



THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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May / June 2005 – # 52

LEGITIMATE PROPERTY

D.Villela

Knowledge of our spiritual reality transforms substantially the concept of property. This concept is only true and crystal-clear when applied to our spiritual acquisitions (intelligence, discernment, sensibility, etc.), which integrate the undeniable patrimony of our individuality. Material possessions stay with us only while we are incarnate, making us in reality usufructuaries and not permanent owners. Human laws that regulate the acquisition and use of such resources understandably change with time and not rarely an act considered legal in a certain period of time is later classified as criminal (slavery is a good example).

The desire to possess is natural because it is linked with one of our basic needs, that of security. To have means to guarantee our maintenance and the realization of our objectives gives us serenity in the present and a favorable perspective for the future. However, it is also a fact that a large patrimony provides its recipients with an impressive power which, if utilized without scruples, let's them obtain conveniences and advantages in detriment to others.

It is interesting to observe that the right to use and dispose of possessions in an exclusive way was little developed in the early stages of civilization, being restricted to objects of personal use. It is well known in Brazil's history the fact that our Indians did not know and did not accept the idea of private land property, a concept brought to them by European colonizers, and which appeared thousands of years ago with the emergence of agriculture and the first urban nucleuses. We all know, on the other hand, that with progress this concept expanded to include, along with tangible items, also the products of intelligence and sensibility (intellectual property) and even creations entirely within the judicial realm such as associations and companies. On this topic, by the way, a recent survey showed that they grew to such a degree

that when classifying the entities of the largest patrimonies in the world, right after the more prosperous countries, on the seventh position, appear organizations whose wealth is vastly superior to those of the other countries. As a consequence of this, these organizations have control of a significant part of the resources moved by all humanity. Parallel to this finding, we see emerging and increasingly expanding the concept of *social responsibility*, as well as the necessity to regulate producing activities in any shape or form to respect and preserve the environment. Under this new social responsibility, these organizations present along with their annual report, a socio-environmental statement that describes their initiatives towards the promotion of social justice and the preservation of natural resources.

While temporary, possession of material assets constitutes a valuable experience for the spirit who, in its evolutionary trajectory, has to learn to utilize them with discernment and disinterestedness, without forgetting the instruction of the Good Spirits on this topic in the *Spirits' Book*:

“No property is legitimate unless acquired without injury to others.”



Spirits' Book (Questions 883 and 884).

ECHOES FROM THE WORLD SPIRITIST CONGRESS

Living in Paris for a number of years, Cláudia Bonmartin of Brazil is a dedicated Spiritist worker currently heading the “Centre d'Etudes Spiritiques Allan Kardec” (Cesak), which operates similarly to the Centers in Brazil.

From a Spiritist family, as soon as she moved to the French capital she started her doctrinal activity, which she knows in depth, not only in France but also in other cities of Europe.

Since she was an organizer of the Fourth World Spiritist Congress, we took advantage of her recent visit to Rio de Janeiro to interview her on the importance of that event for the Spiritist Movement in France and the European continent.

The following is the interview she kindly gave to the *Serviço Espírita de Informações* (SEI) [Spiritist Information Service]:

“What is the importance of the Fourth World Spiritist Congress for Spiritism in Europe?”

“I think the positive consequences of this congress are being felt in France through meetings organized by the president of the French Spiritist Union for the purpose of making us reflect on ways of finding better strategies to disseminate the Doctrine in Europe, alongside with the union among the groups. In France, certainly a new consciousness regarding the necessity of a more united work among the countries is taking shape. At the beginning of June we will have the First English Spiritist National Congress in London, with representatives from other European countries who will also make presentations at the event. We just had in April the annual meeting of the International Spiritist Council – Europe Division, in Luxembourg, and it is meetings like these that help us understand our difficulties and to develop friendships and partnerships to better carry out our Spiritist activities.”

“And what about France specifically?”

“This Congress represented for us, in France, above all, an honor! To be able to celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Allan Kardec in the city of the [Spiritist] Codification meant honor, responsibility, and a great challenge. We are still a small Spiritist Movement, inexperienced in the organization of big events. As such, without the help of the International Spiritist Council and the Brazilian Spiritist Federation (FEB), represented by its Secretary-General and President Nestor João Masotti respectively, we would never have had the conditions to carry it out.”

