

The Self as a Linguistic Event: Discourse Functions in the Poetry of Fernando Pessoa

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Abstract: *Fernando Pessoa has several fictional characters who are claimed to be the authors of various collections of poetry gathered under his name. In the criticism, these are often seen as figures substituted for himself, while the poems which are not attributed to any of these fictional characters are treated as his own direct speech actions without subterfuge. This is in line with the conventions that have been dominant in discussions of literature, either to start from the author or from what Edward Said calls the 'social and economic outside facts'. With attention turned elsewhere, the literary work itself tends to figure as an instrument in the hands of the author for use in pursuing some purpose. In this paper, we are going to bring back the works into focus. Discourse analysis is helpful in doing this. It is also applied in this paper to help sharpen focus on the characters of discourse, their identities as discourse agents and the objects which exercise them, in order to achieve interpretation of the poems as discourse events.*

Keywords: *abjection, author-function, discourse, instance of discourse, persona, speaker.*

I. Introduction

The author function is a special kind of problem in studying the poetry of Fernando Pessoa, because this poetry comprises bodies of works by different fictional authors. Roditi (2009), reports, for instance, that 'Pessoa wrote and published his Portuguese works under six different names, in six poetic idioms, each one of which constitutes a separate identity among what Pessoa and his Portuguese critics have called his heterónimos'. These are 'heteronyms', but at the same time, different characters, with different histories and biographies and different poetic pedigrees. Concerning, Alberto Caeiro, for instance, Ricardo Reis, acting as a kind of biographer and editor, writes:

Alberto Caeiro da Silva was born in Lisbon on April 16, 1889, and died of tuberculosis in the same city on (...), 1915. He spent nearly all his life in a village in Ribatejo; and only returned to the city of his birth in his final months. In Ribatejo he wrote nearly all his poems, those of the book entitled *The Keeper of Flocks*, those of the incomplete book, *The Amorous Shepherd*, and some of his first which I myself, having inherited them for the purposes of publication with the rest, gathered together under the designation graciously suggested by Álvaro de Campos: *Detached Poems*. His final poems, beginning with the one numbered (...), were written in the last period of the author's life, after he had returned to Lisbon. The task befalls me briefly to establish a distinction. Some of these poems reveal, by reason of the perturbation caused by illness, something new and rather foreign — in nature and direction — to the general character of his work.... Caeiro's work represents the absolute essence of paganism, fully reconstructed. The Greeks and the Romans, who lived in the midst of paganism and therefore did not think about it, would have been incapable of such a thing. Yet Caeiro's oeuvre and its paganism were never thought through, nor were they even felt. They came from something within us deeper than feeling or reason (Berkeley Neo-Baroque Gang of One, 2006).

Reis is writing a brief sketch of Caeiro's biography, in part because he is arranging the pagan poet's work for publication. Though he is himself an invention, he takes both himself and the other inventions, Álvaro de Campos and the one he gives the accolade, 'my Master', Caeiro, seriously. This same invention is also reported to be Pessoa's 'Master' by Josipovici (1987: 31).

In every way, Pessoa's 'heteronyms' are really full psychological entities who not only have their own personal histories, but also for whom poetry flows from this individuality; and the poetry is their poetry. Ricardo Reis is so respectful of Roberto Caeiro's pagan work, that he is rather disappointed and irritated with an occasional misstep into 'Christian subjectivism'. For this, he writes, 'I do chastise him, and I severely chastise him (as I severely chastised him in person), for not returning to his earlier poems and adjusting them to his acquired discipline' (Alberto Caeiro: *Complete Poems* (Web)). These creations are strong enough personalities to be given credit or censure for their productions. Criticism, however, has not been as respectful of them as they are of one another or Pessoa appears to be towards them.

Roditi explains the heteronyms in part as a kind of identity game Pessoa begins to play to cope psychologically with 'the limitations that fate and neurosis imposed on his genius'. But he gets trapped in this game as he begins 'like a character in a Pirandello play, to lead his other lives, imaginary lives of imaginary

