



Television Fiction in Europe

Eurofiction 2002 Sixth edition

Please note:

The following report is a comprehensive analysis of fiction programmes scheduled in European TVs in 2001.

The European Audiovisual Observatory could not publish anymore such a report for the following years. However, in the framework of [its Yearbook, Film, Television and Video in Europe](#), Chapter "Programming", the Observatory published for all the following years a statistical analysis of fiction programming in most of the European television markets.

Milly Buonanno (editor)

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The analyses expressed in these articles are the authors' own opinions and cannot in any way be considered as representing the point of view of the European Audiovisual Observatory, its members and the Council of Europe.

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Preface

EUROFICTION, an indispensable tool for understanding the European audiovisual market

The European Audiovisual Observatory is delighted to present the sixth EUROFICTION report.

As in previous years, the report is a result of the partnership between the Observatory and the Fondazione Hypercampo (Università di Firenze). Professor Milly Buonanno continues to coordinate energetically and efficiently the network of five national teams which, within their respective institutions (Siegen Universität for Germany, Universitat autonoma de Barcelona for Spain, INA for France, British Film Institute for the United Kingdom and Osservatorio sulla Fiction Italiana for Italy), collect the data and produce the analyses contained in this report.

EUROFICTION is the only reliable tool for qualitative and statistical analysis of developments in television fiction in the five largest West European markets. The continuity provided by the report is clearly invaluable in an era when the European Union and industry professionals are endeavouring, not without difficulty, to evaluate the impact of the "Television Without Frontiers" Directive on the European market.

As well as analysing the situation in the five countries traditionally studied by EUROFICTION, the report contains, as it does every year, articles relating to other countries, coordinated by Gerd Hallenberger (Siegen Universität). This year, countries as different as Poland and Portugal come under the microscope.

The Observatory would like to thank all the EUROFICTION teams for the quality and perseverance of their work, carried out under conditions that are not always easy. We are also grateful to RAI and Mediaset which, as the main sources of funding for the Osservatorio sulla Fiction Italiana, enable Professor Buonanno to coordinate the project.

Complementary tools for fiction market analysis

In addition to the EUROFICTION report, the Observatory offers further tools to analyse the situation of European audiovisual production, particularly fiction production.

- In March 2002, the Observatory launched the trial version of the KORDA database (<http://korda.obs.coe.int>) on its website. Accessible free of charge, the database provides a detailed panorama of public aid programmes for the film and audiovisual industry in the

European Union Member States. It will be gradually broadened to include data from the Observatory Member States which are not EU members. The database currently includes more than 200 national and regional aid programmes for the film and audiovisual industry. Whilst most of these programmes are aimed primarily at the film industry, 72 of them support the development or production of television fiction, illustrating the growing interest being shown by public authorities in this genre.

- In November 2002, the Observatory will publish the 5th volume of the 2002 edition of its Yearbook, which deals with the production and distribution of audiovisual works. Dividing the Yearbook into thematic volumes has enabled us to increase our statistical coverage of the audiovisual market. In addition to the traditional data on the distribution, by genre, of programmes broadcast by the main European channels, and on the volume and origin of imported fictional programmes, the 5th volume will include original data on the financial situation of audiovisual production companies, particularly fiction production companies. Without revealing the details of this new statistical data, we should point out that our current estimates suggest that the TV fiction sector is achieving a profit margin of 4 to 5%, whereas the film production sector is just keeping its head above water with a zero profit margin.
- Last but not least, the second edition of the economic study on the financial value of fiction production in Europe will be published by the end of the year. The Observatory published the first such report in 2000, when it was produced by the INA in collaboration with the EUROFICTION teams, using the data gathered by EUROFICTION. The first report was co-funded by the Observatory and the CNC. This year, the CNC is the main sponsor, although the European Audiovisual Observatory and the Media Development Directorate (French Ministry of Communication) are providing additional funding. Based on the so-called "standard cost" method developed by INA researcher Jean-Pierre Jézéquel, this study enables us to estimate the value of fiction production in the five featured countries and to compare the very different situations of independent production and internal production by TV channels.

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Part One

Methodology

1. Preliminary Remarks

The graphs and tables appearing in the first chapter, as well as those in the single country-reports, present the results of a study carried out by five research teams in the EUROFICTION member countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom. Monitoring was done according to a set of pre-established, homogeneous criteria. In light of the overall lack of harmonisation in gathering and processing information which usually hampers research in the field of television industry and programming, this homogeneity in methodology is a primary resources of the EUROFICTION project.

The datasheet presented here below was used to survey and classify *all domestic television fiction programmes, including co-productions, broadcast as first runs during the year 2001 by the national broadcasting networks¹ of five major European countries*. The basic unit of analysis was the single episode or instalment.

The major channels monitored in each country are as follows:

France	Germany	Italy	Spain	United Kingdom
TF1	ARD	Raiuno	TVE1	BBC1
France2	ZDF	Raidue	La2	BBC2
France3	RTL	Raitre	T5	ITV
M6	SAT.1	Canale5	A3	Channel 4
Canal+	Pro7	Rete4	TV3	Channel 5
Arte	(others) ²	Italia1	Autonomicas	--

It is important to specify that reruns of domestic fiction and imports from European or non-European countries are not included in the annual survey. EUROFICTION is primarily focused on the productive activity and capacity of European broadcasters. The most evident indicator of this is without any doubt the volume of first runs domestic fiction programmes each network is able to offer per year.

¹ Spain is the only exception here. The autonomic Catalan channel TV3 was included in the study since 1996 because of the important contribution it makes in producing and programming domestic fiction. Moreover in 1999 all the other regional/autonomicas channels were included as well.

² See the country-report for Germany for more detailed information.

Reruns and imports have been included, on the other hand, in the data gathered during the *sample week* (4-10 March 2001). Monitoring, for this week only, includes the totality of fiction programmes without exception, in order to situate the results within a broader range of contextual factors.

Fiction is a product both of industry *and* television culture. This dual approach, which is the cornerstone of the EUROFICTION research project, is reflected, from a methodological point of view, in the datasheet, which has been divided into two sections.

In the first section, fiction programmes are classified according to key variables related to format and genres in conjunction with their position in the schedules and their ratings.

The second section looks at four *cultural indicators*, time, place, environment and main character, in an attempt to give an overview of the dimensions and characteristic of the more specifically cultural aspect of the stories told. It is clear that the definition and breakdown of *cultural indicators* need further fine-tuning as the research project progresses. Nevertheless, this has already proven its worth as one of the peculiarities of EUROFICTION for two reasons:

- first, because it integrates the quantitative/statistical approach by a qualitative and interpretative stance, which is what EUROFICTION selfconsciously regards as its competitive advantage in the research field of European television industry and culture,
- second, it entails and implies a working method requiring first-hand knowledge of the fiction programmes. Without this, the classification of *cultural indicators* would be impossible.

This first-hand knowledge is the starting point for a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the state of domestic fiction and its major trends in the individual countries observed, as it can be found in the national chapters of this report.

2. Datasheet

(Unit of analysis: broadcast unit, i.e. single episode, part or instalment)

A. Basic classification

1. Retrieval information

- Title:
- Day:
- Date:
- Channel:
- Time slot:
- Length in minutes (advertising not included):

2. Type of production

1. Domestic productions
2. Inter-European co-productions (with partners from other European countries: *
Europe is meant within conventional geographical borders)
3. Inter-continental co-productions (in partnership with non-European countries, or with other European+non-European countries)

* if the case occurs, co-productions with same-language countries can be introduced separately

3. Format

1. TV movie (one-off)
2. Miniseries (up to six episodes, narrative closure)
3. Series (anthology plot, almost self-sufficient episodes)
4. Open serial (e.g. soap)
5. Closed serial (e.g. telenovela, in any case running plot over more than six episodes, narrative closure)

4. Genre

1. General drama (e.g. soap)
2. Action/crime (e.g. police)
3. Comedy (e.g. sitcom)
4. Other

5. Subgenre

establishing subgenres is left to each national research team)

6. Audience data

- Audience average:
- Ratings:
- Share:

B. Cultural indicators

1. Time

1. Present (the present decade)
2. Past
3. Future

2. Place

1. National - i.e. if the story is set *mainly* in the country of production (if national, specify: Region)
2. International - if the story is set in other countries *as well*
3. Abroad - if the story is set *totally* in other countries

3. (Main) Environment

1. metropolitan (specify if Capital city)
2. urban
3. rural (countryside, seaside etc.)
4. other
5. not identifiable

4. Main character*

1. Male
2. Female
3. Male group
4. Female group
5. Mixed/choric

* any elements implying that one character holds a special position (e.g. programme title) are to be considered indicators of non-group/choric status.

1. A Comparative Overview

by Milly Buonanno

1. A New Turbulent Environment

An area of turbulence is forecast for the imminent future of European television fiction. Actually the future, disclosed by much evidence in 2001 - the reference year of the current Eurofiction report, the sixth of the series - has already become part of the present at the moment of this volume's publication and circulation.

We are used to diversifying each year, at the beginning of the comparative overview, the metaphors, the key words and the perspectives that we adopt in order to offer – on the basis of phenomena and trends deemed the most significant - an immediate and synthetic characterisation (*the cipher*) of the period under analysis. The European television landscapes having undertaken an incessant though partial and not necessarily disruptive transformation process, always offer something different from before (or perceptible from an innovative point of view): and this requires a diversification of the descriptive and interpretative language. Furthermore, the many aspects of inevitable repetition of a yearly production need to be balanced by a dose of novelty, exactly what happens to the narrative seriality of television fiction.

In presenting the sixth Eurofiction report, from a temporary perspective now more than ever liminal, at the crossroads between 2001 already finished and 2002 already well on its way, we happen instead to recall the metaphor of the “turbulent environment” previously adopted. The fact is that nothing else can better account for the present condition of the television fiction industry in the five largest European countries.

We resorted to the same words in the introduction of the third report (1999). But the turbulences of only three years ago, correlated firstly to the advent of digital TV and its presumable repercussions on the industry of contents, seem to be quite feeble in the light of the present-day situation; and above all they seemed to be at that time endowed (perhaps deceptively) with a comfortable dose of ambivalence. In fact, they half revealed a dual potential - always in terms of impact on the fiction sector - risk but also opportunity, restriction and resource, slowdown and thrust. The risk and slowdown factors in the meantime appear to have increased and become more threatening.

In the first place, it must be made clear that fiction is still a vital genre in Europe and capable of excellent performances – as far as quality and audience ratings are concerned - even though the limelight it enjoyed

during the second half of the nineties is perhaps not so brilliant as before. It would therefore be out of place to immediately invoke the generic and alarmist category of “crisis”. As we argued in the introduction to last year’s report (Eurofiction 2001), the cyclical tendencies and the alternating ebbs and flows are peculiar phenomena in the television industry - at least as we have experienced it up to now.

It is most likely that the cycle of luck and expansion of European drama is just on the wane; but the drop promises, or better, threatens to be important because, apparently for the first time, there are many unfavourable factors involved. However the theory of ebbs and flows, supported by experience, suggests the benevolent and even reasonable expectation of a turn-around in the near (but unspecified) future, it is just as reasonable not to underestimate the empirical indicators and the factors responsible for the actual and potential difficulties of European television fiction.