“Previously to the Congress, in order to get a little experience in organizing events, we realized in Paris, in November 2003, for 200 participants, the First Encounter of Medicine and Spirituality, in partnership with the *Associações de Médicos Espíritas (AMEs)* [Associations of Spiritist Physicians], both Brazilian and International, headed by Dr. Marlene Nobre. It was a success and enabled us to gather

some experience, although the World Spiritist Congress, with more than 1,900 applicants, presented a different reality. Nevertheless, all were unanimous in saying that the Congress took place in an environment of harmony, peace and happiness, as well as being satisfactorily organized."

"As far as the visible and invisible results, it is a tad early to derive any conclusions. We are already clearly feeling the awareness among the French groups that we will have to organize ourselves differently for a better dissemination of the Doctrine in France, and to better respond to the demand which has been steadily increasing. Because of this, Roger Perez, who was re-elected as president of the French Spiritist Union for a new term, convoked for the 10th of April all group representatives for a meeting in the city of Tours, to discuss the best way to carry out this project in a more united and efficient way. We will see."

"As far as the Spirits, they tell us that the French [Spiritist] Movement, and probably the European, will be forever divided into the before and after the Congress because, according to them, it represented an important landmark in this region of the world."

"Cláudia, how do you see the growth of the Spiritist Movement in Europe, and where does it thrive better?"

"Thanks to the pioneer work of Divaldo (Pereira) Franco, who very much helped and encouraged the Spiritists and sympathizers of Spiritism in the Old Continent, today, in many European countries, there are Spiritist groups, and in some even a very strong movement, such as is the case of Portugal. We can say that Spain is the second country in number of Centers, followed by France, Belgium, England and Germany, which are more or less on the same level. Other countries have smaller groups but very active, carrying out a difficult job

because they don't even have the books of the Codification in the language of those countries. In this regard, the International Spiritist Council, through the leadership of Nestor João Masotti, is doing everything possible to attempt to overcome these difficulties little by little."

"And the Spiritist literature, in France and the rest of Europe? Besides Kardec and the classics, what else is being published? And the works of André Luiz that talk about life in the spirit world, are they known?"

"The first great concern is with the works of the Codification, but other psychographed books, mainly by Chico and Divaldo, are translated in various languages. The books with Spiritist messages and the Spiritist novels also enjoy a great success with the Europeans."

"What do you have to say about the Eastern European countries?"

"To tell you the truth, I do not know the Movement in those countries. I know that there are Spiritists in Poland, Belarus, the Czech Republic, and it seems, also in Russia, but I cannot tell you for sure because we have no contact with those fellow Spiritists."

"And the activities at the 'Centre d'Etudes Spirites Allan Kardec,' where you are a member?"

"During the preparation of the Congress, Cesak was, in Paris, the general administration headquarters of the event, and because of that, our doctrinal activities were seriously cut back. Now we are slowly returning to our mediumistic activities and planning some projects for the future."

"In conclusion, what are your closing words for the readers of the SEI Bulletin?"

"I would like to thank the SEI for the opportunity of this interview and also the Brazilian Spiritists for the beautiful work they do for our Doctrine, which serves as an example and encouragement to us who do the same outside of our beloved country."

AROUND THE WORLD

• ARGENTINA

One of the ways to help disseminate Spiritism's doctrinal postulates is to distribute messages of Spiritist content to friends and other close acquaintances. Some of these messages are published in Spanish by the *Fundación Espírita Humanista Allan Kardec* [Allan Kardec Spiritist Humanist Foundation], which distributes them free of charge. The messages generally originate from the books of the Codification or from authors such as Léon Denis. The objective, of course, is not only to disseminate the Doctrine, but also to bring comfort and enlightenment to those in need.

Besides Spiritist messages, they also offer decals on topics such as abortion, suicide, and euthanasia, among issues linked to Spiritism under the motto "Get Ac-

quainted with the Spiritist Teachings."

