

Fernando Pessoa

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Since the desintegration of Spain is a definite fact, the case is how to make up for it by a civilizational reaction. The idea is, not to form an Iberian Federation, which would be unacceptable all round, but to split up Iberia into separate nations, which would be wholly separate except in respect of (1) an offensive and defensive alliance,

(2) a cultural alliance, (3) the abolition of customs frontiers between all.

Each nation would be wholly independent, with its own army, navy, diplomatic service and the like, Spain to make what it can of the navy and of its colonies, which, fortunately, are few and may either fall to Castile or be somehow administered jointly by the nations now composing what is called Spain.

The problem of language does not matter, for if a Catalan likes to write Castilian, he will do so then as he does now, in the same manner

as a Catalan can write in French and get a wider public still. Unamuno put the case: why not write in Castilian? If it comes to that, I prefer to write in English, which will give me a wider public than Castilian; and I am as much Castilian as I am English in blood and much more English than

Castilian since my education is English.

Unamuno's argument is really an argument for writing in English, since that is the most widespread language in the world. If I am to abstain from

writing in Portuguese, because my public is limited thereby, I may just as well write in the most widespread language of all. Why should I write in Castilian? That U. may understand me? It is asking too much for too little.

s. d.

Ultimatum e Páginas de Sociologia Política. Fernando Pessoa. (Recolha de textos de Maria Isabel Rocheta e Maria Paula Morão. Introdução e organização de Joel Serrão.) Lisboa: Ática, 1980: 193.