



On the Pneumatophonias Recorded in Domestic Spiritist Sessions in Times of Pandemic by Covid-19.

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Abstract

The record and systematization of some events that occurred in domestic spiritist sessions during the pandemic by COVID-19 in the province of Corrientes, Argentina, are presented. These records took place in contexts of mediumistic experiences where participants claim to receive certain messages from the dead. It delves into the relations between mourners and the deceased in a situation of human crisis and in the search for alternative communication with the deceased relatives to whom it has not been possible to provide care and farewell rites that traditionally effected. Given this impossibility of farewell some mourners promote the realization of spiritist sessions in private homes in order to communicate with the deceased. For this work observations, interviews and field records have been made.

Keywords: Ultra-Grave Relationships; Pneumatophonies; Death; Death; Death; Manifestation; Spiritualism

Introduction

Spiritism, the center of all beliefs related to ghosts and ghosts, is nothing more than the experimental theory and practice of relations with the double, with or without the intervention of mediums (necroromantics suitable for hypnotic communication with the beyond) [1].

Proposing the writing of this article is the first controversial, complex and enigmatic point; revealing part of our human limitations, our prejudices and the impossibility of separating the world from the sensible of the intelligible, as part of the Cartesian heritage of understanding and shaping the universe of the human. For some colleagues in the field to discipline this type of socialization of experiences would imply the loss of the longed-for objectivity, but in analogy to the summoning theme they are only "spectra of scientificity".

On the contrary, the path taken is one of great responsibility, descriptive and analytical rigour; attributes conferred because these paragraphs arise from firm empirical bases based on ethnographic records in dialogue with interlocutors and their domestic spiritist experiences during the pandemic by COVID-19 in the Province of Corrientes, Argentina.

The corpus of work, reference frameworks and background are taken from several research and extension projects:

- Practices and beliefs on the death of children (angels) in Northeastern Argentina, Western Region of the Republic of Paraguay and Southern State of Rio Grande do Sul of the Federative Republic of Brazil. Nineteenth, twentieth and ethnographic centuries. CONICET
- Practices and beliefs around death, death and death



in northeastern Argentina, southern Paraguay and southern Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil. Diversity of configurational modes in the ethnographic present. CONICET.

- Project 16PH/411- PI- Death, Dying, Society and Culture. Funeral memory and daily life. Northeastern Argentina and Southern Eastern Region of Paraguay,
- Project 16PH/430-PI - Anthropology of "beliefs and belief". Studies on magical-religious practices in the northeastern region of Argentina: border confluences.
- Project 16/H1566 -PI - The wake of the angel in the northeast of Argentina and the south of the eastern region of the Republic of Paraguay. Nineteenth, twentieth centuries and ethnographic present.
- Death Extension and Society-Cycle Conference Project.
- Extension Project: In-memoriam, altars to the deceased: higher education committed to funerary memory.
- University Extension Post Specialization and Diploma in Thanatodidactics: didactics of death in formal education
- Audiovisual Project- Inter-stocks: from here and beyond (TransMedia UNaM) Los casos abstraídos para este artículo corresponden a experiencias domésticas. Estas sesiones espíritas se han realizado sin la intervención de escuelas o grupos especializados en la tradición de mediación, invocación y contacto con los muertos.

Consequently, we propose as a general objective of the article to systematize, describe and reflect - in an exploratory and descriptive way, on the pneumatophonies recorded in domestic Spiritist sessions in times of pandemic by COVID-19 in the Province of Corrientes, Argentina¹.

It is worth mentioning that, as Banga [2] explains, in the history of modern spiritism the contributions of Emmanuel Swedenborg are relevant. Following the contributions of the author we highlight two of the topics installed by Swedenborg, and which are seen as essential in modern spiritualist doctrine.

The spiritual space can be understood by scientific axioms; and b) it is possible to communicate with the spirits in the hereafter thanks to a harmonic universal vibration, which unites all beings both in the material world and in the spiritual world (...) existence, linked to a Divine plane, is not simply a matter of faith, but a suprahuman and universal purpose that can be explained from reason [2].

In this line of analysis the author mentions that there is

1 According to the data provided by the Argentine Spiritist Confederation Spiritist Centers are not registered in the Argentine coast. The registered centers are in Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Córdoba, La Pampa, La Rioja, Neuquén, San Luis, San Juan, Santa Fe and Tierra del Fuego.

not much difference between English-American spiritualism and French spiritualism. Even so, one of the basic divergences is based on the belief of spiritualists in reincarnation. The criticism that the English and American spiritualists made of the current of Allan Kardec was based on the fact that the former rejected dogmatic interpretations lacking scientific proof.

