

From Michael and Teca: two unpublished letters to Hubert Jennings

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Keywords

Fernando Pessoa, Hubert Jennings, correspondence, Pessoa's family, Henriqueta Madalena Nogueira dos Santos Rosa ("Teca"), Luiz Miguel Nogueira Rosa ("Michael"), Fernando Pessoa's estate.

Abstract

What follows is the transcription of two letters written to Hubert D. Jennings, one by Pessoa's half-brother Michael (born Luiz Miguel) Nogueira Rosa, the other by Pessoa's half-sister Henriqueta Madelena Dias, known to her friends as "Teca." Together they offer the only evidence we have in the Jennings archive of a correspondence with Pessoa's family. Michael's letter is largely a response to Jennings's questions regarding his translations of Pessoa, Pessoa's English poems, and the prospect of Jennings's own book on the poet; Teca's is full of personal memories of time spent in South Africa and at the family residence on Rua Coelho da Rocha. The letters complement each other: one adds to our knowledge of how Pessoa's estate was managed; the other gives us an account of Pessoa's daily routine upon his return to Lisbon in 1905. A general introduction and explanatory notes accompany the transcription of the letters.

Palavras-chave

Fernando Pessoa, Hubert Jennings, correspondência, família Pessoa, Henriqueta Madalena Nogueira dos Santos Rosa ("Teca"), Luiz Miguel Nogueira Rosa ("Michael"), espólio de Fernando Pessoa.

Resumo

Transcrevem-se aqui duas cartas endereçadas a Hubert D. Jennings, uma escrita por Michael (nascido Luiz Miguel) Nogueira Rosa e outra por Henriqueta Madelena Dias, conhecida por seus amigos como "Teca" – respectivamente irmão e irmã de Fernando Pessoa por parte de mãe. Em conjunto, essas cartas oferecem a única evidência no arquivo Jennings de uma correspondência com a família de Pessoa. A carta de Michael é, em grande parte, uma resposta às perguntas de Jennings sobre suas traduções de Pessoa, sobre poemas ingleses de Pessoa, e sobre o prospecto de um livro do próprio Jennings sobre o poeta; a carta de Teca é repleta de memórias pessoais sobre tempos passados na África do Sul e na residência da família na Rua Coelho da Rocha. As cartas complementam-se: uma acresce ao nosso conhecimento de como o espólio pessoano foi gerenciado; a outra dá-nos um testemunho sobre o dia-a-dia da família de Pessoa quando do seu regresso a Lisboa em 1905. Uma introdução geral e notas explicativas acompanham a transcrição das cartas.

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The two letters here reproduced and found among the Jennings papers are from Fernando Pessoa's two siblings: his half-brother Michael (nicknamed "Lhi") and his half-sister Henriqueta Madelena Dias (known to her friends as "Teca"). Both siblings were born in Durban: Teca, on October 22, 1898, and Michael two years later, on January 11, 1900. A third sibling, João Maria (aka "John"), was born on January 17, 1903. Pessoa left Durban to return to Portugal definitively in August of 1905, but his siblings remained in South Africa for another fifteen years. They continued to live in Durban until June 1911, when the family moved to Pretoria—where their father (Pessoa's stepfather) had been named consul general of Portugal—and where they remained until March 30, 1920, approximately six months after his death on October 7, 1919. At that point Teca returned to Portugal, married three years later and raised a family there; the two brothers went to London to continue their education, and eventually set up permanent residence in England. While most of the correspondence between Pessoa and his siblings while they were in Pretoria—and with Michael and John after they moved to London—is believed to be lost, a number of postcards and letters between Pessoa and his siblings do exist¹, some of them still unpublished.

