

Fernando Pessoa

Now of three things one must be true.

Now of three things one must be true. Either all nations are wholly and exclusively formed by defence, their national unity (and national type) rising out of a defensive attitude; or they are generally formed by something different from a defensive attitude, Germany constituting an exception; or they are formed by defensive attitude plus something else to be investigated.

If nations are wholly and exclusively formed by defence, and the more perfectly formed, the more really nations, the more they are formed by defence, Germany is, being so completely formed by defence, one of the greatest nations that the world has ever seen, and, further, a typical nation, which, for our case, is more important point.

The greatness may be discussed and all things defended concerning it; the typicality does not exist. For, if Germany were a typical nation, it would, above all things, be a typical nation of the period in which it exists. Now, if anything be true, it is true that Germany is a perfect contrast to the European nations of to-day. So that all nations are not, exclusively formed by defence. But they may be the more perfect the more they are formed on defence.

Defence gives an artificial homogeneity, because it gives a homogeneity founded only on the necessity for defence, and therefore not intimates to the congregated elements.

What elements exist in Germany which, not being eliminable on the score of being attributed to such phenomena as Empire, are not also attributable to the fact that Germany is a nation built up by defence?

They are: 1st. the perfectly coherent social organisation — not the statist character of it (for that belongs to the defence-basis), but the unity and exact adjustment of parts, which implies some capacity for organisation whose necessity defence could suggest, but whose realisation only some other quality could provoke. 2nd. the passing from a stage of mental to a stage of material organisation, which in itself is not necessarily implied in defensiveness, but merely in some mode of it conditioned by some other cause or causes. 3rd. (...)

s. d.

Pessoa Inédito. Fernando Pessoa. (Orientação, coordenação e prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes). Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1993: 170.

«O Templo de Jano».