

Fernando Pessoa

## **My intense patriotic suffering,...**

My intense patriotic suffering, my intense desire of bettering the condition of Portugal provoke in me — how to express with what warmth, with what intensity,

with what sincerity! — a thousand plans which, even if one man could realise them, he had to have one characteristic which in me is purely negative—the power of will. But I suffer — on the very limit of madness, I swear it— as if I could do all and was unable to do it, by deficiency of will. The suffering is horrible. It holds me constantly, I say, on the limit of madness.

And then ununderstood. No one suspects my patriotic love, intenser than that of everyone I meet, of everyone I know. I do not betray it; how do I then know they have it not? How can I tell their care is not such as mine. Because in some cases, in most, their temperament is entirely different; because, in the other cases they speak in a way which reveals the non — existence at least of a name patriotism.

The warmth, the intensity — tender, revolted and eager —, of mine I shall never express, [...]

Besides my patriotic projects — writing of *Portugal Republic* — to provoke a revolution here, writing of Portuguese pamphlets, editing of older national literary works, creation of a magazine, of a scientific review, etc .— other plans, consuming me with the necessity of being soon carried out [...] combine to produce an excess of impulse that paralyses my will. The suffering that this produces I know not if it can be described as on this side of insanity.

Add to all this other reasons still for suffering, some physical, others mental, the susceptibility to every small thing that can cause pain (or even that to a normal man could not cause any pain), add this to other things still, complications, money difficulties — join this all to my fundamentally unbalanced temperament and you may be able to suspect what my suffering is.

30-10-08

Páginas Íntimas e de Auto-Interpretação. Fernando Pessoa. (Textos estabelecidos e prefaciados por Georg Rudolf Lind e Jacinto do Prado Coelho.) Lisboa: Ática, 1966: 4.