

## Introduction

More than even Conrad, Tagore, and Nabokov—to name just a few late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century writers who went beyond the realm of the mother tongue—Fernando Pessoa (1888–1935), from childhood on, moved with great ease between Portuguese, English, and French,<sup>1</sup> as well as a smattering of humorous and philosophical Latin when appropriate. Publications during his lifetime, along with the numerous unpublished writings in his archive housed at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (National Library of Portugal),<sup>2</sup> provide ample evidence of an intense engagement with all three languages, at times simultaneously. Moreover, his private library, kept at the Casa Fernando Pessoa (Fernando Pessoa House),<sup>3</sup> feels more like the study of an English writer permanently residing in Lisbon, surrounded by many volumes of his favorite English authors, reading French texts only in the original, and possessing a large number of Portuguese books, many signed by fellow writers.<sup>4</sup>

After Pessoa's father—a modest employee of the secretary of state, as well as music critic of the *Diário de Notícias*—died prematurely, his mother married the then Portuguese consul to South Africa. Pessoa, age seven and a half, left Lisbon to travel with her to Durban, the capital at the time of the British colony of Natal, South Africa. He would remain there for the next nine years (February, 1896–August, 1905),<sup>5</sup> and all his formal education would be in English. Some might say—as Eduardo Lourenço has said—that Pessoa could never have been the writer he became had he not spent his formative years undergoing what can only be described as a typical upper-middle-class education within the British Empire at the end of the Victorian era. What Pessoa gained in literary terms during those years was invaluable. He became acquainted with Milton's *Paradise Lost* long before he read the Portuguese epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (*The Lusiads*) of Camões; he admired Keats for his “love of the decorative” and “love of the natural” before coming in contact with his beloved Cesário Verde, the “poet of unpoetical things”;<sup>6</sup> his knowledge of Shakespeare enabled him to produce a series of his own Shakespearean sonnets in English as well as to read, appreciate, and even attempt translations of Antero de Quental's sonnets.<sup>7</sup> In a word, what Pessoa brought back to Lisbon was something sorely needed among the Portuguese literati of the time: an

informed, outsider's literary perspective on Portugal and all things Portuguese capable of reinvigorating, or better, redefining, the country's literary identity.

Once back in the city of his birth, the young Pessoa never again set foot in an English-speaking country. Yet like the traveler who dreams about distant lands without actually venturing forth, he never ceased to dream about other places, other ways of feeling, knowing, being . . . He had returned home with a mind on fire, brimming with myriad projects, both literary and commercial, often conceived in English, often left unfinished, as his archive reveals. In fact, many of his poems echo this sense of endless schemes and dreams without endings:

Tenho já o plano traçado; mas não, hoje não traço planos . . .  
 Amanhã é o dia dos planos.  
 Amanhã sentar-me-hei á secretaria para conquistar o mundo;  
 Mas só conquistarei o mundo depois de amanhã . . .<sup>8</sup>

(I've got a plan all mapped out; but no, not mapping it out today . . .  
 Tomorrow is the day for plans.  
 Tomorrow is the day I'll sit at my desk and take over the world;  
 But I'll only take over the world the day after tomorrow . . .)

Taking over the world implied an inner conquest: a verbal, dramatized shedding of light on some uncharted land within consciousness. His lifetime's effort never really swerved from this serious pursuit of a language capable of expressing the layered, highly complex answer to the always-elusive question of personal identity in all its conceivable dimensions. And in this endeavor, Pessoa's greatest compass remained, unfailingly, his private library. His voracious appetite for books gave him all that was necessary for his poetic voyage. It took him anywhere his precocious intellectual curiosity desired to go: across Europe and all the way to the East. Even across the Atlantic Ocean—to the companionship of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Poe. And how to forget Whitman—that “universão”<sup>9</sup> (giant universe) whose portrait Álvaro de Campos kissed and described as “Shakespeare da sensação que começa a andar a vapor, / Milton-Shelley do horizonte da Electricidade futura!”<sup>10</sup> (Shakespeare of the sensation on the verge of steam propulsion, / Milton-Shelley of the dawning future of Electricity!)? Rather than ply the waters in search of new lands, Pessoa's version of the Portuguese explorer would plumb oceanic literary depths in search of the ever-changing, fathomless Self.