It is almost paradoxical that here we face one of the rare cases in which we can use the word “European” without worrying about generalising. Even though, on the specific terrain of television drama, in the last few years there has been a process of relative unification among the major European countries - this can be seen in the previous Eurofiction reports - the enduring national peculiarities concerning systems, resources, television and social culture and much more, often make the word “European” a mere convention and a linguistic short cut. “Excepted the differences between one country and another” is a warning often expressed and always implicitly effective in the comparative synthesis of Eurofiction. But, as the national chapters included in this report show right from the para-textual side of the title (from the Italian “Cloudy fictionscape” to the German “Calm Before the Storm”), the conditions or the prospects of a turbulent environment are seemingly omni-present and give rise to an authentically European phenomenon: which evidently makes it much more serious and relevant.

Exogenous and endogenous as well as structural and cyclical factors, meet to create the contemporary turbulent habitat of European television fiction. Even if for analytical and clarifying reasons we deal with them separately, as discrete variables, it must be understood that they act and make an impact in reciprocal inter-relationship.

- A. ***Exogenous factors:*** are those which do not originate inside the television systems, which however they affect at various levels. The sharp drop or even turnabout of the growth in advertising investments is today the exogenous factor with the most negative impact on the entire economy of the European television systems. Over and above what is normally described as convergence, the connection between media and telecommunications finds added evidence in this phenomenon: if Internet and telecommunications were those which fostered by their expansion, even

on the front of advertising investments, the prosperity of television up to the beginning of the third millennium, the “shrinkage” of the sector is among the main responsible for the present contraction of television resources.

Generally speaking, the depletion of resources brings about restraints, to a greater or lesser extent, of the programming costs. In similar circumstances the broadcasters are pressed by the difficult objective of squaring the circle, setting up programme schedules which are both economical and appealing, so as to avoid triggering off a vicious circle: meaning that a poorer offer and thus (eventually) less attractive risks to arouse a loss of viewers, which in turn is likely to cause a further outflow of advertising investments. Genres and contents less expensive or deemed more reliable for realising a better balance between production costs and benefits of audience and advertising, become crucial for this strategic operation.

In particular, the shrinkage of the resources hits first and foremost the television fiction sector, notoriously the most prestigious and costly of the contents (with the exception of soap operas and the like, not by chance in great expansion in many countries), as well as that which in recent years has seen its production costs ballooning out of proportion. Following the advertising recession, budget cuts in fiction were announced, or in any case decided, by many European broadcasters, firstly but not exclusively by the commercial channels - is another small paradox that this has happened after a year of great achievement: as we shall see later on in this chapter, in 2001 the drama of the European private televisions earned itself a larger number of positions in the list of the 100 most watched episodes.

Against budget cuts, the declarations of the broadcasters aimed at reconfirming the confidence and the commitments to indigenous fiction as a structural component of the schedules and primary marker of the identity of the channels, are hardly reassuring for the independent producers. Small or large controversial hotbeds, concerning in particular the question of rights ownership and exploitation and the amount of the producer's fee, have been constantly kindled in recent years, and these latest developments do not help to improve the climate of the relationships between the parties.

The intrinsic weakness of the sector of independent television production in Europe risks breaking cover as never before in the present situation. The volume of financial capital which is needed to set a fiction project in motion is undeniably out of reach for the independent production companies, most of them being small or medium sized. The more or less total cession of the rights to the broadcasters does not permit additional earnings from the sale abroad or on secondary markets; on the other hand, this is a more relevant obstacle in terms of principles rather than facts, since a secondary market of some importance has not been set up in any of the countries - the multi-channel environment still has to keep its promises in this instance - and we

can hardly say that national European fiction, except for Germany, is competitive on an international level.

The absence or the small size of the ancillary internal markets, and the relative scantiness of the flow of finances conveyed by exportation, obviously put the breaks on the acquisition of added resources by the broadcasters as well: a limit which can be unimportant in the phases of prosperity but is much more of a burden in critical moments as now. As regards international contributions linked to fiction co-productions, their incidence can sometimes be relevant for single projects but certainly not decisive as substantial compensation for the cuts due to the deficit in primary advertising resources - which, out of all the European televisions, only the wealthy BBC is able not to miss at all.

- B. ***Endogenous factors.*** These originate from inside the television field. In turn they can be divided analytically into two categories, depending on whether they concern competition among different genres, or if they are pertinent to a specific area of contents (fiction, in our case).

Concerning competition and the position of strength between the television genres, it is well-known that since 1999 and in a more explosive way since 2000 a cycle has begun (or should we say begun again, after about ten years) of huge popularity for the reality and game shows, and continues to be so. From *Big Brother* to *Operación Triunfo* and their more or less successful clones, these programmes have done much more than simply establish themselves in the schedules of European television, and specially of commercial channels. They have triggered off co-operation between different distribution platforms, established forms of interactivity and nourished other sectors of the media industry (advertising, music). They have achieved the goal, which rarely and often in vain is attempted by the traditional terrestrial networks, i.e. to attract the evasive young audiences, and above all have obtained a public visibility and sparked off discussions even within the circles and the media of the intellectual elite. This has brought back television - recently undermined by the arrival of digital TV, the convergence, technology and the like - to centre stage.

The subsequent editions of the same programmes have generally occurred in a more inattentive atmosphere; the share of the channels usually falls back to the previous levels after the soaring figures which successful reality programmes benefit from. There have also been some quite sensational failures (however they have been cushioned by a fast rate of exchange of offer); where they were shown in direct competition with fiction programmes, the reality shows have sometimes managed to siphon off audiences and sometimes they have not managed to do so (for example French fiction has stood up to this situation very well). In spite of this distinction, it can not be denied that the reality shows secured the public's

approval in one go - above all appealing to common people's widespread desire to be protagonists - as well as the broadcasters, and constitute the most popular television genre of these days.

As we had already assumed in the introduction of the previous report, the (so-to speak) attack of the reality shows on fiction programmes does not happen so much or primarily in the form of direct competition, coming out trumps or in any case formidable competitors in a possible neck and neck, but more by an indirect passage but actually more decisive: the diverging repositioning of the two genres on the agenda of the broadcasters' strategic priority. This simply means that - spurred on by the crest of the wave of success - the reality shows become the leading programmes of the channels, the mainstay of the schedules, the typology of production and offer on which higher expectations of notoriety and success are invested, and greater planning, promotional and fulfilling commitments are deployed. In this process of redistribution of positions, fiction programmes tend to shift (from a little to a lot) lower or marginally.

Moreover, compared with fiction, the reality shows have a double competitive advantage which - combined with their ascent in winning over viewers favour - create an amalgam which the broadcasters find difficult to resist. They are in fact economical in two ways, both financial and creative. Although it would be misleading to consider them as totally inexpensive programmes, the preparation, production and management of the reality shows imply decisively lower costs than those for fiction programmes of a medium standard (and they can be just as successful or even more so): an appreciable requisite as never before, in a contraction phase of advertising resources. Also appreciable are the creative economies made possible by the fact that in most cases the setting up of reality shows is based on already tried and tested international concepts or formats. Without denying the fact that the local adaptation of formats can in turn be creative and at times enhance the original idea, the saving in terms of inventive elaboration is unquestionable.

There is more to it. Just because they are based on formats for international circulation, the reality shows often benefit (and consequently bring benefit to the networks) of an "embodied advertising resource". Unless of course they are not debuting, they appear on television in various countries already preceded and surrounded with a glow of publicity for the success they have obtained elsewhere. This kind of promotional resource, able to intensify the curiosity and the expectations of the public, obviously does not offer any guarantee against failure or disappointment; but it pre-establishes a vibrant context of reception which, when given the chance, can facilitate the swing of a programme (reality or other) towards success. The same popularity obtained in Europe in the past by many American fiction programmes, and

basically also the more restricted cult phenomena which they evoke today, were facilitated (although never determined) by the international run-up of echoes of their fame in their home country and overseas. For obvious reasons purely national fiction cannot take advantage from a similar promotional device.

Lastly, the reality shows are or appear to be endowed with a further requisite: not so much a mere gleam of newness rather more a true innovation. They mix-up genres and languages, perform inter-mediality, and democratically exalt the desire to be protagonists of the ordinary people. They present themselves as the most advanced frontier of television communication (not unlike what happened ten years before), thus offering the channels which broadcast and cultivate them a “progressivist” legitimisation. Together with all the rest, it is enough to illuminate the scenario of competition between the reality shows and television drama.

This latter point directly introduces the second endogenous factor of turbulence, the critical area inside the very body of European drama: the poor capacity of renewal and regeneration.

In order not to give the false impression of a genre cornered by the triumphant advance of the reality shows or affected by inherent weakness, it is necessary once again to stress that European national fiction is still today an important structural component of the schedules of public and private channels, and a means of great successes: a sign of its lasting ability to gain and hold the favour of the local audiences. Just a short time ago it could have been considered, and it actually was by many broadcasters, the strategic content of programming. The fading of the successes, in other words the relative fall of audience ratings pointed out unanimously in the national chapters of this report, rings perhaps an alarm bell: but it resounds more for the dispersion of viewers into the rivulets of the multi-channel television environment, than for the same public’s disaffection for fiction programmes. Equally, one must accept with a certain amount of caution the disapproval coming from intellectual circles, media critics (and indeed sometimes by the same authors) on the widespread decline in quality of fiction production. Although such manifestations perform, in each country, an invaluable role of keeping alert the attention towards the cultural and aesthetic standards of such a prestigious genre as drama, often they are biased by idiosyncratic evaluation criteria, or they are “mixing the good with the bad”. Good or excellent quality fiction - which more often than not coincides also with good or excellent audience ratings - are omni-present in the programming of European televisions, to an extent which does not entitle us to consider it a rare event.

Nonetheless, there is a problem; and having systematically followed the development of European fiction for the last six years (seven, if we include

2002) we do not wish to underestimate it. The problem lies in a drive towards renovation or innovation which is too weak, non-existing or inefficient: when it comes to formulae and concepts, genres, language and other. We do not refer to the few novelties which in variable numbers and with alternating luck are scattered over the seasonal or yearly programming of indigenous fiction in each country; but to the ideas, the talents and the experiments able to mark a turning point, rejuvenate or rewrite a genre, establish new standards, recreate long-lasting phenomena of popularity or cult, give rise to trends, gather fans (and passable audience ratings). Nothing more than what is needed for fiction to keep its vital momentum which generates and in turn is regenerated by a good dose of innovative audacity.

The innovative audacity seems to have become a limited resource in the national panoramas explored by Eurofiction, where the prudent reliance of the broadcasters on the tried and tested - the re-proposal of consolidated formulae which defends against having to deal with the risk of change - prevails. The capacity of resistance of older programmes with respect to the rapid obsolescence of many recent programmes is likely to corroborate this policy of caution, giving the apparent evidence of the fixed habits of the fiction viewers. But it is just as evident that in this way the diversification of the audiences is undermined - notwithstanding the satisfaction which usually welcomes the discovery of tribes, clusters or profiles of segmented audiences announced by the marketing companies. In this way one also gives up the culturally driving role which, at least in part, pertains to the creative sectors of great responsibility and social influence, as it is undeniably the case with television fiction.

