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The doctoral dissertation *Adaptation strategies in the films of Bernardo Bertolucci* provides an analysis of eight films by the Italian director, starting with *The Grim Reaper* and ending with *The Sheltering Sky*. My research covers the period from 1962 to 1990 - between Bertolucci's debut and the time the director of *The Last Emperor*, winner of the Academy Award, became one of the most respected authors of world cinema. From the perspective of nearly thirty years I was able to take a look at the evolution of the artist, and define the stages, in which particular adaptation strategies became dominant. A careful study of individual works of Bertolucci, their multiple contexts taken into account, allowed me to show the remarkable erudition of the director, who most often draws from the rich treasury of culture. My interests included the adaptation as a method of cinema, as well as the attitude of the director (who is called "a pre-postmodernist") to the heritage of the past hallowed by tradition. The subject of my research is the works of Bertolucci which can be treated as literary adaptations, however, the films analyzed here are sometimes untypical specimens of adaptation, which in Bertolucci's cinema is a complex process of transformation "the genetic material" undergoes, and not merely the assimilation of the original. Within the field of film studies, the concept of adaptation includes the specificity of the cinema medium - not only does it refer to the filming of literary works, but is also an adaptation of the works of painting, theater and opera, as well as philosophical ideas and aesthetics. Considering Bernardo Bertolucci’s films in their multiple aspects, I refer primarily to the adapted literary texts, and then to the cited and paraphrased fragments from the history of cinema. Moreover, I make references to philosophical texts, writings by theorists of cinema, as well as trace intertextual links to the world of painting, opera and theater, so as to attempt to determine the forms in which the cited texts of culture manifest themselves at different levels in the structure of a film. Bernardo Bertolucci is not usually limited to adapting literature, therefore narrowing the research perspective solely to the literature-film relationship would be a mistake. The artist simultaneously reaches for various cultural texts: images (René Magritte, Francis Bacon), operas (predominantly Giuseppe Verdi), theater projects (Antonin Artaud’s Theatre of Cruelty, The Living Theater), films by other directors (especially Jean-Luc Godard and Pasolini as well as other Italian and international directors), philosophical works (Georges Bataille, Plato), writings by cinema theorists (Jean-Louis Baudry, Pier Paolo Pasolini), which often play a more important role in the film than a literary work. I present films in the chronological order, treating them as examples of adaptation strategies, showing a rich repertoire of the adaptor’s creative potential. Such an approach has allowed me to create a monographic outline of Bernardo Bertolucci’s filmmaking.