



THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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LIBERATION OF THE SOUL DURING SLEEP

D. Villela

Daily rest through sleep takes up a significant part of the time we spent incarnated on earth. Imagining that we sleep six hours per night, we can easily conclude that at age forty we have slept for a total amount of ten years, indeed a mechanism of low returns if seen only in terms of recuperating our organic or even psychological wearing. And, if this period of restoring of our strength is yet a bit longer, say 8 hours, for example, at 60 years of age we would have passed one third of our lives — that is, 20 years — immersed, at least apparently, in the unconsciousness of sleep.

However, the Divine Wisdom, present in all natural processes, could not be absent from this one, as the Spiritist Doctrine came to clarify.

During our physical recovery, only the body is immobile. At that time, the links between body and spirit loosen so that spirit can experience part of the liberty it enjoyed — and will enjoy again — when discarnate. On earth, in our waking hours, we interact with people who present diverse moral and intellectual characteristics. When we are asleep, we maintain another life where the laws of affinity have a much greater influence. While the physiological machine rests, the habitual interests and preferences of its user will take him/her either to meet with good and enlightened entities or, on the contrary, with entities inclined to irresponsibility and perturbation. It can also happen that, given their evolutionary characteristics, spirits stay close to the body during sleep without any greater mobility conditions in the spirit world.

Moreover, Spiritism also addresses another interesting occurrence during this process: the spiritual visits between the incarnate. We can, at night, meet with relatives or friends who are far away from us, sometimes keeping this recollection when we wake up. That's why we say "Last night I dreamed with so and so, who lives

far away." When in reality we could have said "Last night I was with so and so who lives far away."

The Doctrine explains the importance of these invisible relationships all the incarnate possess, and invites us to take advantage of it in the best possible way. That means that we should conduct ourselves in such a way that those hours apparently destined only for the body, would also be productive from the spiritual perspective. So every morning, along physical revitalization, we would find ourselves in a renewed good mood, keeping in our subconscious the valuable suggestions which, at the appropriate moment, would come to our mind as ideas or suggestions for the solution of difficulties or the fulfillment of tasks. In sum, making sure that the one fourth of our lives spent asleep effectively contribute for a better utilization of the remaining three fourth when we're awake.



The Spirits' Book (Questions 401 and 414).

PLASTIC SURGERY AND SELF-ESTEEM

"If Divine Providence has granted us the benefits of regenerative plastic surgery, it is surely so that we will value even more the physical vehicle through which we express ourselves on earth." This statement was made by our deeply missed medium Francisco Cândido Xavier at the highly watched program "Pinga Fogo," aired in Brazil in December 1971, at the now defunct TV Tupi. In the program, Chico Xavier spoke on different topics, among them the assessment of spirit mentors on plastic surgery.

This issue was once more picked up by the periodical *Folha Espírita*, which interviewed the most important Brazilian expert on plastic surgery, Dr. Ivo Pitanguy, about the current fixation worldwide with physical beauty and vanity.

"We are living in a youth-obsessed time, not only in Brazil, but all over the world. This obsession is entrenched in marketing with the sale of many products —

cosmetics, foods, and the like. In my opinion, this marketing is wrong, since the youth of today will be the seniors of tomorrow. In reality, I think this is a transitional phase because human beings have to live with dignity every moment of their lives. Youth is so good that its only problem, according to philosopher Bertrand Russell, is that it is lost on youth, who have no capacity to appreciate it," Dr. Pitanguy added.

Explaining that regenerative plastic surgery tries to remedy malformations and deformities that afflict human beings and diminish their self-esteem, Dr. Pitanguy said that the right time to reach out for this alternative is when the person does not feel good with him/herself, and does not accept his/her appearance any longer.

"No one wants to be different because looking like the others means acceptance in one's environment. Surgery can bring back the joy of living in peace with one's image," declared Dr. Pitanguy, adding that in his private clinic, as well as at the *Santa Casa de Misericórdia*, a low income hospital in Rio de Janeiro, he deals with patients of different economic backgrounds whose desires, nonetheless, are the same.

