The languages of Typeface Design in Portugal

As linguagens do Design Tipográfico em Portugal

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Abstract

This paper addresses the evolution of Letter and Typeface Design in Portugal, walking through the genesis of letter painters and graphic artists up to the contemporary typeface designers, tracing influences and characteristics that may contribute to a better understanding and lead to the further development of an emerging Typographic Culture in Portugal. Morphological, stylistic, as well as cultural and social relationships are investigated, in an attempt to obtain core indicators that will allow to understand the influences that ancient visual vocabulary, material and techniques had on the innovation of contemporary digital Typography. Since Typography is a structural component within Communication Design, this research aims to understand better the Typeface Design in Portugal, its roots and extensions, looking for variables that may explain the idiosyncrasies and reputation of their creations. This study is being developed as part of a PhD thesis in the Research Institute for Design, Media and Culture (ID+) of the University of Aveiro in Portugal (UA) and is supported by *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (FCT) and Porto Polytechnic Institute (IPP).

Key words: calligraphy, typography, typeface design, Portugal.

Resumo

Este artigo aborda a evolução do Design Tipográfico em Portugal, passando pela gênese do manifesto dos pintores e artistas gráficos até design tipográfico contemporâneo, traçando influências e características que podem contribuir para um melhor entendimento e levar ao desenvolvimento de uma emergente cultura tipográfica em Portugal. Relações morfológicas, estilísticas, bem como cultural e social são investigados, em uma tentativa de obter indicadores de base que permitirão compreender as influências que os antigos vocabulários visuais, materiais e técnicas tiveram sobre a inovação da Tipografia digital contemporânea. Partindo da Tipografia como um componente estrutural dentro de Design de Comunicação, esta pesquisa tem como objetivo compreender melhor o design tipográfico de Portugal, as suas raízes e extensões, olhando para as variáveis que podem explicar as idiossincrasias e a reputação de suas criações. Este estudo está sendo desenvolvido como parte de uma tese de doutoramento no Instituto de Investigação em Design, Media e Cultura (ID+) da Universidade de Aveiro em Portugal (UA) e é apoiado pela Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT) e Instituto Politécnico do Porto (IPP).

Palavras-chave: caligrafia, tipografia, design tipográfico, Portugal.

Before print

Before the invention of moveable typefaces and the printing press, literacy, scholar wisdom, religious beliefs, jurisprudence, and in a general sense, any written communication, were based on manuscripts. Medieval monks working in many clerical centres took care of the arduous task of copying, and sometimes translating, texts. For quite a long period, monks were also in charge of writing down significant documents related to state issues such as sovereignty, feudal rights, donations, peace treaties, among others.

In the early Middle Ages, some manuscripts were profusely decorated and illuminated, often embellished with initial letters used to mark the beginning of chapters. The production of such books required several artistic and technical skills, from the preparation of the parchment to the choice and usage of the adequate pens, the preparation of inks, binding and finishing, tasks usually split among several craftsman. Regional calligraphic skills were transmitted from monk to monk – or imposed by a monarch, such as Charlemagne, who imposed the *Caroline Minuscule*.

In the Middle Ages, Portugal had *scriptoria* in monasteries such as Mosteiro do Lorvão (9th century), the Cistercian Abbey of Alcobaça (1248 or 1251) and the Monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra (1131). The surviving manuscripts from the Abbey of Alcobaça are preserved today in the National Library and also in the National Archives Torre do Tombo in Lisbon. The surviving manuscripts of Santa Cruz de Coimbra are kept in the Biblioteca Municipal do Porto. A copy of *Vetus Testamentum Liber quaestionum*, authored by Isidore of Seville, in the 12th century is one of the oldest manuscripts kept in Portugal. It was written in Visigothic Script (an Iberian calligraphic script used between the 7th and 12th centuries), has the last folio written with Carolingian letters. According to Duarte (2008) and Heitlinger (2010), the elimination of Visigothic Script was due to the increasing scope of the Carolingian calligraphy and with the forced abandonment of the Mozarabic liturgy in the emergent kingdom of Portugal.

