

In Search of “what’s in a name”: The English Pessoa as Poet as SHAKESPEARE, and the Case of SuperCamões*

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Abstract

This paper deals with the question of *naming* and *being* against the background of the Western tradition (Plato’s *Cratylus* being the point of reference). At the interface of English and Portuguese literature(s) / culture(s), it halts to consider the case of Fernando Pessoa, whose early work is written in English, only to bring up the issue of European identity. This is approached from the onomastic perspective, with Pessoa’s heteronyms as obvious concepts and poetic material. The theoretician Pessoa is further analysed in parallel with T. S. Eliot and modernist poetry presented with its basic coordinates. For the English case, the debate gravitates round the canonical of canonicals – Shakespeare turned SHAKESPEARE, for the Portuguese, it is Camões turned SuperCamões, reenactments of Eliot’s Dante. From pseudonyms to *heteronyms* and back to *orthonyms*, capitalizing on *endonyms* and *exonyms*, identity and names, *being* and *naming* provide as many critical landmarks for the whole demonstration.

Keywords: *identity, name, orthonym, autonym, heteronym, pseudonym, endonym, exonym*

In his 1997 novel *Todos os nomes* (*All the Names*) José Saramago made an obvious return to the theme of boringly flat life. One year on he was awarded the Nobel Prize and became the recognizably dedicated author of haunting identity questions: *O homem duplicado* (*The Double*) of 2003, *As intermitências da morte* (*Death with Interruptions*) which came out in 2005, and *As pequenas memórias* (*Memories of My Youth*) of 2006 all deal with the frail human condition of petty people, the *anonymous*.

Victims of maddening provincial contexts, his characters live their own Bovarism, torn between groundless dreams and a gnawing anxiety to find an escape. No novelty in his writing career, this awareness of how absurd life is brings the now late Portuguese celebrity close to Eugène Ionesco and Antonio Tabucchi. Like Ionesco and Tabucchi, Saramago can exploit alienation through language, whether from within or without his mother tongue or simply from within language as such. In *Todos os nomes*, a title fraught with *onomastic problems*, the main character is his namesake, José, at once a deeply *typical name* pointing to his Iberian-Portuguese identity and an indication of how uncertain his identity is. If every other man is called the same, where does their uniqueness lie?

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Things get interestingly more complicated in *A viagem do elefante* (*The Elephant's Journey*), a novel composed in 2008, in which the sixteenth-century Portuguese king Dom João III makes a *sui generis* wedding present to his cousin, the Archduke Maximilian, in the person – as it were – of an elephant called Solomon. The gigantic wedding gift travels under the supervision of its Indian keeper Subhro, whose arrival in Portugal has to do with colonial Goa. As they move across the continent, heading for Austria via France and braving the Alps, the elephant's name undergoes the religiously charged shift from Solomon to Suleiman. Its keeper instead is turned simply into Fritz, for fear that nobody might be able to understand his Indian name at the imperial court in Vienna. It is fundamental *to have a name*, yet one impossible to remember, let alone understand is altogether useless.

The imbricated issue and reality of *translinguism* cannot be dissociated from, rather it widens and aggravates the question of, cultural identity. Migrating from one culture to another can be the business of colonial appropriation, of religious conversion or of territorial re-tailoring as in Brian Friel's play *Translation*. Antonio Tabucchi's *Requiem* was written in Portuguese and only then translated into its author's mother tongue by another Italian writer. The book resisted the name 'novel' as Tabucchi preferred to call it a 'hallucination'. Upon publication it was perceived as of the same ilk as Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* for its treatment of life suspended from plain actuality. Not least telling is the protagonist's identity overlapping with the author's own, as is his meeting Fernando Pessoa in Lisbon while he is reading *Il libro dell'inquietudine*, the Italian translation of the original *O livro do desassossego* by Bernardo Soares, one of Pessoa's *semi-heteronyms*.

