

# First International Symposium on Fernando Pessoa

## Seven unpublished letters by Jorge de Sena

George Monteiro\*

### Keywords

"International Symposium on Fernando Pessoa," *The Man Who Never Was*, Jorge de Sena, João Gaspar Simões, Unpublished Sena letters.

### Abstract

An account of the circumstances surrounding the first International Symposium on Fernando Pessoa, held at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, on October 7-8, 1977, the actas of which were published by Gávea-Brown Publications in 1982. The symposium featured talks by a number of Pessoa scholars, headed by João Gaspar Simões and Jorge de Sena. Included in this piece are the texts of the seven Jorge de Sena letters addressed to George Monteiro, leading up to the symposium and its immediate aftermath. These letters are published for the first time.

### Palavras Chave

"Simpósio Internacional sobre Fernando Pessoa", *The Man Who Never Was*, Jorge de Sena, João Gaspar Simões, Cartas inéditas de Jorge de Sena.

### Resumo

Um relato das circunstâncias em torno do primeiro Simpósio Internacional sobre Fernando Pessoa, que teve lugar na Brown University de 7 a 8 de Outubro de 1977 e cujas Actas foram publicadas na Gávea-Brown Publications em 1982. O Simpósio reuniu um número de eminentes estudiosos de Pessoa, com destaque para João Gaspar Simões e Jorge de Sena. Neste documento incluem-se os textos das sete cartas enviadas por Jorge de Sena a George Monteiro, imediatamente antes e após o Simpósio. Estas cartas, inéditas, têm agora a sua primeira publicação.

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\* Brown University.

*Actas do I Congresso Internacional de Estudos Pessoaanos*, published in September 1979, presents the papers delivered in Porto, Portugal, on April 3-5, 1978. Its title is misleading, for the fact is that the very first international Pessoa conference had taken place more than six months earlier and on a different continent. The "actas" for that first international encounter were published by Gávea-Brown, Providence, Rhode Island, in 1982, under the title *The Man Who Never Was: Essays on Fernando Pessoa*. What follows herewith is an account of the Brown University symposium on October 7-8, 1977, drawn from the introduction to the published "actas," followed by seven letters from Jorge de Sena pertaining to the symposium.

## I. The Symposium

On October 7-8, 1977, Brown University was privileged to serve as the host to what turned out to be the first international Symposium on Fernando Pessoa held anywhere in the world. When in 1976 it first occurred to the faculty at the university's Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies to sponsor and organize such a meeting, it did not strike us that when held ours would be the first such symposium. It could not then have been foreseen that our symposium would anticipate by almost six months to the day the congress held by the Centro de Estudos Pessoaanos, Oporto, Portugal, in the spring of 1978.

Those who planned and organized the symposium were motivated by the desire to call attention, particularly in the United States and other English-language countries, to the major poetic achievements of one of the world's great Modernist poets. Of the stature of the work of Valery, Rilke, Ezra Pound, and T. S. Eliot, Fernando Pessoa's work remained, we felt then, terra incognita in the United States. Matters were a bit better in England, perhaps since Pessoa's first significant publications, *Antinous* and *35 Sonnets* (originally in English) and *Inscriptions*, appeared in London (the first two in 1918 and the last in 1920) and since the Englishman Roy Campbell, who knew of Pessoa's early years in South Africa, had translated some of his poems. But even in England Pessoa's reputation was slight indeed; and although the translations of Pessoa by Jonathan Griffin, F. E. G. Quintanilha, and Peter Rickard — all in 1971 — were giant steps in redress, there was still a long way to go. In the same year, it should be pointed out, the American publisher Alan Swallow brought out its bilingual edition of Edwin Honig's selected translations of Pessoa. Still, apart from an occasional essay in the *Luso-Brazilian Review*, in the United States Pessoa was relegated entirely to the classroom and to national and regional meetings of the various modern language associations. Yet it cannot be said that even in academia Pessoa had fully arrived. There was then no Prentice-Hall Twentieth-Century Views volume on Pessoa, no

Twayne World Authors series study, no G. K. Hall bibliographical guide — some of the tell-tale signs of academic acceptance. These simply did not exist.

