

# The Double Nature of Brazilian Portuguese: Daughter and Sister of European Portuguese

Dr. Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士

George Washington University

**Abstract:** *In this work, I explore the double nature of Brazilian Portuguese, or rather, I look at its unique position within the Portuguese language. In other words, I consider how, by undergoing a process of Creolization, Brazilian Portuguese boasts features that clearly bestow upon it the characteristics of a separate language altogether. Yet, by having undergone a decreolization process, Brazilian Portuguese cannot be regarded as a separate language, but rather, it should be viewed as a variant of Portuguese, albeit distant and on the cusp of one day (inevitably) falling into the category of “separate language.”*

**Keywords:** *Brazilian Portuguese, (De)creolization, European Portuguese, Lusophone, Portuguese-based Creole*

## I. Introduction

Portuguese is a Romance language. Portuguese and the other languages and dialects spoken today or that were spoken at one time in the Iberian Peninsula descend from Vulgar Latin (spoken Latin) and belong to the Ibero-Romance (or Hispano-Romance/Luso-Hispano-Romance) group. The origin of the Portuguese language from Vulgar Latin (from which all Romance languages descended) is traced to the time when the Romans arrived in 218 BCE. in the western part of the Iberian Peninsula that roughly corresponds to present-day Portugal.



Vulgar Latin => Romance Languages

Ibero-Romance Languages

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Of mixed ancestry (Celtic and Iberian), the Lusitanians were the inhabitants of present-day Portugal at the time of the Roman invasion of the Iberian Peninsula (2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE-5<sup>th</sup> c. CE).

Portuguese is spoken on all continents. It is the mother tongue of more than 340 million people in all continents. Besides Portugal—which includes the archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira — and Brazil, Portuguese is an official language in East Timor, as well as in six African countries, namely: Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea (along with French and Spanish),<sup>1</sup> São Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, and Mozambique. Macau, once a Portuguese possession in China (1553-1999), still has Portuguese as one of its official languages (along with Cantonese/Mandarin), and will maintain it at least until December 20, 2099. After this date, the People's Republic of China has the discretion of renewing for another fifty years Macau's status of Special Autonomous Region with its own laws (Portuguese-based), languages (Portuguese and Chinese), currency (Macau Pataca, abbreviated as MO), and Identification/Passport.

Portuguese is still spoken in former Portuguese India—as in the case of Goa, Damão, and Diu (1498-1961) by the Indo-Portuguese communities (mainly Catholic)—and in the geographical areas where Portuguese-based Creoles are spoken throughout the world, from the Americas and Lusophone Africa to Sri Lanka, Malacca, Singapore, Batavia, Thailand, and Indonesia, as in the case of Malaccan Portuguese, otherwise known as *Papiá Kristang* (Christian language), spoken as a first-, second-, and/or third language by 5,000 people in Malacca and 400 in Singapore, taught regularly in all colleges and universities.<sup>2</sup>

Portuguese is the 5<sup>th</sup> most spoken language in the world, after Mandarin, English, Hindi, and Spanish. Portuguese is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most spoken European Language in the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Between 1472-1778, Equatorial Guinea belonged to Portugal. With the *El-Pardo* Treaty, Equatorial Guinea was then ceded to Spain in exchange for more land in Brazil, i.e., the future Brazilian state of Acre. In August 2010, Portuguese became the third official language of Equatorial Guinea, after Spanish and French. On July 23, 2014, Equatorial Guinea was accepted as a full-fledged member of the CPLP (Community of Countries whose Official Language is Portuguese, <<https://www.cplp.org/>>). *Fá d'Ambô*, a Portuguese-based Creole, is spoken on the island of Ano Bom, one of the two islands of Equatorial Guinea.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士. "1916-2016 TUFs. Português: do Século XXI para o Futuro." *Simpósio Internacional. Sobre o Centenário do Ensino da Língua Portuguesa na TUFs*. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo, Japan. November 21, 2016; 6; Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士. "Felipe B. Nery (1920-2011) and Macau: A Lifetime of Memories in the Diaspora," in *Macaology*. Center for Macau Studies. Macau: Universidade de Macau/University of Macau, 2012. 185-216. 190; Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士. "Macau's Foodscape: Identity Marker within Two Worlds," in *Food-Scape, Swiss Chinese Cultural Explorations*. Eds. Margrit Manz, and Martin Zeller. Hong Kong: MCCM Creations, 2009. 107-109; 107-108; Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士. "澳門食物風景: 兩個世界中的身份標記," trans. Cathy Wong, in *Food-Scape, Swiss Chinese Cultural Explorations*. Eds. Margrit Manz, and Martin Zeller. Hong Kong: MCCM Creations, 2009. 100-111; 100; Joseph Abraham Levi 雷祖善博士. "Gastronomia macaense: Sinal de identidade entre dois mundos," in *Food-Scape, Swiss Chinese Cultural Explorations*. Eds. Margrit Manz, and Martin Zeller. Hong Kong: MCCM Creations, 2009. 112-114; 112-113.