What initially launched Pessoa onto the world stage was his modernist epic of personal consciousness: the poetic trio of heteronyms in his “drama-emgente” (drama-in-people).<sup>11</sup> From this initial whirlwind of interest, curiosity led to awareness (and translations) of his other major works in Portuguese—*Livro do desassossego* (*The Book of Disquiet*) and *Mensagem* (*Message*; the only Portuguese work published in his lifetime, a year before his death), plus the vast output of his own poetry in Portuguese (as distinct from his heteronymic poetry). Serious interest in the English side of Pessoa, on the other hand, took much longer to rouse. Only twenty years after Pessoa’s death did the focus begin to shift. The publication in 1956 of Maria da Encarnação Monteiro’s pioneering work, *Incidências Inglesas na Poesia de Fernando Pessoa* (*English Influences in the Poetry of Fernando Pessoa*),<sup>12</sup> was soon followed by a host of editions, translations, and studies by Georg Rudolf Lind, Edouard Roditi, Jorge de Sena, José Blanc de Portugal, Hubert D. Jennings, Alexandrino Severino, George Monteiro, Susan Margaret Brown, Anne Terlinder, João Dionísio, Luísa Freire, and Maria Irene Ramalho de Sousa Santos, among others.<sup>13</sup> More-recent works have been published by some of the contributors to this special issue: Richard Zenith, Mariana Gray de Castro, and Jorge Uribe on Oscar Wilde; Patricia McNeill on William Butler Yeats; Mariana Gray de Castro on Shakespeare; Jorge Uribe on Matthew Arnold; Jerónimo Pizarro on Khayyam-FitzGerald; and Patricio Ferrari on Pessoa’s English metrics.<sup>14</sup>

Studying the English literary production is pertinent for many reasons, including the way it helps contextualize Pessoa more thoroughly. It is important to know that before making his literary debut in book form with *Mensagem* in 1934, he had already published some of his works in English. In 1918 two chapbooks came out in English: *Antinous*, a long poem celebrating the homoerotic love between Antinous and the Emperor Hadrian; and 35 *Sonnets*, a series of Shakespearean sonnets. Three years later, in 1921, Pessoa published *English Poems I–II* (a revised version of *Antinous* and *Inscriptions*, a series of fourteen epitaphs inspired by *The Greek Anthology*, compiled and translated by W. R. Paton<sup>15</sup>) and *English Poems III* (*Epithalamium*, a twenty-one-poem series set in Rome and infused with explicit scenes of heterosexual love). These two slim volumes were published by Olisipo, a commercial agency and publishing house that Pessoa founded that same year. He also published two other poems: one in the well-known London-based journal *Athenaeum*, and the other in *Contemporânea*, a literary magazine created in Lisbon. In this connection, it should be mentioned that

the letters Pessoa wrote to English critics, publishers, and editors underscore just how serious he was about his English poetry, and just how hopeful he was about making this poetry known in England.<sup>16</sup>

Especially now, with Pessoa's digitized private library online, the importance of English in his formative years is irrefutable: Shakespeare, Milton, Chatterton, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, among others, were the bedrock from which his poetic sensibility emerged. The legacy of this literary language provided him with a scope, the breadth and depth of which characterize the quality of the imagination of the true comparatist. Most of what Pessoa eventually wrote was informed by these (his) original sources. Whether his scribbled annotations in works of other authors, his own essays, poems, and fiction, or the writings attributed to his fictitious authors, the most alluring aspect of these English writings is the connections and transformations taking place within Pessoa's mind as it migrated back and forth between two linguistic homelands. As we learn how to make these connections, we begin to find significance in what was previously of little interest. What matters is not so much that his English poems, for example, are not of the highest literary quality—one of the reasons many critics have ignored them—but rather what these poems are trying to do, what they express and how they express it, and the ways they foreshadow, in part, what would subsequently take place in Portuguese.

