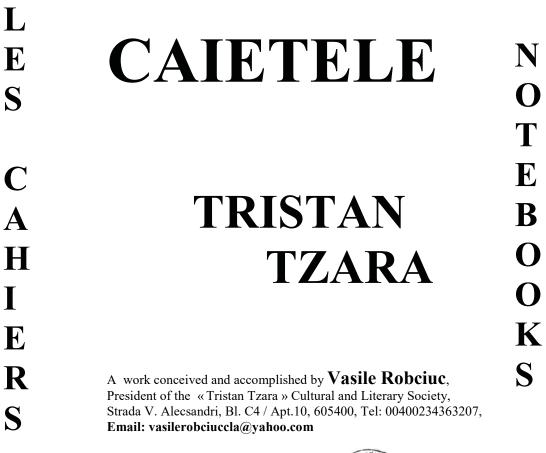
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# INTERACTION OF CLASSICAL AND NON-CLASSICAL FORMS IN TRISTAN TZARA'S POETRY

The first decades of the twentieth century were marked with modernist quests of updating Romanian literature. One of the modernist trends is the avant-garde movement due to which "Romanian literature is synchronized with European literature" stressed M. Kelinesku [1: 209]. The representatives of "new poetry" felt a need to make poetry free from classical literary forms that did not meet the challenges of modern times. Modernist poets do not stop condemning the outdated poetic forms which were considered to be deprived of any content advocating novelty, originality and modernism [1: 209].

One of the founders of Romanian modernism, Tristan Tzara, propagates epatage and destruction, structural instability, fragmentation, game, mosaics and eclecticism.

Thus in the early twentieth century, along with canonical classical verse, which has iambus, trochee or dactyl, amphibrach, anapaest forms, there came a non-classical verse which is usually called tonic. Among its meters researchers differentiate three basic ones: dolnik, taktovyk, and accent verse. As for non-classical forms of verse, their interpretations were suggested by well-known Russian poetry researchers V. Zhyrmunsky and M. Gasparov. M. Gasparov in his fundamental works was the first to give a complete and comprehensive description of the basic forms of modern tonic versification: dolnik is a poem in which the amount of inter-accentuated intervals ranges in two options (x = 1 - 2 - 3 syllables, less frequently - 0 - 1 - 2 syllables); in accent verse the amount of inter-accentuated intervals range of three options (x = 1 - 2 - 3 syllables, less frequently - 0 - 1 - 2 syllables); in accent verse the amount of inter-accentuated intervals range of three options (x = 1 - 2 - 3 syllables, less frequently - 0 - 1 - 2 syllables); in accent verse the amount of inter-accentuated intervals range of three options (x = 1 - 2 - 3 syllables, less frequently - 0 - 1 - 2 syllables); in accent verse the amount of inter-accentuated intervals ranges larger than three options. [3, 4].

Some scholars refer vers libre to the non-classical forms considering it to be an accent blank verse (M. Gasparov, I. Ralko, N. Kostenko, *et al.*). Others believe that vers libre is an independent poetic system. It is possible that vers libre has no anticipated prevailing rhythmic structure and rhyme. On the metric level it consists mainly of non-classical verse meter, but the inclusion of classical meters in vers libre is limited by their homogeneity.

The earliest forms of non-classical and vers libre are associated with modernism and avant-garde. The dolnik is said to be the most frequent form of non-classical verse. The theory of poetry defines dolnik as a separate tonic meter alongside with taktovyk and accent verse. However, some modern literary critics, for instance, M. Gasparov and N. Kostenko find dolnik to be a derivative of the syllabic-tonic versification. The classic definition of the dolnik was proposed by M. Gasparov who noticed some rhythmic identity of two-syllable and three-syllable meters [4 : 147]. Due to these definitions dolnik is considered a transitional form between metric syllabic-tonic and tonic versification.

Therefore we can distinguish three types of dolnik:

(1) an independent meter

(2) a non-classical tendency in classical poetry, and

(3) a classical tendency in vers libre.

