

PESSOA EFFECT WITHIN VIRAL SOCIETY

Viral Sociological Poetry using Apps and e-Books Anti-Virus

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ABSTRACT

The present text is about *Pessoa Effect* in the Corona Virus era. *Pessoa Effect* is a social communication dispositif used inside digital social networks, blogs, sites, etc. It is defined as a mode of development in what regards the social, literary and artistic personality of an author, by using *digital heteronyms*. E.g. a user that writes and signs as a different author of multiple e-mails, may construct a digital heteronym in each one of these e-mails. *Pessoa Effect* may also be developed within the hybridization of media or *hybrimedia*: an author may present several personalities (*author heteronyms*) or mix himself with characters (*character heteronyms*). This may be made through an app including poems, which is abbreviated as *p-app*, that is hybridized with an e-book containing poetry, or *po-book*. Thus, the medium resulting from such process is a form of *hybrimedia*, insofar it contains and fusion certain characteristics of one of these media and other features from the other medium. Nowadays, everything (social actors, authors, characters, readers, media, etc.) are being contaminated by Corona vírus, which is building an emergent *viral reality/viral society*. Such new social paradigm includes, among other things: *viral economies, technologies and ecologies; viral policies, politics, politicians and powers*; and also *viral discourses, cultures and arts*. In this context, *viral sociological poetry* is a new poetic genre, which is disseminated through digital methods and *hybrimedia*. E.g. via desktop or portable apps and ebooks, such as *p-apps* mixed with *po-books*, which belong to the broader genre of *HR-apps*, as they use *hybrid reality*, meaning an aggregation of “real”, virtual, augmented and mixed realities.

CCS CONCEPTS

• Applied computing • Arts and humanities

KEYWORDS

Pessoa Effect, digital heteronyms, *p-app*, *po-book*, viral society, sociological poetry, hybrid reality

1 PROJECT: PESSOA EFFECT USING VIRAL SOCIOLOGICAL POETRY

Several authors discuss the need to suggest new solutions within the hypermedia arena, such as those linked to the Semantic Web or Web 3.0 and the intensive and extensive use of ontologies in their implementation [15]. Some others debate the possibility and the probabilities of taking a further step, e.g. proposing unprecedented types of media, even beyond transmedia. This text deals with one of these augmented technologies. Concretely, by presenting the

project *Pessoa Effect within Viral Society*, which uses *hybrimedia* art works, in particular *viral sociological poetry*. This is a poetic genre that uses poems to sociologically depict the dramatic social and cultural situation caused by Corona virus pandemic. For such aim, viral sociological poetry hybridizes text with other media, such as videos, animation, etc., into the above-mentioned resulting medium called *hybrimedia*.

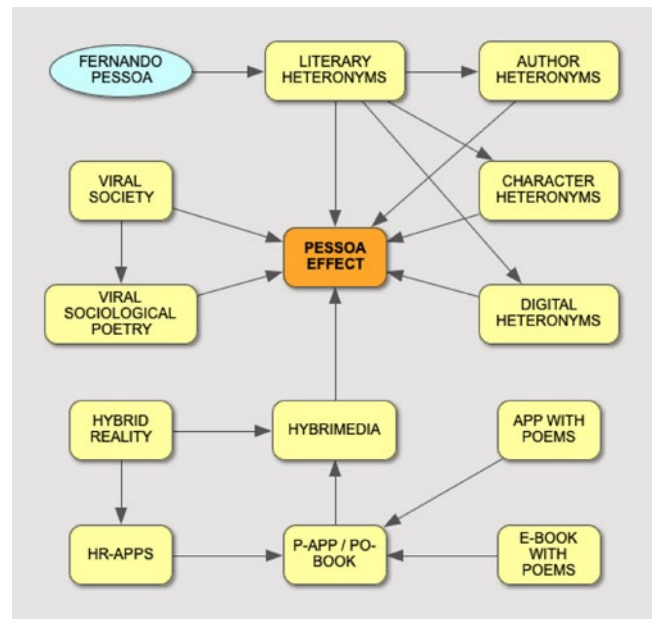


Figure 1 Pessoa Effect project’s main concepts

2 METHOD: PESSOA EFFECT

Pessoa Effect signifies a communicative dispositif used within digital social networks, blogs, websites and other locations at cyberspace and cybertime. It is a mode of unfolding the *social personality of an author*, be it a social scientist, a writer, a visual arts artist or any other author. Fernando Pessoa constructed several literary heteronyms. In the network society, it is possible to build *digital heteronyms*, through the following strategies, among others:

- Via e-mails, social networks, blogs, sites, wikis: an internet user may open several e-mails addresses or sign several digital social networks accounts, and assume

himself as a different *social actor* in each e-mail or social network. Or he can act and write as a singular *social author* on each blog, site or wiki.

