CALL FOR SUBMISSION

International Conference

Technoscientific Imaginaries
Narratives, power, society

Como-Milan, Italy
October 17-19, 2024

The conference aims to develop a multilevel reflection to prospect a socially sustainable evolution of the human-machine relationship, in which the construction of software, hardware, and wetware is realized based on conscious and critical modeling of the connection between mind and technology, to actively support forms of human-machine interaction consistent with the evolution of cognitive and social ecologies that follow the ideal of a human self-development that is not subjected to anything, but based on cognitive and social technologies, in particular those who deal with:

- the fear of a world without humans: **a phobic image** that reflects the fear of being kicked out of the human-machine relationship;
- the positivistic magnification and enthusiast storytelling of the radiant and unstoppable future made possible with machines, and of the generation of a new humanity (posthumanism, transhumanism): **a maniacal image** that leads to the *mythification* of technoscientific forms hiding animism and magical thinking;
- the symbolic forms of power validation, social relation, and dominant values on repressive and persuasive levels: **a censor image**.

The aim is to encourage the inclusion of technoscience into the human according to a dynamic of *interaction* that produces mutual influence and prepares for a straight co-evolution on the one hand; towards an improvement of the ethical dimension of cognitive and social technologies on the other; pointing to a positive self-development of humanity through its very same technology production. That will generate an image able to activate a feeling of **philia** that does not involve an ultimate synthesis nor a total identification.

The study of techno-scientific imaginaries, particularly increased after the beginning of cybernetics, the spread of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the digital (Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Mixed Reality), and "social and creative machines," seems to be the most urgent because of the uncontrolled proliferation of symbolization in socio-cultural processes and of the categories that inform social relations and political discourse. It seems urgent to submit these dynamics and forms of conceptualisation to a genealogical analysis and forms of conceptualization to identify the permanent and changing elements at the discursive, representative, and ontological, as well as epistemological,

levels. If, as the robotics researcher Masahiro Mori suggested in the 1970s, there is the risk of plunge into an *uncanny valley*, there is a need to work on anthropological and epistemological structures of this imaginary. If, as Daniel-Henri Pageaux states, "the image is the literary and non-literary expression of a significant gap between two different orders of cultural reality"then it is indeed this gap that is the proper space to:

- seek to understand the mechanisms that control the making, dissemination, operation, and, in general, the life of images produced and related to techno-sciences;

- analyze the tensions and conflicts produced by such images;

- promote the demystification of "hurdle images" that act unconsciously and the enhancement of the co-evolutionary integration between humans and machines also through imagery intended as a way of *linking* images;

- analyze the germinative function of these images by relating them to "thought experiences" and the way they are presented in techno-sciences literature;

- identify and reconfigure the deep links between images and techno-scientific paradigms, toward a reorganization of the dominant ones to support the social sustainability of human-machine interaction;

- analyze and understand the practices of reading and decoding semiotic, symbolic, and linguistic studies on the imaginaries of technology and science transmitted through literary translation. This does not mean developing a theoretical model of translation practice, but rather developing a linguistic, historical, and socio-cultural study aimed at evaluating the act of translation through the lens of both poetic (lexical contributions, stylistic changes, genre modifying,...) and socio-cultural issues (translation as a tool of literary communication through which a thematic or morphological gap is filled), not to mention that other, equally important facts guide the practice of translation: title changes, children's editions of works written for the general readership, the material conditions of production and dissemination of translation, the critical and editorial discourse accompanying the text in translation;

- investigate the knowledge-power relationship (Chiodi, Wunenburger) in new technologies and the triggers that such technologies produce on the structural, symbolic, and cognitive levels, as much in terms of the social-cultural aspect, as in terms of risking to live in a totalitarian-type drift based on surveillance and capillary control of bodies and minds.

The conference, organized by the *Centre de Recherche Internationale sur l'Imaginaire* (Cri2i), the *Centro Insubre di Studi Politici* (CISP) - Università degli Studi dell'Insubria and the Departments of *Studi Umanistici* and *Comunicazione Arti e media* - IULM University, will take place from **Thursday 17 to Saturday 19 October 2024** in the Como and Milan venues.

Proposals (word or pdf file) must include an **abstract** (max. length **300 words**), a short **bibliography**, **5 keywords**, and **personal data** (Name, Surname, academic affiliation, email) and be sent to technoscienceconference2024@gmail.com before **May 31, 2024**.

Participants are encouraged to attend in person.
Online paper presentations will be restricted to a few parallel sessions, and some will be reserved for extraordinary last-minute emergencies.

The participation fees are established as follows:

Full Participation (Professors): **80 Euros**
Full Participation (PhD Students): **60 Euros**
Online Participation: **30 Euros**

Communication will soon be given on how to pay the chosen participation fee once the notice of acceptance is received.