

**John Pedro Schwartz**

**The Translator's (In)visibility:  
English-Language Translation of Fernando Pessoa's Poetry**

The present talk frames existing English-language versions of Pessoa's poetry in terms of what the translation theorist Lawrence Venuti calls "fluent" and "resistant," "domesticating" and "foreignizing" translation strategies. Specifically, I wish to test Venuti's claims about the dominance of fluency in English-language translation against the evidence provided by published translations of Fernando Pessoa's poetry, translators' prefaces, reviews from newspapers and periodicals, and literary criticism. The aim is to discover whether the "regime of fluency" described by Venuti extends to English-language translations of Pessoa's poetry. Does an authoritative strategy for translating Pessoa's poetry exist? Is there room for other translation strategies that register the linguistic, cultural, and historical differences of the foreign text? A second aim is to present my translation—co-written with my late father, Robert N. Schwartz—of Pessoa's *Message*, due out from Tinta-da-china in July 2022. This edition carries the major distinction of being the only existing English translation of Pessoa's *Message* to recreate both the rhyme and the metrical schemes of the original. I will begin my argument by summarizing the main points of Venuti's theory. Next, I will examine the discourse surrounding English-language translations of Pessoa's poetry, before situating our own work in that context. I will dwell particularly on our rationale for rhymed and metered translation. I will then move into a comparative analysis of how different translators of *Message* have grappled with the challenges posed by Pessoa's use of hyperbaton, inverted sentence structures, and archaic spelling. The talk concludes with a call for translators to reflect seriously on their guiding principles and to evidence this reflection in translator's prefaces worthy of the name.

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