- Through hybridmedia: as noted supra, hybridmedia is media that hybridizes other media. In this perspective, a seminal author may produce not only *heteronyms of authors*, but also *heteronyms of characters*, by using different *hybrid writing styles and / or languages*. For example, a user chooses to deploy an ‘author heteronym’, hybridized with a ‘character heteronym’, via hybridmedia. In other words: a post in social media written by an author working as an ‘author heteronym’, may comment a newspaper’s interview and a photo of the interviewed (an instance of a ‘character heteronym’). While doing this, such author playing as an author heteronym, transforms the *originary* (or initial) content or medium resident in that newspaper, into an *original* and final meaning or medium, in this way hybridized through that social network interaction. Such characters can be ordinary people, like those anonymous in pictures of famous painters who tell stories (that is, the *known unknown people*). See an example of this case in Figure 8. Or be famous characters in History, but containing an often hidden dimension (that is, the *unknown known people*).

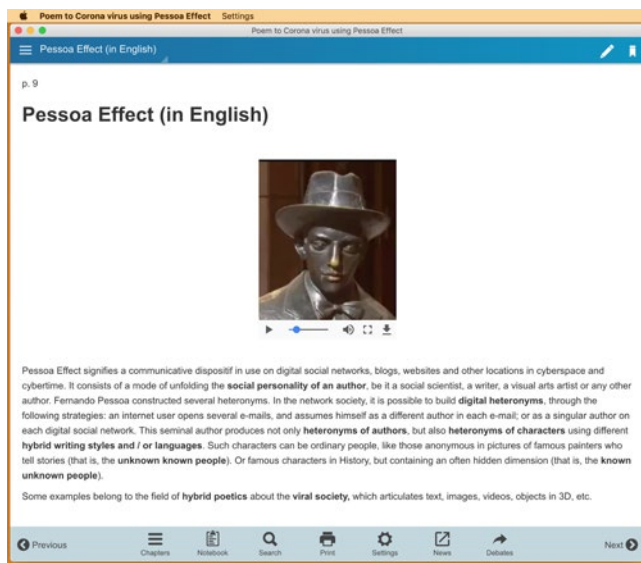


Figure 2 Pessoa Effect explained by Pessoa himself in the p-app / po-book

Pessoa Effect, being a strategy of content and media hybridization, may be studied from an emerging philosophy, *Hybridology*. This is a theoretical reflection and a practice as regards hybrid entities, which today dominate, or at least predominate, in our both locally globalized and globally localized planet.

In particular, *viral sociological poetry* is a new hybrid poetic genre which is disseminated through digital methods and *hybrimedia*, within the new social conjuncture derived from the Covid-19 pandemia. This paper presents below a specific *viral sociological poem*, written as soon as 7 mars 2020.

All genres of media are now contaminated by Covid-19. This is an unprecedented reality that we must consider seriously as well

inside the media arena. Thus, the present text aims to suggest a contribution in this direction, by articulating and hybridizing the emerging *viral media* with the novel *viral reality*. In fact, the whole contemporary society is being contaminated by Corona virus, which is building a rising *viral society*. Such unprecedented social paradigm in discussed with more detail in sections 5 and 7.

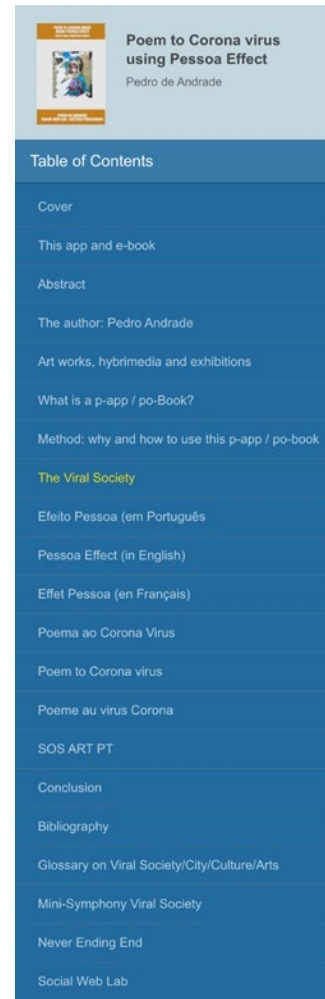


Figure 3 Viral Society in the p-app / po-book’s Table of Contents

This work in progress continues some previous works on arts articulated with hybridmedia and with a sociology of communication [1-7].

