

**The Task of Introducing Fernando Pessoa to a Distant Culture:
Korean Translation Project, Methodological Issues
and a Preface**

Hanmin Kim

Dissertation realized for the degree of Master in Literary, Cultural and Interart Studies,
Branch of Comparative Studies and Intercultural Relations
Supervised by Professor Dr. Rosa Maria Martelo

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Resumo

Esta dissertação¹ é constituída pela defesa crítica de um projeto de apresentação do poeta português Fernando Pessoa aos leitores coreanos. O projeto consiste na publicação de uma antologia de poemas traduzidos do português para o coreano, comportando um conjunto de práticas de organização do âmbito da edição, tradução e apresentação. Na primeira parte, após uma breve reflexão sobre o presente panorama internacional das traduções de Pessoa, a argumentação irá incidir principalmente sobre questões de metodologia relacionadas com a apresentação, seleção e tradução dos poemas essenciais de Pessoa. A segunda parte é constituída pelo prefácio que acompanhará a antologia, centrado no percurso literário de Pessoa enquanto poeta e nas principais temáticas da sua poesia.

Palavras-chave: Fernando Pessoa, Tradução, Coreano, Antologia Poética.

¹ A presente dissertação irá referir investigadores e tradutores internacionais. Assim sendo, e de forma a maximizar a sua disponibilidade ao público-alvo, encontra-se escrita em inglês, língua amplamente aceite como a língua franca da comunidade académica internacional.

Abstract

This dissertation² is a critical justification for an introductory translation & publishing project of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa for Korean readers. This project consists of a poetry anthology translated from Portuguese to Korean language, and involves a set of organizing practices such as editing, translating and presentation. In the first part, after a brief overview of Pessoa's international current state of translation is provided, the discussion will mainly focus on methodological issues concerning presentation, selection and translation of Pessoa's essential poems. The second part is an elaborated preface which focuses on the literary trajectory of Pessoa as a poet, and discusses his major poetic themes.

Key Words: Fernando Pessoa, Translation, Korean language, Poetry Anthology.

² This dissertation is expected to address international researchers and translators. Hence, in order to maximize its availability to the target readers, it is written in English, widely accepted as the *lingua franca* of the international academic community.

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PART I

Methodological Issues

1. Backgrounds

Introducing eminent foreign authors usually depend heavily on qualified professionals. Traditionally, high profile academics, established writers, critics or translators have carried out this task. Through these practitioners, translated publications would begin to circulate among small literary circles, and gradually gain a wider and more universal readership. On a broader outlook, cultural factors – historically accrued, inadvertent social efforts – may help lay readers to familiarize and associate with an unfamiliar author. For example, historical affinities, shared languages, common literary reference or figures (well-known by both the departing and recipient country) may play a key role. The fate of a foreign author depends on what kind of (and how much) interaction it can generate with the literary and cultural polysystem of the target country. Whether it is an individual level (i.e. a specialist, a loyal admirer, sometimes a collective fandom) or a collective level (cultural common ground, language affinity), there is no author independent or irrelevant from these “facilitators/agents” when it comes to international receptions, and the case of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935) is no exception.

Before we address the specific conditions of the country in interest, it would be informative to briefly review the various agents that helped introducing Pessoa to the international literary community. First, let us begin with France, where the history of receiving Pessoa has been the longest.³ In *Le Livre de l'intranquillité* [O Livro do Desassossego: The Book of Disquiet] – indisputably the most internationally renowned book of Pessoa –, it is important to notice «the comparative magnitude of French authors that are cited as models for, or rivals of, its author - Chateaubriand, Senancour, Amiel⁴, Vigny» (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013: 193). Among them, Amiel's *Journal Intime* [Diary] of which *Le Livre* is frequently compared with, would allow certain Francophone readers to associate themselves with the book with relative ease. But more importantly, two prominent translators of the “first generation”, Pierre Hourcade⁵ and Armand Guibert, who benefited of having personal acquaintances with the *Presença* members (direct interlocutors of Pessoa during his lifetime: José Régio, Adolfo Casais Monteiro and João Gaspar Simões), solidly fulfilled their role in paving the early roads to Pessoa for French readers in the 1940s. Around the '70s,

³ In 1955, the first translated book of Pessoa's poems was published in Paris (trans. Armand Guibert). The second was a selection of poems of Alberto Caeiro, translated by Ángel Crespo in Madrid, 1957.

⁴ In fact, Henri Frédéric Amiel (1821–1881) was not French, but a Swiss philosopher/writer who lived in Geneva, but he wrote in French.

⁵ In the case of Pierre Hourcade, –by then a French scholar who was the Principal of the “Le Lycée Français” in Lisbon– he was able to meet Pessoa in person (1930). He wrote an article in a Parisian literary magazine about his impression of the meeting.

prominent francophone Portuguese translators-scholars⁶ marked profound impacts by pursuing perfection in translation and academic research of the Portuguese poet.

In the Anglo-American countries, Pessoa remained practically unknown until the '60s due to lack of translations. We are able to note that until 1970, there were clearly fewer texts (both verse and prose) that appeared in English, in contrast to those of Italian, French, Spanish and German. However, thanks to the effort of key translators such as Edwin Honig, Jonathan Griffin and Peter Rickard, «by the end of 1998, the comparative situation of Pessoa's poetry and prose translations in different languages had substantially changed from that of 18 years before» (Blanco, 2008: 27). We can observe the increase of texts (in verse or prose) which became available during this period: English: 63 → 632 / Italian: 257 → 863 / French: 250 → 1353 / German: 116 → 504 / Spanish: 187 → 1591 (*Id*: 17 & 27). In 2000, Richard Zenith translated «a new, substantially extended version» (*Id*: 25) of *The Book of Disquiet*, followed by noteworthy poetry anthologies such as *Pessoa & Co.* (2006) and *A Little Larger Than The Entire Universe* (2006).⁷ Also, we should not forget the role of the preeminent literary critic Harold Bloom who had included Pessoa on the list of the 26 writers who established the parameters of western canon⁸. Besides that, Pessoa's profound affinity with English and American literature, especially with Victorian and Romantic poets as well as Walt Whitman, would have probably provided a familiar access or linkage to English readers and academics. Adding to that, Pessoa himself and some of his heteronyms such as Alexander Search and Charles Robert Anon wrote prolifically in English. (Jean Seul de Méluret wrote in French.)

Other countries also benefited from the service of established “mediators” (writers, translators and scholars etc.) to facilitate the poet's “soft landing”. In Italy, the role of the loyal “Pessoan Missionary” Antonio Tabucchi –himself an acclaimed writer– is certainly unmistakable, as well as the philologist Luciana Stegagno-Picchio who published more than thirty essays about Pessoa up to 2004. A distinguished scholar and translator Georg Rudolf Lind deeply influenced Pessoa's German reception⁹. Also, Pessoa's interest on the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche deeply influenced his creation of António Mora, the “neo-pagan” philosopher, who intrigued academics to conduct comparative studies. In the case of

⁶ Namely, Teresa Rita Lopes, José Augusto Seabra, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen and Isabel Magalhães etc.

⁷ The latter was appreciated as the «most generous offering of Pessoa in English» (Blanco, 2008: 27).

⁸ See: Bloom, Harold (1994) *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*, New York, Harcourt Brace.

⁹ Georg Rudolf Lind first published 1962 his first Pessoa anthology, in Frankfurt. From 1985 to 1997 he published 15 volumes of poetry and prose - perhaps the most extensive of all translated collections. He was first to make an inventory of the unpublished poems, in English, by the young Pessoa, under the name of Alexander Search. (...) Lind showed that it contained most of the themes and obsessions that Pessoa later developed in his poetry in Portuguese (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013: 237).

Spain¹⁰, Ángel Crespo translated the Odes of Ricardo Reis, which he thought the most beautiful, as well as poems of Alberto Caeiro, and the *Faust*. Overall, all of these aforementioned countries share common socio-cultural backgrounds around the Modernist period.

Whereas, Pessoa's international reception outside Europe and North America still finds itself in its early stage.¹¹ For instance, in Asia, there has been no country that has claimed a leading role or demonstrated conspicuous growth in translating publications of Pessoa thus far. Japan was the first in Asia to publish poems of Pessoa.¹² In 1985, a translation by Mineo Ikegami from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, *Portugaru no Umi* [ポルトガルの海: フェルナンド・ペソア詩選, Mar Portuguese: Poesias de Fernando Pessoa] was published (Yabunaka, 1988: 188). Nao Sawada from Rikkyo (St. Paul's) University translated *O Livro do Desassossego* and published it together with a collection of poems in 2000. Sawada translated another edition of selected poems which came out in 2008. A new edition of *O Livro do Desassossego* was published in 2007, this time newly translated by Tomihiko Takahashi from Takushoku University. Notably, the literary magazine *Gendaishitecho* (思潮社 現代詩手帖) brought out two special issues focusing on Pessoa, in 1996 and 2015.¹³ The first direct translation of Pessoa into Chinese was *Mensagem* [Message], by Jin Guoping, published in Macau (1986). In mainland China, the *Selected Poems* by Zhang Weimin (1987) would record the first. Recently in 2013, a poetry anthology of Alberto Caeiro was published. It was translated by Min Xuefei, who is also responsible for the upcoming translation projects of Pessoa. Min Xuefei said that direct translations are only recently beginning, and she stressed the importance of Pessoaan translations being accompanied by academic studies.¹⁴

¹⁰ «In Spain, Pessoa was soon translated and reviewed, but it was only 15 years following his death that he was translated and commented in book form. (...) In 1957, Crespo published *Poemas de de Alberto Caeiro*, the first of his eight volumes of Pessoa in translation. (...) In 1988, he published the second ever biography of Pessoa (the first being that of Joao Gaspar Simões in 1950), *La Vida Plural de Fernando Pessoa* (1988) which has been widely translated into other languages, including Portuguese» (Blanco, José, *Great Pessoaans A Tribute* in Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013: 235).

¹¹ Except Lusophone countries such as Brazil. We will not discuss the case of Brazil here, but Maria Eliete Galhoz who edited *Obra poética de Fernando Pessoa* (1960, Editora Aguilar) is worth mentioning.

¹² Concerning articles about Pessoa, there were various published earlier. For example, Tetsutaro Takahashi published an article *O ensaio sobre Fernando Pessoa* in the bulletin of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Sofia University, in 1976. Jorge Dias, a reader and lecturer of Portuguese at the Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, published an essay *O Cinquentenário da Morte de Fernando Pessoa: Notas elementares sobre um poeta complexíssimo*, in the Bulletin *Kenkyu Ronso* in 1984, just to name a few.

¹³ Information about Japan: by courtesy of Dr. Kazufumi Watanabe (Embassy of Portugal in Japan / Author of *O Neopaganismo em Fernando Pessoa* (2015), Lisboa/Paris, Nota de Rodapé Edições).

¹⁴ Information about China: by courtesy of Dr. Min Xuefei (Peking University), PhD candidate Inez Zhou (University of California, Santa Bárbara) and Cristina Zhou (Coimbra University).

Project: A Poetry Anthology Translated into Korean

In Korea, the history of introducing and translating Pessoa is perhaps too short and scanty to draw direct comparisons. *O Guardador de Rebanhos* [“양치는 목동”, The Keeper of Sheep], published in 1994 and translated by Song Pil-hwan, is the only direct translation of Pessoa, from Portuguese to Korean, apart from my translation in 2014.¹⁵

Unfortunately, we find very little amount of Portuguese literature translated into Korean language, generally speaking. If we exclude indirect translations – normally through Spanish or English –, the number diminishes even more drastically.¹⁶ This inactiveness of Portuguese literature translation in Korea is in part affected by the socio-economic interest shift to Brazil.¹⁷ On the other hand, translators and publishers with non-commercial interests often face frustrating realities when they struggle to meet the minimal demand and appreciation required to carry out such literary publications (direct translation from a relatively “minor” language –under domestic norms– which demands a high level of knowledge and effort, but are rarely rewarded and poorly compensated). They find their opportunities dwindling between the high-brow readers who prefer to (and are capable of) read(ing) original texts (or English translations) and the lay readers who tend to pay less attention whether the translation is direct or not.

Being aware of these unfavorable conditions and the overall lack of direct Portuguese-Korean translations available, and being a huge admirer of Pessoa’s *oeuvres*, I

¹⁵ *Prosas Escolhidas: Pessoa e Pessôas* (2014) [페소아와 페소아들, Selected Prose of Fernando Pessoa, Seoul, Workroom Press] was selected and translated by myself. The poetry anthology in question is scheduled for 2016. Other than that, *O Livro do Desassossego* was published two times, in 2012 and 2014, but both were indirect translations via Italian and German, respectively.

¹⁶ Among the few existing translations are the following; the Portuguese epic *Os Lusíadas*, which was translated in 1988 by a Spanish literature scholar who also studied Portuguese in Brazil, and the abovementioned *O Guardador de Rebanhos*. These two books were translated directly from Portuguese, but unfortunately, they are both out of print. They are available on the database of the National Library of Korea, but when I requested the book *O Guardador*, the librarians could not find it. Exceptionally, José Saramago’s novels are the most translated (more than 12 titles, including the *Ensaio sobre a Cegueira* [Blindness], *All the Names* [Todos os Nomes], *O Homem Duplicado* [The Double] etc.), but most of them (10 of 12) are also indirect translations through English or Spanish.

¹⁷ In Korea, the only University that has a major which specializes in Portuguese language and literature in Seoul is the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. However, for example, the department Department of Portuguese Studies changed its title to “Department of Brazilian studies” in 2013. The reason was stated as the following, in the department’s official website. «The stable economic development of Brazil after 1990, placed the country in the 6th place of GDP growth in the world. This expanded numerous trade interests and fostered further exchanges in various fields; political, social, cultural interrelations. Witnessing the increasing mutual interest and necessity to build more profound relationship between Korea and Brazil, our department, which started as “Portuguese studies” at 1981, change its name in order to respond to these significant changes». (<http://builder.hufs.ac.kr/user/hufsbrazil/>) The change of the title also brought changes in curriculums, focusing more on economic/management issues than literature. This change also affected other factors, like grammatical and orthographical norms. In Korea, publishers and editors tend to follow orthographical norms determined by scholars. Although it is not obligatory to follow the norms, these regulations are strongly recommended by editors (to translators), who do not want to run a risk by “transgressing” the norms in expense of “trivial” concerns of phonetic exactitudes. As a result, although European Portuguese pronunciation is not entirely neglected in the Korean notational system, it is true that the “power shift” of the socio-economic change did alter the way it notates the foreign language. This case is also exceptional, since Portugal is one of the few countries that fell astern by its ex-colony in economical growth and trade quantity. In consequence, a Korean translator who translates Portuguese language usually translates proper nouns or names following the Brazilian Portuguese system of pronunciation.

decided to assume the task of introducing Fernando Pessoa to Korea: translating and organizing a compilation of his prose and verse.

2. Introducing Pessoa

2.1. Brief Overview on Introduction

Introducing one of the most multi-faceted poets in literature history to a foreign territory raises particular questions of presentation, but the “late starters” are usually bound to accept already-established references from preceding achievements and researches. Though the task of editing Pessoa is a challenging assignment for foreign translators/editors who must deal with readers completely unaware of the writer and Portuguese literature, it does not seem to get any easier for national specialists in Portugal either. In *Editar Pessoa* [To Edit Pessoa], the director of the *Critical Edition* Ivo Castro notes that, as Pessoa is

an author who could not get his works published, and in more than one sense, did not finish to write them, *there is no fixed authorial form that the edition should steadfastly reproduce* (this being true, inclusively to the rare books that Pessoa published, and continued to rewrite afterwards). (Castro, Ivo, 1990: 7-8; italic added)¹⁸

Castro argues that the texts of Pessoa «should simply be read as it is»¹⁹, concluding «we may find Pessoa between his papers. It is time that we find him there» (*Id*: 11).²⁰ Resonating this remark, another member of the “Equipa Pessoa” [Pessoa Team], Jerónimo Pizarro also emphasizes that «we should publish Pessoa more as it (his texts) exists, and less as we would like to see him» (Pizarro, 2012: 182).²¹ However, as Pessoa belongs to one of the few twentieth century literary greats who have left such a dominant part of works unpublished, the suggestion to edit and publish his work “as it existed”, may not be enough to avoid continuous questions. Teresa Rita Lopes criticizes the first edition of Pessoa published by Ática as «realized without means, and without principles. The guideline was its

¹⁸ [(...) autor que não chegou a publicar a sua obra e que, em mais de um sentido, não acabou de a escrever, não existe uma forma textual autoralmente fixada que a edição deva reproduzir fielmente (sendo isto verdade inclusivamente para os raros livros que Pessoa publicou, e depois continuou a reescrever).]

¹⁹ [ler o que efectivamente escreveu.]

²⁰ [Pessoa encontra-se entre os seus papéis: vai sendo hora de aí o procurar.]

²¹ [devemos publicar Pessoa mais como existe (os seus textos) e menos como gostaríamos de o ver.]

legibility»²², and considers the recent “Critical Edition” also questionable since it may confuse the reader by adopting modern textual criteria (Lopes, 2007: 33-34).²³ Indeed, Pessoa’s writings could be regarded as “the text”, in the sense in which Darlene J. Sadlier evokes Roland Barthes: «the text is that social space that leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, decoder» (Sadlier, 1998: 121). Without doubt, whenever his anthology gets published, it invariably undergoes a process of selection, and the final form would be, inevitably, an assemblage of certain premeditated configurations. Adding to this, Pessoa was an authentic “keeper of papers” that «anything that could be written on was used and kept, from his childhood to death: napkins, business cards, bits of posters, book covers, envelopes, notebooks and calendar pages, not to mention writing paper from offices where he worked, and from cafés where he used to write or meet his friends» (Dix/Pizarro, 2008: 6).

All these are typical “Pessoan” problems, as Castro points out: «if every critical edition is hypothetical, in the degree of which it depends on the personal effort of the editor, then the critical edition of Pessoa is so, but *multiplied*» (Castro, Ivo, 1990: 7-8; italic added).²⁴ And in the same way, it is not difficult to foresee that every aforementioned difficulty would easily *multiply* when we attempt to locate this poet in a completely different cultural context.

2.2. Brief Overview on Translation

On the other hand, even in the countries that pertain a long history of receiving Pessoa, translation issues persist. The French translator and renowned biographer of Pessoa, Robert Bréchon addresses major translation difficulties in his essay *Un Demi-Siècle de Traductions Françaises de Pessoa* [A Half - Century of French Translations of Pessoa]. He reports the problems dealing with «neologisms, archaisms, solecisms, and voluntary barbarisms» (Bréchon, 2005: 11) of Pessoa, along with several Portuguese words – i.e. “fingidor”, “Saudade”, “Desassossego” – which require special attention when translated. Georg Rudolf Lind highlights the difficulties in converting the rhymes of Pessoa (especially in the poems of the Orthonym Pessoa) into German: «What are we supposed to do in the case of rhymes, translating from a language extremely rich of rhymes to another language less

²² [(com toda a vênha que nos apeteça fazer aos pioneiros da edição pessoana, em abono da verdade se terá que dizer que) foi realizada sem meios e sem rigor. O critério seguido para a escolha dos textos foi o da legibilidade.]

²³ [(...) por muito que custe dizer, a verdade é que a primeira edição sistemática da obra poética de Pessoa que veio pôr a Ática em causa, da Equipa Pessoa, liderada pelo Professor Ivo Castro, veio propor um outro Pessoa "seu" que é, uma boa parte das vezes, uma desfiguração: seguindo critérios invocados da moderna crítica textual, tem-se esta equipa aplicado a reescrever a poesia pessoana, em edições crítico-genética assim chamadas (...) é, por vezes, muito difícil estabelecer as fronteiras entre a produção ortónima e heterónima.]

²⁴ [Se toda a edição crítica é hipotética, na medida em que depende do empenho pessoal do editor, então a edição crítica de Pessoa é-o multiplamente.]

rich?» (Lind, 1962: 160).²⁵ He considers the approach of the French translator Armand Guibert not *ideal*, because Guibert «calmly avoided the rhymes, limiting oneself to a literal translation that captures the exact meaning of the words, but renounces the supplementary means which forms the musical charm of poetry» (*ibid.*).²⁶ In English,

the most immediately accessible to a foreign audience is perhaps Álvaro de Campos, the out-and-out Modernist whose exciting and often daring form and content more easily commend themselves to translation and comprehension. (...) *Tabacaria* [Tobacco shop] has received an excellent English translation by Suzette Macedo (1987) and created wide interest. Others are virtually untranslatable. (Classe, 2000: 1066)

Edward Honig agrees with the principal difficulty of translating *Cancioneiro* [Songbook] (*in* Monteiro, 1981: 156) and argues that

when he [Pessoa] expresses so perfectly, as he often does, what's special about the Portuguese temperament, it's something one expects only the Portuguese themselves to appreciate. (...) For many, Pessoa's texture is not "poetic" enough. Something disappoints them – the thinness of the verbal play, the sophism of the lines, the raucousness (...) which doesn't translate from Portuguese either. (*Id*: 158-159)²⁷

Outside the Latin alphabet using countries, there is a general lack of reported sources related to translation issues. Alexandra Koss denotes a rare case study of Cyrillic script in Russian reception. She introduces a particular case of the poem *Autopsicografia* where a Russian translator substituted the word "Coração" [Heart] to "Alma" [Soul], which raised serious scrutiny of some critiques. However, since in Russian,

it is the soul where the metaphysical pain is born: talking about the heart, (...) it would be a cardiological pain. (...) The apparent detour of the translator is, in fact, a solution (...) to reach to its supreme objective that would be the integral fidelity of the totality of the text. (Koss, 1966: 68-69)²⁸

This case is similar with the case of Korea, which will be discussed in chapter 5.2, "Ambiguity of Words". Difficulties in translating Pessoa do not end here. There is a biographical fact that adds another dimension: the fact that Pessoa was an active translator

²⁵ [Que fazer no caso das rimas, traduzindo de uma língua riquíssima em rimas para outra menos rica?]

²⁶ [(...) evitou tranquilamente as rimas, limitando-se a uma tradução à letra que capta o sentido exacto da palavra, mas que renuncia aos meios suplementares que, no entanto, constituem o encanto musical da poesia.]

²⁷ From the "Two interviews" with Edwin Honig and Jean Longland by Carolina Matos.

²⁸ [(...) em russo é na alma que nasce a dor metafísica: tratando-se do coração, (...) é uma doença cardíaca. (...) O aparente desvio do tradutor é, na realidade, uma solução (...) para chegar a sua meta suprema que viria a ser a fidelidade integral da totalidade do texto.]

himself. Not only did he earn his life as a commercial translator, but also left several noticeable literary translations behind.²⁹ The polyglot poet wrote in three languages (Portuguese, English and French) and auto-translated some of his own works.³⁰ In effect, his preference on specific words in his own translations as well as his opinions on translation may affect his translators, up to certain extent, on making translative decisions.³¹ This leads to one of the central questions of translation: should the translator transmit the author's words or his (interpreted) will? When it comes to a “bilingual-yet-not-perfectly-bilingual” poet like Pessoa (since his English was fluent and admirable yet not acquainted with real life experience), there can be unintentional “mistakes”. With all due respect, perhaps it might be possible for a translator to provide a “belated advice” to the poet. For example, in such cases like the title “*Naval Ode*” (widely translated to *Maritime Ode*, although Pessoa translated it as mentioned), which could sound awkward to a native speaker.³²

2.3. Special Considerations

2.3.1. Heteronyms

The first question we face is how to deal with one of Pessoa's most peculiar trait: none other than his multiple literary egos. If not dealt properly, this could be easily misunderstood as an “infantile” trait. Actually, these negative receptions happened even in Portugal in the 1940s, when some critics downplayed the idea of heteronyms. For instance, João Gaspar Simões, the first biographer of Pessoa, did not consider it more than a drollery: «We fall in the trap. We were seriously teased, just like his friends whom he teased by deliberately preparing the great “clownery” of his heteronyms» (Pessoa, 2007:11).³³ Even though it is partly true that Pessoa demonstrates a certain aspect of “*Homo Ludens*” through this eccentric experiment, the introducer should make sure to emphasize the poet's serious and theoretical approach to his invention. This issue echoes with the often problematic “postmodern reading” of Pessoa. Apparently, it is true that we can observe some common

²⁹ For instance: «Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee*, and *Ualume* in verse translations; Walter Pater's *La Gioconda*; two short stories by O. Henry; and excerpts from the Greek Anthology» (Howes, 1983: 165) and «Fitzgerald's English quatrains, some English Ruba'iyat in his copies of two books, World Literature Series» (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013: 95), etc.

³⁰ For example: *The Anarchist Banker*, *Naval Ode*, Preface for *Portuguese Sensationists*, etc.

³¹ Richard Zenith, in the “Notes” of *A Little Larger Than the Entire Universe*, remarks: «Pessoa translated about five stanzas of the poem into English. He preceded his translation with the following note: “The word ‘Opiary,’ of course, does not exist in English. But neither does ‘Opiário’ (of which ‘opiary’ is the exact translation) exist in Portuguese. The translator has followed the neologism of the original”» (Pessoa, 2006: 425).

³² cf. From a conversation with the renowned Pessoa specialist and American translator Richard Zenith.

³³ [Caímos na armadilha. Fomos, realmente, burlados, como foram burlados os seus amigos para quem ele preparou, de peito feito, a grande “palhaçada” dos seus heterónimos.]

postmodernist characteristics in Pessoa, – such as ambiguity, fragmentation, relativity, skepticism, indeterminacy, irony and playfulness – but it will be misleading to frame or label Pessoa inside such a postmodernist model, especially concerning the creation of heteronyms. For the most part, the poet dealt his heteronyms with seriousness and earnestness rather than with irony. Some even venture to say, «if one looks attentively, a myriad of Pessoa’s writings seem to lack any irony at all» (Almeida, 2008: 51).

Another consideration we should take into account when it comes to publishing Pessoa is to establish “Pessoa himself” first before his heteronyms. Although the questions surrounding Pessoa’s multiple identities are increasingly complex, the “historical” person Fernando António Nogueira Pessoa allows us to construct a detailed and credible biography. If the editor gets overly caught in presenting the elusiveness of the heteronym system, it could result in “erasing” Pessoa behind the mask of Caeiro or Campos, etc. For example, in Korea, the author of *O Guardador de Rebanhos* was introduced as “Alberto Caeiro”. Perhaps being *too* loyal to the idea of heteronyms, the anthology was registered under the name of Caeiro even in the bibliographic systems and search engines. Although there was an explanation of Pessoa inside the preface, an average reader without background knowledge would find it increasingly difficult to relate Caeiro with the author of other following publications such as *O Livro do Desassossego* (also often introduced as “a book *written by* Bernardo Soares”). Unfortunately, this valuable first direct translation of Pessoa (or Caeiro) in Korea went out of print very soon without raising attention, and the publication became practically unavailable. It took more than 20 years, until now, as I reassume the task of direct translation, to rebuild a continuity. In conclusion, even if the heteronyms deserve due respect, it is strongly recommended to publish Pessoa’s work under the umbrella of Pessoa, at least in the early stage. One may find this confusion of authorship rather natural and meaningful, or even authentic, since it does reveal a particular trait of the poet. However, regarding the lack of general interest and difficult conditions for such publications, to let a valuable translation get isolated and forgotten like this case is not what we are ready to afford, since once an author is misunderstood to have “failed” in raising considerable interest, the opportunities of following publications could be easily overshadowed.

2.3.2. The Poet or the Diary Keeper

The second consideration is to shed light on “the poet” facet of Fernando Pessoa. I expect this point might be important to some countries where Pessoa is known only as the eloquent “aphorist” or “diary keeper” of *O Livro do Desassossego*. This is appropriate, since *O Livro* is undoubtedly one of the most attractive and intriguing guides to the wide world of Pessoa, and he considered it to be one of his main projects. However, if our reading ends

there, the richness of his extensive poetic legacy will remain unjustly unknown. We should keep in mind that Pessoa identified himself as a poet and repeatedly compared himself to the greatest poets of literary history. Although he produced a significant amount of prose towards the end of his life, we cannot begin to describe the mark he left in Portugal literature and European Modernism without his poems.

This issue will be addressed by composing a preface, exclusively tracing a trajectory of the main “poetic events” of Pessoa, which directly relates to his poetic production instead of offering a conventional biographical introduction. Yet at the same time, we should be fully aware that it is next to impossible to determine a strict border between the poetic/non-poetic aspects of an artist whose life and work were so closely interrelated. As Agostinho da Silva remarked, the better way to approach Pessoa is not just «talking about the poems Pessoa wrote», but rather about «the poem Pessoa was» (Silva, 2006: 54).³⁴

2.3.3. The “Zen” Facet of Alberto Caeiro

Could there be any preference of heteronyms by countries? Lind is quite sure that German readers would prefer Campos because of their preference of free verse (Lind, 1962: 156). On the other hand, it is curious to find that Caeiro’s poems frequently appeared as the earliest translations of Pessoa in several countries (France, Spain, Korea and China). Min Xuefei, the Chinese translator of Pessoa’s poems, explained the major reason to choose Caeiro as the first was not only because he is the “Master and Matrix” of the heteronym coterie, but also because the edition of Caeiro would suffer minimum divergence between different editions, since the majority his poems were already published in magazines under Pessoa’s own handling.³⁵ In Korea the reason why Caeiro was the first is not clear. Was it because Caeiro’s simplistic vocabulary allows more accessibility to the reader? Or, was it because one can easily find a philosophically “oriental” perspective in this bucolic poet’s insight? In fact, there were considerable studies conducted about the “Zen” facet of Caeiro. Whether it was intentional or not, it is in fact highly probable that an average Korean reader easily associates Caeiro with oriental wisdom. This topic will also be commented in the preface.

