

Call for Papers

International Symposium: *Streaming in the Global South*

Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies, Vilnius University, Lithuania

Vilnius, 18-20 January 2024

The Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies (Vilnius University) and the Centre for Creative and Cultural Practice (University of East London) invite proposals for conference papers on **streaming and video online distribution in the Global South**.

The rise of streaming in the Global South offers an opportunity to explore in a grounded but multidimensional way changes in the national cinemas of the Global South. Across Asia, the MENA region, Africa and Latin America powerful clusters of film production have tended to stifle local production. For decades they have monopolised national markets with films that have functioned simultaneously as a shared medium and a modern form of cultural colonisation. Today the operation of streaming platforms is beginning to destabilise this configuration, enabling the circulation of films from a wide range of countries that, until recently, were confined to their domestic market. What is the impact of video online distribution (VOD) on filmmakers working in Asia, the MENA region, Africa or Latin America? What kind of exchange does streaming technology make possible between filmmakers and audiences from the Global South?

Existing research tends to examine VOD as an industrial complex through a political economy of the media approach within which films' content, aesthetics and regional address are marginal concerns. It also focuses exclusively on a small number of global, corporate operators, ignoring wholesale the undergrowth of local, language-specific VOD platforms that operate in individual countries and regions. Third, much research of VOD focuses on the Global North and the flow of large budget productions from there to the South. We are interested instead in papers that examine VOD as a form of distribution, exhibition or new mode of film production in any country or region of the Global South. We especially welcome papers that foreground a Global South-centred perspective, focusing on the flow of Asian, Arab, African or Latin American content either within these regions, or from there globally and into the North.

Questions papers may want to address are:

- How is VOD shaping national cinema within the Global South?
- How has the rise of VOD in the Global South altered the political economy and generic conventions of filmmaking and/or television production in specific countries?
- How do Global South filmmakers move within the limits imposed by this new configuration?
- What kind of possibilities VOD affords to filmmakers in the Global South?
- How does VOD shape the films they make?

- Are there shared traits across different countries or regions in the Global South?
- What is the role of VOD in the circulation of independent work by filmmakers based in the Global South?
- What is the role of VOD in the circulation of politically engaged filmmaking?
- How important are hyper-local VOD platforms?
- How important are YouTube and Facebook as means to circulate independent, low-budget or banned films?
- What is the impact of VOD on piracy?
- What forms of transnational dialogue does the streaming of films and web series enable?
- What kind of coproduction and/or collaboration may VOD make possible across borders?
- Do corporate VOD companies promote the work of filmmakers from the Global South, and if so, how?
- What are the working and contractual conditions imposed on creative filmmaking labour from the Global South?
- How do audiences from the Global South access VOD platforms?
- How do audiences from the Global South watch streamed content?
- To what an extent does VOD-circulated or -produced content participate in countering dominant representations of race, gender, sexuality, nation, class, religion, etc.?
- How important are dubbing and/or subtitling?
- What is the role of diasporic communities in shaping and sustaining the operation of VOD platforms?

Submissions:

Abstracts/proposals should be in English and no more than 350 words long, including a 50 word author biography.

The deadline for submissions of abstracts/proposals (and mini-biographies) is **Sunday 1 October 2023** In your email and mini-biography, please specify academic or professional affiliation.

Send your abstract/proposal to the conference organizers at streamingglobalsouth@gmail.com

We aim to notify accepted speakers by Tuesday 31 October 2023. The time for each paper will be 20 minutes. Attendance will be in person. In exceptional circumstances we may consider online presentations.

Conference registration:

Speakers from OECD countries, Singapore, Hong Kong, Macau and South Korea: 150 Euros;

Speakers from China, Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines: 100 Euros;

Speakers from other countries: 50 Euros.

All PhD students: 50 Euros

Regrettably we are unable to offer speakers funding towards travel, accommodation or subsistence.

This symposium is funded by the AHRC (UK).