In order to contextualize the letters from Michael and Teca to Hubert Jennings, it is useful to recall why Jennings became interested in Pessoa in the first place. When, in 1959, Jennings began work on his history of Durban High School, he came across a letter from Roy Campbell (in London) to Bill Payn, his friend and teacher (in Durban). "Guess what," he wrote, "I have just discovered that Fernando Pessoa, the finest poet in any language of this half-century, had also gone to the Durban High School" (JENNINGS, 1979: 17). Unfortunately, Campbell would never know his revelation's impact on Jennings, for he had died tragically in a car accident in Setúbal, in 1957—two years before Jennings found the letter. We, on the other hand, can appreciate just how inspired Jennings must have felt by those words, how immediate and intense his interest in Pessoa became as a result of them. When Jennings's book on the Durban High School (DHS) appeared in 1966, it contained two whole chapters on Pessoa: a sensitive assessment of the poet in Chapter 14, entitled "That Long Patience which is Genius" (pp. 99-110) and a highly imaginative account of the poet as a young school boy in Chapter 15, "Judica Me Deus" (pp. 111-116). But this was just the beginning.

As Jennings confided in his 1979 essay "In Search of Fernando Pessoa," he and Alex Severino²—with whom he had begun a correspondence in 1964—agreed

¹ See Manuela Nogueira's book, *Imagens de Uma Vida*, in the bibliography; the book contains a picture of Pessoa's three siblings in Pretoria (pp. 54-59), a number of postcards from Fernando to each of his siblings in Pretoria (pp. 55-58), two postcards (p. 73 & 92) and one letter (p. 76) from Michael to Pessoa, and one postcard (p. 72) plus one letter (p.86) from Teca to Pessoa (p. 72).

² Alex[andrino] Severino (1931-1993) completed his dissertation on Pessoa in South Africa at the University of São Paulo in 1966, the same year that Jennings published his history of the DHS.

that what was missing from each of their studies was “a sufficient and cogent word from the poet himself” (JENNINGS, 1979: 18). Even though they had found so little from the poet’s time spent in South Africa—no more than two poems in English, one poem in Portuguese, and a “brilliant and astonishingly adult” essay written in December 1904—neither was willing to believe, as João Gaspar Simões did, that all evidence of Pessoa’s life in Durban was to be found in South Africa. It was this determination to sift through all of Pessoa’s papers, in an effort to find more traces of his formative years, that led Jennings to spend eighteen months in Lisbon with a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation, during the period of 1968-69. At the age of seventy-two, Jennings would learn Portuguese and attend lectures at the University of Lisbon, in order to be better equipped to immerse himself in the Pessoa archive, along with other Pessoaan scholars such as Georg Rudolf Lind and Jacinto do Prado Coelho (PESSOA, 1966; *see facsimiles after the bibliography*). This is why the four-year time frame of these two letters (1966-1970) is key here.

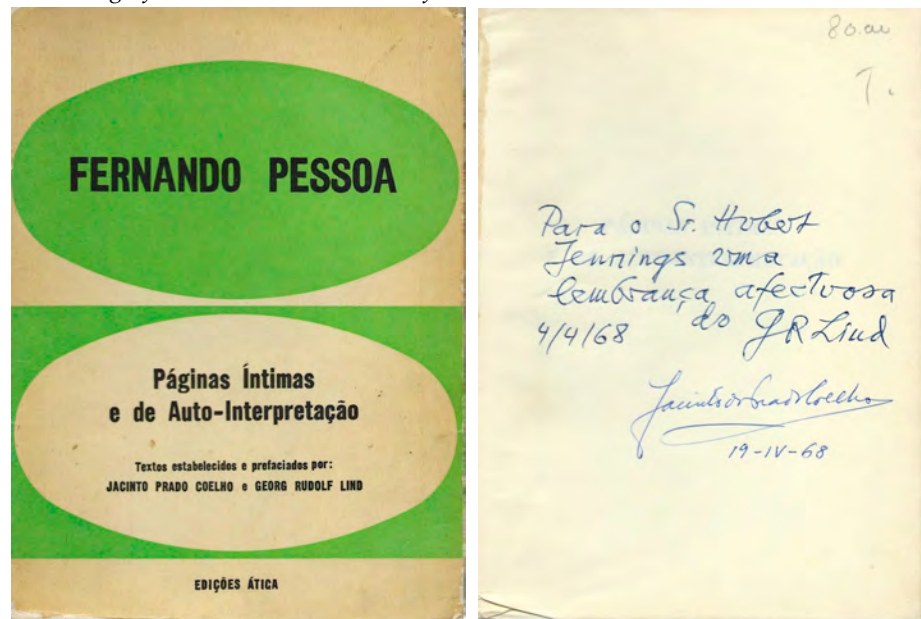
Already seventy years old when he wrote to Michael in November of 1966, Jennings was at the brink of something unforeseeable and new. He had learned enough about Pessoa to know that he wanted to find out more. Indeed, one can imagine Jennings at the time through the same lens with which he had seen Pessoa, as “an adventurer into the world of the spirit no less bold than Vasco da Gama had been into the physical world” (JENNINGS, 1966: 106).

