

NORD | METRIK

News

Metriske meddelelser, no. 1, Høst 2018

FEATURES

Metriske meddelelser – Metrical Announcements 1

Metrics and Versification in Poetry and Song 2

Heini Arjava

An Eighteenth-Century Origin of Modern Metrical Studies?
– or – Robert Lowth as a Pioneer of Ethnopoetics 5

Frog

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Geoffrey Russom, The Evolution of Verse Structure in Old
and Middle English Poetry: 15

Mihhail Lotman, Maria-Kristiina Lotman, On the Estonian
Syllabic-Accentual Rhythmics: 16

PROJECTS

Letters and Songs: Registers of Beliefs and Expressions
in the Early Modern North (2015–2020) 16

Eeva-Liisa Bastman

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Quantitative Approaches to Versification 17

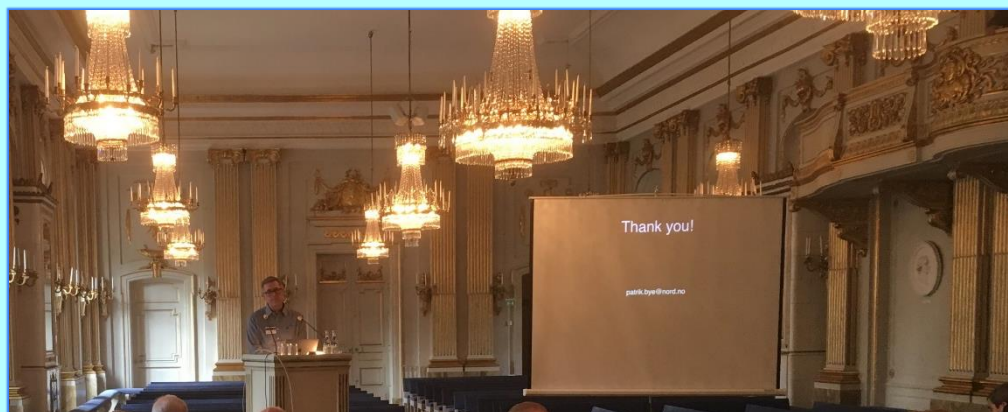
Rhyme and Rhyming in Verbal Art and Song 18

Studia Metrica et Poetica 19

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION

Editor Needed for *NORDMETRIK News* 20

Minutes of the NordMetrik Steering Committee Meeting 21



NORDMETRIK News er et nyhetsbrev utgitt av NordMetrik, Nordisk selskap for metriske studier. NordMetrik er et tverrfaglig internasjonalt nettverk som samler litterater, lingvister, psykologer, oversettere, musikkvitere og andre som beskjeftiger seg med poesiens rytmiske og prosodiske forhold. Selskapet ble stiftet i Göteborg i 1986 under navnet Centrum för Metriska Studier (CMS). I 2006 ble forskernettverket omdøpt til Nordisk selskap for metriske studier / Nordic Society for Metrical Studies. I dag har nettverket medlemmer i land over hele verden, og NordMetrik spiller en aktiv rolle i å koordinere livlige internasjonale diskusjoner om ulike aspekter ved poetisk form.

NORDMETRIK News is the newsletter of NordMetrik, The Nordic Society for Metrical Studies. NordMetrik is an international and multidisciplinary network of scholars of language, literature, folklore, musicology, and psychology. The research network was founded 1986 in Gothenburg as the Centrum för Metriska Studier (CMS) and was renamed the Nordisk selskap for metriske studier / Nordic Society for Metrical Studies in 2006. Today, the Network's numerous members are based in countries all over the world, and NordMetrik plays an active role in orchestrating lively international discussions on different aspects of poetic form, language and aesthetics that engage so many different but related disciplines.

NORDMETRIK News is edited by Frog (mr.frog[at]helsinki.fi) and Sissel Furuseth (sissel.furuseth[at]iln.uio.no), published by

NordMetrik
c/o Sissel Furuseth
University of Oslo
P.O. Box 1102
Blindern
0317 OSLO
Norway

The open-access electronic edition of this publication is available at:
<https://www.hf.uio.no/iln/english/research/networks/nordmetrik/newsletter.html>

Cover image: Patrik Bye presenting a keynote lecture at NordMetrik 2018; photo by Tomas Riad.

© 2018 The authors.

ISSN (electronic) pending

Metriske meddelelser – Metrical Announcements

NordMetrik, The Nordic Society for Metrical Studies, is thriving. NordMetrik was founded more than thirty years ago and has continuously grown and evolved since that time. Today, it is a large international network that connects diverse scholars from many disciplines, all united by shared interest in how metrical and poetic systems work formally and/or socially, as well as how they have been used or developed by particular poets and in specific poems or songs. It is very exciting to see lively activity and developments in NordMetrik, on which we are very pleased to briefly report.

We are back on our rhythm of holding a conference every second year. Our 14th conference, Metrics and Versification in Poetry and Song, generously organized by Tomas Riad, Andrew Cooper, Johanna Einarsson and Giorgio Basciu, was just held in September in Stockholm. A report on this event by Heini Arjava can be found elsewhere in this issue. The venue for the next conference is still being discussed, and plans are also being developed for smaller workshops before that time.

The exciting growth of the Network has had a consequence that its members are dispersed across different countries and even across different continents. Communication is crucial to maintaining any network as a community. The growth of NordMetrik has meant that only a portion of that community ever attends any single event, with the consequence that we could begin shifting from a network to a conference series. In order to remedy this situation, we have started a NordMetrik listserv and are working on developing the Network's website. The most recent development for nurturing contacts and information sharing within the Network is the revival of the newsletter, reborn as *NORDMETRIK News*, which you have before you now.

The aims of *NORDMETRIK News* is to provide a platform for connectivity and communication to the NordMetrik Network. The newsletter will be published twice each year as a medium for information relevant to scholars of metrics. It is planned around a core of reports and reviews, short announcements of publications, projects, and events, along with calls for papers. It is also the medium for the minutes of Network meetings and can provide a venue for discussions, notes and queries, according to the interests and needs of scholars associated with NordMetrik.

We are very pleased by the variety of activities within the Network and its developing infrastructures. We hope that the recent wave of industriousness will gain momentum, stimulating activity in which you all will participate.

