

LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR



Phyllis Clay, a spark

Translate by Gordon Symons

Last December 12, at the age of 75, Phyllis Clay, an American member of the Institute of Psychosynthesis and member of the “Guppo alle Fonti”, passed away.

I want to remember her as a human being who was full of life, as a psychosynthesisist and as a friend.

A real whirlwind of energy for the amount of activities, professional and cultural, to which she dedicated herself, following the powerful thread of an extraordinary ability to become enthusiastic and therefore face them head on: two degrees and several masters, but also deep research in the field of Native American shamanism, a deep-rooted spirituality and a passion for ballroom dancing, which she shared with her husband Stephen; an artistic practice proposed in her workshops on the “Road to Self”, participation as a management member in the early years of the AAP, organization of North American psychosynthesis, an intense bond with the figure of Roberto Assagioli, whom she considered her existential mentor, who brought her to Florence ...

We met in 1994, at a conference of the Institute, in which she - who came with her friends Massimo and Susie Rosselli - participated, although she hardly spoke a word of Italian. Far from suffering from it, she claimed to understand almost everything, absorbing in another way the meaning of what was being said ...

Naturally, our friendship was fostered by a shared passion for Psychosynthesis, and immediately we started collaborating in various ways, such as my participation with a paper in the publication she edited for AAP on *Reflections on the Will Part II: Transformation Through Will*, or holding workshops together on several occasions, in Italy and the USA.

In those years she had started coming to Florence once a year for a month, attending an Italian course but above all immersing herself for hours every day among the folders of the Assagioli Archive (those of the Studio, already cataloged at the time), carefully leafing through the manuscripts and everything she could find. At that time, I absolutely I did not understand her passion for those notes, which aroused no interest in me ...

In August 2005 Phyllis had just arrived to visit me in Rome when I received a phone call asking for my urgent presence in Florence: as an architect I was following the renovation works of the Institute’s headquarters and therefore I was asked to save the material of the so-called “esoteric room” located in the attic, which had been practically exposed by the construction company. So, we rushed to Via San Domenico, camping in the basement and starting to collect the materials that crammed the room, putting them in the boxes. ... and here our difference in attitude appeared: while I was worried about carrying out that task as quickly as possible, Phyllis was taken by the reading, sheet by sheet, of those manuscripts that she already knew and loved. My moment of irritation: what? There is a lot of work to be done, and you start to read every sheet that passes through your hands? I must say that there was almost no need for any response on her part: a moment later I found in my hands a beautiful letter (aesthetically beautiful too, thanks to her nineteenth-century calligraphy) from an Assagioli in his early twenties, addressed to his parents, in which he tells of a meeting with an interesting American doctor and above all of his intention to write a book entitled “Natura Animae Imago – Paesaggi e scene della vita interiore” adding that “as well as this one, there are four books that I want to write ...”.

From that moment, captured by the fascinating content of those notes and folders, the same spell that had possessed Phyllis for years also caught me. As a result, the pace of boxing work slowed down considerably and the initial illusion of being able to put everything in order diminished ...

But also, in that same moment a clear understanding was rooted in my consciousness: we had a real treasure

at our disposal, a rich and living material, which showed without mediation the long and constant work of an evolved consciousness dedicated to the maturing of the human psyche . The quantity and the wide range of reflections and themes offered the opportunity to different psychosynthesis enthusiasts, Italian and foreign, to be able to work and contact directly, holding those notes in hand, the inner work of the founder of psychosynthesis, and drawing deep nourishment . That is the moment when the whole experience of Casa Assagioli arose: the birth of the "Gruppo alle Fonti" of Psychosynthesis, the work to complete the Assagioli Archive, putting online the manuscript part of the historical Library and the International Documentation Center, to create the International and National Meetings, the Youth Project, the publication of Freedom in Prison, of the autographing Evocative Words ...

For nine years, until last September, Phyllis was part, with her constant enthusiasm, of the management staff of the International Meeting of Casa Assagioli, flying from the United States specifically for that special occasion, that she deemed to be special.

Sometimes, only in retrospect is it recognized that small things have generated great effects. Assagioli himself, in one of his notes, writes: "*Psychosynthesis: the life-giving spark has been given to me by M. Buber, 7 speeches on Judaism ...*" referring to the pages in which Synthesis is discussed.

Similarly, I believe that for the birth of the experience of Casa Assagioli, the world of Psychosynthesis can express thanks to Phyllis Clay, who was its *life-giving spark*.

Paola Marinelli



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The Second Psychosynthesis Coaching Symposium
12th February 2020 in London

A gathering of 85 coaches, most of whom were trained in Psychosynthesis and others who were interested in Psychosynthesis. A number of Italian Psychosynthesis coaches were present, as well as others from Switzerland, Norway, Russia and the Netherlands.

I was granted the opportunity to present the *Psicosintesi* magazine. I spoke to the audience about the precious articles in the magazine, from Assagioli himself, from those who were his students and from other notable psychosynthesists.

I also read an extract from an article which will appear in this April's magazine, "Casa Assagioli parla di sé" (PierMaria Bonacina).

The reading and the information that I shared were received with much appreciation and interest, particularly the fact that many of the articles are in English.

I directed those present to the *Psicosintesi* website and I invited them to consider contributing an article themselves.

I feel very proud to represent the magazine and the work of the Scientific Committee and I am hopeful that the readership and the contributions from English-speaking authors will increase as a result.

Gordon Symons

