

Episode 6. **I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes**

Location: **Praça da Figueira / Baixa**

Market

Sofia: You should now be in Praça da Figueira.

Market trader: Feel free to choose. It's a bargain.

[00:00:16.13]

Sofia: At the beginning of the 20th century there was a market here. Pessoa describes it in his book "Lisbon What The Tourist Should See".

Fernando Pessoa: *This market is very popular and lively: it is built in iron with a glass roof, and is made up of a large number of small shops and stalls, facing the streets and the inside of the building. The best time to see it is in the morning, when it offers an animated scene.*

Market, fado music

Sofia: Imagine. A woman is plucking a chicken, another skinning a rabbit. It is the wheel of life with characters in it. Sailors in white come and go. Cars, trams and bicycles are circling the square. A policeman signals with his hat and gives directions with the help of a whistle. Prices and products are discussed. Ideas are exchanged.

Antonio Cardiello: Fernando Pessoa reaches a critical-literary maturity, in the post-Orpheu period. Before that he was gathering a lot of knowledge. There are the tragic Greeks, the pre-Socratic philosophers, enlightenment philosophy, the evolutionists, idealism, French decadent symbolism, there's German romanticism, theosophy, esoterism, astrology. There is a whole series of authors and knowledge and all this information that he finds, digests and absorbs, then, 15 years later, comes to the fore.

Rita Patrício: The more immediate form of Pessoa's work, what we call the heteronyms, the heteronymy, gives a spectacular and very impressive view of the consciousness of the entire twentieth century. That is, the crisis of the subject, the inability of the individual to recognise he is only one.

Bird singing; street sounds

[00:02:33.24]

Jerónimo Pizarro: Fernando Pessoa says that the heteronym phenomenon is a phenomenon that started in his childhood, with Chevalier de Pas, the knight of denial, and with other characters and the generic idea was to create a work partly written under Pessoa's name and partly written under the name of other characters, heteronyms, semi-heteronyms and all kinds of fictitious authors.

Sheep

Richard Zenith: Fernando Pessoa defined himself above all as a dramatic poet.

Teresa Rita Lopes: He said that one of the heteronyms was a drama, because it was a dramatic monologue and all together formed another drama.

Bird singing

Pablo Javier Pérez López: The *Drama in People* goes beyond the tragedy, because it is a living tragedy. There are authors within the author, including Pessoa himself. There is Pessoa the author and Pessoa the heteronym.

Teresa Rita Lopes: Of the real heteronyms, that is, each with his own biography and literary style, there are only three.

Street sounds

Richard Zenith: Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos.

Antonio Cardiello: These four heteronyms, considering Fernando Pessoa an heteronym of himself, each one represents an aspect of his aesthetic and his poetic-philosophical project.

[00:04:18.00]

Jerónimo Pizarro: Fernando Pessoa presents Álvaro de Campos in the magazine *Orpheu* in 1915, and presents Caeiro and Reis in *Athena* in 1924, 1925.

Bird singing

Fernando Cabral Martins: They are three strong personalities, three personalities of a poet. Each one has a unique biography and a specific literary style and they interact with each other. One is the master and then there are two disciples, two disciples completely opposite and different from each other, one a classicist and the other one a modernist.

Pablo Javier Pérez López: Ricardo Reis is more stoic, Álvaro de Campos is more Nietzschean. He is excessive, struggles against the prejudices of society, struggles against the great philosophical and academic names and Pessoa himself represents his own struggle between Plato and Homer, the struggle between rationality and instinct.

Countryside sounds; dog barking; sheep, birds

Fernando Cabral Martins: The master completely escapes the definitions. Alberto Caeiro represents the desire to return to the roots, to the original.

Pablo Javier Pérez López: He represents paganism itself, Pessoa himself said, that Caeiro exists to recover the primitive Greek way of philosophising through poetry. And this is Alberto Caeiro.

Sheep

Fernando Cabral Martins: And that's why he's the master. Because he was able to go back to the source and he brings the knowledge that can quench the thirst of the moderns. That water is called Sensationism.

