

CHAPTER 6

LITERARY MAGA/ZINES: POEM-ACTION AND TOGETHERNESS

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This chapter looks at the contemporary production and circulation of literary periodicals in Portugal. Taking insights from cultural sociology, material culture studies and literary studies, and based on in-depth interviews with periodicals' editors, the chapter documents how these small-scale projects are assembled by poetry amateurs, here understood as both non-professionals (and outside the literary canon and mainstream institutions) and poetry lovers, in the vein of pragmatic sociology (cf. Hennion, 2007). After a brief overview of the literature on literary journals and the presentation of the theoretical framework used in this chapter, the research project "New Poetics of Resistance", from which this chapter's data stems, is introduced. The Portuguese literary periodicals and its editors are presented, detailing the process of producing a literary magazine, from a desire and need to publish texts to a distributed artefact, both offline and online. As a conclusion, we highlight poetry as socio-cultural practice.

Keywords: poetry, magazines, fanzines, collective and peripheral publishing.

6.1. The social life of literary magazines

Contemporary poetry worlds are diverse – from poetry slams and sound poetry to electronic poetry. However, written text, printing press and book publishing are constitutive of poetry worlds. For poets, poetry is "a career without a job" – as poets are unlikely to make a living from their writing alone – and where "publication remains the keystone of legitimation in contemporary fields of poetry production" (Craig, 2007: 46).

In contrast to individual forms of publication, such as books and the book publishing market, scant attention has been paid to literary journals. The field of literary studies has focused on the links between literary magazines, aesthetic communities and socio-political geographies. Literary magazines have been studied as part of modernist projects of literary movements and national affirmation at the beginning of the 20th century (Canelo, 1997; Bradbury and Jameson, 1991), as well as crucial for the development of national or continental literatures (eg: Lusophone Africa's literature, cf. Alao, 1999).

Some insights on literary periodicals also come from studies on fanzines and graphic design. Triggs (2010) acknowledges that modernist little magazines and literary self-publishing (among 19th century political broadsheets, pamphlets, as well as the underground counter-cultural publications of the 1960s), are predecessors of zines; are part of the historical roots for fanzines, as they're all part of the alternative press history. On the other hand, so too is the visual and graphic language of fanzines rooted firstly on the artistic and literary practices of avant-guard movement, such as Fluxus, Surrealism and Dada artists' self-published journals, which are considered by some the first "proto-zines" (Triggs, 2010: 15). More recently, the small-press and underground poetry publications have been considered within public library archival purposes (Basinski, 2002).

Contemporary literary periodicals have been acknowledged for their role in the establishment of writers' careers and reputation, mostly as an early-stage activity (Verdaasdonk, 1989), or as "sideline activities" of a writer's career (Janssen, 1998). The editorial role of the editor and editorial teams, considered influential agents in the literary field – gatekeepers – is also unexplored (Philpotts, 2012).

Ailsa Craig's innovative comparative ethnography on contemporary poetry subcultures in USA and Canada has unveiled the role of chapbooks – in its materiality and the practices it engenders – on the creation and maintenance of identity and community within a gift economy (Craig, 2011).

Extending Craig's valuable insights to a new object – the magazine –, this chapter is indebted to a culture 'in action' perspective, considering magazines as mediators and the socio-material practices that are constitutive of poetry worlds (DeNora, 2014). This chapter will document the specific ways by which meaning is constructed as magazines are assembled, and how this cultural artefact is consequential for future action within poetry worlds and social fields.

6. 2. New Poetics of Resistance

The research project "New Poetics of Resistance"⁶⁵ undertook a systematic selection of existing poetry publications, from 1990 to 2010. Fieldwork was conducted in mainland Portugal's 16 districts outside Lisbon and Oporto, where archival research was done – in local public libraries and cultural centres – in which we conducted 100 in-depth interviews with periodical's editors, small press editors, poetry groups, poets; also with libraries', municipalities' and local associations' representatives. We also did observation at poetry events (readings, meetings, book launches). For the "Electronic Poetry Observatory" we conducted online systematic survey of around five hundred blogs and online publications; and 21 interviews with bloggers and electronic writing spaces keepers.

Within its literary studies strand, the project intended to research for "alternative institutions" to the "official verse culture", in the way Charles Bernstein, mentor of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E school, puts it: "The power of our alternative institutions of poetry is their commitment to scales that allow for the flourishing of the art form, not the maximizing of the audience; to production and presentation, not publicity; to exploring the unknown, not manufacturing reknown" (Bernstein, 1999: 153-154).

