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World War I
Europe, Africa, and "O Menino da sua mãe"

ABSTRACT: Written in the midst of World War I, the over-psychologized poem "O Menino da sua mãe" ("His Mother's Child") can be best read as Fernando Pessoa's most efficient antiwar poem. Among its antecedents is the antimilitary poetry of the English poet A. E. Housman, whose *A Shropshire Lad*, though first published in 1896, achieved its first great dissemination and popularity during the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902), an event that took place during Pessoa's long stay in South Africa. Important to the overall argument of this essay, also, is the large-scale public reaction to the unsettling death of the young "war" poet Rupert Brooke, a death that occurred, ironically, while he was aboard a ship transporting British forces to Gallipoli.

KEYWORDS: A. E. Housman, *A Shropshire Lad*, "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries," "O Menino da sua mãe," Rupert Brooke, Emma Lazarus, "1879" (sonnet), "Ultimatum," Henry James, Homer, *Iliad*, Anglo-Boer War

At the outset of his review of the collective volume of the poetry of Wilfred Owen, the English poet killed in France in the final days of the Great War, Philip Larkin works out a singular definition of the true "war poet" and what he deems the nature of this poet's work:

> A "war poet" is not one who chooses to commemorate or celebrate a war but one who reacts against having a war thrust upon him: he is chained, that is, to a historical event, and an abnormal one at that. However well he does it, however much we agree that the war happened and ought to be written about, there is still a tendency for us to withhold our highest praise on the grounds that a poet's choice of subject should seem an action, not a reaction. "The Wreck of the Deutschland," we feel, would have been markedly inferior if Hopkins had been a survivor from the passenger list. Again, the first-rank

> poet should ignore the squalid accident of war: his vision should be powerful enough to disregard it. Admittedly, war might come too close for this vision to be maintained. But it is still essentially irrelevant.[1]

Larkin's observation raises an interesting specter. After all, Homer was not a participant in the war he wrote about in the *Iliad*, nor was Shakespeare at Agincourt. Without making any attempt to come out on either of the two sides of this issue, one can still note that the poets whose names come up in the discussion that follows were not participants in the battles referred to more or less directly in their poems. Besides Homer, the poets whose poems are examined in this discussion of Fernando Pessoa's "O Menino da sua mãe" ("His Mother's Child") include Emma Lazarus, A. E. Housman, and Rupert Brooke.[2]

In one way or another, the West's war poetry as a whole derives from Homer's *Iliad*. The Greek poet's grand poem about the ways of warfare and the heroism of warriors stands as the beginning design and, in my opinion, remains the benchmark for all that has followed. Not unexpectedly, Homer's work has had several major English-language translations. The best known of these and, perhaps, the most influential—even to those with a knowledge of the original languages—were done, first, by George Chapman, and then in the next century, by Alexander Pope. It was Chapman's Homer that John Keats first read and then celebrated in the equally well-regarded sonnet "On First Reading into Chapman's Homer."

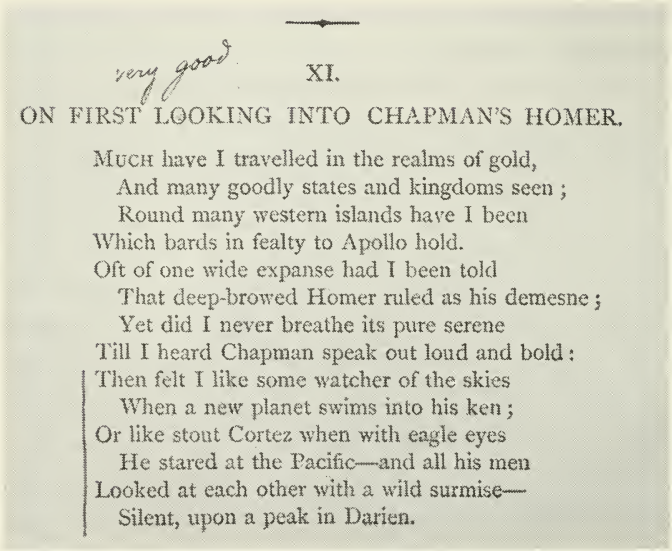
Chapman's translation lasts as a straightforward expression in naturalistically brutal language, in which Homer excels, that is evocative of dramatic deeds, as, for example, in Achilles's taunting of the dying Hector in Book 22, boasting that his body, unburied, will be left to the unkindness of dogs and birds: "And now the dogs and fowles in the foulest use / Shall teare thee up, thy corse exposed to all the Greeks' abuse."[3] Contrast this speech with the quite different vow that the same Achilles addresses to the body of Patroclus, his friend and fellow warrior:

> O my Patroclus, for thy Corse before I hither bring
> The armes of Hector, and his head, to thee for offering.
> Twelve youths, the most renown'd of Troy, I'le sacrifise beside
> Before thy heape of funerall, to thee unpacifide.
> In meane time, by our crooked sternes lye drawing teares from me;
> And round about thy honour'd Corse these dames of Dardanie

And Ilion with the ample breasts (whom our long speares, and powres,
And labours purchast from the rich and by-us-ruined towres
And cities strong and populous, with divers-languag'd men)
Shall kneele, and neither day nor night be licenst to abstaine
From solemne watches, their toil'd eyes held ope with endless teares.
This passion past, he gave command to his neare souldiers
To put a Tripod to the fire, to cleanse the festred gore
From off the person. They obeyd, and presently did powre
Fresh water in it, kindl'd wood, and with an instant flame
The belly of the Tripod girt till fire's hote qualitie came
Up to the water. Then they washt and fild the mortall wound
With wealthy oyle of nine yeares old, then wrapt the body round
In largenesse of a fine white sheete, and put it then in bed [. . .][4]

Within the Homeric tradition overall, there is a noteworthy place, perhaps surprisingly so, for the American poet Emma Lazarus (1849–1887), a descendant of the first Portuguese Sephardic Jewish settlers in what would become known as New York, and whose continuing fame outside of Jewish circles rides on the fact that she is the author of "The New Colossus," the poem quoted on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty standing on Ellis Island in New York Harbor. Less well known is her sonnet "1879," the second poem comprising a diptych titled "Destiny":

Born to the purple, lying stark and dead,
Transfixed with poisoned spears, beneath the sun
Of brazen Africa! Thy grave is one,
Fore-fated youth (on whom were visited
Follies and sins not thine), whereat the world,
Heartless howe'er it be, will pause to sing
A dirge, to breathe a sigh, a wreath to fling
Of rosemary and rue with bay-leaves curled.
Enmeshed in toils ambitious, not thine own,
Immortal, loved boy-Prince, thou tak'st thy stand
With early doomed Don Carlos, hand in hand
With mild-browed Arthur, Geoffrey's murdered son.
Louis the Dauphin lifts his thorn-ringed head,
And welcomes thee, his brother, 'mongst the dead.[5]



very good

XI.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," *The Poetical Works of John Keats*, London / New York: Frederick Warne, 1898, 42. CFP 8–294. Pessoa jotted "Very good."

Tempting though it might be to see echoes and traces of this poem lamenting the violent death of a historical celebrity, Prince Imperial Bonaparte (1856–1879), the last of the Bonaparte line, in the stanzas of Pessoa's decidedly more ironic poem "O Menino da sua mãe"—the corpse of a young soldier, lying "beneath the sun" of "brazen Arica"—one need not infer that Pessoa was acquainted with Lazarus's poem, for the link may be only that it is reminiscent (as is Pessoa's own poem) of the death of Portugal's young king Sebastian in a sixteenth-century African battle. Similarly, it would be less than plausible to think, for that matter, that Pessoa was comfortable enough with ancient Greek to take on Homeric poetry in the original in any appropriative way. But he knew English well enough, naturally, to recognize the importance to the English literary canon of the translations of Homer's poetry by Chapman or Pope.

Pessoa should have known just where his own war poetry fit in as well as differed from those model works lamenting the death of kings and princes and other historic heroes—all traceable to Homer's great poetry. His soldier has met his death, his name silenced.

