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Source: *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Winter, 1975), pp. 186-212

Published by: [University of Wisconsin Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3512942>

Accessed: 06/03/2011 11:38

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Fernando Pessoa, the Saudosista

Margarida L. Losa

1. *Saudosismo*

Two years after the proclamation of the Republic on October 5, 1910, the new cultural society *Renascença Portuguesa* emerged in Porto as an outgrowth of the magazine *A Águia*. The magazine, which had started its publication in December 1910, was now remodeled and enlarged under a triad of new directors: one for the scientific, one for the artistic and one for the literary sections.¹ Teixeira de Pascoaes, a *nom de plume* for Joaquim Pereira Teixeira de Vasconcellos, a landowner's son from Amarante in the north of Portugal, became its literary director. Teixeira de Pascoaes was fairly well known as a poet and his reputation had recently increased in connection with a group of ideas, soon to be known as *saudosismo*, which he had begun to propagate. As *A Águia*'s new director, he decided to have these ideas preside over the remodeled magazine and the new *Renascença Portuguesa*.² His treasured literary friendship with Don Miguel de Unamuno, who visited him in Amarante and maintained an epistolary correspondence with him, also contributed to his glory.³ Unamuno became the magazine's correspondent in Spain. Earlier, asked by Teixeira de Pascoaes to lend a protective hand to the emerging movement, he had sent the following sonnet:

Del atlántico mar en las orillas
desgreñada e descalza una matrona
se sienta al pie de sierra a que corona
triste pinar. Apoya en las rodillas

los codos y en las manos las mejillas
y clava ansiosos ojos de leona
en la puesta del sol. El mar entona
su trágico cantar de maravillas.

Dice de luengas tierras y de azares
mientras ella sus pies en las espumas
bañando sueña en el fatal imperio

que se le hundi6 en los tenebrosos mares,
y mira como entre agoreras brumas
se alza Don Sebastián, rey del misterio.⁴

Except for the one extravagance of the leonine woman, all the thematic elements of the poem, namely the sea, the indefinite longing, the lost glory of the Empire and the vision of Don Sebastián reappearing from out of the sea mist, do correspond to the idiosyncracies of the new movement as they were felt by Pascoaes and several other members of his Porto *tertúlia*. Portugal, according to the *saudosistas*, was to be reborn not just out of the inglorious, concrete efforts dispensed by the newly born Republic, but out of the lyrical enthusiasm and the nostalgic glances cast toward the glorious Portuguese past by sensitive, imaginative people, in the hope of conjuring one or more new Sebastiãos who would come to raise the country to the grandeur which had preceded his reign but which fate had assigned to him to bring down to defeat in Alcazar-Kebir in 1578. The name of the magazine, *A Águia*, served well enough to indicate the strength that the new movement wished to embody, but *saudosismo* was to be the true spirit of Portugal's rebirth. The allegedly extreme lyrical sadness and nostalgic dissatisfaction of the Portuguese temperament were to become the source for the new golden era.⁵ *Saudade* was to be, according to Pascoaes and the other members of the group, the catchword for the movement. It was, according to them, an untranslatable term, an exclusive feeling of the Portuguese. Though it was proved otherwise in *A Águia* itself by an expert philologist, the word continued to be sung in the many poems published in the magazine and to be discussed, one way or another, in probably one third of its articles.⁶ It stood, according to Pascoaes' several rhapsodies, for the shield that was to protect Portugal from the evil influence of the modern industrialized democracies. It was to keep Portugal to her own "genuine" brand of living, to preserve the sanctity and quiet of her provincial beatitudes; her grandeur would arise out of sheer will and wishful thinking, the main incentive to be the shame of the present compared to the glory of the past. Two main elements, however, show us that *A Águia* did not become a typically reactionary or tradition-oriented magazine: its broad political sympathies and its religious tolerance. Pascoaes considered himself, for poetical purposes, a "transcendental pantheist"; other collaborators were anti-clerical deists; some were agnostics or, probably, even atheists (the ones who later dissented), some were Roman Catholic and, one assumes, went to church. To save Portugal, nationalism, in short, seemed to be the only ruling principle. The great tradition to look up to was the glorious period of the maritime discoveries, in which Portugal's minority of Arabs and Jews had joined hands with her Christians for the advancement of the sea sciences; in which pagan mythology had been allied to Christian faith to produce Camões' national epic; and in which the Portuguese state had found it necessary to strengthen itself against the abusive interference of its ally and protector of old, the Church of Rome.

It was in *A Águia* that Fernando Pessoa made his literary début. As seemed to be the destiny of most of his public appearances—they were few and, it seems, carefully selected—it scandalized the good judgement of some people, created controversy

and, in this particular instance, led to a quiet break of the poet with the magazine.⁷ My belief is, as I shall try to point out in the course of this paper, that notwithstanding this dispute, the main tenets of *saudosismo* remained with Pessoa all his life and that they do manifest themselves throughout his work, even when, as under his "heteronyms" Caeiro and Campos,⁸ he is deliberately trying to undermine its postulates.

Fernando Ant3nio Nogueira Pessoa was born in downtown Lisbon, 1888, in a building overlooking the National Opera House. Just two blocks away stands the *Igreja dos M3rtires*, a large city church, the chiming of whose bells Fernando Pessoa was to describe, around 1913, as follows:

Ó sino da minha aldeia
Dolente na tarde calma,
Cada tua badalada
Soa dentro da minha alma.

E é tão lento o teu soar,
Tão como triste da vida,
Que já a primeira pancada
Tem o som de repetida.

Por mais que me tanjas perto
Quando passo, sempre errante,
És para mim como um sonho,
Soas-me na alma distante.

A cada pancada tua,
Vibrante no céu aberto,
Sinto mais longe o passado,
Sinto a saudade mais perto.⁹

This poem reads, I feel, half like a hoax (due to the ultra-romantic pose and clichés), half like a sincere temperamental combination of *saudosismo* and the ennui of the decadents, the *vencidos da vida* of the previous generation. "Que já a primeira pancada/ Tem o som de repetida": from the start, Pessoa's *saudosismo* possessed a double consciousness. It was accepted by him as something desirable, nationally and culturally speaking, but not necessarily genuine or in accordance with the facts of real life and the demands of modern art. This kind of duplicity in Pessoa, of such good service to him when he half-heartedly joined the so-called Portuguese futurists, was what did him disservice among the *saudosistas*. Pascoaes and the *Renascença Portuguesa* were very much in earnest; they had no sense at all of duplicity, irony or put-on. They did not dissociate themselves from their work, their missions from their human flesh. Pessoa was the one to make these unforgivable "mistakes". As Pascoaes would say of him, as late as 1950 (!): "He was a great ironist . . . but he was not a poet," and "he tried to intellectualize poetry and that means its death."¹⁰

There may have been good reasons for Pessoa's special temperament, and quite a few of them are exposed in João Gaspar Simões' biography. When seven years old, Pessoa, whose father had died two years before, left with his mother for South Africa, where he was educated, far from "home", from Lisbon (or any Portuguese "village" of any kind), from aunts and uncles (he had a few remarkable ones), in a foreign language, in foreign schools and in the household of a "strange second father" (the Portuguese consul in Durban). This would have implanted in him a permanent feeling of uprootedness, in which nostalgia of very early childhood was mixed with some degree of pride in his British upbringing. Simões manages to deduce a great majority of the remaining relevant elements in Pessoa's temperamental formation either from the defection of his mother's attention (she also bore three more children), or from his Jewish ancestry, or from both.¹¹ In 1905, now seventeen years old, Pessoa returned to Portugal under the pretext of wanting to study *Letras* at the University of Lisbon, but more likely, judging by Simões interpretation, in the hope of re-establishing his broken roots with the Portuguese soil and his Portuguese childhood, an attempt whose alleged failure is in fact alluded to, in several different ways, in his poetry. He probably also hoped to establish himself as a great poet, something like a Portuguese Milton or Shakespeare, the apparent failure of which is also referred to in some of his more bitter verses. Perhaps he *was*, as Simões portrays him, an uprooted man, longing for some nook of comfort and tenderness, either in country, love or fame, none of which he ever found while he lived.¹² What we cannot doubt is that, as an artist, he certainly became implicated in expressing intensely felt distances, divisions of self, frustrated attempts at unity and reality. *Saudade* becomes a modern attitude in him, a complex web of self-conscious emotions. Pessoa does to *saudade* what no other *saudosista* seems to have dared to do: indeed, he intellectualizes it. But, contrary to Pascoaes' verdict, this does not mean either the death of lyrical poetry or of its sincere emotional motivation.

