150000000*' (first published in *Russian Literature*, 47, 2, 2000, pp. 111–33). The present essay draws as appropriate on my other studies but its scope is both different and far wider.
- 9 Iurii Tynianov, 'Promezhutok', in his *Arkhaisty i novatory*, Leningrad, 1929, pp. 541–80 (pp. 553–57); I.P. Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl i evoliutsiia poeticheskikh sistem*, Moscow, 1977, pp. 118–44; Mikhail Vaiskopf (Weiskopf), *Vo ves' golos. Religiiia Maiakovskogo*, Moscow-Jerusalem, 1997, pp. 5–15.

- 10 Roman Jakobson, *O cheshskom stikhe preimushchestvenno v sopostavlenii s russkim* (1923), in his *Selected Writings*, V, *On Verse, Its Masters and Explorers*, prepared for publication by Stephen Rudy and Martha Taylor, The Hague, 1979, pp. 3–130 (p. 106).
- 11 Gasparov, *Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, pp. 372–97, 398–468 (on Maiakovskii's free trochee and iamb, and accentual verse), pp. 220–44, 245–93, 294–351 (on the three-ictus *dol'nik*, four-ictus *dol'nik*, and *taktovik*, including Maiakovskii).
- 12 See M.L. Gasparov, *Ocherk istorii russkogo stikha. Metrika, ritmika, rifma, strofika*, Moscow, 1984, pp. 217, 219–22; see also note 11 above.
- 13 See Gasparov, *Ocherk istorii russkogo stikha*, pp. 70–71, 125–27, 191–92, 217–18.
- 14 Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra'. In his study of the generative rules of the hexameter in application to the Russian hexameter, Lotman also deals with variations and deviations from the standard scheme (but not with Maiakovskii's hexameter): Mikhail Lotman, 'Geksametr v poeticheskikh sistemakh novoevropeskikh iazykov. (Predvaritel'noe soobshchenie, II)', *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, 780, *Studia metrica et poetica*, 2, 1987, pp. 40–75; this follows a first, theoretical article: Mikhail Lotman, 'Geksametr. (Obshchaia teoriia i nekotorye aspekty funktsionirovaniia v novykh evropeiskikh literaturakh). Predvaritel'noe soobshchenie, I', *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, 396, *Studia metrica et poetica*, 1, 1976, pp. 31–54.
- 15 See L.E. Liapina, 'Sverkhdlinnye razmery v poezii Bal'monta', in *Issledovaniia po teorii stikha*, ed. V.E. Kholshchevnikov et al., Leningrad, 1978, pp. 118–25; P.A. Rudnev, 'Metricheskii repertuar V. Briusova', in *Briusovskie chteniia 1971 goda*, ed. K.V. Aivazian, Erevan, 1973, pp. 309–49 (p. 329); Lenie Lauwers, *Igor' Severjanin: His Life and Work — The Formal Aspects of His Poetry*, Leuven, 1993, pp. 97–98.
- 16 Concerning Maiakovskii and Severianin, see Nikolai Khardzhiev, 'Maiakovskii i Igor' Severianin', *Russian Literature*, 6, 1978, pp. 307–46; Lauwers, *Igor' Severjanin*, pp. 41–49.
- 17 See Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl*, pp. 104–05. An exception among the Cubo-Futurists was Livshits, who translated from French. Livshits was also steeped in classical literature and mythology, which thus, potentially at least, had a presence in Maiakovskii's Futurist background. Although classical references are a feature of Livshits's famous memoir *Polutoraglazi strelits* (1933), there is no mention of classical literature in relation to Maiakovskii (Benedikt Livshits, *Polutoraglazi strelits*, in his *Polutoraglazi strelits. Stikhotvoreniia. Perevody. Vospominaniia*, comp. E.K. Livshits and P.M. Nerler, Moscow, 1989, pp. 307–546).
- 18 Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra', pp. 336–38.
- 19 Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra', pp. 333–34.
- 20 In *Oblako v shtanakh* a few hexameter lines are complicated by the addition or inclusion of extraneous segments, which for the purposes of this description are discounted; in *Chelovek* the rhythmical prose of the chapter headings can be seen to have a relation to the hexameter, but it has not been included here.
- 21 Curiously, the one example Gasparov gives is from a poem by Lavrenev, 'Isterika Bol'shoi medveditsy', which was published in 1913 in *Krematorii zdravosmysliia*, an almanach brought out by the Futurist group 'Mezonin poezii' led by Shershenevich. In this poem Lavrenev deviates from the hexameter scheme not only in length, with seven-ictus lines, but also uses rhyme and the occasional irregular interval ('Derivaty russkogo geksametra', p. 332).

