

CHAPTER V

CHELOVEK

In 'Ia sam' Maiakovskii contrasts *Chelovek* (1916–17) with the preceding, or in part contemporary, *Voina i mir* (1915–16): 'В голове разворачивается "Война и мир", в сердце — "Человек"' (I, 24).¹ The very title echoes the last two lines of *Voina i mir* ('И он, / свободный, / ору о ком я, // человек — / придет он, / верьте мне, / верьте!' (I, 242)), but, as it turns out, *Chelovek* refutes this utopian vision which had been introduced as the creation of the poet's brain. In *Chelovek* Maiakovskii places the heart at the centre of the human condition, but, although the poet hero's heart can potentially transform the world and his love could lead to liberation, the human condition as he experiences it in the poem is not one of freedom but of chains.

Metrical Composition

In its metrical composition *Chelovek* occupies a transitional position between the fluid accentual verse of *Oblako v shitanakh* and *Fleita-pozvonochnik* and the system of discrete measures in *Liubliu* and *Pro eto* (and elsewhere), between Maiakovskii's early and later verse. *Chelovek* is already a polymetric poem throughout, but in its accentual verse (the major metrical form) certain metrical tendencies still emerge and consolidate within the poem, especially towards the end in the chapter 'Maiakovskii vekam' where a system of discrete measures is almost established. In his study of the poem Ivanov goes so far as to identify certain metrical tendencies as discrete forms, but this creates considerable (acknowledged) problems of metrical interpretation in the many stanzas which do not quite conform to the set forms,² and it fails to account properly for the way the metrical tendencies arise and develop in the accentual verse. In general the criterion for identifying a metrical tendency is that in a given passage the number of lines which deviate from the putative measure does not reach a quarter of the total (this is the criterion used for the identification of a transitional metrical form). This criterion, however, cannot be used to determine a free accentual tendency, which is less rather than more organized than the surrounding accentual verse; but in the two consecutive passages which have been classified as free accentual it is clear that the normal factors of line length organization in Maiakovskii's accentual verse, such as the leading role of the four-stress form, are absent (as in the free accentual verse in the *Tragedy*).

In addition to the metrical criterion, the passages must form compositional units and consist of at least one stanza, although outside 'Maiakovskii vekam' most passages consist of three or more stanzas. The metrical tendencies within the accentual verse are four-ictus accentual verse, alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik*, free accentual verse, and four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* (approaching amphibrachic tetrameter); there is also simple accentual verse where there is no specific metrical tendency. The interpretation of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency, which is found in just a single stanza, is not altogether certain, but in context it seems to make sense; the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency, on the other hand, is so regular that it could be classified as a discrete measure, but in the context of the poem it can be seen to develop out of the earlier accentual verse and so it has been interpreted as an extreme example of a metrical tendency. The second most prominent form in the poem is the iamb. There are various iambic measures, but they too can all be shown to derive from a single basic form; the two main measures, accounting for all but three stanzas, are alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter and iambic trimeter. Finally, three lines of hexametral verse, the third major form in the poem, can be interpreted as based on the related elegiac couplet and are classified here as a metrical tendency within hexametral verse.

As usual the dominant stanza form is the abab quatrain but there are also five five-line stanzas (four abaab and one ababa), one aabb quatrain (two couplets?), and two couplets. Except where hexametral verse is involved, all stanzas are metrically homogeneous (although in one stanza there is a shift of tendency within accentual verse). Outside this stanza fabric there are five unrhymed lines which can be interpreted as verse; three of these lines are hexametral, while the other two are classified as accentual. There are also seven 'prose' segments and a quotation which are not counted as metrical lines. Finally, the prologue and two chapters open with headings of rhythmical prose, while a third chapter opens with a numerical sequence. A full rhythmical description and a breakdown of the metrical segments are given in Appendix IV.

The five metrical forms or measures employed in the poem are accentual verse, iamb, hexametral verse, iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura, and three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*. The distribution of the poem's 479 lines (474 rhymed and five unrhymed) among these five forms in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given, in percentages of the relevant total, in Table 1. The distribution of lines among the four metrical tendencies within the accentual verse, the two main iambic measures, and the elegiac hexametral tendency is given as well. The headings are marked, and the 'prose' segments are shown as before, together with the quotation. The titles of the seven main chapters — 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo', 'Strasti

Maiakovskogo', 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo', 'Maiakovskii v nebe', 'Vozvra-shchenie Maiakovskogo', and 'Maiakovskii vekam' — are abbreviated as follows: RM, ZhM, SM, VnM, MN, VvM, and MV.³

TABLE 1. Metrical Composition

	Prologue	RM	ZhM	SM	VnM	MN	VvM	MV	'Posled- nee'	Total	Lines
Heading	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	-		
Ac	44.4	54.7	57.7	64.0	47.6	86.2	83.7	73.4	25.0	66.8	320
Ac-Ac4	—	30.2	35.9	—	—	41.4	41.9	4.3	—	22.5	108
Ac-Dk4343	—	—	—	16.0	—	—	—	—	—	0.8	4
Ac-AcF	—	—	—	—	—	31.0	—	—	—	3.8	18
Ac-Dk4Am	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	45.7	—	9.0	43
I	55.6	—	30.8	32.0	52.4	—	4.7	26.6	—	21.7	104
I43	27.8	—	30.8	32.0	27.0	—	—	12.8	—	13.8	66
I3	27.8	—	—	—	19.0	—	4.7	4.3	—	5.2	25
Hx	—	37.7	6.4	4.0	—	6.9	7.0	—	75.0	8.1	39
Hx-EC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	75.0	0.6	3
I4c+1	—	7.5	—	—	—	—	4.7	—	—	1.7	8
Dk3An	—	—	5.1	—	—	6.9	—	—	—	1.7	8
'Prose'/Quote	—	—	—	—	1	5	—	2	—		
Lines	18	53	78	25	63	58	86	94	4		479

The table shows that accentual verse appears in every chapter and accounts for almost exactly two thirds of the total lines, while the two main, four-ictus metrical tendencies account for nearly half the accentual lines. The other two prominent themes, the iamb and hexametral verse, both recur through the poem, though not in every chapter, and there is already some indication of their incompatibility: where one is prominent the other is generally muted or absent.

In its compositional outline the main body of the poem can be divided into three roughly balanced parts, or movements, with the first three chapters, the middle two chapters, and the last two chapters forming larger compositional units; the beginning of each part is marked by a heading. The prologue introduces the two most prominent metrical themes, accentual verse and the iamb. Then, in the poem's first movement, 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' has a prominent hexametral theme, while 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' has a prominent iambic theme. 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', which is the first emotional climax, stands out as the shortest chapter; yet it brings together accentual, iambic, and hexametral verse, and it is the only chapter in which the iamb and accentual

verse (in the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency) share a common ictus scheme. The second and shortest part has distinctive but rather diverse themes: the iambic theme continues even more strongly in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' but is absent from 'Maiakovskii v nebe', which features two contrasting accentual themes, four-ictus accentual and free accentual (the most irregular form); this chapter also contains most of the 'prose' segments. In the concluding and longest part accentual verse dominates and becomes more regular as the four-ictus accentual tendency gives way to the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* in 'Maiakovskii vekam'; the emergence of this tendency prepares for the dominant metrical theme of *Liubliu* and *Pro eto*. It is in the first half of 'Maiakovskii vekam', however, that the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency is especially prominent, while the iamb takes over in the poem's finale. The elegiac variation of the hexametral theme rounds the poem off in 'Poslednee'. It is also possible to project a secondary division into two halves, with the break after 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' at the end of the poet hero's life on earth. The secondary division distinguishes the greater prominence of iambic verse in the first half and the dominance of accentual verse in the second, and so highlights a continuity between the first two parts and the second two parts respectively.

1. Accentual Verse

Accentual verse is the major metrical form in the poem. It is the vehicle for the poet hero's experience of the world at large; as the poem develops this is increasingly projected in a temporal dimension and takes on narrative form. The four-ictus accentual tendency first appears after the iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura has established a four-ictus scheme, and in three main, parallel passages it is the vehicle for the poet hero's description of the nature of things on earth, in heaven, and on earth once more. The four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency emerges out of the four-ictus accentual tendency as the theme of millennial inertia comes to the fore in the first half of 'Maiakovskii vekam'. In *Pro eto* the ballad associations of this form are clearly indicated, but here, although there is a reference to 'ballads' earlier in the poem (I, 258, l. 461),⁴ such genre associations, which may be relevant to the narrative structure of a journey through life (and beyond), are still incipient. *Chelovek* was originally subtitled 'Veshch'' (I, 445), by which in part Maiakovskii probably intended to define the work as a *poema*, and it cannot readily be defined in more specific genre terms. The free accentual tendency, which is only found in the first half of 'Maiakovskii v nebe', conveys the poet hero's experience of the free, amorphous space of heaven. Finally, as already noted, the single stanza of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency serves to link the accentual and iambic themes through a common ictus scheme.

The accentual verse will be characterized both as one form and according to the tendencies within it (including the simple accentual verse where there is no specific metrical tendency). Difficulties of interpretation arise in the free accentual verse of 'Maiakovskii v nebe' where the division into metrical lines is not always certain, but for the purposes of classification a likely interpretation which keeps the basic stanza form is adopted and a single line with a displaced rhyme is considered to end at the graphical break.

The distribution of the 320 lines of accentual verse according to line length (measured in stresses) in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given, in percentages, in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Line Length

	10	8	7	5	4	3	2	1	Lines
Prologue	—	—	—	25.0	37.5	25.0	12.5	—	8
RM	—	—	—	6.9	79.3	13.8	—	—	29
ZhM	—	—	—	11.1	80.0	8.9	—	—	45
SM	—	—	—	12.5	68.7	12.5	6.2	—	16
VnM	—	—	3.3	10.0	43.3	23.3	10.0	10.0	30
MN	2.0	2.0	2.0	8.0	58.0	22.0	4.0	2.0	50
VvM	—	—	—	1.4	72.2	13.9	11.1	1.4	72
MV	—	—	—	1.4	84.1	8.7	2.9	2.9	69
'Poslednee'	—	—	—	—	—	—	100.0	—	1
Total	0.3	0.3	0.6	6.2	70.3	14.4	5.6	2.2	320

The consolidatory effect of the two main, four-ictus metrical tendencies is evident in the high overall percentage of four-stress lines, while three-stress lines are relegated to a minor role. The local presence of the two main tendencies also shows in a higher percentage of four-stress lines in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo', 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo', and 'Maiakovskii vekam', while in 'Maiakovskii v nebe' this effect is off-set by the free accentual tendency which can now be seen to develop out of a greater spread of forms in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo'. The tripartite compositional outline is clearly evident. The first three chapters are relatively streamlined, while the theme of diversity in the central chapters is emphasized; 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', however, is already rather less streamlined than the first two chapters and features the first appearance of a short line in the main body of the poem. Thereafter short lines figure quite prominently, especially on the way to and from heaven in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' and 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo'. Five-stress lines, on the other hand, recede in the last part of the poem, and the progressive consolidation in the four-ictus scheme leads to the highest percentage of four-stress lines in 'Maiakovskii vekam'.

The distribution of the 147 lines of simple accentual verse — accentual verse where there is no specific metrical tendency — according to line length (measured in stresses) is given, in percentages, in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Line Length

7	5	4	3	2	1	Lines
0.7	8.8	55.1	21.1	10.2	4.1	147

The minor forms are naturally prominent here but the four-stress form still plays the leading role, accounting for over half the lines and providing a significant degree of organization; this is not free (deregulated) accentual verse. The proportion of four-stress lines only falls below a half in the prologue (37.5%) and ‘Voznesenie Maiakovskogo’ (43.3%). The role of the four-stress form is further evident in the stress schemes found in the twenty-seven full quatrains of this verse: all but four open with a four-stress line, and although there is a great variety the four schemes that appear twice (4443, 4442, 4432, 4333) all confirm to a greater or lesser extent the leading role of the four-stress form; it is notable, however, that there is no example of the 4343 scheme. This accentual verse is found in every chapter, and the variations from chapter to chapter (not presented here) fit in with the picture already established.

The distribution of the eighteen lines of the free accentual tendency according to line length (measured in stresses) is given in Table 4.

TABLE 4. Line Length

10	8	7	5	4	3	2	1	Lines
1	1	1	4	2	6	2	1	18

This table shows a deregulation of line length, with the full range of forms found in the poem’s accentual verse and with the four-stress form weakly represented; the profile differs strikingly from that of the simple accentual verse, even in ‘Voznesenie Maiakovskogo’ (see Tables 2 and 3).

The distribution of the 108 lines of the four-ictus accentual tendency, the four lines of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency, and the forty-three lines of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency according to line length (measured in stresses) is given in Table 5.

The four-ictus accentual tendency, as this Table shows, is the key form in the poem’s accentual verse because it is the bridge between the simple accentual verse and the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*. Its strong four-stress inertia — all but ten lines (over 90%) have four stresses — enhances the leading role of the four-stress form in the simple accentual verse and prepares for the

TABLE 5. Line Length

	5	4	3	2	Lines
Ac-Ac4	2	98	8	—	108
Ac-Dk4343	—	2	1	1	4
Ac-Dk4Am	1	42	—	—	43

amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency where the four-ictus scheme is maintained in every line, with full stressing (the single five-stress line has a hypermetrical stress in the anacrusis). The two five-stress lines in the four-ictus accentual tendency both appear third in the stanza, while one three-stress line appears second, one third, and six last. In the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency a stress has to be interpreted as omitted in the first three-ictus line, hence some uncertainty in the metrical interpretation; this is the short line in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo'.

