



*Cinematographic relationships between Italy and  
Germany: film industry, mutual influences, images and  
stereotypes, market and reception*

**Research Project 2013**

**Progetto Premiale**

**D.M. 949, 19.12.2012 / Ric. Premiale 2012**



Following project refers to Article 2 of this notice, in the intervention area: “Inclusive, innovative and reflexive societies, and belongs to SH section (Social Sciences and Humanities) concerning the ERC fields.

The project refers to Intervention Line 1 of the Article 3 of this notice

***Cinematographic relationships between Italy and Germany: film industry, mutual influences, images and stereotypes, market and reception.***

The present project is an extension and a development of a premium project of the Istituto di Studi Germanici (Rome), which was granted financial support in 2012 (“Relazioni intermediali e interculturali fra Italia e Germania”). During the last year, we focussed on the textual level. Two workshops were organized to study the cinematographic transpositions of Italian literary works in Germany and of German literary works in Italy. This first level of investigation revealed the need of examining the filmic relationships between Germany and Italy in a wider range, which are the subject of the following project. Since cinema is often to be considered in a transnational perspective, the multiple levels of interaction between the cinematographic fields of the two countries emerged during these past two meetings. The great amount of industrial collaborations have contributed not only to the production of several motion pictures but also to an intense professional exchange. Throughout their history, the Italian and the German cinema have often taken mutual inspiration regarding genres, movements and authors’ personal styles. Another level must deal with the images each country produced of the other one, by contemplating negative stereotypes as well as utopian projections of otherness. The market circulation through several distribution channels (cinemas, film festivals, film clubs) as well as the reception of film products are the subject of the last section.

Four sections may therefore be highlighted:

1) The first section of this project is focussed on the relationships between the German and the Italian film industries, in particular as far as film co-productions are concerned. Since the 1920s, film co-productions have been, for both of these countries, a way of reaching a wider international audience thanks to the presence of transnational film stars and of greater production values. Moreover, during the early sound era, co-productions have worked as a means to make multi-lingual talking pictures, thus allowing the international distribution of films before dubbing became a mainstream practice. Finally, since the 1950s, co-productions have had a pivotal role in helping European countries to counter the competition of Hollywood cinema. In fact, the bilateral agreements that have been signed between countries such as Italy, West Germany, France or Spain, have allowed these nations to pool their financial and artistic resources, as well as governmental aids to film production.

As though film co-productions have always been a mechanism well-known to film historians, we maintain that the cooperation between Italy and West Germany has seldom been investigated. However, these two countries have frequently cooperated since the 1950s, co-producing, often along with other European nations, works as diverse as Italian westerns (e.g. *A Fistful of Dollars*, Sergio Leone, 1964, Jolly Film/Constantin Film Produktion/Ocean Films) and thrillers (such as *Black and Black Lace*, Mario Bava, 1963, Emmepi/Top Film/Productions Georges De Bauregard), as well as art films such as Orson Welles' *The Trial* (1962, Paris-Europa Productions, Finanziaria Cinematografica Italiana, Hisa Film), Jean-Marie Straub and Daniele Huillet's *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* (1968, Frank Seitz Filmproduktion/Gianvittorio Baldi IDI Cinematografica) or Rainer Werner Fassbinder's Tv series *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980, Bavaria Film/Westdeutscher Rundfunk, RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana).

Thus we believe that investigating film co-productions between Italy and Germany could bring to interesting results, especially regarding topics such as the transnational circulation of skilled professionals (i.e. actors, directors, screenwriters or technicians); the actual frequency of cooperation between the two countries and its dependence on political, industrial or market factors; the role of Italian and German co-productions in shaping, on the one hand, European film genres such as the spaghetti-western, the Krimi and the Italian Giallo, and, on the other hand, more highbrow phenomena such as the New German Cinema and the 1960s Italian auteur cinema; the overall importance of Italian and German co-productions within the respective domestic markets.