Beyond manuscript production related to religion and clerical matters, other significant calligraphic activities were developed in the royal chancery. In Portugal, as in many other European kingdoms, we had also a continuous production of secular documents, notarial and commercial records, *foral* documents (declaration of feudal rights), among others, which were executed by *tabeliões* (notaries) and scribes hired for this purpose. The king, for example, had a *Scribe of Purity*, title given in the 13th century to a scribe responsible for the public documents issued in the king's name.

Between the 12th and 15th centuries we can find many examples of professional calligraphy in Portugal. However, the first treatise where the rules of calligraphy are presented and exemplified appears quite late: *Exemplares de Diversas Sortes de Letras*, published by the hands of Manuel Barata, in 1572. For the first time the intent of establishing a Portuguese calligraphic style appears which, according to Duarte (2008, p. 103), expresses "the desire (of Barata) to provide a calligraphic style that reveals the personality of his country."

Nova Escola para Aprender a Ler, Escrever e Contar, printed in 1722, a treatise written by Manoel de Andrade Figuere-

Figure 1. *Vetus Testamentum Liber quaestionum* (12th century) by Isidore of Seville.

do, establishes again a Portuguese calligraphic letter and demonstrates the author's analytical mind and pedagogical intentions. It was the first manual that provided a systematic way of teaching and learning. Duarte (2008) gave his definition of Andrade's Portuguese calligraphy:

"French and English calligraphies, which were also used in Portugal, did not carry our linguistic dimension as the (script called) *Cursiva Liberal*, where the generous counters shows a light tonality, open and broad as the Portuguese phonetic. Thus, it is a practical and accessible calligraphy like the direct phonetic, consistent and without ambiguity that characterizes the Portuguese language."

In his treatise, Andrade showed other examples of letters – Roman, Gothic and Antique, proving that he was (as all his colleagues in Spain, Germany and other countries were) aware of many national scripts. We question ourselves if these treatises were just teaching manuals or also fine examples to promote their authors as professional calligraphers. We also verify that Calligraphy as a professional activity brought foreigners scribes to Portugal, such as the Spanish calligrapher Marcos Paz y de las Ruelas, who was active in the second decade of the 18th century in the royal court of Lisbon where he taught Calligraphy to the infants of king João V.

The treatise *Nova Arte de Escrever,* 1794, by Jacinto de Araújo, shows the abandonment of Figueiredo's Portuguese calligraphy and the implementation of the English Roundhand calligraphy in Portugal. In his book he created a terminology for Calligraphy. For him, French calligraphy
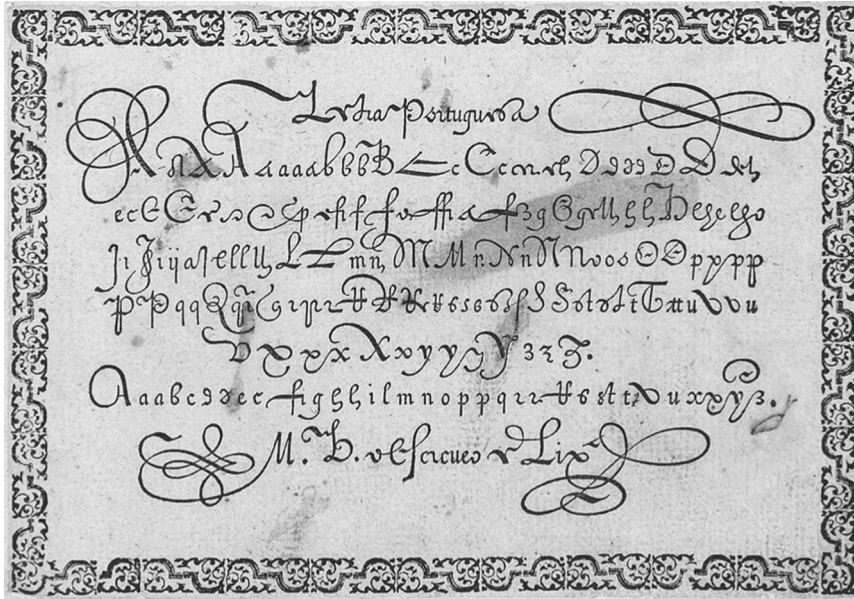
Figure 2. *Letra Portuguesa* in *Exemplares de Diversas Sortes de Letras* (1572) by Manuel Barata.

was more virtuous (but also more exaggerated) than the English calligraphy – the one which had became a kind of general standard in Europe.