Poetry is a peripheral artistic genre – it is on the margins of dominant social discourses (Perelman, 1996), on the margins of literature and publishing house catalogues and it has a small readership (Dubois, 2006). Those "alternative institutions" were expected to be found on the margins of the centre. That is to say, outside Lisbon

⁶⁵ I refer to the "New poetics of resistance in Portugal" (FCOMP-01-0124-FEDER-007264), coordinated by Professor Graça Capinha. All the poetry publications collected are available at the North/South Library of the Centre for Social Studies (University of Coimbra). The Library catalogue is available at: http://webopac.sib.uc.pt/search*por-S30. The database on Contemporary Poetry is available at: <https://www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/novaspoeticas/pages/portugues/base-de-dados-poesia-contemporanea-em-portugal-planos-excentricos2352.html>

and Oporto, on the basis that due to the high centralization of cultural (and hence, literary) life, it is important to research cultural practices in small and medium-sized cities (Abreu and Santos, 2002). In non-metropolitan cities, municipalities are key actors in defining cultural public policies, positioning culture as an engine of development policies (Silva et al., 2012). Due to the market's weakness to sponsor arts, municipalities and the third sector (associations, co-ops, etc) are key agents in developing local cultural practices (Silva, 2002) – including poetry publications and public readings. Public funding of poetry has also been noted in France (Dubois, 2006). This becomes relevant when considering that the book publishing market in Portugal is small (mostly made up of companies with less than ten employees) and fragile (Gomes et al., 2005). A limited export market – to other Portuguese-speaking countries – and the low levels of reading habits in Portugal are part of the book publishing vulnerability (Gomes et al., 2005). A set of measures for improving the book and reading sector included the development of the National Network of Public Libraries.

Internet in Portugal constitutes a distribution medium for poetry. In the 2000s the boom of the blogosphere and the rise of online self-publishing enabled a wider circulation of poetry in the electronic writing space. However, as we found in previous work (Portela and Grácio, 2012), the online sphere ability to constitute an alternative to print media and literary institutions is diminished by processes of absorption; hence, reproducing, to a greater extent, the (paper) mechanisms of literary legitimization and consecration.

6. 3. Literary maga/zines in non-metropolitan Portuguese cities [1990-2010]

In the research, we came across poetry sections, literary book reviews and interviews with writers regularly published in cultural magazines, public libraries' and municipal magazines, local newspapers, as well as "arts & culture" supplements. This points to the vitality of poetry publishing, not only in the small (local and regional) press⁶⁶; but also, among the specialized literary magazines, where the privileged genre is poetry⁶⁷. Fiction and prose are published to a much lesser extent; and very few magazines contain sections with literary criticism, although essays covering literary topics are published occasionally.

For this chapter, the focus will be on the literary periodicals [cf. Table 6.1], although we may refer to cultural periodicals that publish poetry (eg: Eito Fora, Periférica, Mealibra; Ave Azul; Plátano; Entre o vivo o não vivo e o morto).

⁶⁶ Although the number of poems per issue is rather small.

⁶⁷ Contrary to literary periodicals in other countries, such as the Netherlands, where "essayists constitute the largest group; the talent for writing non-fiction is more widespread than that for writing poetry" (Verdaasdonk, 1989: 215).

I will refer to these periodicals as maga/zines, as a way of highlighting the diversity of formats (zines and little magazines, folios, pamphlets, gazettes, bulletins, notebooks).

