

WHO EMIGRATES DEPARTS WITH #WORDS IN THEIR POCKETS @ *AIMISOLA.NET/HYMIWO.PO*¹

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ABSTRACT: Acting as a background and log to the writing and artistic research process, this essay presents some of the inner poetological, systemic, networked, gender, socio-political and ludic workings of *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po*, a collaborative online poemgame written and developed by Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen.

KEYWORDS: African Immigrant Women; Refugee; Digital Poetry; *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po*; Poemgame; Poemscreen.

RESUMO: Actuando como pano de fundo e registo do processo de escrita e investigação artística, este ensaio apresenta alguns dos mecanismos internos, a nível poetológico, sistémico, em rede, de género, sociopolítico e lúdico de *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po*, um poema-jogo colaborativo, e em linha, escrito e desenvolvido por Álvaro Seiça e Sindre Sørensen.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Mulheres Imigrantes Africanas; Refugiada; Poesia Digital; *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po*; Poema-jogo; Poema-ecrã.

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home countries, either because they are running away from an armed conflict or they are being persecuted. Refugees, despite some right-wing political agendas that try to classify them as pure migrants, are people who flee from their home countries because of war, persecution or human rights violations. Here, again, women and children are the most affected groups. Having these issues in the background, the work bridges both the situation of immigrants and refugees. Rootlessness, personal hopes, women's rights, human rights, social and professional exclusion, gender inequality, and sexual aggression experienced by women living in precarious situations of unemployment, served therefore as ultimate source for the writing process. Trying to account for this endemic condition is further complicated by the post-2008 economic recession, which aids increasing discrimination and social, gendered and economic inequities. Hence, immigrant women have less access to language courses, jobs, and vacancies for their children in public kindergartens, even if, in many cases, they are mothers of European-born children.

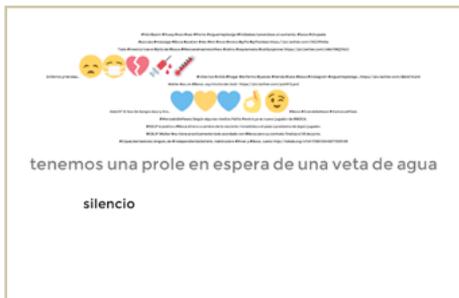


Figure 4. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). Spanish version (screenshot).

#migra... #imigrantes somos
temos uma prole à espera de um veio de água
que varra a montanha mineral até à nossa #boca
temos os ossos curtidos à espera de um músculo
que aqueça o início das madrugadas
temos o alcatrão fóbico das avenidas à espera
que os dentes em fogo arranquem o húmus aos canteiros

#immigrants all #immigrants we are
we have an offspring awaiting for a stream
to sweep the mineral mountain down to our #mouth
we have the tanned bones awaiting for a muscle

to warm the beginning of dawn
we have the hot tarmac awaiting for the teeth on fire
to rip out the dirt from the flowerbeds



Figure 5. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). Portuguese version (screenshot).

a poemtrack for a yet-to-be-written dance piece

My initial response was to construct a poetic score, to script a kind of musical score with no music, but rather text – a *written* representation of a *textual* composition. This path would function, I hoped, as a soundtrack made of text, that is, a *textrack*. Impressed and inspired by the assemblage of genres, the hybrid form, irony, and themes of *Masurca Fogo* (1998), by Pina Bausch/Tanztheater Wuppertal, which I had seen at the Oslo Opera House in February 2015 – just a couple of days after I had been invited to write a poem for the Aimisola project – I envisioned devising a poem that would function as a *poemtrack* for the whole duration of *Masurca Fogo*. This poem would interweave and match silent and spoken parts of the live piece. It would be scripted with silent moments, when text or sound would be performed in *Masurca Fogo*, and with textual moments, when silence would occur in Bausch's piece. For that, I would need a full audio version of the live piece, with time codes, or a full video so that I could extract the time codes, and therefore synchronize the two works. In turn, I even planned to use the audio file as the Web-based soundtrack to the *textrack*, as users would read and interact with the poem. After receiving a negative reply from Tanztheater Wu-