- 22 See Liapina, 'Sverkhdlinnye razmery', p. 124; Lauwers, *Igor'-Severjanin*, pp. 106–08; James Bailey, 'Russian Binary Meters with Strong Caesura from 1890–1920', *International Journal of Slavic Linguistics and Poetics*, 14, 1971, pp. 111–33.
- 23 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, p. 36.
- 24 See Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl*, pp. 103–08.
- 25 Concerning the question of the spondee and the debate of the 1810s, involving, among others, Gnedich, Vostokov, Kapnist and Voikov, see, for example, Lotman, 'Geksametr v poeticheskikh sistemakh', pp. 47–48, 50–54.
- 26 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, p. 257; in his pioneering study of the *taktovik* Gasparov identified such verse as a separate type (*Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, pp. 301–09).
- 27 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, p. 22.
- 28 See Gasparov, *Sovremennyi russkii stikh*, pp. 261–75.
- 29 Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra', pp. 331–32, 338; concerning experiments with the rhythm of the hexameter, see also Lotman, 'Geksametr v poeticheskikh sistemakh', pp. 59–64.
- 30 Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra', pp. 334–35.
- 31 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 229–30.
- 32 See note 6 above.
- 33 Curiously, the spondaic effect here bears a certain resemblance to that used by Briusov in his 'Rok (Geksametry Avsoniia)' (1911), where each line ends in a spondee and the final word is then repeated at the start of the next line, for example: 'Все непрочное в мире родит, и ведет, и крушит Рок, / Рок, неверный и зыбкий, но манит нас льстивых надежд рой...' (Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. P.G. Antokol'skii et al., 7 vols, Moscow, 1973–75, 3, pp. 488–89); see Lotman, 'Geksametr v poeticheskikh sistemakh', pp. 69–70, note 25.
- 34 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, p. 44.
- 35 For a compilation of accounts of the production, see B. Rostotskii, *Maiakovskii i teatr*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 32–48.
- 36 See L.F. Volkov-Lannit, *Vizhu Maiakovskogo*, Moscow, 1981, pp. 53–58.
- 37 Without there being any link to this poem, it is still interesting to note that Piast uses the same word 'mockery' in relation to a variation on the hexameter which he deems unacceptable (Vladimir Piast, *Sovremennoe stikhovedenie. Ritmika*, Leningrad, 1931, p. 250; quoted in Gasparov, 'Derivaty russkogo geksametra', p. 335).
- 38 For a study of the elegiac couplet/distich in Russian verse, see Michael Wachtel, *The Development of Russian Verse: Meter and its Meanings*, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 171–205 (on Ivanov, pp. 194–99); use of this form in Russian verse is quite limited in volume and scope, remaining predominantly within the realm of stylization. The possibility of 'Izdevatel'stva' as a parody of Ivanov offers an intriguing and potentially very fruitful line of investigation, which could be pursued both for itself and within the wider context of Futurism's relationship to Symbolism. Motifs such as the 'cycle', 'swarm' and 'oak' could link to Ivanov, but it is characteristic of Maiakovskii that he adopts a metrical voice.
- 39 On the iconic interpretation of the sign in Futurism, see Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl*, pp. 103–18.
- 40 The significance of hugeness (and a loud voice) in Maiakovskii has often been highlighted, and at a variety of levels, but might nevertheless merit a study of its own that would also place this theme in broader cultural context. The problematics

of huge size (*razmer*) in Maiakovskii provides a recurring theme for Marina Tsvetaeva in her comparative study of Maiakovskii and Pasternak (Marina Tsvetaeva, 'Epos i lirika sovremennoi Rossii. Vladimir Maiakovskii i Boris Pasternak', *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. A. Saakiantz and L. Mnukhin, 7 vols, Moscow, 1994–95, 5, *Avtobiograficheskaia proza. Stat'i. Esse. Perevody*, pp. 375–96); concerning magnification (and diminution) in relation to Futurist poetics, see Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyi smysl*, pp. 126–27.

