

# THE SYSTEMIC VIEW AS A BASIS FOR PHILOLOGICAL THOUGHT

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# **The Systemic View as a Basis for Philological Thought**

## Studies in Slavic, Baltic, and Eastern European Languages and Cultures

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By Olga Valentinova; Vladimir Denisenko;  
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Translated by Olga Barash; Nicolas M. Jansens  
and Walker R. Thompson

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# Introduction

As is clear from the title, this book deals with the systemic methodological approach to researching some of the main issues in linguistics and literary studies.

It is necessary to clarify the content of the concept of a “system” as implied by the authors, as well as the functioning of the systemic approach as a means of gaining developing knowledge in compliance with the authors’ conception.

This understanding of a system is the methodological thread that ties together the four parts of this book. The reader is referred to the theory of the unique Russian thinker Gennadii Prokop’evich Mel’nikov (1928–2000), one of the founders of modern systemic linguistics and modern systemology as a general discipline that connects the methodology of any specific branch of science with philosophy. Mel’nikov is also the originator of the concept of a systemic typology of languages. Mel’nikov understood a system to be a unity of structure and substance that performs a certain function within a supersystem, and systemic linguistics was treated by him as a science of language based on Wilhelm von Humboldt’s fundamental idea of the necessity of “a systemic, integral approach to any language as a specimen of a certain language type” (Mel’nikov 2003, 90).

Hence, the ultimate goal of the systemic approach is to

reveal the systemic nature of the object under study, to give a concentrated formulation of the uniqueness of its systemic organization (that is, the formulation of the internal determinant of the system), to see the place of this system within a system of a higher level (within a supersystem), to show the *function* of the system (that is, what requirements imposed by the supersystem have influenced the formation of the system in question), and, finally, to get an idea of the main stages of its formation. (Mel’nikov 2003, 146)

Mel'nikov's understanding of a system is fundamentally different from that of structuralism, where the concept of the system is reduced to conceptions about structure and the properties of any component are reduced to the paradigmatic significance of that component in the structure of relations between parts of a whole. Other properties of components, called "substantial," are declared to be of no importance for understanding the nature of language as a system. The causes of the restructuring of a language system, the factors of its composition, and the properties of its units remain outside the field of view of structuralism.

Reconstructing the logic behind the evolution of ideas with respect to the typological similarity of languages allows us to understand the exceptional place of Mel'nikov's systemic typology in the general theory of language and to achieve a new awareness of the role of such trends as structuralism, functional linguistics, and linguistic and cultural anthropology.

The very idea of typological classification emerged in the early nineteenth century as the antithesis of genealogical classification. The German philologists August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767–1845) and Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829) put forward the idea of grouping languages into certain classes not according to their origin and common source material (phonetic and morphological units going back to proto-forms) but based on a common organization of the internal structure of word forms. At the same time, morphological classification was proposed as an addition, not a substitute, to genealogical classification. Yet the resulting classification was static, formal, structural. After this, typological classification in linguistics came to be understood as a formal morphological (structural-morphological) means of classification, that is, as the grouping of languages on the basis of the morphemic structure of word forms.

Opposed to August and Friedrich Schlegel's theory was the evolutionary classification of August Schleicher (1821–1868), in which the same language types are considered to be indispensable stages in the history of language and its natural evolution toward the most perfect type.

The neogrammarians, and Ferdinand de Saussure after them, supported the historical method as the only one possible in the science of language and rejected any structural classification as being arbitrary and not reflecting the history of language. As a result, language was presented as an absolutely autonomous system that existed according to its own internal laws, but only the evolution of linguistic matter was subordinated to these laws. The structure of a given language was consequently the product of material transformations and received neither internal nor external explanation.

Not satisfied with the traditional morphological classification of languages, Edward Sapir (1884–1939) proposed, firstly, replacing the formal morphological classification with a semantic-morphological one, that is, distinguish-

ing language classes on the basis of their typical grammatical meanings, and, secondly, substituting a multidimensional classification based on several criteria for a unidimensional one. However, in his book *Language*, Sapir did not raise the question of how these different criteria relate to each other. This question was considered in terms of its formal dimension by A. A. Reformat'skii (1900–1978), and a systemic approach to this problem was proposed for the first time by Mel'nikov.

The founder of the systemic approach to typological classification of languages was Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). Humboldt's classification of morphological types comes across as simultaneously static and dynamic, morphological and syntactic, formal and semantic, as well as structural and functional.

Humboldt's ideas cannot be regarded as widely known nor actively used, although they are often recalled not only by historians of linguistics but also by the founders of influential linguistic theories (Noam Chomsky, Anna Wierzbicka). The very notion of the systemic nature of language is most often associated with Ferdinand de Saussure, while Humboldt's contribution to the systemic theory of language is nearly forgotten. One of the tasks of this book is to show the complex historical path of systemic ideas in the branches of science dealing with language and text.

Humboldt's technique of studying a language type as a single organic whole was developed in the works of the Russian scholars I. I. Sreznevskii, A. A. Potebnia, and I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay. In the late twentieth century, the ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt were taken up by Mel'nikov, whose systemic typology is not just a classification of types of languages according to selected features but a *taxonomy* in light of which all known classifications and typologies turn out to be elements of a typology of typologies. Systemic typology is thus a synthesis of the morphological and stadial manners of classification in that it proceeds from the principle of complementarity, which is the opposite of the principle of mutual exclusion.

The founder of systemic typology, G. P. Mel'nikov, explains typological differences among languages as a result of the adaptation of language systems to the conditions of communication typical for a community leading a certain way of life and involved in a certain type of economic activity. These conditions, which are external to language, act as the external determinants of the structure of a language, and these set up, according to Mel'nikov, various internal determinants (communicational approaches) of four basic morphological types. Similar problems (the relationship between social and linguistic structures and their dynamics in the context of interlingual contact) were posed in Peter Trudgill's sociolinguistic works but did not receive an exhaustive elaboration there.



Mel'nikov's theory of language ensures the consistent derivability of linguistic concepts and ideas from an ever smaller number of initial axioms and notions, which in turn allows one to come continuously closer to working out an integrated view of language in which the causes and stages of its evolution and the direction of impending changes are revealed. Such an approach can be found in many modern linguistic theories conceived within the frameworks of generative, mathematical, and computer linguistics. The difference of the concept under consideration here is that it regards language not as a ready-made congenital structure but as a system that is constantly being formed by a speech community in specific communicative conditions.

The systemic typology of languages, in maintaining Hegel's triad of form, matter, and content, serves within the broader framework of systemic linguistics to reveal *determinants* and thus prove and explain the systemic interactions and interrelations of all levels of language, both in the four main types of languages identified by Wilhelm von Humboldt and in variations of them. Systemic linguistics, in turn, acts as an integral part of systemic research into texts and literature in general, as well as, at the same time, into entire cultures. Such a comprehensive study of ethnic or national cultures based on an in-depth understanding of their language was once called philology, and in modern scientific discourse it is integrated (though sometimes only in individual aspects) into culturology, semiotics, discourse analysis, and other disciplines.

The powerful explanatory potential of Mel'nikov's concept began to be acknowledged by the forward-thinking part of the Soviet linguistic community as early as the 1960s, when Mel'nikov, a graduate of the Moscow Engineering and Physics Institute who had received his doctorate in technical sciences at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research in Dubna, was invited to give special courses at the Faculty of Philology of Lomonosov Moscow State University. In 1979, at the invitation of Professor Lev Alekseevich Novikov, Mel'nikov came to the Department of General and Russian Linguistics of the Peoples' Friendship University, now the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University), where he taught until the end of his life.

Nevertheless, Mel'nikov's theory has not become widely known, neither in Russian nor in global scholarship.

By discussing the explanatory and predictive potential of Mel'nikov's systemic approach and applying it to the study of linguistic and philological issues that Mel'nikov himself did not directly address, the authors of this volume seek to give the reader a chance to see the universality of Mel'nikov's systemology and its high degree of relevance for the study of complex self-organizing systems.

The first part of the book, by Mikhail Rybakov, "How to Classify Languages: Autonomous Classifications or a Comprehensive One?," reveals

the integral value of systemic linguistics by showing the compatibility of concepts in the ideas of twentieth-century Russian and foreign typologists and by searching for complementary principles in contentive, semantic, structural, and functional linguistics. Unlike many theorists, the author pays attention not so much to differences as to similarities in the views of the originators of important typological models. This search for points of conceptual convergence embraces the history of typology from Sapir's ideas down to Mel'nikov's conception. The author's comparison of typological classifications shows that only a systemic typological classification can explain the system of language as a whole because it takes into account the interconnection of the static and dynamic aspects of language, the various levels of language, the form and content of linguistic signs, the relationship of substance and structure, as well as structure and function, and the internal and external determinants of language.

Rybakov furthermore addresses the more recent turn of typology to the grammatical content of languages as their most complex object of study (in comparison to grammatical form). He analyzes the explanatory potential of the systemic approach to studying the content of linguistic categories in terms of the category of case, one of the most abstract—and therefore not directly observable—and particularly complicated categories to analyze semantically. The systemic interpretation is based on an understanding of case as a special morphological category for designating the typical roles of participants in a situation, as depicted by an utterance, according to a typical compositional pattern. The highest criterion for evaluating these concepts is that of semantic typology, which forms the core of the explanatory potential of typological linguistics. By expanding the sphere of semantic typology beyond the traditionally investigated lexicon to the central category of system linguistics, that of internal form, Rybakov presents a semiotic model that is central to systemic linguistics. It is a model in which the elements of the internal form perform the function of special intermediaries, allowing one to associate elements of the external form with elements of extralinguistic thought content on the basis of similarity.

In Rybakov's conceptual model, linguistic schools are depicted as natural complements to each other. Such an approach to the history of the science of linguistics is in compliance with the principle of complementarity applied by Mel'nikov to the systemic typology of languages. The systemic method turns out to be relevant both for typological linguistics and for the history of linguistic science.

In the second part of the book, by Vladimir Denisenko, "Modeling the System of Language," the explanatory and predictive potential of the systemic approach is revealed in modeling the conceptsphere as a complex,

evolving semantic object that emerges as a result of a dynamic equilibrium of meanings and senses.

Denisenko works out a dynamic concept of the semantic field, which, as a systemic formation, is related to the notion of the worldview as determined by language and, at the same time, is part of a more abstract structure: a linguistic personality.

In his functional interpretation of the semantic field, Denisenko shows that a consistent hierarchical dependence exists in the entire system of the field's units, where each preceding link (a hierarchically higher one) can be represented as a primary function with respect to the subsequent links, those realizing secondary, derived functions. This chain extends from the nucleus of the field (its name and invariant meaning) to the center of the field (semantic classes of different ranks) and then to its periphery. The functional approach makes it possible to interpret the semantic field as an integrated and intertwined structure of hierarchically dependent units, ensuring that it fulfills its main intrasystemic linguistic function of systemically reflecting a fragment of extralinguistic reality.

The task of working out taxonomically strict principles for semantic field analysis and a methodology for comparing semantic fields in different languages entails a need to account for a system of paradigmatic and syntagmatic parameters. Denisenko demonstrates that one of the central conditions for a reliable analysis of a semantic field is comprehensive consideration of the typological characteristics of a language. According to Denisenko, a semantic field is, likewise, a systemic formation both in itself and as a model for the systemic and functional analysis of language.

The third part of the book, "The Systemic Approach to Investigating Text and Style: The Rationale of the Causal Typology of Texts," presents the conceptual views of Olga Valentinova through the lens of her vision of historical changes in literary language as a materialization of changes, both conscious and unconscious, in the public consciousness.

The selection of types of texts is based on the search for a single system-forming principle in the relationship between form and content that reflects a historically significant change in consciousness.

The main essential task is to reconstruct the manner of understanding a text that was inherent in the cultural consciousness contemporary to the text in question. This is reconstructed, among other methods, by using the text itself. In the branch of hermeneutics developed by the author, the historical aspect is heavily realized.

Proceeding from the idea that a text is a system and literary language is continuously developing, the researcher verifies her theory with reference

to the Russian literary language, which is attested in literary works from the mid-eleventh century onward.

The need to reconcile the amplitude of historical change in the Russian literary language over the span of a millennium—from the mid-eleventh to the early twenty-first century—with the methodological necessity of keeping the whole text in view, brings the issue of how to select material, and on what principle to do so, into sharp focus. Selecting exemplary texts from each period and a system of contexts that reflect the historically conditioned principle of the correlation of form and content, or, inversely, abrupt change in this principle, allows Valentinova to reconstruct a dynamic model of the semantic structure of the Old Russian and Russian literary language that reveals the main tendency of its semantic development. Valentinova defines this tendency as desacralization.

Based on the well-known idea from history and biology that it is impossible to isolate a historical event or a mutation without transforming linear time into discrete, intermittent time, Valentinova introduces the concepts of sense-forming and sense-changing contexts into philological scholarship.

In accordance with her major conviction that a lack of understanding of dynamic changes in context leads to a persistent automaticity of perception that entails a global distortion of textual, linguistic, and cognitive reality, Valentinova substantiates the necessity of distinguishing historical periods in a manner that is centered on the reproduction of one type of context or another. Hence the conceptually significant attention she pays to interactions at the syntagmatic level, which determine semantic shifts that reflect historically significant states of mind.

The author's dialectical constructions—of which the most important is the proposition that meaning is the initial cause of form, whereas form, in a stable semiotic system, has a highly focused sense-forming force—allow us to discover relationships of cause and effect that had been previously ignored by science.

In the fourth part of the book, by Sergei Preobrazhenskii, "The Systemic Analysis of Verse," Mel'nikov's ideas of systemic linguistics are applied to the sphere of prosody. A verse (that is, a line of poetry) is considered as a linguistic unit of complex order that possesses both syntactic and suprasegmental aspects and evolves depending on the characteristics of a specific language. The author proposes that these units are not constructs of poetry but elements of a peculiar linguistic system whose main communicative function in poetic language is the secondary segmentation of speech, which results in a partial syntactic restructuring of the proposition. In this case, the repertoire of such signal constructions with a varying rhythmic organization must be

limited in number and have a certain set of distinctive features, such as their rhythmic structure, the number of accented words they include and their syntactic potential. In order to describe such units systemically, Preobrazhenskii suggests using the “-emic” term *verseme* and gives a comprehensive characterization of the *verseme* that can be deemed typical for Russian and Slavic prosody. He also presents various *versemes* as devices in the systemic approach to such spheres of the study of verse as poetic semantics, poetic translation theory, poetic syntax, and historical poetics, thereby establishing links between areas that are usually thought to have few points of contact. It is generally acknowledged that rhythmically organized speech transforms seemingly recognizable meanings, and the task that Preobrazhenskii accomplishes is to find out the direction of change set by a given rhythmic pattern and to discover the connection between rhythmic patterns and the typological properties of a language.

Preobrazhenskii discusses this idea of juxtaposing a typology of verse and a typology of language, which is essentially new to the humanities, in the context of a philosophical and historical analysis of the reasons behind the lack of interest in Mel’nikov’s scientific legacy within modern linguistic circles. This is indeed worth discussing because the ideas of systematicity in Mel’nikov’s conception help us to synthesize his predecessors’ findings, as well as doing away with contradictions in the data gathered on the world’s languages and, thereby, achieving completion and becoming universal. In this way, they turn out to be applicable not only to any sphere of linguistic and philological knowledge but also to any science that studies systems, including the historical and life sciences.

In developing the idea of systematicity and drawing the attention of the reader to Mel’nikov’s creative legacy, the authors of this book aim to reveal the great scientific potential of the systemic approach to the ever evolving objects of study of linguistics and philology.

*Part I*

**HOW TO CLASSIFY LANGUAGES:  
AUTONOMOUS CLASSIFICATIONS  
OR A COMPREHENSIVE ONE?**

Mikhail Rybakov



## *Chapter One*

# **The Main Problems of Linguistic Typology**

Our task is to analyze the evolution of the systemic approach to solving the problems of linguistic typology in twentieth-century language studies and to show the explanatory power of the systemic presentation of the typological diversity of languages.

The main questions of linguistic typology are: What is the degree of similarity and of difference between the languages of the world? What are the boundaries of linguistic diversity, the boundaries of the possible and the impossible in the world languages?

To answer these questions, typologists must discover both the common features of the world's languages and all their rarest peculiarities, such as sounds, morphological forms, or syntactic constructions that exist only in a few languages (or even in just one). A more important and difficult task is the identification of typical language structures, allowing one to distinguish the classes of structurally similar languages.

A superfluous devotion to seeking general regularities has frequently led typological linguistics to producing schematic descriptions of languages and to ignoring substantial differences in the material or formal structures and, especially, in the seemingly universal domain of semantic content. At the same time, a pursuit of specific traits and rare facts has overshadowed type-based classification.

Typology means seeing the vast and diverse material in its entirety, noticing differences among that which is similar and similarities in that which is different.

Similar grammatical, phonological, lexical, and semantic phenomena exist in both related and nonrelated languages. Related languages always possess some similar typological features, although their structural types (initially shared) may change considerably over the course of time.



Modern typology is closely connected with functional theories in linguistics, that is, those explaining the boundaries of the observed diversity of languages through the conditions and goals of their use. Systemic linguistics develops the ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt, A. A. Potebnia, and G. P. Mel'nikov and addresses the nature of typical conditions for the communicational functioning of languages in order to explain their determinants, that is, the leading systemic language types.

The idea of identifying typical structures in different languages is essential not only for general language theory but also for developing standard translation methods, for teaching languages to foreigners, and for predicting typical difficulties for learners and translators with respect to particular pairs of languages on the basis of knowledge about the typological class they belong to.

Linguistic typology does not study particular, singular cases of language similarity and disparity, it investigates only phenomena of a general nature that embrace a wide range of uniform features.

The idea of comparing languages became a new trend in linguistics in the early twentieth century together with the concept of synchronic description of languages. Both trends were opposed to the neogrammarian view of traditional comparative historical linguistics as being the only scientific approach to language study. Both new approaches nevertheless borrowed principles from comparative linguistics, including that of empiricism, emphasis on the methods of analysis and special attention being paid to the phonetic and grammatical structure of languages. While descriptive linguistics has tackled the material of modern languages, typology has applied the principles of comparison and classification in its own way.

Comparative studies of languages have provided a rich material basis for typology but have not come to comprise typology proper. Typology involves classifying and systematizing diverse language material and defining classes of languages that have the same structure. Initially, it was concerned with morphological structures. These are the most convenient for systematization because they have a sufficiently compact set of features for classification and, thus, yield a limited number of language classes.

Thereafter, typology has developed in several directions:

1. the search for new levels and objects for typological research;
2. attempts to develop complex (multidimensional) classifications; and
3. the search for a new, nonmorphological organizing principle for typological classification (classification on a semantic or syntactic basis).

Typology began by classifying languages according to the characteristics of their external, grammatical form; the grammatical content of languages was often considered to be universal and determined by logical laws of hu-

man thinking. But lately we have been observing a considerable interest in the typology of morpho-semantic categories, such as voice, aspect, tense, mood, class, number, etc. The observed disparities between languages in the semantics of morphological categories has turned out to be limited and to represent selections from a single universal set of grammatical meanings. The progress of grammatical semantics has allowed us to acknowledge that the structure of grammatical categories and meanings—analogue to formal structures—has not only universal features but also its own specific and typological ones.

A new and promising trend is semantic typology based on the vast but theoretically unconsolidated material of historical comparative semasiology, ethnolinguistics, and translation theory. Although these linguistic disciplines have turned to the problems of semantic similarities and disparities between languages, they have done so in their own interests: to prove the relatedness of languages, to demonstrate the ethnic specificity of languages, or to overcome difficulties in the translation of lexical items. Semantic typology has a different purpose, namely to explain how the world's languages reflect the content of human thinking, that is, to account for similarities and disparities in the semantic organization of languages.

Semantic typology focuses on the comparability of lexical and semantic units and categories and classes, on setting the criteria for comparison, and on discovering universal and typological features in the field of semantics. Semantic typology cannot exist without a theoretically grounded classification of individual lexical and semantic facts, such as the definition of types of synonyms, antonyms, and polysemantic words.

Importantly, an objective investigation of the semantic aspect of language has become possible not within the limits of any particular lexicology, as might be expected, but rather within the concepts of general linguistics, which have posed fundamental questions concerning the nature of language and its connection with thinking and culture.

Semantic typology studies, first and foremost, similarities and disparities in the domain of meaning: the commensurability of meanings, the commonality of semantic features, the scope of usage for a given meaning, the realization of a common meaning in specific situations, and the matter of lexical significance. The most complex systemic objects of semantic typological classification are language-specific worldviews, which combine both universal and ethnically specific concepts.

The most typical tendencies in the typology of the late twentieth to early twenty-first centuries are

- the search for an explanation of the similarities and disparities between languages;
- an increase in the range of languages under investigation;

- the use of computer databases; and
- the elaboration of a common international terminology (within separate schools and larger scientific branches).

The explanatory power of the systemic approach to studying linguistic categories will be seen in our analysis of the category of case. Systemic linguistics understands the grammatical category of case as a special morphological means for indicating the roles of participants in a situation in accordance with the typical compositional arrangement that determines the principal characteristics of a proposition.

Systemic linguistics explains the universal properties of language in general and the specific properties of individual language types by discovering connections between the structural features of a language and its functioning in the process of communication. This is why G. P. Mel'nikov paid special attention to the conditions for the exchange of information in different types of ethnic communities (micro-, macro-, and mega-communities).

The classification of the functions of case, as set forth in systemic linguistics, allows one to compare the case systems of languages in view of the differences in the semantics associated with their case forms. This is especially important when the application of identical naming schemes conceals differences in the functioning of case forms and in their significance for the entirety of the case system. The systemic approach allows one to avoid the excesses of schematic universalism, on the one hand, and the complete rejection of the typological approach, on the other, and helps to dialectically explain the connection of individual forms and categories with regard to the language system as a whole.

Thus, the systemic treatment of case allows one to see the inadequacy of characterizing case as (1) a formal, syntactic category bereft of (semantic) meaning, revealing nothing but the syntactic relations within a sentence; and (2) an "objective" logical grammatical category expressing the semantics of the subject-object relationship, which is one and the same for all languages.

Viewed in the light of systemic linguistics, the morphological category of case pertains to grammaticalized forms that reveal the typical roles of participants and facts within the topical structure of a real-world situation, as depicted by an utterance. The case system of any specific language reflects the structure of categories that are key to the typical predicative utterance pattern in a given type of language, while the speaker's choice of a specific case form, given the availability of syntactic variants for sentence construction, reflects the speaker's communicational plan, including indication of the topic-focus structure and the actual significance of the participants' roles from the speaker's point of view.

Many trends in modern linguistics manifest an attempt to solve the problem of the typological classification of languages in a systemic way, but the systemic approach to issues of typology has not led to the immediate creation of a systemic typological theory.

What has prevented linguists from arriving at a systemic interpretation of typological data, and what is necessary for a genuinely systemic account of language similarities and disparities?

These are the questions that are central to our research.

## IS LANGUAGE A HODGEPODGE OR AN ORGANIC WHOLE?

A *system* is an integrated totality of interconnected and interdependent elements and their interrelations performing a certain function within a larger system.

A *structure* consists of relations between elements, the manner in which a system is organized.

In the general theory of systems, the following approaches to investigating a systemic object are possible:

- the elemental (inventory-based and taxonomic) approach: the study of the individual constituent elements;
- the structural approach: the study of the relations within the object;
- the stratificational approach: the study of its hierarchy;
- the topological approach: the study of the spatial organization of its features; and
- the functional approach: the study of the functioning of its elements and of the system in general.

Each of these approaches is used in typology. The choice of a particular approach is dictated by the theoretical principles of various scientific schools or by one's research objectives. The systemic approach possesses the greatest explanatory power because it always allows for other approaches to be made a constituent part of the research.

The terms *system* and *structure* are often used as synonyms. This is incorrect: they denote interrelated notions, but in different aspects. *System* entails the interrelation of elements and their unified organizing principle, while *structure* characterizes the internal arrangement of the system. The notion of system is related to the investigation of objects in the direction "elements → total"; structure pertains to the direction "total → elements." The precise distinction between system and structure is evident in the following definition: "The

arrangement, organization or order of a system, i.e. the structure of a system, is determined by the nature of the relations of its elementary objects, or the elements of the system. The structure of a system can, in other words, be defined as the set of connections within the system” (Solntsev 1978, 29).

Some scholars give specific definitions to these terms. Thus, according to A. A. Reformatskii, a system is the unity of homogeneous, mutually conditioned elements within one level, while a structure is the unity of heterogeneous elements within the limits of the whole (Reformatskii 1996, 32, 37).

The notion of *system* plays a significant role in linguistic typology. It explains the interrelation of different language phenomena and stresses the utility of its arrangement and functioning. The systemic approach helps one understand language not as a mere set of words and sounds with rules and exceptions but as a rationally organized totality. The notion of *structure* is just as significant. Although the world’s languages share common principles of organization, they differ from one another, and the differences consist in the originality of their structural organization, as the elements may be connected in different ways. It is the difference in structure that allows languages to be grouped according to typological classes.

The elements of the language system are both signs (morphemes, words, structural arrangements of phrases and sentences) and the structural components of signs (phonemes).


A linguistic sign may be a code sign or a textual sign. Code signs exist as a system of units opposed in language and connected by the relationship of signification, which determines the content of the signs specific to each language. Textual signs exist as a sequence of units connected both formally and by meaning.

Meaning is the content of a language sign and occurs as a consequence of extralinguistic reality being depicted in people’s minds. The meaning of a linguistic unit within a language is virtual, that is, it is determined by what that unit can denote. Within a particular utterance, the meaning of a linguistic unit becomes actualized in that the unit becomes related to a particular object, to that which it actually denotes within the utterance.

In a natural language, a word acts both as a sign (phonetic word) and as the unity of a sign and its meaning (lexical word).

A word is a discrete signal of syncretic thought. This definition means that a word, unlike a thought, possesses the quality of separability. As a sign, it is separable from the flow of speech, while its meaning conveys a nonlinear, multidimensional idea that is indivisible into separate tangible segments.

A word is a compact quant of information, a sign capable of taking on an additional meaning together with a change of form, or even without it. This quality allows one to tell the difference between a word and an artificial (coding) sign.



REPRESENTATION	
onomatopoeic word	<i>bang, meow, whoosh</i>
compound word	<i>sunflower</i>
derivative word	<i>producer</i>
non-derivative word	<i>house</i>
borrowed word	<i>café</i>
term	<i>server</i>
function word	<i>to</i>
SYMBOL	

**Figure 1.1. The Continuum of Word Conventuality.**

Source: Rybakov 2016.

A word describes various phenomena, as opposed to a representation, which depicts them.

Words possess external and internal systemic connections. In comparison to representations, the internal connections of words are stronger and the external connections weaker. In comparison to coding signs, the external connections of words are stronger and the internal ones weaker.

Short syntagmatic segments of a natural language can be formalized more strictly than can longer segments.

According to their degree of rigidity (the strictness of the rules for forming complex signs as well as those governing the use of signs), the structures of language and speech make up a continuum.

The specificity of language as a sign-based system, as compared to natural and representation-based systems, consists in the conventionality and abstractness of the signs, as well as in the greater role of syntax.

The specificity of language, as compared to code-based systems, consists in its being more open, dynamic, and variable, while the rules of syntax and semantics are less strict.

**Table 1.1. Continuum of the Rigidity of Language and Speech Structures.**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Type of Representation</i>
Phonetics	Combinations of sounds are strictly determined by the language itself (synchronic phonetic rules)	Tables
Morphology	Combinations of morphemes in a word are determined by the vocabulary of the language, but occasionalisms are possible in speech	Paradigms
Syntax	Language rules exist, but a choice of expressive means is possible in speech	Arrangements
Text	Stylistic recommendations exist, but there are no formal rules	Patterns

Source: Rybakov 2016.

## Chapter Two

# Can a Linguistic Classification Explain Anything About a Language?

The *Filosofskii entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (1983, Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary) defines typology as a method of gaining scientific knowledge by partitioning and grouping object systems on the basis of a generalized, idealized model or type. The term is also used in the meaning of “the result of typological description and comparison” (Ogurtsov 1989, 656). In linguistics, the notion of typology is specified as the comparative study of the structural properties of languages regardless of their degree of relatedness. Furthermore, typology is understood to distinguish different kinds (types) of one or the other linguistic phenomenon.

Typology is closely connected with *taxonomy*, the theory of classification and systematization of complex spheres of reality, which develops a system of taxonomic categories denoting hierarchical groups of objects. Classification itself is also referred to as *taxonomy*.

Alongside *taxonomy* (understood as the theory of classification) and *classification* (understood as the result of a typological study), there is also *systematics*: the study of kinds of objects and the connections between groups of objects.

According to Émile Benveniste, languages are such a complex phenomenon that they can be classified only by using several very different principles. A complete and all-embracing typology must formulate a hierarchy of morphological features (Benveniste 1971, 51). The most elaborate classification, in Benveniste’s view, is that worked out by Edward Sapir, but A. A. Reformatskii has shown that it is far from fully reflecting the properties of languages (Reformatskii 1987).

Scientific classification puts the properties of an object into a functional relationship with its position in a particular system. The progress of science entails a transition from descriptive classifications, which conveniently ar-

range the collected empirical results, to structural classifications that unveil the essence of the objects under classification.

In the twentieth century, linguists frequently expressed their doubt about the scientific significance of traditional morphological classification. Still, there are reasons to regard it as useful and theoretically well grounded. The value of this sort of classification lies not only in its systematization of facts but also in its explanatory power when considering language as an evolving and self-regulating system.

Since the emergence of this mode of classification, efforts have been made to conceptualize it as reconstructing the fundamental moments in the development and evolution of language as a whole. Thus, already Wilhelm von Humboldt saw in the main types of morphological classification steps of progress being taken by the human mind toward solving the problem of language formation, that is, the fusion within language of form and content and of the subjective and the objective world.

## **WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT'S TYPOLOGICAL SYSTEM**

Wilhelm von Humboldt ascribed the following characteristics to the various types of languages:

1. the inflectional type: words are well endowed with indicators of their grammatical connections within a sentence;
2. the agglutinative type: inflection is not fully developed and mechanical addition is used as inflection;
3. the isolating type: the connections among words in a sentence are indicated indirectly, generally nonphonetically; words are entirely detached, whereby the unity of the sentence is achieved by means of word order and special, equally isolated words; and
4. the incorporating type: sentences exhibit the closest possible cohesion, fusing into a single form pronounced as one word; the sentence together with all its parts is seen not as a unit consisting of words but as an individual word.

According to the founder of scientific linguistics, the typological characterization of languages according to the previously listed notions can be regarded as the “pivot about which the perfection of the language-organism revolves,” and it is necessary to find out “from what inner demand it arises in the soul, how it is expressed in the treatment of sound and how these inner demands are fulfilled, or remain unsatisfied, by this expression” (Humboldt 1988, 100).



Humboldt is cautious in approaching the stages of language evolution. He thinks it short sighted to regard types as stages. Nonetheless, he accepts the existence of a more perfect form of language and a natural path of language evolution toward that perfect form. Upon this path, the particular forms of different languages arise, which consist (inasmuch as they deviate from the ideal construction) of two parts, a negative one, conditioned by the limitations imposed upon the language at the moment of formation, and a positive one, prompting the yet imperfect portion of the construction to strive toward the universal goal. With respect to the negative part only, one may imagine a step-by-step ascension to the highest stage, while, in their positive part, even imperfect languages show a well-developed individual structure.

The analysis of the structural changes of a language is impossible without morphological classification because describing the changes in different elements without characterizing their structural significance and connection with the language type at hand would ascertain neither the reasons for the changes nor the grammatical trends in the dynamics of the language.

In the process of the historical development of languages, morphological changes are the most distinct in revealing both the laws governing the evolution of form and its relative independence. This shows both in the retaining of old forms already devoid of their meaning and in the appearance of new forms whose semantics are not yet absolutely clear.

The systemic nature of Humboldt's typology of language was formulated clearly by the scholar himself in the following thesis: "we can grasp the possibility of discovering in every language the form from which its structural pattern emanates" (Humboldt 1988, 145).

This very form was later defined by G. P. Mel'nikov as the determinant of language. Wilhelm von Humboldt sees the systemic nature of language not only in the synchronic aspect: "The description of any language must begin with a characteristic system. . . . For it is, as it were, the bed in which the stream of the language flows from one era to the next; its general directions are governed thereby and a persevering analysis is able to trace its most individual manifestations back to this foundation" (Humboldt 1988, 70).

## THE SEARCH FOR NEW PATHS IN TYPOLOGY

In the twentieth century, typological linguistics took different paths in search of more relevant theory. The most important of them were

- the involvement of new levels into comparative research;
- the development of a typological standard that is external to any given language;

- the creation of a system of intersecting coordinates as a basis for multifaceted typological characterization of language;
- the singling out of types within a language (classification of individual language phenomena);
- the creation of graduated classification patterns based on quantitative methods;
- the characterization of language types on the basis of characteristic examples; and
- the search for universal regularities in language structures, including universal interconnections between various properties of a language.

Typology offers an inventory of concepts, a theoretical apparatus, and a meta-language for the comparison of languages and, moreover, a systematized body of knowledge about languages that is unified by a common terminology. Typology presents specific data concerning the presence of particular phenomena in languages. All this makes it an indispensable source of information about the world's languages for the general study of language, whose subject matter pertains to common linguistic categories.

The history of twentieth-century typology consisted of an evolution from the critique of traditional morphological classification to an understanding of systemic connections between specific characteristics of a language.

Over the course of the twentieth century, various types of classification were offered:

- formal vs. semantic;
- one dimensional vs. multidimensional;
- layered vs. interlevel vs. integrated;
- inductive vs. deductive;
- stadial vs. synchronic; and
- aspectual vs. synthesizing.

## **FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE'S SKEPTICISM OF TYPOLOGY**

The founder of the structuralist and semiotic trend in linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure, understood language primarily as a system of signs (in fact, a structure) that is arbitrary in relation to the substance of language and showed little interest in the issues of language typology. Remarking on the connection between typology and the history of language as follows, "no family of languages rigidly belongs once and for all to a particular linguistic type" (Saussure 1959, 228), Saussure avoided questions with respect to the factors affecting language evolution and was skeptical of hypotheses on the

reasons for language evolution. He also rejected the assumption that “the ‘genius’ of a race or ethnic group tends constantly to lead language along certain fixed routes” (232).

Thus, in light of the dynamics of language, Saussure regarded language evolution as an accidental process; moreover, he thought that language in no way reflects a people’s mentality: “The psychological character of the linguistic group is unimportant by comparison with the elimination of a vowel, a change of accent, or many other similar things” (1959, 227), which, in Saussure’s opinion, might at any moment revolutionize the relationship between the sign and the concept in any form of language.

Saussure manifested some interest in the classification of languages according to devices used for expressing thoughts, but he did not think them sufficient for arriving at conclusions concerning anything beyond the limits of the language itself.

The predecessors of modern typology are, without a doubt, F. F. Fortunatov, who strove to create a form of typology that disregards stadiality, and Otto Jespersen, who attempted to go beyond the limits of morphological typology.

Various approaches to solving the problems of typology can be found in Edward Sapir’s ethnolinguistics, Leonard Bloomfield’s descriptive linguistics, Noam Chomsky’s generative linguistics, and G. P. Mel’nikov’s systemic linguistics.

## **EDWARD SAPIR ATTACKS TRADITIONAL TYPOLOGY AND INVENTS SYNCHRONIC SEMANTIC TYPOLOGY**

The synchronic typological approach to semantics began with the book *Language* (1921) by Edward Sapir, centered on developing a semantic basis for the morphological classification of languages. The book analyzes the problems of external and internal linguistics, the synchrony and diachrony of languages and the correlation between language, thinking, and reality and between language and culture, whereby it establishes the most general properties of the mechanisms of language and languages. The problems of typology take one of the central places in it.

The “integrated” morphological formula of traditional classification—with its oppositions of inflection vs. agglutination and agglutination vs. fusion, these being organized according to the word-centric principle—had, by the beginning of the twentieth century, not only become morally obsolete but also failed to embrace the structure of incorporating languages, with polysynthesis as their main organizing principle. Instead of customary classifications, which were based on the form of the word and revealed the leading tendency

for a given language or group of languages, Edward Sapir offered a multidimensional classification. It is based on three criteria:

- the complexity of the word in conjunction with a differentiation of analytical, synthetic, and maximally complex polysynthetic (incorporating) word syntagmas;
- the degree of cohesion of elements inside the word when differentiating between isolation, agglutination, fusion, and symbolism as grammatical ways of expressing meaning in language; and
- the types of meanings (concepts) in a language and the ways of expressing them.

These *concepts* were divided into the following types:

- *basic* or *concrete*, expressed through separate words or roots, that is, lexical meanings;
- *derivational*, less concrete, expressed through word-formational affixes, that is, lexical and grammatical meanings or abstract categorial concepts;
- *abstract* with a measure of concreteness or *concrete relational*, expressed through inflectional affixes and those transmitting morphological meanings; and
- *pure-relational*, expressed mainly through agreement affixes, position, or word order: syntactic concepts. (Sapir 1921, 49)

Nevertheless, this classification of concepts, as was admitted by Edward Sapir himself, is not universal, because any meaning—for instance, that of plurality—may turn out to be both concrete, derivational, abstract, and pure-relational in any given language.

Based on the established types of expressed meaning (that is, his four “concepts”), Sapir distinguishes four types of languages. The two diametrically opposed types—concrete and relational languages—account for the external language technique (that is, the manner of expressing grammatical relations) inherent in all known human languages. The two medial types—derivational and concrete relational—are represented only among languages with a well-developed morphology.

Thus, the language types that reflect all of Sapir’s principles of multidimensional classification are described in the following way.

*Pure-relational nonderivational languages*, or simple pure-relational languages: These are languages that express syntactic relations in a pure manner (meaning separate from elements expressing other types of meanings) and are unable to modify the meaning of their radical (that is, root) elements by

means of affixes or suppletion. In the traditional classification, they correspond to isolating or root-isolating languages.

*Pure-relational derivational languages* or complex pure-relational languages: These languages express syntactic relations in a pure manner and are able to modify the meaning of their radical elements by means of affixes or suppletion. Sapir correlates such languages with the agglutinative-isolating type.

*Mixed-relational nonderivational languages* or simple mixed relational languages: These are languages in which the syntactic relations are expressed in necessary connection with concepts of a special kind. These concepts are not entirely abstract but allow for the modification of meaning only in necessary connection with syntactic relations. The leading principle of the traditional classification corresponding to this type is agglutination with elements of fusion.

*Mixed-relational derivational languages* or complex mixed-relational languages. In these languages, syntactic relations are expressed in combination with morphological relations, or in mixed form, and the modifications of meaning are maximally represented. These are inflective or fusional languages (speaking in terms of technique) in the traditional typology.

Thus, each of the two leading types has two variants:

1. *Pure-relational languages*:

- A. Simple
- B. Complex

2. *Mixed-relational languages*:

- C. Simple
- D. Complex (Sapir 1921, 65)

Naturally, such a classification fails to capture significant internal features of languages, for which reason each of the four types—A, B, C, and D—includes agglutinative, fusional, and symbolic subtypes, depending upon which manner of modifying radical elements prevails in the languages in question. Therefore, in order to be precise, they should be described using compound terms, such as agglutinative-isolating, fusional-isolating, symbolic-isolating, etc.

In this way, the types and subtypes of languages distinguished by Edward Sapir objectively confirm the multidimensional nature of classification and its being based not only on language typology and structure but also on meaning or, more accurately, on an attempt to synthesize the form and content of language in the classification. According to Sapir, a more detailed multidimensional

mensional description of languages would reveal more substantial differences between them and clarify questions with respect to the general mechanisms of inflection and word formation in human languages.

Sapir also put forward the question of the hierarchical arrangement of a language system, of its deep and surface features. According to the scholar, the conceptual language type is deeper and more fundamental, more resistant to change. Regarding the incessant change that languages undergo, Sapir considers a series of examples and comes to the conclusion that a language's type and its degree of synthesis change considerably over the course of time (the synthesis of Latin and Sanskrit vs. the analyticity of French and Bengali; agglutinative Finnish taking on "inflective" features), but the conceptional type persists, as, for instance, classical Tibetan and Chinese, which have retained their pure-relational type, although the techniques of these languages have changed differently in each case.

In *Language*, Edward Sapir states his intention to "look a little more closely into the nature of the world of concepts, in so far as that world is reflected and systematized in linguistic structure" (1921, 41).

With respect to the semantic diversity of languages, Sapir stipulates that "the concreteness of experience is infinite, the resources of the richest language are strictly limited. It must perforce throw countless concepts under the rubric of certain basic ones, using other concrete or semi-concrete ideas as functional mediators" (1921, 42).

Through comparison of the English sentence *The farmer kills the duckling* with its translations into other languages, Sapir shows that meaning may not be universally lexical or universally grammatical but depends on the grammatical and semantic structure of the language.

Later, this issue was addressed by I. I. Meshchaninov, S. D. Katsnel'son, and G. A. Klimov.

I. I. Meshchaninov opined that comparative grammars do not reveal the basic foundation of development in language and thus will not solve the principal problems of linguistics as long they refrain from analysis of the substance of language. "The one-sided analysis of form is not the only and ultimate goal of linguistics" (Meshchaninov 1940, 16).

Meshchaninov manifests a special interest in historical changes in the semantics of grammatical categories:

It is possible to draw up also a synchronic grammar, and then it will be necessary to identify the available indicators in specific languages, establishing these indicators according to their current meaning in the studied linguistic structure. But, even in the latter case, the description of the current structure of speech in any language needs historical grounding. (1940, 19)

He furthermore attacks the logical trend in linguistics and asserts that “the expression of grammatical categories cannot be singular and constant, for they are not eternal and do not linger in the language’s structure forever” (Meshchaninov 1940, 25).

S. D. Katsnel’son adds to the list of crucial problems for the general study of grammar the following items:

Category differences between languages arising from the way intermediate categories behave when the initial categories become polarized; how a morphological category relates to its mental “nest”; the degree of universality of a grammatical category, or, in other words, the degree of grammaticalization etc. (Katsnel’son 2001, 552)

According to Katsnel’son, “it is necessary to trace the way in which elementary categories of thinking are objectivized in the forms of language. The process is different in different languages and depends on a number of factors” (2001, 553).

With respect to the opposition between universal grammar and characterological grammar, Katsnel’son recalls two of Humboldt’s dialectically connected theses concerning the significant unity of all languages, being accordant with general human nature, and the significant disparities between languages, both of external and internal nature.

## DIACHRONY IN EDWARD SAPIR’S THEORY

The breadth and diversity of the material on the native languages of America caused Edward Sapir to look for a new approach to the issues of diachronic typology. Whereas August Schleicher had set forth a linear pattern of language evolution, which could probably be explained by his having taken Indo-European languages to be the typological benchmark (and, moreover, the typological ideal), Edward Sapir included into the field of argument languages of a different typological nature. Hence, his approach to typological variation over time was different. To explain the tendencies of development, he introduced the term *drift*.

The drift of a language is constituted by the unconscious selection on the part of its speakers of those individual variations that are cumulative in some special direction. This direction may be inferred, in the main, from the past history of the language . . . the changes of the next few centuries are in a sense prefigured in certain obscure tendencies of the present and that these changes, when consummated, will be seen to be but continuations of changes that have been already effected. (Sapir 1921, 74)

He illustrates the notion of drift by means of the reduction over time of the Indo-European syntactic case system to the four-case system of the early Germanic languages, its further reduction to two cases in English, and the loss of case inflections on inanimate nouns and pronouns in contemporary English (Sapir 1921, 150–52).

Here, as well as in the case of synchrony, Sapir draws upon the idea of typological multidimensionality. This allows him to be more flexible in evaluating the origins and prognoses of the typological dynamics of languages, although he offers no explanation of the causes and factors determining language drift.

### **LEONARD BLOOMFIELD'S POSITION**

According to Leonard Bloomfield, the morphological variety of languages highly exceeds their syntactic variety and does not allow for a reduction of the material to a simplified classification scheme, as the choice of constituents of a complex form (that is, a word) is quite individual and often whimsical (Bloomfield 1933, 207).

In the division of languages into analytical, synthetic, and polysynthetic types, for Bloomfield, only the extremes of the scale are distinct. In his opinion, the distinctions of the four morphological types of languages employ heterogeneous criteria, thus the classes were never clearly defined.

According to Bloomfield, the task of future linguists consists in comparing the categories of various languages and singling out those that are universal and widespread (1933).

It is noteworthy that Bloomfield often mentions the structure of language but never speaks of language as a system.

### **THE STRUCTURALIST IDEAS OF NIKOLAI TRUBETSKOI AND ROMAN JAKOBSON: LANGUAGE AS A SYSTEM OF OPPOSITIONS**

Nikolai Trubetskoï proffered the idea of using the structuralist model of phonology as a basis for a general morphological theory. According to him, the difference between disjunctive and correlative oppositions may turn out to be fruitful in morphology. He furthermore pondered on the feasibility of classifying grammatical categories and using linguistic geography in describing the morphological distinctions between languages (Trubetskoï 1987, 511). These ideas were far ahead of their time and began to be actively expounded by typologists only in the twenty-first century.



Roman Jakobson worked in the same vein. He proposed the concept of marked and unmarked categories and forms in morphology. This idea was also developed in various works of typology in the late twentieth century (see, for example, Croft 2003, 87–100).

Another fruitful idea connected with the name of Jakobson is the axiomatic specification of a certain set of initial elementary meanings, the combination of which yields various language categories. This is the path that modern linguistic semantics is following today (Ivanov 1985, 19).

Jakobson was one of the first to pay attention to the significance of the systemic approach in linguistics. With respect to the search for the principles underlying the typology of case systems, he observed that they would, in spite of the systems' diversity, reveal general agreement in their structural laws, and in order to make their work fruitful, linguists must consider the various dimensions of the language system and the various levels of linguistic units, especially those of the word and the phrase (Jakobson 1984, 99).

Jakobson addresses the systemic nature of language in his article "Parts and Wholes in Language" (1963), in which he asserts that further typological studies will enable us to answer the question posed by systems whose parts are in various interrelations of dynamic dependence (Jakobson 1971, 284).

Jakobson also proposed the idea of classifying sign systems and types of propositions. He considered such classification to be the necessary basis of an in-depth scientific study of communication (1971, 699). The most promising subject of typological studies was, in his opinion, semiotic structures with a dominant esthetic function (704).

G. P. Mel'nikov called Jakobson one of the "initiators of the introduction of systemic methodology into linguistics," who made "cautious predictions" with respect to the ability of typology to point out the regular interrelations among the levels of language (Mel'nikov 1973, 198).

### **FORTUNATOV'S OR THE MOSCOW FORMAL SCHOOL: LANGUAGE IS FORM AND NOTHING BUT FORM**

In the early twentieth century, the questions of typology were regarded in different ways by Baudouin de Courtenay's and Fortunatov's schools of linguistic thought. According to F. F. Fortunatov, morphological classification should be based on the similarities and differences of languages with respect to the formation of synthetic (noncompound) word forms (Fortunatov 1956, 153). On the whole, his theory was based on the formal morphological differences among languages.

It was F. F. Fortunatov who identified the central role of morphology in the language system and offered distinct criteria for typological comparison of grammatical forms in different languages. Through his elaboration of a theory of word forms, Fortunatov was able to distinguish between inflection and word formation and between grammatical meaning and its formal expression. At the same time, he was aware of the fact that formal word classes had not been established once and for all, that they differed in different languages and at different stages of their development.

Understanding the word form in terms of its ability to be divided into a stem and an affix in the speaker's mind is one of the central ideas of Fortunatov's grammatical theory. The theory of word forms was further developed by Fortunatov's pupils (G. K. Ul'anov, V. K. Porzhezinskii, D. N. Ushakov, and A. M. Peshkovskii), later by A. A. Reformatskii, P. S. Kuznetsov, and V. N. Sidorov. In the second half of the twentieth century, Fortunatov's tradition was most persistently represented by M. V. Panov and A. V. Shirokova.

Of particular value for typology was Fortunatov's idea that word structure could have a dual nature, that is, components of the word could be either part of the word's meaning or part of the word itself (as a phonetic unit). The correlation between elements of the formal structure and those of the semantic structure is thereby an important typological feature for the classification of languages. Fortunatov also noted that the difference between languages in the forms of individual words could relate not only to the meanings of the forms but also to the manner of word formation.

Of great importance for modern typology are Fortunatov's observations in the area of morphological classification of languages, especially with respect to the inflectional-agglutinative type characteristic of Semitic languages. The specific determinant of Semitic languages, which expresses itself in their tendency toward maximal grammaticalization, was noted by the founder of systemic typology G. P. Mel'nikov.

According to Fortunatov, radical (that is, isolating) languages do not have complete forms of individual words, they have only forms of phrases and compound words.

In agglutinative languages, complete forms of individual words are constructed with affixes by way of adhesion because here the stem and affix always remain separate parts of the word form.

In inflectional-agglutinative languages, first distinguished as a separate type by Fortunatov, stems necessarily have forms arising from stem inflection, and the relationship between the stem and the affix is the same as in agglutinative languages.

In inflectional languages, stem inflections exist in the same forms as are generated by means of affixation, hence the stem and the affix are semantically interrelated in a way that cannot exist in any other type of language.

The distinction of grammatical classes (this is how Fortunatov understands parts of speech) according to morphological features allows one to see clearly the specifics of the morphological structure of languages. The term *word classes* is used instead of *parts of speech* in modern generative linguistics.

Fortunatov's morphological approach to parts of speech does not, of course, embrace all the properties of language structure, but it should not be ignored by linguists as it presents a reliable basis for comparative analysis of languages.

Fortunatov's theory also contains sufficiently distinct criteria for singling out a word according to differences in terms of sound pattern and lexical meaning. A difference in sound without a change in lexical meaning creates either word forms (by analogy to phonology, they may be called lexeme variants with a significative function, as in Russian *zima*<sub>nom.</sub> – *zimu*<sub>acc.</sub>) or so-called word variants or morpheme variants (*zimoj*<sub>inst.</sub> – *zimoju*<sub>inst.</sub>)—or, to be more precise, lexeme variants with a perceptive function. Even if a grammatical form is lexicalized (*zuby* “teeth” – *zub'ja* “(mechanical) teeth,” *muzhi* “(arch.) men” – *muzh'ja* “husbands”), it retains the common semantic nucleus; the meanings of the forms are delineated according to their additional, special features, but the invariant meaning remains intact.

Sound complexes (words) with a difference in lexical meaning but the same sound pattern may also be defined as the same word, provided these different meanings turn out to have historically been alterations of the meaning of the same word. Thus, the differences between an adjective and a participle (Russian *ubezhdjonnyj* “convinced,” *poterjannyj* “lost, missing”) are connected with differences in grammatical properties but not with a complete difference of lexical meaning. The relationships between lexical meanings in such cases are metonymic.

The pupil and follower of F. F. Fortunatov, Professor V. K. Porzhezinskii, criticized theories in which language types were correlated with stages of progressive development of language. He argued that “all languages fulfill their purpose in the environment in which they exist, although they have different means of denoting the relationship between the objects of thought in the language itself” (Porzhezinskii 1916, 151). This idea, from a representative of a formal school of linguistics, is interesting because it is in accord with Humboldt's idea that languages move toward a common goal along different routes.

## THE SYSTEMOLOGICAL IDEAS OF BAUDOIN DE COURTENAY'S SCHOOL

The notion of the *morpheme* as introduced by Baudouin de Courtenay allowed twentieth-century linguistics to describe the layered structure of language more clearly, which, in turn, paved the way for the comparison of languages with different organizing principles.

In defining the morpheme as any part of a word endowed with an independent psychic life and, thus, from this standpoint, not further divisible, Baudouin de Courtenay anticipated the theoretical basis of some structuralist conceptions that considered the morpheme to be a more definite unit in comparison to the word (Leonard Bloomfield, Henry Allan Gleason).

The word in different types of languages varies greatly in terms of integration, independence, inflectional morphology, and grammatical organization. These features are quite typical for an inflected word, but in other types of languages they are realized differently. In agglutinative languages, a word is not a fully self-contained unit; in isolating languages, a word is not independent from a phrase; in incorporating languages, a word is a derivable unit that is syntagmatically equal to a sentence.

Judging by Baudouin de Courtenay's various statements, he understood the word to be a self-contained unit that is differentiated phonetically (or, rather, phonologically, by accent, audible boundaries, and phonematic organization), morphologically (by the morphemic system and its conforming to the particular morphological type of one or the other language), syntactically (by its ability to be a "syntagm"), and semasiologically (through "associations from the extralinguistic world") (Baudouin de Courtenay 1917, 50, 52–53).

A morpheme clearly demonstrates the unity of the three aspects of language distinguished by Baudouin de Courtenay: the external (sound-related) aspect, the extralinguistic (semantic) aspect, and the internal (morphological) aspect, as the morpheme is (1) the minimal phonetic segment possessing meaning, (2) the minimal semantic unit expressed by sounds, and (3) the minimal unit of a grammatical structure possessing a meaning and a phonetic form.

G. P. Mel'nikov regarded the introduction of the concept of the morpheme as Baudouin de Courtenay's contribution to the development of the ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt and A. A. Potebnia concerning the connection of language and mental content. In his opinion, a morpheme is a representation "of a minimal sign, i.e. the minimal external form of language which is . . . directly associated with the minimal internal form, i.e. meaning" (Mel'nikov 2000, 21). In describing the specifics of the morpheme in inflectional languages, such as Russian, G. P. Mel'nikov stated the following:

Individually, morphemes, without the participation of other morphemes, only rarely hint through their meaning directly at the closest sense. It is most typical that a whole sequence, a whole block of morphemes and, correspondingly, a block of their meanings, being reproducible, acts as a “collective hinter” at this or that closest or furthest sense, and any currently “hinted at” sense can afterwards become the initial link in the chain of further intermediate and prefinal senses hinting at the intended final sense. (Mel’nikov 2000, 21)

This shows that languages represent different modes of formalizing mental content and not just different sign-based structures for transmitting the same meanings.

The theory of morphemes reflects Baudouin de Courtenay’s idea of the isomorphism of language and mental units because the morpheme is, on the one hand, the main structural unit of language and, on the other, a live mental unit that manifests itself, for instance, in speech errors and slips of the tongue.

Regarding the morpheme as a unit of comparative analysis of languages, it should be mentioned that its suitability for the comparison of languages of different types is granted by its systemic and sign-related characteristics.

The systemic characteristics of the morpheme include

1. having a material envelope (in V. M. Solntsev’s terminology, a soneme);
2. being included in the system of a word as an element with a function, namely that of expressing an associative meaning;
3. uniting allomorphs into a system, whereby the rules for their selection determine the structure; and
4. comprising a system of a higher level than the phoneme.

The sign-related characteristics of the morpheme are as follows:

1. being an elementary sign;
2. being a grammatical sign with a lexical and grammatical meaning;
3. being a variable sign in a phonological and semantic sense;
4. participation in syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships; and
5. participation in semantic and pragmatic relationships.

The mentioned systemic and sign-related characteristics make the morpheme a universal unit of language organization. Thanks to this fact, it was used as the unit of analysis by the founders both of descriptive linguistics (Leonard Bloomfield, Henry Allan Gleason) and of contrastive linguistics (E. D. Polivanov, V. A. Bogoroditskii, L. V. Shcherba, and Edward Sapir).

I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay furthermore distinguished the genealogical and structural similarity of languages. The structural similarity, according to

him, concerns the state and change of language and does not depend on historical or genealogical connections (Baudouin de Courtenay 1963, 215). He paid attention not only to the typology of related languages; his works contain statements, albeit scattered among them, on the possibility of the comparative study of nonrelated languages, their common structural configurations and similar variations and processes. The tasks of these studies were formulated in a most general way, by opposing them to the comparative and historical study of nonrelated languages. Although Baudouin de Courtenay did not use the terms *typological studies* and *language typology*, he strictly delineated the presence of parallel structural features independent of the genetic relatedness of languages (typological relationship) from similarity or resemblance based on a genetic connection (material relationship). The study of common features in nonrelated languages was regarded as a task for general grammar or the philosophy of language, unlike the comparative grammar of related languages (Gukhman 1968, 73).

Baudouin de Courtenay doubts the exactitude of classifications distinguishing inflectional, agglutinative, and radical (or isolating) languages (Baudouin de Courtenay 1963, 216) and, at the same time, reminds us of the unstable, transient existence of language states. He opposed the theory of “seeing separate groups as nothing but various stages of improving one and the same principle (form, type) of morphological structure” (Baudouin de Courtenay 2010, 72) and criticized commonplace morphological classifications for proclaiming a single one of the external characteristics of a language to be the only, exclusively defining one, while drawing attention to the simultaneous application of two or even three morphological principles in the structure of one and the same language (Baudouin de Courtenay 2010, 132).

At the same time, Baudouin de Courtenay discusses the “internal form” as the basis for classification, defines it as the system of grammatical categories inherent in a given language, and writes in his “Podrobnaia programma lektsii v 1877–78 uchebnom godu” (1879–1881, “Detailed Program of Lectures in the 1877–78 School Year”): “The relationship between matter and form and its morphological manifestation must serve as the starting point for differentiating languages” (Baudouin de Courtenay 2010, 73).

Baudouin de Courtenay’s broad approach to language manifests itself in his remark: “If language should be taken for a special kind of *knowledge*, then it can at the same time function, on the one hand, as *an action, a deed*, and, on the other, as *a thing, an object* of the external world” (2010, 99).

Another representative of the Kazan’ linguistic school, N. V. Krushevskii, paid attention to the morphological systematicity of language: “in language, one can always discover known types of words and the connection between individual types” (Krushevskii 1998, 181).

E. D. Polivanov regarded the morpheme, in the spirit of Baudouin de Courtenay's ideas, as "a minimum unit in morphology, i.e. a part of a word that bears its own meaning (but is indivisible into further meaningful parts) and occurs with the same or similar meaning also in other words" (Polivanov 1991, 383).

In developing Baudouin de Courtenay's ideas, Polivanov argues that the morphological classification of languages could create groups of languages that are known to be alien to one another historically or geographically, for example, modern English and modern Chinese, "on the basis of several similar features in the morphological structure of these languages." He concluded that morphological classification had not yet been worked out completely and found Sapir's revision of the traditional system of morphological classification very interesting (Polivanov 1991, 383). The traditional division into three or four types (or progressive stages), in Polivanov's opinion, did not hold water in terms of logic and was "incapable of accounting for all the diversity existent in the morphological structures of languages." Polivanov thus accepted these types as "reference patterns" that generalize some principal differences between language systems (Polivanov 1991, 384).

V. A. Bogoroditskii considers morphemes to be parts of a word that express meaning and regards their existence to be the result of an association between words due to their partial similarity

when words related in some morphological part are pronounced: thus, the words "vyvozh" and "vychodit," differing in root and inflection, present an example of association by partial similarity—that of the prefix etc. Thanks to such partial associations, morphological parts of words spring up in our minds, and the words themselves are combined by similarity of meaning and inflectional morphology into grammatical systems. (Bogoroditskii 1935, 96)

The minimalism and the sign-like nature of the morpheme were pointed out also by other scholars. For instance, in one of the first manuals on introductory linguistics, R. O. Shor and N. C. Chemodanov characterize the morpheme as "the shortest element of coherent speech distinguished in the mind of the speaker of a given language as a bearer of a known meaning" (Shor and Chemodanov 1945, 97). V. M. Solntsev, who also defined the morpheme as the shortest dual unit of language, noted not only its possessing a certain meaning but also its lack of syntactic independence (Solntsev 1978, 33).

At the same time, the morpheme possesses not only universal characteristics but also features directly connected with the type of the language in question. The peculiarity of morphemes in inflectional languages is their allomorphic variation; in agglutinative (and incorporating) languages, it is

phonetic variation while the phonemic composition remains stable; in isolating languages, morphemes are often syllabic units without phonemic variants and the alternation of tone creates a different morpheme.

The morphemes of differently organized languages are different also at the level of content. In inflectional languages, functional morphemes are characterized by multicategoriality, as compared to agglutinative affixes; isolating languages are marked by the polysemy of roots; in incorporating languages, the opposition of root and affix morphemes is, to a certain degree, neutralized; in inflectional-agglutinative (for example, Semitic) languages, it is possible, within some limits, to speak of neutralization of the difference between word-formational and inflectional morphemes. The morphemes in Semitic languages are still more interesting for their being invariant and clearly distinguished (agglutinative) with respect to their form and multicategorial (inflectional) with respect to their content.

All this reminds us of the importance of Baudouin de Courtenay's theses concerning the dynamics (kinetics) of language, in contrast to which stasis occurs merely in specific cases. This postulate is correct not only for the history of language but also for its synchronic state, where the dynamic interaction of units is so great that any linguistic model turns out to be a convention requiring qualifications.

### **THE PROBLEM OF STADIALITY: HOW DOES LANGUAGE CHANGE IN THE COURSE OF TIME?**

The problem of the change of grammatical type over the history of a language was first set out by August Schleicher, and the variants of its solution expressed themselves both in the theory of "stadiality" (that is, stage-based evolution) and in the idea of the invariability of a language's morphological type.

Schleicher distinguished periods of growth and decay; these ideas resulted from his naturalistic views and did not reflect the dialectical contradictions in the development of languages. Examples from English, as well as Russian, show that the loss of certain forms and categories is compensated by other forms that spring up and become established in the language.

The theory of stadial development by N. Ia. Marr and I. I. Meshchaninov correctly points out that grammatical phenomena of different periods, whether having retained or lost their internal form, can and do coexist in language. But this observation exaggerates the social aspect of this issue, in particular, connecting the stages of language evolution with social formations.

N. Ia. Marr tried to create a general theory of language on the basis of the historical and typological approach to language evolution. Having pointed



out some drawbacks to the traditional genetic classification (for example, a disregard of the dialect diversity of proto-languages; the direct comparison of ancient attestations of language with modern languages; a disregard for the problem of the conflation of oral and written speech), about which Hugo Schuchardt and I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay had written earlier, Marr went so far as to completely deny the reality of language relatedness. At the same time, he put forth the idea of the “unity of the glottogenic process”—the process by which a language emerges—which effectively meant that all languages were related at the level of their initial material, this being the fantastical “four elements: *sal, ber, yon, rosh*.” This demonstrates his ignorance of the limits inherent to the comparative-historical method, in general, and of the method of reconstruction, in particular: not everything that has existed in the history of languages can be reconstructed, only that which has left traces, and, even then, the degree of probability may not be very high.

In response to the ideas of Marr, I. I. Meshcaninov commented:

All the enormous amount of language material that is already available for study and, moreover, still awaiting the attentions of a researcher will never reveal the unity of the process and its regularities if we mechanically transfer the laws of development from one language onto another. (Meshcaninov 1936, 41)

Thus, Meshcaninov justly regards the phonological “laws” of comparative linguistics as particular facts of the history of individual languages and language groups. He furthermore poses a new problem, that of the search for common laws determining language development. It was not solved at that time and has lately arisen again as the principal problem of diachronic (historical) typology in the works of G. P. Mel’nikov, Östen Dahl, William Croft, and other linguists.

Instead of genealogical and typological classifications, Marr and Meshcaninov proposed a fundamentally typological association of languages according to stages and systems.

The idea has its roots in the concepts of the early nineteenth century, when comparative linguistics was modeled after the developmental and taxonomic comparative methods of the natural sciences, mainly biology.

Franz Bopp’s “theory of agglutination” already contained an explanation for the structure of an inflectional word formed by way of affixing particles and pronouns to the main part of a word, that is, the structure of language is explained through the historical change of the interrelations between its elements. I. I. Meshcaninov pointed out such cases in the histories of languages, drawing attention to the development of linguistic form and the perception of the grammatical structure of the language from the point of view of the thinking that was characteristic of a given historical period. We are deal-

ing here with an aspect of the problem of whether language equals thought, though one that is somewhat different from that which was considered under the hypothesis of linguistic relativity: it is not the reflection of thinking in language but rather reflection of the language in thinking. A comprehensive investigation of this problem demands attention be given to both aspects. Here, Meshcaninov points out the vestigial retention of archaisms from earlier stages across the incrementally staggered development of a language (for example, the retention of dual forms in the literary bookish language after their decline in the living Russian language).

With an emphasis on semantics, the defenders of the stadial theory pointed out the problem of a change in the formal expression of language being dependent upon a change of its functional significance. In this way, Meshcaninov explained changes in the type of a language's form in relation to changes in the type of its content, the type of its semantics, and the worldview of the studied period.

"The semantics of the vocabulary led inevitably to a worldview in general, not merely to a particular perception of a given term," wrote Meshcaninov in characterizing the historical process of the development of speech and thought (Meshcaninov 1936, 26). The development of language from one type to another is correlated with the development of forms of consciousness. Meshcaninov nevertheless thinks it unnecessary that every language should pass through all the stages of development and points out that a language is subject only to changes it encounters on the path of its evolution. With regard to the Indo-European languages, he recognizes them to have been initially inflectional.

Of great significance is also his thesis that a general explanation for all language phenomena outside of time and space neither exists, nor can one (Meshcaninov 1940, 19). This thesis can be illustrated by differences in the layered organization of languages of different types, in the different contents of such notions as the word, the morpheme, and the phoneme. The founders of comparative-historical linguistics, who compared classical Indo-European languages to modern languages of the same family, were the first to pay attention to the fact that, in the process of the formation of modern languages, the role of analytical means of expression invariably grew, while the role of the synthetic means so characteristic of classical inflectional grammar declined. Successive stages of such restructuring directed from synthesis to analysis may be defined as analytical stages of language evolution. This direction in the evolution of inflectional languages was considered by many outstanding linguists, such as, for instance, August Schleicher, to be the only one possible, while modern inflectional languages with a high level of synthesis were seen as having merely conserved their earlier stages (see Mel'nikov 2000, 13).

In Marr's new linguistic doctrine, the stages are understood as "steps in the historical course of development of the language process" (Meshcaninov 1936, 56). Although August Schleicher's idea of stadial development was grounded in natural history (biology), while Marr's stadial theory had a socio-historical grounding, both concepts proposed a universal pattern of stage-based development, this being the only one possible for all the world's languages.

But the development of language should not necessarily be reduced to the accumulation of analytical properties, which is characteristic of the concepts of language that were widespread in the structuralist trends of linguistics in the twentieth century. G. P. Mel'nikov paid attention to other, less popular concepts in modern scholarship, such as those of I. I. Sreznevskii.

According to G. P. Mel'nikov, Marr postulated that the synthetic stadial restructuring in the process of language evolution, as discovered by Sreznevskii and Potebnia, was the *universal trajectory*, the "unified glottogonic process" common to the development of all the world's languages. As we know, such absolutization had almost completely discredited the very idea of stadial development for many linguists. But the desire to explain all the observed differences in language structures as stages of a "unified glottogonic process" on the way to an increasing role of synthesis and expansion of the formal differentiation of linguistic units brought the adepts of the "new doctrine" to a broader understanding of the range of stadial restructurings even in languages that, in traditional morphological classifications, were usually categorized as being incorporating or polysynthetic. They thus came to discern stages of synthesis preceding those typical for classical and modern inflectional languages. As a result of this broadened view, the types of languages that are considered quite independently in the conventional morphological classification were found to be intrinsically connected as representing different stages of unidirectional change. Thus, it turns out that Marr's doctrine, refined and elaborated by Meshcaninov, on the one hand, caricatured the possible typological dynamics of languages and reduced them to a single trajectory of linear progression, though different from that of August Schleicher; on the other hand, thanks to this theory, the incorporating type found its place in the general typology of languages, whereas it had been ignored by August Schleicher and many other originators of nineteenth-century morphological classifications.

According to Marr's theory, a stage encompasses languages that are similar in a number of semantic and syntactic features, in other words, in features having to do with the construction of the internal form of an utterance and the technique of its external formalization, although neither Marr nor Meshcaninov employ the notion of internal form. As stated by the theory, languages

transform from one stage to another but retain vestigial stadial archaisms, that is, categories and structures that arose at earlier stages. Stadiality is considered to be the central idea of the general theory of language, and stages are understood foremostly as steps along the semantic history of a language:

The language structure is subject to fundamental shifts, manifesting the transformational process of its development, passing from one step to another. Such passages are revealed in the semantic progress of the etymon and in the change of the principles of structural formalization in general (the stages). (Meshcaninov 1936, 56)

Moreover, the semantic changes themselves are regarded as direct changes in thought: “the language itself in its step-by-step development is distributed into stages depending on the respective change in the form of consciousness and its interrelation with language” (Meshcaninov 1936, 27).

### **IVAN I. MESHCANINOV’S STADIAL MODEL: FROM THE STAGES OF THINKING TO THE STAGES OF LANGUAGE**

Meshcaninov offers the following periodization for his stadial model:

1. active mythological (active passive)
2. passive (passive activating)
3. ergative (formal passive)
4. active logical (formal active).

A system, unlike a stage, is defined by Meshcaninov as a synchronic language group of a temporary character, which, having taken shape in a certain historical period, can disappear in the process of transformations. Systems are identified by formal typological similarity; the differences inside them determine their division into languages and dialects. As Meshcaninov argues, “Every system has its typology, that is, by belonging to a certain stage, it develops specific formal indicators” (Meshcaninov 1936, 59), whereby he stresses that division by stage does not coincide with division by system: “one stage, that is, one distinct period in the development of speech, includes several systems, while one system may turn out to be multistaged” (Meshcaninov 1936, 56).

Meshcaninov based his stadial model on dissimilarities in sentence structure and emphasized the analysis of subject–predicate–object relations. Such an approach to identifying the stratification of stages initially demanded consideration of various features, or coordinates, such as

1. the position of the cases of the subject and the object in the language: whether the case of the subject stands out within the paradigm or if it coincides with one of the oblique cases; whether the case of the subject is universal or if it varies depending on the type of predicate, the type of verb, or the whole character of an utterance;
2. whether the language possesses a special case for the direct object or if direct and indirect objects are not distinguished; whether the direct object case is universal or if its usage is limited by specific conditions;
3. whether the predicate includes markers for person and number as well as class indicators; whether it agrees only with the subject, only with the object, or with both the subject and object (poly-personal conjugation); how this agreement is realized; and
4. whether a subject–object–predicate phrase differs structurally from phrases of a nonpredicative type; whether verb and noun phrases are opposed, etc.

Meshcaninov was, in fact, the first Russian linguist to formulate a general and typological syntax based on the material of languages with different structures, including ergative and incorporating languages. Among all the works of his predecessors, the founder of syntactic typology favored A. A. Potebnia's ideas on syntax and sentence development, which, as he pointed out, had found no implementation in Russian scholarship (Meshcaninov 1940, 13). Potebnia's ideas were later expanded upon in G. P. Mel'nikov's theory of predication.

In the late 1940s, Meshcaninov worked mainly at identifying common features in the grammars of languages with absolutely different structures. He searched for grammar universals, both formal (description of the ways of expressing syntactic relations in different languages) and in terms of content-related universals (consideration of systems of grammatical categories with respect to parts of a sentence and parts of speech).

Meshcaninov emphasizes the functional and semantic aspect of analyzing linguistic reality: units of grammatical meaning, or "conceptual categories," are, in fact, the initial invariant that, being realized in different ways or completely absent, accounts for different grammatical structures. "Conceptual categories" are thus used as a kind of unit of measure for the typological similarities and differences of grammar systems. Roman Jakobson also pointed out that grammatical phenomena in languages of different structures could not be identified without semantic criteria.

N. Ia. Marr was one of the first to pay attention to the importance of semantic issues for typological linguistics. He proffered the ideas of the "semantic laws" of language evolution and "semantic clusters" (diffuse complexes of

interrelated lexical and semantic variants of a polysemantic word). At the same time, his works lack distinct definitions and strict methods for semantic analysis. Later, the idea of the diffuseness of semantics was independently developed in the semantic fields theory (Shchur 1974; Karaulov 1976; Denisenko 2004) and in modern foreign cognitive linguistics, namely in the theory of conceptual metaphor and the theory of prototypes (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Evans and Green 2006; Geeraerts and Cuyckens 2007).

Marr also demonstrated the insufficiency of any single formal feature for classifying languages by type and, in fact, was one of the first to point out the systemic interconnection of typological features.

Taken together as coordinates, 1) amorphism, i.e. the absence of morphology, 2) monosyllabism (words of one-syllable length), 3) synthetic structure, 4) absence (or poor differentiation) of parts of speech and 5) polysemy jointly comprise the sum of decisive features which allot to a language of the corresponding system quite a definite chronological place in the layers of diachronic division of all the languages of the world. (Marr 1927, 151)

Although, at present, we have no sufficient proof of unambiguous links between the type of a language system and its chronological place (because different types may occur within one period, while one and the same type may maintain itself over the time), Marr's ideas are interesting both for his turning to diachronic typology and for their anticipation of the coordinate method in synchronic typology, which became widespread and received further development only much later. As M. M. Gukhman points out, "we can argue about how effectively or how correctly the attributes or coordinates were selected, but, undoubtedly, such a multi-aspectual definition of a language type represented something new in comparison to the usual morphological models" (Gukhman 1968, 75).

### **SOLOMON D. KATSNEL'SON: DEVELOPMENT OF THE STADIAL APPROACH**

With respect to the tasks of linguistic typology, S. D. Katsnel'son thinks it erroneous to treat typology mainly as a classifying science and to assume that morphology is the direct expression of essential differences. According to this scholar, no single structural feature of language is alone capable of reflecting the whole diversity of the language structure and its typological peculiarities. In his view, the replacement of morphological classification with syntactic classification does not eliminate the substantial drawbacks of the classificational approach, and Edward Sapir's attempt to offer a

multifeature typological model does not yield a unified classification (Katsnel'son 1972, 5–7).

The characterological approach, as opposed to the classificational approach, dates back to Heymann Steintal and is based on the detailed characteristics of the most apparent representatives of the major types of languages, but it turns out to have an insufficient theoretical basis, and the selection of representative languages appears to have been made at random (Katsnel'son 1972, 9).

The method of universals that came to replace the search for ideal language types helps us to establish the mutual dependence of individual language structures, but, as stated by S. D. Katsnel'son,

it stays within the limits of studying microstructures and is little interested in the language system as a whole. As a result of such atomization of language structure, the language system becomes a long list of individual and disconnected universals. This sort of typology often calls itself “structuralist,” but it is not consistent in promoting the structuralist point of view, since the regularities characterizing the whole system escape its attention. (1972, 10)

G. P. Mel'nikov later criticized the structuralist approach from the same perspective.

In turn, Katsnel'son proposes “involving the content aspect into the orbit of typological investigations,” arguing that “languages also demonstrate features of similarity and difference in the domain of content.” He also draws attention to the notion of content representing a universal component of language structure (1972, 11).

Seeing the task of content-based typology in the delimiting of universal and ideo-ethnic functions, which form the amalgam in the content of language forms, Katsnel'son makes no mention of typological features being characteristic for certain groups of languages possessing structural closeness with respect to their semantics. However, the existence of such features is proved, in particular, by the presence of certain types of case, number, tense, modality, voice, and aspect systems in the languages of the world. No matter how grammatical categories are formally expressed, and whether languages are related or not, the meanings expressed within the framework of one or the other category may have similar structures.

It should be added, however, that, lately, the study of universals has progressed not only in the number of common regularities discovered but also in terms of the systematization and explanation of the gathered data (see, for example, Bybee 1985; Comrie 1989; Croft 2003; Song 2013).

**VLADIMIR G. ADMONI:  
THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL-DOMINANT APPROACH**

Edward Sapir's multidimensional approach to classifying languages, as well as other similar approaches that postulate the equivalence of features used in classification, may be counterposed by the multidimensional-dominant approach of V. G. Admoni, who proposed that grammatical structure be presented "in the whole diversity of its aspects and facets, as a dynamic and voluminous formation, with demonstration of its transitional and intermediate phenomena and with emphasis on the leading and dominant aspects" (Admoni 2004, 102).

According to Admoni, it is incorrect both to ignore the transitional phenomena and the objective complexity of the language system and to reject the search for dominant features in the grammatical structure of language. In advocating the systemic nature of grammatical theory, he understood it in terms of the diverse aspects of grammatical structure standing in correlation with the factors operating upon it. He stressed the fact that, in order for a language to be comprehended, a great number of approaches and aspects are required.

Admoni sees the multiaspectual nature of language at both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic level.

The multiaspectuality of the paradigmatic structure consists in the fact that "grammatical phenomena that are ascribed to a particular group in view of a certain feature may drift towards other groups in view of their other features" (Admoni 2004, 35). But the multiaspectuality in question, as it follows from V. G. Admoni's work, does not imply that language is unsystematic nor that it may not be described comprehensively. "In most cases, it is possible to distinguish among the various features of one or the other group those which are most important, the dominant ones, which give the group a certain integrity, a unity, even though there are some discrepancies between these features and other features of the same group" (35–36).

In setting out the tasks for grammatical theory, Admoni advocated for a methodology that would permit one to

1. study the form of a language in organic connection with grammatical meaning, while neglecting neither of these aspects;
2. connect individual grammatical phenomena with the specific character of grammatical systems; and
3. reveal all the many diverse aspects of grammatical phenomena and determine the organic unity of these aspects. (2004, 73).



For inflectional languages, paradigmatic multiaspectuality consists in their having grammatical homonymy and synonymy, different types of paradigms of a variant character, and paradigms containing segments located at the intersection of two parts of speech.

For agglutinative languages, paradigmatic multiaspectuality proceeds from the fact that many grammatical “indicators quite easily ‘travel’ from one category of words to another” (Admoni 2004, 37).

The multiaspectuality of syntagmatic structure shows up in the fact that the flow of speech, both in its acoustic form and in its meaning, is “a complex formation consisting of a number of overlapping threads that interact in diverse ways” (Admoni 2004, 41). For the German language, Admoni distinguishes the following threads of grammatical meaning overlaying the flow of speech:

1. those specifying and modifying lexical meanings (part of speech, number, gender, definiteness, measure and degree, syntactic orientation);
2. those expressing a connection with the speech act and its moment of occurrence as well as the speaker’s attitude toward the content of the utterance (tense, person, modality, emotional intensity, the cognitive attitude of the speaker, that is, the information structure); and
3. those expressing the role and place of the sentence in the process of communication (the communicative task of the sentence, its relationship to other sentences). (2004, 41–42)

V. G. Admoni formulates his classification of language types based on the traditional principle of the formal expression of grammatical meanings and distinguishes isolating, agglutinative, inflectional, and analytical types. The latter implies, so to say, formerly inflectional languages that have lost a considerable amount of their inflection and developed analytical features. At the same time, multidimensionality as the general principle for the constitution of grammatical phenomena of different types manifests itself in many ways and with varying intensity.

## **THE SYNTHESIZING PATHWAY OF PROGRESSION IN THE STUDY OF TYPOLOGICAL DYNAMICS**

It was I. I. Sreznevskii who first introduced the notion of a synthesizing pathway of progression in the study of typological dynamics and expressed the idea that the highly synthetic structure of such modern inflectional languages as Balto-Slavic may be explained not by the conservation of highly synthetic

developmental stages of inflection but by a stable further progression of the inflectional technique in comparison to its classical state, as, for example, in the structure of the Old Church Slavonic language. But this implied that reconstructions of language stages could start from a high level of inflectional synthesis and lead not toward analyticity but toward a yet higher level of synthesis. The phases of language evolution in this direction can be defined as synthetic stages.

I. I. Sreznevskii's typological views were proved to be accurate by A. A. Potebnia, who used a wide range of language material to compare the historical evolution of the Balto-Slavic languages to that of other Indo-European languages. He demonstrated, in particular, that objective boundaries could be observed between synthetic stages, such as the period in which the identical declination of nouns and adjectives was supplanted by a distinctive opposition in their forms, the period in which parataxic sentence constructions were replaced by hypotaxic ones, etc. (see Mel'nikov 2000, 13).

## **THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF TYPOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

Half a century ago, V. A. Zvegintsev pointed out a number of, at the time, prevailing approaches to the understanding of the tasks of linguistic typology:

1. a rejection of the evaluative and evolutionary treatment of the typological classification of languages (that of August and Friedrich Schlegel, August Schleicher, N. Ia. Marr);
2. a dynamic approach to the typological study of languages, acknowledging the possibility of structural changes in language;
3. a perception of genealogical classification as effectively being typological, that is, every language family is regarded as a separate language type;
4. the formulation of more complex classifications by way of increasing the number of taxonomic classes;
5. expansion onto new levels of the language system (such as phonology or syntax) in typological research;
6. the formulation of typological standards;
7. the formulation of cross-coordinate systems;
8. the application of quantitative methods to typology;
9. the search for universals; and
10. an increase of attention paid to the hypothesis of linguistic relativity. (Zvegintsev 1963, 10–15)

Importantly, all of the trends pointed out by Zvegintsev were further developed and came to enrich typological linguistics with new data and new conclusions. The dynamics of typological changes is under investigation by Östen Dahl, Joan Bybee, William Croft, and other scholars. The typological study of individual language families and groups has become widespread in descriptive and comparative linguistics. In the past two decades, many trends within generative grammar have turned to comparative and typological studies in the area of syntax. Quantitative methods have become an inseparable part of many segments of modern linguistics, and typology is not an exception. The study of universals is one of the most lively trends of linguistic typology, represented by Anna Wierzbicka, Joan Bybee, Bernard Comrie, William Croft, and Jae Jung Song. The hypothesis of linguistic relativity has long since found its place in cognitive linguistics as well as in a number of typological trends.

Vladimír Skalička has distinguished several schools in typology:

1. classificational typology: the substantiation and elaboration of language classification (Wilhelm Humboldt, Heymann Steintal, Franz Nikolaus Fink);
2. characterological typology: establishment of the typological characteristics of individual languages, discovering their specific characteristics in relation to typological standards and universals (Vilém Mathesius, Karl Vossler, Walter von Wartburg, Ernst Levi, Peter Hartmann);
3. the typology of types in language: grouping of individual phenomena (A. V. Isachenko, Jiří Krámský, Tadeusz Milewski, Vilém Mathesius);
4. stage-based typology (Edward Sapir, Marcel Cohen, Bohumil Trnka, Joseph Greenberg); and
5. implicational typology: establishment of the relations between phenomena (Roman Jakobson, B. A. Serebrennikov, Vladimír Skalička). (Skalička 1963, 25)

At present, the most developed of those mentioned previously is implicational typology, which has established numerous regular interconnections between language features.

An example of the use of two features to establish a classification of language can be found in C. E. Bazell's division of languages into classes based on the nature of segmentation and the classification of basic morphological units. Bazell points out that, in such languages as Vietnamese, linguists easily distinguish minimal meaningful segments but face difficulties in their classification. In Latin-like languages, however, classifying word forms presents no problem, but there is some difficulty in dividing them into morphs. As a result, the traditional morphological classification becomes two dimensional.

Language types are classified according to the peculiarities of segmentation and classification: in inflectional languages it is simple to classify units, in isolating languages it is simple to segment a text, in agglutinative languages both procedures are simple (Bazell 1958, 20–21).

C. E. Bazell does not mention the fourth, incorporating type, in which problems may arise both with segmentation (due to the presence of fusion) and with classification, because it is difficult to determine the central unit for morphological classification: is it the morpheme? the lexeme? an incorporative complex as a whole?

### **TRADITIONAL MORPHOLOGICAL TYPES IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN TYPOLOGY: THE TYPOLOGY OF FORMS IS NOT JUST A FORMAL TYPOLOGY**

In order to discover the typological specifics of incorporating languages, it has proved useful to apply the notion of the incorporative complex, introduced in Russian scholarship. An incorporative complex consists of stems merged into a single morphological entity, while each retains lexical and semantic independence. Such a complex is formed by joining dependent stems onto the main stem, such that the whole acquires a unified phonetic structure. A complex can function either as a part of a sentence or as a complete sentence in itself and possesses complex denotational or integrated predicative semantics. The structure of an incorporative complex contains roots and affixes (most frequently suffixes, prefixes, and confixes), which are linked by agglutination or by fusion, while the complex itself can have a single main stress and may correspond to the law of synharmonism. The notion of an incorporative complex is analyzed thoroughly in an article by P. Ia. Skorik, who notes that an incorporative complex outwardly resembles a compound word but, in contrast, expresses not an integrated but a compositional meaning and is not merely reproduced but rather formed in the process of speaking (Skorik 1963, 240). Together with incorporative complexes, incorporating languages manifest also analytical complexes, combinations of words united by common lexical semantics. P. Ia. Skorik distinguishes in the relevant languages four types of linguistic units (illustrated using the example of the Chukchi language):

1. the word (a linguistic unit of integrated meaning and integrated form):  
*kupren* “net”;
2. the incorporative complex (a unit of integrated form and compositional meaning): *t-y-nəran-kopra-ntyvat-y-rkyn* “I am setting two nets”;

3. the analytical complex (a unit of compositional form but integrated meaning): *lygi t-y-lg-y-rkyn* “I know”; and
4. the word combination (a unit of compositional form and compositional meaning): *ytlygyn kuprən* “father’s net.” (Skorik 1963, 242)

Thus, incorporation means that a communicational unit is formed according to the rules for forming denotational units in agglutinative or inflectional languages.

In agglutinative languages, word structure is both complex and transparent. Its complexity derives from its capacity for a great number of affixal morphemes, each of which expresses only one grammatical meaning in a typical agglutinative language. The transparency of the structure is provided by distinct morpheme junctions and a strict ordering of morphs within a word form. “No matter how complex a word may be in its composition and number of affixes, it is easily divided into constituent parts and easily reveals its root which, as a rule, remains invariable and, on the whole, retains its phonetic form” (Baskakov 1963, 77).

In Turkic languages, a classic example of agglutinative languages, the word structure includes

1. the root, coinciding with the form of a nominal unit in the nominative singular or a verb in the second person and the imperative mood;
2. suffixes for lexical and grammatical word formation, by either (a) conversion, that is, forming a part of speech, or (b) modification, that is, specifying the lexical meaning of the stem;
3. functional and grammatical suffixes (of the substantive, of the attributive of substance, or of the attribute), in other words, derivational suffixes; and
4. inflectional suffixes. (See Baskakov 1963, 83)

A crucial question for typology is that of the substantial difference between agglutinative and inflectional languages. The devotees of Indo-European comparative linguistics saw this difference first of all in the nature of the intermorpheme connections within a word and in the system of grammatical categories. G. D. Sanzheev, for instance, mentions grammatical gender and dual number among the nonagglutinative phenomena in the history of the Altai languages (Sanzheev 1963, 270). Some scholars consider the category of case to be a hallmark of inflectionality.

In actual fact, the presence of the mentioned grammatical categories is not an indication of inflectionality in a language. The dual number exists in the (incorporating) Chukchi language as well as in the Koryak language, which is

characterized as agglutinative suffix-prefixal with developed stem compounding and incorporation as a means of syntactic connection (Zhukova 2001, 149). The Papuan languages Aua, Biaka, and Kiwai manifest the triple number and agreement in number with verbs and adjectives (Mel'chuk 1998, 98).

The category of gender is represented in the agglutinative Dravidian and Nakh-Dagestanian languages and in the Ket and Burushaski languages. And in the languages of the Bantu family, it exists within the wider category of class. The supposed absence of gender in agglutinative languages was deduced from the material of Turkic, Mongolic, and the Finno-Ugric languages, in which there happens to be no gender.

Neither is the category of case a feature necessary nor unique to the inflectional type, for it is represented in Turkic, Mongolic, Finno-Ugric, Chukotko-Kamchatkan, Australian, Quechua, and some other American languages. The most complex case systems are those found in the agglutinative Nakh-Dagestanian languages. In Spanish, Italian, and other modern Romanic languages, the category of nominal case is absent, even though these languages are inflectional. It is not the category of case itself that is connected with inflectionality but case agreement inside nominal groups, which is not characteristic of noninflectional languages, as well as the presence of several paradigms of case inflectional morphology (types of declension).

At the same time, the morphological, that is, formal classification of languages cannot be regarded as completely independent of their morphological-semantic classification, for there are some clear implications between them. For example, the category of case is not represented in isolating languages, and no more than eight case forms can be observed in inflectional languages.

Some scholars see the difference between inflectional and agglutinative languages only in their degree of fusion (Danilenko 2010, 21). Of course, even in languages ascribed to the types in question, the differences in their external form cannot be reduced to the degree of fusion; the most significant difference concerns the internal form of these two language types, the communicational aspect of inflectional languages being directed first of all toward reflection of the event structure of the situation and that of agglutinative languages focused mainly on the description of the background and the qualitative characteristics of the situation depicted.

The problem of inflection was thoroughly considered by Wilhelm von Humboldt. He pointed out the cases in which “to the act of designating a *concept* itself there is allied also a special operation of mind which transposes this notion into a particular *category* of thought or speech; and the word's full meaning is the simultaneous outcome of that conceptual expression and this modifying hint” (Humboldt 1988, 100).

Thus, inflectionality is a quality of language consisting in the designation of a concrete concept accompanied by some general category in the integratively formed denotational unit.

According to Humboldt, inflection emerges in a language when it is necessary to “attach a twofold expression to the word in accordance with the needs of changing speech or the word’s enduring meaning, and without prejudice to its simplicity impart a word a twofold expression in accordance with the changeable needs of speech and without harm to its constant meaning and simplicity” (1988, 102).

Humboldt points out the indissoluble combination of the feeling of inflection and the striving for verbal unity (1988, 107), as well as the functional role of inflection in the structure of a sentence: “it demands the appropriate articulation of the sentence and freedom in forming the latter,” and, what is far more important, “it awakens a more accurate and perspicuous insight into the way that thoughts are put together” (108).

The principal feature of the agglutinative type is the generation of forms of independent words with the help of monosemantic affixes freely attached to the initial form. Wilhelm Humboldt regards agglutination as the incorporation of concepts and the representation of things in all their specificity, as a phenomenon that differs from inflection not in type but in the extent to which it organically expresses grammatical meanings.

The important features of agglutination are

- transparency of syntagmatic word structure, with unrestricted subdivision into morphemes;
- the axial nature of the paradigmatic structure, with unrestricted generation of word forms; and
- the linear nature of the word, exhibiting a convergence of the stem with the root and with any word form that serves to generate a more complex word form in terms of the number of its grammatical meanings.

Agglutinative affixes are characterized by the following features:

- monosemy: each affix expresses, as a rule, one category;
- variance: an affix usually has no variants; and
- free attachment to the word.

Agglutinative languages are characterized by highly developed affixation in derivation and inflectional morphology, an absence of morpheme variants except for those conditioned phonetically, an absence of grammatical alternations, and a unified type of declension and conjugation.

B. A. Serebrennikov noted that, in agglutinative languages, any noun can take on the role of an attribute, for example, Mansi *norkol* “house of logs” (lit. “a log, a house”) (Serebrennikov 1965, 14).

Thus, *agglutination* is a property of language consisting in the designation of a concrete concept by an independent root—or the unity of a concrete concept with more general ones by means of a freely constructed denotational unit.

In languages of the *isolating* type, morphology cannot be seen as central to the language system because the relations between words are not manifested in the words themselves. The leading tendency in the sentence structure of such languages is, of course, isolation, which is described by V. M. Solntsev as follows: “isolation is a way of connecting words in a sentence by which the forms of words do not express a relationship to other words, such that the syntactic function of a word is unmarked” (Solntsev 1995, 9).

Accordingly, *isolation* is a property of a language consisting in the designation of specific and general concepts by independent root morphemes and the conversion of stable syntactic groups into reproduceable denotational units.

This makes the morphological typology of isolating languages especially interesting because, in the languages of three other types, especially the inflectional type, morphology is undoubtedly the organizing component of the grammar in its paradigmatic composition, and for inflectional languages also in their syntagmatic organization.

In isolating languages, the syntactic level comes to the forefront in both syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations. The paradigmatic choice in formulating an utterance becomes the choice of a syntactic construction, and the constructions themselves become entities expressing grammatical categories. Accordingly, although the structure of levels in language is universal, the correlation of levels and their functions may have typological differences. Moreover, linguists have noticed that the question of determining the boundaries between morphology and syntax is frequently rather difficult and closely related to the language type. Thus, the question of the word as a structural and grammatical unit of language is also typologically significant. The very definition of the word from a structural point of view turns out not to be universal but dependent on the language type. When participating in the formulation of an utterance, a word performs lexical and syntactical functions, the realization of which is bound both by its morphological semantics and its morphological structure. In inflectional languages, syntactic units are characterized by the interaction of morphological, semantic, and functional features. In isolating languages, the functional and semantic features come to the forefront; morphological features are not present everywhere, rather only where derivational forms of a word exist. For example, in Chinese, demonstrative pronouns used



attributively may take suffixes indicating singularity, but when these same pronouns act as subjects, such suffixes are never used.