It is with a rather snobbish prose contribution that Pessoa introduced himself into the literary world. Though he was already writing poetry in Portuguese (in South Africa he had written mainly in English), he did not send any of it to the magazine. He felt, rather, the need to help define more clearly what the new *Renascença Portuguesa* was all about. He therefore sent to *A Águia* a series of articles entitled "A Nova Poesia Portuguesa Sociològicamente Considerada" and "A Nova Poesia Portuguesa no seu Aspecto Psicològico".¹³ What Pascoaes had tried to convey in a rhapsodical style, Pessoa tries to define with syllogisms and logical inductions. Mere lyrical rapture is put aside (but not in the least Pascoaes' basic irrationalist tenets) and glorious dreams are transformed into logically proven certainties. The golden era of Portugal was definitely going to come. The whole series of articles is a monument of barely disguised wishful fallacies which, apparently, even the far-gone *saudosistas* felt suspicious about. Pessoa's metaphysical idealism is carried to the farthest extremes. Still, he disguises it in the garb of a totally confident positivism.

The idea of the articles is to prove that the *saudosistas* are the first blooming of the glorious age that destiny bestowed upon Portugal, in the context of contemporary Europe. First, Pessoa claims, glorious ages are always preceded by the sprouting of poetry and ideas; only afterwards does political action come. The poets are harbingers, the first symptoms. Sociologically considered, the major premises offered as an analogy are England and France. To be proved is the "truth" that the new literary movement is the prelude to Portugal's superior version of England's and France's greatest ages. A Portuguese "supra-Camões" is announced, to be followed by a Portuguese Cromwell or Napoleon. Whoever reads the articles cannot avoid suspecting that Pessoa might already have been dreaming of himself as the "supra-Camões". But what he could not then have foreseen was that the "Portuguese Cromwell" had also already been born and was just a year younger than himself. No matter how little they may have desired it, the *saudosistas* did make things smoother, culturally speaking, for the implantation of Salazar's regime, easily the most *saudosista* dictatorship in twentieth-century Europe. Leaning on the arm of the Catholic Church and guided by its narrowest and most conventional social and religious views, it was certainly not the regime that the imagination of most *saudosistas* had hoped for, and therefore only a few of them adhered to it.¹⁴ But they certainly acted, during the short-lived Republic, as some of its cultural launchers. And Pessoa, staunch anti-socialist and no fervent democrat, seems to have felt a calling to act as its prophet. He wrote in "A Nova Poesia Portuguesa Sociolôgicamente Considerada":

Conservemo-nos, por enquanto, absolutamente portugueses, rìgidamente republicanos, intransigentemente inimigos do republicanismo actual. Brevemente começará a raiar nas nossas almas a intuição política do nosso futuro. Talvez o Supra-Camões possa dizer alguma coisa sobre o assunto. . . . Suavemente, se puder ser, será a transformação feita, a criação começada. Mas se assim não for, se esta gente de hoje não curar de se tornar portuguesa, confiemos sem horror, que o Cromwell vindouro os saberá afastar, aplicando-lhes por triste necessidade, a *ultima ratio* de Napoleão, de Cavaignac e do Coronel Conde de Gallifet.¹⁵

In the second series of articles "A Nova Poesia Portuguesa no seu Aspecto Psicológico", Pessoa attempts to approach the metaphysics and aesthetics of the movement. He finds in the style of its poetry three characteristics: *vagueness*, *subtlety* and *complexity*; that is to say, an imprecision in locale (no preoccupation with realism) and a preoccupation both with subjective intricacies, which are according to him *subtly* explored, and with the external world of Nature observed in a *complex* relationship with the subjective world.¹⁶ Everything however is portrayed with *clarity* (*nitidez*), *plasticity* and *imagination*. These characteristics lead, in Pessoa's opinion, to a definite kind of balance,

which he defines as "spiritualization of Nature" allied to a "naturalization of the spirit". Hence the new literature is, Pessoa writes, metaphysical and religious. He seems to find, however, some difficulty in defining this anti-materialistic metaphysics and this pantheist religion, since they differ, he feels, from any traditional form of spirituality. We may attribute part of this difficulty to the contradictions inherent in the eclectic philosophical trends of the times, and part to the fact that Pessoa was speculating, in any case, on what he would like things to be, rather than on what they were. Most of the poems published in *A Águia*, including Pascoaes', convey only a traditional kind of Christian sentimentality and mysticism. It is in Pessoa's own poetry that this traditional kind of sentimentality and mysticism is not indulged in. We find there the metaphysical longing he attributes to the *saudosistas*, "o querer encontrar em tudo um além," but devoid, mostly, of any faith in its resourcefulness, at least as far as the finding of happiness on earth is concerned. Pessoa's *saudade* seems to be nourished by an eternal absence:

A ausência tem uma filha
que tem por nome *saudade*.
Eu sustento mãe e filha,
bem contra minha vontade.¹⁷

For a better idea of the inflation of sentiment in some of the *saudosistas*' minds, we can pause to read a few sentences about *saudade* from a text by Pascoaes:

Não me cansarei de afirmar que a Saudade é, em última e profunda análise, o amor carnal espiritualizado pela Dôr; é o casamento do Beijo com a Lágrima; é Vênus e a Virgem Maria numa só Mulher. É a síntese do Céu e da Terra; ponto onde todas as forças cósmicas se cruzam; o centro do Universo; a alma da Natureza dentro da alma humana e a alma do homem dentro da alma da Natureza. Saudade é a personalidade eterna da nossa Raça. . . . É um estado de alma latente que amanhã será Consciência e Civilização Lusitana.¹⁸

In spite of the rhetoric, these thoughts are quite representative. But the truth is that, whereas the nostalgic nationalist writings of such "gay and sociable creatures" like Pascoaes and his fellow-poets of *A Águia* "cozily settled in their beloved country," "proprietors," "teachers," or "sons of well-to-do families"¹⁹ are more or less forgotten today (except in primary and secondary school textbooks), Pessoa's poetry, where *saudade* is a much grimmer affair, is not.

Tomar a ânsia de uma felicidade inatingível, a angústia dos sonhos irrealizados, a inapetência ante a acção e a vida, como critério definidor do génio ou do talento, imediatamente facilita a todo o indivíduo que sente

aquela ânsia, sofre daquela angústia e é presa daquela inapetência, o convencimento de que é uma individualidade interessante, que o Destino fadando-a para aquelas ânsias, aqueles sofrimentos, e aquelas impossibilidades, implicitamente fadou para a grandeza intelectual.²⁰

It is not against yearning, anguish and passivity that Pessoa is writing in this fragment, but against the lack of intelligent discipline of these sentiments in their artistic expression. *Saudade* is abundant in everyone, and we do certainly meet with it in most of Pessoa's poems. But there it is a qualified, thought-over, intellectualized feeling. Lyrical romanticism does not meet the requirements of the age. Feelings have to confront the colossus of modern civilization, even if to oppose it. They have to be reasoned out.

By keeping at a distance, as a craftsman, from any immediate manifestation of emotion, having it mediated by the poet's reason and craft, Pessoa contributed to the transmutation of traditional poetry (in its inherited classical and romantic forms) into modern poetry. By casting away most of the prevalent poetical conventions, he became aware that the modern poet needed to devise and master his own. He left *A Águia* to join hands with Mário Sá-Carneiro and launch their *sensacionismo*, and even, for a while, with Santa-Rita Pintor and Almada Negreiros to launch a Portuguese futurist movement. He allowed himself to be influenced by all sorts of foreign novelties, a sin the *saudosistas* seem never to have been able to forgive.²¹ The subjective world of emotions and sensations is still the source of all his poetry, but mediated by self-consciousness and by the contriving nature of art, as a form of expression.²² With all this, Pessoa remained enclosed in what can be characterized as his social alienation and his isolationism. He found himself often caught in a game of scholastic dialectics of assertions and negations. His poetry is, more often than not, a self-consuming dilaceration of the self, with only occasional glimpses of escape—unless this very escape is organized in a definite pose, as is the case with the "total objectivism" of Alberto Caeiro and the "stoic-epicurean classicism" of Ricardo Reis.