3. Project Definition

³⁴ [(...) O Fernando Pessoa era um homem, ao qual o alfaiate podia tirar as medidas e depois fazer um casaco ou umas calças, mas o poema que era o Fernando Pessoa não há jeito de tomar medidas nenhuma. (53) Não estou a falar nos poemas que Fernando Pessoa escreveu, estou a falar no próprio poema que era Fernando Pessoa. (54)]

³⁵ From a e-mail conversation with Professor Min Xuefei.

3.1. Dimension

Here we must address some pre-conditions of organizing the anthology in question. First, the dimension of this anthology will be limited to a single volume. If the circumstantial conditions allowed us to publish a multi-volume series or collection, it would have been preferred. Nevertheless, this was impossible, not only for non-literary reasons such as financial factors, but also due to the “un-readiness”³⁶ of the public.

This “single-volume condition” faces a different task in comparison with the case of multiple volumes. Even in the case of translating an existing edition, it seems to be impossible to single out an anthology that would both meet our needs and secure indisputable consensus over the choice. Moreover, there is no single-volume anthology that is purposely designed to evoke positive responses of a specific group of readers regarding this case. This is the reason why I will try to organize a new set of poems. For reference, there are a couple of reasons why single-volume anthologies are less published, even in Portugal, although we may witness an abundance of Pessoaan publications. Firstly, as Pessoa was such a prolific poet whose works amount to about 3000 poems³⁷, the difficulty to publish a single edition of “complete poems” is understandable.³⁸ Furthermore, to label a book as “complete poems of Pessoa” could be still risky, or untimely, since almost every year a new unpublished text of Pessoa comes to light.³⁹ Secondly, because single volume anthologies are usually preferred by international readers than national readers who have easier access to the full “corpus” of the author, thanks to the variety of publications.

³⁶ What do I mean by *being ready*? I think that some poets need certain pre-conditions for presentation. It is not enough to “cook a dish”, but one has to create the “taste”, which does not automatically follow. If the “taste” part is not established due to cultural differences, it requires a “mediator” to build a bridge. In my view, not all the works of Pessoa, but some of them need a mediator to offer a guideline. To borrow the words of Wordsworth: «If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this—that *every author*, as far as he is great and at the same time original, *has had the task of creating the taste by which he is to be enjoyed*: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them; —and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road: —he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps» (William Wordsworth (1798) “Essay Supplementary to Preface”, in *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, Volume 2, edited by William Knight, p.344, italic & emphasis added).

³⁷ According to the experts I have consulted, the total number oscillated between 2,500–3,000. However, there is by far no exact or “official” registration. Besides, if we include his English poems, we may add approx. 300 poems. And a single poem can consist of, at the longest, 903 verses, in the case of *Ode Maritima*.

³⁸ By far, the most complete single volume international edition is the 2074-page volume “*Œuvres poétiques de Fernando Pessoa* (2001) édition, traduction et commentaire de Patrick Quillier, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard”. However, following this format would be unrealistic and unpractical considering the conventions of publishing environments in Korea.

³⁹ Concerning poetry, we are quite certain that the most important and renowned poems are already published. Yet, we cannot completely rule out the possibilities of something new to appear. Another idea to formulate a convincing anthology is to exclusively organize the poems “published during his life”, as Fernando Cabral Martins did. However, considering the other valuable poems only published posthumously, it would be untimely to have that criteria as the editing principle, especially in this particular case of publishing in Korea, where this anthology will be practically the first poetry book of Pessoa.

3.2. Hypothetical Reader

Now, when we are to bear a target reader in mind, it is not easy to make a clear-cut choice between the general public and the academic community, since interests of both parties will contribute to spread, fuel and foster interests on the author in different ways. But if a choice is to be made, considering the given actual circumstances and the own nature of Pessoa's particularity, I think the project should address the academic community first. Although there is a small but growing recognition of Pessoa, a professional and academic approach to enrich knowledge of Pessoa's literature is what we actually lack more in degree. By far, not a single PhD thesis of Pessoa has been published in Korea. Although the general academic community consists of a very small number of readers, we expect it to become the cohesive core group which boosts future interests and activities related to the poet. Considering the possibility that the anthology would serve as a textbook for university classes, I will try to synthesize the most reliable selections of published anthologies and consider adding other poems which frequently appear in important Pessoaan studies. If we consider the general public as priority, we must select "accessible" poems, offer a less elaborated, less academic preface with fewer footnotes, and regulate the quantity and length of the volume in order to render it "reader-friendly". This will not be the case. Yet, obviously, dismissing this "friendliness" does not imply entirely excluding intentions of raising general public interest in Pessoa evoked by latest publications. However, organizing a "commercial" version, solely in order to adjust to the norms of the current market will be avoided.

3.3. Preface & Supplementary Contents

As we will focus on academic readers, the preface will play a more important role. As we stated before, the focal point of the preface is the poetic production of Pessoa. In this regard, we will elaborate his poetry in relation with various *isms* he created himself. I will primarily try to quote relevant references of Pessoa himself, and secondly, incorporate convincing interpretations of distinguished academics. It may be, more or less a collection of "filtered" references and informations, based on my own academic experience of *how to start with Pessoa*. The general approach intends to be an attentive and faithful reading of Pessoa and of his key commentators. My personal opinions and arguments will be limitedly expressed. Relying on established scholars' opinions may lead to a conventional and conservative reading of Pessoa, by excluding bold, controversial interpretations. As a result, it is possible to become less experimental and original, but this may be the compromise one is bound to make in the early stage.

* Supplementary Contents: Some excerpts of Pessoa's important proses and articles related to his poetics will be added/translated as well: *A Nova Poesia Portuguesa* [The New Portuguese Poetry], *Apontamentos para uma Estética Não-Aristotélica* [Notes for a Non-Aristotelian Aesthetics], *Heróstrato* [Herostratus], etc.

4. Methodology & Editorial Principles

Taking all the abovementioned conditions into account, now it seems to be the time to answer the central question: If one is supposed to suggest a convincing methodology in organizing a single volume anthology of Pessoa, what would be the most adequate approach to compose it, within the given circumstantial limits? I argue that a reliable poetry anthology must consist of the following three elements: (Order according to priority)

- 1) Representability of the author's *corpus*
- 2) Credibility (Reliability) of the editor/translator and editing process
- 3) Accessibility for the reader

Now, how can we organize an anthology that would introduce Pessoa in the most representative, legitimate, yet accessible way?

4.1. Structure

In the majority of cases, the basic structure of editing Pessoa's poems seems to be consensual. Although the concrete selection of poems would widely vary, almost every single volume anthology adopts the same structure⁴⁰: presenting three "heteronyms" (Caeiro, Campos, Reis) and the "orthonym" Pessoa (Pessoa himself). Nonetheless, this apparently safe and conventional structure is not unquestionable: What about the "pre-heteronym" Alexander Search? Do we include the poems of Vicente Guedes? Do we exclude his English and French poems? What about some ambitious poems that evoke interest yet remain unfinished?⁴¹ What about his popular quatrains? etc. Eventually, we will begin to realize that, as Ivo Castro mentioned (see page 14), finding a single reliable criterion is *not* possible. Hence, compromise is inevitable, and to a certain degree, it is necessary to sacrifice the strict sense of categorization by «breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things» (Foucault, 1966: 15). Maybe the

⁴⁰ There are anthologies which group poems according to thematic affinities, (i.e. "Love poems" or "Esoteric poems" by Pessoa) but these approaches will not suit our goal to organize an anthology with high representability.

⁴¹ *O Fausto*, *Saudação a Walt Whitman*, *Passagem das Horas* etc.

“impossibility of congruence” or, the necessity of alternative categorization *is* itself, Pessoa. In conclusion, for this case, we will root for the synthetic module: a basic structure + adding “unmissable” poems + supplementary elements.

4.2. Selecting Process & Criteria

The most important part is the selecting method of the poems, regarding the overwhelming quantity of Pessoa’s corpus. It will be overly arbitrary and subjective if I chose certain poems depending on my personal opinion of their “literary quality”. There are exceptions, for instance, such as the poet Eugénio de Andrade’s anthology. Although Eduardo Lourenço judges it as a «extremely personal choice, of pure taste» (Lourenço, 2006: 7)⁴², the widely respected poet’s selection does not lose its unique value. Alternatively, one can opt for selecting only the published poems during Pessoa’s lifetime, but it could exclude numerous valuable poems. Taking reference from Pessoa’s own editing plans (unpublished drafts and notes) as a guideline could also be a method, but these lists are either too incomplete or vary too much. Assigning a numerical frame such as giving a title like “100 poems of Pessoa” could also be another method to set a limit, but in our case I prefer the project not to be confined by a self-imposed arbitrary number.

I contend that the most consensual and objective approach would be respecting the history of previous publications and relying on precedent researches. Following this premise, I chose to consult eight examples among single-volume anthologies. The chosen anthologies were organized, edited, introduced by distinguished specialists on Pessoa studies, or widely respected poets/translators.

Title	Year	Editor	Publisher/ Country	Language
Poesia de Fernando Pessoa	1945 [2006]	Adolfo Casais Monteiro	Editorial Presença / Portugal	Portuguese
Fernando Pessoa: Selected Poems	1974 [2000]	Jonathan Griffin	Penguin Classic / USA	English
Os Melhores Poemas de Fernando Pessoa	1986 [2014]	Teresa Rita Lopes	Editora Global / Brazil	Portuguese
Antologia Poética	1982	Ángel Crespo	Espasa Calpe / Spain	Spanish
Fernando Pessoa / poesias escolhidas	1996	Eugénio de Andrade	Campo das Letras / Portugal	Portuguese
Poems of Fernando Pessoa	2001	Edward Honig	City Lights Publishers / USA	English
Antologia Poética de Fernando Pessoa	2006	Eduardo Lourenço	Visão JL / Portugal	Portuguese
Forever Someone Else	2008 [2013]	Richard Zenith	Assírio & Alvim / Portugal	Portuguese / English

(Table 1) Pool of Reference⁴³

⁴² [(...) escolha de puro gosto, pessoalíssima].

⁴³ French editions were excluded because the reliable versions were either too lengthy (the 2074-page French volume *Œuvres poétiques de Fernando Pessoa* (2001); mentioned in footnote 32), or because they were published separately by heteronyms.

Once the reference pool was established, the logical first step (a) to organize a rather “objective and reliable” selection of poems was to construct an *intersection* of these eight anthologies, and find a common ground of choices.

Poeta	Poema	Lopes	Lourenço	Monteiro	Andrade	Zenith	Honig	Griffin	Crespo	Total
Fernando Pessoa	Impressões do Crepúsculo	✓	✓	✓		✓				4
	Hora Absurda	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			5
	Chuva Oblíqua	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			6
CANCIONEIRO	Autopsicografia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
	Isto	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		6
	Passos da cruz	✓(5,6)	✓(4,6,7,10,13)	✓(7,10,12,13)	✓(4,7)					4
	Marinha	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				5
	O menino da sua mãe	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	5
	Ela canta, pobre ceifeira	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
	Iniciação	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	6
	Abdicação		✓	✓	✓	✓				4
	Paira a tona de agua...	✓	✓	✓	✓					4
	Súbita mão de algum fantasma		✓	✓				✓	✓	5
	NATAL		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		6
	O Andaime		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	5
	Qualquer música		✓	✓	✓	✓				4
	Conselho		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	5
	Neste mundo em que esquecemos		✓	✓		✓		✓		4
	Liberdade		✓		✓	✓	✓			4
	Leve, breve, suave		✓	✓	✓		✓			4
	Intervalo		✓	✓	✓		✓			4
	Dá a surpresa de ser.		✓	✓	✓				✓	4
	Pobre velha música		✓	✓	✓				✓	4
	Sol nulo dos dias vaos		✓	✓	✓				✓	4
	Na sombra do Monte Abiegnio		✓	✓	✓				✓	4
	Gomes Leal			✓	✓			✓		3
	Não: não digas nada!			✓			✓	✓		3
	Canção			✓		✓		✓		3
	Sonho. Não sei quem sou...	✓		✓		✓				3
	Ó sino da minha aldeia		✓		✓	✓				3

(Table 2) Example of finding an intersection between the selected anthologies – step (a)

4.3. List (Result)

Each poem selected by more than half of the editors was automatically included.

Fernando Pessoa	Mensagem	Alberto Caeiro	Álvoro de Campos	Ricardo Reis	35 Sonnets
Impressões do Crepúsculo	Ulisses	1	Ode Triunfal	Ouvi contar que outrora...	28
Hora Absurda	D. Dinis	5	Ode Marítima	Para ser grande...	
Chuva Oblíqua	D. Sebastião, Rei de Portugal	8	Tabaccaria	Como se cada beijo...	
Autopsicografia	O Infante	9	Opiario	Vem sentar-te comigo, Lidia...	
Isto	O Mostrengo	20	Lisbon Revisited(1923)	Já sobre a fronte vã se me acinzenta	
Passos da cruz	Mar Português	28	Lisbon Revisited(1926)	Nada fica de nada. Nada somos.	
Marinha	O Quinto Imperio	30	Mestre, meu Mestre querido!	As rosas amo dos jardins de Adónis	
O menino da sua mãe		39	Dois Excertos de Odes	Quanta tristeza e amargura	
Ela canta, pobre ceifeira		43	Poema em Linha Recta	Quando, Lidia, vier o nosso Outono	
Iniciação		44	MAGNIFICAT	Prefiro rosas, meu amor, a patira	
Abdicação		46	Adiamento		
Paira a tona de agua...		47	Quero acabar entre rosas		
Súbita mão de algum fantasma		48	Os antigos invocavam as Musas		
NATAL		49	Simbolos? Estou farto de		
O Andaime			Escrito num livro abandonado		
Qualquer música			Se, depois de eu morrer, quiserem escrever a minha biografia (de <i>Poemas Inconjuntos</i>)		
Conselho			A espantosa realidade das coisas		
Neste mundo em que esquecemos			Tambem sei fazer conjecturas (O Penúltimo Poema)		
Liberdade			Não basta abrir a janela		
Leve, breve, suave					
Intervalo					
Dá a surpresa de ser.					
Pobre velha música					
Sol nulo dos dias vaos					
Na sombra do Monte Abiegnio					

(Table 3) The first list of “essential” poems (76 poems were selected)

However, as we predicted, relying solely on the intersection would not satisfy our needs. As our focus was finding the best way possible to not lose anything crucial, I started to add poems which were frequently commented or quoted in essential references, in order to facilitate the academic readers on researching. This was the second step (b). As a result, 51 poems were added. ((a)+(b)= Total 127 poems).

Fernando Pessoa	Mensagem	Alberto Caeiro	Álvaro de Campos	Ricardo Reis	35 Sonnets
Gomes Leal	O dos Castelos	No.7	Soneto Já Antigo	A flor que és, não a que dás, eu quero	8
Não: não digas nada!	O das Quinas	14	Sair de Comboio...	A nada imploram tuas mãos já coisas	
Canção	D. Sebastião	32	Apostila	Prefiro rosas, meu amor, à pátria,	
Sonho. Não sei quem sou...	As Ilhas Afortunadas	35	Trapo	De novo traz as aparentes novas	
Ó sino da minha aldeia	Noite	36	Aniversário	Se recordo quem fui, outrem me vejo	
Não sei se é sonho, se realidade,	Nevoeiro	45	Demogorgon	Aqui, dizeis, na cova a que me abeiro	
Não sei quantas almas tenho.		O amor é uma companhia	Dobrada à moda do Porto	Como este infante que alourado dorme	
O amor é que é essencial. O sexo é ...		Se eu morrer novo	Gazetilha	Cuidas, invio, que cumpres apertando	
Viajar! Perder países!		Criança desconhecida e suja	Afinal, a melhor maneira de viajar	Eu nunca fui dos que a um sexo o outro	
O último sortilégio		É talvez o último dia da mir	Tenho uma grande constipação	Da nossa semelhança com os deuses	
Quero ser livre insincero			Comeco a conhecer-me		
Tenho tanto sentimento					
Un Soir à Lima					

(Table 4) The list of additional poems – step (b)

4.4. Provenance of Texts

For the source of the poems, I have basically consulted the criteria employed by the Pessoa's Critical Edition. (*Edição Crítica das Obras de Fernando Pessoa*, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda). However, on trying to enhance readability, I decided to exclude the critical apparatus. And when there were variables of words, I chose the one that brought the best effect in Korean translation.

5. Translation Issues

5.1. Rhythm and Rhyme

According to the German translator Lind, there is a noticeable facility in translating poems of Campos, since the poet adopts free verse: «Once you find the adequate word, it is just enough to reconstruct a rhythm that can adapt to the tonality of the poem and after that surges a translation which is not (or only a little bit) remote from the original» (Lind, 1962:157).⁴⁴ The French translator Bréchon finds poems of orthonym Pessoa (for example, the *Cancioneiro*) extremely difficult to translate:

⁴⁴ [uma vez encontrada a palavra adequada, basta reconstituir um ritmo que se adapte à tonalidade do poema e surge depois uma tradução que pouco ou nada se afasta do original.]

if the translation of free verse poses the same kind of problems as the prose, the elegies in regular verse of *Cancioneiro* poses other (problems): Should one try to render the metrics and the rhymes, running the risk of betraying the meaning? Our response, (...), was: no. (Bréchon, 2005: 11)⁴⁵

In the case of translating into Korean, it is even more unthinkable to “betray” the meaning in order to attain rhythm and rhyme. In linguistic typology, subject–verb–object (SVO) is the so-called “basic” sentence structure where the subject comes first, the verb second, and the object third. Languages regarded as this SVO order include Portuguese, French and English etc.⁴⁶ Meanwhile; Korean language obeys the subject–object–verb (SOV) order (i.e. also Japanese, Hindi etc.), which produces difficulty in translating poetic rhythms written in languages that follow the SVO order. Paying attention to the common verb-final word order, the translator is bound to vacillate whether he/she should inverse the verse or not, but usually ends up transmitting the meaning first – an act that many times reduces the original musical effect – unless the musical intention is explicit. As a result, the priority of meaning over rhythm or rhyme would prevail overall.

In this regard, poems such as *Pauis*, poems from *Cancioneiro*, and Ricardo Reis’s short quatrains were especially difficult in translating the formal tonality or the sonority of words. Nonetheless, no translator would totally renounce conveying poetic musicality, so they usually recite the poem repetitively and amend the ending of the words in order to preserve, at least, the minimal effects according to the sonority, but many times the result is not satisfactory. To paraphrase Lind’s aforementioned comment, I will have to confess: «although you find the closest word, it is just *not* enough to reconstruct a rhythm that can adapt to the tonality of the poem, and after that surges a translation which *is* quite remote from the original». Edwin Honig remarks: «With few exceptions the translations dispense with rhyme. The reason is that the syntactical problems are nominally profuse enough without courting further complications for the minimal advantage to be had in rhyming. (...) No matter how hard one might try to reassemble them, certain poems just do not lend themselves to translation. One is *Hora Absurda* [Absurd Hour] (...)» (Pessoa, 2001: 14-15; in *Introduction* by Edwin Honig). On the other hand, it is also important to recognize the style difference of each heteronym. Yet, we must consider that Pessoa could have easily accentuated their style-difference even more, but for some reason he did not radically “magnify” it. Taking this into account, I think the key is attributing a *subtle* difference in style. Even though heteronyms are different from each other, it is important not to exaggerate the difference at the price of losing any quality of each poem.

⁴⁵ [(Enfin,) si la traduction des vers libres pose le même genre de problèmes que la prose, les élégies en vers réguliers du *Cancioneiro* en posent d’autres: faut-il essayer de rendre les mètres et les rimes, au risque de trahir le sens? Notre réponse, (dans l’édition Bourgois), a été: non.]

⁴⁶ In German, Dutch SVO in main clauses coexists with SOV in subordinate clauses, which gives more facility in translation.

5.2. Ambiguity of Words

When translated to Korean, many poetic words of Pessoa tend to lose its ambiguity by gaining a more specific or categorical meaning. This tendency becomes problematic with certain words that are frequently used by Pessoa. Against his/her will, the translator is subject to unilaterally choose *a* meaning between various meanings, which the original text does not explicitly express. It goes without saying that semantic ambiguity is characteristic in poetic language in general, not only in Pessoa's poetry. Unfortunately, once they are translated, many words suffer a diminishing effect compared to its original exuberance of meanings. For example, in the Korean translated version, "Saudade" must be chosen between "향수" [nostalgia] or "그리움" [feeling of missing] or "동경" [longing] etc., "Ânsia" has to be either "근심" [worrying] or "갈망" [aspiration] or "불안" [anxiety] etc., "Coração" has to be either "마음" [Mind] or "심장" [Heart(cardiologic organ)] or "가슴" [Chest], etc. Also in the opening line of *Autopsicografia* –one of the key poems that pertain Pessoa's essential thoughts on poetry–, «O poeta é um fingidor», the word "fingidor" is so untranslatable that it does not allow the translator to satisfyingly settle on a single Korean word.⁴⁷ It should be reluctantly decided between "모방자" [Feigner/Mimic (Mimicker)] or "흉내내는 자" [Imitator], "속이는 자" [Deceiver/Cheater], "사칭하는 자" [Liar/Faker/Swindler], "위조하는 자/위조범" [Forger/Fraud: connotation of a criminal] etc. I opted for "척하는 자" [a person that pretends], which may be perhaps the closest option concerning its meaning, but obviously cannot transmit the original simplicity.

As a final example, the nautical terms in the *Ode Marítima* [Maritime Ode] would sound excessively technical for a poem, when translated into Korean, although we consider its modern experimental quality. Especially, it was difficult to determine the equivalent of "Volante", because of the same reason: whereas the Portuguese word "Volante" encompasses various meanings, in Korean it has to be either "플라이휠/관성바퀴" [flywheel], or "핸들/조종장치/조향장치" [steering wheel], or "키/타륜" [helm], or "수평 핸들" [tiller], or "키의 손잡이/방향타" [rudder]. The semantic flexibility or wideness of Portuguese wording allows the reader to freely imagine the word as a mechanical part of the ship, or a metaphysical mind-controlling gadget or so on, which opens the way of exuberant interpretation, whereas, when translated into Korean it tends to demand a categorical meaning.

⁴⁷ The German translator Lind also mentions the impossibility to find the exact word that corresponds the "fingidor" in German. (Lind, 1962: 161) In the case of French translation, «there is indeed a noun *feinteur*, but it is rarely used (...) it would be used to a football player who can "dribble" skillfully. It is improper in the case of the poet. (...) This is how the two main translators translated: "The poet knows the art of faking" [Le poète sait l'art de feindre] (Guibert) / "To feign is the character of the poet" [Feindre est le propre du poète] (Quillier)» (Bréchon, 2005: 11).

5.3. Letter Case: upper and lower cases letters

In *Ode Marítima*, Pessoa frequently adopts words in capital letters⁴⁸ and hyphenation to coin new words, such as “Espaço” “Cais Absoluto” “Grande Cais” “Distância Absoluta” “Distância Abstrata”, “Morte”, “A Voz Absoluta” “Coisas-Reais”, “Espíritos-Coisas”, “Entidades em Pedra-Almas”, supposedly to invoke a Platonic implication of the “Idea” of the things, rather than designating a physical and concrete object. However, as Korean language uses a “caseless” alphabet which does not have a system proper to distinguish upper and lower cases letters, a Korean editor would, for instance, mark the difference by applying san-serif typefaces to the upper case letters, in contrast to the body text in serif typeface. But this “san-serif style” emphasis may evoke different effects. For example, it can be misunderstood as an equivalent of an “*italic*” style usage, which also does not exist in Korean orthographic notation, therefore usually substituted with underlines. Consequently, through these typographical modifications, the poetic words may suffer an unsuspected change, and can fall short in transmitting the poet’s initial intention.

Final Considerations

Robert Frost (1874–1963) once described: «Poetry is what gets lost in translation». As we have examined, this introductory translation project was also not invulnerable when it was situated, in numerous occasions, on the brink of “losing” poetic qualities. Be that as it may, the emphasis must be laid on the fact that the difficulties presented here do not buttress any sort of “impossibility” of translation/introduction. Although we may occasionally encounter certain “incommunicability”, it does not necessarily imply “untranslatability”. We must carefully draw a distinction between the two. In fact, even the abovementioned famous quote by Frost is widely misquoted. To be precise, he said, in *Conversations on the Craft of Poetry*, that «I could define poetry this way: it is that which is lost out of both prose and verse in translation» (Frost, 1995: 856). Now, the meaning is not the same as the originally mentioned. Like this, we can easily lose something even in *transcription*, precisely while we are talking about losing in translation.

What I intend to highlight, is the limited condition that the editor/translator had to face, as well as the inevitable decision he/she is forced to make, which invoke issues that deeply root in substantial cultural differences or linguistic composition processes. I will have to admit that many of the difficulties of editing and translating that I have posed above could

⁴⁸ Not to say that Pessoa is the only poet who does so. For example, Mário Sá-Carneiro also uses it, just to name one. But at least in this poem, the philosophical implications play more significant role to understand the poem, and the usage is more frequent.

be caused due to my personal limits of linguistic knowledge or translating talent, and not because of an “untraversable abyss” between languages or cultures. Therefore, I am willing to accept any suggestions or corrections. Pessoa once said that «the only interest in translation is when they are difficult, that is to say, of doing it from one language to another completely different one, or a very complicated poem to a very close language. There is nothing interesting to translate, let us say, between Spanish and Portuguese» (Pessoa, 1993: 221).⁴⁹ His observation of the two Romance languages may not be entirely true, but I do agree with the point that the true merit of translation lies in the more challengeable task. Even though the territory of incommunicability and imperfection exists, the “trials of the foreign”⁵⁰ must continue and it is always worthwhile to dare a challenge. If there is something truly incommunicable, it may be the almost obsessive level of seriousness that the translator projects on every trivial detail.

(END)

⁴⁹ [O único interesse em traduções é quando elas são difíceis, ou seja, de uma língua para outra completamente diferente, ou então de um poema muito complicado para uma língua muito próxima. Não tem nenhuma graça traduzir, digamos, entre espanhol e português.]

⁵⁰ Coined from the title of Antoine Berman's renowned text *Translation and the Trials of the Foreign* (1985).

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PART II

Preface

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Notes on Quotation

- For the convenience of bilingual readers, every Portuguese quotation is accompanied by its original source text in footnotes. When the English translation of the text was mine, I only indicated the source of the original Portuguese text at the end of my translation; when I cited translations by others, both sources (of the original text and its translation) are indicated at the end of each quotation, respectively.
- Other cited texts without any original Portuguese text footnote means that it was originally written in English.

Foreword

“If Fernando Pessoa was a painter, instead of being a poet, what self-portrait would have he painted of himself?”

– José Saramago, Presentation of *Sabat*.

What was poetry, or a poem, for Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935)? We may start to find an answer of this question by directly referring to Pessoa himself, since he did not shy away from defining things. Yet, pay attention: he would usually offer definitions rather than a definition; contradict his own arguments without hesitation; allow different opinions to flow through his mind; challenge his thoughts by operating his keen sense of self-criticism. As a result, whenever an attentive Pessoa reader assumes that the poet established one point, he/she is likely to encounter a counter-point among his numerous scattered texts. That being said, his disperse thoughts may allow us, at least, to draw a hazy outline of his notion of poetry. Among the definitions of poetry that Pessoa left, mainly in unpublished notes, let us start with an indirect one, written in a letter to an English editor (1916) where he provided a rather anthropomorphic idea.

I sometimes hold that **a poem** — I would also say a painting or a statue, but I do not consider sculpture and painting arts, but only perfected artisans' work — **is a person, a living human being**, belongs in bodily presence and real fleshly existence to another world, into which our imagination throws him, his aspect to us, as we read him in this world, being no more than the imperfect shadow of that reality of beauty which is divine elsewhere. (1966A: 126, emphasis added)

It could be read as a possible echo of what Pessoa read as Aristotle's remark on poetry:

There are three central tenets of Sensationism. The first is that art is supremely construction and that the greatest art is that which is able to visualize and create organized wholes, of which the component parts fit vitally into their places; the great principle that Aristotle enunciated **when he said that a poem was an «animal»**. (2009:155)

In contrast to this “animated” version, he would elaborate a more “artificial” definition in other texts, especially addressing his preoccupation on rhythm and musicality.

A poem is an intellectualized impression, or an idea converted in emotion, communicated to others through the medium of rhythm (...) a work of art consists of, fundamentally, an **objectified interpretation of a subjectified impression.** (1966A: 177)¹

Another similar idea written in *Erostratus* brings the musical aspect as well, though this time adding a dimension of visuality.

A poem, which is a musical picture of (in) ideas, makes us free, through the understanding of it, to see what we want and to hear what we want. All statues and paintings, all songs and symphonies, are tyrannous in comparison with this. In a poem, we must understand what the poet wants, but we may feel what we like. (1966: 224)

Pessoa's "heteronym" poet Ricardo Reis had an opinion not very different from his creator.

Poetry is an expressed emotion in rhythm through thoughts, just like music is an expression, but a direct one, without the mediation of the idea. To give music to a poem is to accentuate the emotion, reinforcing its rhythm. (1966: 73)²

In another modified phrase, Reis seems to be either confused, or still in search of a more satisfactory answer, as he vacillates while attempting to determine the order and process of creation.

A poem is a projection in words of an idea through emotion. An emotion is not the base of poetry: it is just a medium which the idea uses to reduce itself to words. (2003A: 207)³

However, the free verse poet Álvaro de Campos, another heteronym of Pessoa, throws another topic to his colleague: the incompatibility of musical rhythm and words.

