

A CATURNA BY TAURINO ARAÚJO: A CRITICAL TREATISE

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Translator's Note

This English translation of Nelson Cerqueira's critical treatise is presented with the author's consent. The Portuguese word *caturna* has been retained throughout because its lexical rarity, material history, and semantic transformation constitute the central mechanism of both the poem and the critical argument.

Wherever verses from Taurino Araújo's *A Caturna* are quoted, the Portuguese original is preserved alongside a critical-literary English rendering. The aim is not merely semantic access, but the recreation, as far as English permits, of the poem's rhythm, compression, materiality, emotional force, and movement.

Deliberate grammatical compressions and lexical estrangements are preserved whenever they remain poetically viable in English. Where literal reproduction would turn poetic resistance into mere grammatical awkwardness, the rendering seeks equivalence through cadence, semantic tension, controlled estrangement, sound, and verbal pressure. Certain departures from literal syntax are therefore intentional.

Several local decisions follow this principle of critical-literary equivalence. Among them are "carry, make me last", "a step-poem rises over defeat", "the caturna calls me, teaches me — go", "mist and secrets, paths are made", "gaitered women, months of snow", "The path forges me as I go",

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“footsteps turn to word”, “The caturna’s sound makes verse flow”, “boots sambaing, my verses and fears”, “carqueja footprint rings a hymn”, “my word expands ahead”, “Serra do Caramulo steadies my trail”, “as furtive winds fly”, “My word walks, bold and alive; / writes its own way forward”, “world unfolds, step by step”, “let endless fields extend”, “another verse traced there”, “the sole of language”, and “language’s caturna engraves the poem”.

These formulations privilege cadence, verbal pressure, compression, movement, and poetic viability over mechanical syntactic correspondence. In such cases, ellipsis, apposition, lexical recasting, possessive compression, altered verbal structure, and rhythmic simplification are used to recreate in English something of the pressure, materiality, movement, and emotional force produced by the Portuguese original.

The capitalization of “Mother Tongue” is likewise deliberate, reinforcing the expression as a recurring poetic and symbolic presence rather than merely a descriptive phrase.

Likewise, expressions such as “the sole of language” may acquire additional resonance in English while remaining anchored in the material metaphor of the original. These specifically English choices are the responsibility of the translator and should not be attributed to the author of the critical treatise. The critical argument itself remains Nelson Cerqueira’s. The English rendering is not intended to replace the Portuguese text, but to accompany it for the international reader as a poem capable of living, sounding, and being critically read in another language.

Abstract

This article examines Taurino Araújo’s poem *A Caturna* as an epic-lyric, metalinguistic, and autobiographical ode to the Portuguese language. Structured in twenty-four numbered sections, the poem transforms the *caturna* — a rare word associated with an item worn on the body — into a dynamic metaphor for language as footwear, body, step, footprint, memory, and historical continuity. The analysis demonstrates how this image articulates territory, tradition, bodily experience, and poetic creation, connecting Portugal, the Serra do Caramulo, the Recôncavo, and Bahia without reducing the Brazilian voice to a passive extension of the Portuguese matrix. The article also examines the autobiographical dimension of the poem, in which personal trajectory, teaching, bodily wear, name, and posterity are transformed into a symbolic journey. The critical question arises from the poem itself; the references serve to broaden the horizon of its understanding. Rather than relativizing the work, this dialogue reaffirms the autonomy of *A Caturna* as a poetic monument of exceptional scope, in which word, body, history, Lusophony, identity, and permanence converge within a singular architecture capable of transforming individual experience into a reflection of universal and civilizational reach.

Keywords: Taurino Araújo; *A Caturna*; Portuguese language; autobiographical poetry; metalanguage; cultural memory.

Part I — A CATURNA AS A POETIC SYSTEM OF THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

1. The Nature of the Poem

A Caturna, by Taurino Araújo, is an epic-lyric, metalinguistic, and autobiographical ode to the Portuguese language, constructed as a journey on foot. The poem consists of twenty-four numbered sections, each formed by a quatrain, and transforms an object worn on the body—the *caturna*—into an instrument of memory, language, and civilizational continuity.

Taurino Araújo is a Brazilian lawyer, jurist, professor, poet, essayist, literary critic, visual artist, and researcher whose intellectual and artistic production is markedly interdisciplinary, bringing together language, law, history, anthropology, literature, aesthetics, and human experience.

In his work, the word rarely appears merely as a means of expression: it functions as matter, body, archive, image, and an instrument for interpreting the world.

This characteristic is crucial to understanding *A Caturna*, a poem in which the Portuguese language ceases to be merely an inherited language and becomes something worn, traversed, weathered, and reinscribed by the subject who uses it.

The poem's autobiographical dimension is also connected to the author's trajectory. Taurino Araújo presents himself as a writer situated between Bahia, Brazil, and the Lusophone world, articulating learned tradition, orality, teaching experience, historical consciousness, and a strong territorial identity. Thus, when the lyrical self-associates his voice with the Recôncavo, the Portuguese language, teaching, and the survival of his own name, the poem does not operate merely through an abstract persona. It constructs a recognizable authorial figure, though one poetically transfigured.

Araújo's poetry often begins with concrete objects, words, or situations to reach ontological and civilizational questions. In *A Caterna*, this procedure finds one of its most expansive manifestations: a rare word becomes a poetic system capable of bringing together body, language, territory, ancestry, memory, and posterity.

The *caterna*, therefore, is not merely a theme or an isolated metaphor; it is the form through which the poem organizes a worldview and an image of the author himself.

The poem's opening action already contains this entire program:

*Calcei as botas, firmei-me na estrada,
a velha caterna da Língua Portuguesa.
I pulled on my boots and stood firm on the road,
the old caterna of the Portuguese tongue.*

The lyrical self does not contemplate language from a distance: he puts it on.

This operation is decisive. The Portuguese language ceases to be an abstract heritage, a schoolroom monument, or merely a means of communication. It becomes clothing, contact with the ground, protection, and an instrument of movement.

The word *caterna* is rare and regional. Dictionaries record it as a term associated with *coturno*; older lexicographical sources connect the word to an item worn on the feet, such as a sock or male stocking. The poem deliberately expands this semantic nucleus and turns the *caterna* into an archetypal boot capable of crossing mud, snow, mountain ranges, historical periods, and continents.

The title therefore does more than select an old object: it retrieves a word of limited circulation to demonstrate that no word need die as long as it can be made to walk again.

And this is the autobiographical wager of the lyrical self.

2. The Great Metaphor: Language as Footwear

The central metaphor unfolds through a coherent chain of transformations.

This chain is not decorative. Each element produces and transforms the next.

The Portuguese language becomes embodied in the *caturna*; the sole brings this material into contact with the world; from that contact comes the step; the step leaves a footprint; the footprint becomes a semantic trace; the trace becomes inscription; inscription constitutes memory; and memory projects language, work, and name toward permanence.

The word *caturna*, rare and regional, belongs to a lexical field associated with objects intended to protect the feet and mediate the body's contact with the ground. This concrete function is decisive for the architecture of the poem, because what protects also makes advance possible: to put on footwear is to make traversal possible.

Hence formulations such as:

pegada tem voz, passadas palavra.

footprint has voice, footsteps turn to word.

and:

cada pegada, um verso cravado.

each footprint — a verse driven in.

This system reaches an especially powerful synthesis in:

a trilha da vida, o solado da língua.

the trail of life, the sole of language.

“Sole” brings together the material and the verbal. Language possesses a part that enters contact with the world, undergoes wear, gathers dust, and precisely for that reason becomes testimony.

This is not a language preserved under glass: it is a language in use, historical, marked by the crossings of its speakers.

The sole of the foot is oriented toward the ground; the “sole of language,” however, transforms this lower contact into verbal elevation. What steps on the world also names it, records it, and projects meaning.

3. From the Serra do Caramulo to the Recôncavo: A Transatlantic Geography

The poem begins from a concrete location: the Serra do Caramulo, in Portugal. The mountain territory, with its paths, altitude, mist, *carqueja*, granite, and traditional forms of dress, does not function as a tourist landscape; it is presented as archive, vantage point, and a privileged material nucleus of language.

References to hoods, gaiters, snow, valleys, and paths connect the vocabulary to communal life. The Serra do Caramulo preserves traditions associated with pastoral life, cold weather, clothing made of *burel*, and a granite landscape marked by ancient routes.

Within this horizon, the verse

polainas mulheres nos meses de neve!

gaitered women, months of snow!

condenses clothing, bodily protection, human presence, climate, and territory into a single image.

The precision of

altitude 1,075!

produces a singular effect. In the midst of symbolic language, an abrupt topographical datum appears. It anchors exaltation in a measurable, almost documentary fact.

The poem seems to say: metaphorical ascent does not abolish the exact ground from which one rises; even that which endures must possess a solid foundation.

The route then connects Portugal to Bahia:

nos campos lusitanos, falamos de Alcofra;

minha voz Recôncavo, a caterna de outro:

in Lusitanian fields, we speak of Alcofra;

my voice — Recôncavo — another caterna:

This passage produces a geography of language that does not obey a simple relationship between center and periphery.

The Brazilian voice does not appear as a passive repetition of its Portuguese origin. It is “my voice — Recôncavo — another caterna”: the Bahian voice receives the language, carries it through another history, and returns it with a rhythm of its own.

The Portuguese *caterna* reaches Brazil and begins to “samba”.