To cope with the risk of innovation (obviously without having to abandon the large and safe roads of the tradition) is no easy task or a question of simple good will on the parts of broadcasters and producers. It requires the singling out and nurturing of the right talents, a lot of research and experimentation, suitable slots in the schedules to put the experiments to the test of targeted audiences, a wide rate of tolerance of failures, and in conclusion the mobilization of fairly large resources and a financial machine.

The present circumstances do not lend themselves to a similar eventuality, hardly compatible with either the down-flow in advertising incomes or the competitive ascent of other television genres. To bet on safety constitutes, understandably, the guiding principle in the phases of major uncertainty.

We shall see, in the next few years, in which way European fiction will cope with the condition and the challenges of this turbulent environment, and the ensuing results. A problematic and delicate phase is beginning or more exactly has already begun. It is however encouraging that home-grown

drama in Europe is preparing to face it from the advantage point of its still vigorous state of health.

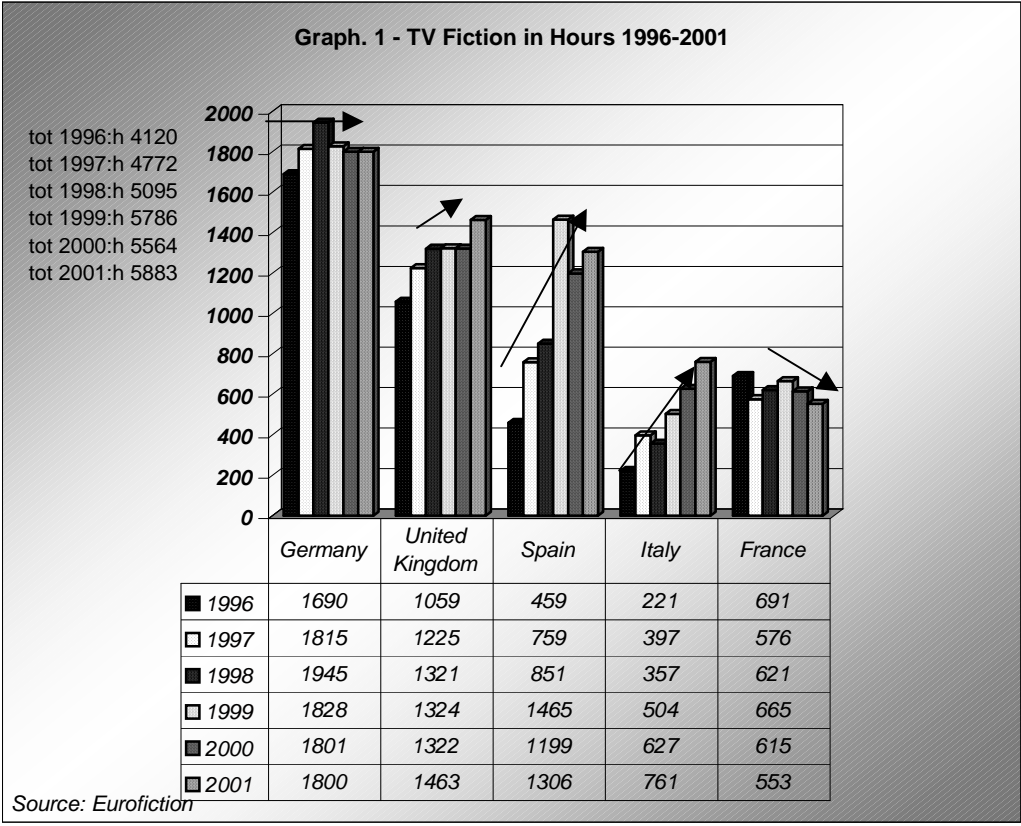
2. The Offer of European TV Fiction in 2001: On The Increase

The volume of national fiction supply has never been as bountiful as in 2001: **5883 hours** totalled in the five largest European countries. The overall growth of just over 300 hours (+5.7%) fully compensates the drop in 2000 and recuperates the expansive trend which has been recorded in the European television industry since the second half of the nineties. With respect to 1996, the presence of fresh national products in the schedules of both public as well as private channels (N.B. the Eurofiction monitoring concerns only first-run contents) went up by more than 1700 hours, thus a substantial increase of 43%.

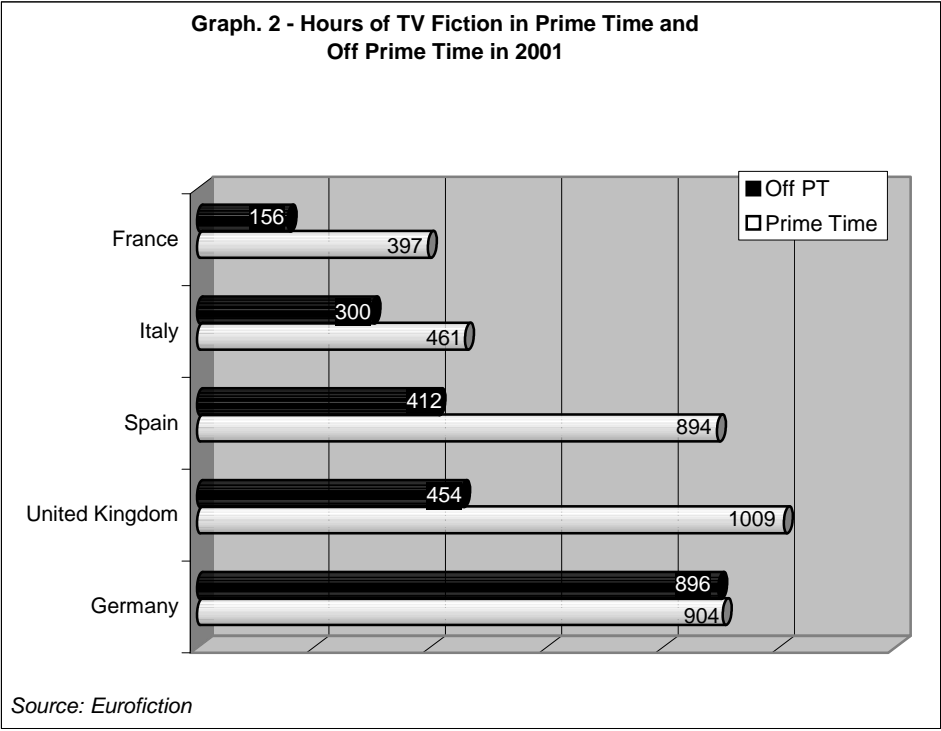
In this fairly short time span of six years, and putting aside at the moment the different directions of the national dynamics shown in the graph, the productive capacities of the European television industry – of which fiction represents the most important output - have strengthened and have enabled the channels to fill widening spaces in the schedules with domestic programmes, the most enjoyed by the local audiences. Especially in prime time this process has gone *pari passu* with the huge, though not complete eviction of imported programmes, and particularly those from the USA. It is not just by chance that more than six out of ten hours of European fiction in 2001 were broadcast in prime time. Though this distribution should be adjusted in the light of both the variable extension of the evening slot in the different countries (from two to three hours), as well as the variable scheduling of the different formats: the British channels by tradition and the Italians due to recent innovation, for example, transmit the soap operas in prime time, which obviously contribute in expanding to quite an extent the volume of supply in that time slot.

As highlighted in the previous reports (and is promptly taken up again in the national chapters), the expansion of production and offer of national fiction in the main European countries between 1996 and 2001 was neither a generalised or homogenous process.

It was not generalised because one of the countries, France, did not take part and in fact moved in the opposite direction: excluding the temporary revival during the two years 1998-1999, French fiction fell systematically in the period under consideration and today is the only case of a national industry with a production level lower than that of 1996 (graph. 1).



It is well known, and is quite evident in the distribution of offer by time slots (graph. 2), how the main cause of this regression is the absence of the *fiction de journée*, the daytime programmes, and generally the fact that the French channels have refrained up to now from taking the way of the long seriality; or more precisely they stopped going along it once the vein of youthful series, which flourished in the early nineties, had been exhausted and after the unsatisfactory results of the first home-grown soap opera in 1999.



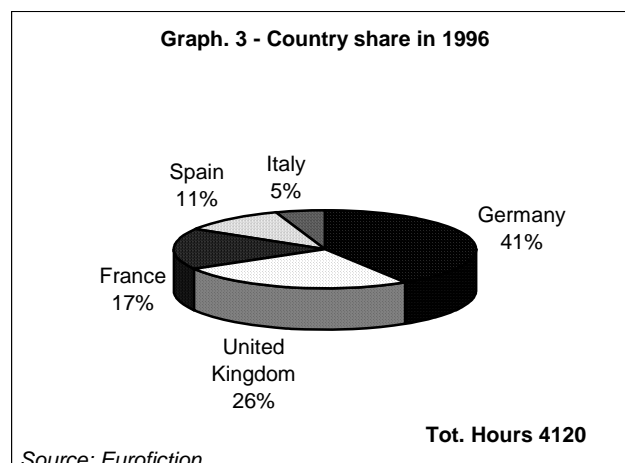
On the other hand, it was not a homogenous process because it happened with very different intensity and with different impact on the local and the entire European scenario in each of the other four countries. If we wish to trace back the various evolution dynamics to the same regime of regulation, we can affirm that the television industry in each country was strengthened inversely in proportion to the level of production capacity which it had already reached in 1996.

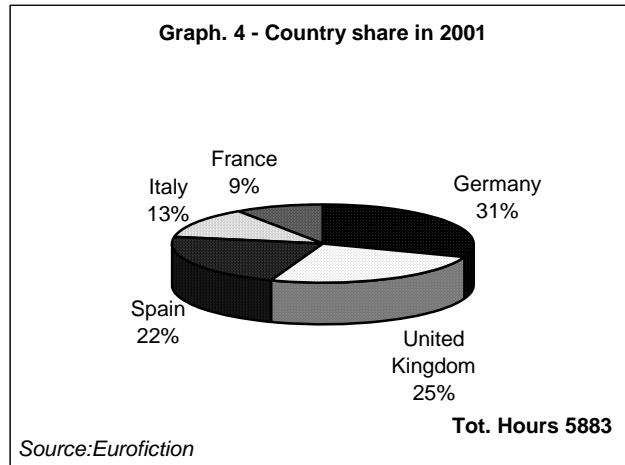
Thus, Germany which was and still remains the main European producer, and started with a volume of domestic fiction at approximately 1700 hours, after having touched the level of more than 2000 in 1998 has levelled out during the last three years at the fairly high quota of 1800 annual hours.

The United Kingdom, in turn, has continued to hold the position of the second largest producer, gradually increasing the output of locally produced drama from over 1000 hours initially to top 1400 hours in 2001: 38% more than 1996.

