

# Augusto Ferreira Gomes and *Orpheu* 3: The “Death of a Faun” and Literary *Ekphrasis* in Portugal at the beginning of the twentieth century

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## Keywords

Augusto Ferreira Gomes, *Orpheu* 3, ekphrasis, Death of a Faun, António Soares.

## Abstract

“Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno” was Augusto Ferreira Gomes’s contribution to the third number of *Orpheu*, that was never published despite repeated attempts and announcements. Only in 1983 the typographical proofs of the number would be published in a photomechanical reproduction. This article transcribes and discusses the recently discovered manuscript of the text, in the context of the magazine’s history, focusing on three points: the characterization of the text as *ekphrasis*, and the analysis of its expressive means; the imagery of the faun in contemporary European culture and Ferreira Gomes’s possible cultural referents; and the omission of the dedication to the painter António Soares in the published version of the manuscript (1983, 1984).

## Palavras-chave

Augusto Ferreira Gomes, *Orpheu* 3, ekphrasis, Morte de um Fauno, António Soares.

## Resumo

“Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno” é o texto que Augusto Ferreira Gomes ia contribuir para o terceiro número da revista *Orpheu*, que nunca foi publicada apesar de repetidos esforços e anúncios. Foi em 1983 que as provas tipográficas para o número apareceram numa edição de reprodução fotomecânica. Este artigo apresenta a transcrição do recém-descoberto manuscrito do texto e o contexto da história da revista, enfocando os três pontos seguintes: a caracterização do texto como écfrase e a análise dos seus meios expressivos; a iconografia do fauno na cultura Europeia contemporânea e as possíveis referências culturais do autor; e a omissão da dedicatória ao pintor português António Soares na versão publicada do manuscrito (1983, 1984).

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The manuscript of Augusto Ferreira Gomes's "Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno," was recently discovered in a private collection.<sup>1</sup> The text, intended for the third number of *Orpheu* (1917), the Portuguese modernist magazine whose only two numbers appeared in 1915, was first published in 1983, in the photomechanical reproduction of the typographical proofs that never made it to the press (SEABRA, 1983; see also SARAIVA, 1984: iii-xliv). Seabra's publication reproduced the paginated proofs in the possession of the poet Alberto de Serpa, a photocopy of which had been deposited at the Biblioteca Municipal do Porto (SEABRA, 1983: vi; SARAIVA, 1984: xxv-xxix). Previously, an edition of Fernando Pessoa's poems intended for the third number of *Orpheu* had taken place, after a partial copy, which had been discovered by Adolfo Casais Monteiro in the poet's archive (PESSOA, 1953).

Fernando Pessoa's letter to Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues (Sept. 4, 1916) announcing the imminent publication of the third number already at the end of the month does not include any mention to a possible participation of Ferreira Gomes (PESSOA, 1945: 78-81), whose manuscript is dated "October 1916." Pessoa was still discussing the details of the third number's printing, distribution and advertisement the following summer (in a letter to José Pacheco, dated July 11, 1917; SARAIVA, 1984: xx-xxi). *Orpheu 3* would be announced as forthcoming in October 1917, in a list of Álvaro de Campos's publications: "Saudação a Walt Whitman (in *Orpheu 3* a aparecer em Outubro 1917)" (PESSOA, 1917). Furthermore, Pessoa "num prefácio escrito para uma antologia de poetas sensacionistas, pela mesma altura, cita *Orpheu* como tendo tido já 3 números publicados" (SEABRA, 1983: v). An astrological map, bearing the inscription "*Orpheu* decided in 12.5.1917" (Fig. 1; cf. PESSOA, 2009: 86), might indicate that the issue was finalized around May 1917.

The names of participants mentioned in the letter to Côrtes-Rodrigues (Camilo Pessanha, Mario Sá-Carneiro, José de Almada-Negreiros, Albino de Menezes, Carlos Parreira, Álvaro de Campos, and Fernando Pessoa himself) are markedly different from the ones that appear in the typographic proofs (to the names of Sá-Carneiro, Albino de Menezes, Fernando Pessoa and Almada Negreiros, those of Augusto Ferreira Gomes, D. Thomaz de Almeida, C. Coelho Pacheco, and Castello de Moraes have been added, while Camilo Pessanha and

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Jerónimo Pizarro and Carlos Pittella-Leite for inviting me to participate in this issue of *Pessoa Plural*, and trusting me with Augusto Ferreira Gomes's manuscript. Ana Isabel de Ornellas, who continues the work of her father, Américo de Miranda Soares (the painter's brother), in the organization and preservation of the António Soares archive (future Casa-Memória Mestre António Soares, Santo Tirso), put at my disposal a wealth of unpublished material (including correspondence between the painter and Ferreira Gomes, as well as the digitized copies of rare exhibition catalogues). Without her indispensable collaboration and unbounded generosity, this article would not have been written.