Tabucchi's text hosts reality and phantasy with equal generosity, so that the *onomastic confusion* arising stems from the very uncertain status of characters bearing uncertain names. *What's in the name* seems coextensive with *what's in the person*. Like Pirandello's characters in search of an author, or like, again, Pirandello's late Mattia Pascal, the perpetual victim of deflected, then toyed with identity, Tabucchi's protagonist is in search of human identities whose status is subject to question. Characters *bearing fictional names*, himself included, coexist with characters recognizable by *referential names*. He meets a mysterious lady called Isabel, looks for Pessoa, yet dines with the Stone Guest of the opera, he deems, while this is none else but Pessoa in person – a linguistic game of more marked effect in Portuguese: *Pessoa em pessoa*. Tabucchi's character questions Pessoa the author. The literary topos that jumps to mind is the episode in *Don Quixote* in which the decaying hidalgo reads about, and concludes that he is, a *homonymous* decaying hidalgo, as he leafs through the freshly published volumes that he finds by mere accident, his author will have it, in a provincial printing shop. By the same token, in Tabucchi's novel Pessoa the author seems wrapped up in his own disquiet (*desassossego*). A prolonged suspension of certitude and the need of clarification(s) and ascertainment blur the border between Tabucchi and "Tabucchi", Pessoa and "Pessoa", author and character. We are to understand that "Tabucchi" is Pessoa turned "Pessoa" in a final and unacknowledged, yet no less possible *heteronym*. This is Pessoa's "latest, posthumous, and unforeseen heteronym" (Biasin, 1994, 843).

Upon receiving the Nobel Prize, José Saramago felt the need to speak about his extremely modest family roots. Born in a village at the back of nowhere in the Ribatejo area some hundred odd kilometers north-east of Lisbon, he was the son of, but of course, one José de Sousa – a kind of prototypical Portuguese name and surname – and

one Maria da Piedade – a deeply Catholic full name. Such were the conditions in the poor countryside that the family identity of the later Nobel Prize winner circulated as Saramago, a *nickname* recalling the herbaceous plant picked in the woods and cooked by the very poor as the staple food of the place. As he confessed minutes before being acclaimed as the most prominent writer of the world, it had taken him years to realize that his name would have been and should have been José de Sousa. At the age of seven, the time to go to school, papers confirming his identity were requested. Thus he came to see the difference between his *natural appellation* as José Saramago and the *official one* as José de Sousa Saramago (the village registrar having decided, of his own initiative, to bestow upon the child a more complex name, with *surname* and *nickname* joined).

And so his *namesake* José, the low-rank clerk in the Central Registry of Births, Marriages and Deaths. This is a rather unfit person to find involved in exhausting *all the names* in the world of the living and the dead, since the latter carry into the other world names from this one and are remembered by them. A wonderful *onomastic link* between ontic regimes. Effaced and indistinct as identity, this petty functionary leads a Gogolian-Chekhovian life reduced to rags by boredom and loneliness. As he does his routine in the hatching, matching and dispatching business, he remains professionally *anonymous*, while a shade of pride visits his suppressed smile each time he is addressed as Senhor José by those pettier than himself. And, tellingly, even if he is nobody, like them, he does have a name, standard(ized) and uninspiring as it may be. Everybody else in the novel is literally *nameless* and referred to in terms of some feature, habit or locally acquired reputation of some sort or another. Steeped in his stale daily toil, Senhor José devises a way of saving himself out of flattening tedium. He will collect information about *famous* people from the records kept in the registry, which – significantly – is the central office of some indistinct, *anonymous* city. When he falls upon the record card of an *unknown* woman, he becomes obsessed with her identity, while he does nothing to decipher it. At the cost of his own job, he assumes this weird status of a man insecure and worried about *nominal identity* in general.