In this paper we propose to investigate the Romanian poems by Tristan Tzara in order to reveal classical tendencies in his poetry and to refer dolnik to the classical transitional form. To indicate the poetic forms we introduce the following abbreviations:

Cl – a classical poem

Ncl – a non-classical poem

- Ia iambus
- T trochee

D – dactyl

Am – amphibrach

An – anapaest Dk – dolnik Tk – taktovyk Ac – accent verse.

Our study is based on 38 poems from the collection entitled "Primele poeme" ("The First Poems") by Tristan Tzara. Two poems were written in classical meters. "Glas" ("The Voice") was written in the style of trochaic tetrameter with an archaic rhythm, and "Cântec vechi" ("The Old Song") (disordered long trochee structure alternation constitutes 78% (T6 – T10) reveals the free trochee form. It must be mentioned that the determination of rhythmic poetic forms is undertaken according to some calculations: if a certain rhythmic pattern in the verse varies from 100% to 75% it must be taken as the only verse rhythm.

Thirty-six verses from the collection have no stable repeated pattern. Therefore to present a general pattern of certain meters in these verses we had to investigate verse lines paying attention to their relationship and their drawing from this or that system. So thirty-six vers libre poems were studied based on 932 verse lines non-systematically interspersed with syllabic-tonic and tonic meters.

Meter	Line quantity	%
Cl	433	46,5%
Т	243	26%
Ia	131	14,1%
D	24	2,6%
Am	24	2,6%
An	11	1,2%
Ncl	499	53,5%
Dk	141	15%
Tk	256	27,5%
Ac	102	11%
Total	932	100

The results of the quantitative analysis of the metric repertoire are represented in Table 1.

The data proves the instability of vers libre as a nonsystematic verse form; the classical meters in the rhythm structure are registered in nearly one-half of his poems. In

Tristan Tzara's vers libre there is a pronounced mixture of various classical and non-classical forms. Tzara's poetry is marked with wavy graphic contours, and a sharp change of long and short lines. Such poetry includes nearly all the forms of non-classical versification, especially, dolnik and taktovyk. The meters of classical verse are used to some extent. Undoubtedly, the poet employs the classical two-syllabic base as an attempt to introduce such a type to non-classical verse. Let's illustrate the above-mentioned thesis with an analysis of the verse "Verişoară, fată de pension" ("Cousin, the Girl from the Boarding School"):

1.	Verișoară, fată de pension, îmbrăcată în negru, guler alb,	2-1-4-2-2-1-1-	- Dk8
	Te iubesc pentru că ești simplă și visezi	2-4-3-	Ac3
	Şi eşti bună, plângi, şi rupi scrisori ce nu au înțeles	2-1-1-1-3-	T8
	Şi îți pare rău că ești departe de ai tăi și că înveți	2-1-1-3-3-	T9
	La Călugărițe unde noaptea nu e cald.	4-1-1-1-1-	Τ7
	Zilele ce au rămas pân'la vacanță iar le numeri	-2-2-3-1-1-1	Tk6
	Şi ți-aduci aminte de-o gravură spaniolă	2-1-3-3-1	Τ7
	Unde o infantă sau ducesă de Braganza	-3-3-3-1	Τ7
	Stă în rochia-i largă ca un fluture pe o corolă -1-2-3-	-5-1 Ac5	
	Şi se-amuză dând mâncare la pisici și așteaptă un cavaler	2-1-1-3-2-4	Ac6
	Pe covor sunt papagali și alte animale mici	2-3-1-3-1-	T8
	Păsări ce-au căzut din cer	-3-1-	T4