But soon the weather in Pessoa studies began to turn around. In *The Poet's Work: 29 Masters of 20th Century Poetry on the Origins and Practice of their Art*, edited by Reginald Gibbons (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), several excerpts from Pessoa's prose, collected under the title "Toward Explaining Heteronymy," were given a featured place early in the volume, second only to a short poem, "Ars Poetica?" by Czeslaw Milosz. As more and more of Pessoa's work — prose as well as poetry — was translated into English, the clearer it became that his contribution to modern literature and thought was enormous.

At any rate, since Pessoa was not well enough known to English-speakers in 1977, it was decided that the program at our symposium would be conducted mainly, if not entirely, in English. Those invited, with one exception, were asked to present papers and lectures in English, and they agreed to do so. As a result we were able to present, over a two-day period, the following program:

## POETRY READING

Jean Longland (Hispanic Society of America)

Nelson H. Vieira (Brown University)

## OPENING LECTURE

João Gaspar Simões (Lisbon, Portugal)

"As relações de Fernando Pessoa com a revista *Presença*"

## LECTURE

Hellmut Wohl (Boston University)

"The Short Happy Life of Amadeo de Souza Cardoso"

## LECTURE

Alexandrino Severino (Vanderbilt University)

and Hubert D. Jennings (Republic of South Africa)

"In Praise of Ophelia: An Interpretation of Pessoa's Only Love"

## COLLOQUIUM

Catarina Feldmann (Universidade de São Paulo)

"The Sun vs. Ice Cream and Chocolate:

The Works of Wallace Stevens and Fernando Pessoa"

Gilbert Cavaco (Providence College)

"Pessoa and Portuguese Politics"

Ronald W. Sousa (University of Minnesota)

"Ascendant Romanticism in Fernando Pessoa"

## CLOSING LECTURE

Jorge de Sena (University of California at Santa Barbara)

"Fernando Pessoa: The Man Who Never Was"

## POETRY READING

Edwin Honig (Brown University)

Lisa Godinho (Harvard University)





Fig. 1. International Symposium.

It was a great privilege and, as it turned out, a unique opportunity to include among the participants in the Symposium two of the indisputable giants of Pessoa scholarship, João Gaspar Simões and Jorge de Sena, with Simões giving the first lecture (the only one delivered in Portuguese) and Sena the last and culminating one. The program of lectures and colloquium was framed by poetry readings of Pessoa's Portuguese originals and their English translations by the translators themselves, Jean Longland on the first day and Edwin Honig on the second. For the rest of the lectures and papers, with the exception of Hellmut Wohl's (he lectured on Pessoa's contemporary, the artist Amadeo de Souza Cardoso), we chose to invite then-younger scholars—American and Brazilian—who could offer a new generation's perspectives and interests on the subject of Pessoa: Gilbert Cavaco on Pessoa within the context of Portuguese politics, Alexandrino Severino (working in collaboration with Hubert D. Jennings) on Pessoa's one known romantic relationship, Ronald Sousa on the question of Pessoa's romanticism, and Catarina Feldman's comparison of Pessoa to the American poet Wallace Stevens.

The symposium was attended by three hundred people, including the Ambassador of Portugal to the United States, Dr. Joao Hall Themido, and Dr. José Stichini Vilela, then the Consul of Portugal in Providence, Rhode Island.

From the beginning the symposium's sponsors intended to publish the papers presented on the occasion, and, happily, all but one of those appeared in *The Man Who Never Was*. We were unable to include the Severino and Jennings paper, which could not be published at the time because Ofélia Queirós's permission to quote from her letters to Pessoa was withheld. (I am not aware that this paper was ever published.) To the book, it was later decided to add interviews with Jean Longland and Edwin Honig, Pessoa's earliest American translators, as well as papers by two other young students of Pessoa: Francisco Cota Fagundes (on Álvaro de Campos's "Ode Marítima") and Joanna Courteau (on Pessoa's orthonymic poetry), and a biographical-bibliographical essay prepared by the noted Portuguese novelist and critic José Martins Garcia.