3 MEDIA: HOW TO MAKE A ‘P-APP’ / ‘PO-BOOK’

One possible way to transform the contemporary media arena, into a post-viral media within a post-viral society, is using hybridmedia. An hybridmedia process transforms initial or *originary media*, into hopefully innovative final media, which may be *original media*, that is, whose nature is different from the initial media. An illustration

of an hybrimedia work is an app including poems as its main objective, which is named *p-app*. Similarly, an e-book aiming to show poetry, more importantly than including other media, is a *po-book*. A second level of fusion consists of a hybridization of a p-app and a po-book. The medium resulting from such two-level hybrid process contains some characteristics of each of the several media involved.

This may be made, for instance, via desktop apps and portable apps, called *HRapps*, as they use *hybrid reality*, which is defined as a mode of reality that aggregates “real”, virtual, augmented and mixed realities.

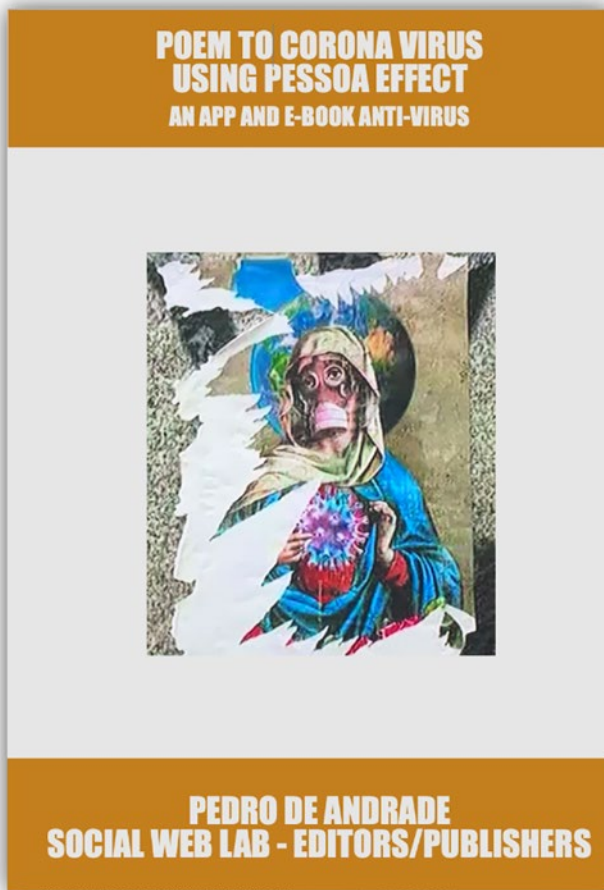


Figure 4 p-app / po-book's cover

In sum, the work here suggested is not just an app (including windows, menus, buttons, etc.) or only an e-book (e.g. featuring searches, bookmarking pages, highlighting text, note taking, exporting to an external file), but a fusion of both, that are mixed and hybridized in their characteristics.

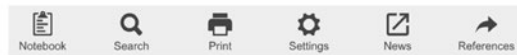
Specifically, within the actual work, the hybrimedia process functions in this manner: the *originary media* are texts (sociological, journalistic); images on Covid-19 pandemia; videos and animations showing Fernando Pessoa explaining what 'Pessoa Effect' is; a character from a painting declaiming a poem; a 'mini-symphony' on Viral Society. Such process produces an innovative or *original media*, a p-app / po-book.

HOW TO USE THIS P-APP / PO-BOOK:

Specific instructions on how to do the above mentioned actions, are explained via clear **instructions** and tips inside this p-app / po-book.

You may use the following buttons below in the page, in order to:

- **zoom on media** used in the p-app / po-book, to see more details;
- use the **notebook** to take notes, and see lists of pages bookmarked and words highlighted;
- **search** the whole p-app / po-book or just a chapter;
- **print**;
- define **settings** (font size and styling, auto-adjust line height, toggle fullscreen view, page view, page animation, interface language).
- read **news** within an author's or institution's site, or any other content within the Internet.
- consult **bibliographic references**.