Carlos Parreira do not appear). An undated manuscript index of *Orpheu 3* by Fernando Pessoa, including the names of participants and the number of pages allocated to each, also does not mention Augusto Ferreira Gomes (the participants were Camilo Pessanha, Albino de Menezes, Sá-Carneiro, Almada Negreiros, José Pacheco, Álvaro de Campos, Ricardo Reis and Pessoa himself, Fig. 2; cf. PESSOA, 2009: 79-81). The index totals up to 64 pages, plus 16 more that Pessoa was reserving for him and his heteronym, Ricardo Reis. The four *hors-texte* by Amadeo de Souza Cardoso, that were to be included in the third number, are also mentioned in the manuscript.<sup>2</sup>

This number of pages closely corresponds to the final number of pages of the existing proofs (63 pp., from 165 to 228, as the pages would follow the pagination of the second number). There is however another prospective index (also undated), entitled “*Orpheu 3 e 4*” (published by LOPES, 1993: 255; cf. PESSOA, 2009: 82), with a different list of participants, including Ferreira Gomes (the others were Sá-Carneiro, Albino de Menezes,<sup>3</sup> José Coelho Pacheco, Mário da Cunha e Sá, Silva Tavares, José de Almada-Negreiros, M. Barradas Telles d’Aviz, Fernando de Carvalho, Fernando Pessoa, Castello de Moraes and Álvaro de Campos). Ten pages were allocated to Ferreira Gomes in this version, instead of the four pages that Ferreira Gomes’s text occupies in the typographical proofs (SEABRA, 1983: 189-192, including the title page and blank page preceding the text).

Ferreira Gomes’s participation in the third number of *Orpheu* has not been previously discussed in detail, the most likely cause being that he was not among the central figures in the history of the magazine’s publication, neither was his text a poem. His contribution has frequently been dismissed as a minor one, not adequate for the modernist environment of *Orpheu* and resulting probably from personal relationships rather than from intrinsic literary value (SARAIVA, 1984: xxxiii). This article aims to address these issues, proposing that “*Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno*” belongs to the literary genre of *ekphrasis* and that, instead of it being a simple evocative description of a mythological scene (in the guise of an object), it explores ideas of representation and intermediality. The article will also concentrate on the choice of its subject matter, as well as on the differences observed between the manuscript and the text in its publishable form, referring most notably to the removal of the dedication to the painter and graphic designer António Soares.

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<sup>2</sup> On the works by Amadeo that might have been intended for the third number of *Orpheu*, see “*Os 4 hors-texte de Orpheu 3*” by Marta Soares (in ZENITH 2015: 103-108) and “*Nota editorial*” by Steffen Dix, in *Orpheu – Edição fac-similada* (2015a).

<sup>3</sup> Lopes has mistakenly transcribed the name as “Alvaro de Menezes” (1993: 255).

## The literary genre of *ekphrasis*

Augusto Ferreira Gomes (1892-1953), a journalist, writer and modernist poet, was also a close personal friend of Fernando Pessoa,<sup>4</sup> and moved in the intellectual circles of writers and painters that pushed the boundaries of literary and artistic creation in Portugal at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was the author of various literary works such as *Rajada Doentia* (1915), *Múmia Assassina?* (1923) and *Quinto Império* (1934). The books published by Ferreira Gomes attest to this dense network of relationships, through their reciprocated dedications and complex intertextual references (*Rajada Doentia*), their artwork (see for example the cover and illustrations of *Múmia Assassina?* by Martins Barata, Fig. 3), and friendly participations (such as the preface of *Quinto Império*, written by Pessoa himself).

The text “Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno” belongs to the literary genre of *ekphrasis*, according to its modern definition as constituting the description of works of visual art (for a string of examples, see CUNNINGHAM, 2007). Nevertheless, *ekphrasis* was conceived more broadly in the ancient world and was probably “not so much a genre as a technique or quality of both literary and oral composition” (FRANCIS, 2009: 2). It “encompasse[d] descriptions of all types,” and one of its distinctive qualities was that of “narrative vividness (*enargeia*), that is, the ability of ekphrastic language to create the illusion that the absent object of description is actually present in discourse.” (CHINN, 2007: 267).<sup>5</sup>

Although the first example of *ekphrasis* in Western literature is often considered to be the description of the shield of Achilles in Homer’s *Iliad*, a passage to which authors have responded to throughout history,<sup>6</sup> the implications of Homer describing an object (a shield made of gold, and forged by Hephaestus) instead of a painting have not always been taken into account.<sup>7</sup> Ferreira Gomes’s

<sup>4</sup> He even participated with Fernando Pessoa in the so-called “Mistério da Boca do Inferno” prank, the staging of Aleister Crowley’s suicide in 1930. See Augusto Ferreira Gomes, “O Mistério da Boca do Inferno,” in *O Notícias Ilustrado* 121 (Oct. 5, 1930), pp. 9-10, 16.

