

## The prosodic word as a unit in poetic meter

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The epic decasyllable is a traditional South Slavic folk metrical form. The poems created in this rich oral tradition are of a highly formulaic nature, and possess a discernible metrical organization. My focus will be on the so-called Serbo-Croatian poems within this tradition (cf. Maretić 1907, 1935, Jakobson 1933, 1952), which have been documented in numerous volumes of verse. Among the most notable are the five volumes of Serbian epic poetry collected and published by Vuk Karadžić between 1814 and 1847, which will be the principal basis of this study.<sup>1</sup>

Although extensively documented, this verse form has eluded clear characterization. Each line of the epic decasyllable has ten metrical positions, with a caesura after the fourth, which divides it into two cola. A metrical position corresponds, strictly, to a syllable, while colon boundaries coincide with word breaks.<sup>2</sup>

- 1) Mjèšec kârâ || zvižèzdu Dànicu      ‘The moon admonishes the morning star’  
σ σ σ σ || σ σ σ σ σ σ      (Vk, II, 98, 1)

These are the obligatory, and just about the only uncontroversial, aspects of the structural organization of this verse. The establishment of further structural characteristics of a decasyllabic line has been fairly intractable. Claims that this is a periodic meter have not been supported by a straightforward prosodic characterization of the division of a line into metrical feet. Yet, any questioning of the periodic nature of the epic decasyllable has left unaccounted for the highly suggestive signs of its trochaic organization.

My claim will be that the epic decasyllable is indeed a periodic, more specifically, a trochaic meter. The goal of this paper is to identify the prosodic indicators of its trochaic organization which, as will be shown, are of a somewhat unorthodox nature, and crucially include the prosodic word. The theoretical frame of reference will be Hanson and Kiparsky’s 1996 parameterized account of possible metrical forms, and the basic premise therein about the dependence of poetic meter on the sound system of language, which sets the range of what is possible, or to be expected, in verse (Jakobson 1960, Kiparsky 1973, Hanson 1991). Finally, I will rely on Optimality Theory (McCarthy and Prince 1993a, Prince and Smolensky 1993) in presenting the interactions among metrical properties, formalized as constraints, that characterize this metrical form.

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<sup>1</sup> This study is based in fact on the second, third, and fourth volume (Karadžić 1958). The first volume includes only the lyric poetry, and only some of the poems are decasyllabic; the fifth volume is not nearly as polished as the others, and is thus a less reliable source of this verse (Maretić 1907). Other sources include Njegoš’s 1845 collection (Njegoš 1975) and the poems collected by Milman Parry in the thirties and later published by Lord (Parry and Lord 1953).

<sup>2</sup> In the examples, Karadžić’s collection is denoted by *Vk*, Njegoš’s by *Nj*, and Parry and Lord’s by *P&L*. Specified for each example is the volume number (if relevant), the number of the poem within the volume, and that of the line within the poem.

The organization of the paper is as follows: In section 1, I present those aspects of the Serbian prosodic system that are relevant for understanding this verse. In section 2, I establish the structural properties of the epic decasyllable, and in section 3, propose a formal account of its metrical organization. Sections 4 and 5 address the place of function words in this verse, and section 6 revisits the organization of higher order metrical constituency. In the Appendix, I discuss earlier treatments of this verse.

## 1. The prosodic system

This section provides an outline of those aspects of the Serbian prosodic system whose understanding is crucial for providing proper characterization of the epic decasyllable. We present here the relevant prosodic characteristics of two major dialectal areas, Old and Neo-štokavian. The prosodic distinctions between these two dialect groups will provide a crucial insight for understanding the prosodic basis of this verse form, as detailed in section 2. We focus first on the distribution of pitch accent in the Old- and Neo-štokavian dialects, and then, on its prosodic nature, and the minimal prosodic unit within which it is realized.

The Neo-štokavian dialects are traditionally characterized as having four pitch accents, two falling and two rising (Ivić 1958, Lehiste and Ivić 1986). As illustrated in (2), the falling accents may occur on the only syllable of a monosyllabic word, and on the initial syllable of a polysyllabic one. The rising accents, which are not found in monosyllables, may appear on any syllable of a polysyllabic word, with the exception of the final one.

### 2) Neo-štokavian pitch accents

	Short falling	Long falling	Short rising	Long rising
monosyllabic:	sàn ‘dream’	dân ‘day’	<i>none</i>	<i>none</i>
disyllabic;	mèsēc ‘moon’	sûnce ‘sun’	jùnâk ‘hero’	ljúba ‘wife’
trisyllabic:	jàbuka ‘apple’	nâmera ‘intention’	dànica ‘morning star’	prílîka ‘opportunity’
			planîna ‘mountain’	junáci ‘hero, pl.’

The prosodic properties of the Old-štokavian dialects are more straightforward: these are the dialects with only the falling accents, which may appear on any syllable within the word, including the final one, as in (3):

### 3) Old-štokavian pitch accent:

	Short falling	Long falling
monosyllabic:	sàn ‘dream’	dân ‘day’
disyllabic;	mèsēc ‘moon’	sûnce ‘sun’
	ljúbà ‘wife’	junâk ‘hero’
trisyllabic:	jàbuka ‘apple’	nâmera ‘intention’
	danîca ‘morning star’	

The traditional diacritics utilized in (2) – (3) cover a complex of prosodic properties. Each symbol marks the presence of stress, as well as a characteristic pitch, either falling or rising. What the traditional diacritics do not mark is the disyllabic nature of the Neo-štokavian rising accents, with a high pitch characterizing both the accented syllable, and its immediate successor. Moreover, in both dialect groups, the long accents appear on syllables with long vowels, while the short accents appear on syllables whose vowel is short. Vowel length, which is an independent phonological property, is also found on syllables unassociated with pitch accent, for example, on the second syllables of *měsēc* ‘moon’ and *jùnāk* ‘hero’.

The štokavian system of pitch accents is of a complex nature: each pitch accent is manifested as both tone and stress. Although distinct, these two components of pitch accent are integrated through the system of feet which includes both the standard trochaic set, in (4)a,b, and the set characterized by tonal prominence, in (4)c,d, as argued in detail in Zec 1999.

- 4) Foot inventory:
- |    |                                   |    |                          |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|--------------------------|
|    | without tone                      |    | with tone                |
| a. | [σ <sub>μ</sub> μ]Φ               | c. | [σ <sub>μ</sub> μ]Φ<br>H |
| b. | [σ <sub>μ</sub> σ <sub>μ</sub> ]Φ | d. | [σ <sub>μ</sub> ]Φ<br>H  |

Pitch accent is realized within the prosodic word. Each prosodic word obligatorily contains a tonal foot which serves as its head, and is the bearer of stress, as shown by the forms parsed into feet in (5) and (6). This foot (designated by underlining) is the leftmost one in the prosodic word in the Neo-štokavian, but not necessarily in the Old-štokavian.<sup>3</sup>

- |                   |  |   |  |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| 5) Neo-štokavian: | a. [( <u>sàn</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H       | b. [( <u>dân</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H        | c. [( <u>mě</u> )(sēc)] <sub>πω</sub><br>H   |
|                   | d. [( <u>ljú</u> )(ba)] <sub>πω</sub><br>H H | e. [( <u>dà</u> )(ni)ca] <sub>πω</sub><br>H H | f. [( <u>jù</u> )(nāk)] <sub>πω</sub><br>H H |
| 6) Old-štokavian: | a. [( <u>sàn</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H       | b. [( <u>dân</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H        | c. [( <u>mě</u> )(sēc)] <sub>πω</sub><br>H   |
|                   | d. [(ljū)( <u>bà</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H   | e. [da( <u>nĩ</u> )ca] <sub>πω</sub><br>H     | f. [ju( <u>nâk</u> )] <sub>πω</sub><br>H     |

<sup>3</sup> The position of pitch accents in the two dialect groups diverges in a systematic fashion. Diachronically, the Old-štokavian is a historical predecessor of the Neo-štokavian which, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, underwent the process of leftward accent shift whereby all non-initial falling accents became rising accents on the immediately preceding syllable (Belić 1956). While the place of the Neo-štokavian falling accents is much the same as in the Old-štokavian, the Neo-štokavian rising accents correspond in the Old-štokavian to the falling accents one syllable to the right. The retracted accent, and as a result, the bisyllabic status of the rising accents, are the central prosodic properties that set apart the Neo-štokavian group of dialects from the Old-štokavian ones, those that had not been subject to this change (see Ivić 1958, Inkelas and Zec 1988, Zec 1993).

Because the stressed syllable has to be associated with tone, “standard” trochaic feet in (4)a,b, may never serve as heads of prosodic words. However, they may appear in non-head position: (4)a appears in non-head position in (5)c and (6)c,d. Non-head tonal feet are relevant only for the Neo-štokavian, and are exemplified in (5)d,e,f. Both “standard” trochaic feet and non-head tonal feet are active in prosodic morphology, as argued in Zec 1999.

The head of the prosodic word is associated with two types of prominence: stress, which is of relational nature, and tonal salience, which is not. The head foot bears the highest degree of prominence by virtue of stress, which is phonetically realized as increase in duration; in (5)d,e,f stress alone makes the head foot more prominent than the immediately following non-head tonal foot. The head foot is also characterized by tonal salience, which distinguishes between those feet that are, and those that are not associated with a High tone. Tonal salience, as already noted, is the non-relational sort of prominence, its phonological status being predicated solely upon the presence, or absence, of a High tone.

As already noted, pitch accent is realized within the prosodic word. Given the division of the lexicon into lexical and functional elements, only elements in the former class invariably correspond to prosodic words. As argued in Zec 1997, 2002, the prosodic properties of functional elements are more varied, their prosodic behavior depending on whether they belong to the class of clitics, that is, bound function words, or free, non-clitic function words. As will be shown in section 6, this distinction plays an important role in the organization of the epic decasyllable.

