

LAMA GOVINDA REVIEWS "THE ACT OF WILL"

In the spirit of World Psychosynthesis Day and Roberto Assagioli's urgent call "*to establish Spiritual 'Airways' between nations, institutions, movements and continents ...*", we would like establish connections between our magazine and other publishing entities that also focus on psychosynthesis.

In this issue, we refer to Catherine Ann Lombard's blog: *Love and Will - A psychosynthesis approach to living* (LoveAndWill.com)

Catherine has already collaborated with our magazine and the Istituto di Psicosintesi has published some of her work, most recently her translation of Assagioli's *Psicosintesi: Per l'armonia della vita (Creating Harmony in Life)*.

She also volunteers in Assagioli's archives at Casa Assagioli. You may read more about her at by clicking here (<https://loveandwill.com/about/>).

Among her numerous published articles, we have chosen one that draws its inspiration from her work in Assagioli's archive. This excerpt talks about Roberto Assagioli's meeting with Lama Govinda more than fifty years ago and Lama Govinda's review of *The Act of Will*.

You can read the article in full on Catherine's blog Lama Govinda Reviews "The Act of Will" (<https://loveandwill.com/2023/09/16/lama-govinda-reviews-the-act-of-will/>).

Enjoy your reading!

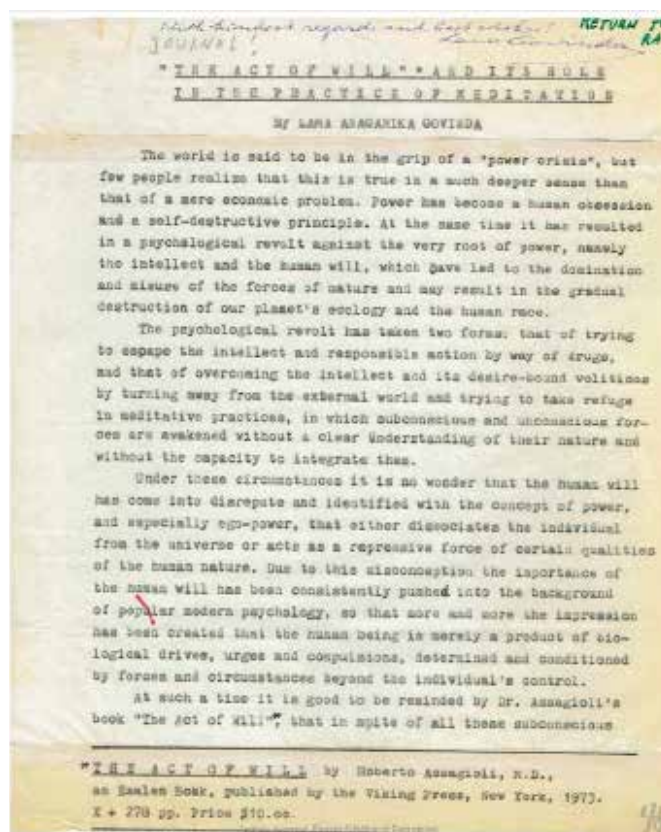
A few years ago while working in Assagioli's archives, I found an interesting document. It is a review by Lama Anagarika Govinda (1898-1985) of Roberto Assagioli's book *The Act of Will*. Govinda's review starts out with this very powerful statement, which can apply today as much as it did more than 50 years ago:

The world is said to be in the grip of a "power crisis", but few people realize that this is true in a much deeper sense than that of a mere economic problem. Power has become a human obsession and a self-destructive principle. At the same time it has resulted in a psychological revolt against the very root of power, namely the intellect and the human will, which have led to the domination and misuse of the forces of nature and may result in the gradual destruction of our planet's ecology and the human race.

(Lama Anagarika Govinda)

On the top margin of the first page of this typewritten review is a handwritten note by Lama Govinda to Assagioli: "With kindest regards and best wishes! Lama Govinda"

On the bottom margin of the last page, there is the



following handwritten note:

“Copy sent to the Editor *Psychosynthesis Journal*, San Francisco”

Govinda and Assagioli's Meeting

In his autobiography, Piero Ferrucci (<http://pieroferucci.it/indra.html>) writes about the two men's meeting which took place in Castiglioncello, Tuscany, in August 1972. Here is a brief excerpt:

“At one time Assagioli achieved a degree of fame overseas, far more than in Italy, and various people came to meet him. Lama Govinda came while Assagioli was spending a few days at Castiglioncello on the Tirrenian coast. Lama Govinda had written books on Tibetan Buddhism, and had made available to the western public its forgotten teachings. Assagioli and Lama Govinda were puny, frail old men with white beards and an air of wisdom about them.

His meeting with Assagioli was a great piece of theatre. Lama Govinda was slowly climbing a staircase with friends, Assagioli was waiting at the top and began going down the stairs to meet him.

He had asked me: “Should I greet him the Oriental way, with hands clasped, or the Western way, with a handshake?” A fair question, seeing as Lama Govinda was actually a German scholar transplanted in the East. I said he should greet him with hands clasped. When the meeting took place, Assagioli gave him the Oriental greeting, but Lama Govinda extended his hand. So Assagioli started to give him his hand, but meanwhile Lama Govinda had decided to greet with hands clasped. It looked like a strange ritual: East meets West.

“The conversation began and Lama Govinda pointed out that the concept of will in psychosynthesis was similar to that of the Buddhist virya, inner strength. After a while the two asked to be left alone... Sometime later the two of them came back looking radiant and resembling each other even more.”

Piero Ferrucci



Above are two photos of the two “puny, frail men with white beards.” I am not certain, but perhaps these photos are the ones mentioned by Lama Govinda.

Unfortunately, Govinda's review was never published by the *Psychosynthesis Journal*. However, a slightly edited version was published posthumously in *The Lost Teachings of Lama Govinda: Living Wisdom from a Modern Tibetan Master*, edited by Richard Power, foreword by Lama Surya Das. Quest Books, 2007.

What I found most interesting are Govinda's definitions of the Transpersonal Will and Universal Will.

“Transpersonal Will (which is the urge to find a meaning in life, the urge towards highest realization [Sanskrit: *Dharma-chanda*]) and the Universal Will (in which the human will is in perfect harmony with the universal law [*Dharma*]).”

Catherine Ann Lombard
Psychosynthesis Psychologist MA, Researcher and Writer

References

- To learn more about Lama Govinda, you can visit: *Lama Anagarika Govinda: The Pioneer Who Introduced Tibetan Buddhism to the World*
- <https://www.tsemrinpoche.com/tsem-tulku-rinpoche/buddhas-dharma/lama-anagarika-govinda-2.html>
- *Lama A. Govinda: The founder of the Arya Maitreya Mandala*
- <http://www.arya-maitreya-mandala.org/content/lamagovinda.htm>