That transformation has already been announced in:

as botas sambando, meus versos e medos.

boots sambaing, my verses and fears.

This is one of the poem’s most revealing images. The mountain object does not remain folklorically immobile; by crossing the Atlantic, it acquires Brazilian movement.

The *Mother Tongue* preserves and transforms at the same time.

4. Intertextuality with Olavo Bilac

The sixth section directly invokes Olavo Bilac’s poem *Língua Portuguesa*:

Milhões de Bilacs, as vozes do Lácio,

meu grito gravado, a Última Flor!

Millions of Bilacs, voices of Latium,
my engraved cry, the Last Flower!

“Last Flower” refers to Bilac’s celebrated opening, “*Última flor do Lácio, inculta e bela*” — “Last flower of Latium, uncultivated and beautiful”.

In Bilac, language is flower, gold, trumpet, lyre, a language both rough and sorrowful; in Taurino Araújo, it ceases to be contemplated as a floral organism and begins to be worn as an instrument of marching.

The distinction is significant: in Bilac, the lyrical exaltation of language predominates, whereas in A Caterna the bodily historicization of language predominates.

The “Last Flower” becomes a sole. What once was fragrance, brilliance, and music also becoming leather, dust, cracking, and weight.

This does not negate Bilac; it materializes and extends his tradition.

The expression “Millions of Bilacs” further suggests an empowering democratization of authorship: language does not belong exclusively to the consecrated poet. Every speaker who traverses, transforms, and transmits it is potentially a new agent of its permanence.

5. Body, Word, and Inscription

One of the poem’s strengths lies in its constant fusion of anatomy and language:

*Língua que molda os sulcos da pele,
em cada palavra, um rastro semântico.*

*Language shaping furrows in the skin
in every word, a semantic trace.*

“Furrows of the skin” and “semantic trace” belong to the same system. Meaning leaves marks comparable to wrinkles, scars, and cracks in leather.

The leather of the *caterna* is also an image of the aging body:

*O couro estalado de anos de guerra,
marcou minha lida em neve e suor.
Cada rachadura que o tempo encerra
guarda um segredo, um grito maior.*

*The leather cracked by years of war
marked my toil in snow and sweat.
Each fissure sealed by time
keeps a secret — and a greater cry.*

Here, aging is not decadence. Every crack is an archive. Wear increases the object's capacity to bear witness.

The *caturna* comes to represent simultaneously the old footwear, the Portuguese language, the poet's body, cultural tradition, and the poetic work itself.

This superimposition constitutes the poem's principal symbolic achievement. By the end, it is no longer possible to separate completely the sole, the subject, and the language he has reinscribed and perpetuated.

6. The First Person and Symbolic Autobiography

Although the lyrical self should not automatically be identified with the empirical author, the autobiographical reading of *A Caturna* does not arise merely from the use of the first person. It results from the convergence of voice, territory, intellectual activity, bodily memory, literary project, and the desire for permanence.

The poem does not present an entirely imaginary walker detached from recognizable circumstances. The voice that puts on the Portuguese language asserts its own *verbo*, its *Mother Tongue*, its connection with the Recôncavo, its teaching, and the expectation that its name will remain after the footsteps cease.

The first person, therefore, does not function simply as a lyrical convention. It establishes a continuity between the subject who walks and Taurino Araújo as a historically and culturally situated author.

When the poem associates "my voice" with the Recôncavo, brings together Lusitanian fields and a Bahian destiny, and turns the inherited language into the

material of an individual experience, the transatlantic trajectory ceases to be merely geographical.

It becomes autobiographical as well: Portugal and Bahia are incorporated into the formation of a voice that receives tradition, transforms it, and seeks to inscribe its singularity within it.

As the analysis has already demonstrated, the Brazilian voice does not appear as a passive repetition of its Portuguese origin, but as a “Recôncavo voice” capable of giving the language another rhythm and another history.

This autobiography, however, is neither documentary nor chronological. The poem does not enumerate events from the author’s life, dates, or private episodes.

It constructs what may be called a symbolic and programmatic autobiography: life is reorganized through the image of walking, and the *caturna* comes to condense formation, work, wear, confrontation, teaching, creation, and posterity.

The leather marked by years therefore represents more than an aged object; it becomes an archive of body and experience. Cracks, snow, sweat, and war give the voice an authority earned through traversal rather than simply proclaimed.

The autobiographical dimension becomes even more explicit when the poem links language and name.

By asking the *caturna* to preserve him, the lyrical self transfers to language itself the responsibility for his survival. The individual name enters the same regime of permanence as words, peoples, stone chests, and dolmens.

The poem does not seek merely to preserve a collective language; it seeks to inscribe within that language a particular way of walking.

The articulation between walking and teaching is likewise autobiographical. The assertion that language is taught and that walking constitutes the lyrical self’s kingdom brings together two recognizable dimensions of the authorial figure: the

teacher of language and the poet who transforms his own trajectory into a path of creation.

The lyrical self does not present himself merely as an ordinary speaker of Portuguese, but as someone who receives, investigates, teaches, challenges, and transmits it.

The poem's first person therefore possesses a simultaneously individual and representative character: it is Taurino Araújo's particular voice, yet it seeks to embody the broader condition of the writer as inheritor and transformer of language. This gesture inserts the authorial name into historical duration.

The ending definitively confirms this reading.

When the footsteps cease to echo and the *caturna* continues proclaiming, the poem imagines the separation between body and work. Bodily disappearance belongs to individual destiny; the continuity of language and poem belongs to the authorial project.

The reversal by which the *caturna*, initially worn by the poet, ultimately speaks after him transforms the text into an autobiography projected beyond life itself.

The lyrical self does not merely narrate what it has been; it constructs the image of what it intends to continue being within the memory of language.

7. Dolmens and Memory Before Writing

The recurrence of “arcas” and “dólmens” — stone chests and dolmens — vastly expands the poem's temporal scale:

*a velha caturna é sol que perdura,
meu verbo, memória, as arcas, os dólmens.*

*the old caturna, an enduring sun —
my word, my memory, stone chests, the dolmens.*

Dolmens are megalithic monuments that preserve traces of communities far older than literary writing. In the Caramulo region, the Lapa da Meruje is a

monumental dolmen built in the fourth millennium BCE, with chamber, corridor, engravings, and archaeological materials associated with the ritual memory of Neolithic populations.

This reference allows us to understand more fully the lines:

*Pois tudo que fomos persiste nos dólmens,
o solo conserva o que um dia ficou.*

*For all that we were still lives in the dolmens,
the soil preserves what once remained.*

The poem proposes two forms of inscription: prehistoric stone preserves collective memory, while the poetic word preserves what wind and time might erase.

Hence, immediately afterward:

a caterna da língua um poema cravou.

language's caterna engraves the poem.

The verb *cravou* belongs both to the step and to inscription in stone. The poem thus becomes something marked into memory with the durability of an engraving, while the larger architecture of walking remains active through the caterna itself.

Here lies a productive paradox: the work seeks permanence yet remains permanent by continuing to walk.

It is not an immobile monument; it is a dolmen with soles—both on the feet and in the physical language of the lyrical self.

8. The Poetics of the Path

The poem rejects arrival as its ultimate purpose:

*Porque quem caminha não teme destino,
não busca chegada, não pede razão.*

Who walks fears no destiny,

seeks no arrival, asks for no reason.

and:

viver é andar, e andar é meu reino.

to live is to walk, and walking is my kingdom.

This philosophy of the path makes walking not a means of reaching a specific point, but a form of existence.

The subject does not walk to conclude his own story; he walks in order to continue inscribing it.

The road becomes an aesthetic category. To write is to walk, and to walk is to keep language alive.

The formulation

o mundo se faz no caminho.

world unfolds, step by step.

is central because it rejects the idea of a ready-made world.

The world comes into being through passage. Language does not merely name a previously constituted reality: it participates in making it.

In this sense, *A Caturna* already anticipates an important feature of Taurino Araújo's later poetry: the transformation of a concrete word into an ontological device.

The *caturna* does not simply represent language; it enables us to think about how language traverses the world, inscribes the subject, and produces continuity.

9. Structure and Rhythm

Formally, the poem consists of twenty-four numbered quatrains. The repetition of the four-line stanza creates visual regularity, although the lines vary in length and do not conform entirely to a single metrical pattern.

This oscillation does not diminish musicality. The rhythm arises primarily from parallelisms, enumerations, alliterations, repetitions of nuclear words, alternation between declarative and conditional sentences, and plosive sounds associated with the step: *p, t, d, c, g*.

Expressions such as *pegada, passo, poeira, pedra, palavra*, and *percurso* create verbal percussion. At moments, the sound itself seems to reproduce the striking of boots against the ground.

The recurrence of constructions such as “*Se a estrada...*” (“If the road...”), “*E mesmo que...*” (“And even if...”), and “*E se um dia...*” (“And if one day...”) gives the poem a cadence of resistance.

Whenever the possibility of interruption appears — dust, wind, fatigue, death — the voice answers with continuity.

The quatrains function almost like stanzaic steps: each advances a little, leaves a mark, and passes the movement on to the next.