poets, of fictional characters whose very real works he wrote and published under these other names that are now his heterónimos' (Web n.pag.). Since these characters are psychological reproductions of Pessoa himself, 'playful mystifications', sometimes to be given full play, sometimes to be repressed, Roditi reduces the reality of these personalities and centres Pessoa's authorship, commenting that 'As Ricardo Reis, one of the least prolific of his Portuguese personalities, Pessoa was consciously classical, a gnomic poet who remembered the Odes of Horace and perhaps also some of the more Olympian utterances of Goethe and of Nietzsche, certainly the Augustan serenity of Alexander Pope as well as of the eighteenth-century Portuguese poet Bocage. As Alberto Caeiro, Pessoa appeared as a modern Pantheist, a balanced and optimistic disciple of Whitman. Always more articulate than William Carlos Williams, less blatant than Carl Sandburg' (n. pag.). We see here in Ronditi's practice positivism's mark on literary criticism. In this practice, where 'the truth of discourse defined on the basis of the truth of the object' may not be ascertained (Foucault 359), the author, always assumed to be directing discourse from behind the scenes, breaks to the surface as the final reference point. This way of reading went with an expressionist view of poetry – and criticism hasn't completely freed itself from this author function and positivism.

More concerned with the analysis of discourse itself than its reference, however, Josipovici treats Reis, Caeiro, and the other heteronyms as the intellectual proprietors of their poems and the logical subjects of the recurring First-Person pronouns. He thus uncovers serious discursive consequences where there are sharp contrasts in tone between the character and the agent of enunciation indicated in the pronoun, since 'even more clearly than with Caeiro or Reis we can witness, in the course of the next twenty years, the disintegration of the persona of the marine engineer [Álvaro de Campos], as poems issue from his pen which have little to do with the image of him so lovingly created by Pessoa.... In ['The Ancients Used to Invoke the Muses'], for example, we encounter a wit and irony quite foreign to de Campos, or indeed to any of the heteronyms' (1987:40). It is as if the poetic pen, even though still in the hand of the marine engineer, is under his control only in the mechanical sense, but for all intents and purposes had become an agent instead of an instrument. Thus Campos's writing is increasingly at variance with the mental habits and the characterization associated with the writer himself. Josipovici links the voice he hears in 'The Ancients Used to Invoke the Muses' to that of the poems of the last five years of Pessoa's life, and wonders, 'But whose voice is that?' (41), as if poetry is only one of the more 'sophisticated forms of textualization of the voice' (Portelli 1994: 30). It will be concluded in the interest of unity that this is the authentic voice of a person, the poet Fernando Pessoa. For the author function used commonly as a convention of unity (Culler 1980), is especially hard to avoid in studying lyric poetry, with its tendency to run into numbers of brief and varied pieces of discourse – the 'social and economic outside facts' (Said 1984), which suit the demands of positivism being more frequently used with the novel and drama. Discourse analysis affords another way of reading which avoids both traps. In order to understand Fernando Pessoa's poetry as discourse, with all its consequences, I will analyse it in this paper using Emile Benveniste's theory as instrument. Seeing it as discourse will enable the characterizing of the agents who are marked in the poems solely by means of pronouns.

II. Discourse Agents as Functions

Modern discourse studies owes much to Emile Benveniste's *Problems of General Linguistics*, first published in 1966. But it has evolved along several different paths, some travelling far indeed from what Benveniste probably anticipated. There are social semiotics, critical discourse analysis, systemic-functional theory, appraisal theory, multimodal discourse analysis, frame theory, and so forth. Benveniste's notion of discourse concerns 'the discrete and always unique acts by which the language is actualized in speech by a speaker' (217). Language itself is a system of potentiality, but then, according to Paul Ricoeur, 'someone speaks, someone says something. The word ... becomes word at the moment when man becomes speech, when speech becomes discourse' (1974: 92). Discourse and speaking are contemporary; and it is in the 'instance of discourse' that the speaker realizes himself as a subject, not necessarily a grammatical one, but as the logical one who stands behind the utterance, the individual who identifies himself/herself as 'I'.

Benveniste applies the category of personal pronoun primarily to this speaker, but he also recognizes a second member in the personal pronoun paradigm, 'you', defined in a symmetrical relation to the 'I'. The 'you' is the 'individual spoken to in the present instance of discourse containing the linguistic instance you.' These definitions refer to I and you as a category of language and are related to their position in language' (Benveniste 218).

In contrast to the 'I' and 'you', 'he' is strictly a syntactic category. It shares with a noun which on its own signifies potentiality, but is actualized in this specific discourse 'in a particular object and always identical with the mental image it awakens'. The personal pronoun is different. As Benveniste accounts for it, 'If I perceive two successive instances of discourse containing I, uttered in the same voice, nothing guarantees to me that one of them is not a reported discourse, a quotation in which I could be imputed to another. It is thus

necessary to stress this point: I can only be identified by the instance of discourse that contains it and by that alone' (218).