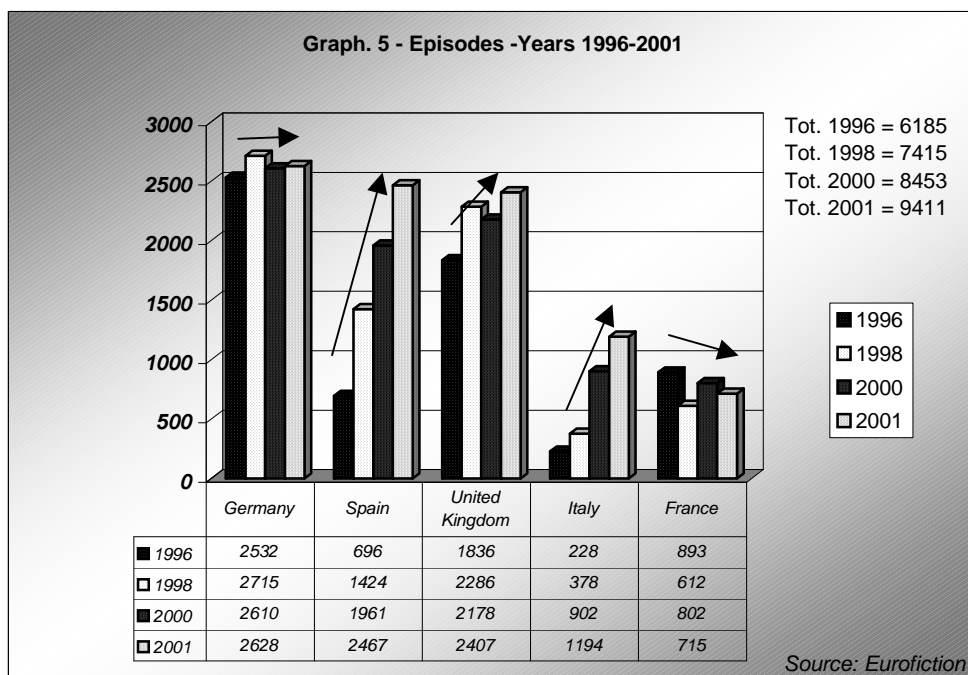
However, the most vehement driving force was produced by the Spanish and Italian television industries, which far from the preceding (with 459 and 221 hours respectively) and falling behind France, were in 1996 the weakest links in the European production apparatus. Spain's contribution to the global bulk of European fiction almost tripled between 1996 and 2001 (+185%) and the capacity of this national industry is now placed above the threshold of one thousand hours per year (it must be noted that the historical series of data from Spain presents some problems of comparability, as in the first three years of Eurofiction the very productive autonomic televisions were not included in the survey).

As far as Italy is concerned, the truly paltry size of that which in the middle of the nineties could hardly be called industry, has given way to a production system which is now three and a half times more than its initial capacity (+245%), and lastly has broken away from the French one: where in 1996 Italian fiction amounted to only just a third of that produced in France.





The field of positions of the five countries, based on the quota supplied by each one to the cumulated volume of European fiction, has therefore been restructured over the years, following the dynamics of stabilisation, rise and fall referred to previously. The comparison between 1996 and 2001 shows immediate proof of the changes in degree and substance which occurred in this sector: the fairly significant downsizing of the German output (though still representing the major producer), the more than double incidence of Italian and Spanish productions, and in spite of the French quota being halved, the shortened distance between the Anglo-Saxon countries on one side and the Latin countries on the other. In 1996 the “slices” of these latter were equivalent, as a whole, to the third of the “cake”, and this means that out of three hours of European fiction only one was produced by the Mediterranean television industries; in 2001 the proportion increased to more than four hours our of ten (44%).



Whether we are speaking of Anglo-Saxon or Latin countries, the increase in the hourly volume of fiction supply is due to an identical primary factor: an intensified process of serialisation of national production. In other words, the schedules of the British, Spanish and Italian channels were nourished by a greater quantity of long seriality fiction, and in the first place soap operas.

This is confirmed by the evolution of the episodes, which increased by more than 900 units between 2000 and 2001: the 11.5% more (double the progression in hours). Spanish television and above all the autonomic channels, which in the year under analysis beat the national channels in hours and number of episodes, contribute significantly (500 episodes) to the further expansion of long seriality. A new soap opera in Italy and two in the United Kingdom, as well as the addition of supplementary weekly episodes to some of the pre-existing ones, cover the remaining difference.

Not only in 2001 but during the entire time span of Eurofiction monitoring, the serialisation has been the main originator of such an explosive growth (as in the case of Spain and Italy) of European national drama. The French case provides an evidence *a contrario*: it is the only national industry which does not produce soap operas and long series, and is also that whose production volume has fallen over the years.

In terms of episodes - not hours, given the short length of the instalments in soaps - the open and closed serials amount today to more than half of European fiction, all countries considered. Their incidence is the highest on the Italian and British channels, although seriality holds a very different position in the television history of the two countries: the United Kingdom counts on soaps which have been transmitted for many decades, in Italy the first local soap dates back to 1996.

Tab. 1 - Episodes of Serials in % in 2001

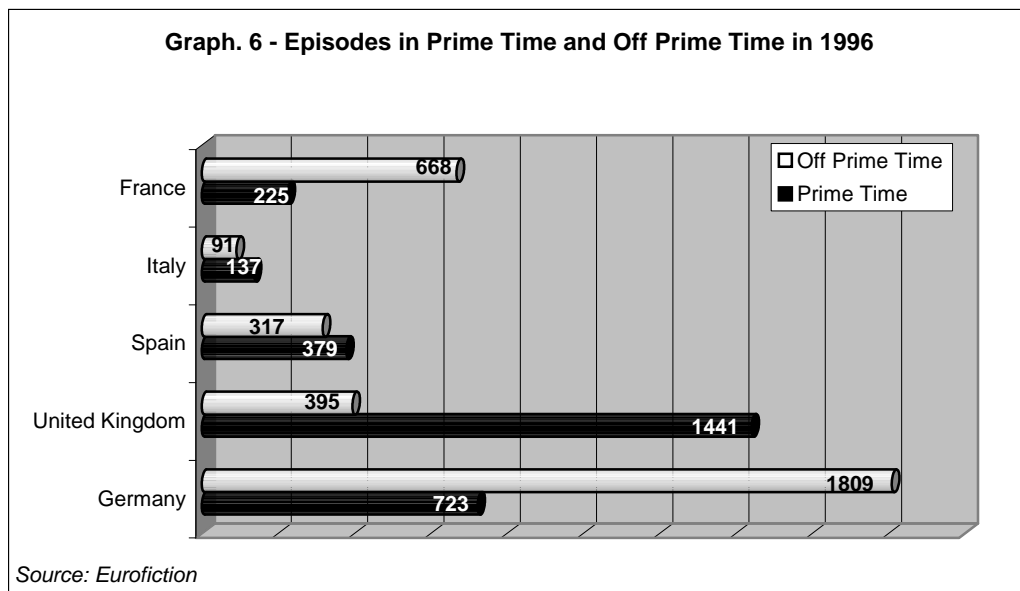
United Kingdom	72%
Italy	71.30%
Spain	59.60%
Germany	49.60%
France	0%

Source: Eurofiction

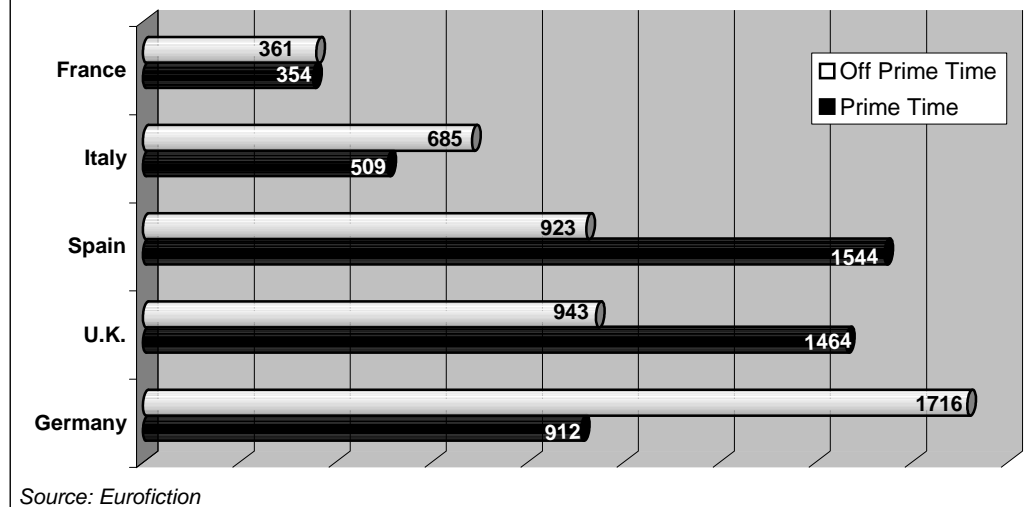
Even though, as we can see, not all countries support - or at least not to the same extent - that which a few years ago was rather disdainfully called “soapmania”, the reasons why the long serials are well placed in the preferences agenda of the broadcasters are well-known and understandable:

unrivalled capacity to structure the schedules, which they supply hundreds of episodes per year; ability to ensure a relatively stable and faithful audience over a long period; training providers for creative talents; maintenance of a high level of employment in the production system; and last but not least, consistent production economies. In reality, even more in the present situation of skimpy resources, serials offer the best solution for the problem of keeping down the costs without having to lower production levels. As regards the audience ratings, no country has been able to equal the extraordinary and long-lasting popularity of several British soaps, authentic institutions of the national popular culture; but generally speaking the serials can assure the channels satisfactory performances, in relation to the average shares of the time slots where they are scheduled. It is not rare that this slot is the prime time (on the British, Italian and Spanish television), even though in recent years the long seriality has been exploited by the broadcasters to better refurbish the daytime slots, still saturated by imports (however in slight decrease), with indigenous fiction programmes.

If we compare the breakdown of the episodes by time slots in 1996 and 2001, the expansion of supply in off prime time on the British, Spanish and Italian channels is quite evident (next to the stable distribution of German fiction and to the contraction of the French off prime time for reasons often mentioned). Thus, while prime time is in the forefront in hourly volume, in terms of episodes - all countries considered - the distribution of the offer is equal.



Graph. 7 - Episodes in Prime Time and Off Prime Time in 2001



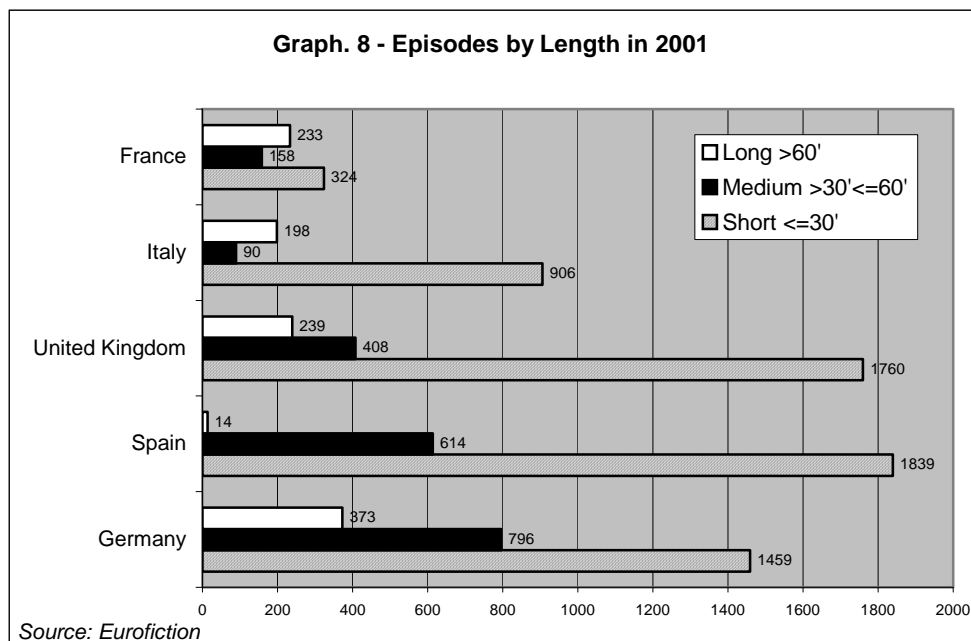
Against long seriality, and almost everywhere, it exists - in the intellectual and professional circles and even among the viewers - a negative prejudice, the tendency to hastily accuse it of second-rate quality. In this instance, the advancement of soaps, serials and long series in European fiction should be considered further evidence of the dumbing-down of contemporary television. There is no need to share such a schematic and detrimental perspective - which attributes all the quality to formats similar to films, as the TV movie and mini-series, and nourishes the eternal yearning for single plays - in order to perceive the imbalance of a production and offer of national fiction too leaned on long seriality side. At least because soaps and their variants represent the expression and the real emblem of a fiction in full sense domestic, localised and sometimes regionalised: a great resource for keeping television in contact with the national and regional audiences, on the basis of the cultural proximity and the sense of belonging to the same home, but for this very reasons a eminently *inward looking* fiction. If one of the problems, both cultural and economical, of European drama is the difficulty to establish on a national level a sufficient “critical mass” of potentially exportable programmes, the growing volume of production of the soaps is far from providing a solution.