¹ [um poema é uma impressão intelectualizada, ou uma ideia convertida em emoção, comunicada a outros por meio de um ritmo (...)] a obra de arte, fundamentalmente, consiste numa interpretação objetivada de uma impressão subjetiva]

² [A poesia é a emoção expressa em ritmo através do pensamento, como a música é essa mesma expressão, mas directa, sem o intermédio da ideia. Musicar um poema é acentuar-lhe a emoção, reforçando-lhe o ritmo.]

³ [Um poema é a projecção de uma ideia em palavras através da emoção. A emoção não é a base da poesia: é tão-somente o meio de que a ideia se serve para se reduzir a palavras.]

Everything is prose. **Poetry is the form of prose in which the rhythm is artificial.** (...) But one may ask: why should it have an artificial rhythm? The response is: because the intense emotion does not fit in words. (2003A: 216)⁴

Campos accepts the notion that poetry consists of an act/performance of singing, yet he thinks one must artificially *process* the musicality, in order to maintain the poetry non-musical. The conclusion he draws is concise.

This is poetry: to sing *without* music. For that reason, the great lyric poets, in a broad sense of the adjective “lyric”, are not *musical*. How could they be, if they are musical? (1996A: 391, italic added)⁵

Reis counters⁶ Campos, as he affirms music as the basis, words as instruments.

I, however, would rather say that poetry is the music that we make with ideas, therefore with words. (1996A: 391)⁷

If so, is poetry “music played with words”, instead of instruments? If Bernardo Soares, Pessoa’s *semi*-heteronym, had participated in this debate, perhaps he would have inclined towards Campos. Soares preferred prose because he was able to find himself less constrained by rhythm and musical nature.

I prefer prose to poetry as an art form for two reasons, the first of which is purely personal: I have no choice, because I’m incapable of writing in verse. The second reason applies to everyone, however, and I don’t think it’s just a shadow or disguised form of the first. It’s worth looking at in some detail, for it touches on the essence of all art’s value.

I consider poetry to be an intermediate stage between music and prose. Like music, poetry is bound by rhythmic laws, and even when these are not the strict laws of metre, they still exist as checks, constraints, automatic mechanisms of repression and censure. In prose we speak freely. We can incorporate musical rhythms, and still think. We can incorporate poetic rhythms, and yet remain outside them. An occasional poetic rhythm won’t disturb prose, but an occasional prose rhythm makes poetry fall down.

⁴ [Tudo é prosa. A poesia é aquela forma da prosa em que o ritmo é artificial. (...) Mas pergunta-se: porque há-de haver ritmo artificial? Responde-se: porque a emoção intensa não cabe na palavra.]

⁵ [É isto a poesia: cantar sem música. Por isso os grandes poetas líricos, no grande sentido do adjectivo «lírico», não são musicáveis. Como o serão, se são musicais?]

⁶ To see the full debate refer to: “Controvérsia entre Álvaro de Campos e Ricardo Reis” (1996A: 391).

⁷ [Eu, porém, antes diria que a poesia é uma música que se faz com ideias, e por isso com palavras.]

Prose encompasses all art, in part because words contain the whole world, and in part because the untrammelled word contains every possibility for saying and thinking. (...) I'm convinced that in a perfect, civilized world there would be no other art but prose. (2002: Text 227)⁸

Through these threads of thoughts, maybe we can conceive a vague direction where Pessoa would like to lead us, as Rita Patrício suggests: «Pessoa thinks essentially in the valorization of art in words, and more particularly, in poetry. An example of this is the way how the notes entitled *Aesthetics* are exemplified with poetry and are orientated for the valorization of poetry: the projects of Aesthetics of Pessoa, are above all studies on Poetics» (Patrício, 2012: 20).⁹ However, we also realize that Pessoa simply preferred to indulge inside the in-between space created through endless dialogues of defining/redefining, rather than prioritizing a single dominant idea.

At this point, I suggest that we should rather try to decipher his mind through his *poetic* expressions, since often times «in his poems we encounter more fecund definitions of his theory than in his prose» (Lind, 1970: 331).¹⁰ The best example would be one of the most famous “definitions” of a poet, the remarkable opening line of the poem *Autopsicografia*: «The poet is a feigner» (2008: 277).¹¹ What does the poet “feign” about? And before that, *whom* –among all the poets created by Pessoa– is the feigning subject? In order to enter Pessoa’s complex literary labyrinth, we must get accustomed to this multiplicity. As Pessoa was (or were) in fact *Pessoas*, every moment we encounter an issue related to the poetic narrator, lyric subject, or authorship, we are continuously compelled to ask *which Pessoa* we are dealing with. Depending on the criterion we accept, we could be talking about a good

⁸ [Prefiro a prosa ao verso, como modo de arte, por duas razões, das quais a primeira, que é minha, é que não tenho escolha, pois sou incapaz de escrever em verso. A segunda, porém, é de todos, e não é - creio bem - uma sombra ou disfarce da primeira. Vale pois a pena que eu a esfie, porque toca no sentido íntimo de toda a valia da arte.

Considero o verso como uma coisa intermédia, uma passagem da música para a prosa. Como a música, o verso é limitado por leis rítmicas, que, ainda que não sejam as leis rígidas do verso regular, existem todavia como resguardos, coacções, dispositivos automáticos de opressão e castigo. Na prosa falamos livres. Podemos incluir ritmos poéticos, e contudo estar fora deles. Um ritmo ocasional de verso não estorva a prosa; um ritmo ocasional de prosa faz tropeçar o verso.

Na prosa se engloba toda a arte - em parte porque na palavra se contém todo o mundo, em parte porque na palavra livre se contém toda a possibilidade de o dizer e pensar. (...) Creio bem que, em um mundo civilizado perfeito, não haveria outra arte que não a prosa] (1998A: Trecho 227).

⁹ [(...) Pessoa pensa essencialmente na valorização da arte em palavras, e mais particularmente, na poesia. Exemplo disso é o modo como as notas intituladas *Estética* são exemplificadas com poesia e direccionadas para a valorização da poesia: os projectos de *Estética* de Pessoa são sobretudo estudos de Poética.]

¹⁰ [nos seus poemas encontramos, curiosamente, definições mais fecundas da sua teoria, do que as encontradas na sua prosa.]

¹¹ [O poeta é um fingidor] (1986B: 40).

number of poets. There are various suggestions around the issue of how to interpret the heteronym system, but probably no single explanation would guarantee a consensus. Besides, the categorization of each heteronym by Pessoa was not as “systematic” as one might imagine. Sometimes, a poem would be attributed to more than one heteronym, sometimes the author would be changed, and sometimes it would end up without any designation. Sometimes the poet would develop and change the style of a heteronym but maintain its name (like the case of Campos). So we should bear in mind that it was a living and constantly transforming system –if we could call it a system at all–, not a strict and rigid logic.

By and large, this intricate “constellation” of poets is indeed the most commented part of Pessoa’s literary legacy, but could this represent the originality of his poetry? What does Pessoa stand for in the poetic tradition? Peter Rickard tries to respond:

He stands for the denial, not only of sentimentality, but even of sentiment itself as a matter of poetic content. He stands instead for the primacy of thought, intuition, vision and prophecy over sensibility and feeling. His literary ideas, as expressed in a large number of provocative articles, stand in the main for a questioning, a reappraisal, a deepening and heightening of the content of poetry, and for a search for new forms of expression. In his own practice, he introduced into Portuguese a new poetic syntax of the kind already achieved in French Symbolist poetry, and he renovated the poetic vocabulary, carefully avoiding, except in parody, anything resembling the stock poetic diction of the accepted Portuguese literary tradition. (...) Can we explain the poetry in terms of the man? Or the man in terms of the poetry? Only to a very limited extent, and we would probably be wrong to try. (...) Above all, Pessoa has the merit of questioning our assumptions, of delving deeper into the things we take for granted, of making us think along new lines, and of presenting things to us in a different and startlingly unconventional way. Many poets have written about suicide, but who ever treated the subject as he has treated it? Many poets have apostrophized Night, but who has done so as Pessoa did? Who ever compared himself with someone's last look? Who yearned to kiss the harpist's gesture, not her hand? Who has ranged so widely, so originally, so multifariously and at the same time so agonizingly and so poignantly over so many aspects of the mystery of existence and man's quest for identity? (1971: 53, 54-55/ 56, in *Introduction* by Peter Rickard)

Even though Pessoa was the author of the text entitled *Uselessness of Criticism*, in fact he was quite preoccupied with critical acclaim and literary recognition. He thought that people (and critics) are only able to recognize true originality in relation with the past, or when originality *becomes* the past. In *Erostratus*, we read:

Let us suppose a deeply original work of art comes before his eyes. How does he judge it? By comparison with the works of art of the past. If it be original, however, it will depart in something — and the more original the more it will depart — from the works of art of the past. In so far as it does this, it will seem not to conform to the aesthetic canon which the critic finds established in his mind. (1966: 44)

Actually, the fragments of *Erostratus* were written in a state of certain anxiety towards celebrity, which Pessoa never achieved in his lifetime. As Pessoa said, maybe we are able to value his originality only because we have everything about him in hindsight. Or rather, we are not even ready to understand it yet, as our contemporary philosopher Alain Badiou remarks: «we must therefore conclude that philosophy is not —at least not yet— under the condition of Pessoa. Its thought is not yet *worthy of Pessoa*» (Badiou, 2005: 36).

About this anthology

Let us bear in mind that when one organizes a poetry anthology of Pessoa, one should not forget that one is dealing with a significant amount of posthumously published, or unpublished texts. So most of the selections are organized *a posteriori*. Therefore, to organize an anthology of Pessoa one requires certain criteria or methodology, so that the reader is not reading an arbitrary choice of the editor.¹²

Although Fernando Pessoa remains practically unknown to the Korean public, interest seems to be gaining grounds after several recent publications. Most of this interest comes through *The Book of Disquiet*. This is appropriate, since *The Book* is undoubtedly one of the most attractive and intriguing guides to the wide world of Pessoa and he considered it to be one of his main projects. However, if our reading ends there, we will miss out on the richness of his vast poetic legacy. We should keep in mind that Pessoa identified himself as a poet and repeatedly compared himself to the greatest poets of the literary history. Although he produced a significant amount of prose towards the end of his life, we cannot begin to

¹² In this regard, I encourage the reader to consult an elaborated critical justification about this anthology: *The Task of Introducing Fernando Pessoa to a Distant Culture: Korean Translation project, Methodological Issues and a Preface* (2015) by me.

describe the mark he left in Portuguese literature and European Modernism without his poems.

With this in mind, I have attempted to trace a trajectory of “the poet” Fernando Pessoa in this preface. I will try to highlight the main events that directly relates to his poetic production. Although it loosely follows chronological order, I have avoided writing a conventional biography. It will heavily focus on his poetic quest, as well as his theoretical development in poetry and his unique procedure for creating poems. His literary voyage is divided into eight important facets as a poet, and we start where his career as a poet began.

Certainly, if there is a royal road for understanding a poet, it is that of simply reading his/her poems. You could opt to skip this preface and dive directly into his poems. But if you believe that some background knowledge can enrich your reading, here is a behind-the-scenes story of this “dramatic poet”.

1. The New Portuguese Poetry

1.1. Naturalization

Following the death of his father (1893) and remarriage of his mother to the Consul of Durban (1895), Pessoa joins his family to leave Lisbon for South Africa in 1896, at the age of seven and a half, where he begins to receive British education. Surrounded by English Romantic poets like Coleridge, Browning and Wordsworth, his earliest admirations are most notable in his reading of Keats. «I cannot think badly of the man who wrote the *Ode to a Nightingale*, nor of him who, in that *To the Grecian Urn*, expresses so human an idea as the heart-rending untimeliness of beauty» (1966: 331). Also noteworthy is his appreciation of Shakespeare and Milton which would profoundly shape his literary ideals, as well as his personal favorite *The Pickwick Papers*. Any direct influence of Africa is scarcely observed, as he only offers a glimpse into the poem *Un soir à Lima*.

The main language he develops as an aspiring poet until the age of eighteen is English, not his mother tongue. «In December 1904, Pessoa took the Intermediate Arts Examination and received the highest score in Natal, which would have earned him a government grant to study at Oxford or Cambridge, but (...) applicants had to have spent the four previous years at Natal School. Because of the trip he made to Lisbon in 1901-02, Pessoa was disqualified» (2006: 17, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith). A strong case could be made that he could have become an English poet if he had been selected to go to the UK. But instead, a different question would have been raised upon his arrival to Lisbon in 1905: “In what language should I write?” After his return to Lisbon, he enrolls in Lisbon University to study literature and philosophy, only to drop out after two years. It was perhaps due to a sum of illness, weak motivation, combined with a student strike against the dictatorship of Prime Minister João Franco. But Pessoa indulged in the library as an autodidact and was enthused about Walt Whitman. His step-uncle, “General” Henrique dos Santos Rosa, a retired military and poet, introduced the young Pessoa to Portuguese poetry, notably the Romantics and Symbolists of the 19th century (Vieira/Zenith, 2008: 78). In 1907, he worked as a

practitioner at R.G. Dun & Company, an American mercantile information agency and in 1911-12 he also participated in a project of translating a series of World Literature, of which his work impressed the counterpart editor in London, who would offer a grant to stay in the UK. Curiously, this time he refuses the offer and decides to remain in Portugal, and this was, arguably the most critical decision of his life. Why didn't he accept? Didn't he always wish to establish himself as an English writing poet? Maybe it was because he chose to remain as a Portuguese poet, to be faithful to his mother tongue. In hindsight, it seems to be true that he was a man with a self-imposed mission: to glorify the Portuguese language and launch a National Literary Revival. The date on which the poem *To Keats* (1908) was written –which most evidently shows his debt to the English poetry tradition– curiously coincides with the end of his early phase of writing English poems, and marks the start of writing in Portuguese, or his “independence”: «Now I find myself in full grasp of the fundamental laws of literary art. Neither Shakespeare can teach me to be subtle, nor Milton to be complete» (1974: 76).¹³ However, this “nationalization”, does not imply that he would lose his cosmopolitan vision. On the contrary, his English and French production continues. But Pessoa's turn to Portugal during the span of 1908~1914, was indeed a crucial decision to modern Portuguese literature.¹⁴

1.2. Début as a critic

Rather than making his début¹⁵ as a poet, Pessoa began his career as a critic. In 1912, he publishes an essay in the Oporto based literary magazine *A Águia*, whose main editor was Teixeira de Pascoaes (1877-1952), the leader of “Saudosismo”. Entitled as *A Nova Poesia Portuguesa* [The New Portuguese Poetry], his essays argue that “the Vague, the Subtle, the

¹³ [Encontro-me agora em plena posse das leis fundamentais da arte literária. Shakespeare já não me pode ensinar a ser subtil, nem Milton a ser completo.]

¹⁴ There is a similar remark by Irene Ramalho Santos: «To refuse this opportunity to go to England and eventually establish himself there and build a literary career, Pessoa took perhaps the biggest decision of his life: to fully dedicate in his own development as a Portuguese poet.» [Ao recusar esta oportunidade de ir a Inglaterra e eventualmente aí se estabelecer e construir uma carreira literária, Pessoa tomou porventura a maior decisão da sua vida: empenhou-se plenamente no seu próprio desenvolvimento como poeta da língua portuguesa.] (Santos, 2007: 49)

¹⁵ Strictly speaking, the “14 year old” Pessoa published his first poem in the newspaper *O Imparcial*, at 18 July 1902.

Complex” are the key elements for new poetry in Portugal. His reference or analysis focuses more on French literature, as his main ingredients were French Symbolists (Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud) and Maeterlinck whom he read between 1909 and 1912 (2006: 24, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith), and also *Saudosista* poets such as Pascoaes. What was the tone of the young critic’s voice? Bold? Subtle? Inflammatory? Unapologetic? Insinuating? Perhaps a little bit of everything. It was a carefully choreographed announcement of his début, but his critical tone on contemporary Portuguese literature was unmistakable. This young critic completely new to the public did not shy away to reveal his ambition to proclaim the advent of “Super-Camões”, and it is quite obvious that he was addressing none other than himself as the most likely candidate. In a letter to João Gaspar Simões (11 December 1931), the poet shows a rather complex attitude towards Luís de Camões, widely considered Portuguese language’s greatest poet: «I have great admiration for Camões (the epic, not the lyric) but I don’t know of any Camonian element that would have had an influence on me, though I am easily influenced [...] What Camões could have taught me I had already learned from others» (1980: 175).¹⁶

The reception of his article was reported by Álvaro Pinto, the secretary of *A Águia*. Pinto recounts that the article of Pessoa «provoked strong impression and some contrary reaction (...) The reproaches (...) were quite sharp, above all from the old writers and poets, due to the advent of super-Camões preconized by Fernando Pessoa» (Simões, 1950: 161).¹⁷ His provocation would bring troublesome relations with Pascoaes. And it is important to notice that this distance created with “Saudosistas” coincided with the creation of Alberto Caeiro, in 1914.

Teixeira de Pascoaes was arguably one of the poets that influenced Pessoa most in his youth. Pascoaes was eleven years older than Pessoa, but had already published notable works, establishing himself as the kernel of *Renascença Portuguesa* and the theorist of Saudosismo.

¹⁶ [Tenho uma grande admiração por Camões (o épico, não o lírico), mas não sei de elemento algum camoniano que tenha tido influência em mim, influenciável como sou. (...) É que o que Camões me poderia «ensinar» já me fora «ensinado» por outros.]

¹⁷ [O artigo de Pessoa “provocou forte impressão e algumas reacções contrárias”, escreveu o referido secretário de *A Águia*, na revista *Ocidente*. “Foram, mais tarde, bastante azedos os remos que recebi, sobre tudo de velhos escritores e poetas, por causa do advento do supra-Camões preconizado por Fernando Pessoa”.]

Pessoa highly admired Pascoaes, calling him «the greatest European lyric poet of today», but afterwards refuted his own opinion saying, «Junqueiro is dead» and «Pascoaes is moribund» (Bréchon, 1996: 139-140).¹⁸ Revisiting the relationship between the two poets, António Feijó¹⁹ stresses the crucial role of Pascoaes of motivating Pessoa to create the heteronyms:

In the creation of his heteronyms, Pessoa was compelled by the necessity to emulate the *Portuguese Renaissance* movement, which was assembled around Teixeira de Pascoaes. The symposium that gathered the heteronyms was conjectured as a rival version of *A Águia*, the magazine in which a bunch of disciples arduously celebrated the genius of Pascoaes. Alberto Caeiro and the disciples were the unique cult, an internal mimicry of *A Águia*, synthetically elevating it to modernity. The composition and the exuberant nature of the heteronyms of Pessoa were a parallel to the scale of Pascoaes». (Feijó, 2015: 62)²⁰

It is curious to ponder on why Pessoa chose *A Águia* to make his début in the first place, if he did not fully agree with the members. We know that he did rate the saudosista poets favorably (not only Pascoaes, but also others such as Jaime Cortesão, Mário Beirão etc.) and therefore he must have thought they were, at least, the most interesting literary movement going on in Portugal at the time.²¹ Besides, with them Pessoa could share a part of his nationalistic or “messianic” vision. Yet, he had a much more cosmopolitan perspective. Perhaps he might have had other intentions as well, such as certain “strategic” motivations. At any rate, the intellectual revival (renaissance of Portuguese literature) was indeed an important issue for him no matter where or from whom it originated from.

¹⁸ [Teixeira de Pascoaes é “o maior poeta lírico europeu de hoje”. Muito mais tarde, há-de negar essa paixão da juventude, e executar o seu antigo ídolo com uma palavra feroz. Depois de dizer que “Junqueiro morreu”, acrescenta: “e Pascoaes está moribundo”.]

¹⁹ Feijó introduces a novel of Agustina Bessa Luís, *O Susto* (Guimarães, 1958), which insightfully describes the relationship between the two great authors of the time. See: two footnotes, no. 21 & 22 of *Uma Admiração Pastoril pelo Diabo* (2015), pp.90 & 92.

²⁰ [Na criação dos seus heterónimos Pessoa foi compelido pela necessidade de emular o movimento da Renascença Portuguesa, reunido em torno de Teixeira de Pascoaes. O simpósio que reúne os heterónimos foi conjecturado como versão rival de *A Águia*, a revista em que uma série de discípulos assiduamente celebrava o génio de Pascoaes. Alberto Caeiro e discípulos são uma seita única, um mimetismo interno de *A Águia* elevando-a sinteticamente à modernidade. A composição e natureza exuberante dos heterónimos de Pessoa são função da magnitude de Pascoaes.]

²¹ See *A Nova Poesia Portuguesa Sociologicamente Considerada, Reincidindo* and *Frederico Feis – Folheto* in *Sobre Orpheu e o Sensacionismo* (2015: 18-25). Pessoa rates these poets favorably even after the emergence of the heteronyms, for instance, in the letters to English publishers in which he tries to promote Portuguese Literature.

1.3. Three Portuguese Poets

Pessoa was indeed an exemplary poet of what Harold Bloom tried to explain with the phrase «every poem is an inter poem» and «every reading of a poem is an inter-reading» (Bloom, 1980: 3). We are already aware of his huge debt to English poets, but his return to Lisbon seems to have triggered his belated discovery of national poets. Although he kept his distance with Pascoaes after ceasing to collaborate with *A Águia*, his respect toward Portuguese poets continued: «In Portugal, in the 19th century, there were three poets, and only three, who could legitimately compete for the name of Masters. They are, putting in age order, Antero de Quental, Cesário Verde and Camilo Pessanha» (Coelho, 1972: 54).²²

The influence of Antero de Quental (1842–1891) was studied by Joel Serrão, Beatriz Berrini²³ and most recently by Onésimo Almeida. By regrouping the already exposed yet widely scattered materials and adding unpublished fragments, Almeida shows Pessoa's consistent reverence of this Romantic poet. Pessoa compares Antero with Shakespeare: «the intimate expression of the idea, the ideation's form is as superior in Shakespeare as the idea itself is in Antero» (1993A: 246).²⁴ And the poet also offers a classification:

Great Poets: Conception

- (1) Vast, profound and perfect conception
- (2) Profound and perfect conception.
- (3) Only perfect conception.

Examples: (1) Homer, Shakespeare.

(2) Antero

? – (3) Victor Hugo. (BNP/ E3, 14D-78^r; unpublished)²⁵

Sometimes he would even put Antero over the English Bard. «I think that, as an intellectual and artistic whole, Shakespeare's sonnets are not superior to those of Antero»²⁶.

²² [Houve em Portugal, no século dezanove, três poetas, e três somente, a quem legitimamente compete a designação de mestres. São eles, por ordem de idades, Antero de Quental, Cesário Verde e Camilo Pessanha.]

²³ For example, “De Antero a Pessoa: Alguns Rumos de Investigação” in *Revista Colóquio/Letras*. Ensaio, n.º 88, Nov. 1985, p.9-16. / “Pessoa e Antero” in *Persona*, Porto, n.11/12, 1985, p.11-12, respectively.

²⁴ [A expressão íntima da ideia, a forma da ideação é tão superior em Shakespeare quanto é em Antero a ideia em si.]

²⁵ [Grandes poetas: Conceção (1) Conceção vasta, profunda e perfeita. (2) Conceção profunda e perfeita (3) Conceção apenas perfeita. Exemplos: (1) Homero, Shakespeare. (2) Antero. ? - (3) Victor Hugo.]

(...) Anthero's sonnets are superior to those of Shakespeare» (2006B: 439).²⁷ For him Antero was the «precursor of our literary current» (1999B: 25).²⁸ No one could better understand this pessimist soul than him. «I am never happy, neither in my selfish, nor in my unselfish moments. My solace is reading Antero de Quental. We are, after all, brother-spirits. Oh, how I understand that deep suffering that was his» (2003: 84). The following text shows the reason of his admiration, which reveals consistency with his poetic imperative on intellectualization.

In Antero de Q[uent]al all (...) is thought. He is one of the most conscious, perhaps the most conscious poet that has ever existed. (...) He has not, properly speaking, any spontaneity. Nevertheless, he is great, and an inspired – a truly inspired poet. The fact is, however, that his inspiration – true as it is – is not sentimental, but intellectual. Or rather, his inspiration does not go from his feeling to his intellect, as in most poets it does, but from intellect to sentiment. His poems are made of the first thought, then the thought is felt: then comes the expression. And this expression is not less perfect than that of the poets. It is but calmer (of course), full of infiniteness. (...) (2006B: 438)

Pessoa also translated some of Antero's sonnets, and described the difficulties of translation.²⁹ Onésimo Almeida argues that although Pessoa was often times self-contradictory and ironic, he «held deep-seated beliefs and values; he championed aesthetic conceptions and ideals and admired authors such as Homer, Shakespeare and Antero, whom he worshipped as demigods. (...) He would become all of them together, and naturally surpass them all» (Almeida, 2008: 63-64).

Camilo Pessanha (1867-1926) was a Poet, also serving as a judicial officer in Macau, married to a local Chinese, practically unknown to the Portuguese public of his time. But Pessoa discovered his value through few of his scattered poems published in literary magazines. Through Henrique Rosa's introduction, they managed to meet twice in Lisbon. After Pessanha returned to Macau, Pessoa wrote a letter to ask his contribution to *Orpheu* No.

²⁶ An old Portuguese spelling of Antero. I quote exactly as Pessoa has written it.

²⁷ [acho que, como um todo intelectual e artistico, os sonetos de Shakespeare não são superiores aos de Antero. (...) os S[oneteos] de A(nthero) são superiores aos de S(hakespeare)].

²⁸ [precursor da nossa corrente literária.]

²⁹ For details, see: Maria Etelvina Carvalho Ferreira (1996): *O Poeta é um Tradutor. Fragmentos para uma Poética da Tradução em Fernando Pessoa*. Lisboa, Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

3, but unfortunately, this collaboration would never be realized. According to Arnaldo Saraiva, the reason of this failure is unknown, since we cannot confirm if Pessoa's letter was actually sent to Pessanha. Under the circumstances we are aware of, it is unlikely that Pessanha would refuse such a proposal full of admiration (1984: 17-18).

In the case of Cesário Verde (1855–1886), Pessoa and Sá-Carneiro were the earliest discoverers who deserve credit for finding the originality of this poet-merchant unknown to the literary circle. Pessoa's French autobiographer Robert Bréchon argues that both the creation of the bucolic Caeiro and the urbanite Campos have much to do with the objective style of Cesário Verde (Bréchon, 1996: 139-140).³⁰ Pessoa expresses his admiration for Cesário Verde that, in spite of the fact that his work seems to «lack imagination, intelligence and even aesthetic sentiment» (Verde, 2006: 225), it possesses the most essential quality that constitutes great poetry, which is originality.³¹ This appreciation is echoed by Álvaro de Campos. In *Dois Excertos de Odes* [Excerpts from Two Odes], Campos writes:

And how mysterious the unanimous end of the streets
When the night falls, O my master Cesário Verde,
Who wrote "Sentiment of a Westerner"!

What profound restlessness, what longing for other things
That aren't countries or moments or lives! (2006: 164)³²

³⁰ [Passa-se exactamente o contrário com Cesário Verde (1855-1886), totalmente ignorado em vida, que exprime no seu poema O Sentimento de um Ocidental uma forma de «saudade» intimista radicalmente diferente da saudade mais conspícua de Pascoaes. A arte de Cesário é objectiva, tanto que por vezes a integram na estética parnasiana; mas exprime a emoção, ora alegre, ora dolorosa, que lhe dá o espectáculo da realidade urbana ou campestre, o que faz da sequência dos seus poemas uma espécie de diário de um homem das ruas de Lisboa, um pouco como há-de ser, em prosa, o Livro do Desassossego de Bernardo Soares. A inspiração bucólica de Caeiro e a citadina de Campos devem muito ao seu exemplo. A admiração de Pessoa por Cesário talvez não tenha sido imediata, mas foi profunda e duradoura. É a de um irmão pequeno pelo seu irmão mais velho, de quem se sente muito próximo.]

³¹ Full text: [Quem ler a obra de Cesário / admira-se / da admiração que a muitos causa. É que lida desprendidamente, e com a expectativa de encontrar grandeza, a obra de Cesário Verde com o que revela de nula imaginação, de nula inteligência, de sentimento circunscrito e até de falta de sentimento estético, assombra pelo que não tem de grande. O segredo está em que essa obra, pobre como é de quase tudo quanto constitui a grandeza poética, possui soberanamente e absorventemente uma qualidade constitutiva da grandeza – a originalidade. Para medir a grandeza de Cesário é preciso lê-lo depois de por ampla leitura se estar saturado e integrado no género poético no meio do qual a sua obra surge como um relâmpago. É depois de ler essas obras que se deve ler Cesário; e é reflectindo então em que foi no meio psíquico, onde aquelas eram representativas e/ usuais/, que irrompeu a obra de Cesário Verde.]

³² [E que misterioso o fundo unânime das ruas, / Das ruas ao cair da noite, ó Cesário Verde, ó Mestre, / Ó do «Sentimento de um Ocidental»! / Que inquietação profunda, que desejo de outras coisas, / Que nem são países, nem momentos, nem vidas.] (1986B: 110)

In *Ode Marítima*, Cesário Verde is described as the only person he could share the view in finding poetry inside the mundane and futile urban life.

Life's complexity! Though drawn up by people
Who love, hate, have political passions and sometimes commit crimes,
The invoices are so neat, so well written, so independent of all that!
Some people look at an invoice and don't feel this.
Surely you felt it, Cesário Verde.
And I feel it so humanly it makes me cry.
Don't try to tell me there's no poetry in business and in offices! (2006: 193)³³

Verde was also summoned up by Caeiro, in *O Guardador de Rebanhos*, in poem III:

In the evening, leaning out my window,
Watching the fields out front from under my brows,
I read Cesário Verde's book
Until my eyes were burning.