As far as the risks on this type of treatment, he said that plastic surgery is a specialty subject to imponderable risks such as any other. "We take all possible cautionary measures, but we are not gods, we have no way of totally guaranteeing the final results. ... When the imponderable happens, the discomfort and desolation are enormous, as much to the surgeon as to the relatives."

Asked finally how he viewed the union of medicine with spirituality, he declared: "One of the principal roles of medicine is to show that there are no diseased people, but diseases. When the diagnosis is made, however, we have the somatic and anomic parts that intertwine. We know of numerous cases of inexplicable cures in the light of science, showing us the spiritual aspect and the power of faith. Therefore, we have to unite scientific knowledge with the psychic and spiritual development of the patient."

The article further quotes a statement on the matter by Chico Xavier included in the book *Lições de Sabedoria* [Lessons

of Wisdom], of *FE Editora*, as follows: "We believe, together with the spirit friends who communicate with us, that not all atonements should last through a lifetime. There is a time when atonement can be extinguished, geared towards goodness, and converted for the individual's happiness. Regenerative plastic surgery is a science that appeared for our benefit because many of us need a face that is more or less well formed, strong limbs, together with other morphologic aspects of a correctly built body with which to perform our work well. I know a friend who is a model and earns money to support a husband who is in a sanatorium. Why impede that she resort to breast plastic surgery if the breasts are flawed?"

Chico Xavier further declared in the same interview: "Regenerative plastic surgery, under medical orientation, is a factor of great psychological stimuli so that the joy of living does not disappear from our hearts and we can work with more interest, more enthusiasm, rendering our lives for the good of all. Regenerative plastic surgery is as legitimate as geriatrics and gerontology, which arrived through the hands of science so that we, after the age of 40, could enjoy with as much health as possible this period of maturity. We should not wish for a premature suicide through inertia or carelessness regarding our personal appearance."

The complete interview can be read in the January issue of *Folha Espírita*, published by *FE Editora Jornalística* (Av. Pedro Severino Júnior, 325 – 04310-060 São Paulo-SP – Brazil – phone (11) 5585-1977).



"Neither cling excessively to the difficulties of yesterday, nor do worry too much about the possible hurdles of tomorrow."

Emmanuel



THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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AROUND THE WORLD

• ARGENTINA

To be informed on what is going on in the Spiritist Movement in Spanish-speaking countries, please read the *Boletín Informativo CEA*, a publication of the *Confederación Espiritista Argentina* [Argentinean Spiritist Confederation]. Circulating every three months, the periodical can be downloaded for free from the Internet, at www.spiritist.org/argentina, which also posts past issues. The last one contained 8 pages, including articles on Brazil.

The periodical is headed by Félix José Renaud, at the following address: Sanchez de Bustamante, 463 – Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires – Buenos Aires – Argentina – phone 4862-6314 – e-mail: ceaespiritista@ciudad.com.ar.

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Future mailings of the bulletin "Luz y Vida" [Light and Life], a publication of the *Asociación Espiritista Luz y Vida* [Light and Life Spiritist Association] will be sent solely to Spiritist Centers. It also continues to be available in the Internet at www.aeluzyvida.com.ar, as well as in PDF format at aeluzyvida@yahoo.com.ar. The aim is to reduce costs, which are currently very high.

For more information, contact the *Asociación* at Pasaje San Ignacio 3666 – 1231 Buenos Aires – Argentina.

• AUSTRALIA

The *Franciscans' Spiritist House* has joined the worldwide assistance efforts for the victims of the tsunamis in Africa and Asia that left around 300,000 dead. The organization collected two tons of clothes, and is offering fundraising luncheons on the first Sundays of each month to benefit the victims. They also collaborate with the *Lar Fabiano de Cristo*, sending periodically boxes of clothes to be distributed at the organization's Units of Integral Assistance.

The *Franciscans' Spiritist House* is located at 1 Lister Ave – Rockdale 2216 – Sydney – Australia – <http://geocities.yahoo.com.br/joanadecusaf> – franciscanshouse@yahoo.com.au.