In the syntagmatic relations of isolating languages, an active role is played by root morphemes, compound words, and various syntactic groups, including parenthesis. In paradigmatic relations, the lexical and syntactic paradigms prevail; in some cases there are derivational paradigms, while paradigms of derivational morphology are exclusively rare. It is no wonder that the theoretical and practical grammars of isolating languages are devoted mainly to syntax.

A most important feature of morphemes in isolating languages is their monosyllabism, whereby each morpheme consists of one syllable, no more and no less, and any syllable in the language in question is a morpheme. This feature allows one to distinguish the syllabic morpheme as the minimal morphophonological unit. The syllabic morphemes of isolating languages possess a syllabic tone, which is a significant differentiating feature. Such morphemes are easily distinguished: they can be recognized on the basis of syllable boundaries. They are entirely invariant in form, being minimal units not only at the level of morphology but also at the level of phonology, so they allow no alternation of phonemes.

Root morphemes are always polysemantic, while the morpheme inventory is limited by the number of syllables and tones possible in the language in question. Affix morphemes do not differ formally from root morphemes, for they originate from roots that have become attached to the word and lost their individual lexical meanings. These affixes are either monosemantic or express very broad and abstract meanings.

Some morphemes of isolating languages, such as the Chinese morphemes *-la*, *-men*, *-zi*, *-tou*, are used only as part of a word. When separated from words, these morphemes are perceived as having some meaning, but they cannot be used alone in a sentence (Solntsev 1978, 260). Other morphemes can be both a part of a word and a separate word; for example, the Chinese word *panzi* “a fat man” includes the morpheme *pan-*, which can also be the simple word *pan* “fat” (260). Thus, in isolating languages, a simple word and a root morpheme represent similar phenomena: the same grammatical unit can be both a morpheme and a word. “Isolating languages demonstrate a mass mutual conversion of words and morphemes” (265).

Morphemes in isolating languages also have no paradigms, as their syntagms are characterized by distinct boundaries and an absence of phonetic interaction between them in a linear sequence. The phonetic distinctiveness of morphemes is provided by the convergence of the morpheme and the word.

Typical syntagmatic models of word structure in isolating languages are: (1) root (R) and (2) root + root (RR), root + affix (Rd). The typical length of

a word is two to four morphemes, though a word may comprise up to six or more root morphemes.

In internal syntagms, as well as in external ones, the main and subordinate components are distinguished. In derived words, the root is the main component and the affix is subordinate. In compound words, the main component is one of the roots, whichever expresses the core meaning of the compound word.

Word formation in isolating languages tends largely toward agglutination. The affixes are monosemantic, invariant in form, and easily distinguished in the word structure. The stems are independent, the roots are phonematically unchangeable. In some cases, fusional phenomena are possible. For example, in the Chinese language, there are several cases of simplification with two roots fusing into one: *hama* “frog,” *hude* “butterfly,” *yingu* “parrot,” *ugun* “centipede,” *pianfu* “bat,” *kedao* “tadpole” (Sofronov 1979, 23). Sometimes, an unclear morphemic boundary occurs in Chinese: *nar* “there” consists of the root *na-* and the suffix *-er*, while *zher* “here” consists of the root *zhe-* and the suffix *-er*.

Isolating languages are characterized by having an analytical structure:

- information is partitioned in the structure of the utterance—syntactic meanings are disclosed separately from lexical ones by means of word order and functional words;
- information is partitioned in the structure of the word—the roots of a compound word express separate semes, which each go into the meaning of the word;
- inflectional morphology is absent;
- roots can be separate words;
- grammatical information is, as a rule, expressed external to the word, rarely by affixes;
- there are no grammatical classes of words;
- there is no grammatical homonymy and synonymy;
- the order of elements performs a grammatical function; and
- there are no grammatical complexes in the structure of words.

In the opinion of V. M. Solntsev and N. V. Solntseva, which should be strongly supported, “the lack of expression of the relations between words within the words themselves is a hallmark of isolation. The higher the degree of isolation, the higher the analyticity of the language” (Solntseva and Solntsev 1965, 84).

Of current importance for typological linguistics is the question of the status of morphological classification. While formulated on the basis of just

one level of language, it has historically been regarded as, and is, in fact—as demonstrated by typological studies carried out on the material of other levels—the most universal classification, capable of revealing the most significant features of language structure. At the same time, attempts are being made to formulate phonetic, syntactic, semantic, and functional classifications of languages. And the debate in linguistics is ongoing as to whether a language's type is related to the type of thinking and culture of its speakers. A scientific approach to this question implies investigating concrete examples of such relationships and their essence and manifestations, and it is too early to say that such a comprehensive approach has prevailed.

The constant technical issue in typology is the relevance of typological features, their significance for the entire system of language. Here it is important to apply a strict, unified terminology to the various languages and to have verifiable definitions of terms or reference models of typological phenomena. Linguists working on typology must also understand the inner logic of national linguistic traditions and the internal forms of their nationally specific linguistic terms.

## *Chapter Three*

# **The Prospects of Creating a Semantic Language Typology**

Semantic typology is a new subdiscipline of linguistics based upon the broad but theoretically unconsolidated material of comparative-historical semantics as well as upon ethnolinguistics and the theory of translation. Although these disciplines have addressed semantic similarities and differences between languages, they have each pursued their own goals: proving the relatedness of languages, demonstrating the ethnic specificity of languages, and overcoming difficulties in the translation of lexical units. Semantic typology pursues a different objective: to explain in which way languages reflect the content of human thinking, that is, to explain similarities and differences in the semantic organization of languages. Semantic typology is aimed at developing principles for language classification according to semantic criteria and distinguishing languages according to semantic types (classes) and the semantic character of each individual language.

The prospective tasks of semantic typology may be formulated as follows:

- classification of languages according to their dominant morphological and semantic word type;
- classification of languages according to their dominant lexical and semantic word type;
- classification of languages according to their dominant types of grammatical features;
- determining types of semantic fields; and
- grouping languages according to their characteristic types of semantic fields.

Morphological and semantic word types include simple (nonmotivated) and composite (motivated) words; the latter are divided into lexically synthetic

(with a phraseological, indivisible meaning) and lexically analytical (drawn from the meanings of the morphemes they include) words.

Lexical and semantic types of words include monosemantic and polysemantic. Polysemantic words are divided into types with regard to metaphoric and metonymic transfer and into topological types with regard to structural connections between meanings: those of a chain-like, radial, or mixed structure. Radial polysemy can be found in the figurative meanings of the word *circle*, chain polysemy is present in the word *right*, and mixed polysemy characterizes the word *heat* (Novikov 1997a, 232–33).

The task of classifying languages according to the dominant types of grammatical categories can benefit from the classifications of Edward Sapir, G. A. Klimov, S. D. Katsnel'son, I. G. Miloslavskii, and I. A. Mel'chuk.

## THE TYPOLOGY OF SEMANTIC FIELDS

Of special significance for the semantic comparison of languages is the typology of word classes and semantic fields.

Among the semantics fields, L. M. Vasil'ev mentions the following: (1) semantic classes of words of a single part of speech, (2) semantically correlated classes of words of various parts of speech, (3) lexical and grammatical (functional semantic) fields, (4) paradigms of syntactic constructions connected by transformational relations, and (5) various types of semantic and syntactic syntagms (Vasil'ev 1990, 126). L. V. Vasil'ev specifies semantic classes of words of a single part of speech as “lexical fields of a paradigmatic type” but, at the same time, finds it advisable “to differentiate semantic classes of words and semantic fields” (126). The semantic classes of words of a single part of speech consist, according to Vasil'ev, of lexical and grammatical categories, synonymous and antonymous sets of words, and lexical and semantic groups. The semantically correlated classes of words of different parts of speech include “derivational clusters of transpositional types and sets of words like *uspech* ‘success’ – *povezlo* ‘had a lucky result’, *zvonit* ‘ring up’ – *telefon* ‘telephone’, *do* ‘until’ – *predshestvovat* ‘precede’” (Vasil'ev 1990, 33). From the point of view of structure, Vasil'ev distinguishes paradigmatic, syntagmatic and mixed (complex) fields (135). In addition, he also mentions the existence alongside semantic fields of associative and notional fields (136).

According to V. N. Denisenko, the type of a field is determined according to what part of speech its nuclear unit functions as, the way the field is expanded, and the manner in which derivatives are formed and included into the semantic field. Denisenko singles out the processual, feature-,

and object-based (concrete and abstract) semantic fields, as well as other types of fields, namely those of “coordinates” and “direction,” where the principal role is played by adverbs, pronouns, and other parts of speech (Denisenko 2002, 53–54).

Similar lexical and semantic phenomena exist both in related and in unrelated languages. Related languages will necessarily possess some similar semantic features, explained both by the existence of universals and by the common origin and initial internal form; unrelated languages will have some similarities due to the general nature of universals.

Thus, the subject of semantic typology deals with the comparability of lexical and semantic units as well as categories and classes, the task of determining criteria for comparison, and the issue of discovering universal and typological features in the domain of semantics. Semantic typology is impossible without a theoretically grounded classification of the individual facts of the lexicon and semantics, such as those pertaining to the distinguishing of types of synonyms, antonyms, and polysemantic words.

Semantic typology, it seems, will be able to generalize the results of specific descriptive studies of the semantics of various languages and permit us to compare the world’s languages from the standpoint of language content and to reliably characterize the ways that ethnically specific worldviews are linguistically constructed.

## THE ORIGINS OF SEMANTIC TYPOLOGY

The history of semantic typology has its roots in Wilhelm von Humboldt’s ideas about the necessity of studying the relationship of languages to the world of the concepts that comprise their general content and of understanding the character of each individual language in the context of its speakers’ ethnic culture and history.

Humboldt acknowledged the peculiarity of each language both in terms of form and content; at the same time, he believed that the content of each language also contained universal elements, though the entirety of a language’s content cannot be reduced to its universal component. He warned against possible erroneous interpretations of the role of language in the process of perceiving the world: “It is already in itself most precarious to seek to assess from its *dictionary* the range of concepts possessed by a people at a given time. A large number of . . . concepts . . . may be expressed through metaphors, to us unfamiliar and hence unknown, or else, by circumlocutions” (Humboldt 1988, 33). According to Humboldt, the passive role of language in relation to thought was just as natural as its active role. While the latter

was deduced by him from the idioethnicity of languages, the former was conditioned by the universal nature of all languages. He argued that the experience of translation out of very different languages, as well as the fact that the most primitive and undeveloped languages find use during initiation into the most sacred religious revelations, demonstrate that any concept can be expressed in any language, albeit with a greater or lesser degree of success (see Humboldt 1988, 315).

The typological study of semantics, in fact, begins with Humboldt's idea of the *internal form of a language*, or its type of semantic organization and, in a broader sense, the relationship of the language's content to extralinguistic (mental) content.

Humboldt persistently stressed the idea of the typological relatedness of all languages. Thus, he did not approve of a one-sided approach to the problem of language diversity, according to which languages are seen as either absolutely identical or absolutely different. The antinomy of identity and difference, both universal and individual, loses its antagonistic character: "For in language the *individualization* within the general *conformity* is so wonderful, that we may say with equal correctness that the whole of mankind has but one language, and that every man has one of his own" (Humboldt 1988, 53).

In formulating the principle of the typological relatedness of languages, Humboldt speaks of the typological nonhomogeneity of the functional content of linguistic forms. The functional essence of language (its "goals") and the general principles of language structure (its "means") are the same everywhere, as they are "in accord with general human nature." But, aside from the unity of such structural principles as, for instance, the coherence of human speech, the presence within it of discreet and continuous elements, the division of its structure into grammar and vocabulary, etc., languages possess a unity of content, which makes multilingualism, that is, the command of several languages and translation from one language into another, fundamentally possible. Precisely "in their intellectual component," languages must and do manifest a significant similarity. The lack of a rigid interdependence between meaning and sound pattern leads to the fact that the differences between languages are especially striking in their phonetic expression. But Humboldt is aware of the fact that there are "substantial differences" in the intellectual aspect as well.

Hence, in the "intellectual part" of language structure, universal and specific elements necessarily coexist. The universal elements underlie the unity of all languages, which manifests itself in "multilingualism," "language contact," the possibility of learning foreign languages, and translation. But for many reasons that Humboldt does not clarify, the intellectual part also implies differences that account for the varying adequacy of translations.

Finding out the correlation of universal and unique elements in languages' structures becomes, according to Humboldt, one of the key problems to be addressed by general language theory.

While the conceptual kernel in various linguistic worldviews is mainly the same (for example, the concept "change" [see Denisenko 2004] is present in every ethnically specific worldview), the ways of segmenting reality are, undoubtedly, different. This very fact underlies the whole theory of linguistic relativity. According to Humboldt, the founder of the theory of linguistic relativity, different languages are by no means different denotations of the same thing but different ways of seeing it.

Humboldt wrote that the ethnic originality of spirit and character manifests itself in the designation of concepts and the linkage of thought in a sentence and that "there takes shape in language an artistically creative principle which belongs quite specifically to it" (Humboldt 1988, 90). If we search through the words of a particular language, we may recognize the threads of their connection and depict the general procedure of individualization therein (92). It is through the mode of thinking and sensing of a given people that a language acquires its color and character (148).

Humboldt expanded the notion of the form of language from the external aspect of language (sounds) to the internal aspect (the content of language). He protested against understanding language as the "garb of thought" and proclaimed it "the organ of thought." Possessing its own specific internal form, a language directs the cognitive activity of its speakers along a special ethnically specific route, thus establishing limits within which they can perceive the world. Every language thus possesses cognitive power in relation to its speakers. It becomes an intermediate world between objective reality and the perceiving subject. It becomes a prism through which a person sees the world. One can get rid of this prism only by exchanging the prism of one's native language for the prism of a foreign language.

Accordingly, the most complex systemic objects of semantic typology are linguistic worldviews, which combine universal and ethnically specific concepts. Let us stress that a linguistic worldview, unlike a general worldview, is a specific linguistic category representing the sum of all reconstructed semantic fields and classes of interrelated and interdependent language units. Assuming that any language conceptualizes the world in a certain way, the linguistic worldview may be defined as the conceptual worldview of a human. It is the sum of knowledge about the world imprinted in linguistic units (Denisenko and Rybakov 2009, 31).

The question of the semantic specificity of languages has been raised also within the framework of characterology, as developed by representatives of the Prague linguistic circle. Thus, Vilém Mathesius wrote that every



language, in perceiving reality in its own way, formalizes it in accordance with its own system of signs. That is why every language is quite original in its reflection of reality and contains a number of peculiarities that cannot be reproduced in any other language (see Mathesius 2003, 55).

According to Iu. V. Rozhdestvenskii, the difference between typological and characterological methods consists in the fact that in characterology the list of differential features is open, and in typology the list of languages is open (Rozhdestvenskii 1969, 44).

The typological problems of semantics were discussed also by V. G. Gak, B. Iu. Gorodetskii, G. A. Klimov, A. M. Kuznetsov, M. M. Makovskii, and B. A. Uspenskii.

### THE STRUCTURALIST MODEL OF SEMANTIC TYPOLOGY

B. Iu. Gorodetskii was the first to formulate the problems of semantic typology based on a description of the essence and structure of the domain of language content. He defined semantic typology as a component part of the typological study of languages concerning “semantics (the whole language domain of content without any exception)” (Gorodetskii 1969, 9). According to Gorodetskii, the core of semantic typology includes questions as to what the principles of semantic organization of information are, how they are realized in languages, and which of them are universal. He formulates the tasks of semantic typology, defines its categories and methods, and outlines the possible prospects for its applied use.

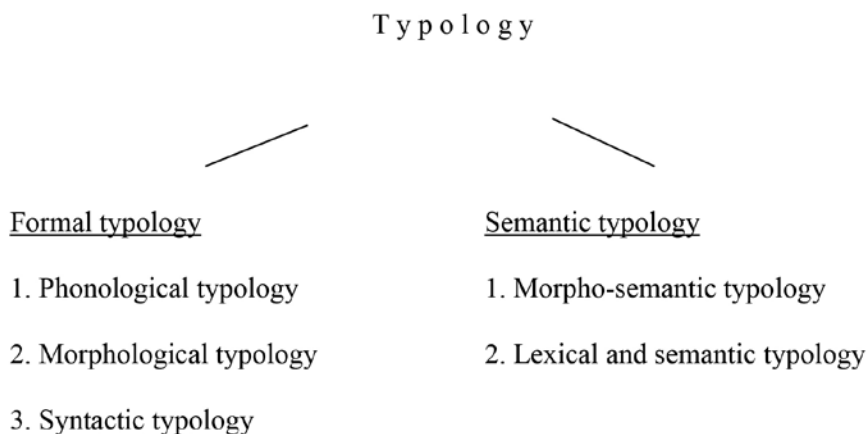
Gorodetskii holds that an important characteristic of the language system as a whole is a lack of isomorphism between the domains of content and expression and the presence of a specific system of levels in each domain (Gorodetskii 1969, 44–45). At the same time, “different languages manifest different kinds of interdependence, different extents of separateness from each other,” which, in itself, is an important issue for typology (49).

Regarding the question of whether typology will be aided by classifying the criteria of different levels together, Gorodetskii argues that combining several “conditional and one-sided” classifications into one may make it multifaceted, but it remains contingent and schematic (Gorodetskii 1969, 56). He offers a new definition of the *linguistic type*, “a system of features on the basis of which representative components for different languages are equated” (64), as well as a definition of typology as a science of linguistic types and “of the inter-language models of language substructures” (75). Nevertheless, sharing in the criticism of schematic and unreasoned classifications, Gorodetskii considers classification an inseparable part—and the logical completion—of typology (73).

B. Iu. Gorodetskii distinguishes the main categories of typology, giving the central place to the category of language characteristics, while the other categories are divided into four groups:

1. those describing the objects under comparison:
  - the typified domain;
  - the representant of the type;
  - typification; and
  - inventory taking;
2. those relevant to objects at the interlanguage level:
  - typological characteristics; and
  - typological identification;
3. those related to linguistic types:
  - the essential type; and
  - the extent of the type's prevalence; and
4. those relevant to classification:
  - typological class;
  - total typological class;
  - initial typological class; and
  - typological classification. (Gorodetskii 1969, 88–102)

The composition of typology as a scientific discipline is represented in the monograph just cited by figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1. Typology.**

Source: Rybakov 2016.

In addition to this figure, the author mentions graphical typology, the typology of related languages, and general typology (Gorodetskii 1969, 127–29).

The classification of types builds upon several bases and is presented according to

- the prevalence of a language's structure: global and specific types;
- the prevalence of a language's classes: universal and specific types;
- the nature of the content: relational, correlational, and relational-correlational;
- the relationship to level-related characteristics: homogeneous, intersecting, and combined; and
- abstractness: logically possible, linguistically possible, hypothetical, heuristic, standards, and meta-types. (Gorodetskii 1969, 104–20)

The main stages of the typological work itself are presented as follows:

1. taking inventory of language data;
2. uniform description of a specific domain that is typical for a group of languages;
3. discovery, description, study, and interpretation of linguistic types; and
4. pointing out of linguistic regularities. (Gorodetskii 1969, 121)

The necessity of developing semantic typology is explained by the developmental needs of both semantics and typology. Semantics requires it due to the fact that it is impossible to fully grasp the domain of content without comparative data on many (ideally all) human languages. Typology must turn to semantics for the sake of completeness and adequacy in presenting the language systems under study. With respect to application, the results of semantic typology will be significant for modeling human speech, the theory and practice of translation, bilingual lexicography, and methods of teaching foreign languages (Gorodetskii 1969, 280–81).

The subject matter of semantic typology, according to Gorodetskii, is the domain of language content (semantic structure).

A semantic structure is a kind of sum of what exists in the minds of different speakers, but this sum is not artificial, because the full semantic structure is a system whose internal unity is based on the fact that it subordinates all texts, *all* speech segments *in the given language*, and the core of this structure is the totality of those structural elements which, for the most part, are located in the mind of every speaker. (Gorodetskii 1969, 132–33, emphasis in original)

The goal of semantic typology, according to Gorodetskii, is the study of *semantic types*. A semantic type is defined as “an abstract semantic substructure of a group of languages that is inherent to them in the sense of their possessing specific semantic substructures corresponding to the abstract substructure in question.” The specific substructures are called representants (Gorodetskii 1969, 284).

On the other hand, a semantic type is defined as the system of all characteristics on the basis of which the components of a sum of representants are identified (Gorodetskii 1969, 239).

The components of a semantic type are the typological characteristics of semantic relations and the totalities of semantic units.

A fragment of semantic structure that is studied to single out representants of certain semantic types is called a *typified domain*. The sum of the features of a semantic element that allows including it into the typified domain is called an *identifier*.

Important notions of semantic typology are the *information segment* (information to be transmitted or stored by means of a certain language) and the *informational domain* (the sum of information taken in general, without regard to the possibility of its transmission) (Gorodetskii 1969, 139).

B. Iu. Gorodetskii defines the tasks of semantic typology as follows:

- reveal sufficiently content-rich semantic types: semantic and typological classification of languages (the main task);
- develop the concept of a semantic type and related notions for various domains of semantic structure;
- develop the concept of a content-revealing semantic type;
- develop the methods of semantic and typological research;
- take an inventory of semantic data for many languages;
- reveal and describe specific semantic types on the basis of extensive material;
- compare languages of prominent semantic types and categorize languages according to semantic and typological classes (including complex classifications);
- distinguish the semantic types prevailing in the world's languages;
- study semantic types from the standpoint of their psycholinguistic and other interpretations that reveal the semantic laws of human speech; and
- discover semantic and typological (including universal) regularities that demonstrate the interconnection of semantic types, characterize the correlation of the possible and the impossible in a semantic structure, and reveal the principles of organization of information in human languages. (Gorodetskii 1969, 252–53)

Semantic typology is divided into the following parts:

1. the typology of intersememe correlations;
2. the typology of semantic fields;
3. the typology of semantic categories;
4. the typology of the obligatory (grammatical) component in the domain of content;
5. the typology of relational-correlational semantic types showing the principles of the interaction of paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations;
6. the typology of semantic layers (denotative, significative, expressive, syntactic) and semantic arch-units; and
7. the typology of the levels in the domain of content (morpho-semantic, lexical, and semantic). (Gorodetskii 1969, 278–91)

*Relational semantic typology* studies the principle of connecting semantic units into morpho-semantic and lexical and semantic complexes. It addresses the compatibility of semantic units, semantic valency, semantic distribution, the significance of the order of a sequence of semantic units, the semantic correctness of syntagms, and the distinguishing of relational semantic types.

On the basis of A. K. Zholkovskii's and I. A. Mel'chuk's theory of lexical parameters, a typology of parametric and semantic successive relations can be established.

A further item is the typology of the semantic relational framework of sentences.

Still another trend is the typology of the relations of "semantic addition." This involves the study of semantic relations in the case of simple juxtaposition of units, such as parts of a compound word or independent syntactic elements in a phrase (Gorodetskii 1969, 271–76).

Correlational semantic typology studies the principles of the paradigmatic organization of a totality of semantic units in the world's languages. The typology of metaphor and metonymy and of the topological structures of polysemantic words as well as the comparison of the systems of their meanings also belong to the typology of intrasystem correlations.

The *typology of semantic layers* concerns the types of information contained in semantic units.

The typology of the denotative layer reveals the denotative focuses of a language, that is, the main domains of material and spiritual culture that are key to the ethnically specific linguistic worldview.

The typology of the significative layer concerns the interlingual description of the way in which semantic units are linked with concepts. The main task of such research is to develop a meta-language capable of making eth-

nically specific concepts comparable. Such concepts include not only designations of cultural realia but also the whole lexicon, except for universal units (semantic primitives).

The typology of the expressive layer describes the conditions of using speech units in specific situations of interlocution and requires the comparison of many expressive units.

The typology of the syntactic layer studies the semantic types at the syntactic level. The semantic units at this level are segments of information concerning the relations between parts of a speech segment.

## THE TYPOLOGY OF LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC CATEGORIES

The typology of lexical and semantic categories was developed by L. A. Novikov.

One of the universal categories in language is *polysemy*, defined by Novikov as “a semantic relationship within inwardly bound (motivated) meanings expressed by forms of one word (one lexeme) and delimited in a text due to different mutually exclusive positions of the word” (Novikov 2001, 568). An LSV in the structure of a polysemantic word can be motivated (bound) by relations of contiguity (*metonymy*) or similarity (*metaphor*).

Polysemy can be shown in the following example:

$$\text{bar}_1 \rightleftharpoons \text{bar}_2 \rightleftharpoons \text{bar}_3 \rightleftharpoons \text{bar}_4$$

(1) “a long rigid piece of material”; 2) “a room in which alcohol is served”; 3) “a (notional) partition in a courtroom”; 4) “a unit of pressure.”

Among the types of metonymy, L. A. Novikov distinguishes such relationships of meanings as: action – result of action; action – place of action; action – instrument of action; quality – bearer of quality; container – the contained; whole – part; object – material; etc.

Types of metaphors are established on the basis of their being motivated by similarity of form, appearance, impression made, location, structure of the action, structure of the evaluation, that is, of a quality, a feature, or a function (Novikov 2001, 575–81).

Furthermore, Novikov distinguishes associative, notional, and associative-notional types of polysemy based on the logical or psychological character of the relationship between the meanings: radial, chain, and radial-chain types of polysemy, according to the way that specific meanings are linked with one another in terms of topology (Novikov 2001, 575–81).

Metaphor types were previously described by Hermann Paul, who doubted the possibility of giving an exhaustive account of them and distinguished, for example, similarity of shape (*head of a cabbage*), of position (*foot a mountain*), of function (*head of a procession*), of behavior (*whip—an official in the British Parliament whose duty is to see that members are present at voting*), of color (*orange, hazel*), in terms of space–time analogy (*a long way – a long day*), etc. (Paul 1960, 115–17).

Synonymy as a lexical category is “a semantic connection of identical or similar meanings expressed formally by different words (LSV) which fulfill the functions of replacement or specification, as well as stylistic functions, in a text” (Paul 1960, 614). Synonyms are divided into two types: semantic (ideographic) and stylistic. Semantic synonyms differ in their shades of meaning (*quick – hasty*), stylistic synonyms coincide in meaning but vary in style (*verification – checking*). Antonymy is “the semantic relation of opposed meanings expressed by formally different words (LSV) which fulfill the function of opposition and other related functions in a text” (Novikov 2001, 638). Antonyms are commonly subdivided into words expressing contrary (*cold – hot*), complementary (*true – false*), and vector-related oppositions (*forward – backward*).

## CONTENTIVE TYPOLOGY

G. A. Klimov, the originator of the concept of a contentive typology of languages, attempted to formulate a typological model of language on the basis of different-level (lexical, syntactic, and morphological), mutually implicating features, pointing out that “it is in the domain of the lexicon that the fundamental features of language structure lie” (Klimov 1976, 125). In this case, of special importance is the study of the lexical and grammatical categories of the noun and the verb. Such a division is widespread in the world’s languages, and the underlying semantic features may be either general or quite specific. Contentive typology, according to Klimov, concerns not the content aspect of a language but only one aspect of content, which, in his opinion, is both universal and the most significant, that is, the way the language conveys the subject–object relations of reality. Hereby, “the semantic determinants of different language types may be represented as different degrees of closeness to the principles of the subject–object opposition” (Klimov 2009, 42).

Klimov saw the futility of understanding typology as a set of classifications based on arbitrarily chosen features. Thus, he argued for a deterministic characterization of language types and the need of demonstrating their systemwide character. He also noted that it was Humboldt who first commented

on the intersecting evidence of different levels of language structure (Klimov 2009, 32). In his definition of the subject matter of diachronic typology, Klimov includes the processes of parallel development of language structures.

In explaining the syntactic types of languages in terms of contentive typology, G. A. Klimov singles out coordinate features in each of them and poses a question about the semantic determinant of these types.

The semantic determinant of the *class-based* type differs from the determinants of all other types in its stable morphological encoding of a certain set of semantic roles in the form of morphological nominal classes ranging in quantity from several classes to merely the binary opposition of animate–inanimate. A class acts as a nondeclensional category in the case of nouns and as a syntactic (relational) category in the case of adjectives and verbs. Examples of this language type are the languages of the Bantu family (Klimov 2009, 114).

The semantic determinant of the *active* type consists in the basic opposition for the semantics of an utterance being that of active and inactive actions and the resulting morphological differences between active and stative verbs and between active and stative nouns, or even between active and stative nominal cases, which distinguish the subjects of active or stative verbs, as well as other nominal groups.

Given such a determinant, the opposition between active and inactive sentence structures plays a leading role in syntax and implicates a series of morphological phenomena:

- the verbal category of centrifugal and centripetal versions (the first implies the action spreading beyond the limits of the agent);
- the prominent role of the manner of an action (aspect) as opposed to the category of tense; and
- the existence of a category distinguishing the forms of alienable and inalienable possession.

Examples of the active language type are the languages of the Tupi-Guarani family (Klimov 2009, 94).

The semantic determinant of languages of the *ergative* type is a division of verbs into two semantic classes, namely agentive verbs denoting an action that modifies the object and factitive verbs denoting a state of the subject or an action that concerns the object in only a perfunctory manner. The basic opposition in the case system of ergative languages is formed by the absolute case and the ergative case. The object of a transitive action in an ergative language is the main actant of the predicate and is expressed in the absolute case. The system may also include various locative cases. A peculiar feature



of ergative languages is the absence of voice diathesis in agentive verbs. Examples of ergative languages are Basque and Nakh-Dagestanian languages (Klimov 2009, 98–104).

The semantic dominant of the *accusative* type consists in the opposition of the subject and object in the semantic structure of an utterance and the subsequent oppositions of transitive and nontransitive verbs, active and passive voices, and nominative and accusative cases. The case system often includes the dative and genitive cases and various “semantic” cases (for example, instrumental, comitative, etc.). Locative cases are either absent or represented by several forms. Examples of the accusative type are Indo-European, Turkic, and Finno-Ugric languages (Klimov 2009, 105–9). Linguists, as Klimov stresses, have frequently observed that the “paradigmatic relations of different levels of the accusative system [are oriented] at conveying the relationship between the semantic roles of subject and object both explicitly and implicitly” (110). Subject–object relations are the central semantic opposition in the structure of an utterance only in accusative languages; moreover, there are no grounds for regarding this opposition to be a grammar universal. Conversely, in languages with a class type structure, subject–object relations are maximally lexicalized (122).

If the nominative structure of a language retains any nominal classification, such as gender, this becomes a formal one, and the case system causes the various semantic roles of nouns to become dynamic, situationally distinct. This permits us to consider the accusative and class-based types of languages to be maximally opposed to each other (Klimov 2009, 116, 118, 120).

Klimov arranges contentive types in a continuous sequence: class-based type – active type – ergative type – accusative type (Klimov 2009, 116).

As for the way the semantic type of a language affects comprehension of the objective world, G. A. Klimov opines that “most probably the semantic determinant of a language type represents nothing but a certain level of verbal thinking which in no way affects the adequacy of perception of the objectively existent subject–object relations” (2009, 115).

Klimov also points out the existence of transitional contentive types (2009, 121).

The consistency and generalizing nature of contentive semantic classification, the resultant implications with respect to nominal and verb morphology, and the connection of the contentive types with the lexical classification of words once again demonstrate the organizing role of grammar in the system of language.

The issues of semantic typology were considered also in the works of M. M. Makovskii, originator of the *theory of lexical attraction*. The significant presence of a given complex of lexemes used in certain meanings at a

**Table 3.1. Contentive Language Types.**

Class-based type (with active-type features)	Bantu
Active type (with class-type features)	Na-Dene
Active type	Tupi-Guarani
Ergative type (with active-type features)	Abkhaz-Adyghes, Eskimo-Aleut
Ergative type	Basque
Ergative type (with accusative-type features)	Nakh-Dagestanian
Accusative type (with active-type features)	Yeniseian, Kartvelian
Accusative type	Indo-European

Source: Rybakov 2016.

certain stage of language evolution is defined by Makovskii as a lexical macrostructure, while the functional-dynamic processes connecting the elements of microstructures are described as lexical attraction (Makovskii 1965, 83). The lexicon of a language as a whole (the lexical macrostructure) represents the totality of coexistent and intersecting microstructures, each of which is final for the present stage of language evolution (91). Makovskii also explains the terms: *semantic cycle*—a certain semantic sequence in diachronic perspective; *semantic invariants*—the constant, obligatory components specific to a given cycle; and *semantic variants*—semantic diffractions of invariants in different environments, which arise in related languages as a reaction to the lexical environment (Makovskii 1966, 36). With the help of these concepts, M. M. Makovskii formulates a number of universals in the area of lexical semantics. B. A. Uspenskii defines the *structural typology* of languages as the systematization of phenomena in different languages by means of features that are essential to the structure of a given language (Uspenskii 1965, 10). In characterizing typological investigation, he formulates seven questions that point out general differential features:

1. Are texts or systems of different languages compared?
2. Are all languages compared or are individual languages (or groups of languages) characterized?
3. Are the languages compared in general or within the limits of a particular level?
4. Does the comparison concern general systems of languages or specific systems of certain language phenomena?
5. Is the typological characterization of a language based on its correlation with some language type or the presence of certain features in it?
6. Is information about the language presented in the form of utterances or in the form of numerical values?
7. Is the study based only upon linguistic analysis or upon some extralinguistic prerequisites? (Uspenskii 1965, 34–51)

V. G. Gak formulates the problem of typology as that of calculating the ways of expressing a grammatical meaning. Marking the word stem with *A* and the grammatical indicators with *a* and *b*, we acquire three means of grammatical expression (Gak 1998, 65).

V. G. Gak illustrated all three types using examples from Romanic languages: in French: *le cas – les cas* (isolation), in Spanish: *el caso – los casos* (agglutination), in Italian: *il caso – i casi* (inflection) (Gak 1998, 65).

Gak suggests taking the study of the internal form of denotations as the basis for typological comparison of the semantics of languages: “alternative possibilities for the description of one and the same situation underlie semantic typology” (Gak 1998, 283).

According to Humboldt, the internal form is a differential feature chosen by the speaker in the process of denotation. The first typology of internal forms is based on the difference in the logical hierarchies of “be” and “have,” which unite objects on the basis of similarity into paradigmatic classes (Trier’s fields) and syntagmatic classes (Porzig’s fields). The differential features of the first type can be defined as independent or intrinsic (for example, shape, size) and features of the second type as relative (for example, purpose) (Gak 1998, 202).

Another kind of typology of internal forms may be based on Arsène Darmesteter’s theory distinguishing two types of semantic word development: radiality (parallelism) and linking (sequence). Still another typology of denotations may be based on the correlation of economy and redundancy (Gak 1998, 202–3).

“Each language prefers certain types of denotations. Comparing translations and observing conversational speech allow the detection of telling distinctions in the internal forms of the denotations used” (Gak 1998, 203).

Several problems of semantic typology have been posed in works on the comparative and typological study of the lexicon of related and unrelated languages. According to V. P. Konetskaia,

the main results of typological study of the lexicon are: 1) detection of universals, certain categories and substantial features relevant for typological description of the lexicon, 2) justification of the units of typological comparison (the possibility of comparison at the level of vocabulary, at the level of microsystems and words both as components of vocabulary and as elements of the lexical system and at the level of elementary meanings as elements of semantic fields), 3) discovery of similarities and differences in certain lexical domains of specific languages. (Konetskaia 1993, 28)

In this case, “the most difficult task is to justify the unit of lexical comparison and the principle for selecting groups or microsystems that can present a

sufficient basis for typological description of the lexicon” (Konetskaia 1993, 25); as a result, “the least investigated aspect is that of the contents of the lexicon, and the prospect of typological comparison of the lexicon as a system looks to be the most labor intensive” (29).

The principal theoretical tasks of semantic typology may be formulated in the following way:

- comparative study of the semantic structure of words and meanings in different languages;  
working out the criteria for comparison of the lexicon and semantics;
- discovery of semantic universals, typological features of the lexical systems of languages, and unique semantic phenomena;
- comparative study of lexical and semantic categories;
- comparison of the lexical classifications contained in descriptive studies of specific languages, working out a unified typology of specific semantic categories;
- establishment of the types of lexical units typical for a given language;
- comparison of the structures of semantic fields;
- definition of the types of semantic fields;
- discovery of linguistic semantic types; and
- characterization of the internal forms of specific languages.

Among the applied tasks of comparative typological semantics are

- compilation of bilingual and multilingual dictionaries;
- working out recommendations for the translation of texts and the evaluation of their quality;
- development of linguistic expertise on the semantic content of texts; and
- working out recommendations for preventing intercultural communicational conflicts.

According to the character of the typological features studied, semantic typology may be subdivided into four parts: semantic universology, typology proper, contrastive semantics, and semantic characterology.

The following universals have already been revealed in lexical semantics:

1. the more developed word compounding is, the higher the degree of semantic motivation of words;
2. there exists a direct relationship between the extent of a word’s semantics and its combinability;

3. there is an inverse relationship between a word's polysemy and its word-formational type: the more complex the word-formational type, the more obvious its tendency to monosemy; and
4. the proportion of homonyms is greater in languages in which the most productive manner of word formation is semantic. (Zelenetskii and Monachov 1983, 194)

The principal semantic universals in diachrony show directly opposite vectors in the semantic development of languages:

1. from the external to the internal and from the internal to the external (formal and semantic contamination, lexicalization of morphological forms, assimilative alterations of borrowings, words transferred to a different category, words transferred from the center to the periphery, and vice versa);
2. from the simple to the complex and from the complex to the simple (alterations in morphological and semantic structure, simplification and backward derivation, and other processes);
3. from the old to the new and vice versa (appearance of neologisms, archaization, dearchaization, and change of function);
4. from the incidental to the mandatory and from the mandatory to the incidental (folk etymology, dissimilation, or, inversely, assimilation of words within constructions). (Ivleva 1984, 29–31)

M. M. Makovskii discovered a tendency toward an “uneven distribution of a language's energy”: “the lexicon of a language at a certain synchronic stage cannot simultaneously contain functionally and semantically equivalent units, at least not for a long time” (Makovskii 1965, 86).

Another general regularity concerns the stability of lexemes in a language: “the more numerous the links of a given lexeme, the greater its lexical potential in the configuration in question, the more stable its position in the language” (Makovskii 1965, 89).

Proceeding on the basis of the theory of lexical attraction, Makovskii formulates general semantic regularities:

(I) In various world languages (except polysynthetic and incorporating ones), a certain systemically significant element (we shall call it the central element of the semantic cycle within the limits of the system in question) can exist on the synchronic semantic grid only if the system contains at least one semantic invariant of the same cycle (a marginal member)—a preceding or a following one; all of the mentioned invariants are typically expressed by different lexemes (roots), but not by lexemes that are constants. (Makovskii 1969, 28)

(II) If a semantic cycle in its evolution in a given environment reaches its outermost component (target-structure, according to Hoenigswald), then (in the presence of variant conditions in the system) the cycle reverses, i.e. it evolves in reverse order back to the initial one, including from one polar component to the other (usually such reversion is accompanied by additional phono-morphological processes). If the reversion cannot take place, the root in question either leaves the system or becomes subject to enantiosemy. (Makovskii 1969, 34)

(III) Lexemes belonging to the same set usually express semantic units belonging to different sets. Semantic units belonging to different sets are expressed, as a rule, by lexemes belonging to different sets. (Makovskii 1969, 35)

## *Chapter Four*

# **Fundamental Concepts of Systemic Methodology and G. P. Mel'nikov's Systemic Typology**

Of crucial importance in the systemic linguistic concept of Humboldt, Sreznevskii, Potebnia, and Baudouin de Courtenay is that one recognizes the mental, social, communicational, and universal essence of language, due to which language must be understood as “a mechanism formed within the psyches of every member of a language community and specialized for universal sign-based communication” (Mel'nikov 2000, 17).

### **WHAT IS A SYSTEM: GENNADII P. MEL'NIKOV'S SYSTEMOLOGY**

According to Mel'nikov, a system is “any object the stable properties of which have been formed due to the necessity of retaining the stability of certain properties of another object, which we shall call a supersystem” (Mel'nikov 2000, 11). In his other work, Mel'nikov specifies that

a system should be understood as any complex unity consisting of interconnected or interdependent parts, of elements embodied in a real substance and possessing a specific pattern of interconnections (relations), i.e. a structure. Consequently, although the most significant, structure is only one of the characteristics of a system. The second, no less significant characteristic is its substance. (Mel'nikov 1967, 99)

The universal features of any system are

- presence of a determinant;
- presence of a function; and
- uniqueness of the subdivision into parts (uniqueness of structure).

Various types of systems are distinguished as

- biological vs. social;
- artificial vs. natural;
- static vs. dynamic; and
- self-regulating vs. non-self-regulating.

An important postulate for systemic linguistics is that language belongs to a definite variety of dynamic systems, namely self-regulating systems. Accounting for the properties of self-regulating systems makes it possible to explain many properties of language that remain unexplained within the framework of both traditional and structuralist linguistics.

According to G. P. Mel'nikov, self-regulating systems represent a special type of systems,

which emerge or are created to perform a certain function. We shall call each of these functions a general function of a self-regulating system. As is true of any self-regulating system, language has a multi-level hierarchic structure, including intra-level, inter-level and various cross-level connections, while, as a whole, language itself is an element of a system of ultra-high level. The functioning of a self-regulating system is achieved by way of coordinated interaction of the elements, levels and subsystems of the system between which specific functions are distributed. Hence, the general function of a system turns out to be specific in relation to an ultra-high-level system. (Mel'nikov 1967, 100)

The most important quality of self-regulating systems, according to G. P. Mel'nikov, is "their ability to rebuild their structure, to choose a substance for the construction of elements and to get rid of ineffectual distributions of specific functions until a way of functioning is found through which the effectiveness of functioning will prove to be sufficiently close to that which is maximally possible under the conditions in question" (Mel'nikov 1967, 100).

This means that the levels, components, and structures connecting the elements of language must be socially unified and thus make it possible to reproduce and recognize the *signs* in the flow of speech and to associate them with certain components of *extralinguistic* mental content. This provides the most effective control of the course of the thought process in the listener's mind, provided they wish to decipher the speaker's intended meaning. Such interaction results in exchanging socially significant experience stored in the minds of members of the society speaking the language in question.

## WHAT IS THERE INSIDE A LANGUAGE?

Wilhelm von Humboldt was the first to delineate the *signs* in the flow of speech from the generalized mental *representations* aimed at reproducing and



recognizing these signs, as well as to consider the *representations* of signs to be elements of their *external form*, functionally opposed to the elements of the signs' internal form, which are associated by contiguity with elements of the external form in native speakers' minds. Elements of internal form act as special intermediaries in associating the elements of external form—and, subsequently, the signs they reproduce in the flow of speech—with elements of *extralinguistic* mental content, such as logical concepts, thanks to their association on the basis of similarity with the mentioned extralinguistic content. At the same time, notwithstanding the possibly high level of generalization, figurativeness is permitted, both for extralinguistic, such as logical, content and for all elements of the internal form.

This facilitates an association *by similarity* between elements of the internal form and elements of extralinguistic mental content, which permits one to *hint* at certain features of the denoted mental element by means of certain features of the elements of the internal form; this is sufficient for the interlocutor to deduce *the whole* element of content being hinted at and implied. Thus, according to Humboldt, thanks to the elements of internal form, a *limited* number of elements of external form and, likewise, initial signs used by language allow *actual* speech acts to express an *unlimited* number of elements of extralinguistic mental content and to control the course of mental processes by way of affecting the interlocutor through the flow of speech signs. This creative but externally directed mental activity results in the formation in the mind of new mental content, new knowledge, whose necessity of conveyance it was that induced the speaker to affect the listener by means of the uttered signs in the flow of speech. If verbal communication were performed not by such hints and stimulations but, say, by the direct association of signs with elements of extralinguistic mental content, without intermediation via elements of the internal form, language as a sign-based system would lose its significant quality of universality (see Mel'nikov 2000, 17–18). Table 4.1 illustrates this point.

G. P. Mel'nikov regards Humboldt as a predecessor of systemic linguistics and appreciates his having posed the general problems: what language is; what its functions are; what the most important structural characteristics of languages are, regardless of relatedness; how language and thinking or language and culture are connected, that is, in a broad systemic approach to the researched subject.

## LANGUAGE AND MODEL, SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE

In demonstrating the difference between language as a system and its structural model, G. P. Mel'nikov performs a general delimitation between the

**Table 4.1. Language as a Mental Form of Conveying Information from the Perspective of Systemic Linguistics.**

<i>Speech</i>		<i>Language</i>		<i>Thought</i>
Signs in the flow of speech	External form	Internal form		Logical concepts
Physical sounds	Mental generalized representations of the flow of speech	Elements of linguistic content capable of hinting at extralinguistic content		Extralinguistic mental content
<i>Association by Contiguity</i>				
<i>Association by Similarity</i>			<i>Association by Similarity</i>	
<i>Sign</i>			<i>Meaning</i>	
In speech (external)	Linguistic (internal)	Closest (linguistic)		Furthest (extralinguistic)

Source: Rybakov 2016.

parameters of the system and those of its model. This allows for an understanding of the difference between systemic and structuralist approaches in linguistics: the structuralist approach analyzes a model and frequently replaces qualities of the original system with those of a model; a systemic approach proceeds from an understanding of the difference between a model and the original systemic object and is aimed at the understanding of the original object proper.

Similar ideas were put forward by A. F. Losev, who defined a language model as a pattern for the construction of linguistic elements (Losev 1968, 20) and a structure as a regularized continual-discrete unity of a finite or infinite number of states (251). According to Losev, the original and the model possess an identical organization, that is, structure (27). In regard to the typical errors made by linguists when defining systemological terms in the 1960s, Losev notes also that “every model is a structure, but not every structure is a model” (27) and offers his own definition of a model: “a structure transferred from one substrate to another and embodied in it with true-to-life reality and technical precision” (28, italics removed).

The main function of language, according to Losev, consists in “interpreting reality in accordance with the needs of human communication, choosing from reality some things and ignoring others, reflecting some things correctly and distorting others, often consciously” (Losev 1968, 33).

In analyzing the specificity of language structures as compared to those of physics and mathematics, Losev draws attention to the fact that language structures (that is, the structures of languages themselves) have at least two

or even three domains, or rather are multidomain; furthermore, they are sign oriented and communicational. Losev criticizes one-sided structuralism for dissecting language into signifiers and the signified, into synchrony and diachrony, and into separate levels (Losev 1968, 33). Accordingly, language models must also be multidomain, sign oriented, and communicational. A. F. Losev insists that “any formal—including a theoretical multiplex-type—model of language is always communicational by its nature” (28).

### **G. P. MEL'NIKOV'S SYSTEMIC TYPOLOGY: METHODOLOGICAL BASIS**

The methodological principle of Mel'nikov's concept of typology consists in the systemic view of language and linguistics and dates back to the ideas, categories, and concepts rooted in the theories of Humboldt, Sreznevskii, Potebnia, and Baudouin de Courtenay.

The synthesizing nature of the systemic typology of languages is based on Humboldt's concept of the “internal form of languages” and on the initial traditional morphological classes in relation to Meshcaninov's and Baudouin de Courtenay's stadial classes.

In general, the task of systemic typology is to create an integrated linguistic picture to unveil the nature of language in general and of every language type in particular. The scope of this task demands a special general methodology, a demand that Mel'nikov believed systemology was able to meet. Only systemology provides a philosophical basis for the methodology of linguistics, as it correlates the initial principles of research with the vast and diverse material of specific languages. In this case, abstract philosophical categories are filled with linguistic content.

Mel'nikov specifies the place of systemic methodology within the system of scientific approaches in his book *Sistemnaia tipologiya iazykov: sintez morfologicheskoi klassifikatsii iazykov so stadial'noi* (2000, *Systemic Typology of Languages: Synthesis of Morphological and Stadial Classifications*). The principal characteristic feature of systemic morphology is the integrity and consistency of its criteria based on the synthesizing method of other methodological approaches. The domain of definition for systemology is specified by the consistent deducibility of concepts and the objectification of the minimal necessary and sufficient number of initial concepts and axioms capable of explaining the organization and efficiency not only of a single object but also of the universe as a whole.

The effective functioning of a system (including that of language), according to Mel'nikov, consists in the adjustment of its properties in accordance

with the performed function within the framework of a supersystem, that is, through the process of adaptation. The function of a system is that very effect, result, or process that arises in order to support the stable property of a system thanks to the existence of the determinant.

An object may be classified as a system if it retains its integrity, notwithstanding its partitioning into subsystems and elements. The network of connections between elements comprises the structure of a system. The place of an element in a certain node of the system's structure is defined as the value of the element in the given structure (Mel'nikov 1980, 16).

The determinant of a system is defined by Mel'nikov as "the major supporting characteristic," or, in other words, "the general functional characteristic of the system" (Mel'nikov 1980, 13). As related to the structural characteristics of a system, the *arrangement* of its components, beginning with the elementary ones, is understood as the system's *substance*. Such an opposition of the concepts of system, structure, substance, and function and their linking through introduction of the concept of the determinant, which in earlier works was referred to as the system's dominant, was first offered by Mel'nikov in 1965.

A change of the determining property, that is, the property that determines the character and the mode of functioning of a system, may be required, for example, in case of a change of the *function* of an already existing system or a change of the *conditions* of its functioning, which will inevitably affect *all* other, obliquely functional properties of the system, for they must acquire such a property as will allow them, in all their integrity and interaction, to support the changed determinant, that is, the new determining property of the whole system.

A systemic change begins when the structure of a system as a whole entity starts to disagree with its properties.

The adaptive capacity is understood by systemic linguistics as the key feature of systemic objects: the higher the degree of adaptivity, the more stable the determinant, the higher the degree of systematicity of the object (Mel'nikov 1980, 22).

The process of adaptation begins with the *initial* internal state characterized by intentions to change, continues with participation of the *complicit* external state, which facilitates the conversion of intentions into extensions and the course of change, and terminates with the *final* internal state (see Mel'nikov 2003, 47).

In accordance with this triad, a system is characterized by the initial, current, and final internal determinants, depending on its actual state. This triad correlates with three more dialectic triads: condition – cause – consequence; matter – form – content and substrate – structure – substance (see Mel'nikov 2003, 58).

G. P. Mel'nikov's systemic typology, which is based on the systemological methodology, differs from all existing structuralist classifications of languages. But its founder defined it as a language taxonomy, or system of typologies, in the spirit of I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay. "The current state of modern linguistics is such that it is represented by a great number of competing versions and concepts" (Mel'nikov 2003, 23).

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SYSTEMIC TYPOLOGY

The following principles underlie systemic typology:

1. the principle of the materiality of the substrate upon which language systems exist: language systems exist in space and time on the material neuron substrate in native speakers' minds;
2. the principle of dimension: in language systems, systemic typological research must "discover the boundaries of its extent as the main indicator of the spatial and temporal determinacy of these systems" (Mel'nikov 2003, 66);
3. the principle of the substantiality of typological parameters: the search, on the basis of the principle of dimensionality, for the natural foundations that are objectively inherent in language systems;
4. the principle of the completeness and integrity of the typological study of language systems, including single-aspect typological approaches;
5. the principle of the part-and-wholeness of the development and existence of the objects of systemic language typology: "a language system is a system of *levels* (tiers), the units of which are in part-and-whole relations; a language system considered in the process of its formation (diachronically) changes its functional parameters in a step-by-step manner, so the relationship between the boundaries of the extent of the process and these steps is also part-and-whole" (Mel'nikov 2003, 68);
6. the principle of the triadic nature of characterizing the object of systemic typology, consisting in the division of characteristics into three categories: *initial* characteristics, showing the internal language system's intentions toward change; *complicit* characteristics, showing the factors acting from without; *final* characteristics, resulting from the exhaustion of this process when the system passes into a new stable state;
7. the "white box" principle: the internal organization of a complex entity represents a great scientific interest;
8. the principle of the determinacy of the evolution of language systems: the explanation of language evolution with the help of the triad of determinants (initial internal, current external, and current internal determinants);

9. the principle of chronotopical homonymy: the similarity of spatial and temporal laws implying a “uniformity of the structures of interconnection, interaction and interlocation of the components of language systems both in the process of their *formation* and in their developed *state*, i.e. diachronically and synchronically” (Mel’nikov 2003, 76); and
10. the principle of syntagmatic-paradigmatic functional coordination implying the equal significance of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations in the realization of the functions of the language system (Mel’nikov 2003, 79–83).

According to Mel’nikov, the most significant are the principles of materiality, dimension, and the triadic nature.

### DETERMINANTS AND APPROACHES TO REPRESENTING SITUATIONS IN AN UTTERANCE

The notion of the internal form of language—central to Mel’nikov’s linguistic theory—is specified as the internal determinant, functionally the most significant property of a language type, not of a single language. The functional dependency of the internal determinant of language is the communicational dependency, while language is, in the first instance, a communicational device, not an instrument of thinking.

The internal determinant interacts with the external determinant, namely with the sum of the conditions determining communication and the characteristics of the language community including those relevant to communication: its size, degree of homogeneity, regime of communication, etc. The communicationally functional crux of the language together with the internal form of a proposition, or the subject matter, the communicational aspect, are always specific, a fact that expresses itself in the implicational schemes of typical utterances. This is how the internal form of a language manifests itself while realizing the internal determinant of its system.

The external determinant of a language system is most frequently correlated with the notion of the functional requirement imposed by the supersystem that the system interact in certain ways with other systems contained within the supersystem in question.

Thus, the most significant for systemic typology are the following characteristics of a language system:

- the *external determinant*: the typic conditions for communication and the communicationally significant characteristics of a language community:

its size, degree of homogeneity and the degree of mental proximity to one another of the community members;

- the *internal determinant*: the most stable, systemically significant feature of the language structure;
- the *denotational approach*: the typical manner of presenting a situation in an utterance; and
- the *communicational approach*: the typical subject matter of propositions, aspects of utterances, and manners of depiction (uniform/nonuniform).

G. P. Mel'nikov objectivized *four* types of internal determinant and, correspondingly, *four* internal forms and *four* communicational aspects of language:

- *ambient determinant*—incorporating languages;
- *attributive determinant*—agglutinating languages;
- *eventive determinant*—inflectional languages; and
- *occasional determinant*—root-isolating languages.

The attributive determinant is subdivided into two variants:

- qualitative-attributive—agglutinative denotational languages; and
- resultative-attributive—agglutinative ergative languages.

In chapter 3 of his monograph (2000, 31–42), Mel'nikov establishes the connection between the type of a language community and the denotational approach of a language.

Mel'nikov explains the difference between morphological types of languages as the consequence of a mutual awareness, on the part of various types of interlocutors, of the surrounding world as a whole, of typical and current events. Depending on what levels of thinking are socialized in the most typical situation, a language selects a certain type of morphemes as the most effective for formulating a proposition.

**Table 4.2. Type of Community and the Denotational Approach of Language.**

<b>External Determinant</b>	<b>Internal Determinant</b>	<b>Denotational Approach</b>
<i>Community Type</i>	<i>Syntactic Type</i>	<i>Semantic and Syntactic Type</i>
Micro-community	Incorporating	Ambient
Macro-community	Ergative	Resultative-attributive
Mega-community	Denotational	Eventive

Source: Rybakov 2016.

## DETERMINANTS AND MORPHOLOGICAL TYPES

The four possible variants of mutual awareness of the content of mental units in correspondence to the four most typical variants of the human way of life yield Humboldt's four morphological types:

If interlocutors are aware on all levels of the senses (generic vs. specific, individual and unique), then incorporation develops; if socially important communication can be based, for the most part, on the mutual awareness of only the generic vs. specific level, then inflection arises; if the mutual awareness is lost only at the level of unique senses, the language becomes agglutinative; if a sufficient awareness on all three levels is not guaranteed, isolation becomes the most ideal for the situation. (Mel'nikov 2000, 174)

According to Mel'nikov, "the initial postulate of systemic linguistics is not just recognition of the systemicity of language as a social phenomenon, but the assertion that language belongs to the class of adapting (self-regulating) and, hence, dynamic systems" (Mel'nikov 1971, 359). That is why, when solving specific problems of linguistics, Mel'nikov always poses the question of the external and internal determination of the facts of a given language, synchronically and diachronically, and tries to reveal the specifics of the interrelations between language substance and language structure. Such an approach differs greatly from the ideas of historical randomness and the arbitrariness of language structure, an absence of dependency between substance and structure, between structure and the functioning of language units, the randomness of language diversity and the randomness of the features characterizing specific languages—ideas that are widespread in structuralist (and not only structuralist) linguistics. G. P. Mel'nikov seeks and finds the cause of the differences between language systems, which is regulated by the typical conditions of communication in a certain language community and by the unconscious desire of the participants in a speech act to choose the most effective linguistic means that will allow them to achieve mutual understanding in the most economical way under the conditions determining their speech.

The systemic approach allows G. P. Mel'nikov to explain external grammatical differences according to the peculiarities connected with their being aimed at performing different functions. Thus, "the creation of an agglutinative word, which occasions a requirement for nothing but momentarily necessary auxiliary information, requires a lesser degree of variation in the combination of morphemes within a lexeme, greater significance of the word order in a sentence and greater restrictions upon fusional processes in uniting morphemes into word forms" (Mel'nikov 2003, 92). Furthermore, he



explains the specificity of the principal typological features of isolating and incorporating languages:

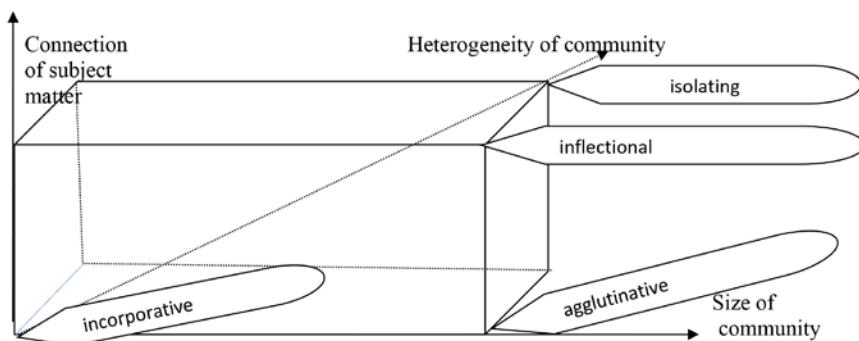
The internal determinant of isolating languages consists in the tendency to express not only lexical, but also grammatical information with the help of morphemes bearing a lexical meaning; incorporating languages exhibit a strong tendency to do with a minimum of specific morphemes and to form utterances largely with morphemes that are very abstract but possess material meanings, these morphemes being used to denote both the actants of the situation being expressed and the relations between the actants. (Mel'nikov 2003, 92)

The typological differences of languages captured in the traditional morphological classification are explained by Mel'nikov as being a result of the adaptation of language systems to the concrete communicational conditions typical of a community leading a certain way of life and engaged in a certain type of economic activity. Thus, the structure of a language system becomes dependent upon its function. Accordingly, the formal morphological differences between languages are not random but conditioned by the adaptive nature of the language system, by the language being directed toward the expression of the communicational requirements of human beings in accordance with the conditions under which information is shared in the community of native speakers. This is why, in Mel'nikov's works, much attention is paid to the conditions under which information is conveyed in ethnic communities of different types (micro-communities, macro-communities, mega-communities).

Of crucial significance are such communicational conditions as the typical informational situations, the community members' awareness of current events and their participants and outcomes, and the regularity of contact between communicators. The size of a community, its degree of homogeneity, and the nature of the connection between instants of the subject matter of communication represent differential features of the external determinants of languages belonging to different types because they are external features with respect to the language system. External determinants help us to answer the question of what motivates the occurrence of one or the other internal determinant and the specific organization of a particular language structure.

The data in table 4.2 can also be presented as a three-dimensional geometric model, as shown in figure 4.1.

External determinants regulate the degree of proximity of individual language consciousnesses, including the proximity of current representations, of individual representations, and of worldviews. These characteristics are extralinguistic but belong to the psychic level and affect the communicational approach of languages of different morphological types, which



**Figure 4.1.** An Axis Model of External Determinants.

Source: Rybakov 2016.

is characterized by such properties as the uniformity or nonuniformity of the subject matter of propositions, aspects of utterances, and approaches to representational depiction. Communicational approaches create the ambient internal form in incorporating languages, the qualitative-attributive internal form in agglutinative languages, the eventive internal form in inflectional languages, and the occasional internal form in isolating languages (see Mel'nikov 2003, 130–31).

To sum it all up, different conditions of communication yield different types of the most frequent patterns for the formulation of utterances, and, as a result, the leading pattern establishes itself as the canonical internal form of an utterance in a given language.

## THE SYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE SYNTACTIC CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE

G. P. Mel'nikov employs the same concept—whereby the organization of language depends upon specific conditions surrounding the performance of the communicative function—to explain the syntactic classification of languages because one of the main ideas of systemic linguistics is to study language levels on a unified basis and to synthesize the results of aspectual studies in a complex and integrated model of language. In describing the internal form of ergative languages, Mel'nikov first of all considers the typical denotational arrangement of the utterance. In a macro-community, it is the relationship of “unequal interaction,” in which one participant of the event, the “initiator,” acts as a “subject” and the other as an “object” affected by the “subject.” In a communicational situation typical for such a community, the speaker informs the listener about the outcome of a known event, that is, about the transition

of the object to a new state. In such a case, the subject is indicated only with the help of a class indicator or, in case of a special requirement, in full form with a nominal root, but it is presented, at the same time, as a circumstantial modifier and formalized, accordingly, by means of an oblique case, in contrast to the absolute case of the object. If a proposition concerns the outcome of an event with a single participant that changes its state without any “contributor” assisting in producing the resultant attribute (for example, a cat usually does not sleep because someone has put it to sleep), then a linguist may label such a “protagonist” as the “subject” of an “intransitive action,” but for the members of such macro-communities in which the denotational approach of their language is specialized for “highlighting” the resultant state, the sole participant will be seen as the “bearer” of that state, of the resultant attribute (see Mel’nikov 2000, 37–38).

Thus, according to Mel’nikov’s systemic theory of language, the denotational angle of ergative languages as aimed at expressing the resultant state of an object.

Mel’nikov argues that

the transformation of a macro-community into a mega-community, the expansion of the boundaries of the territory occupied by the native speakers of the language in question, leads to an increase in the importance of those properties of the language system which make it the most ideal especially for communication between people who are not personally acquainted, otherwise any socially significant news cannot spread effectively across the extensive territory on which a settled mega-community is dwelling. (Mel’nikov 2000, 40)

In such a community, it becomes necessary for each speech act to accurately indicate the subject and the object and, hence, to clearly delineate them in the typical pattern of an utterance, a rule that is observed in languages of the accusative syntactic type. “The denotational approach of the propositions formed in the language of a mega-community specializes in such a way as to become a perfect means to tell of an event, to evoke in the listener’s consciousness, with the help of the signs comprising the proposition, a vivid representation of the event at the stages of its *emergence* and development” (Mel’nikov 2000, 40). In the language of a mega-community, it becomes important to accurately identify the subject, the action, and the object, if the last is present in the event, as well as the circumstances in which the event takes place. When trying to depict a given denotational sense, the speaker must also make it clear which part of the denotational content is being presented to the listener as the focus and which as the topic.

On this basis, Mel’nikov concludes that the primary case in the case system of inflectional languages is that of the nominal element that the speaker

presents to the listener as the sign indicating the initiator of the action that gives the initial impetus to the development of the event depicted by the utterance, rather than the case of the nominal element referring to the bearer of the *resultant* feature, as is done in ergative languages. And because this initiator case is called the nominative case, it becomes clear why the structure of inflectional languages was defined by the originators of stadiational classifications as a nominative (another term for accusative) structure that had come to replace the ergative structure.

### THE SYSTEMIC UNDERSTANDING OF STADIALITY IN THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE

G. P. Mel'nikov sees the origins of the stadiational theory in the observations of the first comparative linguists who pointed out the development from synthesis to analysis in the history of European languages. In its most vivid form, this idea was expressed by August Schleicher, who considered the synthetic system to be the common initial state, while analyticity arose as a result of language evolution. A somewhat different view of language evolution was put forward by I. I. Sreznevskii, who was the first to observe that the highly synthesized system of modern Baltic and Slavic languages could be explained not by the preservation of the ancient inflectional stage but by the continuous further evolution of inflectional techniques. A. A. Potebnia's research confirmed the idea, but N. Ia. Marr and I. I. Meshchaninov, who considered the synthetic rearrangement of syntactic structures to be a universal trend, discredited the very idea of possible stadiational changes in a language's type. According to Mel'nikov, both Sreznevskii and Potebnia used a synthesizing methodology, whereas Marr and his followers relied on the aspectual approach to language phenomena. At the same time, the stadiational theory showed an inner connection between the syntactic and morphological evolution of languages, although the adherents of the "new linguistic doctrine," who rejected traditional linguistics, did not use the vocabulary of morphological typology and therefore could not show the interrelation of morphological and syntactic changes in language. As for Mel'nikov himself, he thinks it useful for linguistics to synthesize morphological and stadiational classifications and to interpret the previously known language types not as being restricted to individual levels (morphological or syntactic) but as systemwide in nature and to understand their evolution and stadiational transformations as a result of changed communicational conditions in which the languages exist (see Mel'nikov 2000, 14–15).

The just criticism of the mechanistic and economic explanation of stadiational changes in the "new linguistic doctrine" should not lead to a rejection of the

**Table 4.3. Typology of Typologies.**

<i>Totality of Languages</i>	<i>Class</i>
With a common initial internal determinant	Genealogical
With close current internal determinants	Morphological
With close final internal determinants	Typological
With close initial and final internal determinants when the phase of their current determinants is close	Stadial

*Source:* Rybakov 2016.

very idea of stadiality in the development of language structure—an idea rooted not only in the mentioned theory but also in those of A. A. Potebnia, I. I. Sreznevskii, Wilhelm Humboldt, and I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay (Mel'nikov 2000, 16). Understanding a language's determinant as its main typological feature has allowed systemic typology to formulate a fairly strict enumeration of typologies, that is, manners of uniting languages into a single class (cf. Mel'nikov 2003, 88).

## *Chapter Five*

# **The Typological Analysis of the Category of Case**

### **GEOMETRICAL MODELS OF CASE: HOW TO SKETCH A GRAMMATICAL MEANING**

One of the most complex tasks of the general theory of grammar and the morphological typology of natural languages is to define and describe the meanings of grammatical categories and specific grammatical forms. Traditional grammar appealed to logical and psychological terms and concepts in order to explain the nature of linguistic facts, but the nonidentity of grammatical and logical categories was noticed, as early as in the mid-nineteenth century, by neogrammarians (namely Hermann Paul) and A. A. Potebnia and, later, in the early twentieth century, by I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, Ferdinand de Saussure, and F. F. Fortunatov. The world's languages, as was shown by Wilhelm von Humboldt, differ from one another not only in their external form (signs denoting linguistic meanings) but also in their internal form (linguistic meanings as signs denoting extralinguistic senses). One and the same notional content can be represented by languages to varying extents of detail and structured in different ways.

Grammarians have traditionally noted that, through a given stage of conceptualization, grammatical meanings objectivize knowledge about the objects and phenomena of reality and their connections and relations. It should be added that every natural language not only objectivizes but also categorizes in a specific way, which is to say, it classifies and formalizes a person's conception of reality. Thus, language is not just based on ready-made concepts about the structure of reality; it takes an active part in the formation of these concepts.

The grammatical meaning of case is often defined as the expression of a noun's relationship to other words in a phrase and sentence, but these relations

between words imply relations between concepts and the objects of reality; hence, the case is, in fact, not only a syntactic, that is, an intralinguistic syntagmatic category, as follows from the habitual definition, but a morphological (associated with the semantics of the word form in a certain context and with the general meaning of a morphological category) and semantic (related to extralinguistic senses) category.

Structuralist linguistics, in presenting language as a network of relations between elements and seeking to study it “as a system of pure values,” tried to develop new methods for describing grammatical semantics. These are: the method of componential analysis of a word, applicable to the analysis of grammatical meaning as well; the methods of analysis of types of positions and oppositions; the method of the semantic (including the functional and grammatical) field; and the method of modeling a grammatical meaning as a systemic object formed by integrated and differential features, which will be considered shortly.

A linguistic model is understood as a hypothesis about the internal structure of a complex linguistic object that is aimed at a gradual refinement of our conceptions of this structure. Linguistic modeling unavoidably requires idealization of the object, presentation of its most typical, most probable properties. The logic of the scientific understanding of language leads from initial schematic representations of linguistic objects to the probabilistic legitimation of more accurate models.

The demand for modeling is especially relevant in scientific areas where the object of research is not accessible to direct observation. Grammatical semantics is, in general, more abstract than lexical semantics, and the grammatical meaning of case is, in our opinion, more abstract than the meanings of other nominal categories. It is no surprise that, in numerous textbooks and academic grammars, the meaning of case is characterized only by the notion of “relation.”

## THE ORIGINS OF THE SYSTEMIC STUDY OF CASE

The study of the semantic aspect of case began with Roman Jakobson’s famous article “Beitrag zur allgemeinen Kasuslehre“ (1936, “Contribution to the General Theory of Case”), in which a fundamentally new model of linguistic description was proposed, in many important points opposing Berthold Delbrück’s comparative historical concept of grammatical categories. Jakobson’s approach was synchronic, discrete, systemic, and invariant-oriented. Jakobson paid special attention to the difference between case and the syntactic function of a word: “we are not entitled to assert that word order

can express case; word order can merely express the syntactic function of words, which is not at all the same thing” (Jakobson 1984, 63), and noted the extremely subjective nature of separating case into individual meanings (60).

Jakobson was the first to show that the semantic structure of a case form was based on a general meaning that engenders particular individual values, among which the primary meaning may be singled out. Such a formulation of the question allowed Jakobson to correlate the numerous particular meanings of case forms with one another and to systematically represent them and explain their unity and common generative principle. Jakobson defined the general meanings of the case forms of the Russian language:

- nominative: no indication of whether the referent is affected by any action;
- accusative: an object in relation to which the speaker actively expresses their point of view;
- genitive I: indication of the limit of the referent’s involvement in the content of the utterance;
- genitive II (ending in *-u*): indication of the limit of the referent’s involvement in the content of the utterance if the referent is something taking shape or being shaped;
- dative: indication of the referent’s peripheral status and involvement in an action, whereby its existence is independent of the action;
- instrumental: indication of the referent’s peripheral status;
- locative I: indication of the referent’s combination with a preposition; and
- locative II (ending in *-u*): indication of the referent’s functioning as a container, measurement, or bounded area. (Jakobson 1984, 59–99)

Instead of lists of the individual meanings of case forms, Roman Jakobson offered a structural description of the whole category of case and emphasized the invariant meanings of case forms and the nature of the morphological correlations that make up the declension system using the example of the Russian language. According to Jakobson, for all the variety of uses of each case, all these uses are mutually related and can, in fact, be reduced to one invariant formula. Moreover, each semantic invariant contains (like a phoneme) a bundle of features.

Cases are interrelated in language and form a system, and, although each of them individually represents a unique set of semantic features, all cases may be described with the help of the same set of features; the cases enter into various oppositions with each other on the basis of these features, the meanings of which they do or do not convey. For example, the Russian instrumental case is akin to the dative, as they both contain the feature of “peripherality,” and these two cases are both opposed to the accusative as



a “central” (not peripheral) case; the instrumental case is also related to the nominative because it bears no feature of “directionality,” as opposed to the accusative and the dative, that is, the directional cases.

Having distinguished eight cases in the Russian declination system, Roman Jakobson presented them as a three-dimensional system (Jakobson 1984, 123). Tronskii’s, Losev’s, and Mel’nikov’s concepts of case have much in common with that of Roman Jakobson.

## COMPARISON OF MODELS

I. M. Tronskii studied the question of the structure of the grammatical category of case in connection with reconstruction of the grammatical structure of the Indo-European proto-language. He draws attention to the multilayered nature of the system of inflectional categories and the possibility of raising the problem of reconstructing the main stages of its evolution. Tronskii supports Berthold Delbrück’s hypothesis that the syncretism of meanings within individual cases resulted from an excess in the number of meanings requiring expression in comparison to the number of case forms available. Thus, the Old Church Slavonic genitive is composed of two Indo-European cases: the genitive and the ablative, and the Latin ablative combines with the ablative proper, the instrumental, and the locative (Tronskii 1967, 51).

Tronskii believes that the traditional reconstruction of the Proto-Indo-European system as having eight cases should remain valid (Tronskii 1967, 72), while, developing Roman Jakobson’s ideas on the three-dimensional structure of the category of case, he offers a new model. Using the example of the Russian sentence *Drug otca na rassvete napisal iz Moskvy karandashom pis'mo bratu* “A friend of father’s wrote a letter from Moscow to his brother using a pencil at dawn,” I. M. Tronskii shows the semantic oppositions of seven Indo-European cases on the basis of three features: exocentricity, objectness, and complicity.

The vocative case is excluded from consideration as a form of address outside the syntactic structure of the sentence; within the genitive case, the subject- and object-oriented meanings are distinguished as points on the rear face of the prism corresponding to the nominative and accusative, while the case itself is represented as an edge in the figure.

The genitive, ablative, and locative cases are exocentric. They denote participants of a situation not completely affected by the action and who, moreover, go beyond it. “Unlike the subject, the source of action, which in language is separated from the action by virtue of the binary structure of the

sentence, the object in Indo-European languages forms a single unity with the action, its inalienable, but inactive constituent” (Tronskii 1967, 75).

The feature of objectness (a lack of activity) distinguishes the accusative, dative, locative, and objective genitive. Accordingly, the instrumental, which serves to identify an additional actant, instrument, or secondary participant, and the ablative, as a marker of the starting point of movement, as well as the subjective genitive, are located on the side opposite to that of the objective cases.

Furthermore, the instrumental is opposed to the nominative on the basis of the feature of complicity. The same concerns the dative in relation to the accusative, denoting an additional object, most often an addressee or an interested witness of the action. On the front face, the cases of complicity form the “second” line of subjective–objective cases; thus, they are opposed to the line of locational cases, the ablative and locative, but, at the same time, they are united with them into the four cases of complicity (attendant circumstances).

Comparison of the Indo-European languages reveals that a semantic merger may occur for the cases located on opposite vertices of an edge. Thus, in later Hittite, the locative merges with the dative; in the Balto-Slavic languages, the ablative merges with the genitive; the same concerns the locative, dative, and instrumental in Greek and the locative, ablative, and instrumental in Latin (Tronskii 1967, 76).

Tronskii admits that there were possibly more than eight cases in the early stage of Indo-European (Tronskii 1967, 77), while the oldest layer of declension consists, to his mind, of the nominative, the accusative, and the genitive singular (80), which is typologically isomorphic to the Semitic case system.

The structural analysis of the case system as a network of relations formed by the differential features of the meanings of cases was performed within the framework of Fortunatov’s school of formal morphology by O. S. Shirokov, who, while describing Russian case, distinguished three abstract parameters, which he named grammemes: inner connection or sociativity (*Sc*), exocentricity or marginality (*Mg*), and alienation or peripherality (*Pph*). Sociativity implies a close connection of the referent with the action: *napisal pis'mo* “(he) wrote a letter,” *napisal chernilami* “(he) wrote in ink,” or with another subject: *khvost korovy* “the tail of a cow.” Marginality consists in incomplete coverage, or exocentricity, of the referent in relation to the event: *napisal na rassvete* “(he) wrote at dawn,” *napisal na bumage* “(he) wrote on paper.” Peripherality involves alienation of the object, that is, its complicity but not participation in the event: *napisal o lese* “(he) wrote about the forest,” *napisal sestre* “(he) wrote to his sister.”

It is interesting that the feature of complicity—meaning the same as that of sociativity—is assigned by Tronskii to the dative, the locative, the ablative,

and the instrumental, while, in Shirokov's concept, its bearers are the instrumental and the genitive. Other linguists' models contain similar discrepancies. Evidently, the criteria for the semantic characterization of cases had at the time not yet been clearly defined and were frequently not explicitly formulated. In such conditions, it is rather difficult to give a comparative evaluation of these models, as each model is based on its own criteria for distinguishing differential features of the meaning of cases.

In analyzing the Eskimo language, Louis Hjelmslev notes the following semes: connectivity, the "from," seme and the "to" seme (Hjelmslev 1937, 74), which may be represented as a table.

The "from" and "to" semes are understood by Hjelmslev as being locational in the literal and the figurative sense; the seme of connectivity denotes contact or penetration (in the literal and the figurative sense as well).

The differential semes of cases distinguished by Hjelmslev confirm the featureless character of the semantics of the nominative case, show the markedness of the perlativ (the case denoting "movement through") in all features, reveal the "from" directedness of a referent's action in the ergative, and separate the group of locational cases from the syntactic and semantic ones via the feature of connectivity.

Martin the Dane (or Martin of Dacia, thirteenth century), while modeling the system of Latin cases, implements seven differential features: source, terminus, substance-to-substance, substance-to-action, "to," "from," "toward" (Blake 2001, 37).

Manfred Bierwisch, in his analysis of the syntactic features used in morphology, namely in the case system of German, restricts himself to two characteristics: oblique case and governed case (Bierwisch 2001, 239–70).

Barry Blake holds that componential analysis offers a more accurate description of the grammatical meaning of case than does the search for common meanings and also facilitates the establishment of a classification of cases. Proceeding from the Latin case system, Blake distinguishes five semantic features characterizing case or denoting one of the components of its meaning. Proceeding from the Latin case system, Blake distinguishes five semantic features characterizing case or denoting one of the components of its meaning: addressee, indirect, peripheral, local, possessor (Blake 2001, 43).

**Table 5.1. Characteristics of Case According to M. Bierwisch.**

	<i>Nom</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>Gen</i>	<i>Dat</i>
Oblique	–	–	+	+
Governed	–	+	–	+

Source: Rybakov 2016.

Blake comes to the conclusion that the general meanings of cases are not self-sufficient, for they do not allow derivation of the totality of contexts in which a certain case can be used: “However, generalised meanings, or at least generalised characterisations, can form the basis for a componential analysis of case which enables one to capture similarities between sets of cases” (Blake 2001, 46).

P. V. Durst-Andersen, in contrast to Blake, thinks that invariant meanings can be assigned to cases without losing the possibility of explaining specific, individual meanings (Durst-Andersen 2000, 140). In the general classification of Russian cases, P. V. Durst-Andersen uses three features. In the general classification of Russian cases, P. V. Durst-Andersen uses three features: “direct,” “external,” and “contact” (Durst-Andersen 2000, 140).

This classification includes two direct cases (nominative and accusative), two external cases (genitive and vocative), and two contact ones (accusative and prepositional).

For indirect cases, Durst-Andersen establishes additional features: (1) the prospect of considering two referential entities named in a sentence (one of which is denoted by the subject, the other by an indirect case form), (2) the physical relationship between these two entities, and (3) their logical relationship. At the same time, three types of reflexes are investigated: spatial, temporal, and figurative, that is, the reflections of spatial, temporal, and logical relationships of referents in the semantics of a case form (Durst-Andersen 2000, 140–44).

The issue of distinguishing the semantic features of the meanings of various cases is considered in detail in works of the adherents of “distributed morphology,” a trend in generative linguistics that posits the structural identity of relations between morphological and syntactic units. Thus, Gereon Müller proposes to analyze the semantics of case by means of breaking down case features, and, within the framework of this procedure, he distinguishes three binary elementary features of case: [ $\pm$  subject], [ $\pm$  governed], [ $\pm$  indirect].

Müller characterizes intraparadigmatic homonymy as syncretism and argues that the identity of forms is always connected with common functions. In other words, forms that have common elementary semantic features are homonymous. Furthermore, Müller sees a correlation between form and function in the system of Russian nominal inflectional morphology (Durst-Andersen 2000, 372).

Another representative of the same trend, Thomas McFadden, believes that the breaking down of morphological categories requires more stringent restrictions, and this is especially important in the analysis of the category of case. Proceeding from this assumption, he considers the features of German case

highlighted by Manfred Bierwisch to be insufficient and offers his own model, including next values: subordinate, indirect, and genitive (McFadden 2008).

This model shows more distinctly than others that the most widespread cases in various languages are those with a lesser degree of markedness, those having a simpler semantic structure.

### THE SEMANTIC MODEL OF CASE IN ALEXEI LOSEV'S WORKS

A. F. Losev was one of the first Russian linguists to foreground the communicational and semantic functions of case. In his work on modeling language phenomena in linguistics, he wrote the following about case: “to model this category in language means, firstly, to determine its internal structure and, secondly, to consider this structure as a principle of its reproduction, of its functioning with different materials, as a potential valence for the reproductions it generates” (Losev 1968, 225–26).

Losev noted the unity of the system of cases—which is obvious not only to linguists—and their belonging to a single and integrated domain of language and speech. According to Losev, the concept of the model permits one not only to intuitively feel but also to formulate the nature of this unity:

It [the concept of the model—M. R.] depicts not only the unity of the notional direction in the transition of individual particular meanings of a given case to that particular case in general, in the transition from one case to another, and, finally, in the transition of all cases to their regular system, but also the subordination of real language semantics to all of these case structures. (Losev 1968, 226)

With the help of mathematical concepts, Losev dialectically solves the problem of the basic meaning of case in correlation with a concrete meaning in the living context of language and speech: “each particular case is only the *limit* of an infinite number of its individual meanings, which may become closer to its basic meaning than any concrete expression of it (Losev 1968, 222).

Regardless of the difficulty of formulating the basic meaning, it performs a regulatory function, a function of the principle in view of which all infinite concrete meanings of the case in question are considered: “Without the concept of a limit, it is very difficult for linguistics to operate with an infinite number of shades of this or that grammatical category in a living language and, especially, in live speech” (Losev 1968, 254).

A. F. Losev describes the structure of case not only as a synchronic and static state of a language system but also as a communicational and dy-

namic phenomenon of speech, as the “unity and definiteness of semantic development” (Losev 1968, 223). He defines case as a “subject–object relationship expressed in a noun and by means of only one noun” (227), thereby delineating the grammatical category of case from the category of the relationship in formal logic. Losev argues that “case is a communicationally expressed relationship of one noun to another or a relationship between a noun and an action” (230–31).

At the same time, Losev notes that case is not an inflectional category and may be expressed by any other kind of linguistic means (Losev 1968, 228); he furthermore stresses the structural *multidimensionality* of the category of case (230).

The cited study consistently highlights the grammatical meanings of Russian cases: “The *nominative case* exhibits the subject, which is not correlated with any other objects and speaks only to the active semantic significance of the subject” (Losev 1968, 231). This is the null subject–object relationship.

“The *accusative case* is the maximally passive case” (Losev 1968, 232). Losev gives various examples of the form of the accusative expressing different degrees of activity and draws the conclusion that the grammatical category of case itself is categorially differentiated.

In comparing grammatical and semantic approaches to case, A. F. Losev finds these two approaches to be complementary: “what is usually called a formally grammatical approach is the establishment of a *more general* communicational significance of case; what we call in our essay a semantic approach concerns only the *more specific* communicational significance of case” (Losev 1968, 236).

The *prepositional case* is the case of an indirectly potential object.

The *dative case* is the case of a directly potential object (Losev 1968, 237).

The *genitive case* expresses the activeness of an object but primarily not by its substance, rather, so far, only by its generic commonality.

The *instrumental case* denotes the most active object (Losev 1968, 242).

Thus, Losev builds a semantic sequence of Russian cases: nominative (case of the subject) – accusative – prepositional – dative – genitive – instrumental (cases of the object in different degrees of activity). Case, both as a substance and as an expression the interdependence of its referents, “may possess different degrees of independence and activeness” (Losev 1968, 246). Substance that is active of its own accord is denoted by the nominative, genitive, and instrumental cases. Potentially active substance is denoted by the dative and prepositional cases. Passive substance is denoted by the accusative case (246).

In distinguishing the invariant meanings of cases, Losev notes that “each case has an infinite number of meanings depending on those infinite contexts

of speech in which it is used” (Losev 1968, 8). Pointing out the continuity of case semantics, Losev writes, “No matter how close to each other two meanings of a given case are, it is always possible to find just such a speech context in which our case will have a meaning intermediate between those two very closely specified meanings” (8).

## SEMANTIC OPPOSITIONS IN CASE SYSTEMS

L. A. Novikov characterized antonymy as an expression of opposition in a language. His definition of lexical antonymy as a semantic relationship of opposite meanings expressed by formally different words (lexical and semantic variants) performing the function of opposition and other related functions in a text (Novikov 2001, 638) may be applied to the domain of grammatical semantics and used, for instance, in the analysis of the semantic structure of the grammatical category of case.

Grammarians have repeatedly turned to the concepts of grammatical synonymy, homonymy, and antonymy. Thus, for example A. V. Shirokova considered grammatical homonymy and synonymy to be characteristic features of inflectional and, especially, inflectional-synthetic languages (Shirokova 1994). In agglutinative languages, these phenomena are not typical, they are rather exceptions there.

Antonymy in grammatical semantics appears to be a universal phenomenon. In all types of languages, opposite meanings can be found within the framework of grammatical categories. However, the question of what meanings should be considered opposite in the morphological paradigm of a word is not so simple.

The first possible answer is that all members of a grammatical category are opposed to each other. This idea was developed by Ferdinand de Saussure, who wrote, “Whereas a syntagm immediately suggests an order of succession and a fixed number of elements, terms in an associative family occur neither in fixed numbers nor in a definite order” (Saussure 1959, 126), allowing an exception for the first feature in paradigmatics. Thus, members of a paradigm (an associative group, according to Ferdinand Saussure) were understood to be opposed to one another without any hierarchy or order. As an example, Saussure used the paradigm of case: “the number of cases is definite. Against this, the words have no fixed order of succession, and it is by a purely arbitrary act that the grammarian groups them in one way rather than in another” (127).

Roman Jakobson proposed a completely different approach to explaining how grammatical categories are arranged and showed that they have a specific structure based on oppositions with respect to differential features (Jakobson 1984).

If we accept that all cases are antonymous to each other in their meanings, the concept of antonymy becomes senseless. Indeed, all meanings are different, in certain contexts they are in contrast to each other but not opposed. Here, we should turn to the notion of the *opposition*, which was analyzed in detail by L. A. Novikov. Having mentioned that the discrepancies in the perception of opposition depend on the socially relevant, age-related, and psychological characteristics of an individual, Novikov reveals several aspects of the category of opposition: the logical, psychological, semantic, and functional aspects.

Thus, different professionals will choose different antonyms to the adjective *whole*, such as *broken*, *dissected*, *fractional*. Hence, antonymy as a phenomenon of language must be “purified” from accidental “drifts.” Similarly, in the semantics of case, the nominative case is opposed to the accusative on the basis of one feature (absence of objectness) and to the instrumental on the basis of another (absence of peripheralness). As in lexical and morphological semantics, it is crucial to determine a specific differential feature as the basis of opposition.

In philosophy, the concept of opposition was regarded as being initial and obvious, while, on the other hand, it represented the culmination of complex philosophical systems. Opposition as a logical category is characterized by a dialectical interconnection of opposing concepts. Hegel’s ideas are helpful here, for he treats each opposite as an internal negation of its counterpart in itself. Opposites, according to Hegel, have a property of counterweighting each other, demonstrating symmetry (Novikov 2001, 37–48).

Lexical semantics distinguishes complementary and contrarian antonyms. Complementary antonyms deny each other, and, in formal logic, they correspond to incompatible concepts, completely exhausting the scope of the generic concept. In the semantics of case, a complementary relation can be seen in the opposition of direct and indirect cases. This opposition has a negative character and, as in the lexicon, is weakened, not strong. An oblique case is indirect, but the term does not indicate how exactly. However, in a two-case system, the significance of an oblique case increases; it becomes not a set but an explicit member of the opposition, although semantically it covers all possible indirect functions.

For languages with more than two cases, the formula of antonymy will be as follows:

$$C = \{d, \neg d = O\},$$

where  $C$  is the set of all cases in the language in question,  $d$  is the direct case,  $\neg$  is the sign for logical negation, and  $O$  is the set of all oblique cases.



For two-case languages, the formula of antonymy is different:

$$C = \{d, \neg d = obl\}, \text{ and } d = \neg obl,$$

with *obl* standing for the oblique case (*obliquus*).

In two-case systems, the antonymy of cases appears to be truly symmetrical. In contrast, the relations among the meanings of cases in a multicase system cannot be regarded as being organized on the principle of a contrarian opposition; in case semantics, it seems unlikely that some central element can be identified in the conceptual continuum, in relation to which polar opposite meanings could be distinguished. Lexical antonymy is based on the contrarian opposition helping to distinguish, delineate, and delimit various kinds of “continua” and “semantic spaces” in language (Novikov 2001, 66), whereas, in case semantics, the primary role is played by the opposition of cases on the basis of a specific differential semantic feature.

Within case semantics, the oppositions of subject and object, direct and indirect object, agent and instrument are obvious; nevertheless, the issue of distinguishing antonymous meanings among cases and the rationale for such a distinction requires investigation.

In lexicology, antonyms are understood as words that are highly homogeneous in their semantic structure. “Antonymous meanings that oppose each other in their whole content differ paradigmatically only by one differential feature” (Novikov 2001, 82).

Such an understanding of antonymy can be fully transferred to case semantics, whereby meanings of cases can be detected that are opposed within the paradigm on the basis of one differential feature. Of course, systems of differential features—or semantic coordinates—for cases differ in different theories. Let us consider which antonymous pairs may be obtained in each of such coordinate systems.

The system of differential features of case according to Roman Jakobson is analyzed in detail by Arkad’ev (2006). In Jakobson’s “Contribution to the General Theory of Case,” P. M. Arkad’ev singles out four differential features, relationship, extensionality, peripherality, and formalization, according to which they form antonymous pairs. On the basis of *relationship*, they are nominative–accusative (+) and instrumental–dative (+); for the feature of *formalization*, they are genitive–partitive (+) and prepositional–locative (+); for *extensionality*, they are nominative–genitive (+) and instrumental–dative (+); for *peripherality*, they are nominative–instrumental (+) and accusative–dative (+), where the plus sign denotes the members of the pair possessing the feature in question.

Carol Neidle singles out three differential features for the classification of cases: peripherality, quantity, and attribution (Neidle 1982, 397).

On the basis of these features, eight binary correlations emerge. On the basis of *peripherality*: nominative–instrumental (+) and partitive–locative (+); on the basis of *quantity*: accusative–genitive (+) and dative–prepositional (+); on the basis of *attribution*: nominative–accusative (+), partitive–genitive (+), locative–prepositional (+), and instrumental–dative (+). Moreover, in this system of features, a polar pair of antonymous cases is identified: nominative–locative, which are opposed to each other by all three differential features.

To compare the results of the analysis, let us turn to table 5.2.

The comparison of antonymous pairs—that is, the semantic correlations of cases based on a single feature—shows both the dependence of the result on the system of differential characteristics and the presence of convergence. Two clear antonymous oppositions have been revealed: the nominative–accusative opposition (the semantic subject–object opposition) and the nominative–instrumental opposition as the opposition of agent and instrument.

However, with respect to the diathesis of voice, the second pair acts also as a pair of converse elements; it is worth mentioning that the concept of conversion has been thoroughly investigated by L. A. Novikov (2001). Another five correlations coincide in two of the examined systems.

**Table 5.2. Case Antonymy in Different Systems of Coordinates.**

No.	<i>R. Jakobson's System (following P. M. Arkad'ev)</i>	<i>C. Neidle's System</i>	<i>I. M. Tronskii's System</i>	<i>Coinciding Pairs</i>
1	Nom – Acc	Nom – Acc	Nom – Acc	3
2	Nom – Instr	Nom – Instr	Nom – Instr	3
3	Acc – Dat		Acc – Dat	2
4	Gen – Part	Gen – Part		2
5	Prep – Loc	Prep – Loc		2
6	Nom – Gen			1
7	Dat – Instr	Dat – Instr		2
8	Instr – Prep			1
9		Acc – Gen	Acc – Gen	2
10		Part – Loc		1
11		Dat – Prep		1
12			Loc – Abl	1
13			Dat – Loc	1
14			Gen – Abl	1
15			Gen – Loc	1
Features in the system	4	3	3	
Antonymous pairs in the system	8	8	8	

Source: Rybakov 2016.

The analysis of semantic oppositions in case systems shows the value of the concept of antonymy for studying the semantics of grammatical categories. Moreover, there are reasons to believe that the opposition of invariant meanings among cases is universal, despite the fact that the semantic structure of case as a category, taken in the entirety of all its meanings, is specific to each individual language.

