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El espiritismo de las mujeres puertorriqueñas:
De las extraordinarias pioneras a sus herederas
contemporáneas

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Indexed Interview

Ana Troche Vargas

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Ana Troche

Indexed Interview

Mediumistic Development - 1:35 - 7:47

The Center - 8:25 - 13:00

Hypnotic Regression - 13:40 - 16:20

The Spiritist Vision - 16:31 - 18:55

Communication with the Spirits - 19:26-20:46

The Future of Center *Amor al Bien* - 22:09 - 25:22

Clara Román-Odio [00:00:03] I'm Clara Román-Odio of the project "Spiritism: Oral history of Puerto Rican Women," and I'm interviewing Mrs. Ana Rosa Troche Vargas, she is a practitioner of Spiritism. Today is July 28, 2019 and we are interviewing Mrs. Troche Vargas at the *Amor al Bien* Spiritist Center in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico. Thank you very much for your participation in this project. Could you please tell me your full name and date of birth?

Ana Troche [00:00:50] Ana Rosa Troche Vargas. I was born on March 24, 1949.

Clara Román-Odio [00:00:51] Thank you very much. Regarding family values, from whom did you learn about Spiritism?

Ana Troche [00:00:58] As a child, I grew up under the protection of the Catholic Church. But, since I was a student, I learned that you must corroborate when you study sciences. We have to corroborate. It's not about believing just because they tell us to do so. No, it is necessary to corroborate. And one of the foundations of Spiritism is the corroboration of everything. My first experiences began when my mother passed away.

Clara Román-Odio [00:01:39] Can you tell me how those experiences were?

Ana Troche [00:01:43] She disembodied very quickly in relation to how soon she disembodied after she started feeling ill. But she had no spiritist knowledge and remained attached to her body all the time and spiritually, I had an out of the body experience. In spirit, I went every night to the cemetery to her grave to tell her that her body was no longer useful, that she needed to separate from it to continue her path. While I was doing that, my sister fervently asked her to help her because she could not deal with her death.

Ana Troche [00:02:30] That confused her even more. And we spent a whole month in that going back and forth, while she was trying to separate herself from her body. But then, a couple of Spirits came willing to help her in her transition.

Clara Román-Odio [00:02:53] How did you know that your mother was still attached to her body?

Ana Troche [00:03:00] Because we talked, we talked every night. We talk every night. And I would have an out of the body experience in order to go to her grave. She wore the gown I made her to go to the hospital.

Clara Román-Odio [00:03:12] Then you are a medium?

Ana Troche [00:03:17] I'm a medium but the development of my mediumistic mind is basically that of a writer. But since there was such a great spiritual affinity with her, I became very attached to her since I was a child. To the degree that I cut her hair for her, I made her clothes, we solved everything together; she was my friend. Apart from being my mother, she was my friend. And that affinity made it possible for me to see her even though I am not a seer. I can see, on some occasions, I have seen things, but it is not the bulk of my mediumship. I am a writer.

Clara Román-Odio [00:04:02] Could you elaborate a little more on how this gift of being a writer manifest?

Ana Troche [00:04:17] Normally, when we make circles for [00:04:19] des-obsession[0.0s] to help people who have special situations we focus, together, to gather thoughts, to find a way to help her/him and sometimes specific words come to my mind, sometimes complete sentences. Sometimes past life situations, and we write that, and after everyone has made their contribution we discuss them.

Clara Román-Odio [00:04:54] So what did it mean to you growing up with the spiritist belief?

Ana Troche [00:05:02] At the moment we started studying the books of the codification [of Spiritism], which happened in a way, we cannot say that it was accidental because nothing happens [00:05:32] accidentally [0.0s] everything has a purpose, my husband had lost his job. He went to San Juan to work, we stayed, the children and I stayed here in Cabo Rojo. A co-worker of his was a Kardecian medium. She approached him and asked him where his family was and he told her we were in Cabo Rojo. Immediately, without having any kind of relationship, they searched for a house for us to move into. And in a week, we were already in San Juan.