There are two tendencies seemingly conflicting but for the most part interconnected which can be seen in contemporary European fiction: on one hand the serialisation which has just been mentioned and which, consisting of a dilated and hyper-dilated programme segmentation, can be identified with a form of *stretching*; on the other hand a reduction of the length of the episodes, or rather the proliferation of short episodes, equivalent to a form of *shrinking*.

Two fiction episodes out of three last less than half an hour, the typical length of soaps and sitcoms, and between 1996 and 2001 the number of

short episodes has risen by 68%. The average standard of hour long episodes are still irregularly widespread in Europe, above all because the French and Italian tradition of the series of cinematic length is still strong and competitive; however, since the end of the nineties, both industries have started a more sustained production of one hour series.

If soaps and sitcoms give obviously the major contribution to the shortening of length, the shrinking of the episodes is also the manifestation and the result of a recent and interesting phenomenon which can be ascribed to the few novelties in European fiction. This is actually the advent of very short formats (only a few minutes), first introduced in France in 1999 with the comedy *Un gars, une fille*, adaptation of an original Canadian format. A second series of the same type *Camera cafe* was added in 2001, while one of



the Spanish channel has re-adapted the former with the title *Ell i Ella*. Moreover some British channels have commissioned and scheduled an unusual number of short TV movies. These productions which last as video-clips, and sometimes are shaped according to the same aesthetics, have opened up a small space of refreshing innovation in the rather static panorama of European drama; and lending themselves to programming which does not need great manoeuvres in the schedules and just exploits the short intervals between one programme and another, they have introduced a new typology of *interstitial fiction*.

3. Formats: Between Abundance and Plurality

If the hours and the episodes capture the accelerated rhythm with which the European television industry has been developing during the last six years, the third indicator - the number of titles - supplies the elements to ascertain

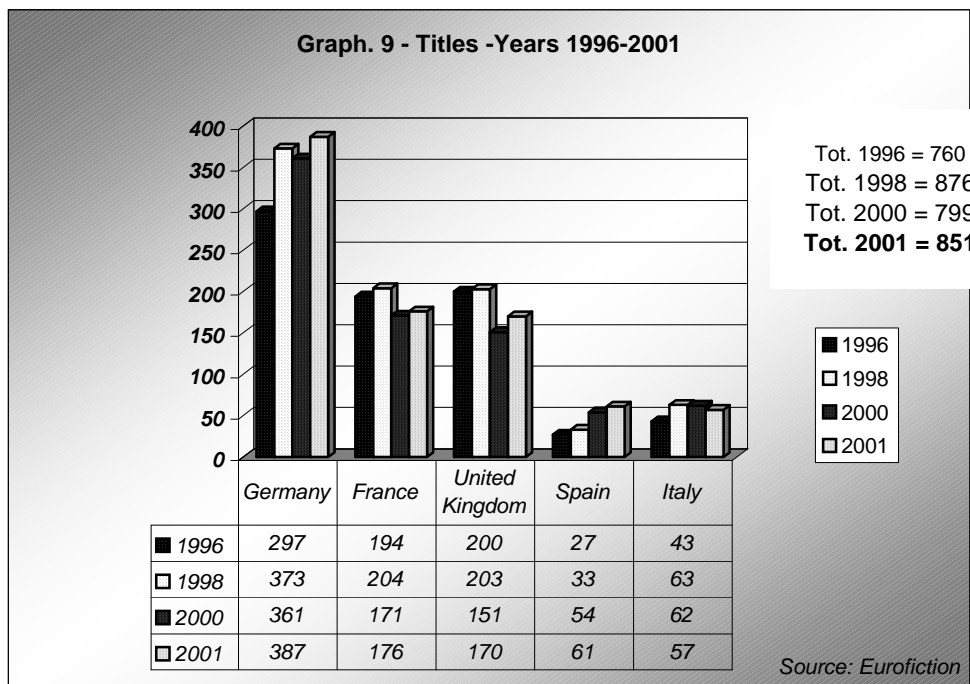
and downsize this large expansion. Suffice it to compare the differences in growth over this period - according to the episodes, hours and titles - in order to obtain an immediate idea.

Tab. 2 - Differences 1996-2001

Episodes	+52%
Hours	+43%
Titles	+12%

Source: Eurofiction

Instead of introducing a contradiction in the picture already outlined up to now, the modest increase in titles represents its confirmation: namely it confirms that, where it has been produced, the new abundance of European fiction was rather more the result of a dilatation process (accentuated segmentation, *stretching* and therefore increase in hourly volume) than of a pluralisation process of the programmes commissioned and offered by the television channels.



In reality the number of titles reached its zenith (876) in 1998, and then began to decrease in the subsequent two years; and although in 2001 there were 50 more productions than the previous year, it was not enough to recuperate the previous levels of 1998. Most of the new titles were made up of TV movies, which seem to have regained momentum in Germany, France and the United Kingdom; but the respective national chapters resound a note of caution in this instance. Some German broadcasters have already announced that they want to reduce the number in the near future; the new

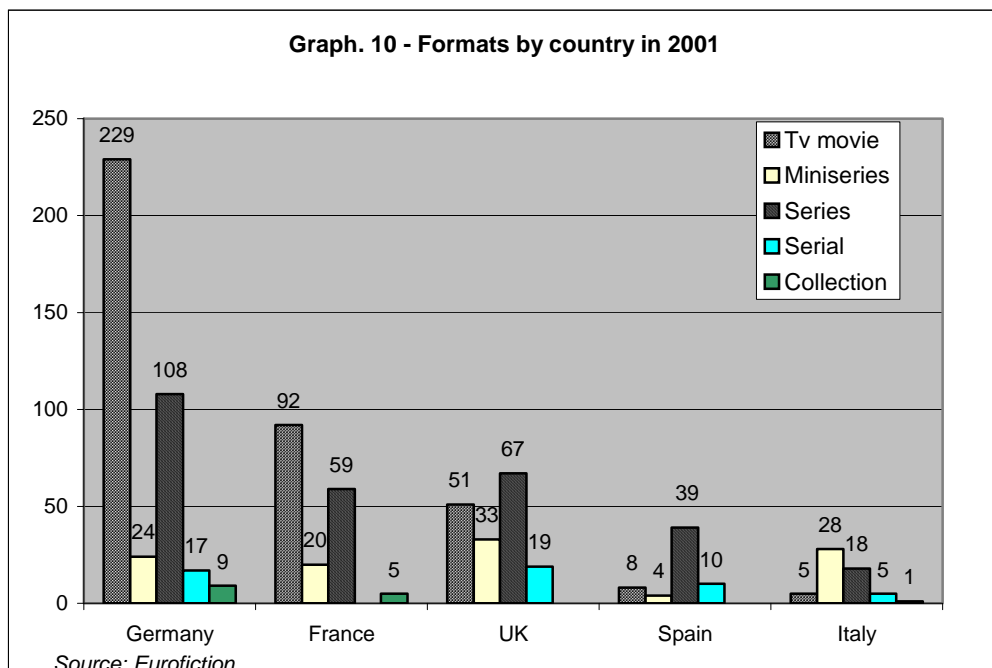
regulation in France on the broadcasters' production commitments, in force since 2002, contain dispositions which could favour the series - because they are more repeatable - compared to the one-off formats, less exploitable as reruns; the blooming of British TV movies is above all due to the aforementioned "shorts".

The titles and their corresponding formats represent a strong element of distinction among the different countries and heavily restructure their relative positions. Thus, if Germany remains the major producer whatever indicator is taken into consideration (387 fiction programmes), France, which is the last according to hours and episodes, goes to second position thanks to 176 titles in 2001; with respect to the French channels, the Spanish ones offer three times as many episodes of domestic fiction, four times the number of hours and barely a third of the programmes; measured in hours Italian fiction is much more than half of German output, measured in titles is a seventh. In conclusion, 45% of European fiction programmes is produced in Germany – which presumably is not unrelated to the competitive capacity of the German television industry on the export front.

Tab. 3 – Formats

	<i>TV MOVIE</i>	<i>SERIES</i>	<i>MINI-SERIES</i>	<i>SERIAL</i>	<i>COLLECTION</i>
2001	385	291	109	51	15
2000	345	293	94	45	22

Source: Eurofiction



From this point of view, not of minor importance, little has changed in fact since 1996; the Spanish and Italian television industries, if on the one hand have proved to be the most dynamic and have given the major contribution to the quantitative growth of European fiction, on the other hand have not been able to bridge to a proportional degree the gap from the high level of multi-programmes productiveness of the more mature and consolidated industries. The double aim of abundance and plurality of production and offer was probably too difficult to achieve short-term.

All countries considered, the distribution of the formats shows few changes compared with the previous years, not so as to modify positions and incidence of each typology. We must note that the lack of seven collections is an added downsizing factor to the comeback of the TV movie.