The moving border between reality and fantasy is also worsted into the narrative thread of a previous novel by Saramago, *O ano da morte de Ricardo Reis* (*The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis*). We are warned about this by the three mottos appended. The first is a quote from Ricardo Reis, one of Fernando Pessoa's three most frequent and habitually mentioned heteronyms, which confesses that wise is the man content with the spectacle of the world. There follows a second confession, this time uttered by Bernardo Soares, a fairly *anonymous heteronym* by comparison: here Pessoa alias Soares, used to finding ways of non-acting, appears proud of this as the scruples of his own life. Finally, Fernando Pessoa himself rejects the absurdity of being reproached with absurdly speaking about somebody who never existed. On the contrary, he says, he can think of no evidence that Lisbon itself ever existed, or that he ever wrote, or that whatever ever was, and, despite all this, these things can be talked about. For the English-speaking reader, this is very much like the white bear episode in *Tristram Shandy*, in which Mr. Shandy does not find it necessary at all for white bears to really exist if they are to be evoked in words. Therefore, he decides to conjugate the modal and auxiliary verbs of the English language in sentences referring to "a white bear" travelling to Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point of Portuguese, European and Eurasian land mass, will be little surprised to read on the crucifix-bearing monument that rises on the rock: "Aqui, onde a terra se acaba e o mar começa", yet another slight

variation on the theme launched by the canonical of Portuguese canonicals, Luís de Camões. The celebrated epic poet had underlined that this is the limit of “Europa toda” and “o Reino Lusitano”, as well as the place where “Febo repousa no Oceano”. Also, as he carries on, the place where the heavens wanted the Lusitan armies to fight the Mauritans.

This imagological confrontation of white and black man, the symbolic overlapping of factual and legendary history, like the confusion of reality and dream lay the premises of an ideal identity: Ricardo Reis, whose *heteronymic biography* extends between 1887 and 1936. Saramago makes of him his own character, of the same medical profession as Pessoa’s personage, and has him come back from Brazil after the death of Fernando Pessoa. Like Pessoa’s, Saramago’s Reis lives a detached life and cultivates systematic distance between himself and the world. He reads *The God of the Labyrinth* by an imaginary author, Herbert Quain, derived from *Examen de la obra de Herbert Quain* by Jorge Luis Borges. This is one of many analyses by Borges of fictitious works and authors, part of his attempt to reach the ideal text of the ideal book of the books that makes up the one great Book of the world.

As in various other writings bearing his signature, Saramago gets involved in intertextual encounters with Portuguese works and authors and these do or do not appear under their *real names*, the alternative being *fictitious* names or utter *anonymity*. A *Cratylean struggle* is fought in his work, with Hermogenes often coming to the fore to annihilate the scaffolding of name-sensitive and name-motivated entities. When Cratylus proves victorious in this *onomastic combat*, language asserts itself as more than mere communal benefit, more than colonial imposition, more even than religious support. It becomes, “a lingua de Camões, a “patria” de Fernando Pessoa, a qual, hoje, reclamamos, a título de propriedade” (“the language of Camões, the fatherland of Fernando Pessoa which we, today, claim as property” (Hamilton, 1991, 329)).

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When he returned to Portugal, after boyhood and early adolescence in the South African city of Dunbar, Fernando Pessoa was English educated and had developed a love for English literature, further fed by literary texts in his mother tongue, into which he was convinced he was only just repatriating himself. He was to find *appropriate names* in his maternal culture for what he had acquired overseas, conditioned by his stepfather’s job. Already as a young boy he had embarked upon the practice of finding *alternative names* for his own identity. Aged six, he called himself Chevalier de Pas, at once an *invented name* and a made up character in the person of a French nobleman. To this were added *pseudonyms* based on childhood readings, such as David Merrick, possibly influenced by the monstrous man of the same name that had become a human curiosity in London, and Dr. Pancrácio, recalling athletic combats and the display of strength (*κράτος*), in his particular case, in *naming* and/as writing. He also signed as Charles Robert Anon, to display his appetite for *anonymity*, and Alexander Search, to indicate his capacity to protect people under *alternative names* (*αλέξω* “defend”, *ανήρ*, *ανδρός* “man”) in (their) *search of identity*.

As a teen-ager Pessoa had read Whitman and been impressed his idea of containing “multitudes” in one’s own self. A protean case, indeed, Pessoa is still subject to interpretations, his heteronyms having considerably grown in number from three or four-five to almost eighty. If we add to this the copious secondary literature written

along the decades, we will easily realize the variegated and substantial onomastic richness of a spirit shaped between two cultures, both of long and pertinent colonial history, both traditionalist and conservative, yet both exposed to modern(ist) taste overnight.