## II. The Jorge de Sena Letters

Planned originally for the spring of 1977, the Pessoa symposium was put off until later in the year to accommodate Jorge de Sena, who had prior commitments. During that period Sena was kept apprised of our evolving plans and the necessary changes in their specifics. This resulted, over the months, in an exchange of letters. Sena's side of the correspondence amounted to seven letters. They are reproduced here with the kind permission of Mécia de Sena.

1.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

HELPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

Jorge Sena, Chairman

January 7, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
Director  
Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
Brown University  
Providence, Rhode Island 02912

Dear Professor Monteiro

Excuse me for only now answering your most kind letter of December 2, which I received by the middle of that month, when already being overwhelmed not only with the usual bureaucratic work of two big departments but also with scores of applications for a vacancy in Spanish that we have advertised. To screen eighty candidates, and brace myself to interview some thirty of them at the New York MLA convention, as I did, kept me busy until the end of the month. Here I am now, thanking you very much for your letter and your invitation which highly honors me, and congratulating you and your Center for the initiative of a Fernando Pessoa Symposium. If I answer in English to your Portuguese letter it is because I suppose that, for administrative purposes, it will be more convenient to you.

To be invited to deliver the closing lecture of the symposium, after the distinguished names who precede me in the tentative program, is a great honor that I cannot refuse. And so, I accept formally your invitation. But there is a problem that may be solved, if you accept me in just word and spirit (and not in "carne y hueso", like our old Garcilaso translating Petrarch would say). In April-June I will have my sabbatical leave, which I was supposed to enjoy last year when struck by a serious illness from which I am recovering very well. My research plans and other contacts require me in Europe by then, since the middle of April to the middle of June. I can send you my speech—and I would like to know if we are supposed to talk in English, as it seems better to me, or in Portuguese. That speech would be read there by someone, or distributed among the attendance. As soon as I have your answer I will concentrate on some theme and inform you of it.

You ask me about suggestions concerning other scholars who, either in Portugal or in the United States could be invited. In the United States Dr. Jean

Longland, librarian of the Hispanic Society of America, has been a distinguished pioneer in translating Pessoa. In Germany Georg Rudolf Lind, who has published also in Portugal, has contributed widely to the study of some aspects of Pessoa. As a matter of fact, for instance, Anne Terlinden, a doctoral candidate, who came from Belgium to study here under me, wrote there a splendid masters thesis on Pessoa's English poems (having worked with many of the unpublished ones, which Lind was kind enough to lend her).

As to Portugal, I must say – even if for decades I have not had any personal contact with him – that it seems to me extremely unjust not to invite, as no. 1, Dr. João Gaspar Simões, who is in fact in this world of ours, the dean of Pessoa studies whether we like it or not, and moreover, the critic who first, nearly fifty years ago, proclaimed Pessoa the great poet that even Pessoa himself by then was and was not quite sure of being. As far as I know, Dr. Gaspar Simões is in good health and spirits, and can perfectly well fly to the United States.

I have no doubt that the Gulbenkian Foundation (whose administrator, my good friend Dr. José Blanco is, being at the same time a great bibliographer on Pessoa, and whose director of the review *Colóquio-Letras*, Professor Prado Coelho is, besides being another outstanding “fernandista”), will give the best support to such an idea of mine. Other names of the highest category in Pessoa studies among Portuguese critics are Professor Eduardo Lourenço, of the University of Nice, and Professor José Augusto Seabra, I believe of the University of Porto now.

