

Fernando Pessoa

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It is necessary above all to distinguish the sociological from the ethical criterion. Both are legitimate, but neither is legitimate where the other should be used.

The Germans have been attacked for the exhibition of qualities which they do not possess quâ Germans, but as men who are at war, as members of an empire, and as citizens of a collectivist type of state. The first kind of defects are possessed by all the soldiers in this, or in any other, war. The second type are as fully possessed by the Briton as by the German. The third are as fully shown by the Swiss as by the subject of Wilhelm the Second.

The great mistake of German culture is that it has sacrificed one type of culture to another, and of all things, culture is the one that cannot make sacrifices. The great mistake of British culture, for instance, is precisely the opposite one: that it has evolved singularly along the lines of individualistic effort, and nowise on the road of a stronger organising ability, which is possible without the slightest deviation from individualism.

Of France it may be said that the defect of her culture is simply the reduction of it to seriousness. The great fault of French culture is not so much that it is superficial, as that it is falsely deep.

As for Russia, it has no type of culture at all, and is nothing save a (. . .)

Thus the great fact is that this is a conflict between a type of civilization — the German — and a number of uncivilized nations — the Allies. The German type of civilization is realised in flagrant opposition to the European environment, and, since Germany is a European state, it is condemned by this non-adaptation. The Allies, however, have no civilizational type at all, either common to them all, or to several of them, or to each or any of the nations composing them. In Great Britain there is a haphazard individualism, incapable

of organisation, lapsed from that basis of classic culture which was one of the mainstays of its racial type. In France there is a mock liberalism fettered unto a republican caesarism, and gilt over with all the evil-smelling paraphernalia of rhetorical revolutionarism. In Russia, there is not even Russia yet. The rest, save Italy, must be silence and the outer darkness where there will be gnashing of teeth. Italy is a second type of France, almost a replica (. . .)

s. d.

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«O Templo de Jano».