ppertal, on the basis of “legal reasons” for sharing audio or video files – regarding my intention of writing on top of Bausch’s piece – I decided to abandon this path. Instead, I started scripting a poemtrack not to an existing dance piece, but rather to a future one, one that had yet-to-be devised and choreographed. This is the backstage for that long and strange subtitle – *a poemtrack for a yet-to-be-written dance piece* – that perhaps you have been wondering what it does really mean. The subtitle aims to be a cue, an invitation for further collaboration; for an author, collective or ensemble here and now, or yet-to-be-born, to use, remix, modify or reassemble the poem as part of a larger artistic project.

it is a boat gliding over knotted arms #hands

As the writing process progressed, the individual and collective experiences of African women leaving their home countries, emigrating, and adjusting to Spanish society became part of a broader (e/im)migration issue. To tackle both the local and the universal, but especially the European context, I tried to frame their experiences as unique, and re-situate them as plural, given the smuggling of people from Northern Africa to Europe; the constant occurrences of people dying of hunger or of having their boats sank in the Mediterranean Sea.

#imigrantes todas #imigrantes somos
com o tráfico das horas pulsando nos ovários
e o tráfico das moedas nos bolsos de quem os leva

#immigrants all #immigrants we are
the trafficking of hours pounding in the ovaries
and the traffic of coins in the pockets of those who take it

I had been following these issues since at least May 8, 2011, when news broke about a major incident. Military units, including a NATO ship – according to *The Guardian* and the 2012 Council of Europe report “Lives Lost in the Mediterranean Sea: Who Is Responsible?” – had left 63 persons die, as they were being transported by boat from Libya to Lampedusa, via the Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, witnessing Europeans replying in

a completely non-unanimous manner, fostering solidarity but also, in many cases, racism and xenophobia, reinforced part of the problem. Then, as I was finishing writing the poem, the so-called “European migrant crisis” fully exploded.

To set a state of alert and coastal lighthouse sound atmosphere, a sound source could provide an intensification of cinematic, thematic and reading experiences. Sea sound was our first option. Yet, it was too smooth and pacifying. We needed a soundscape that would convey an emergency feel. I turned to Tonbruket. The soundtrack that builds the synesthetic environment comprised by text, image and audio – kinetic poetry, visual art and music – became “Lighthouse” (2011), a 3’21” song by the Swedish jazz band Tonbruket, included in the album *Dig It to The End*.

```
// tonbruket_lighthouse.mp3 is 03:21 long, i.e. 201 seconds
<audio id="lighthouse">
<!-- source src="Lighthouse" in "Dig it to the
end" (2011) Courtesy of Tonbruket/ACT -->
<source src="/tonbruket_lighthouse.
mp3" type="audio/mp3"/>
</audio>
```

(before they razed your house)

Whereas I have experienced the cultural and social Spanish context in many occasions, further insights were given by different sources. These sources acted as prompters for parts of the writing’s development. Regarding the economic and real estate depression, but especially the effect of the “mortgage crisis” on people’s everyday life, due to forced evictions, Michelle Teran’s film *Mortgaged Lives* (2014) – based on the movement *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH), operating since 2009 through social work – and Ada Colau and Adrià Alemany’s book *Vides Hipotecades* (2012), translated as *Mortgaged Lives* (2014), provided a resourceful account about women’s empowerment, right to housing, the financial banks’ social responsibility and power abuse, and psychosocial effects. They expanded the meaning of social bond, resistance, radical protest and home.

não foi o mercado imobiliário que escreveu
na fachada da calle mundo se alquila
foi um homem feito de homens
como uma #mutilaçãogenitalfeminina
vendido o prédio ainda em planta
sem aqueles bancos disseste
(antes de te navalharem a casa)
não teríamos estes créditos

