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NÉLIDA GONZÁLEZ LEBRÓN

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

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2019

## 9 Indexed Interview

Nélida González Lebrón

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## Indexed Interview

### Nélida González Lebrón

#### Digital story

**The Ballerina of Prussia** – [01:00 - 06:44]

#### Other themes

1. **The Experience of Disembodiment** – [07:06 - 10:50]
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**Clara Román-Odio** [00:00:01] I'm Clara Román-Odio from the project *Spiritism by Puerto Rican Women: From Remarkable Pioneers to Contemporary Heirs*, and I'm interviewing Mrs. Nélida González who is a journalist, writer of fiction and poetry, and a Spiritism practitioner. Today is July 28, 2019 and we are interviewing Mrs. González at her residence in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. Thank you very much for your participation in this project. Could you please tell me your full name and date of birth?

**Nélida González L.** [00:00:40] My name is Nélida González Nebrón and I was born on July 11, 1947, in the last century.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:00:54] Thank you. So, thinking about family values, from whom did you learn about Spiritism?

**Nélida González L.** [00:01:00] I learned from my maternal grandmother. My maternal grandmother was a natural medium but she had no control of her mediumistic faculties. For example, she could be sitting anywhere and if there was a spiritist manifestation there she would take to the Spirit, speak with it, sing along with it, and the entity manifested with her and stayed with her. And that is how she lived. I saw as a child how she worked her oral mediumship, how she was around the Spirits and they spoke through her. In particular, one who was a ballerina. My grandmother said that this was her guiding Spirit and that she had been with her since a previous incarnation. My grandmother did not dance but the ballerina sang. The ballerina sang

music never heard by my nuclear family, let's say. And every time she showed up and after she sang, she said what the ballerina said. It never failed. If the ballerina said something was going to happen in the family, it happened. And so, I grew up knowing about mediumistic phenomena through my maternal grandmother.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:02:53] Do you remember if there was any change in her voice or in her countenance?

**Nélida González L.** [00:03:04] Totally. Both in the voice and in countenance. Sometimes she fell to the floor and stayed there rigid. Other times she spoke in a more natural way. The change in her voice was significant especially when the ballerina sang. It was a beautiful voice and I had an experience that I can share with you here. My grandmother said that the ballerina came from Prussia. Prussia was ancient Germany. As a child I learned about Prussia and the ballerina. And in my adulthood, I travelled to Europe with my partner. We took a trip and at one point we were in a city that the guide told us: "no, these buildings are from ancient Prussia." And then I said: "Oh the ballerina!" I remembered her immediately and said well, I'm going to buy a ballerina at any store in this place. To my frustration there were no ballerinas anywhere. I didn't find any ballerinas in the stores. We left that sector of Prussia and continued our journey.

**Nélida González L.** [00:04:31] I was very sad because I couldn't bring with me an object, a ballerina, to remember that I had been there. Remembering at the same time my years as a child and my adolescence and practically my adulthood, with the experience of my grandmother and the ballerina. Then the next tourist destination was the city of Vienna and part of the activities there was an artistic show of classical music. We arrived at the theater, the orchestra, and the program. And then a singer entered the stage and sang the song that my grandmother sang in my house where we lived in Puerto Rico. An amazing thing! Then I got up from the seat because I could not control my excitement. I could not believe it. I could not believe what I was seeing. Then I got up, I got comfortable in a place of the theater and started crying because in that moment I found, there in Vienna in a theater, I found the ballerina. In fact, I wrote that story in my most recent book called *Of the Transient and Intangible*. And that is a spiritist tale of these experiences of mine and other people that I decided to write about and that is the story titled *The Ballerina* and it tells of this incredible experience.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:06:31] What a beautiful story! How old were you or how old was your grandmother during your childhood and adolescence?

**Nélida González L.** [00:06:43] Me with her?

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:06:44] Yes.

**Nélida González L.** [00:06:44] My grandmother lived with my family, in the family nucleus,

until she disembodied. She was always with us. She died at ninety-seven.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:07:00] So what did it mean for you to grow up with the spiritist belief?

