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Eccentricities: Outlying Poems that Reconstruct the Modern City

Excentricidades: Poemas periféricos que reconstruyen la ciudad moderna

Excentricidades: poemas periféricos que reconstruem a cidade moderna

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Artículo de reflexión

Abstract

This article, using Cesário Verde as a point of reference, presents diverse strategies of poetic reconstruction of the city via scansion and formal analysis of representative poems: "cidade/city/cité" by Augusto de Campos, "Ode Triunfal" by Álvaro de Campos (heteronym of Fernando Pessoa), "As Scismas do Destino" by Augusto dos Anjos, "Paisaje de la Juventud que Vomita (Anochecher en Coney Island)" by Federico García Lorca and "O Inferno de Wall Street" by Joaquim de Sousândrade. These poems are taken from Portuguese, Brazilian, Spanish and US-American literature and provide a fertile line of inquiry into urban poetics.

Keywords: Urban poetics, Modernity, Cesário Verde, Fernando Pessoa, Augusto dos Anjos, Federico García Lorca, Joaquim de Sousândrade.

Resumen

Este artículo, utilizando como punto de referencia a Cesário Verde, busca presentar diversas estrategias de reconstrucción poética de la ciudad, a través de la exploración y el análisis formal de poemas representativos: "cidade/city/cité", de Augusto de Campos; "Ode triunfal", de Álvaro de Campos (heterónimo de Fernando Pessoa); "As scismas do destino", de Augusto dos Anjos; "Paisaje de la juventud que vomita", de Federico García Lorca, y "O inferno de Wall Street", de Joaquim de Sousândrade. Estos poemas de la literatura portuguesa, brasileña, española y estadounidense constituyen una fértil línea de investigación sobre la poética urbana.

Palabras clave: poética urbana, modernidad, Cesário Verde, Fernando Pessoa, Augusto dos Anjos, Federico García Lorca, Joaquim de Sousândrade.

Resumo

Este ensaio, utilizando como ponto de referência Cesário Verde, procura apresentar diversas estratégias de reconstrução poética da cidade, por meio da exploração e da análise formal de poemas representativos: "cidade/city/cité", de Augusto de Campos; "Ode Triunfal", de Álvaro de Campos (heterônimo de Fernando Pessoa); "As Cismas do Destino", de Augusto dos Anjos; "Paisaje de la Juventud que Vomita", de Federico García Lorca, e "O Inferno de Wall Street", de Joaquim de Sousândrade. Esses poemas da literatura portuguesa, brasileira, espanhola e estadunidense constituem uma fértil linha de pesquisa sobre a poética urbana.

Palavras-chave: Poética urbana, modernidade, Cesário Verde, Fernando Pessoa, Augusto dos Anjos, Federico García Lorca, Joaquim de Sousândrade.

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To Michael Franco and Sergio Mota, listeners of city rhythms

Poly-city

In 1995, the Brazilian poet Augusto de Campos released an album with audio recordings of his poetry. The album, called *Poesia é Risco*, included a track with the trilingual title “cidade/city/cité”—a poem originally written by Campos in 1963:

cidade/city/cité

atrocaducapacaustiduplielastifeliferofugahistoriloqualubri

mendimultipliorganiperiodiplastipubliaraparecipro

rustisagasimplitenaveloveravivaunivora

cidade city

cite.¹

Campos is an exponent of concrete poetry: a literary movement that fuses the form of a text into its content for the purpose of making unique objects out of poems. It follows that there is a unique concept of “verse” for each concrete poem as its structure is intended as a formal emanation of what one wants to convey.

Campos keeps this architectonic perspective of the city in mind when he recites his poem. The recording of “cidade/city/cité” starts as an incommensurable noise, from which a voice emerges and attempts to pronounce the sprawling string of letters. But the voice fails: given the enormity of the word, the poet eventually runs out of breath.

It is only after a few attempts that the poet manages to complete the chain of sounds, and we hear the end: the suffix *-cidade* (or *-city*, or *-cité*, depending on which of the three looping languages the poem is being recited). This is the common denominator, which gives meaning to

the many etymological roots that, in alphabetical order, constitute the poem. These roots, at first sight random, suddenly become legible when coupled with *-cidade/-city/-cité*.

Urban Poetics

How have innovations in poetry attempted to recreate the archetype of a city? This inquiry focuses on individual poems that first attempted original re-creations (not only descriptions) of cities—works in which the city somehow lives *in* the verses, breathing through *form*, *sound* and *rhythm*.

The idea of *space to build* comes to mind: How is the space of a poem built with the materials particular to this craft; and, in the case of a poem intending to recreate a city, how are the tensions, forces, structures of the city projected into this poetic space? These are questions that evoke Charles Olson’s “Projective Verse” manifesto:

(We now enter, actually, the large area of the whole poem, into the FIELD, if you like, where all the syllables and all the lines must be managed in their relations to each other.)