Expecting to hear from you, and sending to you and all the members of your Center my best,

I remain, sincerely yours,



Jorge de Sena  
 Professor of Portuguese & Comparative  
 Literature  
 Chairman, Spanish and Portuguese Department  
 Chairman, Comparative Literature Program

JS/ps



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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE  
Jorge de Sena, ChairmanPHELPS HALL  
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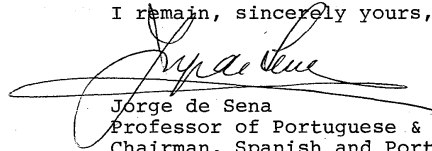
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Jorge Sena

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

PHELPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

January 14, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
Director  
Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
Brown University – Rhode Island

Dear Professor Monteiro

You must have received in the meanwhile my previous letter, thanking you for your kind invitation and accepting it (as I say, in word and Spirit, as it cannot be otherwise). This one is just a continuation, to redress<sup>1</sup> a forgetfulness of mine. When I was giving you names in the U.S. – and I may be forgetting some really worthy ones – I should have mentioned Professor Joaquim Francisco Coelho, Stanford University, who can very well and in the most distinguished way represent Brazil and the good criticism of Pessoa produced there and here (in his case, also with articles printed in Portugal). Excuse me for bothering you again, but I felt that it was my duty to add this excellent name of a Brazilian critic who lives and teaches in the U.S.

Sincerely yours

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SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

Jorge Sena, Chairman  
Spanish and Portuguese  
Comparative Literature

March 5, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
Brown University – Providence – Rhode Island  
02912

Dear Professor Monteiro

Please forgive me for only now, more than three weeks after receiving your kind letter of February 9, answering it. But my life as double chairman in a crucial moment of several changes which must be enacted before I start my leave of absence, has been a perfect hell, with the collapse of my entire personal work and correspondence.

Thank you very much for having accepted my suggestions about a meeting which I hope it will be the great success which Pessoa deserves and as not yet found in this country so deaf to what does not come with the blessings of France or Mittel-Europa. So, I will send you, to be read as the closing speech of your symposium, a paper written in English – you can read it yourself, doing me such favor, being so willing. Before I leave, my paper will reach you.

What an excellent idea to have the papers published! I believe that, in good time, a biobibliographical note about each of the contributors will give to the book some "pessoana" authority. Of course you have already my authorization for such an enterprise. And I expect that the Gulbenkian Foundation will help you as I think that they should, and that the invited people may come (one or another may not, either because one never knows how things are worked out in Portugal, or just because they may feel that to come to the U.S. may tarnish their socialist paint – for many, you know, quite fresh)

Keep me posted on any developments, call for my poor help if you think that I may be useful, and count on my remaining

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge de Sena', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jorge de Sena

P.S. – I would appreciate very much your announcing or advertising our prosperous (but in need of even more students) Summer Session, with Gulbenkian grants, at the Symposium, and around you. Here follow some leaflets. The brochure can go, if you wish.

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Jorge de Sena, Chairman  
 Spanish and Portuguese  
 Comparative Literature

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

March 5, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
 Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
 Brown University - Providence - Rhode Island  
 02912

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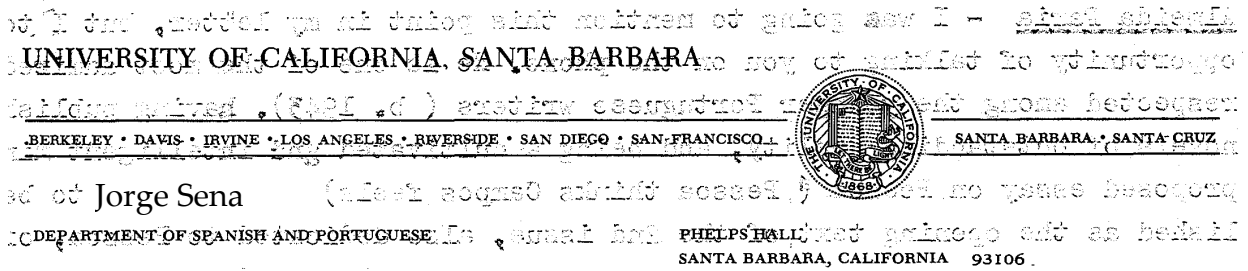
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*Jorge de Sena*  
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 at the Symposium, and around you. We follow correspondence.

4.