The NordMetrik Steering Committee

Metrics and Versification in Poetry and Song

13th—15th September 2018, Stockholm, Sweden

Heini Arjava, University of Helsinki

Scholars from various disciplines from all over the world gathered for the 14th conference of NordMetrik (the Nordic Society for Metrical Studies) in Stockholm, Sweden, held from 13th to 15th September 2018. The conference *Metrics and Versification in Poetry and Song* was hosted by Tomas Riad, Andrew Cooper and Johanna Einarsson from the University of Stockholm, and co-organised with the Swedish Academy. The event aimed to gather researchers of linguistics, literary studies, musicology, cognitive poetics, philology, linguistic anthropology, folklore, and aesthetics to discuss the many aspects of language that are shaped into verse in poems and songs. The topics of the conference combined the domains of music and poetry in both abstract and concrete ways, ranging from generative metrics and philological treatments to musicological approaches, and all this scholarly diversity was intensified by the shared fascination of the participants with the limitless aesthetic potential of linguistic rhythm.

The event brought together seventy participants, most of whom also contributed to the content of the conference through paper presentations. Because the conference only lasted for three days, talks had to be spread across two to three parallel sessions every day, which unfortunately prevented everyone from hearing all of the presentations. All the same, the organisers had been considerate in their planning of the program, and the arrangement of the talks offered many thematically relevant selections of topics to the listeners.

Prominent themes of the event included introductions to a variety of, for instance, European, Mesopotamian, East-Asian and Australian traditions of verse and epic poetry; free verse; textsetting (alignment of text to music); generatively and otherwise formally oriented metrics; as well as the increasing use of experimental and corpus methods in metrics. Especially notable in this NordMetrik conference was the



Photo 1. Paul Kiparsky presenting the paper “Micro-Parametric Typology: Correspondence Constraints” (photo by Tomas Riad).

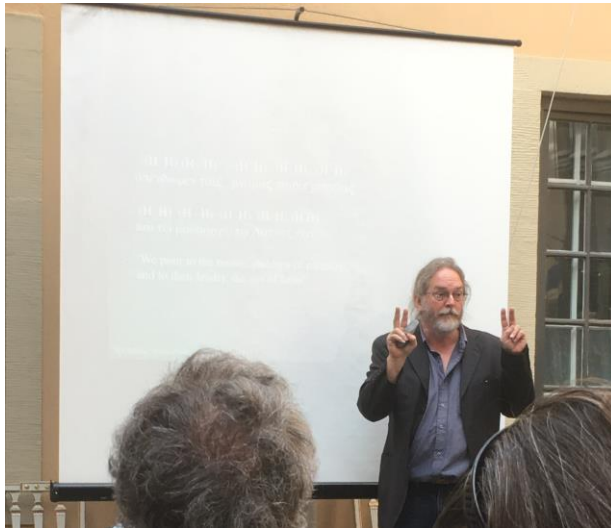


Photo 2. Chris Golston presenting the paper “A Foot in the Poem is Worth Two in the Prose” (photo by Tomas Riad).

The audience had the opportunity to enjoy four keynote lectures, which harmoniously represented both musical and poetic aspects of verse in the spirit of the event. On the first day, Sissel Furuseth (University of Oslo) gave a lecture titled *"The Hammer Blows in the Mountain Came": Tomas Tranströmer Interpreting Edvard Grieg*, and discussed the intriguing, abstract influence of music on poetry, which is far less often observed than the reverse. In the example explored by Furuseth, this influence took the form of linguistic imitation of music by the Nobel Prize winner Tomas Tranströmer.



Photo 3. Jesper Svenbro presenting the paper “On the Absurdity of Metrical Translation” (photo by Tomas Riad).

The two keynote lectures on Friday included the talk titled *The Relationship between Grammatical Structure and Metrical Structure in Jean Racine's Verse* by François Dell (CNRS Paris) and Romain Benini (University of Paris-Sorbonne), and Myfany Turpin's (Sydney Conservatorium of Music / University of Sydney) lecture *Why are Songs Difficult? Evidence from Aboriginal Australia*. François Dell and Romain Benini presented the tendency of the French Alexandrine meter to align metrical and grammatical boundaries, but immediately rendered the picture more exciting by arguing for exceptions to these generalisations,

number of music-related presentations, surpassing that of many previous events, due to both the rarely highlighted musical focus of the conference, and the current growing interest in the field of textsetting. The wide diversity of the fields also illustrated the variety of terminology used to describe similar and overlapping concepts, and the importance of finding common language for discussions of metrical concepts in interdisciplinary settings.

alongside prosodic and locational constraints governing them. Myfany Turpin provided a rare and fascinating view into the ceremonial traditions of a small aboriginal Australian language group, and discussed the incredible interpretive difficulty of their songs. She argued that interpretive challenges advance these traditions into a special non-communicative form of art, formally guarded by the elders of the society.

The closing day of the conference was opened with a keynote lecture by Patrik Bye (Nord University), who, like François Dell and Romain Benini the day before, discussed the crossings of metrical boundaries in English poetry in *The End of the Line: The Relation between Meter, End-stopping and Enjambment*. Bye claimed that there is a stronger bias against discontinuity over line boundaries in trimeters than in tetrameters, and argued for the inherent metric incompleteness of trimeters.



Photo 4. Patrik Bye presenting the keynote lecture “*The End of the Line: The Relation between Meter, End-stopping and Enjambment*” (photo by Tomas Riad).

During the conference dinner on Friday, the attendees could enjoy Swedish herring delicacies and other local specialties while resting up and exchanging ideas in the company of colleagues in the simultaneously homely and refined atmosphere of the Faculty Club of Stockholm University. On Saturday, courtesy of the Swedish Academy, the closing day of the conference took place in the august premises of the Academy House in Stockholm. After interesting talks in this inspirational environment, a high-spirited ending for the conference before the community parted ways was ensured by the amusing and informative tour of the key locations of the Academy headquarters.

An Eighteenth-Century Origin of Modern Metrical Studies? – or – Robert Lowth as a Pioneer of Ethnopoetics

Frog, University of Helsinki

In order to gain perspective on a research topic in the present, it is important to look back into the past of its discussion and how that discussion has developed over time. This principle is the foundation of reviews of scholarship, which have become a standard feature of doctoral dissertations, research articles and monographs. However many times it has been done before, looking into the past of a discussion or of a whole field can also lead to new insights and understandings. The perspective from the present is ever-changing, allowing developments in the past to be considered in different ways, and it is also possible to uncover previously unobserved relations or factors which affected that history but have never been brought into focus. Amid the rich discussions at the recent NordMetrik conference in Stockholm, one such oft-overlooked development in the history of research on metrics and poetics recently came into focus for me. This development is perhaps crucial for the evolution of metrical studies as understood today but most members of the Network seem unaware of it. The revival of the newsletter of NordMetrik thus seems like an ideal venue for looking back into the history of metrical studies. My modest hope is to shed a bit of light on the impact of Robert Lowth (1710–1788) on the study of poetry, playing a crucial role in transforming thinking about metrics in ways that enabled the development of metrical studies today. I am still developing the views on historical changes in terminology. Outlining them already at this stage brings a significant issue into discussion, which will allow the perspectives offered here to be refined and developed in relation to future research.

