

# Visuality & Material Expressiveness in Portuguese Experimental Poetry

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Literary experimentalism transcends belonging to a specific literary period. Emerging periodically, it is conveyed through expressive practices that focus on the significant materiality of literary semiotic mechanisms. In this essay I will examine the work of a group of Portuguese poets, aligned with the international concrete poetry movement, who were active in the second half of the twentieth century and designated their activities as POesia Experimental (PO. EX). The origin of this name comes from two anthologies titled *Poesia Experimental* published in 1964 and 1966.<sup>1</sup>

Even though the history of the Portuguese Experimental Poetry Movement is yet to be written, in recent years the interest as well as the scholarship dedicated to this subject has increased, mainly abroad, with collective publications and exhibitions, dissertations, and R&D projects and books. It is therefore clear why the PO.EX group and namely Ana Hatherly considers the Movement to be an “ungrateful cause” (1985:15) that drives its poets, mainly between 1960 and 1990, towards assuming a persistent activist and disseminating role on behalf of the Movement’s cause—to which they contributed with their writings, manifestos, and public interventions. The activities undertaken at the time now seem remarkably pertinent and relevant considering the present networked society characterized by ephemerality and information flows.

Digital media open up space for recognition of the importance of the materiality of multimedia writing to writing itself. As Ryan observes, the development of electronic textualities has “led to a rediscovery and critical investigation of print and the codex book” (Ryan, 2001). As such, the historical importance of innovative and experimental poetry (concrete, visual, etc.), which recognized *avant-la-lettre* the importance of the aesthetic function of language (Block & Torres, 2007; Reis, 2009) becomes relevant to digital literary studies. One must also acknowledge that many of the operations that the computer provides can be found in previous poetical practices, from collages and graphic spatialization design to automatic writing and permutation (Reis, 2009; Drucker, 2005), and many scholars have identified systemic similarities between experimental poetics and digital media (Barbosa, 1998; Portela, 2009). Portela (2006) explicitly mentions an “intrinsic connection between concrete poetics as a theory of the medium (i.e., of language, of written language, and of poetical forms) and digital poetics as a theory of poetry for the digital medium.”

Portugal may constitute a privileged arena for literary experimentalism, although for the worst reasons, since the underlying purpose of PO.EX is the violence and shock generally characterizing avant-garde movements. For more than forty years until 1974, Portugal was ruled by a dictatorship averse to recognizing these activities, which were regarded as subversive. Yet, after the Portuguese Revolution of April 1974, the dissemination of these works was not immediately allowed by the democracy, as will be shown by Arnaldo Saraiva (1980) regarding the conceptualization of marginal and marginalized literatures. Hence, in Portugal, the response to PO.EX remained muted despite the aforementioned interventions by the group members.<sup>2</sup>

There is basically no reference to PO. EX in the *História da Literatura Portuguesa (History of Portuguese Literature)* by António José Saraiva and Óscar Lopes following the publication of the collections on Experimental Poetry. In the 9th Edition (1976), Experimental Poetry is awarded two lines, and in the 17th edition (1996), the only change is in the title, with a (cynical?) “Experimental Poetry or similar” [underline added]. The space granted to PO.EX is, even so, similar. This reference

publication in the field of Portuguese literature studies has an official weight and visibility that illustrates and contrasts with the reduced space given to experimental poetry, patronizingly considered by many as a game.<sup>3</sup>

PO.EX itself was therefore “an act of rebellion against the status quo ... [and] a profound questioning of the reason for the creative act and the way in which it was being practiced” (Hatherly, 1985:15). Moreover, these authors theorized about their own language poetics, thus constituting self-explanatory exercises and works concerning poetry in general. Hatherly summarizes these two aspects and concludes that “the actions of their promoters contributed to an attitude of reassessment and renewal of the literary text, from the point of view of production and from the point of view of critical analysis” (1985:15).

This reflexive aspect is important to understanding how the *poeprática* (poepractice) was established, connecting social intervention to aesthetic concern. *Poeprática* is a neologism introduced in a PO.EX retrospective in 1980 at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Lisbon. In the catalog of the exhibition, designated PO.EX 80, as José-Alberto Marques remarked, one could read: “*houve uma POEPRÁTICA*” (“there was a poepractice”) (1985:89). As also stated by the same author, the “*textos / objectos / intervenções possuíam, eles mesmos, uma componente teórica implícita*” (texts / objects / interventions held, themselves, an implicit theoretical component) (Marques, 1985:89). Salette Tavares, in her “Carta a Pedro Sete” (“Letter to Pedro Sete”) from the book *Quadrada (Square)*,<sup>4</sup> (written between 1959 and 1960 but published later in 1967) also states that

“*[o]s manifestos são as poéticas que acompanham a produção poética com que se mostra a consciência crítica dessa nova maneira. O próprio poema chega a ser manifesto*” (manifestos are poetics that accompany the poetic production with which is shown the critical awareness of that new manner. The poem itself becomes a manifesto) (1992:169).<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, Hatherly also concludes that “[*t]oda a arte é metalinguagem, uma reflexão sobre o código*” (all art is meta-language, a reflection on the code) (1981b:136-37).

The “poepractice” of these “poet-theorists” (Hatherly, 1981a:146), on the other hand, emerges from the bourgeois society that they criticize. Their rise against literature is therefore a rise against stereotyping and standardization of the creative power, operated through its plotted integration into the literary canon. In fact, we must bear in mind that for these poets literature reflects and illustrates the decadence of the ruling class and by appropriating literature renders it inoperative in the context of the routine use that is institutionalized by official culture (Hatherly, 1981a:150).

## PO.EX: A HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Although the history of PO.EX formally begins with the publication of the first issue of the magazine-object *Poesia Experimental (Experimental Poetry)* in 1964, organized by António Aragão e Herberto Helder, its origins are already implicit in the first book by Salette Tavares, *Espelho cego (Blind Mirror)*, published in 1957. There it is possible to witness the benchmark visual components of early PO.EX works. Tavares’s increasing use of spatialization of the signifiers in the



1. *Operação 1* / Org. de E. M. de Melo e Castro; António Aragão; Ana Hatherly; José Alberto Marques; Pedro Xisto; capa de (cover by) João Vieira. - Lisboa : edição dos autores (author's edition) 1967

2. *Hídra 2* / organização de (organized by) E. M. Melo e Castro ; maquete, capa [e] arranjo gráfico [de] (maquette, cover, and graphics by) E. M. Melo e Castro. - Lisboa : distribuição (distribution) Livraria Quadrante, 1969. - [10] f. : il. color. ; 43 cm + exemplar policopiado. (photocopied copy) - Published on the occasion of the Bibliographic Exhibition of Portuguese Collective Experimental Publications, at Quadrante Gallery in Lisbon. - Stapled to the last page there's an envelope with two A4 sheets with the dactylographed text "Sintagma 67" by E. M. de Melo e Castro, dated from 1967.

3. *Poesia Experimental: caderno antológico* / António Aragão, Herberto Helder. - n.o 1 (1964) - n.o 2 (1966) . - [Lisboa : Edição Cadernos de Poesia], 1964-1966 ( Lisboa : (imp. Associação dos Estudantes do Instituto Superior Técnico). - Caderno de Poesia Experimental 1 (1964). - [90] p. - Collaboration by: António Aragão, António Barahona da Fonseca, António Ramos Rosa, E.M. de Melo e Castro, Herberto Helder, Salette Tavares . - Caderno de Poesia Experimental 2 (1966). - [102] p. - Collaboration by: Jorge Peixinho, Álvaro Neto, Salette Tavares, Ana Hatherly, Pierre Garnier, António Aragão, Pedro Xisto, António Barahona da Fonseca, Mário Diácono, Edgard Braga, Mike Weavez, Emílio Villa, Luiza Neto Jorge, E.M. de Melo e Castro, José Alberto Marques.