The distribution of the 320 lines of accentual verse according to rhythmical form in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given, in percentages, in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Rhythm

	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	By	Short	Lines
Prologue	—	—	87.5	—	—	12.5	8
RM	17.2	37.9	44.8	3.4	3.4	—	29
ZhM	28.9	22.2	48.9	13.3	2.2	—	45
SM	31.2	18.7	43.7	18.7	—	6.2	16
VnM	20.0	10.0	50.0	16.7	—	20.0	30
MN	20.0	20.0	54.0	12.0	4.0	6.0	50
VvM	12.5	19.4	55.6	12.5	4.2	12.5	72
MV	4.3	7.2	82.6	42.0	1.4	5.8	69
'Poslednee'	—	—	—	—	—	100.0	1
Total	15.9	17.5	58.7	18.4	2.5	7.8	320

The effect of the amphibrachic *dol'nik* metrical tendency is evident in the high overall percentage of *dol'nik* (and ternary) lines, but it does not distort the picture, while the emergence of iambic metre in the poem (out of the binary rhythmical theme in *Fleita-pozvonochnik?*) has reduced the role of binary rhythm in the accentual verse. The compositional outline of the poem is now reinforced. In the first part a move, relatively speaking, towards the extremes of accentual and ternary rhythm reaches a peak in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', the first emotional climax; this highlighting of ternary, rather than *dol'nik*, rhythm adumbrates the amphibrachic development in the accentual verse. After

'Strasti Maiakovskogo' the percentage of accentual lines falls as that of *dol'nik* (and later ternary) lines rises, but this movement towards regularity only becomes clearly marked in 'Maiakovskii vekam' where the amphibrachic rhythm of millennial inertia comes to the fore. Viewed on their own, however, the two central chapters present an almost static picture.

The distribution of the 147 lines of simple accentual verse (designated simply Ac), the 108 lines of the four-ictus accentual tendency, and the eighteen lines of the free accentual tendency according to rhythmical form is given, in percentages, in Table 7.

TABLE 7. Rhythm

	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	By	Short	Lines
Ac	18.4	15.6	51.7	6.1	2.7	14.3	147
Ac-Ac4	17.6	27.8	54.6	16.7	3.7	—	108
Ac-AcF	27.8	16.7	38.9	11.1	—	16.7	18

The table shows that the free accentual tendency is also the least regular rhythmically, but in respect of *dol'nik* and accentual rhythm the other two types are close; the difference between them lies in the presence of short lines in the simple accentual verse and the greater prominence of *taktovik* rhythm in the four-ictus tendency. In the first two parts of the poem the variations from chapter to chapter in the simple accentual verse (not presented here) reinforce the rhythmical trends already noted, but in 'Maiakovskii vekam' this verse remains rhythmically distinct from the dominant ternary inertia. Bearing in mind the importance of ternary rhythm, the form with the rhythmical profile most representative of the accentual verse as a whole (see Table 6) is the four-ictus accentual tendency.

The distribution of the 108 lines of the four-ictus accentual metrical tendency according to rhythmical form in the relevant chapters is given, in percentages, in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Rhythmical Development

	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	By	Lines
RM	25.0	56.2	18.7	6.2	—	16
ZhM	17.9	28.6	53.6	21.4	3.6	28
MN	16.7	20.8	62.5	16.7	—	24
VvM	11.1	22.2	66.7	19.4	8.3	36
MV	25.0	25.0	50.0	—	—	4

The rhythmical development within this tendency, as Table 8 shows, is one of the key underlying trends in the poem: the consistent rise of *dol'nik* rhythm

up to 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' shows that the appearance of the amphibrachic *dol'nik* metrical tendency has its origins right back in 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' (just as the strong four-stress inertia in the four-ictus accentual tendency prepares for the strict four-ictus scheme of the amphibrachic *dol'nik*); so the poet hero's experience on his return is essentially a continuation of his life.

The distribution of the four lines of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency and the forty-three lines of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency according to rhythmical form is given in Table 9.

TABLE 9

	222		Rhythm — Dk4					Rhythm — Dk3		Lines
	212	122	211	221	121	112	12	OS		
Ac-Dk4343	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	4
Ac-Dk4Am	29	7	2	2	1	1	1			43

The table shows that the metre as well as the ictus scheme of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* is maintained without a break. Out of context, therefore, this could be defined as a separate measure, but in context, as the development of the four-ictus accentual tendency has shown, it can be seen as the extreme metrical tendency in the accentual verse. All the fully-stressed forms other than the binary form are represented, but the ternary (222) form dominates while the 212 form stands out among the secondary forms; it is these two forms which have already appeared in the four-ictus lines of the alternating *dol'nik* tendency. The underlying rhythm of the three-ictus line with an omitted stress is also ternary. The dominance of the 222 form in the four-ictus tendency brings the accentual verse close to a ternary base in 'Maiakovskii vekam'.

The distribution of the 320 lines of accentual verse according to anacrusis in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given, in percentages, in Table 10.

Unlike Tables 2 (line length) and 6 (rhythm), this table shows an overall profile unchanged from the preceding poems (see Chapter III, p. 86, Table 5, and Chapter IV, p. 137, Table 4); two factors which affect the profile — the almost constant monosyllabic anacrusis in the amphibrachic four-ictus *dol'nik* and a high proportion of zero anacruses (twenty-one out of thirty-four) in heterogeneous stanzas with hexametral verse — more or less balance each other. The compositional role of the anacrusis, however, is now more active. In the first three chapters a clear linear movement, as in the rhythm, is evident, in this case a progressive reduction in the length of the anacrusis with a climax in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo'; this rhythmical quickening at the beginning of the line will also be used to signal a climax in *Liubliu* and *Pro eto*. The two central

TABLE 10. Anacrusis

	0	1	2	3	Lines
Prologue	50.0	37.5	12.5	—	8
RM	37.9	34.5	27.5	—	29
ZhM	55.6	33.3	8.9	2.2	45
SM	75.0	18.7	6.2	—	16
VnM	53.3	33.3	10.0	3.3	30
MN	36.0	44.0	18.0	2.0	50
VvM	44.4	38.9	12.5	4.2	72
MV	10.1	87.0	2.9	—	69
'Poslednee'	—	—	100.0	—	1
Total	39.1	47.2	11.9	1.9	320

chapters then reverse this movement, a *rallentando*, and it is not until the advent of the amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency that the monosyllabic anacrusis, relatively neutral so far, becomes dominant.

The distribution according to anacrusis in the simple accentual verse and the four metrical tendencies is given, in percentages, in Table 11.

TABLE 11. Anacrusis

	0	1	2	3	Lines
Ac	50.3	35.4	12.2	2.0	147
Ac-Ac4	39.8	42.6	14.8	2.8	108
Ac-Dk4343	25.0	75.0	—	—	4
Ac-AcF	33.3	44.4	22.2	—	18
Ac-Dk4Am	2.3	97.7	—	—	43

The table shows that the free accentual tendency again has the most diverse profile, while the four-ictus accentual tendency is again the most representative of the accentual verse as a whole. In the simple accentual verse there is a preference for zero over monosyllabic anacruses, although this is inflated a little by the influence of hexametral verse in the heterogeneous stanzas. In the four-ictus accentual tendency there is a slight rise in the percentage of monosyllabic anacruses through the poem, but only to 47.2% in 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo'. All this serves to highlight the appearance of the almost constant amphibrachic anacrusis in the four-ictus *dol'nik* tendency and indeed the dominance of the monosyllabic anacrusis in 'Maiakovskii vekam' generally. It is interesting, however, that the amphibrachic anacrusis is found in three of the four lines of the alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* tendency.

The single line with a displaced rhyme is not classified for clausula; the distribution of the other 319 lines of accentual verse according to clausula in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given, in percentages, in Table 12.

TABLE 12. Clausula

	m	f	d	h	Lines
Prologue	50.0	25.0	25.0	—	8
RM	37.9	51.7	10.3	—	29
ZhM	22.2	51.1	26.7	—	45
SM	31.2	43.7	18.7	6.2	16
VnM	30.0	60.0	10.0	—	30
MN	40.8	53.1	6.1	—	49
VvM	26.4	51.4	20.8	1.4	72
MV	23.2	60.9	15.9	—	69
'Poslednee'	100.0	—	—	—	1
Total	29.8	53.3	16.3	0.6	319

This table shows a reduction in the percentage of dactylic clausulae and an increase in the feminine clausulae compared with the preceding poems (see Chapter III, p. 87, Table 6, and Chapter IV, p. 138, Table 5); there are just two hyperdactylic clausulae. In this case the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency hardly affects the profile at all. There are twenty-three heterosyllabic rhymes (15.5%) combining accentual lines, but they are unevenly spread, being especially prominent in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo' (42.9%) — which is highlighted yet again — and to a lesser extent in 'Vozvrashchenie Maia-kovskogo' and 'Maiakovskii vekam' (19.1%). There are just two examples of a hypermetrical stress in the clausula in accentual lines. As usual, the clausula's role in shaping the poem's compositional outline is relatively marginal, although there are quite marked variations between the parts, especially in the masculine and dactylic forms. 'Strasti Maiakovskogo' has the most diverse profile, while there is a concentration in masculine and feminine clausulae in the central two chapters in counterpoint to the theme of diversity there; the percentage of feminine clausulae rises again in 'Maiakovskii vekam' in accordance with the general movement towards uniformity.

The distribution according to clausula in the simple accentual verse and the four metrical tendencies is given, in percentages, in Table 13.

This table reveals a relatively uniform picture with the free accentual tendency, in contrast to its metrical character, having the most streamlined profile. The simple accentual verse displays the greatest diversity, while the four-ictus accentual and four-ictus *dol'nik* tendencies show a clear affinity.

TABLE 13. Clausula

	m	f	d	h	Lines
Ac	36.1	46.9	16.3	0.7	147
Ac-Ac4	17.7	58.3	16.7	0.9	108
Ac-Dk4343	50.0	50.0	—	—	4
Ac-AcF	29.4	58.8	11.8	—	18
Ac-Dk4Am	20.9	60.5	18.6	—	43

The number of different types of clausula pattern and the distribution of the sixty-six homogeneous accentual quatrains (excluding the one that involves the line with a displaced rhyme) among them in the prologue and eight chapters and also overall is given in Table 14.

TABLE 14. Clausula Pattern

	fff	fmfm	mfmf	Others	Types	Stanzas
Prologue	—	—	1	1	2	2
RM	2	2	—	1	3	5
ZhM	2	1	2	4	6	9
SM	—	1	—	2	3	3
VnM	3	1	—	3	5	7
MN	2	3	—	4	6	9
VvM	3	3	1	9	12	16
MV	5	1	3	6	7	15
Total	17	12	7	30	20	66

The ffff pattern has emerged as the leading type; it and the other two prominent forms account for over half the total stanzas, while no other pattern accounts for more than four. There is little significant variation between the chapters, except for a discernible final move to greater uniformity, which is evident in the prominence of the ffff form and the ratio of types to total stanzas, in 'Maiakovskii vekam'.

The number of different types of clausula pattern and the distribution of the homogeneous quatrains of simple accentual verse and the two main metrical tendencies — four-ictus accentual and four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* — among them are given in Table 15.

This table reveals little of interest: the ratio of types to total stanzas is effectively the same in the two main forms, but the ffff pattern is relatively more prominent (and the fmfm pattern less so) in the four-ictus accentual

TABLE 15. Clausula Pattern

	ffff	fmfm	mfmf	Others	Types	Stanzas
Ac	6	6	2	13	13	27
Ac-Ac4	8	4	2	13	14	27
Ac-Dk4Am	3	—	3	3	4	9

tendency; both the ffff and mfmf patterns are prominent in the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency, but the fmfm pattern is absent.

2. Iamb

While accentual verse is the vehicle for the poet hero's experience of the world at large, the iamb conveys his particular fate. The iambic theme is essentially earthbound, prominent only in chapters set on earth, but not in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' which projects the poet hero's natural potential. The iambic metre can express constraint for Maiakovskii, and the iambic stanzas record the poet hero's particular fate as imprisonment in space, time, society, art, and, ultimately, in an eternity of unfulfilled love.⁵ Although less prominent in quantitative terms than accentual verse, the iambic theme is the conclusive, definitive metrical theme in the poem; it is the iambic theme that concludes the action of the poem in the final four stanzas of 'Maiakovskii vekam', and it is the iambic theme that will stand for the poem *Chelovek in Pro eto*.

The distribution of the twenty-five iambic stanzas (twenty-one quatrains and four five-line stanzas) according to measure in the prologue and relevant chapters and also overall is given in Table 16.

TABLE 16. Measure

	I4343	I43443	I3	I3343	I43523	I4	Stanzas
Prologue	—	1	1	—	—	—	2
ZhM	6	—	—	—	—	—	6
SM	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
VnM	3	1	3	1	—	—	8
VvM	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
MN	3	—	1	—	1	1	6
Total	14	2	6	1	1	1	25

The table shows the leading role of the alternating tetrameter and trimeter (the five-line form is a variation of the basic measure), with the trimeter as a major secondary form. After the prologue has introduced both these measures (in five-line stanzas), the leading role of the alternating tetrameter and trimeter

is firmly established in 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' and 'Strasti Maiakovskogo'; the trimeter then features prominently in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo', the most densely iambic chapter in the poem, and finally, in 'Maiakovskii vekam', two new forms are introduced. The other forms can all be related to the basic, leading measure, and the derivation of the main secondary form, the iambic trimeter, from the alternating tetrameter and trimeter is revealed in the way the odd lines end in these two measures, as Table 17 now shows.

TABLE 17. Odd Line Clausulae

	m	f	d	Lines
I4343	34	—	—	34
I3	—	1	12	13

The table shows that in the alternating tetrameter and trimeter the odd lines invariably end in masculine clausulae, while in the trimeter, with a single exception in the prologue, they end in dactylic clausulae; this means that the odd lines in the iambic trimeter preserve the syllabic length of the odd lines in the alternating tetrameter and trimeter. Furthermore, in all the trimeter stanzas outside the prologue one or other odd line invariably features a hypermetrical stress (a heavy hypermetrical stress) on the last syllable of the dactylic clausula, for example:

111(1)d	Петлей на шею луч накинй!
111d	Сплетусь в палящем лете я!
111d	Гремят на мне наручники,
13d	любви тысячелетия . . .

(l. 913)

The opening line of this stanza would be read as a tetrameter until the third line is reached and the rhyme 'луч накинй' — 'наручники' renders the stress on 'накинй' hypermetrical, and so it emerges that the trimeter derives from the alternating tetrameter and trimeter through the suppression of the fourth metrical stress in the odd lines. This contraction of the line should intensify the theme of constraint, and the appearance of the trimeter in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' brings the iambic theme in the first half of the poem to its climax.