Forty-three years ago, Georg Rudolf Lind identified and analyzed Pessoa's small cache of antiwar poems written during World War I.[6] Pessoa wrote wartime poems he attributed to the heteronyms Ricardo Reis, Alberto Caeiro, and Álvaro de Campos ("Ode marcial" ["Martial Ode"]). He also wrote "Salute to the Sun's Entry into Aries," "Tomámos a vila depois de um intenso bombardeamento" ("We Took the Town after Heavy Bombardment"), and "O Menino da sua mãe," poems he attributed not to heteronyms but to his orthonymic self.

The last of these poems is central to this essay: a poem that was written, most likely, sometime before the Portuguese government, succumbing to British political pressure and in defiance of Portuguese public opinion, agreed to send troops to support the English and the French in their war against the Germans and their allies.[7] For some unknown reason, however, the poem remained unpublished for a decade, until it appeared in the May 1926 issue of the Lisbon periodical *Contemporânea*.[8] It is my contention that reading "O Menino da sua mãe" in light of specific poems written by the English poets Rupert Brooke (1887–1915) and A. E. Housman (1859–1936) will take it out of the realm of disguised autobiography (as João Gaspar Simões would have it)[9] and reveal its greater universality.

Following is undoubtedly Pessoa's most frequently declaimed and oft-quoted lyric, "O Menino da sua mãe":

No plaino abandonado
Que a morna brisa aquece,
De balas trespassado—
Duas, de lado a lado—,
Jaz morto, e arrefece.

Raia-lhe a farda o sangue.
De braços estendidos,
Alvo, louro, exangue,
Fita com olhar langue
E cego os céus perdidos.

Tão jovem! que jovem era!
(Agora que idade tem?)
Filho único, a mãe lhe dera

Um nome e o mantivera:
"O menino da sua mãe."

Caiu-lhe da algibeira
A cigarreira breve.
Dera-lhe a mãe. Está inteira
E boa a cigarreira,
Ele é que já não serve.

De outra algibeira, alada
Ponta a roçar o solo,
A brancura embainhada
De um lenço . . . Deu-lh'o a criada
Velha que o trouxe ao colo.

Lá longe, em casa, há a prece:
"Que volte cedo, e bem!"
(Malhas que o Império tece!)
Jaz morto e apodrece
O menino da sua mãe.[10]

(On a deserted plain
Heated by a warm breeze,
Drilled clean through—
By two bullets—
He lies, dead, turning cold.

Blood steeps his uniform.
Blond, white, bloodless,
His arms extended,
He stares listlessly and
Unseeingly at lost skies.

He was so young! So young.
[And now how old is he?]
An only son, his mother
Had called him "Mother's
Boy." The name stuck.

Anon from his pocket
Falls his cigarette-case,
A gift from his mother.
The case is intact and in
Good shape. He is not.

From the other pocket, a
Dangling edge, the hemmed
White of a handkerchief flicking
The ground—a gift from the old
Nurse who carried him about.

Far off, at home, there is prayer:
"Return him soon—safe, sound."
[Webs that the Empire weaves!]
He lies dead, and rots,
This mother's boy.)[11]

In late July 1914, the result of political and diplomatic events that began with the assassination in Sarajevo of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian-Hungarian throne, warfare broke out in Europe. Within days, England was deeply involved. Patriotism ran high. Despite Portugal's long-standing alliance with England, the smaller country did not enter the war until March 9, 1916, sending troops to the front no earlier than February 1917. Portugal's quarrels with Germany were not such that the country felt it needed to immediately join England's side. In fact, if Pessoa's views at the time are any indication, there was much to be said in Germany's favor, at least until Germany declared war on Portugal in 1916. Pessoa's references to Germany, especially before 1916—in his political, sociological, and historical writing—indicate a comparatively favorable view of the role the Germans were made to play in the Great War.