<sup>5</sup> See also Chinn (2007: 268): “*ekphrasis* should create the illusion that a listener almost sees the object being described, and hence is almost transported to its presence.”

<sup>6</sup> See for example W. H. Auden’s 1952 poem “The Shield of Achilles.” Auden seem to have been particularly sensitive to the genre, as his *Musée des Beaux Arts* poem attests (1938), that includes a description of Pieter Bruegel’s *Landscape with a Fall of Icarus* (c. 1558).

<sup>7</sup> For example, see David Rosand (1990), who only discusses *ekphrasis* in the context of Renaissance visual culture, and more specifically the production of images based on ekphrastic texts (in this case, Titian’s paintings after Philostratus’s *Imagines*). Francis—although careful with the distinction between ancient and modern definitions of *ekphrasis*, and although referring to Achilles’s shield as

choice of an object, a low-relief (frieze) made of malachite and gold, places him in close association to this first instance of *ekphrasis*.

The object described, however, in Ferreira Gomes's text is a fictional one, something that modern scholars often term "notional *ekphrasis*," although this was not a matter of concern in antiquity, as the "distinction between real and fictional subject matter in this regard" was not made (FRANCIS, 2009: 6). As far as I have been able to ascertain, the frieze that Ferreira Gomes describes does not exist. None of the contemporary publications on Pompeii—from guides to detailed descriptions of archaeological findings—includes a similar object (for example, MACKENZIE, 1910). The frieze described as having been found in the ruins of the house of Caius Syrus, in all likelihood a fictional personality as well (see Annex I), might be an oblique reference to one of the most important private residences of Pompeii, the so-called "House of the Faun," taking its name from the bronze statue of the dancing faun that decorated it (the house was also famous for the so-called Alexander mosaic, today in the Naples National Archaeological Museum).

The choice of a fictional instead of real object could also be meaningful in the context of experimentation that *Orpheu* provided. Instead of providing the description of an object that existed in physical reality, Ferreira Gomes plays with the ability of literature to generate images (including the images of objects), thus concentrating on the reflexive function of *ekphrasis*. Although recent scholarship on *ekphrasis* has tended to concentrate on the perceived "agonistic" relationship between word and image (see FRANCIS, 2009: 7, 18, for criticism), the "Death of a faun" does not seem to be motivated by a desire to prove what literature can accomplish, as opposed to sculpture or painting. On the contrary, the text seems rather conscious in its attempt to probe the convergence of different media (the literary and the plastic) through an excessive, almost obsessive, use of color and material references.

As far as expressive means are concerned, Ferreira Gomes employs a series of devices in order to bring the object he describes "before the eyes" of his readers/viewers. This was precisely the expression used by ancient writers to describe the function of *ekphrasis*: "In antiquity, *ekphrasis* was a rather uncommon and late-developing term defined, not as a description of art, but as evocative description pure and simple, 'laying out the subject before the eyes' (*sub oculus subiectio*) as Quintilian says, citing Cicero" (FRANCIS, 2009: 2). Given the central position of the eyes, it is perhaps not a coincidence that the poem "Olhos" by D. Thomaz de Almeida, also included in the proofs of *Orpheu 3*, bears a dedication to Augusto Ferreira Gomes. D. Thomaz de Almeida also appears, as a dedicatee of the text "Rendez-vous macabro" (mentioned as D. Thomaz de Chatillon-Almeida),

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an "artistic object" —quickly slips to the *ekphrasis* as description of an image. What falls between the cracks in this (or any other) case is the materiality of the object.

in Ferreira Gomes's *Rajada Doentia* (GOMES, 1915: 5-21).<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, the fictional story regarding the relationship between Ferreira Gomes and "Alberto," taking place at Lisbon and the Hospital de Rilhafoles (Hospital Miguel Bombarda), and dated October 16, 1914, may have been inspired by a 1911 newspaper article on the poet Ângelo de Lima (SAMPAIO, 1911). Lima's poems were included in the second number of *Orpheu*, an inclusion that is widely considered as having resulted from the contemporary reception of the magazine, whereby the *Orpheu* poets were harshly criticized as lunatics (DIX, 2011: 158). The text by Ferreira Gomes, as well as the Poe epigram accompanying it ("Será a loucura o grau sublimado da intelligencia?"), may suggest an earlier and sustained interest in madness and the relationship between madness and genius that clearly antedates the Lima "stunt."<sup>9</sup>