4. Ana Hatherly : *Mapas da imaginação e da memória*. - Lisboa : [S.n.], 1973. - 96 p. : il., p. & b ; 30 cm

5. *Poema azul e branco [Material gráfico]* : António Aragão / António Aragão. - Funchal : (author's edition), 1970. - One envelope with two glossy paper sheets: rose and blue; 19x18 cm. The document is an envelope with a circular window on the front and a small text by the author.

6. *Poema vermelho e branco [Material gráfico]* : António Aragão / António Aragão. - Funchal : (author's edition) 1971. - One envelope with two glossy paper sheets: rose and red; 19x19 cm. The document is an envelope with a circular window on the front and a small text by the author.

page, as well as in the repetitive and minimalist approach by Abílio-José Santos in *Voo do morcego* (*Bat flight*) (1962) and in *Poema primeiro* (*Poem first*) by António Aragão (1962), anticipate concerns regarding poetic form that would later be explored.

The almost calligrammatic poems by Jaime Salazar Sampaio (1925–2010), published in 1954 in the book *Poemas propostos* (*Proposed Poems*) also anticipate the genre. Likewise relevant are some works by Alexandre O'Neill (1924–1986), mainly "Divertimentos com sinais ortográficos" ("Games with Orthographic Signs") in *Abandono Vigiado* (*Guarded Abandonment*) from 1960, denoting some abidance to the procedures that would later define Concretism in Portugal.

However, the most significant proposals prior to 1964 are those by Ana Hatherly with her "*poemas concretos ortodoxos e para-concretos, inclusive de carácter político, escritos entre 1959 e 1964*" ("orthodox concrete poems, and para-concrete, including political, written between 1959 and 1964") (2001:15), revised and corrected for inclusion in the anthology *Um Calculador de Improbabilidades* (*The Improbabilities Calculator*) (2001), as well as several books by E. M. de Melo e Castro, mostly *Ideogramas* (*Ideograms*) and *Objecto poemático de efeito progressivo* (*Poematic object of progressive effect*), both published in 1962 but written earlier, and *Poligonia do soneto* (*Poligony of the sonnet*), published in 1963.

As mentioned, one of the first signs communicated by concrete poetry from those times is the graphic layout of the signifiers on the page. This concern with the poem's spatial organization is close to what Eugen Gomringer called "constellation" and therefore fits the poetics of word rarefaction typical to concretism. The use of blank spaces suggests frequencies that are different from those allowed by punctuation. This configuration of the graphic space also allows for unexpected meaningful connections, to which is added "ideogrammatism," i.e. the possibility to combine different sign elements to produce new forms of reading and interpretation.

Alongside these initial experiences of what would be Portuguese Concretism, it must also be recognized that the critical-theoretical

apparatus, presenting and explaining this new form of poetic making, emerged at about the same time. The first article published in Portugal about concrete poetry was written by Ana Hatherly for the daily newspaper *Diário de Notícias* in September 17, 1959, “O idêntico inverso ou o lirismo ultra-romântico e a poesia concreta” (“The identical inverse or the ultra-romantic lyricism and concrete poetry”), with a concrete poem by the author. The first book devoted entirely to the subject, in turn, was *A Proposição 2.01 – Poesia Experimental (Proposition 2.01 – Experimental Poetry)*, published by E. M. de Melo e Castro in 1965.

One of the aspects that has worried Portuguese poets from the Experimentalism movement the most (and also Brazilian poets from the Concretism movement) was the establishment of a tradition of innovative poetry allowing the identification of certain historical coordinates of visibility. This visual and figurative demand in the history of literature was made in order to retrieve texts that were not considered literary by the official critics and considered conservative by these poets. At the same time, its identification created a certain sense of continuity of the avant-garde movements (the cyclical spirit of the timeless experimentalism we referred to earlier in this article). In Portugal, this recovery work was mainly performed by Ana Hatherly. Her book *A experiência do prodígio (The experience of the prodigy)* (1983) collects texts that contradict the tendency of some historians to locate the onset of visual poetry in the early twentieth century, with the Futurist *parole in libertà* (words in freedom) or the dadaist collage-poems. According to Hatherly, however, this chronology must include:

“séculos de experiência de textos-imagens, que compreendem hieróglifos, ideogramas, criptogramas, diagramas, rebus, mandalas, amuletos, jóias, brinquedos, lápides e até alguns monumentos, além de todos os outros textos e objectos poemáticos identificáveis como tal” (“centuries of experience in image-texts, which include hieroglyphics, ideograms, cryptograms, charts, rebus, mandalas, amulets, jewelry, toys, tombstones and even some monuments as well as all other poetic texts and objects identifiable as such”). (1981a:141)

The survey of Portuguese visual laudatory poetry, from the fourth century to the eighteenth century, carried out by Ana Hatherly at the National Library of Lisbon is therefore an important contribution to the Movement.<sup>6</sup>

Beside this historical survey it is noted that the recovery of a tradition constitutes a rereading and accordingly is part of a ‘culturmorphology’ in which the past and the present are connected, as explained by Haroldo de Campos (Campos, Pignatari and Campos, 1965:24). This reassessment of tradition is duly summarized by Hatherly: “se para uns a tradição existe e deve ser imitada, para outros, se existe é para ser reinventada” (“if for some, tradition exists and should be imitated, for others, if it exists, it is supposed to be reinvented”) (1985:17).

Having presented the context in which PO.EX emerged, we may now state that Portuguese Experimental Poetry, as a unit for coordinated intervention, is introduced to Portugal with the anthologies *Poesia Experimental 1 e 2. (Experimental Poetry 1 and 2)*. In 1963 Herberto Helder and António Aragão had already devised the plan of publishing the first issue of the collective publication, establishing contacts for that purpose. Published in July 1964, the first edited collection has poems and texts by the editors and also by António Ramos Rosa (1924 - ), E. M. de Melo e Castro, Salette Tavares and António Barahona da Fonseca (1939 - ).<sup>7</sup>

The *Separata Um* (offprint number one) of this anthology, includes the “*Romance de Iza Morfismo*” (“Romance of Iza Morphism”) by António Aragão. Through the work the author explores, along twenty-six pages, a set of very significant expressive techniques both at the semantic level and at the level of the topology of the page—techniques that would

be explored in subsequent publications of the group.

In “*Poema fragmentário*” (“Fragmentary Poem”) also included in that edition, the same author proposes a sort of anagram of reading, pointing at the openness of the work of art and simultaneously to the more recent potential of the hypertext. In the work, according to Aragão: “podem ler-se os três espaços gráficos separadamente ou em conjunto, usando apenas as palavras mais negras obtém-se ainda uma outra leitura” (“the three graphic spaces can be read separately or together; using only the darker words there is yet another reading”). (1964:34)

The collages by Aragão, taking from the concept of found poetry, the graphic and visual poems by Melo e Castro, the fragments of the expression of a combinatorial and algorithmic thinking present in “*Máquina de emaranhar paisagens*” (“Machine to Entangle Landscapes”) by Helder, as well as the graphic “*brin cadeiras*” and sound poetry scores—the kinetofonias—by Salette Tavares constitute the most relevant aspects of this issue. Also included in accordance with the above-mentioned ‘reinterpretation of tradition,’ is an anthology of classic texts, namely by Luís de Camões (c.1524-1580), Ângelo de Lima (1872-1921) and Mário Cesariny (1923-2006).

Another relevant and historical activity of the Experimental Poetry group was a collective exhibition, *Visopoemas*, inaugurated on January 6, 1965 at the same time of the publication of a ‘Supplement’ on Experimental Poetry in the newspaper *Jornal do Fundão* and which included the participation of poets from the core cell of the first Caderno (Aragão, Melo e Castro, Helder, Barahona da Fonseca and Tavares). The exhibition included objects, paintings, and posters that evinced the transition of the Portuguese group from concrete poetry into visibility and materiality in search of a wider sphere of action and intervention. This was announced in the first volume of *Poesia Experimental*, “no próximo mês de outubro efectuar-se-á na «galeria divulgação» em Lisboa uma exposição denominada *VISPOEMAS* seguir-se-á uma outra sob o título de *AUDIOVISOPOEMAS* e ainda um *POEMA FÍLMICO*” (“next October will take place in the ‘gallery Divulgação’ in Lisbon an exhibition called *VISOPOEMS* and another will follow entitled *AUDIOVISOPOEMS* and also a *FILMIC POEM*”) (1964:1).