Tab. 4 - Summary of the Offer in 2001

	Hours	Titles	Episodes	Seriality Index* 2001	Seriality Index* 1996
Germany	1800	387	2628	6.7	8.5
United Kingdom	1463	170	2407	14	9.2
Spain	1306	61	2467	40.4	25.7
Italy	761	57	1194	20.9	5.4
France	553	176	715	4	4.6
tot.	5883	851	9411		

Source: Eurofiction

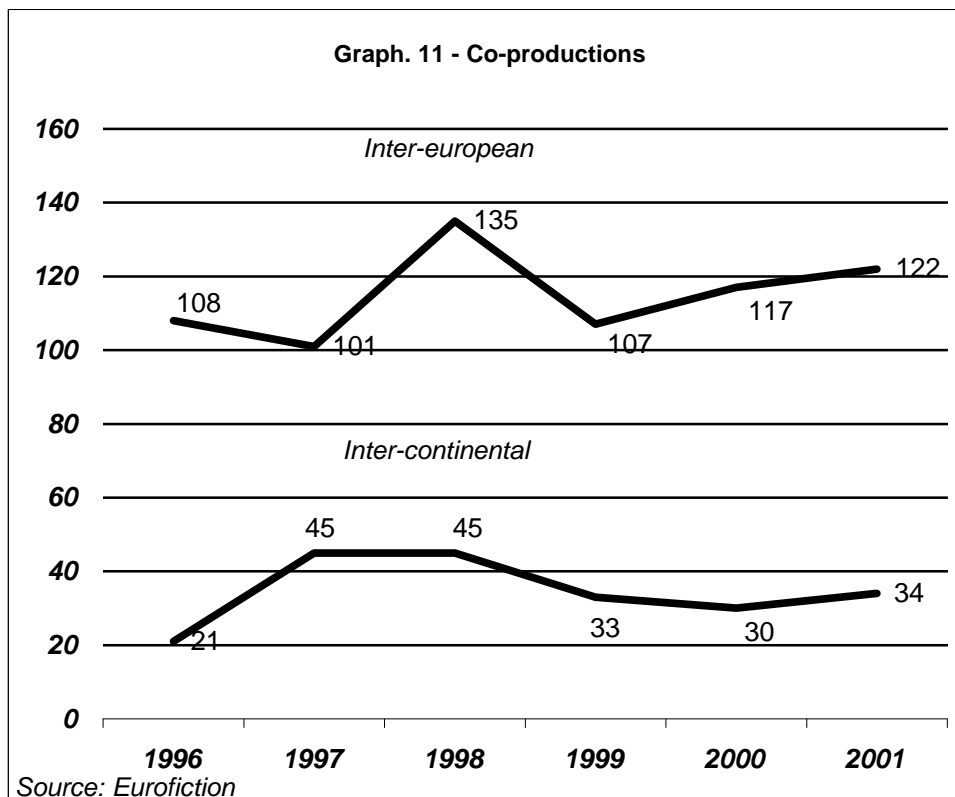
**average number of episodes per title*

The German channels above all, and quite a long way off the French, continue to cultivate in high quantities the one-off format; Italy has almost left it by the wayside and Spain has only just begun to introduce it. The countries characterised by a richer and multiple production in terms of titles (Germany, France and the United Kingdom) grounds this prerogative on the coupling of the preferential formats of the TV movie and the series; the abundance of Spanish fiction rests on the binomial of series and serials; Italy, whose catalogue of annual programmes is the least (57 titles), equilibrates the dilation of the series and serials devoting half its titles to the mini-series format, which is the emblem of its productive tradition.

4. Co-productions: Awaiting *Napoléon*

Immediately after 1998, the year in which the total of inter-European and inter-continental co-productions reached its peak with 180 titles, 2001 was the more fertile season for the international component of European fiction. The 156 co-productions found in the offer of the five countries confirmed the slight increase following the sharp fall in 1999; and with respect to the 129 titles of the first year of monitoring demonstrated steady progress of 20%.

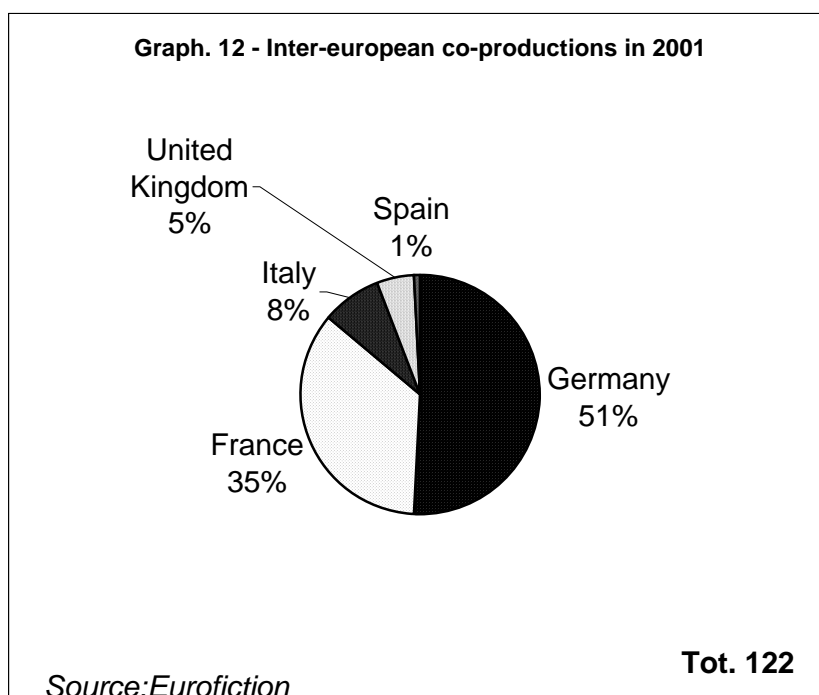
The situation, however, is far from giving us the possibility of proclaiming triumphalism nor even only great expectations. During the last six years neither of the two types of co-production - the inter-European between two or more European countries; the inter-continental, the fruit of a partnership between European and extra-European operators, the latter being mostly American - have shown signs of a vigorous and sustained growth. There was an initial stage of ascent (the three year period 1996-1998), a subsequent decrease and more recently a two year period of revival; but the oscillations are few and the incidence of the co-productions (on average 18%) on the number of titles of fiction annually programmed by the European televisions remains more or less unchanged.

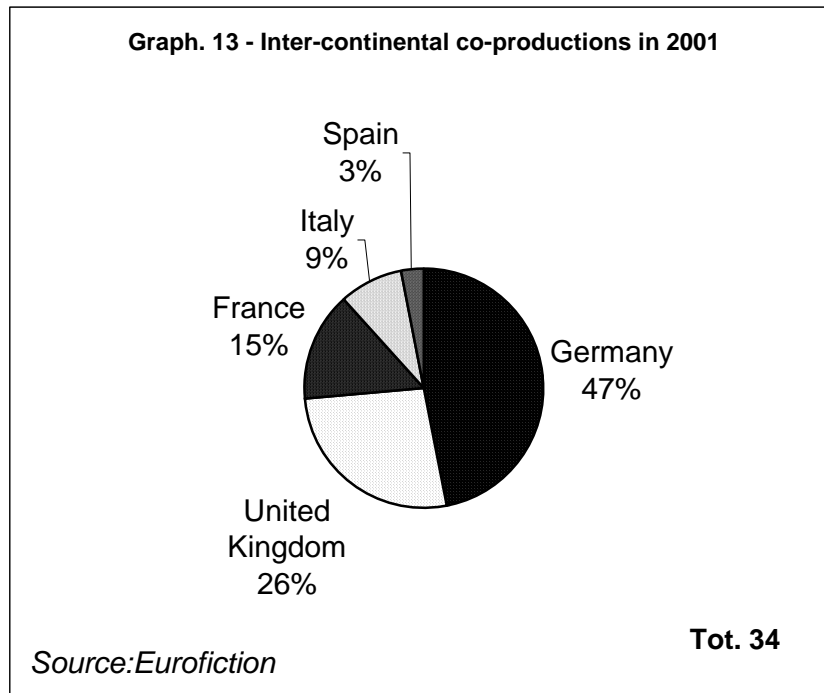


In fact the co-productions have constituted, at least up to now, one of the more stable objects (or more stationary) of our data gathering, in the sense that each year the picture has not undergone significant variations. It is necessary however to avoid considering not elastic results in a similar way as non-results, or inert information; on the contrary, these are eloquent indicators of a crystalised state of affair, and for one reason or another (generally more than one) allergic to change - if not perhaps over the long period.

In the more or less recent years we often had the illusive impression that favourable conditions were emerging for the intensification of the creative and productive cooperation among the European countries, and among the latter and the “others” in far away countries. International treaties, alliances among operators, the support of the European institutions and the more compelling thrust by the increasing costs of fiction production, have nourished the expectations of a substantial expansion of the inter-European and inter-continental co-productions.

The reaping of this crop of expectations was frankly meagre, if it has to be gauged according to the additional handful (fewer than 30 titles) of the co-productions in 2001, compared to those in 1996. And for the future, observing how Germany is the country which is more involved in both the typologies of co-production, we must ask ourselves what kind of impact the headlong fall of the television empire of Leo Kirch (till now one of the most active players on the field) will have on the German partnerships, and subsequently on the co-productions in Europe.





There are naturally good and quite plausible reasons able to explain the cautious evolutive dynamics of the sector. As with every plan which involves negotiations and agreements among several partners, the co-productions are a complicated and lengthy business: a discouraging prospective right from the start or during the negotiations, and a kind of inborn device of selection and reduction of initiatives. Furthermore they show a rate of risk far superior than normal as regards the artistic presentation and the audience results, every time that the mixing of national and international components produce an imperfect amalgam, not recognisable enough as being local by the public of the primary markets, and not attractive enough as “exotic” for the public of the secondary markets. Many European broadcasters have not forgotten the era of the Europuddings: when, also on the wave of a certain EU rhetoric based on an enthusiastic and abstract idea of pan-European television, co-productions were set up which were mere and inefficient combinatory formulae of international contributions (financial, infrastructural, scenographical, artistic): without however basic resources, a story, characters a narrative style endowed with an authentic trans-cultural attraction. That unsuccessful experience has left long-lasting signs, even though a few recent episodes have shown that it is possible to achieve co-productions very successful among the audiences of the partners’ countries, and beyond.

As a matter of fact it is the “demonstrative effect” (see Report 2001), the symbolic value of the small number of productions able to achieve popularity and trigger off multi-local and cross-border resonance - as was the case of *The Count of Monecristo* and *Les Miserables* and some chapters

of the *Bible* project - which repays the efforts of co-productions: over and above the stagnation of titles or the modest increase in projects. The quantitative dimensions are not however secondary, both because the stressed economies of the production systems can find relief in the international financial contributions, as well as the fact that the co-productions partially substitute the trade deficit of much of the European fiction.

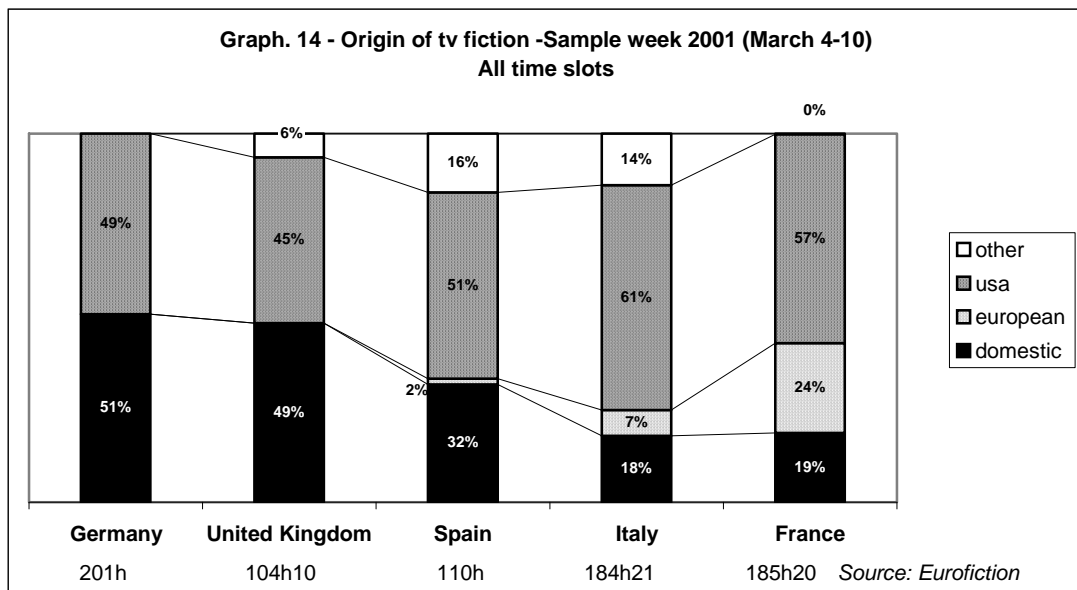
Demonstrative effects, echoes and resonance are however volatile phenomena which necessitate incessant nourishing and regeneration. In this instance 2001 has been a year of stand-by for the co-productions. Waiting for the heralded event of *Napoléon*.

