

Unwinding the Sea: notes on H.D. Jennings's translation of *O Marinheiro*

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Keywords

Fernando Pessoa, Translation, The Sailor, The Watchers, H. D. Jennings, static theater.

Abstract

H. D. Jennings—who taught at Durban High School after Fernando Pessoa had studied there—began an English translation of *O Marinheiro*, the drama that Pessoa published in 1915. Jennings was apparently unaware of the fact that the Portuguese writer had already started the same project; Pessoa, in fact, left loose evidence among the thousands of pages in his archive of an incomplete and fragmented English translation. This article analyzes the way in which Jennings's version changes some of the most crucial notions of the play: the title, certain grammatical constructions, and, in consequence, a series of concepts implied behind the storyline and its *mise-en-scène*.

Palavras-chave

Fernando Pessoa, Tradução, O Marinheiro, veladoras, H. D. Jennings, teatro estático.

Resumo

H. D. Jennings – que trabalhou na Durban High School depois de Fernando Pessoa lá ter estudado – começou uma tradução para o inglês de “O Marinheiro”, a peça de teatro que Pessoa publicou em 1915. Aparentemente, Jennings não sabia que o escritor português tinha começado o mesmo projeto; de fato, entre os milhares de páginas do seu espólio, Pessoa deixou evidência de uma tradução incompleta e fragmentária para o inglês. Este artigo analisa como a versão de Jennings muda algumas das noções mais essenciais da peça: o título, algumas construções gramaticais e, em consequência, uma série de conceitos determinados pelo argumento e a encenação.

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In 1915, Fernando Pessoa published *O Marinheiro*, a play on which he had allegedly been working since 1913 and which, according to other manuscripts and records, he continued rewriting and editing for decades. This text is also part of an ambitious translation project in which Pessoa envisioned a trilingual play in Portuguese, French, and English. However, he never managed to finish a draft of the last two, and all that he left, unsurprisingly, were translated fragments. H. D. Jennings—who taught at Durban High School after Pessoa had studied there—began an English translation, apparently unaware of the fact that the Portuguese writer had already started the same project and had left loose evidence of it among the thousands of pages in his archive. Pessoa’s attempted English translation is brief and fragmented, especially when compared to the twenty-five pages of his French translations¹, but they correspond to three crucial moments of the story. The play takes place in a castle, where three women talk to each other while watching a deceased fourth woman who is lying on her casket. They begin to talk about life, imagination, and reality, and one of them narrates a dream she had about a sailor, a man who begins to dream of an imaginary past until he is unable to distinguish reality from fiction. Pessoa’s English translation includes the beginning of the play, the dialogue prior to the appearance of the sailor, and a part of the dream about him. Jennings’s version, on the other hand, is a continuous translation that stops right in the middle of the climax: the scene in which one of the women narrates her dream about the sailor. Based on this material—Jennings’s partial translation and Pessoa’s even shorter one—I will analyze the implications of Jennings’s most significant choices and variations: the title, the grammar, and the reinterpretation of essential Pessoaan lexica. While these modifications are in some cases openly deliberate and presumably inadvertent in others, the consequences of these choices are impactful, due to their metaphorical potential and the effect they have on certain themes that prevail in the analysis of this play and in Pessoa’s writings in general.

The theater of Fernando Pessoa, like much of his writings in other genres, unveils a disruption of the surrounding reality, a compulsion that the Portuguese poet has come to be known for among critics and readers. And, true to his literary tendency toward self-sufficiency, which is best manifested in his plastic world of fictitious authors and relationships, Pessoa proposed a new philosophy of theater while destroying the previously established rules of drama. In doing so, he created a new type of genre that he labeled *teatro estático* (static theater). Self-sufficient, yet also problematically fragile, this genre threatens the viability of theater itself with scripts that seem to be made in a way that could never be performed.

¹ These are not continuous or unified texts. Among the manuscripts of French translations, for instance, there are up to six variations of the initial scene in *O Marinheiro*.

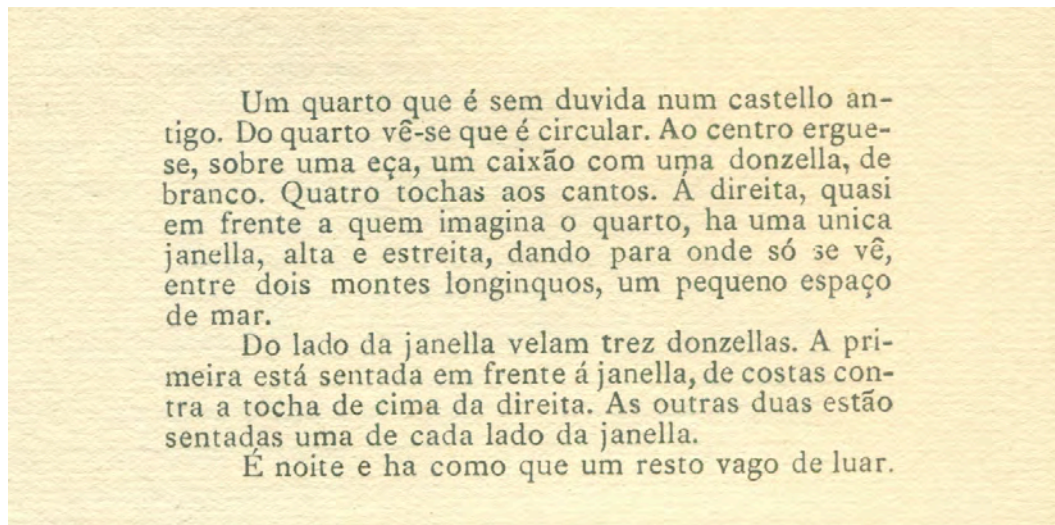
One of the most revealing attributes of this new form of theater—devoid of action, movement, and conflicts—is precisely its *mise-en-scène*. Given that *O Marinheiro* stands as Pessoa's single finished and published play within the static theater project, it is this work what will allow us to explore the author's notion of drama and the effects of Jennings's choices. Let us examine the opening lines of *O Marinheiro*, a stage direction for this static drama-in-one-scene:

Um quarto que é sem duvida num castello antigo. Do quarto vê-se que é circular. Ao centro erge-se, sobre uma eça, um caixão com uma donzella, de branco. Quatro tochas aos cantos. À direita, quasi em frente a quem imagina o quarto, ha uma única janella, alta e estreita, dando para onde só se vê, entre dois montes longinquos, um pequeno espaço de mar.

Do lado da janella velam trez donzellas. A primeira está sentada em frente á janella, de costas contra a tocha de cima da direita. As outras duas estão sentadas uma de cada lado da janella.

É noite e ha como que um resto vago de luar.

(PESSOA, 2015: 41)²

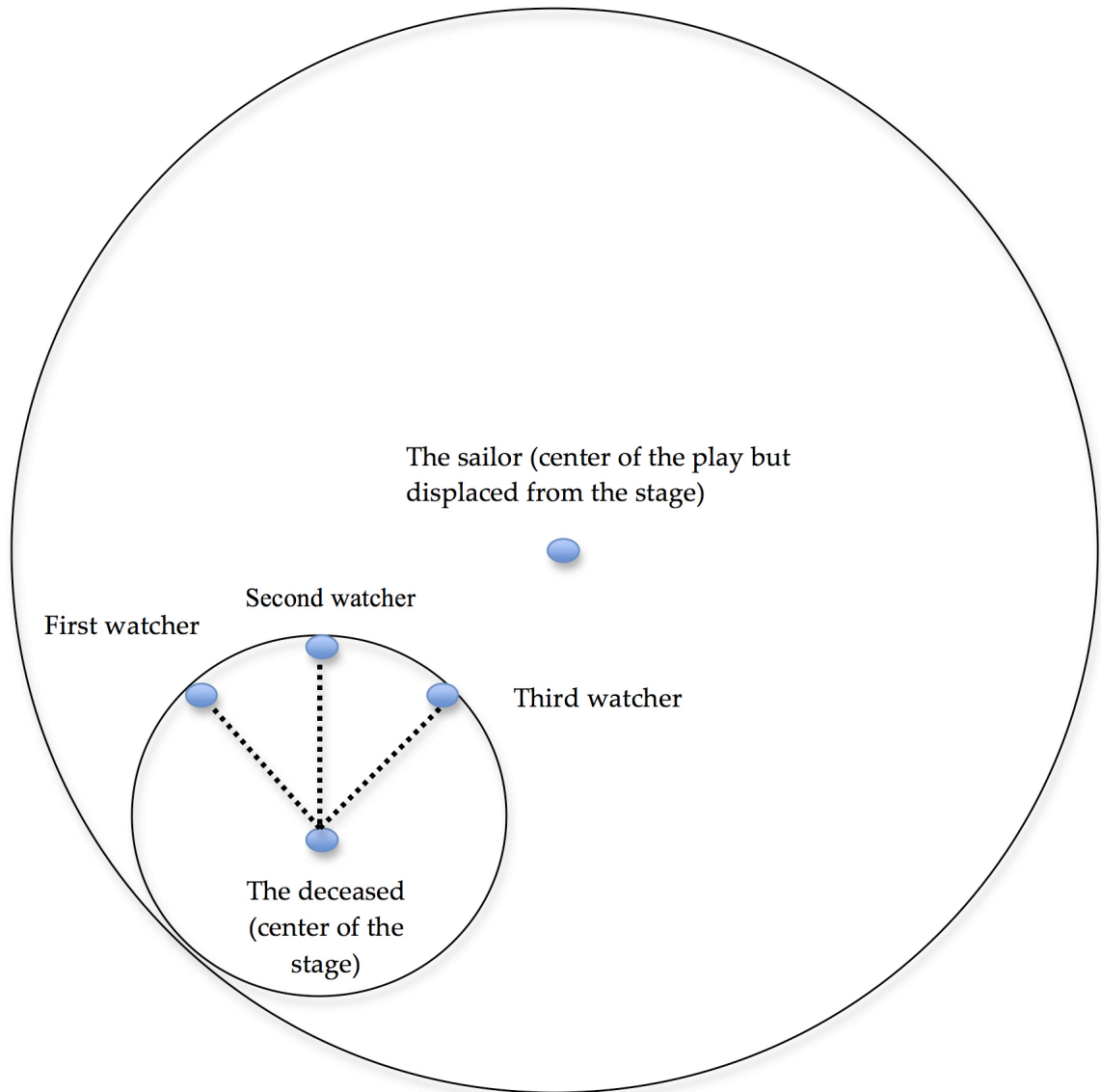


["O Marinheiro," in *Orpheu*, n.º 1, p. 29, 1915; Casa Fernando Pessoa MC/RES 82.1; detail]

The round stage is the basis of the story and its *mise-en-scène*. It is because of this circle that *O Marinheiro* begins to drift away from theater tradition, with a theater-in-the-round that seems to be replacing the proscenium-type stage and that immediately encloses the characters within a perfect circle, thereby leaving any potential audience in a spatial limbo: either nonexistent, outside the walls and unable to watch the plot, or somehow meant to be inside the circle. The geometrical relationship between points on the circumference and the lines in this round layout becomes crucial for the visual setup of the stage and the development of the story. Our first character lies in the center, while three other women sit on the circumference, forming three unstated radii. The fifth character

² Jennings's English translation of this same fragment is transcribed further on.

(the man) emerges only near the end of the story, yet his entrance remains exclusively nominal. Therefore, we are aware of the existence of this extra variable, the fifth point, but we are unable to place it on, inside, or outside the circle.



[The *mise-en-scène* of *O Marinheiro*.]

The shape of this theater provokes an ever-changing vantage point. As a “polygon” of infinite sides, the circle destroys the four walls of the traditional stage and becomes an impossible space of infinite walls and vantage points. As in every circle, no initial or end points can be traced in this castle tower. Moreover, the actions of the man in the title, who seems to be the most prominent character of the story, do not even seem to be occurring inside this space, but rather far away from it. Hence, the title becomes especially relevant precisely due to the lack of correspondence between the character it references and the spatial

dynamic of the stage, where actions do not take place but rather potentially happen somewhere else. In Pessoa's convoluted version of theater, the *mise-en-scène* seems to have no purpose at all, since it is not where the audience's gaze must aim – should there ever be an audience.