A multitude of selves and a *multitude of names* define Pessoa’s personality as one extending from classic antiquity to the modern age – the chronic line – and from the Anglo-Saxon territory in the north to sunny southern realms – the topic line – united in a complex *chronotope* whose changing names cover the very range of the basic aesthetic categories: Romanticism, classicism, the baroque, a triad reminding the Romanian reader of the protean Călinescu case. The exciting *onomastic game* which he played during a lifetime is paradoxically helped along by his very *orthonym*, Pessoa being the Portuguese for “person”. One is put in mind of Pound’s *Personae*, yet the term *person* itself is rich in semantic possibilities: it can designate the generic, therefore vague, reference to human identity, an individual (personal) identity, but also the mask set on the actor’s face *per sonare*, literally to let his voice (re)sound through its semiotic filter. The mask of the ancient classic theatre turned masque in baroque times remained a point of reference in Pessoa’s aesthetic education, Ben Jonson featuring as a select author in his readings.

Fernando Pessoa’s contact with English literature occurred not only at an early age, but also as a deep influence. Durban High School left its imprint on his choice of Victorian authors, with Tennyson, Arnold, Macaulay and Browning as favourite names. The recently instituted “Queen Victoria Memorial Prize” awarded him at the age of fifteen for the best English essay seemed to have encouraged him with such special readings. Edgar Allan Poe was a clear attraction, as were the English Romantics, especially Byron as a public figure, and Coleridge and Keats as thinkers, while Blake and Shelley served his further aesthetic demonstrations. He soon grew into a systematic Renaissance literature reader and theoretician and fostered the dream of translating Shakespeare, *Paradise Lost*, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid* and *The Divine Comedy*. In a way *all the great names* of world literature to the day, as choice and elitist as he could fancy them to be, and reflecting his personal case of an original writer trans-lating himself from a foreign though perfectly acquired language to his own native tongue.

English is indeed the language in which Fernando Pessoa starts writing original texts and 1901 is the date borne by his first poem. Brought up in the Victorian context of the onetime British Colony of Natal, he comes under the influence of Victorian institutions. Ironically his poetic debut marks a kind of symbolic emancipation from these values, as does the public scene, with Queen Victoria departing the throne and this world at the same time as the setting in of a new century. Pessoa’s modern(ist) proclivity confirms this sense of novelty and rejuvenation. His “Britanization” has been regarded as not so much due to “the South African colonial atmosphere of his youth as

[...] to his intellectual contact with classics of English Literature [...]. One could even say that Pessoa became “British” through culture and mental language” (Terlinden, 1990, 14). Between 1903 and 1906 his literary compositions are exclusively in English apparently by an author called Search, *in search of an apposite name*. After 1906 we find him alternating English with Portuguese. One year in Lisbon already redirects his options and Portuguese gradually replaces English, though he carries on with English texts, as well. In effect, the early Pessoa remains an English-speaking poet under a fairly wide umbrella of *famous names*: to Shakespeare, Milton and Spenser, the absolute *old names* are added the modernizing Romantics and, jointly, the French Symbolists

(Baudelaire and Mallarmé), equally influences on the modernist Pound, Eliot, and Yeats, his own masters among the *new names*.

One sixth of his whole oeuvre is written in English and the whole interval preceding, unfolding during, and following the Great War sees the English poet Pessoa at work, author of *Epithalamium* (1913), *35 Sonetos* (1913), *Antinous* (1915) and *Inscriptions* (1920). Some of these texts are published separately (*Antinous* in 1918, *35 Sonetos* also in 1918), or as part of *English Poems I-II* and *English Poems III*, the 1921 collection of the remaining English lines. They make the case for his Luso-bilingualism and “shed light on the rather unexplored “English facet” of Fernando Pessoa” (Terlinden, 1990, 9). There are critics though who estimate Pessoa’s mastery of both languages as a unique performance among authors in the same category of bilingual poets (Lind, 1981, 237). Others, like Carreño, are tempted to see in his sweeping across the territory between two such different languages, literatures and cultures as the Portuguese and the English yet another form of *search*, one in which “el concepto de persona como identificación, diferencia, negación o búsqueda”¹ is coextensive with “la búsqueda mítica del Otro”² ending up in “la creación de repertorios enteros de personajes, poetas ellos mismos”³ (1982, 13, 47, 87).