I felt so sorry for him!
He was like a man from the country
And he walked through the city like he was out on bail.
But the way he looked at houses,
And the way he saw the streets,
And the way he had of taking things in,
Was like someone looking at trees,
Or lowering their eyes to the road where they go walking
Or taking in the flowers in the fields . . .

That's why he had that great sadness
He could never really say he had,
But walked in the city like someone walking in the country,
Sad, like pressing flowers in books
And putting plants in jars... (2007C: 18)³⁴

³³ [Complexidade da vida! As facturas são feitas por gente / Que tem amores, ódios, paixões políticas, às vezes crimes - / E são tão bem escritas, tão alinhadas, tão independentes de tudo isso! / Há quem olhe para uma factura e não sinta isto. / Com certeza que tu, Cesário Verde, o sentias. / Eu é até às lágrimas que o sinto humanissimamente. / Venham dizer-me que não há poesia no comércio, nos escritórios!] (2007A: 270)

³⁴ [Ao entardecer, debruçado pela janela,
E sabendo de soslaio que há campos em frente.
Leio até me arderem os olhos
O livro de Cesário Verde.

Que pena que tenho dele! Ele era um camponês
Que andava preso em liberdade pela cidade.
Mas o modo como olhava para as casas,
E o modo como reparava nas ruas,

Pessoa demonstrated a tendency of searching for and constructing his own literary genealogy, and this historical attitude led him to discover unknown or underappreciated poets. He was by no means a self-absorbed artist solely interested in promoting himself. On the contrary, he was a feverish advocate of others, including contemporary artists of whom he found value, such as António Botto and Raul Leal,³⁵ just to name a few. Whether it was defending the freedom of personal expression or exposing hidden values by dedicating prefaces for others, history proves that his insight was keen and foresightful. His aspiration was to overcome the provincialism of Portugal, broaden its literary horizons and attain a cosmopolitan vision:

We are not Portuguese writing for Portuguese; we leave that to journalists and political leaderwriters. We are Portuguese writing for Europe, for all civilisation; we are nothing as yet, but even what we are now doing will one day be universally known and recognised. We have no fear that it will be otherwise. It cannot be otherwise; we realise sociological conditions the outcome of which is inevitably that. We work away from Camões, from all the tedious nonsenses of Portuguese tradition, towards the Future. (1966A: 117)

2. Pessoa and Co.

2.1. Heteronyms

It seems that Pessoa lived a discrete and lonely life, but inside his invented world he was never alone. He was accompanied by numerous “heteronyms”. The word *heteronym* existed before Pessoa, but he “reinvented” the term, referring to imaginary literary characters, which are different from mere pseudonyms as they have their own identity, unique physiques, biographies and writing styles. Pessoa kindly explained how this mysterious habit would

E a maneira como dava pelas coisas,
É o de quem olha para árvores,
E de quem desce os olhos pela estrada por onde vai andando
E anda a reparar nas flores que há pelos campos...

Por isso ele tinha aquela grande tristeza
Que ele nunca disse bem que tinha,
Mas andava na cidade como quem anda no campo
E triste como esmagar flores em livros
E pôr plantas em jarros...] (1946: 25)

³⁵ In 1922, the Olisipo (publisher founded by Pessoa) published a book of poems entitled *Canções* [Songs] by António Botto. The homoerotic contents raised scandals. In the defense of Botto, Pessoa wrote an article in the magazine *Contemporânea* No. 3, (Sep. 1922), praising Botto for expressing homosexual love as a true aesthete. In 1923 he also defended Raul Leal, who had been attacked by a student organization for defending Botto.

develop, in one of his most quoted letter – the so called “genesis of heteronyms” – sent to his friend Adolfo Casais Monteiro (13 Jan. 1935), ten months before he died. What he did not mention in this letter was the presence of his great uncle Manuel Gualdino da Cunha (future husband of Pessoa’s great-aunt Maria Xavier Pinheiro) who was very close with the infant Pessoa, which may have played an important role in developing this habit while playing “persona-inventing” games and building stories. At the age of six, Pessoa started to write letters to himself signed by a person called Chevalier de Pas, shortly followed by Dr. Pancrácio and Charles Robert Anon. Alexander Search, one of the most important “pre-heteronyms”, surged later when Pessoa became a student at Lisbon University (1905~7). Search was an English poet but born in Lisbon just like Pessoa. He represents the “identity-searching” period when Pessoa tries to adapt to his homeland’s reality after spending his youth in South Africa.

Pessoa continued to create numerous alter egos: some of them only have a name accompanied by brief descriptions or memos; some of them are developed with astonishing details and demonstrate distinguishable styles. Depending on how one defines the term heteronym, we may count over 130, but if we strictly respect the definition given by Pessoa, we may consider 3~6 legit candidates.³⁶ Among them is the “Caeiro-Reis-Campos Trio” (maybe a quartet, if we also include Pessoa-himself as another heteronym) that Pessoa spared a privileged position. In a letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues (1915) he affirmed: «everything that I have written under the names of Caeiro, Reis and Álvaro de Campos is serious. Through all three of them I let a deep conception pass, different in each but in each the concern about the mysterious importance of the simple fact of existing» (1985: 43).³⁷

According to Pessoa, Ricardo Reis was born in 1887, Fernando Pessoa in 1888, Alberto Caeiro, 1889, and Álvaro de Campos in 1890. However, – also according Pessoa – it seems that they all came into the mind of him almost simultaneously on March 8, 1914. It

³⁶ Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis, Álvaro de Campos, António Mora, “Pessoa himself” and Bernardo Soares (so-called “semi-heteronym”, but a significant presence).

³⁷ [(Por isso) é sério tudo o que escrevi sob os nomes de Caeiro, Reis, Álvaro de Campos. Em qualquer destes pus um profundo conceito da vida, diverso em todos três, mas em todos gravemente atento à importância misteriosa de existir.]

was the famous “Triumphal day” of his life.³⁸ This creative turning point would be followed, at the next year, with the birth of the triquarterly magazine *Orpheu*, where Pessoa’s works under his heteronym would be first published. (Campos appears in *Orpheu* in 1915, Reis and Caeiro later in the five issues of *Athena*, the self-founded magazine in 1924) The term “orthonym” –meaning “true name”–, which refers to Pessoa himself, was also invented at this period. Pessoa later shaped up the relationship between the core heteronyms into a more intricate interacting system, in which each of them engage in debates and get influenced by one another. One of the best examples is *Notas para a Recordação do Meu Mestre Caeiro* [Notes for the Memory of My Master Caeiro] by Álvaro de Campos.

The invention of heteronyms is undoubtedly the most studied and commented part of Pessoa’s entire literary legacy, but in the early days some considered it as a playful or childish trait. Pessoa defended the idea:

(...) the mental origin of my heteronyms lies in my relentless, organic tendency to depersonalization and simulation. (...) Ever since I was a child, it has been my tendency to create around me a fictitious world, to surround myself with friends and acquaintances that never existed. (I can’t be sure, of course, if they really never existed, or if it’s me who doesn’t exist. In this matter, as in any other, we shouldn’t be dogmatic.) Ever since I’ve known myself as “me,” I can remember envisioning the shape, motions, character and life story of various unreal figures who were as visible and as close to me as the manifestations of what we call, perhaps too hastily, real life. This tendency, which goes back as far as I can remember being an I, has always accompanied me, changing somewhat the music it enchants me with, but never the way in which it enchants me. (...) Such things occur to all children? Undoubtedly—or perhaps. But I lived them so intensely that I live them still; their memory is so strong that I have to remind myself that they weren’t real. (2001: 254-255)³⁹

³⁸ Until today, there are disputes over the “authenticity” of the so called “Triumphal day” – whether it *really* existed. Since Pessoa’s description wasn’t entirely consistent with the remaining proofs, it is widely believed to be “exaggerated” or even “falsified”, allegedly as a motive of mystification. However, Luciana-Stegagno Picchio, a respected Pessoaan (She met Roman Jakobson while teaching in Harvard and together they wrote in 1968 “*Les Oxymores Dialectiques de Fernando Pessoa*” [Fernando Pessoa’s Dialectic Oxymorons]) and herself a philologist, proposed that in order to read Pessoa, “one should use two different measures or interpretative levels, in a game of ‘double truth’ like the one used by the 15 century humanist philosophers. If philology has robbed us the triumphal day, Pessoa believed in it - and without it his poetry cannot be understood.” (Picchio, 1968: 63) This argument came out as a counter argument against those who said the “Triumphal day” was falsified.

³⁹ [(...) a origem mental dos meus heterônimos está na minha tendência orgânica e constante para a despersonalização e para a simulação. (...) Desde criança tive a tendência para criar em meu torno um mundo fictício, de me cercar de amigos e conhecidos que nunca existiram. (Não sei, bem entendido, se realmente não existiram, ou se sou eu que não existo. Nestas coisas, como em todas, não devemos ser dogmáticos). Desde que me conheço como sendo aquilo a que chamo eu, me lembro de precisar mentalmente, em figura, movimentos, carácter e história, várias figuras irreais que eram para mim tão visíveis e minhas como as coisas daquilo a que chamamos, porventura abusivamente, a vida real. Esta tendência, que me vem desde que me lembro de ser um eu, tem-me acompanhado sempre, mudando um pouco o tipo de música com que me encanta, mas não alterando nunca a sua maneira de encantar. (...) Coisas que acontecem a todas as crianças? Sem dúvida — ou talvez. Mas a tal ponto as vivi que as vivo ainda, pois que as relembro de tal modo que é mister um esforço para me fazer saber que não foram realidades] (1999A: 340-342).

Adolfo Casais Monteiro (the recipient of this letter) and Jorge de Sena were the early critics who took the idea of heteronyms seriously, maybe to the level of which Pessoa wished them to do. However, there were also considerable counterarguments. First, José Augusto Seabra argued that «it has been precisely the problem of heteronyms (...) which by almost monopolizing the attention of Pessoa's experts has contributed in great part to distract them from that first reading to which the poet invited them» (Seabra, 1993: 14).⁴⁰ Mário Sacramento also suggested to «forget once and for all the jargon of orthonyms, heteronyms, drama-in-people, etc. If all this was necessary (and it was) so that his work may exist today as it is, it is time for us to take away this scaffolding, recognizing that the house did not, after all, remain “yet to build” (...)» (Sacramento, 2011: 174-175).⁴¹ By the same token, Jacinto Prado Coelho thinks that heteronyms should be treated as one writer: «I shall consider the work of Fernando Pessoa, whether orthonymous or heteronymous, as one simple whole and will proceed to analyze the themes that are at the core of the author's spiritual life. Thus I shall attempt to open the way for the discovery of the psychic unity in the polymorphic form, if such a unity (...) actually exists» (Coelho, 1969: 79-80).⁴² As interpretative opinions usually surge in reaction to prevalent tendencies and eventually form a thesis/antithesis dialect, it is simply the reader's decision to choose a stance, or not choose any stance at all.

(...) When we arrive at the conclusion that everything is vacuous, that everything is equally indifferent or indifferently equal, then no one method, approach, or mode of expression is more legitimate or illegitimate than another. (...) we have entered the realm of Intertextuality, in which all styles from all ages are equally valid, if not (opinions here vary) equally valuable. Bizarrely but truly, the deconstructionists' ideal is embodied in this early twentieth century writer (...). (1998: 28, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith)

⁴⁰ [Ora tem sido precisamente o problema dos heterónimos (...) que ao quase monopolizar a atenção dos exegetas de Pessoa tem contribuído em grande parte para os distrair desta primeira leitura que o poeta os convidava.]

⁴¹ [Sublinhemos esses nomes, esqueçamos de uma vez para sempre todo o jargão de ortónimo, heterónimos, drama em gente, etc. Se tudo isso foi necessário (e foi) para que a sua obra hoje exista tal qual é, vai sendo tempo de lhe tirarmos esses andaimes, reconhecendo que a casa não ficou afinal “por fabricar”.]

⁴² [considero a obra de FP, ortónimo ou heterónimo, como um todo, analisando os motivos que me parecem no âmago da vida espiritual do autor. Tento assim abrir caminho para descobrir a unidade psíquica na polimorfia se tal unidade (...) efectivamente existe.]

As Richard Zenith remarks above, at least everybody would agree in the point that without the creation and development of the heteronym system, the singularity of Pessoa's literature would not be the same of what we know. The urge to constantly hide behind his literary masks, create an imaginary stage of drama with personalities, and instigate opinions into the non-acting-actors, which contradict each other and their creator himself, seems to be crucial and even *inevitable* for this poet. Among the 35 *Sonnets*, the poem VIII remarkably renders this obsession.

How many masks wear we, and undermasks,
 Upon our countenance of soul, and when,
 If for self-sport the soul itself unmasks,
 Knows it the last mask off and the face plain?
 The true mask feels no inside to the mask
 But looks out of the mask by co-masked eyes.
 Whatever consciousness begins the task
 The task's accepted use to sleepness ties.
 Like a child freighted by its mirrored faces,
 Our souls, that children are, being thought-losing,
 Foist otherness upon their seen grimaces
 And get a whole world on their forgot causing;
 And, when a thought would unmask our soul's masking,
 Itself goes not unmasked to the unmasking. (2007B: 160)⁴³

2.1.1. Alberto Caeiro

In Pessoa's letter on January 13, 1935, describing the genesis of his heteronyms, he claims that Alberto Caeiro, the Master of Fernando Pessoa's heteronyms was born in himself. Indeed, the 8th of March in 1914 «was the triumphal day of my life, and I can never have another one like it» (2001: 256)⁴⁴ when he wrote «thirty-some-odd poems at once, in a kind of ecstasy I'm unable to describe» (*Ibid*).⁴⁵

⁴³ Also available in: The Project Gutenberg EBook of "35 Sonnets by Fernando Pessoa", Release Date: November 30, 2006 [Ebook 19978] https://archive.org/stream/sonnets19978gut/19978-pdf_djvu.txt

⁴⁴ [E escrevi trinta e tantos poemas a fio, numa espécie de êxtase cuja natureza não conseguirei definir] (1999A: 343).

⁴⁵ [Foi o dia triunfal da minha vida, e nunca poderei ter outro assim] (*Ibid*).

Alberto Caeiro, the «only nature poet» (1946: 88)⁴⁶ according to Pessoa, apparently has verses that are similar to the conventions of pastoral poetry, but his flocks are his thoughts, not sheep. In the first lines of the first poem of *O Guardador de Rebanhos* [The Keeper of Sheep], which he considers as «the best I have done» (1957: 97),⁴⁷ he illustrates this peculiar style of “abstractive naturalism”:

I never kept sheep,
But it's as if I'd kept them.
My soul is like a shepherd (...) (2008: 27)⁴⁸

Caeiro is «presented in this initial poem as a thought experiment, an as if self. Therefore, Caeiro's world is an as if world» (Mendes, 1999: 8). His poetry has a clear message: learn to “desaprender” [unlearn], and to see things just the way they are. As Jorge de Sena duly labeled him, Caeiro was the “indisciplinador de almas” [in-disciplinarian of souls] (1959: 171-192). His poetry is marked with pure innocence, simplicity and positive ways of thinking. Caeiro's perception of truth is clearly stated in the verse of the Poem XLVII: «Nature is parts without a whole. / This is perhaps the mystery they speak of» (2008: 47).⁴⁹ Although Pessoa still had a nostalgic concern towards the unity, Caeiro believed solely in dispersed truths, the things we can see with our unlearned eyes. (Caeiro's anti-philosophical attitude brought scholars to compare him with Baruch Spinoza.⁵⁰)

Caeiro's recurrent emphasis on seeing things just as they are also lead some critics to compare his thoughts with Buddhism, especially the school of Zen. It is true that his poetry shares certain qualities with Zen: Caeiro criticizes metaphysics and Intellectualism, deemphasizes abstract notions and pursues intuitive direct knowledge, which all coincide with

⁴⁶ [(Além disso, fui) o único poeta da Natureza.]

⁴⁷ [o melhor que eu tenho feito] (in a letter to João Gaspar Simões dated February 25, 1933)

⁴⁸ [Eu nunca guardei rebanhos,. Mas é como se os guardasse. Minha alma é como um pastor, (...)] (2007A: 33)

⁴⁹ [A natureza é partes sem um todo. Isto é talvez o mistério de que falamos.] (2007A: 72)

⁵⁰ For example, see: Christopher C. Lund, *Fernando Pessoa: The Spinoza Connection*, Santa Barbara Portuguese Studies, Volume IV: 1997, Published by the Center for Portuguese Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, with the support of the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, and the Instituto Camões, Lisbon.

the key values of Zen. Despite of these striking similarities, the unfitting part is the presence of Caeiro himself as a “thought experiment”, which is precisely an abstract construction even though he is *supposed* to keep distance from abstract thinking. One cannot simply extract the *ideas* of Zen and claim affinity, since the practical dimension pursued through rigorous meditation practice constitutes its essential and indispensable nature. Besides, from a religious aspect, although Caeiro «wasn’t just pagan», but «was paganism itself» (2001: 40)⁵¹, he was never a militant critic –like Nietzsche, for instance– on attacking Christian values.⁵² Caeiro still finds himself inside the vocabulary and narratives of God and Jesus, for example, in his poem VIII of *O Guardador de Rebanhos*. This could be considered as a common trait of modernists who embraced or appropriated traditions (whether literary or religious) than thoroughly breaking up with them.

During his brief life –from the 49 poems, to the *Uncollected Poems* – Caeiro’s poetry slightly varies but does not essentially “evolve”. Of course we remember that Pessoa said, «I don’t evolve, I TRAVEL» (1980: 211).⁵³ Nonetheless, it is compelling to imagine how further Caeiro could have “traveled” if Pessoa had more legit opportunities to understand Buddhism. Different from the case of Arthur Schopenhauer who openly states his influence by Buddhism, or T.S. Eliot⁵⁴ whose approach of Buddhism was accompanied by extensive academic studies, Pessoa had only limited knowledge and comprehension of Buddhism, deducing from his few direct commentaries on it, mainly made by António Mora. Caeiro’s apparent similarity with Buddhism seems to be a result of the poet’s contemplative search of alternatives for the western logo-centric philosophic tradition, which is, for me, an even more impressive and *Zennish* approach. Leyla Perrone-Moisés notes that «in Caeiro, and only in Caeiro, Pessoa was able to find repose from his anguished search for identity» (in Mendes,

⁵¹ [O meu mestre Caeiro não era um pagão: era o paganismo.] (2006A: 82)

⁵² Pessoa’s perspective on Christianity is complex. For example, Campos regards it as a socio-historical disease in *Ultimatum*, and Pessoa frequently criticizes the Roman Catholic Church in various texts. However, in some poems he lavishes praises toward God or Jesus Christ. Perhaps what he wanted was not *literally* eradicating Christianity, but being free to choose between various faiths. But this argument could also be rebutted.

⁵³ [...], não evoluo, VIAJO.] (1999A: 350, in the letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro, 20 Jan. 1935)

⁵⁴ For example, the case of T.S. Eliot and his various allusions to Buddhism is largely engaged with his rigorous study on oriental religions in his post graduate school. But still, Eliot’s knowledge was limited to other Buddhist doctrines, since Zen Buddhism was only introduced to the western world by Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, around the '60s.

1999: 20). Maybe it is true that he momentarily found a peaceful state of mind, but the metaphysical search itself—which causes perpetual agony, according to Buddhism—did not seem to meet an end, or attain Nirvana. Even after Caeiro’s “official” death, Pessoa continued to write verses.

2.1.2 Álvaro de Campos

Álvaro de Campos, the Portuguese naval engineer, born in Tavira (October 15th, the same day Friedrich Nietzsche was born) and educated in Glasgow was a euphoric modernist with a mission to interpret the Age of Technology. He was the heteronym of major productivity and longevity, and the only heteronym who seems to have accompanied Pessoa until his death.⁵⁵ Campos wrote only in Portuguese but often took English titles (ex. *Lisbon Revisited*, *Oxfordshire*, *Clearly Non-Campos*, etc.). His sexuality is also a subject of interest in queer studies.

The early period (1914-16) had a strong influence by Whitman, especially from the American bard’s *Song of Myself*⁵⁶. Pessoa did not keep this influence as a secret but openly exhibited it, for example in one of his unfinished poems, *Saudação a Walt Whitman* (1915), where we can observe similarities as well as differences between the two poets. Although never as optimistic as Whitman, Campos certainly seems to have

acted as a key to open up Pessoa and the power of his own personality. *Song of Myself* is a song of the whole cosmos—the cosmos felt and substantiated in the self—and it was this audacity, thischutzpah, that galvanized Pessoa and his heteronymic cosmos, which otherwise might not have been more than a curious psychological phenomenon and stylistic exercise, without real literary consequence. (2006: 25, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith)

One of the pioneers to expand the formal liberty of free verse in Portuguese literature, Campos appears with a prevailing “Vertigo”, ferocity and unusual velocity in his odes. As

⁵⁵ One could argue that Ricardo Reis is also there until the end, but except for few of his final odes (ex. *Vivem em nós inúmeros* [Countless lives inhabit us]), his work significantly loses the energy of his early productions.

⁵⁶ In a 1906 notebook belonging to Alexander Search, we find the following words: «from Trimble, W. A. A., “Walt Whitman and Leaves of Grass”» (ESP 114 H/32): this means that Fernando Pessoa already knew, albeit indirectly, about *Leaves of Grass* by 1906. (see: <http://casafernandopessoa.cm-lisboa.pt/bdigital/index/estudos3.htm>)

João Gaspar Simões says, Campos was «the twin brother of the “mad” Fernando Pessoa» (Simões, 1950: 291),⁵⁷ and he certainly represents the most frantic facet of the poet, but not in a traditional sense of madness. In *Modernism*, Peter Nicholls defines: «modern man is a “nerve ridden”, (...), dominated by a “psychology of nerves” and increasingly unpredictable, caught between a cult of “multiplied sensation”, on the one hand, and an impasse of inaction and impotence, on the other. (...) This new form of subjectivity is accompanied by a rejection of art’s traditional role as an arbiter of moral truths» (Nicholls, 1995: 59). This frenzy culminates in Campos’s characteristic “scream”, both notable in the *Ode Triunfal* and *Ode Marítima*, which makes them arguably the two loudest poems in Portuguese Literature. This could be interpreted as a frustrated expression of “ineffability” that represents the failure in reconciling the values of the past, present and the future. For Eduardo Lourenço, «the screams of *Ode Marítima* are different from mere onomatopoeia. They represent, with all the consciousness, an attempt to force the language to overcome its “natural” resources of meaning, in order to convert it into a meaningful thing of a matter, and the matter itself of a new meaning. The word wants to gain the status of an opera – musical, plastic and free» (Lourenço, 1974: 65).⁵⁸ Lourenço adds:

The essential condition of the modern spirit, unable as it is to make the synthesis between its science and its ethics, much less fuse them, is that of *exploded consciousness*. Fernando Pessoa gave us one of the most tragic and brilliant visions of this. What are the values of the absurd accusations against him of “mystification”, “artifice,” or “game” in the face of his carnal assumption of the objective unhappiness of the modern spirit? (Lourenço, 1991: 59)

Campos was also the exponent of Pessoa’s “Non-Aristotelian” theory, aesthetics not based on the idea of beauty but force. In the *Apontamentos para uma Estética Não Aristotélica* [Notes for a Non-Aristotelian Aesthetics] (1925), we read:

⁵⁷ [Álvaro Campos é o irmão gémeo do “louco” Fernando Pessoa.]

⁵⁸ [(...) os gritos da *Ode Marítima* são outra coisa que simples onomatopeia. Representam com toda a consciência a tentativa de forçar a linguagem a ultrapassar os seus recursos “naturais” de significação para a converter em coisa significativa de uma matéria e matéria por sua vez de nova significação. A palavra quer ganhar o estatuto de ópera – música, plástica e libreto].

My aesthetic theory is based on – contrary to the Aristotelian one, which is based on the idea of beauty – the idea of force. Of course, the idea of beauty can be a force. When the “idea” of beauty would be an “idea” of sensibility, an emotion and not an idea, a sensible disposition of temperament, such “idea” of beauty is a force. Only when it is a simple, intellectual idea of beauty it is not a force. (2006A: 111-112)⁵⁹

Campos mentioned that the poems of Whitman, poems of Caeiro, the *Ode Triunfal* and the *Ode Marítima*, are by far the only three manifestations of this aesthetic doctrine (2006A: 113).⁶⁰

Campos is the only heteronym that explicitly *evolves* both stylistically and thematically. We can observe his works change through roughly three periods: 1) Campos the engineer, 2) Campos the Sensationist, 3) Campos the Return. The initial outburst and scandalous Campos seems to gradually soften by the time passes, and the later Campos tends to use more traditional forms and make use of sonnets, yet still in free verse.

2.1.3. Ricardo Reis

This Neo Classic Horatian surgeon-poet, a self-taught semi-Hellenist, and the admirer of Greek Philosophy, is the most elusive heteronym of all. As a monarchist, he went to a voluntary exile when the Republican Revolution took place in 1910. Reis remained in Brazil since 1919, but there is a note of Pessoa, which shows “Dr. Ricardo Sequeira Reis” had an address in Peru, Cerro do Pasco. He was educated by Jesuits who taught him Latin, but grew up as a pagan, becoming an advocate of Pessoa’s Neo-pagan theory along with António Mora.

Reis receives relatively less attention than his colleagues, perhaps because his poetry reminds neo-Greek antiquity or a revival of Epicureanism and stoicism that Horace’s odes had perfected long ago. However, one can ask, as Baudelaire –in the *The Painter of Modern*

⁵⁹ [A minha teoria estética baseia-se — ao contrário da aristotélica, que assenta na ideia de beleza — na ideia de força. Ora a ideia de beleza pode ser uma força. Quando a «ideia» de beleza seja uma «ideia» da sensibilidade, uma emoção e não uma ideia, uma disposição sensível do temperamento, essa «ideia» de beleza é uma força. Só quando é uma simples ideia intelectual de beleza é que não é uma força.]

⁶⁰ [De resto, até hoje, data em que aparece pela primeira vez uma autêntica doutrina não aristotélica da arte, só houve três verdadeiras manifestações de arte não-aristotélica. A primeira está nos assombrosos poemas de Walt Whitman; a segunda está nos poemas mais que assombrosos do meu mestre Caeiro; a terceira está nas duas odes — a *Ode Triunfal* e a *Ode Marítima* — que publiquei no «*Orpheu*». Não pergunto se isto é imodéstia. Afirmo que é verdade.]

Life [Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne] (1863) –, «how may modernity become antiquity? And “under what conditions may this occur?» (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013:76) When we closely read between the lines of Reis’s conventional symbols –roses, river, destiny, death and chess-games– it might be possible to encounter an agonized modernist in a classical disguise, who has a keen sensibility of the unavoidable tragic sense of life that, essentially, there is very little that mortal men can change. In a separate unpublished note, Pessoa described Reis as a «Greek Horace who writes in Portuguese» (2010: 181).⁶¹ In fact, both of the poets combined the values of Epicurism and Stoicism. They pursued the epicurean ideal of pursuing the present pleasure (“seizing the day” as Horace famously stated) as well as the stoic ideal of complete autonomy. However, whereas Horace was more inclined to the former, we can sense that these two elements are more even and simultaneously vivid in Reis. An attentive reader may even discover subtle criticism towards Horace between his verses. This apparent objective posture of Reis could be influenced by Pessoa’s Sensationist approach on intellectualizing feelings. The wavering between the joy of pleasure and awareness of existential sufferings, resumes and inclines towards a nihilistic attitude. In contrast with the euphoric and aggressive Campos, the consistent approach of Reis is that of a defensive indifference: always avoiding passions. Reis criticized free verse forms of Campos, saying that what happens in the poems of Campos is «an extravasation of emotion. The idea serves the emotion, (but) does not dominate» (2003A: 208).⁶² One could argue that Reis goes too far in the other direction. Even in his poems of love, when he evokes so many times the unknown names of Lídia, Chloe, Neera..., the lovers are rather an abstract and premeditated object, therefore a somewhat “cold” being; never the subject *a priori* of idea, with warm blood and flesh.

The poetry of Ricardo Reis could have never been able to achieve without the presence of Caeiro. «After meeting Caeiro and hearing him recite *The Keeper of Sheep*,

⁶¹ [Horácio grego que escreve em português.]

⁶² [(É o que, em meu entender, sucede nos poemas de Campos.) São um extravasar de emoção. A ideia serve a emoção, não a domina.]

Ricardo Reis began to realize that he was organically a poet» (2001: 49).⁶³ His respect to his Master Caeiro is unconditional and he praises his poems as exemplary, but at the same time he does not forget to mention some of its defects. The most evident one is the poetic form – Caeiro’s free verse– which Reis finds «inadmissible», because this is born from «a incapacity to place the thought inside stable moulds; it facilitates too much, for us to count it as value» (1996A: 359).⁶⁴ This preoccupation of formal aspect is permanent in Reis. We can see how much the formal aesthetic is important to Reis in the following text written by Thomas Crosse, an English-language heteronym:

Caeiro has one discipline: things must be felt as they are. Ricardo Reis has another kind of discipline: things must be felt, not only as they are, but also so as to fall in with a certain ideal of classic measure and rule. In Álvaro de Campos things must simply be felt. (2001: 54)

One of the few genuine advocates of Reis, the Spanish translator and biographer of Pessoa, Ángel Crespo argues that the poem known as *Vem sentar-te comigo, Lídia, à beira do rio* [Come sit by my side Lydia, on the bank of the river] contains the following themes characteristic of Reis. It includes: a) the river as an image of life that passes, b) a life that goes far beyond of where one encounters gods, c) infancy and ideal age, pure spirits, d) the ideal of a passive and silent life, e) not materializing love, f) lack of dogmatic ideas and philosophies as mediums to maintain them pure and stable, and g) his own paganism (Crespo, 1984: 163-164).