Discourse is determined by the utterance of the speaker 'I': each such utterance is an instance of discourse. But it would appear that the 'successive instances of discourse containing I, uttered in the same voice', even if a quotation is involved, nonetheless makes up one event and the first task of discourse analysis is to determine the identity of the 'I' and its relation to meaning. In communication studies, it is commonly supposed that the task of the speaker is simply to 'encode' meaning. But discourse analysis enables us to see that meaning could be processed in other ways: it could be constructed or reconstructed so that it is no longer the same; it could be interrogated or 'rethought' (Derrida 2002), in order to be understood anew; discourse could equally have the effect of putting it in quotes for purposes of verification, and so forth.

Literary works are discourses because of the functioning of the personal pronouns, 'I' and 'you', especially the former, in them. In narrative, it functions generally within 'citations' (Kristeva 1980: 45), but if it occurs in narration itself, this marks the narrative event as the discourse of the First-Person Narrator. In Third-Person Narratives, according to structuralists the norm of narrative, 'the 'I' is usually a spectator' (Barthes, *Selected Writings*, 48). Outside these – in drama and lyric – it occurs freely. The one who utters it in drama is the 'persona', while that in lyric poetry is traditionally called 'the speaker;' and may specifically refer to itself as 'I' or function in the mode of a pure utterance.

Criticism, however, appears to be divided as to what to make of these persons of discourse. Aristotle treats them quite as a set of masks the author could choose from in achieving poetic representation and lays down that in composing, 'one may either (1) speak at one moment in narrative and at another in an assumed character, as Homer does; or (2) one may remain the same throughout, without any such change; or (3) the imitators may represent the whole story dramatically, as though they were actually doing the things described' (*On the Art of Poetry*, chapter 3). Up to the present many critics continue to treat the characters of discourse as assumed names under which the writer carries on his project of expression or communication, ignoring traditional English poetics in which the author and the discursive functions are kept apart. In I. A. Richards's *Principles of Literary Criticism*, for example, references to authors are made with respect to the work itself, while the 'speaker' features in references to textual utterances.

Indeed within twentieth century philosophy of the phenomenological tradition which has been so influential in poststructuralist criticism and theory, the ability of the work of art to stand on its own, without the author-prop, of a poem to speak for itself and not function as some individual's medium of expression is a mark of success and emergence as an authentic work of art. Discussing Georg Trakl's 'A Winter Evening', for instance, Heidegger observes that 'Who the author is remains unimportant here, as with every other masterful poem. The mastery consists precisely in this, that the poem can deny the poet's person and name' (*Language, Poetry, Thought* 198). In Heidegger, clearly, the business of the work of art is with truth (unconcealedness); and the work does not become masterful unless it attains this 'self-establishing truth', which 'happens in creation as the bringing forth of the unconcealedness of what is' (69). The work's truth also signifies that it has attained the freedom to speak for itself, standing in 'the openness of beings' (59), or as Hofstadter phrases it, in 'the self-showing of beings in overtness' ('Introduction', xx). Such unconcealedness in and as the poem, self-contained and 'purely self-referential' (Derrida 1992: 45), is therefore a mode of 'articulation of thought upon itself' (Foucault, *The Order of Things* 101).

Poetry is undoubtedly representation by means of language alone (*monon tois logois* – Aristotle, 1447a, 25), but it does not become discourse merely because it is a linguistic form. The conditions of possibility of discourse include the subject who names himself as 'I'. Accordingly, Foucault notes that in poetry, 'representation provides itself with "characters"' (101), whereby the speech event is rooted in the poem as an instance of discourse. In Derrida, poetry is the bringing about of this instance of discourse, which is self-contained, or as Aristotle puts it, 'whole and complete' (*holên kai teleian*, 1459a, 19). The full consequences of this are brought out by Derrida who writes that, 'to write is to draw back... from one's writing itself. To be grounded far from one's language, to emancipate it or lose one's hold on it, to let it make its way alone and unarmed. To leave speech. To be a poet is to know how to leave speech. To let it speak alone, which it can do only in its written form. To leave writing is to be there only in order to provide its passageway, to be the diaphanous element of its going forth: everything and nothing' (*Writing and Difference* 85). As discourse, each poem, whether short or long, goes forth alone, making its solitary way. The self explored in this paper is the discursive 'character' functioning in the poem; and we can see the distinctive individuality of this 'I' in the analysis of the individual poems.