In this context most of the poems become “ready-made,” placing the works by Salette Tavares in a central place. This author created several collage-poems as well as objects in wire, sheet metal, pottery, gold, and paper.

The day after the launching of the exhibition there was a happening where poetry and music came together as autonomous languages in a trajectory of mutual transformation and symbiosis. This performance was entitled *Concerto e Audição Pictórica (Concert and Pictoric Audition)* and not *AUDIOVISOPOEMS* as promised in the first PO.EX collection) which conveyed a kinesthetic sense and verbal-vocal-visual integration that allowed a greater understanding of the hybridization and interdisciplinarity that characterized PO.EX approach.

The second number of *Poesia Experimental*, organized by António Aragão, Herberto Helder and Melo e Castro, was issued the following year in May, 1966. By this time Herberto Helder began to distance from the group’s activities, resulting in Melo e Castro and Ana Hatherly becoming more dynamic members. This second issue of the collective magazine confirmed the focus on a variety of approaches, promoting openness to other forms of expression that the concrete movement did not always articulate. To that end a semi-pictorial text by Lewis Carroll was published on the cover. There was also a focus on an openly internationalist character, including guests from Brazil (Pedro Xisto, Haroldo de Campos and Edgard Braga) and France (Pierre Garnier<sup>8</sup> and Henri Chopin).

The text “*Mirakaum* (in five episodes),” by António Aragão, confirms the author as one of the most relevant of the group, not only

for trying various new techniques but also for his intensive production (that, like for Abílio-José Santos, does not find fair expression at the level of mass edition). In that text, alternating the content between different features of handwriting and typography, images and illustrations, Aragão exposes the multiplicity of tools he considers fair for the poet of the century of the machine to use. Melo e Castro published in this volume his *Negative Music* (score for the presentation made at the *Concert and Pictorial Audition*), Álvaro Neto presents his grammar experiences (later compiled and developed in the book *Historical Grammar*), Salette Tavares presents her sound object and random procedure *Parlapatise* that we will address again later, and there is still an important edition on musical notation written by the avant-garde musician Jorge Peixinho (1940-1995).

One aspect that must be mentioned is the complaint by Salette Tavares regarding the poor reproduction (at a graphic level) of her poems. Indeed, as she stated after her collaboration in the two volumes of *Experimental Poetry*, her work “was barely recognizable in print and disappeared.” As the poet came to confess, not without some exaggeration characteristic of Portuguese language, “in the first years [Salette Tavares] was ashamed to show that blur that was issued” (1995:18-19). In fact, several books came out with pages of the wrong dimensions. Also the poor quality of the paper contributed to increasing the negative aspects for which Tavares did not pardon her editors.

Several reasons converge, however, for that to have happened, and we think it is possible to understand them now as curiosities, because they are indicators of the connection of experimental poetry to the real world (of typography, for example). We understand, therefore, that the lack of finesse and much of the residual typographic confusion is also related to the craftwork aspect at the origin of these magazines. On this subject, Ana Hatherly states that

“[a] espécie de confusão estética que se verifica nos dois únicos números da *Poesia Experimental*, e que justifica a colaboração heterogênea, é devida à novidade da tendência, que ainda não tinha tempo de se explicar devidamente (fenômeno semelhante ao que ocorreu com a publicação do Orfeu), e que, por outro lado, fazia apelo ao espírito de subversão, de crítica ao establishment e de gozo lúdico da criatividade, tão tradicionalmente nossos” (“the kind of aesthetic confusion that exists in the numbers of *Experimental Poetry*, and that justifies the heterogeneous collaboration is due to the newness of the trend, which has not had time to properly explain itself—a phenomenon similar to what occurred with the publication of Orfeu—and, on the other hand, did appeal to the spirit of subversion, critical of the establishment and embedded with the joy and playfulness of creativity, so traditionally our own”). (1995:15)

To these initial activities of the PO.EX group one should also add the publication of other collective magazines, such as *Operação 1* (*Operation 1*) (organized by E. M. de Melo e Castro in 1967, including works by António Aragão, Ana Hatherly, E. M. de Melo e Castro and José-Alberto Marques), *Operação 2: Estruturas poéticas* (*Operation 2: Poetic Structures*) (with works by Ana Hatherly, 1967) and *Hidra 2* (*Hydra 2*) (organized by E. M. de Melo e Castro, 1969).<sup>9</sup>

After this initial moment there followed what might be called a process of the rereading of experimentalism, as put forth in the anthologies and collections that reproduced many of these works. Some examples are the reprinting of PO.EX works in the *Anthology of Concrete Poetry* in Portugal organized by Melo e Castro and José-Alberto Marques (1973) and the book *Visual-Experimental-Concrete*, edited by Fernando Aguiar and Gabriel Rui Silva (1989).

A new stage of the life of literary experimentalism seems to start with the volume *Poemografias* (*Poemographies*), organized by

Fernando Aguiar and Silvestre Pestana. It is a publication that aids in an understanding of the directions followed by Portuguese visual poetry after 1960. The book begins by warning the reader about the procedural and documentary nature of experimentation in an epigraph: “This book is an introduction” (9).

*Poemografias* includes theoretical texts and poems by Ana Hatherly, Salette Tavares, E. M. de Melo e Castro and António Aragão, already present in previous anthological volumes, and introduces a new set of authors who were to prove crucial in the context of expanding into other arts starting with the organizers, Fernando Aguiar and Silvestre Pestana. Works and texts by Abílio-José Santos, Alberto Pimenta, Antero de Alda and António Barros appear here, as does a statement on the “minimal in minimal music” by the musicologist and promoter of new music in Portugal, Jorge Lima Barreto (1949-2011).

*Poemografias* was also an itinerant exhibition of visual poetry in Lisbon (Gallery Diferença), Torres Vedras (Gallery Nova), Évora (Municipal Art Gallery), Lagos (Gallery Mercado de Escravos) and in Coimbra (Gallery C.A.P.C.).

In fact, in the years that followed the publication of *Poemografias* there was a projection of visual poetry onto the Portuguese context of galleries and museums. In this setting there occurred two retrospective exhibitions of PO.EX (PO.EX 80, at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Lisbon, and PO.EX 99 at the Museum of Serralves in Porto), with new works and new reconfigurations of previously published works.

Another important activity that contributed to the opening of experimental poetry to the world in which it is made and lives was the first International Festival of Live Poetry, hosted by Fernando Aguiar with the help from E. M. de Melo e Castro and Rui Zink, at the Municipal Museum Dr. Santos Rocha, in Figueira da Foz, in 1987. Fernando Aguiar by this time assumed a very important role in spreading Portuguese experimental poetry. He organized the anthologies *Visuelle poesie aus Portugal: eine Anthologie* (Siegen, 1990), ‘Portuguese Visual Poetry’ (in the special issue of the magazine *Visible Language* on ‘Visual Poetry: An International Anthology’ (Providence, 1993)), *Poesia experimental portuguesa dels 90: antologia*, with Ramón Salvo (Barcelona, 1994), *Imaginários de ruptura, poéticas visuais*, with Jorge Maximino (Lisbon, 2002), and *Concreta, experimental, visual: poesia portuguesa 1959-1989*, with Gabriel Rui Silva (Institute of Portuguese Language and Culture, 1990).