City/Place	Title	Dates ^a	Editor(s)	Publisher
Aveiro	Folhas, Letras e Outros Ofícios	1997-active	Grupo Poético de Aveiro (GPA)	Grupo Poético de Aveiro (GPA)
Vila Nova de Farnalício	Apeadeiro: revista de atitudes literárias	2001-2004	Jorge Reis-Sá; Valter Hugo Mãe	ECL Empresa de Comércio Livreiro/Quasi
Guimarães	Bumerangue: poesia, fotografia, gravura e outros ofícios	1993-2001	João Salgado	
Fafe	Perfil: revista de artes e letras	1992-1996	Núcleo de Artes e Letras de Fafe (NALF)/Artur Coimbra	Núcleo de Artes e Letras de Fafe (NALF)
Guimarães	Jornal dos poetas & trovadores	1980-active	Barroso da Fonte	Editora Cidade Berço
Braga	Quantos Ledores Tantas as Sentenças	1997-1999	Autores de Braga (AB)/Adelina Vieira	Autores de Braga (AB)
Bragança	Orpheu: magazine de criação literária	2000-2004	Paulo Resende	Estabelecimento Prisional Central de Izeda
Castelo Branco	Sirgo: Caderno de Letras e Artes	1992-1994	António Salvado	
Castelo Branco	Petrinea: fólhos de poesia	1999-2000	Pedro Salvado	Liga dos Amigos de Alpedrinha
Coimbra	Absinto	1992-1996	Pedro Águas; Carlos Ramos	Absinto
Coimbra	Alma Azul: revista de artes e ideias	1999-active	Elsa Ligeiro	Alma Azul
Coimbra	Inimigo Rumor ^{da} ; luso-Brazilian poetry magazine	2001-2003	Carlito Azevedo; Augusto Massi & Marcos Siscar (Brazil) Américo Lindeza Diogo, André Jorge & Osvaldo Manuel Silvestre	Cotovia & Angelus Novus (Portugal) & Sete Letras (Brazil)
Coimbra	Foro das Letras	1998-2007	António Osório de Castro	Associação Portuguesa de Escritores Juristas
Coimbra	Oficina de Poesia: revista da palavra e da imagem	1998-active	Graça Capinha	Palimage
Faro	Sulscrito: revista de literatura	2006-active	Fernando Esteves Pinto; João Bentes; Pedro Afonso	ARCA
Silves	Litterarius: Revista do Prémio Litterarius	2007	Gabriela Rocha Martins	Racal Clube
Olhão	Tão longe, tão perto!	1994-1999	Pedro Jubilot	
Guarda	Boca de Incêndio	2004-2006	Américo Rodrigues; António Godinho	Aquilo Teatro
Guarda	Aquilo: Cadernos de Poesia -II série	1986-1997	Américo Rodrigues; António Godinho	Aquilo Teatro

Guarda	Aquilo: Cadernos de Poesia -II série	1986-1997	Américo Rodrigues; António Godinho	Aquilo Teatro
Guarda	Ups!	2001-2007	João Louro; Brígida Ribeiro	Aquilo Teatro
Torres Vedras	Quase	2001-2003	Luis Filipe Cristovão; Renato Caldeira; Rui Matoso	Académico de Torres Vedras
Torres Vedras	Sítio	2005-active	Luis Filipe Cristovão	Académico de Torres Vedras
Nazaré	Non Nova Sed Nove	1991-1998	m. parissy; Luís Paulo Meireles	Non Nova Sed Nove
Castelo de Vide	Cadernos (Ultra) Periféricos ⁷⁰ : fanzine de arte, fotografia e poesia	2000-2006	Vasco Câmara Pestana	
Abrantes	Canal: revista de literatura ibérica	1998-1999	Augusto Oliveira Mendes	Palha de Abrantes
Tomar	Entre Letras: livros e escritores	2001-2006	Carlos Trincão; Nuno Figueiredo	Razão de Ser
Grândola	Literaturas e Culturas: jornal literário	2005-2009	Pedro Águas; Carlos Correia	
Grândola	Gérmén: cadernos literários	1995-2001	Pedro Águas	
Almada	big ode	2006-active	Rodrigo Miragaia, Sara Rocio, Maria João Lopes Fernandes	
Setúbal	Mensageiro da poesia	2000-active	Alexandrina Pereira	Mensageiro da Poesia
Setúbal	O canto dos poetas	2005-active	Henrique Mateus	Núcleo de Poesia do Grupo Desportivo Independente
Almada	Debaixo do Bulcão: poezine	1996-active	António Vitorino	
Vila Real	Aliquidi fanzine	2008-2010	João Frade; Jorge Almeida	
Viseu	Plágio: revista de poesia	1993-2003	hélio t; João Garcia; César Zembla; Ricardo Bordalo	Edições Caixa de Costura
Viseu	Coisa	2008	hélio t; César Zembla	

Tabel 6.1 List of literary periodicals

Source: author's table, created from the project New Poetics of Resistance dataset

Not just the format, but also the scope of the periodicals is diverse. The maga/zines do not always exhibit a well-defined editorial intention expressed in a written publisher's note. However, socio-literary proposals are embedded in magazines formats and naming practices; and enacted over the editorial decision-making processes, from gathering contributors and selecting works to distribute the magazine, and sometimes getting financial support.

