Università di Firenze Dipartimento di Formazione, Lingue, Intercultura, Letterature e Psicologia

Corso in Lingua e Cultura degli U.S.A. John Gilbert

The Origins of International Women’s Day

**Answer sheet**: Put an appropriate preposition in the blanks and then reconstruct the article by putting the paragraphs back in the correct order.

“How International Women's Day Began”

Adapted from 16 March 2000 issue of *Workers World* newspaper (N.Y.) by Sue Davis, N.Y.

\_\_1\_\_ A. International Women's Day, March 8, was born **in/from/out of** struggle. **(On)** that day **in** 1908 thousands **of** working and poor women, mostly East European immigrants, surged **out** of needle-trade sweatshops and tenements **on** New York's Lower East Side and marched defiantly **to** Union Square, where they held a militant rally.

\_\_7\_\_ B. **In** the United States **in** the 1950s, the vicious Cold War repression and an anti-communist witchhunt undermined this tradition **of** women’s struggle. Though groups **like/such as** the Women's International League **for** Peace and Freedom tried **to** keep the IWD spirit alive, the day was no longer the torch **of** freedom **for** women it once had been.

\_\_4\_\_ C. That thousands **of** working women dared **to** voice demands **for** a better life **for** themselves and their families made headlines. When news **of** it was telegraphed **to** Europe, German socialist Clara Zetkin saw it **as** the sign **of** the working-class women's movement she had been waiting **for** **(ever) since** she first raised the demand **for** equal rights **for** women **in/within** the socialist movement **in** 1889.

\_\_8\_\_ D. But **by** 1970, following the successes **of** the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement, a new progressive era had begun. Many young veterans **of/in** those struggles had also begun rebelling **against** their second-class status **as** women.

\_\_5\_\_ E. Finally, **in** 1910, **under** Zetkin's leadership and **with** the support **of** Rosa Luxemburg and the Russians Alexandra Kollantai and V.I. Lenin, the Second International’s Conference **of** Socialist Women **in** Copenhagen established International Women's Day, which in 1913 would be set on 8 March.

\_10\_\_ F. And these activists who gave birth **to** the Women's Liberation Movement **in** the 1970s were inspired **by** the history and tradition **of** International Women's Day.

\_\_3\_\_ G. Their speeches denouncing the bosses, the landlords, the bankers, and all who oppressed them showed extraordinary revolutionary working-class consciousness.

\_\_6\_\_ H. International Women’s Day symbolized the struggle **for** a thorough-going emancipation **of** women -- **from** economic exploitation, centuries-old patriarchal domination, and all forms **of** oppression and inequality.

\_\_9\_\_ I. They were furious **at/about** being paid half **of** what men made, **at/about** being segregated **at/about** "women's jobs," **at/about** the sexual double standard, **at/about** illegal abortion and the oppression **of** lesbians, **at/about** the silence protecting incest and domestic violence, and **at/about** being measured **against/by/with** Caucasian beauty-queen standards.

\_\_2\_\_ J. The women marched **under/with** the suffragist banner **of/for** "Votes **for** Women," but their demands **for** higher wages and better working conditions also struck a blow **against/at** capitalism.