In the area of copy-art and electrography César Figueiredo who often collaborated with Abílio and António Nelos, stands out for the organization of the following exhibitions:<sup>10</sup> Copy art: electrographic exhibition (César Figueiredo, Avelino Rocha, Graça Santos, 1990), Electrografias (António Nelos e César Figueiredo, 1991), 1ª exposição internacional de arte postal de Matosinhos (Abílio-José Santos e César Figueiredo, 1993), Copy. Porto portfolio (Jürgen O. Olbrich e César Figueiredo, 1993) and Expo-Copy 93: exibição internacional de copigrafias (César Figueiredo, 1993).

Experimental poetry is therefore not restricted to a period nor has it remained settled in its founding moments. Today it branches out through a set of activities that mark new forms of expression for human creativity.

## VISUALITY AND MATERIALITIES OF EXPERIMENTAL LITERATURE

Following the proposal by Arnaldo Saraiva for the study of marginal literatures (1980), we can say that experimental poetry (concrete, visual, sound or cybernetic), breaking with “the dominant literature, official, consecrated, academic and even classical” (Saraiva, 1980:5), does not suffer from “less structure, less aesthetic elaboration, less conceptualization, or less cultural ambition” (1980:5). However it is marginal and marginalized in the name of “literary ideology” and

“publishing market economy” (Saraiva, 1980:6). Experimentalism promotes, in fact, “the contempt for classical laws, [proposing] the novelty in the techniques or motives, the contamination of genres, (. . .) the structural complication” (Saraiva, 1980:6) and in this sense the literary ideology within is a serious opponent. On the other hand, literary marketing fails to legitimate it, for being unable to compartmentalize the formats set by the market—experimental poetry is published in brochures, catalogs, event logs, graffiti, photocopying, objects, gardens . . .

Experimental poetry past and present is central in the movement to overcome of the limits of genre theorization, presenting a “transgressing attitude regarding dominant conventions and specific grammars” (Reis, 2005). As also stated by poets from São Paulo, Brazil, since the 1950s, “the historical cycle of verse as formal-rhythm unit” (Campos, Pignatari e Campos, 1965:154) was deemed as closed, paving the way for a “renewal of literary communication” and the resulting “dismantling of the discourse from the established power” (Reis, 2005).

Contemporary practice continues as poetic production that crosses, in the expressiveness of media, a variety of verbal-vocal-visual matrices: sound—from advertising and popular songs; graphics and visuality—from comics and urban iconography; writing—from calligrams to combinatorial techniques. There are countless examples in Portugal: Ana Hatherly explores visual resources from calligraphy; Herberto Helder develops in his poems the combinatorial technique, anticipating



Figure 1.  
António Aragão, *Electrografia* (1990:14)

the experiences with computers; António Aragão explores xerography; Ernesto M. de Melo e Castro creates video-poetry; Fernando Aguiar is dedicated to performance; and Alberto Pimenta gathers all these, with considerable irony, relevance, and coherence.

Perhaps this is why in the above-mentioned book *Proposition 2.01 - Experimental Poetry*, E. M. de Melo e Castro, anticipates and synthetically theorizes “the many different types of experimental poetry” (1965 pp. 35-36), which he considers to be eight: visual, audible, tactile, respiratory, linguistic, conceptual, mathematical, synesthetic, and spatial.

This variety of approaches is symptomatic regarding the multiple

experiences the poets intended to pursue. On the other hand, the demarcation proposed by PO.EX members also occurs regarding other literary trends or schools.

Summarizing the proposals developed along the texts left by the experimentalists, and following a set of graphs that illustrate, in diagrammatic and infographic way, the connection of PO.EX with other literary trends (Hatherly and Melo e Castro, 1981), it is possible to conclude that: PO.EX opposes the discursive and sentimental aspects of traditional poetry in general; rejects the rigidity of metrics and rhyme; proposes objective and collective work to counteract the individualistic psychologism typical of the Orfeu generation; suggests resistance and internationalism as a way to reject the nationalistic project from Portuguese Futurism; and rejects the ideological discourse of neo-realism and the automatism from surrealism, proposing instead an approach to scientism (Hatherly and Melo e Castro, 1981: 26-27).

PO.EX also distances itself from other movements with a concretism background, forming an alliance instead with computers and combinatorial poetry. This assertion finds its groundings in the fact that both Herberto Helder and António Aragão, at the time of the first edited collection, were already interested in such experiences. The same is true for Silvestre Pestana, Melo e Castro, and Pedro Barbosa who were pioneers in the use of computers and software for literary creation.

As a result from these deviations, experimental poetry extended beyond the early influence of concretism, focusing its attention on the possibilities of multi-sign materiality and visuality, features that translate into the creation of hybrid works that include photocopy-art, kinetic objects, and the happening, among others.

The scope of the experimental trend in poetry expanded so much that it now includes texts and/or objects that no longer depend on the same rhythmic rules and rhetorical resources from concrete poetry. The poet becomes in this context the one who signals materiality, due to understanding that writing is a drawing with letters and symbols, that is, a notation system that questions language itself. Subverting writing and its logical and psychological structures, these poets contribute in the break down of ideological structures in a society marked by electronics and industry, by cybernetics and information theory, applying the word as a material for verbal, visual, and sound composition.

## EXAMPLES OF PORTUGUESE EXPERIMENTAL POETRY

Experimental poetry today, characterized by visuality and multimodality, offers in its materialities a wide variety of approaches to the poetic object which translate into a range of techniques we will try to illustrate in the final section of this article.

Poetry of innovation seeks to employ all available techniques in order to increase the levels of information and reduce the redundancy of the artwork, thus forcing the reader to seek the limits of meaning within the intricacy of the text. Raising its voice against the means of mass communication, experimental poetry places its emphasis on creative and complex structures, distinguishing the artistic from the ritual, and the new from the ordinary.

In his rare but eloquent theoretical articles António Aragão usually expresses the relevance of employing technology and machinery as a

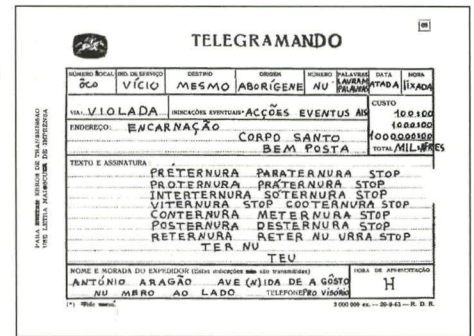


Figure 2.  
António Aragão, *Telegramando* (1973:50)

ground for testing knowledge and creativity limits. According to this author, “it is appropriate to question when the total use of the freedom of expression will emerge through all the means that current technology makes possible. (. . .) Let us say here that this has nothing to do with admiring the new machines, but with using current technology to create” (Aragão, 1990:80).

The electrographic works by António Aragão, inscribed within the international copy-art movement, and with several prominent followers in Portugal (besides Aragão, A. Dantas, A. Nelos, Abílio, A. Pimenta and César Figueiredo, to name only a few), present collections of narrative settings that are subject to progressive deformations and transformations. Image and text manipulation by the use of a copy machine lends an aesthetic sense to the inscribing surface and texture of the page.

This is the case of the electrography illustrated on the previous page (figure 1), in which António Aragão, through deformation processes obtained by moving the sheet in contact with the scanning surface of the copier, connects visual manipulation of images with the narrative progression of the associated text. Hence, the verbal component, combining a son questioning his mother—in this case, “Mãe, Deus tem barriga?” (“Mother, does God have a belly?”)—is subject to a process of progressive distortion that ultimately becomes the discourse of power itself, revealed in all its arrogance, thus associating common banality to the tautological response of the mother: “Cala-te! É melhor não saber” (“Shut up! It is better not to know”).

In *Telegramando* (*Telegramming*), (figure 2, previous page) also by António Aragão (from 1965), the machinery is not the only device appropriated for creative purposes but also the standardized format of the textual model for mass communication poured into a visual grid of poetic communication. The appropriation of communication models, in this case a telegram being sent by fax, through the suppression and transformation of certain constitutive elements of the form, as well as by filling its fields using a simultaneously lyrical and ironic language, causes the reader to sense strangeness, and therefore disrupts the fragile frontier between art and life, reality and fiction.

