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The fatal drawback of Spanish psychology...

The fatal drawback of Spanish psychology (?) seems to be their tendency to division. This is very clearly seen in South America. Whereas the Portuguese part, enormous as it is in territory, has kept one under the name of Brazil, the Spanish portion has split up into several republics. This cannot be said to be a reflex of the essential division of Spain itself, for the two divisions are of a different type. The division of Spain proceeds from the fact that it incorporates several nations, speaking different languages, and not merely different dialects — Catalonia, the Basque Provinces and Galicia, neither of which have Spanish as a natural language; the rest may be considered as «conquered». But the division of Spanish America does not derive from any linguistic origin, for throughout those territories, it is Spanish, i. e. Castilian, which is spoken. Separatism seems to be, for some unknown reason, a Spanish character.

For our present case, all depends on how far this division will influence any possible linguistic division. There is a tendency to linguistic division in all the American continent. We all know and see how the English spoken in America is departing from British English. But the same thing happens in respect of Spanish and Portuguese in the other parts of the Continent. The divergence between the Spanish of Spanish America and the Spanish of Spain is varying; it is greater in some regions than in others, as might be supposed. The divergence between Brazilian and European Portuguese is similarly divergent in respect of the various provinces which make up Brazil. But whereas in North America there is very little reaction in favour of «pure English undefiled», and in Spanish America very little in the same sense with regard to Spanish, in Brazil there is and has always been a strong «classical» current. As a matter of fact, the best Brazilian Writers (except in such cases as the great poet Cattulo Cearense, who dramatizes his poems in the patois of the Brazilian Backwoods) are particularly scrupulous in the use of Portuguese and write more classically and more near to the Vieira standard than the best writers in Portugal. Again, Brazilian newspapers are generally written in better Portuguese than the Portuguese papers, which are in the main deplorably anti-national in this respect. That is to say, the Portuguese (using the word

in a sufficiently wide sense to include the Brazilians) maintain, even in this respect, their organic tendency to unity and cohesion. The recent decision of the Brazilian Foreign Minister, Dr. Octávio Mangabeira, that Portuguese be used by Brazilian delegates in every international congress in which Brazil shall take part, shows very clearly how deliberate and conscious is the Brazilian tendency to defend the mother tongue.

s. d.

Pessoa Inédito. Fernando Pessoa. (Orientação, coordenação e prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes). Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1993: 109.