

ABSTRACT PRIN 2017

Modes, Memories and Cultures of Italian Film Production 1949-1976

The PRIN-funded "[Modes, Memories and Cultures of Italian Film Production 1949-1976](https://doi.org/10.54103/2036-461X/22508)" (MMC4976) project is a collaborative research led by the Udine University (Principal Investigator: prof. Mariapia Comand) and carried out by scholars from six universities (IULM in Milan, Parma, Roma Tre, Cagliari and eCampus). It partners with institutions in the field of film industry (AGIS Triveneto, ANICA) and preservation (Archivio Storico Istituto Luce, Archivio Centrale di Stato, Biblioteca "Luigi Chiarini" CSC Rome, Cineteca "Renzo Renzi", Bologna).

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The project's aim is to detect the distinctive socio-economic and cultural features that shaped the Italian production system from the post-WWII period to the mid-1970s. Such a wide time span is sub-divided in three, shorter periods: 1949-54 (for the increase in film production after "Andreotti's law" to the first of Italian cinema's cyclical crises); 1958-63 (a still flourishing phase during national government's political shift); 1971-76 (the last growing stage before the liberalization of television frequencies). The methodological framework intertwines a long-standing tradition in political-economic studies on the modes of film production with the more recent interest in professional communities' cultural stances. The first line of inquiry is aimed at reconstructing how the system worked on a macro-level, paying attention to the institutional features and to the corporate and political strategies; the second one takes a close look at the professional figures employed in the organizational and craft dimensions of filmmaking, enlightening the

discursive (self)representations of specific trade communities.

In line with this multi-sided approach, the research has considered different orders of historical source-materials: institutional papers on ANICA's activities preserved in the Oppido Lucano Film Archive were re-organized and inventoried; datasets were extracted from the cataloguing of paperworks on the co-production of feature films preserved at the Archivio Centrale di Stato in Rome; an extensive survey on audiovisual sources preserved by public television (RAI) and non-fiction film archives (Luce, Aamood) was completed; the memoirs of several film industry laborers or their heirs' were captured on camera; finally, entire collections of Italian trade press journals (*Araldo dello spettacolo*, *Cinemundus*, *Cinespettacolo*, *Giornale dello spettacolo*, *Cineproduzione*, *Cinema d'oggi* and *Fiera del cinema among others*) were digitized and made available for consultation as OCR-readable files from a digital

Catalogue.

To date, the MMC4976 project has promoted several dissemination activities, including an on-line [round table \(Udine, March 2021\)](#) and two conferences on the topics of ["out-of-standard" \("fuori norma"\) production practices \(Rome, November 2022\)](#) and on the [representation of the film producer \(Milan, April 2023\)](#). The research group also curated two film retrospectives on the "alternative and independent modes of production", hosted by the [Palladium \(November-December 2022, Rome\)](#) and the [Sergio Amidei](#) film festivals (July 2023).

Reflections on sources, methods and infrastructures were also shared in two special issues of *L'Avventura* journal, devoted to production archives (Comand and Venturini, eds. 2021) and to the trade press (Di Chiara and Dotto, eds., 2023). Marsilio's book series "Retrosceca" was inaugurated precisely to host the project's outcomes: it already counts three monographic volumes, on Franco Cristaldi as a creative producer (Corsi 2021), on the exchanges between the film and publishing industry (Zanco 2022) and to trade organizations for sponsored film producers (Dotto 2022). Edited collections

on the cultures of Italian film production in the 1960s (Giordana and Ugenti), on out-of standard production practices (Zagarrio and Uva), on the public representation of the film producer (Farinotti, Gipponi and Grizzaffi) are expected by 2024. An international collection on European film policies (Di Chiara ed.) is also in its working phase.

Two major outcomes are to be released the end of the project: the first one is a documentary short film (provisionally entitled *Made in Italy*) directed by Vito Zagarrio, featuring the witnesses gathered while interviewing (former) professionals in film production and their heirs. The second one is an online Atlas of Film Production: the data gathered from ANICA and ACS archives on the personalities (production managers and inspectors, general managers) and on the geographies (studios, locations) of film production will be elaborated through data visualization and visual storytelling tools, to make historical knowledge of the Italian Film Industry available to wider audiences of scholars and enthusiasts. For more details: <https://cineproduzione.uniud.it>.

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