In the next century, Joaquim José Ventura da Silva, was inspired by the work of Andrade de Figueiredo and followed his methods, although introducing an original touch. He published *Regras methodicas para se aprender a escrever os caracteres das letras ingleza, portugueza, aldina, romana, gótica-itálica e gótica-germanica acompanhadas de hum tratado complecto de arithmética*, in 1819.

Eventually, Calligraphy began to loose the tradition of being a virtuous practice to become a more mechanic, operational and functional style. Calligraphy continued active in Portugal until the introduction of the typewriter machines that, slowly, contributed to forget the manual methods of registry and became the standard of writing for administrative usage.

Printing until the 18th century

With the invention of movable type, Typography replaced the scribe's manual art. In Europe, Johannes Gutenberg invented printing with movable metal types, around 1450. At that time, the period of incunabula, printing and publishing books was done under the same roof, and the punchcutter was often the designer as well. Jewish and German printers introduced Typography in Portugal by the end of the 15th century. Currently, 1487 is thought to be the year when the first book was printed in Portugal – *Pentateuco* (Pentateuch) – set with Hebrew characters, by Samuel Gacon, a Jew established in Faro.

The printed book was an object of art and culture. But it was also an ideological tool, definitely raising the interest of the dominant class in Portugal. As revealed in Pacheco (2005), the overseas expansionist determination of monarchs João II and Manuel I, meant a shift in strategy towards modernity and contributed in a decisive way to create a new framework of political, social and cultural relations. A new framework with an increasing importance

in the development of State Capitalism, and a growing interest in humanistic culture, understood to be the best opportunity for an approach to European art and culture.

Commercial, cultural and artistic relations were established with Italy, with northern Europe, Germany, Flanders, France and Spain. Despite those relationships, Portugal was unable to generate a stable printing industry. The weakness of the printing industry was due to high illiteracy levels, preventing the introduction of economically profiting printers and authors. The production was limited to clerical needs or to royal demands. All typographic material, typefaces, ornamental and decorative elements, but also the printing presses and paper, were imported.

Until the end of the 15th century, two typographical cultures dominated. Hebrew Typography was important, but was totally dismantled when Jews were forced to leave the country or convert to Catholicism. The typographers of German origin, who dominated the flourishing printing business in both Portugal and Spain, used Gothic *Rotunda* typefaces. We have to wait until 1550 to see Roman Renaissance typefaces being used in Portugal.

Konrad Haebler (1905), researcher of incunabula (1450-1500), found that 79% of the incunabula printed in all European countries were done with Gothic typefaces, while Roman typefaces had a share of just 19%.

The leading printers of the incunabula period in Portugal were the Jews Samuel Gacon and Elieser Toledano and (the mostly German) João Gherlinc, Nicolau da Saxónia and Valentim Fernandes. Fernandes was not only the printer of a Portuguese translation of the bestselling *Vita Christi* (1495), one of the most remarkable incunabula printed in Portugal, but also the printer who printed the new Laws of King Manuel I.

In the 16th century, arriving from Antwerp, Peter Craesbeeck (1572–1632), a disciple of Christophe Plantin and Balthasar Moretus, stands out as a composer and printer active in Lisbon. Due to his merits, he is appointed as Royal Printer. The French Miguel Deslandes (?–1703),

Figure 3. *Pentateuch* (1487) by Samuel Gacon.

also established in Lisbon, was famous for his vignettes and flourishes carved in copper.

The 17th and 18th centuries were marked by a decline of Typography in Portugal. The first metal typefaces produced in Portugal appeared only in 1732 by the French Jean Villeneuve, who had immigrated to Lisbon. He was the first to cast metal typefaces in Portugal, but we do not know if he cut punches in France or Portugal, or if he just brought them with him. Jean Villeneuve, and also Francisco Bartolozzi, arrived in Portugal, in 1732 and 1802 respectively. Bartolozzi was hired to foster the development of engraving, and to teach this technique. Motivation was stimulated by offering interesting sums to each student that graduated.

