

Fernando Pessoa

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My first action was to inquire of myself whether man's failure in the grounds of higher thought was due to want of reasoning power, or to an ill use of his reasoning. It appeared strange to me that we should [be] able to discuss these questions of metaphysics and of psychology with such subtlety, and yet be unable to come to any conclusion in these fields that it found not an immediate answer, and hence onward in an infinite progression.

I concluded hastily that one of two hypotheses must be right: either man failed through improper or impersistent application of his intellect, or he failed by the want of a primary critique of reason.

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Textos Filosóficos . Vol. II. Fernando Pessoa. (Estabelecidos e prefaciados por António de Pina Coelho.) Lisboa: Ática, 1968: 215.