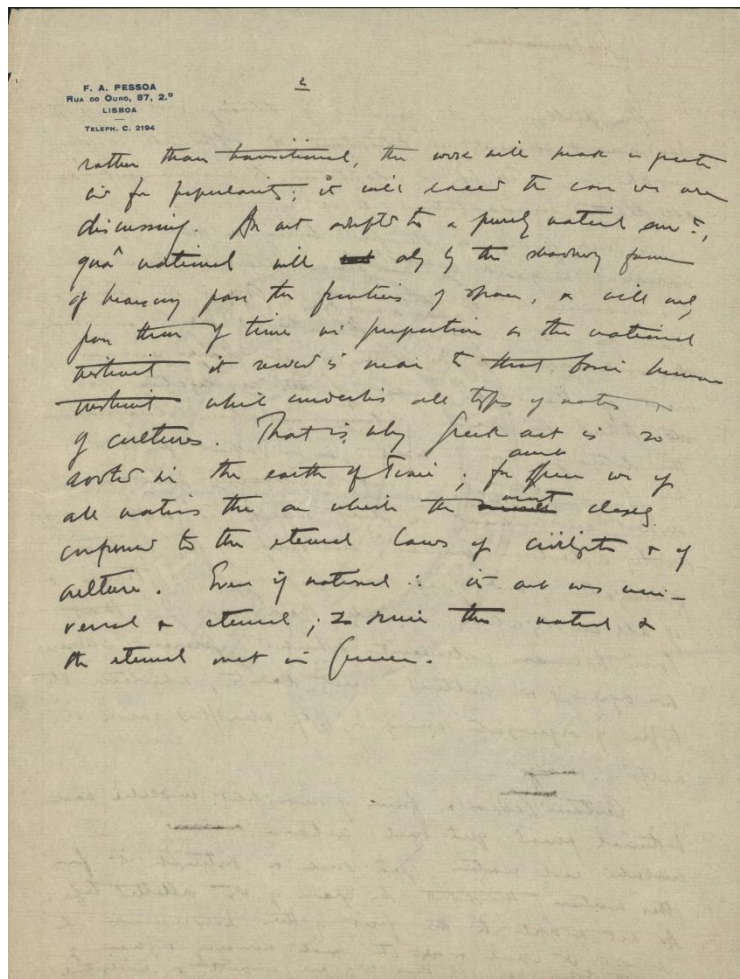


Impermanence

The problem of the survival of literary works, and of the permanent elements of literature is, after all, a very simple one. All life is adaptation to environment, and all death inadaptation to it.

A work of art is therefore living or great by its approval as great by ~~an~~ a critical environment. There are 3 environments of this kind. One is the immediate one - the nation to which the artist belongs or the strict epoch in which the work appears. The other is the larger environment of the whole course of the civilization to ~~its~~ which the nation belongs, in whose language the literary artist wrote, or in which the artist was born (supposing him not a literary artist). The widest environment is that which is not that of ~~civiliz~~ a certain nation, nor even of a certain civilization, but of all nations in all times, and of all civilizations in all their eras - that basic human element which is present wherever an organized and cultured society exists, whatever its type of organization may be, of what kind soever its culture. ~~may~~

Certain ~~names~~ ideas and forms of sensibility underlie each historical period quã such; certain ~~names~~ {...} underlie each nation quã such and distinguish it from other nations throughout the space of its allotted life. An art adapted to the first of these environments dies out with its epoch and ~~its~~ the small surviving influence of its [typical] ideas. If these ideas are important or civilizational



rather than transitional, the work will make a greater bid for popularity; it will exceed the case we are discussing. An art adapted to a purely national environment, quã national will ~~not~~ only by the shadowy fame of hearsay pass the frontiers of space, and will only pass those of time in proportion as the national instinct it received is near to that basic human instinct which underlies all types of nations and of cultures. That is why Greek art is so rooted in the earth of Time; for ancient Greece was of all nations the one which the ~~much~~ most closely conformed to the eternal laws of civilization and of culture. Even if national therefore its art was universal and eternal; ~~is~~ since the national and the eternal met in Greece.

DIREITOS ASSOCIADOS

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