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This issue on Pessoa is divided into five themes, each of which is treated in several chapters: the Durban years; Pessoa's short and long poems; mediating Portugal; the nineteenth century and a theoretical framework for heteronymism; and Pessoa's archive. Additional short sections containing fiction, essays, translations, an interview conducted last year, and three reviews of recent editions of Pessoa round out the volume.

Because this is the first publication devoted exclusively to Pessoa as an English reader and writer, we wanted to cover a broad spectrum of topics and approaches while still maintaining cohesion. This explains our choice of contributions.

We thought it pertinent to open with writings from Pessoa's formative years in South Africa. Richard Zenith's article deals with *The Barrowboy Boys*, a boy's storybook serialized in a British magazine in 1903, which sparked enough interest in Pessoa that he wrote his own version in Portuguese. With the political poetry attributed to Charles Robert Anon/Alexander Search as a focal point, Stefan

Helgesson discusses the contextual circumstances of Fernando Pessoa in the Natal Colony at the time of the Anglo-Boer War and its aftermath.

George Monteiro opens his article with a new interpretation of Pessoa's "O Menino da sua mãe" ("His Mother's Child"). Reading it in the light of specific war poems written by English poets Rupert Brooke and A. E. Housman, Monteiro offers an alternative reading to João Gaspar Simões's autobiographical interpretation of the poem, and in so doing grants it a greater universality. Pauly Ellen Bothe reflects on the modernist long poem as a cosmopolitan aesthetic phenomenon by examining characteristics of both T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Álvaro de Campos's *Ode marítima* (*Maritime Ode*).

Patricia Silva McNeill concentrates on Pessoa's role as cultural mediator between Portugal and England. She demonstrates Pessoa's familiarity with cultural magazines published in London in the first decade of the twentieth century, and she indicates the extent to which the British avant-garde most likely influenced Pessoa's work. José Barreto transcribes and discusses Pessoa's most ambitious English prose undertaking before the age of twenty-five: "History of a Dictatorship."

In the chapter on heteronymism,<sup>17</sup> Mariana Gray de Castro examines Pessoa's poetic engagement with Keats, both in specific lines of verse and in the gradual theoretical development concerning the formation of Pessoa's heteronyms. Flávio Rodrigo Penteadó and Caio Gagliardi use some of Pessoa's theoretical texts in order to analyze the relationship between Robert Browning's dramatic monologues and the heteronymic project.

Finally, Jorge Uribe tracks all of Pessoa's references to Walter Pater, shedding important light on the influence and the instrumental use of tradition. Bringing to light four unpublished English sonnets, Patricio Ferrari and Carlos Pittella-Leite lay to rest the erroneous idea that Pessoa stopped writing English verse in the early 1920s.

As guest editors, we were privileged to be granted the opportunity to coordinate the five short final sections.<sup>18</sup> The first section, on Pessoa's fiction, includes a brief introduction and a new transcription of Alexander Search's "A Very Original Dinner" by Natalia Jerez Quintero. In the section on essays, Filipa de Freitas transcribes and comments on six fragments from Pessoa's "Erostratus," an unfinished essay in English concerning artistic fame. In the section on translation Claudia J. Fischer reveals unpublished translations of

lines from Dryden, Keats, Tennyson, and Browning. Following that, Maria de Lurdes Sampaio interviews Margaret Jull Costa, joint winner of the Portuguese Translation Prize in 1992 for her translation of Pessoa's *Livro do desassossego*. The volume closes with reviews by Patricia McNeill, George Monteiro, and Susan Margaret Brown of three recent Pessoa editions.