Until Villeneuve, typefaces as well as decorative vignettes used in books were imported from abroad. He was the first to argue that the import of typefaces to Portugal was not desirable. Villeneuve was so convincing that king João V decided to support typeface founding in Portugal and forbade importing typefaces from abroad.

In 1768, king José I disposed the creation of what would be the *Impressão Régia* (Royal Print) or *Régia Officina Typographica*, integrating the type founding workshop that Villeneuve had created. In 1802, Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, who had been commissioned to reform the Royal Press, hired the Italian Francisco Bartolozzi to reactivate the engraving class. National specialists tried to gather knowledge in foreign countries to expand the national production. As an example, in the late 18th century, Joaquim Carneiro da Silva joined the Royal Press coming from Italy where he learned engraving with Ludovico Sterni. To him we owe the engravings used for printing, as well as conducting the first school of engraving in Portugal. He taught engraving, geometric and typometric skills.

The printing shops active in the 18th century, especially in Lisbon and Porto, began to show a considerable dimension: more than one hundred (Pacheco, 2006).

Between the 18th and 19th centuries, some private printing shops should be highlighted: Typographia Rollandiana, Nevesiana, Nunesiana, Louisiana, Silviana, António Alvares Ribeiro in Porto, among others. João Francisco Rolland was one of the few influential printers and booksellers in Lisbon. Some other efforts have emerged in the field of typography, during the following centuries, but were insufficient to respond to the needs (Anselmo, 1997).

Between the 15th and early 18th centuries, printing was done using foreign resources, printing presses and typographers (Anselmo, 1997). A lot was imported, but very little was adopted and assimilated, and therefore we stayed without a typographical identity.

The 19th century and the mechanization of type

During the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century the medieval printing presses are replaced by printing machines. But cutting punches remains unchanged for centuries. A new energy source, steam power, completely modifies the traditional print medium. The introduction of colour, lithography and the mechanization gave a new life to visual communication. People are overwhelmed by the impact and the speed of the new printing techniques. There was less interest in aesthetic quality and in the traditional typographical skills of typesetters and printers, based on manual processes (Satué, 2002).

Parallel to book production, advertising begins to emerge with a more outspoken graphic language, leaving behind the formal rules of manual composition. Stimulated by new lithographic processes characters began to appear in gigantic sizes to produce a new visual impact. The large format poster was the principal medium for new typographical experiences. The presses had major technical improvements, allowing the expansion of print formats. Commercial artists who worked for the emerging advertising market drew the letters manually. These letters combined visual and decorative elements in a new kind of Typography, heavily influenced by the aesthetics of Victorian Art and Art Nouveau.

From the 19th century on, typefaces were created for advertising purposes, or displays. *Egyptian* typefaces appear, with geometric thick serifs; the first *Grotesque*, first only available in upper case, condensed and totally devoid of serifs; *Fat Face* typefaces, expanded, round and heavy; and *Ornamental* with shaded and arabesques with zoomorphic and floral characters. Alongside this exploding development of new typefaces, the newspaper industry appears, using a more classical approach to typography, searching for better legibility, readability and acceptance.