#imigrantes todas #imigrantes somos
um copo de plástico rolando em rô pela ladeira
o odor do refogado preso ao tacho às quatro da manhã
e aquela madrugada aquela madrugada
a memória é um túnel de imagens
suspensas por teias de seda
naquela madrugada naquela madrugada
de rompão os bastões e capacetes escavando
as portas pelo prédio acima
a evacuação do patamar até ao sétimo andar
os gritos das #crianças acordadas no pátio de gelo
as #mulheres e os homens gemendo
até se evaporarem na invasão prussiana
os cães uivando nas galerias das casotas
as ambulâncias em jacto permanente
pelas alamedas dos cemitérios
as carrinhas da guarda civil correndo
num vaivém iluminado em círculos
todas as sirenes se afirmando enquanto o primeiro-ministro
lava os dentes com a #boca ainda estremunhada

it wasn't the real estate market who wrote
on the facade of calle world se alquila
it was a man made of men
as a #femalegenitalmutilation
still in blueprint the buildings are sold
without those banks you said
(before they razored your house)
we wouldn't have these loans

#immigrants all #immigrants we are
a plastic cup rolling down the slope
the scent of deep-fried fat stuck to the pan at four a.m.
and that dawn that dawn
our tunneled memory as images suspended by silky webs
in that dawn in that dawn
thundering batons and helmets ramming
the doors one by one
the building's evacuation from the
ground up to the seventh floor
the screams of #children awake in the icy courtyard
#women and men groaning
until they've evaporated within the prussian invasion
the dogs howling in the galleries of kennels
the ambulances permanently blasting
along the cemeteries' alleyways
the vans of the civil guard racing
in a bright swing of circles
all sirens stating out loud while the prime minister
is brushing his teeth with his #mouth still half-asleep

sula, but that has rather strong traits of patriarchy, chauvinism and sexism, was enhanced by Carlos Saura's *Carmen* (1983). Financial, cultural, social and gendered power, dominance, and oppression are visible aspects in Spain, which can be felt not only in the society at large, but also in particular events. They are deeply ingrained in cultural traditions that range from flamenco to bullfighting. Hence, a feminist perspective is vital to address these issues.

mas vamos ver se nos entendemos
#espanha é ainda uma embalsamada #redesocial
e dizer #espanha é dizer mais do que #espanha
as touradas salitram gritos como múmias patriarcais
no flamenco os flamingos dançam como pavões
(sim não estamos aqui pelas maiorias
e sim gostamos da festa e da dança)
mas vamos ver se nos entendemos
#espanha é ainda uma embalsamada #redesocial
os homens dançam como cavalos
os touros dançam contra os homens
e pelo meio e pelo final os homens dançam
sobre os flamingos cavalos ansiosos contra os touros

but let's see if we understand each other
#spain is still an embalmed #socialnetwork
and to say #spain is to say more than #spain
bullfights dripping screams like patriarchal mummies
on flamenco the flamingos dance like peacocks
(yes we aren't here for the majority
and yes we like party and dance)
but let's see if we understand each other
#spain is still an embalmed #socialnetwork
men dance like horses
bulls dance against men
and by the middle and by the end men dance
over the flamingos eager horses against bulls

<META name="description" content="?">

The commentaries in the source code, as well as the "read me" content in the introduction scene or opening screen, provide instructions, information, and context regarding the title, year, authors, license, language versions, music and sources, functioning as help and credits.

The dominant Spanish male culture, which is neither unique to Spain, nor to the Iberian Penin-



Figure 7. Source code opened in Sublime, a text editor (screenshot). HTML comments are provided in lines 12-49.

The comment in the HTML code, lines 12 to 49, is here transcribed:

```
<!--//////////////////////////////////////
aimisola.net/hymiwo.po: a poemtrack for
a yet-to-be-written dance piece

2015 álvaro seiça + sindre sørensen
cc by-nc-sa 4.0

(HYMIWO.PO=HYmn+imMigrant+WOMen.POem)

/reading instructions/
press the left and right arrow keys.(and
disorient{the verses+yourself})
the silence
move ({its/your}reading.back+forth)
press all the arrows.(and{read+play+}
traverse the poemscreen)
a language-game-scene
and continue reading
write the #words on twitter
and read them back

/text/
the spanish and english versions have
been translated by álvaro seiça
and respectively proofread by xiana sotelo and anna watson
anna watson contributed with major suggestions
to improve the english version
the tweets are being proofread in real-
time by all the writers out there

/music/
"lighthouse" in "dig it to the end" (2011) by tonbruket
courtesy of tonbruket/act

/source/
aimisola.net/hymiwo.po was born from acudeva's
project "voices of immigrant women"
a wiki and assortment of collaborative
poems which are rooted in the
socially-engaged project
AIMISOLA (Integral Attention to Immigrant Women:
```