In the right superior corner, you find the following two buttons, the first one for taking **notes**, and the second one to **bookmark** pages.



If you select a word, you can use the following buttons, in order to:

- **copy** to the clipboard.
- text to **speech** (only supported in the mobile versions iOS and Android).
- search in **Wikipedia**.
- search in **Google**.
- write **notes**.
- **highlight** words.



Figure 5 How to use a p-app / po-book

As for the images of this p-app / po-book, some show everyday social scenes, cultural events and arts, produced under Covid-19 confinement. These were taken while the author was limited to his home space and time, at Lisbon, since March 2020, or later until July 2020. They are mostly images obtained via an iPhone from international and Portuguese TV news, concretely a selection from pictures took the 8 april 2020. This was a sort of *sociological and hybrimedia day* in the present new *viral life and society*, which will never be the same again, but hopefully will emerge as more conscious and respectful for the Others lives, that matter. Other photos were taken at Lisbon and at Fuseta, in the South of Portugal.

In sum, inside such hybrid media, the very possible actions and interactions are various and often mixed. It is feasible, at the same time or within a multiple-way flow, to read, comment, dialog and even re-write the contents of an author's poetry. A *p-app / po-book* is then an alternative mode of production, publication and dissemination / presenting poetry.

This specific p-app / po-book is the first one of its *genre*, and is available in the following *interactive formats*: *Mac and Windows desktop apps*; *e-pub* consultable via some e-pub reader: Calibre, etc.

Please note that Mac and Windows apps are the best options to get the *full interactivity* explained here for a p-app / po-book. Interactivity and other features vary according to the *different epub readers's features*. E. g. when using Calibre (download it free at Calibre's site <https://calibre-ebook.com>), go to Preferences to choose the best ways to view and use it in your computer.

If you want to interact with a *mobile app*, in the Android and/or iOS formats, please contact the author at pjoandrade@gmail.com.

Non interactive formats (.mov, .pdf) can also be used.

The present p-app / po-book is in its 1st version., and other versions may be published in the future. Which means that p-apps / po-books may work as a *palimpsest*: at each moment, the reader may read the same app / book, but (s)he will cope with different content and media.

4 USABILITY: WHY AND HOW ACTIVATE A P-APP/PO-BOOK

In short, it is possible to use this *interactive p-app / po-book* for:

- *Reading*, by: changing *interface languages* (Português, Espanhol, Français, Italiano, English, Deutsch, Nederlands, Svenska, Norsk, Russian, Polsk, Român, Magyar, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, Turkish, etc.); *highlighting* text; *bookmarking* pages; *search* inside a p-app / po-book chapter or the entire p-app / po-book; *Google search* for different kinds of information and sources; *Wikipedia search* for words' definitions or explanations.
- *Writing*, through: *note-taking*; *aggregating* notes, bookmarks and highlights into a PDF; *copying* words to the clipboard and paste to a Word document.

For more details, see Figure 5.

5 CONTENT: VIRAL POETRY THEMES IN VIRAL SOCIETY

Corona virus pandemia has had a huge impact in the first 2020 months, on our contemporary societies and cultures, and it seems this dramatic situation will continue in the medium or long term.

Within such present conjuncture, *Viral Society* may be an emergent social paradigm, caused partly by Covid-19, and defined by the following characteristics, among others:

- *viral economies and technologies*, based on capitalism's global weaknesses and economic crises, caused not only by computer viruses, but also and increasingly, by biological viruses.
- *viral policies and politicians*, for example the possibility that certain states, institutions, organizations, associations, or other social agents, use various types of viruses as weapons of threat, aggression or surveillance, local or global.
- *viral cultures and cults*, that is, modes of exercising science and the arts, or other knowledge and leisure, through virulent strategies. These strategies are based on the idea that the more followers and / or friends (or, in certain cases, the more enemies) a cultural or cultural user gathers within cyberspace, the more cultural and cultural virulent value that individual or collective user accumulates and / or distributes across the social fabric.

For instance, new 'social poetics' emerge at the urban fabric, such as the message 'welcome back' from confinement, written at the entrance of mall Amoreiras Shopping Center, et Lisbon, in July 2020 (see Figure 6). In this city public space, unprecedented urban circulation rules were pasted on the floor, inside billboards, and in shops windows (Cf. Fig. 7). Moreover, at holidays sites, at a tour-

istic town, Fusetas (South of Portugal, July 2020), warnings to the mandatory use of masks at a café (Figure 8, left side) and several other communicative regulatory texts and images, inaugurate novel social and cultural behaviours under the still permanent threat of Covid-19.