While lexical elements ( $W_L$ ) are unexceptionally associated with pitch accent and the prosodic word status, as stated in (7), the prosodic status of free, non-clitic function words ( $W_F$ ) depends on their size. Those that are minimally disyllabic possess a pitch accent, and receive the status of a prosodic word. Those, however, that correspond to a single syllable are accented and endowed with the prosodic word status only if associated with sentential focus, as stated in (8).

7) If  $W_L$ , then  $[W_L]_{\pi\omega}$

8) If  $W_F$ , then  $[W_F]_{\pi\omega}$  iff  $W_F$  is minimally disyllabic, or associated with focus.

In sum, monosyllabic free function words lack the prosodic status and, as such, disrupt the prosodic hierarchy (as defined in Selkirk 1978, Nespor and Vogel 1986, Hayes 1989). As argued in Zec 2002, such monosyllabic elements are incorporated directly into the prosodic phrase. The organization of the epic decasyllable is highly sensitive to the prosodic properties of monosyllabic function words: their distribution within a metrical line is considerably restricted in those cases when they lack prosodic salience.

Bound function words, those that are designated as clitics, cannot form a prosodic word on their own under any circumstances. Rather, they subcategorize for a prosodic word, either as proclitics, as in (9a), or as enclitics, as in (9b) (Inkelas 1989); the clitic forms with its host a nested prosodic structure.

9) a.  $[ \text{clitic} [ \text{host} ]_{\pi\omega} ]_{\pi\omega}$     b.  $[ [ \text{host} ]_{\pi\omega} \text{clitic} ]_{\pi\omega}$

Both lexical and functional elements may serve as clitic hosts. Moreover, monosyllabic free function words, which are also possible clitic hosts, form with the clitic a disyllabic unit with nested prosodic word structure, which then makes them eligible for pitch accent (Zec 2002). The clitic, in this case, endows its host with the prosodic word status (see Halpern 1992 for other cases of this type). A monosyllabic free function word thus corresponds to a prosodic word in yet another case: not only when the monosyllabic function word is focused, as stated in (8), but also when it is associated with a clitic.

At most one pitch accent is associated with a prosodic word, regardless of whether it is simplex in structure, as in (10)a, or possesses a nested structure, as in (10)b,c:

- 10) a. [ dân ]<sub>πω</sub> ]                      b. [ na [ dân ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> ]                      c. [ [ dân ]<sub>πω</sub> je ]<sub>πω</sub> ]  
           'day'                                      'on (the) day'                                      '(the) day is'

The nested structure created by the clitic and its host is ambiguous in one respect: phonological processes whose domain is the prosodic word may select either the larger or the smaller scansion of the nested structure and, as argued in Zec 1993, individual dialects, or local idioms, select either the larger or the smaller scansion. However, the larger scansion is relevant for the purposes of prosodic parsing, since it alone yields an exhaustively parsed prosodic constituency. In the epic decasyllable, the larger scansion is selected in the general case, as demonstrated in section 6 below. I take this to be a fact about the linguistic, rather than the metrical, makeup of this verse.

## 2. Prosodic basis of metrical organization

### 2.1. Distribution of pitch accent

The arguments, both for and against, the periodic organization of the epic decasyllable have relied upon the distribution of pitch accent. As observed in the literature (Zima, Maretić, Jakobson), the occurrence of pitch accents in this verse appears to be fairly free, with one notable regularity: colon and line final syllables, the fourth and the tenth, may not bear pitch accent. These distributional properties have been stated with the Neo-štokavian prosodic system in view, and are illustrated in (11); the accent marks follow the Neo-štokavian accentuation.

- |         |   |  |
|---------|---|--|
| 11) (a) | <u>Dm</u> itar <u>l</u> òvi    <u>c</u> ijel <u>d</u> ân po <u>g</u> òri, | 'Dmitar was hunting, all day, in the mountain, |
| (b)     | i <u>n</u> è može    <u>n</u> jšta ulòviti:                               | but could not catch anything.                  |
| (c)     | <u>n</u> âmjera ga    pred <u>v</u> èče <u>n</u> ânese                    | A purpose brought him, towards the evening,    |
| (d)     | na <u>z</u> èlenō    u <u>g</u> òri jèzero,                               | to a green mountain lake.                      |
| (e)     | u jèzeru    <u>ù</u> tvva zlatòkrila;                                     | In the lake, there was a gold-winged duck.     |
| (f)     | <u>p</u> ùsti <u>Dm</u> itar    <u>s</u> îvōga <u>s</u> òkola             | Dmitar released his gray falcon,               |
| (g)     | da <u>ù</u> vati    <u>ù</u> tvvu zlatòkrilu,                             | to seize the gold-winged duck.'                |
- (Vk, II, 97, 64-70)

While the fourth and tenth positions consistently remain unaccented, all other positions in a line, both odd and even, may bear accent: the first syllable is accented in lines (a), (c), and (f); the second in (b), (d), (e), and (g); the third in (a) and (f); the fifth in all lines other than (c) and (d); the sixth in lines (c) and (d); the seventh only in line (a); the eighth in all lines other than (a); and the ninth in line (a).<sup>4</sup> In light of this, any assumption that the epic decasyllable is a periodic meter opens the issue of the headedness of metrical feet. The problem is illustrated in (12): while in (12)a (repeated (11)a) each accent is associated with an odd position in the line, in (12)d (repeated (11)d), each is associated with an even position. (Parentheses in (12) designate the division into metrical feet; accented syllables are highlighted by underlining.)

- 12) (a) (Dmītar) (lòvi) || (č̣ijel) (dân po) (gòri),  
 (d) (na zè)(lenō) || (u gò)(ri jè)(zero),

The issue of whether or not the distribution of pitch accents is metrically significant for the organization of this verse led in fact to a split of views on the nature of this meter. Under one view held, most notably, by Jakobson 1933, 1952, pitch accent exhibits a trochaic tendency, which is manifested as an overall statistical bias towards accentedness in the odd positions of the meter, and its absence in the even positions.<sup>5</sup> In the data he presents, based on two poems (783 lines) by the Montenegrin singer T. Vučić, given in (13), the percentage of accented syllables is generally lower in the even, than in the odd, positions of the line.<sup>6</sup>

- 13) The distribution of pitch accents in Vučić's poems (783 lines) (Jakobson 1952:420)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
62%	31%	53%	--	75%	22%	34%	35%	42%	--

<sup>4</sup> The type of pitch accent does not play a role in the composition of this verse, either. Again, any of the four pitch accents may appear on any of the accent-bearing positions within a line, although there are certain dispreferences. Long accents are rare in the seventh, and even more so, in the eighth position in the line. For example, in the poem from which the excerpt in (11) was taken, and which has 102 lines, we do not find a long rising accent in the seventh, nor a long falling accent in the eighth position in the line; but there are four long falling accents in the seventh, and two long rising accents in the eighth position. Jakobson 1952:418-419 treats this as a metrical constant, but in fact it is no more than a tendency.

<sup>5</sup> Jakobson (1933, 1952) distinguishes between metrical constants and metrical tendencies, and considers the prosodic demarcation of feet in the epic decasyllable to be of the latter type. Jakobson attributed the periodic nature of the epic decasyllable not only to the distribution of pitch accent, but also to the positioning of word boundaries. In the latter case, he identified a tendency towards the placement of word boundaries before the odd, rather than before the even verse positions. This however sheds no light on the headedness of feet, that is, on whether or not this is a trochaic meter.

<sup>6</sup> According to Jakobson 1933: 53, Vučić's performance had been recorded by G. Gesemman at the Sound Division of the Prussian State Library.

Thus, according to Jakobson (1952:420),

The even syllables of the line show a marked tendency to be unaccented and the odd syllables a less marked tendency to carry word accents: even syllables are less frequently accented than the following odd syllables.

But, with the exception of the fourth and tenth positions, the degree of accentedness in the even positions makes the trochaic tendency fairly weak. In (13), the eighth position has a slight advantage over the preceding seventh position, which according to Jakobson does not lessen the trochaic tendency. But the data from Vuk's collection show that, in certain poems, the eighth position exceeds not only the seventh, but also the ninth position in the line.<sup>7</sup> In sum, if the epic decasyllable is indeed a trochaic meter, one would expect much more robust prosodic indicators than is the case with pitch accent.

Under the alternative view, this meter is seen as syllabic in nature, and any apparent trochaic tendency is attributed to the phonological properties of the language rather than to the pressures of the meter (Zima 1909a, 1909b, Maretić 1907, Vaillant 1932, Matić 1964). This view, however, is overly pessimistic in assuming that no prosodic property other than syllable count is subject to metrical patterning.

The one robust prosodic regularity that emerges is the absence of pitch accent from the fourth and tenth positions in the line, as stated in (14) (where  $\acute{\sigma}$  stands for a syllable bearing any of the four pitch accents):

- 14) a. \*  $\sigma\sigma\sigma\acute{\sigma} \parallel \sigma\sigma\sigma\sigma\sigma$   
 b. \*  $\sigma\sigma\sigma\sigma \parallel \sigma\sigma\sigma\sigma\acute{\sigma}$

As we will see, the regularity in (14) does reflect the trochaic organization of the epic decasyllable, once the prosodic indicators of its metrical organization are properly identified.

## 2.2 Accents of mono- and polysyllables

A clearer metrical characterization of this verse emerges if we narrow the focus on the distribution of the accents of monosyllables which, as will be argued, play a central role in the trochaic patterning of this verse. Relevant here is the distribution of those monosyllables which constitute prosodic words and, as such, bear pitch accent.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> According to Ružić 1975:147, the poem *Marko Kraljević i Arapin* (II, 65), in Vuk's second volume, which has 435 lines, exhibits the following distribution of pitch accents:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
50.6	36.3	53.3	0.2	80.2	20.7	33.1	41.1	38.4	--

Note that here, the eighth position outweighs both the seventh and the ninth. High accentedness of the eighth position is characteristic of one of Vuk's best singers, Tešan Podrugović, who preferred trisyllabic to disyllabic words in line final position (Ružić 1975:147). For possible reasons, see section 6.