The use of a hypermetrical stress in the clausula is thus closely associated with the iambic theme. There are in fact nine such examples of a heavy hypermetrical stress (and a further seven examples of a light hypermetrical stress) in the iambic stanzas, not all in the odd lines of the iambic trimeter. Such hypermetrical stresses are also found in the even lines of both main measures, which suggests that these trimeter lines too might derive from a tetrameter

another (form III) has a zero anacrusis;⁷ one trimeter (form III) features an initial rhythmical inversion (a transferred stress), though not involving a monosyllabic word as should be the case in the Russian iamb. The table reveals an extraordinary rhythmical profile in both tetrameters and trimeters, with the fully-stressed form dominant in both. As already noted in Chapter I, this produces an unusually high stress load compared with both the theoretical load (around 71% and 75% respectively for tetrameter and trimeter) and the average load in actual verse (around 80% in both).⁸ Thus the significance of the iambic metre is forcefully realized in the actual, 'shackled' rhythm of the iambic verse. The rhythmical profiles are unusual not only in the dominance of the fully-stressed form but also in the relative prominence of the secondary forms. As Ivanov has pointed out, the dominance of form I and the near equality of forms III and IV are quite unlike the classical profile of the iambic tetrameter, where form IV is the leading form, and recall instead Lomonosov's earliest iambic experiments, while in the trimeters the dominance of form I at the expense of form II is equally unusual.⁹

The key rhythmical feature in the iambic verse is the stress load, because it shows the rhythmical realization of the theme of constraint; the overall stress load in the iambic lines — dimeter, trimeters, tetrameters, and pentameter combined — in the prologue and relevant chapters is given in Table 19.

TABLE 19. Stress Load (%)

	Prologue	ZhM	SM	VnM	VvM	MV
	90.1	85.7	82.1	89.9	91.7	90.8
Lines	10	24	8	33	4	25

The prologue introduces the iambic theme with intensity, while the least 'shackled' rhythm is found in the eight lines of 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', but otherwise the rhythmical constraint intensifies from 'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' through to 'Maiakovskii vekam'. So the iambic theme, like the accentual theme, develops through the poem to its conclusion in 'Maiakovskii vekam', and the poet hero's experience on his return is again seen as the continuation of his life.

The distribution of the 104 iambic lines according to clausula is given in Table 20.

This table again shows the association of masculine clausulae with the tetrameter (the sole dactylic clausula occurs in the 3343 stanza), while over half the trimeters (not only odd lines) have dactylic clausulae; this preference for masculine and dactylic clausulae distinguishes the iambs from the accentual verse. In the main body of the poem the contraction to a masculine clausula in the trimeters only appears in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' and 'Maiakovskii

TABLE 20. Clausula

	m	f	d	Lines
I2	1	—	—	1
I3	16	13	33	62
I4	39	—	1	40
I5	1	—	—	1
Total	57	13	34	104
%	54.8	12.5	32.7	

vekam' in accordance with the progressive intensification of the iambic theme as the poem develops. As already noted, there are nine examples of a hypermetrical stress in the clausula in iambic stanzas; there are also five heterosyllabic rhymes (10%).

The number of different types of clausula pattern and the distribution of stanzas in the various iambic measures among them are given in Table 21.

TABLE 21. Clausula Pattern

	mdmd/ mdmmd	mmmm/ mmdmm	mfmf	dddd	dmdm	Others	Types	Stanzas
I43443	—	2	—	—	—	—	1	2
I3	—	—	—	3	2	1	3	6
I4343	4	4	4	—	—	2	5	14
I3343	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
I43523	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
I4	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Total	5	7	4	3	2	4	9	25

Because of the almost constant masculine clausula in the tetrameters there is less variety here than in the accentual verse, and of the main patterns only one (mfmf) is even relatively prominent in the accentual verse. In accordance with the supposition of an original, prototype tetrameter measure with masculine rhymes, the first three stanzas of alternating tetrameter and trimeter in the main body of the poem maintain the mdmd pattern, while the first stanza of trimeter in the main body of the poem has the dddd pattern; other patterns appear as the theme of contraction develops.

3. Hexametral Verse

In the *Tragedy* and *Oblako v shtanakh* Maiakovskii had used hexametral verse as a traditional poetical voice. There was no hexametral verse in *Fleita-pozvonochnik*,

but in his next four major works — *Voina i mir* (1915–16), *Chelovek* (1916–17), *Misteriia-buff* (1918), and *150000000* (1919–20) — he uses it in its own right for its grand, heroic associations; these associations coincide with the broad associations of long lines for him: ‘для героических или величественных передач надо брать длинные размеры’ (I, 102). Hexametral verse sets the tone in the opening lines of both *Misteriia-buff*:

0212023f	Это об нас зывала земля голосом пушечного рева.
012214m	Это нами взбухали поля, кровьями опоены.

(II, 169)

and *150000000*:

0221221f	150000000 мастера этой поэмы имя.
010212d	Пуля — ритм.

Рифма — огонь из здания в здание.

(II, 115)

In the years around the Revolution Maiakovskii associates hexametral verse with the theme of man’s heroic potential on earth (the earth is a recurrent motif). This association is first established in the last part of *Voina i mir* in the passage in which the countries of the earth, like Magi, bring their national attributes as gifts to the new, corporate man; the passage ends in a hymn of praise:

032111f	“Славься, человек, во веки веков живи и славься!
034011f	Всякому, живущему на земле, слава, слава, слава!”

(I, 238–39)

In *Chelovek* it is the poet hero himself who is cast in the role of culture hero (Man), but in *Misteriia-buff* and *150000000* it is a collective. In Maiakovskii’s later work, however, and already in the second version of *Misteriia-buff* (1920–21), hexametral verse recedes.

The hexametral verse in *Chelovek* takes up the theme from *Voina i mir* and serves as the poem’s point of departure in ‘Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo’ where it loudly proclaims the poet hero’s wondrous natural attributes, though not the crucial attribute, his heart. As such, it is opposed to the iambic theme which conveys the poet hero’s particular fate as imprisonment; formally, the opposition is of both metre (*dol’nik*/accentual vs binary) and measure, where the hexametral theme of extension contrasts with the iambic theme of contraction. Since the potential ballad associations of both the main iambic measure and the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol’nik* tendency in the accentual verse are probably

more incipient than actual, the hexametral verse serves as the principal bearer of associations in the poem and by extension becomes emblematic of the poem's title, of its promise, as it were. In this emblematic role it recurs through the poem as a measure of the poem's progress, of its distance from the point of departure, and it is often highlighted at the beginning or end of a chapter (and also in the headings). On the poet hero's return to earth, however, there is no place for his heroic potential, and in the single stanza of 'Poslednee', after the iambic conclusion of the poem's action, the hexametral verse is subverted into a form which can be interpreted as based on the related elegiac couplet; this marks the poem's end and the final passing of the heroic theme associated with its title.

In *Chelovek* and the other three works of this period the hexametral verse can still be close to the hexameter, but Maiakovskii also moves to assimilate the form into his accentual system of versification as a long measure, generally with six stresses to the line and a central caesura, but not necessarily so closely based on the metrical scheme of the hexameter proper; it is therefore more satisfactorily described like an accentual, rather than *dol'nik*, measure, although in places it may be closer to the latter. There are two homogeneous hexametral stanzas in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', otherwise hexametral verse appears in heterogeneous stanzas with accentual verse and in three unrhymed lines. In two or three places the line length extends in advance of hexametral verse, but such lines have not been classified as hexametral. The three lines which can be interpreted as based on the elegiac couplet are classified together with the other hexametral lines. The shift into this elegiac variation is adumbrated in two separate lines in 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' which have a zero interval over the caesura, as occurs in the pentameter of the elegiac couplet (but not in fact in 'Poslednee'); these lines, as in the *Tragedy*, are classified as rhythmically correct (*dol'nik*).

The distribution of the thirty-nine lines of hexametral verse according to line length (measured in stresses) and rhythmical form in the relevant chapters and also overall is given in Tables 22 and 23.

TABLE 22. Line Length

	9	8	7	6	5
RM	1	—	1	12	6
ZhM	—	—	1	3	1
SM	—	1	—	—	—
MN	—	—	—	3	1
VvM	—	—	—	6	—
'Poslednee'	—	—	—	2	1
Total	1	1	2	26	9

TABLE 23. Rhythm

	Ac	Tk	Dk	Lines
	4	8	8	20
	2	2	1	5
	—	1	—	1
	1	1	2	4
	—	1	5	6
	—	1	2	3
Total	7	14	18	39

Tables 22 and 23 show that, compared with the earlier poems, there is less variation through the use of longer lines but more in the rhythm (see Chapter II, p. 31, Tables 2 and 3, and Chapter III, p. 88, Tables 8 and 9). The six-stress form dominates, and in fact all the five-stress lines apart from the one in 'Poslednee' could be related — some easily, some at a stretch — to a six-ictus scheme. The *dol'nik* metrical base of the hexameter, on the other hand, shows less clearly than before and there is no ternary rhythm, but allowing for a variable interval over the caesura a further seven lines (three in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' and four thereafter) could be classified as *dol'nik* in rhythm. Both tables distinguish the main hexametral verse in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' from the occasional hexametral lines in the rest of the poem. In the strong hexametral context of 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' there is more scope for variation, but later on the verse draws recognizably closer to a hexameter base. This not only facilitates the perception of the lines as hexametral but also renders the poet hero's hexametral voice, the loud voice which proclaims his heroic potential, more traditional and 'quiet' as the poem progresses (compare the description of regular hexametral verse in *Oblako v shtanakh* as 'тихое слово' (I, 192)). To some extent this development parallels the movement towards greater regularity in the accentual verse (compare also Maiakovskii's description of the amphibrachic tetrameter, which the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* approaches, as 'придуманый для шопотка' (XII, 84)).

The distribution of the thirty-nine lines of hexametral verse according to anacrusis and clausula is given in Tables 24 and 25.

TABLE 24. Anacrusis

0	1	2	3	4
22	7	7	2	1

TABLE 25. Clausula

m	f	d	Lines
17	13	9	39

The hexameter base shows, as usual, in the leading role of the zero anacrusis, although it is notably less prominent than in *Oblako v shtanakh* (see Chapter III, p. 88, Table 10); some, but not all, of the disyllabic and longer anacrusis can be seen to arise from omission of the first stress. The assimilation of hexametral verse into Maiakovskii's system of versification is further evident in the introduction of the dactylic clausula, which was not used in the hexametral verse of the earlier poems, and there are also three heterosyllabic rhymes involving hexametral lines. The clausula profile, with masculine, feminine, and dactylic clausulae roughly in the ratio of 4:3:2, distinguishes this verse from both the accentual verse and the iambs. The variations from chapter to chapter in both anacrusis and clausula (not presented here) reinforce the picture already established: again the greatest variety is found in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' and thereafter a more traditional profile returns, especially in the anacrusis.

The assimilation of hexametral verse into Maiakovskii's system of versification is also evident in the great range of clausula pattern in the stanzas with hexametral verse: there are in all ten different patterns in the fourteen quatrains (two homogeneous and twelve heterogeneous), and the fmfm pattern, previously the single main form, now accounts for only two quatrains. Similarly, whereas the traditional hexameter is unrhymed and ends in a feminine clausula, none of the three unrhymed hexametral lines here end in feminine clausulae (in the *Tragedy* they did).

4. Iambic Tetrameter with Feminine Caesura

This is the measure of just two stanzas but it plays a crucial role in the poem because it is the measure of the poet's heart, his one natural attribute which could transform the world. Physiologically, rhythm and subjective time are determined by the heart; and, in accordance with the poem's genesis 'in the heart' (I, 24) and its placing of the heart at the centre of the human condition, this measure is at the centre of the poem's metrical composition. Its metrical scheme — x ẋ x ẋ x ẋ ẋ — has both iambic and *dol'nik* features: it derives from iambic metre, but through the expanded interval in the middle of the line (over the caesura) it has the makings of a logaoedic *dol'nik* metre.¹⁰ So, potentially, it could integrate the poem's polymetric structure and provide a metrical link between the iambic expression of the poet hero's personal fate and the accentual/*dol'nik* vehicle of his experience of the world at large, a link between the particular and the universal. Its rhythmical movement might even be taken to represent, figuratively, the rhythm of the heart in that the heart beats regularly but is capable of a change in pace or time (the iambic metre would remove this freedom).¹¹

The two heart stanzas also play a key role in the poem's composition. The first, following the hexametral prelude in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', directs the accentual verse in a four-ictus scheme (just as this measure had done in the *Tragedy*) and so initiates the movement which eventually leads to the amphibrachic four-ictus *dol'nik* in 'Maiakovskii vekam'. At the same time, however, it sets in motion the chain of events which leads to the poet hero's ascension to heaven, while the second stanza, at the very beginning of 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo', rouses him from the oblivion of eternity and sets the poem moving again towards its conclusion.

Finally, a certain lightness of tone in these two stanzas suggests that the measure has broadly the same jocular associations here that it had in the *Tragedy*, though without the specific Severianin reference. In view of the tragic outcome of the poet hero's love, the Old Man's reaction to this measure in the *Tragedy* would be equally appropriate in *Chelovek*:

И вижу — в тебе на кресте из смеха
распят замученный крик.

(I, 156)

There is no omission of stress in either stanza; the first has an ffff clausula pattern, the second — fmfm.

5. *Three-ictus Anapaestic Dol'nik*

This is the only independent three-ictus measure in the poem (the iambic trimeter is a derived form). It is used in just two stanzas and, in accordance with the general role of three-ictus verse in Maiakovskii's poetry, it has a marginal role in the poem. This role can also be related to its association with the theme of spiritual, disembodied love, love in the abstract (not the poet hero's kind of love), an association that derives from its use as a Symbolist voice in the *Tragedy*. Its ternary base, on the other hand, can link it to the theme of the inertia of time.

The opening line of the first stanza has been interpreted as a two-ictus line, anapaestic in rhythm, although it might alternatively be interpreted as an incorrect three-ictus line. The distribution of the other seven lines of three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik* according to rhythmical form is given in Table 26.

TABLE 26. Rhythm

22	12	21	11	Lines
4	1	1	1	7

The table shows a strong ternary inertia in this measure. One line has a monosyllabic, not disyllabic, anacrusis; the first stanza has a dddd clausula pattern, the second — fmfm.