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Map of the Lusophone World

Individuals who speak Portuguese, regardless of their origin, are called Lusophone.<sup>4</sup> Lusophone is pronounced: /loofofónə/ and it means speaker of/from the Portuguese-speaking world. The words Luso-American and Luso-Canadian, for example, refer to the descendants of Portuguese immigrants who settled in the United States and Canada.

In the third century of our era, Old Portuguese and Old Galician, collectively known as Galician-Portuguese, began their slow evolution from spoken, colloquial Latin, known as Vulgar Latin,<sup>5</sup> into what are now the Portuguese and Galician languages (see chart below).

During the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries of the Common Era, the Iberian Peninsula was invaded by Germanic tribes. In the northwest corner of the Peninsula the Suevi established their kingdom. As a result of its geographical isolation, the Vulgar Latin spoken in this region forged its own linguistic features. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century of the Common Era, the Visigoths overthrew the Suebic kingdom and, in 711, Muslim troops hailing from North Africa and the Middle East invaded the entire Iberian Peninsula. Portugal was one of the first areas of the Iberian Peninsula *reconquered* from the Muslims (11<sup>th</sup> century). From a semi-independent county (1095), Portugal later became an independent kingdom (1143), one of the oldest unified nations in Europe. By 1249, Continental Portugal had expanded to almost its present-day form. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with the Portuguese *reconquest* from the Muslims, the Portuguese language extended to the extreme south of the country (today known as the Algarve, Arabic for "West"), and, since 1415, with the beginning of the Portuguese Age of Discoveries,<sup>6</sup> to the then newly-discovered archipelagos of the Azores (1431), Madeira (c. 1418), and Cape Verde (c. 1460-62).

<sup>3</sup> Martin W. Lewis. "China Courts the Portuguese-Speaking World." *GeoCurrents* 26 July 2012. <<http://www.geocurrents.info/news-map/diplomacy-news/china-courts-the-portuguese-speaking-world>>.

<sup>4</sup> The name *Luso* derives from a pre-Roman group of people indigenous to the Iberian Peninsula, the Lusitanians, who used to live in most areas of what is now Portugal and parts of south-western Spain. Most likely the name *Luso* meant "people of the River *Lusos*." The River *Lusos* is today known in Portuguese as the *Tejo*, in English, the Tagus.

<sup>5</sup> Vulgar Latin broke into several Latin-based vernaculars, known as the Romance or Latin-based languages, e.g.: Portuguese, Galician, Mirandese, Asturian, Leonese, Aragonese, Castilian Spanish, Catalan, French, Provençal, Occitan, Italian, Rhaeto-Romance, Sardinian, Dalmatian, and Rumanian, all of which boasting regional/dialectal variants, some more marked than others.

<sup>6</sup> The Portuguese Age of Discoveries officially began in 1415 with the first enclave in Morocco. However, Portuguese navigators, with the aid of Genoese and Pisan sailors, began exploring the seas towards the end of

The patronage of Prince Henry the Navigator (1393-1460) encouraged Portuguese and foreign geographers/navigators working for the Portuguese crown to explore the west coast of Africa so that they could eventually reach India and the Far East. Brazil was in fact "discovered" in one of these voyages to India (1500), though there are documents which clearly show that the Portuguese had reached the coasts of Brazil as early as the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, the Portuguese thought that it was a somewhat big island.