In the next section, I will present the periodicals' editors and its magazines' underlying socio-literary proposals.

6. 3.1. Meet the editors: academia, bohemia and amateurs

Literary maga/zines are often one-person operations. When a maga/zine is run by a group of people, it is undertaken by a small group (usually three people group). These people are poets and writers themselves – poet-editors. Hence, the socio-literary life of a maga/zine being dependent upon poets-editor's socio-literary life – maga/zines are highly personal editorial projects, with a collective ambition.

It is the modernist “little magazine” and/or the fanzine – in the spirit of the Do-It-Yourself ethos – that are narrativized as the template after which poet-editors model this type of collective poetic action.

There are maga/zines with some ties to academic circles, whether professors-ran (eg: Oficina de Poesia⁷¹ Inimigo Rumor), or university student-ran (Absinto; Quase). Maga/zines can be part of the activities of formal association of poets and writers (eg: Folhas... by Grupo Poético de Aveiro; Quantos Ledores... , by Autores de Braga; Perfil by Núcleo de Artes e Letras de Fafe). Maga/zines can embody previous literary practices, such as poetry readings (eg: Sulscrito, Petrínea, Folhas); or revive extinct maga/zines, by the hands of their previous editors, who persevere in literary endeavours (eg: Quase gave rise to Sítio; Cadernos Periféricos to Ultra-periféricos; Aquilo to Boca de Incêndio; Plágio to Coisa). In small circles of poets, elements of modernist bohemia (cf. Halasz, 2015) persist.

⁶⁸ “Active” meaning that magazines were still publishing in 2010, the end date of the research project.

⁶⁹ It started as a Brazilian magazine in 1998, but issues 11 to 15 were Luso-Brazilian.

⁷⁰ From 200-2004 its named Cadernos Periféricos. Afterwards, it changes its name for Cadernos Ultra-Periféricos. Under this title two issues were published until 2006.

⁷¹ This magazine derives from a Creative Writing module and workshops at the University of Coimbra. Those were created and are run by Professor Graça Capinha in mid-1990s. It must be noted that in Portugal there is no tradition of Creative Writing programmes – unlike the United States, where: “universities participate in the creation of contemporary poetry. They offer master of fine arts (MFA) programs in creative writing for aspiring writers, and publish poetry journals in which unestablished poets strive to place their work so as to take the next steps toward becoming established” (Craig and Dubois, 2010: 445).

The social life of a maga/zine intersects academia, bohemia, local power and third sector associations, as it's assembled by poetry amateurs. Academics publish in maga/zines that are not run by Professors or students; and students-run maga/zines claim to be "non-academic". The bohemian ethos permeates, at times, the life of poet-editors and groups, and informal sociability is part of most literary events (magazine launches, poets' gatherings).

Concerning its aesthetics, some periodicals are more experimental, while others align with a more lyricist tradition⁷². There are also periodicals devoted to "popular poetry" (eg: Poetas & Trovadores, Literaturas & Culturas).

Despite its different socio-literary proposals, all these maga/zines derive from its poet-editors' "need" and "will" to publish poetry – on the grounds that "is hard to publish" –, and to do it their own way - maintaining autonomy and control across the whole process, and outside the commercial circuits of publishing markets. And, at the same time, answering to the cultural and media environment needs of the place where maga/zine editors live in.

6.3.2. Networks of socio-literary "complicities"

Maga/zine poet-editors prioritize the publication of their own work – not in quantity, and not without scrutiny – but they also invite and promote contributions, creating an "open space": open to other poets, other arts, other languages, other places. These invitations take place within a private clique of poets – poets and artists that are friends of the poet-editor, and friends of friends– or they take the shape of an "open call" – in the magazine editorials, leaflets, or on the internet.

Maga/zines contain mostly un-published works of contemporary poet-friends and unknown poets– hence the poet-editors' "passion" and "pleasure" to publish poems that would not otherwise be printed. Though it may include published work – usually of renowned authors, whether contemporary/living or classical/deceased.

Most of the maga/zines make their attempts to balance between fostering the talent of young writers, as well as publishing work by established writers explicit – in both cases, the maga/zine literary time frame is one of now-ness, by capturing the contemporary. Some maga/zines make its vocation to publish young writers explicit (eg: Folhas; Absinto); others tend towards publishing well-established writers (Mealibra).