The distinction between perspective and target fades. The eponymous sailor represents an exact and, at the same time, untraceable point. His importance rises above that of the other characters, all of whom are excluded from the title, but they are the ones who are present on stage instead of him. And *in lieu* of supporting characters, the watchers become ubiquitous. Contrary to what the title alone would imply, the central character—paradoxically nowhere to be found, let alone in the center of the stage—unfolds through the dialogue of the purportedly tangential characters, who remain permanently in the center. Thus, the logic of vantage points is destroyed: the should-be center is absent and replaced by a substitute center (the enigmatic character about whom we only know that she has ceased to exist). Tangent lines become the circumference itself, and we witness the oxymoron of a displaced center. This absurd construction of vantage points is best manifested in one of the most pivotal questions raised throughout the plot: when the watcher who is narrating the story of the sailor in her dream asks herself whether it is not he who is dreaming of them. As the stage's visual perspective gets lost, reality is nowhere to be found either.

Jennings's decision to change the title of the play from *O Marinheiro* to *The Watchers* adds another level of vantage point disruption. It is most likely an overt deviation (and by "deviation" I mean a deflected vantage point instead of a modified storyline) from the original text, rather than the result of difficulties in the translation. Ruling out the latter as a possible reason for his decision may seem obvious, at first, yet the Portuguese title may contain certain connotations that could get lost in an exact and orthodox English translation.

Out of the handful of possible translations for *marinheiro*, "mariner" and "sailor" are perhaps the two most fitting words, the former for its morphological proximity to the original word, and the latter for being the most widespread word used to communicate this meaning among modern English speakers (*Corpus of Contemporary American English*³). Few objections may be raised against "mariner" other than a potential geographical and chronological detachment from modern English. First registered in the thirteenth century, the Anglo-French "mariner" was derived from the Old French *marinier* used one century before, which in turn came from the Medieval Latin *marinarius* and the Latin *marinus* (HARPER).

³ The online Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) of Brigham Young University (<http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>) shows that while "sailor" ranks 5,081st on the frequency list that averages word occurrences in spoken English, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic articles, the word "mariner" ranks on the 23,019th spot.

On the other hand, “sailor” comes from *sailer*, which was first registered in the fifteenth century as the agent noun of “sail”. The spelling changed one century later and incorporated the *o* as a way to distinguish the meaning of “a man who sails” from “a thing that sails” through the *-or* suffix. Thus, “sailor” came to replace the older terms “mariner,” “seaman,” and *merefara* (Old English for “mariner”) and, according to written evidence, it became even more ubiquitous during the nineteenth century (HARPER). Long more common and earlier than “sailor,” “mariner” acquired more of a learned word status. And, as expected, “mariner” is etymologically closer to the original word than “sailor.” The latter does not contain the root for “sea,” whereas “mar” is present both in the Portuguese *marinheiro* and the English “mariner.”

The question then becomes whether Jennings’s decision to use “the watchers” and not “the sailor” as the story’s title could have possibly accomplished a less intrusive translation when compared to the original concept; in other words, whether the variations between *veladoras* and “watchers” are less disruptive than the variations between *marinheiro* and either “mariner” or “sailor.” The noun *veladora* comes from *velar*, a verb that is broader in meaning than “mariner” or “sailor” and, therefore, richer in its metaphorical potential. *Velar* simultaneously implies the act of keeping guard, assisting a sick or dead person, spending the night, observing something attentively, avoiding sleep, working for extended hours, and keeping a light on. If we go further back and analyze the word *vigília*, introduced as a learned word or Latinism in Portuguese, we unearth an even more revealing nuance in this family of words: in Latin it was used to refer to the sentinels that observed the sea from a watchtower. Therefore, there are three important semantic notions implied by the word *velador*: observation, absence of sleep, and the sea.

Let us take a look at the associations one may find in the word “watcher.” Observation is perhaps the most self-evident notion implied by the word. More technical meanings lead us toward the act of keeping watch, that is, staying awake for safekeeping, and “watch” as the nautical term for a period of time in which a ship’s crew is on duty. One could argue that the original *veladoras* and the English “watchers” seem to have more correspondences (though some of them perhaps slight and tangential) than *marinheiro* and “sailor.”

Accepting the fact that “watchers” maintains the most important connotations of its Portuguese counterpart, thus keeping a rigorous translated title, does not conceal the fact that Jennings’s version prolongs the displacement of vantage points. This new title offers a different irony, which is not a call to a character we never see, but rather a call to a group of characters we permanently see despite the fact that they do not see us—or, for that matter, anything outside their circle. The original title initially places the reader at an undetermined spot—that futile attempt to visually locate the sailor—making it impossible for us to

trace a continuous line of sight due to the lack of a starting point. In the meantime, Jennings's title provides us with the opposite situation. The starting point becomes the people inside the room, but our line of sight gets strayed as soon as it goes beyond the window. In fact, the search for the sailor represents none other than an impossible line of sight, one with no course, projection, or endpoint and, therefore, nothing more than an endless circle we are unable to abandon.

Jennings's decision ultimately raises a question about language and reality by making a distinction between different levels of invisibility. The sailor, already unseen, now enters a new level of invisibility: he becomes the tacit subject of discourse. While Pessoa's sailor stands as the subject enclosing the entirety of this universe, Jennings's twist inverts the center and the circumference, eroding the sailor's status as linguistic subject. Now, it is not only impossible to see him, but also to name him, and his existence is only a possibility that comes from the mouths of characters that are not positively real. If the certainty of the sailor's existence is originally leveraged by his inclusion in the world behind the scenes of the drama – specifically, the world of its conceiver, the playwright – Jennings's version isolates him even more, raising a question about his nameability.

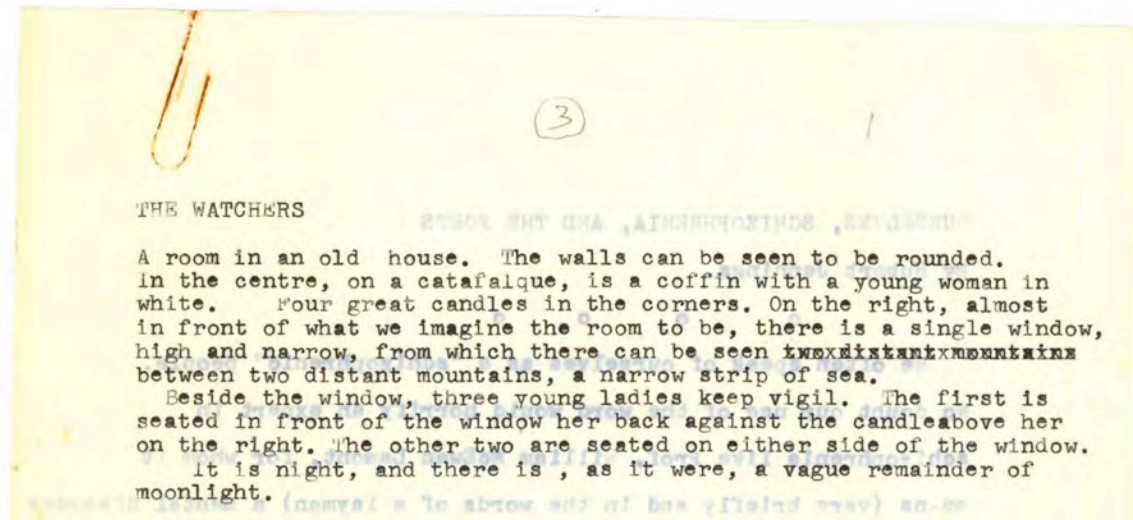
In *O Marinheiro*, the sailor dreams of a past and a homeland he has never had, until it reaches the point where he is unable to remember his true life. Meanwhile, his creation becomes his own reality and, like a god, his own origin becomes the deepest of all enigmas. The sailor emerges as a metaphor for what one could argue is among the most sophisticated irrationalities in humans: knowing we come from an origin, but being incapable of elucidating it; in other words, claiming god as our origin, but being unable to reconcile the paradox that this god is the result of a prior cause, hence no longer an origin. This eternally elusive source is manifested in the godlike character of the sailor. Therefore, it is relevant that Jennings chooses to ostracize this godlike (and already exiled) man, making him an unpronounceable and even more imageless abstraction. By burying the mundane and man-made words that define him, Jennings enhances his otherworldliness.

It is worth reproducing the initial stage directions, as translated by Jennings, in order to point out two revealing aspects:

A room in an old house. The walls can be seen to be rounded. In the centre, on a catafalque, is a coffin with a young woman in white. Four great candles in the corners. On the right, almost in front of what we imagine the room to be, there is a single window, high and narrow, from which there can be seen <two distant mountains> between two distant mountains, a narrow strip of sea.

Beside the window, three young ladies keep vigil. The first is seated in front of the window her back against the candle above her on the right. The other two are seated on either side of the window.

It is night, and there is, as it were, a vague remainder of moonlight.



[Initial fragment of Jennings's translation of *O Marinheiro*, p.1; Jennings archive]

In the first sentence, Jennings omits the phrase *sem duvida* in what should have been translated as “a room *undoubtedly* in an old castle,” for instance. Leaving the inaccuracy of choosing “house” instead of “castle” aside, Jennings’s omission is problematic only when compared to the original. There should not be any doubts raised about what is being expressed by the phrase alone, “A room in an old house.” Yet, when compared to the Portuguese “Um quarto que é sem duvida num castello antigo,” one cannot help but wonder if Jennings’s version could imply the exact opposite: precisely that “with some doubt” such is the real location of the room. Although Pessoa’s clarification turns out to be a blatant lie, since by the end of the story we *do* doubt the room’s existence, Jennings’s omission is also a lie but in a different disguise. He strips the opening line of any verbs—truthful to this theater of no action—and the lie becomes more difficult to trace. There is technically no assertion of any action and, instead, we find a grammatically incomplete sentence that does not enclose a conclusive idea but rather an unfinished one. Unlike Pessoa’s description, Jennings’s initial lie seems to follow the same criteria behind his version of the sailor: images are built on words that remain unwritten, and these cannot be rebutted precisely because they were never said.

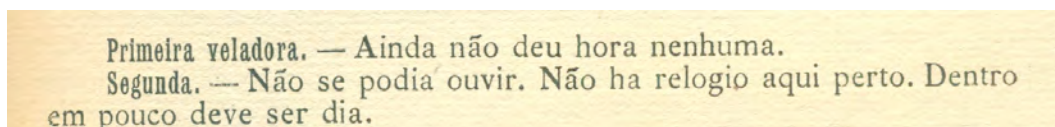
In the introduction, and in virtually the entire translation, Jennings maintains Pessoa’s circuitous syntax and translates sentences using the same periphrastic style full of compound sentences, commas, inserts after inserts, and ideas inside ideas—which never seems to be gratuitous in the original text, but rather a formalistic decision that mirrors the dream-within-a-dream structure of the storyline. It is worth noting that staying true to Pessoa’s sporadically convoluted syntax seems to be more complex to accomplish in English than in a Romance language. Although English allows the use of certain expletives and deictic structures, such as the always-reiterative Gallicized phrases that abound in Pessoa’s writing, these patterns are less frequent and more difficult to

incorporate in the more rigid structure of English's subject-predicate arrangement.

For example, let us compare the following sentences of Jennings's translation with the original Portuguese: "It is only in other lands that the sea is beautiful. That which we see always gives us longings for the one we shall never see." ("Só o mar das outras terras é que é bello. Aquelle que nós vemos dá-nos sempre saudades d'aquelle que não veremos nunca..." [PESSOA, 2015: 42]); "It is mountains that I am afraid of." ("Dos montes é que eu tenho medo" [PESSOA: 43]); and "What I was before I can't remember now." ("O que eu era outr'ora já não se lembra de quem sou" [PESSOA: 44]). In fact, in the last example, Jennings changes the real sense of the sentence ("I can't remember what I was" instead of "what I was cannot remember what I am") and, in turn, creates a distorted complement-subject structure that does not exist in the original text. But, overall, Jennings's urge to mirror Pessoa's syntax reveals a consciousness of linguistic inversion and circularity as a means to build a universe of intricate vantage points.