By 1970, the year of Teca’s letter, Jennings has already met both her and her husband, Coronel Francisco Caetano Dias (known as “Chico”), who was curator of the *espólio* (Pessoa’s estate) at that time. Furthermore, Jennings had seen the contents of the trunk containing Pessoa’s papers and memorabilia, housed in Chico and Teca’s home—and he had spent a year and a half tirelessly investigating the contents of that chest: manuscripts, documents, scattered poems, stories, essays, plus a vast array of non-literary things—postcards, letters, newspaper cuttings, school reports, examination certificates, fragments of homework, games, tricks, puzzles, cricket scores...

The two letters presented here tend to complement each other. While the focus of Michael’s is primarily to provide Jennings with information that can facilitate further work on Pessoa, Teca’s focuses on the personal dimension, portraying an amusing man with a puckish sense of humor, who often chose to be aloof but also loved to read what he’d just written to other family members at the dinner table and who adored playing games with his niece and nephew (NOGUEIRA, 2015). One letter is replete with tender memories; the other, full of details on the earliest stages of Jennings’s scholarship within the archive. Read in tandem, these two documents offer new and often surprising details regarding Pessoa.

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[Cover of PESSOA, 1966, and inscription from Lind & Coelho to Jennings, 1968]

Documents

I. Unpublished letter. One piece of paper typed on both sides and signed by "Michael," Luiz Miguel Nogueira Rosa, half-brother of Fernando Pessoa. Typed in black ink, with the signature in blue ink, and the note "1-88" appended (probably by the receiver, Hubert Jennings) to the top of p. 1. Sent from S. Pedro do Estoril, Portugal. Dated "20th November 1966."

1. 88

Rua da Republica, Lote 20, 1^o,
S. Pedro do Estoril.

20th November, 1966.

Dear Mr. Jennings,

Very many thanks for your two most interesting letters of October 2nd and 18th and for your translations of Fernando's poems. I am amazed at the amount you have done.

Let also apologise for the delay in replying to your letters but, I am afraid, that I am so busy that it difficult to find the time. I am also enclosing some further copies of Fernando's English poems which Eve has copied. There are still some more which I will send you anon.

Now to reply to various points you raised.