Other examples of technological appropriation and remixing are frequent in PO.EX. For instance, there is a similar treatment in the text “*Velegrama*” by Liberto Cruz (1973:97) where Cruz replaced the initial consonants of words in a telegraphic communication by the letter “v”, thus suggesting the transmission speed characterizing this means, while creating sound conditions that requires reading skill regarding phonetic articulation. Thus, the consonant “v”, being introduced as an element of negative entropy in the telegram, suggests on the one hand, and visually, the speed and velocity of the fax, but on the other, introduces a kind of delay on that speed, because when the reading starts there is almost a need to delay the reading of the poem. Written in capital letters and signed by Viverto Vruz, it includes examples such as: “VONS VONVEIROS VOLUNTÁRIOS VELEM VINGUÉM VOSSA VONVA” (Vood voluntary virevighters vake vobody vour vonor). Intervals are signaled with “VTOP”, and the text ends in an ironic and elegiac way: “VIVA VATRIA VIVA VOVO VIVA VORTUGAL” (Vong vive vomeland vong vive vortugal).

If the appropriation of machine technology is a tangible reality in the informational perspective of Experimental Poetry, it is also a fact that the manipulation of reading devices often assumes a material expressiveness that transfers poetry from the book into objects, and thereof onto object-books.

Paradigmatic examples, regarding the close relationship PO.EX establishes with artists’ books, are two poetic objects by António Aragão, in an author’s edition of 1970, the “*Poema azul e branco*” (“Blue and white poem”) and the “*Poema vermelho e branco*” (“Red and white poem”). But there is no poem, except in the title, at least in the traditional sense that verbal language is expected in a written poem. What remains, therefore, is the poem’s program (or, as Aragão chose as a title for one of his first books: *p(r)o(bl)ema* (*p(r)o(bl)em*), as well as the

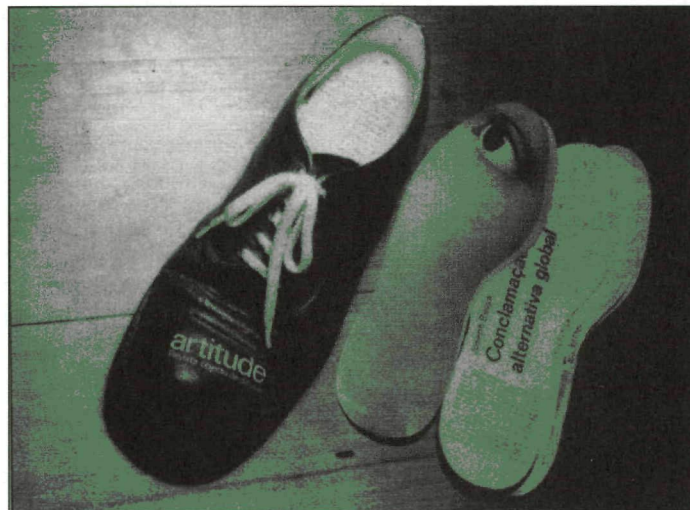


Figure 3.  
António Barros, *Artitude: 01. Revista-objecto* (1985:126)

theoretical conceptualization in a brief explanatory note printed on the cover of the object-book. Three reading stages are proposed, through which we realize that this poem is

- 1) form: “*A forma activa mais a cor é a expressão do poema*” (“The active form and the color are the expression of the poem”);
- 2) action: “*«ler» o poema é simplesmente dobrar e desdobrar*” (“to read the poem is simply to fold and unfold”); and
- 3) process: “*a carga semântica é despersonalizada a qualquer nível da construção - emoção*” (“the semantic charge is depersonalized at any level of construction – emotion”) (Aragão, 1970:cover).

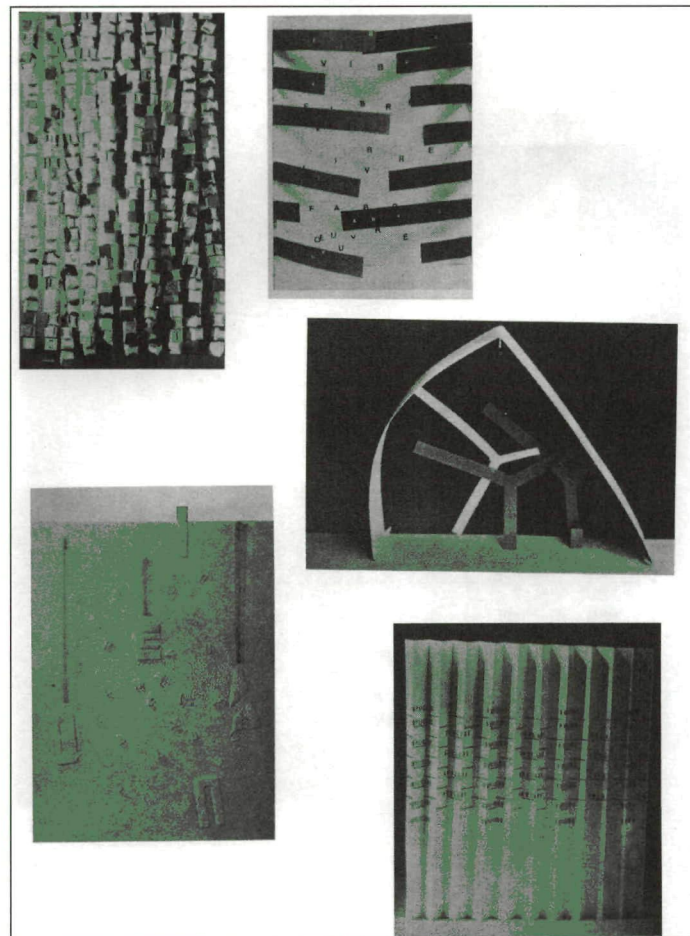


Figure 4.  
E. M. de Melo e Castro, *Poemas cinéticos* (1994:101)



At a verbal level, one of the most effective features from experimental poetry, in line with the proposals from minimalism in music, is the atomization of the linguistic material in a progressive blurring of the narrative structure implicit to language, thereby replacing it by the ideogrammatic connection among signs. This discursive fragmentation often makes use of an exhaustive repetition of terms, with minimal variations, introducing transformations to the repertoire presented. On the other hand, through procedures of agglutination and juxtaposing, it promotes a semiotic rarefaction essential to the understanding of the dialectics between readability and non-readability, between redundancy and information.

In "Escravos" ("Slaves") 1979 (figure 6), by António Barros, printed on a white cloth, there is a transformation of the word *escravos* into another word contained therein: *cravos* (carnations), through the elimination of the syllable *es* after the middle of the poem, which is constituted by a column with some twenty lines.

In fact, it is the successive repetition of the word *escravos* that allows disarticulation and dismantling—and meaning follows the chain of signifiers in an ideogrammatic way. The release of the *cravos* by the *escravos* is a clear reference to the Portuguese Carnation Revolution of April 25, 1974 (*Revolução dos cravos*), but it is also part of a circular process since the syllable *es* will reappear later in the bottom of the column, returning to the poem, in the end, new slaves. This political statement, with latent ideological content, is achieved precisely through repetition, since the vertical column formed by the repetition of the word *escravos* is what allows an enumeration of the nation's illnesses.