In other cases, however, Jennings changes relevant grammatical aspects, such as personal and possessive pronouns, which are significant not only because they have critical implications, but also because they are different from Pessoa's own English translation of some passages. One of the most emblematic examples is found in the beginning of the drama, shortly after the introduction. It is a fragment that Pessoa translated (possibly in 1917), subsequently located by Richard Zenith and published in *El marinero* (2015) and by Claudia J. Fischer in *Pessoa Plural: 1* (Spring 2012). Let us read the Portuguese and the two English versions:

Pessoa's Portuguese version:



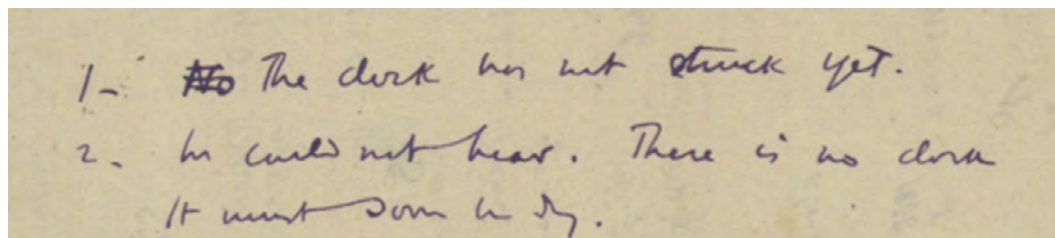
Primeira veladora. — Ainda não deu hora nenhuma.
Segunda. — Não se podia ouvir. Não ha relógio aqui perto. Dentro em pouco deve ser dia.

[“O Marinheiro,” in *Orpheu*, n.º 1, p. 29, 1915. Casa Fernando Pessoa MC/RES 82.1; detail]

Primeira veladora. – Ainda não deu hora nenhuma.

Segunda. – Não se podia ouvir. Não ha relógio aqui perto. Dentro em pouco deve ser dia.

Pessoa's English version:



1. ~~The~~ The clock has not struck yet.
2. he could not hear. There is no clock
It must soon be day.

[BNP/E3, 90-2-41v; detail]

- 1 – <No> The clock has not struck yet.
 2 – One could not hear. There is no clock
 It must soon be day.

Jennings's English version:

FIRST WATCHER) We haven't heard the time yet.
 SECOND - We wouldn't be able to hear it. There is no clock near
 here. Before long it should be light.

[Initial dialogue of Jennings's translation of *O Marinheiro*, p. 1; detail]

FIRST WATCHER – We haven't heard the time yet.
 SECOND – We wouldn't be able to hear it. There is no clock near here. Before long it
 should be light.

Jennings insists on personalizing the first two sentences, although Pessoa's Portuguese and English versions have impersonal constructions. The subject of the first sentence is tacit in Portuguese, while in English it is an object (the clock). As for the second watcher's line, it remains impersonal in both cases, with an impersonal subject in Portuguese, and the undetermined gender-neutral "one" in English. Yet, in the lines of the first and second watcher, Jennings changes the subject and inserts "we" with reference to the watchers. So, in Jennings's *Marinheiro*, not only do we find a different title, but also a story that literally begins with a straightforward appeal to the self. In Jennings's version, the two actions that are mentioned (not hearing the time and not being able to hear it) are a direct result of the watchers themselves, a notion that is not present in Pessoa's versions. Jennings's initial stress on the active voice (both grammatical and metaphorical) deepens the story's contradiction: the watchers' alleged autonomy in their actions soon proves to be false.

Albeit rich in paradoxical meaning and therefore true to the spirit of Pessoa and this drama, Jennings's decision to relinquish the sentence's impersonal subject by using "we" instead of "one" ignores a deeper level of irony that pervades Pessoa's writings: a cunning use of pronouns as a formalistic expression of heteronymism⁴. Subject-verb disagreement comes as a typically Pessoaan attribute, and the link between this person-number disorder and the singleness-plurality relationship in his heteronyms does not seem to be arbitrary.

⁴ Heteronymism—the author's depersonalization into fictitious authors with lives and literary styles of their own—makes Pessoa's use of pronouns a pertinent field of study, due to a likely correspondence with his philosophy of plurality. As shown by Jerónimo Pizarro and Patricio Ferrari in *Eu Sou Uma Antologia*, published by Tinta-da-China in 2013, Pessoa created 136 fictitious authors.

Many critics ⁵ have regarded the watchers as an early expression of heteronymism, as characters that seem to melt into one another (they rarely finish an idea individually) despite their distinctive, yet impersonal identities. Pessoa's own translation maintains his ironic use of grammar: "one," as the most basic meaning of singleness and unity, is precisely the pronoun used in English to express an impersonal notion of a collective and undetermined subject. Thus, it is unsurprisingly Pessoa's best choice when it comes to encompassing the paradoxical spirit of the watchers and the oxymoron of their singular collectivity.

At some points, Jennings himself gets entangled amidst this plurality-individuality confusion, yet in other cases he seems to be well aware of this whirlwind of pronouns and possessive adjectives. He is oblivious to some slips, like writing "stretched on *my* back on the beach" instead of "*his* back", according to the original: "Cada hora elle (...) estendido na praia, de costas" (PESSOA, 2015: 45). He corrects some others, and at the same time he intriguingly decides not to cross out every blunder, as in the sentence: "Weren't we [→Weren't you] going to say what we were," whereas the original says: "Não nos ieis dizer quem ereis?" (PESSOA, 2015: 44).

Semantically, Jennings's translation is full of divergences. As if parodying Pessoa himself, Jennings reinvents lexical boundaries and reinterprets concepts that are key to the story. There are several variations of terms, but we will focus on those associated to three of the most important themes throughout the story: falsehood, the soul, and the act of watching. These are essential ideas that appear repeatedly, and, although Pessoa maintains a lexical uniformity, Jennings does not adhere to a single term.

Jennings swings between the words "false" and "wrong" whenever the original text says *falso*, as in the following examples: "É bello e é sempre falso" is translated as "It's beautiful and always wrong," and "É um modo tão falso de nos esquecermos!" (PESSOA, 2015: 41) as "It's the wrong way to forget ourselves." But then he translates "Não é inteiramente falso, porque sem duvida nada é inteiramente falso." (PESSOA: 45) as "It is not entirely false because doubtless nothing is entirely false..." It is not clear why Jennings would have ruled out the cognate in the first two cases, even more so in exchange for a word with a moral

⁵ David Jackson suggests that *O Marinheiro* is Pessoa's foundational seed, since it introduces themes that would be explored afterwards, such as the voyage, dreams, stillness, and absence, as well as a burgeoning idea of depersonalization. See Jackson, K. David (2010). "Waiting for the Ancient Mariner: A Theater of Immanence", *Adverse Genres in Fernando Pessoa* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pg. 37-59. In turn, Luiz Henrique Barbosa and Raimunda Alvim Lopes Bessa suggest that the watchers of *O Marinheiro* are a metaphor of language as an entity built collectively and not individually, an idea that precedes the definition of heteronyms. See Barbosa, Henrique Luiz and Bessa, Raimunda Alvim Lopes (2007). "O Marinheiro: Um Drama Pós-moderno?", *Fernando Pessoa e o Surgimento do Sujeito Literário*. Organized by Lélia Parreira Duarte. Belo Horizonte: Cadernos Cespuc de Pesquisa, pg. 144-158.

nuance that is not necessarily implied in “false.” Similar hesitations are seen in the array of words he uses to translate the term *espreitar*, which in Portuguese can range from “contemplate” to “observe without being seen”. In fact, Jennings is well aware of the word’s broadness and vacillates in certain fragments, such as: “I lived among rocks and watched [→peeped at] the sea.” Later on, he even introduces a third term with the same meaning: “Life is peering at us all the time.”

The previous decisions are significant because they are concepts that are reiterated throughout this drama and Pessoa’s writings. The concept of falsehood versus truth pervades most of Pessoa’s work, so Jennings’s decision to introduce a slight change in meaning (by not establishing the same opposition but rather a dichotomy between correct versus wrong) is not entirely accurate. Nonetheless, it is still in line with a concern we have seen in other Pessoaan texts such as “O Banqueiro Anarchista”: the supposed disjunction between nature (i.e. truth) and human correctness. The variations of watching, peeping, and peering are also significant, because Jennings’s initial preference for the term “to watch,” as seen in the first example, could have been associated with his version of the title. It could also manifest the ambivalence—and, in turn, the falsehood—of the chosen title: surrounded by thick castle brick, these so-called “watchers” have barely anything to look through besides a single, narrow window. Hence, what they are and how they seem to relate to the life that is happening outside their tower seems to be closer to Jennings’s legitimate hesitation. These watchers are not able to actually watch; instead, they can merely aspire to peer through their window and their pretend lives.

This leads us to the final case of lexical uncertainty, which seems to be a consequence of the ambiguous words used to identify the three women: the terms used when referring to their souls. The Portuguese *alma* has four different translations throughout Jennings’s text—“soul,” “inside,” “spirit,” and “heart”—as seen in the following examples (variations are shown in italics): “There are waves in my *soul*.”; “I spend Decembers *inside me*.”; “This warm air is cold inside, in that part that ouches the *spirit*.”; and “Merely to think of hearing you touches music in my *heart*.” This multiple interpretation of the soul has, in turn, various effects. On one hand, it makes a nebulous concept even more imprecise; on the other, it provides the idea with a materiality it does not originally have. Especially when choosing the words “inside” and “heart” (which can be effortlessly used both in physical and metaphysical contexts), the concept of soul gets lost halfway between two worlds. Perhaps Jennings’s uneasy translation of “soul” suggests how ill-defined the concept is, and how all attempts to encompass it within one word are fruitless. All in all, it does point out the dubious existence of the watchers, who, unable to distinguish between their souls

and hearts, become more prone to ignore the limit between their ethereality and earthliness, between reality and dreams, and ultimately, between life and death.