6. *Headings*

As already noted, the headings at the beginning of 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo', and 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' have a significant role in demarcating the poem's tripartite compositional outline. The last of these headings consists of a numerical sequence (partially in words), but the other headings consist of rhythmical prose. The first heading, at the beginning of the prologue, is openly liturgical in style and with an intimation of a hexametral base, while the next two are clearly based on the hexametral form. In context the numerical sequence, which has seven elements, can also be interpreted as having a hexametral base, especially as the numerical motif is closely associated with the hexametral form. In this way the

emblematic role of the hexametral form extends to the headings, while the liturgical style of the first heading establishes the religious framework of the poem.¹²

This detailed analysis of the metrical composition of *Chelovek* has further illuminated the poem's transitional status in the development of Maiakovskii's verse and, more specifically, in the composite text of his major love poems. The role of the iambic theme has now been defined, while the key transitional development within the poem is the emergence of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* out of the four-ictus accentual tendency; this prepares for *Liubliu* and *Pro eto*. Hexametral verse, on the other hand, has been to some extent assimilated into his accentual system of versification.

The polymetric composition of *Chelovek* is an integrated structure. At its centre is the heart measure, the iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura, which provides a potential metrical link between the two main forms, the iamb and the accentual/*dol'nik* verse, between the particular and the universal in the poem's model of the world; the rhythmical forging of this link, which on the face of it may seem somewhat forced and artificial, will be considered in the commentary. The other two forms, hexametral verse and the anapaestic three-ictus *dol'nik*, can both be related to tendencies within the primary form, accentual verse. The three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik* has a ternary base but plays only a marginal role in the poem. Hexametral verse, on the other hand, develops in a similar direction to the accentual verse and has an important role as emblem of the poem's title and progress, while its distance from the iambs has a parallel in the distance between the poet hero's heroic potential and his actual fate.

The poem's compositional outline has also been reinforced and clarified by the detailed analysis of its metrical composition. After an introduction to the two main metrical themes in the prologue, the first three chapters form a coherent unit with a clear movement towards a climactic confrontation of opposites, both metrical and rhythmical, in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo'; this crucial chapter has been highlighted from almost every angle. The diversity in the middle two chapters derives from the negative resolution of this confrontation and appears to lead to a loss of direction and impetus. The poem is set in motion again by the second heart stanza, and the rhythmical preparation for the emergence of the amphibrachic *dol'nik* theme in the accentual verse continues. Similarly, the iambic theme gradually intensifies towards the conclusion of the poem's action in 'Maiakovskii vekam'. The hexametral theme, on the other hand, becomes weaker and more traditional and is ultimately subverted into an elegiac mode in 'Poslednee'.

The emergence of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency is not a conclusion but a clarification, a clarification of the theme which will only be worked through to a conclusion in *Pro eto*. The iambic and hexametral themes,

on the other hand, both reach conclusions, but contrasting conclusions: the forces of constraint that determine the poet hero's particular fate are intensified, while his heroic potential passes away.

Commentary

The text of *Chelovek* divides into sixty-nine homogeneous metrical segments (counting the unrhymed verse lines as separate metrical segments), seven 'prose' segments, and a quotation; or, if the various iambic measures and the metrical tendencies within the accentual verse are treated as distinct, the number of metrical segments rises to eighty-seven. The metrical segments range in length from one to seventy-five lines, or, according to the second criterion, one to twenty-eight lines.

On top of this metrical segmentation, however, and within the division into chapters, the poem can be divided into twenty more or less discrete compositional units (passages), ranging in length from four lines (the single stanza of 'Poslednee') to forty-six lines; much as in *Oblako v shtanakh*, thirteen passages (over half) fall within the range of sixteen to twenty-eight lines in length, although a further five are longer, from thirty-four to forty-six lines in length. Eight of these passages are metrically homogeneous and twelve are metrically heterogeneous, but even in the latter there is usually a dominant metrical theme; the move from one passage to another is marked by a metrical break of some kind or at least a transition within the accentual verse. Those passages in the main body of the poem where there is a confrontation of contrasting themes are all decisive in the poem's action, above all the meeting with the poet hero's beloved in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo' and the meeting with the woman he mistakes for his beloved on his return in 'Maiakovskii vekam'.

The description of each passage, divided into rhythmical as well as metrical segments, follows the established pattern. It is worth recalling, however, that binary lines are only classified for line length (measured in stresses); in the iambs this shows precisely the key rhythmical feature, the stress load.

Prologue (ll. 1-32)

TABLE 27

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
Heading											
1)	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	3	—	Ac	4
7)	—	—	2	2	1					I43443	5
15)	—	—	—	4	1					I3	5
23)	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	4	—	Ac	4

The prologue opens with a heading of rhythmical prose in liturgical style which introduces the poet hero in religious terms of day and night (time) and the Book of his love:

Священнослужителя мира, отпустителя всех грехов, — солнца ладонь на голове моей.

Благочестивейшей из монашествующих — ночи облачение на плечах моих.
Дней любви моей тысячелютое Евангелие целую.

(1, 245)

There is no obvious metrical base to this rhythmical prose, but it may adumbrate the hexametral base of the other headings since the first two sentences (verses) both have a strong central break and the third, which contains the familiar numerical motif, is more closely hexametral in measure.

In the prologue's composition accentual verse encompasses the iamb, and the poem now moves into verse form as the poet hero awaits release, the earth's *Nunc dimittis*:

1122m	Звонящей болью любовь замоля,
1112d	душой
	иное шествие чающий,
021m	слышу
	твое, земля:
03d	“Ныне отпускаеши!”

(1. 1)

Although the leading, four-stress form is established in the first two lines, the accentual verse will not be set in a four-ictus scheme until after the first heart stanza, and the second half of the stanza introduces shorter — three-stress and two-stress — lines from the accentual range. The rhythm in the first three lines is regular, and again it is not until after the heart stanza that the rhythmical range in accentual verse is thoroughly extended.

The next two stanzas concentrate on the poet hero's earth-bound state and the verse moves into the other main metrical form, the iamb:

1111m	В ковчеге ночи,
	новый Ной,
111m	я жду —
	в разливе риз
1111m	сейчас придут,
	придут за мной
131m	и узел рассекут земной
13m	секирами зари.
111d	Идет!
	Пришла.
	Раскуталась.

'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' (ll. 33–127)

TABLE 28

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
Heading											
33)	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	Hx	2
39)	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	Ac	2
42)	2	1	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	Hx	3
49)	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	Ac	1
51)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Hx	1
55)	—	—	3	—	—	—	1	2	—	Ac	3
63)	6	2	—	—	—	1	4	3	—	Hx	8
88)	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—		1
91)	—	—	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	Ac	2
95)	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	Hx	1
99)	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	4	—		4
110)	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	Ac	1
112)	—	1	1	2	—	1	—	3	—		4
121)	—	—	4	—	—					I4c+1	4

The chapters of the poem, the Book of the poet hero's love, take their titles from the Life of Christ and trace the story of the poet hero's experience of the human condition in search of a quasi-Christian myth of Man.¹⁴ The first chapter, 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo', is the poem's thesis; in it the poet hero seeks to establish himself as Christ figure and culture hero, as Man — the 'man' glorified in hexametral verse in *Voina i mir* and promised in this poem's title. The rhythmical prose which stands at the head of the chapter has a clear hexametral base in preparation for the hexametral theme in the verse to come:

Пусть, науськанные современниками, пишут глупые историки: "Скушной и неинтересной жизнью жил замечательный поэт".

(1, 246)

This readily divides into two six-stress segments, each with a strong central word boundary. The point of this heading is reinforced and clarified in the statement of theme at the beginning of 'Ia sam': 'Я — поэт. Этим и интересен. Об этом и пишу. Об остальном — только если это отстоялось словом' (1, 9); it is the poet's life as fixed by the word in verse that counts.

The theme of the heading is continued into the opening stanza:

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

- 1112m Так вот и буду
 в Летнем саду
012f пить мой утренний кофе.
(1. 33)

In this and the next two stanzas the poet hero proceeds from a series of negative comparisons with Christ, and uses a combination of hexametral and non-hexametral verse in a parallel way. Here the first two lines are hexametral, but the second line only has five stresses and the rhythm bears no relation to the *dol'nik* metrical base of the hexameter proper; in the second half of the stanza the poet hero switches to banal actuality and the hexametral lines give way, in ever descending length, to a four-stress and a three-stress line, both *dol'nik* in rhythm. In the second stanza, however, the hexametral form is more sustained in accordance with a more positive tone:

- 032321f В небе моего Вифлеема
 никаких не горело знаков,
121232m никто не мешал
 могилами
 спать кудроголовым волхвам.
02232f Был абсолютно как все
 — до тошноты одинаков —
0212m день
 моего сошествия к вам.
(1. 42)

The first two lines are now much closer to the hexameter; in the second half of the stanza the poet hero again switches to actuality, but the third line can still be interpreted as hexametral (it could be a six-ictus *dol'nik*) and even the second part of the final, four-stress line could be interpreted as a hexametral half-line in accordance with the grand tone of 'сошествия к вам'. But in the third stanza the tone falls and the negatives are reduced to the point of absurdity:

- 233242m И никто
 не догадался намекнуть
 недалекой
 неделикатной звезде:
1111d "Звезда — мол —
 лень сиять напрасно вам!
2232m Если не
 человечьего рождения день,
1212d то чёрта ль,
 звезда,
 тогда еще
 праздновать?!"
(1. 51)

Now only the first line is hexametral, with a less regular rhythm, and then the four-stress lines of accentual verse take over.

So in the fourth stanza the poet hero moves over to positive affirmation and feeds off a poetic model (Pushkin's 'Skazka o zolotoi rybke') to launch himself into a hexametral hymn in praise of his miraculous natural attributes:

133122d	Судите: говорящую рыбёшку
212321f	выудим нитями невода и поем, поем золотую, воспеваем рыбачью удадь.
022221d	Как же себя мне не петь, если весь я — сплошная невидаль,
233152f	если каждое движение мое — огромное, необъяснимое чудо.

(l. 63)

The six-stress hexametral scheme is maintained in every line, but the pivotal third line, which marks the actual beginning of the poet hero's hymn of self-glorification, is the first and only regular, fully-stressed Maiakovskian hexameter in the passage. In the following stanza the hexametral theme is developed further as the poet hero shows off his hands and arms:

022123d	Две стороны обойдите. В каждой дивитесь пятилучию.
22121m	Называется "Руки". Пара прекрасных рук!
112121221d	Заметьте: справа налево двигать могу и слева направо. Заметьте: лучшую
01231m	шею выбрать могу и обовьюсь вокруг.

(l. 76)

The rhythm is more regular while the line length varies from five stresses in the even lines (both of these lines can be related to a six-ictus scheme) to nine stresses in the third line; such extended lines are a feature of Maiakovskii's hexametral verse, and here the extension emphasizes the arms' extra ability to reach out and embrace.

In the sixth stanza the poet hero introduces his mind, but the hexametral form breaks down in the middle two lines:

031222m	Черепа шкатулку вскройте — сверкнет драгоценнейший ум.
---------	--

021f	Есть ли, чего б не мог я!
1123m	Хотите новое выдумать могу
122122d	животное? Будет ходить двухвостое или треногое.

(1. 88)

This breakdown of the hexametral form highlights the mind's uneasy status in a poem which is centred in the heart, not the head (its inventions would also fit uneasily into the natural world); moreover, unlike the arms that embrace and, in the following stanza, the mouth that kisses, the mind does not fit into the progression towards the poet hero's heart.

The hexametral theme now reaches a conclusion when the poet hero proclaims not only the sweetness of his mouth in a kiss but also the range of his voice, both functions involving the tongue (compare 'и у вас / вырастут губы/ для огромных поцелуев / и язык, / родной всем народам' (I, 154)):

0221122f	Кто целовал меня — скажет, есть ли слаще слюны моей со́ка.
122112m	Покоится в нем у меня прекрасный красный язык.
21122f	"О-го-го" могу — зальется вы́сoko, вы́сoko.
21221f	"О-ГО-ГО" могу — и — охоты поэта сокол —
0122m	го́лос мягко сойdet на низы.

(1. 99)

The rhythm is regular throughout and the finale of the hexametral theme is marked first by the seven-stress form of the opening line and then, especially, by the amplification of the third line into a parallel fourth line. The delay before the final rhyme again creates a sense of expectation, and, in accordance with a gentle descent of the poet's voice, these two five-stress (but still hexametral) lines are followed by a four-stress final line in preparation for the transition into the heart stanza, the climax of this opening passage.

The heart is introduced in a transitional stanza of accentual verse:

1221f	Всего не сочтешь! Наконец, чтоб в лето
01221m	зимы, воду в вино превращать чтоб мог —

212f у меня
под шерстью жилета
043m бьется
необычайнейший комок.
(l. 112)

The line length in this accentual verse still varies, but the regular rhythm, which continues for the first three lines, is transformed in the final line in order to highlight the actual introduction of the heart.

The heart is the poet hero's key natural attribute, for it alone can transform the world. It is set apart from his other natural attributes, which had been sung in hexametral verse, by the move into a quite different and unusual form, the iambic tetrameter with feminine caesura:

1121f Ударит вправо — направо свадьбы.
1121f Налево грохнет — дрожат миражи.
1121f Кого еще мне
любить устать бы?
1121f Кто ляжет
пьяный,
ночами ряжен?
(l. 121)

Pushkin is again the model as the first two lines rework lines from the Prologue of *Ruslan i Liudmila*:

Идет направо — песнь заводит,
Налево — сказку говорит.

This derivation underlines both the heart measure's relation to the iambic metre and its transformation of it. With the heart stanza the poem's thesis is complete, and it is now ready to move into the proof, the narrative. The form of the stanza — the heart's beat, as it were — not only sets the four-ictus pattern which carries the key rhythmical movement in the accentual verse but also provides a potential metrical link between the accentual/*dol'nik* and iambic themes.

'*Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo*' (ll. 128–61)

TABLE 29

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
128)	—	1	11	—	—	3	7	2	—	Ac-Ac4	12
157)	—	—	4	—	—	1	2	1	1		4

The proof of the poem's thesis begins in the four-ictus accentual tendency, the key metrical tendency in the poem's accentual verse. In three parallel stanzas the poet hero demonstrates the capacity of his heart to transform the world:

- 0312f Прачечная.
Прачки.
Много и мокро.
- 0324m Радоваться, что ли, на мыльные пузыри?
1321d Смотрите,
исчезает стоногий окорок!
- 0223m Кто это?
Дочери неба и зари?
- 0321f Булочная.
Булочник.
Булки выпек.
- 1322m Что булочник?
Мукой измусоленный ноль.
- 11321f И вдруг
у булок
загибаются грифы скрипок.
- 2112m Он играет.
Всё в него влюблено.
- 1321f Сапожная.
Сапожник.
Прохвост и нищий.
- 0413f Надо
на сапоги
какие-то головки.
- 1134f Взглянул —
и в арфы распускаются голенища.
- 2212f Он в короне.
Он принц.
Веселый и ловкий.