2. *Two possible poses: Alberto Caeiro and the return to simple and matter-of-fact nature; Ricardo Reis and the wisdom of total renunciation, classical style.*

In the poem "Ela canta, pobre ceifeira", most likely written early in the year 1914, Pessoa expresses a longing to lead a simple, non-cerebral life. He is visualizing a woman harvesting in the fields and considering, with mixed feelings, the possibility of exchanging his life style with hers:

Ela canta, pobre ceifeira,
Julgando-se feliz talvez;

Canta e ceifa, e a sua voz, cheia
De alegre e anónima viuvez,

Ondula como um canto de ave
No ar limpo como um limiar,
E há curvas no enredo suave
Do som que ela tem a cantar.

.

Ah, canta, canta sem razão!
O que em mim sente 'stá pensando.
Derrama no meu coração
A tua incerta voz ondeando!

Ah, poder ser tu, sendo eu!
Ter a tua alegre inconsciência,
E a consciência disso! Ó céu!
Ó campo! Ó canção! A ciência

Pesa tanto e a vida é tão breve!
Entrai por mim dentro! Tornai
Minha alma a vossa sombra leve!
Depois, levando-me, passai!
(OP, 74-5)²³

Alberto Caeiro, the poet-peasant created, according to Pessoa's own account, in March 1914 with the original intention of playing a hoax on Sá-Carneiro—to make believe the existence of an as yet unknown bucolic poet—happens to embody the "alegre inconsciência" of the harvesting woman and the desired "consciência disso".²⁴ Alberto Caeiro is the philosopher of the uselessness of all philosophies, except his own, a kind of 'atomism' or 'finitism' which says that "a Natureza é partes sem um todo" (OP, 165), and that "as coisas são o único sentido oculto das coisas" (OP, 161); he is the poet who can sing of the concrete in abstract terms, as when he writes "sou o Descobridor da Natureza./ Sou o Argonauta das sensações verdadeiras" (OP, 164); he is the man who spends a great deal of time thinking about how not to think is the best way to live; the advocate of the necessity of seeing things without any pre-conceived notion, except, naturally, the pre-conceived notion that you should accept what is seen as it is seen, without any further questioning. Possibly, led by his intention of faking the existence of a peasant or quasi-peasant poet, Pessoa was able to displace himself into a totally new imaginary environment, in which he found himself confronted with the resourceful opportunity of 'seeing' things *as if* from a candid point of view: that of the half-primitive man who lives and enjoys living in the country, of the no-nonsense man who has, supposedly, no need for speculative culture, having somehow discovered on his own that it does not provide any clues to the Universe, any happiness, any rest. Caeiro is not to be sentimental

about his bucolic environment, however. In fact, his appreciations of nature are an uninterrupted sequence of understatements.²⁵ He is to be a matter-of-fact man with only "occasional" longings about having things differently from the way they are. He is prosaic in style, unrestrained in his repetitions of whole sentences within the same poem, sure of himself and quite self-sufficient. In his taking Nature as his main vital topic, meaningful only in itself and for itself, Caeiro, Pessoa himself discovers, reminds one of Pascoaes. But then, Pessoa adds, he is also the reverse of Pascoaes, trying (but not quite succeeding, as I hope to show) to refuse all meaning to the realm of *saudade*. He wants to impose the notion of *limit*, of finite reality. Things are *just* what they are and what they seem, they have no transcendence. To say otherwise is the insane fancy of spiritually sick men.²⁶ As if better to reverse the value of transcendent meanings, Caeiro finds himself placed in a type of environment similar to the one usually selected by the *saudosistas*; and he enjoys the *aurea mediocritas* of his village and sees not much meaning in anyone trying to impose the advancement of social conditions and civilization in general upon it. However, what a difference in the way of expressing emotion! It is as follows that he describes his "sleepy hollow":²⁷

Como um grande borrão de fogo sujo
O sol posto demora-se nas nuvens que ficam.
Vem um silvo vago de longe na tarde calma.
Deve ser um cobão longínquo.

Neste momento vem-me uma vaga saudade
E um vago desejo plácido
Que aparece e desaparece.

Também às vezes, à flor dos ribeiros
Formam-se bolhas na água
Que nascem e se desmancham.

E não têm sentido nenhum.
Salvo serem bolhas de água
Que nascem e se desmancham.

(OP,161)

The whole poem is a masterpiece of understatement. We hardly know where the poet is and we never come to know what the poet suddenly feels a longing for when the train is heard in the far distance. As soon as he states the existence of such a heterodox feeling, he is already qualifying it as vague, placid, to go as it came, nothing more than bubbles on brooks' surfaces. Whatever is specifically human, or spiritual, has to be neutralized. Man has to be like Nature; the reverse, the *spiritualization* of Nature, which Pessoa had detected in the *saudosistas*, has to be, in theory at least, missing in Caeiro. But as alluded above, it is not always so. Caeiro, being the poet he is, is continuously threatened by the sincerity of his contriver Pessoa. The solid man of the country,

preacher of objectivity and common sense—in a bucolic site—still keeps ingrained in him an undeniable, residual feeling of alienation from the outside world (the world that is neither fictive nor bucolic). Unforgivably contrary to plan, Pessoa's *saudade* surfaces in quite a number of Caeiro's poems, in verses such as: "Quem me dera que a minha vida fosse um carro de bois/ Que vem a chiar manhãzinha cedo, pela estrada,/ . . ." (OP,150); "Quem me dera que eu fosse o burro do moleiro/ E que ele me batesse e me estimasse . . . / Antes isso que ser o que atravessa a vida/ Olhando para trás de si e tendo pena . . ." (OP,151); "O luar quando bate na relva/ Não sei que coisa me lembra . . . / Lembra-me a voz da criada velha/ Contando-me contos de fadas" (OP,151); "Se eu pudesse trincar a terra toda/ E sentir-lhe um paladar,/ Seria mais feliz um momento . . ." (OP,152). Caeiro himself takes charge of denying value to such emotionally unbalanced moments. Concerning the two first poems quoted, he says, in a preceding poem, that they were written when he was sick (OP,150); and in another poem, he takes care to state that "Ah, como os mais simples dos homens/ São doentes e confusos e estúpidos/ Ao pé da clara simplicidade/ E saúde em existir/ Das árvores e das plantas!" (OP,141). But then we know that what makes Caeiro what he is, the controversial "bucolic" of modern times, is precisely his being contrived by someone who is preaching what he is not doing, but feels he should, *perhaps*, be doing. And the same goes for the people who, he expects, will be reading him. Pessoa is obviously not concerned about nature. The whole bucolic setting is a metaphor, including Caeiro. Pessoa is concerned with the creation of possible substitute life values. But even Caeiro's "total objectivism", his trampling on transcendentalism, is caught in Pessoa's social isolationism. In Caeiro he is, after all, trying to dream up an individual protection against the modern city's realities. Caeiro has the same attitude of passive acceptance or subjective inner rejection of the outside social world, which is a characteristic of all the heteronyms and of Pessoa himself. Caeiro's views are near to total individual separatism. In poem XXXII of "O Guardador de Rebanhos"—the title of his book—he writes of how he was listening to a man from the city on the previous day, who talked about justice, the suffering of the workers, the poor and the rich, and then comments:

Mas eu mal o estava ouvindo
 Que me importa a mim os homens
 E o que sofrem ou supõem que sofrem?
 Sejam como eu—não sofrerão.
 Todo o mal do mundo vem de nos importamos
 uns com os outros.
 Quer para fazer bem, quer para fazer mal.

Significantly, Caeiro will rather worry about how this kind of talk somehow disturbs the bucolic setting of his soul:

En no que estava pensando
 Quando o amigo de gente falava

(E isso me comoveu até às lágrimas),
 Era em como o murmúrio longínquo dos chocalhos
 A esse entardecer
Não parecia os sinos duma capela pequenina
 A que fossem à missa as flores e os regatos
 E as almas simples como a minha.

(OP,158)

My belief is that even though Pessoa's heteronyms may be aimed at offering possible substitute life values or life styles, they still reveal themselves, invariably, as what Pessoa mostly is in extra-literary matters: a *saudosista* at heart. Hence the underlying unity which, as most critics have come to feel, links the whole of Pessoa's poetical production. I use the word *saudosista*, rather than conservative, for example, because, as a rule, the heteronyms do not so much seek refuge or guidance in some form of past or tradition—not even Reis with his classicism—as they try to erect some form of original, individual response toward an outside world to which they cannot or will not adjust.²⁸

The wisdom of total passivity and acceptance of destiny, indifferent to change, is embodied in Ricardo Reis. He does not differ widely from Caeiro—of whom he is said, in Pessoa's notes, to be a disciple—except that the prosaic style disappears to give way to a disciplined, refined and elevated poetical style, and that the total lack of transcendence of Caeiro's universe gives way to a world where there is the absolute transcendence of *fate*. Whereas Caeiro, though being a "pagan" at heart, had only Christian mythology as a frame of religious reference, Reis, as a cultured man who studied Latin and Greek, deals, as a rule, with pagan subject matter.