The objects which occur at every given moment of composition (of recognition, we can call it) are, can be, must be treated exactly as they do occur therein and not by any ideas or preconceptions from outside the poem, must be handled as a series of objects in field in such a way that a series of tensions (which they also are) are made to hold, and to hold exactly inside the content and the context of the poem which has forced itself, through the poet and them, into being.²

¹ Campos, “cidade/city/cite”.

² Olson, “Projective Verse”, 243-244.

A study of poem-cities is largely a study of tensions:

- a) The general gravitation of words (their attraction/repulsion), manifested in phrasal continuity, enjambments or—as in projective and concrete poetry—a field of forces guiding the distribution of words.
- b) The tension between syntax and rhythm, for “the syntax is trying to speed up the line, and the line is trying to slow down the syntax,” as Robert Pinsky put it.³
- c) The fundamental problem of form/content, which is displayed in various ways, such as how a more-or-less traditional form relates to a more-or-less modern theme/vocabulary.

Through five case studies, this essay examines how those tensions are employed by different poets who attempted to re-create their cities through poetry. The featured authors are all outsiders in their own ways: either because their chosen cities were as important to the poets as peripheral to the world, or because the poets themselves were foreigners in the metropolises they sang... Therefore, their recreations are *eccentric* in an etymological way (*out of the center*). Their poem-cities challenge the center of dominant urban representations and realign city borders by realigning poetry itself. One

such pivotal work, reflecting a crucial change in urban space is “O Sentimento d’um Occidental” by Cesário Verde.

Lisbon, 1880s

Much has been said about Verde’s seminal poem: how it is a turning point in Portuguese literature, and how much it influenced writers such as Fernando Pessoa.⁴ Here I will underscore the internal tensions it used to recreate the city.

This is a relatively long poem (176 verses in 44 ABBA quatrains): the second longest in *O livro de Cesário Verde* (1887). The poem has four parts, each representing a certain period of the same night—a night in the 1880s on which the poet walks through Lisbon.

A scansion of the first page of Verde’s poem generates a rhythmic blueprint: unstressed syllables are marked with a hyphen (-); stressed syllables with primary (/), secondary (\), or secondary-elevated-to-primary (!) accents; and long pauses with the *caesura* symbol (||). Moreover, the Distributive Number (of syllables stressed with primary accents) and the Representative Number (of the amount of syllables in each foot) are presented for each verse.⁵

VERSES	SCANSION	DISTR. #	REPR. #
Nas nossas ruas, ao anoitecer,	- \ - / - - - ! - /	4-8-10	4,4,2
Ha tal sornidade, ha tal melancholia,	- / - \ - / - / - \ - /	2-6-8-12	2,4,2,4
Que as sombras, o bulicio, o Tejo, a maresia	- / - - - / - / - - - / -	2-6-8-12	2,4,2,4
Despertam-me um desejo absurdo de soffrer.	- / - - - / - / - - - /	2-6-8-12	2,4,2,4
O ceu parece baixo e de neblina,	- / - \ - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
O gaz extravasado enjôa-me, perturba;	- / - - - / - / - - - / -	2-6-8-12	2,4,2,4
E os edificios, com as chaminés, e a turba	- \ - / - ! - - - / - / -	4-6-10-12	4,2,4,2
Toldam-se d’uma côr monotona e londrina.	\ - - ! - / - / - - - / -	4-6-8-12	4,2,2,4
Batem os carros de aluguer, ao fundo,	\ - - / - - - / - / -	4-8-10	4,4,2
Levando á via ferrea os que se vão. Felizes!	- / - \ - / - - - / - / -	2-6-10-12	2,4,4,2
Occorrem-me em revista exposições, paizes:	- / - - - / - - - / - / -	2-6-10-12	2,4,4,2
Madrid, Paris, Berlim, S. Petersburgo, o mundo!	- / - \ - / \ - - / - / -	2-6-10-12	2,4,4,2

3 Pinsky, *The Sounds of Poetry*, 29.

4 Buesco, “Introdução—Cesário;” Mourão-Ferreira and Carmo, *Cesário Verde*; Mourão-Ferreira, “Notas sobre Cesário Verde.”

5 Distributive and Representative Numbers (D# and R# respectively) are given as sequences of figures separated by hyphens (D#) and by unspaced commas (R#).