Some other recent works reflect on this emergent phenomenon, via various perspectives: [11], [14], [18].

Before such unexpected process, several authors underlined the importance of urban cultures articulated with new media, e.g. the relevance of *urban public art*: [8], [9], [10], [12]. For that reflection, it is also paramount to use innovative scientific tools such as *Visual Sociology* [13], inventive high-tech instruments such as *semantic web technologies* [15] and creative artistic methods like *ecological aesthetics* [17].



Figure 6 New social poetics at urban fabric: 'welcome back' from confinement (Amoreiras mall, Lisbon, July 2020)

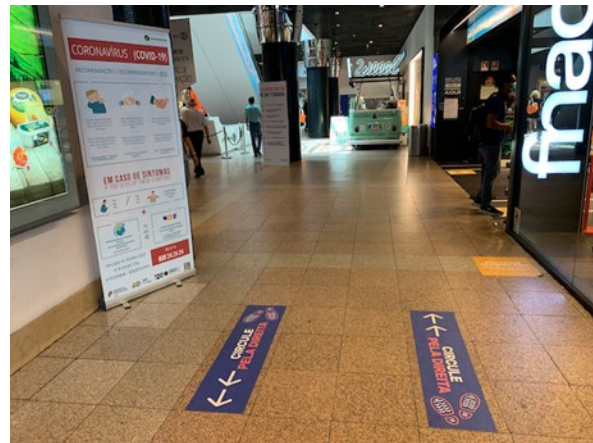


Figure 7 Unprecedented circulation rules for pedestrians at the city (Amoreiras Shopping Center, Lisbon, July 2020)



Figura 8 Warning to the mandatory use of masks at a café in a touristic town, Fuseta, South of Portugal, July 2020

In present viral times, one way to resist and fight back to Corona virus is via the broader field of *hybrid poetics* about *viral society*. Hybrid poetics may articulate text, images, videos, objects in 3D, augmented reality, Internet of Things, etc. *Viral Sociological Poetry* means a genre of poems written about social issues, within the context of a pandemia, such as Covid-19 virus.

The first hybrid poetic text written in this direction is shown below, in its original Portuguese version and in its English translation, and an *augmented interactive* instance of this poem, translated also in French, is articulated with other media. As explained above, such interactive work is available via an actual *p-app and po-book*. Its version 1.0 gathers text, images, videos and several modes of hybrimedia interaction. Next versions will implement new configurations of hybrimedia.

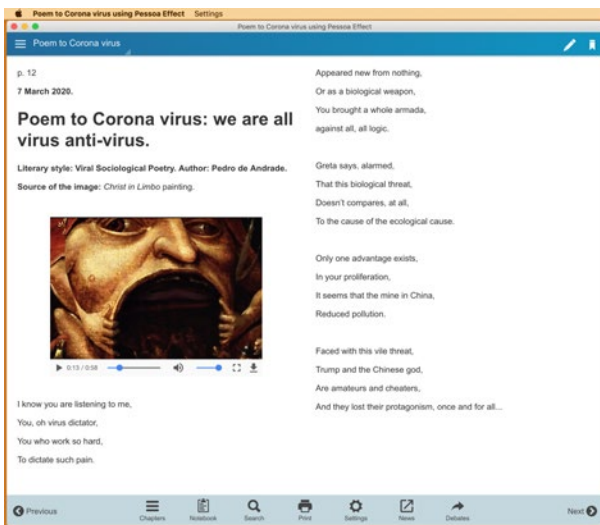


Figure 9 Pessoa Effect activation via a character in *Christ in Limbo* painting, declaiming Viral Sociological Poetry written in 7/3/2020

Título: *Poema ao Corona Virus; somos todos vírus anti-vírus*

Estilo literário: Poesia Sociológica Viral.

Autor: Pedro de Andrade. Data: 2020.3.7.

