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

Corso di Traduzione in Lingua inglese John Gilbert

Extract from *Notturno indiano* (1984) by Antonio Tabucchi

*(Indian Nocturne;* translation by Tim Parks 1989 *Indian Nocturne)*

*Indian Night?*

(…)

IV

“What are we doing inside (of) these bodies,” said the man (who/that was) preparing to

the man/gentleman? said, getting ready to

stretch out on close to

lie down in the bed near mine.

interrogatory/questioning

His voice did not have an interrogative tone. Perhaps/Maybe it was not a question. It was only

He did not use an interrogative tone/the tone of a question. just

(an ascertainment? =*accertamento/verifica)* (, in a way.)

(his way of making) an observation/consideration/assertation/affirmation/statement (, in its/his own way.)

In any case/Anyway (infml)/Anyhow (NAmE infml spoken), it would have been a question (which/that) I

couldn’t/could not have answered//couldn’t answer.

/would not have been able to answer//have known how to answer//wasn’t able to answer. The light

(that/to which) I wouldn’t have been able to respond (to).

which/that came/coming from the platforms of the station was yellow and traced/outlined/drew/cast

from the station platforms

(nimbly?/agilely?)

/projected/threw/reflected? on the peeling/flaking walls his thin shadow which moved (gingerly/lightly)

moving with lightness/agility,

in/around/across the room (gingerly/lightly), with prudence and discretion, it seemed to me, as/the way

(all?) (the) Indians move/do. From far away/a distance/afar (there) (came) a slow, monotonous/monotone

voice (came), perhaps/maybe a prayer or a solitary lament/(wail/wailing?) without hope,

(was coming), a lamentation, lonely? and without hope,

a lone, hopeless lament,

just expressing asking for nothing.

like those laments/lamentations which/that express only themselves, without asking (for) anything.

It was impossible for me to decipher/decode it. India was (also) this (as well/, too): a universe of flat,

undifferentiated/indistinct, indistinguishable sounds.

“Perhaps we travel/are traveling inside/in (of) them,” I said.

A bit of/A little time must have passed since his first sentence. I was lost in far-off/faraway

There must have passed some time I had become/gotten lost in

It must have been a while after his initial words/statement.

/distant/remote considerations/reflections: a few minutes of sleep, perhaps. I was very tired.

some minutes of sleeping, maybe.

He said: “What did you say?”

“I was referring to (the) bodies,” I said. “Perhaps they are like suitcases. We carry/transport/

/are carrying/transporting ourselves (in them/inside).”

Over/Above/Atop the door (there) was a light blue/an azure nightlight/light bulb?, as/like in/on the

wagons/carriages/cars of (the) night trains. Mixing with the yellow light which/that came/coming from

the window, it created a greenish light, almost (like) an aquarium/a fishtank. I looked at him and in

the greenish light, almost mournful/funereal/sorrowful, I saw the profile/outline of a sharp/angular face,

with a slightly aquiline/hooked nose, (his) hands on his chest.

(…)