• BOLIVIA

Hundreds of Spiritist books in Spanish are available at the *Livraria Espírita Joanna de Angelis* [Spiritist Library Joanna de Angelis]. Maintained by the Bolivian Spiritist Federation, the library is located at Calle Libertad 382 entre Seoane y Buenos Aires – Casilla de Correo 6746 – Santa Cruz de la Sierra – Bolivia.

Contacts can be made via fax at (591) 3 337-6060, or via email to cristinaeduardo@cotas.com.br.

• BELGIUM

The *Union Spirite Belge* [Belgium Spiritist Union] is promoting public lectures to disseminate the principles of the Spiritist Doctrine, as part of a program initiated in 2004. Its recent lectures addressed the topic "Scientific Proofs of the Survival of the Soul," since its target public has knowledge of the survival of the spirit and its implications. This year lectures were given in Luxembourg, headquarters of the European Parliament, and in the city of Seneffe.

The *Union* is located at Rue Maghin, 43 à 4000 Liège – Belgium – phone 32 4 227 6076 – e-mail USB@skynet.be.

• COLOMBIA

The *Sociedad Espiritista de Cartagena* (SEC) [Spiritist Society of Cartagena] has a new board composed by Aléxis Bohorquez, president; Álvaro Arrieta, administrative vice president; Luis Murillo, financial vice president; Alvaro Velez Pareja, vice president for studies; and Enid Altamar, secretary. SEC is located at Calle Pantaleón German Ribon, 34-23 – D.T. y C. – Cartagena – Colombia – fax 57 5 6601965.

• FRANCE

The *Centre Spirite Lyonnais Allan Kardec* [Lyonnais Spiritist Center Allan Kardec] published a booklet titled "Discovering Spiritism: Its Philosophical, Moral and Spiritual Principles." Its 8 pages content is simple but well packaged, explaining what Spiritism really is. For instance, how it appeared, what it teaches, its practices (passes, mediumistic meetings, etc.), as well as details on Kardec's life.

It can be obtained directly from the *Centre* at 23 rue Jeanne Collay – 69500 Bron – Lyon – France. Contacts can be made at phone 04 78 41 19 03; e-mail spirite@free.fr, or <http://spirite.free.fr>, for reading and downloading issues for the last 4 years of the magazine *Le Spiritisme*, also published by the *Centre*.

• HOLLAND

Divaldo Pereira Franco will be in Holland on May 26 and 27 to give a lecture on the topic "Violence and Peace," and to participate in a seminar on "Spiritism and Human Problems." The event will take place at the Cultural Center of Huesmolen, in the city of Hoorn, sponsored by the Dutch Spiritist Council, comprised by the Spiritist Groups duly organized in Holland as well as individuals interested in Spiritist studies. The event's main objective is to fortify the Dutch Spiritist union, as well as encourage the formation of new groups.

The Council seeks to promote courses and events destined for Spiritist directors and workers, but also the general public, as scheduled for next May. Please visit www.nrsp.nl to get information on its activities, or call 0229 234527.

• ITALY

Ample studying activities on the Spiritist Doctrine, as well as public lectures and passes, are being developed by the *Grupo Sentieri dello Spirito* [Group Pathways of the Spirit], in Milan. On Mondays, fraternal assistance activities, lectures, and passes; on Tuesdays, study of mediumship, with mediumistic activity; on Thursdays, regular study of the basic works of the Codification, currently *The Spirits' Book* and *What Is Spiritism*. All meetings start at 7:30 PM.

The *Grupo Sentieri dello Spirito* is located at Via Macchiaveli, 02 – Milan – Italy; more information at 328-0077657 or www.sentieridellospirito.it.

• PORTUGAL

A book describing the history of the Spiritist Movement in Portugal has just come to light. It is the result of an extended research and was written by Manuela Vasconcelos, the same author of the biography “Fernando de Lacerda: Medium,” a great success among Portuguese Spiritists.

More information can be obtained with the *União Espírita Cristã* at Rua Allan Kardec, 1 – Bairro da Amizade – 3500-762 Viseu – Portugal – phone 232 426 515, or with the *Federação Espírita Portuguesa* at Casal de Cascais, lote 4 R/C – 2720 – Amadora – Portugal – phone 351 21 497 5754 – email: feportuguesa@iol.pt.