Semelham-se a gaiolas, com viveiros,	- / - - - / - \ - / - II	2-6-10	2,4,4
As edificações sómente emmadeiradas:	- ! - \ - / - / - - - / - II	2-6-8-12	2,4,2,4
Como morcegos, ao cair das badaladas,	\ - - / - \ - / - - - / - II	4-8-12	4,4,4
Saltam de viga em viga os mestres carpinteiros.	\ - - / - / - - - / - II	4-6-8-12	4,2,2,4

At first, the meter seems regular: primary stresses fall upon even syllables, and there are long pauses at the end of almost every verse (*enjambments* are scarce in the poem, appearing only a handful of times). However, the poet conveys a noticeable rhythmic tension in at least three different ways:

- 1) There is unevenness inside each stanza, with one decasyllable followed by three alexandrines.
- 2) The stanza-opening decasyllables alternate between Sapphic (4-8-10 in the first/third stanzas) and Heroic (2-6-10, in the second/forth stanzas).
- 3) Each of the four initial stanzas, although perfectly regular, has its alexandrines stressed in a different fashion: the accents on syllables 2-6-8-12 in the first stanza give way to three different stresses in the second, to a 2-6-10-12 pattern in the third and, in the fourth stanza, to a scheme that resembles the second.

Listening to Verde's varying accent schemes, one's ears never get bored. However, the rhythm does not come across as revolutionary. Even if the alexandrine verse, French in origin, was masterfully revived in Portuguese by Verde, it had already been in use in Portugal for a century—the importation generally being attributed to two Portuguese abbots (Cabral and Brandão) and to Bocage.⁶ Furthermore, one cannot disregard the popularity of Baudelaire and his alexandrine-abundant *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1855), which was very much in vogue during Verde's time. Why then would Verde's poem be regarded as revolutionary?

The answer may not lie in any one element: neither just in the form, nor just in the content—but in the tension created between the two. Indeed, as Verde's lyrical self walks through the city, images

never-before depicted in Portuguese assault the reader; they come from every corner-stanza of this city-poem. Something about the verses is dissonant, ill at ease. The vocabulary is full of imprisoning verbs as if one walked solely to emphasize how much of a prison the city is. Seemingly unpoetic terms clash against elaborate rhythms, with the disturbing modernity of the theme emphasized by the very metric precision. Through this enhanced tension, Verde projects the urban contradictions into the matter and structure of his verses.

“London,” 1914

Verde was not the only herald of modernism and urban-poetics. Fernando Pessoa created a heteronym inspired by Verde using the name Alberto Caeiro; Caeiro, in turn, had Álvaro de Campos—another fictitious Pessoaan poet—as his disciple. Campos's first shocking poem—too futuristic to be taken as sane and too ironic to be taken as merely futuristic—was titled “Ode Triunfal.” When published in *Orpheu I*, the ode, though written in Lisbon, was dated “London, 1914—June”—one month before World War I broke out. Yet, Pessoa never visited London (Campos, the heteronym, had traveled extensively in Pessoa's fiction, like a Marco Polo of modernism).

If Verde's vocabulary was innovative when addressing neglected parts of his city, Campos's was affronting. Verily, the poetry of Campos was groundbreaking in both content and form. In contrast to Verde's regular meters, Campos introduced free verse to Lusophone literature as a pioneering disciple of Walt Whitman.⁷ “Ode Triunfal” is one of Campos's longest poems, with 32 irregular stanzas (totaling 239 verses), long lines (some reaching 20 syllables) and 11 *enjambments*. In Whitmanian fashion, it abounds in alliterations and “chaotic enumerations”—to employ the term coined by Leo Spitzer.⁸

⁶ The Azorean poet João Cabral de Melo has also been given credit for being a pioneer of alexandrine verse in Portuguese. Drummond and Miranda, “O alexandrino português,” 20.

⁷ Britto, “Para uma tipologia do verso livre,” 134.

⁸ Spitzer, *La enumeración caótica en la poesía moderna*.