Ana Troche [00:05:50] But one day I was drinking coffee; she had been sick in the hospital and when she came back from the hospital she talked with my husband.

[00:05:59] She said: "A lady came to the hospital to visit us and gave me a message for you. That message was: "You have to break the chain because you are doing what your father did to you; what his father's father did to him: what your grandfather's father did to him. And if you do

not break the chain, your children will also do it to their children. I did not understand what that meant. Well, we went to visit her and there we found the answer to the situation she raised. Until this day we are still together, we have been married for 48 years. [00": 06: 48] We are a beautiful family. [0.8s]

Clara Román-Odio [00:06:51] Good! If this is not too personal, can you talk or can you elaborate or explain a little more about what that chain was and how it broke?

Ana Troche [00:07:03] That chain was that my husband was abandoned by my father-in-law when he was six years old. [00:07:09] He left him alone in their home. [0.5s] He didn't abandon him completely because they always had some kind of relationship, but it created mixed feelings [00:07:12] and resentment in my husband because everyone else was with his dad [00:07:12] but his dad was not at home. [0.0s] My husband's grandfather had many children and he practically did not raise any of them. The latter received his last name after he had disembodied. That's why there are a lot of Lozadas in Puerto Rico.

Ana Troche [00:07:48] But they sat down to talk at some point of their lives and were able to reconcile all of those hard feelings because after studying this we have to try to get our clothes clean. We want to get rid of our hard feelings because nothing is worth having resentment in your heart.

Clara Román-Odio [00:08:10] You are the president of this spiritual center, *Amor al Bien*, in Cabo Rojo. Can you tell us a little about how you got to this center and to this role?

Ana Troche [00:08:25] We started attending meetings at my husband's partner's house, in San Juan. When we moved here we were "orphaned", they stayed in San Juan, we came here. This center was here but we were totally unaware of what was being done here because it was always closed and we did not live in the village, we lived in the rural area. But whenever we came to town, everything was closed. We started going to the *Renacimiento* with doctor Flavio Acarón.

Clara Román-Odio [00:08:58] Where is that?

Ana Troche [00:09:00] That is Mayagüez, *Renacimiento de Mayagüez*. That center was disorganized and Dr. Acarón came here and tried to fix it. We went there to Mayagüez although we lived in Cabo Rojo. Well, he invited us to come here. That happened in 2000 and we have been here since then.

Clara Román-Odio [00:09:27] And what is your role as the president of the center?

Ana Troche [00:09:29] Well here we offer classes. We teach classes every Tuesday and Thursday from 8am to 9:30am. My role as president is to lead that study. Prepare conferences. Find a way for everyone to understand knowledge, but especially that which they can apply to daily life because it is useless to know books from memory if we cannot apply them. And what concerns us right now is to find a way to live in the best possible way. To improve ourselves as

incarnated beings so that when we return to the spiritual world we can make greater progress having this as a solid base.

Clara Román-Odio [00:10:17] Could you give us a specific example of those studies, how they do it, what they read, and what do you do in [00:10:30] that hour and a half. [0.1s]

Ana Troche [00:10:38] We basically read the coding books of Allan Kardec but we also include all the scientific advances because this doctrine is based on science and all of the discoveries that scientists do to corroborate what the books say about the codification. To this date, not even one scientific discovery contradicts or questions what the codification says.

Clara Román-Odio [00:11:03] And when you talk about the coding books, do you mean Allan Kardec's books?

Ana Troche [00:11:11] Allan Kardec, *The Book of Spirits, Genesis, Heaven and Hell, The Gospel According to Spiritism.*

Clara Román-Odio [00:11:19] And when they come to the study session does everyone has read a portion of it?

Ana Troche [00:11:26] Yes.