Reis' major model seems to have been Horace's odes.²⁹ However, his mood is less one of glorification of the virtues of a simple and moderate life—than one of renunciation and resignation. "A obra de Ricardo Reis," writes Pessoa in one of his self-explicatory prose fragments, "é profundamente triste, é um esforço lúcido e disciplinado para obter uma calma qualquer".³⁰ Resume-se a um epicurismo triste toda a filosofia de Ricardo Reis," he writes in another fragment (PI,386). Reis savors his own lack of happiness, of actual participation in life, and here we are, *mutatis mutandis*, in the realm of the Portuguese *saudade*, that "joy of grief", or "sentimento doce amargo," which Mrs. Caroline Michaëlis writes about.³¹ Reis is resigned to enjoying the world as it is because, I am inclined to feel, none of the better things a human being might expect will possibly be given to him. Absence of an indefinite kind permeates his poetry. In the following poem this absence gains, for a moment, the concrete connotation of the poet's past, which is, however, immediately qualified as only something dreamt of, the nostalgic feeling being restored to its indefinite shape in the present self, where only "blind eyes" can perceive it:

Se recordo quem fui, outrem me vejo,
 E o passado é o presente na lembrança.

Quem fui é alguém que amo
 Porém sòmente em sonho.
 E a saudade que me aflige a mente
 Não é de mim nem do passado visto,
 Senão de quem habito
 Por trás dos olhos cegos.
 Nada, senão o instante me conhece.
 Minha mesma lembrança é nada, e sinto
 Que quem sou e quem fui
 São sonhos diferentes.
 (OP,232)

Reis is constantly aware of the imminence of death, since he does not allow himself to expect any more from life than what is given in each fleeting moment, his fleeting moments being blessed but sad ones. The brevity of life and the certainty of death are recurrent themes in his odes. Passive resignation to destiny, moderate enjoyment of what is given, are what is preached:

Como se cada beijo
 Fora de despedida,
 Minha Cloé, beijemo-nos amando.
 Talvez que já nos toque
 No ombro a mão, que chama
 À barca que não vem senão vazia;
 E que no mesmo feixe
 Ata o que mútuos fomos
 E a alheia soma universal da vida.
 (OP225-6)

This covering with human detachment of the life span that mediates until death is intensified by the dignity the individual must assume while going through it. Reis never complains about anything; he has achieved his own kind of self-sufficiency, the same way as Caeiro has. The following poem links together these two ideas of death and dignity:

Sereno aguarda o fim que pouco tarda.
 Que é qualquer vida? Breves sóis e sono.
 Quanto pensas emprega
 Em não pensares.
 Ao nauta o mar obscuro é a rota clara.
 Tu, na confusa solidão da vida,
 A ti mesmo te elege
 (Não sabes de outro) porto.
 (OP,238)

"A ti mesmo te elege/ . . . porte," writes Reis. Or as expressed in an earlier poem: "Senta-te ao sol. Abdica/ E sê rei de ti próprio" (OP,203). This sense of having the duty to preserve individual dignity, even in the presence of death, might qualify Reis as a stoic, and not only as an epicurean. Pessoa claims he is both

(PI,342). But then individual dignity is the only notion of duty that Reis has. Like Caeiro, he feels no calling to interfere with others. He keeps himself in isolation, even when addressing his beloved Lídias and Cloés. His stoicism is, of all things, *soft*: "Negue-me tudo a sorte, menos vê-la,/ Que eu, *stóico sem dureza*,/ Na sentença gravada do Destino/ Quero gozar as letras" (OP,232, italics mine). His interest in public life is nil: "Prefiro rosas, men amor, à pátria/ E antes magnólias amo/ Que a glória e a virtude.// Logo que a vida me não canse, deixo/ Que a vida por mim passe/ Logo que fique o mesmo" (OP,216). Through his indifference, however, he still demands a moderate amount of enjoyment. He is, indeed, a rather "sad epicurean": "Na sentença gravada do Destino, *quero gozar as letras*," he writes. He expects nothing "salvo o desejo de indiferença/ E a *confiança mole*/ Na *hora fugitiva*" (OP, 216, italics mine). Reis, who preaches the necessity of recognizing the total limits of human power against the superior control of fate, thereby partially counteracting the soaring aspirations of the *saudosistas*, is indeed a very elaborate and well contrived mask for this estrangement and estrangement is one of the main ingredients of the Portuguese *saudade*.

We shall now proceed to meet the last of the important heteronyms, Álvaro de Campos. Campos does not, in theory, avoid the contemporary world. He oscillates between a yearning to surrender himself to it, to be possessed or destroyed by it, and a yearning to give everything up, to retreat into his defeatist conclusion of being a total worldly failure, of being someone who could never find a place in the sun for himself.

3. *The modern industrial world as experienced from the outpost of the longing poetical soul.*

Campos' poetry seems to have no particular philosophy, except an aesthetic one: "sentir tudo de todas as maneiras," and no fixed place, either in landscape or in "literary time" from which to poetize. He is supposed to be a naval engineer who has studied in Scotland, and is therefore called to express everything that is modern, contemporary. He tries to mingle in the busy world of modern city life. He has no given frame within which to assert his individual dignity and self-sufficiency, nor does he strive to have one. He feels, supposedly, without discrimination. He is improper, immoderate, scandalous. His mask is, in a sense, his lack of mask. Because not only his vision is naked—as Caeiro's supposedly was—but also his soul, his emotions tend to run somewhat loose, except that he *is* aware that his emotions tend to run somewhat loose. (Campos' sensations usually seem to have paid a previous furtive visit to Pessoa's intellect and artistic insight.) He becomes somewhat sentimental, "romantic" even, but he is aware that he becomes so. He uses his emotions in their furthest development as sensations. He piles sensations upon sensations, the inner and the outer ones. Accumulation is one of the techniques he masters best. The sense of absence which we have found in Reis

becomes, in Campos, as a rule, rather a sense of impotence. He is the man who recognizes the vitality and expansive energy of the modern world, but cannot help confronting it with his own individual lack of it.

The lost childhood metaphor is more recurrent in Campos than in Caeiro or Reis. It fits well an emotional man like him. It is never too widely elaborated upon, but it is a constant counter-motive both in his early entranced odes and in his later pessimistic poems.³² That his childhood is the metaphor of a longing for refuge, Campos himself realizes. He may choose, since he is prone to rhetorical dialectics, to express this in a paradoxical little poem:

Depus a máscara e vi-me ao espelho.—
Era a criança de há quantos anos.
Não tinha mudado nada . . .
É essa a vantagem de saber tirar a máscara.
É-se sempre a criança,
O passado que foi
A criança.
Depus a máscara, e tornei a pô-la.
Assim é melhor,
Assim sem a máscara.
E volto à personalidade como a um *términus* de linha.
(OP,359)³³

Since Campos is an emotional being, his inner self is often also referred to as his *heart*. As a rule his heart aches, and his soul is a barren landscape, if "unmasked". The two hundred fifty verses of the "Ode Triunfal" do speak out for the triumph of the modern industrial world over the poet's senses, but the reverse is not true. The poet does not triumph in that world in any way, however much he tries to imagine his doing so. Campos is again just a spectator, with only some mixed and seemingly Whitmanesque yearnings to become a part of it all. "Ah, como eu desejaria ser o *souteneur* disto tudo!" he exclaims, after having invoked the world of the machine, industry and cosmopolitan civilization in eighty-two rhapsodical verses, from his alleged location under the big electric lamps of a factory. And at the end of the poem he considers his longing already in the negative: "Ah não ser eu toda a gente e toda a parte" (OP,266). Whitman, Campos' admired prototype, would hardly have expressed such a feeling in the negative. Pessoa, even when "liberated" through his expansive self Campos, can only *long* to become a part, but in actuality remains confined in his barren or masked soul. "Não sou indigno de ti, bem o sabes, Walt,/ Não sou indigno de ti, basta sau-dar-te para não of ser . . ./ Eu tão contíguo à inércia, tão facilmente cheio de tédio," he states in "Saudação a Walt Whitman" (OP,294). We are back again in the realm of *saudade* and, moreover, of *ennui*.