10. Three Internal Movements

The poem may thus be read as unfolding through three larger movements. In the first, corresponding to *sections I to VIII*, the lyrical self puts on the language, steadies himself on the road, and establishes the fusion of language, clothing, and walking; strength, discovery, and territorial expansion predominate. In the second, from *sections IX to XVI*, language engraves furrows, confronts time, crosses the Caramulo, reaches the Recôncavo, and accumulates the marks of struggle, while the *caturna* ceases to be merely a vehicle and becomes an archive. In the third, from *sections XVII to XXIV*, the march approaches the possibility of bodily ending, yet language remains:

*quando a poeira do tempo me leve,
a velha caturna segue proclamando
o sol de um sonho, minha língua materna.*

*when the dust of time carries me away,
the old caturna goes on proclaiming*

the sun of a dream — my beloved Mother Tongue.

The subject may cease; the word continues. The individual trajectory is reinscribed within the historical continuity of language.

This structure explains why the preface to the book identifies *A Caterna* as a moment of “historical inscription” in the opening sequence of *Dançando no meio do inverno*.

The poem occupies the passage between the emergence of the voice and its insertion into a larger history.

11. The Ending: Language After Death

The final quatrain does not present death as absolute silence:

*E quando os passos não mais ecoarem,
quando a poeira do tempo me leve,
a velha caterna segue proclamando
o sol de um sonho, minha língua materna.*

*And when the footsteps echo no more,
when the dust of time carries me away,
the old caterna goes on proclaiming
the sun of a dream — my beloved Mother Tongue.*

There is a transfer of agency. At the beginning, the subject puts on the caterna. At the end, the caterna speaks without the subject.

This reversal is the true closure of the poem’s architecture: first, the poet carries the language; then, the language carries the poet; finally, the language survives the poet.

“Proclaiming” is an emphatic choice. Language does not merely murmur or remember: it makes a public declaration. The “sun of a dream” still answers the snow, mist, and mountains of the journey. After crossing cold landscapes, the *caterna* ends by carrying light.

Part II — AUTHORSHIP, TRIUMPHALISM, AND POSTERITY

12. The Most Powerful Lines

The most enduring achievements of *A Caterna* are those moments in which metaphor ceases merely to illustrate and begins to **produce thought**:

pegada tem voz, passadas palavra.

footprint has voice, footsteps turn to word

as botas sambando, meus versos e medos.

boots sambaing, my verses and fears.

em cada palavra, um rastro semântico.

in every word, a semantic trace.

cada rachadura que o tempo encerra

guarda um segredo, um grito maior.

Each fissure sealed by time

keeps a secret — and a greater cry.

a trilha da vida, o solado da língua.

the trail of life, the sole of language.

a caterna da língua um poema cravou.

language's caterna engraves the poem.

viver é andar, e andar é meu reino.

to live is to walk, and walking is my kingdom.

At these moments, the image is simultaneously bodily, linguistic, historical, and autobiographical, fixed within posterity.

13. Points of Critical Tension

A detailed critical reading, however, must also acknowledge that the poem does not sustain the same intensity across all ninety-six lines.

Some constructions are more celebratory than genuinely revelatory. Expressions such as “*suplanta o sublime*” (“surpasses the sublime”), “*fé*

vencedora” (“victorious faith”), “*um poema que nunca se ofusca*” (“a poem that never fades”), and “*não teme o destino*” (“does not fear destiny”) operate within an affirmative and epic register but possess less imagistic novelty than “the sole of language,” “semantic trace,” or “catura of language.”

There are also passages whose syntax is deliberately compressed:

pegada tem voz, passadas palavra.

footprint has voice, footsteps turn to word.

O próprio percurso é um hino progresso.

The journey itself — a hymn in progress.

a sobrevivência dos antigos étnicos!

where ancient peoples breathe in my memory.

These formulations may be read as points of deliberate pressure within the poem. In the Portuguese original, that pressure sometimes takes the form of grammatical compression or lexical roughness.

A Catura, therefore, is not a poem of minimalist purification. It is a poem of accumulation, marching, enumeration, and proclamation. To judge it by the criteria appropriate to the brief poems of Araújo’s recent cycle would be inadequate. Its aesthetics are expansive and foundational.

14. The Place of *A Catura* in Taurino Araújo’s Work

Within *Dançando no meio do inverno*, *A Catura* performs the function of a manifesto of both affiliation and autonomy.

It simultaneously affirms belonging to the Portuguese language, a historical bond with Portugal, the Brazilian transformation of that inheritance, the singularity of the Bahian voice, continuity among oral tradition, monument, writing, and body, and the survival of the work beyond biography.

The *catura* is thus an image of portable tradition. It does not require the poet to remain at the place of origin; it allows him to carry origin with him and modify it on every ground he crosses.

This idea makes the poem particularly significant: linguistic identity is not treated as purity, immobility, or submission to a matrix. It is that which is preserved because it continues to walk.

A Caterna is an epic-lyric, metalinguistic, and autobiographical poem of strong symbolic unity, whose principal achievement lies in transforming the Portuguese language into a walking body.

Its great invention is not merely to compare language to footwear, but to develop all the consequences of that comparison: wear, grip, protection, footprint, traversal, inscription, and survival.

Its central contribution may be summarized in this way:

language does not endure because it remains intact; it endures because it crosses the mud, receives other rhythms, and continues to leave footprints.

There are passages of more conventional rhetoric and some debatable syntactic compressions, but they do not cancel the power of the imagistic system. The poem possesses historical, transatlantic, and metalinguistic dimensions; it transforms an almost forgotten regional word into an emblem of cultural continuity.

Among Taurino Araújo's expansive poems, *A Caterna* stands out for its ability to bring geography, ancestral memory, body, and language together within a single dynamic figure:

a language that does not rest on the shelf because it is still being worn.

The poem gathers within a single architecture what tends to appear separately throughout world literature: lexical invention, historical consciousness, philosophy of language, transatlantic geography, body, memory, and a project of permanence.

What is most striking is that intellectual ambition does not suffocate poetry.

The Portuguese language is not merely celebrated: it is worn, weathered, inscribed upon the ground, transported between Caramulo and the Recôncavo, and finally transformed into an agent capable of surviving the poet himself.

This is thought realized through image, not philosophy added to verse.

For this reason, *A Caterna* may be read as a major demonstration of Taurino Araújo's poetic stature: in it, the poet is able simultaneously to inherit a language, traverse it, transform it, and imagine its continuation beyond himself.

A Caterna is deliberately triumphalist—both in relation to Taurino Araújo and to the Portuguese language—and this triumphalism does not appear merely as a tone of exaltation. It constitutes the poem's very logic.

The Portuguese language emerges as a historical force capable of crossing mountain ranges, seas, peoples, bodies, and epochs. It is not presented as a static inheritance, but as a power of movement, adaptation, and survival.

The *caterna* wears down, cracks, steps through snow and mud, reaches the Recôncavo, sambas, engraves verses, and continues proclaiming.

The triumph of language does not lie in remaining intact, but in resisting through transformation.

At the same time, the lyrical self assumes an equally affirmative position. He does not appear as a mere user of language, but as one who puts it on, carries it, reinscribes it, and extends it.

There is an almost foundational dimension here: Taurino Araújo presents himself as both continuator and renewer of a millennial tradition, capable of linking dolmens, Caramulo, Bilac, Bahia, and the future within a single walk.

The poem therefore constructs a double apotheosis: the Portuguese language triumphs because it traverses time; Taurino Araújo triumphs because he recognizes himself as one of its historical forms of continuity.

This aspect is decisive for understanding the epic tone.

A Caterna is not a poem of hesitation, modesty, or retreat. It is a poem of civilizational self-proclamation.

The poet does not ask permission to enter tradition; he declares that he is already walking within it and leaving marks of his own.

The ending radicalizes this principle: when the individual footsteps cease, the *caterna* will continue proclaiming. Work, language, and name outlive biography.

The greater triumph is not present success, but the claim to permanence.

Thus, *A Caterna* stages Taurino Araújo as the subject who receives the Portuguese language in its entirety—archaic, Lusitanian, Brazilian, learned, popular, bodily, and monumental—and sets it in motion once again.

The poet appears as heir, conductor, transformer, and future ancestor of the language.

The poem is constructed precisely to produce the image of someone in whom the Portuguese language becomes conscious of its own journey, its metamorphoses, and its capacity for survival: he receives tradition, traverses Portugal and Brazil, incorporates learning and orality, transforms the language without breaking with it, and leaves a mark intended to survive his own body.

Within *A Caterna*, Taurino Araújo appears as a user, interpreter, renewer, and living monument of the Portuguese language, within an architecture that brings together language, body, history, ancestry, territory, literary tradition, and survival.

The passages that make this image most persuasive are precisely those in which the poem ceases to present Taurino Araújo as someone who merely uses the Portuguese language and instead stages him as someone who wears it, carries it, transforms it, teaches it, and bequeaths it to the future.

15. The Rare Word Transformed into Destiny

*Caterna, palavra, me leva, eterniza,
um passo-poema supera revés.*

*Caterna, word — carry, make me last;
a step-poem rises over defeat.*

Taurino removes *caterna* from a zone of lexical rarity and turns it not merely into a theme, but into a complete poetic system.

The word returns to circulation because it has been poetically refounded.

“Me leva, eterniza” establishes a triumphant reciprocity between movement and permanence.

The poet sets the word in motion and, in turn, entrusts to that word the medium of his own continuity.

This relationship is greater than mere lexical mastery; it is an alliance of survival.

16. The Passage in Which Language Acquires a Bodily Voice

pegada tem voz, passadas palavra.