## THE SYNTAGMATIC TYPOLOGY OF CASE MARKING

The syntagmatic typology of how case is marked in language can be considered in several aspects: (1) types of syntagmatic positions of case affixes in a word form in relation to the root, (2) types of connections between morphs expressing case and their environment, and (3) case agreement as a typological feature of the language at hand.

Case may be expressed by morphological signs and clitics. Clitics are non-autonomous word forms, lacking the prosodic characteristics typical of the word forms in a given language (cf. Mel'chuk 1997, 212).

Morphological signs include morphs (affixes), suprafixes (accent and tone), modifications (reduplication and alternation), and conversions (Mel'chuk 2001, 13). Case markings in different languages of the world include also affixes (prefixes and suffixes) as well as tonal suprafixes and alternations.

The typology of grammatical case marking is analyzed in the World Atlas of Language Structures (<http://wals.info>) for a sample material of 1,031 languages. The representation of values is as follows: case suffixes, 452; case prefixes, 38; tonal markers, 5; alternation within noun stem, 1; mixed strategies, 9; postpositional clitics, 123; prepositional clitics, 17; inpositional clitics, 7; languages without the category of case, 379.

These data show that the most common means of marking case is with an affix following the root. Languages of this type are the most widespread upon the linguistic map of the world; they are well represented on all continents and in many language families.

Let us consider languages with rarer means of expressing case in more detail. Case prefixes exist in languages of America, Asia, Africa, and Australia, including two-case languages, such as Movima (Bolivia), Nias (Indonesia), Berber, and Salishan. According to the WALS, case prefixes can also be found in the language of Prasuni (the Nuristani subgroup of the Iranian group of the Indo-European family).

It is interesting that, if a case prefix—or a case suffix—cooccurs in a word form with other affixes, in all the languages considered, it stands the farthest from the root and is on the boundary of the word form. In Russian grammar,

case affixes are called “endings.” For languages with case prefixation, this term is clearly unsuitable, as there the case markers are the “beginnings” of word forms. This typological feature of case affixes is explained by their semantics. The less lexical the affix’s meaning, the farther it will be from the root if a word form contains further lexical affixes, and this trend is universal. It has been confirmed by the material of both suffixing and prefixing languages. Indeed, case is the most variable inflectional category. It is difficult to imagine a noun that has no oblique case forms due to an impossibility of assigning the corresponding meaning to the noun, unlike, for example, the category of number, where the opposition of forms is sometimes impossible for semantic reasons.

A tonal suprafix (tone alternation in the root syllable) is used as an accent marker, according to the WALS, in five languages, one of which is Jamsay, belonging to the Volta subgroup of the Atlantic group of the Niger-Congo family, and the other four, namely Maba, Maasai, Nandi, and Shilluk, belong to the Nilotic group of the Eastern Sudanic family of the Nilo-Saharan macrofamily.

In the Nuer language of the same Nilotic group, case is marked by means of alternation in the stem.

Mixed grammatical strategies occur in case marking in the Moro language of the Kordofanian group of the Niger-Congo family, in the Sidaama and Dhaasanak languages of the Cushitic group of the Afrasian family, in the Turkana language of the Nilotic group of the Eastern Sudanic family, in the Siuslaw language of the Penutian family (United States), and in the Australian language Manggarai.

Clitics are divided into prepositional, inpositional, and postpositional in relation to the base word form with which they are connected through general prosody. As with case affixes, clitics are mostly postpositional. They have been noted in such languages as Basque; Tibetan; a number of languages of the Himalayan area; Kanuri (Western Saharan group of the Nilo-Saharan family) and other languages of this family; Coos, Karok, Tonkawa, Choctaw, and a number of other languages in the United States; Aymara (an isolated language in Southern America); and many languages of Papua-New Guinea and Australia.

Prepositional clitics have been noted, for example, in Squamish (Salishan family, America), Fula (Atlantic family of the Niger-Congo macrofamily), and Malagasy. Inpositional clitics have been found only in seven Australian languages.

The way the case marker is connected with the environment is determined by the terminological opposition of *agglutination–fusion*. The case affixes of Indo-European languages, as well as some affixes in Korean and

the Nakh-Daghestani languages, are fusional. A change in tone or alternation in the stem cannot be classified as fusion in the exact sense of this term because, in such cases, there is no affixation, but these modes clearly veer the language type away from pure agglutination.

The characterization of the case marking in Indo-European languages as inflectional implies not only a fusional connection with the stem and variance in the form of these affixes but also the expression of meanings, alongside those of case, related to other derivational categories.

According to A. A. Reformatskii, agglutinative affixes are invariant in form—that is, they have no formal variants for expressing one and the same grammatical meaning—and—that is, they express only one grammatical category at a time (Reformatskii 1987, 59).

However, agglutinative languages also exhibit some variance in the form of their affixes, though they remain monosemantic. This is noted for the noun case suffix in the Avar language (the Avar subgroup of the Avaro-Ando-Tsez group of the Nakh-Dagestani family), which possesses three types of noun declension (Vinogradov et al. 1966, 260). Another deviation in this language from the agglutinative type is found in alternations in the stem accompanying the formation of some case forms for nouns with an archaic type of inflectional morphology (Bokarev 1954, 43). However, as is typical for agglutinative languages, Avar lacks agreement between adjectives and nouns.

In the Ingush language, the case affixes of nouns are neither invariant in form nor monosemantic, as case and number are expressed by a single affix in a number of word forms (Bokarev et al. 1967, 215). The language also exhibits types of declension as well as noun–adjective case agreement. These characteristics allow one to consider Ingush case marking to be a form of inflection, although the structure of the language as a whole is agglutinative, albeit with deviations from the standard of agglutination.

The material studied has thus far not yielded languages with polysemantic but invariant affixes, though this item requires further research.

Case agreement of attributes with nouns is a characteristic typological feature of inflectional-synthetic languages. It exists in Latin, Greek and New Greek, the Slavic and Baltic languages, Icelandic, and German. The inflectional markings of adjectives and participles in the function of attributes express grammatical meanings that correspond to the categories of agreement of the nouns they modify.

In Latin, the case inflection of adjectives not only expresses the same case as the modified noun but also coincides in its sound pattern with the inflection of the noun in all cases, provided its gender is congruent with the declension type (masculine in *-us*, feminine in *-a*).

There is no case agreement in the vast majority of agglutinative languages, although there are some exceptions. For example, case agreement between adjectives and nouns exists in Estonian. In Udmurt, adjectives with a suffix of definiteness agree with nouns in number and case, as in inflectional languages (Vinogradov et al. 2005, 495, 192). Case agreement in an attributive syntagm has also been noted in Urartian (Kazanskii et al. 2010, 166).

In Khwarshi (the Tsez group of the Avaro-Ando-Tsez family) and in the Chechen, Ingush, and Bats languages (the Nakh group of the Nakh-Daghestani family), adjectives have two case forms, direct and indirect case, by means of which they agree with the nouns they modify. Thus, unlike most agglutinative languages, where adjectives have no relational categories of inflectional morphology, the languages mentioned exhibit syntactic agreement, albeit in a limited form: it is either not represented in all adjectives (as in Udmurt) or reduced to two forms, while the noun has many more cases (as in the Nakh languages).

For inflectional-analytical languages that have lost the category of case on nouns, such as English, French, Spanish, and Irish, agreement simply cannot exist. If, in a language of the inflectional-analytical type, case is preserved on a noun, then a modifying adjective, except for in special cases, will have no case declension. Thus, in Armenian, nouns are declined, but adjectives exhibit no categories of agreement. With respect to the way adjectives and nouns are syntagmatically connected, the inflectional Armenian language is structurally similar to agglutinative languages. In Romanian and Albanian, the situation is similar, but there are exceptions there. In Albanian, if syntactic inversion takes place, the adjective receives the case marking of the noun and thus expresses the case of the nominal group, while the noun itself remains without a case marker. In Romanian, the main way of marking case is inflection not of the noun itself but of the accompanying determiners and attributes. In this situation, a complex interaction of analytical and other means of expressing case is observed in the nominal syntagm, together with syncretism of the expression of case and other nominal categories. Outside the nominal syntagm, adjectives cannot take case marking (Chelysheva et al. 2001, 597–98).

For each of the three previously mentioned aspects of the syntagmatic relations of case, a separate scale can be formulated, indicating the frequency of each feature in the world's languages.

With respect to the syntagmatic position of case markers, the scale of their occurrence in the world's languages is as follows:

*suffixes > postpositional clitics > prefixes > prepositional clitics > mixed strategies > inpositional clitics (> tones > alternations).*

The case markers in parentheses are not segments, they are imposed upon the root in a suprasegmental way and therefore have no syntagmatic position in the word form. These morphological means, in contrast to affixes, very rarely act as case markers.

The frequency of types of morpho-phonological connection with the environment is presented on the following scale:

*agglutinative monosemantic affixes > fusional inflection > fusional monosemantic affixes.*

The scale for types of case agreement is as follows:

*absence of agreement > agreement in case between noun and adjective, each with their own inflectional paradigm > case marking of the nominal group through inflection of the adjective > agreement in case between noun and adjective with a shared inflectional paradigm.*

## THE CATEGORY OF CASE IN SYSTEMIC LINGUISTICS

In systemic linguistics, the grammatical category of case is understood as a special morphological means of denoting the roles of participants in a situation in accordance with the typical compositional pattern determining the basic characteristics of a proposition. The classification of case functions proposed by G. P. Mel'nikov allows for comparison of the case systems of languages with respect to the differences in the semantics of individual case forms, which is especially important when the same case names conceal differences in the functions of case forms and in the significance of these forms in the case system as a whole. G. P. Mel'nikov's systemological approach enables one to avoid the extremity of schematic universalism, on the one hand, and a rejection of the typological approach to language, on the other. Moreover, the systemological approach permits one to dialectically explain the relationship of individual forms and categories within the system of language as a whole.

This proposed hierarchical classification of the semantic functions of cases allows us to explain the differing numbers of members in the category of case (forms and corresponding basic meanings) in the case systems of different languages and to justify the classification of case systems based on the number of forms that occur. Two-case systems manifest a general delineation of the functions of topic and focus. Three-case systems include an additional distinction between direct and indirect objects. More complex systems are also based on the formal delineation of certain semantic functions. This

pattern may be extended to multicaselanguages by further subdividing the locative proper into various functions: first into the essive and lative, and then further, depending on the specific differential features in the system of locative cases. Ignoring G. P. Mel'nikov's hierarchy, the number of cases in a particular language system appears to simply be random, an insignificant feature of classification with no logical explanation.

Comparison within languages of their type of case system and internal determinant reveals a certain regularity. Case systems do not occur in languages with the so-called occasional internal determinant; they initially include five to eight elements in languages with the eventive determinant; they may be complex or absent altogether in languages with the ambient or attributive determinant. The most complex case systems are found in languages with the attributive determinant, which is quite understandable: in these languages, they are one of the most important means for attributive characterization of the objects mentioned in a proposition.

The connection between the category of case and the external determinant of a language is also obvious: case cannot exist in heterogeneous megacommunities, but it is found in all types of homogeneous communities. It also correlates with the way reported subject matter is connected: more complex case systems are found in languages that connect subject matter linearly.

Thus, Mel'nikov's treatment of case allows us to see the insufficiency of characterizing case as (1) a formal, meaningless syntactic category for indicating syntactic connections in the sentence; or (2) an "objective" logical and grammatical category expressing the semantics of subject-object relations common to all languages.

The morphological category of case in the light of systemic linguistics appears to be a grammaticalized form for demonstrating the typical roles of participants and things in the narrative structure of an utterance depicting a real-world situation. At the same time, the case system of a particular language reflects the structure of the categories that are significant for the typical predicative arrangement of an utterance in languages of that type, and the choice of a specific case form on the part of the speaker, given syntactic alternatives for constructing the sentence, reflects the communicative intention of the speaker, including with respect to the topic-focus opposition and the real significance of the participants' roles from the speaker's standpoint.

The adherents of systemic linguistics, in developing Mel'nikov's ideas, offer some new approaches. Thus, using the example of Russian, A. F. Driomov has proposed to consider the case paradigm of the noun as a syntactic "repertoire"—"the nominative case is the subject (*brat pishet* 'the brother writes'), the accusative, dative and instrumental are objects of the predicate (*vidit brata* 'sees the brother'; *zavidujet bratu* 'envies the brother'; *gorditsja*



*bratom* ‘is proud of the brother’); the prepositional case marks the object of a preposition (*o brate* ‘about the brother’; *pri brate* ‘at the brother’; *na brate* ‘on the brother’); the genitive is the object of a noun (*ljubov’ brata* ‘love of the brother’)”—and, in terms of semantics, as a “repertoire of events” including the cause of an action (at the level of language content: *agens*) in the nominative case, the conditions (*faciens*) in the instrumental, the basis (*precursor*) in the genitive, the effect (*patiens*) in the accusative, the consequence (*beneficiant*) in the dative, and the locus (*chronotope*) in the prepositional, as, for example, in the sentence *Uchitel’ melom pishet teoremu Pifagora uchennikam na doske* “The teacher writes the theorem of Pythagoras for the pupils on the board using chalk” (Driomov 2013, 61–62).

In developing Mel’nikov’s systemic views on the nature and functions of case, A. F. Driomov offers a classification of case with a different set of semantic features (cf. Driomov 2001, 164).

In the system of features proposed by Driomov, the prepositional is distinguished as a case marked by three features, while the other cases possess only two. Building upon Mel’nikov’s ideas, S. A. Lutin analyzed the systemically functional oppositions of the Russian cases and identified the following semantic distinctions: real vs. potential events, generators vs. localizers of events, localizers at a point vs. in a zone (Lutin 2008, 40–42). The originality of the classification proposed by Lutin consists in the fact that the genitive case in this model is considered exclusively within the framework of constructions with the preposition *u* “at” (which expresses possession in addition to location).

Stressing the systemic nature of the category of case, Lutin notes, “The traditionally allocated grammatical meanings of each case are united in the native speakers’ minds into a single case not only because of formal uniformity but also because of their having a single, invariant function. The invariant function manifests itself in all case meanings, thus satisfying quite a definite functional requirement of the case system and thereby supporting its functioning as an integrated system within the supersystem of the next tier, i.e. within the language in question; the invariant functions of cases are systemically opposed to each other by a number of communicationally significant criteria” (Lutin 2008, 4).

**Table 5.3. Case Oppositions (According to S. A. Lutin).**

	<i>Nom</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>Dat</i>	<i>u + Gen</i>	<i>Inst</i>	<i>Prep</i>
Real	+	–	–	+	–	+
Potential	–	+	+	–	+	–
Event generator	+	–	–	–	+	–
Event localizer at a point	–	+	–	–	–	+
Event localizer in a zone	–	–	+	+	–	–

Source: Rybakov 2016.

## Chapter Six

# The Systemic Theory of Predication

## *The Internal Form of Morphological Types*

G. P. Mel'nikov's concept of case proceeds from the general provisions of the systemic theory of predication, which describes the conveyance of information within a communicative act. The act of communication concerns not only certain mental notions. Language also controls the unfolding of the original knowledge into new knowledge. It is the concept of the communicational approach of languages, introduced by systemic linguistics, that assumes "a specific manner for each language to control the mental act elicited in the listener's brain in the communicational process" (Mel'nikov and Preobrazhenskii 1989, 77).

In systemic linguistics, a proposition is understood as the elicitation of two mental representations representing elements of knowledge in the subject's mind, one of which, the predicand, is influenced by the other, the predicator, and modified, that is, transformed into the result of this influence, becoming further-specified, revised knowledge, the predicate; and the very process of such a transformation of the predicand into a predicate with the help of a predicator is called predication. (Mel'nikov 2000, 60)

If a predicative process takes place in one's extralinguistic consciousness without any speech taking part in it, this, according to Mel'nikov, is logical predication. But if the predicative process is stimulated in the subject's consciousness by signs expressed by a speaker and perceived in the flow of speech, it should be interpreted as speech-based predication. If, at the same time, the result of speech-based predication < . . . > is introduced into the listener's extralinguistic conception of the world "as a means of refining the characteristics of one of its components," the predication is communicational. But if the predicate, as a result of transformation of the sense of the theme

**Table 6.1. Predication Scheme according to G. P. Mel’nikov.**

<i>Type of Predication</i>	<i>Process of Predication</i>		
	<i>Predicand</i>	<i>Predicator</i>	<i>Predicate</i>
Logical (in extralinguistic consciousness)	A mental representation— an element of knowledge subject to transformation	A mental representation— an element of knowledge capable of refining the conception of the world	A mental representation— the transformed element of knowledge, the result of the predicative process
Communicational (speech based)	An element of knowledge subject to transformation and denoted by elements (signs) in the flow of speech	An element of knowledge capable of refining the conception of the world and denoted by elements (signs) in the flow of speech	The transformed element of knowledge, introduced to the listener’s extralinguistic conception of the world
Denotational (speech based)	An element of knowledge subject to transformation and denoted by elements (signs) in the flow of speech	An element of knowledge capable of refining the conception of the world and denoted by elements (signs) in the flow of speech	The transformed element of knowledge, retained in the mind but introducing no changes into the listener’s extralinguistic conception of the world

Source: Rybakov 2016.

(topic) by the sense of the rheme (comment) of the utterance (or transformation of the said predicand with the help of said predicator) remains only on the listener’s “operational screen,” in his imagination”—that is, introduces no change, no amendment to a particular fragment of the listener’s picture of the world—then the function performed by the utterance is only denotational (see Mel’nikov 2000, 60).

As Mel’nikov has shown, the refinement and deepening of the general concepts of semiotics—including Humboldt’s concept of the internal form of a language system as the main characteristic of the “spirit of language”—achieved by systemic linguistics naturally connects us to the problems of linguistic typology. At the same time, typology turns out to be theoretically significant for the study of specific semantics (the semantics of individual

languages) because specific studies in the semantics of language can hardly be productive without the data of typology.

## THE INTERNAL FORM OF MORPHOLOGICAL TYPES

In this regard, Mel'nikov and his followers have paid attention to the fact that Humboldt's typological division of world languages into four "morphological classes" (inflectional, agglutinative, isolating, and incorporating) "remains, despite constant criticism, practically the most important reference point when it comes to identifying the structural peculiarities of languages under study" (Mel'nikov 2000, 76).

Each "morphological class" must have a corresponding particular *internal form*. But while Humboldt did not manage to explicate the essence of these four internal forms, the practice of classing a language as one or the other language type is still based primarily on certain features of its external form. Most often, attention is paid to agglutination or fusion at the morpheme boundaries of word forms, to the presence or absence of grammatical inflectional morphemes, to the ways of opposing the signs of the subject to the signs of an object, etc., which is to say, to features that are not reducible to unified rationales for classification. Only the few linguists who directly and consistently developed Humboldt's systemic ideas (I. I. Sreznevskii, A. A. Potebnia, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay) accumulated observations on the functional connections between the internal and external parameters of the languages of each "morphological class." And modern systemic linguistics, building on the achievements of its founders, not only explicitly formulates the special character of the internal form of these language classes but also shows that *external forms*, which are conditioned by the internal form, may be reduced, on a unified classificational basis, to the usual notions of inflectional, agglutinative, isolating, and incorporating language structures. This unified basis is manifested, according to Mel'nikov, even at such a high level of the external form as the division of an utterance into communicational theme (topic) and rheme (focus) (Mel'nikov 2000, 76).

The study of the external form of language in systemic linguistics is based on a clear definition of qualitative and quantitative types of morphemes. Qualitative pertains to the division of morphemes into radical (root-based) and auxiliary ones. The morpheme is defined as radical or auxiliary depending on whether the sememes expressed by the morpheme correspond to extralinguistic objects and relations or to intralinguistic objects, relations, and classes. The quantitative characteristic consists in the division of morphemes into synthetic and analytical ones. A morpheme is defined as analytical or

synthetic depending on whether it is a bearer of just one or several sememes. These characteristics of morphemes serve as sufficient grounds for morphological classification of languages on the basis of ideal (as a reference) morphological types.

As we have seen, when the successive stages of inflectional languages are considered, the internal form of an inflectional language consists in the tendency to represent the denotational sense of any utterance as an integrated and coherent dynamic representation of the developing event. But the external form of such an utterance, also coherent and integrated, must undergo *relevant communicational disjunction* (*актуальное членение*), that is, be divided into the communicational *theme* (topic) and *rheme* (focus), so that the listener may effectuate *communicational* predication by means of dividing the denotational sense in the form of the representation of the developing event into the communicational predicand and communicational predicator (see Mel'nikov 2000, 76)

For systemic linguists, it is obvious that the need for such subdivision of sentences in inflectional languages is reduced to the relevant disjunction of a denotational integrated sentence. This is due to the fact that the denotational sense of a typical inflectional sentence, being eventive, can only be coherent and integrated. And only on its basis can the components of a proposition, namely the predicand and the predicator, be obtained. Otherwise, communicational predication would be impossible. Thus, a sentence, in order to become a proposition, should be divided not only into denotational components (parts of a sentence) but also into communicational ones, the communicational topic and focus. In other words, it requires *disjunction* of the information structure to distinguish the topical portion from the focal one (Mel'nikov 2000, 77).

In considering the particularities of the internal and external forms of Humboldt's other three "morphological classes," G. P. Mel'nikov defines the basis for their typological comparison in terms of the particularities of the relevant communicational subdivision of typical utterances in corresponding languages.

For sentences in *agglutinative* languages, the group of the communicational topic and the group of the communicational focus are formed as two separate denotations, and the fact that they are the denotations of parts of a single proposition requires special marking with a sign, which allows the listener to understand that one of the denotations included in the utterance is the relevant communicational topic in relation to the second denotation as the focus. Therefore, while relevant communicational subdivision is realized in inflectional languages as a variant of relevant disjunction of the sentence into the topic and the focus, relevant communicational subdivision

in agglutinative languages is realized as a variant of *conjunction* of the topic with the focus.

In isolating languages—with their clear tendency to hint using substantive morphemes (roots) not only at the senses but also at those relations between senses as are expressed in synthetic languages by morphemes with grammatical meanings (affixes or functional parts of speech)—the fact that an utterance is a proposition and, consequently, that a communicational topic and focus are included in this proposition as denotations of elements underlying the proposition—that is, of the predicand and the predicator—is best indicated descriptively (Mel'nikov 2000, 77).

Most often, it is just an intonational and positional rapprochement of denotations, similar, for example, to the way the semantic connection between the components of a single concept in an inflectional language is sometimes expressed through the apposition of words (*Masha-vostrushka* “Masha the smartie,” *table'-kalendar'* “calendar table,” etc.). Thus, the Chinese statement translated literally, morpheme by morpheme, into Russian as *My prishli gosti* “We came guests” is interpreted by the speaker of an isolating language to mean “As for us, guests have come to see us.” It is clear that, in a more concise Russian variant, this content can be conveyed by the sentence *A k nam prishli gosti* “Guests have come to see us.” Consequently, in isolating languages, it is not relevant disjunction and conjunction that are widely used but rather something like an “apposition” between the topic and the focus, which can also be defined as “relevant communicational adjunction” (Mel'nikov 2000, 78).

And, finally, incorporating languages possess a highly developed technique of forming utterances that present focal propositions, and, therefore, there is no boundary between the communicational topic and focus inside such a proposition. Thus, in the system of typological classification based on the originality of the external form at the level of relevant communicational subdivision, incorporating languages, whose utterances Humboldt called word-sentences, are quite naturally characterized in systemic linguistics as languages with *relevant nonjunction* (Mel'nikov 2000, 78).

Importantly, the method of relevant division preferred at the communicational level of language also prevails at the level of denotational relevant division. We have seen that, in inflectional languages, in order to perform both denotational and communicational predication (if we consider the relationship not only between a word and a sentence but also between a simple and a complex sentence), block predication is used as well as chain predication.

An analogous semblance, homomorphism between communicational and denotational types of predication in incorporating languages is manifested

in the fact that, being a focal sign, a word-sentence is not divisible into such communicational blocks as topic and focus; accordingly, it is not divided into individual words, as typical blocks of signs so characteristic of the system of inflectional languages; and the resultant focal unit itself, that is, the word-sentence, becomes to the listener the expresser of the denotational sense, for it evokes nothing but catenated denotational predications in the process of perceiving the next morphemes of the word-sentence, and, hence, does not contain blocks as independent units of either communicational or denotational type.

The principles applied in modern systemic typology for assigning a language to one of Humboldt's "morphological classes" based on its external form—including such particularities of relevant subdivision as dis-junction, con-junction, ad-junction, and non-junction—differ from the traditional ones in that the new basis for typological classification cannot be accused of lacking unified foundations for classification. Moreover, these refined foundations do not negate the essentiality of the traditional ones but throw additional light on the logic of the connection between the canonical characteristics of the external and internal forms of each linguistic type, which, in particular, paves the way to a deeper understanding of the essence and origins of the features studied in the structures of languages (including identification of the external "extralinguistic" factors that make these features functionally necessary) (Mel'nikov 2000, 78–79). The interest in the question of the relationship between the external (morphological) and internal (semantic) form in systemic typology manifests itself already in the very definition of the morphological structure of language as the nature of "the relations between sememes (i.e. elementary semantic units, or 'semantic coefficients' of a given language in the domain of content) and morphemes (i.e. minimal units of the bearers, or emitters of sememes in the domain of expression) within the word" (Mel'nikov 1966, 265).

*Part II*

**MODELLING THE  
SYSTEM OF LANGUAGE**

Vladimir Denisenko





## *Chapter Seven*

# **Modelling the System of Language with Regard to the Linguistic Personality**

A researcher of language as a system invariably meets with many contradictions within this system and sooner or later starts to wonder what lies beyond its borders and whether many of its features are not concealed in something outside this system but still mandatory for its existence. Obviously, language is a system of a special kind; in the words of Ferdinand de Saussure, it is “the system of systems.” This is due not so much to its openness as to its diffuseness. Diffuse or not strictly organized systems became an object of special attention of scholars in the late twentieth century: “In these systems, it is impossible to set up impermeable partitions. . . . Such systems are sometimes called large systems, since it is necessary to consider the action of so many various factors determining processes which have a different nature, but are closely interconnected with each other” (Biriukov and Geller 1973, 40–41).

As a consequence, the modeling of such systems has its peculiarities. For example, models of these systems are not always amenable to experimental verification. The consistency of any system—not only a diffuse one—cannot be objectified by means of the system itself. It is impossible to cognize language by itself, in itself, and for itself without going beyond its limits and without turning to its creator and bearer: man. We thus come to the idea of linguistic anthropology, that is, the concept of linguistic personality based on the division of culture into two types: anthropocentric (personal) and geocentric (impersonal). In any case, when speaking of linguistics as a science, one must always take into account one of its most important features: the fact that the subject and the object—the researcher of language and language itself—are included in each other. A linguist as a bearer of language observes his own speech activity. The idea of the linguistic personality is, in essence, a refusal to study language only in itself and for itself, that is, solely as a systemic and structural formation. It is awareness

of the transition to anthropological linguistics, to the study of language as associated with human beings and their activities.

It is a property of the linguistic personality to develop; this was described by V. V. Vinogradov and was taken as a basis for G. I. Bogin's language-acquisitional concept of the linguistic personality, which according to him is "a person viewed in terms of his readiness to perform verbal acts, to create and accept works of speech" (Bogin 1982, 1). The ability of the linguistic personality to develop, according to Bogin, manifests itself in the fact that a person with a potential linguistic personality must still become the linguistic personality. The linguistic personality progressively develops from one level to the next, and the result of its development can be described in an ordered form. In this way, we come to the idea of structuring the linguistic personality, and the levels of its modeling do not coincide with the levels of the model of language. In this connection, we should emphasize the fact that the linguistic personality itself is a systemic entity. Nevertheless, this system could easily be classified as diffuse. There are some limitations when it comes to dividing such a system into levels and distinguishing the units of these levels. Bogin builds a model of the linguistic personality along three axes: (i) the level of language: phonetics, grammar, lexis; (ii) types of speech activity: speaking, listening, writing, reading; and (iii) the levels of evaluation of one linguistic personality by another: correctness, interiorization, saturation, adequate choice, and adequate synthesis. The development of the linguistic personality, therefore, occurs as follows:

The linguistic personality, (1) having mastered the most frequent means of direct nomination accepted in the society, proceeds to (2) the interiorization of speech, which opens up the path to (3) lexical and grammatical awareness and, further, to (4) freedom *sui generis* in the selection of means of expression from a number of potential alternatives. The attainment of this freedom allows the developed linguistic personality (5) to operate as a whole text in such a way that the text form is optimally reflected in the content/acts as a "form for content." (Bogin 1982, 12–13)

The concept of linguistic personality is the logical result of interdisciplinary studies of language carried out at the intersection of history, sociology, psychology, ethnography, philosophy, literary studies, art history, and, of course, linguistics. Using the category of linguistic personality has made it possible break down the boundaries between disciplines and thereby to find a new approach to the notion of *homo loquens*: speaking man. In fact, linguistic personality as a category took shape in the works of I. N. Karaulov, who proposed a three-level structure for the linguistic personality, consisting of interrelated and interdependent verbal–semantic, cognitive, and pragmatic

levels (Karaulov 1987). The verbal–semantic level of the linguistic personality, its units, and the relations between them have been the main subject of the study of language since the very birth of knowledge about language. More recently, the cognitive and pragmatic levels have become the object of close attention on the part of researchers, which is largely due to the development of psycholinguistics, the theory of communication, the theory of speech acts, and cognitive linguistics. The main criterion for delineating these levels is the presence of specific typical elements, or units, in each of them, their interrelation, and the distinctive complexes inherent in each individual level. The linguistic personality is regarded as a person reconstructed in its main features on the basis of the linguistic means it uses. At each level, the variable (susceptible to change) and the invariant (stable, fixed, not subject to change) parts are distinguished from each other, as are stereotypes, relations, and, in terms of language acquisition, forms of preparedness.

The verbal–semantic level is that of traditional linguistic semantics, the semantic links between words, and lexical and semantic relations. For a native speaker, it assumes a degree of colloquial fluency, while for the researcher, it implies description of the formal means of expressing meanings. The invariant part of this level is the type of the general national language and stable verbal and semantic associations. This is the constant core of the language, thanks to which the speakers of different dialects of one language can understand each other and modern readers can understand texts written in the language of earlier historical periods. Due to the invariant component of the verbal–semantic level of the linguistic personality, we can understand children’s speech, which is not yet formed according to the literary norm; we can recognize a foreign accent and distinguish a person of a different ethnicity from that of a speaker of the normative literary language. The variable component is the systemic and structural organization of the system of the language in a certain historical period. The stereotypes of the lexical and grammatical level are models of phrases and sentences. The forms of preparedness on this level include reception of grammatical structures, readiness for oral or written speech, command of the system of writing and even calligraphy, command of spelling norms, readiness for the reception of lexis and word choice, readiness for understanding, producing and reproducing texts for everyday use, command of terminology and borrowings, command of spontaneous speech, and others (Karaulov 1987, 60).

The cognitive level of the linguistic personality is the system of values and meanings in the personal, individual view of the world. This level can be defined as the linguistic personality’s thesaurus of the notions, ideas, and concepts comprising each individual’s view of the world, which in turn reflects a particular hierarchy of values. The invariant part of this cognitive

level is the basic, stable part of this view of the world, and the variable component includes social and sociolinguistic characteristics of the linguistic community to which the personality belongs and which determines the relations of the basic concepts in its view of the world (Karaulov 1987, 42). Here we have a transition from the level of meaning to the level of knowledge, and to a set of information integrated into a certain ordered system stored in memory. Here we can speak about collective universal knowledge and ideas and a thesaurus of all mankind, which allows people to understand each other regardless of their belonging to a particular culture, as well as about the thesaurus of an individual.

The relations between the units of the thesaurus are hierarchical and coordinating: they also organize a semantic field. We should remember that as a systemic formation, a semantic field is simultaneously an entity related to the linguistic view of the world that, in turn, is part of a more abstract structure, that is, a linguistic personality. The stereotypes of the cognitive level of linguistic personality are generalized statements. In terms of language acquisition, the thesaurus means problem training, and its units are readiness to define concepts using key words and to extract information from the text, readiness to deploy arguments, readiness to use inner speech, the ability to improvise in the language of study, readiness to express modal coloring, readiness to reflect about the facts of one's native language, readiness to build and use universal or generalized statements, and so forth (Karaulov 1987, 61).

On the cognitive level of the linguistic personality, semantics are blurred, and it is the image that emerges in the system of knowledge rather than in the sphere of semantic notions that is at the forefront. Consequently, the units of the cognitive level are various modes of figurative perception of the surrounding environment, those that are both fixed and not fixed in the language. At the level of the thesaurus we can talk about asemancticity, with signs retreating into the background, while images of a certain kind move into the foreground as elements of the worldview.

An image can be expressed by a comparison, metaphor, frame, or other units related to the structure of representation of knowledge and the ways in which it is conceptually organized, such as *gestalts*, mental models, scenarios, models of situations, motor representations, thought patterns, motor reactions, etc.; symbols, including the symbolic meanings of the names of various colors, as well as various brand names, logos, trademarks, geometric shapes, graphic units, etc.; gestures, facial expressions, and other units of paralinguistic activity (body movement and physical contact between communicators) and paremiological units (phraseology, proverbs). It can be a saying, an aphorism, or a formula, not only a mathematical or chemical one, but also any brief record of a certain thought process: a diagram,

a chart, etc. The units of the cognitive level, or thesaurus, comprise on the whole all linguistic units that are highly specific in their semantics and are related to the preservation of human knowledge: names, various titles, historicisms, and unique names, or so-called nonequivalent lexis; words differing in their internal etymology or nomination; as well as other linguistic means of organizing stored knowledge: generalized concepts (scientific or everyday life ones), various kinds of ideas, etc. It is obvious that the figurative representation of reality is nationally colored, that is, that it differs depending on the culture to which the linguistic personality belongs. The linguistic personality, therefore, possesses national cultural characteristics and linguistic connotations in every single language and cultural tradition. Accordingly, a correlation emerges between the linguistic view of the world and the national-linguistic view of the world, which is conditioned by the means of segmenting reality, not least through language.

The pragmatic, or motivational, level plays a leading role in the hierarchy of the levels of the linguistic personality as a whole. It is the most individualized level and therefore the most difficult to structure and systematize. The units of this level are activity and communicative needs; its relations are the relations within the communicative network and in various communicative situations. The pragmatic level of the linguistic personality includes goals, motives, interests, a person's creative potential, aspirations, attitudes, assessments, and intentions, as manifested in speech activity. In the analysis of the linguistic personality, this level ensures a regular and conditioned transition from assessments in speech activity to the comprehension of reality (Krasnykh 2002, 149). In other words, the orientation of this level is pragmatic, or communicative and practical.

According to Karaulov, the variable component of the motivational level is information of a psychological nature based on the linguistic personality's belonging to a speech collective that is narrower than society as a whole. This information defines stable value criteria that shape the unique, inimitable aesthetic and emotional flavor of its discourse.

The forms of readiness at the motivational level are as follows: readiness to take into account presuppositions in the process of communication; readiness to control communication; readiness to place the element of the utterance rationally in time; readiness to operate in terms of the mechanisms of internal speech, to use various stylistic resources and tropes, and to differentiate among functional styles; readiness for slow reading, for aesthetic analysis of texts, and for literary criticism; readiness to operate in terms of literary topoi borrowed from key texts, in terms of proverbial phrases, etc. (Karaulov 1987, 61).

The units of the *pragmaticon* are ideas about the purpose and meaning of life, motives of behavior and activity, and source-based phenomena

(situations, texts, and names), that is, phenomena that are cognitively and emotionally important for a person, have a transpersonal character, are known in the individual's broader environment, and to which repeated appeals are made. This also includes the composition of the text, changes in the point of view of an unfolding narrative, the colloquial intonation of the narration, unmotivated transitions from characters' inner speech to their external speech and then to the authorial narrative, methods of argumentation in characters' discourse, forms of ritual address, various kinds of language play, etc. All the units of the motivational level are associated with reflection and the correlation of something new with an already known model, identification of the present from viewpoints accumulated in the past; the appeal to oneself, to one's own experience, to one's own knowledge; inner dialogue and presupposition (the nonlexical, nonverbal, or physical context on which the understanding of a particular utterance depends). In other words, reflection is an activity based on association and apperception. For example, such a category as *change* cannot be discussed if presupposition is ignored, while the connection with the categories of space and time is obvious.

The motivational level of the linguistic personality is both decisive and the highly complicated to study because all its units rely directly on emotional criteria whose linguistic expression has not yet been sufficiently researched.

According to Humboldt, the study of language is part of anthropological philosophy; therefore, the concept of the linguistic personality belongs both to anthropological philosophy and to anthropological linguistics. The linguistic personality is considered either as *homo loquens*, in a broad sense, or as a linguistic personality formed by national culture and language, in a narrower sense. Naturally, various adjacent categories emerge alongside that of linguistic personality: linguistic personalia, philological personality, dialectal personality, and others. Nevertheless, the concept of the linguistic personality is primary and decisive and serves both for the general study of language in a community and for the specific description of representatives of that community.

## Chapter Eight

# Research Potential of the Semantic Field Method

### THE COGNITIVE POTENTIAL OF THE SEMANTIC FIELD METHOD IN THE SPHERE OF THE COMPARATIVE TYPOLOGICAL STUDY OF LANGUAGES

Interest in the systemic study of language, especially lexis, increased in the early twentieth century in all areas of linguistics. In the nineteenth century, M. M. Pokrovskii undertook a comparative semasiological study of material from classical and modern European languages and discovered regular diachronic systemic links of units within various language subsystems (such as *nomina actionis*), thereby justifying the field approach to the study of languages. Pointing to the existence of inner relations between words, he wrote, “Words and their meanings do not live separately from each other but are united . . . without respect to our mind into various groups; this grouping is based on the similarity or direct opposition of the main meanings” (Pokrovskii 1959, 82).

In the early twentieth century, the systemic study of languages gathered particular momentum in Germany. Jost Trier’s fundamental work *Der deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes* (1931) is the largest and the most theoretically significant ideographic description of German lexis. This work, by now a classic, put forward the notion of the ideographic field and, more broadly, the paradigmatic semantic field (or Trier field).

Thus, in twentieth-century linguistics, the semantic field method was developed as the most adequate way to describe the lexis of an individual language systematically. The field method made it possible to present the vocabulary of a language not as a mere list of lexical units but as an integral system.

However, in our opinion, the prospects for using the semantic field method are not limited to descriptive lexicology. It has a significant, still undisclosed



potential in the comparative typological study of languages and the detection of lexical universals.

Let us consider the field approach as applied to the semantic field of the Russian word *изменение* “change.”

Even without special research, we can assume that the concept of “change” belongs to the “universal thesaurus.” We can also suppose that “change” may occupy different places in different people’s in “individual thesauri,” predicated primarily on their attitudes to this procedural concept at different points in their lives.

Keeping in mind that the image that emerges in a system of knowledge is central to the cognitive level of the linguistic personality, we can pose a few questions. What images or “pictures” are connected with the concept of “change”? Does the Russian thesaurus, or view of the world, possess units such as set phrases containing the verb *изменяться/измениться* “to change”? What are the specific features of the Russian linguistic view of the world in comparison with the English one? The semantic field method allows us to answer these and other questions.

The means of expressing an image are extremely diverse. But these phenomena become clearer if the field method is used in the comparative study of vocabulary.

It is worth mentioning that *изменение* is beyond doubt a thesaurus-forming notion not only for Russian and English but also for many other languages of the world. The concept of “change” was included by I. N. Karaulov in his “Minimum Ideographic Dictionary” as early as 1976 (Karaulov 1976, 284). This dictionary shows the connection of the concept of “change” with such lexemes as: *перемена* “change,” *поворот* “turn,” *реформа* “reform,” *изменять/изменить* “to change (trans.),” *превращать/превратить* “to transform (trans.),” *становиться/стать* “to become,” *изменяться/измениться* “to change (intrans.),” *превращаться/превратиться* “to be transformed,” *делаться/сделаться* “to be made into.” Besides this, Karaulov ranks *изменение* among potential nuclei and names for fields (Karaulov 1976, 324–27). It is obvious that the figurative representation of reality is nationally colored, that is, that it differs depending on the culture to which the linguistic personality belongs. Accordingly, we can talk about linguistic and national views of the world, which a comparative analysis of lexis is necessary to reconstruct.

The type of a semantic field is deduced from the part of speech of its core element, the way the field is structured, and the mode of forming derivatives to be included in the semantic field. The type of the field is organically related to the syntagmatic character of its units.

Comparison of lexical systems of languages in terms of field types correlation will make it possible to identify the dominant field type characteristic for a given language, and thereby to construct an interlingual typology of semantic fields.

L. A. Novikov (Novikov 1997b, 458–59; 2001) outlines the main typological characteristics of semantic fields. Of course, his scheme does not cover all typological varieties but includes those that are most important.

The analysis of various types of fields gives grounds for to speak of procedural, attributive, and subjective (concrete and abstract) semantic fields.

In a procedural field, the nucleus is formed by a verbal lexeme with the general meaning of action. The field *ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ* considered here is a typical procedural field: *ИЗМЕНЯТЬСЯ/ИЗМЕНИТЬСЯ* “to change” is its leading dominant and the nucleus of the field. This verb manifests the semantic invariant of the field, which can be used as the basis for a functional interpretation of the field. Further complication of its semantics, interpreted by means of an additional function, forms the basic semantic classes for the given semantic sphere of lexis.

Naturally, in such a field, verbs are prevalent and hierarchically dominant. Nouns (*ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ*, *ПЕРЕМЕНА*, etc.), adjectives (*ИЗМЕНЧИВЫЙ*, *ПЕРЕМЕННЫЙ*, etc.), and other parts of speech reflect the nuclear verb structurally and semantically and expand the “semantic space” according to prescribed models: *ИЗМЕНЯТЬ(СЯ)* “to change” — *ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ* “change” — *ИЗМЕНЧИВЫЙ* “changeable” — *ИЗМЕНЧИВО* “changeably” — . . .

Certainly, an adequate analysis of such an object must begin with the dominant of the field that reflects its hierarchical status, that is, with the main verb, which extends further onto the class dominants and all the elements and derivatives of the same that make up the epigrammatic system of the field. The functional approach will make this regularity more obvious and demonstrative.

A comparison of semantic fields can be based on an entire system of various parameters, in which lexical syntagmatics holds an important place.

Let us consider one of the aspects of the compatibility of the verb *изменяться/измениться*, namely its possible use in set expressions. Only one potential turn of phrase with this word is recorded in Russian dictionaries: *изменяться по падежам* “to be declined, inflected in cases.” Still, this cannot be deemed a phraseological unit. In the Collocation Dictionary, it is marked with a light rhombus, that is, it is a phrase that “reflects an irregular co-occurrence of the headword or demonstrates its ‘collapsed meanings’” (Denisov and Morkovkin 1983, 14). The same concerns the noun *изменение*.

Several set expressions are recorded with the verb *переменить* and the noun *перемена*: *переменить (сменить) пластинку* “to change the subject

of conversation, talk about something else,” *переменить свое слово* “to abandon what has been said, promised” (dated), and *перемена декораций* “a change of the situation, the state of affairs” (dated) (Fedorov 1995, 373). In the modern Russian literary language, *измениться в лице* “to change countenance” can be qualified as a collocation, or a phraseological combination. We can also regard the following expressions as such collocations: *произошли (существенные, значительные, серьезные) изменения* “(significant, important, serious) changes have taken place,” *вносить/внести изменения* “make changes,” *измениться/изменяться до неузнаваемости* “change beyond recognition,” *изменять(-ся)/изменить(-ся) коренным образом* “change fundamentally,” *ни капля не измениться* “not change one bit,” *ситуация в корне изменилась* “the situation has radically changed,” *претерпеть изменения* “to undergo changes.” On the whole, sentences such as “за последние годы (за последнее время, за отчетный период) в нашей стране произошли существенные (значительные) изменения” (“in recent years [lately, during the reporting period] significant [substantial] changes have taken place in our country”) and the like can be regarded as source texts that have affected the Russian consciousness since the Soviet period (reports of Party leaders at Party Congresses). Combinations such as *изменять/изменить взгляды, (свое) мнение, (свое) отношение* “change (one’s) views, opinion, attitude” have a status close to collocations.

In English, the situation is different. There are several phraseological units with the noun *change*: *a change of air*; *(one’s) change of base*; *change of front*; *a change of heart*; *a change of scene*; *changes and chances*; *the last great change*; *ring the changes*; *small change* (Kunin 1984, 139–40). Here are some examples of use offered by the dictionary:

*I gradually became aware that Mr. Cox had made a complete change* (Aldington).

*They took his refusal as final . . . when he experienced a change of heart* (London).

*But what is more important is that there has been a change of heart among us, owing to changes in civilization* (Maugham).

*Solon himself sensed in some new strange way that he was close to the last great change* (Dreiser).

The American Idioms Dictionary (Spears 1991a, 53) records the following phraseological units: *change horses in midstream* “to make major changes in an activity which has already begun; to choose someone or something else after it is too late”; *change someone’s mind* “to cause to think differently”; *change someone’s tune* “to change the manner of a person, usually from bad

to good, or from rude to pleasant.” The Dictionary of American Slang contains one idiomatic expression with the verb *to change*: *change the channel* “to switch to some other topic of conversation” (Spears 1991b, 65).

The large potential for forming set expressions with the verb *to change* and the noun *a change* in English may be explained by the feature of the English language known as analysis. In English, there are no prefixal derivatives of these words; instead they have a greater compatibility with different lexical groups and thus a greater freedom to form set expressions, including idioms.

As is apparent, one of the crucial conditions for the adequate analysis of a field is the comprehensive consideration of its typological characteristics. This leads to the definition of the categoric quality of the field. If a field is able to reflect all lexical category relations—if it is not, this is due to the particular ontological qualities of the object; consider, for example, the restriction or absence of antonymy for certain words—then it can be considered a lexical category of a higher order. In some sense, it is the original supercategory, which, depending on the nature of the designated objects, reflects all category relations or a part of them.

Another conclusion concerns the field as a tool for the comparative study of lexis in terms of systemic links of its units. Taxonomically a higher-order category, the field appears in another plane as a method of systemic and functional linguistic analysis. The interpretation of some fragment of reality or another as a hierarchically organized “semantic space” in a language can be regarded as the most complete and adequate method of comparing not only the lexical systems of languages but also national linguistic views of the world.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FUNCTIONAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SEMANTIC FIELD

Modern systemic and functional linguistics operates with complex units that most adequately reflect the structure of language in its paradigmatic and syntagmatic dimensions. In terms of lexis, one such unit is the semantic field, “a hierarchical structure of a set of lexical units united by a common (invariant) meaning and reflecting a certain conceptual sphere in the language” (Novikov 1997b). The field encompasses an “intense” space of homogeneous units and has analogies in other sciences, for example, the gravitational field, electromagnetic field, pressure field, temperature field, etc.

There are several approaches to the definition of the field in linguistics. A concise characterization of these is given by Karaulov (Karaulov 1976). If we ignore the particulars, we can distinguish two basic types of fields: the

paradigmatic field, based on the notion of significance, and the syntagmatic field, derived from the first, which disrupts the regular valencies of the units. The former type of field, described earlier, is associated with Jost Trier and Leo Weisgerber, and the latter with Walter Porzig.

Of course, by and large, what we are discussing are not isolated “paradigmatic” and “syntagmatic” fields but different dimensions of one and the same field (Novikov 1987), including epidigmatic relations (Shmelev 1973).

The history of the development of field theory in Russian and foreign linguistics shows that its initially purely paradigmatic interpretation has been giving way to a paradigmatic–syntagmatic, systemic, and functional one. This leads to a broader understanding of the term “field,” which includes not only semantically homogeneous “initial units” but also units “attracted” from adjacent concordant fields that are necessary for implementing the first ones in certain constructions. In the sentence “Workers are building a brick house using a modern crane,” only the verb *to build* (“to form by ordering and joining materials gradually into a composite whole”) is directly related to the field of “creation.” All the other words—*a worker* (“a person who performs manual or industrial labor or works with a particular material”), *house* (“a building”), *brick* (“a unit of building or paving material, typically rectangular”), and *crane* (“a machine for raising, shifting, and lowering heavy weights”)—belong to other, syntagmatically adjacent fields (agent/profession, construction, material, tool), which are functionally included in the syntagmatic field of the verb as its semantic periphery. The functional understanding of the field is thus connected with the dialectical understanding of the language–speech dichotomy, with the extension of the former idea of the field as a purely linguistic phenomenon to the functional sphere of speech, in which the units of this dichotomy are in close interaction.

However, the functional interpretation is essential not only for unveiling regularities in the usage of the units of the field but also for systematizing them within its “paradigmatic” part as a semantically homogeneous set.

In our opinion, the functional interpretation of the semantic field is the most adequate to the lexical system of language and the most flexible. It makes it possible to present the field as a sequential dependence of interconnected hierarchical elements across different levels: the core (the name of the field and general meaning), center (specialized classes of units with a more complex meaning), and periphery (secondary designations) (Novikov 1997b).

In linguistics, the functional interpretation of meaning goes back to S. O. Kartsevskii’s law of the asymmetric dualism of the linguistic sign (Kartsevskii 1965) and was further developed in Je. Kurylovicz’s theory of the primary and secondary semantic functions of the word (Kurylovicz 1962).

Yet such a dependence exists not only between the lexical and semantic variants of a word and distinct words such as synonyms but also in the entire system of units in a field, where each preceding (hierarchically higher) link can be represented as a primary function in relation to a subsequent link that realizes secondary, derived functions. This chain extends from the core of the field (its name and invariant meaning) to the center of the field (semantic classes of different ranks) and its periphery.

A function expresses a certain dependence of one variable on another, that is, a certain law ( $f$ ) correlating each element of the set  $M$ —which implies the range of values of the independent variable, or argument  $x$ —with an element of the set  $M_p$ , which implies the range of values of the dependent variable  $y$ :

$$y = f(x)$$

This is the “operation which, when applied to something as argument, yields a certain thing as the value of the function for that argument” (Church 1996, 15).

In a semantic field, the initial function ( $f$ ) should be understood as its invariant value for a nonspecialized, extremely generalized argument  $x_0$ ; then the value of the function will have the meaning of the name of the field  $y_0$ .

With specialized arguments, the value of the function is specified and made complex along with the semantics of the corresponding specialized classes of units:

$$y_1 = f(x_1), y_2 = f(x_2), y_3 = f(x_3), \text{ etc.}$$

The functional approach makes it possible to interpret the semantic field as an integral and “intense” structure of hierarchically dependent units.

We shall now consider the semantic field of “change” in Russian, which has not yet been specially analyzed.

Change is an element of genesis. It closely adjoins, although does not overlap with, the category of development in philosophy, which is “the irreversible, directed, regular change of material and ideal objects” (FES 1983). Accordingly, a number of processes of destructive, catastrophic change with accidental and not regular causes cannot be defined as development.

In V. V. Rozanov’s early and undeservedly forgotten treatise *On Understanding* (1886), the essence of change is considered in close connection with the process of genesis: “The doctrine of the essence of genesis must disclose the nature of *change* as an element of genesis; and the nature of *phenomenon* and *process* as two kinds of genesis” (Rozanov 1994, 158). From an initially

negative definition (“change is the non-retaining of self-identity”) he comes to a meaningfully positive one:

Change is the emergence of difference in something . . . the occurrence in something of either deficiency or excess in comparison with what was there before. When a deficiency comes about, it means that something that had previously been allotted to something has been removed from it; and when excess does, it means that something that had not been there before has been added. So the essence of any change consists in the composition and decomposition of something in something. (Rozanov 1994, 158)

This gives grounds to define the invariant meaning of the name of the field for “change,” which is procedural in its essence, as follows: *ИЗМЕНЯТЬСЯ* “to become different” (“become” = “come to be” and “different” = “unlike” remain without definitions because their meanings are obvious); cf. *ИЗМЕНЯТЬ* with causative meaning, “make different.” As it is semantically the most simple, the initial verb of the field does not belong to any specialized class of units, and its use is not limited to its ability to combine with a corresponding thematic series of words: possible subjects of *ИЗМЕНЯЕТСЯ* are *ЖИЗНЬ* “life,” *ВРЕМЯ* “time,” *СТРОЙ* “order,” *ЭКОНОМИКА* “economy,” *ПОЛИТИКА* “politics,” *ПОГОДА* “weather,” *ТЕМПЕРАТУРА* “temperature,” *ОБЛИК* “aspect,” *ВЕС* “weight,” *ЦВЕТ* “color,” *ВНЕШНОСТЬ* “appearance,” *ХАРАКТЕР* “character,” *ОТНОШЕНИЕ* “attitude,” *МНЕНИЕ* “opinion,” etc. Semantically derivative verbs of the field belong to its definite classes: for example, *ХОЛОДАТЬ* “to get cold” (change of temperature; “It has got cold in the street”), *СОСТАРИТЬСЯ* “to grow old” (change of a person’s age: *ОТЕЦ ЗАМЕТНО СОСТАРИЛСЯ* “Father has grown visibly old”), etc.

As the main function of the field under consideration, let us take the invariant meaning of its name “to become different”:  $f = \text{mut}$  (from Lat. *mutari* “to change, to be changed”). The pure, noncomplex meaning of change is inherent in the lexemes of the nucleus of the field ( $y_0 = f_{\text{mut}}(x_0)$ ): *ИЗМЕНИТЬСЯ*, *ПЕРЕМЕНИТЬСЯ*, *ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ*, etc. Units of the *semantic classes* of the field that “envelop” the nucleus have a more complex semantic structure representing the conjunction of the main function ( $f_{\text{mut}}$ ) and the specifying function (functions), for example,  $f_{\text{calid}}$  (temperature, from Latin *calidus* “warm”): *ТЕПЛЕТЬ* “to warm up,” *НАГРЕВАТЬСЯ* “to grow warm,” *ЗАМЕРЗАТЬ* “to freeze,” *ХОЛОДАТЬ/ХОЛОДЕТЬ* “to grow cold,” *ОХЛАЖДАТЬСЯ* “to cool down,” *РАСТАИВАТЬ* “to melt”).

The multiplication of functions— $f_{\text{mut}}$  &  $f_{\text{calid}}$ , or compactly: *mut & calid*—is the marker (the semantic factor) of a certain class of units of the field. With the help of such markers with a functional character, the set of elements constituting the field is successively divided into subsets, and classes or groups of

units are distinguished that receive a certain meaning through this procedure (Lomtev 1964).

The successive complication of semantic markers, by means of which the set of elements in a field is divided, clearly demonstrates its functional nature and the hierarchical character of its structure:

*ИЗМЕНЯТЬСЯ* “to change”  
 ↓  
*СТАРЕТЬ* “to grow older”  
 ↓  
*СТАРИТЬСЯ* “to grow old”

The content of the last verb is defined through a series of functions: mut & temp & hom & habit (Lat. *tempus* “time,” *homo* “man,” and *habitus* “appearance, looks”) along the natural temporal vector “young” → “old.”

Finally, the marginal part of the field is its *periphery*, that is, the units of other, adjacent fields used in their secondary semantic functions.

As concerns the “change” field, it should be borne in mind that it closely adjoins, and sometimes overlaps with (especially at the periphery), other semantic fields and appears not as a sharply delineated sphere but as a gamut of gradual transitions and gradations. For instance, this field is closely adjacent to the field *СОЗДАНИЕ* “creation,” which genetically appears to precede it: cf. *СТРОИТЬ ДОМ* “to build a house” → *ПЕРЕСТРОИТЬ, РАЗРУШИТЬ ДОМ* “to rebuild, demolish a house,” etc.

Usually, a unit in a semantic field is not the whole word but a lexical and semantic variant of it. That is why polysemantic words within the field belong to several classes at once: cf. *КРАСНЕТЬ*<sub>1</sub> “to become red,” “to be visible [used of a red thing]” (*НЕБО КРАСНЕЕТ НА ЗАРЕ* “The sky is red at dawn”; *КРАСНЕЮТ МАКИ* “The poppies show red”), *КРАСНЕТЬ*<sub>2</sub> “to blush” (*ЕЕ ЩЕКИ ПОКРАСНЕЛИ ОТ МОРОЗА* “Her cheeks turned red from the frost”), *КРАСНЕТЬ*<sub>3</sub> “to be ashamed” (*ЭТИМ РОДИТЕЛЯМ НЕ ПРИХОДИТСЯ КРАСНЕТЬ ЗА СВОИХ ДЕТЕЙ* “These parents needn’t be ashamed of their children”). These are, respectively, the semantic classes of change of color, human appearance, and emotional and moral state, which are functionally united into one field.

The referent essence of change may be expressed by the generalized formula  $R [A_1 - A_2 (B)]$ , with R is the referent (a concrete or abstract object: a plant, animal, person, etc.);  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  are the initial and changed qualities within the bounds of the common quality A; and B is the new quality resulting from the transformation of  $A_1$ . They are expressed by the corresponding verbs and their derived forms, cf. *ГУСТЕТЬ* “to thicken” (“to become thicker”:  $A_1 \rightarrow A_2$ ), *ИСПАРЯТЬСЯ* “to evaporate” (“to turn into vapor”: *ВОДА ИСПАРИЛАСЬ* “The water has evaporated”:  $A_1 \rightarrow B_1$ ); cf. also *ТАЯНИЕ ЛЬДА* “the melting



of ice”; *перевод «Евгения Онегина» Пушкина на французский язык* “the translation of Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin* into French.”

The names of change in Russian represent a significant and topically diverse layer of words, the central part of which are verbs that motivate appropriate verbal nouns

Verbs, as the initial designations of change, form the basis of certain semantic classes whose content can be interpreted through a series of functions denoted further by the stems of Latin words, as well as those borrowed from the “sense–text” model (Mel’chuk 1995).

To illustrate, let us consider some semantic classes of the “change” field with common meanings functionally derived from the invariant meaning of the field name, *f* = MUT.

*Change of the form of an object, deformation*: MUT & DEFORM (from Latin *deformare* “to distort, to disfigure”). This semantic class is represented by verbs like *покоробиться* “to become warped,” *покривиться* “to become crooked,” *продавиться* “to sag [intrans.],” *погнуть* “to be bent, to bend,” *сплющиться* “to be flattened,” *сморщиться* “to be wrinkled,” etc.; cf. caus & mut & deform: *покоробить* “to warp,” *покривить* “to make crooked,” *продавить* “to cause to sag,” *погнуть* “to bend,” *сплющить* “to flatten,” *сморщить* “to wrinkle”; for example, “Солдат стиснул решетку дверного окошка своими сухими крепкими руками, и она *погнулась*” (“The soldier squeezed the grille of the door window with his dry, strong hands, and it *bent*”) (Vishnevskii, *We, the Russian People*), “Одна из туфель упрямо пряталась под кровать, а другая *сплющилась*, не пуская в себя пальцы ноги” (“One shoe was stubbornly hiding under the bed, and the other *had flattened*, not letting the toes inside it”) (Gorkii, *The Life of Klim Samgin*).

Introducing an additional marker function allows us to distinguish a subclass of verbs with the meaning “change of bodily form, stature”: MUT & DEFORM & HOM: *согнуть* “to bend over,” *сгорбиться* “to stoop,” *ссутулиться* “to slouch,” etc.: “Еще вольше *сгорбился* и *одряхлел* Мухайло” (“Mikhailo has *become* still more *slouched* and *hoary*”) (Gladkov, *Childhood Story*), “Нина Капитоновна стала совсем старенькая, *согнулась* и *похудела*” (“Nina Kapitonovna had *become* quite old, *bent* and *thin*”) (Kaverin, *The Two Captains*).

*Changing an object (its form) by making holes in it*: MUT & FORM & FORAMEN (from Lat. *foramen* “hole, aperture”). This is a class of verbs of aimed, directed action, like *пробить* “to make a hole,” *пробурить* “to pierce,” *пробуривать* “to drill,” *продолбить* “to bore,” *просверлить* “to puncture,” etc. The characteristic feature of their word-formational structure (model) is the prefix *про-*: “Молча *просверлили* лунки, *закинули* удочки”

(“Silently we made holes in the ice and cast the lines”) (Drozdov, *The Hot Mile*), “**Голдаты пробурвали стволы берез, приладили желобки и собирают в баки от каши березовый сок**” (“The soldiers have drilled the trunks of the birches, adjusted the grooves and are collecting birch sap in the kasha tanks”) (Kataev, *From the Front of World War I*).

The complication of the semantic structure of the verbs of this type by the marker DEGRAD (“to spoil”) characterizes the subclass with the meaning of “to spoil by making a hole”: MUT & FORM & FORAMEN & DEGRAD. Cf. **прогрызть** “to gnaw through,” **прокусить** “to bite through,” **проесть** “to eat through,” **проклевать** “to peck a hole,” **прожечь** “to burn a hole,” etc.: “**В первой рукописи зияла сквозная дыра, видимо, прогрызенная мышами**” (“In the first manuscript there was a gaping hole, apparently gnawed by mice” (Obukhova, *The Favorite of the Age*), “**Пахом сегодня поругался со старухой,—она повесила сушить и прожгла его портянки**” (“Today Pakhom had an argument with his wife because she hung his footcloths up to dry and burned a hole in them” (Tolstoi, *Nikita’s Childhood*). Compare also the function MUT & LIQU: **сгрызть** “to gnaw away,” **съесть** “to eat up,” **сжечь** “to burn up,” that is, to destroy.

*Change in the integrity of form of an object, dismemberment*: MUT & FORM & DIVIS & CAUS (from Latin *divisio* “division”). Here we mean the class of words like: **разделить** “to divide,” **распилить** “to saw up, saw in half,” **разломить (пополам)** “to break (in two),” **разбить (стекло на части)** “break (the glass into shards),” etc.; usually these words have a causative meaning. “**Они распилан столб на аккуратные поленья**” (“They sawed the post into neat logs”) (Ivanov, *The Rats*), “**Она взглянула на него сверху, увидела у ног его древко знамени, разломленное на две части**” (“She looked at him from above and saw at his feet the flag shaft split into two parts”) (Gorky, *The Mother*). Cf. also: **разделиться** “to be divided,” **разломиться** “to be split,” **разбиться** “to be broken, shattered,” etc.

A comparatively small group is formed by verbs denoting a *change in the state of matter*: MUT & CONDENS (from Latin *condensare* “to condense, thicken, congeal”). These are verbs of the type of **концентрироваться (концентрировать)** “to become concentrated (to concentrate),” **густеть (сгущать)** “to become thick (to thicken),” **сжиматься (сжимать)** “to contract,” etc., and their antonyms **разбавляться (разбавлять)** “to become diluted (to dilute),” **разжижаться (разжижать)**, “to liquify (to be liquified),” **разжиматься (разжимать)** “to unclench,” etc.: “**На воздухе нефть теряет свои наиболее летучие составные части, густеет, и, наконец, твердеет**” (“In the air, oil loses its most volatile constituents, thickens, and finally hardens”) (Obruchev, *Gold Diggers in the Desert*), “**Лава, подстилаящая материка, периодически то разжижается, то**

**снова густеет**” (“The lava lying beneath the continents periodically liquefies, then thickens again”) (Savel’ev, *Traces on the Stone*).

A number of semantic classes of words denote a change in color, light, temperature, humidity, and other natural phenomena.

*Change of color*: MUT & COLOR (from Latin *color* “color”). These are the verbs **(по)краснеть, (по)желтеть, (по)зеленеть, (по)синеть, (по)белеть, (по)чернеть, (по)багроветь** “to become (turn) red (to redden), yellow, green, blue, white, black, purple,” etc., and some of their correlations with the causative meaning like **желтить, зеленить, синить, белить** “to make yellow, green, blue, white,” etc. “[У старца] седина в бороде уже **зеленеть** стала” (“The gray hair in the old man’s beard is already *turning green*”) (Tolstoi, *Three Old Men*), “Побледневшее небо стало опять **синеть**, но то уже была синева ночи” (“The pale sky began to *turn blue* again, but it was already the blue of the night”) (Turgenev, *Bezhin Lug*).

Changes in color can also denote emotional, mental, and other human states (MUT & COLOR & HOM): **(по)бледнеть, (по)краснеть, (по)багроветь, (по)зеленеть, (по)чернеть** “to become (turn) pale, red, purple, green, black,” etc. “У Андрея быстро **побагровело** лицо. Он смотрел прямо на капитана Озерова, но от волнения не слышал, что говорил тот” (“Andrei’s face at once *turned purple*. He looked directly at Captain Ozerov, but in his agitation he did not hear what he was saying”) (Bubenov, *The White Birch*).

*Change of light (brightness)*, represented by the functional markers MUT & LUX (from Latin *lux* “light, illumination”) can be illustrated by words like **(по)светлеть, (за)блестеть** “to get (become) light, bright” and their antonyms **(по)темнеть, (по)мрачнеть** “to get dark, gloomy,” etc. “**Светлело**. Вот-вот взойдет солнце” (“It was *getting light*. The sun was about to rise”) (Vershigora, *People with a Clear Conscience*), “Уже **темнело**, и на небе показывались там и сям звезды” (“It was already *getting dark*, and stars were appearing here and there in the sky”) (Chekhov, *The Pecheneg*).

*Change of sound*: MUT & SON (from Latin *sonus* “sound”). This class of units is represented by verbs like **зашептать** “to (start to) whisper,” **стихнуть, (по)утихнуть** “to get quiet (quieter)” and those of opposite meaning, such as **раскричаться** “to (start to) shout,” **заголосить** “to begin to shout,” **расшуметься** “to get noisy.” “Излив мое негодование в самых сильных выражениях, . . . я **поутих**” (“Having given vent to my indignation in the strongest terms, . . . I *fell quiet*”) (Aksakov, *The Childhood Years of Bagrov the Grandson*), “Хоть жарок, но хорош был день,—в небольших рощах, в покинутых сейчас садах распелись, **раскричались** птицы” (“Although hot, it was a nice day; in the small copses, in the now-forsaken gardens, the birds *started to sing and to cry*”) (Tolstoi, *Peter I*).

*Change of temperature*: MUT & CALID can be illustrated by verbs like **теплеть** “to get warmer,” **нагревать(ся)** “to warm,” **растаять** “to melt,”

and their correlates with opposite meanings, for example, *холодать* “to get cold,” *охлаждать(ся)* “to cool down,” *замерзать* “to freeze,” etc.: “Море тепело с каждым днем. Ялта оживала” (“The sea was getting warmer every day. Yalta was becoming livelier”) (Mamin-Sibriak, *The Rolling Stone*), “Уже совсем стемнело и начинало холодать” (“It was already quite dark, and it was getting cold”) (Turgenev, *Yermolai and the Miller’s Wife*).

A certain subclass of units is formed by the names for changes in the temperature of the human body: MUT & CALID & HOM. These are antonymous vectoral words pointing in opposite directions from the starting point, such as *теплеть* “to warm,” *согреваться* “to warm up,” *отогреться* “to get warm,” *взопреть* “to break out in a sweat,” *(по)холодеть* “to get cold,” *замерзать* “to get chilled,” *окоченеть* “to be frozen stiff,” *продрогнуть* “to be chilly,” etc.: “Пойдемте скорее, Александр Васильевич, я совсем замерз” (“Let’s go faster, Aleksandr Vasil’evich, I am freezing”) (Katerli, *The Bronze Spinning-Wheel*), “Гроза прошла, снова стало тихо, засверкало солнце. Степа переменял мокрую одежонку и лег в постель отогреться” (“The storm was gone, again it was quiet, the sun was shining. Stepa changed his wet clothes and went to bed to warm up”) (Kozhevnikov, *The Water of Life*).

*Change in the degree of humidity*, denoted by the conjunction of the main and additional functions MUT & AQUA (from Latin *aqua* “water, moisture”), is also represented by multivectoral antonyms such as *мокнуть*, *намочить*, *отсыревать* “to get wet, drenched, moist” and *сохнуть*, *высыхать* “to get dry” (cf. causative pairs like *мочить* “to wet”/ *сунуть* “to dry”): “Рабочим приходилось целые дни стоять в воде и мокнуть на дожде” (“The workers had to stand for whole days in the water and get wet on the rain”) (Mamin-Sibriak, *The Evil Spirit*), “В камере стоял пар от сохнувшей мокрой одежды” (“There was steam in the cell from the wet drying clothes”) (Tolstoi, *Resurrection*).

A specific class of words comprises verbs denoting *the change or transformation of raw or semi-finished products, vegetables, mushrooms, etc., into food*: CAUS & MUT & COQ & CRUD (from Latin *coquere* “to cook” and *crudus* “raw, uncooked”). These are such causative verbs as *варить* “boil,” *жарить* “roast,” *тушить* “stew,” *парить* “steam,” *коптить* “smoke,” *солить* “pickle,” *мариновать* “marinate,” etc. Both the raw product and the food are quite often denoted by one and the same word with metonymically associated meanings, cf. *to catch a chicken<sub>1</sub> and roast it; to serve chicken<sub>2</sub> for dinner; to gather mushrooms; mushrooms with sour cream; but: to cook the soup, to roast the meat*. “Фирс: В прежнее время . . . вишню сушили, мочили, мариновали” (“First: In the old days . . . cherries were dried, soaked, marinated”) (A. Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*), cf.: *to roast the lamb, to smoke the fish, to boil the chicken*.

*Change of something as damage*, “degradation” (degrad, from Latin *degradare* “lower, degrade”), embraces a large class of verbs whose semantics we have considered as “change in the direction of deterioration, worsening”: MUT & DEGRAD. A. K. Zholkovskii and I. A. Mel’chuk illustrate such change using the following examples: **ХЛЕБ ЧЕРСТВЕЕТ** “the bread gets stale”; **ОДЕЖДА, МОТОР ИЗНАШИВАЕТСЯ** “the clothing, engine gets worn out”; **РЫБА ПРОТУХАЕТ** “the fish turns foul”; **МОЛОКО СКИСАЕТ** “the milk goes sour”; **КАБАЛУК СТАПТЫВАЕТСЯ** “a heel gets worn down”; **ДИСЦИПЛИНА ПАДАЕТ** “discipline declines”; **ЗДОРОВЬЕ ПОШАТНУЛОСЬ** “[his/her/their] health took a blow”; **НЕРВЫ ИСТРЕПАЛИСЬ** “[his/her/their] nerves were worn out”; **ПОГОДА, КЛИМАТ ПОРТИТСЯ, УХУДШАЕТСЯ** “the weather, climate worsens” (cf. **УПАДОК КУЛЬТУРЫ** “decline of culture,” **РАЗРУХА В ХОЗЯЙСТВЕ** “devastation of the economy”) (Zholkovskii and Mel’chuk 1967, 216). “Мука с горохом, что ли, не знаю. Кешка сказывал, хлеб из нее черствеет скоро” (“There must be peas in the flour, I don’t know. Keshka said, the bread baked from it gets stale in a moment”) (Zadornov, *Amur-Batiushka*), “Только стоячая вода остается для себя стоять, тухнет и зеленеет” (“Only still water remains still for itself, it gets foul and turns green”) (Prishvin, *The Eyes of the Land*).

The limit of “degrading” (deterioration) is *change bringing about the liquidation of an object* (CAUS & MUT & LIQU): **ЛИКВИДИРОВАТЬ** “to liquidate,” **УНИЧТОЖАТЬ** “to destroy, annihilate,” **ПРЕКРАЩАТЬ** “to stop,” **ЛОМАТЬ** “to break,” **СЖИГАТЬ** “to burn up,” **ВЗРЫВАТЬ** “to blow up,” etc. “Еще недавно вся долина была покрыта густыми смешанными лесами. Два больших пожара, следовавших один за другим, уничтожили их совершенно” (“Until recently, the entire valley was covered with dense mixed forests. Two large fires in close succession destroyed them completely”) (Arsen’ev, *Dersu Uzala*), “Гузий пустил под откос эшелон противника и взорвал железнодорожный мост” (“Guziy derailed the enemy’s train and blew up the railway bridge”) (Kozlov, *In the Crimean Underground*).

The complication of the function MUT & LIQU & NOM gives the meaning of “to die, to commit suicide”: **УМЕРЕТЬ** “to die,” **СКОНЧАТЬСЯ** “to pass away,” **ЗАСТРЕЛИТЬСЯ** “to shoot oneself,” **ПОВЕСИТЬСЯ** “to hang oneself,” etc. Cf. verbs with causative meaning: **КАЗНИТЬ** “to execute,” **ПОВЕСИТЬ** “to hang,” **РАССТРЕЛЯТЬ** “to execute by firing squad,” **УТОПИТЬ** “to drown,” etc.

A number of semantic classes in interpreted in its meanings with the help of the norm marker (N):

- *change restoring a previous normal state, appearance, etc.* (MUT & RES → N, from Latin *res* “thing”), for example, **ЧИНИТЬ** “to fix,” **РЕМОНТИРОВАТЬ** “to repair,” **ТОЧИТЬ** “to sharpen,” **ГЛАДИТЬ** “to iron,” etc.: “Петр чинил кадку, вставляя в нее дно” (“Piotr was fixing the tub by putting a bottom in it”) (Gorkii, *The Guide*).

- *change leading to the ripening of vegetables, fruit, etc.* (MUT & FRUCT → N, from Latin *fructus* “fruit”): **(по)спеть** “to ripen,” **(со)зреть** “to mature,” **вырасти** “to grow,” etc. “**А за ним (лесом) открывается песчаная равнина, где зреют, поблескивая и волнуясь под ветром, хлеба**” (“And behind it [the wood] a sandy plane opens up, where the corn is ripening, gleaming and waving in the wind”) (Paustovskii, *The Golden Rose*).

Noteworthy also are classes of verbs whose meanings reflect *changes exceeding the norm or not reaching it*:

- MUT & RES > N: **пересолиить** “to oversalt,” **переохладить** “to overcool,” **пересохнуть** “to get too dry,” **перевариться** “to overcook,” etc. (some of them have causative meaning);
- MUT & RES < N: **недосолиить** “to put too little salt in,” **недосохнуть** “not to get dry enough,” **недовариться** “to be undercooked,” etc.

Cf.: **переварить мясо** “to overcook the meat,” **переохладить пиво** “to overcool the beer,” **белье пересохло и трудно гладится** “the laundry has dried too much and is hard to iron,” **недосолиить борщ** “to put too little salt into the soup,” **платье недосохло** “the dress is not dry enough,” etc.

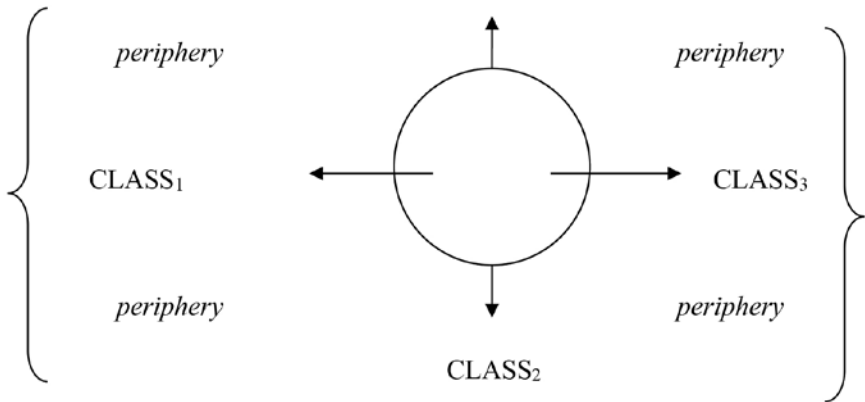
Large classes of verbs in the Russian language that require separate consideration denote various kinds of intellectual, mental, and emotional processes, as well as changes of a social nature: **умнеть** “to get cleverer,” **умудряться** “to get wiser, to manage,” **глупеть** “to get stupid,” **понимать** “to understand,” **уяснять** “to comprehend,” **усложнять** “to complicate,” **укрощать** “to tame,” **(по)тревожиться** “to get worried,” **(по)радоваться** “to rejoice,” **потрясаться** “to be shocked,” **помрачнеть** “to get gloomy,” **приспосабливаться** “to adjust,” **жениться** “to marry (of a man),” **богатеть** “to grow rich,” **нищать** “to become poor,” **нормализоваться** “to be normalized,” **повышаться/падать (о ценах)**, “to rise/fall (of prices),” and many others.

## THE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SEMANTIC FIELD AS A SYSTEMIC REFLECTION OF A FRAGMENT OF EXTRALINGUISTIC REALITY

The functional structuring of a semantic field is thus based on a number of principles used as a basis for its construction. We have already got an idea of the most significant of these:

1. Elements of the field (minimal units): lexical and semantic variants (LSV) of a word or else often the whole monosemantic word. The units

- of selection for a field are therefore most often the meanings of the word. To indicate the primary (1) or secondary semantic function of the units (2, 3, 4 . . .), the number of the meaning in the dictionary is retained.
2. The elements of a field are incompatible (do not intersect) and are organized hierarchically according to the principle of hyponymy (hyperonym–hyponym at each step of classification). If a hyperonym at a certain level is a classeme (Coseriu 1969, 93–104), then the elements of the class are its cohyponyms.
  3. The units of adjacent fields interacting with the field in question are included with their secondary meanings in a certain field class as secondary nominations.
  4. Minimal combinations of elements of the semantic field are lexical and semantic groups (LSG), that is, units of one part of speech that possess the common meaning of the field. Combining them forms subclasses and an entire field consisting of linguistic units of different parts of speech.
  5. The units of the field, apart from the initial hyponymic semantic relations (classification), are able to manifest other category relations: *equivalency* (synonymy), *opposition* (antonymy), *reversibility* (conversion), and *as-sociativity* (polysemy, under the condition of semantic homogeneity of the meanings or LSV). Finally, taking into account their varying parts of speech, such units inevitably exhibit relations of *word-building derivation*.
  6. A field is a three-dimensional space. The traditionally distinguished semantic, paradigmatic, and derivational fields represent the three dimensions of an integral semantic field: paradigmatic, syntactic, and epidigmatic. The properties of units in these aspects are matched and interconnected within the whole.
  7. The general structure of the field is hierarchical. In modern linguistics, it is customary to regard each linguistic phenomenon as having a central and peripheral portion (cf. a word's principal and particular meaning, true homonymy and related phenomena, the main meanings of a grammatical category and its transformation/modifications, etc.). This phenomenon is based on the asymmetric dualism of a linguistic sign (or sign and meaning), as discovered by S. O. Kartsevskii. This gives us grounds to speak of primary (main) and secondary (specific) meanings and of primary and secondary ways of expressing content. The principle of this asymmetry is also the basis of organization for such a complex unit as a semantic field. The main meaning is expressed by primary forms (units). Owing to asymmetry, such a meaning is modified; in its classes, it has its own forms of expression all the way down to peripheral ones: *ИЗМЕНЯТЬСЯ (В ВОЗРАСТЕ)* “to change (in age)” → *СТАРЕТЬ* “to grow old” → *УВЯДАТЬ* “to fade” → *СГОРБИТЬСЯ* “to be bent over” → *СМОРЩИТЬСЯ* “to become wrinkled,” etc.



**Figure 8.1. The Semantic Field Structure.**

Source: Denisenko 2016.

In the center of each field, there is a kind of its “bright” part or nucleus—the main lexeme—that becomes more specialized owing to dominants with more complex meanings that head up the field classes; finally, on the periphery, there are marginal units with contextually determined meanings.

The initial principles that determine the field receive interpretations of varying nature and completeness: from simple list-based arrangements of units to detailed classification (usually alphabetical), strict matrix-based systemization according to meaning and using differential elements, classes of units distinguished by operators extracted from dictionary definitions, distributional and statistical patterns for semantically grouping linguistic units, etc.

Let us turn to the concept of a function in order to apply it to interpreting a field as an internally organized fragment of a lexical system.

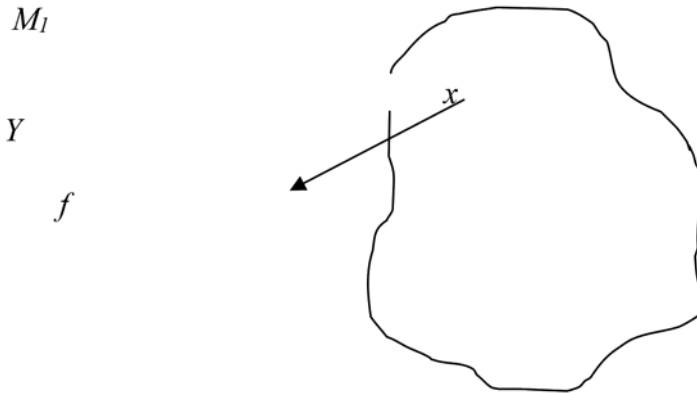
The concept of the function is seen as a reflection of the link between variables of two or more sets, that is, internally organized systems. Linguistic phenomena can be interpreted as a system of interrelated and interacting sets in which the elements of one affect those of another.

The nature of language as a system is such that for a given function  $f$ , the argument  $x$  (the independent variable of the set  $M$ ) as a sign in certain contextual conditions is assigned a completely defined value in the form of a dependent variable  $y$  of the set  $M_f$ .

This is the essence of the functional interpretation of meaning in such an organized system as language. Meaning appears here not only as a reflective category but also as an element of the system of language as activity.

The general (invariant) meaning of the field can be taken as a function for a zero (in linguistics, extracontextual) argument—so to speak—in a “pure” form, for example:  $head = f_{head}(x_0)$ .





**Figure 8.2. The Nature of Language as a System.**

Source: Denisenko 2016.

Changing the argument for the same function will give other correlations, other dependent variables, that is, expressions of corresponding meanings forming the semantic field *head*:

- $(y_1)$  prime minister =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (government)  $(x_1)$   
 $(y_2)$  speaker =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (Parliament)  $(x_2)$   
 $(y_3)$  mayor =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (city)  $(x_3)$   
 $(y_4)$  prefect =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (district)  $(x_4)$   
 $(y_5)$  rector =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (university)  $(x_5)$   
 $(y_6)$  dean =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (department)  $(x_6)$   
 $(y_7)$  director =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (factory)  $(x_7)$   
 $(y_8)$  captain =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (sports team)  $(x_8)$   
 $(y_9)$  chieftain =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (gang)  $(x_9)$   
 $(y_{10})$  keeper =  $f_{\text{head}}$  (den)  $(x_{10})$

Modification (replacement) of the original variable while keeping the same function allows one to group together a class of words with a common (invariant) meaning.

“Multiplication” (conjunction) of a name as the content of a function (a) with the contextual variables (b) existing in the language system is capable of generating a semantic field (c):  $a \cap b \rightarrow c$  (for each class and subclass of the field).

Taking things the other way around, the deep general (invariant) meaning can be obtained by “cleansing” the superficial “complicated” argument, for example, *писать (картину)* “to paint (a picture),” *разбивать (сквер)* “to lay out (a park),” *открывать (совещание)* “to open (a meeting),” *шить*

(*костюм*) “to sew (a costume),” *составлять (алгоритм)* “to compose (an algorithm),” *создавать (условия)* “to create (conditions),” etc., where the same lexical function (parameter) CAUS “to cause” is realized, that is, to create, to cause to arise, to make something come into being (Zholkovskii and Mel’chuk 1967, 203–4).

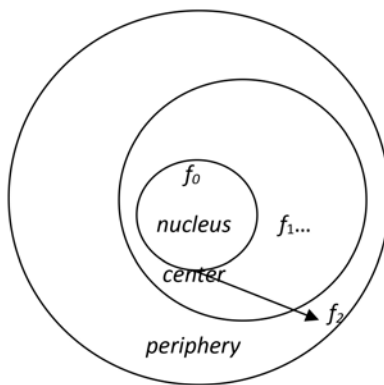
In this sense, the function is thus not only the realization of the general, main, and specific meanings of the lexical units but also the *semantic basis* of the field.

The complication of the initial function of the field ( $f_0$ ) by way of its successive “multiplication” with other functions (such as  $a \cap b$ ,  $a \cap b \cap c$ ,  $a \cap b \cap c \cap d$ ) forms compound derivative functions that realize the primary (main) meaning of units ( $f_1$ ) and their secondary (specific) meanings ( $f_2, f_3, f_4, \dots$ ).

The degree of simplicity or complexity of a function corresponds to the hierarchically differing spheres of the field:  $f_0$  to its nucleus,  $f_1$  to the center (dominants of the classes),  $f_2$  to the subclasses,  $f_3$  (provisionally) to the periphery, etc. (where  $f_0$  is the initial “a”;  $f_1$  is the compound, specified, main meaning of the class “a  $\cap$  b”;  $f_2$  and  $f_3$  are yet more specific, individual meanings of the type “a  $\cap$  b  $\cap$  c,” “a  $\cap$  b  $\cap$  c  $\cap$  d,” etc.).

Inasmuch as they possess the general invariant meaning function ( $f_0$ ), the units of all the spheres are integrated into a single whole and differ only in the degree of complexity, while other meanings differentiate the classes, subclasses, and marginal spheres of the field:

The functional interpretation of the field (of its spheres) permits us to connect the syntagmatic and paradigmatic properties of its units, to uncover their dependency and the predictable connections among them. In the syntagmatic aspect, the functional hierarchy of the nucleus, center (semantic classes), and periphery is manifested in a successive restriction of the use of the units of the field with fixed, sometimes “rigid” compatibility; in the paradigmatic



**Figure 8.3. The Field Spheres.**

Source: Denisenko 2016.

aspect, it manifests itself as the complication of their semantic structure. Even a cursory glance at the use and semantics of the verbs of change *ИЗМЕНЯТЬСЯ* “to change,” *СТАРЕТЬ* “to grow older,” and *СТАРИТЬСЯ* “to grow old” allows us to conclude that the sphere of compatibility of the first verb is extremely broad, and that it is narrower for the second one but even then still wider than for the third one because the third is combined only with designations of “person”; at the same time, the transition from one verb to another entails a complication of their semantics.

A class that is functionally defined using name (classeme)—which in terms of its content is a “multiplication” of the pattern “ $a \cap b$ ” ( $f_i$ )—can, in turn, be represented as the functional structure of its units.

What is most important here is the functional and classificational relation of “species to genus,” that is, hyponymy.

The units of the class (subclasses), that is, hyponyms, become cohyponyms inasmuch as they fit the function “hyperonym” ( $f_{\text{hyper}}$ ). If  $y = f_{\text{hyper}}(x_1)$  and  $y = f_{\text{hyper}}(x_2)$ , then  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  are cohyponyms at a certain level and  $y$  is their hyperonym, for example, *СОБАКА* “dog” and *ОВЧАРКА* “sheepdog,” *ПУДЕЛЬ* “poodle,” etc.

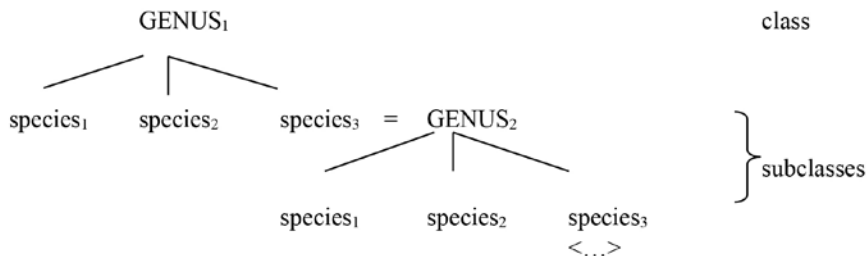
The subsequent divisions of the set into subsets are the basis for distinguishing subclasses of units, that is, different levels of cohyponyms. The terms “genus” and “species” turn out to be relative because of the transitive nature of their relationships.

Thus, for each class unit of a hierarchically lower level, the function of the transition from hyponym to hyperonym must work.

$$y = f_{\text{hyper}}(x)$$

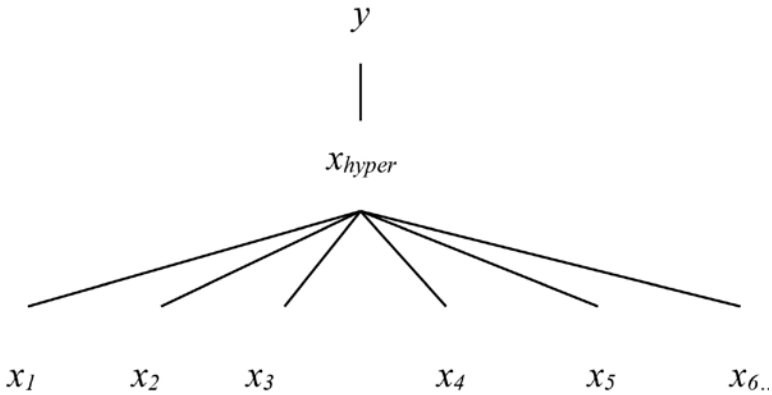
Functionally, the class scheme can be represented as shown in figure 8.5.

Grounds for including linguistic units in a class are a component analysis of their semantics, and the discovery of a basis for integrating them into a genus and of corresponding differences among their “species” (in linguistics, constitutive and differential features).



**Figure 8.4. Species to Genus Relationship.**

Source: Denisenko 2016.



**Figure 8.5. The Class Scheme.**

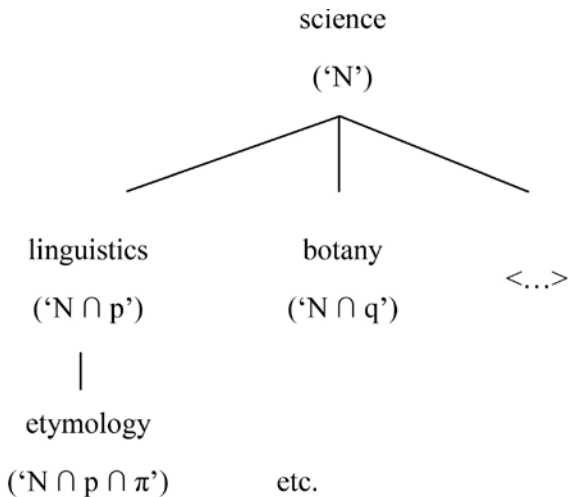
Source: Denisenko 2016.

The reverse relation from hyperonym to hyponym, for its part, is not guaranteed and is merely a matter of probability:

1. **СОБАКА** “dog” → **ПУДЕЛЬ** “poodle”? **ОВЧАРКА** “sheepdog”?
2. **СОБАКА** “dog” → **ПУДЕЛЬ** “poodle”

(In this case, the dog turned out to be a poodle.)

In the case of such divisions, the units of a class are distinguished by the differential features (semes) of their meanings.



**Figure 8.6. The Units of a Class Are Distinguished by the Differential Features (Sememes) of Their Meanings.**

Source: Denisenko 2016.

Due to its functional complication, the general meaning of the class *science* (N) gives meaning to the hyponyms *linguistics* (the science of language:  $N \cap p$ ), *botany* (the science of plants:  $N \cap q$ ), etc., which are contrasted by the differential elements “p” (“language”) and “q” (“plant”) and head corresponding subclasses of units of a hierarchically lower level. An example of a hyponym in the subclass *linguistic* would be *etymology* (the science of the origin of linguistic units such as words:  $N \cap p \cap \pi$ ).

As we see, differentiation takes place both along the line of cohyponyms (“p,” “q”) and along the line of the hyperonym and its hyponyms (“N”/“Np,” “N”/“Nq,” “Np”/“Npπ,” etc.).

A functional basis underlies the most important categorical relations of the units of a field (class): synonymy (SYN), antonymy (ANTI), and conversion (CONV). They play an important role in ordering the relations of units in “semantic space” and, along with hyponymy, in defining the system of values (Ferdinand de Saussure’s *valeur*) as part of a whole.

Synonymy as an expression of equivalence is a realization of the function of substitution and refinement (Novikov 1982, 229–36) and thus differs from hyponymy, which at best can be considered to be quasi-synonymy (contextual realization of the genus-species equivalence).

Synonymy is the realization of one of the functions of lexical substitution, the value of the function here usually is not one word but a whole synonymic series (provisionally:  $y, z \dots$ ):  $\dots z, y = f_{\text{syn}}(x)$ , cf.: *распухнуть* “to swell (especially of a part of the body), become larger or rounder in size, typically as a result of an accumulation of fluid,” *рука распухла* “the arm has swollen up,” *вспухнуть*, coll.: *напухнуть* “expand,” *надуться* “bulge,” *раздуться* “become distended,” *вздуться* “inflate.”

A significant number of units in a field (class) exhibit relations of antonymy, especially when it comes to words expressing qualitative semantics and perpendicular meanings in which the theorem of antonymy operates (Karaulov 1976, 108–11), that is, in such semantic fields as “cleverness/stupidity,” “beauty/ugliness,” “creation/destruction,” etc.