Formative Itineraries for Social and Labour
Insertion) <http://aimisola.net>
and
pina bausch's "masurca fogo" (1998) and
carlos saurá's "carmen" (1983)
and
////////////////////////////////////// -->

The comment therefore provides an explanation for the acronym HYMIWO.PO as it stands for a HYmn to imMigrant WOMen, a POem. The extension "po" both acknowledges the writing form and the initial consideration of using Poedit as an editor for translating the poem. An important aspect is that the title of the work is the very URL of the work. This aspect recognizes the physical and on-line domain for which it was created, aimisola.net, and immediately points to its Web-based characteristics and localization. The source code's lines 1-11 provide data and metadata markup on the type of document, the title, description, keywords, and character encoding, which are read by the browser, harvested by search engines and can be helpful in indexing or cataloguing the work.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<title>aimisola.net/hymiwo.po</title>
<META name="description" content="aimisola.net/hymiwo.
po: a poemtrack for a yet-to-be-written dance piece">
<META name="keywords" content="african, immigrants,
europe, conflict, women, spain, language, fear, waves,
hands, silenced, journey, obstacle, unemployment, social
network, exclusion, children, female genital mutilation, eyes,
inclusion, exchange, education, employment, mobility,
mouth to mouth, violence, daily survival, volunteering,
crisis, refugee, associative power, community development,
import, sub-saharan, export, sexually transmitted
diseases, independence, mali, morocco, mediterranean,
inequality, gender inequality, sexual inequality, sport
inequality, poetic inequality, today, voice, tomorrow,
word, poetry, aimisola, hymiwo.po, poemtrack, dance,
digital poetry, twitter, álvaro seiça, sindre sørensen">
<meta http-equiv="content-type"
content="text/html; charset=UTF-8">
```

Crafty.scene("poemscene");

The second version of aimisola.net/hymiwo.po has four major scenes. The first scene is the

introduction, giving access to language selection, instructions and running the poem. The second scene acts first as a cinematic introduction, though differently from standard opening credits, since the following fifty keywords are presented:

#africanas
 #imigrantes
 #europa
 #conflito
 #mulheres
 #espanha
 #linguagem
 #medo
 #ondas
 #mãos
 #silenciadas
 #viagem
 #obstáculo
 #desemprego
 #redesocial
 #exclusão
 #crianças
 #mutilaçãogenitalfeminina
 #olhos
 inclusão
 #trocar
 #educação
 #emprego
 #mobilidade
 #boca a boca
 #violência
 #sobrevivência diária
 voluntariado
 #crise
 #refugiada
 #poder associativo
 desenvolvimento comunitário
 desenvolvimento local
 #importação
 #subsariana
 #exportação
 #DST
 #independência
 #mali
 #marrocos
 #mediterrâneo
 #desigualdade
 #desigualdade de género
 #desigualdade sexual
 desigualdade poética
 #hoje
 #voz
 #amanhã
 #palavra
 #poesia
 aimisola.net/hymiwo.po
 uma bandapoética para uma peça de
 dança ainda por escrever

álvaro seïça & sindre sørensen



Figure 8. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version. (screenshot).

#african
 #immigrants
 #europe
 #conflict
 #women
 #spain
 #language
 #fear
 #waves
 #hands
 #silenced
 #journey
 #obstacle
 #unemployment
 #socialnetwork
 #exclusion
 #children
 #femalegenitalmutilation
 #eyes
 inclusion
 #exchange
 #education
 #employment
 #mobility
 #mouth to mouth
 #violence
 #daily survival
 volunteering
 #crisis
 #refugee
 associative #power
 community development
 local development
 #import
 #subsaharan
 #export
 #STD
 #independence
 #mali
 #morocco
 #mediterranean
 #inequality

gender inequality
 sexual inequality
 poetic inequality
 #today
 #voice
 #tomorrow
 #word
 #poetry
 aimisola.net/hymiwo.po
 a poemtrack for a yet-to-be-written dance piece
 álvaro seica & sindre sørensen

Some of these words or expressions are marked with hash signs (#), and some are struck through, as they are marked by the HTML tag delete (). The strike-through functions as a typographic, semantic and writing strategy I have been employing since 2012, when I started the series “poemas interrumpidos” (interrupted poems). The hashtags surface throughout the work, among the verses, and pull real-time tweets that have been posted with those specific hashtags.

a #word can be a chisel piercing the brain

Following up the keywords, the second scene activates the lines of the poem, with a *poemscreen* game acting as third scene, to finally give way to the rest of the lines, that is, the continuation of the second scene. The visual texture of the second scene aims to blend different sources of textual output. The background lines are thus tweets pulled in real-time according to the hashtag that appears on-screen, even if a time