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An unpublished English manuscript datable to 1904 and still extant among Pessoa's papers reads as follows:

It has always been the custom of man to bewail the irrevocable past and look upon it as alone good, beautiful and poetic. The early Romans mourned for the Greek past, and the latter Romans in their turn sighed for the days of the birth of their State. The Middle Ages mourned the Roman days, and what they called their poetry, their loveliness and their joy. Others again did come who sighed for the times of Dante. Does not Fielding bewail days gone before, and does not Dickens bewail the times of Fielding himself? And do we ourselves not wish present again the early days of the past century; should we not love to hear the rattling of a coach into an antique yard and to see strangely dressed figures descend from it?

And yet this longing for the past and thinking it alone poetic is not a little caused by the strangeness of it. We have now no toga, no Forum and therefore think it greatly poetic for a man in a toga to be strutting across a Forum.

But the poetry of earth depends much also on the mind of man.<sup>19</sup>

Varied, contradictory, and rapidly changing, the twentieth century was a Pessoa century. In *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom refers to Pessoa not only as the most original poet of the past century, but as one of the twenty-six writers responsible for setting the parameters of literature in the Western world.<sup>20</sup> And Pessoa did so as an outsider, as a writer-between-languages.

Bowler and top hats have gone out of fashion, black suits and bow ties no longer grace the streets of Lisbon, yet the aura of that ethereal silhouette that was Pessoa lurks around the corner, any corner . . . Great literature, just like nature, moves in concentric circles and is ultimately discovered.

As guest editors, our ambition will be satisfied if, in these utilitarian days, we have succeeded in putting together a volume that contributes to the enjoyment of and interest in Fernando Pessoa's bilingual output—one of the literary treasures of the past century that is yet to be unearthed.

## NOTES

We wish to express our utmost gratitude to all the contributors of this issue, as well as to João Cezar de Castro Rocha, editor-in-chief; to the managing editor, Mario Pereira; to the production editor, Susan Abel; and to the copyeditor, Sara Evangelos. We also extend our acknowledgments to Fátima Lopes and Lígia Maria de Azevedo Martins for allowing us to reproduce the images from Pessoa's archive, and to Susan Margaret Brown for the careful editing of this introduction and the translations of the verses there cited. Last but not least, this issue would not be what it is without the precious help of other professors, friends, and colleagues with whom we share a long companionship with Fernando Pessoa's works: Helena Buescu, Onésimo Teotónio Almeida, Patrick Quillier, Antonio Cardiello, Paulo de Medeiros, Carmo Mota, and José Pires Correia.

1. The approximately 200 verse texts that Pessoa wrote in French were composed during three specific periods: 1906–1908, the 1910s, and 1933–1935. See Fernando Pessoa, *Poèmes français*, ed. and annotated by Patricio Ferrari in collaboration with Patrick Quillier (Paris: Éditions de la Différence, 2014).

2. Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal/Espólio 3 [National Library of Portugal/Archive 3]. Hereafter BNP/E3.

3. Jerónimo Pizarro, Patricio Ferrari, and Antonio Cardiello have co-directed the digitization of Fernando Pessoa's private library. The collection consists of more than 1,300 titles and has been available online since October 2010 (<http://casafernandopessoa.cm-lisboa.pt/bdigital/index/index.htm>). The site is complemented by a bilingual paper publication. See Pizarro, Ferrari, and Cardiello, *A Biblioteca particular de Fernando Pessoa [Fernando Pessoa's Private Library]* (Lisbon: D. Quixote 2010). Fernando Pessoa's private library is held at the Casa Fernando Pessoa [Fernando Pessoa House]. Hereafter CFP.

4. Pessoa's marginalia (annotations, poetry, translations, and literary reflections or other notes that Pessoa wrote in the margins, flyleaves, or other parts of his books) are in Portuguese, English, and French. Marginalia is a term coined by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. See George Whalley, "Editorial Practice, Conventions, and Abbreviations," *Marginalia in The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 16 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980), Vol. xii, Part i, cxv.

5. In August 1901, Pessoa returned to Portugal where he remained until September of the following year, when he embarked once again for Durban. In December 1904 he completed his studies at Durban High School.