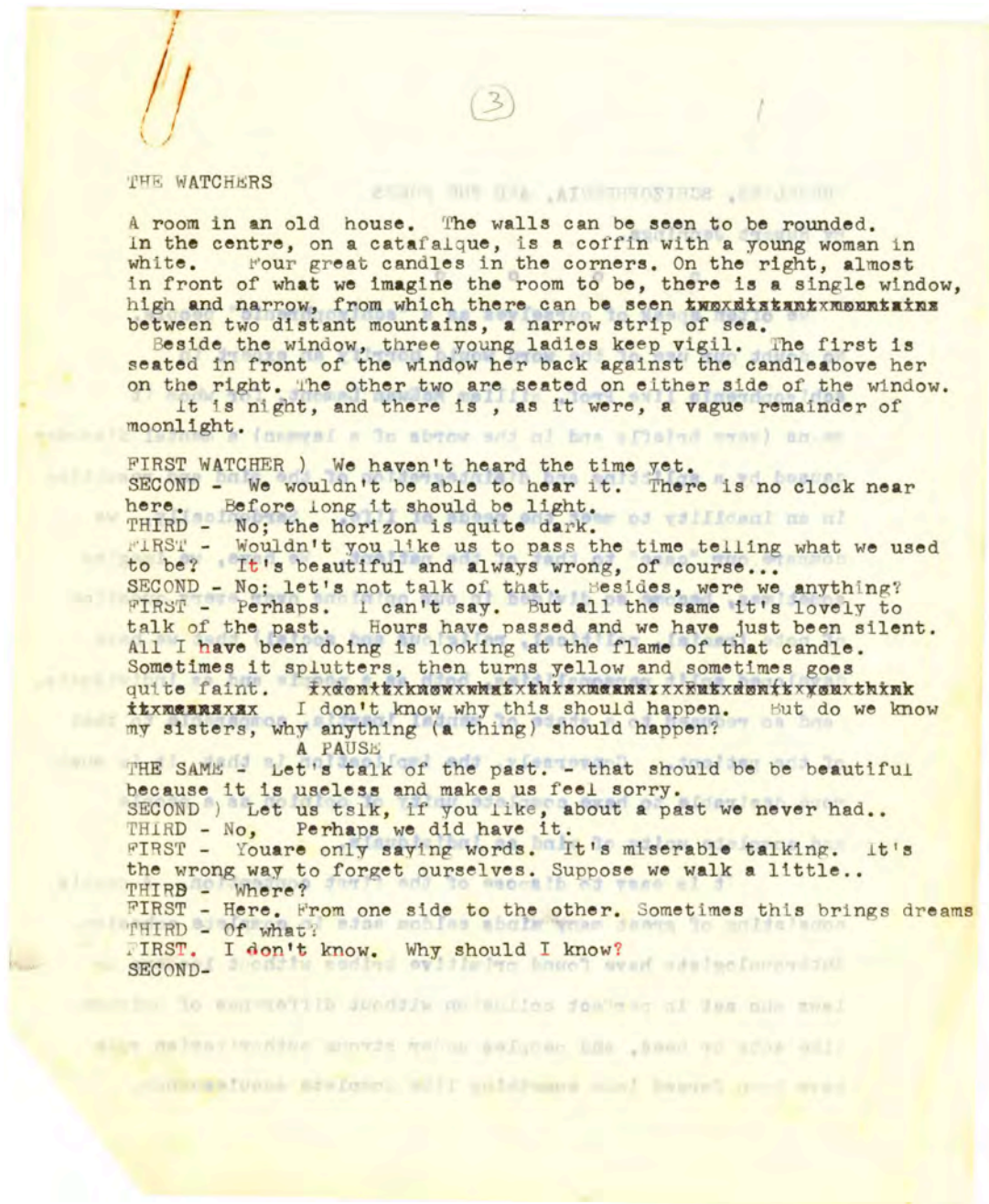
Through his profusion of variations, Jennings builds a translation of masked layers and offers a spirited text that seems to be well aware of he who is being translated: the ultimate master of masks. Jennings's version does grow apart from Pessoa's, but it also seems to treat language with a careful Pessoaan awareness. It must also be noted that although Jennings's translation shows evidence of multiple readings and proofreadings, there is nothing that allows us to consider it a final one. In fact, Jennings's decisions to maintain more than one option in some cases of hesitancy, and to offer a text with other potential texts inside, is perhaps the ultimate Pessoaan attribute of his translation. Thus, at the very least, this incomplete text is a faithful translation in the sense that it leaves the watchers' circumference unenclosed, and, although it alters our vantage points, it does not fully destroy the line drawn on the stage: a circle that will never become a full circle, because it meets a narrow—but infinite—window that faces the sea.

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Annexes

I. *Unpublished. Undated. Seven pages of The Watchers, a partial English translation by Hubert Jennings of O Marinheiro, written in Portuguese by Fernando Pessoa and published in Orpheu 1 (Lisbon: Monteiro & C^a, 1915). The sides of the papers with the translation are facsimiled below; the other sides contain parts of the following unpublished essays by Jennings: "Ourselves, Schizophrenia, and the Poets"; "Fernando Pessoa | What a Portuguese Poet Can Mean to Us as South Africans."; "Fernando Pessoa—And Us."; "Fernando Pessoa | What Portuguese Poet Can Mean for Us."*



2

SECOND - All the country here is very dull. Where I lived before it was much less dull. In the evening I sewed sitting at the window. The window looked out on the sea and at times there was an island in the distance. Very often I stopped sewing; looked out at the sea and forgot about living. I don't know if I was happy. Just now I shall start to be something I never was...

FIRST - Outside of here, I never saw the sea. There, from that window is the only place where the sea can be seen, and you can see so little of it. Is the sea in other lands very beautiful?

SECOND - It is only in other lands that the sea is beautiful. That which we see always gives us longings for the one we shall never see. tell our

FIRST - Weren't we saying that we were going to talk about the past?

SECOND - No, we won't tell it.

THIRD - Why is there no clock in this room?

SECOND - I don't know ... But like this, without a clock everything is more remote and mysterious. The night belongs more to oneself. Who knows if we would be able to talk like this if we knew what time it was?

FIRST - My sister, everything in me is sad. I spend Decembers inside me. I am trying not to look through the window... I know mountains can be seen there in the distance ... I was happy once on the other side of the mountains. I was little. I gathered flowers all day and begged before I went to sleep that they wouldn't take them away. I don't know what there is of irreparable about this that makes me want to cry. It was far from here that this could have been... When will it become light?

THIRD - What does it matter? The day comes in the same way always. always, always, always...

SECOND - Let us tell stories to one another. I don't know any stories but that won't ~~hurt~~ hurt us. Only living does that. Hardly the fringe of our dresses touches on life. No, don't get up. That would be a gesture, and every gesture interrupts a dream...

For the moment I haven't any dream whatever, but I like to think I could be having one. Why don't we speak of the past?

FIRST - We decided not to. The day will break just now and we will be sorry if we do. Dreams go to sleep when it becomes light. The past is nothing but a dream. Besides I don't know what a dream is. If I look at the present very hard, it seems as though it is already past. What is any thing? How is it it passes?

Ah, let's talk, my sisters, talk loudly, all talk together... ~~Sister~~ The quietness is beginning to get a body, begins to be a thing I can feel it wrapping me up like a fog.... Talk, talk!

SECOND - Why? I look at you both and then I don't see you. It seems to me that the gaps between us are growing bigger. I have to give up the idea that I can see you through having arrived at seeing you. This warm air is cold inside, in that part that touches the spirit. I ought to feel now impossible hands going through my hair - it is the gesture with which sirens speak - (Crosses her hands over her knees. Pause). A little while ago when I was not

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not thinking of anything I was thinking about the past.

1st. ~~THIRD~~ - I too must have been thinking about my ...

THIRD - I didn't know what I was thinking... about the past of o
others perhaps... about the past of marvellous people who never
lived... Near my mother's house ran a little river... why ~~did it~~ run
should it run , and why shouldn't run farther away or nearer?
Is there any reason for anything to be what it is? A reason for
it as true and real as my hands?

SECOND - Hands are not true and real. They are mysteries that
inhabit our lives (that live with us). Sometimes when I look at
my hands I have a fear of God ... There is no wind moving the
flames of the candles, yet look, they are moving. They are bending -
toward where? What a pity if someone could reply!
What are they bowing to? What a pity no one can tell us! I feel
a longing within me to hear the barbaric music that must now be being
played in the palaces of other continents . It is always something
faraway with me... Perhaps because, when I was a child, I ran after
the waves ~~at the seaside~~ at the seaside. (sea shore) I lived
a whole life in a nutshell among the rocks at low-tide when the sea
appears to have folded its arms on its breast and gone to sleep
like the statue of an angel that nobody looks at any more.

THIRD - Your words remind me of something...

SECOND - It is perhaps because they are not true... I hardly know
what I am saying... I repeat them following a voice I do not hear
but which still keeps on whispering... But I must really have lived
by the seashore. Every time a thing waves, I love it. There are
waves in my soul. When I walk, I rock myself like a baby. I
would like to walk now. I don't do it because it is not worth
while doing anything - above all what I want to do. It is
mountains that I am afraid of. It is impossible that they should
be so stopped and great. They must have a secret of stone that
refuses to recognize what they are. If, leaning out from this window,
I could stop seeing mountains, someone would be leaning out from my
soul a moment in whom I could feel myself happy.....

FIRST - For my part, I love mountains. This side of ~~them~~ ~~all~~
all mountains life is always ugly. On the other side, where my mother
lives, we used to sit in the shade of the tamarinds and talk about
going to see other countries. Everything there was long and happy
like the song of two birds, one on each side of the road. There
were no glades in the forest except in our thoughts. And our dreams
had a different calm from that which the trees threw upon the ground.
It must have been like this that we lived there, I and I do not know
who else besides... Tell me that this was true so that I do not have
to burst into tears...

SECOND - I lived among rocks and watched the sea (peeped at)
The hem of my dress was cool and salty flapping against my bare legs.
I was small and barbarous. Today I am afraid of having been so.
Now it seems that I am sleeping. Talk to me about fairies. I never
heard from anyone ~~about~~ talk about them. The sea was greater by
bringing thoughts of them. In life, it is annoying to be small.

Were you happy, my sister?

FIRST - I commence at this moment to have been so in the past. For the rest, all that was passed in the shadow. The trees lived it more than I. Nothing came about for which I was scarcely hoping. And you, sister, why don't you talk?

THIRD - I have a horror that in a little while I will have ~~said~~ already said what I am going to tell you. My present words, hardly as I say them, will then belong to the past, will remain outside of me, I don't know where, but rigid and fatal. I speak, and think of this in my throat (the words form in my throat) and the words appear to me to be people. I have a greater fear of what I am. I feel in my hand, I don't know how, the key of an unknown door. And all of me becomes an amulet or monstrance which had become conscious of itself. That is why it terrifies me like going through a dark forest, to go through the mystery of speaking. And, in the end, who knows if I am like this or whether it is this I really feel?

FIRST - It worries a lot to try to know what is felt when we take notice of what is in us! Even living can worry a lot when we notice it. Let's talk, however, without noticing we exist. Talk on, though, without noticing that you exist. Weren't we going to say what we were. (Weren't you)

THIRD - What I was before I can't remember now. Poor happy thing that I was! I lived among the shadow of branches, and all being is ~~is~~ ~~is~~ ~~is~~ interlacing leaves. When I go out into the sun my shadow is cool. I spent the flight of my days beside fountains (springs) ~~in~~ where I moistened my (tranquil) fingers when I was dreaming of life (when life seemed far away as a dream) (the tips of my tranquil fingers) Sometimes on the banks (shores) (margins) of lakes, I leant over and gazed at myself. When I smiled my teeth were mysteries in the water. They had a smile which was theirs alone and independent of ~~my~~ mine. It was always without any reason that I smiled. Speak to me of death, of the end of all, so that I may have a reason for remembering...

FIRST - Don't let us speak of anything - anything It is colder but why is it that it is colder? It is not good for it to be colder than it is. Why is it that we have to talk? It is better to sing I don't know why... A song, when people sing at night, is a happy, unfrightened person who suddenly comes into the room and warms it and consoles us. I could sing you a song that we used to sing in my home in the past. (long ago) Why don't you want me to sing it to you?

THIRD - It's not worth the trouble, my sister, .. When someone sings I am not myself (I can't be with myself) I am unable to remember myself. And afterwards all my past becomes different and I find myself crying for a dead life which I never lived. It is always too late to sing just as it is always too late not to sing...

FIRST - It will soon be day. Let us be quiet. That is how life wishes it. Near my house there was a lake. I used go and sit by the edge on a tree trunk which fell almost into the water. I used to sit on the end and wet my feet in the water, sticking my toes into it. After that I used to keep on staring at the tips of my toes, but it was not just to see them. I don't know why but I have the feeling about this lake that it never existed. Remembering it is like not remembering anything. Who knows why I say this and if it was I who lived what I remember?

THIRD - By the sea we are sad when we dream, We cannot be what we want to be because what we want to be we want it always to be in the past. When the wave breaks and the foam hisses, it seems there are tiny voices speaking. The foam appears to be cool only to one who judges it to be so. All is many and we know nothing. Do you want me to tell you what I was dreaming of by the sea?

FIRST - You can tell it, my sister; but nothing in us needs you to tell it. If it is beautiful, I am sorry already of having come to hear it. If it is not beautiful, wait... tell it only after having altered.

SECOND - I am going to tell it to you. It is not entirely false because doubtless nothing is entirely false.. It ought to have been thus.... One day when I was reclining on top of a cold rock and had forgotten that I had mother or father and what had happened in my childhood and other days - on this day I saw in the distance, like something I only thought I saw, the vague passing of a sail.

Then it stopped. When I came to myself I saw that already I had this dream of mine.. I don't know where it began. And I never turned to see another sail. None of the sails of ships which sail out here from a port are like that one, even when it is moonlight and the ships pass slowly in the distance.

FIRST - I can see a ship in the distance from the window. It is perhaps the one you saw.

SECOND - No, my sister: that one you see must be seeking some port or other. The one I saw could not be seeking a port...