(l. 128)

In each of these elementary functions — in essence washing, feeding, and clothing — the poet hero's heart inspires a creative transformation of the relationship between man and things in work; this passage shows how life could be, and serves as a prologue to the three main passages of the four-ictus accentual tendency which show how life is. A corresponding rhythmical transformation takes place in the four-ictus pattern set by the heart measure and the integration of the poem's polymetric structure is realized: the expanded central interval over the caesura in the heart measure has extended through the line, generating *dol'nik* rhythm (two lines), *taktovik* rhythm (seven lines), and accentual rhythm (three lines), with intervals of two, three, and even four syllables (but no zero intervals). In the first and third stanzas the greatest rhythmical extension occurs at or near the moment of transformation in the second and third lines, while in the second stanza there is an extra stress at the beginning of the third line. Similarly, while the opening line of each stanza preserves a strong central word boundary, by the third line this has been moved; at the same time there is a syntactic transformation into a verbal

2121f	“Если сердце всё, то на что,
0121d	на что же вас нагреб, дорогие деньги, я?

(l. 163)

After a regular four-stress narrative line the last two lines reproduce the rhythm of the heart measure, but in a distorted form, preserving the internal rhythm but not the monosyllabic anacrusis.

The bankers and grantees now act to contain the threat of the heart. They imprison the world, and the constraint of iambic metre is imposed on the verse, suppressing the potential for liberation of the expanded central interval in the heart measure:

1111m	Как смеют петь, кто право дал?
111d	Кто дням велел июлиться?
113m	Заприте небо в провода!
111d	Скрутите землю в улицы!

(l. 170)

This opening iambic stanza establishes the basic iambic measure, alternating tetrameter and trimeter, with the basic clausula pattern, mdmd. The metre's constraint is well realized in the rhythm, with just a single omitted stress here and only three more in the two stanzas following. In the next stanza the bankers and grantees threaten to turn the poet hero's hands from love to war, and in the third he finds himself earth-bound and yoked in the daily round, with his brains saddled by the law and his heart chained by religion:

031m	Загнанный в земной загон,
111d	влеку дневное иго я.
311m	А на мозгах верхом “Закон”,
111d	на сердце цепь — “Религия”.

(l. 183)

There seems to be no special significance in the trochaic form of the first line, although it does mark the move from the bankers' speech to the poet hero's first person narrative.

After three iambic stanzas, with the narrative still hardly under way, there is now a sudden break to two unrhymed lines:

1211dx	Полжизни прошло, теперь не вырвешься.
31322/ 021322mx	Тысячеглаз надсмотрщик, фонари, фонари, фонари . . .

(l. 190)

The unrhymed status of these lines corresponds to the detached viewpoint suddenly adopted as the poet hero looks at himself from the outside, but their status, nevertheless, as verse is confirmed by the hexametral form of the second line (the traditional hexameter is unrhymed). The temporal perspective of the first line, a regular four-stress line, offers little prospect of escape, while in the second line the familiar numerical motif arises, perhaps ironically, in association with the hexametral form.

The three-ictus form of the hexametral half-lines (the second is anapaestic in rhythm) leads into the three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik* in the stanza following:

22/201d	Я в плену. Нет мне выкупа!
222d	Оковала земля океанная.
212d	Я бы всех в любви моей выкупал,
222d	да в дома обнесен океан ее!

(l. 192)

This measure introduces the poet hero's love in the abstract, but the shorter, two-ictus form of the opening line (in the preferred interpretation) may be related to the context of constraint.

The narrative moves forward again when the verse returns to the passage's dominant, iambic theme:

1111m	Кричу . . . и чу! ключи звучат!
13f	Тюремщика гримаса.
131m	Бросает с острия луча
111f	клочок гнилого мяса.

(l. 197)

The measure is still the same, although the clausulae in the even lines have contracted from dactylic to feminine. But there are two omitted stresses in this stanza, one in a trimeter, and the opening line of the stanza following is one of only two iambic lines in the poem with two omitted stresses (form VI):

33m	Под хохотливое "Ага!"
111f	брёду по брёду жара.
113m	Гремит, приковано к ногам, ядро земного шара.

(l. 204)

This freer rhythm continues into a third and final iambic stanza:

113m	Замкнуло золото ключом
111(1)d	глаза. Кому слепого весть?

113m Навек
теперь я
заключен
13f в бессмысленную повесть!
(l. 210)

A stress is omitted in each of the first, third, and fourth lines, while the second line reaches towards tetrameter form through a hypermetrical stress in a dactylic clausula. Despite the apparent intensification of the theme of constraint on the verbal level, the stress load in these three stanzas is only 81.0% and the progressive rhythmical loosening of the metre's constraint prepares for the poet hero's rebellion in the passage following.

'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' (ll. 217–52)

TABLE 31

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
217)	—	1	3	—	—	2	1	1	—	Ac	4
224)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Hx	1
227)	—	—	1	1	—	2	—	—	—	Ac	2
231)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Hx	1
237)	—	3	1	—	—	2	—	2	—	Ac	4
245)	—	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—		2
248)	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	Hx	1
252)	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	Ac	1

In the two passages that make up the second half of *'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo'* the poet hero breaks free to present his definitive description of life on earth: it is a world drowning in a vortex of money and ruled, from the point of inertia at the centre, by the Ruler of All, the controller of hearts.

In the first line of this passage the verse is unable to break free from the constraint of the preceding iambic inertia until the very last interval, but in the second line, as the poet hero declares his rebellion, there is a zero interval:

1112f Долой высоких вымыслов бремя!
0022d Бунт
муз обреченного данника.

(l. 217)

The poet hero now launches into his description of the earth, a corollary to the self-centred version put forward in *'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo'*. Accordingly, he now moves as far from the iamb as possible: both into rhythmical irregularity and back towards the hexametral form, which is the antithesis of the iamb and the voice in which he had earlier proclaimed his own prowess. Following a

preparatory five-stress line at the end of the first stanza and an enjambement between stanzas, the verse reaches hexametral form at the head of the second stanza:

0412f	Верящие в павлинов
	— выдумка Брэма! —
03332d	верящие в розы
	— измышление досужих ботаников! —
1243221m	мое
	безупречное описание земли
	передайте из рода в род.

(1. 220)

The emphatic ‘мое’ announces the return to hexametral form and the main body of the line has a clear six-stress hexametral structure, with a central caesura and a regular rhythm thereafter. The second stanza then continues with a description of the foaming, ringing vortex of money, and the final line returns to a six-stress form that has been interpreted as hexametral, here with an irregular, even spondaic rhythm (the Greek and Latin hexameters involved spondees):

0412f	Рвань из меридианов,
	атласа арок,
034m	пенится,
	звонит золотоворот
013010f	франков,
	долларов,
	рублей,
	крон,
	иен,
	марок.

(1. 227)

In the third stanza, which describes how everything, big and small, is drowned in this vortex, the line length is kept long, though not quite hexametral. Finally, in the concluding stanza of the passage, the poet hero identifies the Ruler of All as his arch rival and enemy:

3342/3252m	А посредине,
	обведенный невозмутимой каймой,
0134m	целый остров расцветочного ковра.
012211m	Здесь
	живет
	Повелитель Всего —
	соперник мой,
031m	мой неодолимый враг.

(1. 245)

In the third line, which actually identifies the Ruler of All, the poet hero assumes his hexametral voice for the last time in the passage. After two

rhythmically irregular four-stress lines, this line forms a regular Maiakovskian hexameter, though not with a central caesura; the centre of the line is occupied by 'Повелитель Всего'.

'Zhizn' Maiakovskogo' (ll. 253–313)

TABLE 32

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
253)	—	—	11	1	—	1	6	5	3	Ac-Ac4	12
280)	—	1	11	—	—	1	2	9	3		12
309)	—	—	3	1	—	3	—	1	—		4

Now that the Ruler of All has been identified, the impetus towards rhythmical irregularity and the hexametral form recedes, and the rest of the chapter completes the poet hero's description of the earth with a characterization of the Ruler of All, the controller of life. The four-ictus accentual tendency is re-established and the rhythm gradually becomes ever more regular; this is the first of the three main, parallel passages in the four-ictus accentual tendency.

The passage begins with a description of the Ruler's dandy attire:

1332d	Нежнейшие горошинки на тонких чулках его.
1222d	Штанов франтовских восхитительны полосы.
013d	Галстук, выпестренный ахово,
0322f	с шеищи по глобусу пуза расползся.

(l. 253)

The rhythm is already more regular, but the third line only has three stresses; in the rest of the chapter, however, only two other lines (a five-stress line and another three-stress line) deviate from the dominant four-stress form. In the ensuing stanzas the poet hero reveals that this figure, the object of world-wide worship, is the vulgar and philistine reality behind life, behind its mysteries and wonders. The movement towards rhythmical regularity reaches a dual conclusion in the third and second to last stanzas of the chapter. In the third to last stanza this rhythm has a binary leaning (there is a mention of 'slaves'):

1211f	Четыре часа — прекрасный повод:
1121d	"Рабы, хочу отобедать заново!"
1111/131f	И бог — его проворный повар —
1212d	из глин сочиняет мясо фазаново.

(l. 293)

In the second to last stanza, on the other hand, a ternary rhythmical tendency emerges in association with the theme of love:

0322f	Вытянется,
	самку в любви олеleyв.
0242f	“Хочешь
	бесценнейшую из звездного скопа?”
1222f	И вот
	для него
	легион Галилеев
1222f	елозит по звездам в глаза телескопов.

(l. 301)

The word ‘самка’ suggests that for the Ruler of All love is reduced to the animal act of reproduction, and in this he is the successor to the Ordinary Young Man, the Poet’s negative double in the *Tragedy*.

The culmination of the movement towards rhythmical regularity in this ternary rhythmical tendency, the rhythm of inertia for Maiakovskii, provokes a striking reaction in the last stanza of the chapter:

0520f	Встрясывают революции царств тельца,
1242m	меняет погонщиков человечесий табун,
2341f	но тебя,
	некоронованного сердец владельца,
212m	ни один не трогает бунт!

(l. 309)

The first line of this stanza contains the most extreme variation of intervals (from zero to five syllables) in the poem, but by the end of the stanza, after two more rhythmically irregular lines, the verse has returned to *dol'nik* rhythm in the three-stress final line; earthly rulers can be shaken or overthrown, but the Ruler of All, whose sphere of control is at last defined as the heart, remains untouched. This definition, together with the rhythmical divergence over the last three stanzas, prepares for the climax to come in ‘*Strasti Maiakovskogo*’.

‘*Strasti Maiakovskogo*’ (ll. 314–60)

TABLE 33

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
314)	—	—	3	1	—	2	1	1	—	Ac	4
321)	—	—	1	1	2					I4343	4
327)	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	4	2	Ac–Dk4343	4
334)	—	—	1	2	1					I4343	4
340)	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	Ac	1
341)	—	1	3	—	—	2	—	2	1	Ac	4
351)	—	1	2	—	—	1	1	1	1		3
357)	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	Hx	1

‘Strasti Maiakovskogo’, as its title implies, is the climax of the poet hero’s life on earth; it tells of a meeting with his beloved and her betrayal of him to the Ruler of All, the ‘uncrowned master of hearts’ (l. 308). Its climactic role has already been highlighted from almost every angle, and its metrical and rhythmical composition embodies the themes of meeting, confrontation, tension, and divergence. Its metrical composition brings together and for the first time properly confronts the poem’s two main metrical themes, accentual verse and the iamb; it also includes an unrhymed line and a hexametral line, and the rapid alternation of forms accentuates the tension. Within its accentual verse the chapter is further distinguished by the rhythmical quickening of zero anacrusis, a surge of heterosyllabic rhymes, and the culmination of a movement towards the opposing extremes of accentual and ternary rhythm.

The opening stanza carries on from the end of ‘Zhizn’ Maiakovskogo’ but moves from description into narrative, with a zero anacrusis in every line:

0231f	Слышите?
	Слышите лошажье ржанье?
0224f	Слышите?
	Слышите вопли автомобилей?
0212f	Это идут,
	идут горожане
041d	выкупаться в его обилии.

(l. 314)

The repetition of the 4443 stress scheme from the preceding stanza underlines the continuity between the two chapters, but the four-ictus metrical tendency is not sustained into this chapter, and the rhythm already shows contrasting tendencies.

The second stanza switches to the iambic metre when the poet hero finds himself caught in the crowd:

1111m	Разлив людей.
	Затерся в люд,
13f	расстроенный и хлюпкий.
131m	Хватаюсь за уздцы.
	Ловлю
13f	за фалды и за юбки.

(l. 321)

The measure is still the alternating tetrameter and trimeter, and the rhythm is relatively unconstrained.

The third stanza leaves the iambic metre when the focus returns to the crowd and the poet hero spies his beloved:

0212f	Что это? Ты? Туда же ведома?!
15m	В святошестве изолгалась!
1222f	Как красный фонарь у публичного дома,
112m	кровок налившийся глаз.

(1. 327)

In context, with stanzas of alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter before and after, the interpretation (following Ivanov)¹⁵ of an alternating four-ictus and three-ictus *dol'nik* metrical tendency, though not altogether certain, seems very plausible; the uncertainty comes from the fact that the second line has to be interpreted as having an omitted stress, although its underlying rhythmical form would be ternary. The *dol'nik* and ternary rhythm of the other three lines supports the interpretation, because it so clearly distinguishes this stanza from the other accentual stanzas in the chapter, as does the presence of a monosyllabic anacrusis in three lines. Such a correlation of the accentual and iambic themes makes sense too, because this is the key transitional stanza in which the outside world, through the poet hero's beloved, becomes personally related to his particular fate. In any case the rhythmical form of the second line, the first short line in the accentual verse, stands out and marks the moment of realization when the betrayal is no longer questioned.

The return to the iambic metre in the next stanza translates this betrayal into the poet hero's personal world:

113m	Зачем тебе? Остановись!
111f	Я знаю радость слаже!
1111m	Надменно лес ресниц навис.
31d	Остановись! Ушла уже . . .