Some Background

Robert Lowth was a true pioneer with his ground-breaking study *De sacra poesi Hebræorum prælectiones* (1753) ['Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews']. Among scholars working on poetry, he is best known as the founder of modern research on parallelism, not to mention establishing *parallelismus* as a term (e.g. Fox 2014: 20–22). In other fields, he is better known for his impacts on biblical scholarship or on English literature (Prickett 2016: 310–311, 316–317). My recent work on parallelism (see e.g. Frog & Tarkka 2017) carried me to Lowth's foundational works, studeis we tend to hear about rather than read. While having his work

freshly in mind, I was also working with the history of the term and concept ‘myth’ (Frog 2018). This brought into sharper focus how Lowth founded approaches to the poetry of an ethnic group which became the platform and inspiration for the aesthetic evaluation of vernacular mythologies and poetries by people like Christian Gottlob Heyne and Johann Gottfried von Herder, leading up to the mobilization of such traditions in national-romantic movements (see e.g. Feldman & Richardson 1972: 5–6, 144–150, 216–217). Lowth’s pivotal move that made his work so radically innovative was to reject the hegemonic perspective of learned literature with its two millennia of momentum. He argued that biblical Hebrew had to be approached from the perspective of the Hebrews who composed and initially received it (see also Prickett 2016). He asserted that the principles of poetics and metrics that were used by scholars were unsuitable for the analysis of biblical Hebrew, and that the biblical texts must instead be approached on their own terms. Viewed from today’s perspective, Lowth was a pioneer, producing the first major work in ethnopoeitics.

Easily overlooked is the position of metrics in Lowth’s argument, and the significance of his argument for metrical studies. It would never have come to my attention had I not been led down a rabbit hole of tracing the origin of an alternative contemporary term for Lowth’s *parallelismus* as *rhythmus sensus*. I initially understood the latter as ‘rhythm of sense/meaning’, but the same in French was *rime du sens*, apparently meaning ‘rhyme of sense’, which appeared related to the common German word for parallelism, *Gedankenreim*, which translates as ‘thought-rhyme’. James Kugel’s (1981) historical review of discussions of parallelism was an invaluable aid in getting a handle on this rhythm/rhyme riddle. However, through the fog of reading eighteenth-century Latin, I gradually began to realize that Lowth was doing something very strategic in his use of *metrum*, which we simply read as ‘meter’, rather than using *rhythmus*. Lowth was working within an agenda linked to his argument about Hebrew poetry, but that argument seems also to have impacted understandings of the term *metrum* and the study of poetics that evolved into studies today and current use of the term meter.

When Meter Was Not Meter

Scholars tend to take for granted that Western discussions of poetry and meter go back to works from Classical Greece and Rome. That was a milieu where the oral forms of verbal art were not only rich and diverse but also surrounded by a no less rich metadiscourse on the variety of discourse forms and rhetorical devices. Within that milieu, poetry was conceived in terms of meter and metrical units were defined in terms of counting syllables and their quantities. Greek and Latin followed common principles for organizing texts made of language into salient verse units as

poetry, and poetry was defined according to those organizing principles. The definition of metrical units was of course ethnocentric rather than universally valid. What usually gets overlooked is that this model of poetry and meter became considered a standard across Europe and impacted discussions for centuries.

This Classical conception of poetry and its associated metadiscourse was carried through the Roman Empire. Today, we are accustomed to broad, cross-linguistic models of poetry and the idea that poetry is an abstract category which manifests differently in languages around the world (see e.g. Fabb 2015). However, the movement toward this sort of universal model is dependent on broad cross-linguistic comparisons. Such comparisons are in turn dependent on seeing diverse forms of verbal art as in some way formally commensurate. Before formal commensurability can come into question, the forms of verbal art must be seen as somehow culturally or socially commensurate, rather than as 'Barbarian', for example.

Without comparative perspectives, categories of discourse customarily get distinguished in relation to one another within the particular milieu. Such categories are often formed on the basis of social situations of use on the one hand and connections between perceived formal sameness or difference on the other, though not systematically (see also Agha 2007; Tarkka 2013). It is therefore not at all surprising that categories for types of discourse are normally ethnocentric in pre-modern milieux. That the spread of the concepts of poetry and meter through the Roman Empire concerned a type of language use specifically in Latin and Greek is also not surprising because that was simply how the words were used. The Greeks and Romans were confident in their cultures' superiority, without motivation to explore the commensurability of their own poetries with those of others, let alone to develop abstract and flexible concepts with cross-cultural applicability. From this perspective, it is not at all peculiar that Hebrew language lacked a corresponding term for 'poetry'. Within a context of colonialism, it is almost to be expected that the Roman category would become a lens to analyze and measure Hebrew discourse. What is remarkable is the long shadow of this development's impact: for most of two millennia, there were lively debates and ongoing attempts to explicate metrical systems of Old Testament texts by counting syllables and their quantities (see Kugel 1981: chs. 2, 5).