FIRST - Why do you answer me. It could be. I didn't see any ship from the window. I was wanting to see one and told you about it to ease my thought. Go on telling us about the dream you had by the sea.

SECOND - I dreamed of a sailor who had been wrecked on a distant island. On this isle there were some hirsute palms, a few only, and some vague birds flying over them. I did not see if any ever rested on them. There the sailor lived after having managed to save himself from the wreck. As he had no means of returning to his country and that every time he thought of it he suffered, he resolved to dream of a country he had never had. He set out to imagine for himself and pretend that it was his another country, another land with other kinds of landscape and other people, and another way of passing through the streets and leaning out of windows. Every hour he constructed in dream this false fatherland and he

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never stopped dreaming; by day in the narrow shade of the great palm-trees, silhouetted fringed with points, on the hot and sandy ground; by night, stretched on my back on the beach, and not noticing the stars.

FIRST - There should have been a tree which spangled my stretched out hands in the shade of a dream like this!

THIRD - Let her speak. Don't interrupt her. She knows words that the sirens have taught her. I am sleeping so that I can listen to her. Go on telling us, my sister. My heart aches for not being you when you were dreaming by the sea.

SECOND - For years and years, day by day, the sail built up a continuing dream of his new native land. Every day he put another dream stone on this impossible edifice. Before long he had a country that he had now passed through many times. He remembered thousands of hours passed along its coasts. He knew the colour of the sunsets in a bay in the North, and how soothing it was to enter, at night, with the mind leaning on the murmur of water that the ship opened, in a great port of the South, where happy perhaps he spent his supposed boyhood. ...

A PAUSE

FIRST - My sister, why are you silent?

SECOND - I ought not to say more. Life is peering at us all the time. All time is maternal for dreams, but it is necessary (it is best) not to know it. If I say any more, I begin to

separate from myself and hear myself speak. This makes me feel sorry for myself and the heart feels too much. (feel my heart too much). I feel then a tearful wish to take it in my arms and comfort it like a child.

FIRST - Keep on, my sister, keep on telling us. Do not stop recounting to us your dream or take note that days will break. The day never breaks for those who lay their heads on the bosom of dreamed hours. Do not wring your hands. It makes a noise like a furtive serpent. Tell us more of your dream. It is so true that it has no meaning at all. Merely to think of hearing you touches music in my heart.

SECOND - Very well, I will tell you more of it. Even I need to tell you it. While I tell it to you, it is to myself I am telling it too. There are three of us listening. (Suddenly, looking at the coffin) Three, no... I do not know ... I don't know how many..

THIRD - You must not speak like that.. Tell your story quickly, tell us again. Don't talk of how many could be listening. We never know how many things live and see and listen. Go back to your dream. The sailor. What was the sailor dreaming?

SECOND - (more softly, in a very slow voice) First he created the landscapes, then he created the cities; then he created the streets and the alleys, one by one, chiselling them out of the material of his spirit - one by one the streets, ward by ward, even to the stonework of the quays where he created later the ports. The streets

THE WATCHERS.⁶

[1]⁷ A room in an old house. The walls can be seen to be rounded. In the centre, on a catafalque, is a coffin with a young woman in white. Four great candles in the corners. On the right, almost in front of what we imagine the room to be, there is a single window, high and narrow, from which there can be seen <two distant mountains> between two distant mountains, a narrow strip of sea.

Beside the window, three young ladies keep vigil. The first is seated in front of the window her back against the candle above her on the right. The other two are seated on either side of the window.

It is night, and there is, as it were, a vague remainder of moonlight.

FIRST WATCHER – We haven't heard the time yet.

SECOND – We wouldn't be able to hear it. There is no clock near here. Before long it should be light.

THIRD – No; the horizon is quite dark.

FIRST – Wouldn't you like us to pass the time telling what we used to be? It's beautiful and always wrong, of course...

SECOND – No; let's not talk of that. Besides, were we anything?

FIRST – Perhaps. I can't say. But all the same it's lovely to talk of the past. Hours have passed and we have just been silent. All I have been doing is looking at the flame of that candle. Sometimes it splutters, then turns yellow and sometimes goes quite faint. <I don't know what this means. But don't you think it means s> I don't know why this should happen. But do we know my sisters, why anything [→ a thing] should happen?

A PAUSE

THE SAME – Let's talk of the past. – That should be beautiful because it is useless and makes us feel sorry.

SECOND – Let us talk, if you like, about a past we never had...

THIRD – No, perhaps we did have it.

FIRST – You are only saying words. It's miserable talking. It's the wrong way to forget ourselves. Suppose we walk a little...

THIRD – Where?

FIRST – Here. From one side to the other. Sometimes this brings dreams.

THIRD – Of what?

FIRST – I don't know. Why should I know?

[A PAUSE]⁸

[2] SECOND – All the country here is very dull. Where I lived before it was much less dull. In the evening I sewed sitting at the window. The window looked out on the sea and at times there was an island in the distance. Very often I stopped sewing; looked out at the sea and forgot

⁶ Besides the page number ("1"), there is the figure "3" written and circled on the top margin, perhaps suggesting that this translation would feature as the third element of a bigger project.

⁷ The document presents the page numbers on the top right margins; we indicate those numbers within brackets, in order to avoid interrupting the narrative flow.

⁸ This pause is not indicated in the Jennings's typescript, though it exists in the original by Pessoa; whenever this is the case, we will indicate the pauses within brackets.

about living. I don't know if I was happy. Just now I shall start to be something I never was...

FIRST – Outside of here, I never saw the sea. There, from that window is the only place where the sea can be seen, and you can see so little of it. Is the sea in other lands very beautiful?

SECOND – It is only in other lands that the sea is beautiful. That which we see always gives us longings for the one we shall never see.

[A PAUSE]

FIRST – Weren't we saying that we were going to talk [↑ tell] about the [↑our] past?

SECOND – No, we won't tell it.

THIRD – Why is there no clock in this room?

SECOND – I don't know... But like this, without a clock everything is more remote and mysterious. The night belongs more to oneself. Who knows if we would be able to talk like this if we knew what time it was?

FIRST – My sister, everything in me is sad. I spend Decembers inside me. I am trying not to look through the window... I know mountains can be seen there in the distance... I was happy once on the other side of the mountains. I was little. I gathered flowers all day and begged before I went to sleep that they wouldn't take them away. I don't know what there is of irreparable about this that makes me want to cry. It was far from here that this could have been... When will it become light?

THIRD – What does it matter? The day comes in the same way always, always, always, always...

[A PAUSE]

SECOND – Let us tell stories to one another. I don't know any stories but that won't hurt us. Only living does that. Hardly the fringe of our dresses touches on life. No, don't get up. That would be a gesture, and every gesture interrupts a dream... For the moment I haven't any dream whatever, but I like to think I could be having one. Why don't we speak of the past?

FIRST – We decided not to. The day will break just now and we will be sorry if we do. Dreams go to sleep when it becomes light. The past is nothing but a dream. Besides I don't know what a dream is. If I look at the present very hard, it seems as though it is already past. What is any thing? How is it passes? Ah, let's talk, my sisters, talk loudly, all talk together... <Silen> The quietness is beginning to get a body, begins to be a thing I can feel it wrapping me up like a fog... Talk, talk!

SECOND – Why? I look at you both and then I don't see you. It seems to me that the gaps between us are growing bigger. I have to give up the idea that I can see you through having arrived at seeing you. This warm air is cold inside, in that part that ouches the spirit. I ought to feel now impossible hands going through my hair – it is the gesture with which sirens speak – (Crosses her hands over her knees. Pause). A little while ago when I was [3] not thinking of anything I was thinking about the past.

<THIRD> FIRST – I too must have been thinking about my...

THIRD – I didn't know what I was thinking... about the past of others perhaps... about the past of marvellous people who never lived... Near my mother's house ran a little river... why <did it run> should it run, and why shouldn't run farther away or nearer? Is there any reason for anything to be what it is? A reason for it as true and real as my hands?

SECOND – Hands are not true and real. They are mysteries that inhabit our lives [→ that live with us]. Sometimes when I look at my hands I have a fear of God... There is no wind moving the flames of the candles, yet look, they are moving. They are bending – toward where? What a pity if someone could reply! What are they bowing to? What a pity no one can tell us! I feel a

longing within me to hear the barbaric music that must now be being played in the palaces of other continents. It is always something faraway with me... Perhaps because, when I was a child, I ran after the waves <at low tide> at the seaside [Ⓜsea shore]. I lived a whole life in a nutshell among the rocks at low-tide when the sea appears to have folded its arms on its breasts and gone to sleep like the statue of an angel that nobody looks at any more.

THIRD – Your words remind me of something...

SECOND – It is perhaps because they are not true... I hardly know what I am saying... I repeat them following a voice I do not hear but which still keeps on whispering... But I must really have lived by the seashore. Every time a thing waves, I love it. There are waves in my soul. When I walk, I rock myself like a baby. I would like to walk now. I don't do it because it is not worthwhile doing anything – above all what I want to do. It is mountains that I am afraid of. It is impossible that they should be so stopped and great. They must have a secret of stone that refuses to recognize what they are. If, leaning out from this window, I could stop seeing mountains, someone would be leaning out from my soul a moment in whom I could feel myself happy...

FIRST – For my part, I love mountains. This side of <them all moun> all mountains life is always ugly. On the other side, where my mother lives, we used to sit in the shade of the tamarinds and talk about going to see other countries. Everything there was long and happy like the song of two birds, one on each side of the road. There were no glades in the forest except in our thoughts. And our dreams had a different calm from that which the trees threw upon the ground. It must have been like this that we lived there, I and I do not know who else besides... Tell me that this was true so that I do not have to burst into tears...

SECOND – I lived among rocks and watched [→ peeped at] the sea. The hem of my dress was cool and salty flapping against my bare legs. I was small and barbarous. Today I am afraid of having been so. Now it seems that I am sleeping. Talk to me about fairies. I never heard from anyone <about> talk about them. The sea was greater by bringing thoughts of them. In life, it is annoying to be small. [5]⁹ Were you happy, my sister?

FIRST – I commence at this moment to have been so in the past. For the rest, all that was passed in the shadow. The trees lived it more than I. Nothing came about for which I was scarcely hoping. And you, sister, why don't you talk?

THIRD – I have a horror that in a little while I will have <said> already said what I am going to tell you. My present words, hardly as I say them, will then belong to the past, will remain outside of me, I don't know where, but rigid and fatal. I speak, and think of this in my throat [→ the words form in my throat] and the words appear to me to be people. I have a greater fear of what I am. I feel in my hand, I don't know how, the key of an unknown door. And all of me becomes an amulet or monstrance which had become conscious of itself. That is why it terrifies me like going through a dark forest, to go through the mystery of speaking. And, in the end, who knows if I am like this or whether it is this I really feel?

FIRST – It worries a lot to try to know what is felt when we take notice of what is in us! Even living can worry a lot when we notice it. Let's talk, however, without noticing we exist. [→ Talk on, though, without noticing that you exist.] Weren't we [→ Weren't you] going to say what we were.

THIRD – What I was before I can't remember now. Poor happy thing that I was! I lived among the shadow of branches, and all being is <leaves which> interlacing leaves. When I go out into the sun my shadow is cool. I spent the flight of my days beside fountains [→ springs] <in> where I moistened my tranquil fingers [→ the tips of my tranquil fingers] when I was dreaming of life [→ when life seemed far away as a dream]. Sometimes on the banks [→ shores] [→ margins] of lakes, I leant over and gazed at myself. When I smiled my teeth were mysteries in the water.

⁹ Note that no page is missing, but the page numbering is incorrect (it goes in the order 1, 2, 3, 5, 4, 5', 6) – which speaks to the unfinished state of this translation.

They had a smile which was theirs alone <and> independent of <me> mine. It was always without any reason that I smiled. Speak to me of death, of the end of all, so that I may have a reason for remembering...

FIRST – Don't let us speak of anything – anything. It is colder but why is it that it is colder? It is not good for it to be colder than it is. Why is it that we have to talk? It is better to sing I don't know why... A song, when people sing at night, is a happy, unfrightened person who suddenly comes into the room and warms it and consoles us. I could sing you a song that we used to sing in my home in the past [→ long ago]. Why don't you want me to sing it to you?