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Two Spiritist Societies moved to new buildings, one in Leiria and one in Águeda. The first, the *Associação Espírita de Leiria* [Leiria Spiritist Association], at Rua das Cervas – Barosa, marked the special day with the 11th National Spiritist Forum, attended by the directors of the *Federação Espírita Portuguesa* [Portuguese Spiritist Federation], and representatives of various organizations in both Portugal and Brazil.

The Forum, under the theme “*Fenomenologia orgânica e psíquica da mediunidade*,” [Psychic and Organic Phenomenology of Mediumship], was conducted by psychiatrist Sérgio Felipe de Oliveira, professor of the *Universidade de São Paulo* [University of Sao Paulo] and director of the *Associação Médico-Espírita do Brasil* [Brazilian Medico-Spiritist Association].

In Águeda, the *Associação Espírita Maria de Nazaré* [Mary of Nazareth Spiritist Association] opened its new building located at Covão-Aguieira – Valongo do Vouga – 3750-802. The ceremony was attended by prominent leadership from the Portuguese Spiritist community, among them the president of the Portuguese Spiritist Federation, Arnaldo Costeira. Juzelma Coelho, from the *União Espírita Mineira* [Minas Spiritist Union] was one of the key lecturers.

• SPAIN

The University of León disclosed a study where 250 of the best sold videogames were analyzed. The conclusion was that all videos had racists, sexual, and violent content. Further, these games develop aggressive, competitive, and domineering attitudes in children. In girls, for example, it induces them to submission, seduction, and search for help. The adolescents who took part in this study do not believe in the videos' influence, but those responsible for the study believe otherwise. The director of the association of companies dedicated to this activity, who was interviewed for this research, considers that the videogames are not made to educate, that they do not have this objective. Their purpose is only recreational. The problem, conclude the researchers, is that this activity is not free from psychological and behavioral influences.

This information appears in the recent issue of *El Gran Corazón*, a publication of the *Comunidad Espírita Cristiana del Hermano Pedro*, located at Valle del Sol, 7 – Camino 3 – 30590 Gea y Truyols – Murcia – Spain – phone 968 43 00 58 – e-mail grancorazon@ctv.es.

BOOK REVIEW

GREENLIGHT

While acquiring knowledge of their spiritual nature, human beings start to live with a new and blessed necessity to integrate morality in their lives. A red light seems to appear automatically in their conscience alerting them of their faults and the importance to repair them. At the same time, another light, in subtle green color, signals approval and the possibility to go ahead, with our actions aligned with the divine laws, pointing to new and happier pathways.

To aid those who go through this phase, and those who inevitably one day will have to do the same, André Luiz, through the hands of the late medium Chico Xavier, wrote *Green Light*. The book is sort of a secure guide on how to live well, presenting, in simple and objective language, concepts of the highest elevated Christian morality in the light of Spiritism. [Following are excerpts of the book, translated into English by the Spiritist Group of Brighton, UK.]

“André Luiz has shown us also in this book with great aptitude the traffic laws which when respected can ensure tranquility and order on the roads of the world. He has also given it an impressive title *Green Light*. Moreover, reading the edifying pages of this book it will be easy for us to realize that in each chapter there are signs of light. It opens for us a clear pathway where we should bear in mind, that we should do to others what we wish to be

done to us. Thinking in this way, we can go forward to achieve the plans of elevation and progress in peace with others, and us, by the power of the peace of mind,” comments the spirit Emmanuel at the beginning of the book.

Green Light addresses events of our daily lives, as attested by the title of some of its 50 chapters: “Waking up”, “On Controlling of the Voice”, “Difficult Relatives”, “Professions”, “Unpleasant Manners”, “Issues of Criticism”, “Social Meetings”, “In the Presence of Sex” and “Visiting the Sick Ones”, among others.

In the book's first chapter, André Luiz immediately calls the reader's attention to the “first thing in the morning” approach, which can help enormously in the preservation of peace as the day runs along:

“In the morning, thank God for the blessing of life.

“If you are not use to praying, think about serenity and optimism for a few moments before you starting your activities.

“Get up calmly.