Şi lungit lângă fotoliul ce-i în doliu	2-3-3-1T6	
Jos – subțire și vibrând – stă un ogar	-1-3-0-2-	Tk5
Ca o blană de hermină lunecată de pe umeri.	2-3-3-3-1 Т8	
Dânsa vrea să o ridice dar	-1-3-1-	T5
Îşi aduce aminte şi îşi mângâie colerul de pe gât	2-2-3-3-3-	Tk5
Pentru că zărește cavalerul – și atât:	-3-3-3-	Τ7
Se apropie de bancă sora Beatrice sau Evelina	2-3-1-3-4-1	Ac5
Profesoară de istorie sau de greacă și latină	2-3-4-3-1	Ac4
O, de ce trec zilele așa de rar	-1-1-3-1-	T6
Frunzele și florile cad ca foile din calendar,	-3-2-1-5-	Ac5
Viața-i tristă, dar e totuși o grădină!	-1-3-3-1	T6
Şi Infanta sau Ducesa de Braganza	2-3-3-1T6	
Iar adoarme sau își pierde importanța – căci tu num	eri 2-3-3-3-1	T8
Zilele ce-or să rămână – socotind de mâini pân'la v	acanță -2-2-3-1-3-1	Tk6//

The analysis of the verse rhythmic structure proves the fact that it is aimed at renovating, and experimenting. Although we cannot say that the poet tried to avoid classical two-syllabic meters, namely, trochees in his verse. His poetry is abundant with various trochee forms. The young poet masterfully uses various combinations of trochee with tonic meters. The verse started with asymmetric non-classical lines, but then, as if hesitating, he was searching a kind of support in trochees. Or quite on the contrary, as if tired of the trochee uniformity the poet went back to tonic meter to make it diversified. There is an asystemic mixture of rhythms in the verse. As for the percentage, 58% of verse lines were written with trochee meters and 42% were written in non-classical style. Such a combination of meters is a characteristic feature of both verse structures – classical and non-classical.

Poems marked with the above-mentioned alternation are defined as transitional meter forms (TMF) or regular vers libre [6 : 132]. These forms take the first position in most verses by Tzara.

There is another specific feature of the poet's versification - a synthesis of stanzas with different structures and meter patterns.

Let's consider the verse "Vacanță în provincie" ("A Vacation in the Province") as a sample:

2.Pe cer păsările nemișcate Ca urmele ce lasă muștele Stau de vorbă servitori în pargul grajdului Și-au înflorit pe cărare rămășițele dobitoacelor	2-5-1 1-3-1-2 -1-3-1-1-2 3-2-3-4-2	T5 Tk3 T6 Ac4
Trece pe stradă domnul în negru cu fetița Bucuria cerșetorilor la înserare Dar am acasă un Polichinelle cu clopoței Să-mi distreze întristarea când mă-nșeli	$\begin{array}{c} -2 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 1 \\ 2 - 3 - 5 - 1 \\ 3 - 5 - 3 - \\ 2 - 3 - 1 - 1 - \end{array}$	Tk5 T7 Ia7 T6
Sufeletul meu e un zidar care se întoarce de la lucru $-2-3$ Amintire cu miros de farmacie curată $2-3$ - Spune-mi servitoare bătrână, ce era odată ca niciodată, Şi tu verișoară cheamă-mi atenția când o să cânte cucul	-3-2-1 Tk4 -3-2-1-1-1-4-1	Tk7 - Dk7
Să ne coborâm în râpă Care-i Dumnezeu când cască Să ne oglindim în lacul Cu mătăsuri vechi de broască	4 - 1 - 1 - 3 - 1 - 1 4 - 1 - 1 2 - 1 - 1	T4 T4 T4 T4

Să fim săraci la întoarcere	1 - 1 - 2 - 2	Dk3
Şi să batem la ușa străinului	2 - 2 - 2 - 2	Dk3
Cu ciocul păsărilor în coajă de primăveri	1 - 1 - 4 - 4 - 4	Dk7
Sau să nu mai mergem nicăieri	2 - 1 - 3 -	T5
Doliu alb la fecioara vecinului.	-1 - 2 - 2 - 2	Dk4