<sup>8</sup> As detailed in section 1, this class includes all lexical monosyllables, as well as those functional monosyllables that possess prosodic salience by virtue of the association with focus.

It is important to note that, within the bounds of the Neo-štokavian accentuation, the restriction in (14) is metrically relevant for monosyllabic, but not for polysyllabic prosodic words. Polysyllabic words, whose final syllable may not bear pitch accent in this dialect, as noted in section 1, vacuously meet this restriction by virtue of their prosodic makeup. Thus, only the absence of monosyllables from the colon or line final syllable has to be viewed as metrically motivated since, by occupying these positions, monosyllables would have endowed them with pitch accent.

But what role, if any, is to be ascribed to the accents of polysyllables? While the Neo-štokavian dialect, whose polysyllables may not bear final accent, provides no useful clues, the Old-štokavian does since, in this dialect, the accent of a polysyllabic word may occur on any syllable, including the final one. Crucially, in the Old-štokavian rendition of the epic decasyllable, accents of polysyllabic words do occur in colon and line final metrical positions. Evidence for this comes from three Old-štokavian sources of this verse: the Montenegrin cycle in the fourth volume of Vuk's collection, Njegoš's *Ogledalo srpsko*, and the poems collected in Parry and Lord 1953.<sup>9</sup> In (15) – (17), accents in the fourth position are given in the a. examples, and accents in the tenth position, in the b. examples. Accents on the fourth syllable occur in about 8% of lines, and on the line final syllable, in about 4%.<sup>10</sup>

15) Vuk's collection:

- a. Za tō Ivān || ne obrāca glāvê (Vk, IV, 2, 91) 'To that, Ivan did not turn his head'  
 Onî sānāk || svojōj gōspī kâžē (Vk, IV, 12, 10) 'She told that dream to her lady'  
 Jednòm rukôm || ùfati orūže (Vk, IV, 12, 55) 'With one arm, he seized the gun'
- b. Svi òvčāri || uz livādu bjēžê (Vk, IV, 12, 57) 'All shepherd s ran up along the meadow'  
 Pā òbjema || žīvī ogānj dājê (Vk, IV, 2, 119) 'And with both, he produced live fire'  
 Zatō Ivān || ne obrāca glāvê (Vk, IV, 2, 91) 'To that, Ivan did not turn his head'

<sup>9</sup> It has been tacitly assumed that the epic decasyllable was composed in the Neo-štokavian dialect. This is mostly due to Vuk's own effort to bestow on the Neo-štokavian dialect, or rather, on one of its regional variants, the status of linguistic norm. However, while it is true that some of Vuk's best singers are of the Neo-štokavian background, epic decasyllable has been composed by singers from more than one dialectal area, including the Old-štokavian, as is clear from Vuk's own commentary. Parry and Lord's singers come from dialectal regions with marked Old-štokavian traits, as documented by the accentuation they provide; while the Montenegrin origin of Njegoš's collection associates it clearly with a specific Old-štokavian idiom.

<sup>10</sup> This is based on 506 accented lines in Vuk's fourth volume (IV, 2, 12, 13, 17); 471 accented lines in Njegoš's *Ogledalo srpsko* (poems 2, 50, 54), and more than 1000 accented lines in Parry and Lord. Accentuation provided in Parry and Lord's 1953 collection clearly reveals that the dialect of the singers is of the Old-štokavian type (with some Neo-štokavian traits). I am grateful to Dr. Drago Ćupić for his generous help with the selection and accentuation of poems from Vuk's and Njegoš's collections.

- 16) Njegoš's *Ogledalo srpsko*:
- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| a. | Nit je <u>orâj</u>    polomïo krïla (Nj, 2, 7)        | 'Nor did the eagle break his wing'              |
|    | Ali <u>junâk</u>    iz mąglë klikùjë (Nj, 54, 50)     | 'But the brave man called from the mist'        |
|    | malën <u>indât</u>    òsam stòfin drūgâh (Nj, 54, 86) | 'A small squadron, of eight hundred companions' |
| b. | dăce dðbrā    ispod sèbe djögă (Nj, 2, 30)            | 'He will give the good white horse under him'   |
|    | malën <u>indât</u>    òsam stòfin drūgâh (Nj, 54, 86) | 'A small squadron, of eight hundred companions' |
|    | dăce za mē    sèdam džeferdarâh (Nj, 2, 26)           | 'He will give seven rifles for me'              |
- 17) Parry and Lord's collection:<sup>11</sup>
- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| a. | Pâ ovakô    govõri serdâru (P&L, 31, 86)              | 'And spoke thus to sirdar'                          |
|    | Evo ser <u>dâr</u>    do družinê prídje (P&L, 31, 56) | 'Then the sirdar approached the band'               |
|    | Svâkî šũtî    nïšta ne govõri (P&L, 1, 43)            | 'Each was silent and said no word'                  |
|    | Sprêmî sultân    stô hïljâda võjskê (P&L, 1, 14)      | 'The sultan sent an army of a hundred thousand men' |
| b. | Râzbolovā    sèdam gðdin' dānâ (P&L, 26, 2)           | 'He was ill for seven years'                        |
|    | Za Osmānom    devedesët drūgâ (P&L, 31, 17)           | 'Behind Osman were the ninety comrades'             |
|    | Sprêmî sultân    stô hïljâda võjskê (P&L, 1, 14)      | 'The sultan sent an army of a hundred thousand men' |

Under the plausible assumption that the epic poems composed in the Old and Neo-štokavian dialects not only belong to the same poetic tradition, but are also in the same poetic meter, we conclude that the absence of the accents of polysyllables from colon final positions in the Neo-štokavian dialect, while being a fact about its phonology, is not a fact about this verse form (contra Matić 1964).

The accents of monosyllables, however, may not appear in colon and line final position in the Old-štokavian rendition of the epic decasyllable, just as they may not in its Neo-štokavian version. We will take this to be a strong indicator of trochaic patterning, and focus, in the following section, on the distribution of monosyllabic prosodic words in this verse.

### 2.3 Distribution of monosyllables

As noted in Maretić 1907:53-54, the fourth and tenth positions in the line are not the only metrical positions from which monosyllables are excluded. In addition, monosyllables are also prohibited in the eighth position. However, this metrical position is relatively frequently associated with the accents of polysyllables in both the Old- and Neo-štokavian renditions of the epic decasyllable. Thus, while the Neo-štokavian, but not Old-štokavian, may be seen as correlating the absence of the accents of mono- and polysyllables in the

<sup>11</sup> Translations of these examples are based on Parry and Lord 1954.

fourth and tenth positions, the eighth metrical position does not exhibit any such correlation in either dialect group.

The exclusion of monosyllabic prosodic words from the fourth, eighth, and tenth positions emerges as a central trait of this meter. Monosyllables thus may occupy a highly restricted set of metrical positions, as shown in (18) – (23). In addition to lexical monosyllables, which include numerals (the most frequent monosyllabic prosodic words in this meter), examples also include focused functional monosyllables. As is generally the case in this highly formulaic verse, specific monosyllables are often restricted to fixed metrical positions, or recur in fixed syntactic collocations.<sup>12</sup>

In the first colon, monosyllables may occur in the first syllable, as in (18), or the second one, as in (19). For the sake of explicitness, the entire colon is parsed into prosodic words. The prosodic word in the relevant metrical position, as well as its translation, is underlined.

#### 18) First colon: first position

- [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ σ || σ σ σ σ σ σ
- a. [Grad]<sub>πω</sub> [gradili]<sub>πω</sub> || tri godine dana, (Vk, II, 25, 7)  
‘they were building the city for three years’
- b. [konj]<sub>πω</sub> [do [konja]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> || junak do junaka, (Vk, II, 49, 22iv)  
‘horse next to horse, knight next to knight’
- c. [tri]<sub>πω</sub> [tovara]<sub>πω</sub> || blaga zadobiše (Vk, III, 3, 97)  
‘three loads of treasure, they acquired’
- d. [svi]<sub>πω</sub> mi [[da]<sub>πω</sub> se]<sub>πω</sub> || u so prometnemo, (Vk, II, 49, 10iv)  
‘if we all turned to salt’

#### 19) First colon: second position

- σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ || σ σ σ σ σ σ
- a. Već [daj]<sub>πω</sub> [mene]<sub>πω</sub> || tvoju vjeru tvrdu (Vk, II, 63, 45)  
‘But give me your firm word of honor’
- b. Što [car]<sub>πω</sub> [reko]<sub>πω</sub> || to i učinio (Vk, III, 12, 167)  
‘What the czar said, he made good’
- Jer [tri]<sub>πω</sub> [fata]<sub>πω</sub> || u visinu skače (Vk, III, 60, 26)  
‘As he leaps three yards in height’

Under a limited set of circumstances, monosyllabic prosodic words may also occupy the third position: when immediately followed by a functional monosyllable, which has no prosodic status (as detailed in section 1):

<sup>12</sup> The latter property may well follow from the scarcity of grammatical roles that lexical monosyllables could perform: monosyllabic nominals and adjectives may be either in the nominative singular or, if inanimate, also in the accusative singular form. Monosyllabic verbal forms are very few, and restricted to a handful of verbs.

20) First colon: third position

- σ σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ || σ σ σ σ σ σ
- a. [[da]<sub>πω</sub> se]<sub>πω</sub> [ja]<sub>πω</sub> sad || na vojsku opremam (Vk, II, 90, 21)  
‘that I am now making myself ready for the army’
- b. [i [tu]]<sub>πω</sub> [ja]<sub>πω</sub> bih || u boga zločesta (Vk, II, 4, 85)  
‘there as well I was evil before God’
- c. [[Da]<sub>πω</sub> ćeš]<sub>πω</sub> [ti]<sub>πω</sub> nas || kadgodj izbaviti (Vk, III, 51, 23)  
‘that you will one day rescue us’

In the second colon, a monosyllable may occupy the first syllable, as in (21); the second, as in (22); and the third, as in (23); the entire colon is, again, parsed into prosodic words.