THIRD – It's not worth the trouble, my sister... When someone sings I am not myself [→ I can't be with myself]. I am unable to remember myself. And afterwards all my past becomes different and I find myself crying for a dead life which I never lived. It is always too late to sing just as it is always too late not to sing...

[A PAUSE]

[4] FIRST – It will soon be day. Let us be quiet. That is how life wishes it. Near my house there was a lake. I used to go and sit by the edge on a tree trunk which fell almost into the water. I used to sit on the end and wet my feet in the water, sticking my toes into it. After that I used to keep on staring at the tips of my toes, but it was not just to see them. I don't know why but I have the feeling about this lake that it never existed. Remembering it is like not remembering anything. Who knows why I say this and if it was I who lived what I remember?

THIRD¹⁰ – By the sea we are sad when we dream. We cannot be what we want to be because what we want to be we want it always to be in the past. When the wave breaks and the foam hisses, it seems there are tiny voices speaking. The foam appears to be cool only to one who judges it to be so. All is many and we know nothing. Do you want me to tell you what I was dreaming of by the sea?

FIRST – You can tell it, my sister; but nothing in us needs you to tell it. If it is beautiful, I am sorry already of having come to hear it. If it is not beautiful, wait... tell it only after having altered.

SECOND – I am going to tell it to you. It is not entirely false because doubtless nothing is entirely false... It ought to have been thus... One day when I was reclining on top of a cold rock and had forgotten that I had mother or father and what had happened in my childhood and other days – on this day I saw in the distance, like something I only thought I saw, the vague passing of a sail. Then it stopped. When I came to myself I saw that already I had this dream of mine... I don't know where it began. And I never turned to see another sail. None of the sails of ships which sail out here from a port are like that one, even when it is moonlight and the ships pass slowly in the distance.

FIRST – I can see a ship in the distance from the window. It is perhaps the one you saw.

SECOND – No, my sister: that one you see must be seeking some port or other. The one I saw could not be seeking a port...

FIRST – Why do you answer me. It could be. I didn't see any ship from the window. I was wanting to see one and told you about it to ease my thought. Go on telling us about the dream you had by the sea.

SECOND – I dreamed of a sailor who had been wrecked on a distant island. On this isle there were some hirsute palms, a few only, and some vague birds flying over them. I did not see if any ever rested on them. There the sailor lived after having managed to save himself from the wreck. As he had no means of returning to his country and that every time he thought of it he suffered, he resolved to dream of a country he had never had. He set out to imagine for himself

¹⁰ In the original published by Pessoa, these lines were spoken by the "SECOND."

and pretend that it was his another country, another land with other kinds of landscape and other people, and another way of passing through the streets and leaning out of windows. Every hour he constructed in dream this false fatherland and he [5] never stopped dreaming; by day in the narrow shade of the great palm-trees, silhouetted fringed with points, on the hot and sandy ground; by night, stretched on my back on the beach, and not noticing the stars.

FIRST – There should have been a tree which spangled my stretched out hands in the shade of a dream like this!

THIRD – Let her speak. Don't interrupt her. She knows words that the sirens have taught her. I am sleeping so that I can listen to her. Go on telling us, my sister. My heart aches for not being you when you were dreaming by the sea.

SECOND – For years and years, day by day, the sailor built up a continuing dream of his new native land. Every day he put another dream stone on this impossible edifice. Before long he had a country that he had now passed through many times. He remembered thousands of hours passed along its coasts. He knew the colour of the sunsets in a bay in the North, and how soothing it was to enter, at night, with the mind leaning on the murmur of water that the ship opened, in a great port of the South, where happy perhaps he spent his supposed boyhood...

A PAUSE

FIRST – My sister, why <do> are you silent?

SECOND – I ought not to say more. Life is peering at us all the time. All time is maternal for dreams, but it is necessary [→ it is best] not to know it. If I say any more, I begin to [6] separate from myself and hear myself speak. This makes me feel sorry for myself and the heart feels too much. [→ feel my heart too much.] I feel then a tearful wish to take it in my arms and comfort it like a child.

FIRST – Keep on, my sister, keep on telling us. Do not stop recounting to us your dream or take note that days will break. The day never breaks for those who lay their heads on the bosom of dreamed hours. Do not wring your hands. It makes a noise like a furtive serpent. Tell us more of your dream. It is so true that it has no meaning at all. Merely to think of hearing you touches music in my heart.

SECOND – Very well, I will tell you more of it. Even I need to tell you it. While I tell it to you, it is to myself I am telling it too. There are three of us listening. (Suddenly, looking at the coffin) Three, no... I do not know... I don't know how many...

THIRD – You must not speak like that... Tell you story quickly, tell us again. Don't talk of how many could be listening. We never know how many things live and see and listen. Go back to your dream. The sailor. What was the sailor dreaming?

SECOND – (more softly, in a very slow voice) First he created the landscapes, then he created the cities; then he created the streets and the alleys, one by one, chiselling them out of the material of his spirit – one by one the streets, ward by ward, even to the stonework of the quays where he created later the ports. The streets []¹¹

¹¹ The typescript ends here—and no other pages were located in the Jennings archive.

II. Twelve pages of *O Marinheiro* by Fernando Pessoa, published in *Orpheu* 1 (Lisbon: Monteiro & C^a, 1915: 27-39); p. 28, being blank (the verso of the title page) is not facsimiled here.



Um quarto que é sem duvida num castello antigo. Do quarto vê-se que é circular. Ao centro ergue-se, sobre uma eça, um caixão com uma donzella, de branco. Quatro tochas aos cantos. A direita, quasi em frente a quem imagina o quarto, ha uma unica janella, alta e estreita, dando para onde só se vê, entre dois montes longinquos, um pequeno espaço de mar.

Do lado da janella velam trez donzellas. A primeira está sentada em frente á janella, de costas contra a tocha de cima da direita. As outras duas estão sentadas uma de cada lado da janella.

É noite e ha como que um resto vago de luar.

Primelra veladora. — Ainda não deu hora nenhuma.

Segunda. — Não se podia ouvir. Não ha relógio aqui perto. Dentro em pouco deve ser dia.

Tercelra. — Não: o horizonte é negro.

Primelra. — Não desejaes, minha irmã, que nos entretenhemos contando o que fômos? É bello e é sempre falso...

Segunda. — Não, não fallemos d'isso. De resto, fômos nós alguma cousa?

Primelra. — Talvez. Eu não sei. Mas, ainda assim, sempre é bello fallar do passado... As horas teem cahido e nós temos guardado silencio. Por mim, tenho estado a olhar para a chamma d'aquella vela. Às vezes treme, outras torna-se mais amarella, outras vezes empallidece. Eu não sei porque é que isso se dá. Mas sabemos nós, minhas irmãs, porque se dá qualquer cousa?...

(uma pausa)

A mesma. — Fallar do passado— isso deve ser bello, porque é inútil e faz tanta pena...

Segunda. — Fallemos, se quizerdes, de um passado que não tivessemos tido.

Tercelra. — Não. Talvez o tivéssemos tido...

Primelra. — Não dizeis senão palavras. É tão triste fallar! É um modo tão falso de nos esquecermos!... Se passeássemos?...

Tercelra. — Onde?

Primelra. — Aqui, de um lado para o outro. Às vezes isso vai buscar sonhos.

Tercelra. — De quê?

Primelra. — Não sei. Porque o havia eu de saber?

(uma pausa)

Segunda. — Todo este paiz é muito triste... Aquelle onde eu vivi outr'ora era menos triste. Ao entardecer eu fiava, sentada á minha janella. A janella dava para o mar e ás vezes havia uma ilha ao longe...

Muitas vezes eu não fiava; olhava para o mar e esquecia-me de viver. Não sei se era feliz. Já não tornarei a ser aquillo que talvez eu nunca fôsse...

Primeira. — Fôra de aqui, nunca vi o mar. Alli, d'aquella janella, que é a unica de onde o mar se vê, vê-se tão pouco!... O mar de outras terras é bello?

Segunda. — Só o mar das outras terras é que é bello. Aquelle que nós vemos dá-nos sempre saudades d'aquelle que não veremos nunca...

(uma pausa)

Primeira. — Não diziamos nós que iamós contar o nosso passado?

Segunda. — Não, não diziamos.

Terceira. — Porque não haverá relógio neste quarto?

Segunda. — Não sei... Mas assim, sem o relógio, tudo é mais afastado e mysterioso. A noite pertence mais a si-propria... Quem sabe se nós poderíamos fallar assim se soubessemos a hora que é?

Primeira. — Minha irmã, em mim tudo é triste. Passo dezembros na alma... Estou procurando não olhar para a janella... Sei que de lá se vêem, ao longe, montes... Eu fui feliz para além de montes, outr'ora... Eu era pequenina. Colhia flôres todo o dia e antes de adormecer pedia que não m'as tirassem... Não sei o que isto tem de irreparavel que me dá vontade de chorar... Foi longe d'aqui que isto pôde ser... Quando virá o dia?...

Terceira. — Que importa? Elle vem sempre da mesma maneira... sempre, sempre, sempre...

(uma pausa)

Segunda. — Contemos contos umas ás outras... Eu não sei contos nenhuns, mas isso não faz mal... Só viver é que faz mal... Não roçemos pela vida nem a orla das nossas vestes... Não, não vos levanteis. Isso seria um gesto, e cada gesto interrompe um sonho... Neste momento eu não tinha sonho nenhum, mas é-me suave pensar que o podia estar tendo... Mas o passado—porque não fallâmos nós d'elle?

Primeira. — Decidimos não o fazer... Breve raiará o dia e arre-pender-nos-hemos... Com a luz os sonhos adormecem... O passado não é senão um sonho... De resto, nem sei o que não é sonho... Se ólho para o presente com muita attenção, parece-me que elle já passou... O que é qualquer cousa? Como é que ella passa? Como é por dentro o modo como ella passa?... Ah, fallemos, minhas irmãs, fallemos alto, fallemos todas juntas... O silencio começa a tomar corpo, começa a ser cousa... Sinto-o envolver-me como uma nevoa... Ah, fallae, fallae!...

Segunda. — Para quê?... Fito-vos a ambas e não vos vejo logo... Parece-me que entre nós se augmentaram abysmos... Tenho que cançar a idéa de que vos posso ver para poder chegar a ver-vos... Este ar quente é frio por dentro, naquella parte que toca na alma... Eu devia agora sentir mãos impossiveis passarem-me pelos cabel-

los... As mãos pelos cabellos — é o gesto com que fallam das sereias... (*Cruza as mãos sobre os joelhos. Pausa.*) Ainda ha pouco, quando eu não pensava em nada, estava pensando no meu passado...

Primelra. — Eu tambem devia ter estado a pensar no meu...

Tercelra. — Eu já não sei em que pensava... No passado dos outros talvez..., no passado de gente maravilhosa que nunca existiu... Ao pé da casa de minha mãe corria um riacho... Porque é que correria, e porque é que não correria mais longe, ou mais perto?... Ha alguma razão para qualquer cousa ser o que é? Ha para isso qualquer razão verdadeira e real como as minhas mãos?...

Segunda. — As mãos não são verdadeiras nem reaes... São mysterios que habitam na nossa vida... A's vezes, quando fito as minhas mãos, tenho medo de Deus... Não ha vento que mova as chammas das velas, e olhae, ellas movem-se... Para onde se inclinam ellas?... Que pena se alguém pudesse responder!... Sinto-me desejosa de ouvir musicas barbaras que devem agora estar tocando em palacios de outros continentes... E' sempre longe na minha alma... Talvez porque, quando creança, corri atraz das ondas á beira-mar. Levei a vida pela mão entre rochedos, maré-baixa, quando o mar parece ter cruzado as mãos sobre o peito e ter adormecido como uma estatua de anjo para que nunca mais ninguem olhasse...

Tercelra. — As vossas phrases lembram-me a minha alma...