Sei que me escutas,
Tu, ó vírus ditador
Tu que tanto labutas
Para ditar tamanha dor

Surgiste novo do nada
Ou de arma biológica
Trouxeste toda uma armada
Contra toda, toda a lógica

A Greta diz, alarmada
Que esta ameaça biológica
Não se compara nada, nada
À causa da causa ecológica

Só uma vantagem há
Na tua proliferação
Parece que na mina da China
Diminuiu a poluição

Diante desta vil ameaça
O Trump e o deus chinês
São amadores e uma trapaça
Perderam o protagonismo, de vez...¹

6 RESISTANCE: SOS ARTE PT SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Viral society is the latest update to the network society, and it even seems to appear as *a new society paradigm*. This is still an obscure and inconclusive process. If we want to follow such unsuspected, disturbing and radical, but also *dazzling, changes*, it is necessary to

1 Title: *Poem to Corona virus: we are all virus anti-virus*.
Literary style: Viral Sociological Poetry.
Author: Pedro de Andrade. Date: 7 March 2020.

I know you are listening to me,
You, oh virus dictator,
You who work so hard,
To dictate such pain.

Appeared new from nothing,
Or as a biological weapon,
You brought a whole armada,
against all, all logic.

Greta says, alarmed,
That this biological threat,
Doesn't compares, at all,
To the cause of the ecological cause.

Only one advantage exists,
In your proliferation,
It seems that the mine in China,
Reduced pollution.

Faced with this vile threat,
Trump and the Chinese god,
Are amateurs and cheaters,
And they lost their protagonism, once and for all...

have an *open intelligence* and a *fine imagination*. Therefore, what has been presented here is just the top of the iceberg, and a possible tip on its future developments. Among other resistance initiatives, we must *not stop making poetry*, articulating it with the present virulent society and culture, but also with *new interactive media*. Only then can we stay afloat for the next flood.

Another way to fight Corona virus is through participation in social, professional and cultural movements. Recently, in March 2020, the SOS ARTE PT movement, in which the author of this paper is one of the co-founders, published the following *Manifesto* at Lisbon:

Following several exchanges of messages, developed by artists, designers, curators, producers and cultural managers, through a WhatsApp group, as well as online meetings on the Zoom.us platform, since March 22, it was decided to launch a resistance movement to the more perverse effects of the economic, social and cultural crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, with special emphasis on the vast universe of so-called visual arts. This movement, called SOS ARTE PT, will become a cultural and professional association, as soon as circumstances allow it. Some subjects are now urgent, but the challenges will be much more prolonged, and this is the reason why a wide congregation of efforts to defend the artistic culture in our country and in the world is justified [16].

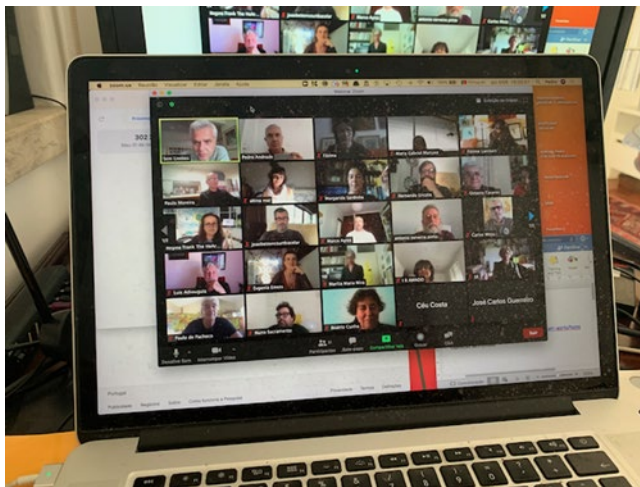


Figure 10 First virtual art exhibition in Portugal during the Covid-19 pandemia: expo *Without Limits'* opening, at Zoom, 2020/6/4, curated by SOS ART PT association

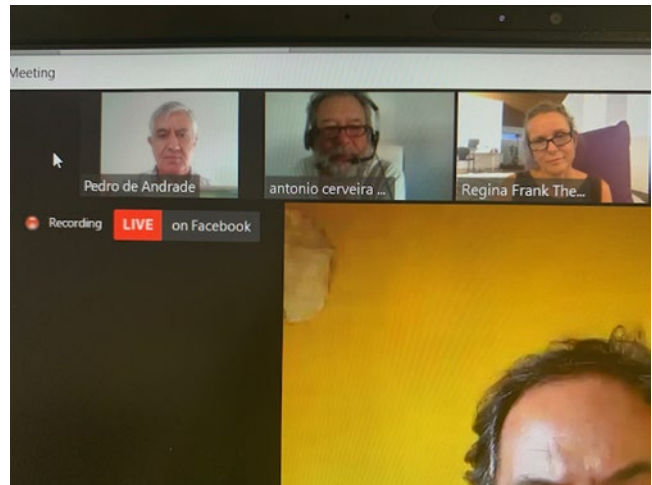


Figure 11 Virtual Expo *Without Limits'* opening, at Zoom, 2020/8/4, curated by SOS ART PT association

Specifically, the *purposes* of such socio-cultural and political movement include a set of actions aimed at mitigating the effects of the crisis, within activities in the field of visual arts and related sectors, such as the creation of an Emergency Fund and a set of 'Protection Circles'. Other actions include the organization and curation of virtual and presentational art exhibitions (see Figures 10-14).