However, poets may gain reputation over time. Bumerangue editor takes pride in having published Adília Lopes "before she became a "pop-star poet". Different maga/zine editors also take pride in having published José Luis Peixoto before he was an established writer. This illustrates the fact that a poet can collaborate with very

⁷² Literary periodicals were classified within a literary studies framework, according to this continuum. Magazines that were classified as belonging to the "Other tradition" and as outside the "official verse culture" were a minority (22 out of 57). There is a clear prevalence of traditional poetry, epigone of Romanticism.

different magazines, and poet-editors collaborate with different poets, as Dubois (2006) found out in the case of French publishing house poetry catalogues. Also, poet-editors publish and cooperate with other magazine and poet-editors, in the spirit of “exchange”. Instead of exclusive aesthetic affiliations, these maga/zines work on the basis of literary “complicities” and personal relationships, generating and maintaining networks of socio-literary complicity:

We met people that also write, that have quality, and who work in the same spirit as we do. And we also want to have a relationship, maybe we prefer someone we already know, with whom we have a bond. [...] and when we started the magazine, we already knew so many good writers, we wanted to publish them (Suslcrito).

In the case of editorial teams, tensions might arise over the desired balance between text and authors. That is to say, an editorial balance between a selection of works based on the poem itself (and issues of literary quality and taste are in debate), and a selection based on the author (maintaining the establishment of poetic communities and networking). When the author prevails as an editorial criterion for inclusion it can be seen as a case of “friendship-ism” – as explained by a poet-editor, referring to the pressure to publish his friends’ poems, even when he disliked its poetics. In other cases, the author criterion can prevail as a non-exclusionary editorial stance: to publish every author who submits poems, despite not publishing every poem submitted. For instance, GPA works under the pedagogical principle of publish the “not so bad poem” of a young author, so he can get motivated to keep on writing, by seeing his work printed. Debaixo do Bulcão poet-editor wants exemption from acting as a judge for “literary quality”, delegating it to the self-judgement of the contributor.

Editorial teams of poet-editors meet to select works for the maga/zine, and in some cases, they evaluate their own texts, which are usually moments for critique. These moments work to improve the writing itself, in a “painful, but productive way”, but they can also generate animosity (Quase).

6.3.3. Local but not localized: peripheral and cosmopolitan

Maga/zines are rooted in the place of their production – after all, it is where poet-editors live and, mostly, get it done. Maga/zines are themselves a way of responding to local cultural environments, by enacting its past rich cultural and literary traditions (Petrinea; Sirgo), or aligning to local poetic traditions (eg: “oral poetry” sections are included in Cadernos Periféricos, Gérmén, Literaturas & Culturas). By aligning with local press traditions (eg: the fanzine tradition) or by counteracting local “cultural deserts” (Aquila; Sulscrito, Eito Fora e Periférica). Cultural magazines are

also forms of cultural and civic engagement in itself– as its editors explain, Eito Fora was intended to “participate in political debates, but also to introduce people to the arts”.

The location also gains visibility when publishers of a maga/zine are 3rd sector organization – not just the case of poets and authors’ associations (AB, GPA); but also different local associations that, among other activities, promote culture and literature through the publishing of a maga/zine, and to which poet-editors associate with.

The place is a site of contested value: it is strategically claimed, but also “surpassed”. Against the “local author” stigma, non-metropolitan maga/zines refuse to be localized in the location, by reacting against “parochialism” and “regionalism”. For the place not to exclude literary quality, said quality is drawn together with alternative attitudes – peripheral-ness and cosmopolitanism. This drawing together involves reflexive action with socio-literary effects, as it refracts back on the categories of “local”, “place” and “quality”, altering them in this process. The practice of poetry outside metropolitan centres grants it a double status of peripheral-ness. Rather than an obstacle, peripheral-ness constitutes the grounds for poetry lovers to engage in the craft of poetry, as a meaningful, collective and public activity, worth of (public) value (as well as public funding).

The cosmopolitan aspiration is most obviously articulated in the inclusion of non-Portuguese authors, whether they are Portuguese-speaking authors (in some cases, a claim to a Lusophone identity, eg: Inimigo Rumor; Litterarius, Sítio), or Spanish-speaking ones –in some cases, the appeal to an Iberian literary identity; and one publication is entirely bilingual: Canal (Portuguese/Spanish). Poet-editors also translate poetry themselves, or invite translations (predominantly Spanish-language contemporary poetry; Anglo-American poetry, from Whitman to the Beat Generation; and French Poetry, from Symbolists to Surrealists).