From the invention of Typography to Industrial Revolution, the working methods have little evolved because at that time all composing and printing work was manually done. Typography was a very reserved craft, which absorbed groups of artisans from various specialities, from
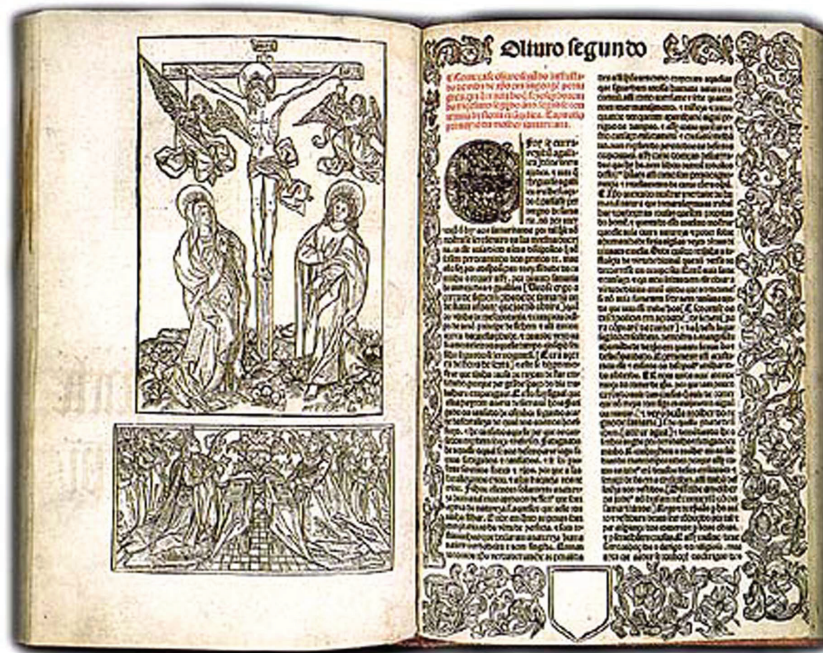
Figure 4. *Vita Christi* (1495) by Valentim Fernandes.

the punchcutter, through the composer, printer, bookbinder, and later photoengravers, etc.

Portugal, like most industrialized countries, despite a late and limited introduction, actually felt the technical developments and the current typographic aesthetics. The book market continues to enforce its rules, the new typefaces come among us with the relevance that advertising imposes, print media starts to evolve and to shape a public opinion that starts to get out of illiteracy and becomes more informed. Portugal, like most westernized countries, adopted the new typefaces.

In 1838, under Liberato Freire direction, the National Press (formerly Royal Press) showed their first type catalogue *Provas dos diversos typos, vinhetas e ornatos typographicos da Imprensa Nacional*. His successor, José Frederico Pereira Marecos had an important role in the modernization of the National Press. His several trips abroad to Paris, London, Brussels, and contact with the best printing houses gave a new impetus to the production of the National Press. Frederico Marecos, reported by Pacheco (2005), held a real diplomatic trip, which put Portugal on the map of the countries concerned and open to the printing industry. Proof of this are the awards that the National Press won in national and international exhibitions: London 1862, Porto 1865, Paris 1867, Vienna 1873, Philadelphia 1876, and under the direction of Venancio Deslandes (1878-1909), Paris 1878, Rio de Janeiro 1879, Paris in 1889 and 1900.

The National Press continued its work in the second half of the 19th century, but the craft of the printer began to give place to the industrial labour. At the end of the 19th century new technological developments emerged: Linotype and Monotype machinery came to revolutionize the speed of typesetting and typeface reuse. The need to conceive a machine that allowed an extraordinary increase of speed in composing type was motivated by the needs

of the newspaper industry. Typographers who saw their professional existence threatened by automatic machines protested against such developments.

From phototypesetting to the digital era

Portugal Futurista (1917) and later *Presença* (1927-1940) emerged as avant-garde publications. The typographical attitudes revealed a taste for mixing several typefaces, and the visual manifestations of text to be read and seen. In Portugal, the first decades of the 20th century witnessed strong social and political protest that led to the implantation of the Republic in 1910. The first half of the 20th century was marked by the rise of oppressive ideologies of the dictatorship and the censorship adopted by the *Estado Novo*, a political regime that sent into exile many intellectuals, politicians and artists. The Linotype and Monotype typesetting machines came to Portugal with the advent of the Republican regime, although many printers kept the traditional manual composition, until the arrival of phototypesetting. Lithography was well developed at this time changing the ways advertising could be done. The first advertising agencies came up, starting to produce posters to advertise movies, theatre and other cultural events. Graphic artists such as Stuart Carvalhais, Maria Keil, among many others, started to draw letters that sometimes are tangled with the figurative representations.

An influential person at that time was the Swiss Fred Kradolfer who introduced the taste of *New Typography* – sans serif, defined as Grotesque in Portugal. He revolutionized the visual language and pushed the development of graphic arts and advertising, in Portugal.