Antonymic relations are regulated by three initial functions (ANTI<sub>1</sub>, ANTI<sub>2</sub>, and ANTI<sub>3</sub>), corresponding to the main classes of antonyms (Novikov 1973, 195–243).

The relationship of the field (class) units by opposition can be functionally expressed as follows:  $y = f_{\text{anti}}(x)$ , cf.: *красивый* “beautiful”/*безобразный* “ugly,” *горячий* “hot”/*холодный* “cold,” *истинный* “true”/*ложный* “false,” *соблюдать* “to observe”/*нарушать* “to violate,” *создать* “to create”/ *разрушать* “to destroy,” *теплеть* “to get warm”/ *холодать* “to get cold.”

An essential category relation in a field (class) is conversion: the inverse, “mirror” relations of units. These relations have not yet been investigated

sufficiently. Conversion is especially characteristic for units of procedural fields: “*The explosion has deafened us*” ↔ “*We were deafened by the explosion,*” “*The heat has dried up the grass*” ↔ “*The grass has been dried up by the heat,*” etc.

Derivative words (units, LSV) of a field are interpreted using the derivation function (DER). “*DER: derivative (syntactic). A word coinciding with  $i_0$  [the key word, the argument—V.D.] in meaning but differing from it in the syntactic status and belonging to a different part of speech (“syntactic word building”)*” (Zholkovskii and Mel’chuk 1967, 200).

Such words, which may be very different parts of speech, have a generalized functional expression:  $y = f_{\text{der}}(x)$ .

Depending on what part of speech represents the initial word (argument), several types of word-formational (“syntactic”) derivation can be distinguished. These are in the “epidigmatic zone” of the semantic field. Let *V* denote a verb, *S* a noun (substantive), *A* an adjective, and *Adv* an adverb; the symbol enclosed in parentheses is the argument (the motivating word), and the symbol preceding it is its derivative (as a value of the function). Derivation as a function can thus be represented in several varieties, as shown in table 8.1.

The basic functional structure of the semantic field obtains its concretization and specificity by taking into account the specificity of the objects it reflects as a fragment of extralinguistic reality.

**Table 8.1. Derivation as a Function Can Be Represented in Several Varieties.**

<u>S (V)</u>	<u>V (S)</u>
<b>изменение (изменяться)</b> change (to [be] change[d])	<b>(о)стекленеть (стекло)</b> to glass (glass)
<b>прогиб (гнуть, прогнуть)</b> a bend (to bend)	<b>(о)леденеть (лед)</b> to get icy (ice)
<u>A (S)</u>	<u>S (A)</u>
<b>умный (ум)</b> brainy (brain)	<b>синь (синий)</b> blueness (blue)
<b>морозный (мороз)</b> frosty (frost)	<b>зелень (зеленый)</b> greenery (green)
<u>Adv (A)</u>	<i>etc.</i>
<b>изменчиво (изменчивый)</b> changeably (changeable)	
<b>холодно (холодный)</b> coldly (cold)	

Source: Denisenko 2016.



*Part III*

**THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO  
INVESTIGATING TEXT AND STYLE:  
THE RATIONALE OF THE CAUSAL  
TYPOLOGY OF TEXTS**

Olga Valentinova





## Chapter Nine

# The Medieval Model of Correlation Between Form and Content

### INTRODUCTORY NOTES

If the idea that the quality of understanding depends on how well the method of investigation corresponds to the properties of the object under study could be transferred from the field of speculative reasoning to the practical sphere and became a generally accepted principle for working with empirical material, we would not have to prove the obvious fact that the study of such semiotic systems as text and style without recourse to the systemic approach have no explanatory power.

The systemic approach is both reliable and economical. Seeing the system-forming principle means explaining the large through the small. Otherwise, it is difficult to stop fragmenting one's thinking in research, which distorts the essential properties of the object under study.

When trying to solve the problem of the historical typology of texts without recourse to the systemic approach, we can hardly find a principle (rather than principles!) for distinguishing *types* of texts that is flawlessly reliable for the whole history—however long—of the formation, development, and change of a literary language. Literary language is the prime of any language's existence, with the highest sense-expressing potential at any point in history. In other words, the problem of the historical typology of texts cannot be solved without recourse to the systemic approach because the solution lies in finding a fundamental principle for distinguishing text types.

The signed nature of a text as a whole and that of the text type as a higher-order whole implies that only the texts revealing the single system-forming principle of the correlation of form and content, and of sign and meaning, are manifestations of a general type.

In the uninterrupted flow of time, historically significant texts are those that, on the one hand, reproduce a historically conditioned principle of correlation between form and content, and, on the other hand, those that violate this principle. The distinction between that which is known and that which is new renders continuous time discrete, intermittent, and, by eliminating the redundancy of description, can help understand the sense of what is happening: the causal typology of texts will be comprehended through the basic historical models of the relationship between form and content reflecting changing consciousness.

Acknowledging the absolute primacy of empirical material as the starting point for the movement of thought in any explanatory science will enable us to avoid semiotic distortions provoked by automatism in the thought of researchers, who project, onto a whole arising on a historical scale, conceptions that are connected with historically anterior and posterior experience of the correlation between sign and meaning, as well as with that which operates in parallel.

The problem of the historical typology of texts was posed by V. V. Vinogradov, yet the science defined by Vinogradov as a history of literary language (of the Russian literary language), which was supposed to solve this problem, was based on certain paradoxes that prevented the formation of a methodological basis determining both the prospects and the productivity of any area of knowledge.

One of the most serious misunderstandings is caused by the fact that acknowledging the text an object of research has remained an abstract thesis for the science in question. In the practice of research, the text has rather functioned, and continues to function, as material for extracting devices (mainly lexical, less frequently constructive) of various origins: Church Slavonic, Old Russian, Western European, etc. Clearly, in such an approach, the idea of the text as a semantic whole with form conditioned by content is ousted to the periphery of researchers' thought, and systemic principles of research remain out of demand.

The well-known controversy about the origin of the Russian literary language—either from Church Slavonic or from Old Russian—is of a very relative scientific significance. After all, no matter what we take as the basis for the Russian literary language, South Slavic or East Slavic, even the most ardent “patriot” in the sphere of cognition cannot deny the core value of Church Slavonic in the formation of the Russian literary language. The unique cultural situation that existed in the first state of the Eastern Slavs in the tenth to twelfth centuries had a linguistic explanation as well. The very high degree of structural and semantic proximity of the Church Slavonic and Old Russian languages during this period ensured that ecclesiastic discourse,

and therefore that of the medieval science and culture, could be understood by all layers of society, albeit to varying extents.

The myth of the two types of literary Old Russian has proven to be as stable as the myth of its origin. All but forgotten is the caveat given by Vinogradov, that last encyclopedic philologist, that the bookish Slavonic and folk literary types were nothing but inaccessible extremes of projection, and that, in fact, each text contained nothing but infinite points of approximation to one or the other pole (Vinogradov 1958). Absolutizing the adopted convention to make analysis more convenient has once again led to mythologizing science (Losev 1994, 14–30). Yet with or without these caveats, the deduced “types of the Old Russian literary language,” which tear up the text into numerous points of attraction, will never become text types and therefore will not solve the question of text typology.

The systemic approach to texts and styles as historical facts can be foregrounded by a branch of science whose very name reflects a view of text and style as historical phenomena. By this we mean the historical typology of texts, which cannot be anything but a systemic typology. However, it is vital for us to emphasize that the very name of the science contains the idea of dynamic, historically significant change. In the study of such a flexible substance as a text, which has always been the only initial reality of philology, it is impossible to understand what is happening without recourse to the idea of change: it is too great a peril to impose a foreign meaning on a sign seemingly recognizable from a different semiotic system (Valentinova 2005).

Obviously, the principal historical models of form–content correlation are a reflection of changing consciousness.

The necessity and sufficiency of studying texts with the problem formulated this way should be determined, in our opinion, by the reliably established textual and extratextual boundaries of the sense-forming context, which would allow us to derive a historically conditioned principle of form–content correlation corresponding to particular types of consciousness: mythological, medieval, and secular. An immanent analysis of the text, which ignores the past (the way the principle of form–content correlation has changed compared to the previous situation) and the future (the way the principle of form and content correlation will change further) is insufficient for understanding the present, that is, the principle of form–content correlation underlying the text in question.

It is well known that the meaning of a word is formed by context. It is understood outside the context, in other words, becomes part of one’s vocabulary only after a multifold reproduction of contexts forming this meaning. If this commonly known circumstance regains its original methodological meaning, it will become obvious that understanding the logic of change of

a language's semantic structure caused by a change in the social conscience is objectively impossible without distinguishing historical periods aimed at the multifold reproduction of sense-forming contexts (fixating the semantic structure of the word) from historical periods aimed at creating meaningful contexts (changing the previous organizational principles of the semantic structure of words). We must always bear in mind that the vector of change can manifest itself to a greater or lesser degree. Our task is to define a common and therefore systemically acting direction of change.

Selecting exemplary texts for every period or that of the system of contexts reflecting a historically conditioned principle of form–content correlation or, on the contrary, a sharp change of the previous form–content correlation principle, will allow us to reconstruct the dynamic model of the semantic structure of the Old Russian and Russian literary languages.

The earliest Old Russian literary texts were created after the adoption of Christianity, in the early Russian Middle Ages. It is true that only later copies have survived. During the tragic history of medieval Russia, much was lost, but even these losses do not lessen the acuteness of the matter of selecting texts in which the form–content correlation can be considered as a manifestation of the medieval mind that determined the whole of human existence at the time.

Admitting that medieval man was essentially religious compels us to turn to two genres: the liturgical sermon and hagiography. Inscribed in the spatial and temporal coordinates of the main Christian Church service, in which the main Church sacrament is performed, the liturgical sermon and the lives of saints, read in a brief form after the Liturgy, had the most numerous listeners and readers in medieval life and therefore could not but reflect the medieval mind and, moreover, shape it.

That is why we presumably can come to understand the causal correlation of sign and meaning in a medieval text, conditioned by the medieval mind, through investigating the foremost works in these genres. One of them is the eleventh-century liturgical sermon by the future Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev known as *Slovo o zakone i blagodati* (“Sermon” or “Word on the Law and Grace”). The other is the *Zhitie Stefana Permskogo* (“Life of Saint Stephen of Perm”), composed during the period of the flourishing Russian holiness by a contemporary of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, Epiphanius the Wise (*Epifanii Premudryi*), a monk at the Holy Trinity–St. Sergius Monastery, and the ideal embodiment of the manner of narration metaphorically called *pletentie sloves* “weaving of words.”

In order to trace subsequent damage to the medieval worldview and to detect the internal logic of the break that occurred, we must remain within the limits of this same genre, in which the medieval worldview manifested itself most fully. There we shall find the sense-distorting, sense-altering (depending

on the sign value) contexts setting a new vector for form–content correlation, which testifies to a historically new type of consciousness. This is why it will be objectively necessary to turn to the semantic reality of the “Life of Archbishop (Protopope) Avvakum.”

Now, tracing these changes, we shall be able to reconstruct a dynamic model of the semantic structure of the Old Russian and Russian languages. The reconstruction of the dynamic model will make it possible, in turn, to reveal the main vector of historical changes within the semantic structures of the Old Russian and Russian languages.

We shall notice the strengthening tendency toward creating sense-changing contexts aimed at the destruction of the ethical integrity of the semantic structure of the medieval word, and this will allow us to see that the main vector of the historical change of the Russian literary language is desacralization.

The ethical integrity of the Old Russian word’s semantic structure, in which the spiritual and the carnal, the noble and the base, the sublime and the profane could by no means be covered by the same grapho-phonemic sequence (one and the same sign), is replaced by the era of secularized consciousness. The semantic structure of the Old Russian spiritual word in the newly created contexts is torn apart by secular meanings; Pushkin’s literary experiments lead to the total collapse of the “high.”

Yet it would be misleading to imagine that the text types deduced by historical typology are a rigid linear sequence of entities irrevocably succeeding each other, and such an error would sooner or later provoke an attempt to attribute a foreign meaning to a seemingly recognizable form. History knows both temporary returns to what has been lost, and the incessant renewal of that typologically special correlation of form and content that has transcended its original cause, ceased to define a historically new type of consciousness, but not disappeared. Revealing the semiotic nature of the “high style” proclaimed by M. V. Lomonosov and the semiotic nature of contemporary theological texts helps us to understand that there is no rigid linearity in the process of replacing one historical text type by another.

With the formation of secular consciousness in Russian society, the category of style begins to form. If by “category of style” we mean a principle of selecting linguistic means, it becomes clear that the category of style is purely secular in its semiotic nature. In the ethical clarity of medieval life, the idea of selection did not exist: the high and the low had no points of intersection, and therefore there was no chance of selecting a means for their designation. The high and the low did not mix. Predetermination in designating the heavenly and the worldly was the basis of the medieval worldview.

The secular worldview gives birth to the category of style, but would it be correct now to reduce the question of the causal typology of texts to that

of styles usually called “functional” and associated with “types of public conscience” and “types of social activity”? And what changes in the sign–meaning correlation might testify to the transformation of the whole integrity of consciousness that is already secular? We propose to look for the answer to this question in specifying the displacement vector of the relationship between functional styles “in favor” of one of them. The violation of the tentative equilibrium between functional styles is always directed. To see this direction means to find out the historically significant systemic change of the correlation between sign and meaning that reflects a change in the social conscience. Historical events are not only accompanied but also anticipated by changing stylistic preferences.

### **THE CAUSAL GROUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTIVE COMPLEXITY OF A MEDIEVAL TEXT: METROPOLITAN ILARION’S LITURGICAL SERMON**

The causal grounds of the medieval principle of form–content correlation find their perfect expression in the perfect genre of theological thought: the liturgical sermon, which, in the fullness of its content and form, is included into the whole of the Liturgy, the basic Christian worship service, in which the main church sacrament, the Eucharist, the sacrament of the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, is celebrated. Therefore, in terms of theological notions, the motive power of the liturgical sermon is grace, not the rhetorical art, which is posited to be a fact of human rather than divine will.

The interpretation of the events of the Old and New Testaments and the interpretation of the present through biblical events, both old and new, determines the presence in a liturgical sermon of three chronological, and therefore semantic, layers: those of ancient history, New Testament history, and history contemporary to the delivering of the sermon. The explanatory principle of the liturgical sermon is nourished by the ontological need of correlating these three values. The need to correlate them brings about the need for comparison, predetermining both the compositional structure of the liturgical sermon and the ways of compositionally accenting the verbal material. Thus, comparison, in remaining a highly significant mental act, turns out to be the genre-forming basis of the liturgical sermon.

Juxtaposing ancient history, New Testament history, and the history of the Old Russian state of the author’s time underlies the liturgical sermon composed during the reign of the Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise, between 1037 and 1043/1050, by Ilarion, the future Metropolitan of Kiev and the

first metropolitan of Russian origin. In the Kievan period (before the Tatar conquest, in the mid-thirteenth century) the higher monastic clergy, mainly of aristocratic origin, were the main bearers of culture. Ilarion, monk, ascetic, and theologian, was one of the zealots who had initiated the Russian monasticism. The cave on the banks of the Dneper where Ilarion had prayed became later the Holy Dormition Kiev Caves Monastery (*Lavra*). Venerable Anthony of the Caves (Antonii Pecherskii), the founder of the future monastery, received Ilarion's blessing.

In the Old Russian state, by the mid-eleventh century, the Christian faith had existed for less than half a century; it was all but newly born in the perception of the former pagans, the stubborn keepers of an ancestral memory that did not distinguish between the present and the past. It may be that very vibrant feeling of the past as something recently experienced brought about the vast scope of contraposition set in the sermon. The compiler of the sermon does not apportion the events of the Old and the New Testaments across the feast days of the church year; he does not search for a literal correlation to the event commemorated by the Church on the day of delivering the sermon; instead, using generic Old Testament images, he comes to correlate the whole totality of the Old Testament with the whole totality of the New Testament. The personal images of Old Testament history become a visible support in the interpretation of the integral semantic value of the Old and the New Testaments.

But initially, abstract thought finds manifold expression in two lines of specifying definitions that establish the semantic relations between the Old and the New Testaments as between the Law (“**закономъ**”) as “the predecessor and the servant of Grace and Truth” (“**предтечей и слугою благодѣти и истинѣ**”) “and Grace (“**благодѣтью**”) as the “servant of the coming age and incorruptible life” (“**слугою будущему вѣку, жизни нетлѣннѣй**”).

By the Old Testament, by “the tablets of the law” (“**скрижальми и закономъ**”), the “God of Israel, the God of Christianity” (“**Богъ Израилевъ, Богъ христианскъ**”) first “enlightened” the chosen people, the “Abraham's breed” (“**племя Авраамле**”). Later “He saved all nations, sending them His Son, His Gospel and His baptism, and restoring them to eternal life” (“**сыномъ своимъ вся языки спасе Евагелиемъ и крещениемъ и въводя а въ обновление пакывытия, въ жизнь вѣчную**”).

“Just as the Law brought those law-abiding to the Grace of baptism, so baptism brings its sons to the eternal life” (“**Яко законъ привождаше възаконеныа къ благодѣтному крещению, крещение же сыны своа прѣпущаетъ на вѣчную жизнь**”).

Moses and the prophets “foretold the coming of Christ” (“**о Христовѣ пришествии повѣдааху**”), whereas Christ and His Apostles “foretold the resurrection and the future age” (“**о въскресении и о будущиимъ вѣцѣ**”).



First came the Old Testament, “the Law” (“**законъ**”), then the New Testament, “the Grace” (“**благодѣть**”); first “the shadow” (“**стѣнь**”), then “the Truth” (“**истина**”).

The numerous parallel constructions correspond ideally to the inner form of a two-part comparison (that of the Old and the New Testaments). The syntactic similitude forming the parallel construction unveils the semantic difference of the two constituents and excludes any chance of being distracted by the minor:

(God) justified Abraham’s breed through the tablets and through the Law (**оправдѣ (Богъ) прежде племя Авраамле скрижальми и закономъ**), then He redeemed all the folks through His Son; through the Gospel and baptism . . . (**послѣжде Сыномъ Своимъ все языки спасе Евангелиемъ и крещенимъ . . .**) (1);

for the Law was the servant and predecessor of Grace and Truth (**Законъ бо прѣдътечя бѣ и слуга благодѣти и истинѣ**),

and Truth and Grace are servants of the coming age and incorruptible life (**истина же и благодѣть слуга будущему вѣку, жизни нетлѣннѣи**) (2);

Just as the Law brought those law-abiding to the Grace of baptism (**Яко законъ привождаше възаконенныя къ благодѣтному крещению**),

so baptism brings its sons to eternal life (**крещение же сыны своя прѣпущаетъ на вѣчную жизнь**) (3);

Moses and the prophets foretold the coming of Christ (**Моисѣ бо и пророци о Христовѣ пришествии повѣдаху**),

so Christ and His apostles foretold the resurrection and the future age (**Христосъ же и апостоли Его о възскресении и о будущимъ вѣцѣ**) (4);

And what did the Law achieve (**И что успѣ законъ?**),

and what has been attained by Grace? (**что ли благодѣть?**) (5);

First the Law (**Прежде законъ**),

then Grace (**ти по томъ благодѣть**) (6);

first the shadow (**прежде стѣнь**),

then the Truth (**ти по томъ истина**) (7). (Parion n.d.)

The manifold repetition of the constructive device based on the syntactic similitude of two statements designated to clarify the content of two global essences appearing always in the same order—first the Old Testament, then the New Testament—establishes a rhythmic model based on the expected alternation of raising and lowering the intonation.

When the preacher speaks about the Old Testament, the intonation is raised; when he speaks of the New Testament, the intonation is lowered.

Thus, incompleteness of the content and the expectation of a continuation implied by the rising intonation steadily accompany the Old Testament narrative. Contrariwise, the understanding of the New Testament events as the

finally completed fact will be supported by the fall in intonation. Eventually, a given rhythmic model will come to be one of the means of embodying meanings not expressed nominally.

The inspired texts themselves, both the aim and means of understanding, become the key to their own understanding. This abstract thought at last finds a visible support in the personal images of Old Testament history, those of Sarah, Abraham's wife, and her slave Hagar, who was the first to give birth to Abraham's son when the spouses had already lost hope of conceiving an heir:

The preimage of the law and grace are Hagar and Sarah, Hagar the slave woman and Sarah the free woman: first a slave, and then a free woman (**Образъ же законѹ и благодати—Агарь и Сарра, работная Агарь и свободная Сарра, работная прежде ти, потомъ свободная**).

But the nature of the comparison rapidly becomes more complicated, with not only separate images but also extended plot fragments of the Old Testament narrative as well as others from of the New Testament being drawn into the juxtaposition:

Just as Abraham from his youth had Sarah, for his wife, a free woman, not a slave (**Яко Авраамъ ѹбо от ѹности своен Саррѹ имѣ женѹ си, свободнѹ, а не рабѹ**):

so God decided before the ages to send His Son into the world, that Grace might appear through him (**И Богъ ѹбо прежде вѣкъ изволи и ѹмысли сына своего в миръ послати, и тѣмъ благодати явитися**) (1);

But Sarah bore no children, for she was barren. Not actually barren, but restrained by the divine Providence to bear in her old age (**Сарра же не раждаше, понеже вѣ неплоды. Не вѣ неплоды, нъ заключена вѣ Божиимъ промысломъ на старость родити**).

So the secret wisdom of God was concealed from angels and men, not eternally concealed, but hidden to be revealed at the end of the age. (**Безвѣстная же и тинная прѣмѹдрости Божии ѹтаена бяхѹ ангелъ и человекъ, не яко неявима, нъ ѹтаена и на конецъ вѣка хотяща явитися**) (2);

And Sarah said to Abraham: "the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: go in unto Hagar my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her" (**Сарра же глагола къ Авраамѹ: "се заключи мя Господь Богъ не раждати; види ѹбо къ рабѣ моеи Агари и родиши отъ нея"**),

so Grace said to God, "If it is not yet my time to descend to the earth and save the world, you descend to Mount Sinai and give them the Law." (**Благодѣтъ же глагола къ Богѹ: "Аще нѣсть врѣмене сънити ми на землю и спасти миръ, съниди на горѹ Синаи и законъ положи"**) (3);

And Abraham listened to Sarah's words and went in to her handmaid Hagar (**Послуша Авраамъ рѣчи Саррины и вѣлѣзе (виде) къ рабѣ еѣ Агарѣ**):

and God listened to the words of Grace and descended to Sinai (**Послуша и Богъ яже отъ благодѣти словесъ и съниде на Гинай**) (4);

And Hagar the slave bore a son from Abraham, a son of a slave, and Abraham gave his son a name Ishmael (**Роди же Агаръ раба отъ Авраама раба робичиштъ, и нарече Авраамъ имя ему Измаилъ**)

and Moses brought down from Mount Sinai the Law, not Grace; the shadow, not the Truth (**Изнесе же Моисѣи отъ Гинайския горы законъ, а не благодѣтъ, стѣнь, а не истину**) (5);

and then, when Abraham and Sarah were already old, God came before Abraham at noon by the oak of Mamre as he sat by the door of his tent at noon. And Abraham ran to meet him, and bowed to him to the ground, and took him into his tent (**По сихъ же уже стару сущу Аврааму и Саррѣ, явился Богъ Аврааму, сѣдящу ему прѣдъ дверьми кущкѣ его, въ полудне, и дѣва Мамьвринскааго; Авраамъ же текъ въ срѣтенне ему и поклонися ему до землѣ и приятъ и въ кущтѣ свою**):

so as the end of this age was near, the Lord appeared to mankind and descended from heaven to the womb of the Virgin, and she bowed to Him and took Him into the tent of the flesh, painlessly; and she said to the angel, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word" (**Вѣку же сему къ концу приближающуся, посѣтитъ Господь чловѣчьскааго рода и съниде съ небесе, въ утробѣ Дѣвицы вѣходя; приятъ же и Дѣвица съ покланяниемъ въ кущѣ плѣтянѣю не волѣвши, глаголющи ти къ ангелу: "Се раба Господня, бѣди мнѣ по глаголу Твоему"**) (6);

And then the Lord loosened the loins of Sarah, and she conceived and bore Isaac, the free woman bore a free son (**Тогда уже отключи Богъ ложесна Саррина и заченьши роди Исаака, свободнаа свободнааго**):

and when the Lord visited the human race, all that was hidden and concealed revealed itself, and Grace was born, the Truth, not the Law, the son, not the slave (**И присѣтивъшю Богѣ чловѣчьска естества, явишася уже везвѣстнаа и утаенаа и родися благодѣтъ, истина, а не законъ, сынъ, а не рабъ**) (7);

And once young Isaac was weaned (grown strong), Abraham made a great feast, as Isaac his son was weaned (**И яко отдонся (возрос) отрочя Исаакъ и укрѣпѣ, сътвори Авраамъ гоститвѣ велику, егда отдонся Исаакъ сынъ его**):

so when Christ was on the earth, Grace had not yet grown strong, and was still suckled for more than thirty years, and Christ then was in obscurity; but when Grace was weaned and had grown strong, it appeared to all men in the Jordan river; God made a great feast, with the fatted calf, nurtured from the dawn of time, with His beloved son Jesus Christ, and assembled in one rejoicing all those from heaven and from earth, and made angels and joined angels and men together as one (**Егда вѣ Христосъ на земли, и еще не уже благодѣтъ не укрѣпила вѣаше, нѣ дояшеся, и еще за 30 лѣтъ, въ ня же Христосъ таяшеся; егда же уже отдонся и укрѣпѣ и явился благодѣтъ Божия всѣмъ чловѣкомъ въ Иорданьстѣи рѣцѣ; сътвори Богъ гоститвѣ**

и пиръ великъ тельцѣмъ ѹпитѣннымъ, отъ вѣка, възлюбленнымъ Сыномъ Своимъ Исусомъ Христомъ, съзавъ на едино веселне небесныя и земныя, съвокупивъ въ едино ангелы и человекы) (8);

Then, Sarah once saw Ishmael the son of Hagar playing with her son Isaac and Ishmael was mocking Isaac; and she said to Abraham: “Expel the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the son of the free woman” (По сиухъ же видѣвши Сарра Изманла, сына Агарина, играюща съ сыномъ своимъ Исакомъ, и яко провидѣнъ бысть Исаакъ Изманломъ, рече къ Аврааму: “Отжени раву и съ сыномъ еѣ, не имать во наслѣдовати сынъ равининъ сына свободнаа”):

After the ascension of the Lord Jesus, when the disciples and others who had already believed in Christ were in Jerusalem, and Jews and Christians lived side by side, then the Grace-filled baptism was mocked by the Law of circumcision and the Christian Church in Jerusalem did not accept an uncircumcised bishop, for by stealing the birthright, the circumcised oppressed the Christians: the sons of the slave oppressed the sons of the free—and there were many quarrels and disputes between them. And seeing her free children, the Christians, suffering wrongs from the Jews, enslaved by the Law, free Grace cried to God: “Cast out the Jews with their law and scatter them among the Gentiles, for what is there in common between the shadow and the Truth, Judaism and Christianity?”

(По възнесеніи же Господа Исуса, ѹченикомъ же и инѣмъ вѣровавшимъ уже въ Христа сущемъ въ Иерусалимѣ, и обнимъ сѣмѣсь сущемъ, нудеомъ же и христианомъ, и крещение благодатьное обидимо бѣаше от обрѣзання законнааго, и не принимаше въ Иеросалимѣ христианскаа церкви епискѹпа необрѣзана, понеже, старѣише творящееся, сѹщен отъ обрѣзання насиловаахѹ на хрестинаны, равичишти на сыны свободныя, и бываахѹ междѹ ими многы распрѣ и которы. Видивши же свободнаа благодѣтъ чада своа христианын обидимы от нудѣн, сыновъ работнааго закона, възъпи къ Богѹ: “Отжени нудѣнство и съ закономъ расточи по странамъ, кое бо причастие стѣню съ истинною, нудѣнствѹ съ христианьством”) (9)

Налеаы ѣе ѣарцаид was cas oѹ wiѣ ѣеы so Исѣае, ад, Исаас ѣе so оѹ ѣе ѹгыее воца есаце ѣеиы о ѣис ѹаѣеы Аѹаѣаци (И отгнана бысть Агаръ раба съ сыномъ еѣ Изманломъ, и Исаакъ, сынъ свободныя, наслѣдникъ бысть Аврааму, отцу своему):

so the Jews were cast and out and scattered among the nations, and the sons of Christian Grace became heirs to God the Father (И отгнани быша нудѣи и расточени по странам, и чяда благодѣтнаа христианни наслѣдници быша Богѹ и Отцу) (10). (Parion n.d.)

The story about Abraham from the Old Testament Book of Genesis is torn into fragments forming the first parts of the parallel constructions; the integrity of the Old Testament story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar can be reconstructed if we combine all the first parts of the parallel constructions:

Яко Авраамъ ꙗко от ꙗности своен Гаррꙋ имѣ женꙋ си, свободнꙋ, а не рабꙋ;

Гарра же не раждааше, понеже бѣ неплоды. Не бѣ неплоды, нѣ заключена бѣ Божиимъ промысломъ на старость родити;

Гарра же глагола къ Авраамꙋ: “се заключи мя Господь Богъ не раждати; вѣлѣзи ꙗко къ рабѣ моеи Агари и родиши отъ неѣ;

Послꙋша Авраамъ рѣчи Гаррины и вѣлѣзе къ рабѣ еѣ Агарѣ;

Роди же Агарь раба от Авраама раба ровичиштѣ, и нарече Авраамъ имя емꙋ: Измаиль;

По сихъ же ꙗже старꙋ сꙋщꙋ Авраамꙋ и Гаррѣ, явися Богъ Авраамꙋ, сѣдѣщꙋ емꙋ предъ дверьми кꙋшкѣ его въ полꙋдне ꙗ дꙋба Мамъвринскааго; Авраамъ же текъ въ срѣтєнне емꙋ и поклонися емꙋ до землѣ и прїятъ и въ кꙋштꙋ свою;

Тогда ꙗко отключи Богъ ложесна Гаррина и зачєньши, роди Исаака, свободнаа свободнааго;

И яко отдонся [возрос] отрочя Исаакъ и ꙗкрѣпѣ, сѣтвори Авраамъ гоститвꙋ великꙋ, егда отдонся Исаакъ сынъ его;

По сихъ же видѣвши Гарра Изманла, сына Агаринна, играюща съ сыномъ своимъ Исакомъ, и яко приобидѣнъ бысть Исаакъ Изманломъ, рече къ Авраамꙋ: “Отжени рабꙋ и съ сыномъ еѣ, не имать бо наслѣдовати сынъ равининъ сына свободнаа”;

И отгнана бысть Агарь раба съ сыномъ еѣ Изманломъ, и Исаакъ, сынъ свободнаа, наслѣдникъ бысть Авраамꙋ, отцꙋ своемꙋ.

But can those who do not know or remember the whole story well enough perceive this fragment integrally? Most probably, for an uninformed person, such a perception would have been an unattainable bound of comprehension. More unattainable would have been the idea of a comparison that is constructively performed in the sequences of parallel constructions.

The difficulty of perception is increased by the fact that the two-part structure meant for comparison contains more than two plotlines, and only the story of Ishmael and Isaac’s births turns out to be relatively integral.

As for the second parts of the parallel constructions, they allude to the content of both the Old and the New Testament and, like the first parts of the parallel constructions, form a sequence of actions that make up a consistent story:

И Богъ ꙗко прежде вѣкъ изволи и ꙗмысли сына своего в миръ послати, и тѣмъ благодѣти явитися”;

Безвѣстная же и таинаа прѣмꙋдрости Божии ꙗтаєна вяхꙋ ангель и человекъ, не яко неявима, нѣ ꙗтаєна и на конецъ вѣка хотѣща явитися;

Благодѣтъ же глагола къ Богꙋ: “Аще нѣсть врѣмене съннѣти ми на землю и спасти мїръ, съниди на горꙋ Синаи и законъ положи;

Послꙋша же и Богъ ꙗже от благодѣти словєсъ и съниде на Синаи;

Изнесе же и Моисѣи отъ Синаския горы законъ, а не благодѣть, стѣнь, а не истину;

Вѣкѹ же семѹ къ коньцѹ приближающѹся, посѣтитъ Господь человѣчьскааго рода и стѣниде съ небесе, въ ѹтровѹ Дѣвицы въходя; принять же и Дѣвица съ покланяниемъ въ кѹщѹ плѣтъянюю не болѣвши, глаголющи ти къ ангелѹ: “се раба Господня, буди миѣ по глаголю Твоемѹ”;

И присѣтивъшѹ Богѹ человѣчьска естества, явишася ѹже везвѣстнаа и ѹтаеннаа и родися благодѣть, истина, а не законъ; сынъ, а не рабъ;

Егда вѣ Христось на земли, и еще не ѹ ся благодѣть ѹкрѣпила вѣаше, нѣ дояшеся еще, за 30 лѣтъ, въ ня же Христось таяшеся; егда же отдонся и ѹкрѣпѣ, явися благодѣть Божна всѣмъ человѣкомъ въ Иорданьстѣи рѣцѣ; сътвори Богъ гоститвѹ и пиръ великъ тельцемъ ѹпитѣннымъ, отъ вѣка, възлюбленнымъ Сыномъ Своимъ Исѹсомъ Христомъ, съзвавъ на едино веселие небесныа и земныа, съвокупивъ въ едино ангелы и человѣкы;

По възнесенни же Господа Исѹса, ѹченикомъ же и инѣмъ вѣровавшимъ ѹже въ Христа сѹщемъ въ Иерѹсалимѣ, и обоемъ смѣсь сѹщемъ, иѹдеомъ же и христіаномъ, и крещение благодатное обидимо вѣаше от обрѣзаниа законнааго, и не принимаше въ Иеросалимѣ христіаньскаа церкви епискѹпа необрѣзана, понеже, старѣише творящееся, сѹщени отъ обрѣзаниа насловаахѹ на хрестяныа, равништи на сыны свободныа, и бываахѹ между ими многы распрѣ и которы. Видивши же свободнаа благодѣть чада своа христіаныи обидимы от иѹдѣи, сыновъ работнааго закона, вѣзъпи къ Богѹ: “Отъжени иѹдѣиство и съ закономъ расточи по странамъ, кое во причастие стѣню съ истинною, иѹдѣиствѹ съ христіаньствомъ”;

И отгнани быша иѹдѣи и расточени по странамъ, и чяда благодѣтнаа христіаныи наслѣдници быша Богѹ и Отцѹ.

As a result, the story of Abraham at different points in its development is juxtaposed with fragments from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Such a juxtaposition results in every narrative turn in Abraham and his sons' story being endowed with a symbolic meaning.

The marriage contracted by young Abraham with the free Sarah is compared to God's decision “before all ages” to send His son into the world:

Just as Abraham from his youth had Sarah for his wife, a free woman, not a slave (Яко Авраамъ ѹбо от ѹности своая Саррѹ имѣ женѹ си, свободнѹ, а не рабѹ):

thus before the ages God deigned and designed to send into the world His Son, that through Him Grace might be made manifest (И Богъ ѹбо прежде вѣкъ изволи и ѹмысли сына своего в миръ послати, и тѣмъ благодѣти явитися).

The dispensation of God concerning Sarah, who had thought she was barren but in old age gave birth to a son, is compared to God's dispensation concerning the end of the age, which was concealed from angels and men.

But Sarah bore no children, for she was barren. Not actually barren, but restrained by the divine Providence to bear in her old age (**Гарра же не раждааше, понеже бѣ неплоды. Не бѣ неплоды, нѣ заключена бѣ Божиимъ промысломъ на старость родити**).

So the secret wisdom of God was concealed from angels and men, not eternally concealed, but hidden to be revealed at the end of the age (**Безвѣстная же и таинна прѣмудрости Божии ѹгаена вѣаху ангель и челоувѣкъ, не яко неявима, нѣ ѹгаена и на конецъ вѣка хотѣща явитися**).

The decision of Sarah, up until that time childless, to send her husband to her handmaid so that the latter could give birth to a child corresponds to the understanding of the Incarnation of God as being then still premature and of the giving the Commandments as anticipating the future:

And Sarah said to Abraham: “the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: go in unto Hagar my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her” (**Гарра же глагола къ Аврааму: “се заключи мя Господь Богъ не раждати; вниди ѹбо къ рабѣ моеи Агари и родиши отъ нея”**),

so Grace said to God, “If it is not yet my time to descend to the earth and save the world, you descend to Mount Sinai and give them the Law” (**Благодѣтъ же глагола къ Богѹ: “Аще нѣсть врѣмене съннати ми на землю и спасти миръ, съниди на горѹ Синаи и законъ положи”**).

Abraham's intercourse with the handmaid corresponds to God's appearing before Moses on Sinai:

And Abraham listened to Sarah's words and went in to her handmaid Hagar (**Послуша Авраамъ рѣчи Гаррины и вѣлѣзе (вниде) къ рабѣ еѣ Агарѣ**): and God listened to the words of Grace and descended to Sinai (**Послуша и Богъ яже отъ благодѣти словесъ и съниде на Синаи**).

The birth of his son by the handmaid corresponds to Moses receiving the Commandments on Mount Sinai:

And Hagar the slave bore a son from Abraham, a son of a slave, and Abraham gave his son a name Ishmael (**Роди же Агаръ раба отъ Авраама раба робичиштъ, и нарече Авраамъ имя емѹ Измаилъ**)

and Moses brought down from Mount Sinai the Law, not Grace; the shadow, not the Truth (**Изнесе же Моисѣи отъ Синаискыя горы законъ, а не благодѣтъ, стѣнь, а не истину**).

The appearance of God before the aged Abraham and Sarah by the oak of Mamre corresponds to the Virgin conception of Mary:

And then, when Abraham and Sarah were already old, God came before Abraham at noon by the oak of Mamre as he sat by the door of his tent at noon. And Abraham ran to meet him, and bowed to him to the ground, and took him into his tent (**По сиѣхъ же ѹже старѹ сѹщѹ Авраамѹ и Саррѣ, явися Богъ Авраамѹ, сѣдящѹ емѹ прѣд дверьми кѹшкѣ его, въ полѹдне, ѹ дѹба Мамьвринскааго; Авраамъ же текъ въ срѣтѣние емѹ и поклонися емѹ до землѣ и прїятъ и въ кѹштѹ свою**):

so as the end of this age was near, the Lord appeared to mankind and descended from heaven to the womb of the Virgin, and she bowed to Him and took Him into the tent of the flesh, painlessly; and she said to the angel, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word" (**Вѣкѹ же семѹ къ коньцѹ приближающѹся, посѣтитъ Господь челоѡвѣчьскааго рода и сѣниде съ небесе, въ ѹтробѹ Дѣвицы вѣходя; прїятъ же и Дѣвица съ поклоняніемъ въ кѹштѹ плѣтянѹю не волѣвши, глаголющи ти къ ангелѹ: "Се раба Господня, вѹди мнѣ по глаголѹ Твоемѹ"**).

Here again the semantic incompleteness of the first part must be overcome by the listener's prior knowledge about what had happened by the oak of Mamre, when it was foretold that Abraham and Sarah would conceive a child.

The birth of the promised baby, the son of Abraham and Sarah, corresponds to the Incarnation of God, the birth of Christ:

And then the Lord loosened the loins of Sarah, and she conceived and bore Isaac, the free woman bore a free son (**Тогда ѹбо отключи Богъ ложесна Саррина и заченьши роди Исаака, свободнаа свободнааго**):

and when the Lord visited the human race, all that was hidden and concealed revealed itself, and Grace was born, the Truth, not the Law, the son, not the slave (**И присѣтившѹ Богѹ челоѡвѣчьска естѣства, явишася ѹже везѣстнаа и ѹгаенаа и родися благодѣтъ, истина, а не законъ, сынъ, а не рабъ**).

Isaac's maturation corresponds to Christ's baptism in the Jordan (before His first sermon) accompanied by the voice from heaven. And Abraham's feast in honor of Isaac being weaned corresponds to the joy of the union of the heavenly and the earthly through the human incarnation of God:

And once young Isaac was weaned (grew strong), Abraham made a great feast, as Isaac his son was weaned (**И яко отдонся (возрос) отрочя Исаакъ и ѹкрѣпѣ, сѣтвори Авраамъ гоститѹ великѹ, егда отдонся Исаакъ сынъ его**):

So when Christ was on the earth, Grace had not yet grown strong, and was still suckled for more than thirty years, and Christ then was in obscurity; but when Grace was weaned and had grown strong, it appeared to all men in the Jordan



river; God made a great feast, with the fatted calf, nurtured from the dawn of time, with His beloved son Jesus Christ, and assembled in one rejoicing all those from heaven and from earth, and made angels and joined angels and men together as one (Егда бѣ Христосъ на земли, и еще не ѹ ся благодѣть не ѹкрѣпила бяше, нѣ дояшеся, и еще за 30 лѣтъ, въ ня же Христосъ таяшеся; егда же ѹже отдоися и ѹкрѣпѣ и явися благодѣть Божия всѣмъ человѣкомъ въ Иорданьстѣи рѣцѣ; сътвори Богъ гоститвѹ и пирѣ великѣ тельцемъ ѹпитѣннымъ, отъ вѣка, възлюбленнымъ Сыномъ Своимъ Исусомъ Христомъ, съзвавъ на едино веселие небесныя и земныя, съвокупивъ въ едино ангелы и человѣки).

Sarah's request to Abraham to prevent Hagar and Ishmael from offending Isaac corresponds to the pleading of Christians to ban the Jews, the sons of the Law who had offended them after the resurrection of Christ, from Jerusalem:

Then, Sarah once saw Ishmael the son of Hagar playing with her son Isaac and Ishmael was mocking Isaac; and she said to Abraham: "Expel the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the son of the free woman" (По сихъ же видѣвши Сарра Измаила, сына Агаринна, играюща съ сыномъ своимъ Исакомъ, и яко привидѣнъ бысть Исаакъ Измаиломъ, рече къ Аврааму: "Отжени рабѹ и съ сыномъ еѣ, не имать бо наследовати сынъ равининъ сына свободна"):

So after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, when the disciples and others who had already believed in Christ were in Jerusalem, and Jews and Christians lived side by side, then the Grace-filled baptism was mocked by the Law of circumcision and the Christian Church in Jerusalem did not accept an uncircumcised bishop, for by stealing the birthright, the circumcised oppressed the Christians: the sons of the slave oppressed the sons of the free—and there were many quarrels and disputes between them. And seeing her free children, the Christians, suffering wrongs from the Jews, enslaved by the Law, free Grace cried to God: "Cast out the Jews with their law and scatter them among the Gentiles, for what is there in common between the shadow and the Truth, Judaism and Christianity?"

(По възнесеніи же Господа Исуса, ѹченикомъ же и инѣмъ вѣровавшимъ ѹже въ Христа сѹщемъ въ Иерусалимѣ, и обомъ сѣмѣсь сѹщемъ, иудеомъ же и христианомъ, и крещеніе благодатное обидимо вѣаше отъ обрѣзання законнааго, и не принимаше въ Иерусалимѣ христианьскаа церкви епискупа необрѣзана, понеже, старѣише творящееся, сѹщен отъ обрѣзання насиловаахѹ на хрестіаня, равиништи на сыны свободныя, и бываахѹ между ими многы распрѣ и которы. Видивши же свободнаа благодѣть чада своа христианыи обидимы отъ иудѣи, сыновъ работнааго закона, възъпи къ Богу: "Отжени иудѣиство и съ закономъ расточи по странамъ, кое бо причастіе стѣню съ истиною, иудѣиствѹ съ христианьствомъ").

Isaac's being an heir to Abraham corresponds to Christians inheriting God's Truth:

Hagar the slave was cast out with her son Ishmael, and Isaac the son of the free woman became heir to his father Abraham (**И отгнана бысть Агаръ раба съ сыномъ еѣ Измаиломъ, и Исаакъ, сынъ свободныя, наследникъ бысть Аврааму, отцу своему**):

so the Jews were cast and out and scattered among the nations, and the sons of Christian Grace became heirs to God the Father (**И отгнани быша иудѣи и расточени по странам, и чяда благодѣтнаа християнни наследници быша Божу и Отцу**).

Thus, every narrative turn of Abraham and Sarah's story is bestowed with a symbolic meaning:

- Abraham and Sarah's marriage receives the symbolic meaning of God's dispensation in sending His Son in the world;
- Sarah's temporary childlessness symbolizes the Incarnation of God being premature at the time;
- the decision of the temporarily childless Sarah to send her husband to her handmaid so that she could bear a child symbolizes the giving of the Commandments in expectation of the Incarnation of God;
- Abraham's intercourse with the handmaid symbolizes God's appearing before Moses on Mount Sinai;
- the birth of a son by a handmaid symbolizes Moses receiving the Commandments on Mount Sinai;
- the appearance of God before the aged Abraham and Sarah by the oak of Mamre symbolizes the Virgin Birth of Christ;
- the birth of the promised baby, the son of Abraham and Sarah, symbolizes the Incarnation of God, the birth of the Savior;
- Isaac's growing mature corresponds to Christ's baptism in the Jordan;
- the feast given by Abraham in honor of Isaac's maturation symbolizes the joy of the heavenly and the earthly being united through the incarnation of God as man;
- Sarah's request to Abraham to ban Hagar and Ishmael offending Isaac symbolizes the pleading of the Christians to ban the Jews, the sons of Law, who offended them after the resurrection of Christ from Jerusalem; and
- Isaac's being an heir to Abraham corresponds to Christians' inheriting the God's Truth.

But not only the events of Abraham and Sarah's story receive a symbolic meaning. Each juxtaposition evokes a number of symbolic meanings. For in-

stance, the juxtaposition of the marriage contracted by young Abraham with free Sarah and the decision of God “before all ages” to send His Son into the world could lead us to a conclusion about the “prescribing force of marriage equal to God’s dispensation about the Son before the universe.”

The development of thought in the “Word on the Law and Grace” is resolved primarily in parallel connections. Each time, the semantic clash of structurally similar statements provokes the exposure of new meanings, symbolic already, imparting an above-worldly sense on each particular fact or event. But the new meanings remain unnamed in the text. Their deduction is the task of exegesis.

It is clear that the division of the Old Testament narrative of Abraham into meaningfully abbreviated fragments, split up by correspondences to other episodes from the Old Testament and to episodes from the New Testament, provoking the emergence of symbolic meanings, makes the perception of the liturgical sermon accessible only to a limited number of listeners: “For we do not write for the ignorant, but for them that have feasted on the sweetness of books!” (“**Ни къ невѣдущимъ бо пишемъ, нъ прѣизлѣха насыштъшемся сладости книжныа**”).

But how original it was to adduce images from the narrative of Abraham in order to interpret the correlation of the Old and New Testaments in the “Word on the Law and Grace”? The question of originality is easily dealt with if we remember that a liturgical sermon is not composed but compiled, and, guided by grace, the author strives to express an insight into an ontologically given truth, not his own idea of it. In his Letter to the Galatians, written to resist the rapidly spreading doctrine undermining the New Testament statement of justification by faith, Paul the Apostle had already relied on the images of Hagar (Agar) and Sarah and the sons born to them. The point of the heretical doctrine against which the Apostle’s message was directed was that the Gentiles, before becoming Christians, were to accept Judaism.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the *son* by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the *son* by the freewoman *is born* through promise. Which things contain an allegory: for these *women* are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, so also it

is now. Howbeit what saith the scripture? Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman. (Gal. 4:21–31, ASV)

The Pauline Epistles show also a correlation of the Old and the New Testaments as the correlation of law and grace:

For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought. (Gal. 2:19–21, ASV)

Although in the eleventh century the Slavic translation did not yet include the full text of the Old Testament (though Ilarion, most probably, knew the ancient Greek language and was familiar with ancient Greek sources), Old Russian authors cannot but have known the text of the “Apostol” (“Praxapostolos”), the liturgical book containing the Acts and Epistles, which were timed to the days of the church year and read out in every church, and which were some of the most widespread biblical books.

But those who testify to the truth cannot but coincide in their evidence and in the forms of demonstrating their testimonies conditioned by the sense they contain; therefore raising the question of the primary or secondary nature of these images, as well as any talk of plagiarism, would be a semiotic error. For in the model of the medieval worldview as well as that of the theological worldview, which is not limited to the Middle Ages, the question of plagiarism is not relevant. Yet Ilarion does not just repeat the idea of comparison, which is already given in Apostle Paul’s epistles; introducing into the basis of comparison a longer and more detailed coverage of the Old Testament story about Abraham, he correlates each turn of this story to other events of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The tripartite composition of the “Word on the Law and Grace” is based not on the creative independence of the Ancient Russian author, who neglected the two-part structure established by the authors of the New Testament and by the fathers of the Church in presenting history, but on a later time contemplator’s insight into a different historical context through the senses of Sacred History. Therefore the comparison of the Old Testament and the New Testament eras is inevitably completed by a third era, that of the author, that is, the history of Rus’. The constructive complexity of the “Word” has ontological reasons. In general, the understanding of the form’s dependence on the content is a necessary condition for a semiotically authentic interpretation of the text, including

its being a fact of literary language. A sermon, compiled after the era of the Fathers of the Church, could not but be triform. In the same way, the specification of the correspondence between the Old and the New Testaments could not but be developed in parallel constructions, and the exposure of the idea of the theanthropic nature of the Savior “as man and as God” (“яко человекъ и яко Бога”) could not but be bipartite:

Єдин сын от Троицѣ въ двѣ естъствѣ: Божество и человекъство, исполнь человекъкъ по въчеловѣченію, а не привидѣніемъ, но исполнь Богъ по божествѣ, а не простъ человекъкъ показавши на земли божьскаа и человекъскаа:

яко человекъкъ во ѹтробѣ матерню растяше, и яко Богъ изиде, дѣвства не врѣждѣ;

яко человекъкъ матерне млѣко приать, и яко Богъ пристави ангелы съ пастѹхы пѣти: “Слава въ вышнихъ Богѹ”;

яко человекъкъ повитъся в пелены, и яко Богъ вълхвы звѣздою ведяше;

яко человекъкъ възлеже въ яслехъ, и яко Богъ от волхвѣ дары и поклонение приать;

яко человекъкъ бежааше въ Єгипетъ, и яко Богѹ рѹкотворенна єгипетъскаа поклонишася;

яко человекъкъ прииде на крещение, и яко Бога Иордань, ѹстрашився, възвратися;

яко человекъкъ, обнажився, вълѣзѣ въ воду, и яко Богъ от Отца послушство приать: “Се естъ Сынъ мой възлюбленнъ”;

яко человекъкъ постися 40 днии и възалка, и яко Богъ повѣди искѹшающаго;

яко человекъкъ иде на бракъ Кана Галилѣи, и яко Богъ воду въ вино преложи;

яко человекъкъ въ корабли съпааше, и яко Богъ запрѣти ветромъ и морю, и послушаша єго;

яко человекъкъ по Лазари прослезися, и яко Богъ воскрѣси и от мертвѣихъ;

яко чѣловекъ на ося въсѣде, и яко Богѹ зваахѹ: “Благословенъ Гряди въ имя Господне!”;

яко человекъкъ распятъ бысть, и яко Богъ своею властїю съпропятааго съ нимъ въпѹсти въ ран;

яко человекъкъ оцѣта въкѹшь, испѹсти дѹхъ, и яко Богъ солнце помрачи и землю потрясе;

яко человекъкъ въ гробѣ положенъ бысть, и яко Богъ ада разрѹши и дѹшѣ свободи;

яко человекъка печатлѣша въ гробъ, и яко Богъ изиде, печати цѣлы съхранѣ;

яко человекъка тѣщаахѹся иѹден ѹтантї възкресенїе, мѣздяще стражи, нѣ яко Богъ ѹвѣдѣся и познанъ бысть всѣми конци земля.

One of the Trinity, he is in two natures: divine and human, not ghostly, but fully human by force of incarnation, but also fully divine by force of godliness.

On the earth he revealed his nature of God and his nature of man.

As man, He broadened His mother's womb as he grew, and as God He came out of it without damaging her virginity.

As man, He fed on His mother's milk, and as God, He commanded the angels and shepherds to sing: "Glory to God in the highest";

as man, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and as God, He guided the Magi with a star;

as man, He reclined in a manger, and as God, He received gifts and worship from the Magi;

as man, He fled to Egypt, and as God, He was worshipped by Egyptian idols;

as man, He came to be baptized, but Jordan was scared of Him as God, and turned back;

as man, naked, He entered the water, and as God, He got the testimony of His Father: "This is my beloved Son";

as man, He fasted forty days and got hungry, and as God, He overcame the tempter;

as man, He went to the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and as God, he turned water into wine;

as man, He slept on the ship, and as God, He forbade the wind and the sea to rage, and they obeyed Him;

as man, He wept for Lazarus, and as God, He raised him from the dead;

as man, He sat on the donkey, and as to God, they cried out to Him: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord";

as man, He was crucified, and, as God, by his power, He led the man who was crucified with him into paradise;

as man, He tasted the vinegar and gave up the ghost, and as God, He darkened the sun and shook the earth;

as man, He was laid in the tomb, and as God, He destroyed hell and freed the souls;

as man, He was sealed in the tomb, and as God, he went out, leaving the seals intact;

as He was man, the Jews tried to conceal his resurrection by bribing the guards, and as He was God, He became known in all the ends of the earth. (Ilarion n.d.)

As for the well-known stereotypes in the interpretation of the form of the "Word on the Law and Grace," such as "rhetorical sophistication," "Byzantine splendor," and "abundant adornment," they are nothing but a derivative of initial semiotic distortions caused by the researchers' distraction from the symbolic nature of art and religion based on the equal significance of form and content (Losev 1994, 40–43). Only understanding sense as the root cause of form, and, at the same time, acknowledging that form possesses sense-producing force and can by no means be "pure," will allow us to semanticize the interdependence of form and content.

Establishing the boundaries of the sense-forming context is of no less importance for authentic understanding, a problem that is complicated by the fact that the meaning-forming context is a dynamic category, changing direction, trajectory of movement, and volume at different points in the text. It is inclined in one place to narrowing and in another to expansion. It works under certain conditions within the text or goes beyond it into the cultural and historical environment.

Thus the incorrectly established boundaries of the sense-forming context within the “Word on the Law and Grace” distort the opposition of that which is Jewish and that which is Christian:

**И не иудейски хулимъ, нъ християнски благословимъ (1);  
не совѣта творим, яко распятни, нъ яко Распятому поклонитися (2);  
не распинаем Спаса, нъ рѹки к нему въздѣваемъ (3);  
не прободаем ребръ, нъ от них пиемъ источникъ нетлѣниа (4);  
не тридесяти сребра възимаемъ на немъ, нъ “дрѹтъ дрѹга и весь живот нашъ” тому прѣдаемъ (5);  
не таимъ възкресениа, нъ въ всѣхъ домохъ своихъ зовемъ: “Христосъ възкресе изъ мертвыхъ” (6);  
не глаголемъ, яко украденъ бысть, но яко възнесеся, идеже и вѣ (7);  
не невѣруемъ, нъ яко Петръ къ нему глаголемъ: “Ты еси Христосъ, сынъ Бога живааго,” с Фомою: “Господь нашъ и Богъ ты еси,” съ разбойникомъ: “Помяни ны, господи, въ царствии своемъ” (8).**

we do not slander him in the Jewish way, but we bless him in the Christian way; (1)

we do not take council on how to crucify Him, but how to worship the Crucified One; (2)

we do not crucify the Savior, but lift up our hands to Him; (3)

we do not pierce his ribs, but drink from them the source of incorruption; (4)

we do not charge thirty pieces of silver for Him, but commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Him; (5)

we do not conceal his resurrection, but proclaim in all our homes: “Christ is risen from the dead”; (6)

we do not say that He was stolen from the tomb, but declare that He ascended to where He was before; (7)

We do not disbelieve, but, like Peter, we call upon him: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and with Thomas, “Thou art our Lord and God, and with the thief, ‘Lord, remember us when Thou cometh into Thy kingdom.’” (8) (Ilarion n.d.)

It is sufficient to divorce this opposition from the preceding line: “And thus: we, who had been strangers, were called God’s people; we, who had been His enemies, were called His sons” (**И тако странни сѹще, людие**

**Божии нарекохомся, и врази бывше, сынове его прозвахомся”**), and the contraposition in time concentrated on the transformation of the personality emerging from the pre-Christian era into the Christian era becomes a spatial contraposition of Jews and Christians, and the semantic vector of the sermon is broken.

Of course, symbolic texts generated by an equal significance of the external and the internal are interpreted as proceeding from the idea that the whole text is the context, but at the same time correct boundaries and intratextual contexts must still be established.

The correct estimation of the strength of the mystical insight of the sermon’s compiler and the very fact of insight is impossible without broadening the boundaries of the context to the extent that will allow correlating the reality of the text to the reality of life—that at the time of compilation and later. By the time the “Word on the Law and Grace” was compiled, the Russian state, the “Russian land,” was not yet a state of the Russian people. The Russian nation would be formed several centuries later.

And by the middle of the 11th century . . . all that was ready were the ethnographic elements that later brought about the long and difficult process of the formation of the Russian national identity. All these different elements had so far been connected purely mechanically; the connection was moral, Christianity was spreading slowly and had not yet had time to cover even all the Slavic tribes of the Russian land; thus, the Viaticchi were not Christians at the beginning of the 12th century. (Kliuchevskii 2005, 43)

In the future metropolitan’s sermon, not only does the phrase “Russian people” appear for the first time, long before the formation of the Russian people as such, but the future of Russia—by then already Muscovite Rus’—is anticipated, and it is said that its inhabitants will have a sense of unity not as Russian people but as Orthodox people.

The eulogy to Prince Vladimir, the final part of the sermon read by Ilarion in the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev in the presence of the Grand Prince Yaroslav and Grand Princess Irina, has nothing to do with flattery. The future metropolitan, who made his life an ascetic feat, was never a courtier.

The comparison/analogy as a universal of medieval thinking, and, therefore, of the medieval text, is the main wellspring for the unfolding of thought in this part of the sermon. The height of Prince Vladimir’s spiritual feat is measured in Ilarion’s sermon by the height of the asceticism of the apostles:

**Хвалитъ же похвалными гласы Римская страна Петра и Паула, и маже върловаша въ Исуса Христа, Сына Божия; Асна и Ефесъ, и Патмъ Иоанна Богословца, Индиа Фому, Египетъ Марка. Вся страны и гради, и людие чтутъ и славятъ коегождо ихъ учителя,**



иже научиша я православнѣи вѣрѣ. Похвалимъ же и мы, по силѣ нашей, малыими похвалами велика и дивна сътворъшааго нашего учителя и наставника, великааго кагана нашеа земли Володимера, вѣнѹка старааго Игоря, сына же славнааго Вячеслава, иже въ своа лѣта владычествующее, мужьствомъ же и храборьствомъ прослауша въ странахъ многахъ, и побѣдами и крѣпостию поминаются нынѣ и словѣтъ. Не в худѣ бо и невѣдомѣ земли владычествоваша, нѣ въ Руськѣ, яже вѣдома и слышима есть всѣми четырьми конци земли.

And the Roman land, with the voices of praise, praises Peter and Paul, through whom it was brought to faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God; Asia, Ephesus, and Patmos praise John the Theologian; India praises Thomas, and Egypt praises Mark. All lands, towns and peoples honor and praise their teachers, who brought them the Orthodox faith. So let us also praise, to the best of our strength, with humble praises, our teacher and mentor, the great kagan of our land, Vladimir, the grandson of Igor of yore, and the son of the glorious Sviatoslav, who, in the days of their reign, were known for their courage and bravery in many lands, and their victories and power are remembered and glorified to this day. For they ruled not in an obscure and seedy land, but in the land of Rus' which is known and heard of in all the ends of the earth. (Ilarion n.d.)

It is true that the fact of this comparison gives the feat of Prince Vladimir (in baptism Vasilii) a special significance: abolishing time, the prince performs the feat of the Apostles almost a millennium after the earthly life of Christ and His disciples.

There are other correlations here as well:

Подобниче великааго Коньстантина, равноумне, равнохристолюбче, равночестителю служителемь его! Онѣ съ святыими отци Никенскааго Събора законъ человекѣкомъ полагааше, ты же съ новыими нашими отци епископы сънимаяся часто, съ многымъ съмѣрениемъ совѣщавашесея, како въ человекѣхъ сихъ ново познавшинхъ Господа законъ уставити. Онѣ въ единѣхъ и римлянѣхъ царьство Богѹ покори, ты же—в Руси: уже бо и въ онѣхъ и въ насѣ Христо царемъ зовется. Онѣ съ матерню своею Еленою крестъ от Иерусалима принесьша и по всемѹ миру своему раславъша, вѣрѹ утвердиста, ты же съ бабою твоею Ольгою принесьша крестъ от новааго Иерусалима, Константина града, и сего по всен земли своен поставивша, утвердиста вѣрѹ.

O you likeness of the great Constantine, his equal in wisdom, equal in the love of Christ, equal in reverence for his servants! He, with the holy fathers of the Council of Nicaea, set down the law to his people; while you, in frequent assembly with our new fathers, the bishops, humbly took council on how to set down the law to our people, who had just come to know the Lord. He subdued to God the kingdom in the Hellenic and Roman land, while you a did so in Rus': for Christ is called king, both with them, and with us. He and his mother Elena

affirmed the faith by bringing the cross from Jerusalem and spreading it all over the world; while you and your grandmother Olga affirmed the faith by bringing the cross from the new Jerusalem, from the city of Constantine, and spreading it all over your land. (Ilarion n.d.)

And yet the range of the semantic relationships established in this part of the “Word” goes beyond the bounds of the Sacred History, and for the purposes of credible reproduction, it is necessary to understand the context of the time in which the compiler and his listeners lived, and the context of recent history at the moment of compiling the sermon. The etymological characteristics of the preacher’s speech do not provide such an understanding. The Khazar title *каганъ* “kagan,” which in the sermon is used of the Enlightener of Rus’, testifies here not to active processes of Old Russian borrowing words from the Turkic language of the nomads surrounding the Slavs, but to the fact of Prince Vladimir’s victory over the Khazars, as the result of which he became their sovereign and took up the title of the Khazar ruler as a sign of having conquered the Khazars. Prince Vladimir’s victory over the Khazars also had a religious meaning, which would have been evident to the listeners of the sermon: the steppe nomads had adopted Judaism and spoke on behalf of the “law.” The correlation of the “law” and “grace” here is presented in the perspective of a different time, a different era.

The glorification of Prince Vladimir in the Old Russian theologian’s liturgical sermon would also have been understood by listeners in the context of the refusal of the Byzantine Patriarchate, which included the Metropolis of Kiev, to canonize Prince Vladimir, who had not been glorified by miracles. The official canonization of the Enlightener of Rus’ would take place several centuries later.

Insight into his time as a historical time shows the mystical illumination of Ilarion, who in his “Word” set the basic semantic tone of future Russian religious philosophy. In the early years of Christianity, in the land of the East Slavic pagans, Ilarion would read the history of Rus’ as the direct successor to Byzantium and Rome.

### **THE NECESSITY OF THE EXCESSIVE: THE SENSE OF OLD RUSSIAN VERBAL ART IN THE ERA OF THE FLOURISHING OF RUSSIAN SANCTITY**

The tensions in fourteenth-century Russian spiritual life gave the Russian land ascetics whose names were immortalized in a special genre of spiritual literature: hagiographic biographies, or *vitae*, which in their shortened form became part of the divine services and were read in church after the liturgy

on the days of commemoration of the saints. Since the fourteenth century, the lives of saints have been written in a manner that is commonly known by the metaphoric name “weaving of words,” as by the most talented master of the genre, Epiphanius, nicknamed by contemporaries the Wise, a disciple of Venerable Sergius and a monk of Holy Trinity–St. Sergius Monastery.

This manner, which would subsequently expand to other genres of spiritual literature, would be retained in the Ancient Russian written culture into the fifteenth century and later. The average perception, both commonplace and professional (philological), continuously reproduces the impression of the “weaving of words” as being “excessive,” “sophisticated,” manifesting much that is superfluous, redundant, unnecessary, burdensome, artificially introduced. This view reflects one of the most undesirable trends in considering art (religious as well), that is, tearing apart the internal and the external, which results in a lack of understanding of the equal significance of thought and form. The appearance of this new manner of narration can be explained and semantically justified not by the text and its spiritual purpose but rather by the global cultural and historical context of a whole epoch, that of the formation and strengthening of the Muscovite state.

It can be explained by the resettlement of outstanding Bulgarian and Serbian theologians fleeing from the Ottoman Turks—the future Metropolitan of Moscow Kiprian (Tsamblak), Grigorii Tsamblak, and Pakhomii Logofet—and the influence they exerted on late fourteenth-century Russian culture when Rus’ was beginning to be liberated from the Mongol yoke.

It can be explained by the growth of the influence of Athos on Russian spiritual life, which became especially strong with the conquest of Bulgaria and Serbia by the Ottomans in the mid-fourteenth century.

It can be explained by the strengthening of Moscow’s spiritual authority in the Orthodox world. Moscow refused to accept the Union of Florence (1439), the agreement on the union of the Eastern and Western Churches concluded by Byzantium with Rome in the face of the threat of the capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans. The Florentine Union, according to which the Eastern church, while preserving only external ceremonies, recognized the supreme authority of the pope and accepted Catholic dogma, did not save Byzantium: Rome was of no help, and in 1453 Constantinople fell, with the last Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI, being killed in battle. After these events, which were so tragic for Byzantium, the idea was born in the Muscovite state that the rights of the Byzantine emperors were to be passed to the Grand Dukes of Moscow, and the rights of the Universal Church were to be inherited by the Russian Local Church, which had identified itself with the Universal Church.

It can be explained by the fact that the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were a time when awareness was growing of Moscow as the new spiritual

center of Christian civilization—a new Rome—and of the Russian people as a chosen people, and of the fact that Moscow’s new role as the successor to Rome and Constantinople demanded that the literary language of the Moscow State become Pan-Slavic, in the way the Old Church Slavonic language was a Pan-Slavic literary language at the end of the Early Slavic era. Such understanding of Moscow ultimately resulted in the early sixteenth century aphorism “Moscow is the Third Rome,” known from the letter of the Elder Philotheus, monk of the Pskov Eleazar Monastery, to the Grand Prince Vasilii III (Ivanovich), the son of Ivan III the Great and Sophia Palaiologina, and the father of Ivan IV “the Terrible.”

An interest in the historical events marginalizes interest in the internal properties of the text. Meanwhile, the “weaving of words” as a manner of narration inherent in Old Russian ecclesiastical literature has also an internal justification, and it would be more correct to seek it in the causal relationship of this manner with the genre in which it had found its perfect expression, and with the ontological meaning of this genre, that is, the genre of the *vita*.

The existential (ontological) meaning of a *vita* is clarified through its likeness to an icon. Both a life and an icon imprint a special image of a saint. The author of a *vita* and the icon painter depict not faces (*лица*) that we perceive through our everyday consciousness but countenances (*лики*), a spiritual essence, the authenticity of the supersensory world that lies beyond the cognitive activity of man:

In Greek, we remember, countenance is called “εἶδος” or “ἰδέα” (i.e., *idea*), for *idéa* is precisely the meaning of countenance: the idea of revealed spiritual being, eternal meaning contemplatively apprehended, the supreme heavenly beauty of a precise reality, the highest prototype, the ray from the source of all images: such are the meanings of *idea* in Plato; and from him, they spread to all philosophy and theology and even into the popular understanding of the word “*idea*.” From all these meanings we gather and make wholly transparent our understanding of countenance. (Florensky 1996, 51)

The ontological similarity of a *vita* and an icon leads to their resembling each other semiotically. And semiotic similarity presupposes identity, or at least aspiration for identity in the perception of a visual (iconic) image represented in space, and of a verbal (hagiographic) image represented linearly, in time.

The common ontological grounds of iconographic and hagiographic images set coordinates of depiction that are alien to secular visual and verbal art: a spatial icon image is endowed with the ability to depict an event that goes on in time, and a hagiographic image presented in time is perceived spatially.

Iconography overcomes the expressive limitations of a visual image, but only the imagination of a prepared contemplator can transform an icon seen

spatially, simultaneously, into an event that proceeds in time. For example, the “Temptation” mural in the Holy Trinity Cathedral of St. Hypatius Monastery in Kostroma depicts Eve and two apples. Eve is taking one apple from the serpent with one hand and holding out the other apple to Adam with her other hand. But in the iconographic semiotic system, these two apples are perceived as one apple that Eve has first taken from the serpent, and then, having tasted from it, holds it out to Adam. Thus, not just a moment or an instant is depicted but the development of a tragic action that continues in time: Eve *being tempted* by the lure of the adversary “to be like the gods”; Eve *already tempted*, after the Fall; Eve, who herself *is tempting* Adam.

Or, for instance, on the “Dormition” icon, two images of one soul, the soul of the Virgin in the hands of Christ standing by her deathbed, and the soul of the Virgin raised up by angels, are transformed into the depiction of an event: the Virgin’s soul did not see the torments of hell, as Christ Himself saw them, for the Son of Man immediately took His mother’s soul into His hands and passed it to the angels. Ultimately, a prepared contemplator of icon painting becomes a reader, while remaining at the same time a contemplator. Similarly, a prepared reader of a vita, while remaining a reader, becomes a contemplator.

A vita, narrated in a manner in which plurality as a substantial property of the medieval text becomes self-evident, creates a spatial image in an especially tangible way. The absence of isolated words, both referent and dependent, allows one to concentrate continuously on the significant subject of thought, transforming the reader and listener into a contemplator. The aesthetics of contemplation supersedes linear perception without destroying it, with spatial perception rising above sequence, over fluidity, over time.

The contemplative character of perception is maintained by the rhythmic disposition of the text. Prolixities consisting of words with consonant endings (homeoteleuta) and words that stand in the same case (homeoptota) set up a smooth swaying motion that corresponds to the inner state of the praying person:

**И о сем прилѣжно думаше и гадаше, искаше и пыташе, кого изискати, изъобрѣсти, и избрати, и поставити, и послати епископа в Пермь** (and of that it was conscientiously thought, and contemplated, and speculated, and cogitated, whom to find, and to discover, and to uncover, and to designate, and to nominate a bishop in Perm).

The tone of internal peacefulness covers the whole text, no matter whether the hagiographer’s thought dwells upon the good or the bad:

**В Того веровати подобаетъ паче, и Того чтити добро есть, и Тому служити лучши есть, нежели бесѣм пагубным, идолом бездушным, вашим богом, кумиром глухим, болваном безгласным, истуканным, безсловесным, издолбеным, изваянным, всякого срама и стыда исполненным, и всякия скверны дѣлателем, и всякого зла обрѣтателем, и всякого грѣха творителем.** (In Him it is preferable to believe, and Him is good to honor, and Him is better to serve, than the demons of evil, soulless idols, these gods of yours, mute statues, voiceless effigies, motionless, wordless, carved, sculptured, full of every shame and disgrace, workers of all defilement, acquirers of every evil and performers of every sin.)

The rhythm set by the structural organization of the text determines the rhythm of reading and eliminates the subjectivity of delivery, and hence the subjectivity of understanding, which may in some way or another infringe on or distort the truth. The lengthy enumerations exclude any chance of logical selection, of emphasis through intonation. In the balancing rhythm of the “weaving of words,” both the voice and the personal will of the hagiographer are eliminated, for his task is not to convey his “thought” but to give reliable evidence of sanctity as an eternally occurring victory over evil. Thus, the rhythm of the “weaving of words,” based on the consistent rejection of individuality, is an internal requirement of a text whose author consciously subordinates his own will to the divine will.

Such an intonation may be expressed graphically as a smooth flowing line without breaks and disruptions—a connecting line, not a dividing one. Such a line, both visible and imaginary, would be embodied in Andrei Rublev’s “Trinity” and would become a basis for interpretation alongside color and composition.

Eternity becomes the point of application for the thought of a hagiographer overcoming the conventions of time and of an iconographer overcoming the conventions of space.

Without an understanding of the causal correlation of the external and internal, the “weaving of words” will be interpreted as a mechanical inflation of a self-sufficing form. Such a mode of interpretation will be admitted as authentic—just as authentic and natural as the conventions of direct perspective in the visual arts, such as

- the Euclidean space: homogeneous, three-dimensional, infinite, with zero curvature, in which no more than one parallel to any straight line can be drawn through any point;
- that light travels not from the object to the eye but “from” the eye to the object: a beam of direct rays from the eye to the contour of the object;

- that the optical center of the painter's right eye is the only possible reference point;
- that the artist, while in a picture, never changes the position from which he contemplates the world; and
- and that nothing but a moment is imprinted on such a picture, a moment beyond memory, recognition, and other psychophysiological processes accompanying seeing. (Florensky 2006)

Iconography, depicting the Gospel held by the Savior and the Saints with three or four edges at once, connecting the face and profile of the countenance and body, rejecting the focus of light and the vagueness of illumination, is read by such a mind not as symbolic art overcoming the literalness of visual perception but as artistic inferiority.

Yet understanding church art through the scale of values of the secular mind would be a semiotic error.

A *vita*, like an icon, depicts reality, but reality of a different order, the reality of the invisible world. A *vita* is not a biography, just as an icon is not a portrait. Expecting hagiographic literature to be a realistic depiction of the material world always ends with accusations of a paucity of biographical facts, of a stereotypical depiction of the saint's life ("from a pious childhood, through reading divine books, asceticism and preaching of the Christian faith, to a blessed death"), and of an impersonal generalization of the image:

Depicted by him [Epiphanius the Wise], Stephen does not resemble a concrete, very personal representative of his time and his people, as he was in reality: it is a generalized impersonal type of a Christian saint converting the pagans. The sermons attributed to him consist of quotes from Holy Scripture and skillful rhetoric figures; they are long and heavy; the historical Stephen probably never spoke this way to his wild Permian audience! (Trubetzkoj 1995, 608–9)

But a *vita* represents not the personality but the presence of the grace of the Holy Spirit in man. How is it possible to depict in words the state of man transformed by grace and to convey this state to readers and listeners? On icons, the holiness invisible to the sense of sight is conveyed symbolically: by a halo, by color, by a three-quarter view, by the line. How, then, is inner light conveyed in words? The answer will obviously contain another justification for the "excessiveness" usually seen in the "weaving of words," a manner of hagiographic narration whose emergence in the fourteenth century coincided with the great flowering of Russian iconography and Russian sanctity, especially of *prepodobie*, or "holy monasticism." Only discovering the symbolic significance of the principles according to which a hagiographic text written in the manner of the "weaving of words" is organized could provide an under-

standing of the excessive as necessary. Yet in order to be solved, the problem first must be stated.

A word in such a text ceases to be equal to a thought. Always repeated or divided (*слышати и преписати* “to hear and to rewrite”; *послшателем и сказателем* “to listeners and narrators”; *(приносити) оуспѣх не хѣд и ползѣ немалѣ* “(to bring) good results and good benefit”; *изидет ис памяти и забвена бѣдѣт* “to vanish from memory and be forgotten”; *в забыть положити и молчанию предати* “to bury in oblivion and consign to silence”), the thought exceeds the limits of the word and becomes the object of contemplation:

*Иже преподобныхъ мъжей житіе добро ксть слышати или и преписати памяти ради, вбаче отъ сего приносити оуспѣх не хѣд и ползѣ немалѣ послшателем и сказателем свѣдѣцим извѣсто. Видѣнк бо ксть вѣрнѣйши слышанъ оуѣрити же многажды и слѣх слышаних, аще вѣистиннѣ бѣдѣт глаголемаа. Аще ли не написана бѣдѣт памяти ради, то изидет ис памяти и въ преходаща лѣта и преминѣющим родомъ хдоть съ забвена бѣдѣт. Да аще бес писанъ забываема бывають, то не полезно ксть юже в забыть положити житіе кго и аки глѣбинѣ молчанию предати толікѣ ползѣ.*

It is useful to listen to or write the lives of venerable men for the sake of memory: to bring good results and good benefit to listeners and narrators who know everything as it was. For vision is more accurate than hearing, but hearing can convince hearers who hear often, if that which is spoken is true. And if the [lives] are not written for memory's sake, then everything will vanish from memory and will quickly be forgotten with the passing of the years and successive generations. So if what has remained unrecorded is forgotten, it is not proper to bury his life in oblivion and to consign such a blessing to silence. (Epiphanius 1897)

It is hardly possible to take an utterance as being the unit of such a text. Repetitions on all levels (auditory, semantic, constructive), in rendering the thought uninterrupted, lead the sentence far beyond the limits of a sentence, expanding the volume of the utterance to fit the volume of the text.

Repetition as a means of expressiveness always implies strengthening of thought. But when the whole text is pierced by uninterrupted repetitions, parallel and intersecting, it is hard to talk about singling out something separate. Is it possible to highlight something by highlighting everything?

In terms of the laws of perception, we must speak here not about emphasis but, conversely, about automation. But if we see the reflection of the world order in such a text, then the idea of universal, cosmic interconnectedness and nonrandomness can be fully expressed by the repetition at the basis of the whole process of text formation. Repetition unveils the semantic density of a



spiritual text, which is not always visible to everybody. Without a feeling for the density (or else the absolute interconnectedness) of the semantic fabric of a spiritual text, as is ideally consistent with an understanding of the universal interconnectedness of the invisible spiritual world, the very idea of interpreting such texts becomes impossible.

The Good Thief's appeal to Christ, "Lord, remember me [μνήστητι μου] when thou comest into thy kingdom," and Christ's answer, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:42–43), are so densely close semantically in their theological perception that they penetrate each other and become semantically equal: "In other words, to be 'remembered' by the Lord is the same as to 'be in Paradise'" (Florensky 2012, 200).

The "weaving of words" makes the semantic density of the text self-evident.

Just as "a poet thinks in images but does not invent them" (Gornfel'd 1911, 344), a medieval writer does not look for contexts but thinks in contexts, the contexts of the Holy Scripture. Scripture is an inevitably mandatory category of thought for a medieval scribe and in a broader sense is a category of the theologian's thought. In this case, it is a matter not of "literary etiquette" but of a manner of contemplating the world. In Epiphanius's references to Holy Scripture and to the writings of the Church Fathers—in the explicit or implicit reproduction of fragments of biblical texts—there is no manifestation of individuality. The will of the author is directed not toward self-expression but toward the perception of existence through the self-testimony of existence, that is, through the inspired texts. Therefore the very formulation of the question on the "literary sources" of, say, "Life of St. Stephen of Perm" distorts the state of affairs because such a formulation takes up the idea of remaking or mechanically reproducing that which is well known. Deriving, say, the comparison in the "Life of Stephen of Perm" of St. Stephen's missionary feat with that of the Apostles, from the comparison of St. Vladimir with the Apostles "used" by Metropolitan Ilarion, means failing to understand that both analogies, that between Stephen of Perm and the Apostles and that between Prince Vladimir and the Apostles, are ontologically unavoidable because they are ontologically authentic. The Apostles, beyond the personal will of the authors, are the prototype of every enlightener and every missionary. Everything that is ontologically truthful will be repeated in liturgical texts. The devices of syntactic parallelism are also ontologically obligatory.

Compiled according to the prototype of the sacred books of the New Testament, the Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles, the lives of saints are close to liturgical texts and to liturgical art as one of the forms in which the eternal meets with the temporal.

The visible form of the "weaving of words" brings together a vita written in this manner and an Akathist, a prayerful doxology, through the nature of

their impact. Strictly speaking, there is only one Akathist, the “Akathist to the Holy Virgin,” an example of Early Byzantine poetry created in the seventh century to honor the miraculous deliverance of Constantinople from the Persians and Avars by the Mother of God. Although the “weaving of words” does not have such a prescribed poetic form as an Akathist, the confluence of “excesses” that is indispensable both in a vita written in the manner of the “weaving of words” and in an Akathist sets a semantic perspective of timeless scope. Yet we can say the same thing about the Book of Psalms, most often “quoted” in “Life of Stephen of Perm,” and about the other books of the Holy Scripture.

Finding out the initial images to which the author of “Life of Stephen of Perm” refers is a necessary procedure, but it is insufficient for deducing the supersense. The pagans with whom Stephen of Perm met in the Zyrian land are shown by Epiphanius the Wise through the images of biblical history:

“**О, прелестниче и развращеню начальниче, вавилонское сѣмя (1), халдѣйскій родъ (2), хананѣйскою племѣ (3), тмы темныя помраченюк чадю (4), пентapolisквѣ сынъ (5), Египетск**” прелестныя тмы внѣче (6) и развращенаго столпотворенья правнѣче (7).

O deceiver and author of debauchery, Babylonian seed, Chaldean clan, Canaanite tribe, darkened child of darkness, son of Pentapolis, grandson of deceitful Egyptian darkness and great-grandson of destroyed Babel! (Epiphanius 1897)

Of course, it is necessary to understand the allusions:

- city of Babylon (“Babylonian seed”): the concentration of “evil,” a sinful city;
- Chaldea, Chaldean Babylonian Empire (“Chaldean clan”): the state with Babylon as its capital;
- Canaan (“Canaan’s tribe”): Noah’s grandson; the land of Canaan’s offspring had been pagan land until the Jewish people settled there;
- darkness (“benighted child of dark darkness”): the delusion of idolatry and unforgivable ignorance of the right faith;
- Pentapolis (“son of Pentapolis”): the five cities among which, together with Adama, Seboim and Segor, were counted Sodom and Gomorrah, notorious for their sinfulness;
- Egyptian darkness (“grandson of the deceptive Egyptian darkness”): the three-day absolute darkness inflicted by God upon Egypt as a punishment for resisting His will; and
- Babel (“offspring of the destroyed Babel”): the sinful building by the pagans of a tower “whose top may reach unto heaven” in order “to make them a name.”

But the successive, linear deciphering of the reference images takes us away from the idea of interconnectedness, perilousness, and deepness of evil that is expressed by other means: consonances (*прелестниче/начальниче, помраченок/разрѣшеного, прелестниче/помраченок/разрѣшеного*), lexical (*тмы темныя, прелестниче/прелестныя*) and semantic (*тмы темныя помраченок . . .*) repetitions, the constructive simile of seven homogeneous, successive direct addresses (seven nouns in the vocative case preceded by agreeing and nonagreeing attributes), and which can be perceived not only and not as much rationally as intuitively, irrationally, especially as far as it concerns perception by ear.

But is it possible to grasp by ear the sacral number of these constructions, seven? Perhaps it is. Staying in the space of liturgical action that has become a natural need of spiritual life brings up such sensitivity as well. For the sacred numbers for religious consciousness are not speculative concepts (“1”: one god, Christ, and not polytheism, one monk, and not sorcerers; “3”: the Trinity; “7”: the days of the creation of the world; “9”: the strengthened Trinity) but the effective manifestation of the invisible world:

After all, *Gehenna* is the *negation of the dogma of the Trinity* [emphasis added—O.V.]. Not for nothing does denying the symbol “three” its own threefold nature underlie the dark evil art of witchcraft. I happened to hear a confessor ask a certain sorcerer at the confession how he conjured; the latter confessed that he did nothing but say:

“Three are not three, nine are not nine.”

The meaning of this blasphemous curse is clear: three is the sacred number of the Truth, and nine are the same trinity, but taken in the strengthened sense, or “potentiated” (such is, at least, its meaning in symbolic arithmology), i.e. the number of the Truth as well. . . . Hence, the curse “Three is not three, nine is not nine” is an impotent attempt at overthrowing “the pillar of the Truth” and to establish “the pillar of ungodly evil,” i.e. falsehood proclaimed as falsehood, ugliness as ugliness: Satan himself. (Florensky 2012, 218)

The appeal to the pagans is their denunciation, the sevenfold denunciation and therefore the sevenfold destruction of evil, “the benighted child of dark darkness.” Can the sevenfold denunciation mean “final destruction”? Yet another thing is more important for us: understanding that the text that not only animates the invisible opposition of the Truth and nonbeing but by its whole existence acts in this confrontation on the side of Truth contains nothing accidental, nothing excessive, “sheerly decorative,” rhetorical.

Of course, we are more accustomed to the use of sacred numbers in the affirmation or in the explanation of the divine, as, for example, the seven parables of the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew—the parables of the sower, the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the hidden treasure, the pre-

cious pearl, the net—give seven mutually supporting similes to understanding the Kingdom of Heaven. But can the denunciation of pagan darkness not be interpreted as an affirmation of the divine light?

The appearance of the “weaving of words” is often explained by the spread of hesychasm (from Greek *ἡσυχία* “tranquility, silence, solitude”) in fourteenth-century Muscovite Russia. This explanation is somewhat far-fetched. If we understand hesychasm as eremitical monasticism, it was known and accepted much earlier than the fourteenth century. The practice of the incessant inner saying of the Jesus prayer (“noetic prayer”), a legacy of ancient Orthodox mysticism, had also been known and adopted earlier. Gregory Palamas’s fourteenth-century theological interpretation of the practice of *dukhovnoe delanie* “spiritual doing,” well known since at least the fourth century, could hardly have yielded such a literal result. Russian Orthodox culture did not inherit the Byzantine culture of theology:

While the Greeks in the time of St. Gregory Palamas (14th century) were concerned with the question whether the grace of God was a created power or the uncreated energy of the Essence of God, the Russian participants in the great controversy of the 17th century defended the two-fingered cross (two natures of Christ) against the three-fingered one (three persons of the Blessed Trinity). . . . Thus, the heightened interest in questions of abstract religious metaphysics has remained in the world of Orthodoxy for the most part a Greek specialty. (Averintsev 2004, 430)

Therefore it would be more correct to speak not of a rational perception of Byzantine mystical doctrine, the dogmatic substantiation of which was the patristic concept of the interaction of divine grace and the free will of man, but rather of an accomplished interaction of divine grace and free will of man in Holy Rus’, as the Muscovite state in the time of St. Sergius of Radonezh (ca. 1314–1392) is often called. The orbits of St. Stephen of Perm (ca. 1345–1396), Epiphanius the Wise (?–ca. 1420), and Andrei Rublev (ca. 1360–ca. 1430) intersected in the St. Sergius monastery in personal or prayerful communion with the saint. The appearance of the “weaving of words,” the flourishing of hagiography, and the flourishing of icon painting coincide with a flowering of sanctity. The hagiographer and the iconographer both testify to that which is contemplated. The spiritual transformation of a person sanctifies everything that comes into contact with it.

## Chapter Ten

# The Secularized Consciousness and Overcoming the Medieval Principle of Form–Content Correlation

### A BREACH IN TIME: SENSE-DESTROYING CONTEXTS IN THE LIFE OF THE FIERY ARCHPRIEST

#### Subjectivation of the Rhythmic Model of the Text

Only understanding the causal connection between form and content in a medieval text can lead us to grasp how deeply damaged the medieval outlook is in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum” (1672).

Scholars incessantly reiterate the notion that the Archpriest began to “mix” the Church Slavonic language, which “still occupied a significant place in his works,” with “living vernacular speech.” But this idea is methodologically erroneous: a seemingly recognizable form may hide quite a different sense. The task of explanatory science is to overcome the inertia of perception and, based on the absolute primacy of the empirical material, to detect the real relation between sign and meaning.

The sense-transforming potential of the “theological” part of the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum” still remains far from obvious. But the invisible is always more effective than the visible.

It would seem that nominal sentences of the type “something is something” present a perfect form for expressing the immobile religious view of the uncreated world that had become both the worldview and the fate of the Archpriest. And yet such sentences are rather scarce in “Life of Archpriest Avvakum.”

**Сия [“присносущные имена истинные, еже есть близостные.”—Ф.В.]  
суть сущие: сый, свет, истинна, живот, толко четыре свойственных,  
а виновных много; сия суть: господь, вседержитель, непостижим,  
неприступен, трисиянен, трипостасен, царь славы, непостоянен, огонь,  
дух, бог, и прочая по тому разумевай;**

**Того ж Дионисия о истинне: себе во отвержение истинны испадение есть, истинна во сущее есть; аще во истинна сущее есть, истинны испадение сущаго отвержение есть; от сущаго же бог испасти не может, еже не быти—нестъ.**

These are the true: Being, Light, Truth, Life. There are only four intrinsic. And the causal are many, they are these: the Lord, the Almighty, the Incomprehensible, the Unapproachable, the Tri-shining, the Triune, the King of Glory, the Uncontrollable Fire, the Spirit, God, and others;

Mind the same Dionysius of truth, for falling away from the truth is a rejection of self, for truth is real. If truth is real, then falling away from truth is rejection from being. From the being, God cannot fall, and it cannot be that he does not have to be. (Here and further the translation of “The Life of Archbishop Avvakum” is cited from Avvakum 1924)

Of course, there are also subordinating conjunctions in the “Life of Archbishop Avvakum.” The Church Slavonic explanatory conjunction *сиречь* (*сирѣчь*) “that is, namely, which means, in other words, to be more precise” ideally corresponds to the inner form of interpretation. Because finding out the meaning is, in fact, interpreting:

**И ныне, владыко, благослови, да, воздохнув от сердца, и языком возглаголю Дионисия Архопагита о божественныхъ именехъ, что есть богу присносущные имена истинные, еже есть близостные, и что виновные, сиречь похвальные”;**

And now, Vladyka, bless, yes, having sighed from the heart, with a tongue I will speak of the Dionysius the Areopagite’s Divine names, what is there for you, God, true, or intrinsic, and that there are causal, that is, commendable.;

**Егда Исус секий иноплеменики, и бысть солнце противу Гаваона, еже есть на полдняхъ, ста Исус крестообразно, сиречь распросте рuce свои, и ста солнечное течение, дондеже враги погуби. Возвратилося солнце к востоку, сиречь назадъ отбежало, и паки потече, и бысть во дни том и в ноци тридесеть четыре часа, понеже в десятый часъ отбежало; так в суткахъ десять часовъ прибыло.**

When Jesus struck foreigners and there was a sun over Gibeon, which means at the zenith: Jesus stood cross-like, spreading his hands, and the solar current stopped until he destroyed the enemies. The sun returned to the east, that is, it ran back, and it began to flow again; and it came to pass in that day and in the night thirty-four hours. In the tenth hour it went away, so ten hours were added up in the day.

The Church Slavonic word *еже* (*юже*) “that,” the “ossified” form of the neuter gender of *иже* “which,” and the word *что* (*чѣто*) “that,” in connection with the verb *есть* “is/are,” meet the requirements of interpretation:

**Бгда заблудная звезда, еже есть луна, подтечет под солнце от запада и закроет свет солнечный, то солнечное затмение за гнев божий к людям бывает;**

When the wandering star, that is moon flows from the west under the sun and closes the sunlight, then such an eclipse of the sun happens for the wrath of God on people.

**И чрез их преходит освящение на вторюю троицу, еже есть господства, начала, власти; сия троица, славослова бога, восклицают: “аллилуйя, аллилуйя, аллилуйя!”**

And through them blessing descends to the second trinity: domination, the beginning, the power. This trinity, praising God, exclaims: “Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!”

The inner form of interpretation corresponds also to the Church Slavonic causal conjunctions *понеже* (пониже) “because” and *бо* (во) “while”:

**Ищитати бегн небесныя любяят погибающии, понеже любви истинныя не приняша, воеже спастися им; и сего ради послет им бог действие льсти, воеже веровати им лжи, да суд примут неверовавшии истине, но благоволиша о неправде.**

The perishing people like to calculate the course of the luminaries, for they don't accept true love, in order to save themselves, and for this God will send them the action of flattery, so that they believe into lies, and the those who did not believe the truth, but who favored the untruth will take the Judgement.

**Он (Дионисий Ареопагит) же ко ученику глагола: “Или кончина веку прииде, или бог-слово плотию стражет”: понеже не по обычаю тварь виде изменену; и сего ради бысть в недоумении.**

He (Dionysius the Areopagite) said to the disciple: “Either the end of the world has come, or God the Word is suffering in the flesh,” since he saw God's creation unusually changed and therefore was in perplexity

**Того ж Дионисия о истинне: себе бо отвержение истинны испадение есть, истинна бо сущее есть; аще бо истинна сущее есть, истинны испадение сущаго отвержение есть; от сущаго же бог испасти не может, еже не быти—несть.**

Mind the same Dionysius of truth, for falling away from the truth is a rejection of self, for truth is real. If truth is real, then falling away from truth is rejection from being. From the being, God cannot fall, and it cannot be that he does not have to be.

The Church Slavonic conjunction of purpose **воеже** (**воеже**) “in order to, so that” is equally fit for the intention to interpret:

**Ищитати беги небесныя любяят погибающии, понеже любви истинныя не прияша, воеже спастися им; и сего ради послет им бог действие льсти, воеже веровати им лжи, да суд примут неверовавши истине, но благоволиша о неправде.**

The perishing people like to calculate the course of the luminaries, for they don't accept true love, in order to save themselves, and for this God will send them the action of flattery, so that they believe into lies, and the those who did not believe the truth, but who favored the untruth will take the Judgement.