In sum, hopefully this virus, instead of making us feel more alone via social distancing or confinement, may, on the contrary, help us to find new solutions for the transformation of our society and culture. In other words, if this is an unprecedented dramatic situation, it is also a unique opportunity for becoming less solitary with ourselves, and more solidary with others and the Other.



Figure 12 p-app / po-book *Poem to Corona Virus using Pessoa Effect* exhibited within presentational expo *Without Limits* at Forum da Maia art gallery, 2020.9.25

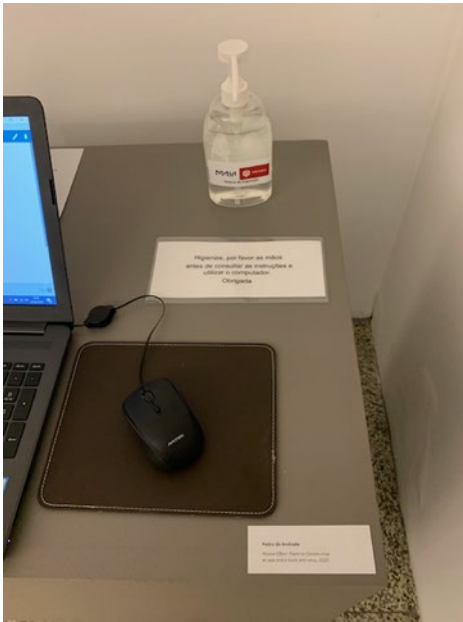


Figure 13 Art exhibition in the pandemic age defined by present 'Viral Society'

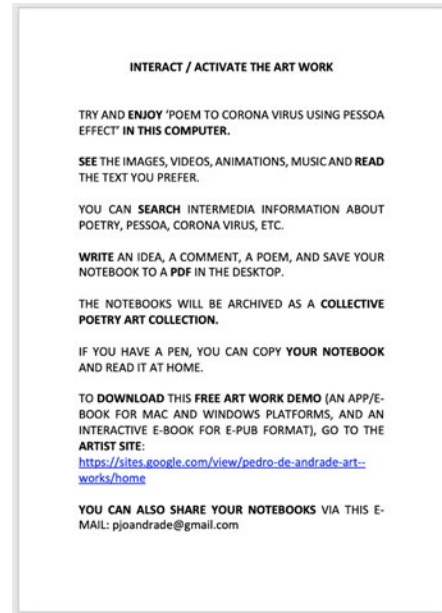


Figure 14 Quick Help provided at the expo, for the p-app / po-book

7 CONCLUSION: FOR A COLLECTIVE VIRAL ART COLLECTION

Some of the main purposes of the *Poem to Corona virus* art work are to contribute to a *Collective Viral Art Collection* and to a *History and Sociology of Viral Arts*, that is being organized by SOS.ART.PT movement (see Figure 15). Other p-app / po-books will be created in the area of Viral Sociological Poetry, gathering dialogically ideas and sensations with users of different origins and profiles. Some examples on such hybridization of scientific, technological and artistic content are glossaries and ontologies of concepts (see the next examples of the main ideas within this text) and experimental works in diverse artistic arenas, such as the *Mini-Symphony Viral Society*, here presented (see Figure 16).

7.1 HYBRIMEDIA

This is a recent genre of new media which transforms originary media into original media. *Originary media* are native media, those that are present in the beginning of a new media process. E.g. an interview in a newspaper and the respective photo of an interviewed. The hybrimedia process transforms these initial or originary media, into innovative final media, named *original media*, whose nature is different from originary media. For instance, a post in social media which comments that interview and photo, and by this way it transforms the originary content into original meanings. Second illustration: an app including poems, which is abbreviated as p-app, may be hybridised with an e-book containing poetry, or po-book. Thus, the medium resulting from this process contains certain characteristics of one of these media and other features of the other medium.

