

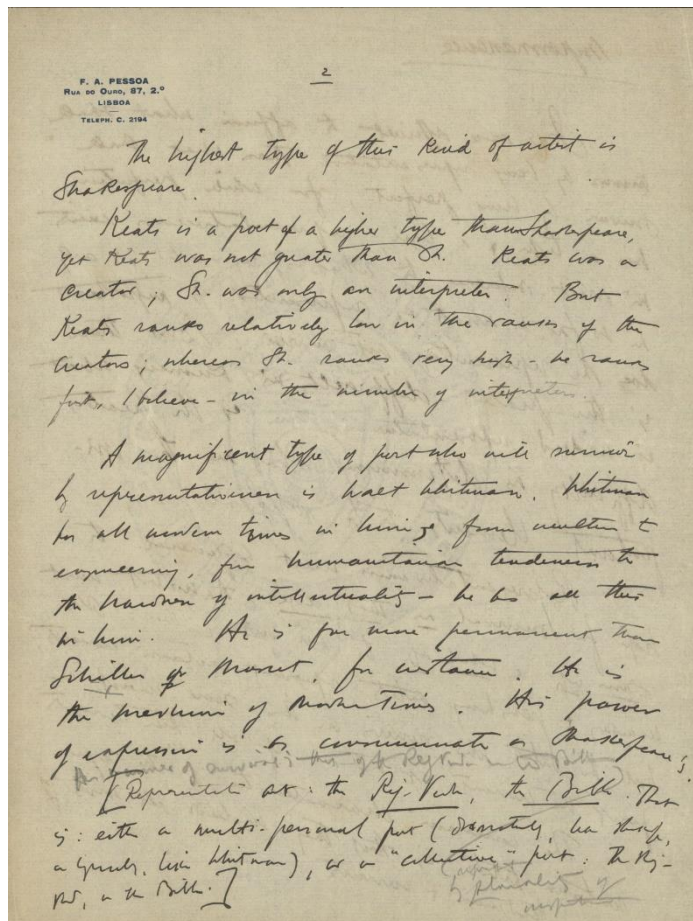
## Impermanence

It is more difficult to affirm what shall survive by being representative than what shall survive by being perfect, for while perfection has a type and a logic, representativeness exists in direct reference to what is represented, and only in so far as what is represented is important does the representing art survive. But there is the greatest difficulty in knowing what is indeed representative because there is the greatest difficulty in determining what are the important elements to be represented.

Representativeness must be general to hope for survival on that score. An artist must sum up a whole age to live out of that. All secondary and perishing artists represent certain currents; but the artist who survives on this score must represent the current at the bottom of all those currents.

The common characteristic of all the representative artists is that they include all sorts of tendencies and currents.

Saturday night artists



The highest type of this kind of artist is Shakespeare.

Keats is a poet of a higher type than Shakespeare, yet Keats was not greater than Shakespeare. Keats was a creator; Shakespeare was only an interpreter. But Keats ranks relatively low in the ranks of the creators; whereas Shakespeare ranks very high - he ranks first, I believe - in the number of interpreters.

A magnificent type of poet who will survive by representativeness is Walt Whitman. Whitman has all modern times in him, from occultism to engineering, from humanitarian tenderness to the hardness of intellectuality - he has all this in him. He is far more permanent than [Schiller or] Musset, for instance. He is the medium of Modern Times. His power of expression is as consummate as Shakespeare's. His manner of survival is that of the Rig-Veda and the Bible, representative by plurality of inspiration.

[Representative art: The Rig-Veda, the Bible. That is: either a multi-personal poet (dramatical, like Shakespeare, or lyrical, like Walt Whitman), or a "collective" poet: the Rig-Veda, or the Bible).]

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## DIREITOS ASSOCIADOS

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