Personal Address:

939, Randolph Road  
 Santa Barbara, Ca.93111

September 3, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
 Chairman  
 Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
 Brown University  
 Providence, Rhode Island 02912

Dear Professor Monteiro

I was going – asking your forgiveness – to answer your letter of July 29, which had the Program of the Symposium attached, when I received your phone call. Here I am now, answering the letter, confirming what I told you in our conversation, and providing you with the information that you have asked for. My silence was the result of, overwhelmed with work, having to write in good time and acceptable Spanish, the opening speech of the convention of the Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, which I had been invited to deliver. Then, from the 21st to the 29th I was travelling or being in Toronto.

*Round-trip – price and schedules*

It seems that it is not quite easy from LA to reach Providence, and that there are more than one combination of routes. Anyhow, my travel agency came to the following conclusion:

We will fly (my wife goes with me) from Santa Barbara to LA, from LA to Cleveland, from Cleveland to Providence (always United Airlines), Thursday October 6, arriving there at 8.34 pm. And I will fly back. The 9th, by the 8.40 am flight to New York (?). The price of one round-trip is 431.00.

Allow me to tell you (and it is up to you and your budget to come to a decision on such question) that if the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is, as I believe it is, sponsoring your symposium, they know that I do not travel alone because I cannot, and not just because I like to be with my wife; and so, the Foundation, in inviting me to go to Europe, giving me any grant, etc, accepts the provision of my wife's round-trip being paid by them or included in the foreseen expenses covered by the grant.



*Almeida Faria* – I was going to mention this point in my letter, but I took the opportunity of talking to you on the phone. He is one of the most admired and respected among the younger Portuguese writers (b. 1943), having published two novels of outstanding quality, and being a cultivated and intelligent mind. The proposed essay on Pessoa (Pessoa thinks Campos feels) is scheduled to be published as the opening text of the 2nd issue, also dedicated to Pessoa, of *Quaderni Portoghesi*, published by the Universities of Rome and Pisa. If you could extend to him an invitation, he will come on his own or with some kind of support which he may obtain having received the invitation, and he could then tour a few universities around the country. I know for sure that Stanford University will have him, like mine here. Looking at your schedule, quite crowded to be true, I feel that – even if you have to find a place for Octavio Paz, if he really will be there – it could be done, and I would be extremely pleased. Mr. Almeida Faria has been in the USA before (as a special guest and resident at Iowa writers' gathering, held some years ago for several months); and his address is Travessa Nova de S. Francisco de Borja – 5 – 1<sup>a</sup> – Lisbon.

It was most kind of you, in sending me the flier for your recent series, "Roads etc," to tell me that my person and my works were mentioned by *several* of your lecturers. Apart from the fact of some subjects not allowing such mentions to be made, I know perfectly well who would and who would not mention me in such a list of names. In general, scoundrels and mediocre people have always been my sworn enemies, not because I have hindered them (on the contrary, many of them even owe me the money that I do not have), but just because I exist as a kind of shadow of decency falling upon them all the time (and the shadow will remain, they know, even if I die, becoming even darker).

I was extremely pleased with the possibility of Octavio Paz being present – and I do not think that he will prepare a lecture for the occasion, and perhaps you could have some special "round-table" with him and a couple of us, the others –, since I never had any occasion of meeting a poet and an essayist whom I respect, and who has been among the rare high ranking persons for whom Pessoa has been a discovery to be made. Our globe-trotters' paths never crossed – will they now? Certainly for people who have written on Pessoa for around half-a-century like Gaspar Simões or 35 years like me it will be a special pleasure to meet with an illustrious "convert," whose fame can do for Pessoa more than millions writing in Portuguese, a language that Spanish-speaking people or hispanists are not supposed to know; for fear of losing their status in a world ignoring them altogether, since a big part of that world believes that God himself speaks also only English (a language which Pessoa could write too well for not being too literary in writing English poems).

Above, I forgot to reiterate the title of my lecture, as I told it to you over the phone: *Pessoa, the man who never was*.

