

## **Ordinary is extraordinary.**

“Before I practiced Ch'an, I saw that mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. However, after having achieved intimate knowledge and having gotten a way in, I saw that mountains are not mountains and rivers are not rivers. But now that I have found rest, as before I see mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers” *Attributed to Qingyuan.*

Our ordinary reality is the only reality. In fact, it is impossible to find another one, reality can only be one. Our ordinary consciousness, that which perceives this reality, is also the only consciousness there is. It is not necessary to look for a different one or in a different place.

The only thing we have to review is our interpretation of reality. We could say that what we call truth consists precisely in the recognition of what is, of the facts: To say that something is true, is to say that it is real. A true idea is that which is in accordance with reality.

Spiritual search is, in this sense, a “scientific” search. The difference with normal science is that it does not limit itself to the realm of the external, that we call objective, but includes the totality of our experience: objective and subjective. The subjective realm, on a closer look, must be also part of the same and only reality.

Nevertheless “spirituality” is, sometimes, associated with a rejection of this ordinary reality in search of another, hypothetical, “extraordinary” reality or experience.

The search for truth is the search for reality. Therefore this search must start from this ordinary reality and, as Ulysses, we should attach ourselves strongly to the mast of reality to avoid falling under the spell of the chants of the sirens that would distract us from our journey back.

It is on arriving back home that we discover that this ordinary reality is, in truth, extraordinary.

Pedro Brañas