The social miseries which Campos, a city man, cannot fail to observe, do not awaken in him, as they did not in Caeiro, any feelings for redressing, but rather "memories from childhood".

Let us consider the following sequence, still from the "Ode Triunfal":

A gentalha que anda pelos andaimes e que vai para casa
 Por vielas quase irreais de estreiteza e podridão.
 Maravilhosa gente humana que vive como os cães,
 Que está abaixo de todos os sistemas morais,
 Para quem nenhuma religião foi feita,
 Nenhuma arte criada,
 Nenhuma política destinada para eles!
 Como eu vos amo a todos, porque sois assim,
 Nem imorais de tão baixos que sois, nem bons nem maus,
 Intangíveis por todos os progressos,
 Fauna maravilhosa do fundo do mar da vida!

(Na nora do quintal da minha casa
 O burro anda à roda, anda à roda,
 E o mistério do mundo é do tamanho disto.
 Limpa o suor com o braço, trabalhador descontente.
 A luz do sol abafa o silêncio das esferas
 E havemos todos de morrer,
 Ó Pinheirais sombrios do crepúsculo,
 Pinheirais onde a minha infância era outra coisa
 Do que eu sou hoje . . .)

(OP,264)

In the "Ode Marítima", an even longer poem, the apposition of the poet's nostalgia or his alienation from the actual surroundings, and of the confusion of the modern commercial, import-export world, is more complex. It is a poem highly revealing of Pessoa's persistent links to the *saudosistas*, transcendentalism and all, at the height of his vanguardist phase.³⁴ The technique of intersection—"real landscape" images intersected by the imaginary soul's images—and of sensationism—decomposition of each sensation in several components or aggregates—are fully developed. Thematically, however, the "Ode Marítima" is an almost epic hymn to Portuguese *saudade*—modernly conceived—with all its due ingredients of unsatisfaction, indefinite longing and absence, spiritualization of nature and naturalization of spirit. Only the explicit presence of the Portuguese navigators is missing to make this *saudade* nationally complete. Campos is still Campos, the modern engineer graduated in Scotland, and therefore he prefers to invoke the English pirates instead. The harbour, from which he watches the double traffic of ships and emotions, serves well as a fixed point of reference. From the very beginning it awakens its own symbolism, its own metaphorical possibilities:

. . .
 Todo o atracar, todo o largar de navio,
 É—sinto-o em mim como o meu sangue—
 Inconscientemente simbólico, terrivelmente
 Ameaçar de significações metafísicas

Que perturbam em mim quem eu fui . . .

Ah, todo o cais é uma saudade de pedra!

. . .

(OP,270)

The poet-engineer, though by profession entangled with the modern machine world, cannot help, moreover, having his private atavistic feelings: "Eu o engenheiro, eu o civilizado, eu o educado no estrangeiro,/ Gostaria de ter outra vez ao pé de minha vista só veleiros e barcos de madeira,/ De não saber doutra vida marítima que a antiga vida dos mares!" (OP,275) At other times the inebriation of energy and power which the present and past sea life produces in him has an inverted response in his heart. Campos feels a yearning to be possessed, to sacrifice himself away, to be subjugated, crushed, victimized: "Façam enxárcias das minhas veias!/ Amarras dos meus músculos!/ Arranquem-me a pele, preguem-me às quilhas./ E possa eu sentir a dor dos pregos e nunca deixar de sentir!" (OP,270) His lust for cruelty and violence remains, as a rule, passive: "Ser o meu corpo passivo a mulher-to-das-as-mulheres/ Que foram violadas, mortas, feridas, rasgadas pelos piratas!/ Ser no meu corpo subjugado a fêmea que tem de ser deles!/ E sentir tudo isso—todas essas coisas duma só vez pela espinha!" (OP,282) The motif of sexual inversion is not far at all, to my thinking, from the social, civilizational motif of retreat. Pessoa himself, always keeping his mental capabilities awake, seems to be aware of the relation between the two. Campos' chanting of the strong sensations at the hands of the pirates is but a way for him of expressing some sort of compensation for the physical deterioration, the impotence of modern civilized man. Rather than glorifying, he is condemning a civilization which he feels is wrong, and of which he considers himself a victim. But then, as the imaginary orgy with the pirates shows, Campos seems to enjoy his role as victim, as passive partner. This could be interpreted as meaning that he has no intention of changing his role as an alienated creature in a world in which technical progress and social class change, though more or less minutely observed, transcend his capabilities of adjustment. Campos, not unlike Pessoa, is after all an outsider in the world of the machine he has been assigned to sing. He is and remains the son of the *fin de siècle*, of the *douceur des mœurs*, a misplaced gentleman who watches the big modern ships from behind his monocle and his "casaco exageradamente cintado" ("Saudação a Walt Whitman", OP, 294). The modern commercial world invokes in him a nostalgia for integrating everything in either some fictitious realm of Absolutes, or in the realm of the past and its adventures in "*veleiros*". The two things can, besides, be linked together: "Porque os mares antigos são a Distância Absoluta/ O Puro Longe, liberto do peso do Actual . . . / E ah, como aqui me lembra tudo essa vida melhor,/ Esses mares, maiores porque se navegavam mais devagar." (OP,275) His turbulent imaginary adventures awaken in him a desire for moderate emotion and privacy: "Ah, o orvalho sobre a minha excitação!/ O frescor

nocturno do meu oceano interior!/. . . / E a minha infância feliz acorda, como uma lágrima em mim." (OP, 286)

Campos is certainly Pessoa's most strenuous attempt at confronting face to face, and at expressing, an emerging new world in which the poet, unwillingly, has been born. He is therefore also the one that most often tries to assert a hysterical reaction, going on to imaginary fantasies of power and autocracy. Campos' irrationalism is allowed the fullest swing of all heteronyms and of Pessoa himself. He is made to be the author of the fascist-sounding manifesto "Ultimatum", first published in the single issue of *Portugal Futurista*, in 1917. In this manifesto, Campos asserts the need Europe feels for dumping all tradition, for abolishing her so-called democracies and her so-called Christian-humanitarian social values, to be then respectively substituted by a "scientific monarchy" and a "humanity of engineers". He then proceeds to wildly cry for the need of great and strong leaders, generals and "masters of people", and for the need of the "complete", "complex", "harmonic" *superman*.³⁵

In the postwar phase of Campos' poetry, it is the direct confrontation with the poet's alienation that becomes his major theme. He lapses into a sense of utter futility, frustration and despair. His naked soul is made to confront its own nothingness. His aching heart is made to feel its pain and bitterness in all possible ways, to accumulate as many sensations as possible. They turn now around the poet's sense of void and impotence: "Não: não quero nada./ Já disse que não quero nada." (OP, 317) "Nada me prende a nada." (320) "Não sou nada./ Nunca serei nada. Não posso querer ser nada." (323) These are the first verses of some of the poems of this phase. We discover that Campos, like any good *saudosista*, *had* had lofty aspirations of succeeding in the world, possibly due to what he, or rather Pessoa, felt was his calling to become and be recognized as the greatest national poet. Campos met with no success. His half-hearted attempts at catching the train of civilization during his vanguardist phase had brought no visible results (so Campos feels). He writes in the poem "Tabacaria": "O mundo é para quem nasce para o conquistar/ E não para quem sonha que pode conquistá-lo, ainda que tenha razão." (OP, 325) "Quantos Césares fui!" he repeats sarcastically in his poem "Pecado Original" (OP, 354). "Rai va de não ter trazido o passado roubado na algibeira!" he exclaims in "Aniversário". The total uprootedness, barrenness and frustration of Campos' soul has, however, a kind of counterpoint in Pessoa's poems, that is, the ones signed under his own name, and, in particular, in the small nationalistic book, *Mensagem*. Here Pessoa seems to find some repose, a *tradition* to lean against, from which he derives some sort of social strength. It is the tradition of the Cabala. Life is *fate* indeed, but fate can be interpreted with the aid of the esoteric 'map' which history is.

4. *The reactionary comforts of the longing soul: Sebastianism and the myth of the Fifth Empire.*

In a long self-explanatory letter to his friend and fellow poet Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues, dated January 19, 1915, Pessoa, involved at this time in the preliminaries of publishing *Orpheu*, the "sensationalist" magazine, complained of how he felt a sense of inner incompatibility with his literary colleagues, with the exception, of course, of his addressee:

. . .
Dá-se esta sua capacidade para me compreender porque você é, como eu fundamentalmente um espírito religioso; e, dos que de perto literariamente me cercam, você sabe bem que (por superiores que sejam como artistas) como *almas*, pròprioamente, não contam, não tendo nenhum deles a consciência (que em mim é quotidiana) da terrível importância da Vida, essa consciência que nos impossibilita de fazer arte meramente pela arte, e sem a consciência de um dever a cumprir para com nós-próprios e para com a humanidade.