Though early writings, these English texts are not remotely peripheral to Pessoa’s original and theoretical works. Rather, they were contemporary with Portuguese and European phenomena of obvious relevance. In 1910 Teixeira de Pascoaes launched *A Águia*, a periodical that is still deemed seminal in having brought to the fore the Romantic-inspired trend known as *saudosismo*. This was based on the very Portuguese concept and experience of longing named *saudade*, which Pascoaes saw as singling out the Portuguese soul. Pessoa contributed articles to the periodical in which he laid emphasis on a modern revival of *sebastianismo*, the sixteenth-century movement originating in the miraculous death of Dom Sebastião. A modern tinge of nationalistic patriotism was added to the debates of the day.

There followed the trimonthly *Orpheu*, in 1915, whose short-lived presence in the sphere of modernist encounters did not impede its refreshing agenda. In accordance with the *name* of the Greek character supposed to never look back, Pessoa and the group round the publication promoted a future-oriented edification of Portugal by utter denial of the past. *Orpheu* introduced modernism to Portuguese letters and made reality of the necessity of a new aesthetics. Pessoa contributed texts to the magazine under the *appellation* Álvaro de Campos, whom he described as an estranged and depressed naval engineer, decadent in his youth, melancholy in his mature years, sensitive, yet impressed by the futuristic metal work-based art produced in the big cities, Lisbon included, solitary and fatalistic, yet pursuing the illusion of life throughout his existence. Like his master Alberto Caeiro, Álvaro de Campos tries to avoid sentimental expression. Unlike the former, he militates for utterly new poetry.

Poetry, the famous magazine published in Chicago, came into being in Pessoa’s English years followed by his repatriation in Portugal and into the Portuguese language. Its first issue of 1912 made clear its intention to keep all doors open and promote *new names*, irrespective of social or political alliance or allegiance, provided this was good poetry! Harriet Moore, the founder, featured by the side of Ezra Pound and such now

¹ the concept of person as identification, difference, denial or search. (my translation).

² the mythical search for the Other. (my translation).

³ the creation of whole repertories of personages, poets themselves. (my translation).

celebrated names as William Butler Yeats, Rabindranath Tagore, Robert Frost or H.D. kept them fine company, as did Carl Sandburg and William Carlos Williams. It was under its auspices that T. S. Eliot published *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* in 1917. His epoch-making *Waste Land* came out in 1922, in the first issue of the British magazine *The Criterion*, and immediately after in *The Dial* across the Atlantic.

Underlying these dates and publications were the two groups supporting them, Bloomsbury in London and A Renascença Portuguesa in chic cultural Porto. Both relied on then emerging celebrated names: Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey, E.M. Foster, Clive Bell, Mário de Sá Carneiro, Afonso Lopes Vieira and, of course, Fernando Pessoa. The years 1913-1914 also witnessed the birth of Pessoa's heteronyms, marks of the new sensibility, modern *par excellence* in the sense of fragmentation, dispersion of individual identity, and, last but not remotely least, *anonymity in the big city*.

Pessoa is a more and more distinct figure in Lisbon's cultural life. His evolution runs parallel to Pound's and Eliot's, all three fuelled by the same or very similar canonical English texts. The Pessoaan heteronyms operate a clear scission in the poet-critic/s personality, and one defining the new sensibility: on the one hand Alberto Caeiro and Ricardo Reis, on the other Álvaro de Campos and Fernando Pessoa. The former two heteronyms defend objective poetry, the third heteronym and the orthonym as such militate for Symbolist-gearred subjective poetry. It is a distinction grasped and theorized by Eliot in *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, which famously expounds the dissociation of sensibility, with "the man that suffers" and "the mind that creates" as the two poles. The Eliotesque theoretical term for this poetic technique is "the objective correlative", as we know. This curbs the emotional identification fallacy and paves the way to, indeed, a new attitude, as Pessoa himself believed.