River flowing

[00:06:22.00]

Rita Patrício: Pessoa from an early age began to try and theorise about the art he wanted to create. And multiplied it into isms, intersectionism, paulism, then sensationism. What is the basic principle of sensationism? It's the idea that sensation is the basis of all consciousness, we are sensations that are thought by our consciousness.

Sheep

Fernando Pessoa: *I placed all my power of dramatic depersonalization in Caeiro; I placed all my mental discipline, clothed in its own special music, in Ricardo Reis; and in Álvaro de Campos I placed all the emotion that I deny myself and don't put into life.*

River flowing; countryside sounds

Sofia: Pessoa explained the heteronyms in a letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro, one of the directors of the literary magazine *Presença*. This now famous letter is dated January 13, 1935. And it is where Fernando Pessoa speaks of the mythical triumphal day.

Closing a drawer; footsteps on wooden floor; pencil writing

Fernando Pessoa: *it was March 8th, 1914 – I walked over to a high chest of drawers, took a sheet of paper, and began to write standing up, as I do whenever I can. And I wrote thirty-something poems at once, in a kind of ecstasy I'm unable to describe. It was the triumphal day of my life, and I can never have another one like it.*

Sheep bells

[00:08:01.29]

Jerónimo Pizarro: Now we know that the story wasn't quite like that. That it had to be wrongly told, because it was a poetic story and the plain truth wasn't good enough. And the young Caeiro, master but young, Caeiro who died before his time, Caeiro who does not have to think to write, the spontaneous Caeiro is a myth and is a myth that Fernando Pessoa had to preserve in 1935.

Sofia: But this spontaneity was never going to be straightforward. The simple universe of the master is transformed by love.

Sheep bells; flock of sheep

Alberto Caeiro:

The shepherd in love lost his staff,

And the sheep scattered over the slope,

And so lost was he in thought that he didn't even play his flute.

No one came or went. He never found his staff.

Other men, cursing him, rounded up the sheep.

He had not, after all, been loved.

Sofia: There is a very important document explaining the heteronyms. The "Notes for the memory of my master Caeiro". It is signed by Álvaro de Campos. In those notes, encounters between heteronyms are described. It also features António Mora, a philosopher. Mora gives us some clues about Alberto Caeiro's thought and Neopaganism.

Street sounds

Fernando Cabral Martins: António Mora is another important figure. Just like Raphael Baldaya who is an astrologer, who made astrological predictions and gave astrology consultations. Just as there is a Thomas Cross who dedicated himself to making riddles, to solving riddles and there are others. Pêro Botelho, and others. Some of them didn't write much, or didn't write at all, they are just a biography. This has to do with a dimension of the heteronym that is only playful, it is neither literary nor poetic.

Birds, street sounds

[00:10:41.24]

Richard Zenith: I think that heteronymy, the classification of what is and what is not a heteronym or if there are pre-heteronyms or sub-heteronyms, I don't think that really matters.

Cat meowing

Richard Zenith: I also think that it is very difficult to separate Fernando Pessoa's life from his work, there is a continuity between the two.

Street sounds; birds

Sofia: In 1929 another figure appears. In the letter of 1935 Pessoa describes this figure as a semi-heteronym. His name is Bernardo Soares. He's a bookkeeper's assistant who lives and works at Rua dos Douradores, our next stop.

Credits:

Voices:

Jorge Louraço, Antonio Cardiello, Rita Patrício, Jerónimo Pizarro, Richard Zenith, Teresa Rita Lopes, Pablo Javier Pérez López, Fernando Cabral Martins, António Durães and Sofia Saldanha.

Bibliography:

WHITMAN, Walt, Poem. London : Review of reviews office 1894? (The Masterpiece Library The Penny Poets ; XXVII), p. 7-32.

Fernando Pessoa, Lisbon: What the Tourist Should See. Exeter: Shearsman Books, 2008.

The Selected Prose of Fernando Pessoa, Edited and translated by Richard Zenith. New York: Grove Press, 2001, p. 256.

Pessoa, Fernando, "The shepherd in love lost his staff", The A Little Larger Than the Entire Universe: Selected Poems, Edited and Translated by Richard Zenith. London: Penguin Books, 2006; The Selected Prose of Fernando Pessoa, Edited and translated by Richard Zenith. New York: Grove Press, 2001.