In 1944, after the Second World War, new communication requirements led to phototypesetting (Mandel, 2006). The metal used to cast traditional characters were re-

placed with transparent films resulting from photographic processes. Phototypesetting, obtained by projection of light through letters on a transparent disk; a lens system regulated the letter size, the result was fixed on paper or other photosensitive material.

The first two phototypesetters were the French "Photon" and the "Fotosetter" of Intertype. In a few years, phototypesetting machines replaced the Linotype and Monotype machines. In Portugal, phototypesetting gained importance only in the 1950s.

In the second half of the 20th century Portugal lived on the margins of avant-garde movements. The involvement in colonial wars limited the dissemination of new cultural expressions and conditioned the influence of new aesthetic concepts that were developing in Europe. Due to the restrictions of Portuguese social and cultural life, the *International Style* slowly established itself in Portugal. The legibility provided by the *New Typography* stimulated the development of visual identities and branding for large companies.

In the 60s, several advertising agencies begin to flourish. The graphic designer Sebastião Rodrigues gains reputation, because of the structured way that he applied all typefaces that were useful in his artwork, which made him a researcher and a perfectionist. He was responsible for the graphic design of *Almanaque* magazine, from 1959 to 1961, and designed the visual identity, posters, books and catalogues for Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

The social and cultural awareness for graphic arts and design begins to take shape among us. The teaching of graphic design in Portugal begins in the late 60s, and in the mid 70s was also established into public education. The Portuguese Association of Designers was founded in 1976.

On April 25, 1974, the world watches the fall of the longest dictatorship in Europe. Political messages in huge letters were painted on walls, sometimes using stencil techniques, and the use of photocopy was popular, being an inexpensive method to disseminate revolutionary messages.

In the 80s Portugal joined the European Economic Community (now European Union) and a new economic and social paradigms began. This period consolidated a democratic political system and reconnected the Portuguese culture to other European cultures. Another key factor was the opening of new markets and technological developments. Portuguese companies expand their business onto the international markets, while the domestic market was flooded with new products. Portugal sees a new wave of advertising and design agencies driven by the developments that digital technologies had brought. The Macintosh computer was available by that time, bringing a revolution to the world of graphic design and, in particular, to typeface design.

Original type designs in Portugal were, so far, little explored or non-existent. The specialized knowledge in typeface design never went beyond experiences with a limited set of characters used in titles or corporate identities, never resulting in a complete typeface technically and commercially viable. Probably the awareness of typeface design as an commercial activity would never had been considered, in part, because of some instability in technological products and processes that have changed

frequently, especially throughout the 20th century, but also because the effort needed to produce useful typefaces required technical knowledge and aesthetic maturation. Until then, little or nothing had been developed in Portugal.

The design of digital typefaces in Portugal

In the early 90s the teaching of typography in schools was promoted, specific subjects were created in universities, and a promising generation of type designers in Portugal first appeared.

Digital technology, computers and, later, the development of *Internet* has increased the access to information. The international *New Wave*, the experimental aesthetics of designers such as David Carson or Neville Brody influenced the development of fonts in Portugal. The first fonts of Mário Feliciano do not hide the influences and the first digital experiences reveal a taste for formal freedom enabled by technological developments. Launched his first font in 1994, but only in 2001 founded his own company Feliciano Type Foundry.

"I was affected strongly by David Carson, whom I was aware of since his early days at Surfer magazine. For years, Surfer was my favorite magazine. When Carson was hired to do RayGun magazine that was the thing! He was my biggest influence — even more so than Emigre, which also influenced me a lot. I was lucky to be able to experiment a lot at Surf Portugal magazine. Maybe I was able to do in a surf magazine what David Carson was doing in a rock magazine!

My work was influenced by worlds outside surfing as well: art, rock, and pop culture. This was when "fonts" came into my life. At the time, the only way to make any graphic design work that remotely looked like David Carson's was to design my own fonts — that's how it all started. Curiously I came to know Carson's work before I knew Neville Brody, let alone Erik Spiekermann or other famous typeface designers. This was the early 1990s [...]" (Feliciano, 2008).