Returning to the text and its literary devices, references to both color and material abound. More specifically, there are twelve references to color (turquoise, magenta, blue, white, green-black, even "made up" colors such as "côr de nardo," etc.) and almost twenty references to material, with emphasis on precious metals and stones (alabaster, crystal, onyx, amber, rubies, sapphire, jasper, mother-of-pearl, repeated references to gold, as well as references to rarer or more obscure materials such as lyncurium). In this, Ferreira Gomes seems to follow the Homeric archetype: "Homer is careful to specify the metal Hephaestus uses to construct the various figures, even calling attention to their crafted realism: e.g., the ground looked like earth, even though it was made of gold [...]; golden grapes are darkened to appear realistic, though the vine-poles are silver [...]; gold and tin oxen pour out of a farmyard to graze near a stream, shedding blood when they are attacked by lions" (FRANCIS, 2009: 12-13). Thus, the imagined materiality of the object described (gold, malachite) does not seem to impose any limitations on the writer. On the contrary, he uses words to convey information that the reader/viewer could never obtain from the object itself (even if the object existed), in an effort not to simply evoke its physical presence, but also a certain poetic mood. Thus, *ekphrasis* posits the writer as twice the creator: of the object, and of its description.

Another characteristic that places Ferreira Gomes closer to the Homeric archetype is the description of scenes that transform into movement, betraying a concept of *ekphrasis* that is not narrowly descriptive.<sup>10</sup> Apart from movement

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<sup>8</sup> On Thomas de Chatillon-Almeida, see the short biographical note by Fernando Fisher (1988), "Um que também foi de 'Orpheu': D. Tomás de Almeida."

<sup>9</sup> On Pessoa's views on madness and genius during the period c. 1915-1919, see PIZARRO (2007: 168-176).

<sup>10</sup> On the distinction between description and narration as relating to *ekphrasis*, see FOWLER (1991).

(running, dancing), another element that could not have possibly been transmitted by the the object itself is music (compare sound in the description of Achilles's shield). Ekphrasis then becomes the vehicle for the exploration of representation (verbal, visual), and its possibilities, as well as an attempt to experiment with the limits of media, something that situates Ferreira Gomes's text at the heart of *Orpheu*'s objectives.

### The imagery of the faun

Ferreira Gomes's text, whose title is undoubtedly reminiscent of Pessoa's "Impressões do crepúsculo" (dated March 29, 1913 and published in the first, and only, number of *A Renascença* in 1914), belongs to a long literary and visual tradition of the representation of the faun. The faun, a half-human with goat legs and horns, was a mythological creature residing in forests and often associated with music and the playing of the flute. Undoubtedly, the most famous of these representations in the nineteenth century was Stéphane Mallarmé's poem "L'après-midi d'un faune" (published in 1876),<sup>11</sup> which inspired Debussy's symphonic poem "Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune" (first performed in 1894). Ferreira Gomes knew Mallarmé's work and probably shared Pessoa's appreciation of his poetry.<sup>12</sup> An unpublished letter to António Soares, dated September 26, 1916, starts by citing the first line of Mallarmé's "Brise Marine" (1865): "La cher [*sic*] est triste, hélas!" (António Soares archive, 0045 AFG), a verse singled out by Pessoa as well, who underlined it in his copy of the third edition of *Poésies* (COELHO, 2015: 45). An affinity between two verses, Ferreira Gomes's "nuvens de oiro acendrado" (see Annex I) and Mallarmé's "bois d'or et de cendres" from the "Faune" (cited in WALKER, 1978: 110), may be coincidental, but may also indicate a good knowledge of the French original by the Portuguese writer.

It is also tempting to suggest that the melancholic tone of Ferreira Gomes's text, far removed from the amorous content of Mallarmé's poem, can somehow be associated with the pall that must have fallen over the group of friends and collaborators of *Orpheu* after the suicide of Sá-Carneiro in Paris, in April 1916.

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<sup>11</sup> As far as possible literary precedents are concerned, one may even consider in this context the poem "The Nymph complaining for the Death of her Fawn," by Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). Marvell's works were known at least to Fernando Pessoa, who owned the compilation of his poems by G. A. Aitken (*Poems of Andrew Marvell*, CFP 8-345). Although the Routledge edition in Pessoa's library is undated, Aitken's compilation dates from 1892 (*The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, edited by G. A. Aitken, London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1892). Marvell also attracted the attention of T. S. Eliot, whose "[1921] provocative essay helped set the direction for the modern re-evaluation of Marvell as a serious poet" (GOTTLIEB, 1999: 273).

<sup>12</sup> On Pessoa and symbolist poetry, see Paula Mendes Coelho (2015), "Pessoa, 'leitor voraz e ardente' dos simbolistas e de suas curiosas 'tentativas frustes'."

Ferreira Gomes would write to António Soares, on May 4, 1916: “Sobre o Sá-Carneiro só tenho a dizer-lhe que o Fernando Pessoa já recebeu a carta de despedida; é simples, sendo enorme: Diz somente o seguinte: ‘Um grande, muito grande adeus do seu pobre Mario de Sá-Carneiro’.” (António Soares archive, 0031 AFG).