Still, these are not the forms that determine the general intonation of the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum.”

In a fierce confrontation with alternative opinion, the Archpriest's religious belief manifests itself in constructive patterns corresponding to the internal form of the events happening both in the text and in reality. He was not just expressing views he recognized as true but giving his life to defend the truth and denounce untruth: to convince and to subvert. When a construction lends a rigid intonational resolution to a statement, the statement becomes audible to the reader: the living voice of the author breaks through the muteness of the written text. Not only rises in intonation but also semantically stressed words and the intense length of the stressed vowels in these words are audible:

**По Дионисию: коли уж (ъ) и-и-истинны испали, тут и сѣ-ѣ-ицаго отверглись.**

According to Dionysius, since they have avoided the truth, so they have rejected the Being.

**Тешит нас Дионисий Ареопagit, в книге ево сице пишет: . . . воистинну истинный христианин . . . не токмо даже (ъ) до сме-е-ерти ведающе и-и-истинны ради, но и неве-е-едением скончающеся всегда . . .”;**

The same Dionysius the Areopagite is consoling us, in his book it is written: . . . truly a true Christian . . . not only until death itself suffers misfortunes for the sake of truth, but also in obscurity always dies . . .

**Лучше бы им (ъ)w в символе веры не глаго-о-лати господа, виновнаго имени, а нежели истиннаго отсекаати, в нем же сѣщество-о-о божие содержится.**

It would be better for them in the Creed to not pronounce the Lord, the causal name, rather than to cut off the true, in which the essence of God is contained.



The intensifiers *уж, даже, и, а* grow together with the logical construction until an indivisible emotional and logical integrity appears, which corresponds to the feeling of inner strain experienced by the author of the “Life.” The theological explanations acquire the excessively personal tone of an intense appeal to the reader.

The personal overlaps with the ontological:

**Он же Дионисий пишет о небесных силах, расписует, возвещая, како хвалу приносят богу, разделяяся деветь чинов на три троны. Престоли, херувими и серафими освящение от бога приемлют и сице восклицают: благословенна слава от места господня! И чрез их преходит освящение на вторюю тронцу, еже есть господства, начала, власти; сняя тронца, славословя бога, восклицают: аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя! По алфавит҃у, аль—отцу, иль—сыну, үйя—духу святому. Григорий Ниский толкует: аллилу́йя—хвала богу; а Василий Великий пишет: аллилу́йя—ангельская речь, человечески рещи—слава тебе, боже! До Василия пояху во церкви ангельския речн: аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя! Егда же высть Василий, и повеле пети две ангельския речн, а третью—человеческую, сице: аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя, слава тебе, боже! У святых согласно, у Дионисия и у Василия; трижды воспевающе, со ангелы славим бога, а не четыржи, по римской бляди: мерско богу четверичное воспевание сицевое: аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя, аллилу́йя, слава тебе, боже! Да будет проклят сице поюще. Паки на первое возвратимся.**

The same Dionysius writes about the heavenly powers, explains, announcing how angel orders bring praise to God, divided into three triads. Thrones, cherubim and seraphim, accept sanctification from God, so they exclaim: “Blessed be the glory from the place of the Lord!” And through them sanctification descends to the second trinity: powers, virtues, dominions. This trinity, praising God, exclaims: “Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!” In alphabetical order: “al” to the Father, “il” to the Son, “Ujah”—to the Holy Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa interprets: Hallelujah—praise God. And Basil the Great writes: Hallelujah is angelic speech, and people say—glory to you God! In Basil’s time, he ordered to sing two angelic words, and the third time in a human way: “Hallelujah, hallelujah, glory be to thee, o God!” The saints they agree, Dionysius and Basil: three times we sing, with angels we praise God, and not four times, according to Roman harlot. Disgusting to God is such a fourfold chant: “Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, glory be to thee, o God.” Cursed be he who sings so.

The logical ground of the constructive opposition of that which is accepted (“three times we sing”) and denied (“and not four times”) is undermined by triform curses of the unacceptable: “according to the Roman harlot,” “Disgusting to God,” “Cursed be he who sings so.”

The resentment becomes almost hysterical. Working himself up, the Archpriest himself cries out the “impious” hallelujah: “Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, glory be to thee, o God,” and for the third time bursts into curses: “Cursed be he who sings so.”

Abrupt changes in the author’s mood are materialized in sharp changes in the intonational construction of the text.

The tranquil balance of the introductory part of the syntactic period that is disrupted in the middle with curses is much longer than the curses themselves.

The subject, expressed by a personal pronoun, is specified by a proper name (Dionysius). The specification slows down the uttering of the statement.

The pronoun followed by a particle forms a single phonetic word [о́нжъ] ([‘oŋzə]). Instead of the monosyllabic [oŋ] with the concluding sharpness of the not just voiced, but sonorous and, moreover, hard [n], a disyllabic [‘oŋzə] (is obtained with an unstressed vowel at the end, and the sound is softened.

The subject is followed by homogeneous predicates, imperfective verbs in the present tense (“writes,” “explains”). The predicates are complicated by adverbial participles in the imperfective aspect (“writes, paints, announcing”). The imperfective verbs in the present tense not only express the fluidity and lengthiness of the action but also determine the smoothness of the intonation pattern corresponding to the fluidity of the action.

The adverbial participle is “expanded” by a subordinate clause (announcing—what—how much praise is brought to God) with two imperfective verb forms: the predicate, again in the present tense, and an adverbial participle *приносят* (*prinosiat*), *разделяясь* (*razdeliaiasia*).

The final [‘jaɪəsə] [‘aj’ʌs’ɨ] of the reflexive adverbial participle (*razdeliaiasia*) acoustically supports the impression of fluidity. The three open [a]s in three open syllables, each following a soft consonant ([l’], [j], [s’]), being gradually reduced from the stressed syllable to the first posttonic one, and from the first posttonic syllable to the second one, fade away softly. The sibilant of the last syllable makes the fading away extended.

The grammatical and acoustic length is supported by constructions. The logical operation of splitting the concept is supported by a corresponding compositional solution.

The heavenly powers are subdivided into nine orders, which, in turn, comprise three trinities depending on “how they praise God.” Before the curses the Archpriest finds time to enumerate the first two trinities: “thrones,” “cherubim,” “seraphim,” and “powers,” “virtues,” “dominions.” The angelic praise to God is also subdivided: “in alphabetical order: *al* for the Father, *el* for the Son, *ujah* for the Holy Spirit.” The constructive device of division is accompanied by the measured intonation of enumeration. The visible logical basis of this device also predetermines the pauses that separate generic concepts from specific

ones, the attribute from the modified word. The consecutive character of the narration, containing adverbial participles, which denote additional actions and parenthetical clauses, makes the fragment still more deliberate, regardless of whether it is read inwardly or out loud.

Compared to this deliberate manner, the unexpectedly sharp, abrupt intonation of the curses looks almost hysterical. The nervous sickliness of the sudden outburst—“four times, according to Roman harlot. Such a fourfold chant is disgusting to God: ‘Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, glory be to thee, o God.’ Cursed be he who sings so”—becomes still more obvious after the no less unexpected return to the disrupted course of reasoning with the previous unhurried deliberation:

**Паки на первое возвратимся. Третьяя троица, силы, архангели, ангели, чрез среднюю троицу освящение приемля, поют: свят, свят, свят, господь Ваваоф, исполнь небо и земля славы его! Зри: тринислено и сие воспевание. Пространно пречистая богородица протоковала о аллилуйи, явилася ученику Ефросина Псковскаго, именем Василию. Велика во аллилуйи хвала богу, а от зломудрствующих досада велика,— по-римски святую троицу в четверицу глаголют, духу и от сына исхождение являют; зло и проклято се мудрование богом и святыми. Правверных избави боже сего начинания злаго, о Христе Исусе, госпode нашем, ему же слава ныне и присно и во веки веком. Аминь.**

Again, to the former we return. The third trinity: principalities, archangels, angels,—by means of the middle trinity accept sanctification, they sing: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, be Heaven and earth filled with his glory!” Look: this chanting too is three-fold. In detail, the Most Blessed Mother of God spoke about hallelujah, appeared to Vasily, disciple of Efrosin of Pskov. Great in “Hallelujah” praise to God is, and from the wicked comes the great annoyance: in Roman do they proclaim the Holy Trinity as the quaternity, let the Spirit proceed from the Son too. Evil and cursed is this sophistication by God and the saints. Deliver the true believers from this mischief of the evil of Christ Jesus, our Lord, to whom the glory is forever and ever. Amen.

Although here the Archpriest also mentions both the quadruple exclamation of praise to the Lord (“in Roman do they proclaim the Holy Trinity as the quaternity”) and the Catholic dogma of the Holy Spirit proceeding not only from the Father but also from the Son (“make the Spirit to proceed from the Son, as well”), he does not exceed the limits of the acceptable attitude toward the untruthful in medieval book lore: “from the wicked one comes the great vexation”; “Evil and cursed is this sophistication by God and the saints.”

Lexical restraint is accompanied by restraint in intonation. And yet it is difficult to say what makes a grimmer impression: the explosion of curses or the author’s unexpected outward calm here, which does not makes the reader

appeared but rather makes him uneasily expect the next attack. In this way, a silence that comes suddenly can sometimes seem ominous.

In the genres of religious literature, the truth of what is said is confirmed by appeal to the books of the Old and New Testament and by references to authors recognized by the Church. The ontological necessity of confirmation in such texts predetermines the emergence of multiple parallels in citing opinions and events as a structural resolution of theological thought. In the “theological” opening of the “Life,” the flow of thought is from reasoning about the “divine names” to reasoning about “the truth,” then about “a veritably true Christian,” then about “the solar eclipse,” then about the “heavenly powers” glorifying God, and, finally, about the catholic (that is, universal) faith as the primary condition of salvation. Each speculation seeks confirmation:

- on Divine names: “*and I will speak in the tongue of Dionysius the Areopagite on Divine Names*”; on the true: “*The same Dionysius on the true, ‘according to Dionysius’*”;
- on the true Christian: “*Dionysius the Areopagite is consoling us, in his book it is written*”; “*(Dionysius) writes to Tymotheus in his book, speaking,*” “*Read The Apostle, 275*”;
- on the eclipse of the sun: “*He (Dionysius the Areopagite) quoth to the disciple*”; “*The same Dionysius writes on the sun eclipse*”; “*According to Dionysius*”; “*The same Dionysius writes of the sun eclipse that was in the time of Joshua in Israel*”; “*Read Dionysius’s book, there at length you’ll get*”)
- on Heavenly orders, . . . how they praise God: “*The same Dionysius writes about the Heavenly powers ‘Grigory of Nissa interprets,’ ‘Basil the Great writes’*”; “*With the saints agreed, Dionysius and Basil,*” “*the Most Blessed Mother of God spoke about hallelujah appeared to Vasily, disciple of Efrosin of Pskov*”;
- on salvation: “*who wants to be saved*”: “*Athanasuis the Great quoth*”; “*If you want to know in detail, read ‘Margarite’: there you’ll find the word on incarnation,*” “*According to the quoted Athanasius.*”

However, the intonation of these references to authoritative opinions, which would seemingly have been recognizable in medieval religious thought, acquires a character that is alien to the religious mentality. The fact of reference cannot be denied, but the negligence of the references cannot be denied either. This negligence takes on different forms.

Sometimes the author’s words shrink to a parenthetical remark: “according to Dionysius,” “according to Athanasius, who was quoted.”

Sometimes the verb is omitted: “The saints being in agreement, Dionysius and Basil.”

Sometimes a saint's name is replaced by a personal pronoun: "he quoth to the disciple," or omitted: "writes to Tymotheus."

Sometimes the reference to a significant opinion is defined by indicating the source: "Read in the Apostle, 275"; "Read Dionysius's book; there you will understand at length"; "If you wish to know in detail, read the 'Margarit': there you will find the sermon on the incarnation."

Now something is becoming clear. Gradually, the picture of the intonation in this fragment of the "Life" becomes visible; it seems that the pauses separating references to authorities from the remaining part of the statement, while retaining their general task of the logical division of speech, additionally give these fragments of the text a negligently abrupt tone.

One more thing is alarming: can it be that if the thought itself and the verification of its truthfulness by a spiritual authority of a saint are important to us, we, like Archpriest Avvakum, will be satisfied by making reference to the source of verification?

Apparently, although the initial part of "Life of the Archpriest Avvakum" outwardly resembles any habitual expression of theological thought, it still reveals a different inner form, far from that inherent in theology.

The promise "I shall proclaim in speech [the words] of Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names" does not come true. The words of Dionysius the Areopagite break off abruptly, "understand others after this manner," or else they transition freely into Archpriest's Avvakum's own speech:

**К Тимофею пишет в книге своей, сице глаголя: "Дитя, али не разумееш, яко вся сия внешняя блядь ничто же суть, но токмо прелесть и тля и пагуба? Аз пройдох делом и ничто ж обретох, но токмо тщету"**

To Tymotheus he writes in his book, thus saying: "Child, or not you understand that all this external filth is nothing, only temptation, decay and perdition. I experienced it on myself and gained nothing but vanity"

The Archpriest places his own opinion among the references to the saints, including it into the prescribed paradigm of parallel constructions of equal semantic significance and highlighting this opinion by means of the intensifying particle *же* (*зѣ*): **"Мы же речем: потеряли неволюбцы существо божие испадением от истиннаго господа, святаго и животворящего дѹха.** And we say: the new-lovers have lost the essence of God by rejecting the true Lord—the Holy and Life-giving Spirit." The initial part of "Life of Archpriest Avvakum" comes to an end and the story of his life begins: the nominal structure of sentences gives way to a verbal structure; static statements are replaced by the dynamic depiction of actions and events. But the sequence of verb forms corresponds to different time segments of reality;

sometimes actions standing far apart in time are juxtaposed, sometimes a sequence of actions that directly follow each other are described. So in spite of the fact that the Archpriest's story about his fate is united by a verbal structure of utterances, the action is at times accelerated and then slowed down. With it, the intonation and the tempo of the story change as well.

The Archpriest begins his story about himself; he turns rapidly the pages of his life. From his birth to his marriage, he stops only at a single spiritually significant episode, and his speech accelerates at once:

**Аз же некогда видел у соседа скотину умершую, и той ночи, возставше, пред образом плакался довольно о душе своей, поминая смерть, яко и мне умереть; и с тех мест обыкох по вся ночи молитис.**

Now one day at a neighbor's I saw a dead ox. And that night, rising from my bed, I wept abundantly for my soul before the holy icons, pondering mortality and how I, too, must surely die. And from that day on it became my custom to pray every night.

The cinematographic language could express the Archpriest's whole previous story about himself in a single frame: Avvakum's mother standing before an icon; Avvakum as a little boy by her side; at the table, or at the door, or else on the bench, is his father who "was given to hard drink" (*прилежаше пития хмельнова*):

**Рождение же мое в Нижегородских пределах, за Кудмою рекою, в селе Григорове. Отец ми бысть священник Петр, мати—Мария, инока Марфа. Отец же мой прилежаше пития хмельнова; мати же моя постница и молитвеница бысть, всегда учаше мя страху божию.**

I was born in the Nizhny country, beyond the Kudma River, in the village of Grigorovo. My father was a priest named Peter. My mother was Mary—Martha was her religious name. My father was given to strong drink; but my mother was given to fasting and prayer, and she constantly instructed me in the fear of God.

The Archpriest has told the reader how he "grew accustomed to praying every night"; again life events are flicked through, the course of real time is accelerated; the narrative intonation is even and calm, and the tempo of speech slows down:

**Посем мати моя отъиде к богу в подвизе велице. Аз же от изгнания преселихся во ино место. Рукоположен во дьяконы двадесяти лет з годом, и по дву летех в попы поставлен; живый в попех осм лет и потом совершен в протопопы православными епископы,—тому двадесять лет минуло; и всего тридесят лет, как имею священство.**

At that same time my mother went to God, having first taken the veil, and died in the odor of sanctity. Because of persecution, I moved to another place, and at the age of twenty I was ordained a deacon and, after two years, a priest. When I had been a priest eight years, I was raised to the rank of archpriest by orthodox bishops. This was twenty years ago. It is thirty years in all that I have been in holy orders.

But then time almost stops: events that are spiritually significant for the Archpriest are depicted in an extreme close up reflecting both the changes in his state of mind and an authentic sequence of external actions, even the least significant ones. Again, the course of time depicted slows down; the tempo of speech, on the contrary, accelerates, becoming almost impetuous:

*Егда еще был в попех, прииде ко мне исповедатися девица, многими грезми обремененна, блудному делу и малакни всякой повинна; нача мне, плакавшеся, подробну возвещати во церкви, пред Евангелием стоя. Аз же, трюкоянный врач, сам разболелься, внутрь жгом огнем блудным, и горко мне бысть в той час: зажег три свещи и прилепи к налою, и возложи руку правую на пламя и держал, дондеже во мне угасло злое разжежение, и, отпустя девицу, сложа ризы, помоляся, пошел в дом свой zelo скорбен. Время же, яко полнощи, и прииде во свою избву, плакався пред образом господним, яко и очи опухли, и моляся прилежно, да же отлучит мя бог от детей духовных: понеже время тьяшко, неудобь носимо. И падох на землю на лица своем, рыдаше горце и забыхся, лежа; не вем, как плачу.*

In those days of my ministry a young woman came to confess to me, burdened with many sins, guilty of fornication and all the sins of the flesh. Weeping, she began to acquaint me with them all, leaving nothing out, standing before the Gospels. I, thrice-accursed, though a lech, fell sick. Inwardly I burned with a lecherous fire, and that hour was bitter to me. I lit three candles and fixed them to the lectern. I placed my right hand in the flame and held it there till the evil passion burned out. When I had dismissed the young woman and laid away my vestments, I prayed and went to my house, grievously humbled in spirit. The time must have been midnight when I reached my house; I wept before the icons so that my eyes swelled. I prayed diligently that God might remove my spiritual children from me, because that burden was too heavy for me. I threw myself on the ground face downwards, sobbing bitterly. And as I lay, I swooned and knew not how I was weeping.

The recognizable repetition of the same laconic syntactic solution—a predicate and no more than three secondary parts—brings about a further acceleration of speech. The live voice of the author manifests itself in the change of pace and rhythm. The Archpriest's understanding of his own life is expressed by changing the angle of the image: by speeding up or slow-

ing down actual time, and therefore by the internal principle according to which these very events, but not others, are selected from the stream of life and shown in close up.

### **Distortion of the Medieval Hermeneutic Status of Biblical Images**

In the text produced by Avvakum, the very direction of thought follows a course contrary to the theological principle.

Biblical images, as standards of understanding through which contemporary life was explained, lose their canonical hermeneutic status here. In keeping with the author's independent mindedness, the symbolic power and interpretational significance of the comparative part of similes, which in religious literature are categorically attached to facts from biblical history, are attached in his texts to those of modern life. Modern events take on a value of an incommensurably higher order than biblical ones:

**Кому охота венчатца, не по што ходить в Перьсиду, а то дома  
Вавилон.**

He who wants to be crowned need not go to Persia. *We have our Babylon here at home.*" ("Life of Archpriest Avvakum")

**Не по што в Персы ндти печи огненные искать, но Богъ далъ дома  
Вавилонъ, в Боровске печь халдейская.**

"No need to go to Persia to look for the fiery furnace, for God has given us a Babylon at home: the Chaldean furnace in Borovsk." (*Kniga besed* ["The Book of Conversations"])

In such a mental situation, biblical images eventually fall out of the sphere of religious thought, are secularized, and become tools of secular oratory. Yet it is not the art of oratory but rather the special Divine power called grace that is considered the driving force of a religiously significant word.

Oratory, the art of persuasion, is, in its essence, the opposite of a blessed word. In oratory, the religious consciousness begins to decompose. Mentions of God lose their sacred meaning; they become figures of speech, sayings, a habit of expression.

*Clasp the feet of Christ / держись за Христовы ноги,  
Satan has asked for and obtained from God our bright shining Russia /  
выпросилъ у Бога светлую Россію сатона;*

*God sent them to our fishery for you / полны сети напехалъ Богъ рыбы,  
Lo! Your kingdom of Heaven is here at home / вот тебе царство  
небесное дома родилось;*



For ten years he had tormented me, or I him—I know not which. *God will decide on the day of judgment* / Десять лет он меня мучил или я его,— не знаю; Бог разберет в день века;

*Christ wields a crueller scourge* than he. Your good man has not taken long to acknowledge his fault / Больше у Христа-того остра шелепуга-то: скоро повинился муж твой (“Life of Archpriest Avvakum”).

In order to give a correct assessment of the semantic situation that emerges in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum,” it must not be forgotten that in spiritual literature, the obviousness of the word has always remained illusory, just as it is illusory in fiction.

The apparent physicality of meaning is a great temptation for a person far from exegesis, that is, from the principles of interpreting biblical texts established in theological science (from the Greek *ἐξήγησις* “interpretation”). Whereas the task of exegesis is to pass from a material or a concrete historical meaning to the symbolic meaning, through which the ordinary content is transformed into sacral content.

Let us try to correlate the expression “clasp the feet of Christ” in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum” with phrases containing the word “foot” known from the Psalter.

In King David’s Psalms, as it is stated in Commentary on the Psalter of Euphemius Zigabenus, the word “foot” has the meaning of “the route of life”: “My foot has stood on a straight course” (Psalm 25:12). “Because my foot has been established in uprightness, that is, my ways shun crookedness, which is like the earlier verse, I have made my path in my innocence” (Zigabenus 2015, 153).

The word “foot” appears in the Psalter also as part of phrases “His feet,” “my feet were made to falter,” “the foot of pride.”

The expression *His feet* means “His path,” “*His descent*” (Zigabenus 2015, 196): “And he made the heavens incline and came down. And thick darkness was beneath his feet” (Psalm 17:10).

“*my feet were made to falter*” means “*diverge from the way of the divine commandment’s, they at once*” / And when my feet were made to falter they boasted loudly over me” (Psalm 37:17).

“*The foot of pride*” is interpreted not only as “*pride*” but as “*all evil.*” “Let the foot of pride not come to me” (Psalm 35:12).

That is “pride,” the part standing for the whole. He is saying, may pride not attach itself to me. Through pride he alluded to all evil, for it is the pinnacle and begetter of all evil. The newest Teachers say that pride has only one foot, first because it is like a one-foot monster, second, because a proud man relies only on himself, and third, because having no good grounds pride easily falls into any disorder and cannot remain standing. (Zigabenus 2015, 153)

In the “Explanatory Bible” edited by A. P. Lopukhin, the expression “Let the foot of pride not come to me” is interpreted in the following way:

The source of man’s righteousness is in the fear of God. Pride is a property opposite to it. Then the meaning of the expression will be: save me, Lord, from willfulness as the cause of alienation of Man from You, for then You will not guard me. “Pride” in general may be understood as a wicked person, then the whole verse will constitute a prayer to God against unrighteous enemies. (Lopukhin 1987)

Paying attention to both parts of the expression “the foot of pride,” Euphemius Zigabenus deduces the general meaning, which proceeds from the meaning of each of the two words but cannot be reduced to a mechanical sum of these meanings. The interpretational space includes the grammatical category of number, which is bestowed with a three-level symbolic comprehension. Euphemius Zigabenus’s idea that in this expression “a part of pride” (a foot) means the whole body of pride, and the name of pride means “all evil,” is isomorphic to the principles of icon painting, according to which the whole is expressed through a part. For instance, a church cupola stands for the whole church, and several church cupolas for a whole city (Uspenskii 1995).

In the “Explanatory Bible” edited by A. P. Lopukhin, the word “foot,” that is, the first part of the expression, is omitted from the interpretation, and thus is effectively deprived of any semantic significance. This, in our opinion, is a serious hermeneutical error, extremely undesirable in exegesis, for a spiritual text contains nothing excessive or accidental. In this case, only the second part of the expression “the foot of pride” is interpreted, that is, the word “pride,” which the interpreter relates to such concepts as *fear of God*, *willfulness*, and the *alienation of man from God*, each of which reveals, in turn, several symbolic meanings. No matter how different these two interpretations are, they have something in common: the author of each of them proceeds from the notion that a correct (semiotically literate) interpretation of a separate expression requires placing it in a system of semantic coordinates that are deduced from mutually specifying contexts with respect to a relatively closed list of texts.

It is clear that the interpretation of a particular expression will in any case be approximate: after all, in the semiotic space of spiritual literature a more or less complete interpretation of a particular expression is possible only if the whole system is reproduced consistently in the totality of its connections. The very form of the interpretation of this or that element of a spiritual text testifies to an incomplete understanding: by explaining pride through *evil*, through *willfulness*, or through *alienation from God*, we encourage the reader to try to find out the symbolic meanings of the introduced specifiers: what

is *evil*? what is *willfulness*? what is *alienation from God*? etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, until the circle of mutually explanatory contexts becomes vicious.

Having now obtained an idea of some principles for interpreting spiritual texts, let us try to use them to determine the semantic status of the expression “clasp the feet of Christ” in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum.” Let us examine the immediate context:

**А я, грязь, что могу сделать, аще не Христос? Плакать мне подобает о себе. Иуда чудотворец был, да сребролюбия ради ко дьяволу попал. И сам дьявол на небе был, да высокоумия ради свержен бысть. Адам был в раю, да сластолюбия ради изгнан бысть, и пять тысяч пятьсот лет во аде был осужден. По сем разумея всяк, мняйся стояти, да блюдетя, да ся не падет. Держись за ноги Христовы и Богородице молись и всем святым, и так будет хорошо.**

But I, the scum of the earth, what could I do if it weren't for Christ? It is fitting that I weep for myself. Judas was a miracle worker, but for his love of silver he fell to the devil. And the devil himself was in heaven, but for his pride was he cast down. Adam was in paradise, but for his lust was he driven out and condemned to five thousand five hundred years in hell. After this let him who in understanding thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. *Clasp the feet of Christ* and pray to the Mother of God and all the saints, and all will be well!

If we mentally transfer the center of semantic gravity from the first element, “clasp the feet of Christ,” to the syntactically homogeneous next element, “pray to the Mother of God,” we shall obviously be able to attach some religious sense to the first element as well: “follow Christ,” “believe in Christ,” “rely on Christ.” But are we right? We understand that the order of turning first to Christ, then to the Mother of God, and only after this to the saints is significant in the coordinate system in which we have tried to interpret the expression “clasp the feet of Christ.” Now, can we, after understanding that the order of enumeration is not accidental, ignore this nonaccidental order and interpret the initial element as proceeding from recognizable meaning of the second element, and not vice versa? It is extremely difficult to answer this question in the affirmative, without an inevitable sensation of the conclusion being artificial and far-fetched. Besides, in our approximate interpretation, we have completely ignored the word “feet.”

How will our perception of the phrase “clasp the feet of Christ” change if we do not arbitrarily shift the semantic center? It will emerge now that the meaning of this statement (“clasp the feet of Christ”) not only remains within the limits of lay perception but practically holds this perception on the level of literal understanding based on the straightforward meaning of the words. The semantic lameness of this expression in the “Life of Archpriest Avva-

kum” is determined by the author’s stylistic choice because the basic word in the phrase “clasp the feet of Christ” is a colloquial verb, and it is confirmed by the situational context:

*А егда еще я был попом, с первых времен. Как к подвигу касатися стал, бес меня пуживал сице. Изнемогла у меня жена гораздо, и приехал к ней отец духовной; аз же из двора пошел по книгу в церковь ноци глубокой, по чему исповедать ея. И егда на паперть азъ пришел, бесовским действием скачет столик на месте своем. И я не устрашась, помолясь пред образом, осенил рукою столик и. пришел, поставил ево, и перестал играть. И егда в трапезу вошел, тут иная бесовская игра: мертвец на лавке в трапезе во гробу стоял, и бесовским бейством верхняя раскрылася доска, и саван шевелитца стал, устрашая меня. Азъ же Богу помолясь. Осенил рукою мертвеца, и бысть по-прежнему все. Егда ж в алтарь вошел, она ризы и стихари с места на место, устрашая меня. Аз же, помоляся и поцеловав престол, рукою ризы благословил и пощупал, приступя, а оне не по-старому висят. Потом, книгу взяв, ис церкви пошел. Таково-то ухищрение бесовское к нам! Да полно тово говорить. Чего крестная сила и священное масло над бешанными и болными не творит благодатню Божию! Да нам надобно помнить сие: не нас ради, ни нам, но имени Своему славу Господь дает. А я, грязь, что могу сделать, аще не Христос? Плакать мне подобает о себе. Иуда чудотворец был, да сребролюбия ради ко дьяволу попал. И сам дьявол на небе был, да высокоумия ради свержен бысть. Адам был в раю, да сластолюбия ради изгнан бысть, и пять тысяч пятьсот лет во аде был осужден. По сем разумей всяк, мняйся стояти, да блюдется, да ся не падет. Держись за ноги Христовы и Богородице молись и всем святым, и так будет хорошо.*

When I was an ordinary priest and had but begun my striving for perfection, this is the way the devil terrified me. My wife fell sick and her spiritual Father came to visit her. In the dead of night I went to the church to get the book for her confession. As I entered the porch, there was a small table there, which, by the devil’s device, began to jump about where it stood. And I, fearing nothing, prayed before the icon, and going up to the table, I made the sign of the cross and put it back into its place, and it stopped dancing around. As I came to the nave, there was another trick of the demons: a corpse lay in its coffin on the bench, and through a device of the devil, the lid of the coffin was lifted, and the shroud began to wave about, filling me with fear. And I, praying to God, blessed the dead, and everything was as before. As I entered the sanctuary, I saw the chasubles and dalmatics flying around, to frighten me. But I prayed and kissed the altar and blessed the vestments, and going up, touched them, and they hung motionless as before. So I took the book and left the church. Such are the devices of the devil against us. But enough of this! What is the power of the cross and of holy oil unable to perform on the possessed and on the sick, by the

grace of God! And we must remember this: not for our sake and because of us, but to His own name doth God add glory. I who am but mud, what could I do, were it not for Christ? It befits me to weep about myself. Judas was a miracle-worker, but because of his greed for money, fell into the devil's hands. And the devil himself was in heaven, but was cast out because of his pride. Adam was in paradise, but was driven out of it for his voluptuousness and condemned to hell for 5,500 years. Knowing this, let every man who believes he is able to stand, beware lest he fall. Clasp the feet of Christ and pray to the Mother of God and all the saints, and all will be well.

In the texts of the “fiery archpriest,” sacral statements turn out to be divorced from their historical sense-forming contexts; this is the way a word is alienated from its sacral essence:

**Нү-тко, правоверне, нарцы имя христово, стань среди Москвы, прекрестися знаменем спасителя нашего Христа, пятью персты, яко же прияхом от святых отец: вот тебе царство небесное дома родилось!**

Come, true believer! Name the name of Christ. Stand in the midst of Moscow, *cross yourself* with the sign of the Savior, our Christ, using *two fingers* as we learned from the holy fathers. Lo! *Your kingdom of Heaven is here at home.* (“Life of Archpriest Avvakum”)

In this remark by the Archpriest, the very concept of “the kingdom of Heaven” (the Kingdom of God) is comprehended spatially and, like everything endowed with spatial coordinates, it turns out to be visible, objective, materially expressed.

The reverse is found in the Gospel of Luke: “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: *Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!* for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20, 21).

These words are the axis of the understanding of the Kingdom of God as a human soul's blissful state arising from absolute union with God, obedience to His will, and fullness of the sensation of His love.

In the “Life,” the expression “kingdom of Heaven” (Kingdom of God), placed by the desperately willful author in an alien context, loses its sacred meaning.

Taken alone, the fact of the presence of biblical contexts and images in the text, as well as the known ways of representing them, are not sufficient to characterize the author's mind. It is absolutely necessary to reinstate the meaning and function of externally recognizable forms. This is the first axiom of semiotic culture. Otherwise, it is impossible to detect the marks of the functional and semantic transformation of signs considered archetypical for medieval texts and for theological texts of any historical period.

## Transformation of Prayer and Ritual into Semantic Opposites

Now let us return to the fragment describing the Archpriest's victory over the devil cited in the previous section. This description verges on parody, but the parody here is perceived emotionally rather than rationally. Obviously, this is due to the fact that parody as an internal intention was absent from the author's mind.

The struggle of a righteous person with devilry is a recognizable episode of a *vita*. In exemplary hagiographic literature, the struggle against demons was understood as the inner struggle of man with his sins and his passions. In the episode in question from the "Life of Archpriest Avvakum," there is no such semantic parallelism. Literalness supplants symbolism on this level as well.

Commonplace things in the description of a demonic act ("a table jumped about," "a corpse lay in its coffin on the bench," "the lid of the coffin was lifted") are combined with the commonplace intonation with which the victory over the demon is described. The ease with which the Archpriest performs feat after feat makes the whole scene evidently schematic. The model of "action and immediate result" is repeated three times within a brief fragment of the story. He "prayed, made the sign of cross, and everything was as before": the table did not jump about; the shroud of the dead man stopped moving; apparently, the lid of the coffin was closed, too, and the *sticheraria* and chasubles ceased to fly. The model deduced here visibly shows the attitude toward ritual and external formula typical for seventeenth-century Russian society, that is, the inner conviction that the formula itself possessed salvific power. This hyperbolized attitude toward externality led to grave semiotic distortions: prayer began to be perceived by the ordinary religious consciousness as a magical spell and the sign of the cross as a magical ritual. In such a perception, the mechanical adherence to form (without any inner tension of thought) gives an instant result, and a deviation from the form is perceived as a deviation from the faith. The mental correlation of the sign to meaning is blocked by such frame of mind. Thus, for example, the mind of the believer cease to correlate the three-, two-, or one-fingered inscription of the sign of the cross—the tree of sacrificial love—with the dogmatic idea expressed by each of these inscriptions: the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of two natures in Jesus Christ, or the idea of the singleness of God.

A saint always wins by God's power. This causal connection between the triumph over evil forces and the miraculous manifestation of God's power is retained in "Life of Archpriest Avvakum": "I, who am but dirt, what could I do, were it not for Christ?" But it also receives a material expression: "What is *the power of the cross and of holy oil* unable to perform on the possessed and on the sick, by the grace of God!"

In this way, the channel to symbolic meanings, which the components of a spiritual text must necessarily take on, is closed simultaneously on the linguistic and on the compositional level. A semantic situation arises where the reader's disposition, devoid of contemplation of the supersensory spiritual world (and such contemplation is possible only where the text reveals symbolic meanings), assumes a nonreligious direction. Thus, the inconceivable becomes not just possible but commonplace.

Now, within the limits of a constructive opposition, there are a rod, a stick, and the tree of sacrificial love rendered back to man, the cross of Christ: "A devil is not a muzhik: he will not fear the stick. What he fears is *the cross of Christ* and holy water and holy oil. Before the body of Christ, he flees entirely."

Here similar things are enumerated: "the cross of Christ," "holy water," "holy oil." But the basis of similarity, the acquisition of the assistance of grace, is omitted, and the spiritual event is hidden behind almost literal materiality.

This passage is almost immediately followed by a description of the main Christian Sacrament, the Eucharist. Again, the author's mind is focused not on the spiritual act but on the sequence of actions:

*Аще священника, н҃жды ради, не получиш: и ты своему брату искусному возвести согрешение свое, и бог простит тя, покаяние твое видеи, и тогда с правницом причащайся святых тайн. Держи при себе запасный агнец. Аще в пути или по промыслу, или всяко получишся, кроме церкви, воздохся пред владыкою и, по вышереченному, ко брату исповедався, с чистою совестью причастися святыни: так хорошо будет! По посте и по правиле пред образом христовым на коробочку постели платочик и свечку зажги, а в сосудце водицы маленько, да на ложечку почерпни и часть тела Христова с молитвою в воду положи, и кадилом вся покади, поплакав, глаголи: "Верю, господи, и исповедаю, яко ты еси Христос сын бога Живаго, пришедый в мир грешники спасти, от них же первый есм аз. Верю яко вистину се есть самое пречистое тело твое, и се есть самая честная кровь твоя. Е҃го же ради молю ти ся, помилуй мя и прости ми и ослаби ми согрешения моя, волная и невольная, яже словом, яже делом, яже ведением и неведением, яже разумом и мыслию, и сподоби мя неосужденно причаститися пречистых ти таинств во оставление грехов и в жизнь вечную, яко благословен еси во веки. Аминь."* Потом падше на землю пред образом, прощение проговори и, возстав, образы поцелуй и, прекрестясь, с молитвою причастися и водицею запей и пакы богу помолись. Н҃, слава Христу! Хотя и умреш после того, ино хорошо. *Полно про то говорить. И сами знаете, что доброе добро. Стану опять про баб говорить.*

If you cannot find a priest in your need, then confess your sins to some discreet brother. God, seeing your contrition, will pardon you. Then, *having read through the canon of the Mass* before communicating *keep some of the reserved*

*sacrament.* Whenever you are away on a journey or engaged in traffic or whatever takes you far from a church—if you give signs of contrition to the Lord and confess to your brother (as indicated above)—you may partake of the blessed sacrament with a clear conscience. All will be well if you first fasted and read through the canon of the Mass. *Take a little casket and spread a napkin in it, and light a candle and pour a little water in a cup and ladle some onto a spoon. With prayer, place a portion of Christ's body in the water in the spoon, and cense it all with a censer.* Then, weeping, say out loud the entire prayer that begins, “O Lord! I believe and confess that you are Christ, the son of the living God.” (It is written in the canon of the Mass.) Then, throwing yourself before the icon, ask forgiveness, and, standing up, kiss the holy image. Now, having signed yourself, *communicate* with prayer, *and drink a little of the water.* Pray again to God, saying, “Now glory to Christ!” Even if you die the minute after, it will be well with you. *Enough of that matter.* You yourselves know that it is good counsel. *Now I will continue with the story of the women.*

In this matter-of-fact description of Holy Communion, which is almost like a chronicle, the prayer, although it is cited almost from beginning to end, appears alien. It is clear that the reading intonation of this fragment—not even intonation, but tone—is set not by the meaning and rhythm of the prayer but by what precedes it and what follows it. It is preceded by the everyday understanding of the Sacrament: “spread a napkin,” “light a candle,” “pour a little water in the cup,” “ladle some on a spoon,” “place a portion of Christ’s body in the water,” “cense it all with a censer.” What follows is also everyday: “communicate,” “drink a little of the water,” as if it were a matter of mere eating: eat it and drink some water. This phrase can hardly be associated with partaking of the glorious Body and Blood of the Lord, the consecrated gifts, the food of immortality, as the communion in the salvific power of the great sacrifice. And in order for the Eucharist to be salvific, one must imitate the Lord in His feat of the sacrificial life. But this is not all; each impossibility is followed by another: “Enough of that matter. Now I will continue with the story of the women.” So from women to the Eucharist, from the Eucharist back to the women.

Having evaluated the consequences for one’s worldview of the semantic reality created in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum,” we can say that the contexts generated in the Archpriest’s works led ultimately to the secularization of the semantic system of the Russian literary language.

### **Substitution of the Medieval Principle of Analogy**

The complexity of detecting transformational processes—the functional and, consequently, semantic transformation—is explained by apparent recognition: in the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum,” images known from the Holy



Scripture fit into the well-known algorithm of the structural resolution of medieval thought. Those who have neglected the will of God are doomed to failure. Something like this underlies the analogy between “Iuda” (Judas), the Devil, and Adam:

*Judas*: the only apostle born in Judea (the others were from Galilee), deceived by the hope that Jesus Christ would become founder of the Kingdom of Earth. He stole money from the common box that he carried, and then, disillusioned as to the rich life in the earthly kingdom of Christ, sold his Teacher for thirty pieces of silver;

*The Devil himself*: a personality first in terms of his closeness to God and created by Him; “Lucifer” (the “bearer of light”), who committed the first sin; “by an inexplicable whim he longed to have everything only for himself”; and

*Adam*: the first man created by God in His image and likeness, who ignored God’s warning and ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Everything is familiar: both the biblical images, and the analogical principle, which is one of the basic principles of constructing a medieval text. Likewise familiar is the principle of the multiplicity of analogies. What is so confusing, then? What is confusing is the arbitrary order in which these analogies are given: neither a “chronological” sequence of actions, nor the degree of sinfulness of the action, nor the very depths of the fall can explain the order in which these images follow one another.

I who am but mud, what could I do, were it not for Christ? It befits me to weep about myself. Judas was a miracle-worker, but because of his greed for money, fell into the devil’s hands. And the devil himself was in heaven, but was cast out because of his pride. Adam was in paradise, but was driven out of it for his voluptuousness and condemned to hell for 5,500 years. Knowing this, let every man who believes he is able to stand, beware lest he fall. Clasp the feet of Christ and pray to the Mother of God and all the saints, and all will be well.

Even more confusing is the lack of correlation between the intended constructive complexity of the analogy (the analogy is tripartite) and the singularity of statements expressing the content: “because of his greed for money,” “fell into the devil’s hands,” “was cast out because of his pride,” “was driven out for his voluptuousness.”

Such a manner of presenting the content allows an arbitrary interpretation.

Let us take the last analogy, in which the Archpriest names voluptuousness as Adam’s sin. Of course, in the sin of the first man and woman there was a sensual part, that is, voluptuousness, the attraction to sensual pleasure, the preference of the lower to the higher: they preferred a nice-looking fruit to

the fulfillment of the will of God, and, having become slaves of sin, lost freedom, which, according to theological concepts, means first of all following the will of God. But can we consider this sensual part to be the main cause of the sin of the first people? What exactly did Avvakum understand by “voluptuousness”? What associative feeling did such a straightforward definition of original sin evoke in the minds of those for whom the Archpriest had composed his “Life”? In what kind of everyday behavior could these subjective associative feelings result? One of the consequences of what is occurring in worldview terms in the semantic space of “Life of Archpriest Avvakum” is, in our opinion, quite obvious: the supersubjectivity of understanding allowed by the structure of this (and not only this) fragment transfers both the author and his reader from the sphere of religious thinking to the plane of secular perception of the world.

### Semiotic Discreditation of the Miraculous

The miraculous, this organic component of hagiographic literature, depicting the images of saints endowed with divine grace, arises repeatedly in the narrative fabric of “Life of Archpriest Avvakum.” Miracles serve to prove the rightness of the martyrs for the old faith; they are the final argument in the dispute between Avvakum and the supporters of the Church reform:

*По сем Лазаря священника взяли, и язык весь вырезали из горла; мало пошло крови, да и перестала. Он же и пакн говорит без языка. Таже, положи правую руку на плаху, по запястье отсекал, и рука отсеченная, на земле лежа, сложила сама пальцы по преданию и долго лежала так пред народы; исповедала, бедная, и по смерти знамение спасителя не изменила. Мне-сү и самому сие чудно: бездушная одушевленных обличает! Я на третьей день у него во рту рукою моею щупал и гладил: гладко все—без языка, а не болит. Дал бог во временне часе исцелело. На Москве у него резали: тогда осталось языка, а ныне весь без остатку резан; а говорил два годы чисто, яко и с языком. Егда исполнилися два годы, иное чудо: в три дни у него язык вырос совершенной, лиш мелко тупенек, и пакн говорит, беспрестанно хвала бога и отступников порицая.*

At the same time they took the priest Lazar and cut out his whole tongue from his throat. But little blood flowed and it soon stopped. *He spoke again without his tongue.* Placing his right hand on the scaffold, they cut it off at the wrist, *and the hand that had been cut off, while lying upon the ground, placed its fingers of its own accord* according to the ancient use. It lay there for a long time before the people. The poor thing made a confession; even in death it did not betray the sign of salvation. Even I am amazed at this; the lifeless thing convicts the living. On the third day I felt into (Lazar’s) mouth with my hand. It was all smooth,

and there was no tongue, but it did not hurt. God had granted with good fortune that it heal. In Moscow they had cut out his tongue but some of it remained; now it was all cut away. But he spoke clearly for two years as though he had a tongue. After two years there was another wonder: *in the space of three days his tongue grew again to its full size, although it was a little stumpy. He spoke again, instantly praising God and railing at the apostates.*

A similar thing occurred to the Solovetsky anchorite elder Epiphanius. They also cut off his entire tongue:

**язык вырезали весь же, ꙗ рꙋки отсекали четыре перъста. И сперва говорила гꙋгниво. По сем молиа пречистꙋю богоматерь, и показаны емꙋ оба языки, московъской и здешъней, на воздухѣ; он же, един взяв, положил в рот свой и с тех мест стал говорить чисто и ясно, и язык совершен обретесе во рѣте.**

and they cut out his entire tongue. And they cut four fingers off his hand. At first he spoke thickly, but he prayed to the Virgin, the Mother of God, and two tongues appeared to him in the air—one of Moscow and the present one. *He took one, put it in his mouth, and from that moment began to speak purely and clearly. The whole tongue fit itself into his mouth.*

The same happened to Deacon Feodor:

**язык вырезали весь же, оставили кꙋсочек небольшой во рѣте, в горле наось резан; тогда на той мере и зажил, а опосле и опять со старой вырос и за гꙋбы выходит, притꙋп маленько. ꙋ него же отсекали рꙋкꙋ поперег ладони. И все, дал бог, стало здорово, и говорит ясно против прежева и чисто.**

They cut out his entire tongue but left a little bit in his mouth, having cut it slantways across his throat. It healed just as it was. But *later it grew again as it was before.* It stuck out a little way from the lips, but stump-like. They cut off his hand across the palm. But, as a gift from God, it all healed, and *he spoke clearly and cleanly as before.*

The descriptions of these miracles follow one another. The three similar stories look not so much like testimonies to the manifestation of the Divine will as devices or means of convincing used by the author to prove his own rightness. The obviousness of the conclusion arising from the events described by the Archpriest and the literalness of the understanding of the events contradict the theological notion of a miracle as an unknowable and unpredictable manifestation of the Divine will and as an omen, a divine symbol or a sign whose meaning has yet to be understood.

Other miracles in this eccentric “Life” confirm the rightness of the author and his associates as literally as those described earlier (Valentinova 2012, 38–46).

The character of these descriptions is as alien to theology as it is to exemplary hagiography but very close to the notions of ordinary religiousness.

In order for the reader to get an idea of the peculiarities of how miracles are interpreted in theology, let us give an example of such an interpretation. The miracle of transforming water into wine performed by Christ at a poor wedding in Cana of Galilee is understood symbolically: “Everything shared by loving people is like wine in comparison with the water of individual experiences, but the Lord transformed water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee to symbolize the future Eucharistic transformation of wine into His Holy Blood, which is to unite all with the Lord and with one another (John 2: 1–11)” (Aleksandr Bishop of Zela 2005, 147).

### The Sense-Destroying Vector of Puns

Let us return to the semantic reality of the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum.” Here are two expressions based on wordplay:

**Я и к обе́дне не поше́л, и обе́дать ко князю́ прише́л, и вся подро́бну́ им возвести́л;**

I did not go to Mass, but I went to dine with the prince and I told him everything—every word.

**Кни́гу Ко́рмъчню́ дал прика́щику, и он мне́ му́жника ко́рми́щника дал.**

I gave the book, The Christian’s Pilot, to the clerk, and he gave me a fellow to serve as steersman in exchange.

Both puns in Russian are based on the confluence in one logical and syntactical structure of two paronyms taken from different spheres of life: the high or spiritual and the everyday or commonplace. **Обе́дня** “mass” is the folk name for the liturgy, the main divine service of the Christian Church established by Christ at the Last Supper. It takes place in the first half of the day, before dinner. **Обе́дать** “to dine” is a verb denoting a very common action: eating in the middle of the day.

The **кни́га ко́рмчяя** “nomocanon,” “the Pilot” is the oldest collection of juridical texts of the Russian orthodox church. A **му́жник ко́рми́щник** is a “muzhik” (“common fellow”) steering a boat.

These words taken from different spheres of life are put into syntactically similar positions and, owing to the fact that syntactic conditions possess

a sense-changing power, appear to be in the semantic relations of interchangeability:

**ОБЕДНЯ/ОБЕДАТЬ:** “к **ОБЕДНЕ** не пошел” (“did not go to Mass”); “**ОБЕДАТЬ** пришел” (“went to dine”).

книга **Кормчая/мужик кормщик:** “я приказчику дал книгу **Кормчую**” (“I gave the book of the Nomocanon to the clerk”); “**мне** приказчик дал **мужика кормщика**” (“he gave me a *muzhik* to serve as steersman”).

The semantic interchangeability of the spiritual and the commonplace, emphasized syntactically, leads to the desacralization of higher meanings.

To be absolutely sure of the conclusions we have reached, let us correlate these puns with the narrative situation in which they appear:

**А** се мне в Тобольске в тонце сне страшно возвещено: блюдися от меня да не полъма растесан будеши. Я вскочил и пал перед иконою во ужасе велице, а сам говорю: “Господи, не стану ходить, где по-новому поют, Боже мой!” Был я у заутрени в соборной церкви на царевнины имянины, шаловал в церкви-той при воеводах; да с приездѹ смотрил у них просвиромисания [просвиромисания— ‘приготовления святых даров’.—**Ф.В.**] дважды или трижды, в олтарь у жертвенника стоя, а сам им ругался; а как привык ходить, так и ругатца не стал,—что жалом, духом антихристовым и ужалило было. Так меня Христов свет поужал и рече ми: “По Толком страдании погивнѹть хочеш? Блюдися, да не полъма разреку тя!” **Я** и к **обедне** не пошел, и **обедать** ко князю пришел, и вся подробну им возвестил;

The following was revealed to me in Tobolsk when I was half asleep. “I bid you to watch so you not be not a branch cut off.” I leapt up and fell before the icon in great terror, and I spoke and said, “Lord, I will not go when they chant in the new-fangled fashion, my God.” I was at early Mass in the cathedral on the name day of the tsarina. I was jesting with them in that church in the presence of the officials, and from the moment of arrival I took note of whether they mixed the elements in a triple or in a twofold way. Standing at the altar by the sacrificial table, I abused them. Over time I got used to them, so I ceased abusing them. Such was the bitter spirit of the Antichrist that stung me. Then our sweet Christ made me afraid. He said to me, “After such great suffering will you perish? Watch out, lest I hew you off like a dry branch.” *I did not go to Mass, but I went to dine with the prince, and I told him everything—every word.*

**А** я . . . , набрав старых, и болных, и раненых, кон там негодны, человек з десяток, да я з женою и з детми—семнатцеть нас человек; в лотку седше, уповая на Христа и крест поставя на носу, поехали, амо же бог наставит, ничего не бояся. **Книгу Кормъчно** дал **приказчику**; и он

**мне мужика кормщика дал. Да друга моего выкупил, Василия. . . . Да и другова такого же увез замочтая.**

A month afterwards, having assembled the aged and the sick and the wounded—whatever there was there of useless folk (there would be ten of them, and I with my wife and children would bring the number to seventeen)—got into a boat. Putting our trust in Christ and fixing the cross to our prow, we started on our way, wherever God would lead us, fearing nothing. *I gave the book, The Christian's Pilot, to the clerk, and he gave me a fellow to serve as steersman in exchange.* He freed my friend Basil. . . . Ay, I also took back with me another lousy spy of the same kidney.

Ignoring the second context, we could decide that the Archpriest is taking the liberty of using such a pun such as **ОБЕДНЯ/ОБЕДАТЬ**, so dubious for a clergyman, only because he is speaking about the liturgy served according to the New Rite. But the second context precludes such an explanation, as the pun **книга Кормчая/мужик кормщик** is not contextually related to the Archpriest's opposition to the patriarch Nikon's church reforms.

These puns, which possessing a sense-destroying force destroy the sacral and leave a void behind them.

In F. M. Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, there is a curious episode that, in spite of its ironic tone, allows one to make a judgment about the unacceptability of such puns in discussing lofty matters:

“the Church is a Kingdom not of this world” [father Iosif's remark.—*O. V.*]. —“A most unworthy play on words for a churchman!” Father Paisyy, unable to restrain himself, interrupted again. . . . If it is not of this world, it follows that it cannot exist on Earth at all. In the Holy Gospel the words “not of this world are used in a different sense. To play with such words is impossible. Our Lord Jesus Christ came precisely to establish the Church on Earth. The Kingdom of God is of course, not of this world, but in Heaven, but it is entered in no other way than through the Church that is founded and established on earth. And therefore to make wordly puns in this sense is impossible and unworthy.” (Dostoevsky 1990, 61–62)

In exemplary hagiographic literature, the purpose of what we now call, in worldly terms, “wordplay” or “puns” was different. Using “plays on words,” the author led the reader to spiritual meanings that did not lie on the surface. **“Иже ‘епископъ’ ‘посѣтитель’ нарицаетсѧ; и посѣтителея посѣтила смѣрть”** (“As the bishop is called an overseer; and the overseer was overseen by death”) wrote Epiphanius the Wise in his “Life of Saint Stephen of Perm.” Based on the etymology of the of the Greek word *ἐπίσκοπος* “overseer,” the hagiographer creates a periphrastic expression, “overseen by

death,” which not only stands for the word “died” but also supplants the idea of death as the end of life.

Against the background of such hagiographic texts, the semantic vector of the puns constructed by the Archpriest (that is, the vector of desacralization) is seen as even less incidental.

Desacralization, which is often far from being obvious on the level of language, is more distinguishable on the situational level, and on the level of composition it is perceived as blasphemy.

### The Loss of the Symbolic Principle

Let us turn to the situational level of the text, that is, to the level that is related to the category of the plot:

**Да и в темницу-ту ко мне бешаной зашел Карилушка, московский стрелец, караульщик мой. Остриг его азъ, и вымыл и платье переменил—зело вшей было много. Замъкнуты мы с ним, двое с ним жили, а третьей с нами Христос и Пречистая Богородица. Он, миленькой, бывало, и серет и сцит, а я его очищаю.**

The *madman* Kirill—my friend and the Moscow musketeer who was my guard—came to my dungeon. I *shaved* him and *washed* him and *changed his clothes*. *He had many lice*. He and I were locked up together, which made for the two of us *plus Christ and the Immaculate*. He, my dear one, was in the habit of *easing himself* and I would cleanse him.

The visibility of the plot level makes it almost improbable that this an accident of which the author is not aware, an unconscious slip of the tongue. But then how should we evaluate the events described in the previous passage?

Not only does the intimate physiological context, devoid of any periphrastic restraint, involve the holy name of the God-man and the holy name of His Mother, but thanks to the syntactic arrangement of the utterance, Christ and the Most Pure Mother of God are included, along with the author and his “guard,” the “madman Karilushka,” as the subjects of one and the same action: “were locked up together.”

Most improbably of all, the fact that Christ and the Mother of God appear on the narrative level does not in the least determine the events even in this fragment, which retains a unity of time and place:

**Есть и пить просит, а без благословения взять не смеет. У правила стоять не захочет—дьявол сон ему наводит: а я постегая чотками, так и молитву творить станет, и кланяется за мною стоя. И егда правило скончаю, он и паки бесноватися станет. При мне беснуется**

и шалает, и егда ко старцу пойдѹ посидеть в ево темницу, а ево положѹ на лавке, *не велю емѹ вставать* и благословлю его, и докамест ѹ старца сижѹ, *лежит, не встанет—богом привязан,—лежа беснуется.* А в головах ѹ него образы и книги, хлеб и квас и прочая, а ничево без меня не тронет. Как *придѹ*, так *встанет* и, дьявол, мне досаждая, блудить заставляивает. Я *закричу*, так и *сядет*. Егда стряпаю, в то время естѹ просит и украсть тщится до времени обеда; а егда пред обедом “*Отче наш*” проговорю и благословлю, так *тово брашна не ест*—просит неблагословеннова. И я емѹ *силою в рот напехаю*, и он *плачет и глагает*. И как *рыбою покормлю*, тогда *бес в нем въздвижничтѹся*, а сам из него говорит: “Ты же-де меня ослабил!” И я, влакався пред владыкою, опять *постом стягну* и *окрочу ево Христом*. Та же *маслом ево освятил*, и *отрадило емѹ от беса*.

He would ask to eat and drink, but he dared not partake without a blessing. He would not stand up when I was saying prayers. The devil would make him drowsy, but *I would beat him with my chotki* and he would *begin to do a prayer* and bow himself, standing behind me. When I would *finish the rule*, he would *become possessed by a devil*. In my presence he would always play the devil and the fool. But when I went to see the elder in his dungeon, I would lay him down on the bench and *instruct him not to rise up*. I would bless him, and as long as I was away with the elder he would *lie there and not rise up*, for he was bound by God. He would rave as he lay there. Images and books and bread and kvass and other things were at the head of his bed, but he would touch nothing while I was away. *When I came back*, he would stand up and the devil made him behave in unseemly ways in order to vex me. I would cry out and *he would sit down*. While I was cooking he would ask to eat. He would try to steal a bite before dinnertime, and when I would say the “*Our Father*” and bless the food before dinner, he would *not eat that food*, asking instead for unblessed food. So I would *thrust some food down his mouth by violence*, and he would *weep and swallow* it. When I *fed him fish*, the devil would *ramp up within him* and he would say, “You have made me weak.” I would weep before the Lord, and I would *curb him with fasting*. I would *quiet him down with the name of Christ*. Finally, *I anointed him with holy oil*, and he was *assuaged of the devil*.

Disintegrated into mechanical actions (“beat him with my rosary,” “fed him fish,” “anointed him with holy oil”), the divine ceases to be the divine.

*I would beat him with my chotki—he would begin to do a prayer,*

*I would finish the rule—he would become possessed by a devil bound by God—he would rave as he lay there,*

*I would say the “Our Father” and bless the food before dinner—he would not eat that food,*

*I fed him fish—the devil would ramp up within him,*



*I would curb him with fasting—I would quiet him down with the name of Christ,*

*I anointed him with holy oil—he was assuaged of the devil.*

The high retreats.

The *chotki* “prayer rope,” an integral part of monastic life (a monk silently says the prayer of Jesus while counting on the rosary: the number of beads touched shows how many times the prayer has been said), acts as an instrument of physical punishment: “I would beat him with my *chotki*.”

It seems that in this sense-destroying space the expression “to make a prayer” has already lost its initial spiritual sense and become equivalent to the expressions “to read a prayer,” “to say a prayer.” But not everyone who is saying a prayer is really praying, and not everyone who is praying is really making a prayer. Obviously, contexts like this destroy the semantic opposition of “doing a prayer” and “saying a prayer” and transform the semantic antipodes into semantic equivalents that are distinguished only by their belonging to what is called the lofty style and the neutral style.

Reducing semantic differences to stylistic differences is a direct path to the secularization of the mind, accompanied by a weakening of intellectual tension. Differences in style can be detected by ear; awareness of semantic differences requires reflection.

The Lord’s Prayer, the main Christian prayer that Jesus Christ gave to His Disciples in response to their request to teach them to pray, that is, to address God, turns into a spell: “I would say the Our Father.”

The blessing, “benevolence bestowed by God and received through a priest,” is in all likelihood reduced to the mechanical making of the sign of the Cross, which is perceived by the everyday religious mind as magical protection: “I would say the Our Father and bless the food.”

Fish, which is allowed during a lenient fast, either ruins the devil or entices him: feeding a possessed person (a person possessed by a devil) fish makes the devil “cry out wildly within him.” But why does the devil by which the person is possessed react in such way to the fish by the possessed, to this indulgence (the symbol of indulgence) for fasting believers, and not to the food allowed only during the absolute fast? As for fasting itself, it is not a means to get rid of the devil but an exercise for cleansing the soul and weakening the passions. Here it is not a matter fasting, just of eating fish. Or has this symbol of indulgence become a symbol of restriction?

In addition, anointing with oil turns from “washing away the filth of sin” into “smearing with oil.”

The Church Slavonic *отрадити* “alleviate, to give joy, relieve of sorrow or pain, give consolation” in the impersonal form *отрадило ему* sounds like the common *полегчало* “he got better.”

The spiritual act is substituted multiple times for a mechanical ritual, giving as immediate a result as habitual, almost base actions: “instruct him not to rise up”; “he would lie down”; “when I came back, he would stand up”; “I would cry out and he would sit down”; “I would force some food down his mouth, and he would weep and swallow.”

All this takes place within one limited fragment. Coincidence is out of the question here, for the constructive principle of building up to this episode is too clearly discernible in the text.

We have just observed how the author, describing his life with the “madman Karilushko,” describes the intimate physiological aspect of the life of a sick person who can no longer take care of himself: “He, my dear one, was in the habit of relieving himself and I would clean him.” No matter how unacceptable this description may seem to us, especially in the genre of religious literature, we cannot but admit that this description is a literal reflection of a sad reality: the reality of the life and the reality of the word. But another reality, that of the text, undermines such an explanation, or at least its being exhaustive:

**Не знаю, дни коротать как! Слабоумием объят и лицемерием, и лжею покрыт еси, братоненавидением и самолюбием одеян, во осуждении всех человек погибаю, а мняйся нечто быти, а кал и гной, еси, окаянной—прямое говно! Отвсюду воняю—душею и телом! Хорошо мне жить с собаками да со свиньями в конурах: так же и оне воняют, что и моя душа, злосмрадною вонеею. Да свиньи и псы по естеству, а я от грехов воняю, яко пес мертвой, повержен на улице града. Спаси бог властей тех, что землю меня закрыли: себе уж хотя воняю, злая дела творящее, да иных не соблажняю. Эй, добро так!**

I do not know how the days run on. I am covered with weakness and hypocrisy and lying. I am clothed with envy toward others and with self-love. I, who condemn all men, perish. I account myself as something, but I, accursed one, am *dung and corruption—nothing but dung. I stink from all my soul and body.* I should live with dogs and with pigs in their sties. *My spirit stinks with an evil stench just like they stink. Pigs and dogs stink because of their nature, but I stink from my sins—like a dead dog cast out into the street of the city.* Thanks be to God for those powers who buried me in the earth! *Although I now stink to myself, doing evil works,* at least I am not a scandal to others. This is good.

Two words characterizing the painful state of soul and body appear in this fragment, the Church Slavonic смрадъ and the Old Russian воня, both meaning “stench.”

The word смрадъ (смород in Old Russian) meant “stench.” Зъльни смрадъ’ “evil stench” means “the bad smell of sin,” for evil means “sinful.” It occurs, for instance, in the Codex Suprasliensis, the tenth-century

collection of lives and sermons (homilies) for the month of March. The Old Russian **ВОНЯ** (**ВОНІА** in Church Slavonic) had the initial meaning of “smell,” usually a good smell (“fragrance”), but it could also denote any smell, whether good or bad. In the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum,” the word **ВОНЯ** already means a bad, repulsive smell, and this very meaning would be fixated in the Russian language.

The comparison of the state of the soul, especially a sinful soul, to a bodily state (unclean thoughts: evil disease) is widespread, but Avvakum does not content himself with this comparison: he extends the familiar metaphor toward literal physiology, without restraining himself either by following the model or by ethical ideas. Thus, the Archpriest describes the sinful state of the soul using the same grossly naturalistic means with which he describes the physical helplessness of a sick person. Can we then understand the physiological component of this narrative only as a prematurely “realistic” description? Of course not. We are most definitely dealing with an exaggerated manifestation of a subjective principle, which much later will be referred to as individual style. After all, of all the ways to depict the depth of the author’s sinfulness, the Archpriest chose this one and not others. This means of expression completely coincides with that selected for the literal description of physical infirmity.

Such extreme physiologicality yet again closes off symbolic meanings.

In Avvakum’s writings, the altered medieval Russian consciousness is materialized, reflecting either the distortion or the complete loss of its former spiritual dimensions. By their very existence, his works testify to a profound deterioration of the medieval principle of text typology, that is, the principle of form–content correlation inherent in the Middle Ages.

The blasphemous juxtaposition of the sacral and the secular in close syntactic unity undermines the former foundations of the semantic organization of the text, testifying to the secularization of the mind.

The semantic construction of the modern Russian literary language had already begun before the time of Peter the Great and before the time when, through the efforts of N. M. Karamzin and his followers, the semantic structure of Russian expressions took on figurative meanings borrowed from the semantic system of European languages. The distortion and destruction of sacred meanings were at its foundation. M. V. Lomonosov, by virtue of his authority, made an attempt to retain what had been lost, but the historical victory was not Lomonosov’s. Thus, from the late seventeenth century onward, still during the Russian Middle Ages, the desacralization of sacred meanings had become the defining vector of semantic reorganization of the Russian literary language.

It seems that the authorial license in the “Life” was inordinate, as was the author’s certainty that he was right:

The organic flaw of Medieval Russian society was that it considered itself the only right-believing community, and its understanding of the deity to be exceptionally correct; it imagined the Creator of the universe to be its own Russian God, belonging to no one else and unknown by others; it put its local Church in place of the universal Church. Being conceitedly satisfied with this, it acknowledged its local Church ritual to be inviolably sacred, its religious understanding to be the norm and correction of theology. (Kliuchevskii 2005, 505)

The fall of the Orthodox East only enhanced this conceit:

I answered them (the Church patriarch) thusly for Christ: O you teachers of Christendom. Rome fell away long ago and lies prostrate. The Poles fell in similar ruin with her, being enemies of the Christian to the end. Among you orthodoxy is a mongrel breed. It is no wonder if—by the violence of the Turkish Mahound<sup>155</sup>—you have become impotent. It is you who should come to us to learn. Autocracy<sup>156</sup> exists among us by the gift of God. Under our pious princes and tsars—until the time of Nikon the apostate—our Russia and our orthodox faith remained pure and undefiled. There was no sedition in the church. (“Life of Archpriest Avvakum”)

We should remember that from the fifteenth century onward, the authority of Greek Orthodoxy had begun to decline in medieval Russia. The gravest reproach to Byzantium was the 1439 Union of Florence, which proclaimed the union of the Eastern and Western Churches. After the complete rupture between the Greek and Roman Churches in the eleventh century, the relations between the Eastern/Western Churches were at first unfriendly and then, after the defilement of the Greek holy places during the Crusades, openly hostile. The attempt to reunify the Orthodox and Catholic Churches was a profound insult to the religious feelings of the medieval Russian people. After all, the union, which allowed the Orthodox “white” clergy to continue to marry, services to be held in native languages, and Orthodox rites to be preserved, adopted Catholic dogmas: that the Roman pontiff was head of the universal Church and the vicar of Christ on earth; that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son; and purgatory.

A few years after the Union of Florence, Tsar’grad (Constantinople) was conquered by the Turks: here came the punishment, the sign of the final fall of Orthodoxy in the East. The first Rome had fallen, and Tsar’grad and “the second Rome” had too. The third and final Rome was Moscow, from then on the true guardian of true Orthodoxy.

During a visit to Moscow in 1589, Patriarch Jeremias II of Constantinople consecrated Metropolitan Job of Moscow as Patriarch of All Russia. In this way, the separation of the Russian Church from the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which in fact had taken place long ago, was finally confirmed.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Russian ecclesiastical community, “emboldened by the political misfortunes of the Orthodox East” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 503), had come to the final conviction that Orthodox Russia was the only guardian of the Christian faith, and the Russian local Church possessed the plenitude of the universal consciousness. Thus, in the medieval Russian citizen’s mind, the Russian Church stood in place of the Universal Church, the mystical, union of all believers crowned by the God-man, those living with God and those who had lived with Him before.

Having acknowledged itself to be the Universal Church, Russian ecclesiastical society “could not allow any checks on its beliefs and rituals from outside” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 504). Hence, Russian ecclesiastical society was becoming more and more strongly convinced that “it had already assimilated everything necessary to save the believer, and there was nothing more to learn, nothing to borrow in the affairs of faith and no-one to borrow it from, and it was left only to guard the received treasure with care” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 504).

In this way, the medieval Russian consciousness, having admitted the sanctity of the church rituals preserved by the local tradition, cultivated in itself “a suspicious and arrogant attitude to the involvement of reason and scientific knowledge in matters of faith” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 504).

Avvakum’s dispute with Nikon was not theological. The Archpriest refused to admit the Greek ritual not because it was of a later origin. “After all, Avvakum defended not ancient, but customary Orthodoxy, and these are not the same thing at all” (Gumilev 2010, 276).

E. E. Golubinskii, one of the most authoritative church historians, has long since proven that at the time of the adoption and establishment of Christianity in Rus’, the Byzantines used two Church typica, those of Jerusalem and Stoudios, which contained discrepancies in their rites. But it is the typica that contain the complete instructions for determining both the contents and the order of divine services for each day of the year. In Moscow Rus’, the Jerusalem Typicon was followed; the Greeks and the “Little Russians” (Ukrainians) followed the Stoudite Typicon. Yet, to reiterate, it was not history that nourished the confidence of the martyrs of the Schism.

Therefore it would be a gross hermeneutical error to evaluate Archpriest Avvakum’s position proceeding not from the Archpriest’s own arguments but from the scientific grounds cited by modern historians. Still, such errors are made even by outstanding scholars:

Among Nikon's innovations at which the schismatics were particularly indignant, two were extremely important: changing the position of fingers while making the sign of the cross, and changing the wording of the eighth part of the Creed.

In Medieval Rus', people crossed themselves with two fingers. . . . At first, in the whole Christian East, the sign of the cross was made with one finger. However, later, when the monophysites interpreted this custom symbolically as proving that their views on the exclusively divine nature of Christ were correct, the two-fingered cross was introduced: this was to symbolize the two natures of Christ, of God and Man at the same time.

Supporters of the Orthodox Church were identified by this sign of the cross, in contrast to monophysites. Therefore, *this ancient symbol had its own historical basis* [here and further: my emphasis —O.V.]. Yet later, long after Christianity had adopted by the Russians, the Greeks . . . started to make it with three fingers, which was supposed to symbolize the Holy Trinity. But this was completely unnecessary, because, since the rejection of Arianism (the heresy of the presbyter of the 4th century Arius, who mistook eternity for infinitely prolonged time and taught that the Son of God was not co-eternal with the Father, but that He was a special higher creation, and therefore that there was a time when He had not existed), the Trinity was not doubted by anyone. In the entire Christian East there was not a single sect that opposed this dogma. The introduction of the new sign of the cross with three fingers was not, therefore, due to church-historical reasons, but was based only on the typical Greek tendency for mystical and symbolic constructions. . . .

The eighth part of the Creed in the old Russian text read: "And (I believe) in the Holy Spirit, the *True* Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father. . . ." The southern Slavs and Ukrainians read this passage like this: "And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father . . ." *It can be scientifically proven that the Moscow text was original and prior, and the other one arose from a misunderstanding.* But now it was this text that was introduced, and the ancient one was banned. In other words, it was forbidden to call the Holy Spirit true, and this could only be interpreted as blasphemy against the Spirit. *Consequently, the indignation of the schismatics was understandable and justified.* (Trubetzkoy 1995, 615–16)

Archpriest's Avvakum's "arguments" are of an absolutely different nature, opposed to any grounding in history, including ecclesiastical history:

**Бог благословит: мучься за сложение перъст, не разсуждай много!  
 А я с тобою же за сие о Христе умрети готов. Аще я и несмыслен  
 гораздо, неукя человек, да и то знаю, что вся в церкви, от святых  
 отец преданная, свята и непорочна суть. Держу до смерти яко же  
 приях: не прелагаю предел вечных, до нас положено: лежи оно, так во  
 веки веком!**

Glory to God! *Suffer tortures for the way you place your fingers. Do not reason much.* I am ready to die with you for this and for Christ. If I am a foolish man without learning, yet I know this: that *all the traditions of the church, handed down to us by the holy fathers, are holy and incorrupt.* I keep them as I received them even unto death. I will not falsify the eternal boundaries—those that were *laid down before our days. Let it remain so to all eternity.* (“Life of Archpriest Avvakum”)

If we intend to authenticate the historically significant typological status of a text by clarifying the principle of the correlation of form and content in it, we must understand that if the task is approached in this way, it is erroneous to take into account external justifications (for example, offered by the academic discipline of history) for the resolutive part of this reasoning (for example, that it is necessary to cross oneself with two fingers and not with three). Otherwise, we will distort the principle of correlation of form and content inherent in the studied text and impose on both the text and its author the features that are not characteristic of them. However, the fact that we have no right to take into account the arguments of academic history in the dispute between supporters and opponents of the Church reform when reconstructing the semantic structure of the “Life of Archpriest Avvakum” does not mean that we should not be aware of this argumentation.

### **REGRETS ABOUT WHAT HAS BEEN LOST: RECONSTRUCTING THE “HIGH-STYLE” WORLDVIEW CODE**

The ideals the medieval written culture would be taken up again in the eighteenth century in the rhetorical structure of the “high style.”

The well-known dispute between M. V. Lomonosov and A. P. Sumarokov, which ended in the latter’s defeat during his life and victory in history, became a sign of the modern era. The logic of the development of the Russian literary language customarily referred to as modern, and which is considered to have been established by A. S. Pushkin, coincides with Sumarokov’s aesthetic and ideological position. But before discussing the gains of this historical victory, let us try to understand the losses it had brought.

Let us try to ignore the recognizable algorithm of thoughts like: “The three contexts or three styles of the literary language did not cover the genres of translated ‘European’ literature,” or “The differentiation of styles in this theory was neither historical, nor etymological, but normatively systematizing” (Vinogradov 1982, 136).

Of the three styles distinguished by Lomonosov, he himself, as a theorist, as a writer, and as a person, was interested only in the high style. His “Rheto-

ric,” which is completely devoted to the high style, serves as visible proof of this. Literature and life were linked in the eighteenth-century Russian mind as inseparably as word and deed were in the medieval mind.

“Lomonosov had two passions: patriotism and the love of science” (Sviatopolk-Mirskii 2008, 64). Only the high-style genres corresponded to his emotions, and the lofty intellectual semantics of the Church Slavonic language were the only possible means of expressing them verbally. It was a worldview model for which the high style was an ontological invariant value rather than the result of some personal, subjective attitude. In the same way, the understanding of “good” or “evil” in the theological space is not the result of the author’s positive or negative attitude toward the depicted object; it is the verification of an essence independent of the human mind, an essence *per se*.

But how do the practical principles of text construction fit into the ontological worldview of the high style? What is the result of the rhetorically prescribed necessity of finding, for each element of the original statement, a balance between gender and species, part and whole; of choosing words of similar or opposite meaning; of being attuned to etymology, of outlining the range of definitions for each element, and refining each of them by consistently answering the questions “who?” “what?” “how?” “what for?” “in which way?” “when?” Yet what other force, except the author’s directed will, is capable of inducing a text to be created?

No speculative answer to this question can be as convincing as personal emotions; besides, it does not possess the evidentiary strength that only personal experience can give. We, too, can acquire such experience, if we walk at least part of the path laid out in Lomonosov’s “Rhetoric” while speculating, for instance, on the well-known maxim “good overcomes evil.” The theme of “good overcomes evil” is arranged in verbal series depicting ideas by means of synonymy and antonymy:

*Good.* We find words of like meaning: *a good (useful) deed, benefit, benevolence, beneficence, charity, donation, favor, service, truth . . .*

We find synonymous expressions: *everything good, positive, aimed at good; strict piety in actions; what is honest and useful; everything that our duty requires of us . . .*

We select adjectives: *kind, good, beneficent, blessed, benevolent, sacrificial, virtuous, noble, valiant, good-natured, kindhearted, humane, caring, sincere, compassionate, cordial, sympathetic, sensitive . . .*

The opposite notions: *evil, wickedness, malice, malevolence, disaster, grief . . .*

Then we answer the questions.

Who? *A kindhearted man.*

What? *Is ready to help.*



In which way? *To be useful.*

How? *Manifesting pity, compassion, kindness of heart.*

When? *When someone needs it.*

*Evil.* Again, we find words of like meaning: *evil, wickedness, grief, misfortune, unhappiness, trouble, discontent, anger, annoyance, irritation, lies, spiteful deeds, malice . . .*

We select synonymous expressions: *the source of ills; to do something for spite, to vex, to disgust, to insult . . .*

We select adjectives: *evil, bad, wicked, hurting, harmful; cruel, causing evil to others; hurtful, pernicious, disastrous, destructive, angry, vindictive, malicious, spiteful . . .*

The opposite notions: *good, virtue, truth.*

We answer the questions.

Who? *The devil, Satan; he whose soul has turned to evil, the adversary of everything good.*

What? *Is striving to do harm to people.*

In which way? *Inflicting pain, taking pleasure from sufferings of others.*

How? *By causing irritation, vexing.*

The same procedures should be followed with the verb “overcomes.”

Of course, the meaning of a word is formed only in context, and only repeated reproduction of the context allows a contextual meaning to become a lexical unit and hence be recognizable without any contextual support. The search for synonyms (“words of like meaning”) and antonyms (“words with opposite meaning”) for a word takes us back to the very beginning: to the involuntary restoration of the contexts that have been lost by the “everyday consciousness.” The longer the series of mutually specifying similar and opposite words, the clearer the contours of the initial sense-forming contexts become. The seemingly fruitless pattern “some good in some way overcomes some evil” is filled with an intense content; it is spiritualized. The struggle between good and evil acquires a substantial, essential character; it becomes a struggle between Good and Evil. The content of evil is clarified; the abstraction becomes visible, material. Evil cannot be unobtrusive, insignificant. It is always huge: it is not just evil, but *evil-doing, evil deeds*. It is always directed, and it is directed against someone, *to cause harm, destruction, annihilation, disgust, vexation, pain*, and therefore entails deep suffering, *anguish, distress, grief, misfortune, disaster*. Evil is always *a lie*. A lie because something that does not exist always proceeds from someone, from the person who has invented it. Lies come from nonbeing, and evil comes from nonbeing.

Thus, evil becomes not only *something that must be overcome, conquered, defeated, disseminated, weakened* but also *someone who must be overcome, conquered, defeated, disseminated, weakened*.

But evil outside us and inside us is overcome by spiritual, not physical force: by *sacrifice, pity, heartiness, compassion, valor* . . .

The more we specify, the more obvious the predetermination of interpretation becomes, conditioned by the system of semantic oppositions and still retaining the relic remnants of the long-lost worldview. Thus, step by step, the rhetorical rules of the “high style” reveal themselves as the key that opens and, as with respect to our time, revives the worldview code of language.

The complex, multidimensional way in which this code is set down makes the vector of interpretation triggered by rhetorical rules so actively powerful that it easily straddles more than two hundred years in time and communicates its will to a young person who is far removed from metaphysical meditations about good and evil and is merely completing a university assignment on experimental rhetoric in the early twenty-first century.

Any retrospective criticism of Lomonosov’s theory of three styles for being limited and schematic now acquires a thoroughly faded pastel hue, if it does not disappear altogether. The three contexts derived by Lomonosov, in fact, did not cover the genres of the translated European literature; Lomonosov, who had “been made a nobleman by service, mastered the way of life of the nobility but internally remained a stranger to the noble milieu” (Chernov 1935, 135), consciously excluded these genres from the sphere of his attention.

The demarcation of styles in his theory was, in fact, neither “historical” nor “etymological.” It was essential, but outwardly it appeared to be “normatively systematizing.” Lomonosov’s “Rhetoric” was written in Russian, rather than in a “Church” language (either “Slavonic” or Latin), and it was perceived as a demonstration of exceptional democratic audacity. Yet having outwardly violated the centuries-old order, according to which “verbal composition” was an organic part of theology and therefore remained part of ecclesiastical higher education, Lomonosov, with his inner disposition toward the “high style,” manifested an uninterrupted connection with the intellectual and spiritual heritage of the medieval world outlook. The mechanics of the “high style,” whether we like it or not, brought and still bring to the surface the former, stable foundations of ethical principles according to which good and evil had not yet been displaced.

The literary efforts of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Russian authors were aimed at “overcoming the artificial separation of the three styles,” beginning with the destruction of the boundaries between the high and the middle style. This destruction of boundaries destroyed the high style. The destruction of the high style was followed not simply by the destruction of the integrity of a certain linguistic substance genetically derived from the Church Slavonic language but also by the social loss of moral thought that

was coded in language and dynamically revealed in the dynamic development of constructive models worked out by rhetorical rules of the high style.

### THE UTTER COLLAPSE OF THE HIGH IN A. S. PUSHKIN'S LITERARY EXPERIMENTS

In the progressive evolution of human consciousness, the medieval outlook on the world was gradually ousted by a secular perception of the world. The formation of a new consciousness cannot but affect the semantic structure of the word. The ethical wholeness of the Old Russian word, which excluded the covering spiritual and carnal content with the same grapho-phonetic sequence, was replaced by a new manner. Now the worthy and the unworthy, the lofty and the ordinary can be expressed by one and the same sign. The semantic transformation of the sacral word will be seen to be a turning point and evidence of the irrevocable loss of the medieval way of life.

The sense-forming environment of the new kind will be called the “modern Russian literary language,” although it would be more accurate to speak about a secular literary language, with its emergence being permanently associated with the name of “the first Russian poet.”

Pushkin creates contexts that destroy the semantic structure of the high word. The semantic interaction of the high and the low set up by the closeness of syntactic links works only in one direction: the low ousts the high. The measure of damage can be clarified by means of restoring of the primary high concept as fully as possible.

To estimate the scope of semantic transformation of, say, the word *duchovnik* “confessor” in its formerly unthinkable interaction with the attribute *lukavyi* “devious,” it is necessary to cross the boundaries of the lexical meaning of the word delineated by explanatory dictionaries: “spiritual father, confessor, priest, to whom people confess their sins” (Dal’ 1978), “a priest who regularly hears someone’s confession” (Slovar’ russkogo iazyka v 4 tt., 1985–1988), and to refresh the meanings at the level of the concept:

- a priest is a person who has received the particular grace of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of ordination;
- grace is the divine power that the Lord sends to man to help save his soul and overcome sinful thoughts;
- grace bestowed in the sacrament of ordination vests the ordinand with a special spiritual authority to guide believers in fulfilling the Christian moral law and to perform sacraments;

- the given grace remains with the priest perpetually;
- the divine institution of the sacrament of ordination is attested in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition;
- priesthood and confession, as well as baptism, chrismation, communion, marriage, and extreme unction, are sacraments, sacred symbolic actions through which the grace of the Holy Spirit is transmitted to a person and the connection of man to God is realized;
- the priest to whom the believer entrusts the guidance of his spiritual life and the performance of the sacrament of confession becomes a confessor;
- the confessor obtains the right to free a person from the bondage of sin;
- not every priest is ready to become a confessor;
- the main qualities of a confessor are humility, discretion, and love;
- a spiritual guide not only directs the spiritual life of his spiritual son but also comforts him, helps him by giving advice, prays for him, that is, entreats God on his behalf for mercy, forgiveness, and the aversion of evil;
- under the fear of losing spiritual dignity, the confessor is forbidden to disclose the sins of the penitent or reproach him for them;

and so on, and so on, and so on, revealing and refining each semantic element arising in the explanation.

The more fully we restore the content of the high concept, the more noticeable both the uninterrupted interconnectedness of spiritual meanings becomes, along with their catastrophic collapse owing to the violation of the principle of combining the high with the high that had been typical for the Middle Ages.

In Pushkin's 1815 Lyceum poem, written in response to A. A. Delvig's enthusiastic epistle "Pushkin" published in *Rossiiskii muzeum*, the expression "devious confessor" ("лукавый духовник") is a part of the poet's periphrastic address to his friend:

*Послушай, мұз невинных  
Лукавый духовник . . .*

But it is not Delvig and his poetic gift that are the semantic center of the poem; it is rather the creative calling of the author himself:

*Послушай, мұз невинных  
Лукавый духовник:  
В тиши полей пустынных,  
Природы ученик,  
Поэтов грешный лик  
Умножил я собою . . .*

**И я главою поник  
 Пред милой суетою.  
 Жуковский, наш поэт,  
 На то мне дал совет  
 И с музами сосватал.**

Listen, you devious confessor  
 of innocent muses:  
 In the silence of the deserted fields,  
 Nature's disciple,  
 I enlarged through myself  
 The sinful choir of poets . . .  
 And I have bent my head  
 Before sweet vanity.  
 Zhukovsky, our poet,  
 has given me advice  
 And matched me with the muses.

(Aleksandr Pushkin, 1815)

(The word-for-word English translations of Pushkin's poems here and further were done by the translators of the book).

While on the semantic periphery of the poem, the expression “devious confessor of innocent muses” damages the epicenter of lofty meanings in the Russian literary language, even though the general significance of this expression, which denotes nothing but a poet, lies at first glance beyond ethics: “he who is cheerful and playful, to whom inspiration trusts his secrets.” Yet the animating element of poetry generates images, not abstract meanings: acquiring corporeality in connection with their epithet, the muses (“innocent muses”) cease to be a conditional, symbolic designation of inspiration and art. However, it is not the evocation of images from antiquity that testifies to the profound transformation that had taken place in the Russian mind but the dissociation of sign and meaning in the word “confessor,” which is achieved by combining entities taken from ethical opposites: “confessor” and “devious.” The extreme degree of syntactic dependence in the noun–adjective agreement provides a maximum of semantic tension, which, when the high is combined with the base, results in a strictly directed transformation of a high word: the low suppresses the high. The low persists. The high is destroyed.

The sense-destroying potential of a syntactically strong connection turns out to be so powerful that a high word becomes implicated in the process of self-destruction. The linear relationship leads the ethically significant words beyond the customary range of cooccurrence.

Due to the conditions of the immediate context, it does not matter whether the secular meaning of the word *lukavyi* “devious” had already been formed and assimilated, “filled with cheerful enthusiasm, playfulness” (Slovar’ russkogo iazyka v 4 tt., 1985–1988), or that the word was initially associated with the Lord’s Prayer (*НО ИЗБАВИ НАС ОТ ЛУКАВАГО* “but deliver us from the evil one”), and hence with the enemy of mankind, and thus regained the historically preceding meanings: “cunning and willful, insidious, secretive and evil, deceptive and dangerous, crooked, pretentious, hypocritical and malicious” (Dal’ 1979). In any case, the ethically significant meaning was to be revived in Pushkin’s poem. Otherwise, the high meaning of the word “confessor” would not be destroyed so irrevocably. Without the syntactically strong connection of the word “devious” and the word “confessor,” the ethically significant meaning of the word “devious” would have not been recalled. The combination of the word “sly” with ethically neutral words (“devious look,” “devious eyes”) may not have recalled the ethically significant meaning of “insidious, evil.”

The contexts generated by the poet have such a powerful sense-changing force that the formation of new meanings in a new poetic context changes not only the semantic structure of the word but the very organizing principle of the semantic structure of a Russian word. The secular mind removes the sharpness of ethical evaluation: in derived meanings the secular mind either reduces the ethical principle or is distracted from it. The historical significance of the contexts created by Pushkin is determined not by the aesthetic value of the emerging poetic reality but by the degree of damage to the semantic organization of the medieval literary language.

It is not the semantic transformation of every Church Slavonic word but that of an ethically significant one, of a word reflecting the Christian idea of the distinction between good and evil, that serves as an indicator for the changing consciousness. The criterion for singling out such words is their meaning, not the external (phonetic and morphological) features of Church Slavonic.

The fact that the integral space of Pushkin’s poetic reality contains both images dating back to antiquity and images associated with Christian culture is only a superficial manifestation of the secularized worldview. The connection of these literary images with their prototypes is equally superficial, and therefore while their interaction remains a given in poetry, it does not become a given for the literary language. These images are taken from different temporal layers and worldviews from throughout human history and are indicators of both the author’s erudition and the triteness of artistic reasoning.

The change in the semantic organization of the Russian word is affected not by the interaction of images at the compositional level (muse/confessor)

but by the linear interaction of words (*lukavyi duchovnik* “devious confessor,” *duchovnik muz* “confessor of muses”).

Furthermore, not all blasphemies, even very obvious ones, affect changes in the semantic structure of the literary language:

**На этих днях, среди собора,  
Митрополит, седой обжора,  
Перед обедом невзначай  
Велед жить долго всей России  
И с сыном птички и Марии  
Пошел христосоваться в рай**

On these days, in the cathedral,  
The Metropolitan, that hoary glutton,  
Before dinner quite accidentally  
Proclaimed “Long live!” to all of Russia  
And with the son of the birdie and Mary  
Went to Paradise to exchange the triple kiss

(Aleksandr Pushkin, 1821)

The fact that in this 1821 poem, the Holy Spirit, symbolically depicted as a dove, is called “a birdie” by the “first Russian poet,” and the God-man is described as “the son of the birdie and Mary,” cannot be regarded as anything other than blasphemy. Yet the change in the semantic structure of the Russian literary language would be affected not by these defiantly scandalous expressions but rather by a seemingly much milder manifestation of antireligiousness, namely by the periphrastic expression for dying: “went to Paradise to exchange the triple kiss.” In this periphrasis, the sacral meaning of “christosovanie” (exchanging a triple kiss and the greeting “Christ is risen!” “He is risen indeed!” as an Easter greeting, on the occasion of the celebration of the overcoming of absolute evil, death) is replaced with its semantic antipode. The blasphemy manifesting itself on the level of the imagery or the subject matter (“with the son of the birdie and Maria”) works only within the category of the poetic. The blasphemy rooted in the level of language, and which, consequently, changes the semantic structure of a high (sacral) word, may transcend the boundaries of poetry, enter the semantic reality of the literary language as a whole, and define the consciousness not only of the poet’s readers but of all speakers of this language. Blasphemy at the level of language, which establishes the vector of semantic transformation of a formerly high word, alters the principle of the correlation between form and meaning in the language as such.

This very same poem by Pushkin, addressed to V. L. Davydov, gives us examples of the semantic transformation of several highly sacral words:

*evkharistiia* “Eucharist,” *voskresenie* “Resurrection,” *spasenie* “Salvation,” *prichashchenie* “Communion”:

**Вот евхаристия другая,  
Когда и ты, и милый брат,  
Перед камином надевая  
Демократический халат,  
Спасенья чашу наполняли  
Беспенной, мерзлую струей  
И за здоровье тех и той  
До дна, до капли выпивали! . . .  
Но те в Неаполе шалят,  
А та едва ли там воскреснет . . .  
Народы тишины хотят,  
И долго их ярем не треснет.  
Ужель надежды луч исчез?  
Но нет!—мы счастьем насладимся,  
Кровавой чаши причастимся—  
И я скажу: Христос воскрес.**

Here is *another eucharist*,  
When both you and my dear brother,  
Before the fireplace putting on  
Democratic dressing-gowns,  
Filled the *cup of salvation*  
With a frothless, frozen stream  
And for the health of them and her  
Down to the bottom, drank it dry! . . .  
But *those* in Naples are naughty,  
And *she* will hardly be resurrected there . . .  
The peoples want silence,  
And their bond will long not crack.  
Has the ray of hope disappeared?  
But no!—we will enjoy happiness,  
Communicate with *the bloody chalice*  
And I will say: “Christ is risen!”

(Aleksandr Pushkin, 1821)

The contexts that form ethically neutral secular meanings (*Eucharist*: “main occupation, main thing”; *resurrection*: “return, repetition, rebirth”) of an originally sacral word or ethically opposite meanings (*communicate*: “join in something bloody: an insurrection, rebellion, revolution”) equally undermine the previous organizing principle of the semantic structure of the Russian word. A sign that had previously been associated only with a high meaning acquires the potential to denote anything, from the neutral to the base.



All words of Church Slavonic origin would eventually be semantically transformed in Pushkin's work: the names of God, the names of sacraments, the ideas of resurrection, repentance, communion, salvation, apostleship . . . and with the change in the semantic structure of these words, the organizing principle of the semantic structure of the entire literary language was altered. It does not matter whether the primary (sacral) values were later renewed in the texts of Pushkin and other authors, and whether the author's worldview changed or not; in any case the high meaning ceased to be the only one and became one of the possible meanings of a once-sacred sign.

In the works of the first Russian poet, the medieval word would die for good. The destruction of the medieval principle of form–content correlation would lead to the sign becoming conditional. The speaker of such a language is an involuntary bearer of the secular consciousness.

## Chapter Eleven

# Desacralization as the Main Vector of Historical Change in the Semantic Structure of the Russian Literary Language

The progressive secularization of the mind will inevitably find expression in a gradual change of contexts, leading to changes in the principle of the semantic organization of the spiritual word comprising the basis of the medieval worldview and hence, ultimately, to a change in the semantic structure of the Russian literary language. The new mind no longer thinks in contexts, as the medieval scribe did; it operates in terms of dictionary meanings. The downward motion from the height of symbolic meanings to literal perception is visible evidence of the loss of the religious worldview, yet it remains invisible to those who are losing it.