Letter of October 2nd. Fernando's English poems. The poems which have been sent you were discovered fairly recently, about a year ago. As far as I know you are the only one outside the family who has seen them. The copies we have were typed by Fernando and, as far as I know the original manuscripts have not been found. The poems were all together and from other papers in the same bundles it would appear that they were written between 1908 and 1912. Thank you for the copies of the Durban papers which were most interesting, and also for the copies which you sent to my sister. She asks me to thank you. I see that you have completed the translation of the poems of Alberto Caeiro and Fernando's comments under the names of Ricardo Reis and Alvaro Campos. I have discussed with my sister and her husband your idea of the above plus a short biography as the first book. Our idea is that the first book should not be too long as a short one would probably find a wider market and open the way to further longer books. What about a biography, not too compressed, followed by some translations of a few poems of Fernando as Fernando, then the complete Alberto Caeiro poems and ending with a few poems of Ricardo Reis and Alvaro de Campos. The poems of Alberto Caeiro to include the Introducao and Prefacio. With regard to the copyright of Fernando's these are held by the family but in many cases where some one translates his work or works on new papers found the family waive their copyright. The visit you had from Jorge Brandeiro must have been most interesting. I am sorry to learn that the house in Sydenham Road has been pulled down. I remember it very well.

Letter of October 18th. The books which you want, Obra e Vida de Fernando Pessoa and Novas Temas, both by Joao Gaspar Simoes. Both books, I am afraid are out of print but my brother-in-law is trying to find copies. If he succeeds he will post them to you, as a gift from the family. In any case we are not sorry that the books are out of print as the family and a lot of other people dislike the first book especially. It contains a number of very unpleasant things both about Fernando and the family. For example he states that Fernando was a drunkard. That is not true. It is true that he drank quite a lot but no one who knew him ever saw him drunk. I remember, as a young man going to the cafe Martinho da Arcada, in Commercial square, and talking with his friends till two or three in the morning. Fernando would start drinking wine and later go ~~to~~ to coffee and agua ardente. I was surprised at the amount he could consume without the slightest detectable effect either in his speech or in his powers of argument. You say that you want these books to check up some Chronological points. If I can help you please let me know and I will try to check what you want.

By the way my brother-in-law will be sending you a copy of a new book on Fernando called Fernando Pessoa, Paginas Intimas e de Auto-interpretacao by Jacinto Prado Coelho and Dr. Georg Rudolf Lind. A most interesting book of more than 400 pages of various things Fernando wrote in prose and a good deal of it is in English.

Lastly on the translations you sent me of some of Fernando's

poems. I really have not got down to comparing the Portuguese with your translation. The few I have done seem to me to be very good and I must congratulate you at the speed at which you have mastered the Portuguese language. As soon as I have done a reasonable number I will write you with my opinion whatever value it may have to you and any comments which might be of some help to you.

Would you please give your wife our best wishes and Eve sends you her best wishes.

Yours very sincerely,

Michael

Rua da Republica, Lote 20, 1º,
S. Pedro do Estoril.

20th November, 1966.

Dear Mr. Jennings,

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³ "peoms" in the document, a typo.

⁴ "peoms" again, a typo.

⁵ This may be true, but we cannot rule out the possibility that Georg Rudolf Lind had also seen those poems, as he had been working with the Pessoa archive since the early sixties and paying particular attention to Pessoa's English poems.

⁶ The "Durban papers" is most likely a reference to documents Jennings found (on Pessoa's earliest years in South Africa) while writing his book on the history of the Durban High School; many of these documents appear in the Appendix of Jennings's 1984 book, *Os Dois Exílios* (pp.179-210).

⁷ These unpublished translations of Caeiro's poems were found among the Jennings papers.

Campos.⁸ The poems of Alberto Caeiro to include the *Introdução* and *Prefácio*⁹. With regard to the copyright of Fernando's these are held by the family but in many cases where some one translates his work or works on new papers found[,] the family waive their copyright. The visit you had with Jorge Brandeiro¹⁰ must have been most interesting. I am sorry to learn that the house in Sydenham Road has been pulled down.¹¹ I remember it very well.