By the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century the Portuguese Overseas Empire included Brazil, Cape Verde, the Guinea Coast, São Tomé and Príncipe, present-day Angola and Mozambique, the Swahili coast (i.e., today's southern Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania), former Portuguese India, Sri Lanka, Muscat, Shiraz, Macau, Malacca, Japan (1514-1639), and East Timor.



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The Portuguese Empire

Standard European Portuguese is based on 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century educated Lisbon- and Coimbra-speech, though modified in order to eliminate several local regionalisms, thus accommodating to some of the other regional Portuguese dialects that sprung from the Vulgar Latin that was spoken at that time in the area, the latter collectively known in Latin as LUSITANIA, from Galicia to the southernmost region of Portugal, i.e., the Algarve. With their lexicon, idiomatic expressions, and unique sociolinguistic features, these regional dialects in fact contributed to the formation of Modern Standard European Portuguese which, though north-central from the start, represents the entire corpus of people who speak European Portuguese today, regardless of their regional, ethnic, racial, and/or national provenience.

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the twelfth century of the Common Era. In 1498, the Portuguese *reconquered* the Cape of Storms (briefly conquered in 1488), soon renamed Cape of Good Hope, and reached Goa in the same year; in 1517, the Portuguese had their first recorded encounter with the Hong Kong and Macau area. During three centuries Portuguese presence in Africa, Asia, and the Americas was a key-factor in establishing trade links among peoples and nations. Joseph Abraham Levi. 雷祖善博士."Muslim Science as the Source of the Portuguese Age of Discoveries." *Comparative Literature and Culture*. Special Issue: *New Work about the Journey and Its Portrayals*. Ed. I-Chun Wang 14.5 (2013). *Purdue University CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2135>>.

<sup>7</sup> "The Portuguese Empire." (1415-1999; 2002).

<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Portuguese\\_Empire.png#/media/File:The\\_Portuguese\\_Empire.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Portuguese_Empire.png#/media/File:The_Portuguese_Empire.png)>.

Due to political reasons, mainly colonialism (1415-1999; 2002), African Portuguese, Macau Portuguese, and East Timorese Portuguese—collectively known as Lusophone Portuguese—are grammatically and, to a certain degree, phonetically still very close to European Portuguese, the only difference is the quality of the unstressed vowels, whereas Lusophone Portuguese is more *open* than European Portuguese. Lusophone African and Asian Portuguese, even though they are closer to European Portuguese, have their own characteristics when it comes to pronunciation.

As for the lexicon, though European Portuguese in nature, each Lusophone country/area also has a lexicon particular to its own geographical region, with obvious borrowings from the local, indigenous dialects, and/or languages. In most Lusophone countries and areas of the world outside Portugal, besides Portuguese and another official language or local language(s), they also speak Portuguese-based Creoles (i.e., Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Goa, Damão, Diu, Sri Lanka, Malacca, Singapore, Java, Batavia, Thailand, Indonesia, Macau, and East Timor).

#### V.

A Creole is a language that boasts a native population. Even though there were (and still exist today) Creole languages in the world before the Portuguese Age of Discovery (1415-1542)—as in the case of Arabic-based Creoles in Africa and Asia, the Creoles in the pre-Columbian Americas, and the Creoles in sub-Saharan Africa<sup>8</sup>—it was only with the arrival of the Portuguese in Africa, Asia, and the Americas (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries) that the establishment of Creoles languages and societies began.

The word Creole comes from the Portuguese *Crioulo* (he/she/they raised at home within a bilingual/bicultural environment), i.e., an offspring of a European (Portuguese) man and an indigenous woman, "raised" in both cultures. There are more than fifteen Portuguese-based Creoles spoken in the world, from Brazil, Cape Verde, and Guinea Bissau to Macau (China), Malacca (Malaysia), and Jakarta (Indonesia).<sup>9</sup>

As for Brazilian Portuguese, in spite of the geographical size of the country, there are only two main dialectal groups: the northern group (which includes the Amazon, the north, and the north-east) and the southern group (covering the central and southern regions).