Messages and decals should be requested at the *Departamento Editorial 18 de Abril*, responsible for the publications of the *Fundación*, at Av. Entre Ríos, 1.181 – C1080ABF – Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires – Argentina – fax (054) (011) 4306-7030; Internet: www.fehak.com.ar and espírita@fehak.com.ar.

• BELARUS

The book *Sinal verde* [Green Light], by André Luiz, psychographed by Francisco Cândido Xavier, will appear shortly also in Russian. The good news rest on the efforts of journalist Spartak Severin, of Belarus, who initiated a translation the moment he got the book as a present of the Spiritist Group of Brighton, England, in English. "As a journalist of a TV and Radio Station in Minsk, he published parts of the book in some Russian periodicals. His idea is to publish the entire book, since he got authorization from the *Comunhão Espírita Cristã* (which has the copyrights), and also the English translator, Públis Lântulus Coelho," declared the secretary of the European Coordination for the International Spiritist Council, Elsa Rossi, through an email to SEI. In addition to versions in Portuguese and English (the last published), "Sinal verde" was also translated in five other languages, including Spanish, Esperanto, and Italian.

• PORTUGAL

The *Associação Auxílio e Amizade* [Association Friendship and Help] was created in Lisbon on December 18, 2001, with assistance given right away to 14 needy families. Currently it helps 45, for a total of 106 people in Lisbon and the city of Amadora. It is not a religious organization, a decision made in order to help the needy who mostly belong to other religions. They receive food, clothing, clothes for newborns, toys, books, prescription medicines, among other services.

Alongside with the individuals who head this project is a person well known and loved within the Portuguese Spiritist Movement, Maria Emília Barros. She tells more about this work in the recently launched by-annual bulletin *Auxílio e Amizade* [Friendship and Help], with information on the projects involving the prison population from Aveiro, Caldas da Rainha, Coimbra, Évora, Guarda, Lamego, and Monção, among others.

The *Associação* is located at Rua da Saudade, 8 – 1^o – 1100-583 Lisboa – Portugal – phones 21 882-1043, and 917 2-48441.

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The means used by the spirit world to disseminate the Spiritist Doctrine in its beginnings were most peculiar, declares Manoel Aguilar Garcia in a recent interview to the *Jornal de Espiritismo* [Spiritist

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THE SPIRITIST INFORMATION SERVICE

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Newspaper], of the *Associação dos Divulgadores do Espiritismo de Portugal* [Association of Disseminators of Spiritism in Portugal]. A loved and well known individual among Spanish and Portuguese Spiritists, Mr. Garcia talked about the tribulations the adherents of Spiritism in his native country, Spain, have gone through since 1926. What is interesting in his two-page interview is the fact that in his home town, Montilla, Spiritism had been practiced since 1918 at the *Centro Espírita Amor y Progreso* [Love and Progress Spiritist Center], brought there by a man who sold “tinajas”, large earthen jars for the fermentation of wine. This man, while traveling throughout the region, spread the Spiritist teachings which were readily accepted by the populace. “Men like him fulfilled the role in those days of our current journalists. From all the places they visited they took and brought information, and because they traveled so much, they had access to all sorts of information, even from distant Paris, from which Spanish immigrants brought the Good Tidings of Spiritism”, stated Mr. Garcia.

The *Jornal de Espiritismo* can be contacted at Apartado 161 – 4711-910 Braga – Portugal – www.adeportugal.org.

• PUERTO RICO

The Puerto Rican Spiritist Movement gets stronger every day. It already has six organizations geared towards the study of Spiritism, and a periodical for the doctrinal dissemination called *Revista Unión Espiritista*, published by the *Unión Espiritista – Escuela de Consejo Moral de Puerto Rico* [Spiritist Union – Puerto Rican School of Moral Advice]. To get to know more on the Spiritist activities of Puerto Rico please contact the *Unión Espiritista* at P.O. Box 360592 San Juan – Puerto Rico – 00936-0592 – phone (787) 751-4872.