**Nélida González L.** [00:07:06] Well, I grew up in an evangelical home because my father is a Presbyterian but I had the counterpart of my grandmother; and because I saw what was happening to her and she explained some things to me, I got interested in that. Then I began to realize that “strange” things were happening to me, in quotation marks right, no, they were not common. I was unfolding. I saw silhouettes, saw familiar characters who had already disembodied, including historical figures and then I began to reason. And I started studying the spiritist doctrine, right. The doctrine was recent. I understood what was happening to my grandmother, what was happening to me, and I understood what this wonderful world of spiritist science was.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:08:13] Could you tell me a little about that unfolding experience. What happened? Why do you think it happened? If you can, go back to that moment or any of the moments that you have lived.

**Nélida González L.** [00:08:29] When I was a child, I was 8 or 9 years old, pillar beds were used in Puerto Rico, mahogany pillars, and there was an essential piece which was the mosquito net that protected us from mosquito bites. Then I felt, before falling asleep, that I had turned into something else, as I always thought, in my childhood imagination, that I was like a balloon full of air, because I was rising, rising, rising, until I reached the top of the mosquito net. I did not pass the mosquito net at that time. And then I came down, went up and then down. And that fascinated me, that was such a beautiful experience. I wondered if that happened to my other friends. But I didn't dare tell them that. But I had many dolls and I told my dolls. And I talked with the dolls and told them: this happened to me. And it happened to me very often. After adulthood, these types of events, experiences, have happened to me several times involuntarily, involuntarily. I know that there are methods that are studied in order to not do it but I have never worried about it because I have done it involuntarily and on one occasion my Spirit got detached from my body, I saw myself lying there in bed and I walked through the walls. I went to a hospital, crossed the walls of the hospital and met a friend of mine who was there. There were other spiritual doctors attending to her and I was there. The other day, she called me and I said: “Oh, how are you?” and she said: “I'm already cured;” and I said: “I knew it.” That was indeed an experience, that unfolding experience was very beautiful to me.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:10:51] Let's talk a little about the spiritist center. I don't know if you or your grandmother frequented the center.

**Nélida González L.** [00:11:00] My grandmother didn't frequent any centers. She learned about

Spiritism in her childhood and youth. There was no electricity in the place they met. No one could read or write except for one person in the family. They met and read the books that arrived in Puerto Rico clandestinely, related to Spiritism, such as the *Book of Spirits*, *The Book of Mediums*, etc. But she always emphasized to me the following, she told me: “you know how to read and write and because of that you should study Spiritism,” she advised me. Because Spiritism is a science. She was from the 19th century and she was already telling me that Spiritism was a science in the 20th century. Then I started going to different places. Until I found here, in the city of Mayagüez, the Institute of Spiritist Culture and Renaissance. Directed by Dr. Flavio Acarón. This place has been open since the 19th century and is a school of spiritist study, and I developed my mediumistic faculties in that center. When I arrived at the center I did not know how to control this, what some things were about, and I was gradually learning. And I still learn because life is a constant series of learning.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:12:38] Could you tell me a little more about these mediumistic faculties? What do they consist of? How have they changed? How did they develop? If you could give me a little more detail.

**Nélida González L.** [00:12:51] Mediumship is an inherent faculty of the human being and there are different kinds of mediumistic manifestations. Some write –there is the automatic writer, which is like the doctor that writes. Writes, writes without thinking, everything is dictated. There is intuition –it’s an intuitive mediumship. There is the speaker, the one that can anticipate future events, the one that can see the past. Many people like to go to mediums and ask them: “what will happen to me in the future? Who can I marry?” These are things that people from rural areas tend to ask, no? Many people worry about these things and go to different places to look for answers to those questions. But that is not the most essential aspect of this philosophy; but the medium can indeed see both past and future. They can heal, there are healing mediums. The medium writes by intuition, sometimes automatically and so there is also the medium that listens. There are multiple, multiple, faculties.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:14:13] And what did you do or what did you do to develop these faculties?

**Nélida González L.** [00:14:17] Well, look, there was a dynamic in this Institute of Spiritist Culture with some mediums that had a lot of experience, they explained to me how to do this, how to breathe according to what I sensed or saw and in this way I developed the talking faculty.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:14:41] Is it always involuntary?