There is, however, a number of cultural references converging in Ferreira Gomes’s text, not all of them direct, French symbolist poetry being but one of them. Other artists took an interest in similar subject matter during the nineteenth- and early-twentieth century—writers as well as painters. Chief among the latter is probably the Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901), whose landscapes were often populated with hybrid mythological creatures such as fauns and centaurs, hybrids that “necessarily gained new connotations in post-Darwinian modern culture, preoccupied with ideas of evolution and the struggle for life” (LÜTTICKEN, 2005: 53). Böcklin was a widely admired figure who was frequently seen as the quintessential representative of contemporary German art, and was even used by critics of the period as the standard bearer of its superiority compared to contemporary French art. Aby Warburg would comment on Böcklin’s use of the “mythopoetic power of the image” (LÜTTICKEN, 2005: 52), and E. M. Forster would respond enthusiastically to his paintings, mentioning them in *Howards End*: “Böcklin [...] wants [...] beauty and all the other intangible gifts that are floating about the world,” and “...a landscape of Böcklin [...], strident and ill-considered, but quivering into supernatural life. It sharpened idealism, stirred the soul” (cited in VARTY, 1988: 516, 517).

Whether Böcklin’s paintings were known in Portugal is a question far from resolved, but at least some echo of his work might have been transplanted in Portugal through Parisian symbolist magazines, where his work was being enthusiastically written about (LUCBERT, 2001). One might even consider the creation of the other short-lived literary modernist enterprise of the period, the 1916 *Centauro*, directed by Luís de Montalvor, as a manifestation of this same fascination for the hybrid mythological creatures that Böcklin had become known for. The imagery of the faun had certainly penetrated the artistic milieu in Portugal. Both António Soares and Almada Negreiros exhibited works with this subject matter, although it is not clear whether they were paintings or drawings. António Soares exhibited “Un Faune” in the *II Salão de Modernistas no Porto* (Porto, 1916), while Almada Negreiros had exhibited the year before “O fauno loiro” (as well as another work, titled “Crepusculo”) in the *Salão dos Humoristas no Porto* (Famalicão, 1915).

Undoubtedly, the most important contemporary cultural reference to the faun must have been Nijinsky’s *L’Après-midi d’un Faune*, performed for the first time in Paris in 1912. The Faune “evoked much larger issues regarding modernism and modernity and the role of art in contemporary society,” thus transcending the



space of theater and dance strictly speaking, and it “broke the ‘rules’ of staged representation in ways reminiscent of contemporary art, and more specifically, of cubism, with which also the choreographer associated its aesthetic” (JÄRVINEN, 2009: 28-29) The scandal that erupted after the première (JÄRVINEN, 2009: 30-35) surpassed national borders and the ballet toured various European cities (Berlin, Vienna and London).

In Portugal, the modernist dimension of the Russian Ballets was not only known and felt, but also feverishly preached. In a text by Almada Negreiros, Ruy Coelho and José Pacheco, published in 1917 in *Portugal Futurista*, and called “Os Bailados Russos em Lisboa,” the ballets were being referred to as “[u]ma das mais bellas étapes da civilização da Europa moderna” and as “a melhor expressão de Arte que hoje te podemos aconselhar porque elles explicar-te-hão a Sublime Simplicidade da Vida onde tu, Portuguez, vives ignorantemente crucificado. Os Bailados Russos teem uma compreensão feliz da Arte moderna” (*Portugal Futurista*, 1990: 1). Ferreira Gomes’s text, with its insistent references to dancing (the verb “bailar” is used seven times), must be seen as subtly and indirectly acknowledging the impact and novelty of Nijinsky’s choreography and the importance of the Russian Ballets for bringing together all the arts in a total work of art (much like Mallarmé himself would have wished)<sup>13</sup>.

### The dedication to António Soares

Notwithstanding some uncertainty as to the editor of the typographical proofs of the third number of *Orpheu*, it seems more than plausible that, after Sá-Carneiro’s death, Pessoa was left as the only one in charge. Apart from small variances (orthography, punctuation), there are not significant differences between the manuscript (see Annex I) and the published version of the proofs (SEABRA, 1983). In one case, the substitution of a verb (“bailar”) with another (“chocar”) has been done with the clear intention of not repeating twice in the same sentence the verb “bailar” (since the word “bailado” immediately follows). This is a purely stylistic intervention and it may strengthen the hypothesis that Fernando Pessoa was personally responsible for preparing the proofs, datable to a period between October 1916 (the date of Ferreira Gomes’s text) and July 1917 (see the letter to José Pacheco, discussed before; SARAIVA, 1984: xx-xxi).