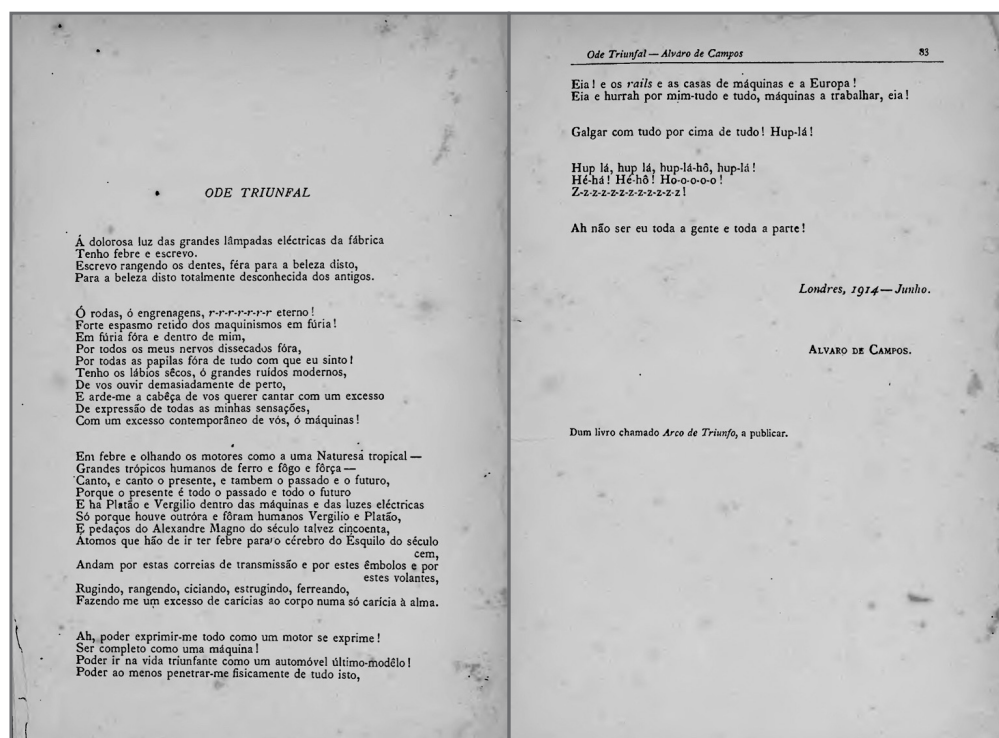


Figure 1. First and last pages of "Ode Triunfal" in *Orpheu* I, 1915.

The scansion of the ode is no simple matter since it requires secondary and primary stresses to be determined without the support of a regular framework. The free verse of Pessoa/Campos may be traced back to Whitman and his experiment of loosening the rules of Anglo-Saxon verse, in which alliterations play a key role.⁹ Besides alliteration, one can add syntactic packaging, parenthetic interruption, anaphora and expansion-contraction of verses—all borrowed from Whitman.¹⁰ Some of these elements are already visible in the first stanza of "Ode Triunfal," as the scansion below shows:¹¹

\ / / / / / / /	
À dolorosa luz das grandes lâmpadas eléctricas da fábrica	R# 4,2,4,4,4
\ / /	
Tenho febre e escrevo.	R# 3,2
/ / / / / /	
Escrevo rangendo os dentes, fera para a beleza disto,	R# 2,3,2,2,5,2
/ / \ / / / /	
Para a beleza disto totalmente desconhecida dos antigos.	R# 4,2,4,5,4

The unapologetic 18-syllable *incipit* introduces the alliteration of liquid/dental consonants (l, r, d, t) that dominate the stanza. The first verse also presents syntactic packaging, emphasized by the reiteration of the long 4-syllable foot imposed by the three successive proparoxytones ("lâmpadas eléctricas da fábrica"); the rhythm functions as super-anapest, with an intrinsic "weak-weak-weak-strong" *crescendo* that adds to the overall impact of the opening). The repetitions of "escrevo" and "para a beleza disto" at the end of verses 2/3 and the beginning of verses 3/4 are examples of anaphora and more syntactic packaging. Note

9 Britto, "Para uma tipologia do verso livre," 129.

10 *Ibid.*, 135-136.

11 For the sake of simplicity, I omitted the unstressed syllable sign and marked alliterations in bold/italics or with underlines. "R#" are representative numbers (indicative of the amount of syllables in each foot); twice we have indicated a 5-syllable foot in this stanza, which would, in practical terms, be broken into two smaller feet of 2,3 or 3,2 syllables, depending on how one goes about reciting the verses.

the metric contraction from the opening line to the second and the subsequent expansion from verses 2 to 4.

This stanza (or “paragraph of verses”) seems to be part cadence and part irregularity—different mechanized rhythms fighting for predominance—precisely one month before monstrous machines would be put to use in World War I.

The city of Campos is extreme: the discomfort of Verde’s poem gives way to manic euphoria in this ode. It has brutal (oftentimes sadomasochistic) vocabulary and a dissonant chorus of noisy machines. Verde innovated in content more than in form; by innovating in both, Campos made sure the reception of his poetry would be as scandalous as the city he was attempting to portray.

Recife, 1912

Much less studied than “O Sentimento d’um Occidental” is its Brazilian equivalent, the poem “As Scismas do Destino” by Augusto dos Anjos

(1912). More than twice as long as Verde’s landmark poem, Anjos’s is a four-part work with 105 ABBA quatrains that total 420 verses. Exclusively in decasyllables, the form is simpler than Verde’s mixed meters—but more daring in its use of enjambments (25 in total). Just as Verde walked through Lisbon in the 1880s, Anjos ambled through Recife thirty years later: time and place are different, but the intertextuality is unavoidable.

Already in the first stanza Anjos indicates the city (“Recife”), the specific starting point of his promenade (“Ponte Buarque de Macedo”), the direction (“indo em direção á casa do Agra”), his feelings (“Assombrado com a minha sombra magra”), and his thoughts (“Pensava no Destino, e tinha medo”).