Segunda. — É talvez por não serem verdadeiras... Mal sei que as digo... Repito-as seguindo uma voz que não ouço que m'as está segredando... Mas eu devo ter vivido realmente á beira-mar... Sempre que uma cousa ondeia, eu amo-a... Ha ondas na minha alma... Quando ando embalo-me... Agora eu gostaria de andar... Não o faço porque não vale nunca a pena fazer nada, sobretudo o que se quer fazer... Dos montes é que eu tenho medo... E impossivel que elles sejam tão parados e grandes... Devem ter um segredo de pedra que se recusam a saber que teem... Se d'esta janella, debruçando-me, eu pudesse deixar de ver montes, debruçar-se-hia um momento da minha alma alguém em quem eu me sentisse feliz...

Primelra. — Por mim, amo os montes... Do lado de cá de todos os montes é que a vida é sempre feia... Do lado de lá, onde mora minha mãe, costumavamos sentarmo' nos á sombra dos tamarindos e fallar de ir ver outras terras... Tudo alli era lóngo e feliz como o canto de duas aves, uma de cada lado do caminho... A floresta não tinha outras clareiras senão os nossos pensamentos... E os nossos sonhos eram de que as arvores projectassem no chão outra calma que não as suas sombras... Foi decerto assim que alli vivemos, eu e não sei se mais alguém... Dizei-me que isto foi verdade para que eu não tenha de chorar...

Segunda. — Eu vivi entre rochedos e espreitava o mar... A orla da minha saia era fresca e salgada batendo nas minhas pernas nuas... Eu era pequena e barbara... Hoje tenho medo de ter sido... O presente parece me que durmo... Fallae-me das fadas. Nunca ouvi fallar d'ellas a ninguem... O mar era grande demais para fazer pensar nellas... Na vida aquece ser pequeno... Ereis feliz minha irmã?...

Primelra. — Começo neste momento a tel-o sido outr'ora... De

resto, tudo aquillo se passou na sombra... As arvores viveram-o mais do que eu... Nunca chegou quem eu mal esperava... E vós, irmã, porque não fallaes?

Torcelra. — Tenho horror a de aqui a pouco vos ter já dito o que vos vou dizer. As minhas palavras presentes, mal eu as diga, pertencerão logo ao passado, ficarão fóra de mim, não sei onde, rígidas e fataes... Fallo, e penso nisto na minha garganta, e as minhas palavras parecem-me gente... Tenho um medo maior do que eu. Sinto na minha mão, não sei como, a chave de uma porta desconhecida. E toda eu sou um amuleto ou um sacrario que estivesse com consciencia de si-proprio. E' poristo que me apavora ir, como por uma floresta escura, atravez do mysterio de fallar... E, afinal, quem sabe se eu sou assim e se é isto sem duvida que sinto?...

Primeira. — Custa tanto saber o que se sente quando reparamos em nós!... Mesmo viver sabe a custar tanto quando se dá por isso... Fallae portanto, sem reparardes que existis... Não nos ieis dizer quem ereis?

Torcelra. — O que eu era outr'ora já não se lembra de quem sou... Pobre da feliz que eu fui!... Eu vivi entre as sombras dos ramos, e tudo na minha alma é folhas que estremecem. Quando ando ao sol a minha sombra é fresca. Passei a fuga dos meus dias ao lado de fontes, onde eu molhava, quando sonhava de viver, as pontas tranquilladas dos meus dedos... A's vezes, á beira dos lagos, debruçava-me e fitava-me... Quando eu sorria, os meus dentes eram mysteriosos na agua... Tinham um sorriso só d'elles, independente do meu... Era sempre sem razão que eu sorria... Fallae me da morte, do fim de tudo, para que eu sinta uma razão p'ra recordar...

Primeira. — Não fallemos de nada, de nada... Está mais frio, mas porque é que está mais frio? Não ha razão para estar mais frio. Não é bem mais frio que está... Para que é que havemos de fallar?... E' melhor cantar, não sei porquê... O canto, quando a gente canta de noite, é uma pessoa alegre e sem medo que entra de repente no quarto e o aquece a consolar-nos... Eu podia cantar-vos uma canção que cantavamos em casa de meu passado. Porque é que não quereis que vol-a cante?

Torcelra. — Não vale a pena, minha irmã... Quando alguém canta, eu não posso estar commigo. Tenho que não poder recordar-me. E depois todo o meu passado torna-se outro e eu chóro uma vida morta que trago commigo e que não vivi nunca. E' sempre tarde de mais para cantar, assim como é sempre tarde de mais para não cantar...

(uma pausa)

Primeira. — Breve será dia... Guardemos silencio... A vida assim o quer... Ao pé da minha casa natal havia um lago. Eu ia lá e assentava-me á beira d'elle, sobre um tronco de arvore que cahira quasi dentro de agua... Sentava-me na ponta e molhava na agua os pés, esticando para baixo os dedos. Depois olhava excessivamente para as pontas dos pés, mas não era para as ver... Não sei porquê, mas parece-me d'este lago que elle nunca existiu... Lembrar-me

O Marinheiro — Fernando Pessoa

d'elle é como não me poder lembrar de nada... Quem sabe porque é que eu digo isto e se fui eu que vivi o que recordo?...

Segunda. — A' beira-mar somos tristes quando sonhamos... Não podemos ser o que queremos ser, porque o que queremos ser queremos-o sempre ter sido no passado... Quando a onda se espalha e a espuma chia, parece que ha mil vozes minimas a fallar. A espuma só parece ser fresca a quem a julga uma... Tudo é muito e nós não sabemos nada... Quereis que vos conte o que eu sonhava á beira-mar?

Primeira. — Podeis contal-o, minha irmã, mas nada em nós tem necessidade de que nol-o conteis... Se é bello, tenho já pena de vir a tel-o ouvido. E se não é bello, esperae..., contae o só depois de o alterardes...

Segunda. — Vou dizer vol-o. Não é inteiramente falso, porque sem duvida nada é inteiramente falso. Deve ter sido assim... Um dia que eu dei por mim recostada no cimo frio de um rochedo, e que eu tinha esquecido que tinha pae e mãe e que houvera em mim infancia e outros dias — nesse dia vi ao longe, como uma cousa que eu só pensasse em ver, a passagem vaga de uma vela... Depois ella cessou... Quando reparei para mim, vi que já tinha esse meu sonho... Não sei onde elle teve principio... E nunca tornei a ver outra vela... Nenhuma das velas dos navios que sahem aqui de um porto se parece com aquella, mesmo quando é lua e os navios passam longe de vagar...

Primeira. — Vejo pela janella um navio ao longe. E' talvez aquella que vistes...

Segunda. Não, minha irmã; esse que vêdes busca sem duvida um porto qualquér... Não podia ser que aquella que eu vi buscasse qualquér porto...

Primeira. — Porque é que me respondestes?... Pode ser... Eu não vi navio nenhum pela janella... Desejava ver um e fallei-vos d'elle para não ter pena... Contae nos agora o que foi que sonhastes á beira mar...

Segunda. Sonhava de um marinheiro que se houvesse perdido numa ilha longínqua. Nessa ilha havia palmeiras hirtas, poucas, e aves vagas passavam por ellas... Não vi se alguma vez pousavam... Desde que, naufragado, se salvára, o marinheiro vivia allí... Como elle não tinha meio de voltar á patria, e cada vez que se lembrava d'ella soffria, poz-se a sonhar uma patria que nunca tivesse tido; poz-se a fazer ter sido sua uma outra patria, uma outra especie de paiz, com outras especies de paysagens, e outra gente, e outro feitio de passarem pelas ruas e de se debruçarem das janellas... Cada hora elle construía em sonho esta falsa patria, e elle nunca deixava de sonhar, de dia á sombra curta das grandes palmeiras, que se recortava, orlada de bicos, no chão areento e quente; de noite, estendido na praia, de costas, e não reparando nas estrellas.

Primeira. — Não ter havido uma arvore que mosqueasse sobre as minhas mãos estendidas a sombra de um sonho como esse!...

Terceira. — Deixae-a fallar... Não a interrompaes... Ella conhece palavras que as sereias lhe ensinaram... Adormeço para a poder es-

cutar... Dizei, minha irmã, dizei... Meu coração doe-me de não ter sido vós quando sonhaveis á beira mar...

Segunda. — Durante annos e annos, dia a dia o marinheiro erguia num sonho contínuo a sua nova terra natal... Todos os dias punha uma pedra de sonho nesse edificio impossivel... Breve elle ia tendo um paiz que já tantas vezes havia percorrido. Milhares de horas lembrava-se já de ter passado ao longo de suas costas. Sabia de que côso iam ser os crepusculos numa bahia do norte, e como era suave entrar, noite alta, e com a alma recostada no murmurio da agua que o navio abria, num grande porto do sul onde elle passára outr'ora, feliz talvez, das suas mocidades a supposta...

(uma pausa)

Primeira. — Minha irmã, porque é que vos calaes?

Segunda. — Não se deve fallar demasiado... A vida espreita-nos sempre... Toda a hora é materna para os sonhos, mas é preciso não o saber... Quando fallo de mais começo a separar-me de mim e a ouvir-me fallar. Isso faz com que me compadeça de mim-propria e sinta demasiadamente o coração. Tenho então uma vontade lacrimosa de o ter nos braços para o poder embalar como a um filho... Vêde: o horizonte empallideceu... O dia não pôde já tardar... Será preciso que eu vos falle ainda mais do meu sonho?

Primeira. — Contae sempre, minha irmã, contae sempre... Não pareis de contar, nem repareis em que dias raíam... O dia nunca raia para quem encosta a cabeça no seio das horas sonhadas... Não torçaes as mãos. Isso faz um ruido como o de uma serpente furtiva... Fallae-nos muito mais do vosso sonho. Elle é tão verdadeiro que não tem sentido nenhum. Só pensar em ouvir-vos me toca musica na alma...

Segunda. — Sim, fallar-vos-hei mais d'elle. Mesmo eu preciso de vol-o contar. À medida que o vou contando, é a mim tambem que o conto... São trez a escutar... *(De repente, olhando para o caixão, e estremecendo.)* Trez não... Não sei... Não sei quantas...

Tercelra. — Não falleis assim... Contae depressa, contae outra vez... Não falleis em quantos podem ouvir... Nós nunca sabemos quantas cousas realmente vivem e vêem e escutam... Voltae ao vosso sonho... O marinheiro... O que sonhava o marinheiro?...

Segunda *(mais baixo, numa voz muito lenta)*. — Ao principio elle creou as paysagens; depois creou as cidades; creou depois as ruas e as travessas, uma a uma, cinzelando-as na materia da sua alma — uma a uma as ruas, bairro a bairro, até ás muralhas dos caes d'onde elle creou depois os portos... Uma a uma as ruas, e a gente que as percorria e que olhava sobre ellas das janellas... Passou a conhecer certa gente, como quem a reconhece apenas... Ia-lhes conhecendo as vidas passadas e as conversas, e tudo isto era como quem sonha apenas paysagens e as vae vendo... Depois viajava, recordado, atravez do paiz que creara... E assim foi construindo o seu passado... Breve tinha uma outra vida anterior... Tinha já, nessa nova patria, um logar onde nascera, os logares onde passara a juventude, os portos

onde embarcara... Ia tendo tido os companheiros da infancia e depois os amigos e inimigos da sua idade viril... Tudo era diferente de como elle o tivera — nem o paiz, nem a gente, nem o seu passado proprio se pareciam com o que haviam sido... Exigis que eu continue?... Causa-me tanta pena fallar d'isto!... Agora, porque vos fallo d'isto, aprazia-me mais estar-vos fallando de outros sonhos...

Terceira. — Continuae, ainda que não saibaes porquê... Quanto mais vos ouço, mais me não pertença...

Primeira. — Será bom realmente que continueis? Deve qualquer historia ter fim? Em todo o caso fallae... Importa tão pouco o que dizemos ou não dizemos... Velamos as horas que passam... O nosso mister é inutil como a Vida...