The word *metrum* long remained specifically linked to the Classical model of meter, even after phonological changes in Latin affected the perception of quantity, creating challenges for composing in the meters (cf. Nollet 2017). In the Classical period, the word *rhythmus* got used alongside *metrum*: there was general agreement that every *metrum* had *rhythmus* but *rhythmus* could also be used to describe forms of verse in which the number and organization of Classically-defined metrical units

could vary. Across the Middle Ages, *rhythmus* was discussed in relation to *metrum* and its definition was debated. In ca. AD 700, for example, the Venerable Bede described *rhythmus* as like *metrum* in the counting of syllables but without an associated quantitative system (Bede, *De arte metrica* 24; see further Heikkinen 2012: §4.4). The lens of Classical metrical units was still in place, but *rhythmus* evolved into a word for verse form that was not organized on the formal criteria of *metrum*. Although it might seem a bit odd today, Bede's definition allowed Old English verse to be analysed as having *rhythmus*. Later on, *rhythmus* also became used for rhyme as rhyme became the way that many types of verse regularly ended. The connection between these words even led the spelling of Modern English *rhyme* to match the beginning of *rhythm* although the spelling had been *rime* in Middle English (*OED*, s.v. 'rhyme'). My confusion about how *rhythmus sensus* could be equivalent to *rime du sens* (e.g. Ullholm 1758: 8; Porthan 1766–1768, 1778: 21–22) turned out to simply be a commonplace translation (see further Kugel 1981: 233–251). This conflation of rhyme with rhythm is connected to *rhythmus* becoming a common term for poetic forms that did not meet Classical standards, leading to statements about poetry being composed “in *rhythm* or *rude verse*” (Lowth 1835: 280n, emphasis original).

Across more than a millennium, *rhythmus* gradually became used for anything that we would discuss as a metrical form, or as structuring principles of sounds and stresses, that falls outside of the Classical definition of *metrum* as based on counting syllables and their quantities. Historical changes in Latin language affected the quantity distinctions on which meters were based. Syllabic quantities remained part of the discourse of *metrum* and relevant to the meters used by historical poets, but use of the term seems also to have undergone flex so that it could be used for syllabic meters, such as the Finnic trochaic tetrameter, now commonly called Kalevala-meter (see e.g. Porthan 1766–1768, 1778 and works there cited). Nevertheless, Classical metrical form remained the central frame of reference.

Less than three hundred years ago, many of the poetic forms discussed at the recent NordMetrik conference would have been discussed in terms of *rhythmus* rather than *metrum*. The trajectory of these terms' development up to about 1750 predicts that the general term for formal principles of organizing words into verses would become 'rhythm', of which 'meter' would become a specific sub-type for syllabic verse if not more specifically for syllabic verse with Classical quantity rules. Such a prediction follows from discussing the great majority of poetic forms in terms of *rhythmus* as distinguished from *metrum*. This observation leads to the intriguing question of what happened that we should now talk about these poetries as having 'meters'.

Ethnopoetics

Today's metrical studies is predicated on a break from ethnocentric Classical definitions. Although this might seem straightforward, it depended on a radical change in thinking. The standard model of poetics had to be discarded; the researcher had to depart from the customary perspective based in learned discourse and try to consider the particular poetry being investigated in relation to its own language and background. What was needed might be described as a breakthrough into ethnopoetics.

Ethnopoetics is a term for current approaches that initially emerged in Folklore Studies and Linguistic Anthropology. The international début of the term seems to have been the eponymous name of a journal special issue in 1970 (Rothenberg & Tedlock 1970), which is an extension of Dell Hymes' (e.g. 1962) 'ethnography of speaking'. It foregrounds the poetic organization of texts and performance, even when verse structures may not be especially marked (see e.g. Hymes 1981: 200–259; Sherzer 1983; Tedlock 1983; Blommaert 2006: 232–241). The approach emerged as a framework for analyzing the poetic structuring of forms of mainly non-Eurasian oral discourse that was not structured by regular meter or phonic patterning like rhyme. In other words, it enabled discussion of poetry and poetics that lacked features emblematic of 'poetry' as conceived at that time in the West. Ethnopoetic research has been significant in developing more nuanced perspectives on the poetic organization of especially oral forms of discourse, and it has revealed that the dynamics of such organization are often at work in what had once been reductively dismissed as 'prose'. Influences from ethnopoetics also flowed back into oral poetry research more generally, especially in the turn toward meaning potential during the 1990s (e.g. Foley 1995).

Ethnopoetics was seen as an innovative approach, but it was not exactly new. Sensitivity to poetic principles as potentially operating in any form of discourse is already found nearly two thousand years before Hymes and Denis Tedlock, as in a statement by Marcus Fabius Quintilian that *contra nihil quod est prorsa scriptum non redigi possit in quaedam versiculorum genera uel in membra* ['certainly there is nothing written in prose that cannot be reduced to some sort of verses or indeed parts of verses'] (*Institutio Oratoria* IX.iv.lii). However, Quintilian's observation differs from the approaches developed in ethnopoetics because it is being made from within the language and its poetics rather than trying to look at one which is 'other' (or, for Quintilian, 'Barbarian') on its own terms. Similarly, the Old Norse *ars poetica* called *Edda* on vernacular court poetry explicates a non-Classical poetic system, but it is composed by the poet Snorri Sturluson, who was (largely) outside the Classical discourse (see e.g. Clunies Ross 2005). Thus, *Edda* may address the poetry on its own

terms, but it is not written by an outsider attempting to see it from an insider's perspective, a significant analytical strategy established about seventeen centuries after Quintilian and two before Hymes and Tedlock.

Pioneering Ethnopoetics and Reconceptualizing *metrum*

Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebræorum prælectiones* (1753) was a pioneering work in ethnopoetics, and its strategy was organized on the same grounds that gave rise to ethnopoetics at the end of the twentieth century – i.e. in order to break down contemporary categorizations of poetry and poetic structure. Lowth argued that Classical models of poetry could not be directly applied to biblical Hebrew. This included features of content and style, for which he sought to resituate images and symbols in relation to the world of the people who produced and received the texts. As the title of his work suggests, he was focused on poetry, and this moves into a broader interpretive agenda of Lowth. He collapsed the relationship of poetry and prophesy, elevating biblical texts to a form of natural religious expression (see especially Lecture 28). Because the Hebrews had access to true religion, this poetry is therefore at the pinnacle of aesthetic expression, superior even to the muse-inspired poetry of the Greeks (see also Kugel 1981: 274–282). It was in this area that the likes of Heyne and Herder found Lowth's work so inspiring, extending it to expressions of the Spirit of any ethnic group (Frog 2018: 19). Nevertheless, the latter argument built on qualifying the biblical texts as poetry, and advocating a far more comprehensive inclusion of texts as poetry than had ever been attempted in earlier approaches, which relied on Classical definitions.