6. For Pessoa's comments on Keats and Verde, see BNP/E3, 14E–69<sup>v</sup> and 14E–39. Fernando Pessoa, *Apreciações literárias de Fernando Pessoa*, ed. Pauly Ellen Bothe (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 2013), 302, 278.

7. BNP/E3, 138A–6; in Teresa Rita Lopes, *Pessoa por conhecer*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Estampa, 1990), Vol. II, 76–77. See also Antero de Quental, *Os Sonetos completos de Antero de Quental*,

partial English translation by Fernando Pessoa; preface to the complete sonnets by J. P. Oliveira Martins; edition and postface by Patricio Ferrari (Lisbon: Ática, 2010).

8. Fernando Pessoa, "Addiamento," *A Revista da Solução Editora* 1 (Lisbon, 1929), 4–5. Fernando Pessoa, *Poemas de Álvaro de Campos*, ed. Cleonice Berardinelli (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 1990), 205. See also the latest Campos edition: Fernando Pessoa, *Obras Completas de Álvaro de Campos*, ed. Jerónimo Pizarro and Antonio Cardiello (Lisbon: Tinta-da-China, 2014).

9. Fernando Pessoa, *Poemas de Álvaro de Campos*, 362.

10. *Ibid.*, 119.

11. See "Tábua bibliográfica" (Dec. 1928), 10. Pessoa did not employ the term heteronímia (heteronymy). He explained the difference between "duas categorias de obras" ("orthónymas" and "heterónymas") in his "Tábua bibliográfica" (Dec. 1928), 10. In this publication, the term *escripto heterónimo* is also used. Pessoa employed the terms *heteronymismo* and *heteronymos* (without the accent) in the famous letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro, dated January 13, 1935, in which he revealed to the critic the genesis of the heteronyms (see *Espólio/15* [Casais Monteiro's Archive held at the National Library of Portugal]); Fernando Pessoa, *Cartas entre Fernando Pessoa e os directores da presença*, ed. Enrico Martines [Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 1998], 251–59). Note that these categories appeared only in 1928. For the different nuances underlying this matter, see Jerónimo Pizarro, "Obras ortónimas e heterónimas," in *Pessoa existe?* (Lisbon: Ática, 2012), 73–97.

12. Maria da Encarnação Monteiro, *Incidências Inglesas na poesia de Fernando Pessoa* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1956).

13. This chronological list is nonexhaustive, and it extends from 1963 to 2000.

14. For the references in the previous endnote, see José Blanco, *Pessoana*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 2008). For the more recent references, see the bibliography at the end of this introduction.

15. *The Greek Anthology*, English trans. William Roger Paton, bilingual ed., 5 vols. (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putman's Sons, 1916–1918).

16. See, for example, the letters written in 1915–1916 to editor Frank Palmer, to one or more English critics, to the publisher John Lane, and to Harold Monroe at the Poetry Bookshop. Fernando Pessoa, *Correspondência*, ed. Manuela Parreira da Silva (Lisbon: Assírio & Alvim, 1998–1999). Fernando Pessoa, *Sensacionismo e outros ismos*, ed. Jerónimo Pizarro (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional–Casa da Moeda, 2009). Fernando Pessoa, *Provérbios Portugueses*, ed. Jerónimo Pizarro and Patricio Ferrari (Lisbon: Ática, 2010).

17. See note 11.

18. The two subsections, sections that normally follow the monographic section, are "Essays" and "Reviews," both usually handled by the editor-in-chief.



19. BNP/E3, 14<sup>2</sup>–42<sup>f</sup>. We thank Pauly Ellen Bothe for this transcription. “The Poetry of earth is never dead” is the opening line of Keats’s “On the Grasshopper and Cricket,” a sonnet penned on December 30, 1816, and underlined by Pessoa in a copy still extant in his private library. See John Keats, *The Poetical Works of John Keats* (London: Frederick Warne, 1898), 44.

20. Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and Schools of the Ages* (New York: Harcourt, 1994), 485–92.

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