(1. 334)

The poet hero's beloved has not only aligned herself with the crowd in which he is caught but has also shut herself off from him, thereby denying his love an outlet; the measure is still the same, but there is one less omitted stress.

This iambic stanza is followed by a single unrhymed line:

0231mx	Там, возносясь над головами, Он.
--------	----------------------------------

(1. 340)

The unrhymed status of this line emphasizes the position of the Ruler of All above the human fray and also, by extension, suggests the separation of the poet hero from his beloved who has gone over to the Ruler of All. Ivanov points out that this line could be interpreted as an iambic pentameter (a line of

blank verse?),¹⁶ and the interpretation of it as indeed verse, rather than a ‘prose’ segment, is otherwise suggested by the poetic ‘возносясь’ and the regular four-stress form. Even so there would seem to be a parallel between the unrhymed status of this line and the breakdown into ‘prose’ when the poet hero recognizes his loss of Maria in *Oblako v shtanakh*.

The unrhymed line halts the rapid alternation of accentual and iambic stanzas. The stanza following, in which the poet hero goes on to describe the Ruler of All in closer physical detail than before, continues in accentual verse:

0222d	Череп блестит,
	хоть надень его на ноги,
2121f	безволосый,
	весь рассиялся в лоске.
02342f	Только
	у пальца безымянного
	на последней фаланге
0415d	три
	из-под бриллианта —
	выщетились волосики.

(l. 341)

The rhythmical themes of the chapter are clearly manifested here: the stanza moves from ternary rhythm through *dol'nik* rhythm to accentual rhythm in the last two lines, and both rhymes are heterosyllabic; the extra stress at the beginning of the third line heralds the introduction of the three hairs. This leads into the final stanza of the chapter in which, in the final act of betrayal, the poet hero's beloved names the three hairs as, or after, his poems:¹⁷

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

(l. 351)

This stanza continues the theme of rhythmical divergence, but its special character lies in an obscurity, or obscuration, of metrical form (a reaction to the betrayal of the poet hero's art?). After two four-stress lines the third line, in which *Oblako v shtanakh* and *Fleita-pozvonochnik* are named (*Voina i mir* is left out), extends to five-stress form, but the rhyme (‘руке’ — ‘другой’) is hard to discern: it is, unusually, a dissonance, and even lacks identity of the support consonants.¹⁸ In the final line *Chelovek* is not named, but it can be identified

through the line's hexametral form which is emblematic of the poem's title and its promise. This hexametral form, however, is made difficult to discern by the adjectival and adverbial qualification in the middle of the line without which it would form a perfect dactylic hexameter:

022222d третий — сияньем неведомым . . . мною творимого имени.
(l. 357)

So the first part of the poem ends, as it began, with hexametral verse, but the hexametral form is now obscured as the promise of the poem's title is betrayed in a whisper.

'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' (ll. 361–89)

TABLE 34

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
Heading											
361)	—	—	—	7	1					I3	8
370)	—	—	1	1	2					I4343	4
377)	—	—	—	3	1					I3343	4
383)	—	—	2	2	1					I43443	5

'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' opens with a prose heading which marks the transition into a new movement in the poem's composition:

Я сам поэт. Детей учите: "Солнце встает над ковьялями". С любовного ложа
из-за Его волосиков любимой голова.

(l, 255)

This heading echoes the thrust of that in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' and even adumbrates the very title of 'Ia sam'. It too has a hexametral base: it readily divides into a seven-stress and a six-stress segment, and the first segment, though not the second, has a strong central word boundary. There is also a parallel with a hexametral line in the *Tragedy*: 'Вас, детей моих, / буду учить непреклонно и строго' (l, 158). Unlike the earlier heading, however, this one looks more back than forward; it follows on from the preceding verse line, rather than prepares for metrical themes to come, and sums up the outcome of the poem so far.

In the opening passage of 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' the significance of this outcome for the poet hero is translated back into verse form in the iambic metre; the poet hero is imprisoned in a love that has no outlet and so his thoughts turn to suicide. There is no break from the iambic theme in this passage and it opens with intensity:

111(1)d	Глазами взвила ввысь стрелу.
13d	Улыбку убери твою!
111d	А сердце рвется к выстрелу,
111d	а горло бредит бритвою.

(l. 361)

The measure has contracted to iambic trimeter, and there is only one omission of stress. In the second stanza the poet hero's thoughts turn in delirium (a recurrent motif) to Lermontov's Demon, and the iambic theme intensifies further:

111d	В бессвязный бред о демоне
111m	растет моя тоска.
111(1)d	Идет за мной,
	к воде манит,
111m	ведет на крыши скат.

(l. 365)

There is now no omission of stress, the clausulae in the even lines have contracted from dactylic to masculine, and the hypermetrical stress appears in the clausula of the third, not the first, line. The image of the hero contemplating suicide over water, which originates here, will be the definitive image of *Chelovek in Pro eto*.¹⁹

In the rest of the passage, after the intensity of its opening, the theme of movement is explored. In the third stanza the poet hero focuses on the whirling snow that surrounds him, and the verse returns to the alternating tetrameter and trimeter:

1111m	Снега кругом.
	Снегов налет.
13m	Завьются и замрут.
131m	И падает
	— опять! —
	на лед
13m	замерзший изумруд.

(l. 370)

Three stresses are omitted in this stanza, but in the first two lines of the fourth stanza the iambic theme intensifies again when the coldness of rejection is related to the icy landscape:

111d	Дрожит душа.
	Меж льдов она,
111f	и ей из льдов не выйти!
113d	Вот так и буду,
	заколдованный,
04(1)d	набережной Невы идти.

(l. 377)

The second two lines, however, are anomalous in form as the poet hero shifts his spellbound state into the future: the third line, the only tetrameter with a dactylic clausula, unbalances the stanza into a 3343 ictus scheme, while the fourth line features a rhythmical inversion on account of the polysyllabic 'набережной', which is not strictly acceptable in the Russian iamb. But in the opening two lines of the stanza following, the final stanza of the passage, the iambic theme clarifies once more:

1111m Шагну —
и снова в месте том.
111m Рванусь
и снова зря.

(l. 383)

The basic measure returns, and in accordance with the impossibility of movement there is no omission of stress. But in the rest of the stanza, after a graphical break, the possibility of escape arises in the shape of a bottle in a chemist's window:

1111m Воздвигся перед носом дом.
131m Разверзлась за оконным льдом
13m пузатая заря.

(l. 387)

A stress is omitted in each of the last two lines, and the expanded, five-line stanza form again creates a sense of expectation in association with the motif of possible release.

'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' (ll. 390–435)

TABLE 35

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
390)										'Prose'	
391)	—	—	—	3	1					I3	4
398)	—	—	1	3	—	1	—	3	2	Ac	4
406)	1	1	—	1	1	1	—	2	1		4
415)	—	—	2	1	1	1	—	2	—		4
422)	—	—	3	4	1					I4343	8

The expectation of escape aroused by the sight of the chemist's bottle leads to the exclamation 'Туда!' at the beginning of the central passage of the chapter:

1 Туда!
111(1)d Мяукал кот.
Коптел, горя,

111m	ночник. Звонюсь в звонок.
13d	Аптекаря! Аптекаря!
111m	Повис на палки ног. (l. 390)

Although 'Туда!' is set apart from the verse following by a graphical break, the rhythm could lead one to interpret it as part of the opening line,²⁰ but, as a trimeter with a hypermetrical stress in the clausula, this line is already equivalent to the basic iambic measure without 'Туда!'. So, while 'Туда!' (the possibility of escape) may lead into the line, metrically it remains outside it, and the stanza itself intensifies the theme of constraint with a return to the trimeter measure and only one omission of stress.

In the next three stanzas there is an extended abstraction from the iambic theme which adumbrates the poet hero's ascent from earth in the final passage of the chapter:

0222f	Выросли, спутались мысли, олены
102f	рога. Плачем марая
022f	пол, распластался в молены
212f	о моем потерянном рае.
1212021f	Аптекарь! Аптекарь! Где до конца сердце тоску изноет?
122f	У неба ль бескрайнего в нивах,
02212f	в бреде ль Сахар, у пустынь в помешанном зное
22/012f	есть приют для ревнивых?
1211m	За стенками склянок столько тайн.
114d	Ты знаешь высшие справедливости.
11m	Аптекарь, дай
0221d	душу без боли в просторы вывести. (l. 398)

The abstraction begins and ends with a four-stress line, but in between, especially in the middle stanza where his thoughts range far and wide, the line length varies; the use of enjambement is also striking. In the rhythm there is a clear ternary tendency in the first two stanzas, but in the third stanza, before the

return to iambic metre, monosyllabic intervals are again more prominent; in each stanza, however, there is one irregular interval.

The narrative now resumes in the iambic metre:

131m Протягивает.
Череп.
“Яд”.
111m Скрестилась кость на кость.
1111m Кому даешь?
Бессмертен я,
31m твой небывалый гость.

(l. 422)

This stanza returns to the alternating tetrameter and trimeter, still with the mmm clausula pattern as throughout the chapter so far. In the final stanza of the passage, however, before the chemist's immortal guest leaves his disabled state on earth, the verse returns to the original form of the basic iambic measure, with the mdmd clausula pattern, and the iambic theme of the poet hero's life is rounded in circularity:

1111m Глаза слепые,
голос нем,
111d и разум запер дверь за ним,
1111m так что ж
— еще! —
нашел во мне,
111d чтоб ядом быть растерзанным?

(l. 429)

The fulfilment of every ictus states the iambic theme in absolute form, allowing for no escape from within the iambs; the poet hero's ascension in the final passage of the chapter is not a development out of the iambs but, as in the middle of this passage, an abstraction from them. The iambic theme therefore awaits his return to earth.

'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo' (ll. 436–65)

TABLE 36

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
436)	—	—	3	1	—	1	2	1	1	Ac	4
442)	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	3	—		6
452)	—	2	4	1	1	2	1	4	—		8

The poet hero's ascension begins when the verse switches into accentual verse in a stanza with a 4443 stress scheme:

0324m	Мутная догадка по глупому пробрела.
0223m	В окнах зеваки. Дыбятся волоса.
1132f	И вдруг я плавно оплываю прилавок.
222m	Потолок отверзается сам.

(l. 436)

The dissolution of spatial causality is reflected in an enjambement of rhyme when the rhyming word 'прилавок' creates a consonance that overlaps from the first line into the second ('пробрела. // В окнах' — 'прилавок'). The break is also accompanied by a less regular rhythm, although subsequently, as in the abstraction in the middle of the preceding passage, irregular intervals appear more occasionally in a *dol'nik* context. But, in accordance with the possible interpretation of measure in terms of the organization of space, the ability to move freely in space is now principally conveyed through a gradual move towards the dissolution of line length organization (compare the variation of line length, and the use of enjambement, in the preceding abstraction); thorough deregulation, however, does not come until the next chapter.

At first short lines appear with the leading, four-stress form. In the second stanza, a couplet, the deregulation affects the stanza form too:

01m	Визги.
	Шум.
1212m	"Над домом висит!" Над домом вишу.

(l. 442)

In the third stanza four-stress lines alternate with a one-word refrain ('Мимо!' (ll. 448, 451)), while in the fourth stanza they are followed by shorter lines:

1122f	Студенты! Вздор все, что знаем и учим!
0252m	Физика, химия и астрономия — чушь.
022/32f	Вот захотел и по тучам
1m	лечу ж.

(l. 452)

But in the final stanza of the chapter two four-stress lines are followed by two longer, five-stress ones:

0202f	Всюду теперь! Можно везде мне.
0212f	Взбурься, баллад поэтовых тина.
02111d	Пойте теперь о новом — пойте — Демоне
33112f	в американском пиджаке и блеске желтых ботинок.

(l. 459)

These last two lines, which present the poet hero as a new and dandy Demon to be celebrated in song, approach the hexametral form in which he himself had earlier proclaimed his wondrous human attributes.

'Maiakovskii v nebe' (ll. 466–520)

TABLE 37

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
466)										'Prose'	
467)	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	Hx	2
472)	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	Ac	2
476)										'Prose'	
477)	—	1	—	1	2	1	—	1	1	Ac–AcF	4
486)										Quote	
487)	3	3	2	5	1	3	4	6	—	Ac–AcF	14
520)										'Prose'	

The poet hero's ascension to heaven is brought to a halt at the beginning of *'Maiakovskii v nebe'* with a single word which stands outside the stanza fabric of the verse:

0 Стоп!
(l. 466)

After a graphical break the first two lines of the opening stanza move into the hexametral form which was approached at the end of *'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo'*:

042122m Скидываю на тучу
 вещей
 и тела усталого
 кладь.
32121f Благоприятны места, в которых доселе не был.
(l. 467)

The hexametral form is now clear, but it has been divested of its worn out associations. In the first line the poet hero throws off the very body which he had proclaimed in the original hexametral verse, while the mock grandeur of *'благоприятны'* and the archaic *'доселе'* in the second line subverts the hexameter's traditional high tone. This subversion is made explicit in the two four-stress lines which complete the stanza:

1333m Оглядываюсь.
 Эта вот
 зализанная гладь —
0212f это и есть хваленое небо?
(l. 472)

A flippant, prosaic tone will now be maintained throughout the passage.

The poet hero's experience of the free but amorphous space of heaven is conveyed through a dissolution of the form of the verse; even the distinction between verse and 'prose' (between what is inside and what is outside the stanza fabric) ceases to matter. The opening stanza is followed, as it was preceded, by a 'prose' segment:

12 Посмотрим, посмотрим!
(1. 476)

In the second stanza the free accentual metrical tendency is established as the line length varies from one to five stresses:

122f Искрило,
 сверкало,
 блестело,
00102f и
 шорох шел —
 облако
 или
1d бестелье
02f тихо скользили.
(1. 477)

The conjunctions 'и' and 'или' are incongruously highlighted by being placed in graphical lines on their own, and 'или' is even rhymed.

