

Fernando Pessoa

## Idea of Cause — Homogeneousness of Cause

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*Homogeneousness of Cause*

Spirit can but produce spirit.

Matter can but produce Matter.

Thus my spirit cannot give a football a kick; neither can my body imagine a work of literature. But, in the writing, both mind and body take part. Body in the writing proper, mind in what is expressed.

Matter and Spirit produces Matter and Spirit; thus, in reproduction. It needs human frames and minds to produce human frames and mind, i.e. a child. This is already a deeper consideration. Therefore if God be a Spirit he could not have produced the world. More acceptable is the pantheistic hypothesis: God matter and spirit cause of matter and spirit, (i.e. *cause of itself*).

Likewise acceptable is the materialistic hypothesis: matter the cause of matter.

Also acceptable idealistic hypothesis: spirit cause of spirit, (i.e. of itself, *all being spirit*).

Is this based on the assertion that nothing can cease to be what it is? Is it a kind of continuity?

Nothing can cease to be. Then, after death, matter and spirit neither of them disappear.

A thing cannot change to anything else.

Matter must change to matter.

Spirit [must change] to spirit.

Is Spirit a function of matter?

Does the conservation of energy apply to body and soul?

This last problem can only be discussed relatively: absolutely spirit alone exists.

Mankind has ever searched, while not denying evil, to make it inferior to and less lasting than good. Thus, Zoroaster Ormuzd and Ahriman, Ormuzd shall in the end conquer.

(*Passim*, this is false argument. Time (...) bounds ought to terminate, at one stroke, both principles).

Similar to the Christian theory of evil, as revolted from good.

Shelley's revolt — merely against anthropomorphism.

Aristotle gives 4 causes.

Material. Formal. Efficient. Final. The first 2 are one, for the stone itself (in a statue) is no subject of thought, the statuary having made nothing of it. The form itself is nothing. Hence 3 ideas, truly Categories of Reasoning:

Idea of Thing (Object).

Idea of Cause.

Idea of End.

Are not these 3 in the category of Reason [?]

The idea of Cause is relative, because it can only be understood among plurality. Where there is only one there can be no cause. Therefore the idea of Cause is a scientific but not a metaphysical idea. The statement often made: «God is his own cause» is erroneous, because not even (...) can anything be said to be its own cause.

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Now the most grave objection against this theory of duty is that this «duty» does not exist. It never has existed, nor ever will exist. There is a sense of good, there is an instinct towards action, there is a sense of ridicule, but there is no sense of duty properly speaking. What we call a «sense of duty» is what I shall term a sense of convention. Duty has never existed as a motive.

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