Similar experimentations were part of the initial work of Dino dos Santos, another of our prestigious type designers who founded DSType, in 1994. Santos (2007) said in an interview to MyFonts how he began his adventure in type design:

"I'm a self-taught type designer; my education is in graphic design. I began designing typefaces in the early '90s because there weren't many typefaces available to us in those days, just the Macintosh system fonts and dry transfer sheets from Letraset and Mecanorma."

The extensive work of these designers associated with some media exposure and international recognition, influenced a new generation of type designers.

The digital typefaces can be subdivided into two broad functional categories: *display* fonts and *text* fonts. A display font favours presence and text fonts transparency.

Initially, the national creations don't deny the influence for more simplified typefaces, geometric, monolinear dis-

play fonts. The difficulty in finding information on methodologies for designing type took designers on a slow learning but fruitful curve. Specialized information on books was rare and the *Internet* was, perhaps, the best way to find the nonexistent methodological and technical information.

In a second phase, now with more information and practice, a devotion to the historical roots is noticed in the production of historical typefaces and revivals. Personalities like Manuel Pereira da Silva (1930-2008), typographer and researcher in type and typography, influenced some of our type designers to learn more from historical creations.

In the third stage, notwithstanding the market trend for custom fonts, for corporate identities and public and private institutions, new typographical creations have emerged, reflecting the development of type families or super-families for editorial purposes.

The Latin market has been one of the main consumers. In Portugal and Spain, for example, the demand for typefaces designed by Mário Feliciano and Dino dos Santos has been remarkable, in particular, for editorial typefaces.

As a result, for the first time, Portuguese newspapers (*O Jogo, Diário de Notícias, Expresso, A Bola; Diário Económico*) and abroad (*El Pais, Politiken; Adressenvisen; Manchester Evening News, The Lawyer, Estado de São Paulo, Libération, Le Figaro; Diário de S. Paulo*), bought fonts and ordered custom fonts for exclusive projects, publications and for corporate identities to Portuguese type designers.

Institutions acquired fonts for the design of documents such as Portuguese Passport, or to use them at public events, such as the "Expo '98" in Lisbon, "OFFF Oeiras" in 2009 or "Centenário da República" in 2010. These initiatives reflect the role of typography as a key differentiation element in communications.

Besides Mário Feliciano and Dino dos Santos, a new generation of type designers have started to appear such as Ricardo Santos (Vanarchiv), Hugo d'Alte, Susana Carvalho, Rúben Dias, Miguel Sousa, Rui Abreu (RType), Pedro Leal (DSType), Joel Santos, among others.

Various international awards recognize the quality and diversity of digital typefaces developed by Portuguese designers. Morgan (2003) a family of fonts designed by Mário Feliciano, won the TDC2 prize in 2003. Garda (2005), also by Feliciano, was included in the best typefaces of 2005 at Typographica.com. Calouste (2005), by Miguel Sousa, won the Certificate of Typographic Excellence by TDC2, in 2006 in the category of text families. It was developed as his final master project in Type Design at the University of Reading. Andrade Pro (2006) by Dino dos Santos won the Creative Review Type Design Awards as best revival. It is based on the work of Manoel Andrade de Figueiredo, a calligrapher from the 18th century. Ventura (2007) also designed by Dino dos Santos was awarded the Certificate of Typographic Excellence by TDC2 in 2008. It was designed has an homage to the work of Portuguese calligrapher Joaquim José Ventura da Silva. Lisboa (2007) by Ricardo Santos was originally designed for a Portuguese magazine in 2000. Ricardo developed dingbats based in symbols found in Lisbon. Orbe (2008) by Rui Abreu has been also awarded the Certificate of Typographic Excellence by TDC2, in 2009.

New market configurations emerge with the *Internet* and new distribution models begin to dominate the international business of typography.