21) Second colon: fifth position

- σ σ σ σ || [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ σ σ σ
- a. Ja njoj dado || [struk]<sub>πω</sub> [rumene]<sub>πω</sub> [ruže]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 29, 284)  
‘I gave to her a stem of red rose’
- b. pošljite mu || [list]<sub>πω</sub> [knjige]<sub>πω</sub> [bijeje]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 28, 121)  
‘Send to him a leaf of white book’
- c. Grad gradili || [tri]<sub>πω</sub> [godine]<sub>πω</sub> [dana]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 25, 7)  
‘they were building the city for three years’
- d. pa po svili || [sav]<sub>πω</sub> [izvezen]<sub>πω</sub> [zlatom]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, III, 60, 4)  
‘and on silk, embroidered all in gold’

22) Second colon: sixth position

- σ σ σ σ || σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ σ σ
- a. “Sjedi, care || pak [pij]<sub>πω</sub> [rujno]<sub>πω</sub> [vino]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 28, 479)  
‘Sit here, czar, and drink of red wine’
- b. i stolove || dje [car]<sub>πω</sub> [sedijaše]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 94, 108)  
‘and the tables where the czar had sat’
- c. bolje nam je || [sva]<sub>πω</sub> [tri]<sub>πω</sub> [poginuti]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 38, 55)  
‘it would be better if we all three died’

23) Second colon: seventh syllable

- σ σ σ σ || σ σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ σ
- a. Lov lovio || [letnji]<sub>πω</sub> [dan]<sub>πω</sub> [do [podne]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 14, 20)  
‘He was a-hunting on a summer day, until noon’
- b. ja sam noćas || [zao]<sub>πω</sub> [san]<sub>πω</sub> [usnio]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 9, 77)  
‘last night, I dreamt an evil dream’
- c. kovala mu || [sablju]<sub>πω</sub> [dva]<sub>πω</sub> [kovača]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 43, 651)  
‘his sabre was forged by two blacksmiths’
- d. Neka sudi || [kao]<sub>πω</sub> [ja]<sub>πω</sub> što [sudim]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, III, 12, 151)  
‘May he adjudicate, just as I adjudicate’

In contrast to the third position, however, the ninth position cannot be occupied by a monosyllabic prosodic word. This is because the prosodic configuration which allows for

the occurrence of a monosyllabic prosodic word in the third metrical position, as shown in (20), may not be replicated for the ninth position. This will be attributed, in section 6, to a special status of the line final foot, one of its manifestations being a prohibition against functional monosyllables in the tenth position of the meter.

To conclude, monosyllabic prosodic words could in principle occupy any odd position in the line, including the third and the ninth; and, among the even positions, only the second and sixth. However, conspicuously absent are the following arrangements of monosyllabic prosodic words:

- 24) a. \*σ σ σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> || σ σ σ σ σ σ  
       [gradili]<sub>πω</sub> [grad]<sub>πω</sub> || tri godine dana (constructed on the basis of Vk, II, 25, 7)
- b. \*σ σ σ σ || σ σ σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub> σ σ  
       Neka sudi || [kao]<sub>πω</sub> što [ja]<sub>πω</sub> [sudim]<sub>πω</sub> (constructed on the basis of Vk, III, 12, 151)
- c. \*σ σ σ σ || σ σ σ σ σ [σ]<sub>πω</sub>  
       ja sam noćas || [usnio]<sub>πω</sub> [zao]<sub>πω</sub> [san]<sub>πω</sub> (constructed on the basis of Vk. II, 9, 77)

Thus, what remains to be explained is the absence of monosyllables in the fourth, eighth, and tenth positions. Their absence from the ninth position results from strong distributional restrictions associated with the final foot, to be addressed in section 6. It should be noted that the distribution of monosyllables in the epic decasyllable sharply contrasts with the ways monosyllables pattern in poetic traditions such as English or Russian, in which they freely occupy weak metrical positions.

### 3. Organization of the epic decasyllable into metrical feet

The relevant descriptive generalization about the epic decasyllable – that a monosyllabic prosodic word may not occupy the fourth, eighth, and tenth position in the line – clearly indicates a binary pattern of the decasyllabic verse. I will further argue that it also indicates its trochaic nature. With a line organized into five trochaic feet, two in the first and three in the second colon, a monosyllabic prosodic word is excluded from the weak position of the foot. This is represented in (25), with feet built over syllable-sized metrical positions, and the *strong* (s) and *weak* (w) marking indicating the head/nonhead relation within a foot (Halle and Keyser 1971, Kiparsky 1977, Prince 1989).

- 25)            / \            / \            / \            / \            / \  
                  s w        s w            s w            s w            s w  
       \* ( σ [σ]<sub>ω</sub> ) ( σ [σ]<sub>ω</sub> ) || ( σ [σ]<sub>ω</sub> ) ( σ [σ]<sub>ω</sub> ) ( σ [σ]<sub>ω</sub> )

This restriction is relaxed in colon initial feet, the first and the third, those that are commonly associated with the weakening of restrictions imposed by poetic meter (Kiparsky 1977, Hanson 1991). This prohibition thus takes proper effect in the second, fourth and fifth foot.

But if (25) captures the structural organization of the epic decasyllable, how is this metrical pattern prosodically realized? This will be examined by invoking the parameters

of poetic organization, proposed by Hanson and Kiparsky 1996:292, that set the range of variation in periodic meters, which crucially distinguish between the structure of metrical feet, in (26)(i), and their prosodic realization in (26)ii, reflected in the prosodic characterization of metrical position, the type of prominence utilized by the meter, and the site within the foot in which prominence is constrained.

26) Organization of periodic meters (Hanson and Kiparsky 1996)

General parameters

(i) Structure:

- a. Number of feet (1/2/3/4 ...)
- b. Headedness of feet (right/left)

(ii) Realization:

- a. Position size: maximal size of a metrical position ( $\mu/\sigma/\phi/\omega$ )
- b. Prominence site: where prominence is constrained  
( $S \Rightarrow \neg U / S \Rightarrow P / W \Rightarrow \neg P / W \Rightarrow U$ )
- c. Prominence type: what prosodic category defines prominence  
(weight, stress, strength, pitch accent)

By proposing that the epic decasyllable is a trochaic pentameter, we have already fixed the structural parameters, the number of feet and their headedness. Some of the realization parameter settings are straightforward. As already noted, the size of a metrical position clearly corresponds to a syllable – since a decasyllabic line is invariably exactly ten syllables long. Much less straightforward is the identification of prominence type. The restriction on the distribution of monosyllables in (25) strongly suggests that the prosodic entity relevant for this meter is the prosodic word, which may not exhaustively occupy a weak position in a metrical foot. Whatever prominence type may be represented by the prosodic word, it can at least be stated that prominence is excluded from the weak positions of the meter, which sets the prominence site to  $W \Rightarrow \neg P$  (if weak, then not prominent). Thus, in (25), the prosodic word perniciously contributes prominence to metrically weak positions. But what is the phonological basis for the prosodic word, and in particular, for the monosyllabic prosodic word, to serve as the source of prominence in this meter?

Any prominence that the prosodic word may possess is entirely due to its affiliation with pitch accent, a bundle of properties that is associated with the head of the prosodic word. As noted in section 1, pitch accent is characterized both relationally, as signaled by stress, and non-relationally, by virtue of tone. It is the latter property that is dominant: the entire bundle of properties inherits from tonal salience its non-relational nature and, as a result, pitch accents in mono- and polysyllabic words will be on an equal footing. Thus, if taken as the basis of prominence, pitch accent will make mono- and polysyllabic forms equally prominent.

But taking pitch accent to be the prominence type of the epic decasyllable is at odds with the fact that the accent of monosyllables, but not that of polysyllables, is subject to distributional restrictions in this meter. As already shown in section 2, the accents of polysyllables are in no way metrically restricted. Crucially, it is the pitch accents of monosyllables that this meter singles out as its prominence basis. The obvious question then is, how to grant a special status to the accents of monosyllables.

The solution to be proposed is the following: while pitch accent is taken to be the prominence type selected by this meter, metrical restrictions are placed *not* directly on the distribution of pitch accent, but indirectly, on its head domain. Since the syllable bearing pitch accent corresponds, of course, to a prosodic word's head, the relevant domain will correspond to the prosodic word.

The relevant properties regarding the realization of the epic decasyllable's trochaic structure are summarized in (27):

## 27) Periodic organization of Epic Decasyllable

### (i) Structure:

- a. Number of feet (5)
- b. Headedness of feet (left)

### (ii) Realization:

- a. Position size:  $\sigma$  (syllable)
- b. Prominence site:  $W \Rightarrow \neg P$
- c. Prominence type: pitch accent *contained within its head domain*

Our initial empirical generalization has been that monosyllabic prosodic words play a crucial role in propelling the trochaic pattern of this meter. But although, in descriptive terms, monosyllables obviously play a significant role, there is no mention of prosodic word size in the formal account of this meter in (27). This is because the special status of monosyllables is only derivative. It results from the interaction of two aspects of the realization of this verse: position size and prominence type. Since a metrical position corresponds exactly to a syllable, it follows, trivially, that only a pitch accent's head domain of precisely that size exhaustively occupies a single metrical position. In sum, monosyllables have no special status among prosodic words, but appear to be playing a special role in this verse because the size of a metrical position invariably corresponds to a single syllable.

A further consequence of the characterization in (27) is the asymmetry between the accents of mono- and polysyllabic prosodic words. While the former are directly targeted by the metrical restrictions on this meter, the latter are left unrestricted. Those pitch accents that are heads of polysyllabic prosodic words are free to appear in any metrical position within the line, and they indeed do, as we have seen in section 2. In sum, the requirement regarding the head domain of pitch accent takes effect only when the head domain's size is identical with the size of a metrical position.

