

Rhythm of Georgian Free Verse

Abstract: Work provides discussion of the issue of rhythm of Georgian free verse. We attempted to identify, what performs the rhythm organizing function in free verse. We regard that the answer to this question is as follows: the key role in organizing of the free verse rhythm is plaid by enjambement and euphony. To prove our proposal we refer to the verses by Zviad Ratiani and Thaddeus Dubrovski, translated by Zviad Ratiani. In their analysis we attempt to emphasize significance of the poetic techniques specified above and establishment of their correlation to the rhythm of verse.

Keywords: verlibr, rhythm enjambement.

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It is well known that generally, vers libre belongs to the tonal system of versification, where the rhythm is organized by the accent. And how Georgian language, characterized with absence of accents accepts the vers libre belonging to the tonal versification system?

In Georgian regular verse, the rhythm is organized not only by the syllables, strophes and rhyme, the euphony and enjambment are of significance as well. According to T. Doiashvili, “euphony in wide sense, together with alliteration and rhyme, includes rhythm as well” [T. Doiashvili 1981 37]. We are interested in the issue of rhythm. It is well known that free verse rejects the characteristics of the regular verses: parisyllabism, metrics, strophes. They play significant role in organization of the rhythm. Free verse still has the rhythm. In think, the main organizing factor of free verse is euphony and enjambment. Though, in certain cases, even weak accent can regulate the rhythm of the verse, though not at the level similar as euphony and enjambment. This is a disputable issue, perhaps, as enjambment is characteristic for the metrically regulated verse (enjambment is perceived in the verses with steady, prominent metrics – T. Doiashvili) and basically, results from the forcing of rhythm over the syntax.

Supposedly, the similar phenomenon in the vers libre should be named differently. (Therefore, we shall quote enjambment) though T. Doiashvili mentions: “*enjambment can emerge in the sentence of any type – carry-over does not depend on the syntactic structure of the sentence*” [T. Doiashvili 2000:20].

Euphony ensures sonority of the verse. Its key types include: alliteration and assonance, as well as set of sounds and echoism, i.e. onomatopoeia (A. Khintibidze 2000). “*Verse euphony relies upon the phonetic characteristics of the language*” [A. Khintibidze; 2000: 96]. And Georgian language is characterized with heaviness, as well as with lightness (A. Khintibidze; 2000). “*Fall and increase*” of rhythm in vers libre should be created by sequence of the light (melodic words) and heavy (containing many consonants) words.

Enjambment is used where “*specific section of the notion cannot be placed within one line and it is carried over to the other*” [A. Khintibidze 2000: 65]. Incompatibility of syntax and rhythm results in enjambment. “*Enjambment is the result of the forcing of syntax by the rhythm*” [A. Khintibidze: 65]. It is

defined by almost all researches in similar way. V. Zhirmunski wrote: “Where the metric division does not coincide with the syntactic one, appears enjambment”; “enjambment is absence of coincidence of the stance with the syntactic section” – explains Tomashevski; I. Tinyanov also regards that enjambment is where the rhythmic line and syntactic set do not coincide with one another”; according to definition by Akaki Gatsserelia, Enjambment is “carrying over of the end of one or another stance of the verse to the next stance, causing intonation conflict between the metrics and syntactic end of the stance” [T. Doiashvili 2000 15-16].

Monograph by Temur Doiashvili “Enjambement” provides wide discussion of the enjambment as a concept and poetic technique. It specifies that there are three types of enjambment: by censure, stance and strophe. The most frequent of them is enjambment by stances. (And as the vers libre is amorphous with respect of strophe, no strophe “enjambment” cannot be identified in it). According to the author, “definition of enjambment, as a rule, takes place by one parameter – from the positions of metric structure, logical-semantic and completeness, or rhythmic-syntactic unity” [T. Doiashvili, 2000:15]. In this case, the first one in relation with the free verse is not suitable as it has no metrics.

The mentioned work contains very interesting fact that “enjambment is oriented towards conversational speech” [T. Doiashvili 2000: 53]; “Orientation towards prosaic intonation shows up in the verse in two respects: stylization of stylistically neutral prosaic intonation and stylization of the conversational speech” [T. Doiashvili 2000: 53]. As it is well known, approach of the poetic speech with the conversational one is a frequent, even widespread phenomenon. In addition, conversational speech is characteristic for it and therefore, we regard that it is assumable that “enjambment” in free verse bears the logical-semantic and rhythmic-syntactic function. It should be into consideration as well that the vers libre is a verse of manipulative nature it may show the general characteristics of the verse sporadically.