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2) One more research line will investigate the influence that single Italian or German film directors as well as larger film movements and schools had on the other country's cinema. Concerning the silent era, an interesting example is offered by the Italian historical film of the 1910s and its influence on the German "Monumentalfilme" of the early 1920s, such as Ernst Lubitsch's *Sumurum*, to name just one title. Vice versa, the German "Tonfilmoperetta" represented a major reference for many Italian film comedies of the 1930s, some of which were explicitly remakes of German successes, and the specifically Italian film-opera genre, which thrived during the second half of the 1930s, couldn't exist without the contribution to it of numerous German screenwriters and actors. A paradigmatic case is represented by Carmine Gallone's film *Casta Diva*, written by

the Austrian screenwriter Walter Reisch and featuring Marta Eggerth, a major star of the German film operetta. Turning to the postwar period, it is our aim to investigate, among others, the problematic influence of the Italian neorealist cinema on the German “Trümmerfilm” of the late 1940s and the so-called Berlin-Filme produced by the East German company DEFA during the 1950s, as well as the aesthetic connections between Luchino Visconti and Michelangelo Antonioni and West German film-makers such as Werner Schroeter and Wim Wenders, who were evidently inspired by the Italian masters. As to the latter, if Michelangelo Antonioni’s filmic lesson greatly contributed to shaping Wim Wenders' style, he will then become a reference for many Italian film-makers from the 1980s onwards, such as Gabriele Salvatores and Paolo Sorrentino.

#### References:

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3) Throughout the 20th century cinema greatly contributed to spread the images each culture intended to share with the others, with wider audiences than any previous art form. At the same time, cinema shaped other nations' representations, sometimes by creating and reinforcing circulating negative stereotypes, some other times by depicting and imagining otherness as a

natural, social, anthropological utopia. As a matter of fact, national cinemas built national images, and thus defined their community by contrast, difference or similitude with otherness. Cinematic images have been a tool to forge identities, peculiar ones as much as shared ones. Under this respect, as many surveys in the recent times researched, transnational market strategies and processes marked European film production; among the outcomes of such processes, a relevant number of mutual representations circulated within the continent, and in between Italy and Germany.

The main task of this section is to explore and produce a taxonomy of national stereotypes as defined in Italian and German-speaking cinemas. Or, more broadly speaking, in what ways, in terms of narratives and iconography, Italian and German-speaking productions defined the two nations in their mutual relation, through formulaic characters, linguistic peculiarities, plot lines, diegetic spaces, musical or iconic attributions and so forth. Just to mention some possible recurrent characters, think of the “German villain” in post-war Italian production until the 1960s, as a means to relieve Italian characters from the burden of their historical and political responsibilities, from *Roma città aperta* (*Rome Open City*, R. Rossellini, 1945) up to *Tutti a casa* (L. Comencini, 1961). Or consider Italian immigrants' multiple definitions in modern German cinema, as a social mirror for German economic wealth and moral malaise, or as a merry neighbor, soliciting laughter, but also marking his/her radical otherness to the host culture. A particular attention will be also paid to star personas, as social images defining concrete human, moral and social paradigms.

#### Selected bibliography

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4) Market and reception played and do play a crucial role in Italo-German cinematic relationships. Distribution channels, cultural institutions and events, discursive practices, specific individuals all contributed to produce unprecedented knowledge, by selecting clusters of informations and establishing hierarchies, eliciting specific traits instead of others, promoting authors, works, phenomenons.

The aim of the present section is at least two-fold. On the one hand, it should research the Italian production released on the German market, or through alternative channels (film festivals, film clubs and art houses, embassies etc.), and the other way round. On the other hand, it intends to make a survey of each national production's reception abroad, in terms of box-office revenues, TV-broadcasting and attendances, critical and historical discourse. Examining these barely known stories enables the researchers to better understand how concretely a certain cultural representation of the other was defined, and what contributed to build it, and under what circumstances. Just to mention two very renown historical phases such as Italian neo-realism and German new wave (jünger deutscher Film), relevant differences emerge in what concerns their foreign distribution. In comparison with the US and Western Europe, Italian neo-realism penetrated lately the German market, mostly crowded with Hollywood's pre- and post-war releases and German formulaic products. Nevertheless, these Italian masterpieces had a second chance at the end of the 1950s, as young German film critics recovered the lost times, by promoting a better knowledge of neo-realism, since French film critics drove their attention to what a decade before went unnoticed. Jünger deutscher Film was immediately well known to Italian audiences, through art house movement and alternative film festivals such as Mostra Internazionale del Nuovo Cinema (Pesaro), that played a relevant role in promoting international new waves.

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The four sections have been indicated separately only to give a greater exposition clearness to the project. Actually, they are to be considered intertwined: the cinematographic production may, for instance, be influenced from existing stereotypes; the critical debate can give impulse to the diffusion of a particular kind of cinema, which may influence some authors' style. To fully investigate the four sections as well as their connections, an interaction of experts of various fields is required. This collaboration will lead to an overall view of the filmic relationships between Italy and Germany, which still represents an important chapter of the integration processes at European level.