To conclude, the prosodic realization of the epic decasyllable's trochaic structure is captured by prohibiting pitch accent, contained within its head domain, from occupying the weak positions of meter. This requirement is relaxed in colon initial feet, which freely admit monosyllables in weak positions, stated in (28).

## 28) **Initial License 1**

In colon initial feet (first and third), the weak position may be occupied by a pitch accent contained in its head domain, that is, by a monosyllabic prosodic word.

This constraint is one of the two colon initial relaxations of metrical conditions; the second one will be presented in section 6. As a result of ranking (28) above (27)ii, monosyllabic

prosodic words are prohibited from the fourth, eighth and tenth, but not from the second and sixth positions.

In the following section I present Jakobson's influential analysis of this meter, and compare it with my proposal which, I argue, is superior to Jakobson's. In section 5 and 6, I present the behavior of function words in this meter: the distribution of monosyllabic prosodic words that serve as proclitic hosts in the former, and the peculiar patterning of monosyllabic free function words in the latter. Section 6 addresses the higher level organization into cola and subcola.

#### 4. Comparison with previous analyses

As already noted, the epic decasyllable has been characterized both as syllabic, and as periodic verse. We focus here on Jakobson 1932, 1933, 1952 proposal, which is by far the most detailed analysis in the literature. In his studies of metrical forms, Jakobson generally distinguishes between metrical constants and metrical tendencies, and this approach constitutes the core of his analysis of the epic decasyllable.

In his study of Slavic epic verse, Jakobson 1952: 418 grants a special status to colon and line final positions in terms of<sup>13</sup>

[a] 'bridge' or 'zeugma' at the end of both colons: the fourth and the tenth syllable belong to the same 'word unit' as the third and ninth syllable, respectively. They are consequently accentless in Štokavian dialects, in which the accent has shifted from the final syllable.

Jakobson 1952:418

In other words, the last two colon final syllables are stipulated to belong to the same word. By virtue of this, monosyllables are excluded from the fourth and tenth positions. Additionally, any polysyllable satisfying the 'bridge' will leave the colon-final position unaccented in the Neo-štokavian dialect; that this is not the case in the Old-štokavian dialect is fully compatible with Jakobson's definition of 'bridge'. This according to Jakobson is a crucial metrical constant of this verse, and thus plays a markedly different role from pitch accent, which in his analysis encodes a metrical tendency towards trochaic rhythm, as mentioned in section 2.

However, while the 'bridge' makes correct predictions about the absence of the Neo-štokavian accent in colon and line final positions, it does not provide a correct empirical generalization about the distribution of monosyllables in this verse. The 'bridge' technically excludes monosyllables from the fourth and tenth positions in a line, yet as we have seen, these metrical positions present only a subset of those that do not admit monosyllables. As demonstrated in section 2, monosyllables are excluded not only from the fourth and the tenth, but also from the eighth position in the line, and this is fully captured by my analysis presented in section 3.

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<sup>13</sup> A footnote is omitted from the Jakobson quote.

In his earlier work on the epic decasyllable (Jakobson 1932, 1933), Jakobson does acknowledge restrictions on the distribution of monosyllables:<sup>14</sup>

Die einsilbigen Wortganzen fallen auf die ungeraden Verssilben. Daher ist die Konstante abgeleitet, dass sich vor der vierten und zehnten Verssilbe keine Wortgrenzen (genauer keine Grenzen zwischen autonomen Wortganzen) finden. In diesem Gesetze über die einsilbigen Wortganzen macht sich die trochäische Tendenz des deseterac geltend, d.h. die Tendenz zum Alternieren “Steigung-Senkung”: die Senkung darf hier nicht mit einem einsilbigen Wortganzen belastet sein.

Jakobson 1933:54

Note that, only the absence of monosyllables from the fourth and tenth metrical positions is interpreted as a constant property of this verse and expressed as a constraint on the placement of word boundaries. But the absence of monosyllables from the eighth position in the line is seen as simply reinforcing the general trochaic tendency of this meter, and as such, comparable to the generalizations that hold for the accents of polysyllables. This interpretation is consistent with Jakobson’s 1952 analysis: while an explicit metrical device, notably, the ‘bridge’, is posited to exclude monosyllables from the fourth and tenth positions, no device is posited to exclude monosyllables from the eighth position. In other words, while the exclusion of monosyllables from the fourth and tenth positions is treated as a constant property of the meter, their absence from the eighth position is seen as a metrical tendency. That monosyllables are consistently excluded from the eighth position is subsumed under the distribution of pitch accents in this, and other weak metrical positions which, according to Jakobson, tends towards trochaic patterning. Yet, as argued in section 2.1, the overall distribution of pitch accents in this verse is not sufficiently systematic to reflect a trochaic tendency. Moreover, even even if the accentedness of the eighth metrical position could indeed be subsumed under a trochaic tendency, this move would obscure a crucial fact about this meter: that monosyllables are absent from the eighth position, which can hardly be interpreted as a tendency. In sum, Jakobson’s analysis fails to capture the distribution of monosyllables in this meter, which is its defining property.

My approach crucially differs from Jakobson’s in treating the distribution of monosyllables as a defining property of the meter which, in a robust fashion, reflects its periodic organization. This calls for a single metrical device that would capture all aspects of the distribution of monosyllables. This of course cannot be accomplished by Jakobson’s ‘bridge’, nor can it be accomplished by any other account in that same spirit. Positing two ‘bridge’ points for the second half-line – before the tenth and, additionally, before the eighth syllable – would incorrectly exclude lines which end with a trisyllabic word, and present a very common line type. The ‘bridge’ is thus not an empirically adequate metrical device for capturing the distribution of monosyllables within a decasyllabic line. In sum, the ‘bridge’ does not cover the full range of relevant facts about this verse, nor does it provide an appropriate conceptualization of its metrical structure. As I have argued here,

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<sup>14</sup> “Monosyllabic word units are found in odd syllables of the verse. This reflects the metrical constant that before the fourth and tenth syllables in verse no word boundary (or rather, no boundary between autonomous word units) may occur. This rule regarding monosyllabic word units gives validity to the trochaic tendency of the deseterac, the tendency towards rise-fall alternations: the fall may not coincide with a monosyllabic word unit.”

the distribution of monosyllables strongly suggests the organization of a line into metrical feet; in sum, it is a clear indicator of the trochaic pattern of this verse.

## 5. Monosyllabic prosodic words combined with clitics

A prosodic word that includes clitics has a nested structure, as in (29), and due to this may potentially have an ambiguous status: either the smaller scansion, that is  $\pi\omega_i$ , or the larger, that is  $\pi\omega_j$ , could be taken as prior:

29) [ clitic [ host ] $_{\pi\omega_i}$ ] $_{\pi\omega_j}$

Generally, it is the larger scansion that is relevant for singling out prosodic words, both in the phonological system, and in this meter. Thus, the four syllables in the first colon may be filled by a single prosodic word, which in turn may correspond to a single morphological word, as in (30)a, or may have nested structure: due to the presence of an enclitic, in (30)b, or a proclitic, in (30)c.

- 30) a. [Andjèlija] $_{\pi\omega}$  || [mòja] $_{\pi\omega}$  [vjêrnā] $_{\pi\omega}$  [ljúbo] $_{\pi\omega}$  (Vk, II, 97, 98)  
 ‘Andjelija, my faithful wife’  
 b. [ [nâmjera ] $_{\pi\omega}$  ga] $_{\pi\omega}$  || [pred [ vèče] $_{\pi\omega}$  ] $_{\pi\omega}$  [nànese] $_{\pi\omega}$  (Vk, II, 97, 66)  
 ‘A purpose brought him, towards the evening’  
 c. [u [jèzeru] $_{\pi\omega}$  ] $_{\pi\omega}$  || [ùtva] $_{\pi\omega}$  [zlatòkrila] $_{\pi\omega}$  (Vk, II, 97, 68)  
 ‘In the lake, there was a gold-winged duck’

In all three cases, the entire first colon is taken to be occupied by a single prosodic word, that is, by the prosodic word that corresponds to the maximal scansion.

Maximal scansion is relevant also for monosyllables which, combined with clitics, form configurations that behave like polysyllabic prosodic words. Monosyllabic prosodic words, as we have seen, are excluded from the weak positions of this meter, but when serving as proclitic hosts, they are admitted into weak metrical positions, as exemplified in (31) – (34); all weak positions in fact other than the tenth, that is, the one that belongs to the final foot.

A monosyllable combined with a proclitic may occur in colon initial feet; this of course is expected, since the first and third foot are those in which metrical prohibitions against monosyllabic prosodic words are generally relaxed, due to (28). In (31) are given examples for the first, and in (32), for the third foot; lexical monosyllables figure in the a. and b. examples, with a numeral in the latter, and monosyllabic function words, in the c. examples.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The preposition/pronoun combinations *za me* ‘for me’, *za te* ‘for you’, *za se* ‘for oneself’ are treated here as lexicalized units, rather than sequences of a proclitic followed by its host, for the following reasons: First, the vowel of the preposition is long in this collocation but short in all other cases. Second, these expressions, have ‘full pronoun’ counterparts *za mene*, *za tebe*, *za sebe*; the pronoun is focusable in the latter, but not in the former set. Likewise, expressions such as *sa mnom* ‘with me’, *za mnom* ‘after me’ which contain the instrumental first person pronoun, will be treated as lexicalized, since here as well the pronoun cannot be focused.