Beyond the mentioned will be the line of Kardec that will have the most impact on the spiritist traditions in Spain and Latin America. For example, in Brazil there was a miscegenation with other traditions, knowledge and practices, while in Argentina it developed entrenched in a materialistic and atheist orientation. Banga review that, "the division installed a debate between secular spiritualism, in many cases joined to groups related to scientific parapsychology, and religious spiritualism, joined to currents of African or Christian origin, that currently persist" [2].

As far as Argentina is concerned, documents Mariño [3], that spiritism was installed between 1869 / 1870, introduced by Don Justo de Espada, a Spanish immigrant. By 1885, eight spiritist centers could be registered in Capital Federal, five in the Province of Buenos Aires and eight distributed in the rest of the country.

In 1877, the only existing society in Buenos Aires was "Constancia", due to the initiative of a theoretical-practical group whose creator was the language teacher Ángel Scarnicchia. For his part, Antonio Ugarte and his wife Rosa Basset, founded in April 1880 "The Fraternity" (...) On the initiative of Antonio Ugarte, the Spiritist Federation Argentina was concretized in 1888. Its first Board of Directors was formed in 1890 and had Antonio Ugarte as President. In February 1891, the magazine of "La Fraternidad" became the journalistic organ of the Federation, directed by Manuel Sáenz Cortés (...) That same year the dialogue with the President of the Society "Constancia" began, Cosme Mariño, although it was not until November 1899 that the first preparatory meeting took place in the premises of "La Fraternidad" (...) In March 1900 the Bases of the Confederation project were discussed, and finally the final meeting was reached, on June 14, 1900, in which 15 institutions were represented, namely: Faith, New Providence, Fraternity. Future. La Aurora, La Salvación, Juana de Arco, Allan Kardec, Constancia, Sáenz Cortés, Amor Fraternal, Paz y Trabajo, Fe y Caridad, Luz del Desierto y Amor Universal. The President's proposal that the Argentine Spiritist Confederation be constituted was unanimously accepted. Of all of them have lasted 3 in the capital: "Constancia", "La Fraternidad" and "Providencia"; and 1 in Pehuajó: "Sáenz Cortés" ²

2 Argentine Spiritist Confederation. Spiritism in Argentina. The

Regarding the territoriality of interest of this article we focus on the province of Corrientes, Argentina.

This sound, in the experiences addressed, represents one of the forms of manifestation of the dead in the world of the living: thus the dead are not only felt in winds, blows, whistles and chills, they are also heard³.

As we have mentioned, we aim to expose some of the records made in the Spiritist experiences developed in domestic situations in groups that promote this activity outside organizations specialized in the subject, as being recognized and consolidated spiritist schools. Their relevance lies in the fact that they are practices inherited from generation to generation where certain mediating attributes are consolidated between the living and the dead, situation of affective bonds between the survivors and the double of the deceased.

Methodology

Several techniques for the collection and systematization of information have been used in the anthropological field. Interviews were conducted with key interlocutors, observations with varying degrees of participation and recording in various devices. Observations, records and interviews were applied in specific significant contexts; addresses of mourners seeking contact with their deceased relatives. In the mentioned period has participated in five spiritist sessions, 20 interviews and varied notes field. Direct participant observation prevailed in the sessions.

The distribution of the space, the structure of the sessions and participants will be described in the section where we address the qualities of these.

As it is of particular interest of this writing the treatment of the auditory messages of the dead, recorded in Spiritist sessions, one might ask how these manifestations of the dead have been accessed?

For access to these messages has worked with mourners and mediums, with the support of these have recorded the experiential situations that the mediums claimed to have channeled, During these outermost links the written transcription of the messages was made; these messages were received in the form of sound, called pneumatophonias, identifying them as "the voices of the deceased". From these

origins of the movement. (Retrieved in <https://www.ceanet.com.ar/el-espiritismo-en-la-argentina/>) December 23, 2013.

³ Given the particularities of this note I cannot fail to refer to the musical production *Psicofonía* of the singer-songwriter Gloria Trevi or the various interventions in Cemeteries, abandoned houses or places of human tragedy in order to obtain recordings where the voices of the dead are recorded.

auditory experiences you have transcribed six messages that are used for this exploratory and descriptive article.

