



Primo Levi's Narratives of Embodiment: Containing the Human (Routledge Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature)

Charlotte Ross

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This innovative reading of Primo Levi's work offers the first sustained analysis in English of his representations of bodies and embodiment. Discussion spans the range of Levi's works ? from testimony to journalism, from essays to science fiction stories ? identifying and tracing multiple narratives of embodiment and disembodiment across his oeuvre. These narratives range from the abject, disembodied condition of prisoners in Auschwitz, to posthuman or cyborg individuals, whose bodies merge with technological devices. Levi's representations of bodies are explored in relation to theories of embodiment and posthumanism, bringing his work into new dialogue with critical discourses on these issues. Taking inspiration from Levi's definition of the human being as a constructor of containers, as well as from the recurring references to both material and metaphorical containing structures in his work, the book suggests that for Levi, embodiment involves constant negotiations of containment. He depicts the complex relationships between physical and social bodies, the material and the immaterial self, the conscious and unconscious subject, the organic and the technologically-enhanced body, engaging with evolving understandings of the boundaries of the body, the self, and the human.

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