Based on the above, we can offer that Georgian language easily accepts free verse; and through euphony and “enjambment” it ensures the rhythm. To reason the expressed conclusion, we shall discuss the verse by Zviad Ratiani “Window Friend”.

(Even silence may be sophisticated) *Its long time*

Sun rays cannot penetrate into its wrinkles. Days became shorter, as the nights. Its long time

Everyday – I watch it – it sits

And exposes to sun its death. It's long time

Neither to sun and nor to the moon rays can dare

Into its wrinkles – labyrinth.

It's long time

Its face maintained two eyes,

Like to boring guests at the empty table,

Already cleared by the lady of house

And left one glass for each and a bottle.

Two eyes, in which the world still turns over the world by inertia,

As wheel of the broken bicycle –
As though the time stumbled,
But did not fall down, went on and here it is, the window,
Window of the house in front; and she cannot be seen, an old,
But I know, she is still there,
I cannot see her but I know, she is still there:
She was by the window for so long that naturally, she got transparency of the glass.

In this verse, “enjambment” plays the greatest role. As we can see, the highlighted words belong to the same syntactic structure, but they are divided and placed in the different lines. And this emphasizes not only sense of rhythm but the contents as well. As T. Doiashvili has mentioned in his study, “*Expressive function of enjambment is revealed in strengthening of the speech expressiveness. It discloses the author’s, poet’s attitude with respect of the narrated fact and phenomenon*” [T. Doiashvili 2000; 43]. Let us make closer look: two sentences expressing one and the same are dislocated on the lines differently:

1. (Even silence may be sophisticated) *It’s long time*

Sun rays cannot penetrate into its wrinkles.

2. *It’s long time*

Neither to sun and nor to the moon rays can dare

Into its wrinkles – labyrinth.

First sentence is divided into two parts, the other is distributed on three lines. In both cases the phrase – “It’s long time” – is highlighted. In the second sentence the words “in its wrinkles” attract attention.

Sequence of the sounds bear significant function in organizing of the rhythm. Let us discuss the following lines:

“Two eyes, in which the world still turns over the world by inertia,

As wheel of the broken bicycle”.

Alliteration of sound “r” is apparent here. This part of the verse makes the pace of the rhythm more prominent. In addition, the semantic meaning is of significance as well.

Enjambment is regarded as an intentional poetical techniques. Therefore, in our opinion, it should be logical to propose that free verse, as the poetry of sense, recognizes “enjambment” as one of the most important stylistic means. To illustrate the significance added by the poet to “enjambment”, we would like to offer the extract from the canonic verse by Zviad Ratiani and also his (Zviad Ratiani’s) translation of the verse by Polish poet Tadeusz Dabrowski.

“Morning Song”

Cannot heat the frozen engine in cold night.

Which bored the driver; *even single leave*

Cannot be covered; my song

Cannot ever be eaten like the bread, cannot *be porn*

On the grave as a wine, and cannot lie down as *Eva, Monroe, Hetaera*

With the excited man; and *cannot return the lost leg to the veteran*. Every day on the

Balcony of ninth floor I wait for the swallows.

Highlighted words show the cases of enjambment. It is clear that the rhythm of the verse depends upon the poetic techniques of enjambment. And now, let us see, how “enjambment” is revealed in Georgian translation of free verse.

Word apple does not contain any truth

About apple, as well as about its shape,

Aroma, color

Or taste. The truth cannot be seen, smelled

And even not bitten. Said *apple* cannot be eaten.

Between apple and real *apple*

There is an apple. Distance between a word *death*

And death is much larger and there is

Life. And word *truth and truth*

Between them

There is death.

As we can see, one sentence is divided on four lines, but it is not emphasized. It could not be regarded as enjambment as each stance is a completed unit. And this creates the effect of suddenness. The situation is different in the second part of the verse. Here each stance is completed thought and the phrases and words bearing significant role are “carried-over” for understanding of the sense of the text. And enjambment, as a poetic technique is applied for the purpose of emphasizing the significant passages. Structural dividing of the verse should be particularly noted: it consists of two parts. First part offers discussion about one particular object, concept (apple) – this is some kind of preparation for the second part. Second part at first presents the conclusion of the discussion provided earlier. After that the main thing to be said by the verse is stated. Hence, this verse could be regarded as a text on text, i.e. it is built by collage

technique. And the “enjambment” in the verse allows realization of that technique, ensuring, together with emphasizing of the sense, the monotonous, low rhythm.

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