Most truly yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Monteiro', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

P.S. – For sure, we will be in contact before my arrival. Anyhow, a tall, lean (not too much) man, with glasses and a dark beret on, and a wife at his side – it will be me.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE PHILIPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

Personal Address: 939, Randolph Road  
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93111  
September 3, 1977

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Chairman  
Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
Brown University - c/o Dept of Lit  
Providence, Rhode Island 02912

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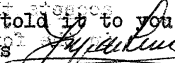
We will fly (my wife goes with me) from Santa Barbara to LA, from LA to Cleveland, from Cleveland to Providence (always United Airlines), Thursday October 6, arriving there at 8.34 pm. And I will fly back the 9th, by the 8.40 am flight to <sup>New York?</sup> Cleveland. The price of one round-trip is 431.00.

Allow me to tell you (and it is up to you and your budget to come to a decision on such question) that, if the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is, as I believe it is, sponsoring your symposium, they know that I do not travel alone because I cannot, and not just because I like to be with my wife; and so, the Foundation, in inviting me to go to Europe, giving me any grant, etc, accepts the provision of my wife's round-trip being paid by them or included in the foreseen expenses covered by the grant.

Almeida Faria - I was going to mention this point in my letter, but I took the opportunity of talking to you on the phone. He is one of the most admired and respected among the younger Portuguese writers ( b. 1943), having published ~~two~~ novels of outstanding quality, and being a cultivated and intelligent mind. The proposed essay on Pessoa ( Pessoa thinks Campos feels) is scheduled to be published as the opening text of the 2nd issue, also dedicated to Pessoa, of Quadrerni Portugesi, published by the Universities of Rome and Pisa. If you could tend to him an invitation, he will come on his own or with some kind of support which he main obtain having received the invitation, and he could then tour a few universities around the country. I know for sure that Stanford University will have him, like mine here. Looking at your schedule, quite crowded to be true, I feel that - even if you have to find a place for Octavio Paz, if he really will be there - it could be done, and I would be extremely pleased. Mr. Almeida Faria has been in the USA before ( as a special guest and resident at Iowa writers' gathering, held some years ago for several months); and his address is Travessa Nova de S. Francisco de Borja - 5 - 1 - Lisbon.

It was most kind of you, in sending me the flier on your recent series, "Roads etc", to tell me that my person and my works were mentioned by several of your lecturers. Apart from the fact of some subjects not allowing such mentions to be made, I know perfectly well who would and who would not mention me in such a list of names. In general, scoundrels and mediocre people have always been my sworn enemies, not because I have hindered them ( on the contrary, many of them even owe me the money that I do not have), but just because I exist as a kind of shadow of decency falling upon them all the time ( and the shadow will remain, they know, even if I die, becoming even darker).

I was extremely pleased with the possibility of Octavio Paz being present - and I do not think that he will prepare a lecture for the occasion, and perhaps you could have some special "round-table" with him and a couple of us, the others -, since I never had any occasion of meeting a poet and an essayist whom I respect, and who has been among the rare high ranking persons for whom Pessoa has been a discovery to be made. Our globe-trotters' paths never crossed - will they now? Certainly for people who have written on Pessoa for around half-a-century like Gaspar Simões or 35 years like me it will be a special pleasure to meet with an illustrious "convert", whose fame can do for Pessoa more than millions writing in Portuguese, a language that Spanish-speaking people or hispanists are not supposed to know; for fear of losing their status in a world ignoring them altogether, since a big part of that world believes that God himself speaks also only English ( a language which Pessoa could write too well for not being too literary in writing English poems).

Above, I forgot to reiterate the title of my lecture, as I told it to you over the phone: Pessoa, the man who never was. Most truly yours 

5.

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Jorge Sena

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

PHELPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

22 September 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
Chairman  
Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
Brown University – Providence – Rhode Island

Dear Professor Monteiro

Thank you very much for your letter of the 15th, which reached me yesterday (mail is using again stagecoaches, and the old country roads, I believe), and for all the copies of other letters that you were kind enough to write on behalf of my wife going with me, and about Almeida Faria's possible visit to this country and your symposium. I expect that the Gulbenkian Foundation will say yes, what will be quite a relief for me. As to AF I think that the letters of yours, the two, will help him to solve the problem. I am glad to hear that you liked my idea of a "round-table" with Octavio Paz, and that your efforts to get him there are going ahead. It came to me (and the idea of the "table" to make things easier) the awful news – are they true? – that he had just undergone some cancer surgery. But it is possible that his condition may be by then already normal, as far as it can be. Sad thing, my God.