A few pages later he writes:

A ideia patriótica sempre mais ou menos presente nos meus propósitos, avulta agora em mim; e não penso em fazer arte que não medite fazê-lo para erguer alto o nome português através do que eu consiga realizar. É uma consequência de encarar a sério a arte e a vida. Outra atitude não pode ter para com a sua própria no-ção-do-dever quem olha religiosamente para o espectáculo triste e misterioso do Mundo.

.
Agora, tendo visto tudo e sentido tudo, tenho o dever de me fechar em casa no meu espírito e trabalhar, quanto possa e em tudo quanto possa, para o progresso da civilização e o alargamento da consciência da humanidade. Oxalá me não desvie disto o meu perigoso feitio demasiado multilateral, adaptável a tudo, sempre alheio a si próprio e sem nexos dentro de si.

Mantenho, é claro, o meu propósito de lançar pseudônimo a obra de Caeiro-Reis-Campos. Isso é toda uma literatura que eu criei e vivi, que é sincera, porque é sentida, e que constitui uma corrente com influência possível, benéfica inconstestavelmente, nas almas dos outros. . . . Chamo insinceras às cousas feitas para fazer pasmar, e às cousas, também—*repáre nisto, que é importante*—que não contêm uma fundamental ideia metafísica, isto é, por onde não passa, ainda que como um vento, uma noção da gravidade e do mistério da Vida.³⁶

This letter well demonstrates, I believe, how Pessoa always felt somewhat of an outsider in the midst of the new modernists, however much he may have tried, and even succeeded, in leading them. (Things were even worse when he became involved with

short-lived Portuguese futurism, in 1917.) His metaphysical and spiritual disquiet, his *saudade*, runs, as I hope I have succeeded in showing, through the poetry of all three heteronyms. They all sit at the threshold of the unsolvable mystery of life and try to put forward different aesthetic *poses* by which life is rendered livable and art possible. Pessoa's nationalistic interests, ostensibly put aside for the sake of art, or perhaps only reversed for the sake of agitation during his vanguardist period, had been a part of him from the beginning, as we have seen in the article he wrote for *A Águia*. The political attitudes the heteronyms assume are not nationalistic, but neither are they progressive in any directly political sense. Caeiro and Reis prefer to abstain from any political and social participation. Campos is critical of the social-political situation, often in a sarcastic way, and tends, when advocating change, to drastic, dictatorial measures, as made explicit in his "Ultimatum". Pessoa proper is usually more serene and mystical, and in his political prose writings usually closer to a mild conservative stand.

Besides Campos' "Ultimatum", two other pieces of socio-political prose created a stir at the time of their publication.³⁷ One was Pessoa's *Interregno*, a public defense of the military dictatorship proclaimed in Portugal in 1928 (which was to usher in Salazar's civilian dictatorship). Another was an article in defense of Freemasonry, published in the daily newspaper *Diário de Lisboa*, on January 4, 1935. In between the two, his poetry book *Mensagem* was published and received a prize from the government department of culture, the "Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional" (December 1934). By 1920, Pessoa had already published a nationalistic poem praising the very short rule of the dictatorial president Sidónio Pais (assassinated), who had also come to power through a military coup, in 1918. Both the poem "A Memória de Sidónia Pais" (60 quatrains) and the essay *Interregno* were published under the sponsorship of a political group called *Núcleo de Ação Nacional*, which ran a magazine called *Ação*, where Pessoa published some of his political writings.³⁸ What precisely were the connections between Pessoa and the *Núcleo de Ação Nacional*, I have not been able to determine. João Gaspar Simões does not elaborate on this in his biography. The same obscurity remains, in my mind at least, about the possible connection between the *Núcleo* and Freemasonry. They might have been the public and the secretive side of the same thing, considering that the 1928 government made reservations about the publication of *Interregno* (intended to be published anonymously as a manifesto of conditional support for the new regime by the *Núcleo*), if not signed. Its author, Pessoa, was in this way made to come out in the open. Did these reservations mean uneasiness—in a government supported by, and needing the support of the Catholic Church—about concomitant support from anti-Catholic Freemasonry?

Also not quite clear, obviously, is Pessoa's relationship to occultism in general. Simões seems to have gone a long way in bringing several loose pieces together. Pessoa himself, in a letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro, denies belonging to any esoteric order and ascribes his interest in theosophy and occultism to his

having been asked to translate some theosophical works from 1915 onwards.³⁹ But was he asked to make the translations only because he knew English well, or because he was already known to have some interest in, or some connection with the field? Simões transcribes a letter that Pessoa wrote to one of his aunts in June 1916, in which he mentions the spiritualistic sessions she used to hold at her home and which he attended. (Pessoa had lived with this aunt for a while, until she moved to Switzerland in November 1914.)⁴⁰ G. R. Lind mentions that some of Pessoa's automatic mediumistic writings found in his papers were signed with the name of an uncle of his, who was a retired army officer and not a well-known poet.⁴¹ It is possible that this uncle, whom Pessoa appreciated, also had some affiliation either with Freemasonry or with a Portuguese theosophical society, or with both: (In Simões' biography he is only described as a highly peculiar individual, widely read and with very pessimistic leanings.)⁴² In a slanderous pamphlet against Pessoa provoked by his defense of the Freemasons, it was also disclosed that one of Pessoa's ancestors, seven generations earlier, had been an astrologer and occultist!⁴³

While there is no doubt about is that Pessoa's interest in national affairs is closely linked with his cultivation of the occult. In the poem "A Memória de Sidónio Pais" he calls for a re-incarnation of the dead president, fusing it with the motif of *Sebastianism*:

. . .
 Vivemos só de recordar.
 Na nossa alma entristecida
 Há um som de reza a invocar
 A morta vida;

 E um místico vislumbre chama
 O que no pláino trespassado,
 Vive ainda em nós, longínqua chama—
 O DESEJADO.

. . .
 Novo Alcácer-Kibir na noite!
 Novo castigo e mal do Fado!
 Por que pecado novo o açoite
 Assim é dado?

(OP, 598)

The popular legend of the return of King Sebastian was found by several historians to be closely linked to the tradition of the Cabala in Portugal.⁴⁴ Not only the Portuguese patriots—and, for some reason, the Portuguese Jesuits—became interested in keeping alive the myth of King Sebastian's return during the Spanish occupation (1580-1640), but some *Cristãos Novos*, namely, in this case, Jews in disguise, seem to have blended it with their belief in the future coming of the Messiah. A "new Christian" nicknamed Bandarra was the alleged author of prophetic, obscure quatrains which

announced the coming of this Messiah who would reign over a new Golden Era. (It seems that Bandarra was prosecuted by the Inquisition and managed to escape.) These quatrains written before the loss of Portuguese independence and, probably, even before the death of King Sebastian, were used during the period of Spanish domination with patriotic intent, the Messiah being readily identified with the never returned Portuguese king. The use of these quatrains seems to have been so effective that King Philip forbade their circulation as early as 1581 (RS,133). They remained quite popular and were interpreted in various ways according to the necessities of the moment. They were republished several times, until as late as 1911 (RS,164). It was also Bandarra who apparently launched the Myth of the Fifth Empire on Portuguese soil.⁴⁵ The Jesuit writer Padre António Vieira took charge during the Spanish rule of adapting this biblical myth to Portuguese history. He announced the coming of the Fifth Empire under a Portuguese King. (Pessoa dedicates one poem to Bandarra's and one to Vieira's prognostications in *Mensagem*.) In a preface written to a book of poems entitled *O Quinto Império* (1934), by Augusto Ferreira Gomes, a friend of his, Pessoa comments, at considerable length, on one of Bandarra's quatrains referring to the Fifth Empire. His explanation shows quite an intimate acquaintance with this sort of esoteric interpretation. How close this myth of the Portuguese "Fifth Empire" can become to concrete realities, Pessoa takes care to explain in his *Interregno*. Perhaps he never took the myth of the Fifth Empire quite seriously. My feeling is, however, that Pessoa did not diverge widely here from the other Portuguese nationalists. Chimerical or not, the redressing of the Empire was considered a very worthy goal to strive for in a country that was then the third largest colonial power.⁴⁶ It is under the impact of this myth that Pessoa composes his book *Mensagem*. The book is divided into three parts, dedicated to reviewing, in a succession of small poems, the principal heroic episodes of the history of Portugal, of the maritime discoveries and of the King Sebastian myth, respectively. The book opens with the following poem which adds a spiritualized, imperialistic facet to the role of Unamuno's *matrona*:

A Europa jaz, posta nos cotovellos:⁴⁷
De Oriente a Occidente jaz, fitando,
E toldam-lhe românticos cabelos
Olhos gregos lembrando.