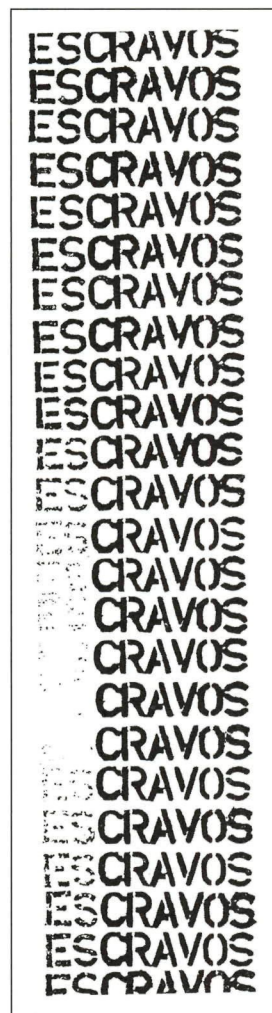


Figure 6.  
António Barros,  
"Escravos" (2004:195)

It would be practically impossible to list in a work with this space restriction all the poems using this repetitive and variational technique. We will merely highlight a few more authors who use techniques involving recursiveness in a more consistent and comprehensive way such as Alberto Pimenta, Abílio-José Santos, Melo e Castro, Salette Tavares, and Pedro Barbosa.

Besides the use of repetition as a form of recursiveness and as a starting point for combinatorial variation, it should be noted that this procedure constitutes, in addition to the reflexive attitude of self-reference regarding the code, a subtle form of transforming the signifier into icon. In other words, the repetition of signifiers forces the awareness of the visual characteristics of the expressive element of language.

In the work "Metaleitura," written between 1968 and 1969, (figure 7) Ana Hatherly operates a set of procedures based on recursiveness onto a text of her own, resulting in a set of seven variations we will now address. Hatherly starts by presenting the theory that underlies this experience of textual manipulation:

*"Ao nível do significado, um texto poético possui tal integridade funcional e é constituído por elementos de tal modo autónomos que suporta sem prejuízo as fragmentações mais sistemáticas"* ("In terms of meaning, a poetic text has such functional integrity and consists of such autonomous elements that it supports unharmed the most systematic fragmentations") (2001: 236).

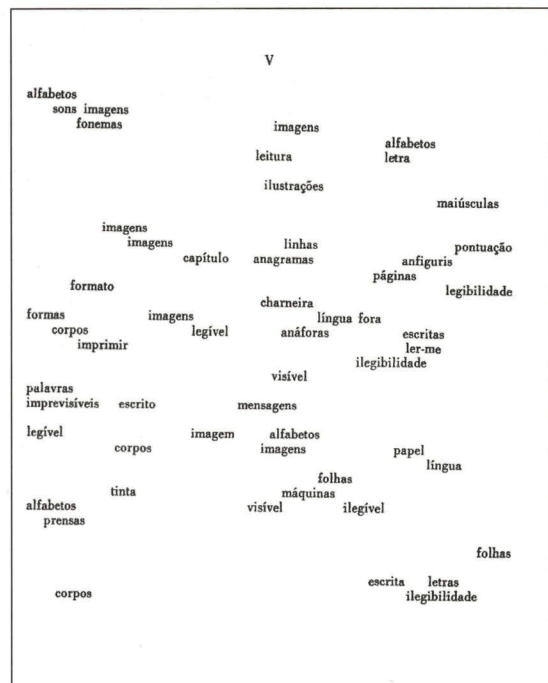


Figure 7.  
Ana Hatherly, "Metaleitura" (2001:241)

The operation to follow is also explained by the author, who characterizes the texts within their specific features, from one ("I") to seven ("VII"):

I - Full text

II - elimination of keywords from the text

III - elimination of verbs

IV - elimination of the third word in each group of five

V - negative of II

VI - negative of III

VII - negative of IV

In "I" the original text is displayed, with just one sentence and no punctuation, thematically focused on writing:

*"alfabetos juncavam"* ("alphabets strewed"), line 1;

*"respiro anáforas vagueio de escritas"* ("I breathe anaphors and wonder through writings"), lines 16-17; and their relationship

*"as criaturas traziam os alfabetos colados à pele"* ("the creatures brought alphabets glued to their skin"), line 4;

*"as letras saem de seus corpos"* ("letters pour from their bodies"), lines 34-35.

It is also a text about the desire of non-readability:

*"selva escorregadia e ensurdecadora"* ("slippery and deafening jungle"), line 4;

*"sacode-me o embate dos corpos que aspiram ao legível"* ("the clash of bodies wanting the readable shakes me"), lines 16-17;

*"e todo o visível tende ao ilegível"* ("and all visible tends to the unreadable"), line 29.

In "II," following the process described by the author, keywords are removed from the text. This voids the text from its main reference, leaving only the skeleton of the articulation, and nullifying what appears returned in variation "V". Here the body of the text itself becomes a noun, forcing the reader to confront herself with only a shadow of the geometry of meaning.

A similar procedure of textual rarefaction and sentence fragmentation that give rise to anagrammatic variations is performed by José-Alberto Marques in his several works based on the principle of homeostasis.

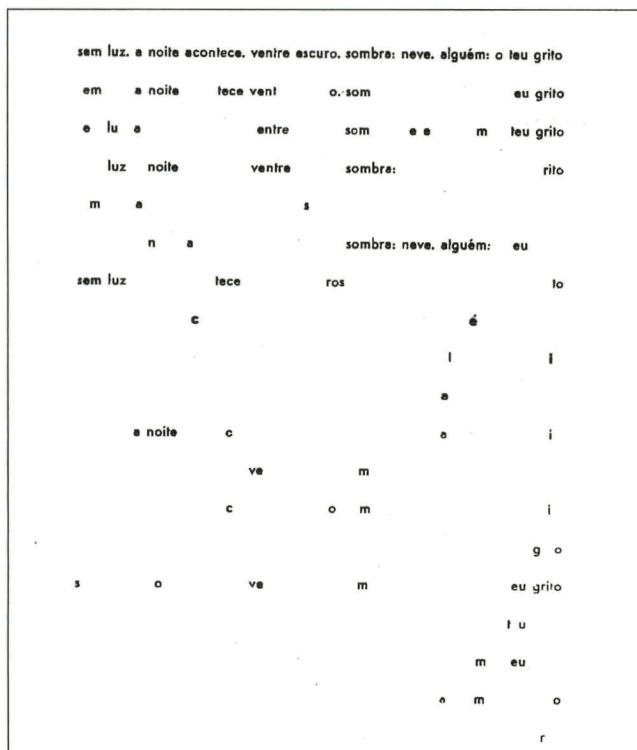


Figure 8.  
José-Alberto Marques, "Homeóstato: 1" (1967: s.p.)

Homeostasis is the ability or tendency of an organism to maintain internal equilibrium by adjusting its physiological processes. Applied to text, it concerns the verification of stable (and readable) conditions supported by its entropic mechanisms. In search of a textual balance, and a reading field capable of generating a large amount of aesthetic information, the homeostats by José-Alberto Marques seek self-organization and independence.

In the example illustrated here (figure 8), originally created in 1965 and first published in *Operação* (1967), the following verse is repeated seventeen times:

"sem luz. a noite acontece. ventre escuro. sombra: neve. alguém: o teu grito" ("with no light. happens the night. dark womb. shadow: snow. someone: your scream")

In each repetition the poem is subject to textual fragmentation by deleting certain letters and words and thus building a succession of homeostatic variations metonymically representing the whole of the poem.

Ana Hatherly in her book *Anagramático* (*Anagrammatic*) from 1970 (figure 9), also proposes a set of variations based on the villanelle by Camões:

"Descalça vai pera a fonte / Lianor pela verdura; / vai formosa e não segura." ("Barefoot to fountain goes / Lianor through the meadows; / fair and unsure she follows.")

Variations from this structure are countless and of various types, from calligraphic works with the word Leonor, to transformations by letter closeness, as in "Variation 7":

"descalça ia leonor. ia à fonte leda efria. / ia leste ia. a fonte corria. leonorapensia. / pela aragem fria. pela manhãia. sorria&ia. / (...) / leonorama. leonor&ana. oh leonorama." ("barefoort went leonor. went tofountain gay andcold. / went hasten going, tofountain flowing, leonorjustwent. / in cold breeze, at dawnwent. smiled&went. / (...) / leonorama. leo&anna. oh leonorama.")