6.3.4. Public funding, but independent editorial choices

These literary maga/zines are non-profit oriented publications, a free-based collaborative venture – editors and contributors’ work is free, no royalties are involved. The main economic concern is to pay for the maga/zine printing costs and to finance the up-coming issue. The money available shapes maga/zines’ print-runs – more money usually means larger circulation – and its price – maga/zines are cheap, and some are free.

Maga/zines can get funding from state institutions – Ministry of Culture (MC) and The Portuguese Institute of Youth (IPJ) – local and regional government and, very few, get it from local business(men). The funding comes in the form of money to support printing costs and distribution. Fanzines’ funding comes as the photocopies themselves (eg: Debaixo do Bulcão) – or as “photoco-pillage” (Non nova sed nove).

The issue of funding itself is not framed as controversial among maga/zine producers, as it does not affect artistic autonomy – poet-editors still have control over the editorial process. Publishing poetry is understood by all stakeholders as being a public good, preservation of heritage, and cultural flourishing, which is entitled to be supported – public funding resonates with public value. Tensions arise over the delay of payments – which may compromise the maga/zine survival; and/or the fact that local power might use the magazines only as a means to promote themselves. Bumerangue was the only case of a maga/zine giving up on public funding. In the absence of funding, its producers shoulder the magazine costs, and often lose money rather than make it.

6.3.5. Fanzines and artworks: visual and graphic dimension

Most literary periodicals feature visual artworks (eg: photography, painting, illustration). The incorporation and levelling of visual arts is common and even expressed in maga/zines' subheaders (eg: "poetry and image", "poetry, photography and other crafts"). Some works explore the boundaries between text and image, mostly in *Ali qui di* and *Ups!* and *Big-Ode* where intermediality prevails. In the case of *Quantos Ledores*, the illustrations by the visual artists associated to *Autores de Braga* are the pictorial re-interpretations of the written poem.

Maga/zines exist in all formats, shapes and sizes, and are extremely sensory objects. From the traditional fanzine, folded and stapled (eg: *Debaixo do Bulcão*, *Absinto*, *germen*, *Non nova sed Nove*, *Gérmén*), [cf. Figure 18 and Figure 19], or "a different fanzine" – *Aliquidi* was issued in a plastic zip-lock baggie; to the idea of the magazine itself as an "artwork" (*bumerangue*), more of an "object-magazine" (*big-ode*) [cf. Figure 20], also expressed in the practice of "limited editions" and numbering maga/zines in the same way as art prints (e.g. *Plágio*, *big-ode*).

Therefore, the physical format of a maga/zine is not a mere container for literary works. It is embedded in a graphic stance. Most of the poet-editors delegate the graphic dimension of the magazine to a designer, except when the poet-editor is a designer themselves (*Big-ode*), or a self-taught one (*Quase*). Graphical experimentation is ingrained in the origins of *Plágio*, as one of the three founding editors was not a poet, but a graphic designer, wanting to "experiment" – here experimentalism underlies both format and content. In the case of *Boca de Incêndio*, the spirit of continuation from the previous maga/zine (*Aquilo*), is embodied in the graphic design.

The fanzine world blends in the life of the maga/zines. To opt for the format of a fanzine (or "notebooks") can be a practical way to solve money issues related to printing costs. But in some cases, it is part of the fanzine world itself. When *Debaixo do Bulcão* poet-editor organized a fanzine fair and then he started a poetry fanzine – a poezine – not as counter-culture, but due to the need to publish poetry.

Also, Non nova sed nove editors were inspired to start a fanzine, after regularly attending (and working as volunteers) at the local annual book fair, where they came across fanzines and books that otherwise would not have had access too.



Figure 6.1 Literary Maga/zines.

Source: CES North/South Library, Coimbra.



Figure 6.2 Non nova sed nove.

Source: CES North/South Library, Coimbra.



Figure 6.3 Bumerangue.

Source: CES North/South Library, Coimbra.



Figura 6.4 Plágio.

Source: CES North/South Library, Coimbra.

6.3.6. Informal distribution networks

The distribution of these small-circulation periodicals takes place along more or less informal distribution channels. Those channels range from the National Library, local public libraries, and bookshops to cafes, cultural centres and local associations. Maga/zines also circulate through the post (to maga/zine subscribers or by online orders). The two most efficient ways of distribution are hand to hand, through the network of its contributors and via maga/zine launches, which serve the purposes of promoting and selling it but are also important socio-literary events in poetry worlds. Magazine editors might also send their magazines to local and national newspapers, hoping to get a review (eg. boca de incêndio; Orpheu).