delay happens. The mash-up of the central line with collectively written tweets provides reiterations of content or information by means of collective discourse and conversations in the social network site Twitter about particular topics, as with #african, #immigrants, #conflict, #women, #spain, #children, #femalegenital-mutilation (Fig. 9), #education, #employment, #violence, #refugee, #STD, #mediterranean, #inequality or #poetry; provokes content mixture, as with #hands (Figs. 10 and 11), or mixed and disruptive content, as it is the case with the hashtag #african (Figs. 12 and 13), which might pull pornographic content, and #mouth, which always pulls porn links (Fig. 14). First, suffice to say that unpredictable factors, error, glitch, chance and randomness acquire an important role here. The hashtag #mouth does not appear in the poem within a pornographic context, and so the two layers contaminate each other. What one reads in the two layers can problematize, enhance or neutralize one another. Second, the correspondent hashtag in different languages nevertheless pulls idiosyncratic content – e.g. #unemployment or #desemplego (Fig. 15) – and tweets that may be in multiple languages. Finally, the size of the emoji gains an expression that was not planned at all by us when defining the framework of live-tweets. Most of the times, the emoji are enlarged both in height and weight, which establishes a new semiotic layer. Hence, emoji can also problematize, enhance or neutralize textual content.





Figure 9. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #female-genitalmutilation. (screenshot).



Figure 10. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #hands. (screenshot).



Figure 12. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #african. (screenshot).

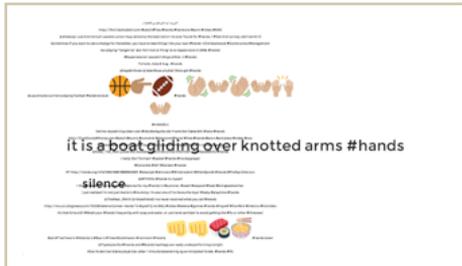


Figure 11. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #hands. (screenshot).



Figure 13. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #african. (screenshot).



Figure 14. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, #mouth. (screenshot).



Figure 15. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). Portuguese version, #desemprego. (screenshot).

The textual and visual elements of the work are thus composed of foreground and background: a stable foreground and an erratic background. They are constituted by fixed lines, which live in a database and are presented in bigger font size, and ever-changing lines – messages with 140 characters that are pulled from Twitter in real-time and presented on-screen in smaller font size. Thus, they inscribe and ascribe an unstable nature in the work, as each iteration of the work, browser refreshment, or new reading provide a

different textscape. The interface’s mash-up, superimposition and time-based features try to account for a texture embodying the aesthetics of information overflow, and try to question what can be read as poetry and what can acquire poetic value. By avoiding a neat interface, it combines, repurposes, and subverts the screen’s media culture, and the visual and graphical display that characterizes current digital environments, since it addresses error and multiple textual fluxes. The spatial composition then tries to speak to an organic surface in which fluidity and layering are key components.

In this sense, the reading direction and speed of the poem was a challenging factor we delved into. After brainstorming, our first option, given the side scroll framework set from the beginning, was to position the work’s fixed lines moving according to a side-scrolling function. However, as we did not want to remediate a roll of parchment, nor compose a “continuous string of signs” (Manguel, 2014, p. 48), instead of setting that function in the fixed lines, we opted for using it in the silent shuttle (*silence*), an avatar that would work both as the duration of each scene and as the embodiment of the reader and reader-player. The duration of each part of the scene is given by the word *silence* moving from left to right, below the fixed central line, which fades in and out at a set pace, though the reader-user can interact by manipulating the left and right arrow keys for slower or faster reading in a to-and-fro motion.

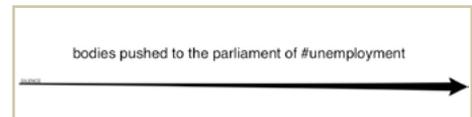


Figure 16. Diagram of the avatar *silence* and its trajectory during scene 2.

Therefore, line replacement, with fade in and fade out, seemed a more contained and functional option, in order to allow the hashtags to be highlighted in the foreground, line by line.

press all the arrows. (and{read+play+}traverse the poemscreen)

The third scene is the poemscreen, a soundless poemgame that acts as an *intermezzo* game. The poemscreen, being a blue screen, can possibly replicate a sea traversal by symbolically representing that situation. It is a 2D game. Neither z-axis exists nor any attempt to simulate or emulate the immersion and phenomenology of that real experience in an immersive 3D hyper-realised game. The reading progression through the language game questions modes and functions of reading and playing, and roles and boundaries between viewer, reader, user, and player. The blue chosen as background (#003399) redirects the reader-player to three possible scenarios, whose meaning is intended to be equally read: the Blue Screen of Death (BSoD), the Mediterranean sea, and the EU flag. Using the BSoD as a glitch source – an error display screen that users might associate with rebooting their machines and losing all unsaved changes – the side-scrolling game thus critically dialogues with game mechanics, OS errors and factual ocean traversals in the Mediterranean Sea. Colors chosen for the background and coastal lettering are blue and yellow, hence signaling the European Union's flag colors: gold stars on blue background. Precisely because they represent "identity and unity," "solidarity and harmony,"³ those colors should in fact reflect both external and internal policies regarding EU-member states unity in retrieving a joint solution for the "migrant crisis" and non-discrimination. Embracing migrants, but more importantly refugees, means to put forward concrete actions that tackle the problem of smuggling and integration, not cashing in the pockets of African countries' politicians by paying for a quick solution to restrain people from entering the Mediterranean in search for a European golden coast.



Figure 17. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, poemscreen (screenshot).

At a presentation of the work at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in November 2015, Andrew Klobucar expressed: "I don't know if I want silence to win." In fact, this was a very appreciated critique, as *silence* has been thought of here not on negative grounds, but rather on positive. The reasons why the avatar is *silence* and not *boat*, or *speech*, for that matter, are precisely due to the effective silence to which emigrants are pushed into, as well as a historical reference to poetic silence, that could take us from Celan to Pimenta, which characterizes moments of pause in language and a much needed reflection on language's political power to act as a reinvention of the world and as a source for change. In a migration process, people carry only hope, they *depart with #words in their pockets*, meaning they carry silence with them, for different reasons that might make them change life and country or be forced to do it. Activating speech, in a new country, is to overcome silence, once integration happens. Hence, the literal meaning in the poem-language-game is not exactly that *silence*, by winning, will mean the absence of discourse on emigration and its social implications, but rather that *silence*, by winning, will allow the progress of the reader-player in the poem, that is, access to speech, and thus the access to the rest of the poem, but also, symbolically, the defeat of *noise*. *Noise* represents here sound that is not articulated, being a metaphor for obstacles. By reaching the *coast*, silence, reflection, change and speech are actually emancipatory elements against *noise*, whatever *noise* might be, say hu-

³ According to the EU website: http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/flag/index_en.htm

man trafficking, smugglers, coast guard, EU policies, inaction, European denial and refusal, exclusion, prejudice, racism, and so on. *Silence* against *noise*, that is, authority.

Reading becomes then an important aspect of the poemscreen. As in any game, video or computer game, you play it by *reading* it, that is, decoding its icons, interpreting its rules and environments. In the poemscreen, though, you not only read in the sense of interpreting and decoding it, but you literally read. You play it by reading it. Hence, the side-scrolling game is a side-scrolling poem, both textually and visually. Opting for transgressing the semiotics of conventional game environments, definitions and codes in a self-reflexive manner, we established that elements in the game would not be visual representations – even if they are – but rather textual representations. So, the signifier *bird* corresponds to the signified *bird*, and not to a pictograph or image of a bird, as do the clouds and the coast. Within the logic of this system, there are two elements that further subvert the very transgressive framework of, let us say, a concrete or literal environment: *silence* and *noise*. These two elements could have been named *boat* or *spaceship* and *enemy*, or *boat* and *torpedo*, or *obstacle*, for that matter. The very act of reading and living continues only if the reader-player traverses the poemscreen, that is, if her outcome is reaching the coast. To read then is to live. To live is to read.

Therefore, the barriers people face and the consequences arising from them need to be transferred into the game's logical and rule-based system framework as possible similes, in an abstract or conceptual way. That means that the migrant or refugee, embodied by the avatar *silence*, if hitting *noise* will collide and sink, that is, she will not have access to the other side of the coast, and literally the rest of the poem. The journey is then over for her. Poem Over.



Figure 18. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). English version, poemscreen (screenshot).

function runSidescrollerGame (afterFunction) {

A quick guide with comments to parts of the source code can help understanding some of the functions and variables programmed. The navigation via cursor keys allows the reader-player to traverse the game. The keyboard can act as an instrument as well, if we consider the piece being performed live.