Thematically, the pessimist attitude towards life which Reis pertained creates a certain thematic monotony throughout his poetry. Since no essential change is expected to take place, the only remaining choice is to passively accept the given conditions, which may bear a nihilistic touch: «We are just tales telling tales, nothing» (1994: 168).⁶⁵ However, precisely because of those limits, the day must be seized. This acceptance of destiny, or the

⁶³ [Desde que conheceu Caeiro, e lhe ouviu o Guardador de Rebanhos, Ricardo Reis começou a saber que era organicamente poeta.] (2006A: 96)

⁶⁴ [inadmissível (...) uma incompetência de colocar o pensamento dentro de moldes estáveis; facilita demasiado, para que o possamos contar como valor.]

⁶⁵ [Somos contos contando contos, nada.]

destiny of acceptance was in fact, the *Fado* that Reis sang in verse. No wonder this sad poet ponders heavily on death. When he runs various debates with Campos over poetry, Reis remarks that «the more cold the poem is, the more true it is» (1996A: 391).⁶⁶ Maybe this constant contemplation on the idea of Death turned his poetical veins even colder.

2.2. Orthonym / Pessoa Himself

It is well known that the Portuguese word “Pessoa” means “person” and is derived from the Latin word “persona”, an actor's mask. In French, “personne” can also mean “nobody”. (For example, when you say “Il y a personne”, it means, “There is nobody”). In accordance with his symptomatic name, Pessoa created – whether inadvertently or not– arguably the most self-effacing heteronym, Pessoa himself.

In a letter to João Gaspar Simões (28 July 1932), Pessoa proposed a specific title *Cancioneiro* [Songbook] for the project of his second book of his poems, after publishing *Mensagem* [Message]. He thought that any «equally unexpressive» title would suit these «loose and unclassifiable» poems (1957: 90).⁶⁷ This description can perfectly serve to render the “uncategorizable” poems written by the orthonym Pessoa. Practically every poem that has not been attributed to his heteronyms could fall under this category. For example, there was a moment he mulled over Alberto Caeiro as the writer of “Intersectionist” poems, but for an unknown reason the orthonym Pessoa eventually took the role. Thus, when we account for the poet “Pessoa himself” or the orthonym, we are automatically dealing with various, flexible, interchangeable poetic identities.

What would have been the necessity to depersonalize even himself to another heteronym? And why did Álvaro de Campos say, when describing the relations of the heteronym coterie in the *Notas para a Recordação do Meu Mestre Caeiro* [Notes on the

⁶⁶ [quanto mais fria a poesia, mais verdadeira]

⁶⁷ [(...) *Cancioneiro* (ou outro título igualmente inexpressivo), onde reuniria (em *Livros I a III* ou *I a V*) vários dos muitos poemas soltos que tenho, e que são por natureza inclassificáveis salvo de essa maneira inexpressiva.]

Memory of My Master Caeiro], «the most curious is the case of Fernando Pessoa, who doesn't exist, strictly speaking»? (1990A: 369)⁶⁸

If we intend a rather pathological interpretation on this matter, we may recall the “multiple personality theory”, first suggested by the sociologist Erving Goffman, who argued that «there is no abiding self or personality, just an appearance generated afresh to meet each new social circumstance» (in Elkind, 1975: 30). To recognize multiple personalities inside oneself is regarded as a psychological disease, but in the time of Pessoa such a diagnosis was not as common compared to nowadays. Maybe that pathological “ignorance” allowed Pessoa to venture further. However, it is still mindboggling to witness how Pessoa broke that psychological taboo, or social convention, when the idea that every individual *should* have an abiding self with coherence would not have been any less rigid than today. For some critics he «anticipated in art by 60 years the multiple-personality theory in science» (Monteiro, 1981: 96). Nevertheless, maintaining multiple egos would not have been an easy task, even for Pessoa. On the contrary, he was almost obsessively worried of becoming insane, and demonstrated various symptoms of breakdown. Joanna Courteau argues in *The Quest for Identity in Pessoa's Orthonymous Poetry* that the poet “Pessoa himself” allowed the poet to resolve this problem in his own way: «Pessoa is well aware that such constant attentiveness to the various voices within could prove to be frustrating and exhausting to the person having this experience. So he choses the orthonymous poetry as the tool with which to analyze and convey such frustration» (in Monteiro, 1981: 96). No wonder that the recurring themes are about indecisive minds facing contradictions and the absence or void of firm centrality. This uncertainty as an ever-troubling identity crisis could be read in one of his untitled poems:

I don't know how many souls I have.
I have changed at every moment
I always feel self-estranged.
I never seen or found myself.
From being so much, I have only soul.

⁶⁸ [Mais curioso é o caso do Fernando Pessoa, que não existe, propriamente falando.]

A man who has soul has no calm. (...) (2008: 269)⁶⁹

In a similar way, he describes the infinite and unfathomable extension of the self:

(...) All is unreal, anonymous and fortuitous.
Don't be curious of this ample world.
It is less extensive than its bottom.
And that which you know not now nor will ever know
Is that which is most real and most profound. (1973: 97)⁷⁰

Besides of the poems that deal with identity matters, there are lyric poems. One of the notable is the *Ceifeira* [Reaper] (1914). In a 1915 letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues, Pessoa confesses: «I especially love the last poem, the *Ceifeira*, where I managed to give a Paulistic note in simple language. I love myself for having written...» (1985: 43)⁷¹, and transcribes a part of the poem.

Ah, to be you while being I!
To have your glad unconsciousness
And be conscious of it! (...) (2008: 263)⁷²

It is widely commented that this poem bears a close inter-textual kinship to Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper* (1807). In comparison with Wordsworth, we are able to observe an interesting similarity as well as a sharp difference, in which the initial ideas of “depersonalization” (and later, “Sensationism”) are hatched. Even though we agree that *Ceifeira* was apparently inspired by *The Solitary Reaper*,

it also contains the typical Pessoaan idea of something lacking, and the longing for the impossible. Wordsworth wants to know what the solitary reaper is singing about: for Pessoa, this is a matter of indifference. He wants to be the singer and yet himself at the same time. He wants to be, like the reaper,

⁶⁹ [Não sei quantas almas tenho. / Cada momento mudei. / Continuamente me estranho. / Nunca me vi nem acabei. / De tanto ser, só tenho alma. / Quem tem alma não tem calma. (...)] (2006C: 210-211)

⁷⁰ [Tudo é irreal, anônimo e fortuito. / Não sejas curioso do amplo mundo. / Ele é menos extenso do que fundo. / E o que não sabes nem saberás nunca / É isso o mais real e o mais profundo.]

⁷¹ [Amo especialmente a última poesia, a da Ceifeira onde consegui dar a nota paúlca em linguagem simples. Amo-me por ter escrito...]

⁷² [Ah, poder ser tu, sendo eu! / Ter a tua alegre inconsciência / E a consciência disso! (...)] (1985: 43)

blithely unaware. And the appeal to sky, field, and song with which the Portuguese poem ends, is quite lacking in Wordsworth. (Rickard, 1971: 47-48)

In contrast with:

the Wordsworthian 'I', who is wholly caught up in the emotion of the song, clearly Pessoa's singing reaper is a pretext for a commentary on the poet, whose divided self becomes the primary focus. And yet ironically, (...) *Ela canta (Ceifeira)* is as graceful and beautiful as the reaper's song. (...) His typology of sentiment gives primacy to the Romantic ideal of spontaneity, but his lyrics are not spontaneous poems. In *Ela canta*, the pure emotion of the reaper is contrasted with the poets' feeling/thinking self. (Sadlier, 1998: 63-64)

As we will elaborate in chapter 4.3, Pessoa's self-created "Sensationism" stresses the importance of being highly conscious of feelings. In *Ceifeira* we can observe not only the rupture with Romanticist ideals but also his growing interests in intellectualization.

If we accept the idea that Fernando Pessoa was another heteronym, how many were they? Richard Zenith poses a question: «Could it be that, just as there were various heteronyms, so too there were various orthonyms - Fernando Pessoa the existentialist, Fernando Pessoa the patriot, Fernando Pessoa the occultist, Fernando Pessoa the rhymester (...)?» (1998: 216). Although the categorization cannot be rigorous, the poems written under the name of Pessoa could be roughly grouped as the following: Post-symbolic (ex. *Pauis*), lyric (in *Cancioneiro*), folklore (*Quadras ao Gosto Popular*), esoteric (*A Múmia, No Túmulo de Christian Rosenkreutz*) and nationalistic poems (*Mensagem, Sim, é o Estado Novo*).

As we saw, the question about how should we deal with heteronyms is an open one. Pessoa frequently changed his mind of attributing names and often remained indecisive. Nearing the end of his time, the poet even considered abandoning the idea of heteronyms, saying: «I don't know if I told you once that the heteronyms (...) should be published by myself under my own name (it is already too late, and therefore absurd, for an absolute

disguise)» (1957: 90).⁷³ But before he fully elaborates that idea, he dies rather abruptly. No one knows what was going on in his mind. Was it skepticism or was it a mental “fatigue” that drew away his enthusiasm from his imaginary coterie? No matter how Pessoa treated it, his literary invention attained a certain autonomous state: «the Caeiro-Pessoa-Reis-Campos quartet is outside history, outside tradition, and belong to no particular place. Their poetic universe is what they have created *themselves*» (Kotowicz, 1996: 61, italic added).

3. The *Orpheu*

Orpheu was a literary magazine founded in 1915 by Pessoa, his poet friend Mário de Sá-Carneiro and other writers and artists. It is widely regarded to have introduced Portuguese Modernism almost single-handedly during its brief life —only two issues were published. A combination of various coincidences enabled *Orpheu* to come out to the world. Pessoa and Sá-Carneiro first met in 1912, and soon become closest friends. Sá-Carneiro went to Paris, but the First World War enforced him as well as many Portuguese artists residing in Paris to return (i.e. Mário de Sá-Carneiro, José Pacheco and Santa-Rita Pintor). They exchanged ideas in the cafés of Lisbon and eventually formed a group of modernists. The provocative writer and visual artist Almada Negreiros was another key figure of this coterie. In 1915, the poet and critique Luís de Montalvor (pseudonym of Luís da Silva Ramos) arrived from Brazil after two years of residence, with a project in mind of launching a literary magazine called “Orpheu”. Although Pessoa and Sá-Carneiro intended to publish a magazine named “Lusitânia” or “Europa” one year before, they agreed with Montalvor’s idea. They added the collaboration of the Brazilian poet Ronald de Carvalho, which would contribute to build a more international image of the magazine.

Contents of the opening issue were a mixture of Symbolism and Decadentism with a glimpse of Futurism. To only comment about poetry, the *Indícios de Ouro* [Traces of Gold] by Mário de Sá-Carneiro and two poems by Álvaro de Campos were most notable and

⁷³ [Não sei se alguma vez lhe disse que os heterónimos (segundo a última intenção que formei a respeito deles) devem ser por mim publicados sob o meu próprio nome (já é tarde, e portanto absurdo, para o disfarce absoluto).]

original. One of the two Campos's contributions was *Opiário* [Opiary], a Decadent poem dedicated to Sá-Carneiro. The creation of this poem seems to be a result of rather circumstantial reasons, according to Pessoa:

When it came time to publish *Orpheu*, we had to find something at the last minute to fill out the issue, and so I suggested to Sá-Carneiro that I write an "old" poem of Álvaro de Campos—a poem such as Álvaro de Campos would have written before meeting Caeiro and falling under his influence. That's how I came to write "Opiary", in which I tried to incorporate all the latent tendencies of Álvaro de Campos that would eventually be revealed but that still showed no hint of contact with his master Caeiro. Of all the poems I've written, this was the one that gave me the most trouble, because of the twofold depersonalization it required. But I don't think it turned out badly, and it does show us Álvaro in the bud. (2001: 257)⁷⁴

The genuineness of Campos would be revealed in the *Ode Triunfal* [Triumphal Ode]. The opening strophe of *Ode Triunfal* begins vehemently demonstrating its new aesthetic attitude towards the full-fledged era of machine-driven industrialization.

By the painful light of the factory's huge electric lamps
I write in fever.
I write gnashing my teeth, rabid for the beauty of this,
For this beauty completely unknown to the ancients. (2008: 139)⁷⁵

To be precise, Pessoa was not the first to make a literary commentary about machines in Portuguese literature, but until this ode appeared, their "unknown beauty" was never earnestly discovered.⁷⁶ «It was necessary to wait until Campos, so that the machine would no longer remain as a pretext, metonymy, but become a revelation, truth of human body (...)» (Eiras, 2015: 42).⁷⁷ Whilst being dazzled by the progress of technology, Campos does not

⁷⁴ [Quando foi da publicação de *Orpheu*, foi preciso, à última hora, arranjar qualquer coisa para completar o número de páginas. Sugeriu então ao Sá-Carneiro que eu fizesse um poema "antigo" do Álvaro de Campos — um poema de como o Álvaro de Campos seria antes de ter conhecido Caeiro e ter caído sob a sua influência. E assim fiz o *Opiário*, em que tentei dar todas as tendências latentes do Álvaro de Campos, conforme haviam de ser depois reveladas, mas sem haver ainda qualquer traço de contacto com o seu mestre Caeiro. Foi dos poemas que tenho escrito, o que me deu mais que fazer, pelo duplo poder de despersonalização que tive que desenvolver. Mas, enfim, creio que não saiu mau, e que dá o Álvaro em botão...] (1999A:344).

⁷⁵ [À dolorosa luz das grandes lâmpadas eléctricas da fábrica / Tenho febre e escrevo. / Escrevo rangendo os dentes, fera para a beleza disto, / Para a beleza disto totalmente desconhecida dos antigos] (2007A: 227).

⁷⁶ The interpretation of *Ode Triunfal* in this text heavily relies on the reading of *Platão no Rolls-Royce: Ensaio sobre Literatura e Técnica* (2015) by Pedro Eiras. See chapter II, *Uma "Ode triunfal" com avaria ao fundo*.

⁷⁷ [Será preciso esperar por Campos para a máquina deixar de ser pretexto, metonímia, e tornarse revelação verdade do corpo humano (...).]

entirely succumb to it by offering simplified eulogy. Instead, he disrupts the chronological time scheme and evokes the classics.

Gaping deliriously at the engines as at a tropical landscape —
Great human tropics of iron and fire and energy —
I sing, and I sing the present, and the past and future too,
Because the present is all the past and all the future:
And Plato and Virgil exist in the machines and electric lights
For the simple reason that Virgil and Plato once existed and were human, (2008: 139)⁷⁸

But this was not enough. His aspiration craves a total embodiment with the machine: «Ah, if I could express my whole being like an engine! / If I could be complete like a machine!» (2008: 139).⁷⁹ However, the “becoming” to this quasi-machine seems to result in a failure, which is expressed by an array of noisy mechanical onomatopoeia accompanied by expressive typographical display. This “audio-visual” technique can also be observed in the *Ode Marítima* [Maritime Ode], which comes out in the second issue of *Orpheu*. With an evidently modernist cover design compared to the Symbolist outlook of the first issue, *Orpheu 2* established its uncompromising provocative attitude, and displayed various influences of contemporary European literary currents. Besides *Ode Marítima*, Pessoa himself contributed with *Chuva Obliqua* [Oblique Rain], which would be the exemplary text of “Intersectionism”. Also a poem of Ângelo de Lima⁸⁰ was included, who was at that time hospitalized in Rilhafoles Hospital (now Hospital Miguel Bombarda in Lisbon).

Pessoa makes sure that *Orpheu* is not associated with one single *ism*, but «is a review of all kinds of advanced literature, from a quasi-Futurism to what we here call Intersectionism» (1993A: 182), in a letter he wrote to Frank Palmer, an English editor.

⁷⁸ [Em febre e olhando os motores como a uma Natureza tropical / Grandes trópicos humanos de ferro e fogo e força / Canto, e canto o presente, e também o passado e o futuro, / Porque o presente é todo o passado e todo o futuro / E há Platão e Virgílio dentro das máquinas e das luzes eléctricas / Só porque houve outrora e foram humanos Virgílio e Platão.] (2007A: 228)

⁷⁹ [Ah, poder exprimir-me todo como um motor se exprime! / Ser completo como uma máquina!] (*Ibid.*)

⁸⁰ Dr. psychiatrist Miguel Bombarda declared the patient Ângelo de Lima to be “alienated and untouchable” (it would be a schizophrenic paranoid, according to current terminology). => Further information: see *1915 - O Ano do Orpheu* (2015), coordenação Steffen Dix, Lisboa, Tinta da China.

We can observe this attitude in relation with Futurism. In a letter to the director of the newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, written by Álvaro de Campos, he draws a clear line: «to place the contributors of *Orpheu* within Futurism is not even knowing how to say nonsense, which is in itself extremely lamentable» (1996A: 412).⁸¹ Later, Pessoa did collaborate with the magazine *Portugal Futurista* (1917), the one and only issue directed by Santa-Rita Pintor, by writing the inflammatory prose *Ultimatum* in the name of Álvaro de Campos, which was scandalous enough so that the police immediately seized the magazine from the newsstands.⁸² But this was rather an appropriation of Pessoa to offer Campos an opportunity to demonstrate and exercise his Sensationist potential, than a “Futurist manifesto”. Some consider *Ultimatum* as «a play of combat, not a work of Futuristic creation. The Futurism of Fernando Pessoa would reside in *Orpheu*, the *Ode Triunfal* and the *Ode Marítima*» (Simões, 1950: 415).⁸³

Two published issues of *Orpheu* were enough to raise attention and controversy. The enthusiasm of Pessoa is palpable in his letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues (4 April 1915):

*We are the issue of the day in Lisbon; I'm telling you without exaggeration. The scandal is enormous. We are pointed out in the streets, all the people – even non literary – talk about Orpheu. (...) The biggest scandal has been caused by (the poem) 16 by Sá-Carneiro and the Triumphal Ode. (1999: 161)*⁸⁴

What Pessoa felt was by no means a subjective perception. It prompted reactions of outrage and ridicule in the press and the literary establishment. In the article of *A Capital* it reads:

What we can conclude from reading the poems subscribed by Mário de Sá-Carneiro, Ronald de Carvalho, Álvaro de Campos and the others, is that they belong to a category of individuals whom science defines

⁸¹ [Englobar os colaboradores do *Orpheu* no futurismo é nem sequer saber dizer disparates, o que é lamentabilíssimo.]

⁸² Portugal supported the Allies in the war, and while Pessoa-Campos's ranting manifesto was not pro-German, it heaped as much abuse on the British, French, and other Allied leaders as on Wilhelm II and Bismarck.

⁸³ [Ultimatum é uma peça de combate, não uma obra de criação futurista/ o futurismo de FP ficará no *Orpheu*, *Ode Triunfal* e *Ode Marítima*.]

⁸⁴ [Somos o assunto do dia em Lisboa; sem exagero lho digo. O escândalo é enorme. Somos apontados na rua, e toda a gente -- mesmo extra literária -- fala no *Orpheu*. (...) O escândalo maior tem sido causado pelo 16 do Sá-Carneiro e a *Ode Triunfal*.]

and classifies inside the lunatic asylum, but can be more dangerous when they get out from there.
(Júdice, 1986: 61)⁸⁵

The headlines of numerous news articles vividly prove the temper of the reception:

«FURIOUS CRITIQUE» (*Eco*, 9 April)

«MAD LITERATURE: The Portuguese “Futurist” – a success of... Laughter» (*A Vanguarda*, 6 April)

«Babbling» (*O Alentejo*, 15 April)

«SUPPOSTED CRIME OF “ORPHEU”» (*O Jornal*, 13 April)

«PARANOIC POETS» (*Ilustração Portuguesa*, 19 April)

«VARIATIONS... ABOUT AN OLD THEME» (*Terra Nossa*, 18 April)

«ARTISTS OF RIHLHAFOLES» (*A Capital*, June 28)

«VERY PAULIC: Literature of astral lunatic asylum» (*O Mundo*, 5 July)

«Unsympathetic Futurism: The poets of “Orpheu” aren’t, after all, more than children with bad sentiments» (*A Capital*, 6 July) (Júdice, 1986: 59-111)⁸⁶

One could wonder how a small literary magazine was able to cause such a scandal during an age of political upheaval, but

the relative exiguity of the Portuguese cultural space and its major conservatism had been decisive for the *Orpheu* to cause a perturbation similar to an earthquake that shook the mentality, carrying out a collapse of sacred aesthetic values, largely due to the potential and originality of the double impelling force of this movement: Fernando Pessoa and Mário de Sá-Carneiro.⁸⁷

Notwithstanding, the magazine could not sustain long, even though it did sell fairly well. As we have seen, Pessoa was enthusiastic with its success of creating an echo. As Sá-Carneiro left again to Paris, he assumed the responsibility to continue the project: to organize

⁸⁵ [Júlio de Matos: No já referido artigo d’A Capital, lia-se: «O que se conclui da leitura dos chamados poemas subscritos por Mário de Sá-Carneiro, Ronald de Carvalho, Álvaro de Campos e outros é que eles pertencem a uma categoria de indivíduos que a ciência definiu e classificou dentro dos manicômios, mas que podem sem maior perigo andar fora deles».]

⁸⁶ [«A CRÍTICA FURIOSA» / «MALUQUEIRA LITERÁRIA: Os “futuristas” portugueses – Um êxito de... gargalhada» / «PAROLEIROS» / «O SUPOSTO CRIME DO “ORPHEU”» / «POETAS PARANOICOS» / «VARIAÇÕES... SOBRE UM VELHO TEMA» / «ARTISTAS DE RIHLHAFOLES» / «MUITO PAULICO: Literatura de manicômio astral» / «Antipático futurismo. Os poetas do Orpheu não passam, afinal, de criaturas de maus sentimentos»]

⁸⁷ A text by Richard Zenith, in a pamphlet of EXPOSIÇÃO: *Os caminhos de Orpheu* | 24 March - 27 June 15 2015 | 18h30 (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Sala de Exposições, Lisbon)

and edit *Orpheu* 3. If the previous two volumes were a mixture of Symbolism, Paulism and Futurism, the project of the third edition would be the “Sensationist Orpheu”. By October, the third edition was prepared and ready to be published, but at the last minute, Sá-Carneiro wrote a hasty letter⁸⁸ to Pessoa, asking him to cease the printing. He lamented that there was no money to sustain the project.⁸⁹ Was this abrupt message really a cause of financial reasons, or because of the scandal caused by the letter⁹⁰ of Campos, or Sá-Carneiro’s depressive return to Paris, or the faded interest of some collaborators? No one would be able to tell the truth. What we know is that in the span of four months, this magazine changed the landscape of Portuguese literature. After *Orpheu*, it was never the same. Some critiques compare it with the English vorticist magazine *Blast*, edited by Wyndham Lewis and with the collaboration of Ezra Pound.

The importance of *Orpheu* cannot be measured apart from the continuous literary achievements by their core members. They became the key figures of the innovation of Portuguese literature themselves. However, almost all of their core members would meet their tragic fates soon. Sá-Carneiro committed suicide in Paris (1916), Santa-Rita Pintor died of tuberculosis (1918), Amadeo de Souza Cardoso died in the same year of Spanish Flu “La Grippe”, and Ângelo de Lima died in 1921 at the same Rilhafoles Hospital where he was hospitalized for almost 20 years. Although the magazine lived an ephemeral life, Pessoa never doubted the longevity of its daring experimental spirit. The year of his death, in 1935, he wrote: «*Orpheu* has ended. *Orpheu* continues» (2009: 95).⁹¹

⁸⁸ Full text in *Cartas de Mário de Sá-Carneiro a Fernando Pessoa* (2001) Lisboa, Assírio & Alvim, p. 209.

⁸⁹ The previous two issues were financed by Sá-Carneiro’s father, who would have been likely troubled by the magazine’s negative public reception.

⁹⁰ In a letter addressed to the newspaper *A Capital*, Álvaro de Campos openly mocked the politician Alfonso Costa, who had recently suffered a severe traffic accident. This incident raised negative reactions, even from his peers.

⁹¹ [*Orpheu* acabou. *Orpheu* continua.]

4. Amplitude of Sensations

4.1. Pessoa as a Theorist

«I was a poet animated by philosophy, not a philosopher with poetic faculties» (1966A: 13). Quite properly self-described, Pessoa had indeed a strong inclination towards philosophy. Although he dropped out of college, he was always eager to absorb contemporary theories and ideas from different fields, and remained as a lifelong auto-didactic reader of philosophy. The most direct result of this was his numerous philosophical essays. He even invented a philosopher heteronym António Mora, especially assigned to carry out his project of propagating the “neo-paganism” theory. Although most of these philosophical essays are not considered rigorously “original” judged by standardized academic philosophy, they played an important role in his literary production. They often energized his creative abilities and liberated his imagination. This bore other fruits as well, as the poet became the founding father of various literary *isms* which influenced poets and writers of his literary circle, and served as the cradle for the creation of the *Orpheu*.

Yet, if an *ism* is conceived as an ideological theory, how seriously should we (or could we) deal with Pessoa’s theories? If we are tempted to analyze Pessoa’s poetry according to his own philosophical standpoints, to what extent should we certify the theoretical values of his *isms*? In other words, to paraphrase the question raised by Jerónimo Pizarro⁹², “does Pessoa’s *theory* exist?”

His inclination to offer logical explanations about his creations could be compared to other poet-thinkers of his time. For example, the critical essays written by T.S. Eliot are considered among the most original and insightful pieces ever written by a poet. It provides theoretical bases for understanding the nature of modern poetry. But Eliot also remarked in his essay *The Frontier of Criticism* that «if in literary criticism, we place all the emphasis upon understanding, we are in danger of slipping from understanding to mere explanation.

⁹² I refer to the title of Jerónimo Pizarro’s book, *Pessoa Existe?* [Does Pessoa Exist?] (2012), Lisbon, Ática. Jerónimo Pizarro is one of the leading editors of Pessoa’s most important theoretical texts such as *Sensacionismo e outros ismos* [Sensationism and other *isms*].

We are in danger even of pursuing criticism as if it was a science, which it can never be» (Eliot, 1957: 117).

Whoever attempts to conceive a systematic *theory* of Pessoa, is likely to encounter unmistakable incongruity and lack of consistency inside the labyrinth of his scattered thoughts. Although we are aware that self-contradiction, incongruity and plurality are some of the common features in avant-garde modernists as well as in Pessoaan literature, the difficulty to build a consistent sense is even more challenging in the case of Pessoa than other writers, especially when we are forced to construct a coherent and logical theory. Besides that, almost every *ism* he created would be sooner or later abandoned due to different motives. Thus, it could be misleading to label Pessoa as a philosopher *stricto sensu* just because of his strong affinity with philosophy. Jerónimo Pizarro explains, in an interview with a Spanish newspaper:

After Nietzsche, it's difficult to think that systematic idea of philosophy (...) Pessoa followed the tradition inaugurated by Nietzsche and in some senses of which Nietzsche is considered a philosopher, Pessoa can also be considered one. (...) if we consider aesthetics a branch of philosophy, (...), Pessoa never abandoned philosophy.⁹³

What we are sure is that Pessoa was a relentless philosophical thinker and essayist whose principal preoccupation was neither in pursuing coherency, nor arranging his ideas under strict orders. It would be more productive and appropriate to examine every given material from the author to trace the factors that formed his poetry rather than excluding certain ones at the expense of coherency, or nitpicking on his logical “errors”. Besides, there is no other poet beside Pessoa whose “constantly contradicting” traits tell more about him. Although they may be problematic to a certain extent, his theories should be closely studied since they remain as one the chief resources of his art. After all, as Paul de Man duly suggests, the connection between theory and work is «like a dream and its interpretation in analysis» (De Man, 1993: 193).

⁹³ [Después de Nietzsche es difícil pensar esa idea sistemática de la filosofía (...) Pessoa siguió una tradición que inaugura Nietzsche y en algunos sentidos en los que a Nietzsche se lo considera un filósofo, a Pessoa también se lo puede considerar uno. (...) si consideramos la estética como una rama de la filosofía, en un sentido muy borgeano, Pessoa nunca abandonó la filosofía], from the on/off-line daily newspaper *La Vanguardia*: <http://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20120929/54351265320/jeronimo-pizarro-boom-editorial-pessoa.html>

4.2. Self-created *Isms*

Pessoa's *isms* were created between 1913-1917, and the first to be launched was "Paulism". In 1914, he published a poem entitled *Pauis* (written in 1913) on the manuscript together with another poem, under the general title *Impressões do Crepúsculo* [Twilight Impressions], which starts with the line «Swamps of yearnings brushing against my gilded soul...» (2006: 279).⁹⁴ And from this emblematic poem's opening word derives the *ism*'s name "Swampism", when directly translated. The poem displays a wordplay that deliberately provokes confusion to the reader than to signify a proper meaning. This disconcertion turns out even more severe and incomprehensible when translated. Apparently, it contains influences of Mallarmé's Symbolism as well as of Camilo Pessanha's *Fonógrafo* [Phonograph], which Pessoa recited on 16th of March 1913, just a few days before he wrote *Pauis* (Júdice, 1986: 38-39).