Clara Román-Odio [00:11:26] And then what do they do, do they discuss it?

Ana Troche [00:11:28] What we discuss depends on the theme we choose. We analyze a specific part of Kardec's books, everyone contributes, because this class is not a lecture but a seminar; and everyone shares their opinion because everyone applies it according to their circumstances.

Clara Román-Odio [00:11:56] There is a doctrinal part, a part of study, but, according to what I understand, there is also a part focused on the practice of Spiritism. After the study of the specific text you have chosen is over, is there any other activity in that hour and a half?

Ana Troche [00:12:35] Yes. The class usually lasts an hour. And after the class is over we share all the ideas in a circle, we do a concentration to level the energy levels of everyone and many times, according to the topic we have discussed, there may be a mediumistic communication with some Spirits that come to learn with us. There are some here physically but there are also many Spirits that not only come here to contribute but to learn.

Clara Román-Odio [00:13:01] You have given me two examples of your mother and your husband, about mediumistic experiences, experiences of communication with the Spirits. For you personally, are there other spiritist experiences that have been extremely valuable or transformative for you?

Ana Troche [00:13:40] There is one experience that is not necessarily of a spiritist nature. When our children were in college we went to a person specialized in regression, hypnotic

regression. And it was impressive, very impressive for us to be able to corroborate, through his manifestation, [00:14:00] of those previous lives, that he had been our son in past lives and that, we, my husband and I, have lived together as a couple many times. Sometimes those children were our parents. And so, what happens? Through that we corroborate that sometimes we come as women, other times we come as men, because the Spirit as such has no sex. Sex is of this material body, either a woman or a man.

Ana Troche [00:14:44] Living as a woman or living as a man offers us all the opportunities that exist for our growth as Spirits. We see that men have different feelings than women. But it is the same Spirit. The only thing is that the experience of a man's life sometimes is not equal to the life of a woman, especially concerning motherhood. Which is what makes us who we are and wraps us in that unique feeling. But men also have to live it. What happens is that they are not aware of that, for the most part.

Clara Román-Odio [00:15:22] Who was the person who went through the mediumistic process?

Ana Troche [00:15:25] Our son.

Clara Román-Odio [00:15:26] It was your son.

Ana Troche [00:15:27] And our daughter as well, our daughter's experience was even more impressive.

Clara Román-Odio [Could you explain that?

Ana Troche [00:15:32] She lived during the construction of the Egyptian pyramids. My husband's mother in this existence was her mother in that existence. When was the construction of the pyramids? 5000 or 6000 years ago? She got there. And she abandoned my husband when she was his mother in a previous life. And now she came as our daughter to work on those hard feelings. And I can tell you that you have no idea of how enriching the experience of this life has been with this knowledge.

Clara Román-Odio [00:16:21] How has this knowledge been enriching or expanding for you?

Ana Troche [00:16:31] In this philosophy we learn to lose our fear. Fear, especially to death and also our insecurity. There is no doubt when you have had experiences and also through comparison with what is being discovered scientifically. There is no doubt that we have lived many times and that we will continue to come to planet Earth as long as we do not fix those negative behaviors, which are the ones that delay us. Especially resentment, hate, selfishness, lack of charity. That's what we come for, to improve that. What's going on? That man, and when I speak of men, I am talking about gender thus includes women, learns very slowly. Too slow. Our philosophy follows the morality of Jesus. And what was Jesus' lesson for us? He came to teach us, to live not to die for us. And what did he come to teach us: to love God above all things and others as yourself. If we, as embodied beings, follow that and nothing more, this world would be much simpler.

Clara Román-Odio [00:18:08] How do you lose your fear of death and insecurity or lack of security?

Ana Troche [00:18:08] First, that everything is temporary. Good times pass just like bad times. So, everything is part of the learning process. Second, that when we say "death" we don't really die, we just disembody and leave the material body because this material body is no longer useful. The life of the spirit is one. And we will have to come as many times as necessary until we learn things. [0.0s] Sometimes as a man, sometimes as a woman. So, if I don't die, why am I going to be afraid of death?