This stanza is followed by a quotation from Verdi which has an ironic relevance for the poet hero:

0231 “Если красавица в любви клянется . . .”
(1. 486)

The incongruity between the status of this line outside the fabric of the verse and its objective status as 'art' emphasizes that such distinctions are irrelevant in the amorphous heavens. There is a further incongruity between the high associations of Verdi opera and the popular comic ring of the opening couplet in the stanza following:

021f Здесь,
 на небесной тверди
012f слышать музыку Верди?
02d В облаке скважина.
1330202f Заглядываю —
 ангелы поют.
 Важно живут ангелы.
 Важно.
(1. 487)

In this stanza, which is presented as a single graphical unit, the standard abab quatrain is rearranged into aabb form (or perhaps two couplets); the second

couplet, in contrast to the first, combines lines of greatly differing lengths (two and seven stresses respectively).

In the next three stanzas the theme of dissolution is taken further and affects even the fundamental division into metrical lines. In the first of these stanzas additional rhymes make it impossible to define the end of the third line or even the number of lines in the stanza:

1221f	Один отделился и так любезно
141m	дремотную немоту расторг:
12232f	“Ну, как вам, Владимир Владимирович, нравится бездна?”
12122212m	И я отвечаю так же любезно: “Прелестная бездна. Бездна — восторг!”

(l. 495)

This could be a quatrain, a five-line stanza, or a six-line stanza, but in view of Maiakovskii's standard stanza form it has been interpreted (more or less arbitrarily) as a quatrain with the ending of the third line placed (again more or less arbitrarily) at the first 'бездна'. In the next two stanzas the theme of dissolution reaches an extreme as the division into metrical lines and indeed stanzas becomes even less certain:

22143 ²¹	Раздражало вначале: нет тебе ни угла ни одного,
122m	ни чаю, ни к чаю газет.
2231m	Постепенно вживался небесам в уклад.
212m	Выхожу с другими глазеть,
21302f	не пришло ли новых. “А, и вы!” Радостно обнял.
0323312231f	“Здравствуйте, Владимир Владимирович!” “Здравствуйте, Абрам Васильевич!” Ну, как кончались? Ничего? Удобно ль?”
122	Хорошие шуточки, а?

(l. 505)

The first stanza, if a quatrain, would appear to end at 'глазеть', rhyming with 'газет', while the first component of the other probable rhyme ('угла' — 'уклад') is displaced from the end of the graphical line; to add to the confusion there is another possible rhyme in 'вначале' — 'ни чаю', but this would dissolve the stanza form.²² As it is, there would have to be an enjambement between this stanza and the one following, where it becomes almost

impossible to perceive structure: there is one certain rhyme ('обнял' — 'удобно ль'), but the search for another rhyme in expectation of a quatrain remains frustrated and there is such a great distance between the rhyming words that the sense of verse form more or less dissolves. The final, throw-away 'prose' segment with which the passage appropriately ends hardly seems different in status from the preceding verse; structural distinctions have dissolved.

'Maiakovskii v nebe' (ll. 521–66)

TABLE 38

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
521)	—	—	3	1	—	1	2	1	—	Ac–Ac4	4
529)	—	—	11	1	—	3	1	8	1		12
548)	—	—	8	—	—	—	2	6	3		8
After 566) ²³										'Prose'	

In the central passage of 'Maiakovskii v nebe' the poet hero moves on from the experience of the free, amorphous space of heaven to a description of it as the centre of the universe, and the verse shifts abruptly, and arbitrarily, into the four-ictus metrical tendency within accentual verse; this is the second of the three main, parallel passages in the four-ictus accentual tendency.

The opening stanza contains one of only two three-stress lines in the passage, and the rhythm is still quite irregular:

1211f	Понравилось. Стал стоять при въезде.
1233m	И если знакомые являлись, умирав,
3232f	сопровождал их, показывая в рампе созвездий
163m	величественную бутафорию миров.

(l. 521)

In the middle three stanzas heaven is revealed as the 'центральная станция всех явлений' (l. 529), a place from where the universe is directed with mechanical indifference to the quality of life (compare the erosion of structural distinctions in the preceding passage). Overall the rhythm is quite regular in these stanzas, but with the odd less regular line as well.

By the end of the passage the rhythm has become more consistently regular, tending even towards a ternary inertia. In the penultimate stanza the essence of heaven is summed up as a 'terrible orderliness':

In the final passage of 'Maiakovskii v nebe' the poem moves into the temporal dimension, extending eventually into infinity. The first stanza introduces the terrible mechanical process of time:

0212m	Кузни времен вздыхают меха —
111m	и новый год готов.
134f	Отсюда низвергается, громокая, страшный оползень годов.
013m	

(1. 567)

The rhythm now ranges once more, from binary to accentual, in a 4333 stress scheme.

The second stanza places the poet hero in this temporal context in the three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik* (again the first line of the measure is irregular, here with a monosyllabic anacrusis):

121f	Я счет не веду неделям.
0122m	Мы, хранимые в рамках времен, мы любовь на дни не делим, не меняем любимых имен.
211f	
222m	

(1. 574)

With the loss of a sense of time the only love for the poet hero in heaven is love in the abstract, the spiritual, disembodied love associated with the three-ictus anapaestic *dol'nik*.

In the final stanza the normal cadence is reversed and after two four-stress lines (the first binary in rhythm) the measure extends into hexametral verse as the poet hero falls silent and then asleep in the seas of eternity:²⁴

0111f	Стих. Лучам луны на мели
0122m	сlegt, волнение снами сморя.
021122f	Будто на пляже южном, только еще онемелей, и по мне, насквозь излаская, катятся вечности моря.
212123m	

(1. 579)

The third line is a regular hexameter, but the last line has a disyllabic anacrusis and an extended final interval; in its emblematic role as measure of the poem's progress the hexametral form, once a heroic roar, is now associated with silence.

'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' (ll. 588–678)

TABLE 40

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
Heading											
588)	—	—	4	—	—					I4c+1	4
595)	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	Hx	1
598)	—	—	12	—	—	2	3	7	1	Ac–Ac4	12
620)	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	Ac	1
622)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Hx	1
624)	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	Ac	2
627)	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	Hx	1
632)	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	Hx	2
638)	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	1	1	Ac	2
642)	—	—	9	2	5	—	3	8	—		16
667)	—	—	4	—	—	2	—	2	—		4

The poet hero's dormition in eternity is represented in the geometrical numerical progression which stands at the beginning of 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo':

1, 2, 4, 8, 16, тысячи, миллионы.
(I, 262)

Bearing in mind the numerical associations of hexametral verse, this heading too can be interpreted as having a hexametral base, especially as it takes on verbal form (and loses its mathematical rigour) at the sixth number, 'thousands', which has been specifically associated with hexametral verse in this poem; the extension beyond the hexametral span into 'millions' would convey the sense of progression into infinity (compare the use of hexametral verse in the progression backwards in time at the end of Act II of the *Tragedy*).

The roar of the hexametral verse in 'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo' had roused the bankers to the threat of the heart, but now the second heart stanza must set the poem in motion again, breaking the silence that has overcome the poet hero and reawakening in him a sense of time and verse form:

1121f Вставай,
довольно!
На солнце очи!
1121m Доколе будешь распластан, нем?
1121f Бурчу спросонок:
"Чего грохочут?
1121m Кто смеет сердцем шуметь во мне?"
(I. 588)

iambic theme which both characterized and concluded the poet hero's earlier existence on earth. In the next stanza, however, as his brain imagines a new order on earth, the rhythmical stride gradually extends again:

1211f	— Теперь на земле, должно быть, ново.
1222f	Пахучие вёсны развесили в селах.
0124f	Город каждый, должно быть, иллюминирован.
1123f	Поет семья краснощеких и веселых.

(l. 614)

A curious feature of these last three stanzas is the move from all masculine to all dactylic to all feminine clausulae.

With the focus now firmly on the earth, a sense of space must be re-established: this is the inverse of the earlier dissolution of a sense of space, which was conveyed through a dissolution of line length organization. In the next stanza the verse moves out of the four-ictus scheme set by the heart stanza:

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

(l. 620)

By the second line the growing nostalgia for the earth leads to a revival of the hexametral form, with a grand tone too ('царственно'), although the zero interval over the caesura gives this line the form of the pentameter in the elegiac couplet; subsequently, however, the verse falls away into a two-stress third line. There is also an enjambement of rhyme, the device that marked the initial dissolution of spatial causality in 'Voznesenie Maiakovskogo', as the rhyming word 'мерещится' creates a consonance that overlaps from the first line into the second ('резче. // Царственно' — 'мерещится').

Following this stanza the hexametral form is tried again, but in isolation, in an unrhymed line:

122121dx	Напрягся, ищу меж другими точками землю. Вот она!
----------	---

(l. 627)

With the poetic and also monosyllabic 'меж' in place of 'между', this line forms a regular six-ictus *dol'nik* (with a monosyllabic anacrusis); the graphical break

before the final 'Вот она!' highlights the eventual recognition of the earth, and the hexametral form is complete.

This positive identification of the earth heralds a gradual consolidation of line length organization in the remaining six stanzas of the passage in preparation for the actual descent to earth. In the first of these stanzas the hexametral measure continues for two lines, each divided into half-lines which thus lead smoothly into the three-stress form of the last two lines:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 022121d | Въелся.
Моря различаю,
горы в орлином клёкоте . . . |
| 021321m | Рядом отец.
Такой же.
Только на ухо больше туг, |
| 322f | да поистерся
немного
на локте |
| 033m | форменный лесничего сюртук. |
- (l. 632)

In the following stanzas the yearning for the physical reality of the earth in reaction to the boredom of heaven becomes ever stronger. The rhythm is generally regular, while different variations of four-stress and shorter lines are tried out in 4432, 4422, and 4342 stress schemes which all advance the leading role of the four-stress form (the inverse of the earlier process of deregulation in the ascent to heaven). In the penultimate stanza the four-stress form takes over in three lines, with a one-stress second line:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1212f | Довольно лучи обсасывать в спячке. |
| 1m | За мной! |
| 2121f | Все равно без ножек —
чего вам пачкать?! |
| 2232m | И галош не понадобится в грязи земной. |
- (l. 662)

Then in the final stanza of the passage the verse returns to a four-stress scheme throughout and the poet hero is ready to descend:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 0215m | Звезды!
Довольно
мученический плести |
| 1122f | венк
земле!
Озакатили красным. |
| 0221m | Кто там
крылами
к земле блестит? |
| 1022f | Заря?
Стой!
По дороге как раз нам. |
- (l. 667)

An interesting feature of this stanza is the identical graphical division of each line.

'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo' (ll. 679–706)

TABLE 41

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
679)	—	—	—	3	1					IЗ	4
683)	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Ac	1
687)	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	Hx	1
690)	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	1	Ac	2
694)	—	—	4	1	3	2	1	2	—		8

At the very inception of the poet hero's return to earth the iambic metre, the metre of the last earthbound stanza, also returns in a lone stanza of iambic trimeter:

31d	То перекинуть радугой,
111d	то хвост завью кометою.
111(1)d	Чего пошел играть дугой?
111(1)d	Какую жуть в кайме таю?

(l. 679)

The presence of hypermetrical stresses in the clausulae of both an odd and an even line distinguishes this isolated stanza from all the other iambic stanzas in the poem. On the verbal level the poet hero is unsure of the significance of the figures he traces in the sky, but on the metrical level the nature of the concealed anguish is quite evident in the significance of the iambic metre. On this level the poet hero's descent immediately stirs the iambic theme of his existence on earth, and the iambic conclusion of his return is adumbrated (compare the earlier emergence of binary rhythm and a hypermetrical stress in the clausula at the first thought of earth).

In the second stanza, however, the poet hero moves towards a grander view of his aerobatics (compare the parade of his motions in *'Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo'*):

14231d	Показываю мирам номера невероятной скорости.
012011f	Дух бездомный давно полон дум о давних
0121f	днях. Земных полушарий горсти

The opening stanza immediately dispels the illusion of a new order on earth:

- 1221f И снова
 толпа
 в поводу у дела,
321d громоголосый катился день ее.
1122f О, есть ли
 глотка,
 чтоб громче вгудела
0221d — города громче —
 в его гудение.

(1. 707)

Dol'nik rhythm is maintained throughout here, but by the third stanza the rhythm has become less regular as the poet hero describes the frantic, world-wide rouble chase:

- 1242f По скату экватора
 из Чикаг
 сквозь Тамбовы
0302f катятся рубли.
 Вытянув выи,
0213h гонятся все,
 телами утрамбовывая
022f горы,
 моря,
 мостовые.

(1. 722)

The ternary form of this last line leads into a strong ternary inertia in the fourth stanza when the poet hero reveals the same old hand behind all the surface commotion:

- 0222f Их тот же лысый
 невидимый водит,
0222f главный танцмейстер земного канкана.
1221f То в виде идеи,
 то чёрта вроде,
1222f то богом сияет, за облако канув.

(1. 732)

In the penultimate stanza a contrasting, binary inertia takes over in the middle two lines in association with the iambic theme of the daily round, the calendar succession of days (compare 'влеку дневное иго я' (1. 184)):

- 0232f Тише, философы!
 Я знаю —
 не спорьте —
1111d зачем источник жизни дарен им.
1111f Затем, чтоб рвать,
 затем, чтоб портить
012f дни листкам календарным.

(1. 738)

In the final stanza the poet hero dissociates himself from the popular mass and prepares for his revenge:

0121m Их жалеть!
А меня им жаль?
1221f Сожрали бульвары,
сады,
предместья!
2232m Антиквар?
Покажите!
Покупаю кинжал.
1131d И сладко чувствовать,
что вот
пред месьтью я.

(l. 745)

The rhythm of this last line, with intervals of one and three syllables, will highlight by contrast the move into the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* at the beginning of 'Maiakovskii vekam'.

'Maiakovskii vekam' (ll. 756–828)

TABLE 43

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
756)	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	3	Ac-Dk4Am	4
766)	—	—	1	3	—	—	1	3	—	Ac	4
772)	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	2	Ac-Dk4Am	4
781)	—	—	4	—	—	2	—	2	—	Ac-Ac4	4
789)	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	12	12	Ac-Dk4Am	12
813)	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	9	5		9

The opening passage of 'Maiakovskii vekam' is dominated by the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency; it takes over when the poet hero is held in the dance directed by the Ruler of All, while metrical shifts occur when he stands more or less outside this dance. In the opening stanza he falls straight into the human swarm:

1212f Куда я,
зачем я?
Улицей сотой
1222f мечусь
человечьим
разжужженным ульем.
1222f Глаза пролетают оконные соты,
1222d и тяжело,
и чуждо,
и мёрзко в июле им.