The verse rhythmic pattern reveals a combination of stanzas with different meters. Every stanza has its own structure which alternates with the following one. The first two stanzas are transitional meter forms bordering with syllabic-tonic and tonic, moreover tonic meters are combined with dynamic classical two-syllabic ones. The iambic line appearance in the second stanza could anticipate the classic meter emergence. But the poet's craft lies in the new patterns of all tonic meter versification. Therefore the third stanza comes as a non-classical structure modeled according the asystemic alternation of taktovyk characterised with different ictus types. The dolnik structure appearance in the final line comes as a transitional form between the tonic and classical versification forms. The preceding stanza supports this fact, wherein the poet, as if tired of experimenting, tried the four-foot trochee with an archaic rhythm to make the second foot weaker. Generally speaking, Tzara's dominant intonation pattern is the colloquial basis inherent in everyday life. The reference to archaism, i.e. the use of the colloquial form, points out the stress omission on the second foot of trochee and iambic meters.

The final stanza of the given verse has a dolnik structure interspersed with one trochee line. The second line architectonics of this stanza presents some interest – the accentual pattern reveals the alternation of two unstressed syllables with one stressed. The anapest also has the same structure and we could refer this line to the anapestic trimeter with a dactylic clause. But taking into consideration that the first line follows the three-ictus dolnik that warns of the appearance of such forms in the verse and the 2-2-2 structure is the most frequent form of dolnik which gives us the right to refer this verse to the dolnik structure.

There is one more variable of the third line which has a seven-ictus dolnik structure. In poetry the six-ictus dolnik consisting of two three-ictus forms is the longest one. The use of longer meters is treated as the sign of the poet's mastership. The versification model introduced by Tzara has an original structure:

Dk7 = Dk4 + Dk3, where

Dk4 has rhythmic form IX: -1 - 4 -

Dk3 has rhythmic form V: -4 -

These rhythmic forms with the interval of 4 syllables are rather uncommon, especially, combined in one verse.

In the process of investigating "Vacanță în provincie" ("A Vacation in the Province") we find out that the verse consists of stanzas with different meters wherein a transition from one meter to another destroys a stanza expectation and makes the text structure unpredictable. The verse marked with the defined structure can be referred to the polimeter constructions (PC).

The given constructions are termed by M. Gasparov as micro-poli-meter structures underlying that a micro-poli-meter character consists of chains with different meters and frequent changes of the verse form, where this change is just the beginning of a new phrase. Consequently, the line anticipation decreases sharply giving the verse a certain tension and diversity [4 : 138–139]. In Russian poetry, M. Gasparov admits, the defined structures are eloquent in the works by A. Block, V. Khlebnikov and V. Mayakovsky.

The use of this structure in Tzara's works is quite natural because he is a pioneer of avant-garde in Romanian poetry. We can trace a correlation of classical and non-classical meters (Cl + Ncl = 33% + 67%) with the tonic meters dominating; the taktovyk is highly frequent. At the same time taking into consideration that dolnik is a transitional metric form –

there is some evidence in the text – due to 3-ictus dolnik and anapestic trimeter identity, those dolnik verses (19%) could be referred to the classical meters. It would facilitate equalizing classical and non-classical meters in the verse and support the idea of transition, a certain neo-syncretism as a contrast to textual fragmentation.

Tristan Tzara elaborated numerous configurations of all tonic verse meters in his experimental works, primarily different long meters, dolnik, taktovyk, and accented verse. In this way he enriched the metric repertoire of Romanian non-classical verse. However the tonic meters cooperate with classical meters, first of all with two-foot ones in his poetry. The introduction of dolnik in Tzara's poetry seems to make the verse cohesive, conservative, and regulative. Among the dolnik meters Dk5 and Dk6 are the most frequent. His innovation in versification is Dk10 which presents a specific experiment; the fact is that such structure can be inevitably divided into two shorter ones.