Whereas the semantic integrity of the books of the Old and New Testament was continually renewed by the medieval mind, the secularized mind begins to single out phrases, images, and subjects from the perfect semantic continuity of the divinely inspired books to describe the facts of everyday life. Torn from the canonical sense-forming context, the signs are inevitably alienated from the sacred essence, or desacralized. The symbolic meanings of the signs extracted from canonical texts, which attested to the authenticity of the invisible being, are the first to be destroyed.

The words of the righteous Job, “the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,” can be unmistakably recognized in the familiar expression **Бог дал, Бог и взял** “God gave, and God has taken away,” which is regularly repeated both in literature and in everyday life. Yet finding out the source is not the same thing as finding out the meaning, both the original biblical one and the everyday, transformed one.

The meaning of the expression “God gave, and God has taken away” flows from one dictionary to another as “by this phrase humility or comfort is expressed at someone’s death or loss.” The dictionaries, as a rule, refer to three classical or almost classical sources: V. I. Dal’s story “Michman Potse-

luev, ili Oglanis', zhivuchi'" ("Midshipman Potseluyev, or Turn Back While Living") (1841), D. N. Mamin-Sibiriak's novel *Tri kontsa* (The Three Ends) (1890), and F. V. Gladkov's novel *Likhaia godina* (Evil Days) (1954):

**У меня умрет сын, отец, жена, сгорит дом, пропадет именьё, я обнищаю—и у меня, вслед за бедою, родится смирение: Бог дал, Бог и взял, говорю я . . . поплачу . . . и приступлю вновь к смиренной жизни своей!**

My son, my father, my wife will die, my house will burn down, my fortune will be lost, and, after the disaster, humility will arise in me: *God gave, and God has taken away*, I say . . . I'll weep . . . and *return* to my humble life! (Dal', "Michman Potseluev")

- **Оберут они тебя, твои-то приказчики,—спорила Анфиса Егоровна,— за всем не угладишь.**
- **Только бы я кого не обокрал . . . — смеялся Груздев.—И так надо сказать: Бог дал, Бог и взял. Роптать не следует.**

"They'll rob you, these clerks of yours," Anfisa Yegorovna argued, "you cannot look over everything."

"Let it just not be me who robs someone . . ." Gruzdev laughed. "And if so, I'll say: *God gave, God has taken away*. We should not complain." (Mamin-Sibiriak, *Tri kontsa*)

**На деда и отца смерть Паши, казалось, не произвела впечатления. Дедущка перекрестился, взглянул на иконы, и с равнодушной покорностью сказал:**

**—Чего же сделаешь? Бог дал, Бог и взял. Всяк от земли и в землю отыдет.**

Grandfather and father seemed unimpressed by Pasha's death. Grandfather crossed himself, glanced at the icons and said with indifferent submission: "Now what can we do? *God gave, God has taken away*. For every man is dust and to dust shall he return." (Gladkov, *Likhaia godina*)

How well do the selected contexts correspond to the meaning preceding these contexts? The question, it would seem, is void. After all, literary examples are given in a dictionary to verify the meaning, and vice versa: the meaning in question can be derived reliably from the selected contexts. And yet an actual correspondence with this derived meaning, or, to be more precise, with the first part of it ("to express humility"), can be found only in Dal's story. The expression *God gave, God has taken away* appears here in the center of a contextual ring, the boundaries of which are outlined by almost synonymous words: "humility will arise," "God gave, and God has

taken away,” “return to my humble life.” Such contextual support makes the interpretation unequivocal: the phrase *God gave, and God has taken away* is an expression of humility.

The context surrounding the expression *God gave, and God has taken away* in Mamin-Sibiriak’s novel forms a different semantic structure for this saying. Here, the meaning of the saying *God gave, and God has taken away* is balancing between two possibilities: ≈ “to have not—to have” (“I’ll be robbed—I’ll rob”) and the “expression of humility” with which we are already familiar (“we should not complain”):

“They’ll rob you.”—“Let it not be me who robs someone.”

“God gave, and God has taken away.”

“We should not complain.”

As for Gladkov’s novel, here the meaning of the saying *God gave, and God has taken away* has nothing in common even superficially with the expression of humility and is in no way connected with consolation: it is nothing but a ready formula to express a lack of concern (“seemed unimpressed by death”) and indifference (“said with indifferent submission”).

So how could an open expression of indifference and lack of concern have been taken to be words of consolation? How can we explain this fact? Was it inattention? Or negligence? Could it be repeated, egregious carelessness? Such an explanation is convenient but dubious.

The example from Mamin-Sibiriak’s novel cannot be explained in terms of any sort of inattention. In fact, why did they not take a different context from the same novel, a context in which the meaning of the popular saying is associated with nothing else than the concept of humility? As it happens, in both cases, “God gave, God has taken away” is said by the same character, Gruzdev:

—Ох, было поезжено, Никон Авденч! . . . А теперь вот на своих двоих катим. Что же, я не ропщу,—бог дал, бог и взял. Даже это весьма необходимо для человека, чтобы его господь смирял. Человек превознесется, задурит, зафордыбачит,—а тут ему вдруг крышка. Поневоле одумается.

—Правильно, Самойло Евтихыч.

“Oh, how much time was spent on wheels, Nikon Avdeich! . . . And now we are going on our own two feet. Well, I’m not complaining, *God gave and God has taken away*. Now, a man needs to be *humbled by God*. A man could get proud, conceited, big-headed, and suddenly get in a scrape. He would come round then, whether he wants to or not.”

“Right you are, Samoilo Evtikhych.” (Mamin-Sibiriak, *Tri kontsa*)

The example from Gladkov’s novel is of a different kind. For here it is not a matter of the purity of the example but about an anti-example being taken as

an example. Perhaps a certain inertia of perception is at work here, such that the compilers and editors of lexicographical works have failed to see the context that had replaced the expected meaning with the diametrically opposite one. Let us assume that this is the situation. In this case, we must admit that both the context that appears in Gladkov's novel and the meaning formed by this context are paradoxical (and therefore unique, that is, individual and non-repeating). True, the metamorphoses that had taken place in the mind of a man from a patriarchal Old-Believer peasant family who became a famous Soviet writer and member of the Bolshevik Party could be absolutely unpredictable.

However, such an explanation must also be rejected. The reason is simple: the meaning of the expression "God gave and God has taken" that we have deduced from Gladkov's novel is reproduced regularly and in different contexts. The encyclopedic dictionary of biblical phraseological units (Dubrovina 2010) contains these contexts:

**В России по-прежнему нет общества, которое умеет и хочет что-то спрашивать с власти. Народ, как и всю последнюю тысячу лет, безмолвствует, никакие телевизионные и газетные залпы его не будят. Люди фаталистически принимают все происходящее—*"Бог дал, Бог и взял."***

In Russia there is still no society able and willing to demand responsibility from the authorities. The people, as over the last thousand years, are silent, and no volleys from the television and newspapers will wake them up. The people *fatalistically accept everything that happens*: "God gave, God has taken away." (*Segodnia*, 25.08.2000);

**Старинная патриархальная семья основывалась на балансе рождений и смертей: *Бог дал, Бог взял.***

The old patriarchal family was based on the *balance of births and deaths*: "God gave, and God has taken away." (*Economicheskaya Gazeta*, 11.09.2001);

**Не стоит, земляне, слишком мрачно судить о неизбежном. Как говорят оптимисты: *Бог дал, Бог взял. То есть хоть теряешь, но дареное.***

You, men of earth, should not be too gloomy about the inevitable. As the optimists say, "*God gave, and God has taken.*" *You do lose something, but you lose what has been given to you as a gift.* (*Moskovskaya Pravda*, 05.07.2001);

**"Мужская сила—это мистическая вещь. *Бог дал—Бог и взял. А если уж потеряете, то никакие шпанские мушки вам, батенька, не помогут!*"—так наставлял своих пациентов доктор в одном из чеховских рассказов.**

Virile energy is a mystical thing. *God gave, God has taken away. And if you lose it, no blister beetles will help*, as the doctor instructed his patients in Chekhov's story. (MK, 20.05.2001)

It turns out that fatalism can be mistaken as humility, and “plus/minus” arithmetical entities, such as “was born/died,” “was given/was lost,” “there is/there is not” can be mistaken as consolation just as unconditionally as indifference was mistaken for consolation.

But what feeds such a peculiar perception that leaves the obvious unnoticed? Perhaps it is the unconditional authority of the biblical source that triggers this exclusively stable perception? In this case, we have nothing to do but to make sure that in the biblical context—Job's words “the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away”—have the meaning that is attributed to them by phraseological dictionaries.

Usually dictionaries refer to the Bible: “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly” (Job 1:20–22, KJV). Dictionaries also report the events preceding these words: Job's righteousness was put to the test, and he straightaway lost his worldly possessions and all his children perished.

The constructive structure of the fragment cited resists this proposed interpretation. Job's words are placed after “the words of the author,” in which physical actions performed by Job are listed successively, one after another: first he arose, then rent his mantle, then shaved his head, then fell down to the ground, then worshiped, then spoke. Job's words consist of three parts, the first two of which are constructively similar to each other:

*Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither (1);  
the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away (2).*

The constructive parallelism provokes semantic parallelism: the first parts of the first and second utterances and the second parts of the first and second utterance begin to interact semantically:

*Naked came I out of my mother's womb ~ the Lord gave;  
And naked shall I return thither ~ and the Lord hath taken.*

Now it is clear that the words “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away” cannot be interpreted without being correlated with the preceding statement: “Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return

thither.” When these two statements are correlated, the words “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away” receive a very definite meaning: “The Lord gave life, the Lord has taken life back.”

But can the words “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away” not be interpreted as an expression of humility, proceeding not from the previous statement but rather from Job’s subsequent utterance “blessed be the name of the Lord!” and the “author’s” explanation: “In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly”? In other words: is it possible, proceeding from this fragment, to come to the conclusion that Job obediently accepted the death of his children as a manifestation of the will of God and did not murmur against God, for that would be the expression of humility? As soon as we have reformulated the question, it becomes clear that the context is insufficient to confirm or disprove the alleged meaning reliably. We must thus expand the context, but in order to define the limits of this expansion, it is necessary to read “The Book of Job,” one of the most difficult parts of the Bible to understand.

Job’s righteousness is actually put to the test, but by Satan, and not by God. This is done with God’s permission:

Now it came to pass on the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, that Satan also came among them. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered Jehovah, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and turneth away from evil. Then Satan answered Jehovah, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thy hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah. (Job 1:6–12, ASV)

The disaster inflicted upon Job by Satan did not make him “curse” the Lord:

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

But Job, who knows he is innocent, does not accept his sufferings as his due. He curses both the hour of his birth and the hour of his conception: “Let the day perish wherein I was born, And the night which said, There is a man-child conceived” (Job 3:3, ASV).

Rejecting the explanations of his friends, he demands an answer from God:

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me;  
Show me wherefore thou contendest with me. . . .  
That thou inquirest after mine iniquity,  
And searchest after my sin,  
Although thou knowest that I am not wicked,  
And there is none that can deliver out of thy hand? (Job 10:2, 6–7, ASV)

God admits that Job is right before his friends but does not reveal the cause of his calamities to him. God will not return Job's dead children to him; "new" children will be borne by him:

So Jehovah blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: and he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. . . . And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days. (Job 42:12–13, 16–17, ASV)

So the Book of Job asks questions that are painful for any person: "Why does the righteous man suffer? Why do the wicked flourish?" It brings these questions to the point of desperate futility and leaves them unanswered.

The semantic integrity of the Book of Job does not make it possible to interpret Job's life as an embodiment of unruffled humility. But in spite of the complex semantic course of the biblical text, the image of the righteous Job extracted from the absolute semantic continuity of the Old Testament has become a symbol of unbroken humility. In the same way, the words "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away," spoken by Job when he was in utter despair and desiring death as an escape from unbearable mental anguish, acquired an isolated existence and began to serve as an expression of humility.

Awareness of the fact that the semantic structure of language not only is determined by the mind but also determines the mind allows us to assert that the speakers of a literary language that has undergone secularization of its semantic structure are unconsciously involved in the general direction of the semantic change of the literary language, irrespective of their attitude to questions of faith. Thus, the erroneous understanding of Job's words turned out to be common both for those leading a secular way of life and for those who are not only members of the Church but who are also obtaining or have already obtained a higher theological education—students and graduates of the Moscow Theological Academy—as has been confirmed in personal conversations with them. The common mindset also remembers that the words of



Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and of the young sage Elihu were rejected as being erroneous:

- if any suffering is a punishment imposed by God, then the suffering man must deduce from his suffering that he is guilty;
- suffering is sent by God not as a punishment but as a means of spiritual awakening.

Unwilling to accept questions without answers, the linear perception began to mistake falsehood for truth. In the stream of spontaneous interpretation, Job's words "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away" have predictably fit into the easily recognizable paradigm of trite meanings.

Of course, a false interpretation, like everything that is false, is endowed with a powerful inertial force, which can only be overcome by resorting to a sense-forming context. To outline the correct boundaries of the sense-forming context means to give a correct interpretation.

The semantic structure of the medieval Russian literary language, in which the spiritual and the carnal, the high and the ordinary, could not be covered by the same grapho-phonetic sequence fully reflected the medieval integrity of being. The history of the Russian literary language is the history of the destruction of the semantic foundations of the Middle Ages. A semantic discord is an inevitable consequence of spiritual discord. The changing consciousness eventually changed the contexts, bringing together what was previously incompatible within the limits of single syntactic unit. The changed contexts eventually changed the semantic structure of the word (the high word). Only the form remained high, whereas the meaning became diverse: one and the same word with a variety of meanings entered into different spheres of being, spiritual and mundane, serious and ironic. The high, having ceased to be combined only with high, was demoted to the level of "style." The semantic transformation of the flow of words involved in Pushkin's literary practice is visible evidence of absolute secularization of the semantic structure of the Russian literary language. The modern Russian literary language is generally considered to be the creation of Pushkin. Before Pushkin, it was perhaps only in texts by the disgraced Archpriest Avvakum that contexts appeared that possessed a powerful sense-transforming force determining the main vector of change in the semantic structure of the Russian literary language, that is, secularization. The contexts of the eighteenth century did not possess such a sense-transforming power: words taken from different spheres of life did not enter into a semantic interaction that could significantly change their semantic structure.

Biblical images and sayings divorced from the semantic integrity of the biblical text are also subjected by the generalized mind to secularization, which means destruction. Lay perception is linear. It cannot take in the thickened density of biblical antinomic senses and of simultaneous “yesses” and “noes”; it chooses only one or the other. “He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 10:39, 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24, 17:33; John 12:25).

## *Chapter Twelve*

# **Stylistic Signs of Our Time**

## *Visible Changes in the Public Consciousness*

### **THE EXPANSION OF THE OFFICIAL STYLE: CAUSES AND EFFECTS**

The idea that a certain sphere of social activity and a certain type of consciousness correspond to some functional style or another, is, of course, correct, but not absolutely so. The relative proportion of functional styles varies with the changing political, social, or cultural situation in a society. In Soviet times, the state, when it felt it was in danger for any number of reasons, had recourse to journalistic means of acting upon its "addressees." In the early postrevolutionary years and during World War II, the journalistic style broke through the relative isolation of the official business style in the most significant genres in which the state proclaimed its will:

Decrees: "The Workers' and Peasants' Government, created by the revolution of 24–25 October, and drawing its strength from the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, proposes to all warring peoples and their governments to begin at once negotiations leading to a just democratic peace." ("Decree on Peace");

Resolutions of the Supreme Soviet: "Having treacherously attacked the Soviet Union, the German Fascist invaders and their accomplices are perpetrating monstrous crimes in Soviet territories temporarily occupied by them, torturing and murdering peaceful citizens. They are plundering wholesale the population of towns and villages and exporting the personal property of Soviet citizens, accumulated by their honest labor, to Germany" ("Decree of the Supreme Soviet on forming the Extraordinary State Commission for ascertaining and investigating crimes perpetrated by the German-Fascist invaders and their accomplices")

In these historical periods, the state begins to speak in the language of publicity, with an openly propagandistic tone.

In the past ten to fifteen years, the proportion of functional styles in Russian has been shifting mainly due to the expansion of the bureaucratic style into spheres of life that are far from state and legal relations.

The bureaucratic style penetrates the ordinary consciousness. “Are you studying or working?” a very young correspondent for a youth program asks some very young people who are rushing in the early morning from the bus stop to the metro. And they answer casually, on the fly: “I am student by occupation,” “I have already commenced my career.”

The bureaucratic style has entered into the scientific consciousness too:

*Коммуникация в этой сфере включает, с одной стороны, произнесение различных канонических богослужебных текстов, воспроизведение молитв и песнопений, где действительно представлен церковнославянский язык, а с другой стороны — выступления священнослужителей перед массовой аудиторией по радио, на митингах, по телевидению, в Государственной Думе, во время обряда освящения школ, больниц, офисов и т.д., осуществляемые не на церковнославянском, а на совр. рус. лит. языке, который предстает в виде особого функц. стиля — церковно-религиозного.*

*Communication in this sphere includes, on the one hand, the articulation of various canonical liturgical texts, the reproduction of prayers and hymns, in which the Church Slavonic language is actually represented, and on the other hand, in the appearances of clergymen in front of a mass audience on the radio, at rallies, on television, in the State Duma, during consecration ceremonies at schools, hospitals, offices, etc., carried out not in Church Slavonic, but in the modern Rus[sian] lit[erary] language, featuring a special func[tional], church/religious style.” (Concise Stylistic Encyclopedia of the Russian Language 2003)*

The bureaucratic style has also entered into the “ideological sphere of social activity.” In all the genres represented in the domestic Russian media, from an information bulletin release to an “open conversation on general issues,” the official style not only supplants other styles but substitutes for them. The radius of substitution has turned out to be so wide, and the capabilities of the modern electronic mass media to disseminate, preserve, and reproduce their “product” so perfect, that in the mass consciousness of the mass consumer of this “product,” a new notion of its being appropriate and worthy has quickly established itself. And this view is extremely flawed.

It is well known that the official style is devoid of any personal principle. This trait of the bureaucratic style in some situations objectively shows at least the indifference of those who, consciously or unconsciously, reproduce

this style. And it is reproduced by the critical mass of a vast professional community that has a direct impact on the formation of the mass consciousness.

Such stylistic preferences—for we are talking of preferences now—that do not go beyond the literary language simultaneously reflect an already-accomplished change in the public consciousness and continue to form this consciousness in a way that is most undesirable from the spiritual point of view, namely, by substituting so-called objectivity with indifference.

The mass imitation of the language of official protocols has had other consequences. Specifically, the balance between the forms of written and oral language has been distorted. Speaking the language as it is written (and written, at that, by servants of the bureaucratic apparatus) leads to a gradual loss of the literary variety of the spoken language, as well as of the average literary style as such, protocol. Unnaturalness has become the standard for style. Thus, within the span of one generation, the collective consciousness has been deprived of the expressive means of the literary language that had emerged in due course through the efforts of late seventeenth- and early nineteenth-century Russian educated society.

In the analytical constructions of the bureaucratic style, meaning is fragmented, the verb loses its semantic value, and the nominative structure of the utterance is asserted. As the result, the length of the text increases, while its meaningfulness decreases drastically. We have already gotten used to reading or hearing utterances like “The authorities are carrying out an investigation of the incident of the disappearance of the scuba divers” instead of “The authorities are investigating the disappearance of the scuba divers.”

Or “Cooling to temperatures slightly in the negative range has been forecast” instead of “A slight frost is expected.”

Or “The exam results can be used by applicants in the course of two years” instead of “the exam results are valid for two years.”

This drastic reduction of the content of the text accompanied by an inversely proportional change in its length is a visible consequence of mechanically reproduced nominativity. Yet there are also invisible consequences of the same, and they are much graver. The change of the typological vector (from synthetic to analytical) causes a metamorphosis in one’s worldview: the nominal structure of the statement generates a static picture of the world with a vague sense of either eternity or futility.

The change of the typological vector from synthetic to analytical is outlined on the composition level as well. In the newsreels, every new piece of elementary information is often expressed by a new sentence, whatever the subject is. Typically, simple utterances sound in the following way: “Today the ship ‘Cutty Sark’ burned down in London. It was built 138 years ago. It was the fastest sailing ship in the nineteenth century.”

Or “The President proposed extending the powers of two current Russian governors. One of them is Ivan Petrov. The other is Alexander Ivanov.”

Or “The murder case will be considered by a jury. This was the desire expressed by the chief suspect.”

The perception of such texts without inner resistance is like addiction to comics. The atomized, split depiction of events is destructive for the listener’s thinking. To make this destructive effect more obvious, let us hyperbolize this text-compiling model, which is quite common in contemporary journalism:

*I met a man.*

*His name is Ivan.*

*He is my friend.*

*We had gone to school together.*

We could put it more simply: “I met my former schoolmate Ivan.”

In the “genre of casual conversation,” which is diametrically opposed to the genre of news, oral speech is often automatically substituted with constructions from written speech, and no matter what is being discussed, it is discussed using the style of bureaucratic protocols. For example, some broadcasters’ impromptu speech may contain phrases like the following: “School requires thorough preparation. This concerns, *naturally, not only* those who are going to first grade for the first time, *but also* other schoolchildren. But today *in particular* we want to *place the emphasis* on the first-graders. Starting school is, *undeniably*, a *crucial undertaking*. For the first year at school *will affect the course their education will take thereafter*.”

Or “What do you find *satisfactory and unsatisfactory in the process of attending* the English language courses? Does the possibility of learning a foreign language by means of attending language courses *really exist*?”

Or “This actress *was created, first and foremost, for maintaining direct contact* with the audience.”

Or “The *analysand* was interviewed *within the framework* of his fear of flying.”

It is curious that television often combines the assertion of a style that creates an insurmountable distance between speakers and listeners, with visual, plastic liberties: the presenters’ ease of posture, their deliberate gestures and facial expressions. The discrepancy between the principle of selecting linguistic means and the plastic modeling of the image of the presenter turns out to be a discrepancy between the essence of things and what is visible. In this manner, there emerges an illusion of freedom, or a surrogate freedom.

It is easy to understand that only the total bureaucratization of society could bring about such a large-scale bureaucratization of the language.

However, it seems that the general predilection for the official style that we observe is not only a social but also a psychological phenomenon. When a morbidly low level of general intellectual and linguistic culture is present, the official style generates the illusion that both the speaker and the speech being uttered are significant. This illusion penetrates both the mass and the individual consciousness without hindrance. This must be the reason for the vast popularity of the official style.

In the prevailing sociocultural situation, the well-known stylistic advice to replace passive constructions with active ones, to prefer verbal constructions to nominal ones, to reject compound prepositions, to reduce the use of verbal nouns, and so on and so forth has long ceased to be sufficient.

## DELUSIONS OF INERTIAL THINKING

As soon as we leave the secular verbal space and turn to texts created by the Church community, it immediately becomes clear that the automaticity of the mentioned links between sign and meaning (that is, between the enthusiasm for the official style and the worldview-related causes and consequences of this enthusiasm) is disrupted. Even elementary stylistic advice, some pieces of which we have just listed, cannot be followed unconditionally:

1. **“В течение первой седмицы Великого поста студенты академии, семинарии, регентской и иконописной школ молились в Покровском академическом и семинарском храме преподобного Иоанна Лествичника”** (“*In the course of the first week of Great Lent, students at the Academy, the Seminary, and the Choir Directing and Icon Painting Schools prayed at the Academy and Seminary Church of the Holy Protection and St. John of the Ladder*”);
2. **“Во время богослужения Святейший Патриарх рукоположил в диакона студента 4 курса Московской духовной семинарии Сергея Петрова”** (“*In the course of the service, His Holiness the Patriarch ordained Sergei Petrov, a fourth-year student of the Moscow Theological Seminary, to the diaconate*”);
3. **“В течение предшествовавших дней поста учащие и учащиеся усердно готовились к принятию святыни: говели, ежедневно молились за великопостными богослужениями”** (“*In the course of the preceding days of the Fast, teachers and students prepared hard to the receiving the holy sacraments: they fasted and prayed at the Lenten services*”). (Moscow Theological Academy Press Service)

What could be more official sounding than compound nominal prepositions such as “in the course of,” especially in cases where such prepositions make already clumsy official forms clumsier still:

- two genitives in immediate succession: “*В течение первой седмицы Великого поста*”;
- a compound verbal noun: “*во время богослужения*”;
- two genitives and a polysyllabic participle: “*в течение предшествовавших дней поста.*”

Why could one not say instead *на первой седмице Великого поста* “In the first week of Great Lent,” *на богослужении* “at the service,” *в предшествующие дни поста* “in the previous days of the Fast”? The text would become laconic, sprightly, light, especially if we make some other substitutions. And, of course, we would have been able to make these substitutions had it not been for the fact that the expected stylistic gains (laconicism, sprightliness, and lightness of the text) would unexpectedly result in significant stylistic losses. If we discard the phrase *в течение* “in the course of” and replace it with the preposition *на* “in,” we lose the feeling of a spiritual act prolonged in time that is performed incessantly and conscientiously. In this case the statements “*In the course of the first week of Great Lent, students . . . prayed*” and “*In the first week of Great Lent, students . . . prayed*” turn out to be not stylistic variations of one and the same content but semantic antipodes. The preposition *на* “in” would change the semantics of the whole utterance: a feeling of the carelessness of the action performed would emerge, and the action “prayed” itself would become more external than internal.

The utterance “In the course of the first week of Great Lent, students . . . prayed” speaks about a spiritual act of devotional growth.

The utterance “*In the first week of Great Lent, students . . . prayed*” speaks about an external action performed within the coordinates specified. This means that the second version without the adverbial modifier of place (“*at the Academy and Seminary Church of the Holy Protection and St. John of the Ladder*”) sounds not just incomplete but meaningless.

Contrariwise, the first version manifests a completeness of content even without the said adverbial modifier of place.

Similar reasoning could be evoked with respect to the substitution of a compound preposition (“*In the course of the preceding days*”) with a simple one (“*In the preceding days*”) in the third example. Ascribing conceptually significant content to external (seemingly stylistic) facts, we are inclined to regard the incidental form “*предшествовавший*” (past participle), for



“**предшествующий**” (present participle, as prescribed by the rules of grammar), to be nonincidental: the form “**предшествовавший**” expresses a greater degree of protractedness than the form recommended by modern grammarians (“**предшествующий**”), with one essential condition: that the editors who have admitted such a form be unfailingly aware of the correlation of form and sense in all the texts they publish.

However, such an awareness has yet to be formed.

Here is another example. “An art discussion club was opened at the Moscow Theological Academy. Boris Grebenshchikov and the band Aquarium came to the opening ceremony. Everybody turned up, of course: students, teachers of the Academy, of the Seminary, of the Choir Directing and Icon-painting Schools. Of course, the musicians played. But they not only played. At the club, they were open to discussing everything: the meaning of life, modern music, Buddhism, Judaism, features of Russian culture, the spiritual heights of Orthodoxy. Any secular university could only dream of such a discussion.” Was it necessary to call it “an event” (“мероприятие”) and to describe it in the bureaucratic manner typical of modern journalism (mildly bureaucratic, but nonetheless . . .)? Most likely not:

*В мероприятии участвовали студенты семинарии, академии, регентской и иконописной школ, а также члены профессорско-преподавательской корпорации. В ходе встречи Борис Гребенщиков вместе с музыкантами группы “Аквариум” исполнил несколько авторских произведений, которые сопровождалась живой беседой между композитором и собравшимися. Среди острых вопросов, заданных известному музыканту,—духовный опыт в традиции Православной Церкви и религиозные практики буддизма и иудаизма, сосуществование различных духовных традиций, особый путь русской культуры, место музыки в современном мире, исключительность богооткровенной христианской религии. Особое внимание Борис Гребенщиков в своих ответах уделил роли музыки в своем духовном опыте и значению православной веры в его жизни.*

Students of the Seminary, Academy, Choir Directing, and Icon-painting Schools, as well as *members of the teaching corporation, participated in the event. In the course of the meeting, Boris Grebenshchikov, together with the musicians of the band “Aquarium,” performed several original musical works, which were accompanied by a lively conversation between the composer and the audience. Among the acute questions posed to the well-known musician were those of spiritual experience in the tradition of the Orthodox Church and the religious practices of Buddhism and Judaism, the coexistence of various spiritual traditions, the special path of Russian culture, the place of music in the modern world, and the exclusivity of the revelational Christian religion. In his answers, Boris Grebenshchikov paid special attention to the role of music*

in his spiritual experience and the *significance* of the Orthodox faith in his life. (Moscow Theological Academy Press Service)

A story about a musical evening and a new performance by a student theater club could also not get around using such an unnecessarily official and business-like style:

**19 февраля в стенах Московской духовной академии состоялся концертно-музыкальный вечер, в котором приняли участие студенты МДА, а также специально приглашенные гости вечера—хор учащаяся школы духовного пения церкви святой мученицы Татианы при Московском государственном университете им. Ломоносова.**

**Концертный вечер организован по инициативе Студенческого совета МДА в целях поддержания сложившихся дружеских отношений между учащимися Московских духовных школ и приходом храма святой мученицы Татианы.**

On February 19, *a concert and musical evening was held* at the Moscow Theological Academy, in which students of the MTA took part, *as well as special guests invited to the event: a choir of students from the School of Spiritual Signing of the Church of the Holy Martyress Tatiana at Moscow Lomonosov State University.*

The concert evening was *organized at the initiative* of the MTA Student Council *in order to maintain the established friendly relations between the students of the Moscow Theological Schools and the parish of the Church of the holy Martyress Tatiana.* (Moscow Theological Academy Press Service)

So where is the solution? Why, in some cases, do we see a special, conceptually significant high meaning in these official forms, and in other cases propose to get rid of them mercilessly? The reason for this dual evaluation lies in another historical era: many external indicators of the official business style are of Church Slavonic origin. Does the contemporary ecclesiastical public space give us any chance of restoring the Church Slavonic forms (those homonymous forms of the official style) to their initial meanings in the spiritual contexts that are organic for them and of making these meanings more accessible to unprofessional listeners and readers? Yes, certainly. But this will require eliminating, or at least reducing as far as possible, the use of these forms in contexts that are historically alien to them, in which they are perceived as nothing but an indicator of the bureaucratic style.

Inertia is an inalienable property of not only the everyday mind but also the scientific mind (Toulmin 1972). The idea of the interconnectedness of form and meaning is largely predetermined by the inertia of perception conditioned by previous research experience: the involuntary expectation of the habitual

stands in the way of authentically evaluating changed contexts that transform the familiar idea of form.

In investigating the purpose of some sign (form) or another within a semi-otic system, there is a constant tendency to attach meanings to the sign that the sign possesses outside this system. If a researcher fails to acquire a culture of overcoming the automaticity of perception, the measure of the distortion of the object under study quickly reaches a high point. In fact, even within a particular semiotic system—even before the connection with the content—the form, as the way of representing some sense, possesses a concentrated sense-forming force. In other words, even an unfilled scheme cannot be absolutely empty or “pure”: it sets the direction of sense or understanding.

Using the established algorithm of the stylistic evaluation of secular texts, that is, the concept of stylistic coloring, to evaluate a theological text genetically and ideologically related to the medieval literary language distorts the substantive essence of such a theological text. This happens not only in interpreting forms that are habitually regarded as belonging to the official functional style but also when “high archaic coloring” is ascribed to forms inherent in a theological text. For, example, it is often ascribed to such substantivized participles as *празднословящий* “vaniloquent,” *монашествующий* “monastic; living as a monk,” *усопший* “deceased,” etc.

Such a perception does not take into account that a substantivized present participle denotes man not as some immobile substance (*празднослов* “vaniloquent [person],” *монах* “monk”) but as a person performing an act: it may be a vain action (*празднослов*) or ascetic activity (*монах*); and the act is so constant that it determines the whole existence of the person. Grammar prefers to operate with established terms, but here it would be more accurate to speak not of a “substantivized participle” but of a “participle being substantivized,” or more accurate still: “being substantivized but not substantivizing.” When, in the contexts of the late medieval and postmedieval period, semantic differences start to be reduced to stylistic differences, then the secularization of consciousness begins. When scholars fail to see the semantic differences underlying these apparently stylistic differences—and in theological contexts these differences almost always have to do with worldview—they embark on the path of semiotic distortions. After all, seeing in *усопший* “deceased” nothing more than an “archaic high speech” designation for *мертвец* or *покойник* “dead person” is the same thing as confusing a *sepulcher* with a *dead house* or *mortuary*. In the religious semiotic space words *празднословящий*, *монашествующий*, *усопший* cannot be labeled as “archaic” or “high speech” because they are the only possible means to denote the meanings associated with them: not every monk (*монах*) lives as a monk (*монашествует*) at every minute of his life. These words are

perceived as “archaic” and “high” only by the common secular mind. For nontheological texts, this perception can turn out to be correct.

The concept of “expressive emotional coloring” thus turns out to be not absolute but relative even within the same time interval.

The distortion of the substantive essence of a theological text also leads to the semantic substance of a theological text being perceived through the habitual grid of semantic relations of “general usage.”

The semantic model of theological space does not reproduce the direct oppositions of “general usage.” The linear opposition of *good* and *evil*, *truth* and *falsehood*, *saint* and *sinner* lies outside this model but is often erroneously attributed to it. *Good* and *evil*, *truth* and *falsehood*, *sanctity* and *sin* are not equivalent and not equally possible, and therefore their opposition cannot be literal, it cannot lie in one plane, but each time it will be complicated by ontologically necessary semantic relations: “as it was never created, evil, in fact, does not exist” (Bishop Alexander of Zela 2005, 38); “but how can there be ANOTHER way, if truth is the source of all being and there is nothing outside the Truth. If Truth is all—and if it were not all, how then could it be Truth?—how can we admit some un-Truth, some falsehood?” (Florensky 2012, 172); “So all people in the world are sinners; there are no righteous, there are no saints. There are only people who are NOT AWARE of their sinfulness and corruption before God. And there are people who ARE AWARE of their sinfulness before God” (Archbishop Hermogenes 2006, 234). Beyond this “complication,” there is no theology but instead a simplified semantic scheme opposed to theological thought. Therefore a “literal” linear opposition, especially a binary one, should be regarded as evidence for the nontheological nature of a text—of course, only in cases where one can exclude the possibility of errors in research, both hermeneutical errors caused by incorrect detection of the boundaries of sense-forming context, and methodological errors connected to the constant automaticity of perception of a researcher who attributes the oppositions of “natural” language to a theological text.

The quality of understanding is determined by the degree to which the method of investigation corresponds to the properties of the object under study.

## THE ILLUSION OF THE BEAUTIFUL

It is extremely difficult to develop an awareness of the fact that “a person does not comprehend everything through logical thought and, perhaps, can understand through it only the smallest part of what is intelligible” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 500). Moreover, this concerns not only the mass consciousness but also the consciousness of professional communities, both philological and

journalistic. Once, in the classroom, in a conversation about the peculiarities of the images of saints in Russian medieval hagiographic literature and the structural and hermeneutic (related to special rules of understanding) similarity of these images to icon painting, I wanted to explain the idea of conventionality of the boundary between the visible and the invisible worlds and referred to Fr. Pavel Florensky's metaphor from his work "Iconostasis" (Florensky 2006), that of "hot air rising above a brazier." The analogy was not appreciated. So I had to explain that, when heated, the usually invisible air begins to flow and becomes visible, and then, through the shimmering, already visible air, the outlines of houses, the contours of trees, the silhouettes of people lose the clarity of lines and seem almost illusory.

The reason for this misunderstanding is obvious: aesthetic illiteracy, the basis of which is the lack of an idea of the image as a method of cognition, as a lever for complicating thought and accelerating its movement. But this idea should not remain speculative; one must learn to "apply" it both while reading or listening, and while writing and speaking.

The social and ideological stratification of modern Russian society has determined the social and ideological diversity of the modern media. Of course, the socio-ideological engagement of the media has not disappeared; it has been transformed into the idea of a certain "format" of a printed publication, radio station, or television channel. In the struggle for the reader, the listener, and the viewer, the demand for individuality has sharply increased. This concerns even such a "regulated" genre as news. This has led to a significant decline in style and to a search for means of indirect evaluation and tangible expression. However, this expression is not aimed at meeting the cognitive need of finding an economical form for complex meanings (which is the ontological task of any expressive effort); it is a sheerly pragmatic wish to draw the listener's attention.

The victim of the marketing approach, which consists in exerting active influence on consumer demand in order to increase the sales of an information product, is meaning. Meaning as such. "To kill or to adopt": this is how employees of the federal mass media wanted to announce an upcoming news item. The news item in question was about convincing pregnant women who had decided to have an abortion for social reasons to renounce their intention, to bear the child, to give birth to it, and to give it to a childless couple for adoption. The remark that the phrase "kill or adopt" with an alternative conjunction was meaningless, because the "killing" and "adopting" would be performed by different people, caused only a minute's confusion for the journalist. The option of "to kill or to put up for adoption" was rejected as "not beautiful," and the "beautiful" version appeared on the air: "kill or adopt."

Here are some other seemingly "beautiful" potential news headlines: **“Бывшего президента называли с упоминанием его государственного**

**ТИТУЛА И ОТЧЕСТВА**” (“The former president was referred to using his state title and patronymic”); **“СЕГОДНЯ НЕ ВРЕМЯ И НЕ МЕСТО”** (“Today is not the time and not the place”); **“В КОНЦЕРТЕ ЗАДЕЙСТВОВАНЫ БОЛЕЕ ЧЕТЫРЕХСОТ ЧЕЛОВЕК И БОЛЕЕ ТЫСЯЧИ КОСТЮМОВ”** (“More than four hundred people and more than one thousand costumes took part in the concert.”

In this way, “prettiness” divorced from sense entwines us in the chaos of absurdity. Is this done consciously? In most cases, no. It is done because of the aggressive aesthetic illiteracy that is a stylistic marker of modern Russian history.

But figurative thinking arose at times and in places where logical thinking turned out to be either ineffective or helpless. The best works of both secular and theological scholarship are based on the ability of images to accelerate thought rather than defuse it.

Thus, in his assessment of Westernism and Slavophilism, two global trends in the intellectual life of the Russian society from the late seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries, V. O. Kliuchevskii wrote about the latter: “the Slavophiles won hearts with a broad sweep of ideas, with a cheery faith in the strength of the people” (Kliuchevskii 2005, 484). Thanks to his deep understanding of history and his high level of intellectual and aesthetic culture, Kliuchevskii managed not only to deduce the algorithm of the Slavophiles’ thought in an extremely economical way—in just several phrases—but also to express his own attitude toward this phenomenon in Russian life.

A purposeless, pointless waste of energy, an excess of almost vacuous, ecstatic enthusiasm, emotionality to the detriment of rationality, and much, much else besides stands behind the “wide sweep”—not *scope*—“of ideas” of the Slavophiles mentioned by Kliuchevskii.

The unfoundedness or groundlessness of the Slavophiles’ faith in the “the strength of the people” and Kliuchevskii’s skeptical attitude to what the Slavophiles called “the strength of the people” are expressed in one word: it was enough for him to qualify “faith” with the epithet “cheery.”

Explaining the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the Fathers of the Church had recourse to images: *fire*, *light* generated by it and *heat* coming from it, which meant *a thought* expressed by *a word* and transmitted by *a sound* with the help of breathing (Alexander Bishop of Zela 2005, 18). In showing their reverence for the miracle of the Eucharist, the teachers of the Orthodox Church again turned to images for clarification: a red-hot iron that, though remaining iron, becomes fire (134).

“Beauty”—usually understood as an image or as an expressive technique—and “nonsense” are antonyms. “Beauty” without meaning does not exist. But at the time of total aesthetic illiteracy, even professionals more and more often divorce “beauty” from sense.

We are haunted by misunderstandings leading to a hermeneutic catastrophe when we hear or read something like the following: **“ГЛАВЫ**

государств договорились провести встречу в целях разблокирования ближневосточного мирного процесса. Об этом было объявлено сегодня после завершения их переговоров” (“The state leaders agreed to hold a meeting to *unblock the Middle East peace process*. This was announced today after the conclusion of *their negotiations*”).

Relational adjectives (*БЛИЖНЕВОСТОЧНЫЙ* “Middle Eastern”) imply a constancy of features; grammatically, this property manifests itself in their lack of comparative forms. The combination “the Middle Eastern peace process” means in this case that the peace process is a phenomenon inherent in the Middle East. But, as we know, it is the Middle Eastern problem that is constant, not the peace process: “*the peace process in the Middle East,*” but “*the Middle Eastern problem.*”

Gradually, the semantic differentiation between the prepositive attribute and the genitive of attribution is eliminated: architects with a global reputation are transformed into global architects, the director of a school into a school director, the management of the academy into academic management, veterans of war into military veterans.

In this general flow of progressing nonsense, the sense-expressing abilities of the language are being lost.

Is it possible to explain in such a situation that if every guest who comes to the studio (be it a writer, director, or politician) is endowed with an epithet *emblematic, cult, or charismatic*, eventually not a single one of them will be regarded as emblematic, cult, or charismatic? For in singling out everyone, we single out no one. Moreover, the very adjectives *emblematic, cult, charismatic*, which are interchangeable in modern mass culture, will gradually lose their “mass cultural” meaning of “something special, exceptional” and will simply designate the figure they are talking about at that particular time.

The modern media are helpless in selecting epithets as well as in the use of any other means of expressiveness.

Periphrasis is no exception. This classical technique, designed to convey the meaning of an original expression or word descriptively, is persistently drawn into the vortex of nonsense, no matter whether the authors are trying to create periphrases on a logical or on a figurative basis: neither succeeds. Here are typical examples:

- мир, который не стоит на пути прогресса / the world that is not on the path of progress);
- детское учреждение / a children’s establishment;
- прямой контакт / direct contact;
- язык Пушкина / the language of Pushkin;
- пропуск в вечность / a pass to eternity;
- ребенок в общегражданском смысле слова / a child in the general civic sense of the word.

The distorted idea of the beautiful has led us to the fact that having failed to learn correct and simple speech, we try to speak “in a complicated way” and deem it “more beautiful.”

It seems quite clear that “*the world that is not on the path of progress*” can mean both a *world* that does not obstruct the progress of other “*worlds*” and a *world* far from the very idea of progress. However, it is absolutely impossible to understand what is meant by “the world” itself, no matter good or bad: Is it a social system? A political regime? A separate state? Some social mentality? Anything can turn out “a world.” The same concerns “*children’s establishment*,” the phrase that in the case at hand was applied to a school, nothing more. In search of “beauty,” a personal encounter was persistently dubbed “direct contact.” “The language of Pushkin” was an alias for the basic conversational Russian learned in Cairo by those wishing to work with Russian tourists. “A pass to eternity” turns out not to be death in any form, just some accomplishments. Yet even context does not help us to decipher the meaning of “a child in the general civic sense of the word.”

In a logical periphrasis, the meaning of the original word is conveyed through a description of some essential feature of the concept denoted by this word. The basis of figurative periphrasis is an unexpectedly distinguished feature. But not everyone can distinguish an unexpected feature. This is a special skill that is not only and not largely stylistic. For this purpose, one must possess an original view or an opinion of one’s own, which will be justified only under the condition of free (professional) mastery of the topic.

It is obvious that the authors of the periphrases given earlier are equally far both from recognizing the essential features of anything and from distinguishing unexpected features. Undeveloped logical thinking and aesthetic deficiency have the same result: an atrophying of the ability to “think.” It is not only the “creative minds” of the mass media who are sucked up into the whirlpool of nonsense but also the many millions of consumers of their “creative product.” The ugly is mistaken for the “beautiful” both by the mass producer and by the mass consumer and becomes a model. As for the philosophical understanding of nonsense, it always implies an awareness of the fact that meaninglessness leads to destruction, primarily spiritual destruction. Thus, evil bears no sense, and, like nonsense, it is inexplicable. Evil is always false; it is always movement toward an illusory goal, movement toward nonbeing. As a force directed at nonbeing, evil is always destructive. Evil, nonsense, and destruction are phenomena of the same order, whether we are willing to admit it or not.

Understanding style as a providential category that not only reflects but also anticipates changes in the public consciousness materializes the notions of the systemic method as a method that explains the past and the present and anticipates the future.



## *Chapter Thirteen*

# **The Potential of the Systemic Approach in the Study of Artistic Texts**

### **CONTEXT AND ITS BOUNDARIES**

A crucial problem in understanding an artistic text has always been that of defining the boundaries of the context in which we immerse the literary work in order to provide a more or less adequate perception of it. The universal answer to the question of what the boundaries of the context are is that there is no universal answer.

Some texts do not lend themselves to being deciphered out of context, which is by force quite broad; others can be interpreted out of context without tangible losses.

**Цветы, любовь, деревня, праздность,  
Поля! Я предан вам душой.  
Всегда я рад заметить разность  
Между Онегиным и мной**

(Flowers, love, village, idleness, fields! I am devoted to you with all my heart. I am always happy to notice the difference between Onegin and me),

writes Pushkin in “Eugene Onegin.”

In order to see “flowers,” “village,” and “love” as clichés of romanticism and hence to feel the ironic intonation of this passage, one must have some idea of the dynamics of the literary process, and of realism, which emerged as the aesthetic antithesis of romanticism. If this is the case, the reader will regard the author’s being “different” from Onegin as an almost declarative rejection of one of the foremost principles of romanticism, namely, the identification of the author with his protagonist.

Only knowledge of the general literary context ultimately allows us to admit that the antithesis of romanticism and realism is the basic constructive principle of the structure of Pushkin's novel in verse. Such an admission, in turn, will substantially smooth out the feelings of a sentimental reader. Now, even in such a "tragic" fragment of the novel as the description of Lensky's grave, the reader will find only a masterful juxtaposition of the principles of realistic portrayal with those of romanticism:

На ветви сосны преклоненной,  
Бывало, ранний ветерок  
Над этой урной смиренной  
Качал таинственный венок.  
Бывало, в поздние досуги  
Сюда ходили две подружки,  
И на могиле при луне,  
Обнявшись, плакали оне.  
Но ныне . . . памятник унылый  
Забыл. К нему привычный след  
Заглох. Венка на ветви нет;  
Один, под ним, седой и хилый  
Пастух по-прежнему поет  
И обувь бедную плетет.

(An early breeze would swing a mysterious wreath on the bough of a bowed pine tree above the modest urn. Sometimes, in the evening hours of leisure, two maidens would come here and weep, sitting at the grave close together. But now . . . *the dreary monument is forgotten and the path is overgrown. There is no wreath on the bough; only a lonely, gray-haired shepherd still comes here to sing his song and make footwear of the poor.*)

Now the reader will look at the death of the protagonist differently: a romantic hero is supposed to die tragically.

If, however, the reader is aware of the main milestones in the development of the Russian literary language, he will be able to track the exclusively balanced attitude of the poet in *Eugene Onegin* toward the language-forming positions of the Westerners and the Slavophiles:

Недуг, которого причину  
Давно вы отыскать пора,  
Подобный английскому сплину;  
Короче: русская хандра.

(An illness the cause of which should have long been found, resembling the English *spleen*, in short, the Russian *gloom*.)

Or:

**Она казалась верный снимок  
 Ду сощце і ѿдѣ . . . (Шишков, прости:  
 Не знаю, как перевести.)**

(She seemed to be a perfect image du comme il faut . . . [Forgive me, Shishkov, I don't know how to translate it].)

Ultimately, it seems that, in order to understand *Eugene Onegin*, awareness of a very broad context is not a luxury but a necessity. We are forced to stop only by a negative answer to the question that inevitably arises sooner or later: “Is textual commentary more important than the text itself?” Accordingly, it is not so much context itself that is “dangerous” as context when its length is incorrectly determined. After all, if the scale is wrong, the equality of the text to itself is disrupted.

Of course, outside the literary-historical context, we will not be able to understand the operation of the universal law of art (and art is a historical phenomenon): the law of shift or displacement: “how it was” versus “how it is.” Reconstructing the authentic literary context will make it possible to understand how aesthetic enjoyment is generated by texts that we do not enjoy any longer because of their temporal or cultural remoteness. For example, if we know that by the middle of the nineteenth century, Pushkin's verse had begun to sound like “language that was beautiful, but dead and learned by rote” (Eikhenbaum 1986, 351), we can understand why Nekrasov's verse forms that combined poetic commonplaces with prosaicisms stunned his contemporaries:

**Есть женщины в русских селеньях  
 С спокойною важностью лиц,  
 С красивою силой в движеньях,  
 С походкой, со взглядом цариц,—  
 Их разве слепой не заметит,  
 А зрячий о них говорит:  
 “Пройдет—словно солнце осветит!  
 Посмотрит—рублем подарит!”  
 “Мороз, Красный нос”**

In Russ hamlets women are dwelling  
 With countenance earnest, serene;  
 In all grace of movement excelling,  
 In bearing and look like a queen.

Perhaps they'll escape the dim-sighted,  
But one who can see says of them:  
"She passes—with sunshine all's lighted!  
And looks—'tis like giving a gem!"

("Red-Nosed Frost," translated by S. Smith, from "Moroz krasnyĭ-nos = Red-Nosed Frost / Sostavil Nikolai Alekseevich Nekrasov. Translated in the Original Meters from the Russian of N. A. Nekrasov." Boston, 1887.)

Nekrasov's works were not meant for the elite; Nekrasov's reader did not belong to the elite. Nekrasov understood that the social status of the average reader of the mid-nineteenth century had lowered drastically as compared to that of the early nineteenth century, so he successfully put his trust in "the people":

For many years, Nekrasov had been romancing the people in front of all of Russia. Poetry had been not only in what he wrote, but in his very role, in the story of Nekrasov's one-way, painful love for the people. Thus, when he died, already long spoiled by wealth, a huge crowd shed tears for him at his funeral as for a sufferer for the people and the poor. (Andreevskii, cited in Eikhenbaum 1986, 360)

This makes it clear how what may seem a propagandist banality to a modern reader has become an inseparable part of Russian literature.

Yet without neglecting the context, let us remember that the system of verbal aesthetics, like any semiotic system, can be correctly interpreted only if the researcher, in his constructions, manages to uphold the absolute primacy of empirical material. Setting aside the context does not mean not knowing it. What is more, we can only lay the context aside if we are aware of it. Being aware of the context does not mean replacing knowledge of the text with an understanding of the context.

Understanding the text proceeding from the text itself is a necessary demand of philological hermeneutics. It enables us to avoid semantic distortions implied by the broadness of a solely literary approach and by the narrowness of a solely linguistic approach to the text.

The main task is to see what the text contains. It is especially important when we consider works that do not "reduplicate" reality but present a very deep understanding of its meaning.

"Can a work of verbal art be understood adequately?" This is the question that interests us most of all and the answer to which will show whether we are able or unable to formulate universal (noncontextual) principles of analyzing artistic texts.

Let us first turn to the theory of the mneme.

## THE MECHANISM OF MISUNDERSTANDING

The term *mneme* was introduced into scholarship in the early twentieth century by the German Darwinist biologist professor Richard Semon. His theory (already proven experimentally!) is based on the notion that any contact of a person with the world invariably leaves a trace in the psyche that is called “engram” (“engram” means literally “recording”). An engraphic action is a complex psycho-physiological process of recording or engraving any such experience, conscious or unconscious.

The fate of any engram is complex and mutable. An organism, in breaking through the fragile boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, is continually selecting engrams and thereby bringing about an uninterrupted movement of engrams from the subconscious into the conscious mind. The phenomenon of moving the engrams from the subconscious into the conscious mind is called ephoria. A mneme is a flow of engrams and ephorias. From this definition, it follows that the mneme is primarily a dynamic concept. Of course, ephorias can also be engrammed, which, in turn, often generates new engrams. Another source of intramneme motion is the continuous connection of engrams within the same complex, which forms an associative series. Engrams that coincide completely or partially leave stronger traces in the psyche. The repetition of the same engrams, so-called homophonia, is a highly important mnemotic phenomenon.

Thus, the life of each mneme consists of unique uninterrupted processes of engraphic actions, ephorias, the formation of associative links, and homophonia. Introducing mneme theory into a philological context, the famous Russian bibliophile N. A. Rubakin wrote:

The process of reading is a series of such homophonies, complete or incomplete. Engrams, ephorized in this process, are constantly compared with their initial excitations. In this sense, reading is a *stream of homophonies* [emphasis added —O.V.]. . . . The experience generated by reading is naturally subsumed into the realm of one’s own experience. Such integration of what we have read about into ourselves is what we call understanding a book. It is easy to see that this “understanding” is always functionally dependent on the personal experience of an individual, and hence on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of his mneme. (Rubakin 1929, 77)

In the process of reading, each reader builds his own projection of the book out of the elements of his mneme and mistakes this projection for the qualities of the book itself, calling it the content of the text. Changing the mneme entails changing the projection. This means that even one and the same reader, during each subsequent reading of the same book, will find its contents to be different, depending directly on the qualitative and quantitative changes in

his mneme. Thus, the content implied by the author will be an inaccessible projection limit, and the text will not be a transmitter of information but a causative agent of mental experiences in each individual mneme.

Holbach (in the 18th century) said that when looking at the moon through a telescope, an officer mistook the lunar mountains for fortress towers, a priest thought it was a bell tower, and a worldly lady saw two embracing lovers in the moon: each cast their own special projection onto the screen of the moon, objectifying the elements of their own mnemes. (Rubakin 1929, 80)

It is useless to require not only from an amateur reader but also from a researcher something they objectively cannot give: an exhaustive reconstruction of adequately understood content “embedded” in the text by the author. In this case, the following question naturally arises: Is studying artistic texts worthwhile if the mechanism of the mneme invariably makes the result of studying nothing but a subjective interpretation of inaccessible content? Let us try to overcome the objective pessimism of this question by proceeding from the basic provisions of dialectics, the branch of science based on the fact that any action causes opposition, and any trend cannot but collide with the directly opposite trend. In any case, the author wants to be understood; hence, there must exist something as objective as the mechanism of the mneme and capable of opposing to the tendency toward variable understanding. The functional antipode of the mechanism of the mneme is the activity of the dominant.

## THE SEARCH FOR THE MECHANISM OF UNDERSTANDING

The notion of the dominant (from Latin *dominans*, *-antis*) has come to philology from physiology, where the dominant is treated as a focus of excitement, attracting waves of excitation from a wide variety of sources: “the Dominant is created by unilateral accumulation of excitation in a certain group of centers, seemingly at the expense of the work of other centers. This is something like a fundamental breach of the balance between the centers” (Ukhtomskii 1966, 45). However, the founder of the physiological theory of the dominant, the academician A. A. Ukhtomskii, already understood the dominant as a more extensive, not narrowly physiological entity possessing an extraordinary significance beyond natural sciences, as well, namely, in the scientific field of the humanities. Unfortunately, these ideas received no integral formulation; they are scattered across different essays and letters (cf. Ukhtomskii 1966, 250–64).

Only if we correctly define the limits of the manifestation of the action of the dominant will we be able to see the essence of the dominant as a mechanism directed at achieving one single understanding of a text, as well as the objective character of this mechanism.

## Stages of the Operation of the Dominant

We would not be able to speak about a tendency toward one-sided understanding were it not for a mechanism working to this effect in the text itself and were the author himself not concerned, consciously or unconsciously, with being adequately understood. Therefore there is no doubt that in order to be renewed in the psyche of the reader, the dominant, as the quintessence of what is aesthetically significant, must be imprinted in a special way in the text and therefore should be the subject of particular concern by the artist. Such an understanding of the boundaries of the dominant's activity makes it possible to distinguish three stages of its operation: pretextual, textual, and posttextual.

The pretextual dominant exists in the form of authorial intention. In this phase of its development, the dominant is traditionally studied by the psychology of creativity. The dominant is already present at the first, preparatory stage of the creative process, which N. A. Rimskii-Korsakov called "chronic inspiration." The diaries and letters of a writer, and the plans and sketches of his future work, are able to reveal the presence of the dominant before it is materialized in a text: in the author's direct references to a "main idea" or "basic thought," that is, in the publicized crystallization of the dominant, and in an analytically ascertained constant core that is repeated in all the plans and drafts, in spite of variations in narrative, imagery, and style. The pretextual dominant manifests itself, lastly, in the internal principle according to which the author selects from the vast material of life some facts and not others to be transformed into art: "The very selection of facts will give an indication of how they are to be understood" (Dostoevsky 1974, 104). "From the numerous possibilities flashing through his imagination, the artist chooses one particular one or another only because he recognizes in them a vague correspondence to what he is already vaguely bearing in himself and what he is seeking to embody" (Skaftymov 1972, 23)

Consciously or unconsciously, the author is strenuously searching for the best way to materialize the dominant, which at this point is similar to an obsession. All the writer's creative efforts are focused on embodying the dominant, which is a kind of inner mission. "This mission is the general permeation of the psyche that the artist has felt in himself in the form of a creative summons. The artist remembers and lives with this permeation while fulfilling this summons by creating an adequate, aesthetically materialized reality" (Skaftymov 1972, 24). Consciousness and subconsciousness are equally active in this process because "the conscious and the subconscious are only projections of an indissoluble unity. This unity must be characterized by an indivisible integrity" (Belyi 1910, 34).

As soon as text is written, the dominant begins to live its own life, which now does not depend on the artist or obey him. It is in the text that the domi-

nant reveals itself most fully, amply. As the source of autonomous movement pervading the whole text, subordinating all its elements and controlling them, it is eventually freed from the will of its creator.

And then finally, after the text has been read, the dominant emerges in the psyche of the reader upon the renewal—even partial!—of a stimulus that has become adequate for a given dominant. The ideally adequate stimulus is reading the whole text, but there may be focal points in the text whereby the dominant can be restored with a very high level of adequacy.

All three phases of the existence of the dominant are interrelated, and the relationship is one of rigid causal dependence. The pretextual dominant determines the textual dominant, and through it the posttextual dominant. In the process of writing, the artistic text itself can make adjustments to the creative process, to some extent subordinating the artist to itself: “The poet is not free in his work. This is the first axiom of aesthetics” (Solov’yov 1913, 347). However, this subordination is nothing other than the unconscious embodiment of ideas that disturb the author on a subconscious level because “the intensely active connection of thoughts persists for a long time in the soul and is concealed from the conscious mind” (Neufeld 1925, 88). In one possible algorithm of directional links between writer, text, and reader, the links actually determined by the dominant are “writer → text” and “writer → text → reader.”

A literary work—which, as is well known, is a surprise first and foremost to the author himself—must be least surprising and unpredictable in the field of activity of the dominant. The author’s intense concern for the form in which his creative intention is to be embodied stems in the first instance from a desire to be understood adequately. It is intense work on the form that allows the author to endow the text with the quintessence of that which is aesthetically significant, which tends to remain unchangeable regardless of the historical, cultural, or personal context to which the literary work transferred.

Of course, adequacy of understanding is a relative rather than an absolute value, so it would be more correct to speak not of adequacy of understanding but about reducing the degree of distortion in the understanding of an artistic text. What properties should the dominant of the text possess in order for the reader to be able to understand the idea of the author as faithfully as possible?

### **The Main Properties of the Dominant: Vectorality, Activeness, Stability**

First of all, the dominant, as a force aimed directly at achieving a particular aesthetic result, is characterized by vectorality, that is, a certain direction or unidirectionality. The principle of the dominant is “to alert us as to a certain



direction” (Ukhtomskii 1966, 254). The dominant is always vectoral: the direction is precisely and invariably indicated. The more powerful the vector, the more pronounced the dominant.

The vectorality of the dominant dictates another other of its qualities: its activity. The dominant seeks to establish a foothold in formal means of expression; the set of these means is limited by the scope of the text. The dominant therefore has to subordinate all the elements within its reach; hence the constantly operating, all-encompassing activity of the dominant, which ensures the processing, or transformation, of the elements of elements the text according to the direction of the activity of the dominant: “the Dominant is formed and operates on the bottom levels, and it is strong when it is given on the bottom levels” (Ukhtomskii 1966, 258).

The dominant in no way depreciates the elements of the text on the periphery of its activity, and it does not ignore them; it subordinates them to itself, prescribing them a certain place and a specific function.

In the higher spheres of life, the Dominant is expressed in the fact that all motives and works of thought and creativity are permeated with one hidden tendency penetrating into all details; this tendency contains the key to understanding the details and mastering them. (Ukhtomskii 1966, 258)

The dominant’s activeness entails a fundamental imbalance, which acts as a law: the dynamic continuity of an artistic text as an aesthetically significant verbal unity is based on the coexistence and close interaction of units of different values, which are functionally and structurally heterogeneous.

As it is constantly deepened and reiterated and is aimed at self-preservation, the dominant brings the elements of an artistic text into relationships of hierarchical interdependence: “each component, on the one hand, is subordinated to another as a means, and on the other hand, it is itself served as a target by other components” (Skaftymov 1972, 24). Thus, movement up the ladder of subordination coincides with the direction of the activity of the dominant (in this provisional chart, in the direction “ $X \Rightarrow Y \Rightarrow Z$ ”):

*text element Z—target of element Y*

*text element Y—target of element X and means for element Z*

*text element X—means for element Y*

The activeness of the dominant with respect to the components at all levels of an artistic text is ensured by its own stability against the backdrop of universal relativity and that of the constant changes associated with shifting the text into various chronological, cultural, and personal contexts. Let us define this property as stability, that is, a kind of inertia, a tendency to remain as

whole as possible despite being shifted into a wide variety of contexts. In this sense, the dominant appears to be some kind of conservative process ensuring maximal proximity to the author's original thinking. The dominant forms the least changeable and most aesthetically significant center of the artistic text, that is, that for the sake of which the text was created.

The dominant is not only activity but also substance. Therefore we understand the stability of the dominant to be both the self-preserving and self-renewing activity of the text, and the substance (an invariant of what which is aesthetically significant) that results from this activity and, owing to the same activity, is not destroyed. The artist, as it were, is willing to give the reader a part (sometimes a large part) of his work for free interpretation, and he does so in order to provide a stable understanding of certain aesthetic information that is extremely important for him as a writer. Although, in each individual act of perception, the artistic text inevitably turns out to be unequal to itself, it is the stability of the dominant that creates the equality of the artistic text to itself, as it does not destroy this inequality but resists it.

These properties of the dominant—vectorality, activeness, and stability—are consequent to the functions it is intended to perform.

### **The Functions of the Dominant**

Before characterizing the functions of the dominant, we should mention how they are differentiated depending on whether they are focused on the pragmatic aspect or not.

The pragmatic function of the dominant is aimed at achieving as accurate a perception as possible of the author's thought on the part of the reader. An artistic text is also recognized by its dominant.

Irrespective of the sphere of pragmatics, the dominant exhibits at least two functions: the integration and specification of an artistic text (Jakobson 1987).

In disrupting the equality of the significance of the components of an artistic text, the dominant provides not for chaos or anarchy but for a strict regulation of aesthetic relations, consisting in the directed and multitiered division of the components of an artistic text into those which are foregrounded (most aesthetically significant) that are nonactualized or automated (less aesthetically significant); the latter act as a background for the former.

The material of a work of poetry is intertwined with the interrelationships of the components even if it is in a completely unforegrounded state. . . . It is, however, enough to disturb the equilibrium of this system at some point and the entire network of relationships is slanted in a certain direction and follows it in its internal organization: tension arises in one portion of this network (by consistent

unidirectional foregrounding), while the remaining portions of the network are relaxed (by automatization perceived as an intentionally arranged background). This internal organization of relationships will be different in terms of the point affected, that is, in terms of the Dominant. (Mukařovský 2014, 45)

The dominant thus integrates the artistic text and gives it a unity and an integrity that is not monotonous or equalizing but dynamic and diverse and in which each component is endowed with a certain significance, occupying a certain place in the system and performing a certain function. In this integrity, the automated elements (with differing degrees of automation) are not a depreciated ballast; their value lies in their lesser aesthetic value, against which alone it is possible to distinguish the aesthetically superior elements.

In a well-formed artistic text, the dominant, acting as a focusing principle, will be transformed into an invariant of that which is aesthetically significant. The search for the dominant is thus nothing other than the search for an aesthetic invariant that specifies an artistic text, that is, makes it unique, because in the hierarchy of aesthetic values presented by a text one of them prevails; it is the dominant without which the text cannot be estimated unique, not “one of.” I. N. Tynianov wrote about this function of the dominant:

In view of the fact that the system is not an equal interaction of all elements, but involves the foregroundedness of a group of elements (“the Dominant”) and the deformation of the others; the work enters literature, acquires a literary function precisely by means of this Dominant. (Tynianov 1929, 41)

But if we understand the dominant as activity, we shall also understand that the dominant is not so much the fact of a group of elements being foregrounded as it is the direction of this “foregroundedness” and the deeper motivation for the transformation of other elements.

Integration and specification are regular activities of the dominant and are focused ultimately at achieving a pragmatic goal: to establish maximum proximity between the content implied by the author and that perceived by the reader. The implementation of these functions by the dominant is aimed at overcoming the variability of reading and the variability of understanding of an artistic text.

### **Interaction of the Dominant with Psychological Processes**

The dominant operates in a relationship with the psychological laws of creativity and perception. Whether it is struggle or agreement is another matter, but the interaction always exists.

The breach of the aesthetic equivalence of the elements of an artistic text caused by the dominant's activity is psychologically ensured and supported by the mechanisms of perception and memory.

In the process of perceiving a long artistic text, the luminous field of consciousness is capable of retaining only a part of the whole. The greater part of the information on multiple levels remains in the subconscious. Memory preserves a more or less vivid feeling supported by an image, less frequently by a word. This very feeling is awakened at the moment of recollection and evokes manifold emotional reflexes, creating the innumerable variety of senses that is natural for a work of art.

This feature of human memory is closely connected with the laws of perception, namely, with the principle of the economy of force ideally realized in the aesthetics of verbal art.

An artist who wishes to be understood cannot neglect the necessity of sparing the creative potential of the reader. The author must give the reader's nervous system a chance to relax after every intense expenditure of imaginative energy and attention: "if *maximum forte* has been taken up from the first stroke, then all further noise will be vain, the only way to attract attention is to take up *pianissimo*" (Guyau 1900, 360). The final goal of the author, of course, is not to spare attention but to incite and retain it. Yet it is impossible to retain attention by abusing it. Therefore aesthetic and informative heterogeneity are immanent in an artistic text.

Acting in the same direction as the law of economy of force, the dominant is opposed to the mechanism of its functional antipode, the mneme. In resisting the tendency toward subjectification and individualization of the perception of an artistic text, the dominant strives to form an objective, common understanding of a work of art. In this case, the dominant does not destroy the subjective but only confronts it as a polar principle.

Thanks to the dominant, an artistic text acquires the ability to generate engrams irrespective of the reader's individual experience and to fixate the most valuable aesthetic and informative material more enduringly in the psyche of the reader by repeating these engrams, that is, by reinforcing the engraphic action. We recognize distinct traces of the dominant's activity as soon as we manage to grope for a common constituent of understanding that is not dependent on the engrammed content of various readers' mnemes at different moments of their existence. The presence of this constituent is not only and not mostly the result of the coincidence of the personal experiences of the mneme bearers but mainly the capacity for self-preservation and self-renewal instilled by the author in an artistic text.

In striving to achieve the maximum possible proximity between initial and perceived ideas, the author is forced to pay significant attention to the reader's mental activity, that is, to channel it in a certain direction.

The dominant thus appears as a category that is not only correlated with psychological processes but also conditioned by them: both positively (in which case the dominant's activity coincides with the direction of the activity of a certain psychological process) and negatively (in which case the dominant acts as a counterforce aimed at overcoming a psychological tendency). The dominant acts in the same direction as the law of the economy of psychic energy and is opposed to the law of the mneme. This conditionality is dictated by the functions the dominant is intended to carry out.

To a certain extent, the dominant can be understood as a psychological phenomenon, and this testifies to its dual nature lying simultaneously in two interdependent planes, those of the conscious and the subconscious. The researcher's task is to extract the most accessible part of the dominant from the subconscious into the consciousness and to formalize it and make it tangible as far as the artistic text allows it. This approach leads to an understanding of the deep causality of an artistic text.

### **The Expression of the Deep Causality of an Artistic Text as the Essence of the Dominant**

According to Boris Korman,

a work of art is a living organism, an integral ideological and artistic system in which all elements interact and correlate with the whole. Consequently, when we separate an element from the text and thus give it independence, we must bear in mind the conditional nature of this independence. *The task is to find the connection of this element with others and its function within the ideological and artistic system* [emphasis added —O.V.]. (Korman 1972, 19)

The search for the dominant makes it necessary for the researcher to answer two questions concerning each element of an artistic text: *Why* and *what for*? Why has this particular component appeared? How was its appearance prepared? What has it appeared for? What functions is it to perform?

Therefore in synthesizing the past and the future, the researcher must imagine each element of the artistic text in the aesthetic retrospect, as the goal, and in the aesthetic prospect, as a means.

The direction of the dominant's activity is "goal  $\Rightarrow$  means," and therefore it is also the organizing principle of causal relations that reveal the total interdependence of the elements of an artistic text. Following the dominant, we come to an understanding of the deep essence of a work of art: in the apparent

randomness and lack of motivation, we see a strong intention and predetermination because the dominant, “like a film shot, selects the corresponding causative agents from the environment” (Ukhtomskii 1966, 238).

Starting from the apparent content, we [the artists —O.V.] begin to see that this is just a kind of vague excitement on our part, but that the form of creative vision, that is, the image that arises in our soul, depends on it; and further, that the choice of elements of space and time is predetermined; both the rhythm and the means of depiction are a dissection of the very content. (Belyi 1910, 135)

The essence of the dominant—its purpose in expressing the deep causality of an artistic text—also determines the main principle of structure the structure of the same, which reflects the consistent inequality of elements. This principle is that of hierarchy.

### **The Hierarchical Nature of the Dominant and the Problem of the Levels of Analysis of the Dominant**

The characterization of the dominant in terms of levels is not a mechanical dissection undertaken by the researcher for the convenience of analysis. Characterizing the dominant in terms of levels is an objective necessity dictated by the structure of the dominant, that is, by hierarchy. This is the only possible structure for an entity that performs functions similar to the functions of the dominant. The presence of causal relations in an artistic text is in itself a form of inequality: the subordination of one thing to another. What is more, this subordination is comprehensively motivated and operates regularly and systemically in one direction.

Thus, the problem is not whether the levels of the dominant exist. They cannot but exist. The problem is another one: How are these levels distinguished? How are they identified? After all, successive and parallel dependencies in an artistic text have as many degrees as the number of times they arise. This means that they are actually incalculable. Therefore we are compelled to make a certain compromise by explicitly establishing only three levels. Yet we shall constantly keep in mind the multilevel subordinations within each of these levels.

Let these three levels coincide with the traditionally distinguished levels of an artistic text: ideological and aesthetic, figurative and compositional, and aesthetic and linguistic.

*It is not the levels that are relative. It is the number of the levels we distinguish that is relative.*

Before proceeding to characterize the dominant in terms of levels, we should note that the very expressions “the dominant of the ideological and

aesthetic level,” “the dominant of the figurative and compositional level,” and “the dominant of the aesthetic and linguistic level” are inaccurate because there is, of course, only one dominant, as the direction of its activity is only one. It is vectoral. A more accurate formulation would be as follows: one and the same dominant, which is hierarchical in its structure, acts on different levels of an artistic text.

From this point of view, a certain element of an artistic text will serve as the dominant as far as it presents a goal subordinating certain forces to itself and until it manifests itself as an intermediate goal, which is only a means for a “higher” goal.

### **The Dominant of the Ideological and Aesthetic Level**

The ideological and aesthetic dominant arises twice in a crystallized form: first, *before the artistic text*, as the impetus to create a work of art, and as a writer’s nonincarnate idea striving for adequate materialization and defining the general direction of the unfolding of the artistic text; and, second—with some correction—*after the artistic text*, as the thought perceived by the reader. An artistic text only points to the ideological and aesthetic dominant, “prompts” the path of its development, but does not explicitly name it, although the artistic text has been created and exists for the sake of renewing the ideological and aesthetic dominant in the psyche of the reader. It thus becomes clear now that the study of the ideological and aesthetic dominant should follow two lines. On the one hand, it is the study of extratextual sources (letters, the author’s publicized statements about the idea and the concept of the work, critical literature reflecting some common trend in the perception of a work of art). On the other hand, it is the study of the text itself in order to find a vector leading to the ideological stage, which is the highest stage of development of the dominant. It is the ideological and aesthetic dominant of an artistic text that becomes the force taking us out of the closed, self-sufficient unity of a work of art. It is through the ideological and aesthetic dominant—based, of course, on the accented image—that a work of art enters the realm of literature, acquires a literary function, and becomes wholly correlated with higher-level phenomena: the writer’s creative output, a literary school, movement, direction, process. The ideological and aesthetic dominant is interesting, first of all, as a logically grounded and hence predictable stage of the development or unfolding of the dominant of the totality of the creative work and as a stage prepared by the artist’s previous experience.

The ideological and aesthetic dominant of a work of art should outline the previous path of, and reach a higher stage of realization of, the idea that has constantly been troubling the author.

The path to the ideological and aesthetic level of the dominant is fixated in an artistic text in two-dimensional way: the development takes place simultaneously along the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes, with the syntagmatic axis being unconditionally subordinated to the paradigmatic. The paradigmatic relations revealed in the artistic text bring the researcher to the level of values, concepts, and ideas, unveil a picture of the deep structure of the world presented in the text, but parts of a future paradigm are identified by means of the linear unfolding of the artistic text. In the projection of the ultimate goal, the syntagmatic axis, while remaining original, thus appears auxiliary or subordinate.

Whether the researcher succeeds in ascending to the ideological and aesthetic dominant depends on his “ability” to follow the author’s conception in integrating components of one class or one paradigm at the figurative and compositional level that are scattered linearly throughout the text. It should be borne in mind that the general name of the paradigm may be absent in the artistic text, and in this case the researcher will have to assign a name to the paradigm himself. This name will largely be provisional, and its provisional character will determine the provisional character of the name of the ideological and aesthetic dominant. Generally, any formulation of an ideological and aesthetic dominant will be hypothetical to a certain degree because, while ideally it is equal to the entire artistic text, practically it is always derived from it, and in mercilessly losing its semantic nuances, it becomes the journalistic concentration of an artistically expressed idea. “The more you think about the ‘idea’ of a poetic creation, the less of it will remain. In the end, there is always some dry little lump that does not in the least deserve to be called an idea” (Shpet 1989, 345).

### **The Dominant of the Figurative and Compositional Level**

As a directly perceived component of an artistic text, the image provides the most visible, tangible manifestation of the dominant at the figurative and compositional level of an artistic text. In a work of art, the image appears as a way of knowing a certain phenomenon in development. The image is a kind of improvisation or sign of an idea: something more concrete is always a sign of something more abstract. In an image, the importance of “how-representation” is equivalent to the importance of “what-representation.” After all, *how* we imagine something will determine *what* we imagine.

In correlating the image with the idea, and therefore the figurative and compositional level with the ideological and aesthetic level, we must not bring the image and the idea into the relationships of identity: the artistic image is always smaller than the meaning put into it by the author and always



deeper than the meaning attributed to it by the reader (Potebnia 1976). The image should be more understandable and it should be simpler than the meaning implied by it and the idea “explained” by it (Potebnia 1976).

In focusing constantly on the category of the image and checking the truthfulness of the proposed solution against it, the researcher at once anticipates two extremes that can lead one away from an adequate interpretation of an artistic text: on the one hand, excessive analytical dissection (which may occur in analyzing the aesthetic and linguistic level), and on the other hand, excessive synthesis (possible when analyzing the ideological and aesthetic level).

The dominant at the figurative and compositional level will be fixated in the system of images, where it (the dominant) will determine the alignment of the characters and cause the so-called main character, the bearer of the main idea of the work, to stand out; in the unfolding of the plot, the main character will be distinguished structurally.

To sum up, a certain idea that is troubling the author and trying to find an adequate expression for itself must make a temporary compromise. It is impossible to materialize an idea in a work of art without specifying this idea, which means restricting it to a certain extent. But as soon as an idea acquires a concrete form, that is, becomes an image (“A less abstract notion as compared to a more abstract notion is an image” [Belyi, 1910, 91]), it receives a basically different task: it must make the reader understand that a specific thing (an image) conceals much deeper content. The palpability of the (specific) image is a kind of a forced concession that makes the process of perception easier; an image in an artistic text is the main “lever” in complicating human thought and accelerating its movement (Potebnia 1976).

Figurative thought enters the picture when logical thought turns out to be helpless.

Global, eternal ideas with an incalculable array of meanings and number of semantic variations cannot be expressed by a simple image, which is too narrow for them. Such ideas seek a chance to be resolved artistically as symbols. Only an image that has reached the height of a symbol can hold them.

Symbolism in poetry is manifested . . . in the interpretation of a well-known image, situation, or a whole plot as a symbol conveying an emotional impression of what does not fit directly into any picture, scene, or visual image. Such is the sphere of the immeasurably great and the immensely small. Such are the ideas of God, of the world, of universal evil, the meaning of life, of humanity, of social revolution and, on the other hand, the subtlest, fleeting, most delicate movements of the human soul that are nonetheless significant in their effect. (Lapshin 1923, 87)

It is clear that the whole system of images in an artistic text works to enable the image to achieve the semantic height of the symbol. The semantic

construction of a text containing a symbolic image is always centripetal. The functional load of other images will be closed on the development of meanings, which constitute the content structure of the symbolic image.

It is the symbolic image that will become the most intense manifestation of the dominant's activity, and therefore the symbolic image will lead the researcher to the aesthetically significant invariant that will make this work of art equal to itself, regardless of its shift to different cultural, historical, and personal contexts.

In terms of different aspects of the dominant's activity, it is of fundamental importance to *distinguish between two categories of symbols* in an artistic text:

1. *"ready-made" symbols*, that is, symbols taken by the author from an existing body of culture and used in the work for comparison,

and

2. *symbols that undergo formation* in the process of the unfolding of the text.

Symbols that are undergoing formation, unlike those that are already formed ("ready-made"), cannot serve as independent analogies, as they themselves are in need of comparison.

In a prosaic work, "ready-made" symbols are used extremely economically; they help only to refine understanding of conceptually significant images.

The author has such a great interest in being adequately understood that he attaches not a singular symbolic comparison to the accented image but a whole paradigm of "ready-made" symbols.

Symbols are used as a tool of comparison only regarding an image that the author hopes to "raise" to a symbol.

Let us therefore regard a "ready-made" symbol as an image capable of serving as an independent analogy and temporally and spatially unrestricted in this capacity, that is, an image that has crossed the boundaries of one or several cultures from one or several periods. Upon encountering a "ready-made" symbol in the text, we must perform several "mental" operations: comparing and associating the image that is undergoing formation with an existing complex of concepts (the "ready-made" symbol).

A "ready-made" symbol is the most powerful means of refining the process of perception of an artistic text. A "ready-made" symbol does not enter the aesthetic space of a new text due to its inexhaustibility, unknowability, and conventionality. Quite the opposite. At first, the author is most interested in the stable semantic core of the symbol as a set of finite senses that are visible without special study and have taken firm shape in the hypothetical reader's hypothetical consciousness.

Starting from the core meanings of these “ready-made” symbols, we must come up with new meanings for the sake of which the new text was created.

The main hermeneutical mistake here is the absolute semantic identification of a “ready-made” symbol and an image whose understanding is corrected by the “ready-made” symbol. To compare means to find first what is identical and then what is different. There are no null oppositions in art. It is equipollence that determines the semantic relationship between “ready-made” symbols and the images corrected by these symbols.

The appearance of a paradigm of “ready-made” symbols for one and the same image is triggered by the author’s extremely intense concern for being understood, that is, for achieving the maximum possible adequacy of the initial (embodied) and final (perceived) ideas under the conditions of objectively existing misunderstanding and incomplete understanding.

Starting from the invariant content of symbols assimilated by world culture, the author generally seeks to create his own symbol as a predicate for a new, as yet unknown, almost impalpable idea.

The image becomes the material basis of the symbol:

A symbol is depicted by conventional images; figurative content must be introduced to this concept using artistic imagery; as symbol cannot be presented without symbolization; therefore, we personify it in an image; the image embodying a Symbol is defined by us as a symbol in the more general sense of the word. (Belyi 1910, 105)

A. Belyi refers to the idea symbolized by an image as a Symbol, while calling the image symbolizing this idea a symbol.

The creation of an artistic symbol in a work of art is necessary as a means of comparison with something more complete and profound, that is, with the ideal Symbol. The artistic symbol makes it possible to reduce the unknown to the known (that which is more accessible) to an aesthetically acceptable degree.

The constant meanings of “ready-made” symbols give the new symbol that is undergoing formation a fulcrum, or, to be more exact, a point of equilibrium. But this equilibrium is unstable. As soon as the symbol comes to a state of unstable equilibrium, it begins to develop further: from a substance that is being compared, it becomes a comparing substance, has a resonant effect on the “ready-made” symbols, and strives toward infinity, retaining an indirect connection with reality and anticipating the development of the same. “Reflection, transformation and anticipation: these are the three moments of the process of artistic creation with respect to that which is subject to depiction” (Lapshin 1923, 50).

The symbol foresees the future. It foresees it bilaterally, both rationally and irrationally. The symbol is a two-level category. The conscious and the unconscious are indissociable in it:

A symbol is always a symbol of something; this “something” can be taken only from areas that have no direct relationship to cognition (less still to knowledge); in this sense, a symbol is a combination of something with something, that is, a combination of the goals of knowledge with something beyond the limits of knowledge. (Belyi 1910, 67)

In contrast to a “ready-made” symbol used in a work of art as something predetermined, a symbol undergoing formation is not limited in its meanings. On the contrary, it builds them up: all the formal means that create the symbol that undergoes formation—after the fixation of the concept that is, from the point of view of the author, conceptually necessary—are aimed at eliciting more and more associations in the reader’s psyche, associations that make the reflected idea seem inexhaustible.

The unity of mental activities—feeling, will, thinking—must be contained in the living model of the image, which is the creative symbol. That is why the artistic symbol expresses an idea but is not exhausted by the idea; it expresses feelings but cannot be reduced to emotion; it stirs up the will but cannot be decomposed into the norms of the imperative. A living symbol of art, carried by history through the centuries, refracts in itself a variety of feelings, a variety of ideas. It is the potential of a whole series of ideas, feelings, emotions, wishes. (Belyi 1910, 225)

To sum it up: a symbol, in order to reflect the Symbol—to become its sign—must stand out in the content and formal structures of an artistic text. The remaining artistic images (other than symbols) should be assessed as oppositions to the symbolic image, which are oriented at each point of their development toward their functional dependence on the symbol. Consequently, any image is nothing more than an indirect means of forming an artistic symbol, a kind of emanation toward it. In receiving a name, this means obtains illusory independence. The duty of the researcher is to establish the objective semantic and constructive correlation of the images of an artistic text with the dominant symbol.

To single out the dominant of an artistic text means to interpret this artistic text as a fact of art without any analogues. Such an approach basically coincides with the aspiration of the artist to turn the image being created from “one of” into the only one: “Art is concrete, through and through . . . The master, the artist, the painter, the poet: all of them disintegrate. Their way leads from singularity to uniqueness. Down with synthesis, uniformity, unity! Long live division, differentiation, confusion!” (Shpet 1989, 351).

Uniqueness (the dominant), perceived directly at the level of images, will be regularly and repeatedly fixated at all levels of the form: from the symbolic image to the elementary means of linguistic imagery.

## The Dominant of the Aesthetic and Linguistic Level

The way the dominant manifests itself on the aesthetic and linguistic level of an artistic text is determined by the way this particular level of the text is organized. The language of a work of art is nothing more than a system of linguistic pictorial means, represented compositionally. That is why pure linguistic analysis in this case is impossible. Only aesthetic and linguistic analysis is admissible because the components of the aesthetic and linguistic level are endowed with a false self-evidence, much like the components of the other levels of an artistic text. All of them are aimed at *mimesis*, that is, at the imitation of reality, which is one of the most important factors of aesthetic pleasure arising from the perception of a work of art. The imitation of reality must be distinguished from falsified reality:

In the case of naturalistic falsification of reality, we are dealing not with an aesthetic illusion, but with mystification, in which the real and the fictitious become completely indistinct. Such falsification can only be enjoyed by aesthetically undeveloped beings or children. (Lapshin 1923, 18)

Subjecting the language of an artistic work to a purely linguistic analysis means taking the illusion of reality (linguistic reality) to be reality itself. Such a methodological error will, at best, reduce the researcher's efforts to naught. In the worst case, it will lead to the grossest of hermeneutical mistakes.

In fact, any element of the linguistic level is as fictitious as the artistic image. That is why each element of the aesthetic and linguistic level of an artistic text should be evaluated from the point of view of its fictitiousness or its aesthetic significance (which is the same thing). The aesthetic significance of each component of the aesthetic and linguistic level of an artistic text is clarified by relating this component to the current language and, most importantly, to other elements of the text and to the general constructive principle of the whole. "An unknotted tie at a ball is a greater degree of nudity than a lack of clothing in the bath. The statue of Apollo in the museum does not look naked, but try to tie a cravat around its neck, and it will strike you with its indecency" (Lotman 1972, 24).

The current language is a code. The language of an artistic work superimposed upon the system of the current language is a recoding, at the very least. The upper limit of the encoding remains potentially open.

Of course, different components of an artistic text are of different significance: the law of the economy of force is in operation.

One cannot but agree that removing even one element from an artistic text leads to the destruction of the text. It should also be noted that the removal of different elements entails a different degree of destruction because the struc-

ture of an artistic text is formed by the dynamic interaction of units of different significance, both foregrounded to different extents and nonforegrounded. Moreover, nonforegrounded units should be perceived as a fact of foregrounding because it is necessary to create a background for the foregrounded units. By singling out everything, we would not single out anything.

Shifting the text into different historical, cultural, and personal contexts leads to a shift both in the degree of foregrounding and the boundary between the foregrounded and nonforegrounded zones. However, in order to understand the text in question as a unique aesthetic phenomenon, it is necessary to ensure a very high degree of stability for a certain portion of overforegrounded units with various levels. Therefore the artistic text is organized in such a way as to prevent the destruction of these units. After all, they are the conceptual and aesthetic property of the text; they are in the very center of the category of the poetic, and they manifest the maximum degree of encoding.

The question naturally arises as to how one can objectively determine the most significant constituents of an artistic text.

An artwork is a stream of consciousness and therefore cannot but repeat an idea that is troubling the author and fixate it formally many times. The formal fixation will reveal itself in the persistent observation of the principle of uniformity of technique.

That is why we are interested first of all in the stability of linguistic phenomena at different levels. Obviously, each individual image appears in a certain arrangement of language inherent only in the image in question. The semantic evolution of the image may be accompanied by a change in the parameters of the language. There is also feedback: in an artistic text, every regular linguistic phenomenon is usually attached to a certain image or group of images similar to each other on some grounds. The researcher, while combining both approaches, should correlate each independent image (independent in the sense of an integral expression of an integral idea) with a specific linguistic leitmotif. In the process of correlation, the functional loading of each linguistic device will become obvious.

It is especially important to trace the means of formal fixation of a symbol in the text. The means of representing a symbol are emphatically monotonous. This means that the appearance of an image that symbolizes the Symbol, as well as of any image, will be accompanied by regularly repeated devices forming the linguistic and compositional standard of representation of the given symbol in the text in question. But the standard of a symbol, unlike the standard of a simple image, will be stable to such an extent that it alone, without a name, makes it possible to recognize the implied symbolic image.

The researcher must find a standard for formally representing a symbol in the text because this standard is an immediate component of the symbol itself,

understood as a material scheme expressing “the connection of the visible image with the image of experience” (Belyi 1910, 134).

In a work of art, a symbol is thus fixated bilaterally. First, in the content, as an inexhaustibly deep image anticipating the future. Second, in the form, because semantic foregrounding is impossible without foregrounding the form. “The external can exist without the internal—such is an illusion—but the internal cannot exist without the external” (Shpet 1989, 363).

The activity of the dominant manifests itself in this regularity or stability (against the backdrop of the general instability of a work of art), which repeatedly fixates the uniqueness on all the formal levels of the organization of a text.

Regularity can reveal itself in the construction of certain semantic fields that are attached to this or that image. In the formation of key words representing the encoded system of philosophical and aesthetic views of the author. In the syntactic arrangement of images or themes. In the word-formational motifs of certain aesthetic categories. Finally, the very linguistic aureole may be represented compositionally, in a definite narrative algorithm.

The adequately defined manifestation of the dominant on the “lowest” aesthetic and linguistic level ought to lead us to the paradigmatic integrities lying on the surface. This is the means of opening the universal code of an artistic text that leads us to the unconscious.

The correlation of the dominant of the linguistic level with the dominants of the figurative and compositional and ideological levels is, of course, subordinate, for the linguistic dominant is indisputably a means, but this means has an independent value. This value is determined by the fact that it forms the aesthetic uniqueness of the linguistic solution of the artistic text. To see intentionality in a stressed formal element means to realize the function of this element in the system of other functions and to detect the content behind the form, for in an artwork there is no pure form, but everything is saturated with aesthetics. Intentionality at all levels of form is natural for a high-caliber artist: “Only self-control and inspiration combined with sober work can turn an artist into a classic; here, the artisanal side of the verbal art takes over: a word or an expression per se requires meticulous work” (Belyi 1911, 77).

Eventually, the dominant will lead us to the very principle of the construction of an image. Understanding this principle will be the key to understanding the functional loading of any component of the text, even a highly formal one, because “every word, as well as every paintbrush stroke, has its purpose” (Schopenhauer 1893, 38).

To conclude speculation on the hierarchical nature of the dominant, we would emphasize once again: there is no plurality of dominants; the dominant

is always one. It is a question of the continuous development of one and the same objectively existing entity.

## **THE DOMINANT AS A POSSIBILITY FOR CARRYING OUT AN ANALYSIS THAT IS BOTH INTEGRAL AND ECONOMICAL**

The authentic meaning of every detail and every device is comprehended only by way of understanding the given detail or device in the general structure of the whole: "Understanding the idea of a literary work means understanding the idea of each of its components in their synthesis, in their systemic totality, and at the same time of each of these components in particular. If we have not understood what every element of a work means, we have not understood fully and definitively what the whole work means as an entire system" (Gukovskii 1966, 101).

Ideally, a work of art does not contain anything superfluous, which means that if some element is left out by the researcher, the overall meaning will be distorted. Integrity of analysis thus understood threatens to turn into its opposite: totality. Where is the limit of detail? How can we stop the centrifugal force of analysis? Only the recognition of a different significance for the elements of an artistic text can halt the process of the endless fragmentation of the whole, slow down the anatomically developing movement of the researcher's thought, and transition over to the centripetal study of the aesthetic object. A possible way out is the analysis of the dominant, which fulfills two main demands of aesthetic analysis, those of integrity and economy, in accordance with the principles of necessity and sufficiency.

Through the direction of its activity, the dominant leads us to the quintessence of that which is aesthetically significant. If a work of art is valued according to one aspect and then another, without ever being exhausted, then the scope of an artistic text marked by the activity of the dominant must be evaluated however it is perceived because, without the dominant, an individual artistic text cannot be perceived as unique.

The dominant is anything but arbitrary; above all, it is premeditation, calculation, the action of the author creating a work of art. Once we have made out the direction of the dominant, we are well on the way to mastery.

For us, the dominant is a principle or a law. Knowledge of it allows us not only to explain and understand each component of an artistic text but also to predict the further development of the text and to evaluate each of its fragments from the point of view of their consistency or inconsistency with the fundamental principle.





*Part IV*

**THE SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS  
OF VERSE**

Sergei Preobrazhenskii



## Chapter Fourteen

G. P. Mel'nikov

### *A Linguist for the Twenty-First Century*

Traditional verse theory has largely accepted the verse (in the sense of a line of poetry) to be a communicative unit because its primary function is secondary segmentation of the speech flow. However, ever since the first investigations of M. L. Gasparov and T. V. Skulacheva, as well as those of Zh. A. Dozorets, the “linguistification” of the studied object has not progressed much further than this general statement and indication of the paradigmatic status of the verse (M. I. Shapir). Recognition of the fact that poetic code (or verse code?) is the most important element of a certain communicational system inevitably demands answers to questions about the communicative function and semiotic significance of the verse, that is, about the semantic qualities of the segment of an utterance singled out by a verse, as well as the mechanism for reproduction and recognition of verses in the mode of that very same poetic speech. Further, we propose to introduce the term *verseme* (in Russian: *stikhema*) to denote units of poetic division of speech that act as a specific suprasegmental phonetic instrument. The introduction of this term obliges us to ascertain the methodological isomorphism between the semiotic set of versemes and other “-emic” sets. For the purpose of analyzing the verse as a verbal (and linguistic) entity, it seems promising to follow the provisions of systemic linguistics formulated, developed, and propagated by G. P. Mel'nikov.