Yet Pessoa did not hold any brief for warfare itself. In fact, it was likely in 1916 that he wrote the most famous of his three or four great antiwar poems. His view of warfare, revealed in the figure of a dead soldier, is in sharp contrast, as I will demonstrate, with that of the English poet Rupert Brooke—so sharp a contrast, in fact, that one is tempted to see "O Menino da sua mãe" as something of an answer to the public sentimentality exemplified in the young Brooke's last poetry. But that Pessoa sets the young soldier's death in Africa recalls the fact that

at a certain point in the war, Portugal had an army in East Africa where, along with Great Britain and Belgium, it fought successfully to take over Germany's colonial possessions, a situation that gives precise historical meaning to Pessoa's exasperation—"Malhas que o Império tece!" ("Webs that the Empire weaves!").[12] There was irony in the fact that the hunger to increase their "Empires" in Africa had led Portugal to join forces not only with Belgium, but also with Great Britain, the international power that in 1890 had directed its famous "ultimatum" against Portugal's claims in Africa. There were still bitter memories of the British "mapa de rosa" (their "red map"), a move in accordance with Great Britain's desire to colonize Africa from Cairo to Cape Town, one that humiliated Portugal into backing down. It was no accident that Álvaro de Campos issued his own "Ultimatum" (in the first and only issue of *Portugal Futurista*, in September 1917), not merely against Great Britain and the Allies, but against the whole of modern Europe's history and culture at just about the same time that Pessoa wrote "O Menino da sua mãe."[13]

Before Pessoa registered his reactions to the war being waged in Africa as well as Europe, in December 1914, Rupert Brooke placed five poems in *New Numbers*, a journal of small circulation. Grouped under the title "1914," they soon became known as the "War Sonnets" and were widely circulated. Two of the poems—"The Dead" and "The Soldier"—were reprinted on March 11, 1915, in the London *Times Literary Supplement*; and on April 4 (Easter Sunday), "The Soldier" was read from church pulpits. But it was Brooke's death less than three weeks later, on April 23, 1915, that turned "The Soldier," a stirring feat of bravado in which he celebrated his own death and burial as gestures of an ultimate patriotism, into the British national anthem par excellence.

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less

Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.[14]

Notably, in "The Soldier," Brooke does not write about the soldier's death in battle or anything similar. Rather, he conveys the meaning that the soldier at eternal rest—the buried soldier—will always have for his country. It is in "The Dead" that Brooke talks about the aftermath of the soldier's sacrifice in losing his life for his country. They are the dead, in his words—"the rich Dead."

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.[15]

There is no question that it was Brooke's deep-seated desire (or foolhardy wish, some would say) to prove his mettle by risking his life in combat, even dying a hero's death. This was not to be, however, for on April 23, 1915, the would-be warrior "died of septicæmia in a French hospital ship in the Ægean, and was buried the same day on the island of Scyros,"[16] at some distance from Gallipoli, where the ship carrying the young naval officer was headed and where England (and her allies) were destined to suffer disastrous naval defeats in a long and unsuccessful campaign to take the Dardanelles Strait. Brooke's death had at least spared him that dispiriting experience.

As might well be imagined, the circumstances surrounding the poet-soldier's untimely death were not the most propitious for launching a real-life hero into

the midst of propaganda for the war. The London *Times* notice of Brooke's untimely death begins with a substantial quotation from "W. S. C.," not otherwise identified. It offered the right sentiments, obviously, in the right words:

> During the last few months of his life, months of preparation in gallant comradeship and open air, the poet-soldier told with all the simple force of genius the sorrow of youth about to die, and the sure triumphant consolations of a sincere and valiant spirit. He expected to die; he was willing to die for the dear England whose beauty and majesty he knew; and he advanced towards the brink in perfect serenity, with absolute conviction of the rightness of his country's cause and a heart devoid of hate for fellow-men.
>
> The thoughts to which he gave expression in the very few incomparable war sonnets which he has left behind will be shared by many thousands of young men moving resolutely and blithely forward into this, the hardest, the cruelest, and the least-rewarded of all the wars that men have fought. They are a whole history and revelation of Rupert Brooke himself. Joyous, fearless, versatile, deeply instructed, with classic symmetry of mind and body, ruled by high undoubting purpose, he was all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be in days when no sacrifice but the most precious is acceptable, and the most precious is that which is most freely proffered.[17]