```

/* Sidescroller Game */
function drawCoast() {
  var text = i18n("coast");
  for (i = 0; i < 10; i++) {
    text = text + "" + text;
  }
  Crafty.e("2D, coast, Canvas, Collision, Text").attr({x:
  Crafty.viewport.width - 50, y: 0, rotation: 90}).
  text(text).textColor("#FFCC00").textFont({family:
  defaultFontFamily, size: '100px'});
}
function drawBoat(afterFunction) {
  var crashed = false;
  function initBoat () {
    crashed = false;
    boat.text(i18n("silence"));
    boat.x = 0;
    boat.y = Crafty.viewport.height / 3 * 2;
  };
  var boat = Crafty.e('2D, boat, Controls, Keyboard,
  Canvas, Text, Collision, Tween').text("silêncio").attr({
  }).bind("EnterFrame", function (eventData) {
    if (!crashed) {
      this.x = this.x + 50 * (eventData.dt / 1000);
      nextPage = Math.ceil(this.x / gameWidth);
      this.y += Math.ceil(Math.sin(this.x / 20) * 5);
      var boatIncrement = 50;
      if (this.isDown('DOWN_ARROW')) this.
      tween({y: boat.y + boatIncrement}, 200);
    }
  });
}

```

```

if (this.isDown("UP_ARROW")) this.tween({y:
boat.y - boatIncrement, 200);
if (this.isDown("RIGHT_ARROW")) this.
tween({x: boat.x + boatIncrement, 200);
if (this.isDown("LEFT_ARROW")) this.tween({x:
boat.x - boatIncrement, 200);
}

```

The arrow keys manipulate the avatar *silence*, though by default it moves in a sine wave, programmed with a sinusoidal movement equation. Arrow keys allow the reader-player to avoid colliding against the obstacles:

```

/* Avoidance game */
function drawLitteredKeywords() {
$.each(data["keywords"], function(i, keyword) {
Crafty.e("2D, Canvas, Text, keyword, Tween, Collision").
text(keyword).attr({x: Math.random()*Crafty.
viewport.width, y: Math.random()* Crafty.viewport.
height, rotation: Math.random()* 360});
});
}

```

If hitting the coast, the reader-player wins, which means she progresses in the traversal, therefore accessing another level of the poem. Else, by hitting one of the *noise* words, the reader-player loses, and the poem is over, which is the fourth scene. There is though a cheat code, the key "g," which grants direct access to the game during two out of the three parts of scene two.