(l. 756)

Three lines in this opening stanza are ternary in rhythm and the 212 rhythmical form of the first line is the most important secondary form.

In the second stanza, however, the verse shifts out of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency:

121f	Витрины и окна тушит
021m	город.
	Устал и сник.
1123f	И только
	туч выпотрашивает туши
121m	кровавый закат-мясник.

(1. 766)

The first, second, and fourth lines each have three stresses and, curiously, the same *dol'nik* rhythmical form, while the third line has an extra, initial stress on 'ТОЛЬКО' and a less regular rhythm; the shift out of the four-ictus metrical tendency appears to correspond to a shift in narrative viewpoint from subjective to objective.

The third stanza returns to overt first-person narrative and the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*:

1122m	Слоняюсь.
	Мост феерический.
	Влез.
1222f	И в страшном волнении взираю с него я.
1212m	Стоял, вспоминаю.
	Был этот блеск.
1222f	И это
	тогда
	называлось Невойю.

(1. 772)

The correlation of past and present, which begins here, will be repeated in *Pro eto*, where the last two lines of this stanza serve as the epigraph to 'Ballada Redingskoi tiur'my' and the image of the man on the bridge, itself a recollection of the hero's earlier contemplation of suicide over water, stands for the hero of this poem.

In the fourth stanza the verse again shifts out of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*, but this time just into the four-ictus accentual metrical tendency as the poet hero's recollection of the past leads to an opening of the temporal perspective:

1112f	Здесь город был.
	Бесмысленный город,
0402f	выпутанный в дымы трубного леса.
0112f	В этом самом городе
	скоро

0243d ночи начнутся,
 остекленелые,
 белесые.

(l. 781)

The metrical shift is only relative, because the first line would fit into the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* and the third line is also *dol'nik* in rhythm, but the even lines are both accentual in rhythm.

But this temporal perspective now dissolves in an eternally repeated present, and in the next three stanzas the amphibrachic rhythm is maintained in every line, with feminine clausulae in all but the last line too, thereby creating an unbroken ternary inertia:

1222f Июлю капут.
 Обезночел загретый.
1222f Избредился в шепот чего-то сквозного.
1222f То видится крест лазаретной кареты,
1222f то слышится выстрел.
 Умолкнет —
 и снова.

(l. 789)

The apparent reference to the events of July 1917 (the bloody suppression of a demonstration in Petrograd)²⁵ implies a repetition of the past in the present, a theme which is reinforced by echoes, both in this passage and earlier, of Blok's 'Noch', ulitsa, fonar', apteka'. By the third stanza the poet hero has a vision of his beloved:

1222f И вижу, над домом
 по риску откоса
1222f лучами идешь,
 собираешь их в копны.
1222f Тянусь,
 но туманом ушла из-под носа.
1222d И снова стою
 онемелый и вкопанный.

(l. 805)

After the extended period of ternary rhythm the appearance of other, secondary rhythmical forms now highlights the almost physical sensation of his beloved that is aroused in the poet hero:

1222f Гуляк полуночных толпа раскололась,
1121f почти что чувствую запах кожи,
1221f почти что дыханье,
 почти что голос,
1222f я думаю — призрак,
 он взял, да и ожил.

(l. 813)

The use of secondary rhythmical forms continues in the first two lines of the next stanza, the final stanza of the passage, and a sense of expectation is conveyed once more through the expansion into a five-line stanza form:

1122d	Рванулась, вышла из воздуха уз она.
1212d	Ей мало — одна! — раскинулась в шествие.
1222f	Ожившее сердце шарахнулось грузно.
1222f	Я снова земными мученьями узнан.
1222d	Да здравствует — снова! — мое сумасшествие!

(l. 819)

The final line (and expanded stanza form) emphasize the key, repeated word 'снова', and the action of the poem is now ready to take up from the past and move towards its climax.

'*Maiakovskii vekam*' (ll. 829–904)

TABLE 44

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
829)	—	—	3	—	1	—	2	1	—	Ac	4
837)										'Prose'	
838)	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	4	Ac-Dk4Am	4
844)	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	2	1		2
848)	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	1	—	Ac	2
851)	—	—	1	2	1					I4343	4
858)	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	—	Ac-Dk4Am	4
865)	—	—	1	3	1					I43523	5
875)										'Prose'	
876)	—	—	8	2	2	1	2	7	—	Ac	12
897)	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4	2	Ac-Dk4Am	4

The reawakening of the poet hero's heart and senses at the vision of his beloved precipitates the poem's second emotional climax. As in 'Strasti Maiakovskogo', the first such climax, the verse becomes metrically complex with a confrontation, juxtaposition, and now more extended interplay of forms: four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*, accentual verse outside this tendency, iambs, and 'prose', and all that these forms stand for comes into play.

In the first stanza the verse shifts out of the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* which dominated in the preceding passage:

2112f Фонари вот так же врезаны были
 2131f в середину улицы.
 Дома похожи.
 1231f Вот так же,
 из ниши,
 головы кобыльей
 02f вылеп.
 — Прохожий!
 23 Это улица Жуковского?

(1. 829)

The metrical shift again seems to correspond to a shift in narrative viewpoint as a temporal perspective opens up. The continuation beyond the rhyme at the end of the short, two-stress last line corresponds to the question's logical status, since the street has been renamed after the poet hero himself. In the following stanza the passer-by explains the name of the street, and with a return to the present the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* returns:

0222m Смотрит,
 как смотрит дитя на скелет,
 1222f глаза вот такие,
 старается мимо.
 1222m “Она — Маяковского тысячи лет:
 1222f он здесь застрелился у двери любимой”.

(1. 838)

The first line here features the only zero anacrusis in the four-ictus *dol'nik*, but the ternary rhythm expresses the millennial inertia embodied in the name.

The poet hero, however, reacts with joy because revenge now seems close:

00222m Кто,
 я застрелился?
 Такое загнут!
 1211d Блестящую радость, сердце, вычекань!
 1m Окну
 111f лечу.
 Небес привычка.

(1. 844)

The first line of this crucial transitional stanza continues the ternary rhythm from the preceding stanza but is distinguished by the hypermetrical stress in the anacrusis; the second line stays in the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* but the monosyllabic intervals in the second half of the line lead into the iambic rhythm of the last two lines. At the same time the move out of the four-ictus scheme into these one-stress and three-stress lines is a return to the free variation of line length associated with the heavenly habit of free movement in space; the poet hero, though on earth, is not of it, not properly corporeal.

The move into iambic rhythm leads into the iambic metre itself (in the basic iambic measure) as the poet hero approaches his beloved, or so he thinks, in search of liberation through revenge:

1111m	Высоко.
	Глубже ввысь зашел
31m	за этажем этаж.
131m	Завесилась.
	Смотрю за шелк —
111m	все то же,
	спальня та ж.

(l. 851)

The rhythmical profile of this stanza, with stresses omitted in two lines, is still relatively neutral.

The verse now moves back into the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* in association with the theme of millennial inertia:

1212m	Сквозь тысячи лет прошла — и юна.
1211d	Лежишь,
	волоса луною высиня.
1212m	Минута . . .
	и то,
	что было — луна,
1212d	Его оказалась голая лысина.

(l. 858)

Nothing has changed, apparently, but none of these lines have the ternary rhythmical form; instead, three lines have the 212 form which will be used in *Pro eto* as a rhythmical signal of *Chelovek*.

But the iambic metre returns when the poet hero moves in to take revenge:

1111m	Нашел!
	Теперь пускай поспят.
111(1)d	Рука,
	кинжала жало стиснь!
115m	Крадусь,
	приглядываюсь —
	и опять!
11m	люблю
	и вспять
111d	иду в любви и жалости.

(l. 865)

‘Нашел!’ is set apart from the rest of the stanza as if ‘prose’, but, unlike ‘Туда!’ (l. 390) earlier, it is drawn into the stanza not only rhythmically but also metrically, because with its inclusion the line forms a standard tetrameter with masculine clausula. In the crucial third line the possibility of release is held in the final interval: this extends over two omitted stresses to push the line to pentameter form, but a metrical stress is finally fulfilled — ‘опять!’ — and in the

parallel fourth line, a dimeter, the poet hero finds himself in love again; the sense of expectation (of release) created by the expanded stanza form is offset by this rhythmical fall from pentameter to dimeter, and the last line returns to standard trimeter form.

The final four stanzas of this passage round off the poem's narrative and clarify the situation, for, although the poet hero is in love again, the woman turns out to be the wrong one. The absurdity of this situation also brings out the ambiguity of the poet hero's present status: he is on earth and subject to earthly passions, but nevertheless not properly corporeal; he is both in and outside the present. Since the narrative is rounded off between the poet hero and other people (third parties), accentual verse takes over, but before the next stanza there is a 'prose' segment:

02	Доброе утро!
1221d	Зажглось электричество. Глаз два выката.
133m	"Кто вы?" — "Я Николаев — инженер.
0212/312f	Это моя квартира. А вы кто?
1221m	Чего пристаёте к моей жене?"

(l. 876)

The whole conversation, from the greeting onwards, verges on the absurd; an ambiguity or incongruity is already evident in the continuation from 'prose' into verse, while the stanza itself conveys ambiguity through a combination, repeated in the next two stanzas, of lines that would and would not fit into the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik*, although the lines that would fit all have secondary rhythmical forms. In the next stanza the poet hero realizes his mistake and the line length varies more freely in a 4341 stress scheme:

1121f	Чужая комната. Утро дрогло.
121m	Трясая уголками губ,
1132d	чужая женщина, раздетая догола.
1m	Бегу.

(l. 884)

The third stanza also ends with a short line in a 4442 stress scheme as the poet hero returns to the ground:

1221f	Растерзанной тенью, большой, косматый,
1211f	несусь по стене, луной облитый.

1224f Жильцы выбегают, запахивая халаты.
11f Гремлю о плиты.

(1. 890)

But in the final stanza of the passage the verse at last returns to the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* as the story ends in a legend which must have lasted, like the name of the street, for thousands of years:

1222m Швейцара ударами в угол загнал.
1222f “Из сорок второго
куда ее дели?”
1112m “Легенда есть:
к нему
из окна.
1212f Вот так и валялись
тело на теле”.

(1. 897)

The ternary rhythm does not extend into the last two lines and the four-ictus amphibrachic *dol'nik* tendency ends with the same rhythmical form (212) as it began, the form which will serve as a rhythmical signal of this poem in *Pro eto*.

‘Maiakovskii vekam’ (ll. 905–31)

TABLE 45

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
905)	—	—	4	—	—					I4	4
913)	—	—	—	3	1					I3	4
918)	—	—	2	2	—					I4343	4
925)	—	—	1	1	2						4

In the concluding passage of ‘Maiakovskii vekam’ the iambic metre returns to seal the poet hero’s particular fate, and the rhythmical constraint intensifies with just four omitted stresses in four stanzas (a stress load of 92.9%); the poet hero is now locked forever in a love that can never be fulfilled.

In the first stanza the motif of delirium is realized in a breakdown of language after two lines:

1111m Куда теперь!
Куда глаза
1111m глядят.
Поля?
Пускай поля!
2121m Тра-ля, дзин-дза,
тра-ля-ля, дзин-дза,
1111m тра-ля-ля-ля-ля-ля-ля-ля!

(1. 905)

This is the stanza which, by reference to the rhythmical *gul* of 'Kak delat' stikhi', suggests an underlying tetrameter measure in the iambic verse. Since the rhythmical *gul* is represented in purely symbolic terms, without any value as sound, the last line is probably closer to a possible original form than the third, which already involves some sound play. The incorrect form of the third line could be an example of that intermediate stage in the formation of a line when the metre may be broken, especially as the fulfilment of the metrical pattern can be taken as otherwise absolute, with no omission of stress.

But the poet here is still free in space, and in the trimeter stanza following, which echoes the lone stanza (also of trimeter) in 'Vozvrashchenie Maiakovskogo', he traces more figures in the sky:

111(1)d	Петлей на шею луч накинй!
111d	Сплетусь в палящем лете я!
111d	Гремят на мне наручники,
13d	любви тысячелетия . . .

(1. 913)

The significance of the metre is now clearly recognized and the poet hero's imprisonment has been distilled to its essence, millennia of love.

The last two stanzas return to the basic measure, alternating tetrameter and trimeter. In the penultimate stanza, which envisages the final extinction of the universe, there is no omission of stress:

1111m	Погибнет все. Сойдет на нет.
111f	И тот, кто жизнью движет,
1111m	последний луч над тьмой планет
111f	из солнц последних выжжет.

(1. 918)

But in the last two lines of the very last stanza there are three omitted stresses:

1111m	И только боль моя острей —
111m	стою, огнем обвит,
33m	на несгорающем костре
13m	немыслимой любви.

(1. 925)

The penultimate line is only the second iambic tetrameter in the poem with two omitted stresses (form VI). The striking rhythm of these last two lines serves to highlight the poem's conclusion, but it has more than just this compositional function: the extreme rhythmical loosening of the metre's constraint is an

eloquent final testament to the potential for liberation held in the poet hero's love, and an affirmation of Maiakovskii's fundamental hatred of any kind of coercion or constraint.²⁶

'*Poslednee*' (ll. 932–42)

TABLE 46

	Long	5	4	3	Short	Ac	Tk	Dk	Ty	Form	Lines
932)	2	1	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	Hx-EC	3
942)	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	Ac	1

'*Poslednee*', in an ending which echoes those of both *Oblako v shtanakh* and *Pro eto*, passes a final comment on the outcome of the poem as the poet hero addresses the universe:

012121m	Ширь, бездомного снава
02211m	ЛОНОМ ТВОИМ ПРИМИ! Небо какое теперь? Звезде какой?
032211m	Тысячью церковей подо мной затянул и тянет мир:
23m	"Со святыми упокой!"

(l. 932)

In context, with the final line confirming an elegiac mode, the first three lines can readily be interpreted as a form based on the elegiac couplet: the second line does not have the correct form of the pentameter in the elegiac couplet (with the zero interval over the caesura found earlier), but it is a correct five-ictus dactylic *dol'nik* line. So the hexametral form, the emblem of the poem's title, is subverted into an elegiac mode. Through the elegiac associations of the form the poet hero mourns the passing of that heroic potential so loudly proclaimed in '*Rozhdestvo Maiakovskogo*', but even this form and its high tone are subverted in the short, ironic last line.