- 31) First foot:  $[\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \sigma \sigma \parallel \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$
- a.  $[\underline{u} [\underline{sto}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ sjede} \parallel \text{Crnojević Ivo}$  (Vk, II, 88, 97)  
 ‘At the table sat Crnojević Ivo’
- b.  $[\underline{za} [\underline{tri}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ dana} \parallel \text{i tri noći tavne}$  (Vk, II, 52, 69)  
 ‘for three days, and three dark nights’
- c.  $[\underline{od} [\underline{njih}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ pusto} \parallel \text{oduzeše blago}$  (Vk, III, 5, 159)  
 ‘from them, they took away great treasures’
- 32) Third foot:  $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \parallel [\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$
- a.  $\text{svi mi da se} \parallel [\underline{u} [\underline{so}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ prometnemo,}$  (Vk, II, 49, 10iv)  
 ‘if we all turned to salt’
- b.  $\text{pa napravi} \parallel [\underline{do} [\underline{tri}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ čaše zlatne,}$  (Vk, II, 26, 29)  
 ‘and made three gold goblets’
- c.  $\text{il' ćes vatru} \parallel [\underline{sa} [\underline{tim}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ ugasiti}$  (Vk, IV, 24, 341)  
 ‘or will you extinguish the fire with it’

A monosyllable combined with a proclitic may also occupy the weak positions of the second and fourth foot, those in which metrical constraints rigorously take effect. In (33), a monosyllable combined with a proclitic occurs in the weak position of the second foot: the noun *lov* ‘hunt’ figures in (33)a, the numeral *tri* ‘three’ in (33)b, and the function word *njoj* ‘her’ which, when combined with a clitic, is endowed with a prosodic word status, in (33)c.

- 33) Second foot:  $\sigma \sigma [\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \parallel \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$
- a.  $\text{već on} [\underline{u} [\underline{lov}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \parallel \text{u planinu podje}$  (Vk, II, 7, 53)  
 ‘but he went hunting in the mountain’
- b.  $\text{dje se} [\underline{do} [\underline{dva}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \parallel \text{druma rastavljaju}$  (Vk, III, 49, 178)  
 ‘where two roads fork’
- c.  $\text{kralj ga} [\underline{u} [\underline{njoj}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \parallel \text{u svatove zove,}$  (Vk, II, 61, 14)  
 ‘in it, the king invites him to his wedding’

And, in (34), a monosyllable preceded by a proclitic occupies the weak position of the fourth foot, with the noun *red* ‘line’ in (34)a; the numeral *tri* ‘three’ in (34)b; and the function word *njoj* ‘her’ in (34)c.

- 34)  $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \parallel \sigma \sigma [\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \sigma \sigma$
- a.  $\text{Kako dodje,} \parallel \text{s njima} [\underline{u} [\underline{red}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ stade.}$  (Vk, II, 28, 233)  
 ‘as he came, he got in line with them’
- b.  $\text{te upreže} \parallel \text{konje} [\underline{u} [\underline{tri}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ reda;}$  (Vk, II, 90, 25)  
 ‘and he harnessed horses in three rows’
- c.  $\text{te vidjeo} \parallel \text{što se} [\underline{u} [\underline{njoj}]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega} \text{ piše}$  (Vk, III, 20, 48)  
 ‘and he saw what was written in it’

This clearly shows that it is the larger scansion which is relevant; that is, the weak position is not construed as filled by a monosyllabic prosodic word.

It should be noted that lines with the fourth and eighth positions filled with a monosyllable that hosts a proclitic, as in (33) and (34), are encountered much less frequently than those in which the second and the sixth positions are filled in this fashion, as in (31) and (32). Still, monosyllables hosting proclitics consistently occur in the fourth and eighth positions, albeit with a very low percentage, which is below 1%. Their presence is stable, with several cases emerging within any randomly picked set of one thousand lines. Thus, although lines like (33) – (34) are rare, I will consider them to be metrical, that is, in full compliance with the constraints that regulate this verse.

This is endorsed by the distribution of formulaic expressions across metrical positions. As already noted, the epic decasyllable is a highly formulaic verse in which certain fixed expressions recur with only minimal variation. Of interest at this point is the range of metrical positions that are compatible with a given formulaic expression. Thus, the phrase *na um* ‘to mind’, consisting of a proclitic followed by its host, appears in the fixed expression in (35), with either the order in (35)a or in (35)b:

35) a. [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> pade      b. pade [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub>      . ‘came to mind’

The examples below show that the phrase *na um* is compatible not only with the first and third foot, as in (36), but also with the second and fourth foot, as in (37); with all feet in fact other than the final one.

- 36) a. [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> pade || begu Radul-begu (Vk, II, 74, 40)  
‘It occurred to beg Radul-beg’  
b. Igumanu || [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> pade Simo, (Vk, II, 13, 190)  
‘The prior recalled Simo’
- 37) a. Pade [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> || Crnojević Ivu, (Vk, II, 88, 116)  
‘It occurred to Crnojević Ivo’  
b. Ali njemu || odmah [na [ um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> pade, (Vk, II, 38, 79)  
‘But it occurred to him instantly’

Moreover, numerals often co-occur with the preposition *do* ‘up to’ which in this context serves merely as an empty filler. In (38), *do trista* ‘up to three hundred’ can only be interpreted as exactly ‘three hundred’, which suggests that *do* contributes no meaning of its own, and that its sole function is to ensure correct syllable count within the line.

- 38) te pokupi || do trista svatova (Vk, III, 73, 42)  
‘and he gathered three hundred wedding guests’  
te nadjoše || do trista izvora (Vk, II, 26, 26)  
‘and they found three hundred springs of water’

Combinations of *do* with a monosyllabic numeral are found not only in the first and third foot, as in (39) and (40), but also in the second and fourth foot, as in (41) and (42):

- 39) First foot  
[do [dva]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> brata, dva Nedića mlada (Vk, IV, 26, 69)  
‘two brothers, two young Nedićes’

40) Third foot

- a. Vino piju || [do [dva]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> pobratima (Vk, II, 16, 1)  
 ‘Two bosom friends were drinking wine’
- b. eto otud || [do [tri]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> gorske vile, (Vk, II, 11, 15)  
 ‘From there came three mountain sprites’

41) Second foot:

- a. kada [do [dva]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> || kneza pogiboše (Vk, IV, 24, 441)  
 ‘when two princes perished’
- b. dje se [do [dva]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> || drumna rastavljaju (Vk, III, 49, 178)  
 ‘where two roads fork’

42) Fourth foot:

- a. da ti kažem || do dve [do [tri]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> reči: (Vk, II, 14, 95)  
 ‘Let me say to you two or three words’
- b. Na Balačku || jesu [do [tri]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> glave: (Vk, II, 28, 608)  
 ‘On Balačko, there were three heads’

Thus, formulaic expressions which, in a sense, constitute the building blocks of this verse, when taking the form of a proclitic hosted by a monosyllable, are compatible with both the fourth and the eighth position within the line.

However, this generalization does not extend to the final foot: a monosyllable combined with a proclitic may not occupy the tenth metrical position. While a few lines have been attested with a functional monosyllable combined with a proclitic occupying the tenth metrical position, not one case has been found with a lexical monosyllable occurring in this configuration.<sup>16</sup>

We may thus conclude that, in the final foot, it is the smaller scansion that counts, and that therefore, lines such as (43) are not within the range of metrical possibilities in this verse.

---

<sup>16</sup> The following lines contain functional monosyllables combined with a proclitic in the tenth position:

- (i) da oko šta, || veće [ni [oko [šta]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> ‘what about, if not about a trifle’ (Vk, II, 74, 6; Vk, II, 97, 24)
- (ii) a ne mogu || ni da čuju [za [nju]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> ‘but they cannot even hear about her’ (Vk, II, 96, 34)
- (iii) il ne čuješ, il’ ne haješ [za [nas]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> ‘you either don’t hear, or don’t care about us’ (Vk, III, 16, 60)
- (iv) hoće li se || nasmijati [na [nju]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> ‘will he smile at her?’ (III, 51, 77)

These are the only lines of this type that I have found, and may well be an exhaustive list of such cases. If lines like these are to be permitted into the cannon of this meter, then their privileged status should follow from a special metrical license granted to functional monosyllables which goes beyond those proposed in section 6.

Lexicalized expressions discussed in note 15, such as *za me* ‘for me’, *za te* ‘for you’, *za se* ‘for oneself’, as well as *sa mnom* ‘with me’, *za mnom* ‘after me’ do not violate any constraints on this meter when they appear in line final foot, as in

- (v) Jal’ ne mare, || jal’ ne čuju *za te?* ‘Is it that they don’t care, or don’t hear about you?’ (Vk, II, 96, 126)
- (vi) Stani, Andjo, ti ne idi *za mnom* ‘Wait, Andja, you should not follow after me’ (Vk, III, 54, 205)

- 43) \*  $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \parallel \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma [\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega}$   
 Ali njemu || odmah pade [na [um ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> (constructed on the bases of V<sub>k</sub>, II, 38, 79)

We will attribute the unmetricality of lines such as (43) to the special metrical status of the line final foot, an important property of this verse which is addressed in section 7.

## 6. Monosyllabic free function words

A monosyllabic free function word has no pitch accent of its own, and is thus incapable of endowing a metrical position with prominence, as noted in section 1. As such, it should in principle be compatible with any metrical position, and therefore also with the weak position in the foot. But while the distribution of monosyllabic function words is not constrained by any of the metrical conditions in (27), it is not free, either. In fact, it directly reflects, and is subsumed under, the set of constraints that govern the arrangement of hierarchically organized prosodic constituents (as in Nespor and Vogel 1986, Hayes 1989) within a metrical line.

Both the line, and the colon, are subject to alignment with prosodic constituents. The right edge of the line is generally associated with syntactic boundaries, either phrasal or clausal, which strongly suggests that a metrical line is minimally aligned, at its left and right edges, with an intonational phrase boundary. The colon, on the other hand, is minimally aligned with the edges of a prosodic word, as stated in (44) – (45) (following McCarthy and Prince 1993b).

- 44) **Colon Left**  
 The left edge of the colon coincides with the left edge of a prosodic word.
- 45) **Colon Right**  
 The right edge of the colon coincides with the right edge of a prosodic word.

