

Session in memoriam of Ileana Iori: Introductory Words

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In opening this session devoted to the memory of Ileana Iori, I beg you to allow me to remember not only the words we already spend in her memory as they are reported in the Proceedings of the Meeting of the last year, which are distributed here today, but also a personal touching event. Almost three years ago in 2007, when she was in Legnaro among many other friends and colleagues to celebrate my 80th birthday (see Fig.1, 2).

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Let me recall just the first words she said at that occasion: "... to speak of Renato I feel a little bit embarrassed. I will not speak of him as a physicist, others will do it, but I will tell few words of Renato as a man and as a friend". This is exactly my feeling today in speaking of Ileana, with more emotion of course, and a great sorrow in realizing once again that she is no more here to open the Bormio Meeting, her Bormio Meeting. I will therefore "tell few words of Ileana as a woman and as a friend".

I knew Ileana (I am using her words), I do not remember exactly when, but more than thirty or forty years ago. We worked together for short periods of time, as our fields of specific interest were quite different: I was always active in Nuclear Structure when she was doing Nuclear Reactions and Nuclear Dynamics. In fact, with the advent of Heavy Ion physics, we could enjoy a common interest and research activity especially in the field of dissipative reactions at the Tandem Accelerator in Legnaro. Nevertheless, we met many times out of professional activities but still related to our common life as physicists.

Ileana, in her speech in Legnaro, did remember one of the most exciting and interesting occasion when in 1967 we went to Tokyo ("a beautiful interesting travel in Far East") for the International Conference of Nuclear Physics and where I participated with the family, my wife and the two children, (Ileana described me as "a kind of snail, travelling with his home").



Figure 1: Ileana in year 2007, when she was in Legnaro among many other friends and colleagues to celebrate my 80th birthday.

In describing that event, as well as many others, Ileana revealed her great sensibility which was always related to her particular vision of the life. She was a “single” woman but never “alone”. She was really a person that you could not consider as confined to a physics world (I mean both the world of physics and the physical world) and this allowed her to appear and to be always present where the community to which she had decided to belong, would need a human touch and a common feeling in our life of physicists. Perhaps the more appropriate definition of such particular aspect of Ileana has been made by Luciano Moretto in saying that “... She lived physics as she lived her human condition. Physics was never detached from the physicist who presented it, from his or her individuality and connection with Ileana’s world”. We were particularly honored for having been considered as members of this world, a precious gift we will never forget.

Concerning Bormio, we all realized, and now more than before, how this magnificent corner of Alps had been chosen as an essential part of her life and even of her departure. It sounds terribly monotonous (it is true however) to repeat that she was the brain and the soul of the Bormio Conference, which, under her direction, became the natural home of the Nuclear Physics winter meetings, a magic but so human event, where her qualities, so precious and uncommon, allowed for a realistic assessment of a special way for all of us to meet together.



Figure 2: A moment of the celebration my 80th birthday in Legnaro together with Ileana and Luciano Moretto.

It was her inner intellectual force that enabled her, in spite of the apparent frailty, to be so dy-

namic and vigorous as a real “force of the nature”. And I will repeat what with Marcello Pignanelli, who cannot be present today with us, we said in her memory: “She was capable of unifying a deep cultural and human interiority with a vital verve. This was even contagious up to lavish the joy of life, the joy to be there even if mixed up with a subtle and delicate irony”. This is the reason why Ileana is still so present with us even if we realize that a great discontinuity did occur in our life as members of the Bormio Nuclear community. She is no more with us. But we shall continue to come and to meet here also on her memory.