Standard, Modern Brazilian Portuguese is based on the educated speech of Rio de Janeiro, also known as *carioca*.<sup>10</sup> Besides the lexicon—which reflects the obvious influence of indigenous and African languages, the former mainly belonging to the Tupi-Guarani ethno-linguistic group, the latter chiefly from West Africa, and, during the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as other Indo-European and Asian languages brought by immigrants—what sets Brazilian Portuguese apart from the rest of the Lusophone-speaking world are: morphology and syntax (with remnants of Creole features), sentence structure, noun pluralization or lack thereof (Creole feature), phonology, nasal vowels (Old Portuguese as well as influence from Amerindian languages), primary word stress, placement of clitic pronouns, use of prepositions (Creole feature), replacing clitic pronouns with subject pronouns (Creole feature), and its archaic nature with characteristics that are now extinct in European Portuguese (as in the case of nasality).

Brazil was a Portuguese colony from 1500 to 1822. Starting from 1550, the Atlantic slave trade linking Portugal, Brazil, and West Africa—from present-day Senegal to southern Angola—brought over to Brazil a large number of slaves who hailed from extremely diverse ethnic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds. The only language that these African slaves had in common was Portuguese, or rather, a simplified version of Portuguese,

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<sup>8</sup> E.g., Kikongo-Kituba and Lingala, both based on Kikongo-Kimanyanga and Bobangi spoken in present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo, respectively.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Abraham Levi. 雷祖善博士. "The Many Identity Markers of Luso-Americans: Linguistic and Psychological Identities among First-, Second-, and Third-Generation Portuguese-Americans." *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 3 3 (May-June 2020): 277-301. 280.

<sup>10</sup> *Carioca*: a native Tupi word meaning "house of white people," now used to refer to anyone who is from Rio de Janeiro. A person who is from the State of Rio de Janeiro, instead, is known as *fluminense* (i.e., pertaining to the "river," given that in Portuguese "rio" means "river.").

namely, a Portuguese-based Pidgin<sup>11</sup> that they began to learn in Africa, while waiting to be shipped to Brazil, onboard the slave ships, and/or upon arriving at their final destination. In Brazil, this simplified form of Portuguese, first used as a Pidgin and, after one generation, as a Portuguese-based Creole, became the norm: it was the only means of communication among slaves hailing from a vast geographical area.<sup>12</sup> Given the immense geographical area of Brazil, many, yet very similar, Portuguese-based Creoles were born. These Portuguese-based Creoles were the only means of communication among the African and Afro-Brazilian slaves as well as the indigenous population, and the European settlers.

During his tenure as Secretary of State and Internal Affairs of the Portuguese Kingdom (1756-1777), Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699-1782)—better known as the First Marquis of Pombal, a staunch anticlerical—fought hard to see that in the colony of Brazil (1500-1822), as well as in the rest of the Portuguese Empire, the Jesuits ended their monopoly when it came to teaching and allowing the use of indigenous languages in detriment of the use of the Portuguese language. Indeed, faced with a myriad of aboriginal languages and dialects spoken in the colony of Brazil, the Jesuits chose Tupi as their language of communication with the autochthonous population. In less than two generations since their first arrival in 1549, Tupi became a *lingua franca* used to communicate with the native population of Brazil as well as among Europeans living in the colony. This simplified Tupi was called *Língua Geral* (General Language).<sup>13</sup>

In 1758, the First Marquis of Pombal expelled the Jesuits from the Portuguese empire and imposed the use of Portuguese in Brazil. Noticeably, the Tupi-based Creole (*Língua Geral*) and the Portuguese-based Creoles never disappeared from the linguistic scene of Brazil. The former Creole (the Tupi-based Creole) shrunk in size and became relegated to the northern region of present-day Brazil and it is now known as *Nheengatu*. The latter (the Portuguese-based Creoles) coexisted side by side with Standard Portuguese and, ever since, have been exerting linguistic pressure on Standard Portuguese spoken in Brazil.