As Pessoa did not rigorously define the *isms* himself, definitions were made afterwards or posthumously by others. Compared to the upcoming *isms*, Paulism is considered «no more than a timid approach», described simply as «a decadent and crepuscular state of soul» (Dix / Pizarro, 2011: 27-28), whereas some offer a more detailed and benign interpretation:

The Paulist style is defined by the voluntary confusion of the subjective and the objective, by the "association of disconnected ideas", by noun phrases, exclamations, by aberrations of syntax (...) by vocabulary that expresses tedium and emptiness of the soul, the yearning for "something else", and ill-defined "beyond" ("gold", "azure", "Mystery"), through the use of capital letters that convey the spiritual depth of certain words. (Coelho, 1979: 656)⁹⁵

Another interpretation of Paulism can be observed in his prose *À Memória de António Nobre* [To the Memory of António Nobre] (1915). According to Jorge de Sena, «the text by

⁹⁴ [Pauis de roçarem ânsias pela minh' alma em oiro ...] (1986B: 29)

⁹⁵ [O estilo paúlco define-se pela voluntária confusão do subjectivo e do objectivo, pela «associação de ideias desconexas», pelas frases nominais, exclamativas, pelas aberrações da sintaxe («transparente de Foi, oco de ter-se»), pelo vocabulário expressivo de tédio, do vazio da alma, do anseio de «outra coisa», um vago «além» («ouro», «azul», «Mistério», pelo uso de maiúsculas que traduzem a profundidade espiritual de certas palavras.]

Fernando Pessoa is, (...) inspired by the pure tradition of English essayism, written in a prose absolutely poetic, without the logical abstraction, as implacable as it was ironic, of his articles. This conveys a profound melancholy» (Sena, 1946: 7-8).⁹⁶ Nuno Júdice remarks that

his text uses images that seem to be directly recovered of, (...), *Pauis*: the twilight (crepuscule), the gates of the farm, the ponds, the roads, the woods, all these are perfectly Paulic images, now used to pay homage to the sad dandy figure of Nobre, which would better suit the personality of Sá-Carneiro than that of Pessoa. (Júdice, 1986: 42)⁹⁷

It seems that Pessoa had mixed feelings towards Paulism. Although the *ism* was enthusiastically followed by several poets such as António Ferro and Alfredo Guisado, and was also practiced as an academic model of Decadentism, he sarcastically downplayed his own creation in an article entitled *A Nova Doença na Literatura Portuguesa* [The New Sickness in Portuguese Literature] (2009: 98-101), describing the poem *Pauis* as «hackwork» (*Id*: 101). In a letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues (19 January 1915), he even affirmed that Paulism is practically a «*blague*» (1944: 43).

However, on the other side, Pessoa advocated Paulism under the name of Campos as an «enormous progress over all the Symbolism and Neo-symbolism from outside» (1966A: 125).⁹⁸ The objective of Paulism was for him, supposedly, «to obtain a poetry that was simultaneously objective and subjective, that could – through the “materialization of the spirit” and the “spirituality of nature” – translate into a “vague”, “subtle” and “complex” poetry» (Dix/Pizarro: 2011: 27), namely the three essential qualities for the new Portuguese poetry he projected early on in his first critical essay.⁹⁹

It would be most pertinent to consider Paulism as a transitory experiment to cultivate other upcoming *isms*, which would be more elaborated and taken seriously for a longer period

⁹⁶ [o texto de FP, (...) inspirado na pura tradição do ensaísmo inglês, é escrito numa prosa absolutamente poética, sem a abstracção lógica, tão implacável como irónica, dos seus artigos. Nele perpassa uma profunda melancolia.]

⁹⁷ [este texto utiliza imagens que parecem directamente recuperadas do, (...), *Pauis*: crepúsculo, os portões da quinta, os tanques, os caminhos, a floresta, tudo isto são imagens perfeitamente paulicas, usadas agora para homenagear a figura de dandy triste de Nobre, mais concordante com a personalidade de Sá-Carneiro do que com Pessoa.]

⁹⁸ [(O paulismo é) um enorme progresso sobre todo o simbolismo e neo-simbolismo de lá fora.]

⁹⁹ [For full text see: *A Nova Poesia Portuguesa no Seu Aspecto Psicológico* (initially published in 1912) in *Crítica – Ensaios, Artigos e Entrevistas*, edição de Fernando Cabral Martins, Lisboa, Assírio & Alvim, pp. 36-67 (p.42 and p. 48).

of time. Shortly after, Paulism would be followed¹⁰⁰ by its “second phase” in Intersectionism. This «new kind of Paulism» (1985: 36)¹⁰¹ according to Pessoa –or «a rather more established trend that might more easily be described as an example of literary Cubism» (Dix/Pizarro, 2011: 27)–, would lay a cornerstone on the poet’s earnest journey of analyzing sensations. In the (Interseccionist) *Manifesto* Pessoa tried to distinguish two different Intersectionisms; those of the *Orpheu* coterie, and of the “Intersectionist intuitions”:

(...) Intersection of the object with itself: Cubism. (That is, intersection of various aspects of the same object with each other). Intersection of the object with the objective ideas it suggests: Futurism. Intersection of the object with our feeling of it; Intersectionsism, strictly speaking, our own. (1993A: 140)¹⁰²

Here, we notice one of Pessoa’s earliest emphases on sensation, which will later develop into Sensationism.

The clearest example of Intersectionism is the *Oblique Rain*, openly named as an “Intersectionist poem” in *Orpheu* 2. The poetic technique of super-positioning images – influenced by Cesário Verde – was crucial in the composition of the poem. Pessoa demonstrated his deep awareness of that «each sensation is, in reality, an oblique mixture of other sensations, a continuous intersection of tedium, melancholy and nausea, felt by the poet, with euphoria and the dream of constructing a new beauty in throbbing reveries» (in Martins, 2008: 366, Text by Paula Cristina Costa).¹⁰³ *Oblique Rain* is, for Gaspar Simões, «like an illustration of a painting of Pablo Picasso or of Santa-Rita Pintor» (Simões, 1950: 293). In this period «Pessoa was seeking an inter-artistic aesthetic, but without going outside literature» (Dix /Pizarro, 2011: 29) as we can see when he manifested: «The Romanticists

¹⁰⁰ It is important to note that the appearances of each *isms* were not in a successive order. It occurred rather simultaneously, or “chaotically”, if you like. I would say that Pessoa’s mind was a vivid “battleground” of a myriad of ideas and a microcosm of the dynamics of the European intellectual community during this period.

¹⁰¹ [Verdade seja que descobri um novo género de paulismo.] (In his letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues, 4 of October 1914)

¹⁰² [Intersecção do Objecto consigo próprio: cubismo. (Isto é, intersecção dos vários aspectos do mesmo Objecto uns com os outros). Intersecção do Objecto com as ideias objectivas que sugere: Futurismo. Intersecção do Objecto com a nossa sensação d'ele: Interseccionismo, propriamente dito; o nosso.]

¹⁰³ [cada sensação era, na realidade, uma mescla oblíqua de outras sensações, uma intersecção continuada do tédio, melancolia e náusea sentidos pelo poeta, com a euforia e o sonho (vanguardista) da construção de uma nova beleza (não-aristotélica) em devaneios latejantes.]

wanted to combine. The Intersectionists try to fuse. Wagner wanted music + painting + poetry. What we want is music x painting x poetry» (1966: 355).¹⁰⁴

Pessoa's interest on both Paulism and Intersectionism soon fades away, maybe because of disappointing receptions, or, because he was simply bored or unsatisfied with the *isms* themselves: «(...) neither *Paúis* nor *Interseccionist Manifesto*, of which I read to you some disconnected fragments, wouldn't be (considered) serious. In both of these compositions, my attitude towards the public is that of a clown. Today I feel myself distant from finding these kind of attitudes interesting» (1999:142-143).¹⁰⁵

However, this certainly does not mean that he stopped short in his indulgence in of creating *isms*. On the contrary, it culminated into his next invention, which ambitiously attempted to encompass all the existing *isms*. By 1916, he drops the name of Intersectionism for this upcoming project, namely, *Sensationism*.

4.3. Sensationism

Peindre, non la chose, mais l'effet qu'elle produit.

– Stéphane Mallarmé

Sensationism is arguably the most ambitious literary and philosophical project conceived by Pessoa. Observing multiple literary movements emerging inside and outside of Portugal around the 1910s, it was necessary for Pessoa to synthesize them through an analytic set of ideas in order to attain his “Sensationist” ideal, best portrayed in the famous slogan «*to feel everything in all ways*» (1993: 26)¹⁰⁶ – actually made by Álvaro de Campos, Pessoa's legitimate propagate of Sensationism.

¹⁰⁴ [Os românticos tentaram juntar. Os interseccionistas procuram fundir. Wagner queria música + pintura + poesia. Nós queremos música x pintura x poesia.] (Sobre um Inquérito Literário, 1914?)

¹⁰⁵ [(E por isso) não são sérios os Paúis, nem seria o Manifesto interseccionista de que uma vez lhe li trechos desconexos. Em qualquer destas composições a minha atitude para com o público é a de um palhaço. Hoje sinto-me afastado de achar graça a esse género de atitude.]

¹⁰⁶ [Sentir tudo de todas as maneiras.]

Although Pessoa left numerous writings related to this topic, it is increasingly difficult to outline a clear-cut idea about what Sensationism is, since many of the texts were unfinished and many others lack coherence. This does not mean that it is impossible to cherry-pick some of his words and arbitrarily construct *a* theory, but such an attempt would not fully represent or reflect the “chaotic” nature of the original texts and fragments. As a result, it seems that the *ideas of* Sensationism were just enough to inspire him and his colleagues. Let’s try to conceive what these ideas were, beginning with the meaning of sensation by Pessoa.

The only true reality is sensation. The only absolute reality is the difference between sensation and feeling □. (2009: 179)¹⁰⁷

The premise of sensation as the only existing reality, as the only basis for all art is very frequently repeated throughout various texts. Then, what does the act of “feeling” [sentir] (or sensing) mean?

To feel is to create. But what is feeling? Feeling is thinking without ideas, hence understanding, since the Universe has no ideas. Holding opinions is not feeling. All our opinions come from other people. (2009:176)¹⁰⁸

We know that when Pessoa refers to *feeling* or, *sensing* a sense, it is never confined to a single sense. It implies a set of senses, often times a synaesthetic experience.

Strange as it may seem, it’s possible to hear with the eyes, to see with the ears, to see and hear and taste smells, to taste colors and sounds, to hear tastes, and so on, indefinitely. (2009: 177)¹⁰⁹

Often compared with Pessoa, the American poet Wallace Stevens similarly remarks that «poetry is a sense» (Stevens, 1997: 902), saying that «with my whole body I taste these

¹⁰⁷ [A única realidade da vida é a sensação. A única realidade absoluta é a diferença entre a sensação e sentir □]

¹⁰⁸ [Sentir é criar. / — Mas o que é sentir? / Sentir é pensar sem ideias, e por isso sentir é compreender, visto que o Universo não tem ideias. / Ter opiniões é não sentir. / Todas as nossas opiniões são dos outros.]

¹⁰⁹ [(...) embora parece estranho, e possível ouvir com os olhos, ver com os ouvidos, ver e ouvir e palpar aromas, saber o gosto a cores, e a sons, ouvir sabores, e ouvir indefinidamente (...).]

peaches» (*Id*: 206) in *A Dish of Peaches in Russia*. But we should note that Pessoa's own "feeling experience of reality" can be extremely unreal and abstract, if we remind that Pessoa was a feverish advocate of *experiencing without real experience*. One of the best examples would be the idea of traveling without dislocating.

After all, the best way to travel is to feel. Feel everything in every possible way. Because in fact, all the things are excessive. (1993: 34)¹¹⁰

His sensations could be easily evoked by indirect experience. A minimum amount of real experience was enough to trigger and amplify his sensations, and the conscience of this sensation would expand them into another dimension, thanks to his unusually strong intensity of sensing. Give Pessoa a minimum experience and he could augment and transform it with his explosive imagination. «I grew to be a mere apt machine for the expressions of moods which became so intense that grew into personalities and made my very soul the mere shell of their casual appearance, (...)» (2009: 157). Reality was, for Pessoa, what *Madeleines* were for Marcel Proust. So when Pessoa refers to a process of sensation it means a certain "abstract experience" related to feeling rather than a simple physical and immediate sensing act. One of the most essential formulas of Sensationism is the following:

1. The basis of all art is sensation.

2. In order to convert a mere meaningless emotion to an artistic emotion, or an emotion that is susceptible to become artistic, the sensation must be *intellectualized*. An intellectualized sensation follows two consecutive processes: the first is the consciousness of that sensation, (...) it is, afterwards, a consciousness of that consciousness, (...). Thus, we have:

The pure sensation, as such.

The consciousness of the sensation, which gives that sensation a value and, therefore, an artistic stamp.

The consciousness of that consciousness of the sensation, whereof results an intellectualization of an intellectualization, that is, the power of expression. (1966A: 192, italics added)¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ [Afinal, a melhor maneira de viajar é sentir. Sentir tudo de todas as maneiras. Sentir tudo excessivamente. Porque todas as coisas são, em verdade excessivas.]

¹¹¹ [1. A base de toda a arte é a sensação. 2. Para passar de mera emoção sem sentido à emoção artística, ou susceptível de se tornar artística, essa sensação tem de ser *intelectualizada*. Uma sensação intelectualizada segue dois processos sucessivos: é primeiro a consciência dessa sensação, (...) é, depois, uma consciência dessa consciência, (...). Temos, pois: A sensação, puramente tal. *A consciência da sensação*, que dá a essa sensação um valor, e, portanto, um cunho estético. *A consciência dessa consciência da sensação*, de onde resulta uma intelectualização de uma intelectualização, isto é, o poder de expressão.]

The crucial point is, not merely perceiving a sensation but *intellectualizing* it; having *consciousness of the consciousness of this sensation*. This emphasis on intellectualization is understandable since we are aware of Pessoa's idea of "depersonalization" and his intention to overcome the limits of the Romanticists by keeping distance with personal emotion. Let us compare with William Wordsworth (1770-1850), one of the most representative Romanticists. It is well known that poetry is, for Wordsworth,

the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind.» (*apud* Waugh, 2006: 55) (Quoted from Wordsworth, In *Preface*: 361)

Although Wordsworth stresses his characteristic concept "overflow of emotion", we cannot simplify that his aim was merely to express raw and direct sensations. Even Wordsworth articulates a preoccupation of involving a rather "conscious" procedure, which requires calmness, a mode of contemplation. However, the modernists differentiated from this, particularly in the case of Pessoa, by applying the state of "consciousness of the consciousness of senses". One can argue that Pessoa's version of "objectifying" creates perhaps relatively less "rupture" with the Romantics than the case of T.S. Eliot, the inventor of the term "objective correlative" who manifested that «poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality» in *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (chapter II) (Eliot, 2010: 92). Pessoa shared the tendency with other contemporary high-modernists of preferring synthesis or appropriation of traditions rather than a radical breakup with them, but every modernist executed his beliefs in different ways. José Palla e Carmo compares three modernist poets, Pessoa, Eliot and Ezra Pound, and argues that

the common ground of the three was the rejection of Romanticism. Pound clearly did that, with his Imagist followers; Pessoa developed a long fight against soppy sentimentalism; Eliot, in spite of his

conversion to Marian Catholicism, never completely lost the dryness, sometimes discretely sardonic, of the New England puritans from whom he descended. (Carmo, 1977: 29)¹¹²

Let us continue to analyze the abovementioned “two steps of consciousness on sensations”. Álvaro de Campos said, «the superior poet says what he really (or actually/truly) feels. A mediocre poet says what he decides to feel. The inferior poet says what he ought to feel» (1980: 275).¹¹³ Supposedly, the superiority of “*really feeling*” would refer to the Sensationist way of feeling. The two latter inferior levels of “*deciding what to feel*” and “*feel what one should feel*” may also involve certain consciousness, but perhaps only a primary level (first stage) of consciousness. So, the second stage of consciousness would mean that intellectualization is a process beyond decision-making, or a duty sensing level. It means a highly conscious state of mind, free from the conventions of morality and judgment.

As a reference, Pessoa showed that it is important to discern the notion between consciousness and thinking, while criticizing Descartes. It reads: «It is true that Descartes has no strong sense of what conscious(ness) is, in the metaphysical sense he mixes it with thought» (1968: 113). But his usage of words (feeling, sensation, consciousness, etc.) often comes out from his personalized terminology, or can be quite inconsistent. It is also unclear why he had to name the *ism* “Sensationism” in the first place, if “intellectualizing” was the prime focus. He did provide a short explanation. «Why call it Sensationism? Because it departs from Sensation as its base material; and not, as other arts, from physical things (class[icism]), □» (2009: 150).¹¹⁴ But as we see, this is another unfinished text. At least we are certain that there was no mistake in the naming (as he translated it into English as “Sensationist movement” himself), but I would argue that the name does not perfectly match with the concept, which could be sometimes counter-intuitive.

¹¹² [ponto comum aos três foi o repúdio do romantismo. Pound fê-lo claramente, com os seus sequazes imagistas; Pessoa desenvolveu uma longa luta contra o sentimentalismo piegas; e Eliot, não obstante a sua conversão a um Catolicismo Mariano, nunca perdeu por completo a secura, por vezes discretamente sardônica, dos puritanos da Nova Inglaterra de que descendia.]

¹¹³ [O poeta superior diz o que *efectivamente sente*. O poeta médio diz o que decide sentir. O poeta inferior diz o que julga que deve sentir.]

¹¹⁴ [Por que chamar-lhe Sensacionismo? Porque parte da Sensa[cão] como base material; e não, como as outras artes, das cousas physicas (class[cism]o), □]

Another approach to understand Sensationism is to examine it in relation with other *isms*, since Pessoa drew various “guidelines” to maintain certain distance from each of them. Pessoa was never known to give his full endorsement to any particular current. As he never found himself comfortable dwelling in a single *ism*, he opted to create various ones of his own. In other words, Sensationism was a certain “work in progress” that attempted to identify itself through the course of constant comparisons with other *isms*, whether it was associating or disassociating with them. In *The Portuguese Sensationists* – written by Thomas Crosse – he claims, «the Sensationists are, first of all, Decadents. They are the direct descendants of the Decadent and Symbolist movements» (2015: 126). But in a letter to a British Publisher (1916?), Pessoa writes:

We (Sensationists) descend from three older movements – French “Symbolism”, Portuguese transcendentalist pantheism, and the jumble of senseless and contradictory things of which Futurism, Cubism and the like are occasional expressions, thought, to be exact, we descend more from the spirit than from the letter of these. (...) We intellectualized their processes. The decomposition of the model they realize we have carried into what we believe to be the proper sphere of that decomposition — not things, but our sensations of things. (2009: 402-403)

Isn't Pessoa here, once again objectifying everything by exercising the Sensationist two-step formula? Isn't he being conscious of what he *feels* with other *isms*, and then *being conscious of this consciousness of feeling*? If yes, other *isms* were, for him, mere objects to exert his sensations, materials for the sake at attaining his *isms*' perfection. Either dialectically, or eclectically, he rejects the negatives and accepts the positives of any given *isms* in order to situate Sensationism in its proper position in history. According to Pessoa, Sensationism «rejects Classicism of its limited (clear) visions, (...) disagrees that a work of art should always have to be simple», but «accepts its Construction, the intellectual preoccupation» (2015: 87). Of Romanticism, he assumed that «the Romanticists weren't thinkers» (Patrício, 2012: 384),¹¹⁵ and rejected «its notion of the moment of inspiration» but, «accepts the pictorial preoccupation, the sympathetic and synthetic sensibility in regard of

¹¹⁵ [os românticos não eram pensadores.]

things» (2009: 166-167). Although he criticized Romanticism, it is not difficult to point out certain similarities. Even in the modernist dandy Álvaro de Campos's poetry, one can find his Romantic side. For example, in his poem *Aniversário* [Birthday], he cries with emotion: «What I am today (and the home of those who loved me shiver through my tears) (...)» (2007A: 377).¹¹⁶ And also in a poem that starts with the line “Cruzou por mim, veio ter comigo, numa rua da Baixa” [We crossed paths on a downtown Lisbon street, and he came up to me] (2006: 266), he repeatedly expresses direct self-pity: «Poor Álvaro de Campos! / So isolated in life! (...) I am the one who knows. Poor thing!» (2007A: 429-430).¹¹⁷ Pessoa also believed in the idea of the “genius” which is a typical Romantic characteristic. His relation with Romanticism was more of a continuity than rupture. He struggled with the “anxiety of influence” of Romanticism and fought with the Romanticism that was always present inside of him.

On the other side, Sensationism is sometimes regarded as the Portuguese equivalent of Avant-garde. But some Pessoaans such as Jerónimo Pizarro emphasize the significant difference between the two¹¹⁸, invoking Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974). For example, Pessoa does not share the common Vanguardist attributes such as attacking the institution of art, nor the disbelief in the “organicity” of a work of Art. Among his texts we can certify until present, there is no evidence that Pessoa tried to come to a rupture with the institution of art. Moreover, Pessoa firmly believed in the organicity of the artwork, although at times he would express frustration at failing to achieve it, only to end up with endless fragments. Pizarro stresses the term “Vanguardist” should only be adopted in an “etymological” sense, since «we are led to confirm the absence of any historical and original Vanguardist movement in Portugal» (2009: 13, in *Introduction* by Jerónimo Pizarro).¹¹⁹

Fernando Cabral Martin also affirms that Sensationism

¹¹⁶ [O que eu sou hoje (e a casa dos que me amaram treme através das minhas lágrimas) (...)]

¹¹⁷ [Coitado do Álvaro de Campos! / Tão isolado na vida! (...) Eu é que sei. Coitado dele!] For more information about this issue, see: *Resíduos românticos na poesia de Álvaro de Campos* by José Emanuel Coelho Vieira.

¹¹⁸ See the preface of “Sensacionismo e outro ismos”, Fernando Pessoa, Jeronimo Pizzaro” especially pp. 13-19

¹¹⁹ [(...) somos levados a confirmar a ausência de movimentos de vanguarda historica originais em Portugal.]

served as a common name (circulated very limitedly in public, as a matter of fact) for the diversity of the *Orpheu* poets in 1915, a designation so broad, which was able to assemble Alfredo Guisado, Álvaro de Campos, Raul Leal and Almada Negreiros. (...) it is not really a name of a Vanguardist movement, but a brand of a heterogeneous group, (...). (2015: 9, in *Introductory notes* by Fernando Cabral Martins)¹²⁰

Concerning Futurism, Pessoa clarifies that the only legit Futurist is Santa-Rita Pintor (*Id*: 123). He demonstrates indifference to the idea of framing or labeling artists with *isms*, and defends each of their unique individuality. (*Id*: 124) As we have previously observed in the chapter of *Orpheu*, Pessoa was consistent in keeping distance with Futurism. Furthermore, Pessoa argued that Sensationism differentiates itself with all the past and present *isms*, because of its distinguishable “fusing” nature.

The fundamentals of Sensationism

1. — Sensationism distinguishes itself from all the literary attitudes by being open, and not restrictive. Whereas all the literary schools start from a certain number of principles and establish itself on certain bases, Sensationism does not establish itself on any base. Every literary or artistic school thinks that art must be a certain thing; Sensationism thinks art should not be a certain thing.

Thereby, whereas every literary current is, generally speaking, characteristic of excluding others, Sensationism is characteristic of admitting all the others. In this manner, it is the enemy of all, for all of them are limited. Sensationism accepts all, under the condition of not accepting any of them separately. (2009: 183)¹²¹

In conclusion, Sensationism was, roughly speaking, an idea that focuses on sensations, but through a specific process of intellectualization, which aims to create a synthesis of all the past & ongoing currents with a cosmopolitan attitude. Obviously, this definition is unsatisfactory. Every time one tries to establish a thesis about Sensationism, it is easy to find an antithesis inside the vast pool of fragmented texts, which would contradict it. As we mentioned, this unfinished state and lack of coherence are the major difficulties that impede

¹²⁰ [(O Sensacionismo acaba também) por servir de nome comum (...) para a diversidade dos poetas de *Orpheu* em 1915, uma designação tão ampla que seria capaz de reunir Alfredo Guisado, Álvaro de Campos, Raul Leal e Almada Negreiros. Sensacionismo, deste modo, não é bem o nome de um movimento de Vanguarda, mas a marca de um grupo heterogêneo, (...)]

¹²¹ [Os Fundamentos do Sensacionismo. 1. — O Sensacionismo difere de todas as atitudes literárias em ser aberto, e não restrito. Ao passo que todas as escolas literárias partem de um certo número de princípios, assentam sobre determinadas bases, o Sensacionismo não assenta sobre base nenhuma. Qualquer escola literária ou artística acha que a arte deve ser determinada coisa; o sensacionismo acha que a arte não deve ser determinada coisa. Assim, ao passo que qualquer corrente literária tem, em geral, por típico excluir as outras, o Sensacionismo tem por típico admitir as outras todas. Assim, é inimigo de todas, porisso que todas são limitadas. O Sensacionismo a todas aceita, com a condição de não aceitar nenhuma separadamente.]

us to gain a clear notion of Sensationism as a relevant theory. Maybe Pessoa's own intention has been incongruent, which is highly understandable regarding the poet's self-contradicting nature. When we realize «the radical state of incompleteness and the inorganicity of the work of Fernando Pessoa such as it came upon us, it is interesting (...) to conclude that the poetics of Sensationism is less than poetics but, in a way, rather a fiction of poetics» (2015: 12, in *Introductory notes* by Fernando Cabral Martins).¹²²

Although nobody could ever be able to conclude what the poet really intended to achieve with this *ism*, we know that he put enormous effort in numerous attempts to systematize it, only to fall short¹²³, perfectly resonating Samuel Beckett's famous phrase in his prose piece *Worstward Ho*: «*Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better*» (Beckett, 1983: 7). The meaning of the Sensationism project lies in the urge to analyze his contemporary movements, to fuel and stimulate his self-invented literary vehicle and foster it to its highest operating level, rather than the pursuit of consistent and perfected literary theory *per se*.

As Pessoa said, a movement without results is no movement. Indeed, the Sensationist movement had been influential and productive, although it did not last long. What are the poems which could be considered as "Sensationist poems"? To make a list, it will be useful to discern the two different usages of the name Sensationism: (1) The name to summon up Portuguese "Sensationists" poets who participated in *Orpheu*; (2) The name of Pessoa's personally developed theory.

Regarding the former, Pessoa affirms that «the Sensationist movement counts only the following works: *A Confissão de Lúcio* [Lúcio's Confession], *Céu em Fogo* [Burning Sky], *Dispersão* [Dispersion](12 poems) both by Mário de Sá-Carneiro and poems by Alfredo Pedro Guisado, *Elogio da Paisagem* [Praise of the Landscape] of Pedro de Menezes» (2009:

¹²² [quando se conhece o estado de radical inacabamento e inorgnicidade da obra de Fernando Pessoa tal como chegou até nós, é interessante (...) concluir que a poética do Sensacionismo é menos uma poética do que, de algum modo, uma ficção de poética.]

¹²³ The "incapacity to complete things" was a common trait of Pessoa. We will discuss it in the chapter 7.3, "Fragmentation". Pessoa was more focused on creating things than bringing them into perfection.

160). Also *As Três Princesas Mortas num Palácio em Ruínas* [Three Dead Princesses in a Palace in Ruins] (1916) of João Cabral do Nascimento in another essay published in the literary magazine *Exílio* [Exile] under the title *Sensationist Movement*, is considered as an example of Sensationist poems by Pessoa.

Regarding the latter, it is quite consensual to consider the *Ode Triunfal* of Álvaro de Campos representatively Sensationist, as it served as the initial impulse to this new tendency. Below is the passage from a declaration by the directors of *Orpheu*, Pessoa and Sá-Carneiro, who associated Sensationism with Álvaro de Campos.

The terms «Sensationist» and «Intersectionist», which, with good reason, they apply to the artists of ORPHEU, do not actually match. Álvaro de Campos is the only Sensationist; Fernando Pessoa the only Intersectionist, and only in one collaboration — the «Chuva Oblíqua» in ORPHEU 2. (1993A: 138)¹²⁴

The two odes, *Ode Triunfal* and *Ode Marítima*, were the «key to the poetic revolution of *Orpheu*, which did not include any more daring or unbridled collaborations than these» (Dix/Pizarro: 2011: 32). It is also possible to include Campos' other poems such as *Saudação a Walt Whitman* [Salutation to Walt Whitman] and *Acordar a cidade de Lisboa*, [To wake up Lisbon city] *Afinal, a melhor maneira de viajar é sentir* [At the end, the best way to travel is to feel], *Mestre, meu mestre querido* [Master, my dear master], *Minha alma partiu-se como um vaso vazio* [My soul is broken like an empty vase] and *Lisbon Revisited*. Generally speaking, the most convincing product of Sensationism would be *Orpheu* itself, the organ of the Sensationist movement and «the sum and synthesis of all modern literary movements» (2015: 126), as Thomas Crosse wrote in *The Portuguese Sensationists*.

In my personal opinion, *O Guardador de Rebanhos* [The Keeper of Sheep] is the best example. Alberto Caeiro's poems could be, as a whole, a critical take on Intellectualism, which constantly denounces the “western” consciousness and rationalization. What is the

¹²⁴ [Os termos «sensacionista» e «interseccionista», que, com maior razão, se aplicaram aos artistas de ORPHEU, também não têm cabimento. Sensacionista é só Álvaro de Campos; interseccionista foi só Fernando Pessoa, e em uma só colaboração — a «Chuva Oblíqua» em ORPHEU 2.]

most conscious consciousness of consciousness? Wouldn't it be a "critical mind" on consciousness itself?

To conclude, Sensationism was Pessoa's self-invented "melting pot" of myriads of literary currents and movements. On whether we should agree to regard it as a theoretical leverage to overcome *Saudosismo*, led by Teixeira de Pascoaes, we are assured that his vision aimed beyond national rivalry: to change and influence the world literary landscape of Europe and perhaps, America.