The poetry discussed here is from the collection headed 'Fernando Pessoa – Himself' in Fernando Pessoa: *A Little Larger than the Entire Universe: Selected Poems*. In this collection, there are poems in the Third-Person, which do not fall under what discourse analysis calls personal discourse, although they may still be analysed as speech actions not only because of the 'voice' which is heard, but also because of the object of

discourse, the Third Person (he, she, it), whereby the discourse simultaneously points outward to an object and backwards to the point from which the indication is made (Ricoeur 1981: 198).

III. The Poem, the Instance of Discourse

The poems of Fernando Pessoa are often highly personal and may suggest 'the intimacy of the diary of a writer' (Ferrari 96). The distinctive feature of the works of the heteronyms is that the poems are connected together as the vision of one individual, Caeiro, Reis, or de Campos as the case may be. The character is therefore like a First-Person narrator of the novel or the 'I' of the epistolary genre. In the poems of 'Fernando Pessoa – Himself', the 'I' may in the same way be connected to Pessoa himself, except that the designation 'Fernando Pessoa – Himself' is by an editor external to the poetry itself. They are not claimed by any of the fictional characters of Pessoa and are assigned to Pessoa by default. We shall see in our discussion that discourse analysis offers an alternative path of attribution.

The first poem in the set is 'O Church Bell of My Village' (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 277), which shares with 'Swamps of Yearnings Brushing against My Gilded Soul' (279-280) in having an apostrophe spoken by the 'I'. In 'O Church Bell of My Village', the Church Bell is the Second-Person, the Other to whom the Persona addresses himself, whereas there is no Second-Person in 'Swamps of Yearnings Brushing against My Gilded Soul'. The Persona is alone, his utterance disjointed and fragmentary. There is a substratum of some sort signified in 'O distantly ancient Hour', invoked, obviously to fill the absence, but this Ancient Hour is not only absent from the site of discourse, it is also 'Banished from its own Time-self!' It is lost, like the fragmented 'I', whose mind lacks light to guide it:

My hands reach out to the beyond, but even as they're reaching
I see that what I desire is not what I want.

In their lack of identity with the self, both the Ancient Hour and the 'I' are in retreat, unanchored and unpossessed, but end up running into each other. The Persona is the worse for it, experiencing a –

Receding wave that invades
My ceaseless retreating into myself until I faint.

Unlike the Ancient Hour and the 'I' which are both unanchored, the Church Bell is stable: it has a place, and a time for tolling. It is the 'I' that is 'drifting' (Stanza 3). The tolling of this Church Bell seems to have the power to bring him back to self-presence. It is a peculiar self-presence in that in becoming aware of himself, he is at the same time losing touch of his real past, closing in with an unreal one, 'nostalgia', in fact. Thus,

In my soul your ringing is distant.
With every one of your clangs
Resounding across the sky,
I feel the past farther away,
I feel nostalgia close by (Stanzas 3-4).

The absence of a centre for the 'I' in 'Swamps of Yearnings Brushing against My Gilded Soul' is absolute:

So intent on the present I that I seem to forget myself! . . .
Liquid of halos with no Was behind it, no Self inside it . . .
The Mystery smacks of my being other.

In everyday practical discourse, the 'I' spoken by an individual is a marker of identity and self-knowledge, and simultaneously an agent of a specific 'claim to truth' (Sokolowski 2000: 197). It is not necessarily the case when the instance of discourse is poetry. Thus the temporality associated with a subject is missing in the above lines. This means that the sense of being one with one's history is lacking. The 'I', however, intent on its being, and 'with no Was behind it', there can be 'no Self inside it'. He might as well be an 'other'.

But there is no escape from who he is. The 'I' of 'Swamps of Yearnings' unlike that of 'The Church Bell' is in a state of abjection, in which, according to Kristeva, 'looms . . . one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. It beseeches, worries, and fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects. A certainty protects it from the shameful – a certainty of which it is proud holds on to it. But simultaneously, just the same, that impetus, that spasm, that leap is drawn toward an elsewhere as tempting as it is condemned. Unflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself' (1982: 1). It is precisely the Ancient Hour that inscribes the terror the Speaker feels within himself in that the very 'swamps of yearnings brushing against [his] gilded soul' have armed this Hour with 'claws'. As a result he is in 'self-dread'.

