

TRACCIA 3 - PROVA SCRITTA ING – ITA

TRADURRE IN ITALIANO:

Natalia Ginzburg's principal concern as a writer is the disintegration of the family in contemporary society, leading to broken marriages, solitude, the loss of innocence and the futility of human aspirations. A subtle sense of irony, at times reminiscent of Emily Dickinson's, pervades her work.

I found Mrs Ginzburg in her office at the Rome branch of the Einaudi publishing house, where she is a director. The room overlooked the house where Keats died, at the foot of the Spanish Steps in Piazza di Spagna.

The conversation, said Ginzburg, lighting a cigarette, would have to be conducted in Italian. English, she explained, is the most difficult language in the world. Then she began to speak about her major theme: the death of the family.

'I have never written about the family as though it were an entirely contented unit. Far from it. Often it turns out to be a nest of contagious germs, full of harmful and malicious forces. Nevertheless I believe the family is absolutely irreplaceable. Its ties form a kind of fertile soil from which we draw sustenance, to which we turn in times of need. The weakening of its connections in the twentieth century is nothing short of tragedy.'

I asked Ginzburg if such an opinion could be considered reactionary. Other Italian writers of the ideological Left have cursed the family as the bane of their society. 'Perhaps I am something of a reactionary,' replied Ginzburg. 'A reactionary in certain of my nostalgic affections for institutions and ways of the past, though certainly not in my political beliefs.'