Here is a pattern of such verse:

3.împărații ies în parcuri la ora asta care seamănă cu vechimea gravurilor [2 : 27] 2-1-1-2-1-1 // -1-4-2-2

There is a combination of two semi-verses following the Dk4 model, besides in the other semi-verse the poet employs the four inter-ictus interval form which is a very rare phenomenon for Dk5.

In general the dolniks appear in Tzara's verses as experimental meters combined with tonic or classical forms. The poet does not create independent works with the help of dolnik, though in some verses we can observe this form regularity. For instance, the beginning of the verse "Elegie pentru venirea iernii" ("Elegy to Winter Coming") is expressed by regulated dolniks with different ictus features:

4. Iubită, (auzi) se vaită plopii că pleci	1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 2 - Dk5	
Şi eu mă gândesc : să nu-ți fie frig	1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 1	Dk4
Să iei haine groase și cărți de citit	2 - 1 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 -	Dk4
(O să găsești într-o noapte un crin veștejit)	3 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 2 -	Dk4

The given verse structure appears to be an original rationing and brings to mind the versification initiated by the Symbolists. Nonetheless an unregulated combination of iambic with taktovyk and accent verse loosens the given regulation in the next lines. The introduction of two-syllabic and three-syllabic meters of the classical syllabic-tonic versification interacting with tonic forms and accent verse meters is a characteristic feature of developing avant-garde poetry.

Coming back to the graphic structure of Tzara's verses marked with a shift in the metric repertoire wherein very few forms can be easily perceived, with dominating amorphous and unpredictably rhymed verses comes the issue: does vers libre possess any syllabic tonic? The quantitative data presented in Table 1 quite clearly reveals that nearly half of the syllabic-tonic of all the meter forms were introduced by Tzara. Two-foot forms dominate among long meters, most frequent are trochaic octameters. It must be underlined that there are many stress omissions in such verses on the positions which according to the metric pattern must be stressed, i.e. the number of two-foots is included thanks to the pyrrhic:

5. Eu o să te acompaniez în suflet cu violoncelul [2 : 74]
-7-1-5-1 T9
6.vopsește păsările cu cerneală, înnoește paza de pe lună [2 : 28]

1 - 1 - 5 - 3 - 1 - 3 - 1 Ia10

or

The given examples define the correlation of syllabic-tonic lines with tonic lines. But the alternation is not significant. It disappears due to the pyrrhic. The number of stresses is more important here. Therefore long syllabic-tonic lines are weak-syllabic from the formal point of view. In reality they have a tonic dolnik structure. The syllabic-tonic verses correlate only with dolniks unlikely with taktoviks or accent verse, though from the above given samples we can see that the number of syllables vary in the range of three–seven. Here dolniks are used in the forms not fully stressed, i.e. according to M. Gasparov, who gave the most comprehensive Russian dolnik system, in the fully stressed variant dolnik is used with an interval of stresses in one or two syllables, then in the variant not fully stressed their number varies in the range of 0-1-2-3-4-4-5, rarely in the range of seven syllables [4 : 150–151]. Such data is possible if we take into consideration that dolniks, especially in avant-garde poetry derived from the two-syllabic meters.

N. Kostenko points out that "the classical two-syllabic verse transformation undergoes due to the avant-garde poets' attempt to cultivate it in non-classical verse introducing it to dolniks" [7 : 33].

Consequently, if we share the idea that syllabic-tonic meters are included in the rhythmic form structure of dolnik then the syllabic-tonic is present in Tzara's <u>vers libres</u> thanks to it.

Thus in conclusion we can state that Tristan Tzara is a true poet of "a new generation". His verse is rather complex to describe; it changes in evolution without giving the reader a chance to anticipate any rhythmic expectations. The poet's <u>vers libres</u> are abundant in various non-classical forms – dolnik, taktovyk, and accent verse. As for classical forms they are used in the form of not fully stressed dolnik. At the same time we must understand that dolnik is just a transitional metric form between syllabic-tonic and tonic. Then the dolnik presence in <u>vers libres</u> seems to be a manifestation of the classical tendency. It gives <u>vers libres</u> a chance to be drawn to ordering and in some cases it restrains some rhythmic shifts in the verse.