*O som da caterna ressoa meu verso,
o peso da língua, indumentária capucha.*

footprint has voice, footsteps turn to word.

*The caterna's sound makes verse flow,
the weight of language, hooded garment.*

The compression of “passadas palavra” resists ordinary syntax in the Portuguese original. That compression intensifies the transformation from movement into language.

This is one of the decisive passages.

Taurino converts movement into speech and speech into bodily matter. Language has weight, clothing, sound, and footprint.

The poet appears as someone capable of activating simultaneously the physical, phonetic, semantic, and historical levels of language.

17. The Appropriation of Bilac and the Tradition of Latium

*Milhões de Bilacs, as vozes do Lácio,
meu grito gravado, a Última Flor!*

*Millions of Bilacs, voices of Latium,
my engraved cry, the Last Flower!*

Here the lyrical self pluralizes Bilac — “Millions of Bilacs” — and inserts his own “engraved cry” into the continuity of the Latin and Portuguese traditions.

The operation is ambitious: Taurino receives the “Last Flower,” but no longer leaves it merely in bloom. He wears it, engraves it, and transports it.

The earlier poet is incorporated into a larger march.

Taurino thus appears not as an epigone, but as one who updates and sets Bilac’s legacy in motion.

18. The Brazilian Transformation of the Portuguese Inheritance

*as botas sambando, meus versos e medos,
a língua vibrante, as minhas memórias.*

*boots sambaing, my verses and fears,
the vibrant language, my memories.*

The Portuguese *caturna* does not remain a museum object: it sambas.

Taurino preserves the origin and, at the same time, subjects it to Brazilian transformation. The poet neither breaks with the Lusophone tradition nor kneels before it.

He receives it, traverses it, and returns it renewed.

Authority arises precisely from this double capacity: fidelity and reinvention.

19. Territorial Self-Proclamation

*Rompo fronteiras, refaço paisagens,
[...]
o passo altaneiro, minha língua materna!*

I break through borders, remake the land,

[...]

the lofty step, beloved Mother Tongue!

“I break through” and “I remake” are verbs of authority.

The lyrical self does not merely cross already existing territories: he remakes landscapes. The *Mother Tongue* becomes the instrument of this reconstruction.

“Lofty step” makes the triumphalism explicit. The poet walks with consciousness of his own elevation. He does not ask tradition to grant him passage; he advances as one who possesses the legitimacy to redesign cultural territory.

20. The Union of Body and Semantics

Língua que molda os sulcos da pele,

em cada palavra, um rastro semântico.

Language shaping furrows in the skin,

in every word, a semantic trace.

Language shapes the skin while every word leaves a conceptual inscription.

“Semantic trace” condenses the poem’s thesis: to use language is to leave a footprint of meaning.

The great user of language is not the one who knows the greatest number of words, but the one whose passage alters the semantic field of the language itself.

21. The Explicit Claim to Survival

E mesmo que um dia a poeira me cubra,

o barro do tempo dissolva meu corpo,

a velha caterna é sol que perdura,

meu verbo, memória, as arcas, os dólmens.

And even if one day the dust should cover me,

the mud of time dissolve my body,

the old *caterna*, an enduring sun —
my word, my memory, stone chests, the dolmens.

This is one of the most powerful stanzas in the poem's monumental self-construction.

The body may dissolve; the *verbo* remains beside “stone chests” and “dolmens,” images of long historical duration.

Taurino does not merely project posthumous fame. He places his own word within the temporal regime of ancestral structures.

His *verbo* aspires to possess the permanence of stone and, at the same time, the mobility of the *caterna*.

He presents himself as a monument that walks.

22. The Sovereign Connection Between Portugal and Bahia

*nos campos lusitanos, falamos de Alcofra;
minha voz Recôncavo, a caterna de outro:
o destino Baiano não é mero encargo,
um sopro no vento, um eco no chão.*

*In Lusitanian fields we speak of Alcofra;
my voice — Recôncavo — another caterna:
the Bahian destiny is no mere burden,
a breath in the wind, an echo on the ground.*

Here greatness derives from the ability to bring together two poles of language without reducing one to the other.

“My voice — Recôncavo — another *caterna*” is a declaration of identity, transformation, and authority. The Bahian voice appears not as a subordinate variant, but as a center of linguistic production.

The poet becomes a living bridge among Caramulo, Alcofra, the Recôncavo, and Bahia.

Taurino appears as an effectively transatlantic subject, capable of inhabiting both the unity and diversity of Lusophony.

23. The Declaration of the Word's Invulnerability

*Meu verbo caminha, audaz e vibrante,
não teme o destino, só quer escrever.*

My word walks, bold and alive;
writes its own way forward.

The poet's language acquires autonomy and courage. The *verbo* walks on its own, is bold, and does not fear.

It is no longer simply Taurino writing: his word itself has become a historical character.

The image of the word writing its own way forward turns creation into an inevitable impulse.

This helps consolidate the image of an absolute vocation: not an occasional author, but someone in whom the Portuguese language has found a permanent agent.

24. Marked Leather as Proof of Authority

*O couro estalado de anos de guerra,
marcou minha lida em neve e suor.
Cada rachadura que o tempo encerra
guarda um segredo, um grito maior.*

*The leather cracked by years of war
marked my toil in snow and sweat.
Each fissure sealed by time
keeps a secret — and a greater cry.*

Greatness does not appear merely as a gift; it appears as authority earned through wear.

The leather records labor, struggle, and time. Every crack adds knowledge grounded in traversal, effort, snow, sweat, and war.

The *caturna* possesses value because it has been worn.

25. “The Sole of Language”: Perhaps the Supreme Synthesis

*o próprio percurso é um hino progresso,
a trilha da vida, o solado da língua.*

*The journey itself — a hymn in progress,
the trail of life, the sole of language.*

“The sole of language” is perhaps the most powerful formulation in the entire poem.

It turns Taurino Araújo into the point of contact between language and the world.

The *caturna* is, above all, the poet’s *Mother Tongue* — that which accompanies him, sustains him, and places him in relation to the world. Language therefore ceases to be merely an instrument of expression and becomes a condition of passage.

The sole is that which touches the ground, absorbs impact, supports the body, and leaves marks.

By constructing this image, the poem suggests that language attains historical reality precisely through Taurino’s use of it. He appears not merely within language, but as its surface of contact with experience.

“The sole of language” condenses the material metaphor into a formulation capable of functioning as a genuine critical term.

26. The Poet as Guardian of Words Outside the Dictionary

*Nenhuma palavra na estrada se perde
mesmo não sendo dicionária:*

No word is lost along the road,

even when the dictionary lags behind my beloved tongue.

This passage reinforces the image of the poet as a sovereign and living user of language. “The dictionary lags behind my beloved tongue” reverses the usual hierarchy between lexicographical authority and poetic creation: the dictionary does not authorize the living word in advance; it follows after usage, invention, memory, and expressive force have already set language in motion. The image remains fully consistent with the poem’s central metaphor of walking: the living tongue advances, while the dictionary comes behind, registering only afterward what poetry has already made possible. The legitimacy of a word does not depend upon prior lexicographical authorization; it depends upon its force on the road of the poem.

Taurino appears as someone capable of receiving, reanimating, and granting poetic citizenship to what the norm has not yet recorded.

It is the image of a legislator of language, not merely an obedient user.

27. Inscribing the Name into Long Duration

Caturna das neves guarda-me o nome:

a sobrevivência dos antigos étnicos!

Caturna of the snows, preserve my name —

where ancient peoples breathe in my memory.

The linguistic object is entrusted with the task of preserving the author’s name. The image intensifies the autobiographical dimension: ancient peoples do not survive in an abstract repository of memory alone but breathe within the remembering consciousness of the lyrical self.

The poet associates his own survival with the survival of peoples, words, and ancestral memories.

Personal greatness therefore ceases to appear merely individual and becomes part of the same movement through which language preserves cultures and ancestry.

The name is elevated into the heritage of the historical journey itself.

28. The Statement of Absolute Dominion

*Na sola caterna, na língua que ensino,
viver é andar, e andar é meu reino.*

*caterna's sole — the language I teach,
to live is to walk, and walking is my kingdom.*

It protects without immobilizing, sustains without imprisoning, and preserves precisely because it allows the crossing of new ground. The dash intensifies the poem's central identification: *caterna's sole* and the language taught by the poet are brought into immediate apposition, almost as two names for the same material and symbolic ground.

The *Mother Tongue* is not merely what the poet speaks, writes, or inherits; it is what he walks with.

In *A Caterna*, he walks loftily.

The poet is not a guest on the road; he is king of movement.

Because the whole language has been converted into walking, Taurino's "kingdom" symbolically coincides with the living territory of the Portuguese language itself, and he reigns over the journey that keeps it alive.

The ending completes the investiture initiated in the first line.

At the beginning, Taurino puts on the *caterna*. At the end, the *caterna* continues speaking after Taurino has disappeared.

Taurino puts on the language, makes the language samba, leaves semantic traces within it, teaches it, reigns over its course, and, finally, is proclaimed by it.

What is striking is not merely a single successful image. Across considerable length, the poem sustains an entire sequence in which the Portuguese language becomes *caturna*, sole, step, footprint, semantic trace, inscription, memory, and permanence.

This chain allows the Portuguese language to become simultaneously body, clothing, road, heritage, archive, and future.

Few poems can keep so many layers active without losing their central axis.