As Anjos proceeds with his poetic report, mixing exterior (city) and interior (poet), remarkable evaluations of the city are made: for example, in the sixth stanza, which is scanned below, after the first:

VERSES	SCANSION	DISTR. #	REPR. #
Recife. Ponte Buarque de Macedo.	- / - \ - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
Eu, indo em direcção á casa do Agra,	\ / - - - / - \ - /	2-6-10	2,4,4
Assombrado com a minha sombra magra,	- - / - - / - \ - /	3-6-10	3,3,4
Pensava no Destino, e tinha medo!	- / - - - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
[...]			
Era como se, na alma da cidade,	\ - ! - - / - - - / -	3-6-10	3,3,4
Profundamente lúbrica e revôlta	- / - \ - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
Mostrando as carnes, uma besta solta	- \ - / - \ - / - /	4-8-10	4,4,2
Soltasse o bérro da animalidade.	- \ - / - - ! - / -	4-8-10	4,4,2

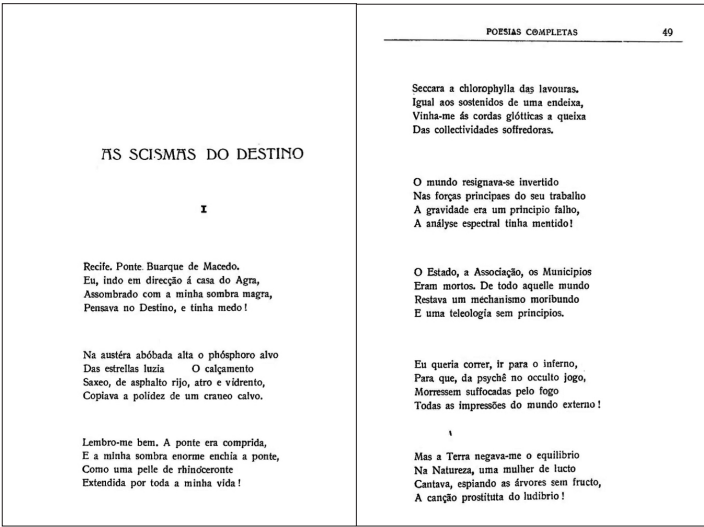


Figure 2. First and last pages of “As Scismas do Destino”. Source: Anjos, Eu (poesias completas).

While the Brazilian poet alternates Sapphic and Heroic verses (with some anapestic—3,3,4—variations of the Heroic), the decasyllabic rhythm is persistent and would perhaps become tedious if it were not for two of Anjos' characteristics: 1) enjambments and 2) scientific/biological vocabulary. The three stanzas below (the 4th, 23rd and 24th of the poem) display those aspects of Anjos's writing (biological lexicon is in bold and enjambment in italics):

A noite **fecundava** o ovo dos *vícios*
Animaes. Do carvão da treva imensa
 Cahia um ar damnado de doença
 Sobre a **cara** geral dos edificios!

[...]

E a **saliva** daquelles infelizes
 Inchava, em minha **bocca**, de tal arte,
 Que eu, para não **cuspir** por toda parte,
 Ia engolindo, aos poucos, a **hemoptisis**!

Na alta allucinação de minhas scismas,
 O **microcosmos** liquido da gotta
 Tinha a abundância de uma **artéria** rota,
 Arrebetada pelos **aneurismas**.¹²

The Brazilian poet would become known for his naturalistic words, mixing everyday terms with jargon that could be deemed unpoetic. The biological verbs (e.g. "fecundava") and nouns (e.g. "microcosmos"), whether purposefully unsophisticated ("saliva," "bocca," "cara," "cuspir")¹³ or glaringly scientific ("hemoptisis," "microcosmos," "artéria," "aneurismas"), reveal word-choices that, in 1920, didn't seem to belong in lyrical poetry.

\ / / /	
La mujer gorda venía delante	R# 4,3,3
/ / / / / //	
arrancando las raíces y mojando el pergamino de los tambores;	R# 3,4,4,4,5
\ /	
la mujer gorda	R# 4
/ / / / //	
que vuelve del revés los pulpos agonizantes.	R# 2,4,2,5
\ / / / //	
La mujer gorda, enemiga de la luna,	R# 4,4,4

New York City, 1929

Similarly to Pessoa, Federico Garcia Lorca was influenced by Walt Whitman; in fact, both Lorca and Pessoa/Campos dedicated free-verse odes to Whitman. Famous for his masterful use of meter in ballads, ghazals and sonnets, Lorca decided to venture into free verse upon visiting New York in 1929-1930. The result is the groundbreaking *Poeta en Nova York* (1940 and 2013).

The rhythm of Lorca's New York poems indeed resembles the free verse employed by Pessoa/Campos, as it can be seen in the first five verses of "Paisaje de la Juventud que Vomita (Anochecer en Coney Island)," which is scanned below.