Such propaganda was wildly successful, so much so that the *Fortnightly Review*, in the months following the outbreak of war, felt the need to describe Brooke as "almost too good to be true," as "certainly one of those whom the gods love," for he died young, at the age of twenty-seven.[18] Pessoa himself would invoke the same notion—"he dies young whom the Gods love" ("morre jovem o que os Deuses amam")—when memorializing his friend, the poet Mário de Sá-Carneiro, who died in his twenty-sixth year.[19] But in Brooke's case, it fell to Henry James, the renowned Anglo-American novelist who had thrown himself into the war effort—including efforts to raise money for American voluntary ambulances, as well as renouncing his American citizenship to become a British citizen as a supportive gesture of the British cause (not to mention its being a complaint against the reluctance of the United States to enter the war on the side of the Allies)—to place the sacrificed life of the poet-warrior Rupert Brooke at the center of the exemplary ethos the British nation had imagined for itself and confirmed in Brooke's meaningful death. In the preface he contributed to Brooke's posthumously published *Letters from America*, James defined that mean-

ing, indulging himself in the fullness of his own late style in the really unearned (and thus exaggerated) poignancy of Brooke's death, not in combat but on a ship making its way to a future scene of battle:

> The event [death] came indeed not in the manner prefigured by him in the repeatedly perfect line, that of the received death-stroke, the fall in action, discounted as such; which might have seemed very much because even the harsh logic and pressure of history were tender of him at the last and declined to go through more than the form of their function, discharging it with the least violence and surrounding it as with a legendary light. He was taken ill, as an effect of blood-poisoning, on his way from Alexandria to Gallipoli, and, getting ominously and rapidly worse, was removed from his transport to a French hospital ship, where, irreproachably cared for, he died in a few hours and without coming to consciousness. I deny myself any further anticipation of the story to which further noble associations attach, and the merest outline of which indeed tells it and rounds it off absolutely as the right harmony would have it. It is perhaps even a touch beyond any dreamt-of harmony that, under omission of no martial honour, he was to be carried by comrades and devoted waiting sharers, whose evidence survives them, to the steep summit of a Greek island of infinite grace and there placed in such earth and amid such beauty of light and shade and embracing prospect as that the fondest reading of his young lifetime could have suggested nothing better. It struck us at home, I mean, as symbolizing with the last refinement his whole instinct of selection and response, his relation to the overcharged appeal of his scene and hour. How could he have shown more the young English poetic possibility and faculty in which we were to see the freshest reflection of the intelligence and the soul of the new generation? The generosity, I may fairly say the joy, of his contribution to the general perfect way makes a monument of his high rest there at the heart of all that was once noblest in history.[20]

Of course, behind James's characterization of a heroic, if noncombat, death such as Brooke's was the idea that everyone, not just the military, could contribute heroically to the British cause. Like James himself—to evoke something of the spirit of John Milton—"they also serve who only stand and wait."

However, there were those few who, unlike James, demurred when Brooke was apotheosized in this way, but significantly, they did not choose to go public

with their reservations or complaints. But one of those who did privately question the young poet's "attitudinizing" was a fellow poet. Writing at the time of Brooke's death, Charles Sorley complained that his "War" sonnets were overpraised:

> He [Brooke] is far too obsessed with his own sacrifice, regarding the going to war of himself (and others) as a highly intense, remarkable and sacrificial exploit, whereas it is merely the conduct demanded of him (and others) by the turn of circumstances, where non-compliance with this demand would have made life intolerable. It was not that "they" gave up anything of that list in one sonnet: but that the essence of these things had been endangered by circumstances over which he had no control, and he must fight to recapture them. He has clothed his attitude in fine words: but he has taken the sentimental attitude.[21]

But the younger poet's words were meant for private ears only, as has been noted, and so they remained. For when almost immediately after Brooke's death his publisher brought out 1914 & *Other Sonnets*, the English embraced the book so eagerly that in 1915 alone, it was reprinted eleven times. Eager to cash in on Brooke's new and greater prominence, his publisher managed to bring out *Collected Poems* in the same year. A copy of the 1926 "The Augustan Books of Poetry edited by Edward Thompson" edition of Brooke's poems survives in Pessoa's private library.[22]

Pessoa's first knowledge of war in his time came while he was living with his stepfather, mother, and half-siblings in Durban, South Africa, at some distance from the conflicts. The Anglo-Boer War, waged between the farmers of the small Boer republics and British troops in the years 1899–1902, evoked from the fourteen-year-old Fernando Pessoa, in the guise of his English preheteronym Charles Robert Anon, the following poetic complaint, which he submitted to the *Natal Mercury*.

