



International conference

The photo text (auto)biographical: borders and traumas

Genoa, 8-10 May 2024

As part of the PRIN 2020 (Relevant National Interest Project) "The Phototext: rhetoric, poetics and cognitive aspects" (2020YB7J25), the Research Unit of the University of Genoa - M. Amatulli, E. Bricco, R. Francavilla, M. Gaboriaud, L. Quercioli, S. Riva, C. Rolla - organizes a conference on the poetics of trauma, which continues the reflection on the specificities of phototextual narration begun in October 2023 during the study seminar "Images, despite the text, 'around' to the Shoah" (Urbino 17-18 October 2023).

In this second scientific meeting we intend to reflect on the phototextual creation paths of authors driven by personal and/or collective needs linked to narration, also in a restorative way, of traumatic events. These itineraries of personal, autobiographical, biographical and/or documentary creation, in which photography and writing converge in the production of intermedial works, will be questioned starting from approaches focused on the original causes of trauma: historical events that have had both collective and individual, and personal events that have led to disappearances, losses and bereavements.

We will start from the observation that, usually, authors deal with the painful story of events/traumas with the aim of overcoming them and that the creative act can be considered as a stage in the process of overcoming the difficult situation with the aim of arriving at repair. In this perspective, writing and photographic apparatus are part of processes that sometimes lead to experiences of assistance, care and re-elaboration, to achieve resilience and *empowerment*.

The conference intends to investigate the way in which the phototext interacts with the (auto)biographical genre and renews it. It will be possible to establish a dialogue between the reconstruction of individual memory in relation to collective memory. For example, we will ask ourselves what the contribution of the images from the family album and those from the collective archive is, and how we can possibly make up for the absence of images (family archives destroyed by wars, lost in migrations...).

The reflection will focus on the notion of border, starting from the problematic relationship between photography and text. We will ask ourselves about creative experiences that address the notions of:

- Insurmountable borders: war experience (recent after 1970), terrorism, mafia, natural disasters, climate crisis, economic crises, pandemics...
- Borders crossed: migratory experiences, exile, gender, social class...
- Perceived boundaries: illness, disability, bereavement, abuse, discrimination...

Of course, it is difficult to distinguish borders when it comes to human experiences therefore the three borders listed above are to be understood as porous spaces that can communicate with each other.

Proposals that call into question the (auto)fictional or documentary status of the phototext and the role of the format of phototextual devices (which media? which diffusion? for which readers?) will be gladly welcomed.

[Consult the bibliographic selection online](#)

Scientific committee: Margareth Amatulli, Elisa Bricco, Michele Cometa, Roberto Francavilla, Marie Gaboriaud, Vittorio Gallese, Magali Nachtergaele, Laura Quercioli, Silvia Riva, Maria Rizzarelli, Chiara Rolla.

Organizing committee: Elisa Arecco, Eliana Bergaglio, Rebecca Biallo

Guest artists: Olenka Carrasco (France- Venezuela), Delio Jasse (Italy-Angola), Pasquale Polidori (Italy), Libera Zbigniew (Polonia)

Keynote speakers: Cristina Demaria (University Alma Mater Bologna), Magali Nachtergaele (University Bordeaux Montaigne)

Organization

Conference languages: Italian, English, French

Days: Wednesday 8/05 pm, Thursday 9/05 am and pm, Friday 10/05 am and pm

The proposal must include a provisional title, an abstract of no more than 5,000 characters and a short bio-bibliographic note. It must be sent to fototestogenova2024@gmail.com by **November 30, 2023**.

Responses will be given after December 15, 2023.

The conference will be organized in such a way that all participants will have to travel and stay at their own expense. Lunches and dinners will be organised. There is no registration fee.

The publication of the proceedings is expected: all works will be subjected to double blind review.

All details will be published on the dedicated web page

For information write to fototestogenova2024@gmail.com



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