**Nélida González L.** [00:14:45] Well no, because the medium already knows when the Spirit is about to manifest itself. In other words, the medium knows that there is an entity that it is close

by and then the medium lends their physical equipment to that entity so that that entity manifests itself within the being that is next to that entity, observing what is happening.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:15:15] You mentioned that your grandmother had a spiritual guide: the ballerina.

**Nélida González L.** [00:15:19] Yes.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:15:20] Did she ever say her name?

**Nélida González L.** [00:15:22] No.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:15:23] No?

**Nélida González L.** [00:15:24] Never. Only that she was from Prussia.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:15:31] And do you also have a spiritual guide in particular?

**Nélida González L.** [00:15:36] I've felt the presence of Entities, Entities who show up at specific moments in my life. I have never worried about declaring this is my guide or this is mine, no. I am here, I am just an echo of what they say. Now, I have indeed felt help from very big spiritual entities. Immense experiences.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:16:15] In the center that you frequented, The Renaissance, how often did the group meet? And I imagine that both men and women could come, right? Were there specific roles determined by gender?

**Nélida González L.** [00:16:34] No, no. Both men and women have been mediums equally at this spiritist center that is currently active. And there are sessions of des-obsession which is when we, the mediums, work with a particular person. And on top of that, we study the spiritist doctrine, the spiritist philosophy, Allan Kardec's books and other modern books that are still written about this philosophy.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:17:13] Can I inquire a little more about the concept of des-obsession? Who is the one being obsessed and what is the process of des-obsession?

**Nélida González L.** [00:17:24] I can tell you with great certainty that we are in an exchange of energy: the visible world with the invisible world. What the Greeks called the Interworld. We are in an interworld of constant exchange of energy during the day, at night, at all hours, constantly because, just as there is a visible world where you have neighbors, other people we know, and friends, there are others who we do not see that are parallel to us and it is in that exchange where

the manifestation of beings occurs. Mostly because they are obviously disembodied because they no longer have a body like we do. Many times, these beings that manifest are family members, friends, entities that for one reason or another are close to us. The des-obsession comes from the obsession. This person has a disease, for example his lungs hurt, there are some manifestations. He is very sick and goes to a center; and if, for example, this is just an example that I am giving, we are going to say that there is an entity that is manifesting that has those same symptoms.

**Nélida González L.** [00:18:51] What happens? That the sick person is not the person who is incarnated there in the center, the sick person is the obsessive Spirit that is manifesting for one reason or another, a reason that we do not know at the moment, through that incarnated person. What happens? That the embodied being has all the symptoms of a disease. And then suddenly that person heals, what a miracle! No, there is no miracle. Is that the obsessor has been withdrawing and as a result of this it no longer provides that symptomatology. Obsessive Spirits are often aware of what they are doing for some reason, some debt from the past or some particular reason. And sometimes they involuntarily do that close to an incarnate person and project a disease or mental disturbances that is not caused by the incarnated person but by the invisible world. So, what happens? The being of the invisible world must be treated.

**Nélida González L.** [00:20:06] The sick person is not the one sitting in the chair, who is in pain or has a mental disturbance or a problem. The sick person is the one we don't see. And who should we treat? The one we don't see. And that is done in a session of des-obsession by speaking to him, letting him know what his status is. Because many times those Spirits think they are still alive. They have the same customs, the same diseases, the same problems. It does not matter how long they have been disembodied. They don't have the awareness human beings have. Well, you have to help those Spirits who are obsessed and then the incarnate person will be cured. He or she will no longer suffer or deal with what was affecting him or her. "You took away what I had!" Many people say: "Oh! Thank you! You took it out of me." No, what we did is that we made the Spirit leave. He had to seek the light, to find his/her way or another way that belongs to the spiritual world. No person can be attached to another one like that just because they want to. You can come and visit. You can come and manifest, momentarily, but you cannot live with an incarnate person all his/her life. That is, that is impossible because it cannot be and is not their destiny.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:21:44] Their destiny would be, according to the doctrine, to evolve?

**Nélida González L.** [00:21:49] Evolve as a Spirit. Yes. We evolve incarnated and evolve disembodied through the experience of life and through experience.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:22:03] One of the explanations or one of the reasons, then, for this communication between the material world and the spiritual world would be this des-obsession.