> [. . .]
> The fallen lion every ass can kick,
> That in his life, shamed to unmotioned fright,
> His every move with eyes askance did trace.
>
> Ill scorn beseems us, men of war and trick,
> Whose groaning nation poured her fullest might
> To take the freedom of a farmer race.[23]

The *Natal Mercury* did not publish this sonnet, nor the other two (compare these sonnets as discussed in Stefan Helgesson's article in this volume).

The Anglo-Boer War, as history would deem, brought fresh attention in a far less singular way, to a small book of poems published in England at its author's own expense in 1896, three years before the fighting broke out in South Africa. Although A. E. Housman did not participate in the wars of his time—the Anglo-Boer War, the Great War—he nevertheless included in *A Shropshire Lad* several poems about the fate of the young soldier at war. Modestly presented (and mostly untitled), Housman's poetry was slow to gain readers at first, but about a dozen years after publication, according to Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* was "'in every pocket' just before the war," and thus "the book was on the spot (as was Rupert Brooke) to take advantage of the increase of interest in poetry brought about by 1914."[24] Not incidentally, that the poetry of Housman and of Brooke was immediately available to the English-language reader (such as Pessoa) at the outbreak of war answers Georg Rudolf Lind's question, "How does the poet, living in a pacific Lisbon, become inspired by bellicose motives, knowing nothing about war other than what the newspapers told him?" ("Como é que o poeta, morando na pacífica Lisboa, se teria inspirado em motivos bélicos, não conhecendo mais sobre a guerra do que aquilo que os jornais relatavam?").[25]

In fairness, it should be noted that Housman's own credibility as an antimilitary poet was later compromised by the popular success of "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries," a poem recalling the British army's defeat at Ypres in 1914 that he published in 1915. Caught up in home front controversies over whether soldiers should receive payment for their service, Housman supplied a defense of the English mercenary that was adopted as a patriotic rallying poem, celebrating the grit and courage of the British soldier. Useful as propaganda, it was reprinted on anniversaries of the otherwise disastrous defeat. In later years, well aware of how the poem had been employed during the war, Housman refused to let it be reprinted or anthologized. Yet it was not the wrongly or rightly perceived patriotism of "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries" that appealed to Pessoa, but Housman's antimilitary ethos, especially as it is expressed in this early *A Shropshire Lad* poem:

On the idle hill of summer,
Sleepy with the flow of streams,

Far I hear the steady drummer
Drumming like a noise in dreams.

Far and new and low and louder
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
Soldiers marching, all to die.

East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
None that go return again.

Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
Woman bore me, I will rise.[26]

In "O Menino da sua mãe," Pessoa goes so far as to draw on this Housman poem for particulars. When he writes, "On the deserted plain" the young soldier "lies dead, and is rotting," he echoes Housman's lines "on fields forgotten / Bleach the bones of comrades slain, / Lovely lads and dead and rotten." If Housman's poem works more generally, its naturalistic detail—the corpse left to rot on the deserted battlefield—serves as a poetic gift from Housman to Pessoa contradicting Horace's notion that *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*—the overarching theme of Rupert Brooke's "War" sonnets. In the poetry written during the war, body parts—usually referred to, with a strong trace of Victorian delicacy, as "limbs"—were lost and heroically dead bodies were interred under fields of red poppies and blooming roses, but it was not noted that myriad corpses, unclaimed for burial, lay rotting on the battlefields where they died.[27] Housman and Pessoa knew better, even if Brooke did not, or would not.