Figure 5. *B-Sides* (1999. Vllg) by Mário Feliciano.
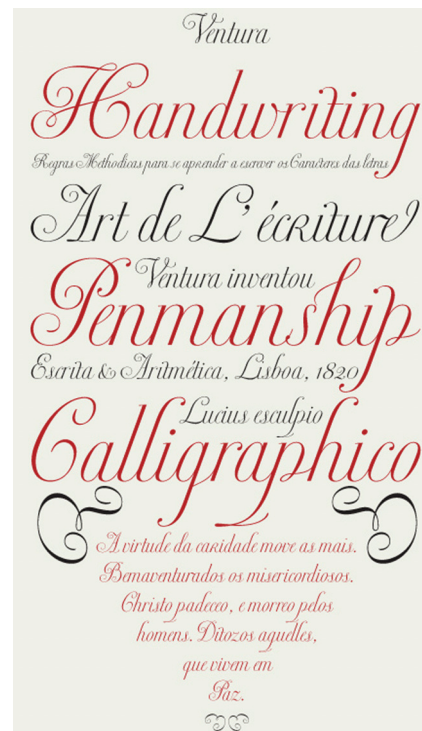
Figure 6. *Ventura* (2006) by Dino dos Santos.

Figure 7. *Expresso* (2006) by Mário Feliciano.

Figure 8. *Orbe* (2008) by Rui Abreu.

Fonts developed by Portuguese type designers start to be distributed and recommended in the main digital type foundries around the world (Adobe, T26, MyFonts, Village, Fontshop, MyFonts, Fountain Type, PSY/OPS, You-WorkForThem, Font Spring).

Today the market becomes more competitive and demanding. The digital type design activity appears progressively more autonomous and specialized skills are necessary to bring together not only the aesthetic concept, but also the technical production in terms of software implementation.

Specialization in type design continues to be made abroad (Chaccur and Amado, 2010). Hugo d'Alte and Susana Carvalho studied at KABK in The Hague, one of the most prestigious schools of type design. Miguel Sousa studied at the prestigious University of Reading and Ricardo Santos at EINA in Barcelona.

The ATypI (Association Internationale Typographique) congress in 2006, which took place at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Lisbon, was an important contribution to the awareness and development of typographic culture in our country. Until then, exhibitions, workshops, lectures and publications, mainly Portuguese, were scarce. In 2009, the School of Art and Design of Matosinhos (ESAD) organized for the first time a Post Graduate course in Digital Typography. In 2010, the School of Art and Design of Caldas da Rainha (ESAD.CR) held the first meeting on Typography Education in Portugal, helping to better understand the course guidelines and active discourses in various national higher education institutions. The Master in Typography at ESAD.CR, which is planned to start in 2010, may contribute to further expand the typographic culture and knowledge among us. Such initiatives demonstrate the growing interest in this subject and are gradually contributing to expand typographic culture in Portugal.

Conclusions

Portugal appeared in the international typographic landscape as a country without tradition. Its peripheral, geographical, political and cultural isolation did not allow the typography in general, and type design in particular, to be developed. However, conditions and opportunities were given to some foreign experts that came to Portugal.

We had no typographic culture that allowed us to build up and develop a typeface distinctly Portuguese. Most of originality lies in some calligraphic expressions. The Visigothic Script, used between the 7th until 12th centuries in the Iberian Peninsula, has its own characteristics and originality.

Several Gothic scripts were adopted in Portugal in the medieval period; specific Portuguese styles evolved, which were drawn on nautical maps, written in *foral* documents (letter of feudal city rights), in books of religious services and in various chronicles and state documents. We can detect some originality in the Portuguese designs of *Gotica Rotunda* letters. The *Rotunda* is the Gothic style prefered in Italy, Spain and Portugal, revealing wide and spaced letterforms, compared to the more condensed and angular German Gothic.

Typography with moveable type was totally dominated by foreign printers and imported technologies. Later, with the development of graphic techniques such as lithography, we again had an interesting period of certain originality, with masters like Stuart de Carvalhais that were skilled artist in the manual design of letterforms for advertising purposes. We can find some *Art Deco* style inspirations, but the accuracy and uniqueness of its drawings are worthy of reference.

The isolation of Portugal in the artistic, cultural and technological fields came to an end in 1974. In the field of typography and type design, the isolation was only abolished in the digital age. A group of typeface designers emerges, enhanced by digital technology and the *Internet*, which abolished borders and democratized access and information sharing.

The effort of the first Portuguese digital type designers, some researchers, teachers and schools have expanded the development of a young but growing typographic culture in Portugal. We are still very far from the typographic performance that countries with great tradition have, but it is undeniable the advances made in the last years.

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