When maga/zines obtain Legal Deposit status they are placed within a formal distribution circuit of the National Network of Public Libraries (such was the case of Big-ode, Bumerangue, Boca de Incêndio, Inimigo Rumor). When the funding comes from the state (MC) magazines get an automatic Legal Deposit. But distribution in local public libraries can get done even in the absence of Legal Deposit – Quase, plágio, – and editors themselves might offer issues to libraries, which are considered important places for reading. It is the job of poet-editors to assure distribution, which is dependent on poet-editors' ability (mobility and networks) to distribute it, unless these maga/zines are published by a small-publishing house (eg: Oficina de Poesia, Alma Azul; entre letras).

These maga/zines can be sold in bookshops. However, as independent bookshops decline – not just book sales drop, but consumers prefer to buy at big chains such as FNAC, Bertrand (cf. Neves et al., 2014) –, these places are carefully handpicked by poet-editors – there is a circuit of poetry-friendly independent bookshops. In more informal networks, and usually related to fanzines, though not exclusively, the maga/zine can be placed in the local associations, local cultural centres and at cafes.

Because it is an extremely portable object (due to its size/dimensions), the maga/zine spreads widely, keeping up with people's mobility – from taking a box of magazines in the car trunk and distribute it in specific places and venues, to take and distribute a few magazines abroad while taking part in a students' exchange programme (eg: Erasmus) or distributing the magazine while travelling on holiday or business.

All maga/zine editors agree that the most efficient distribution channel is through contributors' networks, who receive some extra copies of the maga/zine (also as a payment for their free labour), and distribute it themselves among friends and peers, "so it [the magazine] goes snowballing, and that's more important than selling it" (as Big-Ode editors put it). Maga/zines are often given away, exchanged as tokens of friendship or as a way to introduce the recipient to their own work and others', as well as to the maga/zine itself.

The fact that maga/zines do not have sales figures and profit as a central aim – instead, distribution is the goal - have low production costs, and can get distributed among its contributors' networks makes the "distribution issue" a lesser problem for maga/zine producers - unlike poetry books published by small publishing houses.

6.3.7. Readership: peers and connoisseurs

The distribution circuit allows us to have a sense of who are the recipients of maga/zines: friends, whether poets or not, but mostly, poet-friends, other poets and artists, poetry readers, general audience, and literary critics. Many have noted that poets have little audience outside themselves (Bourdieu, 1993, Craig, 2011). However, instead of problematic, Craig has showed that chapbooks' circulation within poetry communities is foundational of poet's relationships with their peers, it is constitutive of poetry scenes and assures its maintenance.

Maga/zine editorials address an imagined community of readers, and in this process, they organise the reading experience as an active process of meaning-making.

However, maga/zine producers seem to agree that a maga/zine itself is not the best way to gather brand – new readers for poetry [beginners] – that can be best achieved by poetry readings in informal contexts, which can happen at maga/zine launches, and also due to the visual appeal of the maga/zine as an object itself. As a specific mediator within literary worlds, maga/zine affords a specific type of readership – other poets and connoisseurs. As Sulscrito poet-editors illustrate:

You can ask: did Orpheu or Presença created new audiences for poetry? They didn't. Those are established magazines. I think they create new audiences among existing reading audiences. That happens too. Attentive readers, but that are not aware of these unknown, young writers, not published by main publishing houses. We can create new audiences for young writers, among those who are already poetry readers, and who, through magazines, discover new writers.

6.3.8. Online: distribution and archiving

With the rise of the Internet these analogue publications are reconfigured in three ways.

More obviously, the use of e-mail not just eased editor's labour of contacting contributors, subscribers and even sponsors, it also diminished mail costs. Mostly, it extended and remediated maga/zines' contents. Editors create online spaces (blogs or sites) promoting and selling their maga/zine; gaining new and international contributors, audiences, and getting the media's attention. It transformed distribution: editor of Debaixo do Bulcão sends its pdf by e-mail to its contributors, so they can print and fold it at their homes and distribute them. Editors also publish online some of the maga/zine's contents – whether they were already published in the paper; or they were not printed, hence becoming a non-exclusionary editorial stance. Or the paper magazine can turn entirely online to overcome printing costs. Electronic maga/zines mostly take the role of small presses and alternative print, in overcoming the economic constraints of print production – and not necessarily to explore the materialities of the medium (hyperwriting).