Gennadii Prokop'evich Mel'nikov—according to a definition once given by his adherent A. A. Polikarpov—was a linguist of the twenty-first century. Yet the intellectual trends of this century have proved to be directly opposite to the theoretical positions propagated by G. P. Mel'nikov and through which he came to be seen, in the years of his greatest popularity, as a member of the radical avant garde in linguistics. Pluralism and relativism were always the worst methodological enemies of the originator of systemic linguistics;

the idea of a linguistic construct repelled Mel'nikov, and he characterized the majority of contemporary trends as "aspectizing" (that was his term for "non-comprehensive" or "unilateral"). He, himself, however, spent more than forty years working out the synthesizing trend in modern science: "*G. P. Mel'nikov* is developing a kind of synthesizing trend in modern science, which has only recently begun to be recognized by a growing number of scientists and become known as cognitology" (Iudakin 2003, 5).

G. P. Mel'nikov described cognitology as an "aspectizing" discipline that studies and models the human intellect mainly on the principle of the "black box." I am recalling his words from memory, but I can vouch for their capturing the essential meaning: the topic of cognitive linguistics, which was coming into fashion in Russia in the first half of the 1980s, was once discussed around the fire at a "field seminar" in Opalikha, a picturesque countryside place not far from Moscow. Within "aspectizing concepts," Mel'nikov detected both a certain rational impulse, the desire to unite all sorts of specific information around a general idea, and a certain "protruding aspect" that exacerbates the fragmentation of the object's representation. For example, he was openly irritated by the very notion of a "linguistics of the text," as the specific was knowingly placed on a par with the generic only because the additional (against the background of other products of speech) specificity of the text (that is, devices of connection, unfolding, compression) came into view.

Because modern linguistics now looks like a patchwork of new "trends," tendencies, approaches, interdisciplinary disciplines, and similar "aspectizing" inclinations and openly proclaims this principle to be epistemically fundamental, interpretations of what Mel'nikov called "systemology" are almost always decidedly deconstructive.

The most objective reflection of Mel'nikov's epistemology was given by L. G. Zubkova (2003, 6–17). However, this is true only of her preface to the printed version of Mel'nikov's doctoral thesis. As for the chapter "G. P. Mel'nikov" in the manual written earlier by the same author (Zubkova 1999, 83–85), in which Mel'nikov's semiotic model was discussed as a separate subject, there Zubkova turns to her own favorite topic of the dialectics of form and content in language, but this relationship did not bear the same philosophical meaning for Mel'nikov, for he did not treat the opposition between the material and the ideal in the spirit of true Marxism. Like any Russian natural scientist of the early twentieth century, deep down he considered the world to be material through and through and all psychic entities to be products of "highly organized matter," that is, he approached the problem of form vs. content not as a dialectical Marxist who considers the ideal to be more than a terminological metaphor but as a true reduction-

ist or even a monist. When a few of his pupils tried to discuss God with him, he cut them short by paraphrasing Pierre-Simon Laplace: “For my model, this substance is superfluous.”

In his book *Sistemologiya i iazykovye aspekty kibernetiki* (1978, Systemology and the Linguistic Aspects of Cybernetics), G. P. Mel'nikov distinctly defined systemology as “applied dialectics” (Hegel's laws were treated by Mel'nikov in a quite reductionist way, as evidenced by his having reduced the category of quality to a characteristic of a system) and declared any mental reflection that forms a subject's reaction to its “environment” to be based on deformation (the simplest kind of material contact). This schema clearly shows how deformation turns into visual perception. Thereafter, a *representation* is formed:

The internal innate (or inbuilt, in an automaton) intensional representation that allows us to recognize certain external objects without prior learning, only through the correct operation of receptors, can be called an *a priori Gestalt*. As we shall see later, the presence of an *a priori Gestalt* permits us not only to assign the external, reflected objects to a certain universal set, but also to accelerate the process of developing new intensional representations for distinguishing subsets of this set and even its individual representatives. Such representations may be called *a posteriori Gestalts*. (Mel'nikov 1978a, 43)

In fact, this is the quintessence of Mel'nikov's theory of reflection. For this reason, Zubkova's revision immediately places the model under discussion among the ranks of the habitually philosophical but completely distorts the original: “the recognition of the representational (*to be more precise, reflective —L. Z. [italics mine —S. P.]*) nature of the constituents of the domain of content makes it possible to qualify the connection between the form (meaning) and the non-linguistic material (sense) as a relationship of hinting” (Zubkova 1999, 84). It was his specific interpretation of what was commonly called “reflection” in “dialectical materialism” that allowed G. P. Mel'nikov to make the fundamental statement that the relationship between the sign and meaning is materialized in the hint and that the hint is not just a reflexive association but is based on motive, that is, on motivation. A more precise interpretation of the complex of semiotic relations unfolding in the space between the traditional “signifier” and “signified” (Saussure's pair of terms, loathed by Mel'nikov) can be found in Rudenko (1993, 125).

Some vigilant Marxist dialecticians (M. N. Pravdin) accused Mel'nikov of vulgar materialism, though his was, in fact, no more vulgar than that of I. P. Pavlov, V. I. Vernadskii, A. A. Ukhtomskii, A. A. Potebnia, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, and other—as A. T. Semenov aptly defined—“Russian positivists” (Semenov 2008, 24–25, 93). The universality and totality of cognitive

tasks, the desire to combine everything into a single integrated model—these features of his own epistemology were justified for Mel'nikov by the fact that they correlated with the internal determinant of his native Russian language (a branching narrative scenario, consistency, dynamism). The fact that such elegant specific solutions as for example the model of Turkic synharmonism were prefaced with a whole cumbersome, complex, and fundamentally hermetic theoretical basis could not but produce a desire to penetrate into this hermetic theory. This is why the loose interpretations of Mel'nikov's systemology by those who treated his theory with less care than did Zubkova seem to have become common already in the scholar's lifetime.

Already in 1966, the title of Mel'nikov's paper "Lingvistika strukturnaia, ili lingvistika sistemnaia" ('Structural Linguistics, or Systemic Linguistics') was erroneously printed with a comma before "or." The meaning was thus completely altered; the punctuation mistake turned disjunction into equivalence, which was murderous for his scientific reputation (Mel'nikov 1966). This tragicomical episode has its echoes still much later: "The term 'adaptive systems' is also used in the works of the Moscow linguist G. P. Mel'nikov. However, G. P. Mel'nikov's approach significantly differs from ours by its closeness to structuralism, which is reflected in his definition of a system. He understands a system not as a certain set of interrelated elements, but as an object in which the properties of structure and substance are interrelated" (Arnold 2010, 25). The lack of references to concrete pages and the attribution of a quite impossible systemic atomism, which is unattainable in nature, to G. P. Mel'nikov clearly show how closely I. V. Arnold was acquainted with the original source.

Another example is found in a popular memoir: "against the background of that structuralist boom, when linguistics was flooded with techies, and one of them [G. M.], when asked where he was going on vacation, answered that linguists had no vacation" (Zholkovskii 2006, 113–15). Once again, structuralism was associated with the "techie" Mel'nikov. True, having repeated the story many times in different variants, A. K. Zholkovskii had removed the insinuating initials G. M., but the techie structuralist remained (see Zholkovskii 2008, 138). These exercises in the poetics of expressivity would not be worth mentioning if the "vignette" did not mirror the fate of G. P. Mel'nikov's scientific legacy, as it known by hearsay. This author, who began his scientific career as a scholar of Africa, could have shown some interest in Mel'nikov's idea about the category of class in Bantu languages. But it requires too much effort to access a hermetic system. Unfortunately, a carefully considered epistemology does not fit well into the common episteme, is not subject to mythologizing and ideologizing, and has no place in the circulation of scientific discourse, for it aspires to be "scientific" in the spirit of Russian

positivism. For G. P. Mel'nikov, it was necessary not to privatize, in the jargon of postmodernists, but to adapt everything in order to retain the integrity of knowledge. It so happened that the obvious incongruity of using the word "methodology" in relation to linguistics goaded him into writing a manual, in which I took part to the best of my ability (Mel'nikov and Preobrazhenskii 1989). Each of us wrote something of his own: my part was a diligent retelling, his was a commentary on his own framework (a little too detailed and verbose). It was impossible to persuade him to change "phenomenological" knowledge to "empirical," and even this manual is difficult to read.

As it is, G. P. Mel'nikov was fully aware of the fact that universal methodologies cannot exist (if applied in the scientific sense, of course). He honored I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay greatly, considering himself one of his major followers; he even inscribed my copy of *Systemology and the Linguistic Aspects of Cybernetics* with "For Serezha in memory of UDN-Baudouinism" (where UDN stands for "RUDN University) and wrote about him the following: "Is it understandable why neither those who were sufficiently familiar with the work of Baudouin de Courtenay nor even his direct disciples can be ranked among the immediate followers, not of individual ideas, but of the system of Baudouin's views?" (Mel'nikov 1978b, 32). It is as though this were written about his own scientific fate. He further writes,

Baudouin was not able to confine himself to considering some narrow task of linguistics or to working out an effective but specific technique for studying linguistic systems. His constant belief in the objectivity of the processes under study, in the systematicity of this objectivity and in the presence of a causal connection between the observed phenomena, as well as, consequently, his ability to detect gaps in the chains of causes and effects—all this led to the logic of his research reflecting not Baudouin's own tastes and wishes, but the logic of the object itself. (Mel'nikov 1972, 51)

Here, it would seem, Mel'nikov's methodology is expressed with the utmost clarity: a kind of Russian positivism with a tinge of Hegelianism.

## THE EXPLANATORY POTENTIAL OF SYSTEMIC LINGUISTICS

Here we turn to a small illustration demonstrating the potential of the systemic approach, which is related to the alleged representation in Russian syntax of a view of the world as a realm of events that are, for human beings, both uncontrollable and inconceivable (Anna Wierzbicka). So-called reflexive constructions (*O zdesheñ zhizni uzhe ne pishetsia, ia uzhe edu* "Life here is no longer written about [lit. writes itself], I'm already on the



way” [Marina Tsvetaeva]) are treated by Anna Wierzbicka in the following way: “X wants to do Y (not because X wants something to happen to something else) / because of this, X does something / X thinks something like this: I feel I can’t do this / I couldn’t say why / not because I don’t want it” (Wierzbicka 1992, 424–25).

In Mel’nikov’s model of Russian syntax, the choice of construction would be grounded in the following way:

The general mechanism of Russian syntax is constructed in such a way that it describes branching dynamic scenarios of a nonlinear type. The simplest type of scenario is described by a canonical formula like: *Sobaka gonit koshku po ulitse pod dozhdem* “A dog chases a cat down the street in the rain.” In this scenario, as Lucien Tesnière would have said, the key roles are, firstly, that of the active initiator of the action, which is grammatically marked by the nominative case, secondly, that of the action, which is grammatically expressed by a finite verb indicating the source of the action, and, thirdly, that of the other participants (actant-participants) in the action playing the prescribed secondary parts, which are represented by case forms that indicate a minimized utterance (G. P. Mel’nikov and A. F. Driomov’s periphrastic theory of case underwent various interpretations as a model during Mel’nikov’s life [see Stepanov 1989, 9], which is why it is extremely schematized here). When such a model becomes fundamental under the influence of the internal determinant of the Russian language (“dynamic event”), then the list of scenarios that fit poorly into this schema includes those for which it is difficult to encode the following conceivable components in language: (1) the initiator of the action; (2) the action as something actively flowing, dynamic; and (3) any nonprincipal participant. Should such situations as appear anomalous to the basic schema turn out to become frequent, then stable (in a certain sense idiomatic) Russian syntactic models will be created for their encoding in language. The most obvious models are those characteristic of the Indo-European languages of the accusative type, such as “be” or “have” (the earlier second case). In the extremely dynamic Russian model, both follow the same (optionally verb-less) formula with “be”: *U menia est’ zhena* “I have a wife”; *U menia net deneg* “I have no money.”

The formalization of “reflexive” constructions requires compensatory technical linguistic means in the absence of convenient basic ones: *Mne pishetsia* “It writes itself to me” = (a) the one who writes finds no expression as the active initiator of the action + (b) the action is not dynamic, it is a self-contained but constant state (the special grammatical significance of all forms with a “postfix”)—*pishetsia* “it writes itself.”

Consequently, at the level of linguistic consciousness, the “sense” of the given model, the reason for its choice, looks to be as follows: the simulative

source of the action is in a static state, and the secondary agent, or a quasi-agent who takes up the action, is foregrounded as the initiator, that is, the source of the action. Compare the semantic interpretation of the dative by G. P. Mel'nikov: *Esli Ivan brosaet miach Petru, to Petr miach lovit* "If Ivan throws the ball to Peter, then Peter catches the ball," cf. *Ivan brosaet miach v Petra* "Ivan throws the ball at Petr." Is there anything "inconceivable" here (according to Anna Wierzbicka's semantic interpretation)? Another thing is the growing number of such constructions and standardization of encoding numerous situations using them, as well as the gradually decreasing degree of activity of the actant when expressed by an oblique case. Compare: (a) *On ne sumel zabit' gol*; (b) *Emu ne udalos' zabit' gol*; (c) *U nego ne poluchilos' zabit' gol* (all three sentences mean "He failed to score a goal," but in (a) the actant is the subject, in (b) an indirect object, and in (c) a prepositional object). Within the modern research paradigm, an objection will inevitably arise: the choice of a construction is a matter of linguistic pragmatics or of softening or nuancing the modality. However, given that the choices made by native speakers in the past decade have clearly been made in favor of the third option, it is more indicative of a deviation in the trajectory of the internal determinant of the Russian language toward the expression of statics and the resultativeness of the proposition than of a supposed change of pragmatic postulates. The choice of using the "reflexive" constructions described by Anna Wierzbicka indicates the very same communicative priorities on the part of the communicant using them, cf. *Uzhe ne pishu o zdesheñ zhizni* "I don't write about life here anymore" and *O zdesheñ zhizni uzhe ne pishetsia* "Life here is not written about anymore."

As such, the advantage of systemic linguistic analysis consists in the very fact that its explanatory component retains the connection between the concrete phenomenon that interests the researcher and the researcher's general idea of the system's structure, and problems are not solved by postulating the exclusive primacy of one aspect (pragmatics) over another (semantics); this should be confirmed by the previous critical analysis of Anna Wierzbicka's theses.

## The Systemic Model and the Analysis of Poetic Speech

Mel'nikov's systemic model claims to be universal, which entails the highest generalization of the principles of scientific description, and therefore should be applicable to various fields of linguistics and even adjacent areas. Several models are proposed shortly for the analysis of phenomena that traditionally belong to the sphere of prosody. The analysis is based essentially on I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay's phonological model, which was fully adopted and further developed by Mel'nikov.

If we consider a verse to be a unit that exists within a poetic versified language along with other units of the same level (verses), and if we assume that these units are not poetic constructs but elements of a particular language system, signals of varying rhythmic organization whose main communicative function within the framework of this poetic language is secondary segmentation of speech, resulting in a partial syntactic restructuring of the proposition, then the inventory or *repertoire* (set, number) of these signal constructions must be limited in number and have a certain set of distinctive features. It is clear that verses are differentiated from one another by having their own rhythmic structure, by the number of accented words they include (the latter, to a large degree, determines their syntactic potential both in the syntax of the standard language and in poetic syntax proper). For a systemic description of the mentioned units, an “-emic” term would be quite appropriate, which presupposes a certain linguistic model. The first introduction of the term “verseme” (*stikhema*) is, most probably, attributable to M. M. Kenigsberg at the time of his active participation in the Moscow linguistic circle. Due to the scholar’s early death, the concept of this “-emic” unit was never fully elaborated, but the general sense of the innovation appears to be quite clear: “This is not the first time that I use the term ‘verseme,’ but I consider it necessary to specify what I mean by it. I understand the verseme as a unit of verse viewed in its relationship to grammatical and lexical forms (i.e. lexemes, morphemes and syntagms)” (Kenigsberg 1994, 164).

Thus, a verseme implies, at a minimum, a complex synthesis of a syntaxeme and syntagm on the basis of a certain rhythmic formula. A verseme must possess a sufficient degree of communicative definiteness in order to act as an independent speech segment. With respect to its organization as a syntactic segment, the features accounted for in traditional studies of prosody serve as a suprasegmental means of segmentation. Traditional scholarship of poetry proceeds from the assumption that the main object of study is the abstraction of accent alternations (meter), their variation within the limits of a segment (measure), and a further form of variation pertaining to schematic anomalies (rhythm); all of these seem to be represented in the minds of those who speak the poetic language in the form of the so-called rhythmic hum (see, for example, M. A. Krasnoperova’s reconstructions). But Vladimir Maiakovskiĭ, for instance, used to say that the trochaic meter was for him conceptualized as a signboard with the (trochaic) phrase *Magazin i masterskaia shchëtok i kisteĭ* “Sale and production of scrubbers and brushes,” which is to say that a bare metrical abstraction always occurs as a specific representational linguistic segment, or verse. The basic characteristics of the verseme, most obviously, include (a) a particular accentual contour; (b) its possible correlates in the domain of rhythmic patterns, as well as of metric abstractions;

(c) the number of meaningful words commensurate with a syntactic unit of the standard language (a phrase or sentence); and (d) depending on the latter, a greater or lesser degree of syntactic independence and self-sufficiency. The inventory of versemes, like the inventory of phonemes (“psycho-physical” units, according to Baudouin de Courtenay), is determined by their distinctive features. With respect to rhythm, this means that anacrusis and even some (for example, dactylic) clausulas are not variants of one and the same metric pattern but are considered to be characteristic of different versemes. The compatibility of masculine and dactylic clausulas and verses with or without anacrusis in texts of the same metrical pattern measures positions where distinctive features are neutralized and, together with “long meters,” represent the syntax (syntagmatics) of versemes. The length of a verseme corresponds to the minimum–maximum limits of a natural intonational syntagma in the Russian language (five to eleven syllables, accounting for possible pauses at the caesura, because the length of a Russian pause correlates with the length of a syllable: 100 microseconds). The syntactic content of a verseme determines the part-of-speech characteristics of its lexemes as elements of poetic transformational grammar. Thus, for instance, two-word versemes correlate in the mind of a Russian language speaker with parts of a sentence (phrases), hence, for them it will be the relationship of subordination of one lexical element to another that is semantically significant; and the exact formal classification of a phrase according to the taxonomy established in modern Russian syntax will become secondary in comparison to the primary one, that which is supported by the set of communicative instantiations of the verseme in poetic language. In a three-word or longer verseme, the utterance figures as the basic syntactic model, so its interpretation at the level of poetic syntax will be based on the strategy of seeking an analogue to the verbal cluster that is the nominal group of the subject and any secondary actants.

## Chapter Fifteen

# “Shevchenko’s” Hexasyllable as a Common Slavic Two-Accent and Two-Word Verse

Although the attitude of scholars toward the term *verseme* has been rather skeptical, at present, a certain return to the origins is emerging in this field of study. Compare the following quotations: “Rhythmic and syntactic figures make up the basis of poetic discourse” (Brik 1927, 3, 29) and “A poet compiles a verse not of words, but of phrases, which coalesce into rhythmic and syntactic constructions” (Gasparov and Skulacheva 2004, 120). Thus, scholars have moved on from formal, metrical constructs to a dynamic, syntactic syntagm that sets a certain rhythm. It is worth mentioning that Polish philologists, for example, have long been following this path; the models of Adam Kulawik (1994) are based on two factors: the length in syllables of a syntagma and its syntactic characteristics (Polish poetry, however, with its at times contrastive, at times synthetic interaction of syllabic and accentual-syllabic [or syllabotonic] verse, gives Polish philologists some advantages in comprehending the linguistic reality of the verse). In Russia, such methods were, for the most part, used facultatively, only when they were effective in relation to a particular subject of study, such as Aleksei Kol’tsov’s five-syllable verse, as studied by A. N. Bezzubov (1978).

It is worth mentioning that Kol’tsov’s five-syllable rhythm is a legacy common to Russia and Ukraine: “Kol’tsov was able to hear the five-syllable rhythm not only in Russian, but also in Ukrainian songs. The poet lived on the boundary of Russia and Ukraine, and his having been influenced by Ukrainian culture arouses no doubt; in his youth, he wrote three songs in a dialect of Ukrainian” (Bezzubov 1978, 104).

## POSSIBLE SOURCES OF VOWEL LENGTHENING IN THE FIRST SYLLABLE OF THE VERSEME

There are contested territories in Ukrainian poetry, where both syllabic and accentual-syllabic verse hold sway, but they are, of course, not as numerous as in Polish verse. Could these territories have been a source for borrowing (not only consciously but also subconsciously) into the strictly national repertoire of poetic models? Or could these models perhaps be part of a proto-Slavic repertoire, common to Ukrainians, Poles, and Russians? One of the most striking and productive "south-western" guests in Russian poetry is a certain six-syllable verse that was characterized by V. E. Kholoshevnikov in the following way: "the rhythmic device, which occurs in Russian poetry only in trochaic meter, is undoubtedly rooted in folklore; it was frequently used by Kol'tsov and Shevchenko, from the latter it was inherited by Bagritskii, who used it abundantly in 'Duma pro Opanasa' ['The Lay on Opanas']" (Kholoshevnikov 1991). The same phenomenon was treated by A. P. Kviatkovskii as a variant of "rhythmic inversion," but in a six-syllable verse: "in Shevchenko's trochaic verse and in Russian folk verses" (Kviatkovskii 2010, 91). K. F. Taranovskii, in his polemics against N. S. Trubetskoi, stipulates that such "syncopes" are possible only if the text is "tied to a melody" (Taranovskii 2010, 28). M. V. Panov defined the same phenomenon as a realization of "non-metrical stress in a trochee" (Panov 1988, 348). All of these scholars unanimously connected this phenomenon to the Ukrainian poetic tradition, with stylizations à la Shevchenko, while Eduard Bagritskii's "Duma pro Opanasa" was regarded to be the most outstanding example of such stylization. The poem is considered to be responsible for popularizing the device of "non-metrical transfer in a trochee" (Bankovskaia 1974, 76).

Panov saw in this "transfer" the manifestation of a struggle between two elements within the system of Russian poetry, namely of rhythm and timing. The rhythmic element is artificial, arising under the influence of extralinguistic, general cultural factors, whereas the element of timing is based on suprasegmental rules and the laws of segmentation in the language: "the lengthening of the first syllable is a signal of a shift in stress, i.e. a sign of compensation, of deviation from the meter" (Panov 1988, 349). Thus, a particular shade or element of quantitative metrics appears:

Zherebets podnimet nogu,  
A-a-pustit druguiu . . .

In other words, a rhythmic variant is established: a Ukrainianized hexasyllable with additional length compensating for the otherwise lacking metrical stress of a trochaic meter. But in a stanza where a hexasyllable occurs, two

meters are forced to interact because a hexasyllable itself, for the most part, appears to be an amphibrachic dimeter, whereas its dominating environment is trochaic. This combination is frequently declared to be a legacy of the Ukrainian tradition; the combination 4 + 4 / 6 is called, in Russian and Ukrainian poetic scholarship, either “Shevchenko’s verse” or a kolomyika, where the first verse of eight syllables is considered a necessary precursor of the second, six-syllable one. This last notion is easily disproved; one example from Konstantin Bal’mont is sufficient:

Kak l’diny vzgromozhdennye  
Od’na na dru’guu,  
Vesnoi osvobozhdennye,  
Ia’zvonko li’kuju.

(Konstantin Bal’mont, “Vskrytiie l’da,” 1903)

The alternation of iambic and amphibrachic lines is consistently carried out by the author in this stanza. The amphibrach is set up in a stronger form, practically without rhythmic variations. The compensation for this in an iambic environment is still trochaic, and the meter is chosen by the poet as a signal that a “south-western” (Polish and Ukrainian) motive is present in the poem, that is, the meter retains its own semantic halo. It is curious to see a “hexasyllable” in combination with a grammatical Polonism (or Ukrainianism) in a poem written by a (at the time, in 1928) “rural” author, Pavel Druzhinin, who was strongly criticized by the *Levyi front iskusstv* (LEF, “Left front of the arts”) for praising peasant realia (*Literatura Fakta* 2000, 119):

*A v ne’dobrom ’chase*  
Nasmo’treisia ’vsiakoi ’driani  
’Vvoliu na par’nase.

Cf. the canonical form of the idiom: *v nedobryi chas* “at an evil hour”; noteworthy are also the neighboring lexemes *drian’* “trash” and *parnas* “Parnassus,” which may be reminiscent of a similar instance of adjacency in Ivan Kotliarevskii’s poem and, thus, a Ukrainian trace. In Russian poetry of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the hexasyllable most frequently appears as a sign of “being Ukrainian,” no matter what the purpose of the stylization; it is, in any case, a reference to a foreign poetic tradition: “Ska’zhu te’be—’Bozhe / is’ chislivshii ’chisla, / he’khai trost’nik ’myslit” (Maria Galina, “The Cossack Song”).

It is curious that the most consistent attempts at stylizing the entire version of “Shevchenko’s verse” occur when the author’s purpose is satirical, for example, “Duma pro Tarasa” (“The Lay on Taras”) by Vadim Stepantsov,

although the number of verses with a lengthened syllable (in which six- and eight-syllable lines occur together) in "Duma" doesn't exceed 11 percent. The poem also includes seven-syllable verses, which sometimes positionally substitute for hexasyllables (for example, *Ras'svet zani'maetsia*). But the most important fact is that it is specifically the hexasyllable that bears the "Ukrainian" connotation, and it comprises 95 percent of all verses with an increased syllable length and weakly expressed accentuation. As the author, on the one hand, possesses a sufficiently developed poetic culture and, on the other hand, is not a philologist, this example most probably serves as a representation of "Shevchenko's verse" as reflected in the everyday consciousness of a modern Russian-speaking poet. That is to say, the marking element is none other than the six-syllable verse, consisting of two phonetic words and ending in a feminine clause.

### COMPENSATORY LENGTHENING OF THE SYLLABLE AS A DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF THE "HEXASYLLABLE" VERSEME

In the Silver Age, the connotative significance of the hexasyllable was broader and less stable; it didn't refer only to the Ukrainian tradition. Apart from Konstantin Bal'mont's experiments, it is also worthwhile remembering Marina Tsvetaeva's "Poema vozducha" ("A Poem of Air"), especially because this poem has received a rather complicated metrical interpretation from Mikhail Gasparov. The first part in the description of the "metrical composition of the poem" is as "logaoedic 2f3m," that is, alternating logaoedic dimeters and trimeters with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes (Gasparov 1995, 263), while the seventh part is characterized as "trochee 3f3f," that is, a trochaic trimeter with a feminine rhyme. But the even rhymes in the first part are: *Sto 'iavshii tak—'khvoia*; *Byl 'polon ter'penia*; *Ras'koloty i'ashchik* etc. As for the seventh part, it contains, from the viewpoint of word stress, ambiguous lines such as *O, kak vozdukh gudok*; *Pogroznee gornykh*; *Gudok, gudche grota*, where a shift of accent to the second syllable is possible, although it often changes the meaning of the word ('*gudok* "horn, siren" vs. *gu'dok* "bowl-shaped lute played with a bow"). Evidently, these rhythmic oscillations based on different metrical and rhythmic models of the hexasyllable appear to be a means of uniting the whole poem around a certain dominant prosodic pattern. It must be noted that a combination of six- and seven-syllable verses is characteristic of Czech poetry, and the accentual oscillations in the hexasyllable may have been meant by the poet to imitate the behavior of stresses in Czech verse, which includes quantitative phonetic



elements; this implies that the taking on of additional length is to be regarded as a manner of conforming to an invariant model, while the verses in which this does not occur should be regarded as positional variants in the rhythmic context of the poem (despite the fact that they are obviously more numerous). It is more logical, in any case, to consider a hexasyllable with two accented words and a feminine ending to be an independent verseme (Preobrazhenskii 2012, 189) of Russian poetic syntax. The hexasyllable of this type exhibits a tendency whereby “the lengths of the syllables are incorporated into the verse . . . in order to [become a meaningful factor—S. P.] inside the verse” (Panov 2007, 576). In other words, the additional length occurs in such a verse independently of its environment (trochaic context). This stipulation is confirmed by the behavior of hexasyllables in polymetric texts. For example, in Velimir Khlebnikov’s polymetric text, which is sometimes described as “oscillating,” the factor of the environment is minimally important for the correct rhythmic interpretation of an individual verse:

Vrem’ianin ia,  
 Vremianku nastig  
 I s nei potseluinyi  
 Sozda ia mig.  
 I vot ia ochnuksia  
 I dal’she lechu.  
 I v iar okunulsia  
 I v glubi tonu.  
 I kryl’iami slylii  
 Cherpaiu deninu.  
 Iz kladezia golubia  
 Cherpaiu vodinu.

(Velimir Khlebnikov,  
 “Vremianin ia . . .,” 1907)

The stress marking in the first line was initially added by the editor and retained in later editions, although its textual correctness is dubious. Nonetheless, in the context of the problem under discussion, the accentual interpretation of the tenth and the twelfth lines is more important. Strictly speaking, *chérpaiu* and *cherpáiu* are equivalent variants, when allowing for poetic license. It should be noted that, among informants, a high degree of popularity is enjoyed by the amphibrachic dimeter with salient compensatory lengthening. Thus, there is no reason here to think that the accentual particularity of the amphibrachic dimeter is conditioned only by its metrical context. Outside of a homogeneous amphibrach, this meter demonstrates, as

a rule, a specific (and consistent) accentual structure: lengthening standing in for an additional stress.

The interpretation of meter and rhythm becomes much simpler if the hexasyllable is accepted as an entity belonging to the inventory of Russian verse. This becomes especially clear if we look at the micropolymetry of another experimental poet, Ivan Konevskoy. Evidently, his innovations are not as radical as Khlebnikov's, but quite significant for the presymbolist period. In the diptych "Obrazy Nesterova" ("Nesterov's Images"), polymetry is introduced by combining verses of a short length and mainly two-word syntactic content with long ones. The first poem of the diptych includes mostly two-word syntagms:

Tos'ka bespre'del'naia,  
 Tos'ka bezot'vetnaia  
 O 'chem-to ne'vedomom,  
 Pro'zrachnom, voz'dushnom.  
 'Vse ros'lo, vsply'valo  
 'Smutnoe vle'chen'e,  
 Pro'silos' na'ruzhu  
 I 'vse vytes'nialo.

(Ivan Konevskoy, "Obrazy  
 Nesterova," 1895–1896)

According to the simplest interpretation, this is accentual verse styled after a certain folkloric pattern. To interpret it in a more complicated way, one must take into account the numerous rhythmic variations of the verses, plus the variety of readings possible due to the accentual ambiguity of certain lexical forms: *Krugom—el'nik chakhlyi . . . Gluboko vse eto // V dushu zapadalo . . . Tam toska tailas' . . . — // Toska bespredel'naia, // Toska bezotvetnaia . . . —* (a) if the word *krugom* is stressed on the first syllable: *\_U\_U\_U*; (b) if it is stressed on the second syllable: *U\_ \_U\_U*, whereby an antispast "foot" occurs, which is characteristic of folk texts. A similar foot is repeated in the ninth verse, also with possible accentual variations in the word *gluboko*: *Gluboko vse eto*: *U\_U\_ \_U* vs. *UU\_ \_U*. Apart from variations of the trochaic trimeter, this micropolymetric text also includes an amphibrachic dimeter in which reaccentuation with lengthening of the first syllable is stably repeated (over seven verses). Strictly speaking, the hexasyllable dominates in this composition. Thus, in its modern Russian version, the *kolomyika* or "Shevchenko's verse" seems mainly to show up as a rhythmic reflex, that is, as the second (shorter) part of the 4 + 4 / 6 combination, a syntagm of six syllables with compensatory lengthening of the first syllable. In this capacity, it can act as a unit that independently organizes the rhythmic pattern.

## THE HEXASYLLABLE AS AN AREAL UNIVERSAL OF POETRY

According to Russian and Ukrainian scholars, the final formation of the kolomyika verse supposedly dates back to the nineteenth century. But an exact reproduction of this meter can be found, for instance, in Bulgarian poetry: a similar kolomyika by Peio Iavorov is titled “Ovcharska pesen” (“Shepherd’s Song”); it was written in 1899 and, at first, signed with the pen name “Iavorov”; it has since acquired musical renditions):

Обвърнах стадо, либе Радо,  
 снощи на полето  
 и полегнах, час подремнах,  
 съних зло проклето:  
 уж са били теб годили  
 за Радой съседа,  
 теб годили, мен сватили  
 с мъка сърцеда.

(Peio Iavorov, 1899)

Still, the hexasyllables in this poem are all simple trochees; only one of them seems to include an oscillation of stresses and lengthening: *za Radoi sŭseda* (it is noteworthy that, in the most frequently performed version of the song, this verse is replaced by a regular trochaic). But in Ukrainian folklore, hexasyllables with compensatory lengthening are frequently combined with other meters (the iambic in particular); especially illustrative of this are texts reflecting the cultural and everyday context of Lviv. Hexasyllables appear in almost all of the songs and poems included in the book “Knaipy L’vova” (“Pubs of Lviv”): *Iak vechir nastane*; *Bukhc’o pie pil’znera*; *i kel’nera laie* etc. (Vinnichuk 2005); the texts are so numerous, it is especially noticeable that the compensatory length may shift not only to the first but also to the third syllable. Curiously enough, hexasyllables appear in macaronic texts and show up particularly in Polish ones written in the “Lviv” dialect.

At the intersection of Polish and Ukrainian poetic culture, the kolomyika hexasyllable must have acquired a comical chastushka-like connotation, corresponding to the current use of the verse in the west of the Ukraine. In Polish texts, the trochaic and amphibrach variants of hexasyllables naturally function as equivalents (in view of the syllabic tradition, which has been shaken up only as of the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries). Nevertheless, a deviation from the trochee also occurs as a specific form in Polish texts, and this is confirmed by its special compositional role. For instance, in Jan Brzechwa’s poem “A głupiemu radość” (“And Joy to the

Fool"), it is an amphibrach variant that performs the function of the refrain, positioned in the long verse after the caesura ("Czas uczynić już zdrowemu rozsądkowi zadość"), while the number of independent verses with an amphibrach in each of the five ten-verse stanzas is no more than two or three ("Bo jestem zawzięty," etc.).

It should be noted that, here, the hexasyllable (*rozsądkowi zadość*) takes a not quite typical position after the enjambement, whereby the determinative word in dative (*rozsądkowi*) stands apart from the attribute (*zdrowemu*), together with the predicative (*zadość*). In light of the fact that, in comical couplets, the hexasyllable tends to be relatively independent and syntactically complete, this looks like a counter-device.

In modern Polish poetry, which cultivates free verse and a kind of syllabic polymetry, hexasyllables frequently occur as the measure of a verse syntagm together with longer segments: "Z ogarkiem w dłoni schodzę w dół, / śledzę po kątach . . . wstydlivy inwentarz" (Andrzej Kuśniewicz, taken from Kwiatkowski 1997).

In view of the fact that the hexasyllable here is marked not only syntactically—by means of the weakest form of connection, namely apposition—but also semantically—by allusion to the idiom *żywy inwentarz* "livestock"—its role may be regarded as key to the whole fragment. Does assigning such an important role to a hexasyllable imply some kind of tradition, or is its use due to the fact that Andrzej Kuśniewicz is "a representative of the Ukrainian school" (Kwiatkowski 1997, 175)? Both options are possible, as the comical connotation of the hexasyllable has become weakened in both Ukrainian and Polish poetry since the 1930s–1950s. Still, in many cases, the hexasyllable exhibits the emphatic force characteristic of a refrain.

In Krzysztof Koehler's poem "Metafora zajmie się tobą" ("The Metaphor Will Take Care of You"), the second and the third "stanzas" include two trochaic hexasyllables whose connection with the title is obvious. Hexasyllables aspiring to be amphibrach look like syntagms that are both syntactically and semantically eccentric, even for free verse: *To historie mają / Stworzyć cel! Opowieści / Przypuszczenia, legendy.*

The hexasyllable is used as an effective means of segmentation that is typical for free verse, crucially breaking the natural syntactic ties. But it may also perform the function of interverse cohesion, being repeated in a number of verses, as, for example, in Marcin Świetlicki's poem "Wstęp do nocy" ("A Prelude to the Night"): "cienie na dnie pełgają— / szare, więc jaśniejsze / od dna, co jest ciemne."

In spite of the fact that accentual-syllabic verse dominated in Ukrainian classical and modern poetry throughout the whole of the twentieth century, and that *vers libre* became a mass phenomenon among the so-called young

authors only in the 1990s, the behavior of hexasyllables in modern Ukrainian classical poetry resembles their current use in the Polish tradition. The difference between the two is the fact that, in many cases, the Ukrainian version retains its folkloric connotation, for example, in the poem by Iurii Lipa “Suvorist” (“Severity,” 1931). The first part of the chapter *Viina* (“War”) is written in accentual verse where the dominant iambic meter competes with a trochaic one, and thus the rhythm of the hexasyllable, the *kolomyika*, becomes the leading organizing factor. At the same time, the semantic halo of the hexasyllable acquires an epic, tragic character; especially illustrative of this is the ending of the chapter “*Simnadsiatyi*” (“The Seventeenth”) of the same poem:

A vy, sho staly tut dovkola  
 Shapki zdiiniaty, nyzhche chola,—  
 Spy brate . . . / *Krokom—rush!*

**(А ви, що стали тут довкола,  
 Шапки здійняти, нижче чола,—  
 Спи брате . . . / Кроком—руш!)**

The iambic tetrameter is reduced to a trimeter, the same six syllables. An ethnographic hexasyllable in the Ukrainian poetry of the postrevolutionary period is reconsidered as a sign of pathos, but it retains its function as a compositional insertion and a refrain (similar to the way it is used in the Polish tradition, but with a different connotative function).

But poets such as Iurii Klen, who are adept at avant-garde experiments combining ideological conservatism with futurist esthetics, include hexasyllables into accentual verse as a marked element; often the inclusion is followed by a quotation, a change of narrative register. This is how the hexasyllable functions in the poem “*Popil imperii*” (“The Ash of Empires”):

jak bez pidpysu veksel',  
*shpurliaetsia haslo,*  
*shcho svitom potriaslo . . .*

**(як без підпису вексель,  
 шпурляється гасло,  
 що світом потрясло . . .)**

In modern Ukrainian accentual-syllabic verse, the hexasyllable is used as a token of ethnographic borrowing; from a direct quotation of a folk song (for example, “по дорозі чорний / *po dorozh chornui*”) to a *kojnos topos* quotation:

GULAG—ce koly ty holosysh: “Miї smutku, miї padku!”  
Ї нема кому втіамит’, в якій це ти мови кричyš.

**(ГҮЛАГ—це коли ти голосиш: “Мій смутку, мій падку!”  
Й НЕМА КОМУ ВТІАМИТЬ, В ЯКІЙ ЦЕ ТИ МОВІ КРИЧИШ.)**

(O. Zabuzhko, “Resist, Willow-Woman . . .” 1996)

It is noteworthy that, in Oksana Zabuzhko’s texts, hexasyllables often occur as regular hemistichs (half-verses) before and after the caesura; this same device can be encountered also while reading other authors:

Tak, nu vse. Garazd. Zibralys’. *Pochynaiem zhyty,*  
duzhe shvydko—treba zh takozh *inshym miscie daty.*

**(Так, ну все. Гаразд. Зібрались. Починаєм жити,  
дуже швидко—треба ж також іншим місце дати.)**

(Svetlana Bogdan, “Tak, nu vse. Garazd . . .” б 2007)

In accentual verse, where regular hemistichs are not expected, the caesura is where the rhythm changes; in fact, it organizes the poem, appearing regularly before a segment of a constant length (six syllables). The relative autonomy of the postcaesura hexasyllable is stressed by punctuation, revealing the essence of the device. The “international” (according to many philologists) vers libre in the Ukrainian tradition interacts with the hexasyllable in the same way as in Polish: hexasyllables constitute verse insertions, most often in compositionally strong positions:

ї na sonnoho metelyka,  
sheho tak i sydyt’ na kraiechku chuzhoho bezsonnia

**(ї на сонного метелика,  
що так і сидить на краєчку чужого безсоння)**

(Iaroslav Gadzins’kii, “Ikar bezsonnia,” 2007)

The hexasyllable is also retained in the function of the refrain:

tini mynuloho hytaiut’sia na shkyl’nykh turnikakh  
ikh maiŷzhe ne vydno.

**(ТІНІ МИНУЛОГО ХИТАЮТЬСЯ НА ШКІЛЬНИХ ТҮРНИКАХ  
ЇХ МАЙЖЕ НЕ ВИДНО.)**

(Artem Antoniuk, “Nakolki stiraiutsia . . .,” 2007)

In the Ukrainian tradition, hexasyllables rather frequently include components with varying accentuation. This characteristic feature is especially noticeable because of the relative freedom provided by the standard Ukrainian accent in comparison to, say, literary Russian, and a consequence of this is a larger variety of combinations with proclitics and enclitics, cf. *I 'nema/ne'ma'komu/ko'mu vtiamyt'*.

Evidently, the hexasyllable occupies a similar position in modern Belarusian poetry, and its potential as a poetic formula—its ability to mark a syntagm as a verse—is perhaps even higher than in the neighboring Polish and Ukrainian poetic systems. It is noteworthy, however, that, in the modern perception of Belarusians, an individual hexasyllable is, apparently, devoid of obvious Ukrainian roots; it is rather a signal of Polishness (it is those poets most guided by contemporary Polish poetry that use the hexasyllable most actively). It is even more interesting to mention that we have come across a peculiar interpretation of the metric and rhythmic contour of the kolomyika:

Scele khlopec kalamianku—  
abdymae palanianku.

**(Щэле хлопец каламянкү—  
абдымае паланянкү.)**

(Mikhas' Strygaliov, “Kalamyika,” 2008)

The hexasyllable may occur in Belarusian poetry as the dominant rhythmic pattern in the environment of five-syllable verses, and, as has long been noticed, does not necessarily refer to folkloric experience. This is consistent with a general tendency noted by translators, namely that the Ukrainian and, to an even greater degree, Belarusian literary languages have retained many more elements of the original folk language, which is to say that the semantic halo of the hexasyllable in modern Belarusian poetry is absolutely of a literary pedigree:

Ruzhy i Maki—charvonyia zharsci,  
charoŭnyia ŭcioki.

**(Рүжы і Макі—чарвоныя жарсці,  
чароўныя ўцёккі.)**

(Adam Shostak, 2012)

However, in a vernacular context, hexasyllables may create a sense of a stylized “folkloric” aphoristic character:

*Ad zroku da zmroku*  
Adzin krok.

**(АД зроку да змроку  
АДзін крок.)**

(Vera Burlak, 2005)

The compositional functions already noted in Ukrainian and Polish texts are repeated, above all the refrain. Typical are also positions in poems that contrast in the length of the line, which are likely to be routinely classified as heteromorphic verse (nonisometric with irregular and varied rhymes):

Ia zh naŭzboch naziraiu  
*zime tut ne mesca*  
siabu ūiaŭliaiu chastkaiu sviata adnak zastaiusia zvonku

**(Я ж наўзбоч назіраю  
зіме тут не месца  
сябў ўяўляю часткаю свята аднак застаюся звонку)**

(Vol’ga Gapeeva, 2003)

In the twentieth century, the hexasyllable as a prosodic entity (or reality) exists in a number of Slavic variants (Ukrainian, Polish, Belorussian, and Russian). It is noteworthy that the famous specialist of Slavic folklore P. G. Bogatyriov uses hexasyllables in his outstanding translation of Jaroslav Hašek’s novel in order to present the Russian version of Josef Švejk’s favorite songs: “Net, ne zria nosili // rebiata pogony” (Нет, не зря носили // ребята погоны). However, in the original version, the hexasyllable appears only once, in the following stanza (*penize na voze*).

## **THE HEXASYLLABLE AS AN AMBIVALENT VERSEME IN RELATION TO SYLLABIC OR ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC VERSE**

The verseme’s geographical zone of operation is the one of interaction between two poetic cultures. But the hexasyllable essentially serves as the site where the opposition of syllabic vs. accentual-syllabic verse is neutralized. The main rhythmic word in a hexasyllable is the second phonetic one, for it fulfills the axiomatic requirement of the feminine clausula within this verseme. Thus, the reconstruction of the rhythm is, in this case, regressive, but free and variable.



Conditioned by the requirement that two accents occur (two-word verse), there are only three variants for the position of the accent in the zone marked here by X (XXXX\_U): (1) \_UUU\_U, (2) U\_UU\_U, or (3) UU\_U\_U. This axiomatic property of the hexasyllable was formulated on the basis of empirical observations, but let us now regard it as a prescriptive model for the verse. Variants (1) and (3) are based on a trochaic interpretation, variant (2) on an amphibrachic one. Thus, within this limited set, an amphibrach occurs as a rhythmic variant of a trochee; this accounts for the compensatory lengthening in the amphibrach hexasyllable.

The variability of the X-group is the source of the desired variability of the accent in the Ukrainian version of the hexasyllable. The hexasyllable itself is, most probably, a product of the formation of Polish national poetry because, according to Lucylla Pszczołowska, six-syllable *alloformuły* “alloformulas” (Pszczółowska 2002, 26) were the first stable segments of verse to appear in Polish spiritual songs and poems in the twelfth century. Simple syntactic examples yield simple syntactic variety: *Kroła niebieskiego / Kroła anjelskiego* (19); *Miłości jeś pełna / Pełna jeś miłości* (23). Most probably, the Polish source also accounts for the specific rhythmic axiomatics of the hexasyllable and its two-word nature: the probability of a Polish phrase bearing a second stress on the second last syllable of a syntagm is almost 90 percent (only rarely do one-syllable words take the position of an enclitic); if segments of speech of greater and lesser length are combined under the conditions of a still unstable poetic repertoire, a two-word phrase that serves as a primary syntactic unit becomes a testing ground for the formation of rhythm.

## THE HEXASYLLABLE AS A DOMINANT RHYTHMIC PATTERN AND ITS INTERPRETATIVE POTENTIAL

Historical and cultural space often represents a case of heterotopia. Michel Foucault described this using the metaphor of the mirror: “The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there” (Foucault 1986, 24).

This comparison applies both to the rules according to which various cultural codes interact and to the strategies for interpreting these codes, united in a common semiosis. Michel Foucault, like many representatives of the post-modern paradigm, was extremely interested in finding convincing examples of the ways in which the principles of centrism and structural hierarchy cease to be universal for semiotic models. However, the concept of heterotopy—

proposed by the scholar, but not elaborated in detail, and intended for the description of extrinsic juxtapositions—is marked by several typically post-modern methodological traits.

The principal one consists in the fact that, when talking about the multiplicity of codes for interpretation and acentrism, postmodernists tend to appeal to the existence of two parallel codes and two centers. This is natural because the poorly integrated structuralism in the postmodern episteme is necessarily represented by two prerequisites: the bilateral concept of the sign and the principle of binary oppositions. It is in this epistemological space that an umbrella and a sewing machine on the surgical table represent something that prevents logical and semiotic modeling in a manner that is both unified and "centered." The paradox inhabiting the models of acentrism lies in their presumption of bicentricity.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that, as a concept, the idea of heterotopy has remarkable meta-linguistic prospects: a heterotopic situation naturally arises where a multinational cultural and historical context creates the preconditions for an ambiguous choice of a strategy for interpreting a propositional text, or, in other words, where there is no generally accepted interpretative convention. These prerequisites have been extremely characteristic of so-called Central Europe since the formation of national civilizational structures and up to the present day (cf. Ivanov 2004, 101–4). In the so-called *kresy* "fringes"—as they are called in Polish—the relations between center and periphery are actually not so simple, and the binary centric model of "center vs. outskirts," implying a necessary calquing of the center's utterances in the language of the outskirts, is doubtful. On the contrary, the inhabitant of the *kresy* is inclined to project the center onto himself, allowing for its simultaneous existence in an extrinsic cultural space, that is, in a utopia. The present chapter offers an illustration of the previous reflections concerning several seemingly heterogeneous aspects of a poetic text under interpretation: (a) its metrical and rhythmic peculiarities, which are regarded as bearing connotative meaning, halo (or subtext); (b) its semantic reference and the presuppositions of this reference (or context); and (c) the capability of seeing the heterotopical character of the lyrical narrator's position.

We turn to Nikolai Aseev's poem "Pliaska" ("The Folk Dance"), added by the author to the cycle "Sarmatskie pesni" ("Sarmatian Songs," 1912–1914) and published in his first large book of poems (*Oxana*, 1916).

Pliaska  
 Pod kopyta kazaka  
 grian', bran', gin', vran,  
 kin'tes', brovi, na zakat,—  
 ĭan, ĭan, ĭan, ĭan!

Kop'ia tleiut na zapade  
u vrazh'ego lika,  
razmochal'sia, lapot'  
zheleznogo lyka.

Zakruzhi kuntushi,  
goriachee veilo,  
iz pogibshei dushi  
Iasnogo Iageilo.

Zakachalsia tuman  
ne nad bulavoiu,  
zakachal nash pan  
mertvoi golovoiu.

Pereputalis' dni,  
raskatilis' chisla,  
kushakom otiani  
dushi nashi, Visla.

Vremeni dvoiakogo  
pyl' dymit u Krakova,  
v sviste sabel', v bleske pul'  
pliashet krul', pliashet krul'.

### **Пляска**

**Под копыта казака  
грянь, брань, гинь, вран,  
киньтесь, брови, на закат,—  
Ян, Ян, Ян, Ян!**

**Копья тлеют на западе  
у вражьего лица,  
размочалься, лапоть  
железного лыка.**

**Закружи кунтүши,  
горячее вейло,  
из погибшей души  
ясного Ягейло.**

**Закачался туман  
не над булавою,  
закачал наш пан  
мертвой головою.**

**Перепутались дни,  
раскатились числа,  
кушаком отяни  
души наши, Висла.**

**Времени двоякого  
пыль дымит у Кракова,  
в свисте сабель, в блеске пұль  
пляшет крұль, пляшет крұль.**

(Nikolai Aseev, 1916)

M. L. Gasparov (2001, 158–60) uses this text to illustrate “the dolnik on a two-syllable basis,” that is, a dolnik in which two-syllable “beats” prevail, in contrast to the more widespread “dolnik on a three-syllable basis.” M. L. Gasparov’s dolnik theory will not be discussed here, but poetic analysis implies not only finding the dominant rhythmic pattern for the whole text but also revealing peculiarities of its variative realization in individual verses, or lines. And here we observe the first counterpoint of the conflict between heterotopical and conventional (monocentric) consciousnesses:

[The rhythmic basis of the lines—S. P.] in Aseev’s poem is either a trochaic tetrameter (*V sviste sabele’, v bleske pul’*), or a trochaic trimeter (*Mertvoi golovoiu*). At the same time, alongside two-syllable beats, his tetrameters are also intruded upon by one-syllable beats: sometimes once per line (“Pliashet / *krul’*, / pliashet / *krul’*, *Zakru/zhi* / *knutu/shi*, *Pere/pu/talis’* / *dni*”). (Gasparov 2001, 160)

To reduce a micropolymeric composition to a consistent, naturally trochaic dominant meter, which is, moreover, manifested in the “dolnik on a two-syllable basis,” inconceivable efforts are required. Is it possible by means of such poetic interpretation to identify intertextual passages that are similar in rhythmic and metric features or to identify a cultural code? Hardly. The only possible conclusion is the general consideration that Nikolai Aseev’s early works were written during the period in which the Russian dolnik predominated, which is supposedly homogeneous in its genesis.

A compositionally important feature in the poem is the alternation of the length of the verse, marked in the first stanza and extended to the middle of the second: short verses (four to six syllables) and long ones (seven to eight syllables). However, beginning with the third verse of the second stanza, the verses become equal in length (six syllables) and remain so up to the final quatrain, where three seven-syllable verses are closed by a six-syllable ending. Thus, six-syllable segments predominate (seventeen out of twenty-four). Among the six-syllable verses, eight are marked by an accentual feature referred to by M. L. Gasparov: “In his trimeters, there are no one-syllable beats, but there are *disruptions of rhythm*: *U vrazh’ego lika*, *Zheleznogo lyka*, *Goriachee veilo*” (Gasparov 2001, 160). Thus, the actual rhythmic basis of the text, its genuine dominant rhythmic pattern, consists of six-syllable segments, while those of them that exhibit a disruption of the rhythm, being marked forms, are nonuniformly represented. It is on the basis of this poetic

form that it is logical to evaluate the matter of the “semantic halo” as indicating a cultural code.

In commenting on the presence of verses with a “disruption of the rhythm,” Gasparov repeats a widespread opinion of Russian scholars of poetry: “It is an imitation of Ukrainian folk poetry, where such shifts are quite common: they can be found in T. Shevchenko’s works and even in their Russian translations” (Gasparov 2001, 160). In Aseev’s poem, the meaningful signal of intertextuality does not refer to the Ukrainian context; it refers to a heterotopy of contexts (through the Polish to the Ukrainian, Belarusian, and “folkloric” Russian context). Within the frame of Russian “centrism,” this rhythmic unit may be considered a variant of the trochee (although it is a variant of the amphibrach as well), but those who are acquainted with Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian heterotopy will perceive it as nothing other than a manifestation of this heterotopy, where each considers himself either a pioneer or a successor, depending on the circumstances.

But, still more important, a monocentric scholarly interpretation leads to total interpretative impotence: “Aseev’s poem dilutes the two-syllable (and trochaic) rhythm with one-syllable beats, and, hence, it sounds quite different: not soft, but harsh. Its content is a fictitious episode from Polish history: the funeral feast in memory of King *Iageilo* (the more correct name is *Iagailo*) and a dance in honor of the new king *Ian*” (Gasparov 2001, 160). If we have a trochee, this necessarily means a folk dance (a folk-dancing rhythm!), and we have a folk dance, so, it must represent a ritual, and if we have ritualistic dance and *Jagiello*’s soul has “perished,” then we are dealing with a funeral feast.

But let us begin with the prince’s name. In the poem, it is rendered in the Polish-Lithuanian-Russianized manner: *Jagiello* is the Polish variant, *Jogaila* the Lithuanian one, and *Iagailo* the Russian one. Incidentally, in the version from 1928, the prince’s name was, apparently, *Iageil*, cf. *iz pogibshei dushi // iasnogo Iageila* (with the genitive singular ending *-a*). The proper name serves to establish a view of the prince from a specific national context. And can it be the case that Nikolai Aseev (Stahl’baum), who attended courses at the philological departments of the Moscow and Kharkiv Universities and who had been interested in history of the Slavs and the Slavic problem since 1909, was so ignorant as to fail to choose the right anthroponym? The poem is included in “Sarmatian Songs.” Inasmuch as the definition of “Sarmatian” is significant, above all, for the Polish cultural context (Sarmatian baroque), the cultural space and the interpretative context are defined as “Sarmatian,” centered on Poland. But, on the whole, according to M. V. Lomonosov, it is “Roxolanic,” that is, Polish-Ukrainian-Russian, with Lithuania included in the topos at a certain chronological juncture.

In the edition from 1928, the cycle is opened by the poem "Perune, Perune . . ." ("O Perun, Perun . . ."). Of interest is its six-syllable basis, as well as the fact that it sets up one of the important elements of the interpretative code, that is, the nomenclature. They allow one to correlate the text with historic and geographical contexts. The first three poems of the cycle may logically be considered a description of three stages of calling a prince. And there is no indication that the "Russian" version is about summoning the Varangians. This is a kind of "common" Slavic variant. The fourth poem, "Pliaska" ("The Folk Dance"), is characterized by a shift of the chronotope, emphasized by the intrusion of realities that are, in part, anachronistic. These "key" elements are: *kazak* "cossack," *Ian* "Jan," *bulava* "mace," *kushak* "sash," *kuntush* "a Turkish-style nobleman's robe," *pan* "nobleman, lord," *lapot' zheleznogo lyka* "bast shoe of iron," *iasnyi Iageilo (Iageil)* "eminent Jagiello," *Visla* "Vistula," *Krakov* "Krakow," *sablia* "saber," *pulia* "bullet," and *krul'* "(Polish) king." Because the text clearly indicates the convergence of chronological periods (*Pereputalis' dni, // raskatilis' chisla* "The days became confused, // the numbers were set in motion") but confirms the invariance of the topos (*pyl' dymit u Krakova* "dust billows near Krakow"), the main task of the interpreter is to determine the chronos of the past, for there are no great problems with the present: the poem was written during the European war.

In 1434, Jagiello, the founder of the Polish royal dynasty of the Jagiellons—although he was inauthentically king of Poland and a dubious Grand Duke of Lithuania—died, allegedly to the singing of a nightingale. In addition, two years later, Sigismund of Luxembourg overcame the Hussites, who had risen, according to some Slavophiles, to defend the true Orthodox spiritual values, as opposed to the Caesaropapism triumphing in the Holy Roman Empire. The Polish-Lithuanian union had marked the beginning of a long war between Lithuanian brother princes and legitimized the struggle against paganism in Lithuania, once more opening the way for Crusaders. Thus, in general, the name of Jagiello marked a point of historical bifurcation for almost all countries of Central Europe, up to and including Ukraine, which ceased to be Rus'.

Nikolai Aseev expressed all this quite coherently: *Vremeni dvoiakogo / pyl' dymit u Krakova* "Of times twofold / dust billows near Krakow." Actually, his poem's subject is the heterotopy of "the Sarmatian" (the markers of "Sarmatia" in the text are homogeneous, although their national belonging is nonspecific heroic "Polish-Ukrainian": *pulia* "bullet," *sablia* "saber," *kushak* "sash," *kuntush* "a Turkish-style nobleman's robe," *bulava* "mace," and *pan* "nobleman, lord") cultural and historical space and its poetic language (Ukrainian-Polish-Russian-Lithuanian). The "Czech factor" is, perhaps, the most ambivalent poetically: Why are those in the west threatening the enemy

“with a bast shoe of iron” (*laptiu zheleznogo lyka*)? The analogy with Aseev’s Austrian contemporaries is clear, and the figurative comparison is understandable (regressive militarism). But is it not a hidden allusion to the legendary bast shoes of the first Czech prince Přemysl? This is especially likely in view of the fact that, in the sixth poem of the cycle, the name of Libuše appears. The fictitious, legendary Jan, who stands as a candidate for *krul’* (king), substitutes for a Jan Hus of all the Slavs and/or a universal Saint Jan, who has united the Balto-Slavic pagan belief with the Christian era.

### THE HEXASYLLABLE AS A PROBLEM OF TRANSLATION IN THE MODERN UKRAINIAN AND RUSSIAN POETIC SPACE

It is imperative that any text concerning literary translation be preceded by a brief set of general considerations, a kind of methodological credo of the author. With respect to methodology, the views of the majority of philologists on literary translation seem to be similar and boil down to the generally known stipulations regarding linguistic levels and the ways of functioning of linguistic devices (phonetics, supersegmental prosody and rhythm, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, structure, and composition of the text). At the same time, the criterion of accuracy (which implicitly testifies to the existence of a convention accepted by the major part of the research community) is always mentioned but remains vague and does not (cannot) have a universal definition. Moreover, methodological assumptions are not shared with the same degree of solidarity. This methodological paradox of the unity of practice and disagreement of theory reveals itself, however, not only with reference to the analysis of literary translation but also generally, as applied to a wide range of studies in the humanities. Therefore the “accuracy” of translation is understood here to be “illusionary” (Levý 1970, 428). P. V. Florensky once explicated this in the following way: “the re-creation of a certain new work in another language is the answer of the spirit of one people to the idealized thematic matter embodied by another people” (cit. following Ivanov 1988, 74–75). From general provisions follows a fully definite semiotic technology: “the interpretative bearing of different levels of meaning, as well as of the choice of which are to be preferred, are fundamental to the translator’s decisions” (Eco 2006, 61–62); “the translator must rely on that which is dominant in a particular text” (62). The dominant factor is interpreted by Umberto Eco in accordance with Roman Jakobson, which is largely consistent with the methodological basis of this section.

The general problem with respect to the possibilities of translating texts in which one of the principal antinomies is a collision of intercultural inter-

action by two national poetic languages (A and B)—reflected in the text in language A and requiring transmutation into the text in language B—may be posed in relation to the translation of three poems from Oksana Zabuzhko's novel *Pol'ovi doslidzhennia z ukrains'koho seksu* ("Field Work in Ukrainian Sex," 1996), carried out for the Russian version of the book (2001) by Dmitrii Kuz'min. Within the narrative composition of the novel, the poems act as internal monologues. They are another of the narrator's masks, which differs from the book's otherwise prosaic—being stylistically close to a diary—semidocumentary narrative mask. The translator of the novel, Elena Marinicheva, found the translation of the poems to be well suited (although the translator himself, according to Elena Marinicheva, was more restrained in his estimation) (Marinicheva 2008). However, in this article, only one aspect (albeit an important one) of the "accuracy" of the translation will be considered. Enough was said about the difficulties of poetic translation from closely related languages already in the Soviet years, particularly with respect to the "false friends of the translator" at the lexical and phraseological level, as well as the inertia of rhyme leading to a neglect of the semantic structure of the original text. Less has been said about the tragic mismatch of connotations in view of the proximity and sometimes the mutual penetrability of lexical spaces, making it necessary to look for equivalents not needed in the case of more distant languages (for example, the etiquette of address in translation from Ukrainian into Russian and vice versa). As Vladimir Poletaev—the young and brilliantly mature (but, unfortunately, untimely deceased) interpreter and poet—put it with respect to translation from Ukrainian, "in an externally close and, most importantly, understandable language, it is easiest to overlook 'under-reading'" (Poletaev 1973, 480). Such "under-reading" often arises from the fact that the transfer from one culture to another is based on mutual sympathy, but a lack of sympathy casts doubt on the dialogical principle itself and, thereby, on the search for a common communicative solution (because the text must not remain only "theirs" to us but also make the "theirness" become "ours").

Zabuzhko, along with Iurii Andrukhovich, is emblematic for the literary space of post-Soviet Ukraine. Many details of her biography are typical in their own way: a paradoxical combination of success and failure (an early poetic start and subsequent stagnation), radical nonconformism of political views and a fairly successful educational career that naturally led her to the humanistic academic environment, and an interest in the revival of an elite national culture, which has turned out to be largely utopian but has, nevertheless, formed the worldview of cultural analysts anchored in the European liberal paradigm. In Russia, many poets of the "new wave" (Vladimir Aristov, Sergei Biriukov, Nina Iskrenko, Timur Kibirov, Vladimir Karpets,



Iurii Orlitskii, Aleksei Parshchikov, Olga Sedakova, etc.) have had similar biographies with some deviations. The typological similarity of the behavioral model seems to be an important detail that emphasizes the contrast with respect to the radical nationalism of Oksana Zabuzhko (of the listed Russian poets, characteristic only of Vladimir Karpets).

A detailed criticism of Oksana Zabuzhko's political concept is not within our competence, so we confine ourselves to a primitive reconstruction of the ideological schema; but it should be noted that she provides material for a much more detailed analysis, speaking regularly as a political scientist and sociologist in the media. According to Zabuzhko, the role of Russia throughout modern history has been exclusively negative in relation to Ukraine; this concerns not only political oppression but also the destruction of the domestic Ukrainian culture and the infection of Ukrainians with a serf inurbanity. In the Soviet years, it was the direct genocide of the Holodomor, the deliberate destruction of the thinking members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and a continuation of the imposition of "inurbanity" upon the people. The transformation of the Ukrainian into "Homo Sovieticus" is treated as an exclusively antinational program, given that Ukraine was the last—apart from the Baltic countries—center of Europeanism within the territory of the mostly Asian USSR.

Today, the search for analogies between Russia and Ukraine is harmful. This is a different civilization with a completely different history. . . . Ukraine is not some kind of "East" over there, which is again subject to . . . russification, but . . . a people with historical experience and a culture in which Polish society can discover a lot for itself and even learn something about itself. (Zabuzhko 2011, 90–91)

However, despite these words, modern Ukraine is also, to a large extent, a Soviet rudiment. This is fully understood by Zabuzhko but also turns national self-identification into a tragedy of purification through suffering. Tragic is also the personal acceptance or rejection of the Russian (including poetic) culture, the impossibility or necessity of inheriting it. If we consider Zabuzhko's poetic work in the general context of Russian and Ukrainian poetry in the 1980s (the years of her creative maturity), her works should be attributed to the new traditionalism seeking to revive the aesthetic realities of the Silver Age (excepting her juvenile "futuristic" experiments and poems dedicated to Vladimir Vysotskii, in which she rejects classical meters) rather than to the avant-garde-oriented "neofuturism," both official and unofficial, from Andrei Voznesenskii to Viktor Sosnora. The unprinted Russian poetic neoclassicism of the 1960s and 1980s was characterized by a conventional metrical and rhythmic repertoire, increased attention to "accuracy" and the "richness" of rhyme, which was inherited from symbolism and acmeism, and a democra-

tization and devaluation of the poetic norms of usage, inherited from Joseph Brodsky. Zabuzhko is guided by the same neoclassical tradition but within the Ukrainian context; she repeatedly alludes directly to the most revered authors: Evgen Malaniuk, Oleg Ol’zhich, and Vasil’ Stus. The first two were outstanding poets of the period of prewar emigration and represented the generation of the Ukrainian Silver Age; the third was a nonconformist of the Soviet period, an immediate predecessor of Zabuzhko.

A characteristic feature of unofficial Russian poets of the 1980s is their attraction to long three-syllable meters, especially the anapest:

Ia smotriu na tebia iz nastol’ko glubokikh mogil,  
chto moi vzgliad, prezhde chem do tebia dobezhat’, razdvoitsia

**(Я СМОТРЮ НА ТЕБЯ ИЗ НАСТОЛЬКО ГЛУБОКИХ МОГИЛ,  
ЧТО МОЙ ВЗГЛЯД, ПРЕЖДЕ ЧЕМ ДО ТЕБЯ ДОБЕЖАТЬ, РАЗДВОИТСЯ)**

(Aleksandr Erëmenko, 1990)

Govori. Chto ty khochesh’ skazat’? Ne o tom li, kak shla  
Gorodskoiu rekoiu barzha po zakatnomu sledu

**(ГОВОРИ. ЧТО ТЫ ХОЧЕШЬ СКАЗАТЬ? НЕ О ТОМ ЛИ, КАК ШЛА  
ГОРОДСКОЮ РЕКОЮ БАРЖА ПО ЗАКАТНОМУ СЛЕДУ)**

(Sergei Gandlevskii, 1997)

Razdvigaia sozvezd’ia, kak vodu nad Ryboi nochnoi,  
ty gliadish’ na menia kak okhotnik s igrushkoi stal’noi

**(РАЗДВИГАЯ СОЗВЕЗДЬЯ, КАК ВОДУ НАД РЫБОЙ НОЧНОЙ,  
ТЫ ГЛЯДИШЬ НА МЕНЯ КАК ОХОТНИК С ИГРУШКОЙ СТАЛЬНОЙ)**

(Ivan Zhdanov, 1990)

Sero-rozovoi dymkoi, pochti sliudianoi sredoi,  
Iznosivsheisia legochnoi tkan’iu, szhizhaiushchei krov’

**(СЕРО-РОЗОВОЙ ДЫМКОЙ, ПОЧТИ СЛЮДЯНОЮ СРЕДОЙ,  
ИЗНОСИВШЕЙСЯ ЛЕГОЧНОЙ ТКАНЬЮ, СЖИЖАЮЩЕЙ КРОВЬ)**

(Sergei Preobrazhenskii, 1987)

This cento could be continued with the addition of yet further names. At the time that these and other texts of uncensored Russian poetry appeared in *samizdat*, the reader felt a special semantic halo to long three-syllable meters. And it is symptomatic that one of Zabuzhko’s poems directly points to a similar philological reflection because it is titled “Holosom visimesiatykh” (“In the Voice of the Eighties”): “Iz dvadciatoho viku, nemov

iz m'iacha, vzhe zi svystom vykhodyt' povitria // Nabriakaie nechutno nastupnyi—uzhe ne dlia nas, ne pro nas” (“Із двадцятого віку, немов із м'яча, вже зі свистом виходить повітря; // Набрякає нечутно наступний—вже не для нас, не про нас”).

In general, the Russian-speaking neoclassicists were very sensitive to the semantic halos of meters, and for them these connotations were an object of poetic play and deepened reflection. Apparently, Oksana Zabuzhko possesses the same sensitivity (if not a greater one in a bilingual poetic space). This should be born in mind when regarding the poems from the novel, as translated by Dmitrii Kuz'min, because the ethical philosophy and sociology of the Ukrainian-Russian semiotic conflict is one of the main objects of reflection in Zabuzhko's novel: “A novel in which the main character is language (speech and words)” (Hemlin 2001, 4). In Ukrainian, *mova* means “language.” In Russian, the word *iazyk* “language” has several meanings, only one of which coincides with Ukrainian *mova*. And it coincides, I dare say, not entirely. “*Mova* is not just speech, not just a collection of words etc. *Mova* is a shibboleth. A symbol. A sign” (4).

In the novel, the linguistic space is delineated according to the political scientist Oksana Zabuzhko's ideology. In one episode, an unsuccessful rapist on a train full of shuttle traders pronounces unstressed vowels without their full phonetic quality (yielding *a* in place of unstressed *o*); this so-called *akan'e* is, in general, a phonetic signal of antagonism for Zabuzhko. The victim's defender speaks Ukrainian, and the narrator mentally composes lofty poems in unrhymed dramatic iambic pentameter. The three main registers of speech composition of the novel become activated: Russian speech (to which *Surzhik* is nearly equated), Ukrainian prose speech, and Ukrainian verse. In the Russian translation of the prose, the Russian direct and indirect speech is marked phonetically (emphasized via transcription), and the Ukrainian speech by references or remarks. The algorithm of literary translation is traditional but, on the whole, quite adequate. The axiological connotations of the linguistic registers in the novel seem to be ideologically transparent. However, the poetic texts are not so simple.

Three poems in the novel do not rhythmically correspond to the international “Shakespearean” iamb. They include rhythmic schemas that each have a characteristic “semantic halo,” and, in one case, the halos are antinomic:

Vypruchušsia, zhinko verbova. *Lovys' za povitria*

(Zabuzhko, “Resist, Willow-Woman . . . ,” 1996)

On the one hand, this is a long three-syllable meter and was, in fact, treated as such by the translator:

Тy zhenshchina-verba. Vgryzaiisia korniami v promerzluu glinu

**(Ты женщина-верба. Вгрызайся корнями в промерзлую глину)**

(Translated by D. Kuz'min, 1998)

However, Dmitrii Kuz'min added extra feet in the first verses of each quatrain and turned the five-syllable amphibrach into a six-syllable one. Apart from this, the translation contains a hemistich (*vyvorachivaemsia v stolbniake*) that is either a metric misconception or a bold elision: /vive' t'iateivlupsjə/. But here we are interested not in awkwardness but in under-readings. The italicized lines in the Ukrainian original text may have a different rhythmic interpretation in the Ukrainian context, although they are the same amphibrachs, albeit separated by a caesura. A qualified Russian reader may fail to ascertain these segments of the hexametric verse as hexasyllables deeply rooted in Ukrainian poetry (modern included). In others of Zabuzhko's poems (not in the novel), hexasyllables often form regular hemistichs both before and after the caesura: "Na gorby postala stara cerkovcia (*de krovicia vpala*) / **На горби постала стара церковця (де кровця впала)**"; "Toi parkan buv naspravdi. Vin buv—*cerkovna ograda*. / **Той паркан був насправді. Він був—церковна ограда**" (Post Scriptum. Poem-Letter, 1994).

Whereas, in Russian texts, the hexasyllable is a southwestern exoticism, in Ukrainian ones, it is a patriotic meter. It is only under the influence of "equalizing" Russian poetic scholarship that a Ukrainian will fail to see the caesura in the verse and to recognize the hexasyllable and will reduce the whole line to a trochee. Still, even in this case, a Ukrainian will recognize the national connotation but treat it in a different way (as "jingoist" one) (see Kostenko 2004, 132). Thus, in the poem from Zabuzhko's novel, two rhythmic contours are contaminated: an amphibrachic pentameter, connoted as a signal of the dissident neoclassicism of the 1980s, and the national hexasyllable, whereby their positions are ambivalent. In conjunction with *My vsi—taborovi* (the inclusive, generalizing pronoun *vsī* "all" is omitted in the translation), the rhythmic contour emphasizes the tragic character of the almost unsolvable antinomy of national identity. The question of whether it is possible to find an equivalent in translation for the rhythmic opposition/neutralization remains open, but, without such an equivalent, the translation obviously loses part of its "accuracy." The other two texts translated by Dmitrii Kuz'min seem to pose no similarly grand challenges because their intertextual semantics are more obvious; the poems appeal not to the identification of semantic halos but rather to a recognition of reference being made to a culturally relevant literary precursor. As a rhythmic phenomenon, Paeon I is quite conspicuous and not too frequent in Russian and Ukrainian neoclassical poetry. In Zabuzhko's poems, there are only two purely paeonic verses, as is often the case for poems with a paeonic dominant meter:

Їак се дyvно—дiвчyнка. Дyтiя.  
*Вyраз невдоволення на лyчку*

**(Як це дивно—дiвчинка. Дитя.  
 Вираз невдоволення на личкi)**

. . .

*L'alechko, l'udynon'ko, prosty*

**(Лялечко, людинонько, прости)**

(Zabuzhko, “Їак се дyvно . . .” 1996)

Moreover, it contains several “feet” of the type UUU and hemistichs of Paeon I; one of them is *divchynka. Dytia*, that is, a variant of *lialechko, liudynon'ko*. In Kuz'min's translation, Paeon I is reproduced even more regularly and frequently than in the original, whereby the equivalent of the variant mentioned earlier appears three times: in the first, fifth, and sixth lines. But due to repetition and the less defined compositional arrangement, the intertextual significance of the paeonic lines being marked decreases; the intertextuality itself becomes less obvious because these lines give the impression of being internal quotations from the text, its own mutual allusions. But among the paeons of type I with a “female” motive, two may claim to be intertextual references in Zabuzhko's poem, in view of her “Silver Age” literary background. The first is, of course, to Aleksandr Blok's response to Zinaida Gippius. It begins with the hackneyed line *Zhenshchina, bezumnaia gordiachka!* “Woman, crazed and prideful one!” and ends in a bolshevist pathos *Kak zaria nad chernymi skalami— // Veet znamia—Internac'onal* “Like the dawn over black cliffs // A banner waves—the International.” The second is the much less well known—but popular among the nonconformists of the 1980s—text by Roald Mandelshtam, one of the iconic poets of the postwar Leningrad underground: “Devochka chitala memuary” (“A Girl Was Reading Memoirs”). The probability of the Blok intertextual connection is confirmed by the fact that one of the novel's poems also contains an allusion to the canonical work of Blok. The possible allusion to Roald Mandelshtam is supported by the similarity in motif of the last lines by Oksana Zabuzhko, *Nache pomyraty v chystim poli* “Thus to perish on an empty field,” and those of Roald Mandelshtam, *Nezametno, tikho umerla* “Unnoticed, she quietly perished.” Moreover, the two poems have similar addressees: “bookish” girls unable to adapt to a harsh reality. But we must remember that, to Zabuzhko, this inhuman reality has its roots in a choir singing the “International” in Russian. The allusions to Blok are confirmed also by the third text of those translated by Kuz'min, where the intertextual character of the Ukrainian original is obvious to a Russian reader:

"O slipuche, prekrasne i dyke! // Grai vogniamy, zavod' i many" (**"О сліпуче, прекрасне і дике! //Граї вогнями, заводь і мани"**).

Aleksandr Blok was translated into Ukrainian more than once, but the fact that the intertextual connections here allude to the Russian originals cannot be doubted, for none of the Ukrainian translations opens with the exclamatory particle *O* "Oh!" Moreover, the basic rhymes from "Solov'inyi sad" ("The Nightingale Garden") testify to the quasi-centonic (drawing from Aleksandr Blok's texts) character of Zabuzhko's poem. In Kuz'min's translation, the centonic character is transmitted even with some excess: "Ognevoe, shal'noe, khmel'noe! // Oslepliai, zazyvai i mani" (**"ОГНЕВОЕ, ШАЛЬНОЕ, ХМЕЛЬНОЕ! // Ослепляй, зазывай и мани"**).

The signals of lexical and metrical proximity to Blok's anapests, as present in his original, are supplemented in the translation by additional ones to make it look more convincing. But in such an interpretation, Blok turns out to be a source of defiant vital optimism for Zabuzhko; the Ukrainian irony and skepticism disappear.

Rather surprising is also a failure of recognition in the translation of the fourth text, the first lines of which are "Brate mii, chornoknyzhnyk, // De ty teper iesy?" (**"Братє мій, чорнокнижник, // Де ти тепер єси?"**).

This is translated as follows: "Vedun, chernoknizhnik, travnik, // Ty gde, rodnoi chelovek?" (**"Ведун, чернокнижник, травник, // Ты где, родной человек?"**).

It is not that the structure of the dolnik has changed (in some cases, the line has been made longer). The main issue is the lack of recognition of the passage having been inspired by Iurii Vlodov's text, which continues the theme of "unwashed Russia" (*Dukh na Rusi ispoden. Niukhai, da ne gnusi*). Vlodov's poem was well known in the milieu of the 1980s underground, where perhaps not everyone remembered the author, but everyone quoted the refrain: *Kutaisia, Syn Gospoden. / Kholodno na Rusi!*

The failures with respect to the inclusion of folkloric elements in the text continue. In the Blok cento, the more than transparent "fraudulent treasure" (*obmannyi klad*) has become the abstract "false gold" (*lozhnoe zlato*); the devils who were playing dice with the bones of the lyrical heroine now play at dubs (*babki*), which, for a Russian reader, is a patriarchal Russian game sung of by Pushkin with no association to "Little Russians." In Zabuzhko's poems, Russian poetic voices sound like a double alarmist code against the Ukrainian background: a warning about the all-penetrating (including the poetic consciousness of the author of the novel) seductive Muscovite culture and the self-revelation of this culture in the face of the coming "boor." Under the conditions of such a Ukrainian–Russian conflict, translation into Russian from the Ukrainian seemingly becomes an insoluble semiotic problem.

## Chapter Sixteen

# The Hypothesis of the Typological Proximity of Micropolymetry and Devotional Verse

Valerii Briusov actively popularized two poets who stood at the origins of Russian micropolymetric poetic expression and who based their works on the rhythmic and syntactic formulas of the devotional verse. With respect to Ivan Oreus (Konevskoy)—in connection with his metrical experiments (?)—Briusov expressed an ambivalent opinion: “The verse of I. Konevskoy is also unique, also devoid of the cheap ‘smoothness’ easily acquired even by mediocre poets. I remember I. Konevskoy himself saying, ‘I like the verse to be a bit clumsy’” (Briusov 2006). Through the efforts of A. V. Lavrov, the peculiarity of the spiritual world of Ivan Konevskoy himself, as well as his closest associates, has come to attract the attention of philologists (Lavrov 2009). However, experiments in the field of poetic syntax are still being noted only in passing (see Stepanov 1987, as well as his paradoxical assessment including the definition: “‘tongue-tied,’ difficult syntax and rhythm combined with elaborate verse,” in Stepanov 1934). However, these experiments were highly valued in the postsymbolist context (for example, by the poets of *Centrifuga* [“Centrifuge”], see Ivanov 2007).

The main body of Konevskoy’s poetry and lyrical prose is presented in *Mechty i dumy* (Dreams and Thoughts), a book compiled by the author. Many of the young poet’s innovative experiments were left beyond its scope, for example, a sketch about clouds, a “free verse” (*vers libre*) without any reservations:

Oblaka, eto—koni s veiushchimi belymi grivami  
I eti lazurnye ozera—ikh ristalishcha.

**(Облака, это—кони с веющими белыми гривами  
И эти лазурные озера—их ристалища.)**

It was, however, this book that established the reputation of the poet. We should pay attention to the fact that the texts are divided not only into prosaic and poetic texts but also into prosodically “strict” and “free” verses. The former correspond to the generally accepted notion in the nineteenth century with respect to how the metrics of a lyrical poem ought to be structured: a consistent dominant meter or a regular alternation of two or several meters. The prosody in the second group of texts bewilders even today. Although those of the second group are less in number, they are perceived as marked elements of the author’s writing. In these texts, the compositional technique of combining verses of various lengths and rhythmic patterns, that is, micropoly-metry, comes to the fore. Such variability acts as an obstacle to cohesion and increases the significance of the semantic and linguistic factor of coherence:

Zarevom riadnym nebo zalito.  
Svet ty trevozhnyi, chutkii, maniashchii,  
Skol’ko v tebe otkrovenii sokryto,  
Pravdy shchemiashchei! . . .  
Zhdesh’ pomnutno: vot-vot mechta zagoritsia,  
Mir ozarit ot kraia do kraia.

**(Заревом рдяным небо залито.  
Свет ты тревожный, чуткий, манящий,  
Сколько в тебе откровенный сокрыто,  
Правды щемящей! . . .  
Ждешь поминутно: вот-вот мечта загорится,  
Мир озарит от края до края.)**

(Ivan Konevskoy, “V ogne zakata,” 1896)

Even a small fragment suffices to demonstrate how difficult it is to give a metric and rhythmic characterization of the poem:  $\_UU\_U / \_UU\_U // \_UU\_U / \_UU\_U // \_UU\_UU\_UU\_U // \_UU\_U // \dots \_UU\_U / U\_U\_UU\_U // \_UU\_U\_UU\_U$ . The dominant meter here is a combination of the dactyl and the trochee—the shortest and simplest logaoedic verse: the adoneus. It varies, as though in the spirit of ancient meters, by way of adding a superfluous dactylic “foot.” “The stressed syllables surrounding the chain of unstressed ones are pronounced with an elongation, with a ‘chant’” (Panov 2007, 488). The composition of said logaoedic passage naturally includes the dactyl itself as a variant (or, on the contrary, an invariant), as well as a short verse—either a half of a logaoed or a truncated dactyl. But the most enigmatic verse is the one in which the word *mechta* appears. To read it as a dactyl, one must allow the unthinkable poetic liberty of stressing the first syllable in *vot-vot*. Otherwise, we have a dolnik.



The principle of metric construction is similar in the poem “Na letu” (“On the Fly,” 1896). In this poem, the dominant meter is the amphibrach, but, already in the first two lines, it is made to vary (the variation is accounted for by the last two “feet”):

Vnedriaisia v menia ty, o svet proslavlennyi, gornii  
Skachu na kone ia, ves' otshatnulsia nazad.

**(Внедряйся в меня ты, о свет прославленный, горный  
Скачу на коне я, весь отшатнулся назад.)**

Additionally, it should be taken into account that the accentual pattern of the word *proslavlennyi* may vary (with the stress falling on the second or third syllable, allowing for poetic license). Another micropolymetric text “Po dniam” (“By the Day”) has a yet more complex structure than the two mentioned previously, as it is practically devoid of a dominant meter; all three Russian three-syllable meters vary here. The shortest verse consists of two “feet,” the longest one of six. Because the “feet” vary, in such a context they should be referred to as ictuses (beats) without quotation marks. In all these cases, long meters of eleven to fourteen syllables are used. These predominate, and the short lines act as segments marked against them by length.

In the diptych “Obrazy Nesterova” (“Nesterov’s Images”), similar techniques of micropolymetry are employed in combining short verses with predominantly two-word syntactic fillers, as well as with long ones. The first poem of the diptych, “Sviatoi kniaz’ Boris” (“Holy Prince Boris”), consists of two-word, syntactically incomplete segments in which attributive components predominate:

Toska bespredel’naia,  
Toska bezotvetnaia  
O chem-to nevedomom,  
Prozrachnom, vozdušnom.  
Vse roslo, vsplyvalo  
Smutnoe vlechen’e,  
Prosilos’ naruzhu  
I vse vytesnialo.

**(Тоска беспредельная,  
Тоска безответная  
О чем-то неведомом,  
Прозрачном, воздушном.  
Все росло, всплывало  
Смутное влеченье,  
Просилось наружу  
И все вытесняло.)**

(Ivan Konevskoy, 1895–1896)

The simplest interpretation is that this represents a so-called *taktovik*, an accentual verse, stylized after a certain folkloric pattern. A more complex interpretation must take into account the numerous rhythmic variants of verses, and discrepancies, arising, among other things, due to the accentual nonspecificity of certain word forms (*kru'gom* vs. *'krugom*): In addition to trochaic variations of the trimeter, the polymetric repertoire also includes “Shevchenko’s” hexasyllable (seven verses in total).

Combinations of long and short verses are yet more pronounced in the second text of the diptych “Velikomuchenitsa Varvara” (“Great Martyr Barbara”). Short verses alternate with long ones at irregular intervals:

- a. six short verses with a dactylic rhyme: *aabbba*, the rhythmic pattern UU UUU (perhaps an imitation of a glyconic line: “rhythmically the most characteristic part of it is the middle, two short syllables between two long ones, a ‘choriambus’” (Gasparov 1989, 56), with a disruption in the sixth verse yielding UUUUU, which terminates the characteristic “choriambus”);
- b. two long verses with a pair of masculine rhymes—a dactylic pentameter;
- c. a seven-verse segment with a dactylic rhyme: *aabbaaa*, consisting of six verses in Paeon II followed by a line that can be considered iambic (*I na vse dni—bezbrezhnuuu*);
- d. a couplet in anapestic pentameter;
- e. a seven-verse segment with an irregular dactylic rhyme: *abcbdeb*, consisting of two trochees (with the same rhythmic variation: XUUUU) followed by two ambiguous lines (trochee or Paeon III? trochee or Paeon I?), the next verse in trochee or Paeon I and the following couplet more likely trochaic;
- f. a triplet with a masculine rhyme—an anapestic tetrameter.

In the “stanzas” of short verses, the rhymes are mainly grammatical: *toskuiushchii—likuiushchii* etc.; *belosnezhnuuu—bezmiatezhnuuu* etc.; *zakrylasia—rastvorilosia*, *obratilasias—skatilasia*. The masculine rhymes are somewhat more elegant. No metrical and rhythmic regularity can be seen in this polymetric text, but certain parallels can be drawn with one of the most cryptic Russian poetic systems, that of devotional verse. Ivan Konevskoy’s diptych depicts the Holy Martyrs Boris and Barbara. But canonical images refer to canonical texts, to akathists (“unseated hymns”). The akathist canon was established through translations from Greek into the system of “Old Church Slavonic devotional verse” (noteworthy is the speculativeness of the reconstructions and the lack of a generally adopted model). In the Russian recension, the canon was “perceived not as syllabic but as free anisosyllabic verse” (Gasparov 1989, 196). “Free,” evidently, does not mean “arbitrary” but indicates that there were many rhythmic models because “a verse of this kind was alive and active in Russian religious literature” (196).

O. I. Fedotov—one of the most determined opponents of K. F. Taranovskii’s hypothesis that devotional verse is a system of “initial signals,” which, in fact, *does* consist of a set of resources that support rhetorical anaphora—asserts that “all devices of rhythmic regulation of a text are occasional and facultative, as in *vers libre*” (Fedotov 2002, 84). That is, the scholar believes that the absence of a constant dominant rhythm (or regularly alternating rhythms) implies the absence of a model or canon.

But there is another way of reasoning. It can be assumed that we are dealing with a rhythmic system based on the availability of a whole repertoire (“alphabet”) of patterns, in the likeness of which new lines, or verses, are generated. Hence, we have fluctuations in the length of “large” verses (ten to thirteen syllables) and in the length of “small” pre- or postcaesura verses (five to seven). Incidentally, these oscillations fit inside the boundaries of (a) two-word phrases (“small” verses, with an average word length slightly longer than the modern Russian standard, 2.85 syllables, calculated based on a prayer book) and (b) the four-word minimum requirement for a sentence (with subordinate elements or prepositions), that is, they meet the expectations of the standard syllable length of a dependent utterance (consisting of a “small” segment) or an independent one (consisting of a “large” segment).

With respect to the developmental phases of any poetic system within a national language, it inevitably passes through two stages: (a) formation of clichés and (b) variation and transformation of clichés. And, naturally, the clichés are formed as a result of discovering internal regularity in a segment of speech in the process of verbal combinatorics. Such an internally regulated segment becomes a model. It therefore makes no sense to appeal to consistent dominant rhythms in reconstructing devotional verse. A more productive approach is to draw upon the formation of similar “formulas,” often of an international character. For instance, the Polish scholar Lucylla Pszczołowska argues that, for the religious song “Kwiatki czyste, smutnego sierca” (“A Flower Pure, of a Sorrowful Heart”), “no Latin or Czech prototype has yet been found” (Pszczolowska 2002, 37). However, despite the absence of an initial model, the paraphrase of the formula is evidently present not only in Latin and Czech but also in Church Slavonic hymns: *chistym serdtsem / tebe slaviti* “with a pure heart / to glorify you” (an Easter sticheron).

As for Konevskoy’s innovations, his own explication of the devotional verse in his contemporary church milieu might have seemed to him an aesthetically interesting precedent, not so much for the sake of following its traditions as for creating new verse-generating models. It is hardly accidental that the initial title of his poetic volume, as recorded in his notebooks, was “Chuii i chuiu. Glasy i napevy” (“I Sense and Yearn. Voices and Chants”) (Lavrov 2008, 26), where *glasy* alludes to a type of church singing (octo-

echos). Ivan Konevskoy must have born in mind the compositional organization of akathists, for the diptych “Nesterov’s Images” directly relates to the akathist hymns to the Holy Martyr Barbara and the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb. Both to a modern scholar and to a poet who lived a century ago, an akathist represents a text without of a single, consistent dominant metric and rhythmic pattern. An akathist consists of hymns, called *kontakia*, divided into stanzas, or *oikoi*. In its content, a *kontakion* recapitulates all the “glories” of the individual *oikos*. But it looks like a freer, less uniform text, and it is less obviously subject to division into “verses” (syntagms). Cf. Kontakion 2 of the akathist to Saint Barbara:

Vidyashchi svyataya Varvara  
 sebe na vysokom stolpe ot ottsa postavlenu,  
 pomyshlyashe sebe maniem Bozhiim  
 k Nebesi byti vozvodimu. Razumnaya ubo voskhozhdeniya  
 v serdtse svoem polozhshi, temi ot t'my k Svetu i ot prelestnykh idolov  
 ko Istinnomu Bogu umne voskhozhdashe  
 poyushchi Emu: Alliluia.

**(Видящи святая Варвара  
 себе на высоком столпе от отца поставлену,  
 помышляше себе манием Божиим  
 к Небеси быти возводиму. Разумная убо восхождения  
 в сердце своем положши, теми от тьмы к Свету и от прелестных  
 идолов  
 ко Истинному Богу умне восхождаше  
 поющи Ему: Аллилуя).**

(Akathist to the Great Martyr Varvara, approved by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1836)

*Oikoi*, as a rule, contain some semblances of rhythmic and syntactic formulas at the ends of lines: cf. Oikos 4 of the akathist to Saint Barbara:

Raduisya, nezlobivaya golubitse, ot zemnago vrana v pokrov Nebesnago Orla preletevshaya; raduisya, v krove krilu Ego *dobryi sebe pokrov obretshaya*. Raduisya, Nebesnago Ottsa dshchi chestnaya, yako ot zemnago roditelya s bezchestiem *na smert' gonima byla esi*; raduisya, yako ot bezsmertnago Gospoda Slavy v Zhizn' *Vechmuyu so slavoyu priyata esi*. Raduisya, toyazhde i nam zhizni prisnozhelayushchaya khodataitse; raduisya, prilezhnaya o nas k Bogu molitvennitse. Raduisya, Varvaro, nevesto Khristova prekrasnaya.

**(Радуйся, незлобивая голубице, от земнаго врана в покров Небеснаго Орла прелетевшая; радуйся, в крове крилу Его добрый себе покров обретшая. Радуйся, Небеснаго Отца дщи честная, яко от земнаго**

родителя с безчестием на смерть гонима была еси; радуйся, яко от  
везсмертнаго Господа Главы в Жизнь Вечную со славою пріята еси.  
Радуйся, тояжде и нам жизни присножелающая ходатанце; радуйся,  
прилежная о нас к Богу молитвеннице. Радуйся, Варваро, невесто  
Христова прекрасная.)

For a practicing Orthodox inhabitant of the Russian Empire, the presence in devotional texts of certain rhythmic models, which establish “the rule” for individual verses, was obvious. In addition, it is well known that akathists have continued to be composed throughout the twentieth century and even to the present day, and the modern ones consist of more than just quotations from previous akathists. Within such variety, the significance of each rhythmic and syntactic formula is perceived more distinctly, cf.: *Iisuse, sladoste serdechnaia, Iisuse, kreposte telesnaia* etc.; *Iisuse nadezhda nenadezhnykh, Iisuse, uteshenie plachushchikh*.