Interesting, too, is the discrepancy between the fate of the corpse in Brooke's poem—it is "claimed," so to speak, and is, of course, buried—and in Pessoa's. The corpse in Pessoa's poem lies on an abandoned field, unburied. It does not take a classicist of Housman's stature and wide learning to recall here the Greek theme of the crime committed against the righteous Antigone when she is denied the right to claim her brother's body for burial, to keep his rotting corpse from becoming food for dogs and scavenging birds. This tragic note is sounded

by Pessoa by his singling out, metonymically, the unburied, rotting body of one lad (as Housman would have called him), who was a "mother's boy."[28] Yet, touching history, Pessoa's dead soldier serves as a sign of what was already happening on a then unheard-of scale in astonishing numbers. It is estimated that "some 400,000 British soldiers would have no known grave," according to a recent report, "their bodies swallowed in shell-torn mud, sometimes emerging to this day when a plow strikes bones."[29]

NOTES

1. Philip Larkin, *Required Writing: Miscellaneous Pieces 1955–1982* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1984), 159.

2. Several other aspects of Pessoa's poem—theme, image, and so on—are discussed by Monteiro in a chapter titled "Webs of Empire: Caroline Norton, Rimbaud, and Others," in *Fernando Pessoa and Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Literature* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 129–44. Relevant to this kind of literary scholarship is the American poet Elizabeth Bishop's testimony that "it takes probably hundreds of things coming together at the right moment to make a poem and no one can ever really separate them out and say this did this, that did that." Elizabeth Bishop, *Conversations with Elizabeth Bishop* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1996), 88.

3. Allardyce Nicoll, ed., *Chapman's Homer: The Iliad* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 448. In Alexander Pope's later translation (published in 1715–1720), these lines are rendered: "While cast to all the Rage of hostile Pow'r, / Thee, Birds shall mangle, and the Dogs devour." Reuben A. Brower and W. H. Bond, eds., *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. Alexander Pope (New York / London: Macmillan / Collier-Macmillan, 1965), 501.

4. Nicoll, ed., 380–81. Pope's version of Achilles's address to the body of Patroclus reads as follows: "Yet, my Patroclus! yet a space I stay, / Then swift pursue thee on the darksome way. / E'er thy dear Relicks in the Grave are laid, / Shall Hector's Head be offer'd to thy Shade; / That, with his Arms, shall hang before thy Shrine, / And twelve, the noblest of the Trojan Line, / Slain by this Hand, sad Sacrifice! expire; / Their Lives effus'd around thy flaming Pyre. / Thus let me lie till then! thus, closely prest, / Bathe thy cold Face, and sob upon thy Breast! / While Trojan Captives here thy Mourners stay, / Weep all the Night, and murmur all the Day: / Spoils of my Arms, and thine; when wasting wide, / Our Swords kept time, and conquer'd side by side. // He spoke, and bid the sad Attendants round / Cleanse the pale Corse, and wash each honour'd Wound. / A massy Caldron of stupendous Frame / They brought, and plac'd it o'er the rising Flame: / Then heap the lighted Wood; the Flame divides / Beneath the Vase, and climbs around the Sides; / In its wide Womb they pour the rushing Stream; / The boiling Water bubbles to

the Brim: / The Body then they bathe with pious Toil, / Embalm the Wounds, anoint the Limbs with Oyl; / High on a Bed of State extended laid, / And decent cover'd with a linen Shade; / Last o'er the Dead the milkwhite Mantle threw; / That done, their Sorrows and their Sighs renew" (Brower and Bond, eds., 432).

5. Emma Lazarus, *The Poems of Emma Lazarus* (Boston / New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1889), I, 213.

6. Georg Rudolf Lind, "Fernando Pessoa perante a primeira guerra mundial," in *Estudos sobre Fernando Pessoa* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 1981), 425–58.