In another poem, 'Rolling Wave that Returns' (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 333), abjection brings about what may be self-loathing:

Why don't you also take
My heart to that ancient sea?

I've had it for such a long time
That I'm tired of having to feel it.
So take it in that faint murmur
By which I hear you fleeing!

In this case, the threat emanates 'from an exorbitant ... inside' the Speaker cannot escape from; and what a relief it would be if the ancient sea in its ebb would carry it away from him! In 'Where's My Life Going, and Who's Taking It There?' (291-292), it is clearly seen that abjection is really a motif of tragedy, because the persona is driven to ask the basic questions of existence in tones quite reminiscent of Lear in Shakespeare's work:

I don't even know myself in what I knowingly do.
I never reach the end of what I do with an end in mind.
The pleasure or pain I embrace isn't what it really is.
I move on, but there's no I inside me that moves.
Who am I, Lord, in your darkness and your smoke?
What soul besides mine inhabits my soul?
Why did you give me the feeling of a path
If the path I seek I'm not seeking, if in me nothing walks
Except through an effort in my steps that's not mine,
Except by a fate hidden from me in my acts?
Why am I conscious if consciousness is an illusion?
What am I between 'what' and the facts?

There can be no question more important for man than his identity: in Heidegger's formulation, it resolves into a twofold question: 'who man is and where he is settling his existence' (Existence and Being 312). He can tackle other questions only on the grounds of those basic ones having been settled. The Speaker in the above extract, however, is in total confusion as to who he is: knows no self-identical substratum within.

But to speak of man and the questions he must confront and come to terms with is to lift the discourse from the individual level, where he is the author of his own speech actions and the source of the intentional acts implicated to the kind. In drama and narrative, the tragic vision normally belongs to a specific and named individual, but in lyric where, as Heidegger says, it is language that speaks, the 'I' is apt to pluralize and become inclusive. It does take the plural form in fact in some of Pessoa's works, as in a poem of 1934 in which we read,

In this world where we forget,
We are shadows of who we are,
And the real actions we perform
In the other world, where we live as souls,
Are here wry grins and appearances (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 334).

The First-Person here is plural and unlimited in the anaphoric reference. Everybody is presumably included in it; but it is not likely that anybody at all would subscribe to the notion that 'In this world where we forget, / We are shadows of who we are', or have had experiences which may correspond to the claims of the poem. In practical discourse, this sort of all-inclusive 'We' would normally be received with 'quotes' to initiate 'propositional reflection' (Sokolowski 2000: 101), and only 'disquoted' if successfully verified. The risk of the above claims in practical discourse is that it is likely to strike the interlocutor as 'an intolerable form of paternalism' (Habermas 1998: 28). Practical discourse imposes the principle of 'equal respect for everyone', which is 'sensitive to difference' and demands 'a nonlevelling and nonappropriating inclusion of the other' (40). Poetry, however, is free of these demands and makes sense in so far as it interconnects with the other elements of the poem in the constitution of the instance of discourse.

The inclusive First-Person in 'In this World where We Forget' contrasts with a Second-Person in 'Advice' whose individuality is indeterminate. It could be humanity itself getting lessons relevant to the question who man is and how to settle his existence; it could be any one at all who cares to listen, or the Speaker himself announcing to himself the solution he has found to the question:

Surround who you dream you are with high walls.
Then, wherever the garden can be seen
Through the iron bars of the gate,
Plant only the most cheerful flowers,
So that you'll be known as a cheerful sort (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 361).

This Speaker has settled for the position that there is no identity, no individuality, no self even. His way of seeing is the way of grim scepticism. In lieu of a self, 'Advice' recognizes only a 'dream'; elsewhere, it is 'The illusion that kept me going' (299), a garden where 'the most cheerful flowers' are planted for the 'passing gazes' (361). There is one thing this sceptical mind knows for a certainty and it is that 'consciousness is an illusion' (291).

But as a speaker who in speaking ‘commits himself’ (Ricoeur 2003: 84), the giver of the discourse of ‘Advice’ is not giving it out of a dream, nor does he demand of the Second-Person, whoever this may be to give up his own cohesion to a consciousness from which the intention to make a garden and for certain purposes will spring:

Lay flower beds, like other people have,
So that passing gazes can look in
At your garden as you’re going to show it.
But where you’re all your own and no one
Ever sees you, let wild flowers spring up
Spontaneously, and let the grass grow naturally.
Make yourself into a well-guarded
Double self, letting no one who looks in
See more than a garden of who you are—

There appears to be a ‘double self’, and the detailed instructions about setting up ‘high walls’ and planting ‘the most cheerful flowers’ ‘wherever the garden can be seen / Through the iron bars of the gate’ and making ‘yourself into a well-guarded / Double self, letting no one who looks in / See more than a garden of who you are’ are designed to keep the authentic self hidden and protected from the threat of abjection emanating ‘from an exorbitant outside’.