Pessoa embraces the European vocation in his debates from the very inception. To him the Renascença Portuguesa is a salvation at continental level. Its aesthetic messianism imbues his theoretical writings and gradually traces the contours of a new paradigm, the geometric place of the new poetry sought by Pound and Eliot, by the French *Symbolistes* and the Italian *Futuristi*. Raising Portuguese literature to the height of European literature is of the same nature as Pessoa's theorizing on *saudade* "longing" on which he engrafts *sonho* "dream". A vertical abstraction takes place from poetic Lusitania to poetic Iberia. The modern poet can pursue three lines: that of giving up his identity and getting involved in outwardly reality (this is Whitman's way), that of isolating himself in an absolute individual dream (this is Poe's and it is Baudelaire's choice), or that of finding refuge in dream, not before taking with himself the whole external world (this is Pessoa's own solution).

In this scheme, the external/internal or objective poetry/subjective poetry relation becomes fully visible only through its borders growing wider and wider, by their successive passage from the assertively individual to the less and less individual. The Portuguese rebirth coincides with the European rebirth envisaged. The way to the new poetry is marked by set oppositions: subjective vs. objective, synthesis vs. analysis, personal vs. impersonal, feeling/emotion vs. reason/intelligence, romantic vs. classic, modern vs. ancient. The modern poet *qua* poet and modern man is conceived oscillating between the two extremes, to only eventually opt for a neutral central area. The new poetry will inhabit an exemplary *locus geometricus* obtaining by vertical abstraction into an *exemplary Anglo-Lusitania*. An almost poetic *exonym*, still capitalizing on the traditional *endonym* for the place, a matter of event-gearred history raised to potential history.

His aesthetic Arcadia is a land of promise with, leading to it, an insecure path. The way to its destination encounters variants, alternatives and only after repeated attempts a secure path. The futurist way is a possibility, yet strictly analytical objectivity proves insufficient. It is a halved solution. The other half, the intersectionist one, completes the full access to its aim. The eventual mix and cross-fertilization of the two is what Pessoa sees as the way out. Poetry will then reach a desired and necessary synthesis, and one that he, the modern poet, will glibly capitalize on, building on English theosophies (Lind, 1981, 40). Behind this vision we can detect stimuli that may have had a say: Whitman vocally claiming the vast similitude that “interlocks all”, while he, the poet, “contains multitudes”; Hopkins, one step further back, singing hymns to the dappled beauty of the world; still one step backwards, Wordsworth warning us that “we murder to dissect”; and, in the last analysis, the English Metaphysicals forcing impossibilities together. This is special alchemy based on *naming things into being* by holding sensibility together in its synthetic balance.

There is also the exemplary way back to the ancient classics, away from Romantic melancholy and groundless anxiety. With Coleridge’s *Shakespeare Lectures* and Pater’s *Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* in his intellectual baggage, Pessoa heads for an explicit rejection of the Romantic thesis according to which literature is confession. The Greek sense of equilibrium and that disinterested objectivity on which the universal, the classic rise lead him, as they do Eliot, to *depersonalization* and poetic objectification as the only solution to the exacerbated cult of the ineffable practised in Europe since the Middle Ages. It is on such premises that he draws the lines of a neoclassic theory in *Páginas de estética e de teoria e crítica literárias*, produced in 1914, and in *Páginas íntimas e de auto-interpretação*, of 1916. His neoclassic theory engulfs the concept of Renaissance as *forma mentis* and historical occurrence. The Portuguese Renaissance is a modern reenactment of the former, with its own sentiment/reason and the model/models dialectics.