The long feet, the sudden contraction/expansion (from lines 2 to 4), the constant rhythmic variation, the repetitions, the syntactical packaging (as more and more predicates are attached to the initial subject)—these are all poetic gadgets from Whitman's toolbox, which Pessoa/Campos also used. Nevertheless, while the modernist-futurist city of Campos is at once ironic and ominous, Lorca's New York is surreal.

In "Danza de la Muerte" (Death Dance), another poem of *Poeta en Nueva York*, Lorca applies his free verse and surreal vocabulary to Wall Street, which had just suffered the crash of October 1929—something the poet had timely witnessed as the poem is dated December 1929. Lorca is particularly suited to represent this historic moment; he depicts an event that was then perceived as being surreal: the suddenly shattered sense of security of the USA's financial center.¹⁴

¹² Anjos, *Eu (poesias completas)*, 27, 30, and 31.

¹³ The words "bocca," "saliva" and "cuspir" evoke the last verse of Anjos's most famous sonnet, "Versos Íntimos," which ends in "Escarra nessa bocca que te beija" (ANJOS, 1920: 129).

¹⁴ Lorca, *Poet in New York*, 93-103.

Cantos	Years Indicated	pp. from-to	pp. #	Meters besides decasyllables
I	1858	3-18	16	
II	1858	19-44	26	+“WSI” (25-41)
III	1858	45-68	24	+6 (46-51)
IV	1858	69-91	23	
V	1862	92-130	39	
VI	1852-1857	131-146	16	+6 (132)
VII	1857-1900	147-149	3*	+6 (148)
VIII	1857-1870	150-162	13	
IX	1871	163-185	23	+7 (166-167)
X	1873-188...	186-272	87	+4 (217) +7 (221) +“WSI” (231-261)
XI	1878	273-310	38	
XII	1878	311-331	21*	+7 (313-314)
Epilogue [XIII]	1880-1884	332-350	19*	+4 (338-339) +7 (348)

New York City, 1873

Fifty years before Lorca, another foreign poet had visited New York City just in time to witness the first great depression to impact Wall Street (now called the “Panic of 1873”). While Lorca is widely known, the Brazilian poet Joaquim de Sousândrade only started gaining popularity in the 1960s due to the literary revision promoted by the Brazilian poets (and brothers) Augusto and Haroldo de Campos.¹⁵

Born in Brazil in 1833, Sousândrade lived in NYC from 1871 to 1879. His 350-page *O Guesa* was first published in NYC (1877); a revised edition was published in London (between 1884 and 1902).¹⁶ As shown in the table below, the British edition displays years (which I interpret to be years of composition) as subtitles to each of the thirteen Cantos of *O Guesa*. Cantos VII, XII and XIII are incomplete.¹⁷ The table also presents the page count for each Canto, and any meters employed besides the predominant decasyllable (e.g. +6 means that the Canto in question also contains hexasyllables on the pages in parentheses; “WSI” stands for “Wall Street Inferno,” as shall be explained).

Guesa is a word from the Chibcha language, spoken by the native American Muisca people (encountered by the Spanish in 1537 in the central highlands of present-day Colombia). *Guesa* means “the one who errs, the one without home”; it is the name of the protagonist of a Muisca legend according to which the “guesa,” robbed from his parents as a child should complete fifteen years of peregrination through the “Suna path” and then be offered in sacrifice to the Sun-god.

Sousândrade recreates the mythical journey of the *guesa*, mixing it with elements of his own life; after adventures all over the Americas—and 230 pages of poetry—the *guesa* arrives on Wall Street, precisely during the “Panic of 1873”, and this is where things get metrically interesting.

Most of Sousândrade’s poem is written in decasyllables, hardly an innovation—even if one takes into account the occasional 4, 6 and 7 syllable-based verses that appear in a handful of pages. When the *guesa* arrives on Wall Street, though, the poetic form suddenly changes into a surprising arrangement that reflects the theme, i.e., the chaos of Wall Street in 1873; this part of *O Guesa* became known as the “Wall Street Inferno” (a ti-

¹⁵ Campos and Campos, *Re/Visão de Sousândrade*

¹⁶ There is uncertainty regarding the year the British edition was released, as the book does not display a date. It is post-1884; some suggest c. 1888 (Hardman, “Espectros de la nación,” 88 and 96), noting that the ed. would be the most complete one made during the poet’s lifetime. I raise the possibility that the British edition may have been published later, between 1900 and 1902, which would still be during the poet’s lifetime. Note the years added as a subtitle to Canto VII (“1857-1900”), which suggest that the poet was still working on the book in 1900.

¹⁷ On page 350, there is a note indicating that Cantos VII, XII and XIII are incomplete (hence the asterisks by their page totals): “(Ficam interrompidos os cantos VII, XII, XIII, do poema do Guesa).”