```

} else { // new sinking version
Crafty.scene("poemover", function () {
Crafty.background("#003399"); // #002366
});
Crafty.scene("poemover");
Crafty.e("2D, DOM, Text").text("POEM OVER").
css({"text-align": "center"}).attr({x: 0, y: Crafty.viewport.
height / 2, w: Crafty.viewport.width}).textFont({family:
defaultFontFamily, size: "80px"}).textColor("white");
}

```

The piece is built with HTML, CSS, Javascript, jQuery, LokLak, Twitter and Crafty, a JavaScript and HTML 5 open source game engine. Furthermore, a spreadsheet in a CSV file contains the text databases:

```

function readPoemTextCSV() {

var values = Papa.parse(poemTextURL, {
header: true,
download: true,

```

```

complete: readPoemTextCSVcallback,
error: poemTextError,
delimiter: ",",
// rest of config ...
});
}

```

LokLak is a framework server that scrapes, stores and distributes messages. It is locally installed in order to harvest and feed the work with real-time tweets. Its API has been programmed to pull tweets with hashtags according to the foreground, hence fetching and drawing live tweets in the background:

```

var twitterText;

function drawTwitter(data) {
console.log("receiving twitter data");
var text = "";
$.each( data.statuses, function( i, item ) {
text = text + "<p>" + item.text + "</p>";
});
if (text != "") {
twitterText.text(text);
}
}

function fetchTwitter(query, callBack) {
//var loklakAPI = "/api/search.json?callback=?";
var loklakAPI = "http://loklak.org/
api/search.json?callback=?";
$.getJSON( loklakAPI, {
q: query
}).done(callBack);
}

```

we the displaced mothers the new europeans

When setting play as part of a socio-political theme, some might contest that games, by their ludic aspect, divert people from a serious reading, or, in the worst scenario, that they underplay a topic by making it fun, that is, they might encourage a gamification of an issue that one wants to see responsibly addressed. However, by exploring games from an educational perspective, an ethical level can arise at the foreground.

Experimental poetics partake of the exact same creative process. As Ana Hatherly (2001) obser-

ved, Portuguese experimentalism, in its search for invention, was rooted in ludic and ethical dimensions. It is urgent to maintain dimensions of the poetic act as indissociable from a critical and transgressive socio-political, ethical and ludic background. It is precisely an ethical, ludic, socio-political, poetological and aesthetic experience that *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* hopes to harbor.

The work's final verse modifies the second line of the refrain from "we the #african mothers of the new europeans" to "we the displaced mothers the new europeans". By doing so, it tries to acknowledge the difficult process of migration: (e/im)migration.



Figure 19. Álvaro Seiça and Sindre Sørensen, *aimisola.net/hymiwo.po* (2015). Portuguese version. (screenshot).

On the one hand, migration can occur due to economic, social or climate reasons. On the other hand, forced emigration and refugee status needs to be underlined. A human being who risks a life-threatening itinerary does not select it casually. Political, racial, ethnic, sexual, gender identity and religious basis for persecution or human rights violations force people to flee their home countries in search for a better condition at their arrival countries. By displacement human beings try to restart a way of living, to sustain themselves in face of all obstacles, to survive. African women, as well as other women, children and men, who move to Europe, are joining a new cultural and social reality – they are becoming part of that reality. In a world where the notion of nation ought to lose its relevance – at least, in discriminatory nationalistic discourses – and where cultures mingle at a fast pace, miscegenation can be the answer. A clear message of hope, diversity and renewal needs

to be put forward. After all, immigrants are not just immigrants, they are an integral part of the social fabric, they are the new citizens of a common space to be erected – one that allows more respect, opportunities, tolerance and no discrimination.

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