In his third lecture, “Poesin Hebræam metricam esse” [‘Hebrew Poetry is Metrical’], Lowth argues that Hebrew poetry has meter. He acknowledges that biblical verses vary extremely in length and focuses instead on features of language and structure he considers indicative of poetic discourse through comparisons and contrasts with Classical Greek poetry. He stresses that written biblical Hebrew simply cannot be analysed according to Classical metrics owing to the absence of indicators of vowels coupled with the historical remoteness of the language: both the number and quantity of syllables in verses becomes uncertain. In other words, he argues that metrical analysis proper is impossible, which circumvents counter-argument directed at the formal evaluation of verses according to Classical meter. On the other hand, he stresses the relevance and significance of difference in both stylistic devices and organizing principles of verse between Hebrew and Greek. This emphasis is then built up into foundations for parallelism as a principle that organizes text into verse units in the same manner as meter for Classical poetry. Rather than arguing that the poetry was composed with a meter based on counting syllables and their quantities, he argues that the Hebrew system should

be treated as on equal standing as poetic, as in the following statement from his twenty-ninth lecture on parallelism:

In [...] Parallelismo Sententiarum, Metricæ Hebrææ artificium magna ex parte contineri existimo : cui insuper accessisse credibile est, numerorum vel etiam pedum aliquorum observationem [...] Cum autem et hoc, et reliqua etiam metricæ artis signa et quasi vestigia in plerisque Prophetarum scriptis, pariter atque in Libris Poeticis, extant, id satis esse causæ arbitrer, cur in horum censum illos etiam referam. (Lowth 1753: 194–195.)

In [...] parallelism of sentences, I recon a considerable part of the Hebrew meter to consist; though it seems possible that some regard was also paid to the numbers and feet. [...] When, however, also this and even yet other signs and vestiges of the metrical art are together extant in the writings of the prophets and likewise in the poetic books [books of the Bible considered as poetry], there accordingly seems to be sufficient cause in their assessment to place them in the same class.

Lowth's review of poetic features in language and rhetoric are thus used to support an argument that parallelism in biblical Hebrew should qualify it as poetry of the same status as Classical meter.

Poetic structuring through parallelism was also considered prior to Lowth. Lowth's work is best known for developing a system for formally distinguishing varieties of parallelism. In this, the relatively recent typology of Christian Schoettgen (1733: 1249–1263, there called *exergasia* ['elaboration']) significantly helped Lowth to develop his own system and its accessible presentation (see also Kugel 1981: 266–273). Considering parallelism as comparable to meter was introduced almost two centuries earlier by Rabbi Azariah dei Rossi (ca. 1511 – ca. 1578), whose work is discussed by Lowth. Dei Rossi proposed that Hebrew poetry is organized through meanings in a manner equivalent to Classical meter, stating *non enim tibi sunt numerandæ vel syllabæ vel dictiones, sed sensus* (Lowth 1753: 195) ['for by you are to be counted neither syllables nor words but senses'], from which he tries to build a model of meter on analogy to the Classical system (see also Kugel 1981: 200–203). Similarly, Joseph Mede (1653: 114) made the brief observation: *Hæbræa poesis rhythmum habuit, non in sono, nisi fortuito, sed in sensu; idem vel simile, diversa phrase reduplicans* ['The *rhythmus* of Hebrew poetry was not in sound, except by chance, but in sense, reduplicating the same or similar phrases']. Lowth was thus developing earlier lines of discussion and bringing them together.

When Lowth's argument is situated in the discourse of its time, his choice of terminology becomes striking. Focusing his argument on *metrum* has continuity from a long history of arguments that *metrum* can be found in biblical Hebrew texts, and the proposal that parallelism forms a type of *metrum* is developed from dei Rossi's earlier, if problematic, argument

(see Kugel 1981). Mede, on the other hand, addressed parallelism through the more flexible *rhythmus*. Jean des Champs (1754) then follows Mede when responding to a review of Lowth's *Prælectiones*, apparently coining the expression *rime du sens*. This term then appears translated into Latin as *rhythmus sensus* a few years later (Ullholm 1758), a term also adopted by Porthan (1766–1768, 1778) who uses *metrum* for discussion of the syllabic structure of Finnic verse but *rhythmus* to discuss semantic parallelism. Lowth's discussion remains exclusively concerned with *metrum* and does not consider whether the phenomenon might be more appropriately addressed as *rhythmus*.

Lowth's terminological emphasis might simply be driven by historical momentum of centuries of arguments about biblical texts, but it also seems connected to a marked difference in the valorization of verse composed in *metrum* as opposed to in *rhythmus*. On the one hand, Lowth's broader argument identifies Hebrew poetry as divinely inspired, which should place it on a par with Classical poetry inspired by muses rather than popular rhymed songs sung on the street. On the other hand, biblical texts are elevated through their connection with religion to the highest possible status in society, in which case biblical verse should be composed in a corresponding poetic form. This second consideration seems to have been in the background of the long history of arguments that biblical verse is composed in *metrum*. Put simply, poetry of the Bible should at least hold an equal status to works of Homer and Virgil. The factors that drove Lowth's terminology are, however, less important than the consequences.

The *Prælectiones* shift the question of whether Hebrew poetry has *metrum* as Classically defined to whether the organizing principles of this poetry qualify it as metrical. Thus, the study of parallelism for which this work is so well known operates within the larger argument of the work as an ethnopoetic analysis of organizing principles that qualify texts as metrical and poetic no less than Classical meter. Lowth's study ultimately confronts the definition of *metrum* as defined in terms of counting syllables and their quantities. He rejects such a definition's universal validity and proposes an alternative for biblical Hebrew rather than accepting the Classical definition and identifying Hebrew texts with *rhythmus* or something else. This stance is linked to the agenda of the work, which seeks to establish a categorical alignment of biblical poetry with Classical poetry emblematic of *metrum*. Taking this stance while advocating the necessity of approaching a poetry tradition from the perspective of users of that poetry disrupts the ethnocentric foundation of *metrum*'s earlier definition. It pushes that definition in the direction of a concept relative to language and culture more similar to understandings of poetic meter today.

From *metrum* to Metrical Studies

The ethnocentrism of defining meter in terms of Greek and Latin poetics might be seen as a prolonged echo of Roman colonialism. By asserting that a different organizing principle for versification could be equally valid *from the perspective of another language and its speakers*, Lowth disrupted the asymmetrical relationship between Classical and other poetics, opening the door to poetics discussed in terms of *rhythmus* to be reconsidered in terms of *metrum*. Lowth was not the first to challenge this definition (cf. dei Rossi's theory). However, Lowth's work had rapid and profound international impact that established the foundations for vernacular poetics of Europe to be approached in corresponding terms.

