

Fernando Pessoa

Things are, to our sensation, beautiful.

Things are, to our sensation, beautiful. Therefore beauty-in-se, ideal beauty is a reality.

If this ideal beauty be real, since it is not of the same order as things, since it is, I mean, an idea; either both ideas and things exist really, or one is more real than the other, both equally existing, or one is real and the other is unreal, one true and the other false. Let us examine these hypotheses.

To say, for instance, that the idea of space and extended things are equally real is, in my belief, untrue judging. For the things of this world exist by ideas (...)

To say that ideas and things are real, some more than others, is evidently bad judging, not only because the world appears by ideas but also because reality has no degrees. A thing exists or it does not exist; this is all, no more is needed.

The hypotheses remains that one is true and the other false. Now which is truth, and which is appearance? The things *by which* things are, or these things which exist in virtue of other things? It is evident then that ideas are real and things shadows and falseness incarnate.

— But, we may be answered, these ideas are nothing.

— Well, if they be nothing, then the exterior universe is nothing, for it exists by them. By both reasons the world is nothing. It is a shadow and a dream; it is, as the old philosopher said, the play of child on the sand.

1907?

Textos Filosóficos . Vol. I. Fernando Pessoa. (Estabelecidos e prefaciados por António de Pina Coelho.) Lisboa: Ática, 1968 (imp. 1993): 87.