5. Sample Week: A Stable Model

The Eurofiction sample week during which the entire fiction supply, including repeats and imported programmes are monitored, is systematically set in March; the selected week can vary from one year to another - in 2001 it was between 4-10 March - owing to possible exceptional circumstances which in some country happen to interfere with the routine programming. The idea is to report on the distribution of national and foreign fiction in a week as normal as possible, and therefore widely representative of the programming policies when the television season is going full blast. Although this is an objectively limited temporary cross-section, its results help us to outline a basic picture where we can observe the presence of the indigenous output in relation to imports, and how these latter are articulated following the geographical origin.

Over the years, from 1996 onwards, the results of the sample week have brought to light a stable and steadily consolidated model of fiction distribution and offer in the European television schedules, which can be summed up with the expression: off prime time is global (mainly American), whereas prime time is local. The predominant dualism of the local products on one side, and the American ones on the other, leaves variable margins - normally between 10% and 20% - for fiction from other origins: European non national, Latin American (in Spain and Italy), Australian (in the United Kingdom).

The results for 2001 confirm the stability of the model. Over the entire day fiction of American origin comes close to, or goes over 50% of the programming of the German, French and Spanish channels, reaching its peak in Italy. The most intense "Americanisation" of the Italian schedules is also a long-lasting feature: to a large extent it is connected to the marginal use of home-grown fiction by the two minor commercial channels, officially for limited budget reasons.



Compared to the previous years, however, the quota of the American imports appears to be dwindling throughout the entire day, both in Italy and elsewhere. Neither must we forget that the more conspicuous part of the American (and generally imported) fiction broadcast by the European televisions in the off prime time slots mostly consists of repeats, and often viewed for the umpteenth time.

In previous reports we have repeatedly and lengthily dwelt on the rather secondary role in the programming of non-national European fiction, namely the omni-present and unresolved problem of the limited level of circulation and exchange of contents of European origin. It is however worth pointing out the empirical manifestations of circulation and inter-exchange, as they can be observed in the five largest European countries.

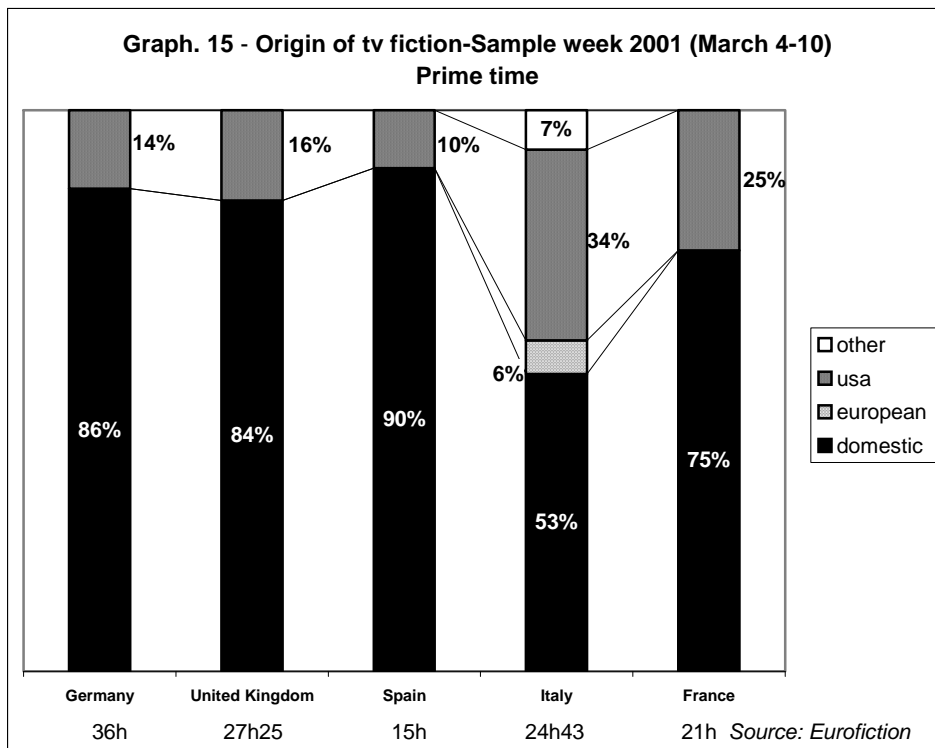
The distinction between the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin (Mediterranean) sub-areas, which we have mentioned in other situations, is once again useful to systematise (if not to explain) the scenario under analysis. In fact, in the former area i.e. German and British televisions, drama from other European countries is hardly ever to be found; the flow of imports and exports within the same area, between Germany and United Kingdom, is equally absent. The latter area appears to be more open to including non-national European fiction. Mind you this is a rather relative opening, which appears more remarkable only on the French channels - subject to tighter regulations in this instance - and clearly decreases on the Italian and Spanish televisions; it is however worth establishing a divide.

Modest and asymmetric flows of inter-exchange occur between Italy and France, in the sense that French fiction - TV movies, recurrent heroes and old youthful series - is more widespread on the Italian channels than the

opposite is true. Actually the non-national European product circulating in the entire sub-area of the Latin countries comes mostly from the Anglo-Saxon area; more precisely Germany, the major European producer, is the almost exclusive supplier.

Thus the one-way direction of the flow of exports - from German to the Mediterranean countries and not the reverse – outlines the distinct profile of an asymmetric relation, not dissimilar to that maintained by all the European countries (perhaps with the slight exception of the United Kingdom) with the USA.

Over and above the considerations triggered off by each situation of imbalance, the case of Germany is of great (unacknowledged, and modestly topicalised) importance as regards the issue – in actual fact a real cultural and economic problem - of exportability of national European fiction. For reasons which are worth an in-depth investigation sooner or later, the firm belief of an inborn incapacity of European drama to travel, and above all within and across Europe, has put down its roots and become common sense in the various milieus of the audiovisual sector. In the previous report we spoke of this as a syndrome of self-fulfilling prophecy widespread among the European operators. The TV movies and the German series which circulate extensively and quite successfully (not to mention when they give rise to real and true popularity phenomena, as in the case of *Derrick* or *Kommissar Rex*) over and outside their national frontiers, supply this common sense with disproof of opposite empirical evidence.



Going back to the sample week results, the second component of the offer's structural model is confirmed as never before in the 2001 survey. Home-grown fiction programmes hold the lion's share during the prime time, in an unparalleled way in the history of Eurofiction data. In four countries out of five (in Italy the share of local programmes is the majority for the first time, but much more compressed than elsewhere) nationally produced fiction is overwhelmingly dominant. That broadcast in prime time, in each country, is mainly fresh fiction: the newest and most prestigious product supplied by the national industries, offered for the enjoyment of the largest possible audiences.

6. Successes: Fading

The extent of the largest possible audiences has begun to shrink. The de-intensification of the successes of domestic fiction is one of the highlights of 2001, and it is underlined in every national chapter of this report. The comparison with other genres could confirm the hypothesis that this phenomenon is due less to an incoming crack in the solid alliance between fiction and its audiences, than to the dispersion of the latter among the various channels of the new television environment. They are small signs of erosion, not a landslide: more than 20 million viewers for the episode of *Only Fools and Horses* opening the British Top 20, 50% share for *Julie Lescaut* in the same position in the French ranking, the three Italian and two German titles on top of their respective ranking with more than 9 million viewers, confirm and not deny the lasting ability of European drama to attract national audiences en masse.

Nevertheless, this capacity of attracting viewers is no doubt languishing, and some telling examples can be provided.

In Germany the viewers figure of the first most watched episode is the lowest in the 1996-2001 period, and the audience of the last title in the ranking of the previous year has now become enough to reach the tenth position.

English drama, which traditionally obtains ratings of matchless magnitude compared to other European countries, has even reinforced its position if we look at the results of the first two episodes in the list, more than 20 million viewers; yet, we should consider that in the top 20 of 2000 there was no title with less than 10 million viewers, while in 2001 there are nine episodes under this threshold.

French fiction, despite having faced competition from reality shows in a very positive way, has had a decrease in audience ratings. The episodes with a share of more than 40% have fallen from nine to seven, and the threshold

of 50% in 2001 is crossed only by the first in the list, against the first three of the previous year.

In the 2000 Italian classification, the first four episodes fell gradually from fourteen to ten million average viewers; in 2001 no episode reaches ten million or a 40% share, obtained by the first two titles in the previous year.

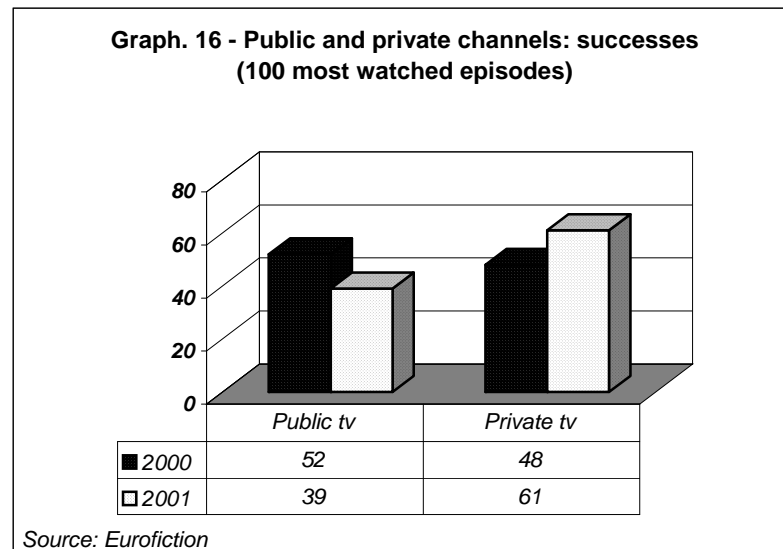
As for the Spanish situation, finally, the high and the middle area of the ranking are relatively the same in 2000 and 2001; but not the lower area, where in 2001 we find six episodes having lower audience ratings than the one in the last position in the 2000 Top 20.

The outlook is too varied and complex to enable us to generalise or identify factors which can be applied to every situation. Generally speaking, we can just note that the most recent productions, the new fictions, are the ones that seem to suffer from fragility. There is a problem of “turnover” in the field of European drama, and this is likely to become more urging in case the de-intensification of successes should seriously draw on the position even of the long-lasting and most consolidated and guaranteed programmes.