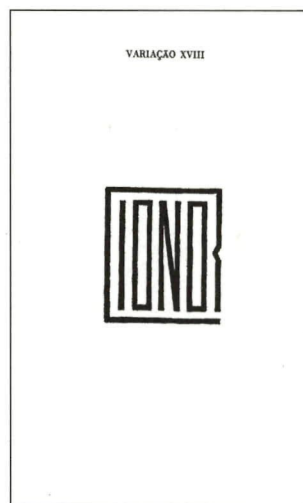


Figure 9  
"Variação XVIII" (variation 18), by  
Ana Hatherly (2001:217).  
(in her book *Anagramático*)



Figure 10  
Abílio-José Santos, "Corte" [unpublished]

"Variação XVIII" ("Variation 18") transforms Leonor into Lianor in order to create a symbol proposing the unity inherent to the word shape itself. This sign, a semiotic poem presupposing the labyrinth of Camões' readings, is illustrated above (figure 9).

Repetition allows transformation and variation, enabling visual understanding of the designed layout of the page space. It also creates conditions for calligram and ideogram-based concrete poetry. Abílio-José Santos is certainly one of the most nonconformist and anti-academic elements in the Portuguese experimental poetry group. According to Alberto Pimenta, Abílio-José Santos,

"trabalhou sempre à margem do grupo de poetas concretos e do seu sistema teórico, que recusa. Para ele, todo o fundamento epistemológico é repressivo: nesse sentido é o mais consequente de todos" ("has always worked outside the group of Concrete poets and their theoretical system, which he refuses. For him, all epistemological foundation is repressive: in this sense he is the most consistent of all") (Pimenta, 1988).

Referring to himself as "*autodidacta insurrecto e panfletário*" ("insurgent and self-taught pamphleteer") (Aguar e Pestana, 1985:107), as Eunice Ribeiro writes, "*quase sem querer, é poeta*" ("almost by accident, he is a poet") (Ribeiro, 1995).

Abílio's writing does not live detached from the world in which it makes its erasures and inscriptions. Its seduction, according to Ribeiro, is "pelo artesanato, pela manufactura" (for craftwork, through manufacture) articulating "escrita-gesto dotada de um carácter processual e exigindo o total envolvimento do sujeito" (writing-gesture endowed with a procedural nature and demanding full involvement from the subject) (Ribeiro, 1995).

Work and pain, political and poetic, meet in Abílio's work in unexpected ways by the use of different graphic and electrographic techniques.

Regarding the aforementioned recursiveness, his graphic works with the words "Amarrotado", "Corte", "Rasgado" and "Recortado" (crumpled, cut, torn, trim) are paradigmatic to understanding the fabrication of the poem and object by the material substance of expression that composes the word. This perspective stems from the idea that there is a coincidence of words with things that poetry can reveal, as is the case of "Corte" (figure 10).

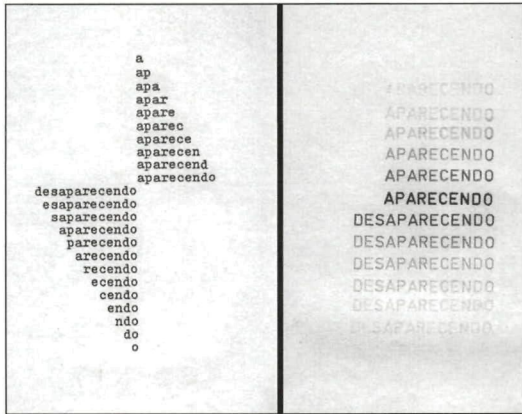


Figure 11  
Abílio-José Santos, "Aparecendo, Desaparecendo" [unpublished]

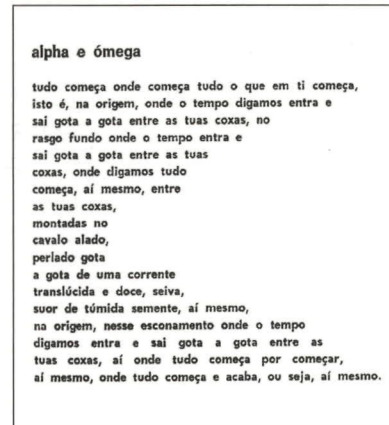


Figure 12  
Alberto Pimenta, "alpha e omega" (2004:164)

In the case of the work "Aparecendo / Desaparecendo" ("Appearing / Disappearing") (figure 11) with two different versions we can identify two sorts of appearances and disappearances. In the first case the word "Appearing" appears and the word "Disappearing" disappears letter by letter, creating a visual effect of a wing expressing the movement of the words themselves, similar to "Escravos" by António Barros. In the second case the effect of appearance and disappearance is achieved through fade in and fade out techniques in the repeated words.

In a visually similar trend but proposing a distinct process of semantics-syntax connection Alberto Pimenta, whose poetry production is vast and with a variety of approaches that would require several



Figure 13  
E. M. de Melo e Castro, "Tontura" (1962:12)

autonomous studies, often uses the repetitive and variational procedures we have mentioned. In his poem "alpha e omega" from 1977 (figure 12), through the visual form of the text he suggests the circularity it regards, i.e., the beginning (alpha) meets the end (omega) once. "tudo começa onde começa tudo o que em ti começa" ("all begins where it all begins what begins in you").

Also using repetition on the one hand and constellation and spatial organization of words in a circular motion on the other, E. M. de Melo e Castro is able in his ideogram "Tontura" ("Dizziness") (figure 13), to induce the reader to react promoting his/her own dizziness. Signifier and signified, as

in the previous examples, appear connected in a reciprocal motivation in an obvious connection to language Cratylism.

António Aragão, in a text about Melo e Castro's ideograms, makes clear the need for a reading approach different from the usual: "Repare-se com atenção nesses ideogramas. É preciso também olhá-los. Que essa poesia é para ler e ser vista. É tão importante a leitura como a visão global do ideograma - o espaço gráfico, entrando no jogo, toma parte fundamental na estrutura do poema." ("Carefully notice these ideograms. It is also important to look at them. Because that poetry is to be read and to be seen. Reading is as important as the overview of the ideogram - the graphic space, entering the game, takes essential part in the poem's structure.") (Aragão, 1981:104)

Finally, we find performance as one of the most recent features of experimentalist production. (figure 14) This is an extension of visibility to other materialities and forms of expressiveness, but in tune with the events that have always guided the interventions from historical Experimental Poetry, as the aforementioned case of *Concerto e Audição Pictórica* (Concert and Pictorial Audition) (1965). According to Fernando Aguiar,

"[i]t so happened that no longer was only the content of the poem important, but also the form of that content (...) the form also became the content and began to constitute a part of the poem" (Aguiar, 1987:140).

Aguiar, besides having an important corpus of visual production since the 1980s, was perhaps the one who carried the concept of poetic intervention farthest and who tried the hardest to spread and theorize the activity.

In fact, explains Aguiar, according to this extension of techniques and means to use in literary production, and using performance as a medium for poetic message transmission, poetry ends up receiving a new set of expressive devices:

"the poem received a new expressive liberty and acquired other components such as movement, volume, color, light and sound, which in their turn definitively altered the ideals of space and time in writing" (Aguiar, 1987:141).

Thus, it is interesting to recall that in poetic intervention, during which "the body functions more as an instrument of writing" (Aguiar, 1987:141), there is a co-presence or simultaneous relationship between author and reader, actor and spectator, a return of sorts to the context of sharing and interaction that characterize orality. On the other hand, performance features such as its uniqueness, indetermination and intermedial polyphony, make these events an opportunity for the artwork to make a statement, in line with Richard Wagner, as total work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*), promoting the fusion and synthesis of the various expressive elements.

Removing the writer/actor from the event, while maintaining the integration and intermediality of the intervention, we can finally replace poetic performance with a wider concept of poetry installation. (figure 15, next page) The poetic installation promotes the appropriation of geography, mapping through space by words and letters that become the topology's structuring agents. Poetic installation like performance is multisensory and multimodal, thus congregating in its fabric a polyphonic configuration that allows the immersion of the reader, as interaction agent, in the construction of a meaning that must be shared in and by the community.

