

Book review

**Review of the book entitled *Espiritualidade e qualidade de vida (Spirituality and life quality)***

Evilázio Francisco Borges Teixeira, Marisa Campio Müller, Juliana Dors Tigre da Silva (eds.)

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The book *Espiritualidade e qualidade de vida (Spirituality and life quality)*, edited by Evilázio Francisco Borges Teixeira, Marisa Campio Müller and Juliana Dors Tigre da Silva is composed of 224 pages and divided into 17 chapters. It counts on the collaboration of 24 professionals of different areas, who tried to outline the history of theories developed about man and that are the basis of the current paradigm.

The book is designed as it follows:

Chapter I – The author defines spirituality as “living with spirit”, and as a human being characteristic. She says that when spirituality is well integrated, it can improve life quality.

Chapter II – Spirituality is approached and conceptualized in the Christian life.

Chapter III – It covers from the medieval to the modern thought, approaching the conceptions of person and trinity, in which both the human person and the trinity person (Father-Son-Holy Spirit) are entities with whom one can have relationships, which make possible the encounter of men with mystery.

Chapter IV – It is about conscience, its nature and formation.

Chapter V – The author of this chapter writes about the interface between religion and other sciences.

Chapter VI – Spirituality is an essential dimension of the human being life.

Chapter VII – It approaches current studies on healthcare, spiritual well being and quality of life and their theoretical presupposes.

Chapter VIII – This chapter discusses the concept of sacredness in science.

Chapter IX – Current research on the effect of prayer in the promotion of cure.

Chapter X – It describes psychology studies on spirituality and life quality.

Chapter XI – The university as a place of production, learning, culture, art and spirituality.

Chapter XII – It asserts that belief in God is subjective and can affect and modify emotional and behavioral responses.

Chapter XIII – It defends the idea that praying and meditating release tensions.

Chapter XIV – This chapter presents a literature review on religiosity, health and life quality.

Chapter XV – It shows a psychoanalytic view about spirituality and life quality.

Chapter XVI – It approaches the topic “Finding integrity”

Chapter XVII – This chapter is about the interdisciplinary nucleus of transdisciplinary studies on quality of life.

Throughout the chapters, the authors present the point of view of philosophers and theologians, as well as the reasons why the world has a fragmented view of the human being, which generated a dichotomy between body and soul: science accounted for the body, and philosophy for the soul. Such a conception generated many conflicts, and its effects have reverberated for centuries. Only now, at the millennium change, we are experiencing an interest for the relationship between science and religion, which were always considered as antagonistic.

According to the authors, it is now possible to devise a new horizon, where at one side are the scientists, who carry out research on the importance of religion for the human being; just like Einstein claimed in 1950, when he said that “a scientist could effectively be a religious men.” On the other side, there is the Pope John Paul II, who made a great step forward decreasing the distance between faith and science, when he launched the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, in 1998. He said that both faith and ratio are “like wings that elevate the human spirit so that men can contemplate the truth.”<sup>1</sup> Both walk side by side, and none should overlap the other.

The book tries to demonstrate that, in spite of difficulties involved in the study of religiosity, research in the health care and psychology areas prove that religion can affect the well being of its followers both negatively and positively, depending on how it is realized and practiced.

*Espiritualidade e qualidade de vida* shows in a very simple and clear way how important it is that professionals who deal with health care and human suffering understand and value spirituality. This work fosters reflection and proves the scientific character of the study on this topic, so that it can be demystified and a new paradigm about the man constructed.

Post-modernity has been facing a crisis on the meaning of life ever seen before. Although we have reached a high level of domain both of technique and science, we have been facing crises of values, moral, ethics, which generates pain, deception and increase violence. Today, we worship material things, possessions, power, leaving the spirituality aside. However, it is noticeable that there has been an increase in the search for the practice of values that had been forgotten, as spirituality, which so far had not been taken into account in the scientific setting.

Today, a large number of studies concerning spirituality confer it scientific acknowledgement as an important factor for cure, as well as for prevention and promotion of the individual's health. This movement is still small, but it is a significant step towards the union of different fields of knowledge.

Spirituality is a unique characteristic of the human being. According to the Dalai-Lama (apud Boff<sup>2</sup>), spirituality is “something that produces an interior change in the human being.” This

way, it is his major and final motivation, his ideals, his utopia, and passion, the mystic through which he lives and for which he fights; with spirituality, the individual shows his enthusiasm, which affects the others.”<sup>3</sup>

In *Espiritualidade e qualidade de vida*, the authors hope to develop a reflection upon spirituality and its importance for the promotion of the health of its followers, who have their quality of life improved.

## REFERENCES

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2. Boff L. *Espiritualidade: um caminho de transformação*. Rio de Janeiro: Sextante; 2001.
3. Casaldáliga DP. *Nossa espiritualidade*. São Paulo: Paulus; 1998.

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