Clara Román-Odio [00:18:56] How or why do we have this communication with the Spirits? Spiritism is, in part, according to the doctrine, about that communication between the Spirits and the incarnated human beings. What is the value of this communication?

Ana Troche [00:19:26] Well, in Spiritism there are two parts: one is the study of the doctrine and the other one is communication with the Spirits. That communication in this doctrine we do not [...] invoke spirits. [0.9s] Spirits communicate with us according to their needs for improvement. When we have mediumistic practice meetings, there are always some superior Spirits that control who are the ones that can manifest. There are some who manifest themselves because the time has come for their understanding that they are in the spiritual world. Because most beings disincarnate without knowing that they no longer have a body. They continue with the same needs, with the same thoughts, with the same resentment, hatred, desire for revenge, and that makes them suffer. No one is good or bad, there are only ignorant beings. Ignorant in the growth of love. As we grow love decreases that negative feeling. That is what growth gives us. That is what gives us security. That takes away our fear of dying.

Clara Román-Odio [00:20:47] Spirits are not invoked in your meetings?

Ana Troche [00:20:50] No.

Clara Román-Odio [00:20:50] Spirits communicate with different people. You said that is very likely that we are all mediums.

Ana Troche [00:20:58] Everyone has mediumistic faculties. Everyone has mediumistic faculties. Some are more developed than others.

Clara Román-Odio [00:21:08] How your spiritist practice or belief matured or changed?

Ana Troche [00:21:24] Well, Spiritism is not a belief. Spiritism is a conviction. A conviction because everything requires corroboration. When I have faith, I believe but the one that believes doubts. In Spiritism there is no faith. There is conviction. Everything must be corroborated. And that is what gives you security.

Clara Román-Odio [00:21:44] Then, do you think that is valuable to make the spiritist experience public?

Ana Troche [00:21:49] Of course. That is why we do public lectures, we try to make the topics we discuss of public interest because through those topics we explore the spiritist doctrine.

Clara Román-Odio [00:22:06] You have been in this place for 20 years.

Ana Troche [00:22:09] We have been in this center for 20 years. But this center was founded in 1903. But before that there was a mediumistic practice group in Cabo Rojo since 1892/93, more or less.

Clara Román-Odio [00:22:20] What projections do you have regarding this center, which is, to some extent, a community center. Are you thinking, if you are thinking about something, for the immediate future?

Ana Troche [00:22:45] What we would really like to do, is a school where children could learn about Spiritism. Because the future of humanity depends on the children's knowledge. Children learn from what adults do. If mommy and daddy fight, what do children learn? To fight. If mommy and daddy tell lies, what do children learn? To tell lies. But if mommy and daddy teach children to have small responsibilities, small responsibilities, what do they learn? First to be responsible and second to make decisions since childhood. And that is extremely important for healthy human coexistence.

Clara Román-Odio [00:23:52] Is there something you want to share that I haven't asked you?

Ana Troche [00:24:18] Apart from the fact that through the study of Spiritism one frees oneself from fear, one learns to appreciate others with their differences, with their circumstances, because we are all equal. We learn that the Spirit, that all Spirits have been created as equal: simple and ignorant. It is our use of free will that makes the difference. We all know what good is, we all know what evil is, is our decision to do it right or do it wrong. The consequences as well. Because the law of cause and effect is the same for everyone. The same for everyone. So, we hope and trust that the little we do, teaching here in this center, can somehow reach all beings. That is our goal. That there can be better coexistence and a better future for our planet.

Clara Román-Odio [00:25:23] Thank you very much for your time.

Ana Troche [00:25:26] Thank you for taking the time to be here with us.

Clara Román-Odio [00:25:31] Thank you!