O cotovello esquerdo é recuado;
O direito é em ângulo disposto.
Aquelle diz Italia onde é pousado;
Este diz Inglaterra onde, afastado,
A mão sustenda, em que se apoica o rosto.

Fita, com olhar sphyngico e fatal,
O Occidente, futuro do passado.

O rosto com que fita é Portugal. (OP,7)

The feeling of *saudade* is restored to its full national calling in "Prece":

Senhor, a noite veio e a alma é vil.
Tanta foi a tormenta e a vontade!
Restam-nos hofe, no silêncio hostil,
O mar universal e a saudade.

Mas a chamma, que a vida em nós creou,
Se ainda há vida ainda não é finda.
O frio morto em cinzas a ocultou:
A mão do vento pode erguel-a ainda.

Dá o sopro, a aragem,—ou desgraça ou ancia—,
Com que a chamma do esforço se romoça,
E outra vez conquistemos a Distância—
Do mar ou outra, mas que seja nossa!

(OP,20)

In the last section of the book, divided into three parts, "Os Symbolos", "Os Avisos", "Os Tempos", Pessoa deals directly with the myths of King Sebastian and the Fifth Empire. In "O Encoberto", he fuses the Sebastian myth with the Rosicrucian tradition:

Que symbolo fecundo
Vem na aurora anciosa?
Na cruz morta do Mundo
A vida, que é a Rosa.

Que symbolo divino
Traz o dia já visto?
Na Cruz, que é o Destino,
A Rosa, que é o Christo.

Que symbolo final
Mostra o sol já desperto?
Na Cruz morta e fatal
A Rosa do Encoberto. (OP,23)⁴⁸

The book ends with a poem entitled "Nevoeiro", in which the *fated hour* of awakening and glory is announced: "Tudo é incerto e deradeiro./ Tudo é disperso, nada é inteiro./ Ó Portugal, hoje és nevoeiro . . .// É a Hora!" (OP,27) Pessoa seems to have found no little comfort in the atavistic political program of *sebastianismo*. This facet of his work, very much looked down upon by subsequent generations, is not at all far removed, as I hope to have shown, from the rest of his writing, including the vanguardist poetry of the heteronyms.

5. Conclusion

Pessoa cannot be said to be a 'typical' conservative poet. Though a poet of nostalgia, of *saudade* par excellence, his nostalgia, except in his nationalistic and esoteric poetry, has no fixed point of referral in any particular past or tradition. As a poet, and especially when signing with his heteronyms, he is, as a rule, too ironical, too critical and self-critical, too disruptive, to be considered a conservative or reactionary in any usual sense of these terms. He was able to create a distance between himself and his art; he was able to give perspective to his own limited self, sometimes not without bitterness and certainly with refined irony. This is why Pessoa is the great poet he is. Nevertheless, he remained a *saudosista* at heart. It is perhaps an irony of fate that the major modern Portuguese poet of this century should have been so, and that his prophesied Fifth Empire should, in a way, have been appropriated by the most *saudosista* of political regimes—a regime from which, however, most of the irony and critical distance seem to have been omitted, and into which, according to Pessoa's own dictum, too much cultural mediocrity found its way. Of these shortcomings Pessoa certainly remained exempt.

NOTES

¹Its editor and director, Mr. Álvaro Pinto, became its executive secretary. The magazine, previously a bi-monthly, became a monthly and was published regularly until 1925.

²For a brief story of the word *saudade* in Portuguese literature see Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcellos, *A Saudade Portuguesa: Divagações Filológicas e Literar-Históricas em volta de Inês de Castro e do Cantar Velho "Saudade Minha—Quando te Veria?"* (Porto, 1914). For the immediate antecedents of *saudosismo* and to help establish its obvious links with Romanticism, see Augusto da Costa Dias, *A Crise da Consciência Pequeno-Burguesa: O Nacionalismo Literário da Geração de Noventa* (Lisboa, 1962).

³See *Cartas de Pascoaes e Unamuno* (Nova Lisboa, 1957).

⁴*A Águia*, 1st series, V (1911), 5. Cf. Unamuno, *Obras Completas*, ed. Manuel Garcia Blanco (Madrid, 1969), VI, 362-3.

⁵So it is that the remodeled *Águia* shows an eagle taking flight from the Portuguese corner of the globe on its front cover, and a nostalgic man meditating with his hand on his forehead on its back cover.

⁶A rough calculation, though more likely than not underestimated. A. A. Cortesão is the philologist. See "Saudade: Breves Considerações Filológicas", *A Águia*, 2nd series, I (1912), 114-7. Around this *saudade* there was a long controversy between Pascoaes and António Sérgio, in *A Águia* itself, which led to the breaking away of the Lisbon nucleus of the *Renascença Portuguesa* and to the formation of a less nostalgic magazine, *Seara Nova*.

⁷This relationship with *A Águia* can be followed in "Viste Cartas de Fernando Pessoa", with notes by the addressee Álvaro

Pinto, in *Ocidente*, XXIV (1944). It is also dealt with at some length in João Gaspar Simões, *A Vida e Obra de F.P.: História duma Geração*, vol. I (Lisbon, 1951).

⁸The term Pessoa chose for his several pen names or aliases. I shall be using it throughout this paper.

⁹*Obra Poética*, ed. Maria Aliete Dores Galhoz (Rio de Janeiro, 1960). Hereafter indicated in the text by the initials OP, followed by the page number. It is in a letter to J. G. Simões that Pessoa discloses the source of inspiration of this poem. See *Cartas de F. P. a J. G. Simões* (Lisbon, 1957), p. 100.

¹⁰From an interview with Pascoaes in *Primeiro de Janeiro*, May 24th, 1950. Quoted in Jacinto do Prado Coelho, "F. P. e Teixeira de Pascoaes", *Portugiesische Forschungen der Goerresgesellschaft*, IV (1964), 224.

¹¹Unfortunately Simões is not the only critic who falls into deducting some of Pessoa's peculiarities from his Jewish ancestry. The use of the Jewish cliché in the biography seems to have been more easily accepted than the Freudian Oedipal one.

¹²And perhaps he was not. In my estimation, Simões' major flaw is the one of deducting too much from the poetical work itself. However, though the biography has been bombarded from several quarters for being fictive, it is still the only and standard biography to which everyone refers. A so-called rectification of it has also been published: *Notas a uma Biografia Romanceada* by Eduardo Freitas da Costa (Lisbon, 1951), who happens to be a cousin of Pessoa's.

¹³See *A Águia*, 2nd series, I (1912), 101-7; 137-44; II (1912), 86-94; 153-7 and 188-92. These articles have also been compiled by Álvaro Ribeiro in a little volume, *F. P., A Nova Poesia Portuguesa* (Lisbon, 1944).

¹⁴The *Renascença Portuguesa* seems to have had a broad national basis indeed, if we consider that such groups as the *Integralismo Lusitano* (the cultural right wing that directly supported Salazar) and the one around *Seara Nova* (the left wing that consistently opposed the regime) both sprang out of it.

¹⁵*A Águia*, 2nd series, I (1912), 144. Like the poem quoted earlier, these articles read half like a sincere exposition of personal beliefs, half like a hoax, in this case, on *saudosismo*. Pessoa's double consciousness seems to be at work here too. Underlying his grand prognostication of a Portuguese golden era there is what seems to be a thin film of irony. Nothing, however, leads me or any critic that I know of to think that the articles were not written with a serious and socially constructive intention, except for the "supra-Camões" prophecy that Simões suggests might have been a practical joke, with Pessoa himself as the target.

¹⁶Georg Rudolf Lind mentions how Pessoa seems to be nearer to characterizing symbolist rather than *saudosista* poetry, in spite of his claim of the superiority of the latter. See *A Teoria Poética de F. P.* (Porto, 1970), p. 26. Prof. Lind attaches value to these articles only as an expression of Pessoa's programs for his own poetry.

¹⁷A popular rhyme quoted by Carolina Michaëlis de

Vasconcellos in *A Saudade Portuguesa*, p. 71.