What other functions does this communication with the spiritual world have?

**Nélida González L.** [00:22:26] Apart from this process of des-obsession, which is done with incarnated beings who have a specific problem, we also deal in orientation. There are Spirits of great light that come to guide those of us who are incarnated with a specific message for a specific reason that guides us.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:22:53] Could you share some memory of a spiritist experience that has impacted you? Is there an experience that has transformed you?

**Nélida González N.** [00:23:08] I would say that all the spiritual experiences that happen to a medium transform him/her, he/she changes because he/she learns, grows. The medium grows with each specific experience.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:23:32] Do you suffer as a medium?

**Nélida González L.** [00:23:35] There is a mediumship that causes suffering, yes. Not in my case, not in my case. There are people who sometimes do not recognize that they have some faculties, they do not understand and they are frightened. They are afraid of the invisible, maybe because they are seeing the dead. It gives them headaches. Of course, things like that and they fear them, they fear them a lot.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:24:06] You would think that many of the symptoms we experience, from the most trivial such as a headache to those that are persistent, those that don't want to go away, to effects on everyday life in general, in work or family or even spiritual relationships, they are also related to the spiritist world.

**Nélida González L.** [00:24:40] Well not all of them. But yes, because we are in the interworld. We are in constant communication, in that constant exchange of energy. Some things that happen to people make them say: "It is inexplicable, this or that! Why did this happen to me?" And sometimes they analyze the events and then they realize that on many occasions these situations are caused by non-visible elements, that is, the invisible world, which is the real world. That is the real world.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:25:14] Why do you say it's the real world? Could you comment on that?

**Nélida González L.** [00:25:17] That is the real world because it is the world that gives us that influence, it comes from the ethereal, from the cosmos, whoever you call it. It is a world in which, before this armchair existed, someone thought of it. Nobody knew that armchairs could

exist. That the chair that you rock in for fun could exist. Someone thought of it. Someone was inspired by that, to give a simple example. And the great minds of humanity have been influenced by the high Spirits in Cosmos for the progress of the human race. Because we have always been progressing, it is constant growth.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:26:19] How are you feeling? I would like us to stop for a moment in these feelings or in this mood. What do you feel when you think, reflect, about the spiritist experience?

**Nélida González L.** [00:26:36] That I've been very lucky, very lucky and I thank my grandmother. I get excited to say that because, since I was a child, she helped me to understand the invisible world. I am very fortunate because of this faculty that I have developed over the years, I have been able to help both the disembodied and the incarnated beings who need help to understand one situation or another in their lives.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:27:20] Do you think it is valuable to make the spiritist experience public at this time in Puerto Rico? To make it more public?

**Nélida González L.** [00:27:32] Well, Spiritism has very big enemies. The major enemy is the Church. The Church as an institution that since centuries ago, since the beginning of Spiritism, has fought it as it has fought Freemasonry, as it has fought other things. Because it does not work according to its dogmas. Spiritism has no dogmas. So, mediums are often discriminated against by other people: "Ah, that's crazy!" Or, "That's a witch!" Epithets of that nature because they do not understand. Because the religious dynamic against this philosophy has been very strong. And it's sad, that makes me very sad because you feel a rejection whenever you try to talk or say what this is about. In my personal case I have never been afraid to say who I am. It does not matter to me. I am like that, I believe in this for such reasons. Spiritists openly say that they are Spiritists. Period. People often confuse Spiritism with witchcraft. No, no, no. Those are other things. Those are other things, because people always relate Spiritism to other practices of other religions, which are valid in every religion like Santería which is a religion that comes from Africa; it came here to Puerto Rico with the slaves and they have practices because mediumship is present in that religion. Mediumship is also present in gypsies who do palm reading. Not because she is gypsy, but because she is medium. We should not be afraid of saying that we are mediums, although we know that it is not socially accepted. In this institution to which I belong we have had radio programs, broadcasting programs, very interesting but the participation of the Spirits is not as much as it should be in society. We find walls, barriers in this beautiful world.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:30:29] You have published several fiction and poetry books about the Spiritist experience. Can you comment a little about this work? How, why did you start writing on the subject? What do you address in this literature?