Indeed, there is historical evidence of communities speaking Portuguese-based Creoles in many parts of Brazil, especially (but limited to) in areas populated by descendants of African/Afro-Brazilian slaves.<sup>14</sup> In other words, as from one hand the Portuguese-based Creoles spoken in Brazil were being decreolized to fit into the mold of a “recreated” Standard Portuguese spoken in Brazil, on the other hand it was leaving indelible Creole features into Standard Portuguese spoken in Brazil. Hence, Modern Standard Brazilian Portuguese is the

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<sup>11</sup> A pidgin is an extremely simplified language whereby no one speaks it as a native tongue given that it is a made-up language used to communicate among people hailing from different parts of the world and that have no common language. Generally speaking, a pidgin is composed of at least two languages whereby their simplified grammars merge to form a quick and useful means of communication in order to perform commercial transactions.

<sup>12</sup> Celso Ferreira da Cunha. “O protocioulo português e a sua universalidade nos séculos XVI, XVII e XVIII,” in *Língua Nação, Alienação*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1981.

<sup>13</sup> The modern descendant of this simplified Tupi is *Nheengatu* (“good language” or “talk too much”) spoken today in Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela by roughly twenty thousand individuals. Lyle Campbell. *American Indian Languages: The Historical Linguistics of Native America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997; Deny Moore, Sidney Facundes, and Nádia Pires. *Nheengatu (Língua Geral Amazônica), its History, and the Effects of Language Contact. Survey of California and Other Indian Languages*. Berkeley: University of California, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> Incidentally, Portuguese-based Creoles are spoken today in rural areas of Brazil by mid- and low-class citizens with little or no access to education and who happen to be descendants of Afro-Brazilian slaves. Alan N. Baxter. “Transmissão Geracional Irregular na História do Português Brasileiro – Divergências nas Vertentes Afro-brasileiras”. *Revista Internacional de Língua Portuguesa* 14 (1995): 72-90; John Holm. “Creole Influence on Popular Brazilian Portuguese,” in Glenn G. Gilbert, ed. *Pidgin and Creole Languages*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987. 490-522; John Holm & al. “Differing Degrees of Restructuring in Two Vernaculars: Caribbean Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese,” in Ernesto d’Andrade, Dulce Pereira, and Maria Antónia Mota, eds. *Crioulos de Base Portuguesa*. Lisbon: Associação Portuguesa de Linguística, 2000. 201-222.

result of, or better yet, is the comprise of Portuguese-based Creole features inserted into a “recreated,” *ex nihilo*, Standard Portuguese.

The differences in morphology, phonology, syntax, and lexico-semantics that sharply divide Brazilian Portuguese from European Portuguese are also found in other Portuguese-based Creoles. Indeed, as the late Creolist scholar John A. Holm (1943-2015) rightly stated, in Brazilian Portuguese “inflections indicating number agreement within noun phrases and between subjects and verbs are greatly reduced. [Hence,] there is unambiguous evidence that [Brazilian Portuguese] was influenced by earlier creolized varieties of Portuguese.”<sup>15</sup>

Renowned Portuguese philologist Francisco Adolpho Coelho (1847-1919), based on equally prominent Portuguese philologist José Leite de Vasconcelos (1858-1941) and Brazilian philologist Joaquim Mattoso Câmara, Jr. (1904-1970),<sup>16</sup> also concluded that Brazilian Portuguese “shows a tendency toward creolization, lack of number agreement, and the use of the third person subject pronoun as”<sup>17</sup> a direct object pronoun: e.g., “I see he,” instead of “I see him.”

Additionally, the linguistic input of immigrant communities hailing from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia also greatly influenced Brazilian Portuguese, particularly when it comes to lexicon that are not found anywhere else in the Lusophone world.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As for the intelligibility between Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese, the intelligibility is not always mutual and it is asymmetrical, or rather, it is easier for a speaker of European Portuguese—hailing from Portugal and/or from any other Lusophone country or area of the world—to understand a speaker of Brazilian Portuguese than for a speaker of Brazilian Portuguese to understand a speaker of European Portuguese, unless the speaker of Brazilian Portuguese is a highly-articulate, well-educated speaker of Portuguese. Brazilian Portuguese is thus perceived by speakers of European Portuguese as an archaic, albeit simplified, and decreolized, yet at times still Creolized, form of Portuguese.