Letter of October 18th. The books which you want, *Obra e Vida de Fernando Pessoa* and *Novos Temas*¹², both by João Gaspar Simões¹³. Both books, I am afraid are out of print but my brother-in-law is trying to find copies. If he succeeds¹⁴ he will post them to you, as a gift from the family. In any case we are not sorry that the books are out of print as the family and a lot of other people dislike the first book especially¹⁵. It contains a number of very unpleasant things both about Fernando and the family. For example he states that Fernando was a drunkard. That is not true. It is true that he drank quite a lot but no one who knew him ever saw him drunk. I remember, as a young man going to the cafe Martinho da Arcada, in Commercial square¹⁶, and talking with his friends till two or three in the morning. Fernando would start drinking wine and later go to coffee and *agua ardente*¹⁷. I was surprised at the amount he could consume without the slightest detectable effect either in his speech or in his powers of argument. You say that you want these books to check up [on] some Chronological points. If I can help you please let me know and I will try to check what you want.

⁸ Jennings would eventually complete such a book by 1974, giving it the title *The Poet with Many Faces*. Due to events connected to the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, the book remained unpublished—but its proofs were found among the Jennings papers now at the John Hay library.

⁹ "Introducao and Perfacio" in the original, with a typo and without cedilla or tilde. This could be a reference to the prefaces written by Pessoa himself, under the name of Ricardo Reis, to introduce the poems of Alberto Caeiro—texts which have been included in publications of Caeiro's poetry.

¹⁰ In the initial lines of his essay "In Search of Fernando Pessoa" (1979: 16), Jennings describes a sketch of Pessoa by artist Jorge Brandeiro, who Jennings had met at an exhibition in Durban (see Haresnape's review of Jennings's *Contrast* articles in this same issue of *Plural*). Alexandrino Severino published a picture of the portrait in his book *Fernando Pessoa e o Mar Português* (1988: 118), with a plaque which reads: "Fernando Pessoa / Great Portuguese Poet / Durban High School 1899-1904 / Presented by Jorge Brandeiro in 1972."

¹¹ A street in Durban where the family of Pessoa lived, sometime between 1905 and 1911.

¹² "Novas Temas" in the original, a typo. Both books by Simões are in the bibliography.

¹³ "Joao Gaspar Simoes" in the original, without tildes.

¹⁴ "succeedes" in the document, a typo.

¹⁵ "expecially" in the document, a typo.

¹⁶ In Portuguese, it is known as "Praça do Comércio," normally translated as "Commerce Square."

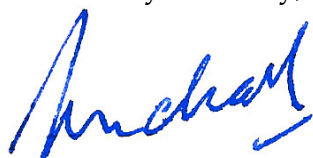
¹⁷ A strong alcoholic beverage often made from fermenting and then distilling sugar cane.

By the way my brother-in-law will be sending you a copy of a new book on Fernando called *Fernando Pessoa, Páginas Intimas e de Auto-interpretação* by Jacinto Prado Coelho and Dr. Georg Rudolf Lind.¹⁸ A most interesting book of more than 400 pages of various things Fernando wrote in prose and a good deal of it is in English.

Lastly on the translations you sent me of some of Fernando's [2]¹⁹ poems. I really have not got down to comparing the Portuguese with your translation. The few I have done seem to me to be very good and I must congratulate you at the speed²⁰ at which you have mastered the Portuguese language²¹. As soon as I have done a reasonable number I will write you with my opinion[,] whatever value it may have to you[,] and any comments which might be of some help to you.

Would you please give your wife our best wishes and Eve sends you her best wishes.

Yours very sincerely,



¹⁸ Jacinto Prado Coelho was one of Jennings's professors when he attended lectures at the University in Lisbon in 1968. Jennings worked closely with both him and Lind on their common pursuit of investigating the Pessoa archive. In his essay "In Search of Fernando Pessoa," Jennings writes the following about Lind: "I also met such enthusiasts as Georg Rudolf Lind who has probably collected more unpublished Pessoa texts than any other researcher and who made me a present of his collection of Pessoa's English poems which I helped to correct" (JENNINGS, 1979: 20).

¹⁹ We indicate here where the second page starts, though the pages are not numbered.

²⁰ "spped" in the document, a typo.

²¹ "languague" in the document, a typo.

