

**Panel 18:** Intersecting Contexts: Media Cultures, Politics and Identity in South Asia

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**Abstract:** The recent interest in 'Bollywood' presents an exotic and somewhat overwhelming discourse in relation to South Asian film and media cultures. This particular formation of Indian film culture - which has come to stand in for the general contemporary visual cultural idiom of South Asia in some contexts - obscures other cultures of media production and reception in the subcontinent. This panel seeks to present new research addressing the cultural contexts of television and marginal cinemas in South Asia, with a particular focus on the politics of production, audiences and genre. We encourage submissions that go beyond purely textual readings of media texts to explore ethnographic, and cultural-studies based methodologies that account for the socio-political context of meaning-generation and production of audio-visual media in the subcontinent (and among transnational/transcultural consumers of this media). Some of the questions this panel proposes to explore are:

- The politics of power through production: how and by which groups of media producers are historical and social events in South Asia being represented to national and trans-national audiences?
- How are dominant 'national' histories of film and media rewritten, challenged or problematised through sub-cultures of production?
- In what ways are discourses on gender, nationalism, ethnicity or class expressed by mainstream media texts across South Asia and how do different sections of the public negotiate meanings from these discourses?
- Which political themes and concerns are expressed across different media audiences and across borders in the subcontinent?

We particularly welcome transnational comparative studies; research that focuses on specific regional case studies of production and reception; and site-specific ethnographic and archive-based historiographical research.

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