The yearly project will be articulated in two phases: in the first one, a series of case-studies will be presented by the proposers of the project itself in a two-day workshop. In a second one, more experts of Italian and German culture and film from all over Europe will be invited to a scientific conference, in order to broaden up the outcomes of this first meeting. Final goal of this project is the publication of a companion, which will offer an exhaustive documentation of the several topics of every research field.

Proposers of this project are: Matteo Galli (Ferrara), Simone Costagli (Ferrara), Francesco Bono (Perugia), Giorgio Pangaro (Perugia), Leonardo Quaresima (Udine), Francesco Pitassio (Udine), Francesco Di Chiara (Ferrara), Eugenio Spedicato (Pavia), Giovanni Spagnoletti (Roma), Tim Bergfelder (Southampton), Jan Distelmeyer (Potsdam), Chris Wahl (Potsdam), Hans-Michael Bock (Hamburg), Luisella Farinotti (Milano), Anita Trivelli (Chieti-Pescara), Antioco Floris (Cagliari), Sonia Campanini (Udine), Irmbert Schenk (Bremen), Erika Wottrich (Hamburg), Erica Carter (London).

The economic request to fulfill the above mentioned goals is 53.000 euro, that can be divided up in the following item costs:

- 1) 2 six months research contracts: 24.000 euro
- 2) research missions: 10.000 euro
- 3) publication: 7.000 euro
- 4) workshops: 2.000 euro
- 5) conference: 10.000 euro

Il Presidente

Prof. Fabrizio Cambi

*Fabrizio Cambi*

IL PRESIDENTE  
Prof. FABRIZIO CAMBI



**Scheda di sintesi (abstract) Progetto Premiale**

**Art. 5 D.M. 949 19th December 2012/ Ric. Premiale 2012**

Project Title:	Cinematographic relationships between Italy and Germany
Intervention Area:	Inclusive, innovative and reflexive societies
Referring Institution:	Istituto di Studi Germanici
Project Manager:	Prof. Matteo Galli
Other Research Institutions:	
Other Organizations:	Goethe-Institut; Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst
Project exposé:	The project intends to examine the multiple levels of interaction between the cinematographic fields of Germany and Italy. First level consider the great amount of industrial collaborations have contributed not only to the production of several motion pictures but also to an intense professional exchange. A second section must deal with the mutual inspiration the Italian and the German cinema have often taken from the other country regarding genres, movements and authors' personal styles. Another level must deal with the images each country produced of the other one, by contemplating negative stereotypes as well as utopian projections of otherness. The market circulation through several distribution channels (cinemas, film festivals, film clubs) as well as the reception of film products are the subject of the last section.
Intervention line (as in article 3 of the notice):	Intervention line 1
Project goal:	To help scientific confrontation between Italian and German film and cultural study specialists. To organize two scientific meetings. Publication of a Companion about Film relationships between Germany and Italy.
Evaluation criteria	Among other things, this Human Sciences Area project wants to activate two research contracts for young scholars, who will inquire a research field of great scientific value and of great importance in the intercultural exchange between two founder States of the European Union.

Project Team	<p>Prof. Francesco Bono (Perugia), Professor of Cinema Studies</p> <p>Dr. Sonia Campanini (Udine), PhD Cinema Studies</p> <p>Dr. Simone Costagli (Ferrara), PhD German Literature</p> <p>Dr. Francesco Di Chiara (Ferrara), PhD Cinema Studies</p> <p>Dr. Luisella Farinotti (Milano), Professor of Cinema Studies</p> <p>Prof. Matteo Galli (Ferrara), Professor of German Literature</p> <p>Prof. Francesco Pitassio (Udine), Professor Cinema Studies</p> <p>Prof. Leonardo Quaresima (Udine), Professor of Cinema Studies</p> <p>Prof. Anita Trivelli (Chieti/Pescara) Professor of Cinema Studies</p>
Economic value	As for any Human Sciences Project, the economic value must be seen in the cultural and intellectual growth of the two countries, in the knowledge development, as well as in the collaboration of young scholars.
Other potential financial coverages:	Goethe-Institut; Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst
Project status:	New
Project time:	Twelve Months
Key Words:	Italy, Germany, Relationships, Intercultural, Film

Cost detail	Expected total	from FOE Source 7%	Percentage impact
Two research contracts	24.000	24.000	45%
Travels	10.000	10.000	19%
Meetings	2.000	2.000	4%
Publications	7.000	7.000	13%
Conference	10.000	10.000	19%
Total	53.000	53.000	100%