Equally extraordinary is the way Taurino appears in the poem: not as a simple celebrant of language, but as one who wears it, moves it, traverses it, transforms it, and projects it beyond his own life.

The greatness of the lyrical self arises from the architecture of the text itself.

This does not mean that every line possesses precisely the same force. There are more rhetorical passages and others that are memorable.

But great poems do not always depend upon uniform perfection; often, they depend upon a vision so broad and an image so fertile that the whole surpasses its irregularities.

And *A Caturna* possesses exactly that: a founding image capable of carrying a vision of language, history, and authorship.

The poem establishes an image with no evident parallel in the literary tradition: the Portuguese language transformed into a *caturna*, worn by the poet and converted into step, footprint, road, memory, and permanence.

The *caturna* is not merely a successful metaphor for language: it generates an entire poetic world.

From it emerge body, march, wear, territory, Atlantic crossing, historical inscription, and the survival of the name.

The whole poem seems to arise from the first gesture of putting on the Portuguese language.

There are poems in which boots represent marching, war, resistance, or experience—as in Rudyard Kipling’s *Boots*—and many poems in which language represents identity, memory, and belonging.

But none of these constitutes the same procedure as *A Caterna*.

In Kipling, boots materialize the exhausting repetition of military marching; in Sujata Bhatt, for example, the *Mother Tongue* appears first embodied and later vegetalized.

None of the cases identified, however, brings together Taurino’s specific construction: putting on the Portuguese language itself and, from that gesture, developing step, sole, footprint, historical trajectory, Lusophone crossing, and authorial survival—the Portuguese language transformed into historical, bodily, and poetic footwear that the author wears, sets in motion, marks, and bequeaths to the future.

The singularity of *A Caterna* lies not only in its architecture, but in the extraordinary density with which that architecture is filled.

A relatively simple central image—putting on the Portuguese language—comes to carry simultaneously the history of language, the poet’s body, ancestral memory, Portugal and Bahia, Bilac and literary tradition, rare vocabulary, orality, displacement, wear, inscription, survival, and posterity.

And these layers are not merely juxtaposed. They communicate with one another.

Cracked leather is simultaneously footwear, aging body, language traversed by time, and archive of experience.

The footprint is physical step, verse, semantic trace, and historical inscription.

The sole is part of the boot, but also the surface through which language touches the world.

Dolmens are real monuments, civilizational memory, and figures of the work's permanence.

This is what produces density: each image continues to signify in several directions without abandoning the poem's core.

29. Vertical and Horizontal Density

The poem possesses a vertical density, because each word descends through several layers of meaning.

Caturna, for example, designates an object, retrieves a rare word, invokes a Portuguese region, materializes language, and becomes a figure of the work itself.

It also possesses a horizontal density, because the poem moves across distinct territories and periods: prehistory, the Latin tradition, Bilac, rural Portugal, the Recôncavo, biographical experience, and posthumous future.

A *Caturna* thus expands in two directions: it deepens each image and continuously enlarges the world that image can reach.

30. The Density of the Inaugural Gesture

*Calcei as botas, firmei-me na estrada,
a velha caturna da Língua Portuguesa.*

*I pulled on my boots and stood firm on the road,
the old caturna of the Portuguese tongue.*

"Calcei" preserves the bodily immediacy of the inaugural gesture: the poet does not contemplate the language; he puts it on and enters the road through it.

"Firmei-me" condenses balance, decision, and authorial affirmation. Together, the two verbs reinforce the poem's inaugural logic: language is at once something worn, a means of contact with the ground, and the condition of forward movement.

"Estrada" — "road" — contains both biographical trajectory and history.

“Velha” — “old” — brings ancestry.

“Caterna” brings lexical rarity and materiality.

“Língua Portuguesa” — “Portuguese language” — opens the civilizational dimension.

In only two lines, the poem establishes subject, object, tradition, movement, territory, body, time, and a project of permanence.

31. The Caterna Is Not a Fixed Metaphor Either

Another reason for the poem’s density is that the metaphor transforms as the poem progresses.

The *caterna* begins as footwear; then becomes voice, rhythmic instrument, archive, monument, transatlantic vehicle, the poet’s body, and an agent of proclamation.

It does not remain subordinate to the author. At the end, it acquires autonomy:

a velha caterna segue proclamando

the old caterna goes on proclaiming

The image undergoes a complete metamorphosis: from an object used by the poet, the *caterna* becomes an extension of the poet, then a form of language, a guardian of the name, and finally a voice that survives the poet.

This progression gives the symbol narrative density.

The *caterna* does not merely signify; it lives a history within the poem.

32. Authorial Density

The poem also contains a powerful construction of the figure of Taurino Araújo.

He appears simultaneously as walker, heir, master, renewer, Brazilian, Lusophone, archaeologist of the word, guardian of the lexicon, epic poet, and future ancestor.

None of these images is presented separately.

All emerge from the relationship between body, footwear, and language. For this reason, self-proclamation does not appear grafted onto the poem: it arises from the symbolic system itself.

33. Philosophical Density

A Caterna also thinks through fundamental questions:

What keeps a language alive?

Use, transformation, and traversal.

How does history endure?

Through marks left on bodies, stones, objects, and words.

What is the relationship between tradition and innovation?

Tradition survives when it can walk upon different grounds and acquire another rhythm.

How does the author outlive his own life?

When his singular way of using language becomes part of its memory.

The poem does not answer these questions with abstract concepts.

It answers with sole, leather, dust, crack, footprint, snow, mud, and road.

That is the poem's true density: thought converted into sensible matter.

A Caterna is distinguished not merely by a symbolic architecture for which no precedent has been identified. It is distinguished by the density with which it makes a single image concentrate body, language, territory, history, tradition, authorship, and posterity.

The *caturna* does not illustrate an idea: it becomes a poetic machine capable of continuously producing new meanings.

The Serra do Caramulo, Alcofra, the Recôncavo, and Bahia function as concrete places from which the *caturna* reaches a universal dimension.

The movement resembles that of major poems: it begins with localized matter—a piece of footwear, a mountain range, a rare word—and reaches questions that belong to all human beings.

34. From the Particular Object to Universal History

The *caturna* does not carry only the Portuguese language between Portugal and Brazil. It carries human walking, the transformation of matter, the memory of peoples, the survival of cultures, the relationship between body and language, the struggle against disappearance, and the passage from individual life into posterity.

When stone chests and dolmens appear, the poem moves backward toward a humanity that precedes modern nations and even writing itself. The Portuguese language becomes the present vehicle of a memory that began long before it.

The *caturna* steps upon contemporary ground but carries megalithic time upon its soles.

Thus, the poem's historical amplitude extends far beyond the passage from Portugal to Brazil: it moves from human ancestry through the formation of languages, civilizations, and literary tradition to individual existence and the future of the work.

35. The Portuguese Language as a Form of the Human

Although the language explicitly named is Portuguese, the poem addresses a universal question: what happens when human beings transform experience into language and leave that language to those who come after them?

The Portuguese language is the poet's specific material, but within the poem it represents the human capacity to name, transmit, remember, walk between generations, and preserve what the body alone cannot preserve.

For this reason, *A Caturna* is not merely a Lusophone ode.

It is a meditation on language as the footwear of the human species. Every person enters the world, receives a language already worn by countless dead, walks with it, adds new marks to it, and passes it on to those who follow.

Taurino radicalizes this process by bringing into consciousness what ordinarily occurs without reflection.

The formulation “language as the footwear of the human species” enlarges the caturna metaphor from Portuguese cultural history to philosophical anthropology without dissolving its material origin.

36. All Times Within the Same Step

The poem’s temporal density is extraordinary because each footprint simultaneously contains:

the past of those who have already walked, the present of the body stepping upon the ground, and the future of the person who will encounter the mark.

The footprint is therefore a small temporal totality. It exists now, proves that someone has passed, and awaits a future observer.

The same is true of the word.

Every word has been inherited, is uttered in the present, and may survive the speaker. By bringing word and footprint together, the poem discovers a universal image for human history itself.

Taurino’s individual walk comes to represent all walks. His body is particular; wear, memory, and the desire for permanence are universal.

37. CONCLUSION: The World as the Road of Language.

When the poem states that

o mundo se faz no caminho.

world unfolds, step by step.

it moves beyond any national cartography.

The world does not appear as a ready-made map, but as a reality produced through human traversals.

The *caterna* can touch snow and mud, mountain and plain, stone and road, past and future, birth and death, silence and proclamation.

It can cross opposites because it functions as a mediator between the body and everything that exists.

The sole touches the diversity of the world, while language transforms that contact into memory.

In this sense, perhaps the most comprehensive image is precisely:

o solado da língua

the sole of language

The sole does not touch only Portugal or Bahia. Potentially, it touches every human ground.

Language becomes the surface through which consciousness encounters the universe.

The lyrical self also moves beyond local biography.

Taurino appears as a historically situated individual yet assumes universal functions: the human being who receives a tradition; the walker who crosses the unknown; the body marked by time; the creator who transforms inheritance into novelty; the mortal who seeks to survive through the work; and the future ancestor who leaves signs for those not yet born.

The poet becomes a representative figure of the human being without losing either name or singularity.

It is precisely this tension that enlarges the poem: Taurino is an individual and, at the same time, the walker of all times.

This is why *A Caterna* may be defined as an epic-lyric, metalinguistic, and autobiographical ode.