(...), all this inventing, innovating, reviving, and reformulating happened more or less synchronically, with the various styles and doxies overlapping each other in a time span of less than ten years. Endowed with an uncommon capacity for absorption, digestion, and organic adaptation, Pessoa hedonistically tried out all that was going in the aesthetical marketplace, creating his own house blends and reworking old recipes. Some of the *isms* such as *Paulismo* and Intersectionism he quickly cooked up and quickly discarded, while the rest became more or less important parts of his artistic repertoire, in which the rhetorical and the colloquial, the solemn and the humorous, the patriotic and the seditious, the absurd and the inexorably rational, the highbrow and the lowbrow could all exist together democratically, (...) (1998: 32, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith)

Additionally, there are opinions that summarize this era of his philosophical experiments into three periods, suggesting that «it is possible to see these three *isms* as phases that correspond to a pre-analytical, an analytical and a synthetical period» (Dix/Pizarro, 2011: 28).

5. English Poems

We know that Pessoa died only having published one book in Portuguese. In fact, he published four poetry books in English, although they were all self-published. Beginning from his youth in Durban, deep influence of English poetry marked his early formation and the most immediate result of it would come to light when he comes back to Lisbon: the name Alexander Search could have been created earlier, but his first poem is dated 1904. Search was born on the same day, year and place as Pessoa (13 June 1888, Lisbon). He also had his own name card. The mission assigned to Search was the following.

Alexander Search.

Born June 13th. 1888, at Lisbon.

Task: all not the province of the others three.

1. «The Portuguese Regicide and the Political Situation in Portugal».
2. «The Philosophy of Rationalism».
3. «The Mental Disorder(s) of Jesus».
4. «Delirium».
5. «Agony». (1990: 148)

In 1908, Pessoa conceives a project named *The Transformation Book*¹²⁵, which consists of a group of alter ego authors who use different languages: Jean Seul the French, Pantaleão the Portuguese, and Charles James Search the English translator and brother of Alexander. (Martins, 2014: 36) This undeveloped project could have been the antechamber to the Pessoaan theatre where heteronyms would actively interact with each other, most notably in Álvaro de Campos's prose *Notas para a Recordação do Meu Mestre Caeiro* (1931).

The period of his time that Pessoa dedicates to writing numerous English poems under the name of Alexander Search marks –as his surname explicitly indicates– an ardent search for his poetic identity and maturity. Many of the central themes on which the future Pessoa would ponder would be germinated in this period. Search is a doubting poet, an anguished interrogator caught in a perpetual state of “metaphysical disquiet”¹²⁶. In the 1907 poem *Mania of Doubt*, it reads: «How false is truth? How much doth seem / Since dreams are all and all's a dream.» (2007B: 76) Search has an obsessive fear of being insane.

On God, let me not fall insane! I know that half-mad I am now; (...)
No more, no more; let me believe
That I am sane, and, oh God, hear
Whate'er thou beest, my true prayer
Shaken from my soul's giant fear...
Torture me in all ways that are,
Let me be scorned and crushed and trod, (...)

¹²⁵ Recently published as *The Transformation Book or Book of Tasks* (2014).

¹²⁶ From the text *Fernando Pessoa's Archive and Library: a solution to some enigmas* by Yvette Centeno. The first oral presentation underlying the relevance of Pessoa's library as an object of study, was presented by Centeno during the 1st International Congress of Pessoaan Studies in Porto in 1978. (<http://casafernandopessoa.cm-lisboa.pt/bdigital/index/estudos3.htm>)

But madness, madness, oh my God,
Do not let madness come to me! (1995: 166)

And in the *EPITAPH*, he shows frequent usage of the double negative structure (Neither~ nor~).

Here lieth A[lexander] S[earch]
Whom God and man left in the lurch
And nature mocked with pain and woe
He believed not in state or church
Nor in God, woman, man or love
Nor earth below nor heaven above.
His knowledge did to this about:
(...)
He died at twenty odd
This was is dying sentiment:
Accurst be Nature, Man and God. (1993A: 67)

This would later become an overall skeptic attitude of Pessoa's literature (i.e. *The Mad Fiddler*, *The Book of Disquiet*, and many other). In *Trifles* (1909), the doubt is even cherished: «They wear no real greatness who have faith / In God: or Matter, in Life's In or Out. / Only perpetual doubt is truly great, / And the pain of perpetual doubt» (1995: 188).

In 1917, Pessoa sent a newly written collection of English verse entitled *The Mad Fiddler* to a British publisher “Constable and Company” in order to seek publishing opportunities, but was refused. According to Fernando Cabral Martins, *The Mad Fiddler* deals with «the reality of interval or of the interlude» (Martins, 2014: 148).¹²⁷ This ambivalent state can be seen in the poem entitled *Suspense*: «(...) My undreamed dreams, pale elves, / Are now part of my flesh; / And all I am my unselfing shelves / On dreams, out of my reach. (...)» (1995: 338), as well as in *To One Singing*: (...) «Sing on! Between the music's human cry / And thy song's meaning there is interposed / Some third reality, less life-enclosed,» (...) (1995: 404), and also in the *King of Gaps*:

¹²⁷ [o tema de uma realidade que é a do intervalo ou do interlúdio].

There lived, I know not when, never perhaps-
 But the fact is he lived - an unknown king
 Whose kingdom was the strange Kingdom of Gaps.
 He was lord of what is twixt thing and thing,
 Of interbeings, of that part of us
 That lies between our waking and our sleep,
 Between our silence and our speech, between
 Us and the consciousness of us; and thus
 A strange mute kingdom did that weird king keep
 Sequestered from our thought of time and scene.
 Those supreme purposes that never reach
 The deed - between them and the deed undone
 He rules uncrowned. He is the mystery which
 Is between eyes and sight, nor blind nor seeing.
 Himself is never ended nor begun,
 Above his own void presence empty shelf.
 All He is but a chasm in his own being,
 The lidless box holding not-being's no-pelf.
 All think that he is God, except himself. (1995: 410)

The «acute consciousness to exist in an “almost” [quasi-] state, of being able to exist in a *interstice* which is not reality, but keeps on being reality»¹²⁸ (Martins, 2014: 149, italic added) is shared with (or perfected by) his soul mate Mário de Sá-Carneiro, in his poem VIII *Quase* [Almost], from the poem book entitled *Dispersão* [Dispersion]:

A little bit more of sun – I were a ember,
 A little bit more of blue – I were beyond,
 To reach, I lack of a stroke of a wing...
 If I could remain at least beneath... (...) (Sá-Carneiro, 1996: 38)¹²⁹

Also in Poem 7, the existential frustration between “além” [beyond] and “aquém” [below] continues in a precarious self-definition. «I am neither me nor other, / I am something in-between. (...)» (*Id.*: 73).¹³⁰

¹²⁸ [(...) consciência aguda de estar *quási*, de algo poder existir num interstício que não é nem deixa de ser a realidade].

¹²⁹ [Um pouco mais de sol - eu era brasa, / Um pouco mais de azul - eu era além. / Para atingir, faltou-me um golpe de asa... / Se ao menos eu permanecesse aquém... (...)]

Seventy years later, the British scholar Homi K. Bhabha articulates how cultural hybridization occurs in an “interstice” or a “third space”, in *The Location of Culture*. Bhabha seeks to find the location of culture in the marginal, “haunting,” “unhomely” spaces in-between dominant social formations. His theory would provide important reference to address postcolonial and diaspora literature, but fairly earlier, “nomadic” Modernist writers who sought cultural exiles such as James Joyce, Emil Cioran and Mário de Sá-Carneiro, or as the case of Pessoa who was an exile in his own country, already bore the desperate necessity to create an interstice space: whether through their mother tongue, or through their literary territories.

The following English verses of Pessoa were *Antinous* and *35 Sonnets*, self-published in two volumes (1918). In *Antinous*, he describes the homosexual relationship between the Greek youth and the Roman emperor Hadrian, by then a highly provocative theme.

Although tame enough by today's standards, *Antinous*, with its references to the physical relations between Antinous and the Emperor, went beyond contemporary English poems on the subject which concentrated on the spiritual and symbolic aspects of the relationship. (...) It is interesting to note that in a type of literature where pseudonyms were commonly used Pessoa chose to publish under his own name, although the heteronyms existed by this time. (Howes, 1983: 163)

Pessoa was aware that it could be scandalous, as he admits the “obscenity” of *Antinous* in a letter to João Gaspar Simões (18 Nov. 1930). One could suspect if his English poems served as a “mask” when he opted to exercise what he was not able to express freely in his conservative homeland. Whether that was the case or not, the poet's stance is consistent with his defense against homophobia (see: page 52, footnote 35).

35 Sonnets are marked with evident Shakespearean formal virtuosity but the recurrent themes of existential discomfort and concerns of identity as masks/under-masks differ from the English bard. Luísa Freire argues that the *Sonnets* «are, more than the other poems or groupings, an *intentional mask* that, like any other, exceeds and distorts the model. (...)

¹³⁰ [Eu não sou eu nem sou o outro, / Sou qualquer coisa de intermédio. (...)]

“Condensation and obscurities” in opposition to the poetry, sometimes simple, undressed and ingenuous, sometimes exalted, emotional and confessional, of A. Search, as in the sonnets everything is carefully thought, restrained and concise. These form the most elaborated and condensed poetry Pessoa wrote in English, (...)» (2000A: 341-342, in *Postface*).¹³¹

Whether we write or speak or do but look
 We are ever unapparent. What we are
 Cannot be transfused into word or book.
 Our soul from us is infinitely far.
 However much we give our thoughts the will
 To be our soul and gesture it abroad,
 Our hearts are incommunicable still.
 In what we show ourselves we are ignored.
 The abyss from soul to soul cannot be bridged
 By any skill of thought or trick of seeming.
 Unto our very selves we are abridged
 When we would utter to our thought our being.
 We are our dreams of ourselves, souls by gleams,
 And each to each other dreams of others' dreams. (2007B: 154)

Antinous and *35 Sonnets* received notable receptions by the British press: In 1918 by *The Scotsman*, *Glasgow Herald*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*, and in 1919 by the *Athenaeum*. They were generally positive. *The Glasgow Herald* commented, in an unattributed review, that they bore a certain «crabbedness of speech, due to an imitation of a Shakespearean trick», but also praised that «these two little volumes reveal a poet of great boldness and imaginative power» and «both books are the work of a strong poetical intelligence» (Howes, 1983: 163). The *Times Literary Supplement* remarked, the «command of English is less remarkable than his knowledge of Elizabethan English (...) The sonnets (...) will interest many by reason of their ultra-Shakespearean Shakespeareanisms, (...)» (2006: 18, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith). Some argue that although being far from his best poems, «they deserve attention and have not yet found their proper place in the context of his

¹³¹ [são, mais que os outros poemas ou conjuntos, uma *máscara intencional* que, como qualquer outra, excede e distorce o modelo. (...) “Condensação e obscuridades” em oposição à poesia, ora simples, despida e ingênua, ora exaltada, emotiva e confessional, de A. Search, pois no sonetos tudo é pensado, contido e conciso. Eles constituem a poesia mais elaborada e condensada que Pessoa escreveu em inglês, (...).]

entire body of work», and revisit the 35 *Sonnets*, «starting from what is generally considered to be its greatest defect: its frequent hyphenation to coin new words, (...) as the ultimate manifestation of its highly complex and “concentric” language» (Lokensgard, 1999: 140-148). The bilingual poet pertained supreme level of literary English, but:

(...) lacked the brutal naturalness of a mother tongue. His English, (...), was *his* English –a more literary, slightly archaic, and occasionally stilted variety of the language. (...) If Anglo-American literature influenced *what* Pessoa wrote, the English language itself influenced *how* Pessoa wrote. English is more apt than the Romance languages to repeat words, – for the sake of clarity, for syntactical straightforwardness, or for a rhetorical effect- and Pessoa followed this usage in Portuguese (...) Pessoa’s English sonnets employ a convoluted syntax derived from his Elizabethan models, modern English seems to have inspired the directness of expression that characterizes the poetry attributed to Alberto Caeiro and Álvaro de Campos. (2006: 18-19, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith)

Pessoa kept working on with his English poems –probably encouraged by the fact that one of the poems of *The Mad Fiddler* had been included to the prestigious literary journal *Athenaeum* (1920)–, and when he founded another publishing house named “Olisipo” (1921), he published *English Poems I-II* and *English Poems III* by his own name.

It seems that his heteronyms were preferred for the national stage. For his English poems, he was always Fernando Pessoa. (He dropped the circumflex from “Pessôa” to make it “Pessoa”, supposedly to give a more international impression.) Although he dismissed an opportunity to embark for the United Kingdom, he never abandoned the dream he once dreamed: to be an English poet. His last written line¹³² was also in English.

Many of his English poems were composed during 1910~1921, and in this period there would be less publication in Portuguese. After the unenthusiastic reception of *English Poems III* they would slowly fade away, or be occupied by more production in English prose, such as *Erostratus*. Curiously, his English poems are characteristic –and at the same time uncharacteristic for Pessoa– for having been finished, in perfect publishing conditions, in contrast to his numerous unfinished works.

¹³² “I know not what tomorrow will bring” (Terlinden-Villepin, 1990: 89). His last word was in Portuguese: “Bring my glasses” [dá-me os óculos] (Barbosa, 2010: 68).

6. Esoteric and Nationalistic Phase

6.1. Esoteric Poems

In the *Biographical notes* (30 March 1935) – written by Pessoa himself, only seven months before his death –, it reads:

Religious Beliefs: Christian Gnostic, therefore entirely opposed to all organized churches, mainly the Roman Catholic Church. Devotee of the Secret Christian Tradition, for reasons that will become apparent further on, which maintains close ties with the Secret Tradition in Israel (The Holy Kabbalah) as well as with the occult quality of the Masonry.

Initiatory position: Initiated, by direct communication between Master and Disciple, in the three lower levels of the (apparently extinct) Order of the Templars in Portugal.¹³³

In another letter, written in the same year he openly states:

I believe in the existence of worlds higher than our own and in the existence of beings that inhabit those worlds. I believe there are various, increasingly subtle levels of spirituality that lead to a Supreme Being, who presumably created this world. There may be other, equally Supreme Beings who have created other universes that coexist with our own, separately or interconnectedly. (2001: 259)¹³⁴

Pessoa's characteristic pluralistic imagination which fortifies his belief in other "Supreme Beings", would on one hand reject any monotheistic religions, and on another hand absorb the "oppressed" beliefs under the name of "pagan" and "occult". The beginning of his interest in esoteric philosophy seems to have been ignited by coincidence, when he undertook the job of translating six lengthy books of theosophy during 1915-1916, for alimentary reasons (Martins, 2014:193), but the consequence of this close reading left a profound impact on his psyche. In a letter to Mário de Sá-Carneiro (6 December 1915) he confesses:

¹³³ [**Posição religiosa:** Cristão gnóstico e portanto inteiramente oposto a todas as Igrejas organizadas, e sobretudo à Igreja de Roma. Fiel, por motivos que mais adiante estão implícitos, à Tradição Secreta do Cristianismo, que tem íntimas relações com a Tradição Secreta em Israel (a Santa Kabbalah) e com a essência oculta da Maçonaria. / **Posição iniciática:** Iniciado, por comunicação directa de Mestre a Discipulo, nos três graus menores da (aparentemente extinta) Ordem Templária de Portugal] (2007: 134-5).

¹³⁴ [Creio na existência de mundos superiores ao nosso e de habitantes desses mundos, em experiências de diversos graus de espiritualidade, subtilizando até se chegar a um Ente Supremo, que presumivelmente criou este mundo. Pode ser que haja outros Entes, igualmente Supremos, que hajam criado outros universos, e que esses universos coexistam com o nosso, interpenetradamente ou não] (1999A:346).

If, afterwards, you notice that Theosophy, since it admits all the religions, has a character entirely similar with paganism, which admits all the gods in its Pantheon, you will have the second element (clue?) of my serious crisis of soul. (...) Theosophy terrifies me by its mystery and by its occultist grandeur, disgusts me by its humanitarianism and essential *apostolism* (Do you understand?), attracts me for resembling too much with “transcendental paganism” (...), disgusts me for resembling too much with Christianity, which I don’t admit. And the abysmal horror and attraction is realized in beyond-the-soul. (1986A: 122)¹³⁵

The word “transcendental paganism” resonates with the notion of “transcendental pantheism”, which he mentioned in his critical essay in 1912. It seems that this discovery triggered further reading, which brought him to an enigmatic realm governed by myriads of gods. In a piece of *The Book of Disquiet*, through the voice of Bernardo Soares, he described these mystical experiences.

After studying metaphysics and sciences □, I went on to mental occupations that were more threatening to my nervous equilibrium. I spent frightful nights hunched over tomes by mystics and cabbalists which I never had the patience to read except intermittently, trembling and □. The rites and mysteries of the Rosicrucians, the symbolic □ the Cabbala and the Templars, □ – all of this oppressed me for a long time. My feverish days were filled with pernicious speculations based on the demonic logic of metaphysics – magic, □ alchemy – and I derived a false vital stimulus from the painful and quasi-psychoic sensation of being always on the verge of discovering a supreme mystery. I lost myself in the delirious subsystems of metaphysics, systems full of disturbing analogies and pitfalls for lucid thought, vast enigmatic landscapes where glimmers of the supernatural arouse mysteries on the fringes. (2002: 217)¹³⁶

Pessoa voluptuously absorbed esoteric ideas without prejudice or judgment. He was confident that, «Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism, Theosophy, Spiritism, Occultism - everything leads to the same conclusion: the meaning of the world, the explanation of life and of death

¹³⁵ [Se, depois, reparar em que a Teosofia, porque admite todas as religiões, tem um carácter inteiramente parecido com o do paganismo, que admite no seu Panteão todos os deuses, V. terá o segundo elemento da minha grave crise de alma. (...) A Teosofia apavora-me pelo seu mistério e pela sua grandeza ocultista, repugna-me pelo seu humanitarismo e *apostolismo* (V. compreende?) essenciais, atrai-me por se parecer tanto com um «paganismo transcendental» (é este o nome que eu dou ao modo de pensar a que havia chegado), repugna-me por se parecer tanto com o cristianismo, que não admito. E o horror e a atracção do abismo realizados no além-alma.]

¹³⁶ [Do estudo da metafísica, das ciências □, passei a ocupações de espírito mais violentas para o equilíbrio dos meus nervos. Gastei apavoradas noites debruçado sobre volumes de místicos e de cabalistas, que nunca tinha paciência para ler de todo, de outra maneira que não intermitentemente, trêmulo e □. Os ritos e as razões dos Rosa-Cruz, a simbólica □ da Cabala e dos Templários, □ — sofri durante tempos a opressão de tudo isso. E encheram a febre dos meus dias especulações venenosas, da razão demoníaca da metafísica — a magia, □ a alquimia — extraíndo um falso estímulo vital de sensação dolorosa e presciente de estar como que sempre à beira de saber um mistério supremo. Perdi-me pelos sistemas secundários, excitados, da metafísica, sistemas cheios de analogias perturbantes, de alcapões para a lucidez, grandes paisagens misteriosas onde reflexos de sobrenatural acordam mistérios nos contornos] (1998A: 251).

itself belong to those initiated into the mysteries of the Occult» (Simões, 1950: 549).¹³⁷ At the same time, Pessoa immersed into Astrology and became a medium by receiving astral communications. The majority of his communications were received during 1916 and 1917 (2003: 209). His aunt Anica, who was also deeply interested in occultism, played an important role in stimulating this unusual obsession by being an attentive correspondent for him. Thematically, these automatic writings mainly deal with two preoccupations: about the imminent loss of his virginity, or his fate as a poet. Pessoa also made acquaintance with the famous warlock Aleister Crowley, and helped him to simulate a scandalous suicide stunt upon Crowley's visit to Lisbon (1930) at the "Boca do Inferno"[Mouth of Hell] in Cascais, which generated wide attention from the newspapers. Interestingly, Pessoa and W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) both «displayed a sustained interest in occultism that encompassed different esoteric currents, comprising hermitism, magic, alchemy, astrology and theosophy» (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013:157), although there was no direct communication between the two contemporary Modernist poets. These esoteric knowledges and experiences are unmistakable in his poems such as, *Abdicação* [Abdication] (1913), *A Múmia* [The Mummy] (1917), *O Último Sortilégio* [The Last Sortilege] (1930), *Iniciação* [Initiation] (1932), *Eros e Psique* [Eros and Psyche] (1934), and also the *Demogorgon* (1928) by Álvaro de Campos, just to point out a few.

6.2. MENSAGEM

Along with his interest in the occult, his nationalistic sentiments would grow deeper. Political turmoils might have heavily weighed on Pessoa to be concerned about the fate of his nation. Between 1910 and 1935, Pessoa «witnessed a series of important events in Portuguese social and political history: the demise of the monarchy, the establishment of the Republic, the rise and fall of Sidónio Pais, and the ultimate creation of the Estado Novo» (Sadler,

¹³⁷ [Gnosticismo, neoplatonismo, teosofismo, espiritismo, ocultismo - tudo conduz à mesma conclusão: que o sentido do mundo e a explicação da vida e da própria morte pertencem aos iniciados nos mistérios do oculto.]

1998:27). Occultism and Nationalism would combine and reinforce each other inside Pessoa to result a chimeric effect: a remarkable mystical epic *Mensagem*, which consists of 44 short poems organized in three parts: *Brasão* [Coat-of-Arms], *Mar Português* [Portuguese Sea] and *O Encoberto* [The Hidden One]. The epic travels through the Golden Age of Discovery, the sea monsters of *Os Lusíadas* [The Lusiads] (by Camões), the myth of King Sebastião (1554–1578), and his vision of a Portuguese renaissance in the doctrine of the Fifth Empire. A non-Portuguese reader might need notes and references to understand this modernist interpretation of Portuguese history and legends¹³⁸, and to appreciate its aesthetic form and architecture of verses.

Mensagem –published in 1934, one year before his death– was the first and only book in his mother tongue ever published in his lifetime. He explains why: «I began the publication of my works with that book simply because it was the first one, for whatever reason, that I managed to organize and have ready. Since it was all ready, I was urged to publish it, and so I did. I didn't do it, please note, with my eyes on the prize (...)» (2001: 252).¹³⁹ However, it actually won the second prize offered by the National Office of Propaganda. Pessoa agreed with Adolfo Casais Monteiro, who considered this début rather uncharacteristic, on the point that the poems did not fully represent the versatility of his poetry. The poet humbly agrees:

I completely agree with you that a book like *Mensagem* was not a felicitous publishing début. I am, to be sure, a mystical nationalist, a rational Sebastianist. But I am many other things beside that, and even in contradiction to it. And because of the kind of book it was, *Mensagem* did not include those things. (2001: 252)¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Pessoa was intrigued by the myth of King Sebastião, the penultimate Portuguese monarch, who embarked on an ill-advised 'crusade' in Morocco, only to be routed At the Battle of Alcácer Quibir (Battle of the Three Kings). After the defeat, his body was believed to have disappeared (or unidentified), and the majority of Portuguese people expected the King to return on a foggy morning as the "Encoberto" (Hidden One) in order to rescue Portugal from its decline and once again glorify its Empire. And the 5th Empire is this: according to Father António Vieira (1608–1697), a respected priest and poet, there are only five empires in world history: the spiritual Greek, the Roman, the Christian, the European, and the Portuguese.

¹³⁹ [Comecei por esse livro as minhas publicações pela simples razão de que foi o primeiro livro que consegui, não sei porquê, ter organizado e pronto. Como estava pronto, incitaram-me a que o publicasse: acedi. Nem o fiz, devo dizer, com os olhos postos no prémio possível do Secretariado, (...)] (1999A:338).

¹⁴⁰ [Concordo absolutamente consigo em que não foi feliz a estreia, que de mim mesmo fiz com um livro da natureza de *Mensagem*. Sou, de facto, um nacionalista místico, um sebastianista racional. Mas sou, à parte isso, e até em contradição com isso, muitas outras coisas. E essas coisas, pela mesma natureza do livro, a *Mensagem* não as inclui.] (*Ibid.*)

Mensagem remained as the last book that Pessoa saw through the press before he died. Initially, it attracted little attention, but now remains as one of the most famous and representative masterpieces of Pessoa. Although *Mensagem* won a literary competition sponsored by the “National” Office of “Propaganda” –under the theme of “Nationalism”– and although it could evoke certain “patriotic” sentiments in Portuguese students who often learn it in their textbooks, the “message” cannot be reduced to mere patriotism or nationalism.

Possibility of being, then, the “poder ser” of one of the poems¹⁴¹ in *Mensagem*, is what Pessoa’s epic of the modern consciousness is all about. It is as much the poet’s search for meaning in the modern world, a world grown increasingly unstable by vertiginous change and shifting uncertainty, (...). In *Mensagem*, as in many of the philosophic, sociological, and political writings (...), Pessoa’s concerns are identical: what is it like to be Portuguese in the twentieth century, when the once great empire had been reduced to nothing? (Santos, 2003:104)

Likewise, we could revisit one of the most frequently quoted phrases of Pessoa (actually from Bernardo Soares), «My nation is the Portuguese language» (2002: Text 259)¹⁴², and understand it in a more universal and broader sense, rather than confining it to a patriotic statement. Language becomes a unique “space” where one can dwell when precarious realities shake our stability. Michel Foucault made a similar remark when he confesses the hardships experienced during his residence in Sweden, in a rare interview with Claude Bonnefoy (1969): «the only real homeland, the only soil on which we can walk, the only house where we can stop and take shelter, is language, the one we learned from infancy» (Foucault, 2013:32). If we interpret Pessoa’s ambitiously aspired Portuguese cultural “empire” within a nationalistic, political or realistic frame, we will fail to envision his endlessly expanding “messianic imagination” which formed a crucial part of his poetic quest. The last paragraph of the *Biographical Notes* shows the peculiar character of his nationalistic attitude most clearly:

¹⁴¹ [Que jaz no abismo sob o mar que se ergue? / Nós, Portugal, o poder ser. / Que inquietação do fundo nos soergue? / O desejar poder querer (In *Tormenta*)] (2006C: 377).

¹⁴² [Minha pátria é a língua portuguesa] (1998A: Trecho 259).

Patriotic position: Follower of a mystical nationalism from which all roman catholic infiltration would be abolished, to create, if possible, a new Sebastianism to spiritually replace it, if it can be considered that there ever was any spirituality in Portuguese Catholicism. He was a nationalist who guided himself by this motto: *“Everything for Humanity; nothing against the Nation.”*¹⁴³

The last line, which is nothing else but «an obvious gibe at Salazar's famous *“Nothing against the Nation; everything for the Nation”*», sums up «his brand of patriotism» (2001: 159, in *Introductory notes* by Richard Zenith).

7. Poetic Issues

7.1. Depersonalization

“La vraie vie est absente.” – Rimbaud

In an attempt to offer a definition of a poet, the English Romantic poet John Keats (1795–1821) revealed his unique idea of the “chameleon poet”, a self-less/character-less/identity-less being, in his letter (27 October 1818) to his friend Richard Woodhouse.

As to the poetical Character itself (I mean that sort of which, if I am any thing, I am a Member; that sort distinguished from the wordsworthian or egotistical sublime; which is a thing per se and stands alone) it is not itself - it *has no self* - it is every thing and nothing - It *has no character* - it enjoys light and shade; it lives in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated - It has as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen. What shocks the virtuous philosopher, delights the *chameleon Poet*. It does no harm from its relish of the dark side of things any more than from its taste for the bright one; because they both end in speculation. A Poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because *he has no Identity* - he is continually in for - and filling some other Body - The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute - *the poet has none; no identity* - he is certainly the most unpoetical of all God's Creatures.¹⁴⁴
(italics added)

As a poet possesses no fixed identity or personality, he is free to camouflage with identities and bodies of others, just like chameleons imitate the colors of their environment,

¹⁴³ [Posição patriótica: Partidário de um nacionalismo místico, de onde seja abolida toda a infiltração católico-romana, criando-se, se possível for, um sebastianismo novo, que a substitua espiritualmente, se é que no catolicismo português houve alguma vez espiritualidade. Nacionalista que se guia por este lema: «Tudo pela Humanidade; nada contra a Nação».]

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.john-keats.com/briefe/271018.htm>

and represent them by their own means. Stéphane Mallarmé also shows a similar tendency of emptying or erasing the Subject in his “impersonalization”, in a letter to Henri Cazalis (14 May 1867): «That will let you know that I am now impersonal and no longer the Stéphane that you knew – but a capacity possessed by the spiritual Universe to see itself and develop itself, through what was once me» (Mallarmé, 1988: 74).¹⁴⁵ Four years later, the idea that a poet cannot be identified in terms of the concept of a fixed “I”, or a single “subject”, would culminate when Arthur Rimbaud wrote the famous line in a Letter to Georges Izambard (13 May 1871), manifesting, «I is another»¹⁴⁶, which is, according to Hugo Friedrich, the trigger to open modern poetry: «(...) that feature of modern poetry primarily associated with Rimbaud, who initiated the abnormal separation of the poetic subject from the empirical self» (Divers, 2002: 36).¹⁴⁷ It was indeed a characteristic trait of the age, opposed to the conventional subjective (personal) approach of poetry. The Modernist poet T.S. Eliot articulated the same preoccupation yet in a different way in *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1921): «The emotion of art is impersonal» (Eliot, 1999: 22) and

the only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an *objective correlative*; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. (in Matthiessen, 1947: 58, italic added)

Eliot criticized Shakespeare that, «Hamlet (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in excess of the facts as they appear. We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him» (in Unger, 1961: 36).

This peculiar experiment of vacuuming one’s identity and simulating the Other also had precursors in Portuguese literature before the appearance of Pessoa. «Since 1869 when

¹⁴⁵ [C’est t’apprendre que je suis devenu impersonnel, et non plus Stéphane que tu as connu, – mais une aptitude qu’a l’Univers Spirituel à se voir et à se développer, à travers ce qui fut moi.] (Mallarmé, 1995: 343)

¹⁴⁶ [Je est un autre.]

¹⁴⁷ The original source is from *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik : Von Baudelaire bis zur Gegenwart*, Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1956: 52.