**Scheda di sintesi (abstract) Progetto Premiale**  
**Art. 5 D.M. 949 del 19.12.2012/ Ric. Premiale 2012**

Titolo progetto:	Relazioni cinematografiche tra Italia e Germania: produzione, mercato, ricezione.
Ambito di Intervento:	Società inclusive, innovative e riflessive
Struttura di riferimento:	Istituto di Studi Germanici
Coordinatore di progetto:	Prof. Matteo Galli
Altri EPR coinvolti:	
Altri Organismi e soggetti coinvolti:	Goethe-Institut; Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst
Descrizione breve progetto:	Il presente progetto prevede di approfondire in modo sistematico lo studio dei rapporti cinematografici tra Germania e Italia mediante l'indagine di molteplici livelli di interazione. In primo luogo, i due paesi hanno collaborato spesso alla realizzazione delle pellicole, attivando canali di produzione che hanno contribuito a uno scambio di professionalità tra i due paesi; secondariamente si è assistito a una reciproca influenza dal punto di vista artistico, soprattutto attraverso l'opera di registi per i quali gli autori dell'altro paese hanno rappresentato una importante fonte di ispirazione. Un ulteriore campo di indagine è costituito dalla immagine complessa che le due culture nazionali hanno saputo veicolare attraverso il cinema, o, viceversa, come quest'ultimo ha prodotto "immagini dell'altro", con la creazione e la ricezione di stereotipi. L'ultimo campo d'indagine riguarda invece la ricezione dei singoli prodotti cinematografici italiani e tedeschi sia di fenomeni più complessi, quali scuole, movimenti, tendenze.
Linea di intervento ai sensi dell'articolo 3 (indicare una sola linea di intervento):	Linea di intervento 1

<p>Obiettivi del progetto:</p>	<p>Favorire il confronto tra specialisti tedeschi e italiani in vista di futuri progetti Pubblicazione di un “Companion” sui rapporti cinematografici tra Italia e Germania.</p>
<p>Criteri di valutazione Sviluppo delle competenze: Grado di coinvolgimento di soggetti pubblici e privati: Attrazione degli investimenti, impatto socioeconomico e sostenibilità economica finanziaria:</p>	<p>Il progetto di area umanistica prevede fra le altre cose l'accensione di contratti di ricerca per studiose/i giovani che potranno fare luce su un ambito a fortissima valenza interculturale, strategico nella negoziazione delle relazioni culturali fra due Stati fondatori dell'Unione Europea. Il progetto, al quale partecipano può favorire la collaborazione tra istituti culturali italiani in Germania e viceversa.</p>
<p>Team di programma/progetto e governance</p>	<p>Prof. Dr. Francesco Bono (Perugia), Prof. Associato di Storia del Cinema. Dr. Sonia Campanini (Udine), dottoranda in Storia del Cinema Dr. Simone Costagli (Ferrara), Dottore di ricerca in Letteratura tedesca Dr. Francesco Di Chiara (Ferrara), Dottore di ricerca in Storia del cinema. Dr. Luisella Farinotti (Milano), Ricercatore di Storia del Cinema Prof. Dr. Matteo Galli (Ferrara), Prof. Ordinario di Letteratura Tedesca Prof. Dr. Leonardo Quaresima (Udine), Prof. Ordinario di Storia del Cinema Prof. Dr. Francesco Pitassio (Udine), Prof. Associato in Storia del Cinema Prof. Anita Trivelli (Chieti-Pescara); Prof. Associato in Storia del Cinema.</p>
<p>Valore economico stimato e dimostrazione dei costi futuri di gestione e manutenzione occorrenti per la vita utile del programma/progetto ed evidenziazione della previsione di copertura ed eventuale autofinanziamento</p>	<p>Come tutti progetti di tipo umanistico, il valore economico è da rintracciarsi nella crescita complessiva, culturale e intellettuale dei due paesi, sull'ampliamento delle conoscenze anche grazie alla collaborazione di giovani studiose/i.</p>

Potenziali ulteriori coperture finanziarie:	Goethe-Institut; Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst
Status del progetto (avviato, nuovo, fasi concluse ... .):	Nuovo
durata del progetto (anni e mesi):	Dodici Mesi
Parole chiave proposte:	Italia, Germania, Relazioni, Interculturali, Cinematografia

#### Stima dei costi del progetto

Macro voci di spesa	Ammontare previsto	di cui Fonte FOE 7%	Incidenza percentuale
Personale	24.000 (due contratti di ricerca)	24.000 (due contratti di ricerca)	45%
Missioni	10.000	10.000	19%
Seminari	2.000	2.000	4%
Pubblicazioni	7.000	7.000	13%
Convegni	10.000	10.000	19%
Totale	53.000	53.000	100%