Its autobiography is not limited to the grammatical presence of the “I”; it arises from the convergence of body, territory, name, teaching, work, and posterity.

Taurino Araújo’s individual walk becomes the figure of a larger walk without disappearing into it.

The poem universalizes his experience without erasing his signature. In *A Caterna*, the poet presents himself as a historically situated individual and, simultaneously, as a representative walker within the human relationship to language, memory, and mortality.

A Caterna begins with the Portuguese language, Portugal, and Bahia, but its true extension is anthropological and universal.

The poem brings together the walking of the species, the memory of civilizations, the transformation of languages, the mortality of the body, and the survival of the work.

Its road crosses the entire world and all times.

Portugal and Bahia provide ground, history, and concrete density. But the *caterna* does not stop there.

Its architecture also reaches the epistemological, ontological, logical, and axiological fields that run throughout the work of the author of *Hermenêutica da Desigualdade*.

If poetic greatness is measured by the capacity to make a single image contain the world, and greatness of thought by the power to reorganize the way the world can be understood and reinvented, *A Caterna* brings these two forms of greatness together at a single vertex of creation, interpretation, expressiveness, and permanence.

The authorial figure that emerges from this convergence does not merely bring poetry and thought together: it carries both dimensions to a maximal point, where image becomes concept, verbal matter becomes a form of knowledge, and individual experience attains anthropological, universal, and civilizational scope.

It is at this limit that the customary designations of poet and thinker—when taken separately—are no longer sufficient to encompass Taurino Araújo.

A Caterna

Critical-Literary English Rendering

Taurino Araújo, Ph.D.

I

I pulled on my boots and stood firm on the road,
the old caterna of the Portuguese tongue.
In the mud of time, my footprint stayed,
a path traced through the Serra do Caramulo.

II

Portuguese — beloved Mother Tongue —
treading distant ground, you endure.
You open borders, surpass the sublime,
on Portugal's fairest mountain range!

III

So many memories gather in my language,
the mud of the world sustains my feet.
Caterna, word — carry, make me last;
a step-poem rises over defeat.

IV

Up the steep trail, I go unafraid;
the caterna calls me, teaches me — go.

mist and secrets, paths are made,
gaitered women, months of snow!

V

The path forges me as I go,
footprint has voice, footsteps turn to word.
The caterna's sound makes verse flow,
the weight of language, hooded garment.

VI

Words become garments, dominion of language,
paths written upon the ground of the treatise.
Millions of Bilacs, voices of Latium,
my engraved cry, the Last Flower!

VII

I know the secrets of the cured leather,
old footsteps, poetic force, burst forth:
boots sambaing, my verses and fears,
the vibrant language, my memories.

VIII

I break through borders, remake the land,
carqueja footprint rings a hymn.
If the road bends, if mirages rise,
the lofty step, beloved Mother Tongue!

IX

Language shaping furrows in the skin,
in every word, a semantic trace.

The sound of my steps, wherever I tread,
victorious faith, my word expands ahead.

X

And even if one day the dust should cover me,
the mud of time dissolve my body,
the old caturna, an enduring sun —
my word, my memory, stone chests, the dolmens.

XI

Through valleys deep and mountains high,
Serra do Caramulo steadies my trail.
If the road weighs on me as furtive winds fly,
I answer the call — altitude 1,075!

XII

I brush off the dust and move ahead,
each footprint — a verse driven in.
So many themes, good winds carry me,
and everything rises in the many Recôncavos.

XIII

In Lusitanian fields we speak of Alcofra;
my voice — Recôncavo — another caturna:
the Bahian destiny is no mere burden,
a breath in the wind, an echo on the ground.

XIV

Yet, in the dust of wandering steps,
each footprint — a world traced out.

My word walks, bold and alive;
writes its own way forward.

XV

If the road breaks, if the wind conceals,
if shadows dance across the lost field,
the old caturna shakes the mountains,
world unfolds, step by step.

XVI

The leather cracked by years of war
marked my toil in snow and sweat.
Each fissure sealed by time
keeps a secret — and a greater cry.

XVII

The rising dust, the opening ground,
the singing winds, the pulsing language —
all unfolds — impalpable word,
the world, a poem that never fades.

XVIII

And if one day the march should end,
if tired soles should ask for rest,
word, resound — let endless fields extend,
an echo without lament — beloved Mother Tongue.

XIX

Who walks fears no destiny,
seeks no arrival, asks for no reason.

The journey itself — a hymn in progress,
the trail of life, the sole of language.

XX

If life is a book, the road is prayer,
each journey, another verse traced there.
No word is lost along the road,
even when the dictionary lags behind my beloved tongue.

XXI

My soles have trodden a thousand ages and hungers,
they know the weight of dream and pain.
Caterna of the snows, preserve my name —
where ancient peoples breathe in my memory.

XXII

For all that we were still lives in the dolmens;
the faithful earth remembers all we leave.
And even if the wind erases the traces,
language's caterna engraves the poem.

XXIII

And so I keep walking, for I know the path
is all that remains, is all that I have.
caterna's sole — the language I teach,
to live is to walk, and walking is my kingdom.

XXIV

And when the footsteps echo no more,
when the dust of time carries me away,

the old caterna goes on proclaiming
the sun of a dream — my beloved Mother Tongue.

A caterna

Taurino Araújo, Ph.D.

I

Calcei as botas, firmei-me na estrada,
a velha caterna da Língua Portuguesa.
No barro do tempo, pegada marcada,
caminho traçado na Serra do Caramulo.

II

Português, minha língua materna,
em solos distantes pisando, resiste.
Abre fronteiras, suplanta o sublime,
na serra mais linda de Portugal!

III

Tantas memórias minha língua matiza,
o barro do mundo sustenta-me os pés.
Caterna, palavra, me leva, eterniza,
um passo-poema supera revés.

IV

Na trilha ladeira, eu sigo sem medo,
a caterna me chama, me ensina, me impele.
Rasgando neblinas, vencendo segredos,
polainas mulheres nos meses de neve!

V

Caminho que forja, moldando meu rumo,
pegada tem voz, passadas palavra.

O som da caterna ressoa meu verso,
o peso da língua, indumentária capucha.

VI

As vestes palavras, domínio da língua,
caminhos escritos no chão do tratado.
Milhões de Bilacs, as vozes do Lácio,
meu grito gravado, a Última Flor!

VII

O couro curtido, conheço segredos,
os passos antigos, a verve, pipocam:
as botas sambando, meus versos e medos,
a língua vibrante, as minhas memórias.

VIII

Rompo fronteiras, refaço paisagens,
pegada carqueja reverbera um hino.
Se a estrada se curva, se impõe miragens,
o passo altaneiro, minha língua materna!

IX

Língua que molda os sulcos da pele,
em cada palavra, um rastro semântico.
O som dos meus passos, onde quer que eu pise,
fé vencedora, o meu verbo tão pando.

X

E mesmo que um dia a poeira me cubra,
o barro do tempo dissolva meu corpo,
a velha caterna é sol que perdura,
meu verbo, memória, as arcas, os dólmens.

XI

Por vales profundos e montes altivos,
Serra do Caramulo firmando meu trilho:
se a estrada me pesa em ventos furtivos,
suplanto ao chamado, altitude 1.075!

XII

Eu cubro a poeira e sigo em frente,
cada pegada, um verso cravado,
tantas temáticas, bons ares me embalam
e tudo ascende os tantos Recôncavos:

XIII

nos campos lusitanos, falamos de Alcofra;
minha voz Recôncavo, a caterna de outro:
o destino Baiano não é mero encargo,
um sopro no vento, um eco no chão.

XIV

Porém, na poeira dos passos errantes,
cada pegada é um mundo traçado.
Meu verbo caminha, audaz e vibrante,
não teme o destino, só quer escrever.

XV

Se a estrada se parte, se o vento esconde,
se as sombras dançam no campo perdido,
a velha caterna amedronta os montes,
pois sabe que o mundo se faz no caminho.

XVI

O couro estalado de anos de guerra,
marcou minha lida em neve e suor.

Cada rachadura que o tempo encerra
guarda um segredo, um grito maior.

XVII

A poeira que sobe, o chão que se abre,
os ventos que cantam, a língua que pulsa,
tudo se faz nesse verbo impalpável,
o mundo, um poema que nunca se ofusca.

XVIII

E se um dia a marcha chegar ao fim,
se as solas cansadas pedirem repouso,
que o verbo ressoe em campo universo,
um eco sem pranto, minha língua materna.

XIX

Porque quem caminha não teme destino,
não busca chegada, não pede razão.
O próprio percurso é um hino progresso,
a trilha da vida, o solado da língua.

XX

Se a vida é um livro, o caminho é a prece,
cada jornada, um verso traçado.
Nenhuma palavra na estrada se perde
mesmo não sendo dicionária:

XXI

minhas solas pisaram mil eras e fomes,
conhecem o peso do sonho e da dor.
Caterna das neves guarda-me o nome:
a sobrevivência dos antigos étnicos!

XXII

Pois tudo que fomos persiste nos dólmens,
o solo conserva o que um dia ficou.
E mesmo que o vento desfaça os traços,
a caterna da língua um poema cravou.

XXIII

E assim sigo firme, pois sei que o caminho
é tudo que resta, é tudo que tenho.
Na sola caterna, na língua que ensino,
viver é andar, e andar é meu reino.