With the permission of the mourners, the messages are presented and ordered and classified, in an insipient way, according to their origin, parental relationship with the mourners, age of the deceased and nature of the contender.

On the Notion of Double

Morin (1974) deals with the problem of the double in the section on ghosts, spiritualism and the individualized content of death. He states that the double is a spectrum endowed with form, with meaning; ghosts in the exact image of the living.

In this way, in the author of reference, the double will be the nucleus of any archaic conception related to the dead. Clearly not related only to a duplication after death but accompanies the living throughout his life, doubles it, and the latter feels it, knows it, hears it, sees it, according to a constant day and night experience, in his dreams, in his shadow, in his reflected image, in his echo, in his breath, in his penis and even in his intestinal gases [1].

The same author, Morin, acknowledges that his notions about the double find a direct correspondence in the contributions of one of the referents of the spiritist doctrine; Allan Kardec Spiritism is based on the existence of an invisible world constituted by incorporeal beings that populate space, and that are only the souls of those who have lived on Earth or in other balloons, in which they have left their material envelope. These beings are what we call Spirits. They surround us without ceasing and exert a great influence on us, even if we do not know it. They play a very active role in the moral world, and to some extent in the physical world.

Also, this double will watch while the living sleeps and dreams. Death will involve the double leaving the physical body; but it can also do so in the waking time. In many cultural traditions this double has the power to transmute to various zoofoms such as felines, peses, birds or forms that are related to the movement of the air; murmurs, whistles, wind. It is also perceived, as we referred to in one of the citations above, in the reflection in the mirrors, in the ponds of water, or in the shade.

In this sense the concern for the double is the responsibility of other disciplines, for example, psychoanalysis this phenomenon was identified in reflection in mirrors, shadows, guardian spirits, belief in the soul and fear of death. The double, which originally served to deny death by providing immortality-in the images of Egyptian

tombs, for example-came to become, frequently, the sinister herald of death [4].

Speaker Buchanan [5] who Freud establishes a relationship between this phenomenon and death [v]. From here we can argue that the double refers to death, arouses anguish, the sinister, the disturbing strangeness. Within psychiatric semiology, this phenomenon is usually located within visual hallucinations. The heaustoscopie is for a subject sudden vision of himself. This phenomenon can be presented in different ways, it can be a pure presence (even if it is not visible), it can be equal or not to the original. When the double appears, it possesses the ability to move and is attributed a revealing activity of his character of being alive. A constant element within these variables is that when it happens, there is no doubt that the one who is being perceived is himself. As for the psychiatric development of the concept Thus, the double is another Ego; an alter-ego that the living man feels and inhabits, but is also external in all his existence. This alter-ego is an "I", but at the same time it is "another" [1].

Consequently, the correspondence between the double, the movement, the air and the reflection are extremely relevant and are comparable components at the transcultural level. On it Morin exposes that the double can manifest in the echo, in the auditory reflex. Also, in the movements of the air when breathing, in the movement of the intestines, in the whirlpool, in everything that possesses an aerial nature.

On the Sessions

Only malevolence and absolute bad faith have been able to confuse spiritualism with magic and sorcery, since it repudiates the purpose, practices, formulas and mystical words of the latter. Some even did not hesitate to compare the spiritist meetings with the Sabbath assemblies, in which the fatal hour of midnight is expected to appear ghosts [6].

The sessions on which this article is developed took place in a very complex context of human crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Argentine Republic, the national quarantine was extended from 20 March to 26 April 2020. Then the geographic segmentation from April 27, 2020 to December 20, 2020. It should be recalled that by means of Decree of Necessity and Urgency (DNU) N° 260/2020 the Executive Branch of the Argentine Republic extended the health emergency and established important restrictions because of the pandemic. Days later the President of the Argentine Nation, Dr. Alberto Fernández, announced in a press conference the scope of DNU N° 297/2020 that established the beginning

of the Preventive and Mandatory Social Isolation (ASPO) ⁴. These health measures directly affected the daily/domestic life of people; not only their work activities without the forms of relationships with the virus and its consequences; hospitalizations, contagion, isolation, death.

As a result, many of the people who had contracted the virus, having been interned in hospitals or clinics, died without being able to see their relatives again. The complexity of the COVID had a direct impact on the farewell rituals of the bodies; in this sense, the wake or the possibility for mourners to say their last goodbye to their deceased, have contact with the body, fix the body, wash it, caress, kiss, veil, etc.