In ‘The Scaffold’ (299-300), the Speaker is sceptical and pessimistic just like the speakers in many of the poems we have considered, but the suggestion here is that these attitudes reflect his own personal experience and response to life; hence we read:

[The river’s] empty flowing mirrors,
Cold and anonymous,
The life I’ve lived in vain.
How little hope ever attains!
What longing is worth the wait?
Any child’s ball
Rises higher than my hope,
Rolls farther than my longing.

Josipovici notes that Pessoa’s poetry recalls ‘the old Romantic dream’; although not in terms of ‘a happy unity with nature’; it is rather in terms of ‘the utter break down of the self in the face of undifferentiated impressions’ (34). Thus the river in the above evokes sentiments which are radically opposed to a Romantic one. Its ‘empty flowing mirrors’ the emptiness and meaninglessness that he thinks his whole life amounts to, which is not the way the river is seen in ‘Between My Sleeping and Dreaming’ (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 326). In this poem, the river ‘flows without end’, like life, and like life is both inside the Speaker and comprehends him. There is here even a certain meeting of minds, so to say, between the Speaker and the river, since ‘the one I feel I am, who dies / In what links me to myself, / Sleeps where the river flows— / That river without end’. But if the source of the terrible perception in ‘The Scaffold’ is also the source of the Speaker’s hope and longing, the hope and the longing must be coming forth with no vital energy to drive them higher or longer than a child’s ball. ‘Misty hopes’, he actually calls them in the poem, and ‘dead hopes— / Dead, because they must die’.

When discourse becomes confessional and personally tragic as it is in ‘The Scaffold’, the arousing of emotion said by Aristotle to be the ‘distinctive function [of representations] of this kind’ (chapter 13), often leads from thinking of the Speaker as ‘one like ourselves’ (chapter 7), to identifying him with the writer – insofar as the latter is in terms of a common humanity, ‘one like ourselves’. But recognition of the Speaker as an existent in the poem just like the narrator in the novel is probably older than I. A. Richards. The Speaker in ‘The Scaffold’ marks his individuality not only in presenting his own perceptions which no one else need agree with, but also he confesses the following about his own personal history:

What did I make of my life?
I found myself when already lost.
Impatient, I let myself be,
As I might let a lunatic go on
Believing what I’d proved was wrong.

Even though we have seen many unhappy and broken down selves in Pessoa’s poems, their specific individualities may still be discerned in the quality of their individual perceptions, their sense of themselves, their sense of where they are and what to do with the world, whether to try and cope with it, even if in bad faith, to reject and try to escape from it, or to denounce its indifference and rail against it. Still ‘Pedrouços’, a poem of 1935, the year of Pessoa’s death has the following lines:

My heart has become forgetful
But not my eyes. Don’t steal from them, Time,

That picture in which the happy boy I was

Gives me a happiness that's still mine! (A Little Larger than the Entire Universe 365-366).

This is certainly not the Persona speaking in 'The Scaffold', who had found himself 'when already lost'. The Speaker in 'Pedrouços' is so comfortable with his own personal history that he is desirous to keep his happiness experienced as a child fresh and unchanging, and preserved from tarnishing even by the passage of time.

IV. Conclusion

Fiction tends to be understood too narrowly as a story lacking everyday probability. As a 'made thing' (poiesis), it extends to all literary forms and is understood in all its richness by Fernando Pessoa in whose oeuvre, fictional characters not only produce their own oeuvres of poetry, with their own individual styles and levels of mastery of the language, but edit, publish, and compose biographies of fellow fictional characters. They are just as much textual beings as dramatic personae and novelistic characters and named narrators like Conrad's Captain Marlow. With the help of Benveniste's theory of discourse, we have also seen that the status of the 'I' of a lyric as a textual being is undiminished by his not having a proper name. Therefore, his utterance may only be appropriated to someone else in error, even if that other be Pessoa. That 'I' is as much a fictional being as his utterance is a fictional utterance. Reciprocally the 'I' and the utterance endow and are given fictional validity each by the other.

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