The Internet also enables the display of digitized expired maga/zines – building digital archives. Here the case of *Non nova sed nove* is illustrative: extinct in 1998, in 2010 its poet-editors created a weblog, where they sell the fanzines and paperback collection they still have in stock, and they digitized covers and posted online some of the maga/zine's contents – poems and photos.

6. 4. “a magazine is a magazine is a magazine”

Glossing Dickinson's verse, I aim to convey the idea that the enactment of a shared convention of the literary field – the literary magazine – it is not mere replication, as repeating is re-creating. A magazine is a catalyst for socio-literary practices, as they are situated in a continuum of socio-literary practices. They are influenced by precedent literary activities – such as other magazines or magazine-making attempts, split books, poetry readings, informal meetings or poet-friends' night outs. And work as hubs for future socio-literary practices: other magazines, offprints [separatas], anthologies and paperback collections. Small publishing houses start as literary magazines. Magazines launches – at cafes, bookshop, cultural centres, local theatres – are ritualistic, socio-literary events in poetry worlds. They serve purposes of promoting – and selling – the magazine to an audience, by presenting and reading poetry, sometimes accompanied by music performances. Furthermore, they are also moments of sociability, gathering poet-editors, contributors and audience. Magazines are also opportunities to get (mainstream and alternative) media attention – and the amount of critical attention is a mark of literary prestige. Therefore, the success of a literary magazine is not strictly dependent upon its longevity, but on its production, display and circulation.

When a poet becomes a maga/zine editor, he is remaking his status as a poet: displaying poetic engagement, gaining reputation, and becoming a gatekeeper. As for chapbooks, so too for magazines “the role of a publisher as gatekeeper is not only one of legitimation, but one of cleansing – in passing through the gate, the publication is cleansed of the self-interest of the author, allowing the work to contribute to ongoing poetic practice by judging it a worthy participant.” (Craig, 2011: 53). Poet-editors, in crafting a collective artefact, are creating opportunities not just for themselves but for others to publish. Magazine contributors' change their status too: they become “publish-able” poets, artists. For both poet-editors and contributors, participating in a magazine is to access new subject-positions of authors, building reputations, is expanding socio-literary networks and gaining audiences.

Publishing is also a way of getting feedback, so it is a ground to test writing styles, and experience other modes of writing. Magazines are sites of informal learning for both poet-editors and contributors. By (critically) reading other's poems, selecting poems is engaging in reflection on poetic issues and the craft of writing. Because magazines comprehend a diversity of authors and other arts, poet-readers can learn from the diversity of poetic styles and artistic genres co-present in the space of the magazine. As such, magazines are important spaces for practising the craft of writing itself, for the distillation of writing.

6. 5. Conclusion

Maga/zines are aesthetic and material resources for amateurs' world-making activities.

The magazine poet-editor or the group of poet-editors plays a decisive role in the production of these material artefacts, mobilizing its specific aesthetic ethos, personal ties and (institutional and informal) resources in the production process - from gathering authors and selecting poems, to printing or applying for funding, as well as in the process of their circulation and distribution. But is also the (free) labour of magazine contributors - offering their work for publishing and distributing the magazine - that coins the collective and collaborative nature of magazines. They result from the collective "labour of love", in the sense it is a committed, non-paid activity. Maga/zines not just express, but constitute informal social networks - networks of socio-literary complicity. The modernist little magazine and/or the fanzine is seen as the referent for collective poetry publishing, hence its role as a template for collective poetic action.

This feature gives magazines its distinctive status in poetry worlds. Within a tight official literary world of best-selling authors, magazines are (re)distributive technologies, furnishing and inflecting the poetry worlds and other social spaces.

These publications become a "practice of registration" for amateur poets, re-making poet's status as "publish-able". For both the poet-editors and contributors, maga/zines afford aesthetic agency. To publish - to make writing public - is not only to take part in translocal literary worlds, but is also a form of participation in the cultural and media life of its production-place, and magazines are part of local literary, media and cultural ecologies.

The layered peripheral status of these literary maga/zines - as a literary artefact in the margins of the book market produced outside non-metropolitan places in a peripheral country of Europe - creates value. Peripheral-ness of poetry and literary maga/zines perform it as a meaningful, collective and public endeavour, worth of public value - and public funding.

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