7.2 P-APP

A p-app is an interactive app that includes mainly poetry. Therefore, it is possible to interact with the content of a poem and its author, through: changing interface languages; do searches in the app text, at Internet or Google; highlight words; bookmark pages; copy words and write and aggregate notes, in order to export them to a text app, etc. Some *p-apps* include *viral sociological poetry*.

7.3 PESSOA EFFECT

Pessoa Effect signifies a communicative dispositive in use on digital social networks, blogs, websites and other locations in cyberspace and cybertime. It consists of a mode of unfolding the *social personality of an author*, e.g. a social scientist, a writer, a visual arts artist or any other author.

7.4 PO-BOOK

A po-book is an alternative mode of production, dissemination and presentation of poetry. As for its form, it consists of an *interactive e-book*, where it is possible to read, comment, dialog and even rewrite the contents of an author's poetry. In what regards its content, the possibilities are endless, one of each is *viral sociological poetry*.

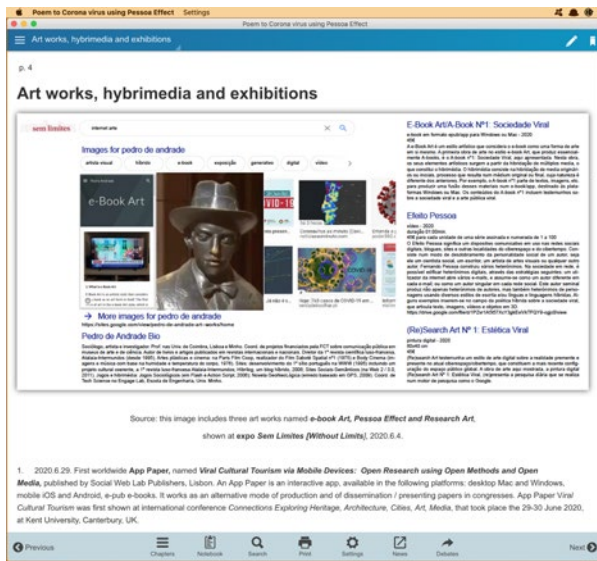


Figure 15 A Collective Viral Art Collection via SOS.ART.PT exhibitions

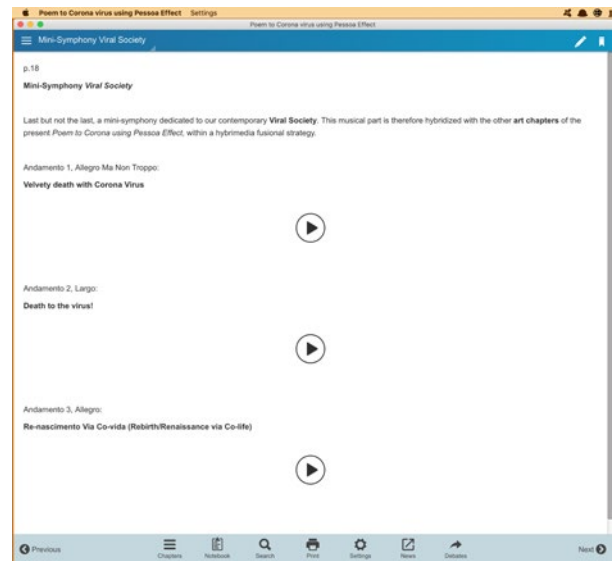


Figure 16 Mini-Symphony to Viral Society

7.5 VIRAL CULTURE

Set of cultural activities carried out in the public space conditioned by the attributes of the viral society, in which culture is included. In fact, one of the characteristics of viral culture is the following: due to social confinement, many cultural stakeholders emigrated to cyberspace and cybertime, to start a new phase of their careers there, through the production and dissemination, exclusive or partial, of cultural works and events on line.

7.6 VIRAL SOCIETY

Society paradigm defined by societal processes never seen before, such as: *viral economies and technologies*, confined not only by computer viruses, but also and increasingly by biological viruses; *viral policies and politicians*, using viruses as weapons, or for surveillance; *viral cultures and cults*, that is, ways of exercising science and the arts, or other knowledge and leisure, through virulent strategies.

7.7 VIRAL SOCIOLOGICAL POETRY

It is a poetry genre where its main content is of sociological nature, often articulated with other domains or issues, and about virus as a social threat, e.g. the Corona virus.

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