The impact of this argument on the broader discourse on poetics seems to have depended on the fact that the alternative concerned biblical Hebrew. The Hebrew Bible was one of few works that could compete with Homeric epics or Latin classics in cultural significance. If the verse form in question had been that of French ballads or even Old English poetry, the argument could be more easily dismissed or largely ignored because of the asymmetry of authority and social significance of those texts relative to major Classical works in the eyes of the educated elite.

Just as Lowth's work opened the door to interpreting different European poetics in relation to natural religion and the 'spirit' of a people, it also opened their poetic systems to analysis from the perspective of the people who used them rather than through the lens of Classical metrical systems. Lowth did not comment on such vernacular poetics nor was the impact of his work immediate, but his study can be seen as pivotal in an eighteenth-century ethnopoetic turn that was a prerequisite for metrical studies as understood today. Lowth was only one voice in these discussions, and his argument that parallelism should be treated as a form of meter did not stand the test of time (cf. Fabb 2015). Nevertheless, his assertion that other organizing principles besides counting syllables and their quantities should be able to qualify poetry as metrical may have shifted the trajectory of the term *metrum*'s evolution enough that this network is called NordMetrik rather than NordRytmik.

Works Cited

- Agha, Asif. 2007. *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2006. "Ethnopoetics as Functional Reconstruction". *Functions of Language* 13(2): 229–249.
- des Champs, Jean. 1754. "Lettre à l'Auteur du Journal Britannique, sur la Poésie Hébraïque". *Journal Britannique* 13 (March & April): 268–282.
- Clunies Ross, Margaret. 2005. *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.
- Fabb, Nigel. 2015. *What is Poetry? – Language and Memory in the Poems of the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Feldman, Burton, & Robert D. Richardson. 1972. *The Rise of Modern Mythology 1680–1860*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

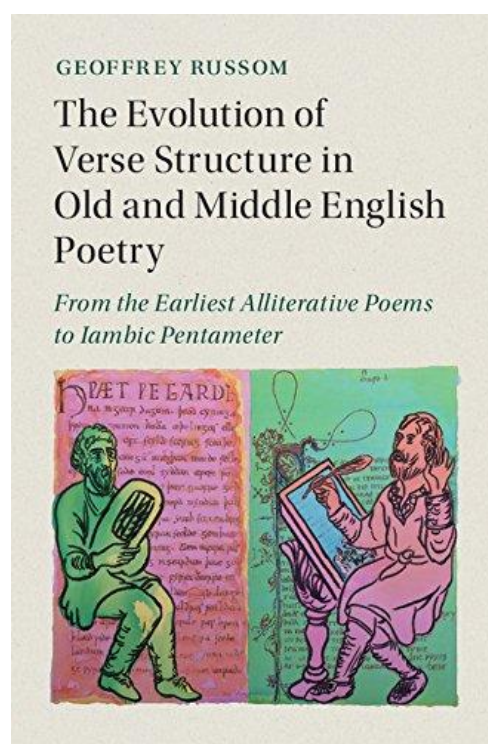
- Foley, John Miles. 1995. *The Singer of Tales in Performance*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Fox, James J. 2014. *Explorations in Semantic Parallelism*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
- Frog. 2018. "Myth". In *The Challenge of Folklore to the Humanities*. Ed. Dan Ben-Amos. *Humanities* 7(1), 14, special issue: 1–39.
- Frog & Lotte Tarkka (eds.). 2017. *Parallelism in Verbal Art and Performance*. *Oral Tradition* 31(2), special issue. Available at: <http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/list?id=65#65>.
- Heikkinen, Seppo. 2012. *The Christianization of Latin Metre: A Study of Bede's De arte metrica*. PhD thesis. Helsinki: Unigrafia.
- Hymes, Dell. H. 1962. "The Ethnography of Speaking". In *Anthropology and Human Behavior*. Ed. T. Gladwin & W.C. Sturtevant. Washington: Anthropological Society of Washington. Pp. 15–53.
- Hymes, Dell. 1981. *"In Vain I Tried to Tell You:" Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Kugel, James. 1981. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Lowth, Robert. 1753. *De sacra poesi Hebræorum: Prælectiones academic Oxonii habitæ a Roberto Lowth A.M. collegii novi nuper socio, et poeticæ public prælectore: Subjicitur metricæ harianæ brevis confutatio et oratio crewiana*. Oxonius: Clarendonia.
- Lowth, Robert. 1835. *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*. Trans. G. Gregory. 3rd edn. London: Tegg & Sons.
- Mede, Josephus. 1653. *Dissertationum ecclesiasticarum triga: De sanctitate relative, De veneratione sacra, De sortitione et alea: Quibus accedunt [sic] fragmenta sacra*. Londini: Jo. Martin, Jac. Allestrye, & Tim. Garthwait.
- Nollet, H. 2017. "Formulas in Neo-Latin Poetry as a Means to Language Enrichment and Self-Representation: Language Tips and Sociolinguistics in Justus Lipsius' Poems". In *Formula: Units of Speech – 'Words' of Verbal Art: Working Papers of the Seminar-Workshop, 17th–19th May 2017, Helsinki, Finland*. Ed. Frog. *Folkloristiikan toimite* 21. Helsinki: Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki. Pp. 113–126.
- OED = *Oxford English Dictionary*. Available at www.oed.com.
- Porthan, Henricus Gabriel. 1766–1768, 1778. *Dissertationis de poësi Fennica*. Åbo: Joh. Christoph. Frenckell.
- Prickett, Stephen. 2016. "Robert Lowth's Biblical Poetics and Romantic Theory". In *Interpreting Scriptures in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Overlapping Inquiries*. Ed. Mordechai Z. Cohen & Adele Berlin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 309–325.
- Quintilian, Fabius. 1920–1922. *The Institutio oratoria of Quintilian I–IV*. Ed. & trans. H. E. Butler. London: William Heinemann.
- Rothenberg, Jerome, & Denis Tedlock (eds.). 1970. *Ethnopoetics*. Special issue of *Alcheringa* 1(1).
- Schoettgen, Christian. 1733. *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ in universum Novum Testamentum*. Dresdae & Lipsiæ: Christoph. Hekelii B. filium.
- Sherzer, Joel. 1983. *Kuna Ways of Speaking: An Ethnographic Perspective*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Snorri, Sturluson. 1987. *Snorri Sturluson, Edda*. Anthony Faulkes, trans. & ed. London: Everyman.
- Tarkka, Lotte. 2013. *Songs of the Border People: Genre, Reflexivity, and Performance in Karelian Oral Poetry*. *Folklore Fellows' Communications*, 305. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
- Tedlock, Dennis. 1983. *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ullholm, Sven. 1758. *De poësi biblica*. M.A. thesis under Carol Aurivillius. Upsaliae: L. M. Höjer.
- Urban, Greg. 1991. *A Discourse-Centered Approach to Culture: Native South American Myths and Rituals*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Geoffrey Russom, *The Evolution of Verse Structure in Old and Middle English Poetry:*

From the Earliest Alliterative Poems to Iambic Pentameter.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. ISBN 978-1-107-14833-8 (print), ISBN 9781316562925 (digital).