• SPAIN

The *Asociación Catalana de Estudios Prácticos del Espiritismo* [Catalan Association of Practical Studies of Spiritism] is responsible for the publication of a series of works in Spanish. Among the titles are: *Después de la muerte* [After Death], by Léon Denis; *El alma es inmortal* [The Soul Is Immortal], by Gabriel Delanne; *El poder del pensamiento* [The Power of Thought], by Annie Besant; *Las vidas sucesivas* [Successive Lives], by Albert de Rochas; *Memorias del Padre Germán* [Memories of Father German], by Amalia Domingo Soler; and the whole Codification by Kardec, as well as *Posthumous Works* and *What Is Spiritism*.

The complete list of books can be found in the *Asociación's* magazine *El Espiritismo* (Apartado de Correos 448 – 08191 Rubi – Spain – Internet: www.acepe.org and acepe@acepe.org).

• UNITED KINGDOM

Correspondence to the Spiritist Group of Brighton, previously known as Spiritist Group of Irradiation should now be sent to the following address: 43, Raymond Close – Seaford – BN25 3DW – East Sussex – England – United Kingdom. More information at phone 44 (0) 1323 89 5979.

• UNITED STATES

The United States Spiritist Council, created on 15 November 1997 for the purpose of integrating the Spiritist Movement in the U.S., carries information in its Internet website on its activities and Spiritism-related items in general, with listings of meetings, lectures, seminars, etc., that take place on American soil. It also posts addresses of Spiritist Centers in various states. Website at www.usspiritistcouncil.com, mailing address at P.O. Box 14026 – Washington, DC 20044-4026 – phone (240) 453-0361, e-mail ily.reis@verizon.net.

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Francisco Cândido Xavier will be honored on July 9 in the City of New York at an event titled “Tribute to Humanitarian Francisco Xavier - A Legacy of Hope and Love” (<http://www.allan-kardec.org/siteflyer/chico.htm>), sponsored by the Allan Kardec Educational Society (AKES) of Philadelphia. The key speaker will be Divaldo Pereira Franco, from Brazil, who will speak on the life and example of the beloved medium who was once nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. The event will take place at the Community Church, at 40 East 35th Street, in Manhattan.

Information also available at <http://www.usspiritistcouncil.com/events.htm>.

BOOK REVIEW

SELF-DISCOVERY

Recently launched in English, *Self-Discovery: An Inner Search*, written by the spirit Joanna de Ângelis through the psychography of Divaldo Pereira Franco, seeks to show that although valuable contribution of humanist psychiatrists and transpersonal psychologists placed the soul as the base of human phenomena, only the spiritual vision of the physical existence can give life itself its real sense and significance.

The book, published for the first time in 1995 in Portuguese by the *Livraria Espírita Alvorada Editora*, has been reprinted numerous times. In it, Joanna de Ângelis shows that self-discovery is an unavoidable process for individuals to take stock of their own possibilities by identifying limits and dependencies, true and false aspirations, deceptions of ego, and impostures of illusion.

She also clarifies that this process is

not always carried out with ease. When invited to free themselves from vices and tormenting passions, afflictions and destructive tendencies, the duality negative-positive creeps into their minds, making a decision difficult. In freeing themselves from their mistaken imagery concerning life, human beings should embrace the reality of the process of evolution and take control, overcoming all factors of perturbation and destruction.

The book is divided in twelve principal topics, as follows: 1 – The Real Being: Complexities of Energy. Spirit-Matter Interaction. Problems of Evolution. 2 – Existential Apparatuses: Conflicts and Illnesses. Dystonias and Their Consequences. The Emotional Being. 3 – Consciousness and Life: Incursion in the Conscience. Responsible Consciousness. Consciousness and Suffering. Analysis of Suffering. 4 – The Unconscious and Life: The Unconscious. The Subconscious. The Sacred Unconscious. 5 – Inner Journey: Searching for Unity. Reality and Illusion. Creative Force. 6 – Equilibrium and Health: Health Programs. Behavioral Disturbances. Hope Therapy. Fullness: the Goal. 7 – The Subconscious Being: Cerebral Computation. Recycling the Subconscious. Subconscious and Dreams. 8 – Soul Killers: The Past. Vagueness of the Future. Unfamiliarity With Oneself. 9 – Mental Addictions: Dissatisfaction. Indifference. Panic. Fear of Death. 10 – Disturbing Contents: Anger. Resentment. Lamentation. Loss by Death. Bitterness. 11 – Feelings: Friends or Adversaries?: Love. Sufferings. To Have Been and to Be. Self-sacrifice and Humility. 12 – Triumph Over Ego: Psychological Infancy. Conquering the Self. Personal Liberation.

