

Biography of “Chico” Xavier (1910 - 2002)

Francisco Candido “Chico” Xavier (April 2, 1910 to June 30, 2002) was a popular Brazilian medium who produced, by means of automatic writing, 458 books with sales in excess of 50 million copies. He was so popular in his home country that a postage stamp was issued in his honor on the 100th anniversary of his birthday. In his home state of Minas Gerias, he was, in 2000, voted “person of the century” in a newspaper poll, with more than 700,000 readers responding.



“Chico was, and still is, loved and respected throughout Brazil as a militant Christian who probably did more visible good to more people than any other individual of his time and place,” Guy Lyon Playfair, his biographer, wrote.¹ Playfair, a British journalist and long-time investigator of psychic phenomena, added that Chico was not taken seriously as a writer by the literary establishment because of the general bias against paranormal phenomena.

Young Chico, who dropped out of school at age 13, began demonstrating psychic abilities at the age of four but it was not until 1927, at age 17, that he became a practicing medium. His 421-page 1932 book entitled *Parnassus From Beyond the Tomb* became a best seller in the Portuguese-speaking world. It contains 259 poems signed by 56 different deceased Brazilian poets, all of the poems judged by experts to be in the style and character of the individual poets when they were alive.

Chico’s books include literature, history, science, and Spiritist doctrine, the content going far beyond his education and knowledge. His

primary spirit guide went by the name of Emmanuel, said to have been Senator Publius Lentulus in Roman times. “When I am writing automatically, I can see, hear, and feel the discarnate spirit who is working by means of my arm, and I have often registered the presence of the communicator without knowing anything about the subject matter on which he is writing,” Chico explained.² He further explained that he always felt the sensation in his arm of electrical fluids surrounding it along with indefinable vibrations in his brain.

Chico did not take credit for the books and in each case stated the name of the spirit person who dictated it to him. Moreover, the royalties from all books were donated to charity. Playfair points out that had Chico, who had a modest income from a government job, taken credit for the writing himself, he would have received much greater acclaim than he did, and he would have been a very rich man.



In discussing one of the science books, Playfair stated that “it reveals an immense knowledge of several sciences that no ordinary writer, even a qualified scientist, could have as-

sembled without copious research and note-taking.”³ A book on first century Rome runs to 553 pages. His nineteenth book, titled *Nosso Lar* (“Our Home”) was published in 1944 and sold over two million copies. It was followed over the next 13 years by eight sequels, a combined 2,459 pages. It was said to be dictated by a spirit who was a doctor on earth named André Luiz, apparently a pseudonym. Playfair described the series as showing “clear signs of having been written by somebody with a professional knowledge of medicine, especially anatomy, and far more than average familiarity with physics, chemistry, biology, embryology, psychology, and the history of evolution.”⁴ Moreover, it revealed a complete mastery of the Portuguese language.

Although *Nosso Lar* was written as a novel, it was intended to be a true first hand account of André Luiz’s experiences in the Afterlife environment. “Death merely dilates our concepts and clarifies our introspection, illuminating our moral sense,” André dictated. “But in no way does it solve the problems which the Universe poses at every step with its display of grandeur.”⁵

According to Playfair, discussions about evolution and the ultimate purpose of life tend to become a bit nebulous, and André Luiz constantly apologizes for not knowing more about them. “Yet when he turns to his own subject – medicine, he could hardly be more precise. Some of the most astonishing passages in his books are those that deal with such routine events as birth and death, but as seen from a highly original viewpoint, that of a spirit who is occasionally able to ‘condense himself’ down to our plane in order to be able to see into people’s bodies, like a human X-ray.”⁶

As with nearly every medium, Chico had his detractors, one of them being a nephew, who claimed that Chico’s works were all his own. The speculation was that the nephew had been bribed by a local priest, who apparently saw Chico’s work with spirits as being demonic and in conflict with Church teachings. Most of Chico’s writing

was consistent with the Spiritist doctrine of Allan Kardec, a 19th Century French researcher, but some of it conflicted with Kardec’s teachings.

In addition to taking dictation for books, Chico Xavier relayed thousands of personal messages from spirits to loved ones on the earth plane, many of them evidential. One of them was allowed in court to exonerate an 18-year-old man accused of murdering his friend. When the dead boy’s parents sat with Chico they heard from their son, who told them that the two were just playing around and that the gun went off accidentally. The judge noted that the details in the message corresponded to the evidence and dismissed the case. Messages in three other court cases are said to have influenced the decision.

More than 120,000 people are said to have lined up in a queue over two miles long to file past Chico’s coffin and 30,000 joined in the funeral procession. The state governor declared three days of mourning.



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¹ Playfair, Guy Lyon, *Chico Xavier: Medium of the Century*, Roundtable Publishing Ltd., 2010, p. 38.

² _____, p. 34.

³ _____, p. 31.

⁴ _____, p. 58.

⁵ _____, p. 59.

⁶ _____, p. 62