Páginas de estética draw our attention to the imbalance ensuing from the abandonment of classic values in European culture as such. The absence of a Dante or a Milton during the whole interval extending to modern times has led to the tilt in the desired equilibrium that Pessoa the theoretician attempts to redress. He embarks upon a medical cure of this dis-ease and finds a poetic Hippocrates in *Shakespeare*, where Eliot does his in *Dante*. Their very suppression as egos in front of the master is a classic posture aiming at a gradual diminution of their individual personality in front of a paraindividual, exemplary personality. For Eliot, Dante is the diachronic master, as Pound is his synchronic *miglior fabbro* and Dante is Virgil’s disciple, behind whom looms Homer. We encounter the same exemplary humbling of the disciple before the master with Pessoa, with Shakespeare as the master, behind whom rise the Elizabethan playwrights, behind whom stand the Italian masters. One step back and we are with the *Dolce Stil Nuovo* poets, behind whom *Graecia Magna* gives us the very class to follow.

Pessoa as Poet as Shakespeare – a first *onomastic-conceptual abstraction* in Pessoa’s theoretical *démarche*. Reiterated observations regarding the Shakespeare – Milton rapport lead to a Christian – classic opposition. To follow is the Shakespeare – Dante rapport as various intensities of the same Christian accumulation. Subsequently, the growing conviction that Shakespeare is a typical depersonalization case, and the ensuing conclusion that he can be placed in poetic tandem with Browning, the author of dramatic monologues. Finally, the Shakespeare case against the European background: Pessoa is categorical in identifying two basic ages in the evolution of European culture,

namely, the Renaissance and Romanticism. The former he deems neatly superior to the latter, in terms of complexity and unmarred classic equilibrium. In broad lines, the Renaissance – Romanticism opposition is coextensive with the Classic – Romantic opposition, in his aesthetic theorizing.

Concrete examples are further supplied to flesh out the scheme above. The Renaissance is a continuum extending from Dante to Milton, with SHAKESPEARE in the middle position and as the apogee of the phenomenon. Romanticism is flanked by Goethe at one end and Hugo at the other, with Shelley in the middle. Like Eliot, Pessoa comes up with a revaluation of European poetry itself, the paragon for assessment being and great literatures. For him the English is the "great" one. Applying the classic paragon to his (re)valuations eventually leads him to his absolute aim – the exemplary SUPERCAMÕES. Taken out of the contingent, this supreme poet is, nonetheless, contingently reachable via Shakespeare, while the latter is himself reachable via the exemplary suppression of individuality. Here is an extended game of personal suppression by elevation to a *suprapersonal* level. It is a game played with masks which function as identity filters of personality, in which the *onomastic* factor assumes a special role.

The Shakespeare cult is inseparable from Pessoa's classic creed. Like the ancient Greeks, Shakespeare is for him the classic of a given culture *and* of European culture, an anticipation to the letter of Bloom's categorical appraisal in *The Western Canon* (1994). Shakespeare is a classic model inhabiting the perfect paradigm that the poet-critic tends to reach. It is in this light that Pessoa's English poems and Shakespearean(ized) sonnets can be best gauged. *Antinous*, for instance, breathes classicism through the Graeco-Latin matter embodied in it, whether as the final attainment of Greek art or as Roman myth-history. But it also is classic owing to the classic expression in which the poem is moulded. Writing in English is as much as raising Portuguese expression to the level of a model. Writing sonnets in the Shakespearean manner is more than following the strictly Portuguese tradition. Rather, it is reshaping the European models in the background. For one thing, it is fashioning oneself according to the European Latinity which Ernst Robert Curtius discerns in the classic European literature of the Middle Ages. Pessoa's English, deliberately archaic and far-fetched, bookish and highly cultivated, is a *lingua franca* itself. By the same token, Eliot saw in Dante's Italian a linguistic measure able to order the European tradition of the thirteenth century. Like Dante for Eliot, Shakespeare is for Pessoa a model of aesthetic permanence able to serve as the centripetal force necessary to exemplary order(ing): SHAKESPEARE. The apogee of the Renaissance. The major age of cultural Europe. The matchless poet.