“Use kindness and gentleness if you have to wake someone up, recognizing that shouting or bad jokes would never help at any time.

“To anyone or anything, always be ready to cooperate for the good of life.

“Before you leave and start your tasks, remember that it is necessary to bless life so that life can bless you.”

A book to be read over and over again, it has been translated into five languages: Portuguese (“Sinal Verde”), Spanish (“Señal Verde”), Esperanto (“Verda Signalo”), Italian (“Semaforo Verde”), and more recently in English, thanks to the efforts of the *Spiritist Group of Brighton* (spiritismo@yahoo.co.uk), from the United Kingdom.

Green Light was translated into English by Públío Lentulus Vicente Coelho. At the end of the book, there are six messages from the spirit Emmanuel on topics such as “Devotion and Service to Others” and “In the Service of Mediumship”. The book is available in Australia, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Holland, New Zealand, Finland, and Belarus. In the United States, it can be acquired at the *Spiritist Group of New York* (www.sgny.org), and in the United Kingdom it can be ordered at phone number 01737 553 401 or via e-mail at ednagalman@aol.com.

FROM OUR FELLOWS

PRESENCE OF MEDIUMSHIP IN EVERYONE'S LIVES

Silvana de Pádua

I was walking down the street when suddenly someone interrupted my walk and hastily asked me:

“Hey, do you go to a Spiritist Center? Are you a medium?”

I hesitated, not sure what to respond.

If I said yes, it would be true, but if I said no, I would not be lying either.

If we look up Allan Kardec's definition of this problem in the *Mediums' Book*, we will understand that anyone who feels in any degree the presence of spirits is, due to this fact, a medium. If we add the answer of the spirits to question 459 of the *Spirits' Book*, we will understand that the spirits interfere in our lives a lot more than we imagine, to the point even to steer us.

On the other hand, if we think of ostensible mediumship, that which permits the communication of the discarnate with the incarnate – classified by Kardec as phenomena that can be physical and intelligent – I could not say that I possessed it.

In a second I considered that the best approach would be not to answer the question, but to first find out what the individual really wanted. So I asked:

“Do you need anything, can I help you?”

To my surprise, the person who addressed me so hurriedly to assess my mediumistic ability recited a litany of problems that made me believe that in reality he was really in great need of someone who listen to him, no matter what the circumstance, if a medium or not, if a Spiritist or not. He was just looking for someone who would listen to him in his hour of distress. And that distress was intense.

We talked for a while longer, and I directed him to a sector of fraternal assistance at the Spiritist Center meant for those who need to talk, to pour their hearts out. Then I resumed my walk, deep in reflection.

On my way, I thought how remarkable life is. God offers us the means at all times to be of help to others since the purpose of the Spiritist Doctrine is to console and enlighten those who suffer and are looking for help, understanding, and peace. At the same time, the Doctrine would not exist on its own without mediumship. It was through mediumship that it all started, and today many still see in this practice a remedy capable of alleviating their sufferings.

What we cannot forget is that God helps us in finding better ways. Sometimes it is a good medium who will listen with understanding and care; other times other intermediaries of goodness take a word of comfort and optimism to those who need it.

Daily we are invited to be instruments of goodness because goodness represents everything that comes from God, and He always assists us. To hear God we do not need to seek out a mediumistic meeting, but we need to open our hearts and understand that in life God always speaks to us in different ways, and that it is up to us to learn to listen to Him.



“You will not always be propelled into major testimonies involving public sacrifices, however, wherever you are, at every moment, goodness shall be calling for you.”

Emmanuel

IN THE SPIRITIST MOVEMENT

• “SPIRITIST REVIEW” FOR FREE

A special edition of the *Spiritist Review* in Esperanto was published in October 2004 to pay homage to the 200 years of the birth of Allan Kardec. Founded by him in 1858, the magazine is currently the official vehicle of the International Spiritist Council and the *Union Spirite Française et Francophone* (French and Francophone Spiritist Union).