Segunda. — Um dia, que chovêra muito, e o horizonte estava mais incerto, o marinheiro cançou-se de sonhar... Quiz então recordar a sua patria verdadeira... mas viu que não se lembrava de nada, que ella não existia para elle... Meninice de que se lembrasse, era a na sua patria de sonho; adolescencia que recordasse, era aquella que se creara... Toda a sua vida tinha sido a sua vida que sonhara... E elle viu que não podia ser que outra vida tivesse existido... Se elle nem de uma rua, nem de uma figura, nem de um gesto materno se lembrava... E da vida que lhe parecia ter sonhado, tudo era real e tinha sido... Nem sequer podia sonhar outro passado, conceber que tivesse tido outro, como todos, um momento, podem crer... Ó minhas irmãs, minhas irmãs... Ha qualquer cousa, que não sei o que é, que vos não disse..., qualquer cousa que explicaria isto tudo... A minha alma esfria-me... Mal sei se tenho estado a fallar... Fallae-me, gritae-me, para que eu acorde, para que eu saiba que estou aqui ante vós e que ha cousas que são apenas sonhos...

Primeira (*numa voz muito baixa*). — Não sei que vos diga... Não ousou olhar para as cousas... Esse sonho como continúa?...

Segunda. — Não sei como era o resto... Mal sei como era o resto... Porque é que haverá mais?...

Primeira. — E o que aconteceu depois?

Segunda. — Depois? Depois de quê? Depois é alguma cousa?... Veiu um dia um barco... Veiu um dia um barco... — Sim, sim... só podia ter sido assim... — Veiu um dia um barco, e passou por essa ilha, e não estava lá o marinheiro...

Terceira. — Talvez tivesse regressado á patria... Mas a qual?

Primeira. — Sim, a qual? E o que teriam feito ao marinheiro? Sabelo-hia alguém?

Segunda. — Porque é que m'o perguntaes? Ha resposta para alguma cousa?

(uma pausa)

Terceira. — Será absolutamente necessario, mesmo dentro do vosso sonho, que tenha havido esse marinheiro e essa ilha?

Segunda. — Não, minha irmã; nada é absolutamente necessario.

Primeira. — Ao menos, como acabou o sonho?

Segunda. — Não acabou... Não sei... Nenhum sonho acaba... Sei eu ao certo se o não continúo sonhando, se o não sonho sem o

saber, se o sonhal-o não é esta cousa vaga a que eu chamo a minha vida?... Não me falleis mais... Principio a estar certa de qualquer cousa, que não sei o que é... Avancam para mim, por uma noite que não é esta, os passos de um horror que desconheço... Quem teria eu ido despertar com o sonho meu que vos contei?... Tenho um medo disforme de que Deus tivesse prohibido o meu sonho... Elle é sem duvida mais real do que Deus permite... Não estejaes silenciosas... Dizei-me ao menos que a noite vae passando, embora eu o saiba... Vêde, começa a ir ser dia... Vêde: vae haver o dia real... Paremos... Não pensemos mais... Não tentemos seguir nesta aventura interior... Quem sabe o que está no fim d'ella?... Tudo isto, minhas irmãs, passou-se na noite... Não fallemos mais d'isto, nem a nós-proprias... É humano e conveniente que tomemos, cada qual a sua attitude de tristeza.

Terceira. — Foi-me tão bello escutar-vos... Não digaes que não... Bem sei que não valeu a pena... É porisso que o achei bello... Não foi porisso, mas deixae que eu o diga... De resto, a musica da vossa voz, que escutei ainda mais que as vossas palavras, deixa-me, talvez só por ser musica, descontente...

Segunda. — Tudo deixa descontente, minha irmã... Os homens que pensam cançam-se de tudo, porque tudo muda. Os homens que passam provam-o, porque mudam com tudo... De eterno e bello ha apenas o sonho... Porque estamos nós fallando ainda?...

Primeira. — Não sei... (*olhando para o caixão, em voz mais baixa*)
Porque é que se morre?

Segunda. — Talvez por não se sonhar bastante...

Primeira. — É possível... Não valeria então a pena fecharmo'-nos no sonho e esquecer a vida, para que a morte nos esquecesse?...

Segunda. — Não, minha irmã: nada vale a pena...

Terceira. — Minhas irmãs, é já dia... Vêde, a linha dos montes maravilha-se... Porque não choramos nós?... Aquella que finge estar alli era bella, e nova como nós, e sonhava tambem... Estou certa que o sonho d'ella era o mais bello de todos... Ella de que sonharia?...

Primeira. — Fallae mais baixo. Ella escuta-nos talvez, e já sabe para que servem os sonhos...

(uma pausa)

Segunda. — Talvez nada d'isto seja verdade... Todo este silencio, e esta morta, e este dia que começa não são talvez senão um sonho... Olhae bem para tudo isto... Parece-vos que pertence á vida?...

Primeira. — Não sei. Não sei como se é da vida... Ah, como vós estaes parada! E os vossos olhos tão tristes, parece que o estão inutilmente...

Segunda. — Não vale a pena estar triste de outra maneira... Não desejaes que nos calemos? É tão extranho estar a viver... Tudo o que acontece é inacreditavel, tanto na ilha do marinheiro como neste mundo... Vêde, o céu é já verde... O horizonte sorri ouro... Sinto que me ardem os olhos, de eu ter pensado em chorar...

Primeira. — Chorastes, com effeito, minha irmã.

Segunda. — Talvez... Não importa... Que frio é este?... O que é isto?... Ah, é agora... é agora... Dizei-me isto... Dizei-me uma cousa ainda... Porque não será a unica cousa real nisto tudo o marinheiro, e nós e tudo isto aqui apenas um sonho d'elle?...

Primeira. — Não falleis mais, não falleis mais... Isso é tão estranho que deve ser verdade... Não continueis... O que icis dizer não sei o que é, mas deve ser de mais para a alma o poder ouvir... Tenho medo do que não chegastes a dizer... Vêde, vêde, é dia já... Vêde o dia... Fazei tudo por reparardes só no dia, no dia real, alli fóra... Vêde-o, vêde-o... Elle consola... Não penseis, não olheis para o que pensaes... Vêde-o a vir, o dia... Elle brilha como ouro numa terra de prata. As leves nuvens arredondam-se á medida que se coloram... Se nada existisse, minhas irmãs?... Se tudo fosse, de qualquer modo, absolutamente cousa nenhuma?... Porque olhastes assim?...

(Não lhe respondem. E ninguem olhara de nenhuma maneira.)

A mesma. — Que foi isso que dissestes e que me apavorou?... Senti-o tanto que mal vi o que era... Dizei-me o que foi, para que eu, ouvindo-o segunda vez, já não tenha tanto mêdo como d'antes... Não, não... Não digaes nada... Não vos pergunto isto para que me respondeaes, mas para fallar apenas, para me não deixar pensar... Tenho medo de me poder lembrar do que foi... Mas foi qualquer cousa de grande e pavoroso como o haver Deus... Deviamos já ter acabado de fallar... Ha tempo já que a nossa conversa perdeu o sentido... O que ha entre nós que nos faz fallar prolonga-se demasiadamente... Ha mais presenças aqui do que as nossas almas... O dia devia ter já rajado... Deviam já ter acordado... Tarda qualquer cousa... Tarda tudo... O que é que se está dando nas cousas de accordo com o nosso horror?... Ah, não me abandoneis... Fallae commigo, fallae commigo... Fallae ao mesmo tempo do que eu para não deixardes sosinha a minha voz... Tenho menos medo á minha voz do que á idéa da minha voz, dentro de mim, se fôr reparar que estou fallando...

Terceira. — Que voz é essa com que fallaes?... E' de outra... Vem de uma especie de longe...

Primeira. — Não sei... Não me lembreis isso... Eu devia estar fallando com a voz aguda e tremida do mêdo... Mas já não sei como é que se falla... Entre mim e a minha voz abriu-se um abysmo... Tudo isto, toda esta conversa, e esta noite, e este mêdo — tudo isto devia ter acabado, devia ter acabado de repente, depois do horror que nos dissestes... Começo a sentir que o esqueço, a isso que dissestes, e que me fez pensar que eu devia gritar de uma maneira nova para exprimir um horror de aquelles...

Terceira. — (para a Segunda) — Minha irmã, não nos devieis ter contado essa historia. Agora extranho-me viva com mais horror. Contaveis e eu tanto me distrahia que ouvia o sentido das vossas palavras e o seu som separadamente. E parecia-me que vós, e a vossa voz, e

o sentido do que dizíeis eram trez entes diferentes, como trez creaturas que fallam e andam.

Segunda. — São realmente trez entes diferentes, com vida propria e real. Deus talvez saiba porquê... Ah, mas porque é que fallamos? Quem é que nos faz continuar fallando? Porque fallo eu sem querer fallar? Porque é que já não reparamos que é dia?...

Prmelra. — Quem pudesse gritar para despertarmos! Estou a ouvir-me a gritar dentro de mim, mas já não sei o caminho da minha vontade para a minha garganta. Sinto uma necessidade feroz de ter mêdo de que alguém possa agora bater àquella porta. Porque não bate alguém á porta? Seria impossivel e eu tenho necessidade de ter mêdo d'isso, de saber de que é que tenho mêdo... Que estranha que me sinto!... Parece-me já não ter a minha voz... Parte de mim adormeceu e ficou a vêr... O meu pavôr cresceu mas eu já não sei sentil-o... Já não sei em que parte da alma é que se sente... Puzeram ao meu sentimento do meu corpo uma mortalha de chumbo... Para que foi que que nos contastes a vossa historia?

Segunda. — Já não me lembro... Já mal me lembro que a contei... Parece ter sido já ha tanto tempo!... Que somno, que somno absorve o meu modo de olhar para as cousas!... O que é que nós queremos fazer? o que é que nos temos idéa de fazer? — já não sei se é fallar ou não fallar...

Prmelra. — Não fallemos mais. Por mim, cança-me o esforço que fazeis para fallar... Dóe-me o intervallo que ha entre o que pensaes e o que dizíeis... A minha consciencia boia á tona da somnolencia apavorada dos meus sentidos pela minha pelle... Não sei o que é isto, mas é o que sinto... Preciso dizer phrases confusas, um pouco longas, que custem a dizer... Não sentis tudo isto como uma aranha enorme que nos tece de alma a alma uma teia negra que nos prende?

Segunda. — Não sinto nada... Sinto as minhas sensações como uma cousa que se não sente... Quem é que eu estou sendo?... Quem é que está fallando com a minha voz?... Ah, escutae...

Prmelra e Terceira. — Quem foi?

Segunda. — Nada. Não ouvi nada... Quiz fingir que ouvia para que vós suppozesseis que ouvíeis e eu pudesse crêr que havia alguma cousa a ouvir... Oh, que horror, que horror intimo nos desata a voz da alma, e as sensações dos pensamentos, e nos faz fallar e sentir e pensar quando tudo em nós pede o silencio e o dia e a inconsciencia da vida... Quem é a quinta pessoa neste quarto que estende o braço e nos interrompe sempre que vamos a sentir?...

Prmelra. — Para quê tentar apavorar-me?... Não cabe mais terror dentro de mim... Peso excessivamente ao collo de me sentir. Afundei-me toda no lodo morno do que supponho que sinto. Entra-me por todos os sentidos qualquer cousa que m'os pega e m'os vela. Pecam as palpebras a todas as minhas sensações. Prende-se a lingua a todos os meus sentimentos. Um somno fundo colla uma ás outras as idéas de todos os meus gestos... Porque foi que olhastes assim?...

Terceira. — *(numa voz muito lenta e apagada)* — Ah, é agora, é agora... Sim, acordou alguém... Ha gente que acorda... Quando entrar alguém tudo isto acabará... Até lá façamos por crêr que todo

este horror foi um longo somno que fomos dormindo... É dia já...
Vae acabar tudo... E de tudo isto fica, minha irmã, que só vós sois
feliz, porque acreditaes no sonho...

Segunda. — Porque é que m'ò perguntaes? Porque eu o disse? Não,
não acredito...

Um gallo canta. A luz, como que subitamente,
augmenta. As trez veladoras quedam-se silenciosas
e sem olharem umas para as outras.

Não muito longe, por uma estrada, um vago
carro geme e chia.

11/12 Outubro, 1913.

FERNANDO PESSÔA.