

## Giancarlo Trombini on his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday



Prof. Giancarlo Trombini celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014. He has spent almost 50 years in academia. He graduated in Medicine and specialized in Clinical Mental Health at the University of Bologna, where he soon started his academic career becoming Assistant Professor of Psychology. After having qualified for University Teaching (1969), in 1975 he became Full Professor in General Psychology at the Facoltà di Magistero of the University of Padua. In 1977 he was called back by the University of Bologna to hold the chair of Psychosomatic Medicine, the first one in Italy. Then from 1990 to 2008 he held the chair of Clinical Psychology. In 2008 he retired from teaching, but remained in academia as Emeritus Professor.

During his career he has been Director of the School of Specialization in Psychology (1978-1990) and Director of the Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Psychosomatic Disorders (1989-2006), which was founded by him to promote the interdisciplinary dimension of research in Psychosomatic Medicine.

In particular, Giancarlo Trombini has focused his attention on the area of psychosomatic disorders and, in general, on the emotional implications linked to illness and its cure, both in developmental and adult age.

He addressed several research fields. His early studies focused on visual perception, where he utilized a specific type of apparent movement, named stroboscopic transformational movement; the results were published in the first issue of this Journal in 1979. He also studied several topics, in particular psychophysiological ones, using psychometric measures to explore the effects of conflicting situations experimentally induced on visceral reactivity in adult and infant patients affected by psychosomatic disorders. From these studies he came to a kind of research that was specifically clinical, based on the observation

conducted in the psychoanalytic setting, especially with psychosomatic patients. In fact, Giancarlo Trombini took the clinical road through psychoanalytic training, leading him to become a member of the International Psychoanalytic Association. His clinical path characterizes him among Prof. Renzo Canestrari's pupils, who developed their master's thought in Psychology, in the investigation of perceptive and cognitive, developmental, social, neuropsychological, psychophysiological and personological processes.

Giancarlo Trombini's research in his fields of interest led him to undertake clinical and scientific collaboration with the main Operative Units of Policlinico Universitario S.Orsola-Malpighi Hospital, making the psychosomatic integration possible both in research and in care.

His scientific production comprises more than 300 international and national publications, and some monographs also translated abroad. This reveals an education in which general psychology, in particular Gestalt Theory, and clinical psychology, specifically Psychoanalytic Theory, coexist.

Although Psychoanalysis has prevailed, Gestalt Theory has continued to represent the background to the "figures" that still appear in the shape of new scientific questions.

His constant attention to the conjunction of phenomenic and psychoanalytic perspectives, specifically in using explicative principles of Gestalt psychology to read clinical phenomena observed in psychotherapeutic practice, can be easily noticed in several studies. In particular this can be traced in his early studies on therapeutic efficacy of Focal Play Therapy, a specific psychotherapeutic technique he created to treat eating and evacuation disorders in children, and in his most recent studies. The paper published in this issue of the Journal is an example of the latter: the therapeutic change in psychoanalytic treatment is highlighted through the structural modifications of representational configurations present in the patient's oneiric contents and free associations.

Prof. Giancarlo Trombini's numerous pupils intend, through these notes, to remember his long activity as a Professor, a Researcher and a Master, wishing him all the best for his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with gratitude and affection.

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