The effect of (44) and (45) is best evidenced at the end of the first, and the beginning of the second colon, and captures the already stated structural property of this verse: that the decasyllabic line is divided into two cola by a fixed caesura, coinciding with a word boundary. To illustrate this, while colon boundaries may align with higher level prosodic constituents, for example, the prosodic phrase, as in (46), they minimally align with prosodic word boundaries, as in (47):

- 46) [ [ [na [ Kruševcu ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πφ</sub> || [ [ gradu]<sub>πω</sub> [ bijelome]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πφ</sub> (V<sub>k</sub>, III, 10, 45)  
 ‘in Kruševac, the white city’
- 47) [ [ [na [ bijelu]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πω</sub> || [ gradu ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πφ</sub> [ [ [ Smederevu ]<sub>πω</sub> ]<sub>πφ</sub> (V<sub>k</sub>, III, 10, 53)  
 ‘in the white city of Smederevo’

Constraints (44) – (45) have an important impact on the distribution of free functional monosyllables. Because its morphological edges do not coincide with any prosodic edges, including the edges of a prosodic word, a monosyllabic function word that

appears at the left edge of a colon violates (44), and one appearing at its right edge, violates (45). In sum, a monosyllabic function word (here MW<sub>F</sub>) prevents prosodic edge alignment both at the left edge of a colon, as in (48)a, and at its right edge, as in (48)b (where || signifies colon edge):

48) a. \* || MW<sub>F</sub> [π<sub>ω</sub> ... ]π<sub>ω</sub> ||

b. \* || [π<sub>ω</sub> ... ]π<sub>ω</sub> MW<sub>F</sub> ||

A further aspect of the mapping between metrical and prosodic constituents is the general requirement that the poetic material within a metrical line be exhaustively parsed into prosodic words, as stated in (49):

49) **Contiguity**

Any two prosodic words within a colon, π<sub>ω<sub>i</sub></sub> and π<sub>ω<sub>j</sub></sub>, are either contiguous, or separated by another prosodic word, π<sub>ω<sub>k</sub></sub>.

\* || ... ]π<sub>ω</sub> ω π<sub>ω</sub> [ ... || where ω is a morphological word with no prosodic word status.

The presence of a monosyllabic function word anywhere in the line directly conflicts with this requirement, as schematized in (50):

50) \* || ... ]π<sub>ω</sub> MW<sub>F</sub> π<sub>ω</sub>[ ... ||

Monosyllabic function words are not, of course, entirely banned from a decasyllabic line, as strict adherence to **Colon Left**, **Colon Right** and **Contiguity** would require. In fact, monosyllabic function words occur relatively freely at the left edges of both cola, due to another case of colon initial relaxation of metrical conditions, **Initial License 2**, stated in (51); and its overriding effect over **Colon Left**, expressed by the ranking in (52):

51) **Initial License 2**

In colon initial feet (first and third), the weak position may be occupied by a free monosyllabic function word.

52) **Initial License 2 >> Colon Left**

The occurrence of monosyllabic function words at the left edge of the first colon is illustrated in (53), and their occurrence at the left of the second colon, in (54).

53) First colon:

a. već [isprosi]<sub>π<sub>ω</sub></sub> || lijepu devojku (Vk, II, 9, 18)

‘but he was accepted by a beautiful maiden’

b. on [sazida]<sub>π<sub>ω</sub></sub> || kulu od kamena (Vk, II, 14, 111)

‘he built a tower of stone’

- 54) Second colon:
- a. pa se svome || on [poklanja]<sub>πω</sub> [kralju]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 80, 97)  
‘and he bowed before his king’
  - b. “Sjedi, care || pak [pij]<sub>πω</sub> [rujno]<sub>πω</sub> [vino]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 28, 479)  
‘Sit here, czar, and drink of red wine’

As the examples in (55) – (56) show, the entire colon initial foot may be occupied solely by functional monosyllables, and thus left outside the prosodic word domain; this collocation is found much more frequently at the left edge of the first colon than of the second.

- 55) First colon:
- a. već on [u [lov]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> || u planinu podje (Vk, II, 7, 53)  
‘but he went hunting in the mountain’
  - c. al’ još [sestra]<sub>πω</sub> || u dušeku spava, (Vk, II, 5, 64)  
‘but the sister was still in bed asleep’
- 56) Second colon:
- a. Ne služi ga || što on [blaga]<sub>πω</sub> [nema]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 75, 4)  
‘He is not serving him because he has no treasure’
  - b. nek je harač || ko što [Murat]<sub>πω</sub> [reče]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, IV, 24, 360)  
‘may the taxes be as Murat had said’

Finally, with **Contiguity** ranked over **Initial License 2**, as in (57), configuration (50) is prohibited in colon initial feet.

57) **Contiguity** >> **Initial License 2**

To conclude, constraints and constraint rankings posited thus far have the effect of excluding functional monosyllables from noninitial feet.

In a narrowly defined discourse context, however, monosyllabic function words may exceptionally occur in the second and the fourth foot, as illustrated in (58) – (60). These, and similar, lines occur predominantly within dialogue exchanges, and are hardly ever found within the narrative portion of the poem. This strongly suggests that lines of this type are licensed by virtue of a discourse based relaxation of both **Contiguity** and **Colon Right** in those portions of the poem which call for a more discursive style:

- 58) Second foot: fourth position
- a. [Koja [je]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> tu || Roksanda djevojka (Vk, II, 28, 571)  
‘Which one here is maiden Roksanda’
  - b. [Kada [ću]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> ja || i tebeka preći (Vk, IV, 24, 628)  
‘When will I cross you, as well’

59) Fourth foot: seventh position

- a. Ako l' bi se || [u [nju]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> kad [vratio]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, IV, 28, 415)  
 'If I ever returned to it'
- b. Al' da vidiš || [čuda]<sub>πω</sub> još [večega]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, III, 38, 181)  
 'If only you saw this yet greater miracle'

60) Fourth foot: eighth position

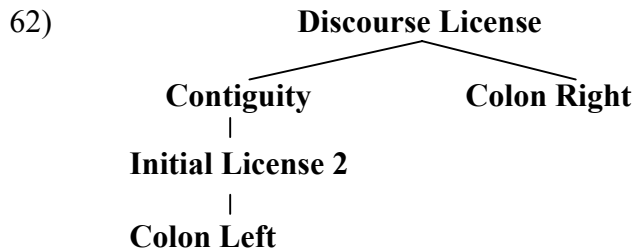
- a. Nit' sam bio, || [niti [ću]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> kad [biti]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 49 (iii), 45)  
 'I never was, nor will ever be'
- b. Da ogledam || [može [li]<sub>πω</sub>]<sub>πω</sub> što [biti]<sub>πω</sub> (Vk, II, 66, 108)  
 'To see if anything could occur'

Thus, monosyllabic function words are exceptionally licensed within dialogue, possibly to render such exchanges more lively and more “natural”, as expressed by the following constraint:

61) **Discourse License**

Functional monosyllables are licensed in dialogue exchanges.

In sum, the overall ranking of constraints which regulate the arrangement of prosodic words within metrical constituents is as in (62):



This ranking allows for the suboptimal configuration (50) to be instantiated in dialogue exchanges in colon initial feet, and this indeed is the case, as illustrated in (63) for the first colon.

63) First colon:

- a. [daj]<sub>πω</sub> ti [nama]<sub>πω</sub> || Sekulu nećaka, (Vk, II, 84, 30)  
 'give (you) to us your nephew Sekula'
- b. [konj]<sub>πω</sub> moj [nije]<sub>πω</sub> ||, a djevojka tudja, (Vk, II, 86, 162)  
 'the horse is not mine, and the maiden belongs to another'

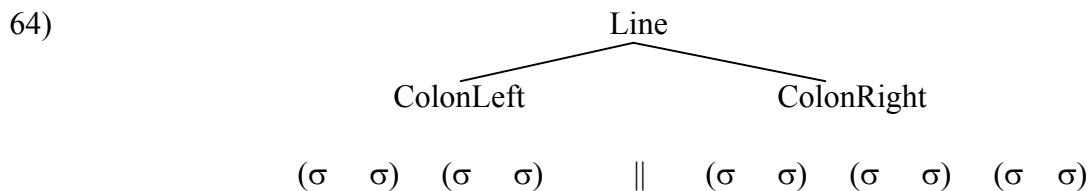
However, a functional monosyllable may not occur in the fifth foot, specifically, in line final position. This distributional gap is not captured by the analysis presented thus far, as summarized in (62). One solution could be to ensure that **Colon Right** is enforced more rigorously in the second, than in the first, colon, thus capturing greater restrictiveness imposed at the end of the line. However, greater restrictiveness at the line closure has

already been evidenced in section 5, which calls for a more general mechanism. In what follows, special restrictions associated with the line final foot will be attributed to structural subdivisions within the line, beyond those that have been posited thus far.

## 7. Higher order metrical units

The line final foot is subject to greater restrictions than other positions in the line, as shown both by the distribution of monosyllabic clitic hosts (section 5), and of functional monosyllables (section 6). Rather than positing a constraint with the sole purpose of further codifying this metrical position, we will attribute these distributional restrictions to the higher level organization of a metrical line.

A notable structural property of the epic decasyllable is that the a line is divided into two cola. The caesura imposes an asymmetric structure, with two feet in the first, and three, in the second colon, rendering the second colon weightier than the first, as represented in (64):



As we have seen, the arrangement of prosodic words in a line crucially observes the caesura, invariably positioned after the fourth syllable; a line with a prosodic word occupying the fourth and fifth metrical positions would be unmetrical.