7. On October 19, 1916, this widely published paragraph appeared in the *New York Times*: "A Madrid dispatch to the Cologne Gazette says no Portuguese troops will be sent to France until two new divisions have been made ready to preserve order in Portugal. Travelers reaching Vigo from Portugal, the dispatch says, declare most of the Portuguese people are opposed to war and many arrests are being made. At Oporto a crowd attacked the barracks, and 130 persons, including soldiers, were arrested," in "Asserts Portuguese Oppose War," *New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1916, 2. Note that these events in Portugal are reported in a Spanish dispatch to a newspaper in Germany. That these details were deemed newsworthy to readers in the United States indicates that what Portugal would do—and when—regarding the war was of interest to more than just the Germans, French, or British.

8. It was reprinted two years later in *O Noticias Illustrado*, on November 11, 1928, marking the tenth anniversary of the true armistice that led to the end of the long war. João Rui de Sousa, *Fotobibliografia de Fernando Pessoa* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa Moeda / Biblioteca Nacional, 1988), 159. And it was published, with minor alterations, also in May 1930 (*Cancioneiro—I Salão dos Independentes*). The poem reproduced in this article is from this last publication.

9. See João Gaspar Simões, *Vida e obra de Fernando Pessoa: História de um geração* (Lisbon: Bertrand, 1950), I.

10. Fernando Pessoa, *Cancioneiro—I° Salão dos Independentes* (Lisbon, May 10 1930), 1–2.

11. Fernando Pessoa, "His Mother's Child" ["O Menino da sua mãe"], in *Self-Analyses and Thirty Other Poems*, trans. George Monteiro (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1988), 25.

12. See, for example, "German Colonies," 4.

13. Pessoa was careful to point out that Campos's "Ultimatum" was "not pro-German" but "anti-everything, Allied and German." BNP/E3, 21–121; Fernando Pessoa, *Sensacionismo e outros ismos* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 2009), 275.

14. Rupert Brooke, *Collected Poems* (New York: John Lane, 1916), 64.

15. Ibid., 66.

16. Geoffrey Keynes, "Preface," in Brooke, *The Poetical Works of Rupert Brooke* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), 5.

17. "Death of Mr. Rupert Brooke: Sunstroke at Lemnos," *London Times*, Apr. 26, 1915, 5.

18. S. P. B Mais, "Rupert Brooke," *Fortnightly Review* 98 (Aug. 1915), 348. Highly romanticized notions of the heroism of Brooke's life and death persisted. For an example of this, see "The Gods' Beloved," *Athenaeum* 4632 (Aug. 1918), 354–55.

19. Fernando Pessoa, "Mario de Sá-Carneiro (1890–1916)," *Athena* 1 (Nov. 1924), 41.

20. Henry James, "Preface," in *Letters from America by Rupert Brooke* (New York: Scribner's, 1916), xl–xlii.

21. Quoted in John Lehmann, *The Strange Destiny of Rupert Brooke* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980), 137–38.

22. Jerónimo Pizarro, Patricio Ferrari, and Antonio Cardiello, *A Biblioteca particular de Fernando Pessoa* I (Lisbon: D. Quixote, 2010), 201; call number CFP 8–69.

23. BNP/E3, 77–80r; Fernando Pessoa, *Poemas Ingleses* II (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 1997), 303.

24. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 282.

25. Lind, "Fernando Pessoa perante a primeira guerra mundial," 425.

26. A. E. Housman, *A Shropshire Lad* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubern, 1896), 41–42.

27. Siegfried Sassoon was the notable exception. In "Counter-Attack," he describes the World War I battlefield: "The place was rotten with dead; green clumsy legs / High-booted, sprawled and groveled along the saps / and Trunks, face downward, in the sucking mud / [. . .]" Sassoon, "Counter-Attack," in *The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry* (London / New York: Penguin, 1996), 68. See also Sassoon's poem sympathetic to the German dead, "'The rank stench of those bodies haunts me still'" (London / New York: Penguin, 1996), 124–26.

28. By an odd coincidence, Philip Larkin concludes that "the fundamental biographic fact" about Wilfred Owen is that he was "his mother's boy." Larkin, *Retired Writing*, 231.

29. Geoffrey Wheatcroft, "Hello to All That!," *New York Review of Books* 58 (June 23, 2011), 28–31.

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