¹⁸*A Águia*, 2nd series, I (1912), 33. Cf. Mrs. Michaëlis' definition of *saudade*: "A lembrança de se haver gozado em tempos passados, que não voltam mais; a pena de não gozar no presente, ou de só gozar na lembrança; e o desejo e a esperança de no futuro tornar ao estado antigo de felicidade." *A Saudade Portuguesa*, pp. 34-5.

¹⁹Words used by Antônio Sérgio in his polemic with Pascoaes. See *A Águia*, 2nd series, IV (1913), 99.

²⁰Text tentatively dated 1917 and first published in F. P., *Páginas de Estética e de Teoria e Crítica Literárias*, eds. G. R. Lind and J. do Prado Coelho (Lisbon, 1966), p. 147, book hereafter referred to by the initials PE in the text.

²¹A curious reflection of this antipathy for all foreign influence is the "Renascença Portuguesa" entry in the *Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa Brasileira* (Lisbon, 1935-60). It is unsigned. As movements, if we can call them so, both *sensacionismo* and Portuguese *futurismo* were very short-lived. Sá-Carneiro committed suicide in Paris in 1916. Santa-Rita Pintor died in 1918, not too long after the printing and circulation of the magazine *Portugal Futurista* (one single issue came out) had been forbidden (1917). Simões gives a lively description of the vicissitudes of the sensationists and futurists in Lisbon, in *A Vida e Obra de F. P.*

²²The painful irony of the situation is that the poet has to contrive what he himself feels, as expressed in the famous poem "Autopsicografia" beginning with the stanza "O poeta é um fingidor./Finge tão completamente/Que chega a fingir que é dor/A dor que deveras sente." (OP, 97)

²³There are two versions of this poem: the one contained in a letter to A. Côrtes-Rodrigues of Jan. 19, 1915, and the one unpublished in the magazine *Athena*, vol. III (1925), which I am quoting here. For a comparison of the two see the Appendix to *Obra Poética*, p. 701.

²⁴Caeiro's "birth" is explained in a letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro included in F. P.'s *Páginas de Doutrina Estética*, ed. by Jorge de Sena (Lisbon, 1946).

²⁵This apparent singularity of the Nature poet who hardly ever lets us feel the Nature he praises, is also noted by J. do Prado Coelho in his *Diversidade e Unidade em F. P.* (Lisbon, 1963, rev. ed.), pp. 19-28, one of the best studies, to date, of Pessoa's poetical work.

²⁶Max Nordau's *Dégénérescence* (Paris, 1894) has been found by Simões to have been an important influence on Pessoa. Caeiro can be seen as an attempt at creating the premises for a healthy, non-decadent art, by someone who is deeply involved in decadent art. Caeiro is most effective when ridiculing speculators, dreamers, transcendentalists (read "*saudosistas*") and so on. However, what can be understood as irony on others and the self, often gives way to what borders closely on the sincere expression of nostalgic bucolism.

²⁷For a discussion of this "sleepy hollow" see Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York, 1964), chapter I.

²⁸Exception will be made of Pessoa's production signed under his own name, when he leans on the tradition of the Western esoteric sects.

²⁹See Maria Helena da Rocha Pereira, *Reflexos Horacianos nas Odes de Correia Garção e F. P. (Ricardo Reis)* (Porto, 1950). Besides Horace and Garção, Eugénio de Castro may also have influenced Pessoa with his Horatian odes included in *Depois da Ceifa* (Lisbon, 1901).

³⁰*Páginas Íntimas e de Auto-Interpretação*, eds. G. R. Lind and J. Prado Coelho (Lisbon, 1966), p. 387. Hereafter referred to by the initials PI in the text.

³¹*A Saudade Portuguesa*, p. 9.

³²Campos is the only heteronym who has a clear evolution in time. He has two major phases, one concomitant with the war, in which long Whitmanesque odes are written, and one disillusioned post-war phase.

³³One can read about a similar confrontation of the self in Elizabethan-metaphysical style in one of Pessoa's English sonnets which begins with the verses "How many masks wear we and under-masks,/ Upon our countenance of soul, . . ." and ends with "And, when a thought would unmask our soul's masking,/ Itself goes not unmasked to the unmasking" (OP,610).

³⁴If the poem is dated 1915, as tentatively suggested in Maria Aliete Galhoz's edition. The poem was published for the first time in *Orpheu*, II (June, 1915). It may, however, have been written earlier than 1915.

³⁵See the "Ultimatum" published under its alias title "A Humanidade dos Engenheiros" in F. P., *Ensaíes Políticos*, ed. by Petrus (pseud.), (Porto, 1957). This text was also published separately as *Ultimatum* (Lisbon, 1917); in *Nas Encruzilhadas do Mundo e do Tempo: Escritos Públicos* [ed.?] (Porto, 1951); and in *O Movimento Futurista em Portugal*, ed. João Alves das Neves (Porto, 1966).

³⁶F. P., *Cartas a Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues*. Introd. by Joel Serrão. 2nd ed. (Lisbon, 1959), pp. 70 and 74-6.

³⁷The publication of "Ode Marítima" in *Orpheu*, II (1915) had also created some commotion. The whole *Orpheu* was the city's scandal, according to Pessoa (*Cartas a A. C. Rodrigues*, p. 105). Between the "Ultimatum" and *Interregno* Pessoa published several articles on social and political issues. They have not as yet been compiled in a standard edition. See following footnote for some available editions.

³⁸Two essays at least, in three different issues, besides the poem "A Memória de Sidónio Pais": "Como organizar Portugal" (*Acção*, May 1st, 1919) and "A Opinião pública" (*Acção*, May 19 and Aug. 4, 1919), later compiled in *Ensaíes Políticos: Ideias para a Reforma da Política Portuguesa*, ed. Petrus (Porto, 1954). Pessoa also contributed with what was supposed to become a regular column to the newly-created paper *O Jornal* (1915). These articles have been compiled in the volume *Crónicas Intemporais*, also ed. by Petrus (Porto, 1951).

³⁹Letter included in *Páginas de Doutrina Estética*.

⁴⁰The date provided by Eduardo Freitas da Costa in *F. P.: Notas a uma Biografia Romanceada* (see note 12), p. 75, in correction of J. B. Simões' date (January 1915). Mr. Freitas da Costa claims that it was Pessoa who initiated his aunt into the spiritualistic séances, but this interpretation does not agree with the contents of Pessoa's letter, where he expressly declares how he used to feel left out in those meetings, whereas at the moment in which he is writing he can boast of finally having experienced mediumistic trances himself. See Freitas da Costa, p. 164.

⁴¹*A Teoria Poética de F. P.*, p. 258.

⁴²This uncle was a brother of Pessoa's stepfather. See *A Vida e Obra de F. P.*, I, 111-3.

⁴³Mário Sâa, "A Infiltração Judaica na Cultura Ocidental: O Caso Literário de F. P.", as included in *F. P., Hiram: Filosofia Religiosa e Ciências Ocultas*, ed. Petrus (Porto, 1953), p. 187.

⁴⁴A wide selection of texts on the King Sebastian myth is included in *F. P. et al., Regresso ao Sebastianismo*, ed. Petrus (Porto, n.d.). Hereafter referred as RS in the text.

⁴⁵As prophesied by Daniel. Interpretations vary about which were the empires that had already taken place. Pessoa mentions the following interpretation among others: 1. Babylon; 2. Persia; 3. Greece; 4. Rome. See Simões' chapter "O Mito do Quinto Império" in *A Vida e Obra de F. P.* and F. P.'s preface to *O Quinto Império* by his friend Augusto Ferreira Gomes included in *Regresso ao Sebastianismo*.

⁴⁶Let justice be done to Pessoa. However important he considered the return of an age of grandeur in Portugal, he was not sure that keeping the colonies would necessarily help in this respect: "Para o destino que presumo que será o de Portugal, as colónias não são precisas. . . . Não sendo uma necessidade, são contudo uma vantagem." From F. P.'s answer to the nation-wide questionnaire "Portugal-Império (1926)". See *Regresso ao Sebastianismo*, p. 107.

⁴⁷Pessoa's archaic spelling is maintained here, as in all editions of *Mensagem*, since this is how Pessoa chose to have his book printed. The use of archaic spelling has been current among conservative nationalists and is still alive today in the manner in which they like to write their proper names.

⁴⁸For a good selection of Pessoa's published esoteric poems, see *Hiram*. According to G. R. Lind, one of the few persons authorized to deal with F. P.'s unpublished material, much on both esoteric and political issues is still awaiting publication.