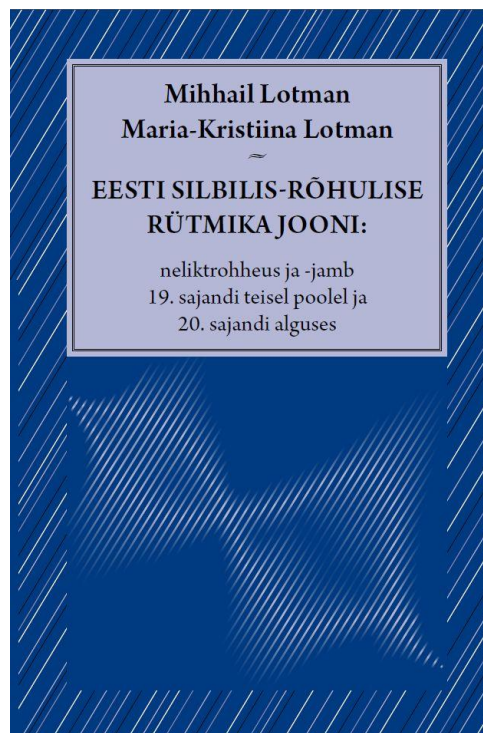
In this book, Geoffrey Russom traces the evolution of the major English poetic traditions by reference to the evolution of the English language, considering how verse forms are born, how they evolve, and why they die. Using a general theory of poetic form employing universal principles rooted in the human language faculty, Russom argues that certain kinds of poetry tend to arise spontaneously in languages with identifiable characteristics. Russom's initial hypothesis is that metrical constituents (positions, feet, half-lines, lines, etc.) are abstracted from linguistic constituents (syllables, words, phrases, sentences, etc.). Language changes may require modification of metrical rules and may eventually lead to extinction of a meter. Russom's theory is applied to explain the development of English meters from their roots in ancient West European alliterative poems through the transition to iambic meter in late Medieval and Early Modern English poems. The book provides detailed analyses of form in key poems, including *Beowulf*, *Judith*, *The Battle of Maldon*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. A comprehensive glossary of technical terms is included.



Mihhail Lotman, Maria-Kristiina Lotman, On the Estonian Syllabic-Accentual Rhythmics:

Trochaic and Iambic Pentameter on the Second half of the 19th Century and the Beginning of the 20th Century. Tallinn: EKSA, 2018. ISBN 978-9949-604-59-3.

This study is the first attempt at an integrated approach to the rhythmical structure of the Estonian literary verse that takes into account the distribution of accent, quantities and word boundaries on different levels. The analysis examined trochaic and iambic pentameters from 20 prominent Estonian poets. Random iambic and trochaic tetrametric sequences were also sampled from prose in order to compare these structures to the forms analyzed in verse. This method made it possible to describe both the Estonian rhythmic canon as well as the individual preferences of different authors. The most important discovery of the study concerned the relationship between authors' esthetic orientation and rhythmic regularities, which enabled a distinction between the so-called Traditionalist and Modernist rhythm types.



| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

PROJECTS

Letters and Songs: Registers of Beliefs and Expressions in the Early Modern North (2015–2020)

Eeva-Liisa Bastman, University of Helsinki

The ongoing research project *Letters and Songs: Registers of Beliefs and Expressions in the Early Modern North* (2015–2020) investigates cultural change in the post-Reformation Baltic Sea region. The project engages researchers from the fields of history, folklore studies and literary studies. Research material includes hymns, manuscripts, collections of

correspondence and occasional poetry, and focus is on the cultural nexus of elite and folk, ecclesiastical and secular, and oral and literary cultures. The project is funded by the Academy of Finland and conducted at the Finnish Literature Society.

One of the sub-projects of *Letters and Songs* deals with poetic registers and early modern Finnish poetics. The sub-project was inspired by the observation that the oral and literary poems of the early modern period have traditionally been studied separately in different disciplines, even though the poems have an oral-literary nature. In fact, the rhymed, stanzaic poetic forms and accentual, word-stress based metrics developed in relation to both folk song traditions and written verse. Thus, the source materials call for a cross-disciplinary approach.

This means that the materials are studied from a variety of different angles. Verse forms and song languages are set in connection with both the uses and ends of poetry and song and contemporary aesthetics preferences. Poetics and metrics are seen in a larger context, as a part of culture and cultural change. The aim of the sub-project is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the systems of verse and versification of this period and at the same time, to reevaluate early modern Finnish poetics.

For more information about the project, please visit our website: <https://www.finlit.fi/en/letters-and-songs>.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Quantitative Approaches to Versification

June 24–26, 2019, Prague, Czech Republic

The Quantitative Approaches to Versification conference is dedicated to Květa Sgallová, one of the most prominent Czech experts in versification, continues the tradition of the annual international Slavyansky Stikh conference, which dates back to 1960s.

We welcome proposals for papers dealing with quantitative analysis (ranging from simple descriptive statistics to advanced machine learning) of all aspects of versification. Papers of 20 minutes may bear on material from any time and in any language, but must be delivered in English.

Abstracts (500–1600 characters) should be submitted no later than 31st October 2018 via the web form. The abstract should clearly describe the research question, data, and method employed. Applicants will be notified about acceptance via e-mail in mid-November.

Should you require earlier review of your proposal in order to support an application for travel funding, please contact Robert Kolár (kolar@ucl.cas.cz).

Proceedings will be published on the day of the conference. To facilitate the production of proceedings, authors of accepted papers must agree to submit their papers (proof-read by a native speaker of English) no later than 28th February 2019. Each author will receive a printed copy of the proceedings, which will also be published online under an open-access CC-BY-ND license.