- 41 Here and subsequently, marked stresses are taken from the *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*.
- 42 See Roman Jakobson, 'O pokolenii, rastrativshem svoikh poetov' (1931), *Selected Writings*, V, pp. 355–81 (pp. 357–58): here Maiakovskii's verse is presented as an organic whole, with one symbolic system, where tragic and comic, high and low, are interrelated. See also Roman Jakobson, 'K pozdnei lirike Maiakovskogo' (1956), *Selected Writings*, V, pp. 382–405: here Jakobson expounds his interpretation of the alternation of lyric and civic cycles in Maiakovskii, and the suppression of the lyric. Finally, in 'Dostoevskii v otgoloskakh Maiakovskogo' (1959), a review article on Shklovskii's *Za i protiv*, Jakobson looks back over his earlier pieces and reiterates his view that Maiakovskii's work has to be seen as a whole, but also emphasizes the fundamental distinction between the lyric and civic (*Selected Writings*, V, pp. 407–12 (p. 411)). Following a direct reference to Bakhtin (p. 409), Jakobson now presents the relationship between the lyric and civic in Maiakovskii as 'polyphonic': the 'mass events on a world scale' of his social poems are opposed to the 'tragedy of love' in his lyric verse; the two genres are 'not fused' but alternate in a 'dramatic collision', a 'struggle of the lyric and anti-lyric' (p. 412). This study of Maiakovskii's hexameter supports Jakobson's final presentation of the relation of the civic and the lyric in Maiakovskii as opposed to that originally put forward in 'O pokolenii, rastrativshem svoikh poetov' (concerning the background to this essay, see 'K istorii sozdaniia i vospriiatiia stat'i "O pokolenii, rastrativshem svoikh poetov"', preface, preparation of the text and annotations by S.I. Gindin, in *Roman Jakobson. Teksty, dokumenty, issledovaniia*, ed. Henryk Baran, Sergei Gindin et al., Moscow, 1999, pp. 161–66).
- 43 Jakobson, 'O pokolenii', p. 356.
- 44 Jakobson, 'O pokolenii', pp. 358–61; see also Kristyna Pomorska, 'Majakovskij's Cosmic Myth', in *Myth in Literature*, ed. Andrej Kodjak et al., Columbus, Ohio, 1985, pp. 170–87.
- 45 See Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 157–61, 233–34.
- 46 Jakobson, 'K pozdnei lirike Maiakovskogo', pp. 399–400.
- 47 For a detailed study of the making of Ivan and the role of measure in *150000000*, especially in the first two chapters, see the accompanying essay 'How Maiakovskii's Ivan is Made: Measure in *150000000*'.
- 48 A possible third use is in the second chapter of *Khorosho*, which opens with six couplets combining seven-ictus and six-ictus *dol'nik* lines (four and two respectively) with short, one-stress lines, for example:

1211122m «Кончайте войну!
 Довольно!
 Будет!
 В ЭТОМ
 ГОЛОДНОМ ГОДУ —

3m	невмоготу.
022212m	Врали:
	«народа —
	свобода,
	вперед,
	эпоха,
	заря...» —
1m	и зря. (VIII, 237)

The long lines are not far from the hexameter, indeed the second one above is a regular six-ictus dactylic *dol'nik*, but the variation is sufficient to leave uncertainty when there are no clear associations with Maiakovskii's use of the hexameter elsewhere. Instead, the key effect is derived from the juxtaposition of long and short lines, although, if there is a reminiscence of the hexameter, then it could add to the effect through the combination of high and low.

- 49 Kiril Taranovsky, 'O vzaimootnoshenii stikhotvornogo ritma i tematiki', in *American Contributions to the Fifth International Congress of Slavists*, Sofia, September 1963, I, *Linguistic Contributions*, The Hague, 1963, pp. 287–322 (pp. 310–15).
- 50 See Pomorska, 'Majakovskij's Cosmic Myth', pp. 183–84; Aizlewood, *Verse Form and Meaning*, pp. 301–04.
- 51 Jakobson, 'O pokolenii', p. 375.
- 52 M.P. Shtokmar, *Rifma Maiakovskogo*, Moscow, 1958, p. 96.
- 53 Jakobson, 'O pokolenii', p. 358.
- 54 Gasparov notes the possibility of a derivative of the elegiac couplet too ('Derivaty russkogo geksametra', p. 335).

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