The most glaring difference between manuscript and proof version of the text is the omission of Ferreira Gomes’s dedication to his friend, the painter

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<sup>13</sup> Camille Mauclair, the conservative art critic who blasted the *Faune* with chauvinistic comments (“il est impossible qu’un danseur slave, meme si intelligent, pénètre une oeuvre de ce genre”), had previously written (in a 1912 issue of *Le Courrier Musical*) “of how the Ballets Russes had realised Mallarmé’s dream of a symbolist total work of art” (JÄRVINEN, 2009: 31).

António Soares: “Ao Pintor luzitano Antonio Soares” (fl. 1).<sup>14</sup> It is unclear why this should have been removed.<sup>15</sup> António Soares was a close friend of Ferreira Gomes, as their correspondence during this period attests, and had a personal relationship with Pessoa as well. As a matter of fact, it was Soares who designed the cover of Pessoa’s *Antinous*, something that has so far escaped the attention of scholars (*Olhares*, 2015: 27). *Antinous* was published in 1918 and had been originally intended for the third number of *Orpheu*. In the António Soares archive, a copy with a handwritten dedication by Fernando Pessoa can be found, dated August 5, 1918 (Fig. 4): “Ao Antonio Soares, ao artista e ao amigo, off., com um abraço de gratidão pelo ‘porteio’, o Fernando Pessoa, 5.8.1918.”<sup>16</sup> The relationship between the two clearly continued after that date, as the handwritten note by Pessoa accompanying the 1922-1923 exhibition catalogue of the painter attests. Dated January 22, 1923, the note reads: “Meu caro Antonio: Vi, senti (não sei se bem) & depois lhe direi. Muito obrigado. Não o pude esperar para além da 1.30. Muito seu Fernando Pessoa 22/1/1923” (Fig. 5).

The dedication to António Soares (who is referred to as a Lusitanian painter, instead of as simply Portuguese) is a testament of the complex network of personal relationships that Portuguese modernists—painters as well as writers—established during the first decades of the twentieth century. The study of the dynamics within these groups, their social composition and interactions, as well as the precise history of their formation have been the subject of much recent art historical scholarship (COTTINGTON, 2012; JOYEUX-PRUNEL, 2014), and the application of prosopographic methods that usually derive from the social sciences might expand the understanding of Portuguese modernism, literary as well as artistic.

What is most interesting in the case of António Soares and Augusto Ferreira Gomes is not so much the probability of the latter being directly inspired by the former in his choice of subject matter for his “Death of a Faun” text, or the

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<sup>14</sup> There is a lamentable lacuna in Portuguese art historiography regarding the work of António Soares. The first monographic exhibition dedicated to the painter, co-organized by the Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea-Museu do Chiado and the Museu do Teatro (curated, respectively, by Rui Afonso Santos and José Carlos Alvarez), will hopefully redress this situation (the exhibition is expected to open in Feb. 2016). The small catalogue accompanying the exhibition *Olhares: Os Estudos e os Desenhos de António Soares. Comemoração do 120º Aniversário do Nascimento 1894/2014* (20 Sep. 2014—21 Mar. 2015, Porto, Fundação Escultor José Rodrigues) includes a useful chronology of the painter’s life and work. See also the short biographical notice on the painter by Leonor Oliveira (2009: 173), as well as the entries by Pedro Lapa (1994).

<sup>15</sup> See exhibition catalogue *Nos, os de Orpheu*, CARDIELLO et al. [ed.] (2015: 129); the catalogue reproduces the first two pages of Ferreira Gomes’s manuscript. See Annex I for complete facsimile and transcription.

<sup>16</sup> The António Soares archive also contains a copy of the 1918 edition of 35 *Sonnets*, with a handwritten dedication by Pessoa bearing the same date (Aug. 5, 1918).

possibility that both of them drew upon common repositories of contemporary cultural references. It is rather that they constitute an optimal example for precisely the study of group-formation mentioned above, and the understanding of how relationships operated on a personal as well as practical level. The letters of Ferreira Gomes to António Soares<sup>17</sup> reveal the social spaces frequented (cafés, exhibition spaces etc.), the common acquaintances (frequently other writers and painters), even the physical objects exchanged, thus painting a vivid tableau of the period and of the creative forces that propelled the people involved in these, often collective, enterprises.

References to *Orpheu* appear in the letters, most surprisingly perhaps in relation to the actual object. In an undated note, written on stationery with the letterhead of “A Brasileira,” Ferreira Gomes asks António Soares to leave the copy of *Orpheu* at the café and makes plans to return it, in case the painter still needs it: “Se por acaso ainda necessita d’elle, eu copio o que preciso, e torno-a dar-lhe” (António Soares archive, 0013 AFG, bearing a handwritten date by Américo Soares c. March 1915, Fig. 6). One can almost imagine the precious volume changing hands, but the letter also raises questions as to the physical realities of *Orpheu*’s dissemination: was it rare to obtain or considered too expensive, so that two people had to actually use the same copy? In another letter, this time written by Fernando Pessoa himself and dated Nov. 29, 1915, Pessoa informs Soares that he is leaving him a copy of *Orpheu* 2, apologizing for it being already opened, and mentioning a quantity of copies that he had at home: “Aqui lhe deixo um *Orpheu* 2. Desculpa elle já estar aberto, mas os que tenho lá em casa estão todos assim; de resto, elle está novo.” (António Soares archive, 0017 FP, Fig. 7).<sup>18</sup>