These situations motivate a group of families to manage the performance of spiritist sessions to contact their deceased relatives. The experiences taken up for this article arise from sessions where between 4 and 5 people participate, and in response to certain demands that, according to what was indicated by the interlocutors, have arisen for, a) need of mourners to know how their deceased relatives were, to be able to say goodbye and leave them a message, and b) manifestations of the deceased in the plane of the dreamlike. The sessions are mainly held during the night, although this is not an irrefutable component.

Due to the existence of the isolation rules, the groups that participate in the sessions are few people, more often than not the inhabitants of the house; receiving as external agents some neighbor close or only the medium whom they contact via acquaintances of the family group.

As mentioned here, the situations of five sessions during 2020 are systematized. All of them during the night, in private homes. In some cases the address of the session is reiterated, but some of the attendees are modified according to their particular interests. The sessions were arranged as follows:

Session 1. Address 1: the medium is in a round with the

4 "PREVENTIVE AND COMPULSORY SOCIAL ISOLATION. Decree 297/2020. DECNU-2020-297-APN-PTE - Provisions. City of Buenos Aires, 19/03/2020 HAVING REGARD to File N° EX-2020-18181895-APN-DSGA#SLYT, Law N° 27.541, Decree N° 260 of March 12, 2020 and its modification N° 287 of March 17, 2020 (...) ARTICLE 2. - During the term of the "social, preventive and compulsory isolation", people must remain in their usual residences or in the residence where they are at 00:00 hours on March 20, 2020, when the measure provided begins. They must refrain from going to their places of work and must not be allowed to travel on public routes, roads and spaces in order to prevent the circulation and spread of the VOCID-virus19 and the consequent impact on public health and other derived subjective rights, such as the life and physical integrity of individuals." (Available in <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/news/-nationalgovernment-decree-isolation-social-preventive-and-mandatory#:~:text=ART%C3%8DCULO%20%2C%2%BA,start20%de%20la20la%20measure%20>). 25 December 2023.

other five members.

Session 2. Address 2: the medium is in front of the other four members.

Session 3. Domicile 3: the medium is in front of the other four members.

Session 4. Domicile 1 is reiterated: the medium is in a round with the other five members.

Session 5. Domicile 1 is reiterated: the medium is in a round with the other four members.

On the Chairpersons of the Meetings

The sessions were chaired by a medium who has no specific training in any Spiritist tradition or group. As an interlocutor, she has said that she has this ability from birth and that since she was a child -at about 5 years old- she became aware that she could hear the "voices of the dead", translate her intentions and comment them to others. Particularly the medium is defined as an auditory medium.

According to these abilities, we can distinguish them in mediums of physical effects, of intelligent communications, clairvoyants, speakers, auditory, sensitive, draftsmen, polyglots, poets, musicians, scribes, etc [6].

As mentioned, all the sessions were chaired by the same medium who is recognized for this ability and was recommended from family to family.

On the intermediary capacities of the mediums reported have special skills for these different media which depend on the disposition of their agency. Thus, we have mediums of physical effects, that is, able to produce material phenomena, such as blows, body movements, etc.; auditory mediums, speakers, visionaries, draftsmen, musicians, scribes. This last faculty is the most common, the one that develops best with exercise, and it is also the most valuable, because it allows more extensive and faster communications [6].

The Messages

Speaker Kardec (2020a, 61) que In addition, the Spirits manifest and can transmit their thoughts through articulated sounds, vibrating in the air or inside the ear; they also do so by the voice of the medium, by sight, by drawings, by music and by other means that a complete study makes known.

With regard to this article, in the terms of the above quote, we include what in Spiritist practice is called pneumatofonia Spiritist or pneumatophonic sounds occur in two very different ways. Sometimes it is an inner voice that reverberates within us; but words have nothing of material, although they are clear and distinct. Other times they are external and clearly articulated, as if they came from a person

who was beside us. Whichever way it occurs, the phenomenon of pneumatophony is almost always spontaneous, and very rarely can be provoked (Kardec, 2020b, 227) [7].