II. Unpublished letter. Two leaves (four pages) in total, with the numbers "2" to "4" (no number on p. 1) on the top margins of each page. Handwritten in black ink, with the note "I-71" appended (probably by the receiver, Hubert Jennings) twice, in blue and red inks, to the top of the p. 1. Sent from Lisbon. Dated "May 17th, 1970." Signed by "Teca," Henriqueta Madalena Nogueira dos Santos Rosa, half-sister of Fernando Pessoa.

I 71

Lisbon, May 17th, 1970.

I 71

Dear Hubert,

So sorry to have kept you waiting so long for an answer to your letter, for which thank you very much. I've been trying to collect several details on Fernando's life which might interest you. They may not all fit in with your work, but that you must decide.

The years that Fernando lived in Portugal before we (Mother, Michael, John & I) arrived from South Africa, were spent mainly with relations at first (Grand aunts & his grand-mother, D. Dionisia, on his father's side) later periodically with a younger aunt (mother's sister, Ana Luisa & her two children Mário & Maria) to whom he was deeply attached. During the first years of his life in Portugal Mother & Father (his step-father) sent him regularly a pension until he could live on his own. When his grand-mother Dionisia Seabra Pessoa died, he came into some money - with it he let a small flat, bought some furniture & lived there for some time (I ignore how long, but know it was in Rua Gonçalves Crespo) with a house-keeper called Emilia & her ~~small~~ daughter. During those years he moved several times into other lodgings, but had somebody always to keep him tidy, (a char or dach) had meals at friends & relations very often but sometimes avoided them to their great distress because he was loved by all & enjoyed his company. He was the one who chose seclusion, even when living with others. In spite of all this, he was very fond of children & took great pains to amuse them. Manuela & Luiz Miguel still remember the stories & little poems

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He used to make up to amuse them. Manuela enjoyed pretending she was shaving F. so he would sit her on his knee, have his face smeared with soap-lather & scraped with some non-cutting implement. This took place very often, at Rua Coelho da Rocha, whenever she was inclined to do it & he was willing. He never shaved himself at home, always went to the barber. In this same street there was a man called Marnáças who he considered his friend & who shaved him daily for years.

When we arrived from South Africa, after my Father's death - Mother had had a stroke years before in Bitoria - her left side was paralysed. After a short stay at some relations we went to live ~~at~~ Rua Coelho da Rocha - 16 - 1st floor (not Lapa as you mention in your letter), which is very near the Estrela Cathedral in Estrela Square. Fernando, Mother & I lived there for many years. Michael & John stayed there with us for a very short time because they were going to England to continue their studies & were only waiting until all was arranged. These two were absent in England for 13 years, in fact Mother never saw them again. When I was married & went away for my honeymoon, Mother & F. remained at R. Coelho da Rocha with a housekeeper & her daughter. There was no separate entrance to this flat. Yes, Fernando did change his room & so did Chico & I because a wall had to be pulled down to enlarge the dining-room which was very small, larger furniture had to be put in & the family was larger. During the years at Rua C. da R. - during Fernando's life (because we still lived there several years after his death) Chico & I were absent for several periods of time - but wherever we went, first by a favour at Buraca, later Evora & then Estoril we always had a spare room for Fernando & he used to come

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+ go whenever he pleased.
 It is possible that Fernando must have spent many hours in the cafe's, both afternoon + evenings as that was the place he chose to meet some of his friends (mostly writers) being nearer + more at hand to the offices + places where he worked at.

When he lived with us, he had his meals always with us, of course, it was then he chose to read what he had written a few hours before. During a few months, when we were absent at a farm when we were first married - Tia Annica, her daughter Maria, her husband Paul with their 2 children Eduardo + ~~Maria~~ Helena stayed with Fernando in that flat.

All my children were born at Rua G. da Rocha - a first child named Maria Leonor, who died when she was 14 months of age, Manuela + Luiz Miguel, all in Fernando's time.