The prophecy of the paradigmatic SUPERCAMÕES is intimately related to the Shakespeare myth. Shakespeare had to become a dramatist owing to the "frightening" degree of depersonalization which he had attained. Having once opted for suppressing the empirical individual ego to the poetic subject, and the existential to the aesthetic, Shakespeare's modernity and exemplarity follow as a matter of consequence. Never superseded, Pessoa's Shakespeare becomes the implicit model for the SuperCamões model. In the latter we encounter a telescoping of ages, aesthetic fashions, and visions, by suprapersonally abstracting the semes of the perfect poet. This is the poet turned non-poet, the *orthonymic* Pessoa and *heteronymic* Caiero-Reis-Campos, Camões and SuperCamões, the national turned world poet, the lyrical turned dramatic poet. Lind

halts to consider a certain psychic likeness between Pessoa and Shakespeare (with focus on the latter's juvenile hysteria and mature hystero-neurasthenia), reason enough, he deems, to see in Shakespeare a Pessoaan prototype, a sort of SUPERPESSOA in psychic terms.

The autarchic poet is endowed with the capacity of transmuting poetic material, to follow the Eliotesque line of thought. Transmuting his own personality, like transmuting metals in alchemy, is done in terms of refinement. It means refining material (in)to a superior quality by raising the perishable individual person, with its terrestrial self, to the exemplary person, with its spiritual self. It means rising from the lie of appearances to the truth of essence(s), since the onetime alchemists were in search of the *quinta essentia*, a business far beyond naming. Rather one of *naming into/as being*. For Pessoa, successive depersonalization can be achieved by de-doubling the self in the game of identities (face/mask, wake/dream, life/art) baroquely amplified in his English sonnets. The terrestrial ego is superseded on the vertical axis by the spiritual Ego, the only one able to communicate with the Supreme Being. In this process each *heteronym* is a partial ego with Pessoa, each *character* functions as a partial ego with Shakespeare. By gradual filtering the poet supersedes his neophyte and adept phases and can reach the SUPERPOET phase, thus becoming a master himself.

A Nova Poesia Portuguesa contains references to this Superpoet and/as SuperCamões, the way Campos's *Ultimatum* does when it deals with the protean poet. In his English written *Essay on Initiation* Pessoa provides a hierarchy of poets comprising ten rungs with, on top, the supreme Superpoet (sic!). The way to the top is the way of utmost intellectual sincerity implying intellectualized emotions, aestheticized intellectual(ized) emotions, transmuting these emotions in(to) the work of art. It is Fernando Pessoa's own trajectory in his aesthetic existence, leaving behind immediate Portugal to head for a possible Lusitania, one transmuted through an Anglo-Saxon filter. A perfect *Anglo-Lusitania*. Simply a matter of *words*? Merely a matter of *names*? *What's in a name?*, we could ask ourselves an otiose question. And yet, as we learn from Pessoa's aesthetic testament, this is much more than that. It is:

O poeta é un fingidor.
Finge tão completamente,
Que chega a fingir que é dor
A dor que deveras sente.⁴

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⁴ The poet is the utmost liar
So masterly the lie he strains
That semblance of pain's real fire
Passes for pain in his own veins. (my translation)

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În căutarea a „ce-i într-un nume”: englezul Pessoa ca poetul ca SHAKESPEARE și cazul SuperCamões

Rezumat

Lucrarea de față se ocupă de problematica *numirii* și a *ființei* pe fundalul tradiției occidentale (dialogul platonice Cratylos fiind punctul de referință). La interfața literaturii /culturii engleze cu cea portugheză, este pus în discuție cazul lui Fernando Pessoa, a cărui operă de început este scrisă în limba engleză, pentru a pune în discuție identitatea sa europeană. Aceasta este abordată din perspectivă *onomastică*, *heteronimele* persoane fiind în mod evident concepte și totodată material poetic. Este analizat apoi teoreticianul Pessoa în paralel cu T. S. Eliot, cu o prezentare în coordonatele ei de bază a poeziei moderniste. Pentru cazul englez, dezbateră gravitează în jurul canonicului canonicilor – Shakespeare devenit SHAKESPEARE, pentru cel portughez, canonicului canonicilor este Camões devenit SuperCamões, reiterări simbolice ale lui Dante în viziunea lui Eliot. De la *pseudonime* la *heteronime* și înapoi la *ortonime*, exploatând *endonimele* și *exonimele*, identitatea și numele, *ființa* și *numirea* servesc drept tot atâtea repere ale întregii demonstrații.