Eça de Queirós and Antero de Quental had invented and launched the nonexistent poet Carlos Fradique Mendes, there was something of a tradition of resorting to mystification when starting a literary movement» (Monteiro, 1981: 29), and «closer to Pessoa's time, Cesário Verde's female impersonation Margarida, in a first-person poem *Cadências Tristes* [Sad Cadences] was published in 1874» (Castro, Mariana Gray de, 2013: 205).

However, Pessoa did not simply inherit all these preoccupations but propelled them forward. He decisively took the path of objective (impersonal) approach and adopted invented voices to remain detached from conventional poetry.

In one way or another, all the great and not-so-great Modernists tried, in contrast to the Romantics, to create a text behind which the author as everyday person would vanish even when drawing on autobiographical sources and feelings. We may say that they were often imagining ardently in verse the lives they didn't have in real life. As we know, nobody took this aim to greater extremes of definite and magnificent realization than did Pessoa. The alter-egos of Valéry-Larbaud, André Gide, Proust, Joyce, Rilke, Antonio Machado, Yeats, Eliot, Pound, and others with their equivalent theories may have given us masterpieces, but they never went to the extreme that made Pessoa a legend even before this purpose was fully understood or before it was accepted as the deadly serious poetic creation it in fact was. (Monteiro, 1981: 23)

In Pessoa, the notion of the poet without identity was unprecedentedly welcomed: The more the identity is void, the better are the potentials of poetic creations. His invention of the heteronyms sets, poetic subjects with complex consciousness, embodiments of plurality and multiplicity were perfect examples of the impersonalized I, which was in his own term a development of “depersonalizing” process. We remember how Pessoa associated the origin of heteronyms with his «relentless, organic tendency to depersonalization and simulation» (2001: 254)¹⁴⁸. Through depersonalization, Pessoa wanted to establish a hierarchy in poetic creation. After explaining the three levels of lyric poetry, he suggests the most superior level, in which depersonalization should be applied:

The fourth level of lyric poetry is, the much more rare, in which the poet, even more intellectual yet equally imaginative, enter in full depersonalization. He doesn't only feel, but lives, the states of the soul that he doesn't directly has. In a good number of cases, this would fit in dramatic poetry, properly

¹⁴⁸ [(...) minha tendência orgânica e constante para a despersonalização e para a simulação] (1999A: 340).

saying, as Shakespeare did, a substantially lyric poet elevated to a dramatic poet by the appalling level of depersonalization that he attained. (1966: 67)¹⁴⁹

Pessoa developed the idea of a dramatic poet in his peculiar creative process called “desdobramento” [Unfolding] of personalities. If we could call him a dramaturge, his dramatic composition was «a drama in people instead of acts» (Monteiro, 2000: 66)¹⁵⁰, or «a drama not divided in acts, but divided in people» (2006: 23, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith). The term “dramatic” was adopted not in the sense that Pessoa literally created poetry in the form of theatre by describing actions one by one, but in the sense that the multiple unfoldings of the characters form a theatre of personalities and generate a dramatic effect. This idea of multiple unfoldings could be interpreted as a rejection to the “Cartesian theatre”. As the poet enjoys assigning grades on things, there is also a “hierarchy” of unfoldings, because «the unfolding of I is, many times, a phenomenon of masturbation» (1990: 421).¹⁵¹

In these unfoldings of personalities or, rather, inventions of different personalities, there are two grades or types, (...) by distinct characteristics. In the first grade, the personality distinguishes by ideas and proper sentiments, different of mine, as such, in the most lower level of this grade, it distinguishes itself by ideas, put in rationality or argument, which isn’t mine, or, if they are, I don’t know them. The *Anarchist Banker* is the example of the inferior grade; the *Book of Disquiet* and the personality of Bernardo Soares are the superior grade. (1966A: 105)¹⁵²

In a letter to his friend Mário Beirão (1 Feb. 1913), he shows a clear example of his unfolding habit. «The curious phenomenon of unfolding is a thing that I habitually have, but I

¹⁴⁹ [O quarto grau da poesia lírica é aquele, muito mais raro, em que o poeta, mais intelectual ainda mas igualmente imaginativo, entra em plena despersonalização. Não só sente, mas vive, os estados de alma que não tem directamente. Em grande número de casos, cairá na poesia dramática, propriamente dita, como fez Shakespeare, poeta substancialmente lírico erguido a dramático pelo espantoso grau de despersonalização que atingiu.]

¹⁵⁰ [É um drama em gente, em vez de em actos.]

¹⁵¹ [O desdobramento do eu é um fenómeno em grande número de casos de masturbação.]

¹⁵² [Nestes desdobramentos de personalidade ou, antes, invenções de personalidades diferentes, há dois graus ou tipos, que estarão revelados ao leitor, se os seguiu, por características distintas. No primeiro grau, a personalidade distingue-se por ideias e sentimentos próprios, distintos dos meus, assim como, em mais baixo nível desse grau, se distingue por ideias, postas em raciocínio ou argumento, que não são minhas, ou, se o são, o não conheço. O Banqueiro Anarquista é um exemplo deste grau inferior; o Livro do Desassossego e a personagem Bernardo Soares são o grau superior.]

never have felt it in this level of intensity. As a proof of a calm kind, I transcribe here»¹⁵³, and then follows the poem *Abdicação*:

O night eternal, call me your son
And take me into your arms. I'm a king
Who relinquished, willingly,
My throne of dreams and tedium.

My sword, which dragged my weak arms down,
I surrendered to strong and steady hands,
And in the anteroom I abandoned
My shattered scepter and crown.

My spurs that jingled to no avail
And my useless coat of mail
I left on the cold stone steps.

I took off royalty, body and soul,
And returned to the night so calm, so old,
Like the landscape when the sun sets (2006:278).¹⁵⁴

Cabral Martins suggests that the true unfolding of this poem «consists in the fact that there exists a new consciousness that manifests, that distinguishes itself of consciousness. This unfolding opens a space, neither here nor there, neither visible nor invisible. But it isn't a

¹⁵³ [O fenómeno curioso do desdobramento é coisa que habitualmente tenho, mas nunca o tinha sentido neste grau de intensidade. Como prova do género calmo do soneto, aqui lho transcrevo:]

¹⁵⁴ Toma-me, ó noite eterna, nos teus braços
E chama-me teu filho.
Eu sou um rei
que voluntariamente abandonei
O meu trono de sonhos e cansaços.

Minha espada, pesada a braços lassos,
Em mão viris e calmas entreguei;
E meu cetro e coroa — eu os deixei
Na antecâmara, feitos em pedaços

Minha cota de malha, tão inútil,
Minhas esporas de um tinir tão fútil,
Deixei-as pela fria escadaria.

Despi a realeza, corpo e alma,
E regressei à noite antiga e calma
Como a paisagem ao morrer do dia (2006C: 51-52).

space of unconsciousness, but rather, as to say, a hyperconsciousness» (Martins, 2014: 54),¹⁵⁵ which would be later systematized in his Sensationist theory.

7.2. Sincerity and Insincerity

A Pessoa reader could be puzzled by the notion of the “feigning Poet” when he/she encounters a pure state of sincerity, and even honesty in the poetry of Pessoa. Wasn’t it Pessoa who criticized insincerity by saying: «I call insincere to the things done only to shock people, and also –pay attention to this, which is important– to the things which do not contain a fundamental metaphysical idea, (...)»? (1985: 42-43)¹⁵⁶ Rather than discussing the sincerity of the poet’s personality, we should confine the discussion within the literary context.

Apparently, among the various poets Pessoa created, the most sincere, or the least feigning poet seems to be Alberto Caeiro. Pessoa clearly mentioned (through Campos): «My Master Caeiro was the only poet entirely sincere in the world» (2006A: 119).¹⁵⁷ Indeed, in the poetry of Caeiro, the reader may witness a thorough innocence combined with simplicity, which has to do with a sincere approach. However, we must note that it was rather an “intellectual sincerity” [sinceridade intelectual] (Simões, 1950: 267). The presence of Caeiro was an abstractly constructed identity, which was «sincere in an intellectual form» (*Id*: 275).¹⁵⁸ But then, «what reasons would have had Fernando Pessoa to attribute such a sincerity to the poetry of Caeiro, if his sincerity was a circumstantial one?» (*Id*: 278)¹⁵⁹ For Pessoa, Caeiro may have served as a poetic device (apparatus) to solve the problem he sensed from Romantic poetry. For example, Pessoa would not agree with the sincerity of a Romantic overflow of emotion. The poetic self (or narrator) may occasionally express sincerity, yet it should not be

¹⁵⁵ [...] consiste no fato que há uma nova consciência que se manifesta, que se destaca da consciência. Esse desdobramento abre um espaço, nem cá nem lá, nem visível nem invisível. Mas não é um espaço de inconsciência, e antes, por assim dizer, uma hiperconsciência.]

¹⁵⁶ [Chamo insinceras às coisas feitas para fazer pasmar, e às coisas, também — repare nisto, que é importante — que não contêm uma fundamental ideia metafísica, (...)]

¹⁵⁷ [O meu mestre Caeiro foi o único poeta inteiramente sincero do mundo.]

¹⁵⁸ [Caeiro foi sincero de uma forma intelectual.]

¹⁵⁹ [Que razões teria Fernando Pessoa para atribuir uma tal sinceridade a poesia de Caeiro quando a sinceridade dela era circunstancial?]

the poet himself who gets directly involved in this emotional act. On the poetic stage, the act of sincerity would be performed by the poetic self; an actor (or a feigner, a pretender, a forger) whose act is deliberately choreographed by the poet. Pessoa corrects the “Romantic” equation of “poetic I = the poet” to “poetic I \neq the poet”, which consequently results as “emotional sincerity \neq poetic sincerity”, and furthermore “poetic I \neq the poet \neq the author”, since it is possible that there are multiple poets in one author. As this difference is established, his goal to objectify emotion could be attained. Pessoa solidifies his logic:

Sincerity is the one great artistic crime. Insincerity is the second greatest. The great artist should never have a really fundamental and sincere opinion about life. But that should give him the capacity to feel sincere, nay to be absolutely sincere about anything for a certain length of time — that length of time, say, which is necessary for a poem to be conceived and written. It is perhaps necessary to state that it is necessary to be an artist before this can be attempted. It is of no use to try to be an aristocrat when you are a born middle-class man or plebeian. (2015: 75)

Sincerity does not serve the purpose of modern poetry, or, at least Pessoa’s poetry, not only because the sincere feeling per se is useless, but also because it is not the adequate method. When it is directly pursued, sincerity can never be attained. This basic imperative has guided the aesthetic attitude in which one locates the works of Pessoa: one should be conscious, vigilant, and objective towards one’s sensation (emotion and feeling). We can see a similar notion of “insincerity as a method” in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, when Oscar Wilde writes: «is insincerity such a terrible thing? I think not. It is merely a method by which we can multiply our personalities» (Wilde, 1991: 251). The Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz also made a similar remark:

Sincerity? As a writer, it is what I fear most. In literature, sincerity leads nowhere. There is another of the dynamic antinomies of art: the more artificial we are, the closer we come to frankness. Artificiality allows the artist to approach shameful truths. As for my diary... have you ever read a ‘sincere’ diary? The ‘sincere’ diary is the most mendacious diary, because sincerity is not of this world. And, in the long run, what a bore sincerity is! It is ineffectual! (Gombrowicz, 1973: 126)

Nevertheless, Pessoa did not unconditionally pursue insincerity, nor did he “feign” for feigning’s sake. We must pay attention to the point that instead of saying “the poet is a liar”, he chose the word “fingidor” [feigner]. He also commented about the act of lying:

As truth is negated, we don’t have something to entertain us except lying. With this we can entertain us, taking it as it is, not as the truth; if a metaphysical opportunity would be given, we will make by it, not a lie of a system (which could be truth), but a truth of a poem or a novel – a truth in the sense that we know it’s a lie, and in that way not lying. (1990: 114)¹⁶⁰

However, this does not necessarily mean that Pessoa was totally pessimistic on the notion of truth, nor did he totally lose interest/desire of communicating it through poetry. The insincerity he meant was rather a “methodological” one, an effective literary “detour” to arrive to the truth: a poetic verisimilitude.

7.3. Fragmentation

In a letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues (19 November 1914) Pessoa confesses one of his frustrations on writing. «My spiritual state forces me to work a lot, without wishing to, in *The Book of Disquiet*. But all fragments, fragments, fragments» (1944: 39).¹⁶¹ In fact, his fragmentary “style” (if we can call it as such) does not only define the formal aspect of *The Book*, but is quite prevailing in his other writings, too. It would be simplistic to conclude that his fragmentary writings were a result of his inability to finish, since in numerous cases he demonstrated his capability of completing works. Yet, the poet was well aware that higher forms of ideas tend to circumvent being united, as Caeiro manifests that, «Nature is parts without a whole» (2008: 47).¹⁶² But he was also well aware of the danger in *overrating* fragments:

¹⁶⁰ [Negada a verdade, não temos com que entreter-nos senão a mentira. Com ela nos entretenhamos, dando-a porém como tal, que não como verdade; se uma hipótese metafísica nos ocorre, façamos com ela, não a mentira de um sistema (onde possa ser verdade) mas a verdade de um poema ou de uma novela - verdade em saber que é mentira, e assim não mentir.]

¹⁶¹ [(...) O meu estado de espírito obriga-me agora a trabalhar bastante, sem querer, no Livro do Desassossego. Mas tudo fragmentos, fragmentos, fragmentos.]

¹⁶² [A natureza é partes sem um todo] (2007A: 72).

The third tenet of Sensationism, qua aesthetics, is that every little fragment that builds up the part of the whole should be perfect in itself; this is the principle which is insisted on through exaggeration by all those artists, of which the Symbolists are part, who, being temperamentally incapable of creating neither great organized wholes nor even (as the Romantics) large eloquent stretches, put their activity into the eggshell (nutshell) of producing beautiful individual lines or very short perfect lyrics. That is beautiful indeed, when it is beautiful, but it is dangerous to fall into the impression that is anything but the lowest part of art. (2009:156)

It would be also misleading to judge that the fragments were results of the author's intention. Pessoa offered a psychological self-analysis on this topic, in an untitled text which opens with the line "It is necessary now that I should tell what manner of man I am":

(...) My writings were none of them finished; new thoughts intruded ever, extraordinary, inexcludable associations of ideas bearing infinity for term. I cannot prevent my thought's hatred of finish; about a single thing ten thousand thoughts, and ten thousand inter-associations of these ten thousand thoughts arise, and I have no will to eliminate or to arrest these, nor to gather them into one central thought, where their unimportant but associated details may be lost. They pass in me; they are not my thoughts, but thoughts that pass through me. I do not ponder, I dream; I am not inspired, I rave. I can paint, but I have never painted; I can compose music, but I have never composed. Strange conceptions in three arts, lovely strokes of imagining caress my brain; but I let them slumber there till they die, for I have not power to give them their body, to make them things of the world outside. (1966A: 15)

In this remark, we can observe both the overflow of simultaneous ideas and a preoccupation of attributing a "body" to, or formulating an "organicity/unity" in his artworks.

Pessoa's conviction that even at the level of the self there is no unity, (...) because he rejected the vision of an ultimate, otherworldly unity (...) isn't to say that he did not desire unity. In the heteronymy of his fragmented self, Pessoa, paradoxically, endeavored to construct a small but complete universe of interrelated parts forming a coherent whole. And his literary creations were all attempts to achieve a moment of unity, an instance of perfection, in the midst of the general chaos of existence. (2006: 29, in *Introduction* by Richard Zenith)¹⁶³

¹⁶³ The full text: «The phenomenon of heteronymy reflects Pessoa's conviction that even at the level of the self there is no unity, and if he championed the resurgence of paganism with its myriad gods, it is because he rejected the vision of an ultimate, otherworldly unity propounded by Christianity and other monotheistic religions. Which isn't to say that he did not desire unity. In the heteronymy of his fragmented self Pessoa, paradoxically, endeavored to construct a small but complete universe of interrelated parts forming a coherent whole. And his literary creations were all attempts to achieve a moment of unity, an instance of perfection, in the midst of the general chaos of existence.»

Endless repetition of this trial, failure and re-trial, which normally ended up in producing even more fragments, occurred more in prose than in verse perhaps because of the formal nature of poetry that allows the artistic license to exercise with “gaps”. The poet American poet Rachel Blau DuPlessis proposes the term “segmentivity”, to distinguish poetry from prose, and to better represent the meaning of this poetic gap, or fragmentation:

Poetry is that form of discourse that depends crucially on segmentation, on spacing, in its production of meaning. Poetry, she writes, involves the creation of meaningful sequence by the negotiation of gap (line break, stanza break, page space); conversely, then, segmentivity, “the ability to articulate and make meaning by selecting, deploying, and combining segments,” is “the underlying characteristic of poetry as a genre. (McHale, 2009: 14)

Maybe this is why fragmentary writings are less observable in Pessoa’s verse. He actually did complete more poems than prose.

Whether his fragmentary tendency was a result of mere “unfinished” work, or of his incurable “unfinish-ability”, we will never know. What we do know is that he wanted to keep and save every single thought running through his mind. He seemed to be truly fecund. As a daily basis he produced a surprising amount of texts.¹⁶⁴ But on the few occasions he finally managed to organize certain texts and embrace them into a coherent whole in a finished form, he used to end up being too imaginative or prophetic. (ex. “Supra-Camões” in *A Nova Poesia Portuguesa, Mensagem*, etc.). This may give a clue to the question of why Pessoa published so few in his lifetime. We know that he wished to get his works published, aspired fame and critical acclaim. Maybe it was his doubt of the worth of publishing, or his fear of being ignored (by ignorance) that overpowered his other wills. «In Spain there is a cultivated public to move, and to influence, but no one to move them. In Portugal there are a few of people who are able to (by their intellectual value) move the public; the lack, however, the cultivated public to move» (1966: 355).¹⁶⁵ So he simply kept writing; restlessly, constantly and

¹⁶⁴ They amount to *circa* 30,000 documents. For concrete information of the inventory of “Arca de Pessoa”, see: *Uma Quase Autobiografia* (2012) José Paulo Cavalcanti Filho, Lisboa, Porto Editora. (Paul Valéry also left numerous unpublished texts in his ‘cahiers’, which consist of almost 30 notebooks.)

¹⁶⁵ [Em Espanha há um meio culto a mover, a influenciar, mas não há o Homem que o mova. Em Portugal há uns poucos de homens capazes (por seu valor intelectual) de mover o meio; falta, porém, o meio culto que movam.]

simultaneously. As much as he failed to finish, he failed to stop. He wrote for writing's sake, without concrete purposes, and was less preoccupied of being coherent. Maybe the fragments were «a solution, not a problem» (Pizarro, 2012: 108).¹⁶⁶ But if it was, it might have been an inadvertent one. Nonetheless, by affirming and accepting the overwhelming simultaneity of thoughts –and merely remaining as a “*Guardador*” [Keeper] of his thoughts, not sheep– he could have at least, *allowed* the fragments to become a solution.

7.4. Interruption

Pessoa never stopped writing, until the very end of his moments, but he has surely been *interrupted*. Pessoa wrote an intriguing text named *Homem de Porlock* [The Person from Porlock] (1934). When Samuel Taylor Coleridge was composing the poem *Kubla Khan* in 1797, in a trance state –suspected to be in a sort of reverie brought on by opium– he was interrupted by a mysterious visitor, “a person on business from Porlock”, who caused an abrupt end to the poem, only to remain incomplete with 54 lines. Pessoa evaluates *Kubla Khan* as an «almost-poem», but praises, that it «is one of the most extraordinary poems in English literature» (2006A: 116).¹⁶⁷ Curiously, he adds an interesting interpretation of this unwelcomed intruder of inspiration.

All of us, although awake when we compose, create while in a dream. Even though nobody visits us, “the Person from Porlock” comes to us, from within, the unexpected intruder. All that we truly think or feel, all that we truly are, experiences (when we express it, even when it be only to ourselves) the fatal interruption of that visitor we also are, that external person which each of us carries within himself, more real in life than we ourselves are –the sum total of what we have learned, of what we judge to be ourselves, and of what we desire to be. (Santos, 2003: 237)¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ [os fragmentos são a solução, não o problema.]

¹⁶⁷ [Esse quase-poema é dos poemas mais extraordinários da literatura inglesa.]

¹⁶⁸ [É que todos nós, ainda que despertos quando compomos, compomos em sonho. E a todos nós, ainda que ninguém nos visite, chega-nos, de dentro, “o Homem de Porlock”, o “interruptor” imprevisto. Tudo quanto verdadeiramente somos, sofre (quando o vamos exprimir, ainda que só para nós mesmos), a interrupção fatal daquele visitante que também somos, daquela pessoa externa que cada um de nós tem em si, mais real na vida do que nós próprios: - a soma viva do que aprendemos, do que julgamos que somos, e do que desejamos ser] (2006A: 117).

Pessoa inverts the argument of Coleridge and subtly attacks the weak part of this enigmatic narrative: the fact that the Person of Porlock is anonymous.¹⁶⁹ According to Pessoa's interpretation, the interruption does not come from the outer world but from inside, from ourselves: we are our own intruders.

This visitant – perennially incognito because, being us, “is not someone”; that intruder – perennially anonymous because, being alive, is “impersonal” – every one of us have to receive, because of our weakness, between the start and the term of the poem, entirely composed, that doesn't allow us to keep writing. And what is of all of us, whether great artists or puny ones, really survive – are fragments of what we don't know what would be; but what would be, if it would be something at all, the same expression of our soul.¹⁷⁰

Mariana Gray de Castro argues that «Pessoa stole¹⁷¹ Coleridge's ideas and expressions about genius, inspiration, creativity and interruption, in the process transforming one of these elements in order to construct his own original image of poetic creation» (Castro, de Mariana, 2014: 58). Irene Ramalho Santos affirms the appropriation of Pessoa, that he

relates it all in his account of the genesis of the heteronyms: as Master Caeiro suddenly “happens” in him (just like a “visitor”, an “unexpected intruder” or “fatal interruption”) Caeiro, Reis, Campos, the orthonymic Pessoa (as well as all the other “persons books”) become the most daring dramatization of interruption as a poetic strategy. (Santos, 2003: 237)

It would be wiser to be more careful in adopting the word “strategy”, but indeed, for Pessoa –a man obsessed with simultaneous flooding of ideas–, the man knocking the door must have been time and again Pessoa himself, and as he was many *Pessoas*, the interruption would have multiplied. Perhaps Pessoa's heteronyms were themselves inspirations that

¹⁶⁹ English poet Thomas De Quincey speculated, in his autobiographical account *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, that the mysterious figure was Coleridge's physician, Dr. P. Aaron Potter, who regularly supplied the poet with laudanum. But this was never verified.

¹⁷⁰ [Esse visitante – perenemente incógnito porque, sendo nós, “não é alguém”; esse interruptor – perenemente anónimo porque, sendo vivo, é “impessoal” – todos nós o temos que receber, por fraqueza nossa, entre o começo e o termo do poema, inteiramente composto, que não nos damos licença que fique escrito. E o que de todos nós, artistas grandes ou pequenos, verdadeiramente sobrevive – são fragmentos do que não sabemos que seja; mas que seria, se houvesse sido, a mesma expressão da nossa alma] (*Ibid.*).

¹⁷¹ “Steal” in a sense when T.S. Eliot says, «Mature poets *steal*. The best ones transform their sources into something better, or, at least, something different.»: from *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1919) (Eliot, 1975: 153).

knocked on the door – like muses – and set the poet on fire.¹⁷² Whether the “*People* from Porlock” have forced him to create countless “interrupted” fragments or not, Pessoa certainly knew how to *steal* inspirations from his unwelcomed visitors.

8. Influences

8.1. The *Presencistas*

The Coimbra based *Presença* was one of the most influential literary magazines published in Portugal in the 20th century. Launched on 10th of March 1927, *Presença* published 54 issues until it ended in 1940. The generation of the so-called “2nd Modernism” of Portuguese literature (as the “Orpheu generation” is recognized as the first) was represented by three key figures: José Régio, Adolfo Casais Monteiro and João Gaspar Simões. They were the first generation to appreciate the writings of Pessoa, and served as intimate epistolary interlocutors of the poet. After Pessoa died, they became the key circulators of his works. In the year 1927, José Régio «in the opening article of *Presença*’s very first issue, considers Fernando Pessoa to be among the few Portuguese writers of those days who were “alive”, (...) contrasted strongly with those who, according to the same author, were creating “bookish”, dead literature» (Monteiro, 1981: 34-35). In an article entitled *Da Geração Modernista* (April 1927), José Régio analyzed three writers whom he considered leaders of the generation that had published *Orpheu*, namely Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, Almada Negreiros, for the first time from the view point of the young generation from Coimbra. In 1942, seven years after Pessoa’s death, Adolfo Casais Monteiro edited the first posthumous poetry anthology of Pessoa (published by Editora Confluência) which contained approximately 100 poems of Pessoa’s heteronyms, and at the same year Luis de Montalvor and João Gaspar Simões edited a more complete version (published by Editora Ática) including poems of orthonym Pessoa (Vieira/Zenith, 2011: 234). Since this year, Ática resumed the work to actively publish and circulate Pessoa’s works to a wider public. In 1950,

¹⁷² This idea is quoted from a personal conversation with Richard Zenith.

João Gaspar Simões published the first biographical work of Pessoa, *Vida e Obra de Fernando Pessoa*.

8.2. Other Portuguese poets

The poet, literary critic and novelist Jorge de Sena's (1919-1978) groundbreaking commentaries and editorial works of Pessoa contributed to the early reception of the poet. He also incorporated Pessoa's influence into his own literary creation, as Richard Zenith remarks in the *28 Portuguese Poets* – discussing the newly blossoming poets during and after World War II–, «Nearly all of them learned something from Pessoa, but only on one of the poets presented here – the protean Jorge de Sena, (...) – seems to have been in competition with him. Although he applied the lesson of *fingimento* for transforming personal feeling into material suitable for making works of art, Sena countered it with a poetics of witness and testimony linked decisively to real life» (Zenith, 2014: 18).

Poems of the celebrated Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen (1919-2004) were largely influenced by Pessoa. She reminds that «Fernando Pessoa would say, “a poem happened to me”. My fundamental way of writing is very close to this “happening”» (Andresen, 2012: 52).¹⁷³ Pessoa is evoked in many of her poems: *Dual*, *Homenagem a Ricardo Reis* (1972); *Em Hydra, evocando Fernando Pessoa* (1977), *O Nome das Coisas*, *Ciclades* (1977) and *Fernando Pessoa ou Poeta em Lisboa* (1973). They are now published in an anthology named *Os Poemas sobre Pessoa* (2012).

Eugénio de Andrade (1923-2005) organized an anthology of Pessoa. Even though he was a huge admirer of Pessoa, he recognized the poet's presence was somehow overshadowing the following generation. Andrade thought that «as a problem of surviving, one should write “turning the back towards him”» (Cruz, 2008: 53).¹⁷⁴ He did not have to wait long to see his mission being explicitly carried out, precisely by his contemporary poet.

¹⁷³ [Fernando Pessoa dizia: «Aconteceu-me um poema.» A minha maneira de escrever fundamental é muito próxima deste «acontecer».]

¹⁷⁴ [Eugénio de Andrade, por exemplo, não obstante a sua enorme admiração pelo mestre modernista, achava que, por uma questão de sobrevivência, teria de escrever “de costas voltadas para ele”, (...).]

The provocative surrealist painter Mário Cesariny (1923-2006) wrote *Louvor e simplificação de Álvaro de Campos* [Praise and simplification of Álvaro de Campos] (1953), and *O Virgem Negra: Fernando Pessoa Explicado às Crianças Naturais e Estrangeiras* [The Black Virgin] (1989). The latter highlights the homoerotic facet of Pessoa, which offers us an interesting aspect of the poet through the irreverent eyes of an “eccentric” artist. According to António Feijó, «for Cesariny, all the poetry of Pessoa, is a badly sutured suppuration of disease caused by a homoerotic love, of whose etiology is an incapacity of de-sublimation. Pessoa, the “black virgin”, suffered from a incapacity of inhabiting the body, of incarnating it» (Feijó, 2015: 115).¹⁷⁵

Ruy Belo (1933~) writes in *Da poesia que posso* [Of the poetry that I can]: «Fernando Pessoa is the living poet that I care the most» (Belo, 2004: 337).¹⁷⁶ Pessoa was certainly “alive” in Belo’s poetry, as Gastão Cruz (himself an admirable poet and critic) said, «Probably no other poet was, beyond Pessoa, in the 20th century of Portugal, so “seriously attentive to the mysterious importance of existence” as Ruy Belo, who obsessively pondered on the issue of death» (Cruz, 2008: 51).¹⁷⁷

Also, the writings of prominent poets like Manuel António Pina, Gastão Cruz, Fiamma Hasse Pais Brandão, Ana Luísa Amaral and Adília Lopes bear the vivid presence of the poet.

(END)

¹⁷⁵ [Toda a poesia de Pessoa é para Cesariny a supuração mal suturada de uma doença de amor, homoerótico, cuja etiologia é uma incapacidade de des-sublimação. Pessoa, o ‘virgem negra’, sofre da incapacidade de habitar o corpo, de o encarnar.] / Further reading: Eugénio de Andrade elaborated this idea, earlier in 1985. See: “Encontro com Fernando Pessoa”, in *Revista PERSONA 11/12*, Porto, Publicação do Centro de Estudos Pessoaanos, pp.3-5.

¹⁷⁶ [Fernando Pessoa é o poeta vivo que me importa mais.]

¹⁷⁷ [Provavelmente nenhum outro poeta, além de Pessoa, esteve, no século XX português, tão “gravemente atento à importância misteriosa de existir” como Ruy Belo.]

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