In this regard, we should point out the striking similarity of Konevskoy’s metrical and rhythmic innovations and the experiments of another of Valerii Briusov’s protégés, Aleksandr Dobroliubov. Because both poets had a common circle of literary association and Konevskoy later even acted as the editor of Dobroliubov’s book, we cannot rule out the possibility that their invocation of devotional verse was a result of a joint aesthetic reflection of the entire mentioned circle of poets. Aleksandr Dobroliubov’s experiments in a new aesthetics appear in 1893, practically at the same time as those of Konevskoy. The common aesthetic space, apparently, can be seen primarily in Dobroliubov’s poems, included in the collection “Natura naturans. Natura naturata” (“Nature Naturing. Nature Nutured”), published in 1895. Like Ivan Konevskoy’s book, the collection includes poems in a proper sense, as well as “prose poems,” the rhythmic nature of which requires further, thorough analysis (however, it is obvious that the “prose” texts also allow for segmentation on the basis of certain additional phonetic signals):

О чем молишь, Светлый? Не очей ли ты жаждеш' неразгаданных,  
не сдержанного ли дыхания страсти? Не улыбки ли, одетой слезами,  
не росистой ли души молодости?

Ya dam tebe telo devstvennoe, besstydneye, smelye nogi, usta op'yanyayushchie  
. . . K lozhu utrennemu ty priblizishsya—Surovyi

(О чем молишь, Светлый? Не очей ли ты жаждеш' неразгаданных,  
не сдержанного ли дыхания страсти? Не улыбки ли, одетой слезами,  
не росистой ли души молодости?

Я дам тебе тело девственное, бесстыдные, смелые ноги, уста  
опьяняющие . . . К ложу утреннему ты приблизишься—Суровый)

(Aleksandr Dobroliubov, “Presto,” 1895)

The metrical and rhythmic repertoire of the poems is very diverse, however, regular patterns (modified hexameters, long trochees, iambs, short dactyls, etc.) nevertheless predominate. Yet the principle of combining a short and a long line in a special sequence (with an increasing number of short lines) resembles the free compositions of devotional formulas:

Zvuki vechernie . . .  
 Gasnet lampada. Vse dyshit legko i schastlivo.  
 Vspykhnulo chto\_to. Poveyalo grust'yu puglivo.  
 Pesni o skorbi drozhat, razrastayas' krasivo.  
 Trepetno tusklye  
 Zvuki vechernie.  
 Slyshitsya proshloe. Babochka vdrug vstrepenulas',  
 Yarko blesnuli prozrachnye kryl'ya . . . prosnulos'  
 Svetloe, nezhnii rebenok ugasshii . . . prosnulos'

**(Звүки вечерние . . .  
 Гаснет лампада. Все дышит легко и счастливо.  
 Вспыхнуло что-то. Поваяло грустью пугливо.  
 Песни о скорби дрожат, разрастаясь красиво.  
 Трепетно тусклые  
 Звүки вечерние.  
 Слышится прошлое. Бабочка вдруг встрепенулась,  
 Ярко блеснули прозрачные крылья . . . проснулось  
 Светлое, нежный ребенок угасший . . . проснулось.)**

(Aleksandr Dobroliubov, "Zvuki vechernie" ["Evening Sounds"], 1895)

The intentional grammatical rhyme also seemingly alludes to devotional verses. At the same time, both Ivan Konevskoy and Aleksandr Dobroliubov have in common a desire to combine stylized devotional verse with the canons of "epic" and "folk" poetry primarily by means of stable folkloric formulas:

Podo Mnoyu orly, orly govoryashchie.  
 Podo Mnoyu ramen'ya, progaliny, zaseki . . .  
 Razbegayutsya zveri rykuchie, ryskuchie,  
 Razbegayutsya v nory temnye, podzemel'nye.  
 Podo Mnoyu orly, orly govoryashchie.  
 Goi, lemboi lesnye, polnochnye!  
 Vykhodite pred litso Velikogo Gospoda,  
 Vykhodite, poklonites' Tsaryu Vashemu Bogu!  
 Podo Mnoyu orly, orly govoryashchie

**(Подо Мною орлы, орлы говорящие.  
 Подо Мною раменья, прогалины, засеки . . .  
 Разбегаются звери рыкучие, рыскучие,**

**Разбегаются в норы темные, подземельные.  
 Подо Мною орлы, орлы говорящие.  
 Гой, лемвои лесные, полночные!  
 Выходите пред лицо Великого Господа,  
 Выходите, поклонитесь Царю Вашему Богу!  
 Подо Мною орлы, орлы говорящие.)**

(Aleksandr Dobroliubov, “Bog Otec” [“God the Father”], 1895)

Here, effectively a whole devotional verse syntagm is quoted, cf. the evening Liturgy:

*Priidite, poklonimsya Tsarevi nashemu Bogu. Priidite, poklonimsya i pripadem Khristu, Tsarevi nashemu Bogu. Priidite, poklonimsya i pripadem Samomu Khristu, Tsarevi i Bogu nashemu. Priidite, poklonimsya i pripadem Emu.*

**(Приидите, поклонимся Царевнi нашeмy Бoгy. Приидите, поклонимся и припадем Христy, Царевнi нашeмy Бoгy. Приидите, поклонимся и припадем Самомy Христy, Царевнi и Бoгy нашeмy. Приидите, поклонимся и припадем Емy.)**

It is noteworthy that, in this Russianized version, Aleksandr Dobroliubov retains the pattern of Church Slavonic accents: *Pri'dite, poklo'nimsia Tsa'revi 'nashemu Bogu*, which is not an isosyllabic structure. In one of the poems, the clearly reproduced formulas even occur as the dominant rhythmic pattern:

Око мое непорочно;  
 Богу одному поклоняюсь',  
 Тихий цвет зарянице;  
 Нози мои белые,  
 Ходят по белым дорогам.  
 Нози мои белые,  
 Богу одному поклоняюсь';  
 Молитесь', нishchaya bratiya,  
 Молитесь' boyaram velikim,  
 Плач'те предо мною,  
 Плач'те i молитесь'.

**(Око мое непорочно;  
 Богу одному поклоняюсь,  
 Тихий цвет зарянице;  
 Нози мои белые,  
 Ходят по белым дорогам.  
 Нози мои белые,**

**Богу одному поклоняюсь;  
 Молитесь, нищая братия,  
 Молитесь боярам великим,  
 Плачьте предо мною,  
 Плачьте и молитесь.)**

(Aleksandr Dobroliubov, “Gorod i kamen’ia” [“City and Stones”], 1895)

Of course, if one discards the rhythmic nuances, the entire first stanza of this text consists of variants of the dactyl, but only the classical dactyl, which occurs in a verse with a quote from Scripture, is repeated in the next stanza along with *nozi moi bely*. It is immediately followed by a micropoly-metric fragment consisting of imitations of an accentual verse that forms syntagms in a number of prosaic fragments of Aleksandr Pushkin’s “Boris Godunov,” as well as verses that repeat the rhythms of short syntagms from devotional verse:

*Plach’te predо мною,  
 Plach’te i molites’.*

**(Плачьте предо мною,  
 Плачьте и молитесь.)**

and

*Plachu i rydayu, egda pomyshlyayu smert’,  
 i vizhdu vo grobekh lezhashchuyu  
 po obrazu Bozhiyu sozdannuyu nashu krasotu,  
 bezobraznu, i bezslavnu,  
 ne imushchu vida.*

**(Плачу и рыдаю, егда помышляю смерть,  
 и вижу во гробех лежащую  
 по образу Божию созданную нашу красоту,  
 безобразну, и безславну,  
 не имущу вида.)**

(John Damascene’s Funeral Sticheron as translated by Aleksandr Sumarokov, 1760)

And yet Dobroliubov’s experiments are based rather on the principle of incorporating the irregular variety of rhythmic patterns into a certain dominant tendency:



Nabegayut sumraki.  
 Moi ruki spletayutsya,  
 Slovno zmei, spletayutsya,  
 I navisli resnitsy,  
 I veyut vlagoyu  
 Moi nogi belye

**(Набегают сумраки.  
 Мои руки сплетаются,  
 Словно змеи, сплетаются,  
 И нависли ресницы,  
 И веют влагою  
 Мои ноги белые)**

(Aleksandr Dobroliubov, “Nabegayut sumraki”  
 [“Shadows Are Gathering”], 1895)

Here we have *UU\_U\_UU // UX\_UU\_UU // XU\_UU\_UU // UU\_UU\_U // U\_U\_UU // UX\_U\_UU*. It is easy to notice how this rhythmic contour resembles that of Ivan Konevskoy’s “Great Martyr Barbara.” In his later experiments, Dobroliubov much more actively resorts to such a combination of short and extra-short verses together with extra-long lines. This approach does not rely on a consistent dominant metric and rhythmic pattern nor a regular alternation of such lines (compare, for example, *Poiu tsarstvo neizmenno nekolebimoe*, *Drevnegrecheskie tserkovnye pesni*, *Voskresnyi psalom* etc.). Evidently, this development can be regarded as a continuation of the general course toward a literary revival of the devotional verse. It is symptomatic that no such extravagance is found in the sectarian hymns collected by S. N. Durylin. This means that the adoption of the devotional verse as a basis for micropolymetry in the Konevskoy–Dobroliubov circle was embraced by the latter exclusively as a literary reality not meant for sacral communication.

## Chapter Seventeen

# The Logaoedic Adoneus as an International Two-Word Verse

Under discussion here is a rhythmic formula characteristic of the common space of Slavic and, likely, also Baltic and Germanic verse. It also distinguishes common Slavic poetry in a manner that goes beyond the distinctive features of traditional linguistics (western and eastern), as well as those of equally traditional poetic scholarship (syllabic and accentual-syllabic). In describing the method of analysis used shortly, Viacheslav Ivanov stressed that “with respect to poetic meters, analogous results [to comparative historical linguistic reconstructions—S. P.] can be obtained only if the regularities of the correspondences between the formal features and the function of these meters are found simultaneously in various literary traditions pertaining to different related languages” (Ivanov 1980, 61).

The specific rhythmic and syntactic formula under consideration here is clearly so marginal to Russian accentual-syllabic verse that it has acquired no generally accepted set of characteristics in poetic studies (and hence no name). It became a subject of debate primarily in connection with prior analyses of Joseph Brodsky’s now paradigmatic poem “Na smert’ Zhukova” (“On the Death of Zhukov”): “Vizhu kolonny zamershich vnukov, // grob na lafete, loshadi krup” (“**Вижу колонны замерших внуков, // гроб на лафете, лошади круп**”; the poem was translated into English by G. L. Cline). Also taken into account was its most obvious prototext, G. R. Derzhavin’s “Snigir’” (“The Bullfinch”):

Chto ty zavodish’ pesnyu voennu  
Fleite podobno, milyj snigir’?  
S kem my poidem voinoi na Giennu?  
Kto teper’ vozhd’ nash? Kto bogatyr’

(Что ты заводишь песню военнꙋ  
 Флейте подобно, милый сннгирь?  
 С кем мы пойдѣм войной на Гиеннꙋ?  
 Кто теперь вождь наш? Кто богатырь?)

(Gavrila Derzhavin, "Snigir'," 1800)

(Cf. the English translation by A. Levitsky and M. T. Kitchen: "Why do you strike up / bullfinch, your march tune?")

M. Iu. Lotman described the meter of Derzhavin's poem as "a caesuraed dactylic tetrameter with truncation of the pre-caesura syllable" (Lotman 2002, 68), and, in several cases, he perceived such modifications as a shift of the caesura. Here is a fragment of his rhythmic interpretation of "Snigir'": "*Net teper' muzha v svete stol' slavna* ( \_UU / \_U / \_U / U\_ ) // *Polno pet' pecniu voennu, snigir'!* ( \_U / U\_U / U\_U / U\_ )." However, the caesura is not indicated in the schema, and the word divisions correspond to a hypothetical reconstruction of phonetic words. The author of the present text together with Olga Barash once offered a different rhythmic interpretation for the two previously mentioned poems, based on the assumption that their initial rhythmic unit is the five-syllable logaoedic, that is, the adoneus: \_UU\_U (Preobrazhenskii and Barash 2004). For the purpose of determining the status and name of the phenomenon described, an essential question is whether it is a derivation of the typical Russian trisyllable or some kind of independent rhythmic reality, whereby the length of the segment in which it occurs is also significant. M. V. Akimova, who explicated the history of this variety of truncated dactyl (or logaoedic) in Russian poetry, defines it in the following way: On the basis of \_UU\_UU\_UU\_UU (a regular dactylic tetrameter), two variants "with oscillation of the second inter-ictus interval" emerge, namely: (a) \_UU\_UU\_UU and (b) \_UU\_U\_UU\_UU (Akimova 2004). Here we must admit that the notion of even the least conservative Russian scholars of poetry that syllables can be "inserted into" metrical schemas and, correspondingly, "removed" from them is reminiscent of medieval etymologies. M. V. Panov, who treated logaoedics as being a result of the antinomial (for Russian verse) opposition of accentual-syllabic and purely accentual principles, defined logaedic verses as those "in which the accent occurs in the same place in each line but the lines are not divided into identical feet" (Panov 2007, 485). In this case, the logaoedic occurs as a separate verse, however, the possibility of identifying one in a micropolymeric context is questionable, for the schema accompanying the definition does not specify which length M. V. Panov considers to be necessary and sufficient for the Russian logaoedic because he illustrated the idea using quatrains with a truncated fourth line:

Vzorom loviashchii  
Strasti ulybki!  
Videla eto—otsepenela,  
Szhalosia serdtse;  
v ustakh ne(po)dvizhnykh  
Golos prervalisia.

**(Взором ловающий  
Страсти улыбки!  
Видела это—оцепенела,  
Жалось сердце;  
в устах не(по)движных  
Голос прервался).**

(Aleksei Merzliakov, “To a Happy Lover,  
from Sappho,” 1826)

The disruption of the meter seen here is treated by M. V. Panov as “an extra syllable after the caesura,” and this implies a kind of a “logaoedic dolnik,” which is, however, determined not by an “extra” syllable but by a synonymous substitution, shown in brackets. But this and similar stipulations contribute to the acceptance of the fact that a logaoedic as a verse—despite the schema representing the last line as a “half meter” (UUU / UUU // UUU)—is a five-syllable segment with no regularly occurring alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables (in accord with M. V. Panov’s definition) but which paradoxically retains its stability and even unvarying prosody: a compensatory lengthening of vowels (compare the “Ukrainian” hexasyllable discussed earlier).

## THE POETIC CONTEXTS OF THE “ADONEUS” VERSE

The unusual history of the emergence and existence of the verse referred to as the adoneus (UUU) has been noted by many scholars of poetry and, as a matter of fact, has two versions with respect to its origin: (a) as an imitation of the antique (Greek) meter by the same name and (b) through borrowing from an indeterminate source. M. L. Gasparov has paid tribute to both versions: in 1974 he spoke of the first Russian logaoedics as being “imitations of ancient lyrical stanzas” and noted that logaoedics of the late nineteenth century should be interpreted as “approaching the dolnik,” while in Soviet times they continued to exist “mainly as meters used in song” (Gasparov 1974, 70). As a mature scholar, Gasparov naturally thought it possible to positively identify the logaoedic only when it is consistently repeated in a poem:

meters in which the number of syllables comprising weak intervals between strong positions is not uniform within a line, but repeats from line to line . . . this usually occurs when poems are composed according to a given pattern inspired by a melody or a foreign language text. (Gasparov 1984, 67)

The scholar thereby emphasizes the utter foreignness of the logaoedic to Russian “spoken” verse. Recalling the way Sumarokov, Elagin, and Beke-tov composed songs to “melodies of unknown origin,” Gasparov reminds us that these texts were meant “only for singing.” This statement is entirely a priori, especially in view of his admission that the sources were unknown. Moreover, the assertion that “all the fireworks of logaoedic experiments had no consequences for the history of Russian verse” (Gasparov 1984, 68) is the triumph of “large numbers versology” at its highest. Panov solidarizes with the “ancient” hypothesis, purporting that the adoneus owes its existence “to Russian transformations of the ancient tradition, to translations” (Panov 2007, 485). Akimova, who does not, in general, share the understanding of the adoneus as an independent five-syllable two-word verse, points to the earliest cases of “the meter”—as she calls it in accordance with tradition—being implemented, namely as a dactylic tetrameter with truncation of the caesura: “The history of the meter began in 1788 with the correspondence of Karamzin to D(mitriev)” and with the “Oda rossiiskim soldatam na vziatie kreposti Ochakova cego 1788 goda dekabria 6 dnia, cochinnnaia ot lica nekoego drevnego rossiiskogo piity” (“Ode to the Russian Soldiers at the Capture of Ochakov Fortress in the Year 1788, the 6th Day of December, Composed in the Voice of an Ancient Russian Poet”) by N. P. Nikolev (Akimova 2004, 308). Karamzin’s correspondence established, according to M. V. Akimova, “two main ideological vectors in the development of the meter”: “these are the theme of war and the high genres . . . and, on the other hand, the theme of love and the countryside and the middle genres” (309). In the elegiac genre, “the meter” was used by Nikolai Karamzin, Aleksandr Benitskii, Pavel Katenin, and others. “The genre of *Snigir*” and its meter were employed by G. Politkovskii, Shirinskii-Shikhmatov, Pobedin, S. A. Tuchkov” (311), while Aleksandr Bestuzhev and F. M. Ryndovskii are also named. This list of “heroic” authors is noteworthy for the fact that two of them (Politkovskii and Ryndovskii) share a related episode in their biographies: they both studied at the Chernigov seminary. For the “Slavic” version of the logaoedic, this is a significant fact, as well as the time of appearance of the “dactylic tetrameter with truncation of the caesura” in Russian “high” poetry.

## THE ADONEUS AS A PRODUCT OF THE POLISH ACCENTUAL SYSTEM

In considering the possible prototexts of Joseph Brodsky's ode "On the death of Zhukov," Olga Barash notes, alongside the generally accepted parallel ("The Bullfinch" by Derzhavin), also conspicuous Polish parallels (Barash 2013) that have gone unnoticed by other scholars. These are poems by C. K. Norwid: firstly, "Bema pamięci żałobny rapsod" ("A Funeral Rhapsody in Memory of Bem"), the very title of which is logaoedic, and, secondly, "Pieśń Tyrteja" ("The Song of Tyrteus"), where the logaoedic is used in the first (precaesura) hemistich of the modified "Stanisław's stanza":

*Czemuż . . . ich pieśni / już tak mało pewna  
Treść—i skażonej całości?  
Lutnie ich czemu . . . / z łomliwego drewna,  
A nie ze słoniowej kości?*

(Cyprian Kamil Norwid, "Pieśń Tyrteja," 1876)

It is clear that Norwid's poems did not serve as a rhythmic model for Joseph Brodsky, but Brodsky may have been the first to detect a "Polish trace" in the "heroic" adoneus. Shortly before the adoneus began to resound in Russian poetry (at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), the so-called Stanisław's stanza became widespread in Polish poetry (it was named after the last Polish king, Stanisław August Poniatowski, the father of the "Polish Enlightenment"). The stanza in question is a quatrain with an alternating rhyme. The first and the second lines each comprise ten syllables with a caesura after the fifth syllable; the second and the fourth lines have eight syllables and no caesura. The ten-syllable lines bear four stresses, the eight-syllable ones have three. The following is a typical example of "Stanisław's stanza":

*Wszystko zwyciężysz, / łódka szlachetna,  
Na ciosy przeciwne twarda;  
Statek twój sława / uwieczni świetna  
Chlubniej niż podróż Blancharda.*

(Adam Naruszewicz, "Balon," 1789)

It is easy to see that the ten-syllable verses are usually composed of two five-syllable adonea. Importantly, for the Polish language, an initial word

combination with an adoneus is one of the most natural five-syllable syntagms of two phonetic words, and a frequent one, considering the language's restriction on accentuation of the last syllable. The probability distribution is very limited: Xx xXx or xXx Xx. That is, either an adoneus or a Polish iambus; exceptions involving proclitics and enclitics are rare and usually occur with three content words, for example, "*Drzę cały, kiedy / bają o tym starce.*" In ten-syllable verses, we have dual adonea: \_UU\_U / \_UU\_U (in Polish notation: XxxXx / XxxXx), that is, a phrase involving two word groups, one of which is equivalent to the topic, the other to the focus (though they do not exactly correspond to the syntactic topic and focus).

In Polish poetic texts, the functional significance of verses of the type XxxXx (\_UU\_U) is obvious, as they establish a rhythm with a natural speech-like structure and provide, through repetition, a recurrence of rhythm, essentially transforming the syllabic verse into an accentual-syllabic one of its own Polish variety. However, the duplication of the adoneus after the caesura ceased to be mandatory already by the nineteenth century. And the logaoedic five-syllable meter manifested itself as a self-sufficient and independent verse form, having begun to be combined into eleven-syllable lines before (as was more often the case) or after the caesura, mainly by poets experimenting in the area of accentual-syllabic verse:

*Tak w noc, pogodna / jeśli służy pora,  
Wzrok się przyjemnie ułodzi;  
Lecz żeby w nocy / jechać do jeziora,  
Trzeba być najśmielszym z ludzi.  
Bo jakie szatan / wyprawia tam harce!  
Jakie się larwy szamocą!  
Drzę cały, kiedy / bają o tym starce,  
I strach wspominać przed nocą.*

(Adam Mickiewicz, "Świtez," 1822)

There is another argument in favor of the fact that the Polish context of "Stanisław's stanza" caused the Poles' more eastern neighbors to perceive a "heroic" semantic halo to the adoneus. The Ukrainian poet Evgen Malaniuk cannot be blamed for an excessive love of Russian cultural heritage, although Gavriła Derzhavin was probably closer to him than, say, Nikolai Nekrasov, whom he cursed up and down, or his "countryman" Nikolai Gogol. Nevertheless, the originator of the concept of "Mazepianism" and author of the work "Iliustrisimus Dominus Mazepa—tło i postać" ("His Illustriousness Lord Mazepa—Background and Personality"), written in 1960, composed his famous poem "Do portreta Mazepy" ("To the Portrait of Mazepa") in 1932, in which parallels with the texts of the "heroic" adoneus are evident. The only

question is which texts served as a model for Malaniuk; can they have been Russian ones? Was Bem more important to him, or Suvorov “the Bullfinch”? The adonic segments are given here:

*Sribna chupryna, / cholo proroche . . .*  
 < . . . >  
*V pancir zakuto / grudy i plechi . . .*  
 < . . . >  
 Чудь століттями, віщий гетьмане . . .  
 (**СРІБНА ЧУПРИНА, ЧОЛО ПРОРОЧЕ . . .**  
 < . . . >  
**В ПАНЦІР ЗАКУТО ГРУДИ І ПЛЕЧІ . . .**  
 < . . . >  
**ЧУДИ СТОЛІТТЯМИ, ВІЩИЙ ГЕТЬМАНЕ . . .**)

### COMPENSATORY LENGTHENING AND THE “SONG-LIKE” ADONEUS

The adoneus is not, in fact, alien to the Ukrainian folk song tradition but rather quite native to it. One of the favorite songs of many Ukrainians is based upon its rhythm:

**Місяць на небі, / зіроньки сяють.**  
**Тихо по морю / човен пливе**  
*Misjac' na nebi, / ziron'ky sjajut'.*  
*Tyho po morju / choven plyve.*  
 (Misjac' na nebi . . . , anon.)

However, songs and written texts are two different things, and one can only draw attention to the fact that the adoneus is more firmly rooted in vocal texts, perhaps due to the fact that, in some languages (certainly including Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian), this verse entails compensatory lengthening of vowels under metrical stress. The chant of “*Mnogaia leta*” (“Many years to come”) is adonic; the hymn “*Bozhe, tsaria chrani*” (“God Save the Tsar”) is adonic as well. Observations of the Slavic poetic space reveal that our pet theories about the “alien,” “antique” logaoedic (at least one of its forms, that of the adoneus), and of its “songlike” halo, should be discarded as a dangerous superstition. It is interesting to note that already the poets who followed the great Polish romantics—representatives of the “Warsaw Bohemia (*Cyganeria*)” school—had deemed the five-syllable logaoedic to be a meter of folk song, and an innovative one at that.



Seweryn Grzegorz Filleborn commented on his own poem “Pieśń gminna” (“Communal Song”) in 1841, in the hoaxing style fashionable at the time, “the song is about the tragic love of two lovers” and is known to the Polish people in different versions. Oskar Kolberg wrote down several of these in various regions of Poland, in addition to the one offered by Filleborn. They vary with respect to the setting, the names of the lovers and their characterization. In comparison to the version proposed by Filleborn, all of them are more detailed (Cyganeria Warszawska 2004, 7–8). Certainly, the parodic nature of the mystifying preface should appropriately tune the reader’s perception of the song, which features adjacent ten- and eleven-syllable lines and consistent use of the logaoedic five-syllable meter. Most amusing is the treatment of the meter as being an original “Polish folk” one, while it accompanies a cruel ballad. Cf.: *Idet moi milyi, s utra on p’iany!* // *Ego zachalit liuboi liagavyi*; this is, undoubtedly, a later Russian thieves’ song, passed down from the mid-nineteenth century up to the 1950s in various versions. Mass consciousness seems to have failed to acknowledge the ironic overtones to such a degree that, in its collective depths, the text has become established as an example of a genuine tragedy. Cf.

1) *A w jednej wiosce / cóż to się stało?*  
*Dwoje się ludzi / w sobie pokochało.*  
*Przyszędł on do niej o ósmej godzinie:*  
*“Wstań, Magdaleno, wyprowadzisz ty mnie!”*  
*I ona wstała, / I zapłakala,*  
*Wzięła chusteczki, oczki obcierała.*  
 (Seweryn Filleborn, “Pieśń gminna,” 1841)

2) *Prishel moi milyi / iz goroda p’iany*  
*Tuk-tuk v okoshko: / “Ja tvoi kohanyi!”*  
*S posteli vstala, / dver’ otvorila,*  
*Pocelovala, / spat’ ulozhila*

**(Пришел мой милый / из города пьяный**  
**Тук-тук в окошко: / “Я твой коханный!”**  
**С постели встала, / дверь отворила,**  
**Поцеловала, / спать уложила.)**

(A song from the mid-nineteenth century)

(This is, in fact, a version of the third stanza or the refrain in the officially unacknowledged version of the Russian folk song “Pozarastali stiozhki-dorozhki” [“Overgrown Are the Pathways and Trails”].)

From the Polish “Cyganeria” stylization of the middle of the nineteenth century to the Russian “urban romance” of the turn of the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries, there is, it would seem, a large chronological and geographical distance. Nevertheless, it is not even the similarity of motive that is striking so much as the lexical and accentual Polonisms and exact parallels with Filleborn's text in the Russian counterpart. The validity of M. L. Gasparov's judgments, as mentioned here, seems to consist in the fact that song texts based on melodies and quadruple-time signatures are much less dependent on the specifics of the poetic language than are works of notorious "spoken" poetry. The oppositions of heroic vs. mediocre, song-based vs. literary, and borrowed vs. original were thus changing within the Polish-Russian context, although the probability of an initial borrowing from Poland into the Russian tradition is high.

### THE "ADONEUS" VERSEME IN THE BALTO-GERMANIC AREA

Nevertheless, the almost anecdotal story of the famous adonic song lyrics of "Vzveites' kostrami, sinie nochi!" ("Rise Up by the Fires, Deep Blue Nights")—the hymn of the Soviet pioneers—and its subsequent clarifications once more give impetus to see the adoneus as an international verse, with a wider home ground in a multilingual cultural space. According to often recalled accounts, when composing the lyrics of this song, Aleksandr Zharov was influenced by the soldiers' march "Gloire immortelle de nos aïeux" ("Immortal Glory of Our Forefathers") from Charles Gounod's opera *Faust*. In the Soviet theater, operas were sung only in translation and, in *Faust*, most of the parts were not translated from the French libretto by Paul Jules Barbier and Michel Carré but from the literary translation of Goethe's poem by Nikolai Kholodkovskii. The rhythmic differences between the pioneer anthem and the French version are quite significant because the latter is far from the German original; but the Russian literary translation, on the contrary, is close to the original:

1) *German original:*

Burgen mit hohen / Mauern und Zinnen  
Mädchen mit stolzen / höhrenden Sinnen  
möcht' ich gewinnen!

Kühn ist das Mühen, / herrlich der Lohn!  
Und die Trompete / lassen wir werben  
wie zu der Freude, / so zum Verderben . . .

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Faust,"  
p. 1, 1773–1808)

2) *French variant:*

Gloire immortelle  
 De nos aïeux,  
 Sois-nous fidèle,  
 Mourons comme eux!  
 Et sous ton aile,  
 Soldats vainqueurs,  
 Dirige nos pas, enflamme nos coeurs!

(J. Barbier, M. Carré, "Faust,"  
 opera libretto, 1859)

3) *Russian translation:*

Bashni s zubtsami,  
 Nam pokorites'  
 Gordye devy,  
 Nam ulybnites'!  
 Vse vy sdadites'!  
 Slavnaja plata  
 Smelym trudam!  
 Podvig soldata  
 Sladosten nam.

**(Башни с зубцами,  
 Нам покоритесь!  
 Гордые девы,  
 Нам улыbnитесь!  
 Все вы сдадитесь!  
 Главная плата  
 Смелым трудам!  
 Подвиг солдата  
 Сладостен нам.)**

("Faust," translated by  
 Nikolai Kholodkovskii, 1878)

Perhaps the incomplete correspondence to the French version creates some inconvenience for Russian performers, but it is in the Russian translation that the adoneus most regularly alternates with a truncated two-foot dactyl, which is a four-syllable meter (*Smelym trudam!* . . . *Sladosten nam*). This rhythmic organization of the quatrain, with strict alternation of the adoneus and the dactyl, was borrowed by Aleksandr Zharov (he seemingly did not know the iambic lines of the French libretto, *Dirige nos pas, enflamme nos coeurs!*, otherwise the pioneer anthem might look different today). Yet regardless of the manner in which the pioneer song was composed, the anthem recalls the context of numerous adonea in Slavic songs, with a characteristic increase in the length of vowels occurring as ictuses, which, one may note, is conveyed

by lines of a truncated dactylic tetrameter with a masculine rhyme. Actually, this is yet another confirmation that the sources of the Slavic adoneus should by no means be looked for in imitation of an ancient legacy. The adoneus quite naturally occurs in two-word combinations not only in Polish but also in Lithuanian and German. In his article “Polymetrie Fausta v polských a českých překladech” (“The Polymetry of *Faust* in Polish and Czech Translations,” 1991), Miroslav Červenka draws attention to the fact that, in Polish translation, “the variations on ‘adonic’ themes” (Červenka 2011, 388), which to a large extent render the original rhythmic profile of Goethe’s great poem, are close to being five-syllable (without rhythmic nuance, that is, not only in the meter XxxXx but also in the iambic xXxXx), while, in Czech, they often receive an additional syllable. From this it follows that a Czech poet feels the self-contained character of the adoneus but cannot adequately convey it, whereas, for Polish translators, the rhythmic variability of the five-syllable meter is not of decisive importance, and they perceive the adoneus as an unmarked version of it within the context of syllabic verse. However, Goethe made this rhythmic configuration the basis of his poem and used it as an “appropriated” device. Goethe’s adoneus is a folksy meter with a touch of vulgarity, and its “choral” status sometimes contrasts in the poem with the content of the verses. Incidentally, among the Russian translations of *Faust*, the most “adonized” is the one by Valerii Briusov; in Ukrainian, that of Ivan Franko. However, the question of whether the adoneus came to Goethe’s poem directly from the German tradition remains open. Of course, in the seventeenth century, there was a sufficient quantity of adonea in song (!) lyrics and fragments of texts, and some of them almost exactly parallel those in “Faust.” They can be found both in songs by anonymous authors and in lyrics of such famous poets as Sigmund von Birken (1626–1681) and:

*Tanzen und springen,  
Singen und klingen, fa la la la la la,  
Lauten und Geigen . . .  
Zu musizieren  
Und jubilieren  
Steht mir all mein Sinn, fa la la la la la.*

(anonymous author, set to music by  
Hans Leo Haßler [1564–1612])

*Lustig zum Garten mit Koerben und Saeken,  
Fruechte zu brechen nehmt Leitern und Stecken,  
Schuettelt die Zweige  
Bis auf die Neige*

(Johann von Rist [1607–1667], “Des ehrliebenden  
Floridans lustiges Herbst- und Liebes-Lied,” 1656)

*Blizet, ihr Himmel,  
Schwitzet uns Regen,  
Machet Getuemmel,  
Lachet mit Segen*  
Unsere Waelder und Felder doch an.

(Philipp von Zesen [1619–1689], “An die hochedel-geborne, liebselige Adelmund, als sie auf der selig-verstorbenen Rosemund Herrn-Hause, dessen Zeichen die Sonne war, bei Abend ihren Einzug hielt; Gesetzt durch Johann Lange,” 1645)

In addition to purely literary odes, madrigals, etc., the German baroque poets also composed songs, in the sense of texts that necessarily had a musical component. These were often (as in the last example) written to an already existing melody, whereby Italian vocal works frequently served as musical models. Thus, German songs of the seventeenth century may have served Goethe as a source of adonic formulas, especially in view of the fact that, as a young man, the poet was engaged in collecting folklore and, indeed, was encouraged in this by Johann Gottfried Herder. However, there is another, more intriguing proposition. By the end of the eighteenth century, the baroque legacy had come to be despised by the now enlightened as a relic of barbarism. Yet conversely, foreign language “barbaric” folklore was seen as very attractive material. So Goethe’s attention may have been drawn to the adoneus through entirely non-German patterns of verse. In 1775, Johann Gottfried Herder began to prepare for the publication of his folk song collection *Alte Volkslieder* (Old Folk Songs), which was also published in 1778–1779 under the title *Volkslieder* (Folk Songs) and, again, after the philologist’s death as *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (Voices of the Peoples in Songs). The preparations coincided with the Weimar period of his life, the time of his intense contact with Goethe. Herder was among the first to pay attention to *dainas*, a Latvian and Lithuanian folk song genre. Here is one of the first samples of a German translation of such texts, “Die kranke Braut” (“The Sick Bride”), which bore the subtitle “Litthauisch” (“Lithuanian”):

*Krank ist dein Mädchen,  
O! krank von Herzen,  
Dort in der neuen Tenne,  
In ihrem grünen Bettchen.*

*Da übern Hof ich,  
Und herzlich weint’ ich,  
Und vor der Thüre  
Wischt’ ich die Thränen.*

(Translated by Johann Gottfried Herder, 1778–1779)

In this translation, the adoneus is the dominant rhythmic model, which corresponds to numerous Lithuanian *dainas*, for example,

Ei pūte, pūte,  
 Šiaurús vėjelis,  
 Ei, barė, barė  
 Jáunas bernelis

...

Nustójo pūtes  
 Šiaurús vėjelis,  
 Nustójo barės  
 Jáunas bernelis.

...

Tadá išvargsiu  
 Sávo vargelį,  
 Kaip áš nuveisiu  
 Pás motynėlę.

Incidentally, some of Herder's translations from Lithuanian were included by Goethe into his libretto of the *Singspiel* "Meerjungfrau" ("Mermaid"). In addition to Herder, Goethe also had another steady correspondent specializing in Lithuanian folklore, Martynas Liudvikas Gediminas Rėza, who published his own collection of *dainas* under the title *Dainos, oder littauische Volkslieder* (*Dainas*, or Lithuanian Folk Songs, 1825). He had been in correspondence with Goethe since 1817 and was an admirer and follower of Herder. When viewed against this background, are not the adonic rhythms of *Faust* actually successors to Baltic five-syllable rhythmic formulas? In German adonic texts, one acquires the impression of a certain syntactic limitation operating on the formula: two content words are typically combined with a (semi)auxiliary one: "Tauet, *ihr* Luefte, // Schimmert *von* ferne, // Schauet *durch* Kluefte" (Philipp von Zesen).

This generally complies with the range of possibilities allowed for by the accentual system of the German language: the tendency for nonderivative nouns to have a two-syllable structure, the much longer length of the verb in syllables, and the absence of inflection in modern German, which causes the word stress to shift toward the beginning of a nonderivative word. In Lithuanian, adonic five-syllable meters seem even more natural: the double nature of the Lithuanian accent makes reaccentuation possible, that is, filler words exhibit additional flexibility with respect to the given formula. According to statistics prepared by Asta Kazlauskienė (2000, 83–88), in Lithuanian nouns, the stress falls on the first syllable with a probability of about 40 percent and on the second with more than 35 percent. The stress falls on the stem four times more often than it does on the ending. In general, for the combination

of two Lithuanian phonetic words, the adoneus is one of the rhythmic patterns with the most natural fit. With respect to two-word phrases, according to the general rule of Roman Jakobson, K. Taranovsky, and Nikolai Trubetzkoy, the regularities can be arranged in two possible ways:  $Xx$  and  $xX$ ; here the natural characteristics of the closing (clausula) word are decisive, for which three possible variants exist: (a)  $\_Xxx$ , (b)  $\_xXx$ , and (c)  $\_(X/x)xX$ . Which of them is most probable is determined on the basis the statistical regularities with respect to the accentual paradigms of the language in question. For the Balto-Slavic languages and for German, variant (b) seems to be the most likely. In such case, accounting for possible regressive reaccentualization yields only two options:  $xXx$  and  $Xxx$ , either a iambus or an adoneus. Thus, the linguistic space itself within certain territorial boundaries establishes the adoneus as a natural national (and international) rhythmic formula. So it remains a major question as to whether Aleksandr Zharov borrowed his anthem from Goethe, or if it is a product of the collective unconscious of a union of poetic languages and their poetic traditions.

# Glossary

## PART I

*Active language type:* A syntactic type of language, the main feature of which is the opposition of active and inactive sentence constructions, active and inactive subjects, and active and stative predicates.

*Adaptation:* Any change in the properties of a system directed at the functionality of its determinants, that is, an increase of a system's ability to maintain the stability of certain properties of a supersystem, this being achieved on the basis of its older and most stable sustaining properties.

*Amorphous language type:* The name used for the isolating language type in the works of August and Friedrich Schlegel, August Schleicher, and others, indicating the "formless" character of the grammar of these languages. In further studies, the error of identifying grammar with morphology was discovered and the analytical but not "amorphous" character of the grammar of isolating languages was established.

*Approach of a language (communicational):* The typical subject matter of propositions as well as the typical modes of utterances and manners of depiction (uniform/nonuniform).

*Approach of a language (denotational):* The typical manner of presenting the content of a situation in an utterance.

*Arealogy:* A branch of linguistic typology that studies typological convergence between languages under conditions of convergence between their external determinants (see Mel'nikov 2003, 137).

*Association:* The natural connection between two constituents of consciousness (sensations, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, etc.) arising in an individual's experience, which is expressed in the fact that the appearance in consciousness of one of the constituents entails the appearance of the other.



*Case*: A morphological category, descriptive value, and form that expresses the typical roles of participants and objects in the clausal structure of an utterance representing a situation that has occurred in the real world. The function of case in an inflectional language is “to specify as precisely as possible the role and place of each of the participants in the event described, as well as the degree of their involvement in the development of this event” (Lutin 2005, 26).

*Categorization*: A mental operation aimed at the formation of categories as concepts that maximally generalize and classify the results of human cognitive activity. In recent decades, the classical notions of categorization in cognitive psychology and linguistics have undergone a very radical revision. Thus, the studies of George Lakoff, Eleanor Roche, Paul Kay, Brent Berlin, and others have shown that, as a result of everyday, commonplace categorization (reflected, in particular, in a language-specific worldview), very specific associations are formed that do not fully correspond to the logocentric norms of Platonic and Aristotelian categorization.

*Category*: (1) Any group of language elements, distinguished on the basis of a common property (broadly defined); (2) A particular feature underlying the division of a vast set of homogeneous linguistic units into a limited number of nonoverlapping classes, whose members are characterized by being alike with respect to the feature in question (narrowly defined).

*Character of a language*: The scope of all virtual meanings of all signs of a language that have become conventional, that is, the entire “linguistically encoded” portion of extralinguistic consciousness.

*Class*: A collection of objects united by the presence of common, coincident features that are preselected for comparison and explicitly formulated, as well as of features that differentiate these objects, that is, the basis for classification (see Mel’nikov 2003, 30).

*Combinatorics*: The possible types of combinations of linguistic units and the investigation thereof; the term is taken from mathematical logic, where combinatorics is understood as the study of the number of possible combinations subject to a certain set of conditions.

*Communication (in linguistics)*: Language-based intercourse between people. The *structure* of the simplest act of communication includes at least (1) two communicators who are endowed with consciousness and aware of the norms of some semiotic system such as language; (2) a situation (or situations) that they seek to comprehend and understand; (3) texts expressing the essence of the situation by means of language or elements of the semiotic system in question; (4) motives and goals that make the texts directed, that is, something that motivates the subjects to address one another; and (5) the process of material transmission of the texts.

*Communicative network*: (1) The stable and traditional connection of communications in a society; (2) The connection of an individual's linguistic personality with a set of communication partners by means of communicative acts.

*Commutation*: The operation of replacing one element with another.

*Conjunction*: The same as logical conjunction, an operation of mathematical logic connecting two or more statements by means of the linguistic operator "and" into a new complex statement that is true only if each of the original statements is true individually.

*Connotation*: An evaluative, emotional, or stylistic coloring of a linguistic unit anchored in the language system or occurring in speech. Any component that complements the subject and the conceptual content of a linguistic unit and gives it an expressive function is connotation. Connotation is associated with the everyday life experience and the cultural and ethnic knowledge of those speaking the language in question.

*Denotational segment (denotation)*: A segment of speech with which the speaker elicits the desired sense in the psyche of the addressee and recalls knowledge known to him or her.

*Desemantization*: The gradual and imperceptible loss by a linguistic unit of its own meaning due to generalized use, a loss of relevance on the part of the meaning in question or erroneous use of the unit in mass speech.

*Determinant of a system (external)*: The factors that have brought some initial object to a state of misalignment and turned it into *material* seeking ways to restore alignment by transition to a new state of *being*, for which this object requires external support—a *form* facilitating such a transition (see Melnikov 2003, 96).

*Determinant of a language (external)*: The main characteristics of the communicational situation in which a language community exists, that is, the conditions of life for the community, the nature of typical occasions for communication and their subject matter, as well as further aspects of the typical communicative act, but also the nature of the differences between a given occasion and the subject matter occurring in connection with it.

*Determinant of a language (internal)*: The general scheme of the denotational sense of a typical utterance, creatively formed in the addressee's consciousness under the influence of instructions pertaining to the strategy of guessing the speaker's intention, which are represented by signs occurring in the flow of speech. Taking into account the determinants of a language makes it possible to reveal the systemic interdependence of all levels and components of the language in its synchronic state by reconstructing a picture of its dynamics for adaptation (see Mel'nikov 2003, 358).

*Function:* The role, purpose, or participatory share of a given object in a particular higher-level object, situation, or environment (see Mel'nikov 2003, 358).

*Hinting:* The process of associating a sign with its immediate content, this being its meaning as intended by the speaker, that is, its proper sense.

*Integrity of a word:* A property of a word consisting in its reproducibility and phonetic and morphological unity; a typological feature of inflectional languages. The integrity of an inflectional word is supported by the presence of a single stress, a fusional bond of the stem with the affix, a lack of independency of the stem, and a phonetic distinction between affixes and function words.

*Internal form of a language:* (1) A system of concepts reflecting characteristics of the worldview of the speakers of a given language and anchored by the external form of the language; (2) A complex of hidden mental processes manifested through the external form of a language (in the interpretation of Wilhelm Wundt); (3) The types of denotational senses of utterances that are most obligatory and frequent in a language community, effecting the transformation of the nonsocialized consciousness of an individual community member into a socialized one; = the communicational approach of typical statements; = the internal determinant of a language (see Mel'nikov 2003, 139).

*Internal form of a proposition:* The final denotational sense of an utterance correlated with its motive in the listener's consciousness and capable of transforming the motive into subject matter.

*Internal form of a relevant sense:* All forms generated in the chain between the generalized representation of a sign and its contextual meaning.

*Internal form of an utterance:* All the meanings and intermediate senses of an utterance with their "catenated" (derivational, transnominative) senses and "flat" (cognominative) relationships (see Mel'nikov 2003, 104).

*Internal form of a word:* The relationship between the meaning of a word and the way it is expressed by the morphemes occurring in that word; the feature underlying denotation at the formation of a new lexical meaning of a word. It motivates the sound image of the word and indicates the reason for why this particular meaning came to be expressed by this very combination of sounds.

*Isolation:* A property of language consisting in the denotation of specific and general concepts by independent root morphemes and the transformation of stable syntactic groups into reproducible denotational units.

*Language:* A system for the reproduction and recognition of social signs enabling universal communication between members of a language community; it consists in eliciting within the psyche of an interlocutor those

particular senses that correspond to the speaker's intention, this being performed by hinting at the desired interpretation with the help of the meanings of the signs that make up the flow of speech;

- “a specialized instrument of consciousness, which is a system of signs for depicting the results of reflection in order to transform the non-socialized knowledge of a perceiver into socialized knowledge” (Mel'nikov 2003, 109);
- a system of mental units resulting from socialization and unification, which makes it possible to simplify all the routine procedures of hinting at the desired elements of the interlocutor's mental conception of the world and of stimulating logical interactions between them in order to provide the interlocutor with the maximum creative opportunity for guessing which element of their mental conception to transform with the help of which other element, and in which way the speaker recommends the listener to do this, in the direction of greater completeness, correctness or truth (Mel'nikov 2003a, 11);
- “a complex of articulate and significant sounds and sound combinations united into a single whole through the intuitions of a particular people” (Baudouin de Courtenay 2010, 33).

*Language class type:* The syntactic type of a language, the main characteristic of which is the means of designating the nominal class of the subject (and sometimes also of the object) in all syntactically related parts of the sentence.

*Language-specific worldview:* A set of ideas—sometimes woven from contradictory theses, facts, and statements—about humankind and the surrounding world that are reflected in ethnically specific language forms and the semantics of linguistic expressions. They are connected like a mosaic (nonsystemically) and impart to the native speaker an illusory confidence in the possibility of finding answers to all basic questions of being within the framework of their ethnic culture.

*Linguistic personality:* A person viewed in terms of their ability to perform speech acts, that is, to generate and understand utterances; one of the facets of an individual's personality. The structure of the linguistic personality includes lexical-grammatical, cognitive, and pragmatic levels.

*Markedness (in morphology):* An expression of grammatical meaning via nonnull means in contrast to a null form.

*Meaning:* An abstract conception directly associated with the generalized form of a given sign and that is elicited along with activation of the form of the sign regardless of situation and context. Meaning is the content of a

linguistic sign formed as a result of the reflection of extralinguistic reality in a given people's minds. The meaning of a linguistic unit in a language system is virtual, that is, it is determined by that which a given unit can denote. In a particular utterance, the meaning of a linguistic unit becomes relevant, insofar as the unit correlates with a particular object, namely with that which it effectively denotes in the utterance.

*Metalanguage:* A language of the "second order," in relation to which natural human language acts as an object language.

*Model:* A substitute for the object under study that is specially created for scientific research, designed to more effectively reflect certain properties of the original, even if other properties of the object are reflected inferiorly (see Mel'nikov 2003, 155). There are four main types of models: object-related (phenomenological), environmental, conceptual, and logical (see Mel'nikov 2003, 163).

*Neutralization:* Positional elimination of the opposition of elements of a language structure.

*Paradigmatics:* One of the aspects of the language system that pertains to the relations of the systematic opposition of units within the framework of linguistic categories and classes. A theory of two such types of relations in language was proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure; the term "paradigmatic relations" originates from Louis Hjelmslev (Saussure referred to them as associative relationships). A similar idea was expressed by I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, who wrote about "vertical" and "horizontal" relations in the comparison of units and their successive replacement, and by N.V. Krush-evskii, who analyzed the question of associations by similarity (paradigmatics) and contiguity (syntagmatics).

*Postposition:* A category of function words, functionally equivalent to prepositions, but semantically connected with the preceding, not the subsequent word. Postpositions complete the lexical meaning of verbs and express syntactic relationships between words.

*Predicand:* An element of knowledge in the mind of a participant in communication that becomes affected by conveyance of a proposition.

*Predicate:* Further-specified, revised knowledge in the mind of a participant in communication; the result of predication; a conception of subject matter that is creatively produced by the listener.

*Predication:* The elicitation of two mental conceptions (elements of knowledge in the mind of the addressee) aimed at forming new knowledge in the interlocutor's mind in accordance with the intent of the speaker; the process of transforming the predicand into a predicate by means of a predictor (see Mel'nikov 2003, 8);

- transformation of a certain fragment of thought material, understood as a *primer*, into a new, more accurate—in the opinion of the speaker—version of its content, that is, into *subject matter* (see Mel'nikov 2003, 97).

*Predicative segment (proposition)*: A segment of speech with which the speaker elicits the desired sense in the psyche of the addressee and forms new knowledge; any utterance for which the actual denotational sense of the signs used includes—in accordance with the speaker's intent—a fragment perceived by the listener as a predicator (see Mel'nikov 2003, 12).

*Predicator*: An element of knowledge in the mind of a participant in communication that is capable of affecting the predicand in accordance with the speaker's intent.

*Relational meanings*: Grammatical meanings expressing the relationship of a given word to other words in a sentence, for example, gender, number, and case of an adjective in Russian.

*Segmentability of a word*: The presence of internal syntagmatic structure within a word; the possibility of distinguishing the component morphological elements of a word.

*Sense*: Any conception of the denotate, elicited indirectly through the meaning of a sign and corresponding to the content that the conveying person desires to elicit in the psyche of those perceiving the sign. Sense is a unit of extralinguistic thinking.

*Sense (relevant)*: The sense that corresponds to the hint made by the speaker using a certain sign.

*Sense-altering context*: A context that alters the previous principles of organization of the semantic structure of a word, the meaning of an utterance, or the function (purpose) of a constructive element from any level of a text .

*Substance*: The composition of a system, that is, the number of its elements with their inherent individual properties.

*Syncretism*: The coincidence in a single form of functions that are usually delimited, for example, the syncretism of grammatical meanings in the category of aspect for the Russian verb or the syncretism of the inflectional and derivational function of the ending for nouns.

*Synharmonism*: A phonetic phenomenon consisting in a uniform vocalic (sometimes consonantal) composition of a word as a separate morphological unit. It performs the function of maintaining the integrity of the word and is a typical feature of agglutinative and incorporating languages.

*Synthesis*: (1) A typological property of language; the combination of the information given in a word, statement, or text and its syncretic expression in one polyfunctional unit. It is manifested in the predominance of morphological

means for expressing grammatical meanings and the presence of polycategorical grammatical forms and polysemantic affixes. A synthetic tendency in a language's structure entails the implicit expression of individual semes and grammatical meanings and determines the typical phraseological character, for that language, of the meanings of words, phrases, and constructions. (2) A syntactic mode of combining the components of a sentence not by merging words but by linking them with the help of various functional particles (in I. I. Meshchaninov's typological syntax).

*System*: Any object whose stable properties have formed due to the necessity of preserving the stability of certain properties of another object, a super-system. An object is a system if it maintains its integrity despite the fact that it is subdivided into subsystems and elements. The network of connections between the elements forms the structure of the system. The place of an element in a particular node of the structure of the system is called the significance of the element in this structure. The system is an adaptive object, and the higher the degree of adaptability, the higher the degree of systemic character of the object (see Mel'nikov 2003, 49).

*Systematics*: The typology of typologies of languages (see Mel'nikov 2003, 141).

*Systemic typology of languages*: "A linguistic discipline, based on the general provisions of systemology, that develops principles, techniques, methods and concepts to establish objective bases for the categorization of evolving and functional language systems according to their type, class, taxon, family and other associations" (Mel'nikov 2003, 58). The systemic typology of languages is compatible with both synchronic and diachronic concepts of typology and serves them as a unifying and mutually corrective basis (see Mel'nikov 2003, 137).

*Systemology*: (1) A methodological principle that

- yields continual convergence with the ideal of formal mathematical methods (developed in their first versions by the ancient Greeks), that is, with the successive derivability of concepts and the perception of the universe from an ever smaller number of original concepts and axioms;
- but also yields continual convergence with the ideal of holism, that is, with the construction of an increasingly integrated representation of the universe, and one that is not limited to a holistic synchronic reality but reveals both the stages of evolutionary formation of the studied objects and the trends of forthcoming changes;

(2) A systemic discipline that has allowed the synthesis of that which is positive and has accumulated up to the present time in the field of typology and the classification of languages as a whole (see Mel'nikov 2003, 33);

(3) A methodologically oriented form of the systemic approach (see Mel'nikov 2003, 58–59).

*Type*: A conception representing the “general outline” of the ideal, that is, of an entity whose representations are all objects belonging to the same class (see Mel'nikov 2003, 30).

Mikhail Rybakov

## PART II

*Argument of a semantic field*: A specialized variable that modifies the semantics of a unit of a semantic field; the use of various arguments (variables) with the same function makes it possible to obtain various classes of units with a common (invariant) meaning. When the number of arguments is increased, the set of elements of a given semantic field is sequentially divided into subsets that each receive a particular elaborated meaning through this procedure, for example,  $f_{\text{mut \& temp \& hom \& habit}}$  (“change” + “time” + “person” + “appearance, looks”) yields *young, old*. Differentiating by degree of complexity, the units of the field form subclasses and marginal spheres of the field. The sequential complexification of the function, that is, the conjunction of the main function with the contextual variables existant in the language system, is able not only to generate a *semantic field* but also demonstrate the functional nature of the field and the hierarchical nature of its structure.

*Function*: An expression of the dependence of one variable upon another; a certain law that provides the basis for each element of the set  $M$  (the variable range of the argument  $x$ ) to stand in correlation to elements of the set  $M_j$  (the range of the dependent variable  $y$ ). In the language system, meaning can act not only as a reflective category but also as a function, that is, as an element of the system of language understood as an activity. Thus, by using the concept of the function, linguistic phenomena can be interpreted as a system of interrelated and interacting sets.

*Functional interpretation of a semantic field*: This allows us to present the semantic field as a sequential dependence of hierarchically distributed levels: the nucleus (the designation of the field, the invariant meaning), the center (specialized classes of units with a more complex meaning), and the periphery (secondary designations, where each preceding link (hierarchically one level higher) is the primary *function* with respect to the subsequent links that realize the derived *functions*). A functional interpretation of the semantic field thus permits us to present it not as a sharply delineated sphere but as a gamut of gradual transitions and gradations and to connect



the syntagmatic and paradigmatic properties of its units, as well as to reveal their interdependence and natural connection.

A functional understanding of the field is entailed by a dialectical understanding of the “language–speech” dichotomy, with an accompanying extension of the former concept of the field as one oriented to language proper into one that is now within the functional–speech domain and in which the units of this dichotomy closely interact.

*Initial function of a semantic field:* The invariant meaning in the case of an unspecialized, maximally generalized (extracontextual) argument  $x_0$ . For specialized arguments, the output of the function becomes more concrete and more complex, as do the semantics of the corresponding classes of units. For example, the initial function of the *semantic field* “change” is  $f_{\text{mut}}$  (the invariant meaning of the field name is “to become different, to make different”). With the successive application of corresponding arguments, it is possible to obtain derived units belonging to certain classes and representing the conjunction of the main function and one that specifies further ( $f_{\text{mut \& calid}} = \text{“change”} + \text{“temperature”}$ : *to warm, to get warmer, to freeze, etc.*). The function is thus not only the realization of the general meaning of lexical units but also the semantic basis of the field, through which the units of all spheres become bound into a single whole.

*Semantic field:* A hierarchically organized set of lexical units, united by a common meaning and forming a common “constrained” semantic space in the language through the complex structure of the interrelated and analogous properties of its constituent units. Broadly understood, not only semantically homogeneous “initial” units are involved in the formation of a semantic field but also units from adjacent congruent fields, which are necessary for the actualization of the former in certain constructions (semantic periphery).

The semantic field is a higher-order lexical category in which, depending on the nature of the objects it designates, all categorial relationships in the lexis (syntagmatic, paradigmatic, epidigmatic) or a portion of them are reflected. As a systemic formation, a semantic field is an effective means for combined systemic and functional analysis not only of a specific language and of ethnolanguage-specific conceptions of the world but also of a more abstract structure, namely a *linguistic personality*.

*Typology of a semantic field:* Types of semantic fields can be determined on the basis of various criteria, for example, which parts of speech are represented at the nuclear level, the manner of the field’s structuring, the derivational character of the derived units, etc. L. A. Novikov, in describing the main typological characteristics of semantic fields, suggests the

following types: processual, feature-oriented, and subject-oriented (concrete and abstract) semantic fields. The consideration and comprehensive description of typological characteristics is one of the central prerequisites for an accurate analysis of the semantic field. Consistent comparison of the lexical systems of languages to reveal correlations between *types* of semantic fields will make it possible to identify the dominant type of field that is characteristic of a given language and to construct an interlingual typology of semantic fields.

*Natalia Bubnova*

### PART III

*Aesthetic and linguistic level of an artistic text:* A system of linguistic figurative means that are represented compositionally.

The elements at the aesthetic and linguistic level, as well as those at other levels of an artistic text, are endowed with a false self-evidency. All of them are aimed at *mimesis*. Therefore any element of the aesthetic and linguistic level of the artistic text should be evaluated from the point of view of its fictitiousness, that is, its aesthetic significance as is revealed when this element is correlated with an illusorily similar element or a construction from everyday language, with other elements of the artistic text and the general constructive principle of the whole.

Correlating each linguistic element and linguistic device in an artistic text in this way clarifies their meaning and functional load.

The application of the linguistic approach alone to the study of artistic texts is a gross semiotic error on the part of researchers.

*Aesthetics of contemplation:* The interpretation of the symbolic essence (symbolic meaning) of the “weaving of words” as grounded in a causal typology of texts.

The structural and semantic organization of a text according to the manner of writing called a “weaving of words,” which is outwardly characterized by the absence of individual referential and dependent words and which allows one’s attention to linger on a significant thought-subject, thereby transforming the reader or the listener into a contemplator. The aesthetics of contemplation supersedes linear perception. The subject matter of contemplation is eternity. In accordance with the criteria of understanding as formulated in the causal typology of texts, which take into account the possible discrepancies between the sign and meaning in various

semiotic systems, the structural and semantic regularities in the “weaving of words” are recognized as being an inner requirement of a text whose author consciously subordinates his will to the divine will.

*Analysis (textual level)*: In inflectional languages of a predominantly synthetic type, the functionally limitless displacement of synthetic constructions by analytical ones that semantically depreciate the verb leads to nominalized statements—which generate a static picture of the world—becoming more established.

This mechanically reproducible nominal quality provokes a sharp reduction in the content of a text in an inversely proportional relationship to changes in its volume.

On the compositional level of a text, the exchange of a synthetic vector for an analytical one manifests itself in an author’s desire to express each new piece of elementary information using a new sentence. A disjointed depiction of an event testifies to a reduction in the intellectual exertion of the “producer of the text” and has a destructive effect on the mental processes of the “user.”

*Artistic symbol*: An image (conceptual representation) possessing an incalculable set of meanings, containing in itself the unity of mental activities (feelings, will, and thought) and not reducible to any single one of them.

It preserves an indirect link with reality—not copying, but reflecting and transforming it—and rationally anticipates its development, revealing a connection with knowledge, even in irrationally, that goes beyond the limits of cognition.

The conceptual representation, which strives to achieve the expressive height of a symbol, feeds (into) the whole system of concepts of the artistic text.

The semantic construction of a text with a symbol of this type is always extremely centripetal. The functional load of other conceptual representations will be oriented toward the optimization of meanings that constitute the structure of the symbol’s contents.

The distinction that we introduce between *symbols* that are “*undergoing formation*” and those which are “*ready-made*” foregrounds hermeneutically significant differences in the semiotic status of one and the same symbol as it exists in an original artistic text and is used in someone else’s.

*Beauty*: An ontological value that is in a relationship of mutual implication with the concepts of truth, goodness, and sense.

*Causal typology of texts (historical typology of texts)*: The philological hermeneutical science that studies the history of literary language as the history of the displacement of one type of text by another, this being undertaken on the basis of a synthesis of notions of a text as a system with notions of a

literary language as a system in uninterrupted development. The selection of the types of texts is based on the search for a single system-constituting principle pertaining to the relationship of form and content and reflecting a historically significant state of consciousness.

*Contexts of Holy Scripture in medieval texts:* A category of thought of the medieval scribe.

A medieval scribe need not grope after the contexts of the Holy Scriptures, for he thinks in them. In medieval theological texts, the author's will strives not toward self-expression but toward the perception of Creation through its self-witnessing by means of *divinely inspired texts*.

*Conventionality of a sign:* In the causal typology of texts, the capability of a sign that had previously been associated only with a high-minded meaning to now designate potentially anything from ethically neutral to low. This is caused by the emergence of sense-altering contexts and their reproducibility.

It is regarded as an indicator of a secular consciousness and, at the same time, as a means of constituting the same.

*Correlation of sense and form:* A correlation possessing an antinomic nature, conditioned by understanding meaning as the first cause of form and by notions of form as a sense-constituting force.

The antinomian nature of the relationship between form and content is conceptualized in the causal typology of texts, obtaining the status of an initial methodological arrangement.

*Desacralization:* The alienation of a previously sacral sign from a sacral entity, expressed in the loss of symbolic meanings.

In the causal typology of texts, it is considered to be the main vector of changes in the semantic structure of the Russian literary language.

*Divinely inspired books:* Books given by God, according to God's revelation. Holy Scripture is divinely inspired. In the causal typology of texts, the concept of a divinely inspired text as being at once the goal and the means of understanding is foregrounded with respect to the medieval consciousness and the theological consciousness, irrespective of the time of manifestation. Renewed to some extent in *exemplary medieval texts* and the theological texts of any historical era, the inspired texts themselves become the key to interpretation of the same.

*The dominant as substance:* An invariant of the aesthetically significant that arises from the activity of the dominant and, by virtue of the same, is not destroyed.

Understood in such a way, an element of an artistic text will be a dominant as long as it represents a purpose that subordinates certain forces to itself, and until it manifests itself as an intermediate purpose, which is only a means to a "higher" purpose. Makes an artistic text unique.

*The dominant as activity:* The activity of a text in preserving and renewing itself, which brings the elements of the artistic text into relationships of hierarchical interdependence. The movement from the means to the goal coincides with the direction of the dominant activity of the text.

We understand it as a functional antipode of the mechanism of the mneme opposing the tendency to misunderstanding.

In opposing the tendency of misunderstanding, that is, subjectivation in the perception of the artistic text, the dominant strives to form that which is objectively common in the understanding of a work of art. In this case, the dominant does not destroy the subjective but only confronts it as a polar principle. Thanks to the dominant, the artistic text develops the ability, irrespective of the reader's individual experience, to generate *engrams* and, by repeating these engrams, that is, reinforcing the engraving, to achieve a more stable fixation of the most valuable aesthetic and informative information in the psyche of the reader.

*The dominant of the aesthetic and linguistic level:* The conventional designation of the dominant's activity as manifested at the aesthetic and linguistic level of an artistic text.

The correlation of the dominant of the aesthetic and linguistic level with the dominants of the figurative and compositional and ideological and aesthetic levels is of a subordinate nature: the dominant of the aesthetic and linguistic level acts as a means, but a means that has an intrinsic value. Its intrinsic value is determined by the fact that it forms the aesthetic uniqueness of the linguistic solution of an artistic text.

*The dominant:* A concept that found its way into philology from A. A. Ukhtomskii's works on physiology, in which a dominant is defined as the focus of excitation, attracting waves of excitation from a variety of sources (Ukhtomskii 1966).

In philological thought, a dominant is understood as the *activity* of the text in preserving and renewing itself and, at the same time, as a substance that is an invariant of the aesthetically significant. It precedes the text as the author's creative intention. It is in the text that it is revealed most fully and voluminously. In realizing itself as a source of self-activation, penetrating the whole text, subordinating all its elements and governing them, it is freed from the will of the artist. It is renewed in the reader's psyche under the influence of an adequate stimulus. Reading the entire text is a stimulus with an ideal degree of adequacy.

The dominant expresses the deep causality of the artistic text. This pre-determines hierarchy as the main principle of its structure, reflecting an inequality of elements that is consistently carried through.

It has a dual nature that lies in the two interdependent planes of the conscious and the unconscious.

*Dynamic continuity of an artistic text:* This is provided by the activity of the dominant, leading to a fundamental imbalance.

It is based on the coexistence and close interaction of different functionally and structurally heterogeneous units.

*Dynamic model of the semantic structure of literary language:* A model tracking changes in what is historically significant as determined by a changing social consciousness of the principle of the correlation of sign and meaning in words and texts recognized as *exemplary*.

This is reconstructed on the basis of the transformation of uninterrupted time into discrete (intermittent) time, which makes it possible to distinguish historical periods aimed at the recurring reproduction of semantic forms, which consolidate the semantic structure of the word in their exemplary texts, from historical periods aimed at creating sense-forming contexts that alter the former principles of how the semantic structure of words had been organized.

*Engramming:* A psycho-physiological process, as a result of which any experience, both one reaching the consciousness and one experienced unconsciously, is recorded or impressed in the human psyche.

*Ethical integrity of the semantic structure of the Old Russian word:* According to the causal typology of texts, the principle of correlation of sign and meaning, which excludes covering spiritual and low content with the same sign (the same grapho-phonetic sequence), is characteristic of the medieval consciousness and is inherent in the medieval mind.

*Exegesis* (from the Greek *exēgēsis* “interpretation”): A branch of theology that develops principles for interpreting divinely inspired texts.

The task of exegesis is to proceed from a material or specifically historical meaning to a symbolic meaning through which the ordinary content is transformed into sacral content.

*Exemplary medieval texts:* In the causal typology of texts, such are a liturgical sermon and a hagiographic life, whose highly intact form is ensured by their being included into liturgical action or by their proximity to the latter. They allow one to understand the causal correlation of sign and meaning as it was determined by the mind of a medieval person as first and foremost a religious person.

*Exemplary text:* In the causal typology of texts, texts are admitted as being exemplary if they reflect the principle of correlation of form and content as historically conditioned by the state of social consciousness, as well those that reflect a sharp change of the former principle of correlation of form and content.

*Foregrounded and automated elements of an artistic text:* These are the most and least aesthetically significant elements of an artistic text.

Automated units (elements) are a necessary background for the highlighting of foregrounded units.

The aesthetic significance of the elements of an artistic text can be explained psychologically by the fact that a work of art, as a stream of consciousness, cannot but repeat ideas that trouble the artist, reinforcing them formally many times over and actualizing them.

In order to recognize an artistic text as a unique aesthetic phenomenon, it is necessary to ensure the maximum possible degree of stability of the over-foregrounded units at different levels. The transfer of the text to various historical, cultural, and personal contexts leads to a shift in both the degrees of actualization and the boundary between the foregrounded and nonforegrounded zones, but the over-foregrounded units (the dominant as substance) show the greatest capacity for preservation.

As they are in the very center of the category of the poetic, over-foregrounded units will demonstrate the maximum degree of encoding.

The division of the elements of a text between foregrounded and automated ones, which is predicated on the artist's inner mission, has a directed, hierarchical character.

*Functional style:* Linking the formation of the category of *style* with the establishment of a secular worldview, the causal typology of texts likewise considers functional styles as a phenomenon peculiar to the *secular period of the development of literary language*.

Foregrounding the relative nature of the connection between functional styles and types of social activity and social consciousness makes it possible to interpret the shift of the conditional equilibrium between functional styles in favor of one of them, determined by a change in the political, social, or cultural situation in society, as a change in the relationship between sign and meaning, testifying to the transformation of the whole secular consciousness.

In emphasizing the inevitably directional nature of the shift of the conditional equilibrium between functional styles, the causal typology of texts considers clarifying the direction of transformation as a criterion for assessing the social and psychological state of a society, both actual and imminent.

Thus, in the causal typology of texts forms, a notion is formed that historical events are not only accompanied but also anticipated by a change in stylistic predilections.

*Grace:* In theology, a special active power of God, given to man in the sacraments of the Church.

*"High" in Lomonosov's "theory of three styles":* An ontological value rather than the result of an individual's subjective attitude toward any particular thing.

In the causal typology of texts, the semiotic status of the high in the “theory of three styles” is established on the basis of understanding high-style genres as the only possible forms of embodying high ethical experiences, and the high intellectual semantics of Church Slavonic language as being the only possible means of their verbal expression.

Recognition of the ontological nature of the high in the “theory of three styles” entails understanding “high style” as a semantic ethical category rather than a stylistic one.

*Historically significant texts:* From the standpoint of the causal typology of texts, historically significant texts are those that reproduce the historically conditioned principle of correlation of form and content, as well as those that destroy this principle.

*Homophony:* The most important mnemonic phenomenon, consisting in the repetition of the same engrams. When they coincide completely or in part, engrams leave a more lasting trace on the human psyche.

*Ideological and aesthetic dominant:* The conventional designation of the dominant acting at the level of ideas. It arises before the artistic text as the primary source of the creation of a work of art, as an unembodied idea of the writer striving for adequate materialization and defining the general direction of the unfolding of the artistic text, and then, after undergoing a certain transformation, it is renewed posteriorly to the artistic text as a thought perceived by the reader.

An artistic text only points to the ideological and aesthetic dominant without naming it, although the text itself has been created and exists precisely for the sake of renewing the ideological and aesthetic dominant in the psyche of the reader.

Ideally, the ideological and aesthetic dominant is equal to the artistic text, but practically always it is deduced from the latter with inevitable semantic losses.

The path to the ideological and aesthetic level of the dominant’s manifestation is laid down in the artistic text in two dimensions: along the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes simultaneously, with the syntagmatic being unconditionally subordinated to the paradigmatic. The paradigm revealed in the text brings the researcher to the value-based, conceptual, and ideological level; it unveils a picture of the deep structure of the world presented in the text, but the revealing of the members of the future paradigm takes place in the linearly materialized progress of the text. Thus, the syntagmatic axis in the projection of the ultimate goal appears auxiliary, subordinate, while remaining initial.

The ideological and aesthetic dominant, which is based on the accented image, allows the work of art to enter literature, to acquire a literary func-



tion, and to become wholly correlated with higher-order phenomena: the writer's creative opus, a literary school, movement, trend, process.

*Image in a work of art:* Sign of an idea, a way of knowing some phenomenon in development.

Understanding the semiotic nature of the artistic image prevents us from identifying an image with an idea.

It is impossible for an idea to materialize in a work of art without being made concrete and hence narrowed in a certain sense. But as soon as the idea acquires a concrete outline and becomes an image, it is endowed with a fundamentally different task: to make the reader understand that the concrete image hides much deeper content. The correlation between the semantic depth of the idea implied by the writer, that of the image, and that of the idea perceived by the reader was deduced by A. A. Potebnia: an artistic image is always smaller than the meaning bestowed on it by the artist and always deeper than the meaning attributed to it by the reader (Potebnia 1976).

The tangibility of the image (that which is concrete) is a sort of a forced concession facilitating the process of perception. Therefore Potebnia understands the image as the main "lever" in the complication of human thought and in the acceleration of its movement (Potebnia 1976).

*Inertial thinking in science:* This is characterized by the researcher's inclination to attribute to a sign a meaning known from other semiotic systems.

*Interaction between the high and the low:* A linear interaction conditioned by the strong syntactic connection of lexical units, mainly of Church Slavonic origin, expressing Christian sacred meanings in the initial contexts, with lexical units of the pronouncedly nonspiritual content.

This is a way of generating contexts that have a focused sense-changing force: the low word retains its meaning, while the high word receives a secularized meaning. Only the form remains high.

*Law of the economy of power:* The law of perception conditioned by the limited possibilities of human memory. It is ideally realized in aesthetics of verbal art because the artist, wanting to be perceived, should give the reader's nervous system an opportunity to relax after every intense expenditure of energy of imagination and attention. Peculiarities of perception, which the artist can consciously and unconsciously take into account, predetermine the aesthetic and content heterogeneity of the artistic text. Acts in the same direction as the *dominant*.

*Levels of the dominant:* These are incalculable because comprehensively motivated subordination, which in an artistic text operates regularly and systematically in one direction, ensures the appearance of successive,

parallel dependencies, which have as many degrees as there are times such relations emerge.

Our conventional reduction of the innumerable levels of the dominant to three that are correlated with the traditionally derived levels of an artistic text (ideological and aesthetic, figurative and compositional, and aesthetic and linguistic) was immediately absolutized despite our multiple reservations, having been subjected to the mythologization inherent in science.

*Literary language:* The causal typology of texts foregrounds the understanding of literary language as the most perfect form of existence of a language that has the highest sense-expressing potential at any given point in history.

*Literary sources of medieval theological texts:* Extrapolating the question of “literary sources” into the Middle Ages is semiotically inaccurate.

Renewing the idea of remaking or reproducing what is well known, or that of borrowing or being oriented on a pattern, references to “literary sources” obscure the fact that, in medieval texts by different authors, what is ontologically inevitable and credible will be repeated. Thus, the Apostles, beyond the individual authorial will, are the prototype for every saint and every missionary. Therefore comparing saints and missionaries with the Apostles is ontologically necessary in hagiographical literature.

*Liturgical sermon:* Instruction given during the liturgy, the main Christian worship service, in the course of which the Eucharist, the main sacrament of the Christian church, is celebrated. Proceeding, in the causal typology of texts, from the necessity to attribute a meaning to a sign within the semiotic system in which this sign exists, the liturgical sermon—included in its entirety of form and content into the liturgical act, which is directed toward the acquisition of grace as a special spiritual force emanating from God—is considered to be an exemplary theological text, in that it is the most perfect genre of theological thought and, in the case of medieval preaching, *an exemplary medieval text*.

*Method of dominant analysis:* Method of investigating artistic texts based on the understanding of a text as a dynamic hierarchically arranged system in which uninterrupted directed deformation of some elements ensures the isolation of others that are most significant aesthetically.

It makes it possible to present elements of an artistic text in aesthetic retrospective, as a goal served by other elements, and in aesthetic perspective, as a means serving a more significant element. By identifying the universal interdependence of elements of an artistic text in the direction from *goal* → *means*, the method of dominant analysis makes it possible to understand the logic of how cause-effect relations are established in the text and to materialize the meanings that are unconsciously fixed by the author.

Deducing the *dominant* ensures that the text is interpreted as an artistic fact without any analogue.

*Mimesis*: Imitation of reality, which is one of the most important factors of aesthetic pleasure arising from the perception of a work of art.

The imitation of reality as an aesthetic illusion should be distinguished from a naturalistic fake reality, that is, from a mystification that makes the fictitious and the real indistinguishable.

To denote the discrepancy between poetic reality and the reality of life, A. F. Losev introduces the concept of detachment (Losev 1994).

*Mneme*: A stream of experience of conscious and unconscious contact with reality continuously recorded (*engrammed*) in the human psyche, with simultaneous uninterrupted processes of repetition and of consequent enhancement of what has been experienced previously (*homophony*), of transferring previously unconscious experience from the subconscious into the conscious (*ecphory*), and of forming of associative connections.

The concept of the mneme was transferred from the natural sciences to the context of philology by N. A. Rubakin, who explained the functional dependence of understanding a book (text) on one's personal experience and on the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of his mneme, which is in uninterrupted dynamic change (Rubakin 1929).

*Mystical insight*: One of the three possible ways of knowing (logical thinking, imaginative thinking, mystical insight).

*Mythologization of science*: Absolutization of conventionality undertaken once for the convenience of analysis or used as a starting point for further theoretical construction. Mythologization was considered by A. F. Losev as a universal property of science (Losev 1994).

In view of the principle of complementarity used in systemic linguistics as opposed to the principle of mutual exclusion inherent in aspectual (noncomprehensive) sciences, it can be assumed that mythologization expressed in a tendency to accept any results as exhaustively reliable is more evident in the aspectual sciences.

*Oratorical word, speech (oratory)*: Speech that is deliberately structured in accordance with the author's (the speaker's) personal will with regard to listeners or readers. The ontological opposite of the word of grace.

The ideas of systematism and historicism as the methodological basis of the causal typology of texts, aimed at the study of various semiotic systems presented at different points of the historical timeline and within the same time segment, make it necessary not only to distinguish between the oratorical word and the word of grace but also to oppose them to each other.

*Originality of text*: The opposite of plagiarism and compilation; the property of the text that characterizes the highest degree of creative autonomy and authorial independence.

In speaking of texts reflecting the medieval consciousness, the causal typology of texts discards the issue of originality, relying on the semiotically significant idea that exemplary medieval texts are not composed but compiled and that the author moved by grace aspires for the insight of ontologically given truth rather than his own idea of it.

*Parallel construction:* Construction consisting of two syntactically similar sentences following each other.

The causal typology of texts, initially a hermeneutical science, understands form as a directed, sense-forming force. Proceeding from such an understanding of form, the sense-expressing potential of a parallel construction is interpreted as the means of exposing semantic differences of two syntactically similar parts of the constructive pattern, while excluding the possibility of distraction to the secondary. Understanding parallel constructions as a whole that is not reducible to a mechanical sum of parts makes it possible to regard parallel constructions (including multiple ones) not only as patterns ideally corresponding to the internal form of a two-part juxtaposition but also as a way of hinting at symbolic meanings typical of *exemplary medieval texts*, the exact definition of which has traditionally been the remit of theology.

*Plagiarism:* Appropriation of authorship, passing off someone else's work as one's own.

The use of the concept of plagiarism has semiotic limitations.

Applying the concept of plagiarism, as well as the concept of a source, to the model of the medieval and theological perception of the world (not limited to the Middle Ages) is considered, when interpreted through the causal typology of texts, to be a semiotic error. Driven by grace rather than personal reasoning, the authors cannot but coincide in their testimonies and in the forms of presenting these testimonies conditioned by their meaning; hence, the question of the primary and secondary nature of images as the basis for plagiarism is disregarded with respect to such texts.

*Primary cause era:* An era that has defined a typologically peculiar correlation of form and content reflecting the historically significant state of social consciousness in the text.

The concept of the primary cause era is introduced in the causal typology of texts in connection with the idea of the absence of rigid linearity in the change of historical types of texts, according to which a typologically peculiar relationship of form and content can go beyond its primary cause era and cease to define a historically new type of consciousness yet not be lost.

*Profane perception:* Unlike prepared readers' perception, it is linear, inertial, and does not imply overcoming or weakening the dependence on the properties of a personal mne.

*Reading:* According to N. Rubakin's mneme theory, projecting the reader's psychic experience onto the book.

In the process of reading, each reader builds their own projection of the readable work from the elements of their mneme and mistakes this projection for the qualities of the book itself and calls it the content of the text being read. A change in the mneme entails a change in the projection (Rubakin 1929).

*"Ready-made" (formed) symbol:* An image that can serve as an independent analogy and is not restricted in this capacity by the limits of space and time, that is, one that has crossed the limits of one or several cultures from one or several periods.

It acts as the most powerful means of adjusting the process of perception of an artistic text, thanks to the formed stable semantic nucleus, a set of finite meanings that can be seen without special investigation and that have established themselves in the hypothetical reader's hypothetical consciousness. Taking the invariant content of symbols recognized by world culture as a point of departure, the artist, as a rule, seeks to create his own symbol as a predicate for a new, yet unknown, subtle idea.

The main semiotic error made by researchers is to identify "ready" symbol semantically with an image whose understanding is corrected by a "ready" symbol. The semantic scope of a "ready" symbol and of an image corrected by this same symbol are in a relations of equipolarity (intersection) rather than equivalence.

*Repetition:* A means of expression usually perceived as a way of strengthening a thought. In accordance with the philological hermeneutics' requirement of understanding the text proceeding from the text itself, repetition, like any sign, constructive and nonconstructive, requires constant realignment of both meaning and function.

*Repetition in the "weaving of words":* Uninterrupted, parallel, and intersecting repetitions, manifested at all levels of form and meaning, make up the basis of text formation in the "weaving of words."

The repetition on which text formation is based contradicts the basic law of perception: the law of economy of mental effort, and from the standpoint of the nonreligious consciousness it is difficult to interpret it as a way of foregrounding a certain meaning.

Yet if we enter the semiotic system of the religious worldview in accordance with the hermeneutically conditioned methodological guidelines of the causal typology of texts, we can admit that the repetition underlying the process of text formation reflects of the idea of universal connectivity and nonrandomness determining the world order.

*Rhetorical rules of high style:* An algorithm for unfolding the text based on the need to endow each ethically significant element of the original statement with a relationship between gender and species, part and whole, to choose words of similar and opposite meanings, to turn to etymology, to outline the range of possible definitions, and to give a number of specifications, successively answering the questions “who?” “what?” “in which way?” “what for?” “how?” “when?”

In the causal typology of texts, the rhetorical rules of the high style are understood as the key that, through the reconstruction of the original sense-forming contexts, opens and—in relation to our time—reanimates the worldview code of the language associated with the intellectual and spiritual heritage of the medieval worldview, which does not permit the conflation of good and evil.

*“Rhetorical sophistication,” “resplendent decoration”:* A stereotypical characteristic of many medieval texts with theological content, reflecting an external, asemantic impression of the constructive complexity inherent in these texts.

Proceeding from the interdependent nature of the relationship between form and meaning, the causal typology of texts reveals ontological grounds in the constructive complexity of medieval texts included into the liturgical act or close to it. Specifying the semiotic nature of the sign makes it possible to formulate criteria for understanding the function performed by the sign.

So, for example, in accordance with the new criteria of understanding, specification of the correlation of the Old and New Testaments could not but develop in parallel constructions. The development of thought about the divine-human nature of the Savior could not but be twofold. In the era beyond the New Testament, a three-part construction of theological texts has become ontologically inevitable because it sets out the understanding of the new historical context by correlating it with the events of the Old and New Sacred History.

*Semantic structure of the Russian literary language of the medieval period:*

This is determined by the impossibility of designating the content of the spiritual and the ordinary, the high and the low by one and the same grapho-phonetic sequence (sign).

*Semantic structure of the Russian literary language of the secular period:*

Unlike the semantic structure of the Russian literary language of the medieval period, this is determined by the ability of one and the same word (sign) to enter with its different meanings into different spheres of being: the spiritual and the mundane, the serious and the ironic. The new principle of relationship between sign and meaning *makes the sign conventional*.

*Semiotic error:* Attribution of an alien meaning to a sign. Semiotic errors in science are provoked by the inclination of the researcher studying the purpose of this or that sign (form) within the limits of some semiotic system to endow this sign with a meaning that it has beyond the limits of this system. This inclination is explained by inertia, an inalienable property of not only ordinary but also scientific consciousness. The idea of form and meaning being interconnected is largely predetermined by previous experience of research: the involuntary expectation of the habitual prevents authentic estimation of the changed context that transforms the familiar idea of form.

If a researcher fails to develop a culture of overcoming the automaticity of perception, the extent of distortion of the object under study quickly reaches the point of no return: in fact, even within a certain semiotic system, form, being a way of representing a certain meaning, possesses a directed sense-forming force even before it is linked with content. In other words, even an unfilled pattern cannot be completely blank or “pure”: it sets the direction of sense understanding.

The causal typology of texts foregrounds the idea that it is necessary to overcome the automatism of perception as a primary condition for a researcher to give an authentic estimate of the principle of correlation between form and content in texts reflecting changes in social consciousness.

*Sense-forming context:* A context that organizes and consolidates the semantic structure of the word, the meaning of the utterance, the function (purpose) of the constructive element of the text at any level.

In the causal typology of texts, it is methodologically necessary to understand the meaning of context as a dynamic category, changing both the direction and the trajectory of movement and its own range at different points of the text. It is prone to narrowing and expansion; it works under certain conditions within the text or goes beyond it into the cultural and historical environment. The question of establishing the boundaries of the sense-forming context is considered fundamental to solving the problem of authentic understanding.

*Simile in the liturgical sermon:* Mental act that becomes an ontologically necessary genre-forming basis for the liturgical sermon.

The causal typology of texts, inasmuch as it admits—in accordance with the principles of semiotic culture—the opposition of the word of grace and the oratorical word, interprets the comparison of the events of the present with the events of the Old and New Testaments, regularly renewed in the grace-driven liturgical sermon, as an ontological necessity, which conditions the explanatory potential of the liturgical sermon.

In accordance with the given criteria of understanding, the comparison is considered as the genre-forming basis of the liturgical sermon, that is, the basis that predetermines the typologically distinctive compositional orga-

nization of the text and the typologically peculiar ways of compositionally emphasizing the verbal material.

*Style*: Materialization of the secular worldview in a text.

In correlating the generally accepted understanding of style as a particular principle for selecting linguistic means with the medieval mind's typical predetermination in designating the high and the ordinary, which excludes the very concept of choice, the causal typology of texts defines the semiotic nature of the category of style as highly secular.

The transformation of semantic differences (requiring understanding) into audible stylistic differences is an indicator of the secularization of mind, accompanied by a weakening of intellectual tension.

In the causal typology of texts, style is understood as a providential category, that is, not only reflecting but also anticipating changes in social consciousness. Such an understanding of the category of style materializes the notions foregrounded in the causal typology of texts about the systemic method as explaining the past and the present and anticipating the future.

*Symbol formed in the course of the development of an artistic text*: Unlike the already formed, "prepared" symbols, it cannot serve as an independent analogy within its original text.

The stable meanings of "prepared" symbols supply a newly formed symbol with a relative support point; providing a primary state of unstable semantic equilibrium is necessary for the further rapid increase of innumerable senses of the newly formed symbol.

*Symbol*: According to A. F. Losev, an utterance whose form and content are brought into relationships of equal significance. An unconditional category of poetic creativity and of mythological and religious consciousness (Losev 1994).

*Symbolic meaning*: In *divinely inspired and exemplary* medieval texts, the meaning that attests to the reality of the supersensory spiritual world. The deduction of the symbolic meaning in divinely inspired texts is within the purview of *exegesis*. The task of *exegesis* is to shift from the material or specific historical meaning to the symbolic meaning, through which the ordinary content is transformed into sacral content.

*Symbolic texts*: Texts generated by the unconditional equivalence of the external and internal. Such texts are interpreted on the basis of the notion that the whole text is the context, but at the same time the need to establish the correct boundaries of intratextual sense-forming contexts is retained.

*Text*: In the causal typology of texts, the researcher keeps in view the idea of a text as a semantically integral entity given in forms conditioned by content.

*Types of texts*: In the causal typology of texts, which proceeds from an understanding of the signed nature of the text as a whole and that of the type of texts as a higher-order whole, only texts revealing a unified system-forming



principle of correlation of form and content are considered as manifestations of some general type reflecting a historically significant state of social consciousness.

*“Weaving of words”*: Metaphorical designation of a manner of exposition established in the fourteenth century in the lives of saints, beginning with those composed by Epiphanius the Wise.

The stereotypical understanding of the “weaving of words” reproduces the impression of this manner of exposition as something superfluous, artificially introduced. Such a perception is a semiotically erroneous disconnection of the internal and external in relation to art (including religious art).

In the causal typology of texts, the question of the semiotic essence of the “weaving of words” is methodologically unconditional, which is resolved through the establishment of the causal correlation of the “weaving of words” with the genre of the *vita* and its ontological meaning—the genre of the *vita* being that in which this manner of expression has found its perfect embodiment.

*Word of grace*: Speech whose *grace*-actuated construction is determined by its being focused on the expression of ontologically authentic meanings rather than by the author’s aspiration to self-expression or a desire to influence other people subject to the author’s personal will. It is the ontological opposite of the oratorical word. The causal typology of texts, which establishes the relationship of sign and meaning in accordance with the basic requirement of philological hermeneutics that a sign not be ascribed the meaning it has in another semiotic system, takes into account the opposition of the word of grace and the oratorical word.

*Olga Valentinova*

## PART IV

*Connotation*: The capacity of a sign to act as a “secondary sign” when, alongside its primary linguistic meaning and usual sense, the sign hints at the habitual context of its use, with the entire set of meanings predicated in this context.

*Hexasyllable* (two-foot amphibrach, Shevchenko’s verse, *kolomyïka*): A six-syllable verse consisting of two phonetic words culminating in a feminine ending. In the hexasyllable, the second phonetic word should be considered the second rhythmic word, for it fulfills the verse’s axiomatic requirement of there being a feminine ending. Shevchenko’s hex-

asyllable (*kolomyika*) is characterized by consistent reaccentuation with a lengthening of the first syllable to compensate for the expected first metric stress of the trochee, as a result of which this element of quantitative metric appears. Such compensatory lengthening may be considered a distinguishing feature of the hexasyllable verse. The hexasyllable as a prosodic unit exists in many Slavic variants (Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Russian), a fact that allows us to treat it as a common Slavic two-accent and two-word verse.

*Logaoedic adoneus*: A verse representing a five-syllable segment with compensatory lengthening of vowels (\_UU\_U). It began to be used in Russian poetry at the turn of the nineteenth century (see Akimova 2004).

Researchers propose two explanations for the emergence of the Slavic adoneus: (a) imitation of the ancient Greek meter (for example, M. L. Gasparov and M. V. Panov, who emphasize the strangeness of logaoedics to Russian verse); (b) borrowing from an indeterminate source. Olga Barash and Sergei Preobrazhenskii see one of its sources in the “Stanisław stanza,” widespread in Poland in the eighteenth century.

*Mechanism of Russian syntax*: A description of a branching dynamic scenario of a nonlinear type. The simplest type of scenario is captured by a formula such as *A dog chases a cat down the street in the rain*. In this clause, the key roles are (a) the active initiator of the action, grammatically marked in the nominative; (b) an action grammatically expressed by the finite verb indicating the origin of the action; and (c) further participants (actants) involved in the action who play prescribed secondary roles represented by case forms, which indicate a curtailed statement.

*Systematicity in language*: “Language is a class of objects in which the systematicity, internal organization and the mutual agreement of all static and dynamic characteristics are represented in their higher manifestations. . . . The final selection and fixation [of an element in the system—S. P.] is carried out not on the basis of the *extremum*, i.e. the maximum or minimum value of a given factor, but on the basis of the optimum, taking into account many factors whose roles as well as admissible and inadmissible contributions are ‘weighted’—under consideration of their interactions and mutual compensations—with respect to the best resulting effect, that is, in achieving effective communication. . . . The optimal balance of the weights of all the factors determining the effectiveness of communication is specific for each act of communication,” but general tendencies develop (a general requirement expressed in the external determinant), “when all members of a language community are forced for a sufficiently long time in most acts of communication to proceed according to the typical conditions common to that community for gauging how to increase the probability that the

transmission of thought content will be successful” (Mel’nikov 1978; cf. Mel’nikov 2003, 55, 74).

*Verseme*: An “-emic” term denoting units that emerge from a metrical segmentation of speech and exhibit a specific suprasegmental phonetic pattern. The term *verseme* was, apparently, first proposed by M. M. Kenigsberg, who understood the *verseme* as an “idealized” unit. If G. G. Shpet’s concept of *the ideal* is adapted (with inevitable losses of meaning) to the modern positivist paradigm, we obtain “the mental” or “the cognitive,” that is, a psychological representation of a rhythmic-syntactic-semantic unit.

Due to the early and untimely death of its originator, the concept of this “-emic” unit was never fully developed, but the general sense of the innovation appears to be clear enough: a *verseme* implies, at a minimum, a complex synthesis of the syntaxeme and the syntagm on the basis of a certain rhythmic formula.

In order to act as an independent speech segment, a *verseme* must possess a sufficient degree of communicative definiteness; in relation to its structure as a syntactic segment, the features considered in the study of prosody (meter, measure, and rhythm) function as suprasegmental means of segmentation. The basic characteristics of *versemes* may include (a) a particular accentual contour; (b) its possible correlates including rhythmic patterns and abstractions of meter; (c) a correlation of the number of meaningful words with the standard for the relevant syntactic level (phrase vs. sentence); and (d) with respect to the latter, a greater or lesser degree of syntactic independence and self-sufficiency.

The inventory of *versemes*, as in the case of phonemes, is determined according to their distinctive characteristics. Although scholars of poetry hold a more than wary attitude toward the term, some shifts in this direction have nevertheless emerged in the field. Thus, researchers are progressing from prosodic metrical constructs to a dynamic syntactic syntagm that sets a particular rhythm.

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## NOTE

1. This section of the glossary and part of section iv were written by Natalia Bubnova.

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