Indeed, empirical research has proven that intelligibility between speakers of Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese increases with the level of education of both speakers, particularly Brazilian Portuguese speakers, though European Portuguese speakers would still have problems understanding the lexicon derived from Amerindian and African languages that historically have contributed to the lexical inventory of Brazilian Portuguese, as well as the lexical contributions of the immigrants hailing from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia that are unique to Brazilian Portuguese.

Are European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese two different languages, just like European Portuguese is a different language than the Portuguese-based Creoles spoken in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau,

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<sup>15</sup> John Holm. “Creole Influence on Popular Brazilian Portuguese,” in Glenn G. Gilbert, ed. *Pidgin and Creole Languages*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987. 490-522. 490.

<sup>16</sup> José Leite de Vasconcelos. “Dialecto brasileiro: Ensaio glotológico, precedido de algumas notas sobre tradições populares do Brasil.” *Revista de Estudos Livres* 1883; Joaquim Mattoso Câmara, Jr. *Brazilian Linguistics. Current Trends in Linguistics*, vol. 4: *Ibero-American and Caribbean Linguistics*. Thomas Sebeok, ed. The Hague: Mouton, 1968. 229-247. 246.

<sup>17</sup> F. Adolpho Coelho. “Os dialectos românicos ou neolatinos na África, Ásia, e América.” *Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa*. 1880-1886. Reprinted. *Estudos Linguísticos Crioulos*. J. Morais-Barbosa, ed. Lisbon: Academia Internacional de Cultura Portuguesa, 1967. 170.

<sup>18</sup> Akira Kon. “Portuguese-Japanese Language Contact.” *Bulletin of Portuguese – Japanese Studies* 3 (December, 2001): 43-51; J. F. Normano. “Japanese Emigration to Brazil.” *Pacific Affairs* 7. 1. (March, 1974): 42-61; Lilian Manes de Oliveira. *Non ti scordar di me: presença de italianismos no português do Brasil*. São Paulo: Annablume, 2010; Mary Bortolanza Spessatto. *Linguagem e colonização*. Chapecó: Argos, 2003; Joseph Abraham Levi. 雷祖善博士. “De línguas do passado a línguas do/com futuro: a importância de aprender, e bem, o português e o espanhol no novo milênio.” *Simpósio Internacional. Mestiçagens e Globalização. Japão: Identidades que se cruzam. Passado, Presente e Futuro*. 29, 30 e 31 de Maio de 2015. Universidade de Estudos Estrangeiro de Tóquio. Tokyo: Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2015. 4-22.

Equatorial Guinea, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, former Portuguese India, Sri Lanka, Malacca, Indonesia, Java, Singapore, Thailand, and Macau? Yes and no. Yes, because of what I have hitherto defended. No, because Brazilian Portuguese has underground decreolization.

Despite the similarities in lexicon between European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese, morphology (with numerous Creole features), syntax, phonology, sentence structure, noun pluralization or lack thereof (Creole features), nasal vowels (Old Portuguese as well as influence from Amerindian languages), primary word stress, placement of clitic pronouns, use of prepositions (Creole feature), replacing clitic pronouns with subject pronouns (Creole feature), and its archaic nature with characteristics that are now extinct in European Portuguese (as in the case of nasality), are the main features that separate Brazilian Portuguese from European Portuguese.

Additionally, the structure of words and parts of words such as stems, root words, prefixes, and suffixes, as well as parts of speech, phonetically-induced spelling simplifications, intonation, and stress in Brazilian Portuguese diverged considerably from those of its parent language (European Portuguese) to grant it the status of separate language and not a mere variant of Portuguese. Yet, because Brazilian Portuguese has suffered decreolization, Brazilian Portuguese has to be regarded as a variant of Portuguese.

16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese, influenced by Portuguese-based Creoles and a Tupi-based Creole spoken by the inhabitants of present-day Brazil, as well as the linguistic input provided by the European,<sup>19</sup> and Asian/Middle Eastern<sup>20</sup> immigrants from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, gave rise to Modern Brazilian Portuguese (see chart below).