The letters also hint to antagonisms and intrigues, as well as to the difficulties of artistic creation. In a letter dated Nov. 28, 1915, Ferreira Gomes apologizes to Soares for his “affastamento d’este cenaculo de intriga” (without referring specific names) and concludes by asking the painter: “Et à cause d’art? Toujours foutu?” (António Soares archive, 0016 AFG). Switching from Portuguese to French was probably a common way to show camaraderie and cultural affinity, among a group of artists and writers who frequently looked to Paris for inspiration.

The correspondence between the two men includes references to what may be common, unidentified projects<sup>19</sup> and to other painters. These latter references

<sup>17</sup> Will António Soares’s letters ever resurface to provide the other side of this conversation?

<sup>18</sup> The letter closes with the following curious warning: “Cuidado com o novo celestial amigo Neptuno,” attesting to Pessoa’s and Soares’s common interest in astrology (also shared by Ferreira Gomes). Could Pessoa be referring to a specific person belonging to the sign of Pisces?

<sup>19</sup> In an undated letter (c. 1915, according to Américo Soares handwritten note), also written on the Brasileira’s stationery, Augusto Ferreira Gomes apologizes for his absence and for “não lhe ter

often reveal indirect criticisms, opinions and even gossip that was shared between writer and painter. Thus, Ferreira Gomes writes that “Barradinhas<sup>20</sup> escreveu ao Jose Pacheco dizendo que tem tido uma enorme dificuldade em encaixar os bonecos. Vê V. Soares, simples *triumpho de sala*” (letter dating May 4, 1916, António Soares archive, 0031 AFG). Ferreira Gomes refers to the May 1916 *Salão dos Modernistas* in Porto, where António Soares participated with numerous works and for which he had drawn the cover of the catalogue (Fig. 8).

On another occasion (Sept. 26, 1916), Ferreira Gomes writes to António Soares about the upcoming edition of *Centauro*, expressing his certainty about the choice of the artist for the *hors-texte*, should he have been available, and asking him his opinion about Christiano Cruz (1892-1951), the painter who provided it after all: “Brevemente sae a Revista do Montalvor “Centauro” e vem com um Hors-texte do Christiano Cruz. Se V. cá estivesse teria sido V. o ilustrador. Mas creio que V. considera o Christiano?” (António Soares archive, 0045 AFG). Ferreira Gomes considered António Soares not only a “sincere friend,” but also a “great artist,” as one reads in the handwritten dedication to the painter of a copy of *Rajada Doentia* (António Soares archive). Soares had even been responsible for the cover of the book, providing a highly stylized front page and a rather humorous emblem of an owl resting on a skull for the back cover (Fig. 9).

The dedication of “Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno” to António Soares, although omitted in the typographical proofs of the text, is consistent then with Ferreira Gomes’s enthusiastic appreciation of his friend’s art (expressed in other letters as well, to be published in a separate article). It also reveals the interconnectedness of the actors of Portuguese modernism, and the vitality of the networks they established.

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trazido os desenhos” (António Soares archive, 0021 AFG), without further specifications on what these drawings might be for.

<sup>20</sup> The painter, ceramist and caricaturist Jorge Barradas (1894-1971).