For more information, please visit our website at: <http://versologie.cz/conference2019/index.php>

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

Rhyme and Rhyming in Verbal Art and Song

22nd- 24th May 2019, Helsinki, Finland

During Medieval times, end rhyme became a key device for demarcating poetic lines in European and Arabic cultures. Besides characterizing a longstanding literary tradition, end rhyme and rhyme patterns became central structural and sonic elements in oral and oral-literary traditions worldwide. In oral performance, rhyme stands for aesthetics, creativity and memory: memorization as well as the exploitation of working memory in lyrical improvisation. In verbal art and song, rhymed registers continue to deploy the poetic potential of language for situated communication and meaning over changes in fashion and the coming of new musical styles.

This conference is intended to promote cross-disciplinary analysis and understanding of the role and aesthetics of rhyme in the poetics of sound and meaning. Our focus is especially upon the history and universality of rhyme as well as its particularities in various performed oral and popular registers.

The keynote speakers will be:

Nigel Fabb, Professor of Literary Linguistics, The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

Dwight Reynolds, Professor of Arabic Language & Literature, Uni. of California, Santa Barbara

Seppo Heikkinen, Senior Lecturer in Latin, University of Helsinki, Helsinki

We invite scholars to engage in analytic discussions on rhyme as a poetic device and rhyming as a cognitive practice. Proposals with abstracts of

300–500 words should be sent by 15th November 2018 to: rhymeconference@gmail.com

We welcome proposals including, but not limited to, the following themes:

POETICS: forms, patterns, aesthetics; language/culture-specific versus universal characteristics

TRADITIONS: cultures, genres, registers; oral/popular/sacred; the interface of oral and literary

HISTORY: historical continuums, developments and transformations; poetic ideologies/currents

COGNITION: methods of oral composition; reception, perception, memorization

The conference *Rhyme and Rhyming in Verbal Art and Song* will be held 22nd–24th May 2019 at the Finnish Literature Society (SKS), Hallituskatu 1, Helsinki, Finland. <https://www.finlit.fi/rhymeconference>

The event is organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland research project *Letters and Songs: Registers of Beliefs and Expressions in the Early Modern North* (2016–2020) of the Finnish Literature Society. A registration fee (approx. 60 €) will cover lunches and coffee/tee. For more information, please contact rhymeconference@gmail.com

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

Studia Metrica et Poetica

Studia Metrica et Poetica (<http://ojs.utlib.ee/index.php/smp>) is a biannual international journal that was launched in 2014. The journal is edited by Mihhail Lotman, Igor Pilshchikov and Maria-Kristiina Lotman and the editorial board consists of 15 leading researchers of versification and poetics. It is indexed in both Web of Science and Scopus.

The thematic range of the journal includes comparative-historical and typological matters, as well as practical questions concerning, for example, the problems of translating poetic texts. Various questions of verbal art and descriptions of the individual creation of different authors are addressed as well. The editors are especially interested in the descriptions of poetic cultures, which are often disregarded in Europocentric approaches.

The second fascicle of this year's volume will be published in December. Calls are open for the issues of 2019 (first and second fascicle of Volume 6). The deadline for 6.1 is February 1, 2019. The participants of the 2018 Nordmetrik Conference are welcome to submit the papers they presented to the journal.

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION

Editor Needed for *NORDMETRIK News*

Do you love poetry? And do you enjoy engaging with people and helping to bring them together? NordMetrik is looking for an enthusiastic and organized individual who would be interested in being the editor of *NORDMETRIK News* on behalf of the Network's steering committee. Responsibilities surround preparation of two issues of the electronic newsletter per year. This role would be ideal for an energetic young scholar who is interested in metrics, poetry or forms of poetic discourse. It provides an easy channel for becoming known among the international community and potentially for building relationships with individuals within the Network. *NORDMETRIK News* is a formal publication with an ISSN number, so this editorship may also contribute to filling out a young scholar's CV. Although the publication may be minor, on a CV this role would be an indicator of experience in publication, responsibility in organization, an active role in the academic community and international networking, all of which are looked for in the review of applications.

Responsibilities would mainly involve maintaining communication for the newsletter, organizing submitted texts with the formal preparation of each issue, and responsibility for its publication. Maintaining communication would mainly concern sending out email requests for announcements, calls for papers or articles and other contributions to the newsletter and being the contact person for submissions in the publication process. The formal preparation of issues would involve organizing contributions with basic editing and layout into a publishable number. Publication would involve providing a ready pdf that can be uploaded on the NordMetrik website and notifying the Network's members that the new number is available. The editor will work under NordMetrik's steering committee, but our central concern is that *NORDMETRIK News* is responsibly managed and maintained as a platform for connectivity and communication. The editor will be allowed freedom in the organization and

development of the newsletter. Members of the steering committee with relevant experience will be available for consultation and support in this process.

If you are interested in becoming an editor of *NORDMETRIK News*, please contact Sissel Furuseth (sissel.furuseth[at]iln.uio.no) by 1 January 2019.

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

| NORD | METRIK | News |

Minutes of the NordMetrik Steering Committee Meeting

15 September 2018, at 2:00 pm, Börshuset, Swedish Academy Building, Stockholm

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Sissel Furuseth opened the meeting at 2:00 pm.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Satu Grünthal was chosen to take the minutes and Jacqueline Ekgren as decisor, to check them.

3. Board Nominations

The Nomination Committee, consisting of Eva Lilja and Tina Hoegh, and represented by Eva Lilja, announced that Lissan Taal-Apelqvist is leaving her post in the NordMetrik Board. Eva Lilja suggested two new members to be invited: Frog and Maria Lotman. The Meeting welcomed both new members to the Board.

4. Old Business: status web page and mailing list

A homepage for NordMetrik will be established under University of Oslo. The homepage can be used for general information about previous and future conferences etc. In addition to this, a newsletter once or twice a year will be distributed to those on the mailing list.

5. New Business: next conference

No decision was made about the next NordMetrik Conference, but the following conferences were announced:

- Jacqueline Ekgren introduced her idea about a “*kveding*”-focused workshop or conference in Norway in 2019.
- Maria Lotman and Mihhail Lotman will be arranging a Versification conference in Tallinn in 2020.

- Tatyana Skulacheva and her colleagues are arranging a conference on versification (statistical approach) in the Institute of Russian Language, RAS Moscow, on 24th–26th June 2018.

6. Comments and Announcements

Frog announced that the Volume of Versification, based on presentations from the Helsinki Conference, will be published in 2019.

7. Adjournment

Sissel Furuseth closed the meeting at 2.30 pm.