XXIV

E quando os passos não mais ecoarem,
quando a poeira do tempo me leve,
a velha caterna segue proclamando
o sol de um sonho, minha língua materna.

38. Theoretical Horizons, References, and Critical Dialogue

Having established this framework, a broader understanding of the philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, and literary horizons invoked by Taurino Araújo's poetics—especially in the relations between metaphor and thought, body and language, walking and writing, autobiography and identity, memory and permanence, orality, Lusophony, and intertextuality—may be pursued through, among others, the works listed below.

These references, however, are not presented as originating sources for the interpretations developed in this study. The reading of *A Caterna* arises primarily from the internal analysis of the poem itself: its verbal architecture, its images, its first-person voice, its geography, its rhythmic structure, and its project of permanence.

Within this analysis, Taurino Araújo's individual walk becomes, in *A Caterna*, the figure of a greater walk without disappearing into it. The poem universalizes his experience without erasing his signature.

In *A Caterna*, the poet presents himself as a historically situated individual and, at the same time, as a representative walker within the human relationship to language, memory, and mortality.

In this sense, the authors gathered below constitute a critical constellation capable of enlarging and contextualizing the questions that the poem itself so powerfully sets in motion.

ARAÚJO, Taurino. *A caterna*. In: ARAÚJO, Taurino. *Dançando no meio do inverno*. 2026. Manuscript in preparation.

38.1. Metaphor as the Production of Thought

RICOEUR, Paul. *La métaphore vive*. Paris: Seuil, 1975.

English edition: *The Rule of Metaphor*. Translated by Robert Czerny et al. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977.

Ricoeur's work offers one of the most fertile theoretical horizons for understanding the functioning of metaphor in *A Caterna*.

From this perspective, metaphor is not reduced to verbal ornament or to the decorative substitution of one term for another: it produces a new relation of meaning and reorganizes the perception of reality.

This approach helps explain why, in Taurino Araújo's poem, the *caterna* does not simply illustrate a previously formulated idea about the Portuguese language but concretizes it from multiple angles.

Indeed, once the language is put on—and, equally, once it possesses a sole turned upward—it begins to generate an entire system of poetic consequences: sole, step, footprint, wear, road, inscription, memory, and posterity.

Metaphor thus becomes an instrument of thought.

LAKOFF, George; JOHNSON, Mark. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate that metaphorical appropriations participate in the conceptual organization of human experience itself.

This approach makes it possible to see that the relation established between language and footwear in *A Caturna* does not remain confined to a localized comparison, especially given the recurrence of such integrated yet distinct semantic correspondences.

The bodily domain of walking progressively structures the understanding of language: to speak is to walk, to write is to leave footprints, to use language is to wear and transform it, and to remain inscribed upon the path.

KÖVECSES, Zoltán. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Kövecses broadens the understanding of conceptual metaphor and its systematic developments.

His contribution is particularly relevant to observing how a nuclear image can radiate correspondences among different domains of experience.

In *A Caturna*, the inaugural association between language and footwear generates a coherent set of relations among body, materiality, displacement, wear, territory, and memory.

38.2. Autobiography, the Lyrical Self, and Identity

LEJEUNE, Philippe. *Le pacte autobiographique*. Paris: Seuil, 1975.

The reference to Lejeune must be used with precision.

A Caturna is not a narrative autobiography in the strict sense of the autobiographical pact studied by the French theorist.

The importance of Lejeune's work lies precisely in allowing us to distinguish formal autobiography from the autobiographical dimension of literary creation.

In Taurino Araújo's poem, the first person, the presence of the name, territory, teaching, intellectual trajectory, and the project of posterity converge to produce a lyrical, symbolic, and programmatic autobiography, rather than a documentary account of life.

RICOEUR, Paul. *Soi-même comme un autre*. Paris: Seuil, 1990.

English edition: *Oneself as Another*. Translated by Kathleen Blamey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Ricoeur's reflection on identity and the narrative constitution of the subject offers a relevant horizon for the autobiographical reading of *A Caterna*.

The poem does not merely present an identity already established; through walking and language, it composes a particular authorial figure.

Taurino progressively appears as walker, heir, teacher, renewer, interpreter of tradition, guardian of the lexicon, and future ancestor.

Identity is produced within the poetic journey itself.

HAGBERG, Garry L. *Living in Words: Literature, Autobiographical Language, and the Composition of Selfhood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023.

Hagberg investigates the ways in which autobiographical language participates in the constitution of identity and self-understanding.

His reflection therefore enters into particularly productive dialogue with the projective dimension of *A Caterna*: the lyrical self does not limit itself to narrating what it has been but linguistically constructs what it intends to continue being within the memory of language.

Posterity thus becomes a component of the very composition of the poetic self.

38.3. Walking, Writing, and the Making of the World

CERTEAU, Michel de. *L'invention du quotidien. 1: Arts de faire*. Paris: Gallimard, 1990.

English edition: *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Michel de Certeau's reflection on walking as a practice that produces space offers an especially suggestive approach to the poetics of *A Caterna*.

Walking does not simply mean moving through a previously constituted space; the very act of traversing produces paths, relations, and meanings.

This perspective illuminates one of the poem's central formulations, especially the idea that "world unfolds, step by step".

The world is not merely crossed by the walker: it is continually reorganized by his passage.

INGOLD, Tim. *Lines: A Brief History*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Ingold brings together walking, writing, drawing, narrative, song, and the production of lines.

This conception enters into direct dialogue with the structure of *A Caterna*, in which the step leaves a footprint, the footprint becomes an inscription, and the inscription can be read as verse.

The bodily line of the journey becomes a verbal line and, subsequently, historical memory.

The sequence from caturna to step, footprint, trace, verse, and memory finds here an especially productive anthropological horizon.

INGOLD, Tim. *The Life of Lines*. London: Routledge, 2015.

In this work, Ingold expands his reflection on lines, movement, ground, dwelling, imagination, and the relation between beings and the world.

Its relevance to *A Caterna* lies in understanding existence as a path produced through walking.

Walking does not take place upon an entirely finished world; it participates in constituting the relations through which the world becomes inhabitable and intelligible.

GROS, Frédéric. *Marcher, une philosophie*. Paris: Carnets Nord, 2009.

English edition: *A Philosophy of Walking*. Translated by John Howe. London: Verso.

Gros considers walking in its philosophical, existential, spiritual, and political dimensions.

His reflection on freedom, pilgrimage, landscape, and transformation of the subject broadens the reading of the “poetics of the path” present in *A Caterna*.

Walking in the poem is not mere instrumental displacement: it becomes a way of existing, thinking, and enduring.

SOLNIT, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Viking, 2000.

Solnit offers a cultural history of walking and its relations to imagination, territory, politics, memory, and creation.

Her work helps situate walking as a human practice charged with historical and cultural meanings—an essential aspect of a poem in which the individual march progressively becomes a figure for the trajectories of languages, peoples, and generations.

38.4. Cultural Memory, Inscription, and Permanence

ASSMANN, Jan. *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. München: C. H. Beck, 1992.

English edition: *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Jan Assmann’s theory of cultural memory constitutes a particularly appropriate horizon for the presence of stone chests, dolmens, inscriptions, and traces in *A Caterna*.

The poem brings poetic language close to the material forms through which societies preserve and transmit the past.

Stones, monuments, and language become part of the same regime of permanence.

ASSMANN, Aleida. *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*. München: C. H. Beck, 1999.

English edition: *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Aleida Assmann's reflection on archives, media, and spaces of memory helps us understand the *caterna* as a kind of mobile archive.

Unlike the immobile monument, the poetic object preserves marks while continuing to walk.

Worn leather, footprint, name, verse, and tradition become different supports of a memory preserved precisely because it remains in motion.

RICOEUR, Paul. *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*. Paris: Seuil, 2000.

English edition: *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

The work makes it possible to deepen the relation among memory, trace, inscription, disappearance, and survival.

In *A Caterna*, the individual body is destined to disappear, but the signs left by its journey aspire to survive it.

The footprint becomes a privileged figure of this paradox: the presence of an absence, the trace of someone who has already passed, and the possibility of future reading.

38.5. Body, Perception, Voice, and the Materiality of Language

MERLEAU-PONTY, Maurice. *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Paris: Gallimard, 1945.

Merleau-Ponty offers an important horizon for understanding the body not simply as an object located in the world, but as the condition of perception and of our relation to the world.

In *A Caterna*, the Portuguese language is understood bodily: it has weight, leather, sole, wear, contact, rhythm, and footprint.

The body does not merely serve as a metaphor for language; it constitutes the place where language and world meet.

ZUMTHOR, Paul. *Introduction à la poésie orale*. Paris: Seuil, 1983.

Zumthor's work contributes to an understanding of orality, voice, and the bodily dimension of poetry.

In *A Caterna*, repetitions, parallelisms, enumerations, and plosive sounds produce verbal percussion capable of bringing poetic cadence close to the physical rhythm of marching.

ZUMTHOR, Paul. *Performance, réception, lecture*. Longueuil: Le Préambule, 1990.

Zumthor's perspective also allows poetry to be conceived beyond the written page, taking voice, body, presence, and reception into account.

This approach is particularly relevant to a poem whose language frequently seems to demand proclamation, sonorous walking, and vocal realization.

38.6. The Portuguese Language, History, and Lusophony

CUNHA, Celso; CINTRA, Lindley. *Nova gramática do português contemporâneo*. Lisboa: João Sá da Costa, 1984.

