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

Corso di Traduzione in Lingua inglese John Gilbert

adapted from “Primo Levi: ‘La memoria è come il mare’” (“P.L.: ‘”(The) Memory is L/like the Sea’”)

by Ilaria Romeo, in *Collettiva,* 13 December 2022

Tratta da: <https://www.collettiva.it/copertine/culture/2022/12/13/news/primo_levi-2563064/?fbclid=IwAR1HBwT6FNZIkELZDplNw8R0-rfzZHL-RBMg6dqoz5PELvZnHPNbrPuJta0>

(On) (The) 11 April 1987 Primo Levi died, probably (by/of/a/for?) suicide. (An) Anti-Fascist/antifascist

(by) committing suicide.

the Valley of Aosta,

partisan, Levi was arrested (on) (the) 13 December 1943 by the Fascists in (the) Valle d’Aosta/the Aosta Valley,

(being)(at) first sent to a collection/collecting/gathering/transit/concentration/prison/sorting?/screening?

camp in Fossoli and, in February of the next year, deported to the (Auschwitz) concentration camp (at

Auschwitz) as/(for) being a Jew/Jewish. Having come out/emerged/escaped alive from//managed to

survive//survived the lager/concentration camp, he returned//came/went? back to Italy, where he

would dedicate/devoted himself with commitment/diligence/passion/devotion/dedication//completely/earnestly

/tirelessly/assiduously to the task/work of recounting/telling/divulging the atrocities (he had) seen/witnessed

and undergone/suffered /endured, (to) the telling/recounting of which he would dedicate/pledged his entire

to whose recounting he would devote

existence (to). He never managed/was never able to/could never forget that experience so full of/filled with

He did not ever succeed in forgetting

atrocities and horrors.

If understanding/comprehending (it) is impossible, (as) he would/used to say, knowing (it)/being aware of

If it is impossible to understand, it is necessary to know,

come about

it is necessary. Because/Since/As what (has?) happened/occurred/took place can/may? return/come back/recur

and (the/people’s) consciences can/may? (still) be/get corrupted (again/once more). (Even) Ours (as well).

Because/Since/As “All those who/that forget their past are condemned/doomed/bound to relive it//live

“Everyone who forgets their past is

/experience it (over) again.”

He wrote:/, “(The) Young people ask us/“We are asked by the young/(the) youth (…) who our

‘tormentors’/‘persecutors’ were, what (stuff/material) they were made (out) of/out of what stuff they

were made. The term (…) in my opinion/according to me is inapt/inappropriate/not appropriate/unfitting

/unsuitable/(*not* improper). It makes you/one think of/(about) distorted/twisted/unsound/disturbed/warped

It gives (one/you) the idea of individuals who/that were distorted,

(born ill/sick?)

individuals, born badly/badly born, sadistic/sadists, affected by/suffering from a defect/imperfection/flaw/vice?

just like us.

from birth/of origin//an original/inborn defect. Instead/On the contrary they were made of our same stuff/cloth

the start. of the same material as us/we are.

They were average human beings, of average intelligence/averagely intelligent, of average evil/averagely evil:

humans in the norm, malice:

except for/apart from/save/barring (some) exceptions, they were not monsters. They had our (same) faces,

exceptions apart/aside,

but they had been (badly) educated/brought up (badly)/wrong/wrongly/in a bad way.”

“(The) Memory is like the sea: it can give back/return shreds/scraps/fragments/pieces of debris

/wreckage after years//years later//at a distance/interval of years(,)” and Levi would never be able to forget

was never to succeed in forgetting was never to manage to forget

could never manage/was never able to forget

his own past

that past of his so full of atrocities and horrors. Although/Though the (by far/far and away) most accredited

/credited hypothesis (by far)//the hypothesis/supposition/theory which/that is by far the most accredited/widely

accepted/supported is/was that of (the/a) suicide, some (have?) maintained/argued that the fall could/might

have been caused/provoked by//due to the serious/bad/severe/intense vertigo/dizziness/dizzy spells

afflicting Levi.

which/that Levi suffered from/had. “I can no longer (manage to) write,” he said to Giulio Einaudi three days

“I am no longer able to write”/“I can’t manage to write anymore,”

before/prior to his death.

(…)