

CO-PRODUCTION POLICIES AND PRACTICES II: INDUSTRY-DRIVEN CO-PRODUCTION

Chair: Jaap Verheul

Summary:

This is one of two panels proposed by the International Coproduction Research Network, a consortium of scholars working on the policies and practices that shape international coproduction around the world. The first panel on policy-driven, 'official coproduction' is proposed by Julia Hammett-Jamart.

This second panel investigates industry-driven co-productions, also known as financial joint ventures, which do not necessarily fall under the auspices of intergovernmental agreements, although they may continue to be informed by their policies and regulations. The panel looks at the impetuses for collaboration between producers and companies, historical precedents for contemporary coproduction practices, the influence of fiscal incentives on transnational cooperation, and the impact of runaway productions on small film-producing nations.

Jaap Verheul discusses British heritage dramas that were co-produced for television by the UK with Flanders to benefit from the latter's availability of regional subsidies and tax schemes. Verheul argues that these miniseries signify the economic benefits of pan-European collaboration while simultaneously re-articulating essentialist notions of "Britishness."

Monia Acciari discusses early cinematic co-ventures between the Indian company Madan Theatres Ltd. and Italy during the era of British colonialism to assess how Indian-based producers developed an anti-colonial dialectic, through Indo-European collaboration, to advance a stronger national identity.

Ilse Schooneknaep demonstrates that industry-driven support mechanisms, such as tax shelter schemes, engender greater budgets, encourage foreign producers to enter into minority co-production agreements, and offer supplemental investment in domestic industries. Such initiatives, Schooneknaep suggests, alter our understanding of co-productions, as they reduce cultural collaboration to the availability of financial resources and fiscal rebates.

Petr Szczepanik examines non-official co-production practices such as minority co-productions and smaller-scale production services. These practices, he posits, facilitate knowledge transfer and enhanced visibility for local talent, while allowing smaller film-producing nations to realize projects with larger budgets and collaborate with prominent producers and directors. In the process, they promise to overcome the "invisible ceiling" of the runaway production, which positions the local crew in a lower tier in the professional hierarchy.