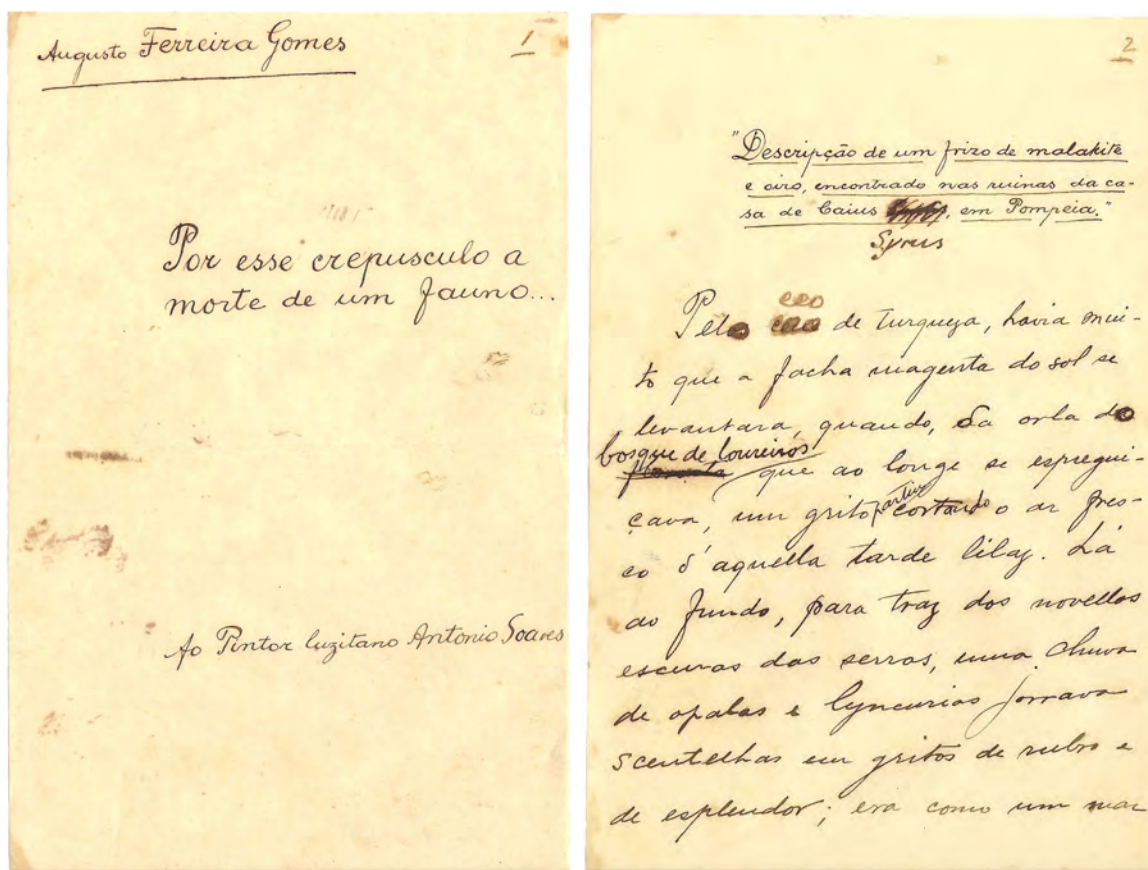
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## Annexes

I. Fifteen pages of "Por esse crepusculo a morte de um fauno," handwritten by Augusto Ferreira Gomes and with the dedication "Ao Pintor luzitano Antonio Soares." Unpublished, except by the first two pages, which were reproduced in CARDIELLO et al. (2015). Fernando Pessoa had prepared the text for publication in Orpheu 3, which didn't make to the press; the typographical proofs were eventually published (SEABRA, 1983; SARAIVA, 1984). The pages are numbered 1 to 14, with two different pages being numbered 11. Dated "Outubro 1916."



3

que ardese, e sempre mais, n'uma ruiva apotheca, como se ondas fossem d'esse mar, tudo illuminavam com a magia do seu brilho... Rezavam n'uma presa de sonho nubes de alabastro, e somnambuladas seguia a guida das por um vento morno, que vez em vez, erguia da placida nubes de ciro acendrado, e n'um vago perfume fazia ondular a agua silenciosa da ~~lagoa~~ lagoa azul e ~~fazendo~~ fazendo tremor a sombra verde-negra de dois cyrestes schematicos e esguios...

Debil como um gemido de pallida

4

eufema tocada pelo outomno, agora sentia-se longinqua e melodiosa uma flauta, e, tambem pelo ceo, n'um arranco, a cavalgada d'ouro galopou uma instante... Semia pelo abraço do vento, agora mais forte, ~~o flauta~~ <sup>o flauta</sup> imponente como um cyclope adormecido, e novamente, agora mais perto, silou estridente um grito da flauta, como n'um apelo...

Rumorosamente, primeiro na distancia, depois mais perto, um gargarhar vibrante como

5

o chocar de crystaes, arrepiou aquelle logar ermo, e nymphas de mãos brancas e olhos d'onyx, flexiveis como <sup>luzes</sup> giestas surgiram ~~do flauta~~. Embalsamava o ar um perfume pagão e as nymphas de mãos brancas e corpos cor de uardo, pararam com o espanto veludo. Deso o olhar ~~escutando~~ silenciosas a flauta flebil agora moribunda, e, quando os ultimos sons se perderam ao longe, nos seus corpos coruscantes de luxuria um fremito passou... Um bando de aves douradas voava sobre a lagoa e do alto de

6

um cyreste um ~~coro~~ <sup>coro</sup> sonhador, em gritos sinistros, evocava a terra...

Novamente, o som longinquo da flauta morden o plavato, e, n'um bailar de curvas, as nymphas romperam ~~silencio~~ n'um bailado de perfumes em pastor acios de camelia em flor... Depois, mais uma vez, a flauta cressou... Agora, junto da lagoa, as romageiras abriam os seus poms, e d'esses fructos d'ouro cahia uma chuva de rubis... E soffregas, as