We are looking forward at being there and meeting with you. I would appreciate, just in case, to know the name of the motel where everybody will stay. If there is any misunderstanding, delay in flights, wrong flights, etc, I will know where to go from the airport, if, in spite of your and my efforts, we do not find each other. By the way: a tall and rather lean white man, with glasses and a b eret on, and a wife at his side, that's me.

Most truly yours

Jorge de Sena  
Chairman

P. S. – From now on, use my private address to speed matters (univ. means a delay of a couple of days): 939, Randolph Road, Santa Barbara, CA. 93111

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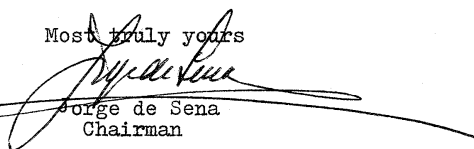
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6.

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DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

PHELPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

September 28, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
Director of the Center for Portuguese and  
Brazilian Studies – Brown University

Dear Professor Monteiro

I have just received your letter of the 26th, giving me, just in case, the name and address of the motel where we will be staying, and asking for my social security number. Thank you very much for that information which I had asked for and here is that number:

391-52-9446

Looking forward to be there, and expecting our symposium to be a success, with all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jorge Sena", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.



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7.

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DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

PHELPS HALL  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

November 10, 1977

Professor George Monteiro  
 Director  
 Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies  
 Brown University  
 Providence, R.I. 02912

Dear Professor Monteiro

Thank you very much for your letter of October 31, sending me the checks. You have not to apologize for the delay, since delays are becoming our daily bread in this era of super-sonic speeds, in which the mail service, it seems as I usually say, has returned to or revived stage-coaches: in fact, this letter of yours arrived only a couple of days ago. Be sure that in good time I will claim back the money that unduly was taken from my check by your bureaucracies, even if, nowadays, returned money is always money coming too late for such poor people, heading for the workhouse like we, scholars and teachers.

As to the Symposium, which was such an excellent event, I received from Dr. José Blanco a letter, just yesterday, in which he tells me how happy they were about the success reported to them (it seems that Gaspar Simões has talked – *urbi et orbi* about our meetings etc), and how they – meaning the Foundation are prepared to help with the publication of some *actas* perpetuating the event.

It was for me and my wife a great pleasure to visit your University, to have (unfortunately the time did not allow very much) the opportunity of visiting a most interesting area for me, which I had never seen before, and, the last but not the least, to make your acquaintance and to meet with your most kind and dynamic staff (please, extend to them all our best “saudades”) – so you have nothing to thank me for. My pleasure and a great honor for me. I hope that one of these days we may have the occasion of getting together again.

Cordially

Jorge de Sena, Chairman

PS – Have you seen in the Fall River newspaper the attack to my wife, incredibly stupid, launched by that crazy doctor whom you have had in those parts, I suppose, since the time of the Corte-Reais, and as uncertain in his mind as they have been in their historical physicality around there?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Manuel Luciano da Silva (1926-2012), who practiced medicine in Bristol, R. I., was an amateurish student of history, supporting famously the fantasy that the Corte-Reais had survived their final voyages to the edge of the New World, the evidence for thinking so being the “discovery” of markings on a much-scarred and mysteriously marked rock in the Dighton River in Taunton, Massachusetts, as well as the Portuguese ascendancy of Christopher Columbus. [Editor’s Note.]

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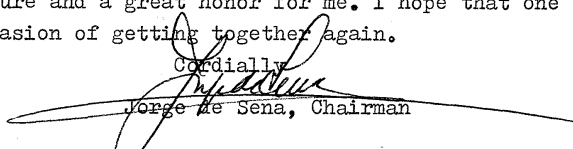
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