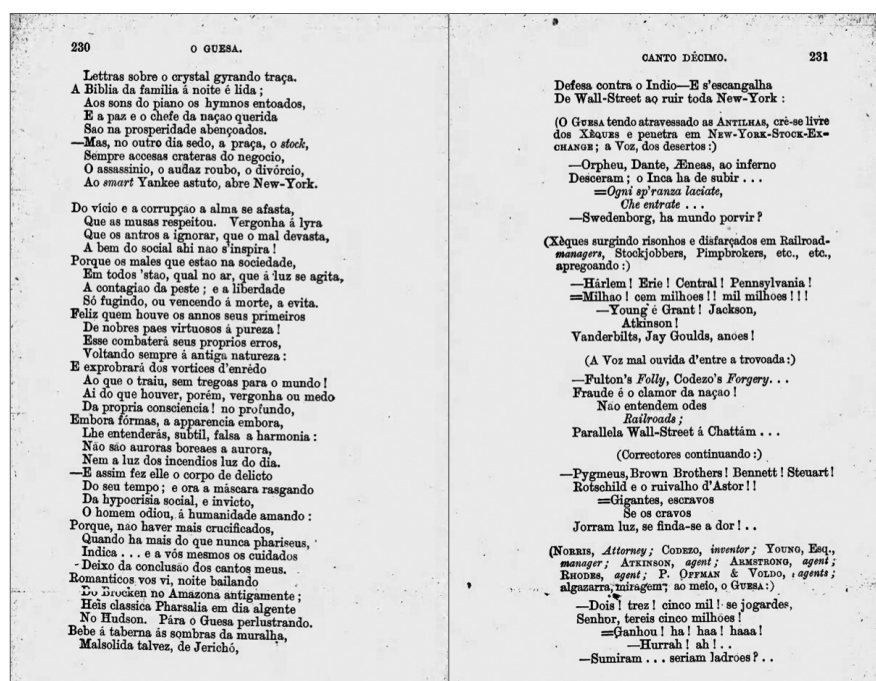


Figure 3. Poetic form morphing in O Guesa; SOUSÂNDRADE, c. 1888: 230-231.

tle given by the Campos brothers in their studies of Sousândrade).

This new poetic form—I call it *infernism*—appears only twice throughout the saga, covering 17 pages of Canto II and 31 of Canto X. The use of this form in Canto II, unrelated to Wall Street, is a first experiment with the new rhythm, which reveals its full powers in Canto X. Below, the pages are reproduced in which the meter changes as *guesa* enters the Wall Street Inferno.

In his study of the poem, Hardman¹⁸ argued that the *infernisms* (my term, not Hardman's) constitute only 14% of the book (this includes the *infernisms* of Cantos II and X. Alone, the "Wall Street Inferno" of Canto X represents 9% of *O Guesa*).¹⁹ Given the relatively small presence of the new form in the whole poem, Hardman concludes that "El *tonus* dominante sigue siendo el del épico-dramático en el mejor linaje romántico".²⁰

Nevertheless, considering the climatic position of the "Wall Street Inferno," I propose a different reading: the relatively small proportion of *infern-*

isms makes this poetic form even more remarkable (by contrast); opposing the thousands of decasyllables, one encounters the dense, special and dramatic *katabasis* into Wall Street.

Below is a proposed scansion of the transition from decasyllables to *infernisms* in *O Guesa*, as well as two more *infernistic* stanzas (the 5th and 28th, counting from the arrival on Wall Street; note the *caesura* symbols are omitted).

On page 231 of *O Guesa*, the stanzas of four heroic decasyllables give way to very different stanzas, which present the following formal attributes:

- 1) one paragraph of prose within parentheses, of varying length, naming (as one would in drama) the characters who voice the subsequent verses;
- 2) five verses spoken by the characters mentioned in the initial prose paragraph, frequently involving more than one voice (different voices are indicated by alternating dashes and double dashes);

18 Hardman, "Espectros de la nación," 91-92.

19 I remade Hardman's calculations and obtained the same figures; nevertheless, both of us calculated the percentages by using the relative numbers of *pages* (and not of *verses*)—so the numbers may be slightly different if one took the time to gauge the exact verse-proportions.

20 Hardman, "Espectros de la nación," 92.

CANTO DÉCIMO.

231

Defesa contra o Indio—E s'escangalha
De Wall-Street ao ruir toda New-York :

(O Guesa tendo atravessado as ANTILHAS, cre-se livre
dos Xêques e penetra em New-YORK-Stock-Ex-
change ; a Voz, dos desertos :))

—Orpheu, Dante, Aeneas, ao inferno
Desceram ; o Inca ha de subir . . .

=*Ogni sp'ranza lasciate,
Ch' entrate . . .*

—Swedenborg, ha mundo porvir ?

(Xêques surgindo risinhos e disfarçados em Railroad-
managers, Stockjobbers, Pumpbrokers, etc., etc.,
apregoando :))

—Harlem ! Erie ! Central ! Pennsylvania !