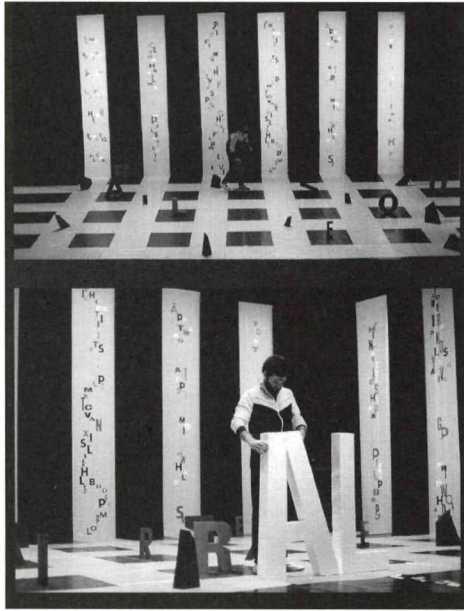


Figure 14  
Fernando Aguiar, *A essência dos sentidos* (performance)  
(2001:27)

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Translated by Isabel Basto.

#### ENDNOTES

1. The main authors in PO.EX, alphabetically ordered by author and to be mentioned in further detail along this article: Abílio-José Santos (1926-1992), Alberto Pimenta (1937-), Álvaro Neto [Liberto Cruz] (1935-), Ana Hatherly (1929-), Antero de Alda (1961-), António Aragão (1935-2008), António Barros (1953-), António Nelos (1949-), César Figueiredo (1954-), E. M. de Melo e Castro (1932-), Fernando Aguiar (1956-), José-Alberto Marques (1939-), Salette Tavares (1922-1994) and Silvestre Pestana (1949-). Bibliographies of these and other mentioned authors may be consulted in a separate article also published in the present journal.

2. There are two key publications available for a critical evaluation of Portuguese concrete and experimental poetry, both published in the 1980s: *PO.EX: Textos teóricos e documentos da poesia experimental portuguesa* (Hatherly and Melo e Castro 1981); and *Poemografias: Perspectivas da Poesia Visual Portuguesa* (Aguiar and Pestana 1985). These books reproduce many of the poets’ ideas.

3. The first book by Salette Tavares within the ‘Cadernos Antológicos da Poesia Experimental’ (1964) was entitled *Brin Cadeiras*. Regarding this title, the author refers that with the separation of the two words, *brin* and *cadeiras* (*brincadeiras* meaning games, *cadeiras* meaning chairs) she intended to “symbolically articulate (and commodify) two concepts from Aesthetics linked to Abraham Moles’ information theory (...) at the perceptive level and at the semantical level” (1995:17). The separation of *brin cadeiras* is in itself a game, a core trend in Salette Tavares’ work. The often ironic verbal game is used as a creative mechanism. Salette Tavares later participated in the second ‘Caderno Antológico da PO-EX’ (1966) with a set of graphic works entitled “Brincade iras / Brincade irras / Birras” (*brincadeiras* meaning games, *iras* meaning rages, *irras* being an interjection expressing

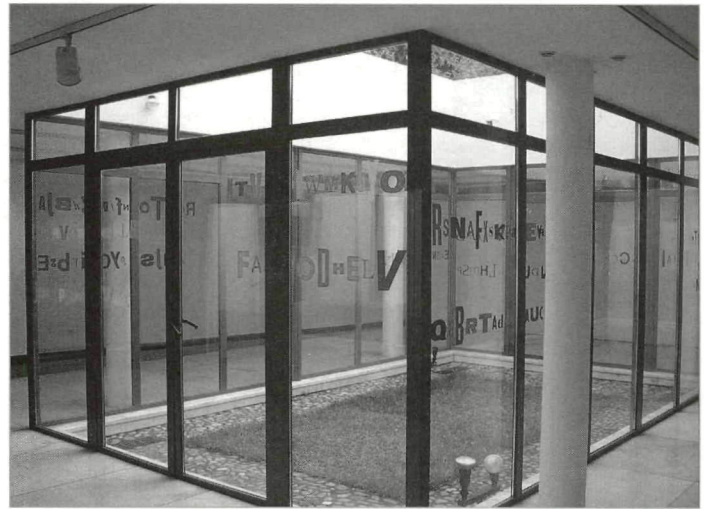


Figure 15  
Fernando Aguiar, Installation in Abrantes

irritation, and *birras* meaning tantrums). The title is a retort to those who were not too fond of *Brin Cadeiras* from the previous publication. Gaspar Simões would have considered those as playing with serious issues. Salette Tavares answers “my word, before such soft brains and hard heads, with the scissors I got in it, was divided by pure rage” (1995:18).

4. In Portuguese, *Quadrado* is the masculine form of the noun square. *Quadrada* is either a forced feminine of that word, thus representing an invention, or court/quatrain.

5. It is a rather intriguing fact that the Experimental Poetry Movement did not leave a manifesto to synthesize the group’s theoretical opposition. There are several factors that may be accountable for an explanation. On the one hand, PO.EX rejects all possible forms of classification, including the ones the very manifest considers. On the other hand, the pluralist nature of the group prevents the ideas from being synthesized in a unique text. At last, the manifesto settles a certain permanence that is contrary to the group’s objectives. Actually, several small manifestos were written by several members. There is also reference to the project of a “text written by António Ramos Rosa rejected by Salette Tavares that was lost” (Hatherly and Melo e Castro, 1981:169-170). In the catalogue of the PO.EX 80 exhibit at the National Gallery of Art in Lisbon, the authors write: “*MANIFESTO, não houve. Houve e há uma POEPRÁTICA que se transforma*” (“*MANIFESTO, there was no such thing. There was as there still is a POEPRACTICE that transforms itself*”) (Hatherly and Melo e Castro, 1981:273).

6. Further developed studies on the subject may be found in the special issue of the magazine *Visible Language* published by the American poet Dick Higgins under the title of ‘Pattern Poetry: A Symposium’, with a study by Ana Hatherly—who by this time lectured at the University of California, Berkeley—on labyrinths from the Portuguese and Spanish Baroque period from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See also Dick Higgins, *Pattern Poetry: Guide to an Unknown Literature* (State University of New York Press, 1987); Kenneth B. Newell, *Pattern Poetry: A Historical Critique from the Alexandrian Greeks to Dylan Thomas* (Marlborough House, 1976); Miguel d’Ors, *El caligrama, de Simmias a Apollinaire: historia y antología de una tradición clásica* (Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1977); Armando Zárate, *Antes de la vanguardia: historia y morfología de la experimentación visual: de Teócrito a la poesía concreta* (R. Alonso Editor, 1976); and *Speaking Pictures: A Gallery of Pictorial Poetry from the 16th century to the Present*, edited by Milton Klonsky (Harmony Books, 1975).

7. The term *cadernos* (collections) refers to participations reproduced in individual edited notebooks. Also named *Cadernos Antológicos da Poesia Experimental 1 e 2* and *Poesia Experimental 1 e 2*.

8. We must bear in mind that in 1964 the Portuguese group joins Position-I from the international movement of Spatialism, together with experimental poets from fourteen other countries. This new movement in experimental poetry launched by Pierre Garnier in France originated in the “Manifeste pour la Nouvelle Poésie: Visuelle et Phonique,” published in the number 29 of the magazine *Les Lettres*, in 1962. Garnier then wrote the draft of the manifesto that after being signed by poets from all over the world was known as “Position I du Mouvement International,” published in the number 32 of the same magazine in October 1963.

9. These magazines, rare and sold out, are available on the PO.EX CD-ROM, organized and developed during a R&D Project at the University Fernando Pessoa, Porto. Available online at: <<http://www.po-ex.net/>> evaluation. Coordination by Rui Torres, 2005.

10. Complete bibliographical references available at the “PO.EX Bibliography” also published in this journal.

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