Revised by Anne Sanouillet, Nice, France

#### 1. Cousine, interne au pensionnat...

"Cousine, interne au pensionnai, vêtue de noir, col blanc, Je t'aime parce que tu es simple el que tu rêves, Parce que tu es bonne et que tu pleures el que tu déchires des lettres qui n'ont pas de sens Et que tu regrettes d'être loin des tiens et de faire tes études Chez les religieuses où la nuit on n'a pas chaud.

Les jours qui restent jusqu'aux vacances tu les comptes à nouveau Et tu te souviens d'une gravure espagnole Sur laquelle une infante ou une duchesse de Bragance Se tient dans sa robe large, comme un papillon sur une corolle, Et s'amuse en donnant à manger à ses chats et attend un chevalier. Sur le tapis il y a des perroquets et d'autres petits animaux Des oiseaux tombés du ciel Et couché près du fauteuil, lequel est en deuil, Là - mince et frissonnant - on voit un lévrier Comme une fourrure d'herminc glissée de quelque épaule. Elle veut la ramasser mais Elle se rappelle et caresse le collier qu'elle a autour du cou Parce qu'elle aperçoit le chevalier - et e'est tout : S'approche du pupitre soeur Béatrice ou Évelyne Professeur d'histoire ou de grec et latin O pourquoi lorsqu'on est à la veille des vacances O pourquoi passent les jours si lentement... Les feuilles et les fleurs tombent comme arrachées d'un calendrier ; La vie est tristé, mais elle n'en est pas moins un jardin !

De l'infante ou la duchesse de Bragance Se rendort ou perd son importance - car tu comptes Les jours qui restent - de demain jusqu'aux vacances."

#### 2.Vacances en province

"Sur le ciel les oiseaux immobiles Comme les traces des mouches Des valets bavardent devant la porte de l'écurie Les traces des bêtes, bouse et crottin ont fleuri sur le sentier

Passent dans la rue le monsieur en noir avec sa fillette Joie des mendiants à la tombée du soir Mais j'ai à la maison un polichinelle à clochettes Pour distraire ma tristesse quand tu me trompes

Mon âme est un maçon qui rentre du travail Souvenir à odeur de pharmacie propre Dis-moi vieille servante ce qu'il y avait autrefois et qui ne sera plus jamais El toi cousine appelle mon attention quand chantera le coucou

Descendons dans le ravin Qui estl Dieu lorsqu'il bâille Mirons-nous dans le lac Plein du frai vert des grenouilles

Soyons pauvres au retour Et frappons à la porte de l'étranger Comme le bec des oiseaux dans l'écorcé du printemps Ou bien n'allons plus nulle part Deuil blanc chez la fille du voisin"

# 3. Le jour décline

"Les empereurs sortent dans les parcs à cette heure qui ressemble à la vétusé des gravures"

### 4. Élégie pour la venue de l'hiver

"Bien-aimée, (entends) les peupliers se lamentent parce que tu t'en vas Et moi je pense : pourvu que tu n'aies pas froid Emporte des vêtements épais et beaucoup de livres à lire (Une nuit tu trouveras un lys fané)"

#### 5. Chante, chante encore

"Je t'accompagnerai au violoncelle dans mon âme"

### 6. Le jour décline

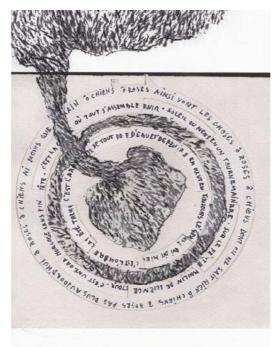
"il peint à l'encre les oiseaux, il renouvelle l'image sur la lune"

Revised by Anne Sanouillet, Nice, France.

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