

Fernando Pessoa

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Consciousness is neither in time nor in space. That it is not in space is no news; but it will be necessary to prove that it is also not in time. We have proved already that what is in time must also be in space, and what is out of time must also be out of space. This is our first argument. Secondly, we can argue as follows: to have consciousness of time, that is to say, for my consciousness to perceive time it is necessary that consciousness should be anterior to and dependant on time. The consciousness of time gives us the impression that consciousness moves along with time, or with phenomena within time; it is purely an illusion: for to say my consciousness moves along with time, that I am conscious of time is wrong, for it is supposing time before we have established it.

From conscience therefore one only Category comes, which is first in the list we are making; this is the Category of being.

The kind of spiritual operation called mediate consciousness has no existence at all, as *consciousness*. It is not, I mean, a part of consciousness. The proof of this is very simple. It is through this operation that we know we have consciousness; if we give this faculty the name consciousness, we shall find that we are conscious of being conscious, which is impossible. We have proved that consciousness is the inmost faculty of the mind, anterior even to time and to space. Another consciousness to be conscious of this is impossible; only one consciousness can exist. For true consciousness being out of time and out of space, cannot by any means be detected by anything backward of itself, for that thing would have to be out of time and of space itself and would have to detect something which itself out of time and space which we could not perceive. If it were thus, we could not perceive it, for we perceive things only in time and in space. No, what has been called mediate consciousness in analysis, reasoning, reflects whatever you Will; but it is unphilosophic to call it in any way a consciousness.

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