Fernando was very fond of playing tricks when he was a boy. He enjoyed dressing up with rather frightening paraphernalia to scare the servants. Amuse him self making up all sorts of living stories in which we (Michael, John + I) were the chief characters. All this took place at 10th Avenue in

Dearborn. He was very much afraid of thunder storms + used to hide in dark places ^{to avoid the lightning} ^{cover his head not to hear the thunder.} ^{wish I could remember more that will} be of any help to you.

I believe Alex Severino is coming to Portugal in July + August. At least that is what Michael told me.

Four women still come every afternoon to work on the inventory of F.'s papers. I haven't the slightest idea when it will all be over.

4.

If there is any more you would like to know or be in doubt about Fernando please let me know.

Did you ever read the article Manuel wrote on F. for the magazine "Flama"?

Eve + Michael were away in England for a fortnight very recently. Eve came back ill with something like jaundice + has been in bed ever since.

I hope you both managed to visit Lawrence Marques + enjoyed it. Try not to forget your Portuguese which was already marvellous.

Kindest regards from my family + my-self to you + Irene

Yours sincerely

Teca

Lisbon, May 17th, 1970.²²

Dear Hubert,

So sorry to have kept you waiting so long for an answer to your letter, for which [I] thank you very much. I've been trying to collect several details on Fernando's life which might interest you. They may not all fit in with your work, but *that* you must decide.

The years that Fernando lived in Portugal before we (Mother, Michael, John & I) arrived from South Africa, were spent mainly with relations at first—(2 old aunts & his grandmother, D. Dionisia, on his father's side) later periodically with a younger aunt (Mother's sister, Ana Luisa & her two children Mário & Maria) to whom he was deeply attached. During the first years of his life in Portugal[,] Mother & Father (his step-father) sent him regularly a pension until he could live on his own. When his grand-mother Dionisia Seabra Pessoa died, he came into some money—with it he let a small flat, bought some furniture & lived there for some time (I ignore how long, but know it was in Rua Gonçalves Crespo) with a house-keeper called Emilia & her <small>/little\ daughter. During those years he moved several time[s] into other lodgings, but had somebody always to keep him tidy, (a char²³ or daily) had meals at friends & relations very often but sometimes avoided them to their great distress because he was loved by all & [they] enjoyed his company. He was the one who chose seclusion, even when living with others.²⁴ In spite of all this, he was very fond of children & took great pains to amuse them. Manuela & Luiz Miguel still remember the stories & little poems [2]²⁵ he used to make up to amuse them. Manuela enjoyed pretending she was shaving F. so he would sit her on his knee, have his face smeared²⁶ with soap-lather & scraped with some non-cutting implement—This took place very often at Rua Coelho da Rocha, whenever she was inclined to do it & he was willing. He never shaved himself at home, always went to the barber. In this same street there was a man called <m>/M\anáças who he considered his friend & who shaved him daily for years.

²² Note that Teca's letter is written shortly after Jennings had spent his eighteen months in Lisbon, which explains her remarks on his command of the Portuguese language (at the end of the letter).

²³ char: charwoman, a woman employed as a cleaner in a house or office.

²⁴ In Chapter 14 of his book on the history of Durban High School, Jennings had written the following: "To his sister who kept house for him, he [Pessoa] was a complete enigma. 'He never seemed to sleep,' she [Teca] told Miss [Maria da Encarnação] Monteiro, 'Either prowling about the house all night and not saying a word, or writing all night and throwing his writings into a large wooden coffer in the corner of the room'; and she resolved the matter in her own mind by deciding that he was mad." (JENNINGS, 1966: 105).

²⁵ The document presents the page numbers on the top right margins; we indicate the page numbers within brackets, in order to avoid interrupting the text flow.

²⁶ "smeered" in the letter, a typo.