Self-Discovery: An Inner Search contains 175 pages and a cover in colors. Published by *Livraria Espírita Alvorada Editora*, it can be ordered at Rua Jayme Vieira Lima, 104 – Pau da Lima – 41235-000 Salvador – Bahia – Brazil – fax (71) 3393-2855 – leal@mansaodocaminho.com.br. All funds from sales are destined to the upkeep of the institution “Mansão do Caminho” [Mansion of the Way], a social assistance undertaking of the *Centro Espírita Caminho da Redenção* [Spiritist Center Path of Redemption], in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.

FROM OUR FELLOWS

EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

Célia Vieira

One day a big entrepreneur in a rich family traveled with his son to a small rural community in order to show the child how poor people can be. The objective was to convince his son of the necessity to value his material possessions, status, and social position. The father wanted to pass early on these values onto his heir.

For a day and a night they stayed in a small mud house owned by a worker at his cousin's ranch.

On their way back home, the father asked his child:

"And so, son, what did this trip mean to you?"

"It was very nice", the kid replied.

"Did you see the difference between living in wealth or poverty?"

"Yes, I did", answered the son deep in thought.

"And what did you learn, with all you've seen in that place so poor?"

The answer came quick:

"I saw that we have only one dog at home, while they have four. We have a swimming pool that only goes to the middle of the yard, while they have a creek that goes on forever. We have a porch that is covered and has some fluorescent lighting, while they have the stars and the moon in the sky. Our yard goes only up to the front gate while they have an entire little forest. We have some canaries, but they have all the birds that nature can offer, and they are not in cages!"

The son sighed and continued:

"And besides, daddy, I saw that they pray before every meal while we, at home, sit at the table to talk about business, dollars, parties, and then we eat, push the plate aside and that's it! In the room I slept in with Tonho, I was ashamed because I did not even know how to pray while he kneeled and thanked God for everything, even for our visit to his house. At our home, we go to our room, go to bed, watch TV and then sleep. You something, daddy? I slept in Tonho's hammock and he slept on the floor because there was no other hammock for him. At our house, Maristela, our maid, has to sleep in that room where we store all types of junk, without any comfort, although we have nice and soft beds all over the house."

As the child talked, the father became in turn surprised, embarrassed, and ashamed.

His son, in his wise innocence and brilliant conclusion, stood up and embracing the father, said:

"Thank you, daddy, for showing me how poor we are!"

IN THE SPIRITIST MOVEMENT

• SPIRITIST BOOK IN HUNGARIAN

A reputable writer within the Brazilian Spiritist literature, Hermínio Corrêa de Miranda, at 80 years of age continues full force, at the moment awaiting publication of his three new books. The good news, however, don't stop there. One of his better known works, *Nossos filhos são espíritos* [Our Children Are Spirits], a favorite bed time book for many, and chiefly pregnant women, can be read in the near future also in Hungarian. We received this

information directly from the author, who revealed that some months ago he received a phone call in his apartment in Rio de Janeiro from a lady called Esther. Very polite, she told him that she and her husband were Hungarian and had been living in Brazil for some time, where they became Spiritists. "Without any fuss she told me that she had just finished translating my book into her native tongue. She was phoning me to offer her translation and did not seek any monetary compensation," he said. In subsequent conversations with Mrs. Esther, he got to know that she was a translator with vast experience and that the publisher of the book in Brazil had received an email of a publisher in Hungary manifesting desire of launching the book in Europe.