This special issue in Esperanto, with beautiful colored illustrations, presents, among other attractions: Kardec's biography; the history of his pioneering role as the Codifier of the Spiritist Doctrine and founder of the *Revue Spirite* [Spiritist Review] and the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, and first leader of the Spiritist Movement; texts in which he himself describes the first contacts with the spirits; mediumistic communications received through psychography by Francisco Cândido Xavier (among them one describing the meeting in the spirit world on 31 December 1799, where the future incarnate, Allan Kardec, meets with the already incarnated Napoleon, First Consul of France); and other very interesting texts on the influence of Kardec works in earthly societies.

To receive this free copy, please request it directly to the *Federação Espírita Brasileira*, at Rua Souza Valente, 17 – São Cristóvão – RJ 20941-040 – Brazil; fax 2589-6838 or e-mail febrasil.org.br.

• CENTENARY OF THE FIRST UNIVERSAL CONGRESS OF ESPERANTO

Esperantists from all over the world helped to celebrate the Centenary of the First Universal Congress of Esperanto that took place in the French town of Boulogne-Sur-Mer, on March 25-30. More details are posted at <http://boulogne2005.online.fr/eo/historio/kongresatag.htm>. The hymn “The Day of the Congress,” composed for the very first Congress, and which was substituted by the current hymn of the Esperantist community, “La Espero,” can also be heard.

• PLAYS IN THE INTERNET

A small group of Spiritists from Marília, in São Paulo, has decided to create, with the help of the *Fundação Espírita Eurípedes Soares da Rocha* [Eurípedes Soares da Rocha Spiritist Foundation] of the same town, a data bank of Spiritist plays in order to offer them in the Internet. Two sites are already available for free downloading, as much for reading as for staging: www.teatroespirita.fundanet.br; and www.fundanet.br/teatro. More information via e-mail: benjamimsa@flsh.tv.br.

• “NOSSO LAR” IN SPANISH

With more than a million copies published in Portuguese and translations into 14 languages, “Nosso Lar” became the most widely known mediumistic book in the world. Dictated by the spirit André Luiz and psychographed by Francisco Cândido Xavier, it has now been introduced in Spanish under the title *Nuestro Hogar – La vida en el Mundo Espiritual*. With a launching of 10.000 copies, this new edition in Spanish, with the copyrights yielded by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, is part of a joint effort together with the International Spiritist Council, which will also distribute it to disseminate the Doctrine. With modern presentation and a beautiful cover in colors, it will certainly please the Spanish-speaking reader. Request should be made to the *Instituto de Difusão Espírita*, Av. Barreto, 1.067 – Caixa Postal 110 – 13602-970 Araras-SP – Brazil – phone (19) 3541-0077 – fax 3541-0966 – e-mail: info@ide.org.br. Price: R\$ 9,00 [Brazilian currency].

• MOVIES WITH SPIRITUALIST THEMES

While parents watch movies with Spiritualist topics, children play under the care of responsible persons who offer puppet presentations, origami sessions, story telling, and other interesting activities. At the end of the movie, Spiritist lecturers will answer questions or doubts regarding the film, providing an enlightening debate. With this activity, the *Associação de Divulgadores do Espiritismo do Ceará* [Association of Spiritist Disseminators from Ceará] is giving the general public information on the Spiritist phenomena. The price of the ticket is symbolic, and the films are exhibited on the second Sunday of each month at a theater located in a shopping center in Fortaleza, Ceará. Before the exhibit, there are artistic presentations, and a Spiritist book fair. More information on (85) 3283-6000.

• SPIRITIST PEDAGOGY

The *Universidade Santa Cecília (Unisantia)* [University Santa Cecilia], in Santos, São Paulo, Brazil, is promoting the first graduate course of Spiritist Pedagogy. With 376 hour credits, the course's purpose is to discuss Spiritist Pedagogy in the context of contemporary culture, to capacitate researchers to develop projects in this area, and educators for a new pedagogical practice. The course, open to individuals who graduated in any area, is coordinated by Prof. Dora Incontri, as well as Professors Alessandro Cesar Bigheto, Alexander Moreira de Almeida, Carlos Orlando Villarraga, Luiz Augusto Beraldi Colombo, Ney Lobo, and Sérgio Felipe de Oliveira, among others. More information at phone (13) 3202-7100 or at www.unisantia.br.