**Nélida González L.** [00:30:47] I have several poetry books where I write romantic poetry. Because as a child I learned to write poetry and learned to appreciate literature, the poetic genre, through my father who also writes. And, in my house, there was always a library and there were books of all kinds that I read. I started writing poetry. I discovered that it is not that I write poetry because I dominate that genre, you might say, it is that there is an inspiration that comes from the invisible world and makes visible what is ethereal. And so, I have written several books of poems but I have a book. I have two books, *The Dream of Birds*, which is prose, and *Of the Transient and Intangible*, which tells spiritist tales. In this last storybook I decided to write about my experiences and the experiences of others in the spiritist field. Some stories are imaginary but each story has a spiritist principle involved. But most are real. There's a story, if I can tell a story. I am a dog lover. I pick up dogs. I cure dogs and cats, etc. And a veterinarian, the veterinarian, with whom I have never talked about this but he knows because he has read my texts, tells me: "Come here. That lady who is there with that dog has had an experience." And I say: "What happened to her?" "Well, she had cancer in the lymph nodes and now she doesn't have it but the dog has cancer in the lymph nodes." "How is that?" The lady, the veterinarian told me, is receiving psychiatric treatment because she cannot understand how she healed from the lymph nodes and now the dog has that. The vet evaluated if the dog could not deal anymore with cancer, he told me: "It's as big as a hand fist."

**Nélida González L.** [00:33:15] The animal had to be euthanized. When he told me that, I got overwhelmed and went to the lady and talked to her about the puppy and she told me the story. And I knelt in front of the dog and stroked it and talked to the dog. I cried with that dog and the woman cried on the other hand and the dog licked my tears, because I told her: "you are so beautiful, so beautiful, and they will make you sleep forever. That should not be the case because you are well and you cured your owner." She heard me and I told her: "Don't put him to sleep, the doctor doesn't want to put him to sleep because he was working." I told her: "Let him die at your feet, because he healed you, healed you. Let him die in front of you, don't put him to sleep." She continued thinking about it. When I saw her again at an appointment, very cheerfully she told me: "I left." And she left with her puppy. Neither she nor the doctor wanted to put the animal to sleep and they left happy and content. That dog cured her disease. How is that? The invisible world knows. I had that experience and I wrote about it in those stories.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:34:58] How interesting and how beautiful. So, you are writing because you are a journalist, you started with journalism.

**Nélida González L.** [00:35:10] I write. I did radio, written and television journalism during my journalism years. A very interesting job, too interesting. Every day is different in journalism. One learns and learns every day. You get up and do not know what will happen that is not news material. Oh! There are different things every day.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:35:41] When you reflect on your entire professional career and think about Spiritism and the world of the invisible for a moment, how do you see that relationship?

**Nélida González L.** [00:36:00] It has been a key element. Why? For example, the journalist has to see beyond what they are interviewing about. You have to foresee things and, in that sense, it helps immensely. I was also an actress, many years, and that has helped as well. Why? Because I have to make a character, I am an old woman who is not me or a girl who is not me. I have to incarnate her and perform her; and [Spiritism] facilitates that kind of work.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:36:50] Is there anything that I haven't asked you, any topic or any comment, that you want to mention?

**Nélida González L.** [00:37:04] Well, I would tell you that I urge those who listen, those who listen, those who read, those who can see this interview and everyone I encounter in my journey, to study this philosophy. It should not matter which one is your religion, you should study it. Because you will understand, the person will be better prepared to live, to face the difficulties that life presents to us. Because we learn from these difficulties and we are growing. And the one who understands the spiritual world learns how to deal with all types of situations that you encounter in daily life, whether simple or complicated. For example, the loss of a loved one always leaves a mark. It is always surprising. It is always painful. But the one who understands the spiritual world is prepared for that, and because of that much more.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:38:15] What is the fundamental message that Spiritism has to offer humanity?

**Nélida Gonzales N.** [00:38:25] Hope.

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:38:29] Thank you very much. Thank you very much for your time.

**Nélida González L.** [00:38:33] Gladly!

**Clara Román-Odio** [00:38:33] And for this knowledge.

**Nélida Gonzále N.** [00:38:35] Thank you!