The auditory experiences taken as examples were brief, with few words and short frases. Among those recorded in the dialogue with the interlocutors we can mention the following pneumatophonías that we can classify them according to, a) the content of the message, b) the gender, the parental relationship with the family and the age of the deceased that enters in communication and, c) the meeting and venue.

a) The Content of the Message

Pneumatophony N 1: "everything will be fine" (man died at 45)

Pneumatophony N 2: "I am well" (woman died at 70 years old)

Pneumatophony N 3: "move on" (woman died at age 56)

Pneumatophony N 4: "do not worry" (man died at age 35)

Pneumatophony N 5: "I love you" (woman died at 85 years old)

Pneumatophony N 6: "I love you" (man died at 63)

b) Gender, parental relationship with family and age of the deceased entering communication

Pneumatophony N 1: brother, man died at 45.

Pneumatophony N 2: grandmother, woman died at 70.

Pneumatophony N 3: sister, woman died at age 56.

Pneumatophony N 4: son, man died at age 35.

Pneumatophony N 5: grandmother, woman died at 85.

Pneumatophony N 6: father, man died at 63.

c) The meeting and venue

Pneumatophony N 1: session 1-domicile 1

Pneumatophony N 2: session 1- domicile 1

Pneumatophony N 3: session 2- domicile 2

Pneumatophony N 4: session 3- domicile 3

Pneumatophony N 5: session 4- home 4

Pneumatophony N 6: session 5- home 5

The sessions were brief and messages were delivered after several attempts at mediation. Thus, having delivered the message it was very difficult to reconnect with the deceased in other sessions with the same intensity and sound clarity. As Kardec [6] exposes 59. The medium has only the ability to communicate, because effective communication depends on the will of the Spirits. If these do not want to manifest, the medium will not get anything; it is like an instrument without a musician to touch it. As the Spirits only communicate when they want or can, they are not subject to anyone's whim; no medium has the power to make them appear against their will. This explains the intermittence of the faculty even in the best mediums, as well as the interruptions that sometimes

experience for many months.

In this sense the enigma overflows the human. For these practitioners the dead have spoken. As Morin explains, “we are before the unexplored abysses of our sympathy (...) My dead mother, is myself, my mimetic love that survives until death, my alienated self in her, but also her alienated being in me, the unforgettable sediment of her existence in my soul” [1].

Closing Remarks

We can see that the concerns of the Spiritist doctrine are based on statements about the double, about the nature of the condition of the deceased. As Morin mentions, the integral presence of the spirits invoked by the medium is no more amazing than the integral presence of our relatives or strangers in our dreams. We stand before the unexplored abysses of our sympathy... They certainly conceal the secrets of thought transmission, hypnosis, miraculous healings (...) in a way the doubles are the sympathetic alienations of the living that evoke them. But conversely, there are also the alienations of the deceased who survive in another [1].

These questions, which include questions about the human condition in the face of death, the vital continuity of the spirits and the destiny of the soul, have troubled and disturbed the human being since the very origins of culture.

In this sense, inspired by [8], this irrecusable, random/random, everyday, universal and relative condition becomes complex in times of crisis and human tragedy; such is the case of the pandemic by COVID-19 that we have traversed and that has imposed new logics and ways of operating on the deceased; either in planes of the ritual in particular, the treatment of the body, the ways of remembrance; or in the thanato-culture in general.

The disruption in the traditional, common ways of saying farewell to the deceased: thanatopraxia, open-ended funerals, prayers, etc., were paused, interrupted. There was no possibility of dismissing the deceased present, let alone seeing them on their deathbed; there remained endless messages and affections impossible to transmit.

Faced with these impossibilities, the spiritist sessions were an alternative taken up by these mourners who, aware of their attachment to the Roman Catholic Church, entrusted God to the spirits and saw these messages as messages of light, peace and quiet about the final fate of their deceased relatives.

Also, this article sets an irrecusable present regarding the continuity of these practices outside the spiritist groups

constituted as such, and accounts for the existence of people with the mediumistic capacity that develop the activity in the face of the direct demand of the mourners.

The records, worked here in an exploratory and descriptive way, allowed us to understand more clearly part of the strategies that are implemented at the time of solving the existential group dilemmas, promoting healing while experiencing the grieving process, understand the loss and re-elaborate the bonds before the physical absence [9].

They also enable to identify differentiated roles in the field of Spiritist configurations and the continuity of ancestral traditions often invisible, ignored or subjected to pejorative value judgments. We hope that the dialogue with these manifestations will be fruitful and will allow us to reach encouraging conclusions regarding the development and knowledge of the practices of spiritualism in the northeast of Argentina.

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