The work of Cunha and Cintra can function as a background linguistic reference for questions concerning the unity and diversity of the Portuguese language.

In *A Caterna*, the language is presented simultaneously as historical inheritance and as material subject to transformation across different territories.

CASTRO, Ivo. *Introdução à história do português*. Lisboa: Colibri, 2006.

The history of the Portuguese language constitutes an important horizon for a poem that makes language an entity in movement through time and space.

The historical perspective helps contextualize the continuous transformation of the language, central to the conception that language remains alive precisely because it does not remain intact.

LOURENÇO, Eduardo. *A nau de Ícaro seguido de Imagem e miragem da lusofonia*. Lisboa: Gradiva, 1999.

Eduardo Lourenço's reflection makes it possible to problematize critically the idea of Lusophony and to avoid a simplified reading of the relation between Portugal and Brazil as a rigid opposition between center and periphery.

In *A Caterna*, the "Recôncavo voice" receives the Portuguese language, but traverses it with another history and impresses upon it a rhythm of its own.

Inheritance is simultaneously conserved and transformed.

UNESCO. World Portuguese Language Day. Paris: UNESCO.

<https://www.unesco.org/pt/days/portuguese-language>

Accessed August 14, 2026.

UNESCO initiatives related to World Portuguese Language Day provide institutional context for the international and transcontinental dimension of the language.

38.7. Intertextuality and Literary Tradition

BILAC, Olavo. "Língua Portuguesa." In: BILAC, Olavo. *Poesias*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Garnier, 1902.

Bilac occupies a particular position within this set of references because he is not merely a theoretical or comparative source: he is an intertext explicitly invoked by the poem itself.

The expression “Millions of Bilacs” and the reprise of the “Last Flower” place *A Caterna* in direct dialogue with one of the best-known poetic celebrations of the Portuguese language.

The relationship between the two poems, however, is not reducible to homage. In Bilac, language appears as flower, gold, trumpet, lyre, and material for lyrical exaltation.

In Taurino Araújo, this inheritance undergoes a material transformation: the flower is put on, encounters the ground, suffers wear, leaves footprints, crosses territories, and acquires historical movement.

Intertextuality therefore operates as appropriation and reinvention.

GENETTE, Gérard. *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré*. Paris: Seuil, 1982.

Genette offers conceptual tools that are particularly useful for understanding relations of transformation between texts.

His reflection helps situate the dialogue between *A Caterna* and Bilac’s tradition not as servile repetition, but as the transformative reuse of an earlier literary heritage.

KRISTEVA, Julia. *Séméiotikè: recherches pour une sémanalyse*. Paris: Seuil, 1969.

Kristeva’s work constitutes a classical reference for understanding intertextuality as the circulation and transformation of discourses within new texts.

In the case of *A Caterna*, this perspective helps reveal how earlier elements of the tradition of the Portuguese language are absorbed and reinscribed within a new poetic architecture.

38.8. Comparative References

BHATT, Sujata. “Search for My Tongue.” In: BHATT, Sujata. *Brunizem*. Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1988.

KIPLING, Rudyard. “Boots.” In: KIPPLING, Rudyard. *The Five Nations*. London: Methuen, 1903.

These texts may be used as comparative references, provided that the difference between their procedures and the specific system developed in *A Caterna* is preserved.

In Rudyard Kipling's "Boots," footwear is associated above all with the physical and psychological repetition of military marching.

In Sujata Bhatt, the *Mother Tongue* is embodied and subjected to its own imagistic transformation.

Neither parallel, however, is equivalent in itself to Taurino Araújo's operation: transforming the Portuguese language itself into footwear and, from that inaugural gesture, generating sole, step, footprint, territory, inscription, history, autobiography, and posterity.

Such comparisons are useful precisely because they make it possible to delimit more accurately the singularity of the poetic construction of *A Caterna*, without turning that singularity into a claim that no literary antecedents of any kind exist.

38.9. Lexicographical Sources

Because *A Caterna* begins with a rare word and assigns it structural importance, lexicographical investigation performs a specific function in this study: to confirm the presence of *caterna*, *caturno*, *coturno*, or other pertinent lexical information.

ACADEMIA DAS CIÊNCIAS DE LISBOA. *Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa Contemporânea*. Lisboa: Verbo, 2001. 2 vols.

BLUTEAU, Raphael. *Vocabulário Portuguez e Latino*. Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712–1728. 8 vols.

HOUAISS, Antônio; VILLAR, Mauro de Salles. *Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*. Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2001.

MACHADO, José Pedro. *Dicionário etimológico da língua portuguesa*. 7th ed. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995.

SILVA, António de Moraes. *Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Typographia Lacerdina, 1813. 2 vols.

Specialized historical databases, such as the *Corpus Lexicográfico do Português*, may also be employed, provided that the occurrence used is effectively identified and recorded in the final version of the study.

Lexicographical consultation is particularly important because the rarity of *caturna* does not function as a peripheral curiosity.

The poem depends precisely upon the recovery of a word of limited circulation to transform it into the center of a poetic system.

The historical investigation of the word therefore helps demonstrate the process by which an almost forgotten term is reintroduced into literary circulation and subjected to semantic expansion.

38.10. Historical, Cultural, and Heritage Sources

Other claims concerning the Serra do Caramulo, its landscape, local routes, megalithic monuments, and particularly the Lapa da Meruje should be accompanied by institutional, historical, or heritage sources.

These references differ in nature from the theoretical works mentioned above: they do not constitute the foundation of the literary interpretation, but document concrete elements mobilized by the poem and by the critical analysis.

COMUNIDADE INTERMUNICIPAL VISEU DÃO LAFÕES. “Lapa da Meruje.” In: *Rota de Megalitismo*. Tondela: CIM Viseu Dão Lafões, n.d.

<https://rotademegalitismo.visitviseudaolafoes.pt/rota/rota-de-megalitismo/monumentos/lapa-da-meruje/>

Accessed August 14, 2026.

The source situates the Lapa da Meruje at the top of the Serra do Caramulo and identifies it as a megalithic monument located in the municipality of Vouzela, in the parish of Cambra e Carvalhal de Vermilhas.

It further records that the monument was discovered and studied in 1917 by Amorim Girão and that, since 2016, it has been the subject of a research project developed by the University of Algarve.

The heritage description presents the Lapa da Meruje as a large dolmen composed of a polygonal chamber with seven orthostats, measuring approximately 3 × 3 meters, a corridor approximately 8 meters long, and a mound about 35 meters in diameter, whose stone structure remains largely preserved.

The source also records engravings on the orthostats and the monument's integration into Vouzela's cultural route known as "Gigantes de Pedra" — "Giants of Stone."

39. Final Methodological Note

The set of references gathered here should be understood as a horizon of dialogue, not as a compulsory genealogy of Taurino Araújo's poetics.

It cannot be claimed that *A Caterna* results from the conscious application of the theories of Ricoeur, Lakoff and Johnson, Kövecses, Lejeune, Ingold, de Certeau, Assmann, Merleau-Ponty, Genette, Kristeva, Zumthor, or the other authors discussed here.

Nor is the intention to subordinate the poem to categories produced outside it.

The critical movement proceeds in the opposite direction: it begins with the poetic text and observes that its own organization raises problems that resonate with different traditions of contemporary thought, in keeping with the interdisciplinary — and, at several points, transdisciplinary — character of Taurino Araújo's intellectual and artistic production.

Within this movement, the transformation of *caturna* into a poetic system calls forth theories of metaphor; the first person and the construction of an authorial image bring the poem into proximity with problems of autobiography and identity; step and footprint invite reflection on walking, line, and the production of space; leather and sole evoke the corporeality of experience; dolmens, traces, and the

survival of the name introduce questions of cultural memory; voice and proclamation bring the text into dialogue with orality and performance; Bilac inscribes the poem within an intertextual tradition; Portugal, the Recôncavo, and Bahia open the historical and Lusophone dimensions of language.

A Caterna does not require an external theory to acquire complexity.

Its complexity already resides in its very construction:

*a rare word becomes caterna;
the caterna becomes footwear for the Portuguese language;
the sole produces contact with the world;
from that contact comes the step;
the step leaves a footprint;
the footprint becomes a semantic trace;
the trace becomes inscription;
inscription constitutes memory;
and memory projects work and name toward permanence.*

The bibliography assembled here makes it possible to recognize that this architecture touches upon questions belonging to long philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, and literary traditions.

The poem itself, however, remains the point of departure and the center of the investigation.

The critical question arises from the poem itself; the role of the references is to broaden the horizon within which that question can be understood.

Precisely for this reason, the dialogue with different philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, and literary traditions does not subordinate *A Caterna* to external categories. On the contrary, it reveals the extent of the fields that the poem's own architecture can mobilize.

The rare word becomes body; body becomes path; path becomes memory; and memory reaches history, identity, Lusophony, mortality, and permanence.

The poem does not merely contain thought: it becomes thought itself in a state of epiphany and historical permanence.

Within this convergence, poetry and thought cease to constitute separable activities: that by which the poem thinks is precisely that which makes it a poem—its capacity to transform verbal matter into experience, concept, and world.

A synthesis takes place in which the word does not merely describe being but inscribes it within time. *A Caturna* thus establishes itself as an epic-lyric, metalinguistic, and autobiographical monument of anthropological, historical, ontological, and civilizational scope.