When we arrived from South Africa, after my Father's death—Mother had had a stroke years before in Pretoria—her left side was paralysed. After a short stay at some relations we went to live at Rua Coelho da Rocha—16—1st floor (not Lapa as you mention in your letter), which is very near the Estrela Cathedral in Estrela Square. Fernando, Mother & I lived there for many years. Michael & John stayed there with us for a very short time because they were going to England to continue their studies & were only waiting until all was arranged. These two were absent in England for 13 years, in fact Mother never saw them again. When I was married & went away for my honey-moon, Mother & F. remained at R. Coelho da Rocha with a housekeeper & her daughter. There was no separate entrance to this flat. Yes, Fernando did change his room & so did Chico & I because a wall had to be pulled down to enlarge the dining-room which was very small, larger furniture had to be put in & the family was larger. During the years at Rua C. da R. & during Fernando's life (because we still lived there several years after his death) Chico & I were absent for several periods of time—but wherever we went, firstly a farm at Buraca, later Evora & then Estoril we always had a spare room for Fernando & he used to come [3] & go whenever he pleased.

It is possible that Fernando must have spent many hours in the cafés, both afternoon & evenings as that was the place he chose to meet some of his friends (mostly writers) being nearer & more at hand to the offices & places where he worked at.

When he lived with us, he had his meals always with us, of course, it was then he chose to read what he had written a few hours before. During a few months, when we were absent at a farm when we were firstly married—Tia Annica, her daughter Maria, her husband Raul with their 2 children Eduardo & Helena stayed with Fernando in that flat.

All my children were born at Rua C. da Rocha. A first child named Maria Leonor, who died when she was 14 months of age, Manuela & Luiz Miguel, all in Fernando's time.

Fernando was very fond of playing tricks when he was a boy. He enjoyed dressing up with rather frightening paraphernalia to scare the servants, amuse himself making up all sorts of living stories in which we (Michael, John & I) were the chief characters. All this took place at 10th Avenue in Durban²⁷. [→ He was very much afraid of thunder storms & used to hide in dark places to avoid the lightening & cover his head not to hear the thunder.]

I wish I could remember more that will be of any help to you.

I believe Alex Severino is coming to Portugal in July & August. At least that is what Michael told me.

²⁷ 10th Avenue in Durban is where the family first lived once in South Africa; later, after Pessoa had returned to Lisbon in Aug. 1905, they moved to Sydenham Road, mentioned in Michael's letter.

Four women still come every afternoon to work on the inventory of F.'s papers. I haven't the slightest idea when it will all be over.²⁸

[4] If there is any more you would like to know or be in doubt about Fernando[,] please let me know.

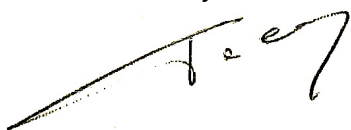
Did you ever read the article Manuela wrote on F. for the magazine "Flama"?

Eve & Michael were away in England for a fortnight very recently. Eve came back ill with something like jaundice & has been in bed ever since.

I hope you both managed to visit Lourenço Marques & enjoyed it. Try not to forget your Portuguese which was already marvellous.

Kindest regards from my family & my-self to you & Irene.

Yours sincerely,



²⁸ The "four women" mentioned are most likely the first four librarians who worked on the initial inventory of Pessoa's literary estate: beginning work on November 14, 1969, Maria Laura Nobre dos Santos and Alexandrina Cruz were the first two archivists to formally catalogue Pessoa's papers, being joined, on January 11, 1970, by Rosa Maria Montenegro e Lúcia Pimentel. The four worked on the inventory at Teca's house until August 1, 1970, when about four thousand documents were transferred to the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP, National Library of Portugal), against the advice of the archivists. The work continued at BNP until December 31, 1970, when the initial inventorying was suspended, much to the surprise of the four librarians. Only in June 1971 would the work resume, led by a totally different group of archivists. Most of this information comes from SANTOS *et al* (1988: 199-213).