=Milhao ! cem milhoes !! mil milhoes !!!

—Young e Grant ! Jackson,
Atkinson !

Vanderbilts, Jay Goulds, anoes !

(A Voz mal ouvida d'entre a trovada :))

—Fulton's Folly, Codexo's Forgery. . .

Praude á o clamor da nação !

Não entendem odes

Railroads ;

Parallelá Wall-Street á Chettám . . .

(Correctores continuando :))

—Pygmeus, Brown Brothers ! Bennett ! Stuart !
Rotschild e o ruivalho d'Astor !

=Gigantes, escravos

Se os cravos

Jorram luz, se finda-se a dor ! . .

(NORRIS, *Attorney* ; CODEXO, *inventor* ; YOUNG, *Esq.,*
manager ; ATKINSON, *agent* ; ARMSTRONG, *agent* ;
RHOADS, *agent* ; P. OPPMAN & VOLDO, *agents* ;
algazarra, miragem ; ao meio, o GUESA :))

—Dois ! trez ! cinco mil ! se jogardes,

Senhor, tereis cinco milhoes !

=Ganhou ! hu ! hea ! baaa !


—Hurrah ! ah ! . .

—Sumiram . . . seriam ladroes ? . .

VERSES	SCANSION	DISTR. #	REPR. #
Romanticos nos vi, noite bailando	- / - - / \ - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
Do Brocken no Amazona antigamente;	- / - - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
Heis classica Pharsalia em dia algente	- / - - / - / - / -	2-6-8-10	2,4,2,2
No Hudson. Pára o Guesa perlustrando.	- / - / - / - - / -	2-4-6-10	2,2,2,4
Bebe á taberna ás sombras da muralha,	\ - - / - / - - / -	4-6-10	4,2,4
Malsolida talvez, de Jerichó,	- / - - / - - - /	2-6-10	2,4,4
Defesa contra o Indio—E s'escangalha	- / - - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
De Wall-Street ao ruir toda New-York:	- / - - / \ - - /	2-6-10	2,4,4
(O GUESA, tendo atravessado as ANTILHAS, crêse livre dos XÊQUES e penetra em NEW-YORK STOCK-EXCHANGE; a VOZ dos desertos:)	(prose paragraph)		
—Orpheu, Dante, Æneas, ao inferno	- / \ - - / - - - / -	2-6-10	2,4,4
Desceram; o Inca ha de subir...	- / - - / - - - /	2-5-9	2,3,4
=Ogni sp'ranza lasciate,	\ - / - - - / -	3-7	3,4
Che entrate...	- / -	2	2
—Swedenborg, ha mundo porvir?	- - / - - - /	3-5-8	3,2,3
[...]			
(NORRIS, <i>Attorney</i> ; CODEZO, <i>inventor</i> ; YOUNG, <i>Esq.</i> , <i>manager</i> ; ATKINSON, <i>agent</i> ; ARMSTRONG, <i>agent</i> ; RODHES, <i>agent</i> ; P. OFFMAN & VOLD, <i>agents</i> ; algazarra, miragem; ao meio, o GUESA:)	(prose paragraph)		
—Dois! trez! cinco mil! se jogardes,	\ \ / - / - - / -	3-5-8	3,2,3
Senhor, tereis cinco milhões!	- / - / \ - - /	2-4-8	2,2,4
= Ganhou! ha! haa! haaa!	- / \ \ /	2-5	2,3
—Hurrah! ah!...	\ - /	3	3
—Sumiram... seriam ladrões?...	- / - - / - - /	2-5-8	2,3,3
[...]			2-5-8
(OSCAR-BARÃO em domingo atravessando a TRINDADE, assestando o binoclo, resmirando, resmungando de <i>tableaux vivants</i> , cortejando: o povo levao a trambolhões para fóra da igreja:)	(prose paragraph)		
—Cobra! cobra! (<i>What so big a noise?!...</i>)	\ - / - / - \ - /	3-5-9	3,2,4
Era o meu relógio... perdão!...	/ - \ - / - - /	1-5-8	2,3,3,3,2,3
São pulgas em Bod....	- / - - /	2-5	2,3
Me acode!!...	- /	2	2
= <i>God? Cod! Sir, we mob; you go dam!</i>	\ / \ - / - - /	2-5-8	2,3,3

- 3) a movement of contraction-and-expansion in the size of verses, following the overall pattern *long-long-short-shorter-long*, with a fixed number of feet but not of syllables for each of the five verses (3/3/2/1/3-feet);
- 4) flexibility of types of feet (iambes, trochees, anapests, dactyls...);

- 5) a rhyme scheme ABCCB, including rhymes across languages.

There is, thus, some sort or order in the chaos of Sousândrade's Wall Street; an order that sprouts from disorder, that represents a fluid geography and that allows for the babble and the Babel of our human cities. 

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