• CONGRESS IN BAHIA, BRAZIL

Information on the 12th Spiritist Congress of Bahia to take place 27-30 October is starting to circulate. The studies will focus on the theme "The Being and Immortality", with discussions relating to the interchange of the spirit world in the many areas of human knowledge. Cesar Soares dos Reis, Djalma Motta Argolo and Jason de Camargo are some of the invitees for the event which will take place at the Convention Center of Bahia, in the city of Salvador.

This Congress will be part of the activities relating to the 90th anniversary of the *Federação Espírita do Estado da Bahia* [Spiritist Federation of Bahia] (Rua Coronel Jaime Rolemberg, 110 – Brotas-40275-610 – Salvador-BA, Brazil), responsible for the event, and also the 140th anniversary of the book *Heaven and Hell* by Allan Kardec. More information at www.feeb.com.br.

• NEWS ON ESPERANTO

Two Spiritist Esperantists from Poland will be visiting Brazil in the months of July and August to conduct courses and seminars, promote the exchange and offer an overview on the dissemination of Spiritism and Esperanto in their country. They are the journalist and doctor in pedagogy Mr. Przemek Grzybowski, and the doctor in psychology Ms. Anna Rokowska. He has 26 published books, and is responsible for the first complete translations in Polish of *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*, as well as being an instructor of Esperanto. She is an Assistant Professor in the section of Psychology of Human Development at the Academy of Bydgoszcz, and has published three books on psychology. Activities for both also shall encompass aspects of Polish history and culture, questions on intercultural education, development of activities geared towards children and youth from problematic families, and topics concerning the teaching and practice of Esperanto. Mr. Przemek and Ms. Rokowska visit to Brazil is scheduled from July 22 through August 15. More information at vizitodeprzemek@yahoo.com.br.

• SEI IN THE INTERNET

The *Serviço Espírita de Informações* [Spiritist Information Service] bulletins are available in the Internet at www.lfc.org.br/sei, where they can be read and printed by anyone anywhere in the world. The site, which also gives a brief history on SEI, is posted in Portuguese, English, Spanish, and shortly also in Esperanto.

• "THE MESSENGERS" IN FRENCH

The book *Os Mensageiros* [The Messengers], by André Luiz, psychographed by Chico Xavier, was launched for the first time in Brazil in 1944, by the *Federação Espírita Brasileira* (FEB) [Brazilian Spiritist Federation]. Having sold to date almost 60 thousand copies in the Portuguese language, it was also translated into Spanish, German, Czech and Greek. It is estimated that the total number of books in all these languages comes to over 17 thousand copies. More good news is that there is now a French version, "Les messagers", launched under the responsibility of the International Spiritist Council with the full support of FEB.

"Les messagers" contains 326 pages, and can be ordered directly at the International Spiritist Council at Av. L-2 Norte – Quadra 603 – Conjunto F – 70830-030 Brasília-DF – Brazil - phone (61) 226-4173 – www.espiritismo.org.

• EVENT BRINGS 18,000 SPIRITISTS TOGETHER

Brasília, current headquarters of the *Federação Espírita Brasileira* (FEB) [Brazilian Spiritist Federation] and the General Secretariat of the International Spiritist Council, hosted a big event in the month of April bringing together more than 18 thousand Spiritists in a sports gymnasium. The event was attended by medium Divaldo Pereira Franco and paid homage to Allan Kardec. Sponsored by the *Federação Espírita do Distrito Federal* [Spiritist Federation of Brasília], the event was acknowledged in newspapers and TV stations, and was also announced by FEB in its program "Terceira Revelação" [Thirds Revelation], transmitted to all Brazilian territory.

• ANDRÉ LUIZ IN THE INTERNET

On the air for five years, with more than 300,000 hits, the André Luiz Spiritist Site became an Internet point of reference on the spirit author of the classic *Nosso Lar* [A Spiritual Home]. The site posts details about his life, the books he authored in partnership with Chico Xavier, and essays on topics the book addresses, among other things. The site was created March 16, 1999, in the city of Curitiba, Paraná, an initiative of Professor Lori Marli dos Santos, a Spiritist worker since 1981. Currently, an average of 300 to 500 people visit the page daily at www.institutoandre Luiz.org.