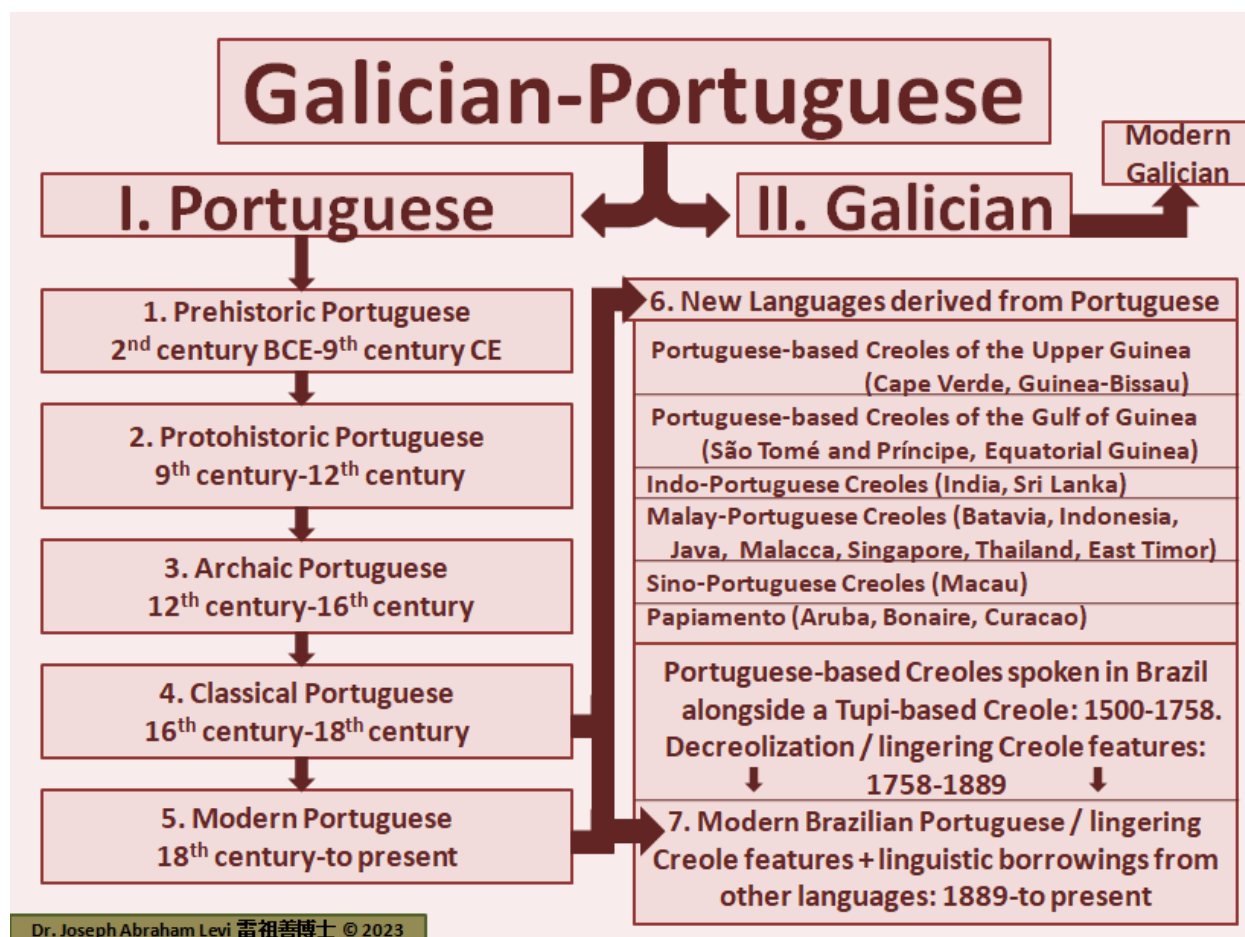
In other words, Brazilian Portuguese is at the same time daughter of European Portuguese—hence, it falls within the category of a different/separate language altogether—and sister of European Portuguese and, as such, it is only a variant of Portuguese. Time will tell if and, most likely when, the abovementioned differences will thrust Brazilian Portuguese into the category of “different language” altogether.

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<sup>19</sup> E.g., Austrian, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian.

<sup>20</sup> E.g., Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Lebanese.





Evolution of European Portuguese, Portuguese-based Creoles, and Brazilian Portuguese

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