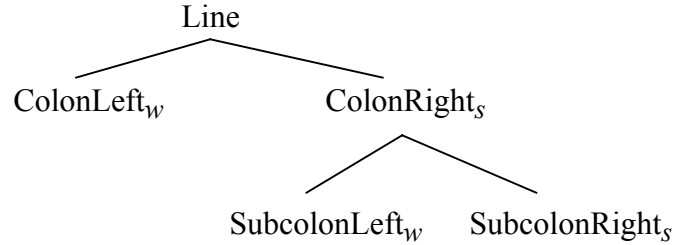
This, however, is not the only structural division within a decasyllabic line. The heightened metrical restrictions in the line final foot will be accounted for by positing an additional break, henceforth the subcaesura, which divides the second colon into two subcola. Unlike the caesura, the subcaesura is only partially fixed: the second subcolon corresponds to a single prosodic word and minimally includes the final metrical foot, as stated in (65):

### 65) The rightmost subcolon

- a. subsumes the line final foot (metrical requirement)
- b. corresponds to exactly one prosodic word (prosodic requirement)

Both cases of heightened metrical restrictions take effect within the rightmost subcolon. Its special status follows from the structural organization of higher level metrical constituents and their relative strength, as represented in (66):

66)



The strong/weak labeling in (66) (following Prince 1989) designates the right colon, and likewise, the right subcolon, as stronger than their left counterparts. The rightmost subcolon thus emerges as the strongest higher level metrical subconstituent and, as such, associated with greater metrical restrictiveness. The special status of the line final foot thus follows from its obligatory inclusion into the rightmost subcolon.<sup>17</sup> By contrast, the weak subconstituents, leftmost colon and leftmost subcolon, allow for relaxations of metrical conditions. The two **Initial License** constraints, stated in (28) and (51), could profitably be restated as taking effect at the left edge of those metrical subconstituents which are labeled as weak.

The absence of functional monosyllables follows directly from the characterization of the rightmost subcolon. Note that (65) imposes an obligatory prosodic word boundary at the end of the line. If (65) is rigorously enforced, that is, if it ranks above **Discourse License**, then the final foot will not contain any functional monosyllables, which captures the heightened restriction in this metrical position, stated in section 6.

The metrical restriction stated in section 5, according to which a monosyllabic proclitic host may not occupy the tenth position in a line, calls for further refinement. The rightmost subcolon is prosodically transparent: it forms a narrow window in which all prosodic structure, including prosodic word nesting, is visible to, and evaluated by, metrical constraints. As a result, any prosodic structure that it contains has to conform to the metrical requirements of this verse, including all layers of prosodic word structure.

67) **Strong Subcolon Transparency:** Every prosodic word included in the rightmost subcolon has to comply with metrical constraints (in particular, (27)ii).

Thus, the clitic combination *na um* in the unmetrical line (30), repeated here as (68), violates **Strong Subcolon Transparency** because one of the prosodic words in the

<sup>17</sup> There is a small number of metrically infelicitous lines, with lexical monosyllables in the fourth and eighth positions. Below are listed the known examples in Vuk's three volumes::

- |   |                    |  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| (i) Ili si [lud] <sub>πω</sub>    i ništa ne znadeš,      | (Vk, II, 65, 356)  | 'You are either <u>mad</u> , or know nothing'        |
| kamo ti [mač] <sub>πω</sub>    i megdan junački           | (Vk, III, 60, 47)  | 'where is your <u>sword</u> , and the heroic duel'   |
| najprva [kćer] <sub>πω</sub>    Mihaila bana,             | (Vk, II, 12, 41)   | 'the first <u>daughter</u> of Mihailo ban'           |
| pak mu sve [tri] <sub>πω</sub>    otsiječe glave,         | (Vk, II, 28, 665)  | 'and he cut off all his <u>three</u> heads'          |
| Meni se [zna] <sub>πω</sub>    i otac i majka             | (Vk, III, 55, 120) | 'It is <u>known</u> who my father and mother are'    |
| (ii) Da se, jadna,    za zelen [bor] <sub>πω</sub> vatim, | (Vk, II, 50, 135)  | 'If, in my misery, I touch a green <u>fir tree</u> ' |
| ćeraše ga    za puno [dva] <sub>πω</sub> sata             | (Vk, IV, 28, 381)  | 'they chased him for <u>two</u> whole hours'         |

Crucially, however, no cases have been found with lexical monosyllables in line final position, which is consistent with maximal metrical restrictiveness associated with the line final foot.

rightmost subcolon exhaustively occupies a weak position of the meter. The fact that, in addition to a monosyllabic prosodic word, there is also a disyllabic scansion available, does not salvage this configuration.

68)         $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$     ||     $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma [\sigma [\sigma]_{\pi\omega}]_{\pi\omega}$   
          \* Ali njemu    ||    odmah pade [na [ um ] <sub>$\pi\omega$</sub>  ] <sub>$\pi\omega$</sub>

The special status of the second subcolon can account for another metrical peculiarity of this verse. As schematized in (69), the second subcolon which, as already stated, corresponds to the final prosodic word in a line and subsumes the final foot, may considerably vary in size, the extreme case being (69)a, in which the subcaesura coincides with the caesura, and (69)b, in which the subcaesura is one syllable apart from the caesura.

69)	ColonRight	
	SubcolonLeft	SubcolonRight
a.		[ $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$ ] <sub><math>\pi\omega</math></sub>
b.		$\sigma$   [ $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$ ] <sub><math>\pi\omega</math></sub>
c.		$\sigma \sigma$   [ $\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$ ] <sub><math>\pi\omega</math></sub>
d.		$\sigma \sigma \sigma$   [ $\sigma \sigma \sigma$ ] <sub><math>\pi\omega</math></sub>
e.		$\sigma \sigma \sigma \sigma$   [ $\sigma \sigma$ ] <sub><math>\pi\omega</math></sub>

By far the most common are the types of lines in (69)c – (69)e, which jointly account for over 95%. In only one of these cases is there a further requirement imposed on the second subcolon: when it corresponds to a single foot, as in (69)e. There is a strong tendency for disyllables in line final position to possess a heavy initial syllable (Maretić 1903, 1907). This is the case in about 75% out of the total number of disyllables in line final foot, compared to the situation in the third foot, in which no more than about 44% disyllables have a long initial syllable. This will be interpreted as tendency towards prominence required in the strong position when the second subcolon equals a foot, as stated in (70).<sup>18</sup>

#### 70) Final Foot Prominence (tendency)

If the rightmost subcolon corresponds to a single foot, then

- a. the strong position of the foot has to be prominent (S  $\Rightarrow$  P)
- b. the prominence type is syllable quantity (P = vowel length)

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<sup>18</sup> This condition appears to be subject to singers' individual strategies, which would lead to a reduced number of disyllables with a short initial syllable in line final position (Ružić 1975:147). Jakobson 1952: 418-419 treats the quantitative clause as a metrical constant, on the basis of Vučić's two poems (783 lines) in which "an accented short is avoided in the penult (ninth) syllable." Thus reportedly, in this case penultimate syllables are long, regardless of the size of the word unit that they belong to. It could be that, in Vučić's style, length in the ninth position is a condition relevant for any final foot, rather than just those that are singled out by a specific shape of the second subcolon.

While this is not an absolute requirement but rather, a metrical tendency, this tendency is sufficiently strong, that is sufficiently above chance, to deserve a place in the formal account of this verse. Moreover, the property of this verse to avoid vowel length in the seventh and eighth metrical positions, observed by Jakobson, could well be construed as a counterpart to the marked case in (70). In the unmarked case, when the rightmost subcolon's size exceeds the size of a foot, as in (69)c,d, the corresponding word unit preferably begins with a short voweled syllable.<sup>19</sup>

Cases of greater restrictiveness in line final position, which have been captured here as metrical conditions on the rightmost subcolon, while apparently disparate in nature, do possess a unifying property: they impose greater regularity, both metrical and prosodic, within the metrically strongest constituent in the line. Constraint (70) could be motivated in this same spirit. The preferred size of the rightmost subcolon is to be greater than a metrical foot, and constraint (70) encodes what amounts to compensatory prominence when this is not the case. Thus, for the second subcolon to be greater than a metrical foot emerges as its unmarked size, which in effect maximizes the window within which a higher degree of metrical regularity is imposed.

But the preference for the rightmost subcolon to be greater than a foot could be interpreted in yet another fashion. As already noted, the subdivision into cola is asymmetric, with the second colon being weightier than the first. In light of variation in the size of the rightmost subcolon in (69), the following generalization obtains: The second subcolon is weightier than the first in (69)a - (69)c, and equally weighty as the first in (69)d. Only in (69)e which, as we have argued, is a marked case, is the first subcolon weightier than the second. Thus, while at the colon level, the second constituent is categorically weightier than the first, at the subcolon level, due to the mobility of the subcaesura, there is a strong preference for the second subcolon to be at least as weighty, or weightier than the first; and constraint (69) encodes what amounts to compensatory prominence when this is not the case. In other words, lines such as (69)e are marked by special prominence because they counter what appears to be the overall asymmetric organization of this verse, calling for any rightmost metrical subconstituent to be weightier than its left counterpart.

## 8. Concluding Remarks

The principal claim of this study is that the epic decasyllable is a periodic meter, corresponding to a trochaic pentameter, with the prosodic word, or rather, pitch accent contained in its head domain, serving as its crucial prominence source. Because of this, the monosyllabic prosodic word emerges as this meter's sole prominence source, and is, as such, excluded from weak metrical positions. A further important property is the exclusion of monosyllabic free function words, those that possess no prosodic status, from all positions within the line other than colon initial. This is due to this meter's strict adherence to the principles of prosodic parsing, much stricter in fact than in the "ordinary" language. The general consequence of these two principles is an overall preference in this meter for words that are minimally disyllabic. Since both lexical and free functional polysyllables invariably correspond to prosodic words, their distribution within a metrical line is fairly

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<sup>19</sup> See footnote 4.

free, restricted only indirectly, by constraints on monosyllables. Moreover, the proposed higher level organization of this verse into cola and, in particular, into subcola, and the metrical constraints associated with these structural constituents, further reinforce this meter's preference for polysyllabic lexical units. The epic decasyllable thus possesses a set of metrical properties which differ in crucial ways from the well-known situation found, for example, in the English or Russian iambic meters, in which the distribution of monosyllables is relatively free, while that of polysyllables is heavily constrained.

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