

CALL FOR PAPERS



Beyond Adaptation.

Theories, Forms and Aesthetic of Media Transcoding

L'Aquila, February 4th-5th 2019 – Department of Human Science - Excellence 2018-2022

Organising committee: Massimo Fusillo, Mirko Lino, Lorenzo Marchese, Lucia Faienza



First, seen as a formal entity or product, an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works. This “transcoding” can involve a shift of medium (a poem to a film) or genre (an epic to a novel), or a change of frame and therefore context: telling the same story from a different point of view, for instance, can create a manifestly different interpretation. Transposition can also mean a shift in ontology from the real to the fictional, from a historical account or biography to a fictionalized narrative or drama.

(Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, Routledge, London 2011).

Starting from this brief, non-prescriptive definition, with this conference we invite potential interested scholars to participate in a full-ranging debate on modes of transcoding a text into another semiotic frame. To do so, we shall take into account the modalities of adaptation, as well as its most recent formal and procedural developments, with particular regard to ways and forms of intermediality and transmediality.

Our aim is to pay special attention to the patterns occurring during the transition from one medium to another, in a context in which there is a close interrelationship between literary and audiovisual artistic languages; a context in which long-standing media and technological innovations produce storytelling narration that hybridise codes and languages (book, movies, television; but also contemporary art, video installations, videogames, Internet and its creative uses, such as fandom, memes, online videos, webseries and so on). Moreover, if we consider intermediality – a widespread notion in the academic international debate by now, which provides for a text of any kind (literary, audiovisual, theatrical, ecc.) including languages, forms, styles, codes and aesthetics from several media, within a relation of integration, cooperation and complementarity. This *modus operandi* can be found in several experimental visual forms, such as in performing arts, multimedia plays, videomapping installations (which put back the movie experience in specific urban architectural contexts), selected applications of Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality technologies. In addition to intermediality, a “transmedia” approach has increasingly taken shape: such an approach envisages a narration expanding throughout different media arranged in a converging, interrelated way (transmedia storytelling).

How does the theory of adaptation deal with such formal and procedural developments? What is left of the idea of adaptation among traditional media? What requires, instead, a theoretical recalibration, starting from digital evolution in media environments and ensuing narrative practices? What is the artistic and communicative extent of the increasing interrelation between different media, which leads an artwork to become a *brand*, readapted into a wider network? How do both kinetic and static features – crucial for the realisation of an artwork – modify, intersect and evolve across adaptation? How do we deal with adaptations stretching toward interactivity? Is it possible to reduce the distance from the audience through digital media?

In order to answer these questions, we invite scholars from involved fields of research to send proposals for interventions. Interdisciplinary approaches will be preferred. Participants are invited to send a proposal concerning any of the following guidelines:

- 1) **Theories of adaptations:** methodological, critical and philosophical discussions about transposition/translation, intermediality and transmediality, seen as relevant categories for a critical theory of culture;
- 2) **Cultural adaptations:** translation-transmigration of a narrative, cinematographic, theatrical text, produced in a given historical-cultural context, into another form, both from a chronological (transmigration from a historical period to another, as in the “updating”) and spatial perspective (from a region/country to another);
- 3) **Practices of adaptation:** studying forms, producers, recipients and contexts of production/fruiting of a single adaptation in the contemporary media production (both Italian and international). In particular, we aim to support intermedial comparisons between different adaptations of a single source text, as well as long-range analysis of the impact of a single adaptation taken into consideration;
- 4) **Pathways of adaptation:** web platforms for cooperative writing, textual productions of *grassroots* culture, cultural appropriations of contemporary narrations and mythologies that may already be

consolidated into the audience's imagery; forms and practices of media-activism and performativity (e.g. cosplaying, flash mobs and such "fictional" activities); narrative and productive strategies underlying transmedia and intermedia storytelling;

- 5) **Adaptations in videoart**: videomapping, performative art, multimedial theatre and other intermedial forms: Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality experiences (based upon literary, movie and theatrical imageries).

Proposals must be submitted to the following address: **adaptationsconference2019@gmail.com**

We accept only proposals containing: a **500** words abstract, **5** keywords, a short **biographical profile** and a valid **email address**.

Submission deadline: **December 8th, 2018**

Notification of acceptance: **December 31th, 2018**

Duration of the talk: **20 minutes** each (excluding questions and answers)

Languages accepted: **Italian, English**

Keynote speakers:

Gino Frezza (Università di Salerno),

Irina Rajevsky (Freie Universität Berlin),

Federico Zecca (Università di Bari)