Almost everywhere (except Spain), during 2001 public channels happened to lose points in the competition for the best ratings of national fiction, letting private televisions to regain even to an increased extent their usual advantage. Commercial channels are, on the whole, more productive than public stations from the successes point of view; and there are a number of reasons for that, from market position to a host of other elements probably different on a case-by-case basis. This is what usually happens in France, and more moderately, in the UK and in Spain; and since it happens in three countries out of five, this is not counterbalanced by the public channels dominance in Germany and in Italy. As a result, among the 100 most watched episodes of every year all countries considered, a small majority of about 55 titles is fiction offered by European private channels (however, we should say that the total result is somewhat biased due to the almost total predominance of TF1 in the French Top 20).

From 1996 to 1999 the positions of public and private televisions did not change. In 2000 a sudden and short-lived reversal took place, but by the following year it was over. Where, as in the French and British case, private channels are systematically dominant in the list of the most watched episodes, the phenomenon was further marked: ITV and TF1 in 2001 gained three new positions compared to 2000. In Italy and in Germany, where supremacy traditionally lies (and still does) with public channels, the gap was reduced. RAI fiction featured in the top 20 with eleven titles compared to fourteen in 2000 and, for the first time, it lost the top place. The loss of positions of public channels occurring in Germany is much greater (six

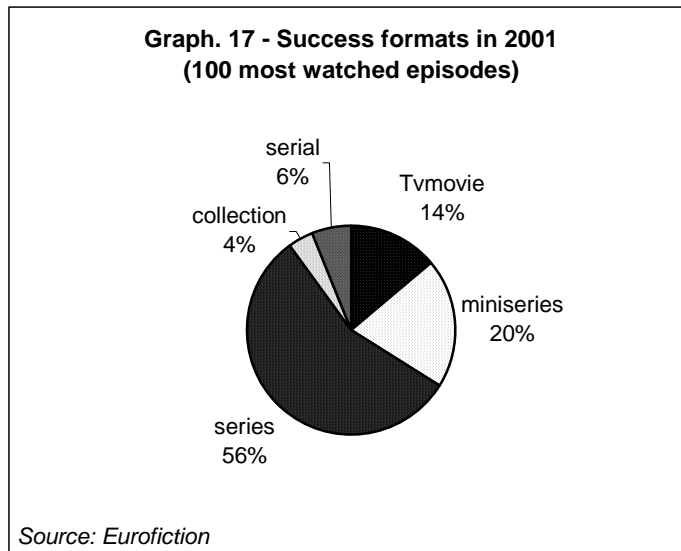
episodes), allowing commercial channels' fiction to appear in the list eight times against the two of the previous year.



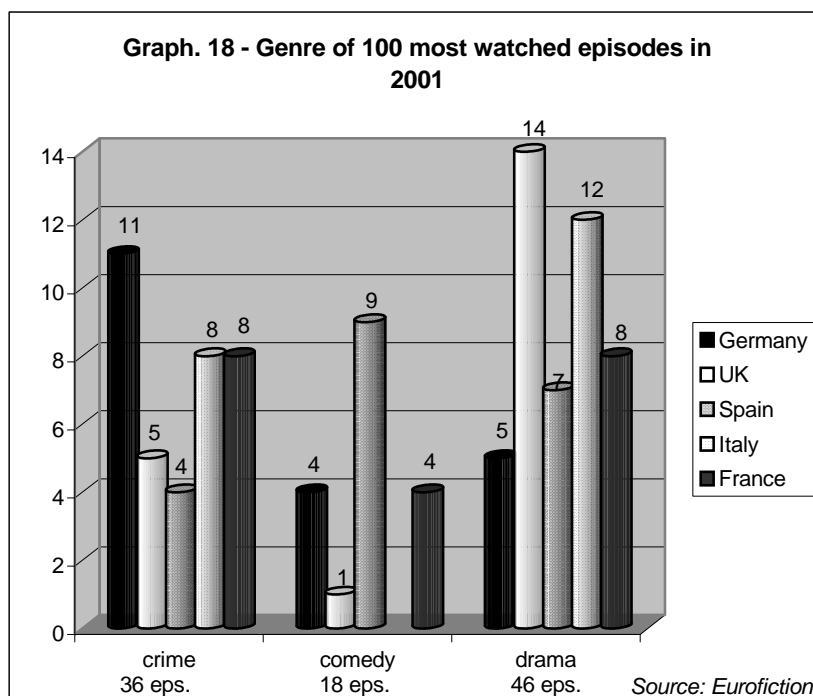
We could be speaking of a restoration of the usual proportions, except for the fact that in 2001 fiction successes of the European public televisions were at their lowest since 1996, with only 39 episodes among the 100 most watched.

On the other hand there are no relevant changes in the matter of successful formats and genres. The capability of serial fiction of attracting and maintaining large audiences thanks to regular appointments with recurring heroes (single or collective, men or women), and environments, basic dilemmas and modes of action in turn recurring, is confirmed: in 2001, as in the past, the episodes most watched by European audiences are series episodes. To tell the truth, there is a minor decrease in series compared to 2001, and it is worth noting it is to TV movies' advantage: this latter has, during 2001, undertaken a revival in Germany and in France, the two major European producers of the format, and also has obtained good ratings - with even eight TV movies in the French Top 20 -. However TV movies remain a risk format in the current situation of European fiction, as pointed out and explained in the French and German chapters.

Lastly, the breakdown of genres brings to light the unchanged preference of European audiences for cop shows; if drama is predominant, this is because it is fractured into many sub-genres, none of which however has, in any of the countries, the detached predominance of stories about little and great deviancies and anomalies, which have become the privileged point of view from which national fiction of European countries monitors and represents the agency of the contemporary social fabric.



The police/crime genre is mostly preferred by German audiences (at the same level as drama is preferred by British and Italian audiences), and it gains a good share of success everywhere. Comedy on the other hand finds the most favourable context of reception (and offer) in Spain; it is completely absent among the Italian successful programmes, and it is amazing that the great tradition of British sitcoms is represented only by an exceptional case (a Christmas special of *Only Fools and Horses*). It is just as surprising that comedy re-flourishes where it is deemed less likely: inside the German fiction, which already had two episodes of humorous series in the 2000 Top 20, and has doubled them in 2001.



In the previous reports the comparative overview routinely ended with a short section about Eurofiction «cultural indicators»: a doorway to the more specifically qualitative dimension of our approach to European television fiction. It was, as we have already stated in some of the last reports, an insufficient and unsatisfactory attempt.

Seven years after the beginning of the project, we would like to go further. Eurofiction, in the meantime, has produced an economic spin-off (Eurofiction economy), which is in its second edition, and will be issued at the same time as this report. It will produce, in the near future, a qualitative spin-off (Eurofiction culture) which aims to deepen and enlarge via case studies and focused in-depth analysis of trends, genres, contents (and more), the exploration and understanding of European television fiction.

2. Julie Lescaut Wins Over Loana* French TV Fiction in 2001

by Régine Chaniac et Jean-Pierre Jézéquel

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: The Year of *Loft Story*

After a year of steady progress in 2000, French television registered a decline in advertising investment in 2001, estimated at 3.5% for terrestrial channels. The two public channels, France 2 and France 3, account for two thirds of this reduction, the year 2001 being the second step in the reduction of advertising time imposed by the government. TF1 too registered a clear fall and M6 is thus the only terrestrial channel which managed to increase its advertising revenues. Advertising on thematic channels, accessible on cable or satellite, increased substantially but still accounted for a marginal share (5%) of the television advertising market.

Average viewing time in France, which has been steadily increasing since 1998, went up again by 5 minutes per day in 2001, arriving at 3 hours 18 minutes for individuals 4 years old and over. Extra viewing time is shared equally between terrestrial and thematic channels.

Tab. 1 - Market Share of French TV Channels

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000 ³	2001
TF1	35.3	35.0	35.3	35.1	33.4	32.7
France2	24.2	23.7	22.5	22.3	22.1	21.1
France3	17.7	17.1	17.0	16.3	16.8	17.1
M6	11.9	12.7	12.9	13.6	12.7	13.5
Canal Plus	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.1	3.6
Arte/5ème	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.4
Other TV	3.4	3.8	4.3	4.5	7.5	8.5

Source: Médiamat/Médiamétrie, ind. 4 years old and over

In audience share, two channels gained ground with respect to the others: M6, which had lost much ground the year before, almost regained its record 1999 level; France 3 has² continued to progress for two consecutive years. Therefore, the two leading channels declined. France 2, which had resisted the “Other TVs” well the year before, lost one point and TF1 saw the erosion of its audience continue.

* Loana was one of the most popular participants in *Loft Story*, French adaptation of *Big Brother*

³ Since 28 February 2000, the Médiamétrie panel has added 280 digital homes; the “Other TVs” audience share went from 5% over the first two months of the year to 8,1% over the following ten months.

At the end of the year 2001, French population receiving widened cable or satellite possibilities amounted to 22.4% of individuals owning a television. After the digital bouquet boom in 1997-1998, progress slowed down and had the same rhythm for three years. At the end of 2001, 3.5 million homes were subscribed to digital television, of which 1.8 million Canalsatellite, 1.1 million TPS and 0.6 million cable.

In terms of programmes, the year 2001 might be considered the year of reality TV on French screens. M6 opened the floodgates in spring with the broadcast of *Loft Story* from 26 April to 5 July. The event was on a level with the heavy investment made by this small commercial channel which, for the first time, was able to destabilise the big channels, especially TF1. *Loft Story* fascinated adolescents, invaded conversations, aroused debates and passions and mobilised the entire media. A reference newspaper like *Le Monde*, clearly representative of the critical observer pose adopted by the written press with respect to television, increased its readers and advertising revenues by dedicating its first pages to the *Loft Story* phenomenon.

In audience terms, the results have to be relativised. Of the channel's many broadcasts (almost 200 in 10 weeks, constituting a total of more than 120 hours), the greatest success went to the access prime time slot, during the week, which gained an average audience share of 35%, with peaks at more than 40%, clearly beating TF1 and France 2. Thursday evening prime time also went well, with an average share of 36%, but it was not able to dethrone TF1's leadership with recurring heroes series. The other slots (weekend access, best of 7 minute-broadcasts during the week at 20:45) remained at less than 25% on average. But above all, the channel's global audience share, which increased significantly over the whole period, getting over 16% in May and June, fell after the end of *Loft Story* to its old level (12.3% over the August-December period).

In the wake of *Loft Story*, two other reality TV programmes were broadcast at the end of the year (*Popstars* on M6 and *Star Academy* on TF1) but without the same public reaction. However *Popstars* was the origin of a controversy in professional circles, following the decision of the CNC to consider the transmission a documentary and therefore an "œuvre", which meant it could benefit from a subvention. All the latent ambiguity of our national regulations concerning television – should we support creation or the programmes industry – was revealed once more and divided producers and authors. A consultation of the entire profession on the definition of audiovisual œuvres, keystone of the French regulatory system, was conferred on the CNC by Catherine Tasca, Minister of Culture. This led to an initial report in spring 2002, just before the elections, which was happy with just demonstrating the different points of view; it did not take up any position.

Once more in the regulatory field, the new decree stating obligations on the part of terrestrial channels concerning production, came out just before the summer and was not applied until 1 January 2002. With the scope of facilitating the exploitation of *œuvres* by producers, the decree envisages a limiting of rights acquired by the broadcaster who is limited to a single broadcast over 18 months. The broadcaster will later have the priority to repurchase reruns, the total of which will be included in his production obligations (fixed at 16% of his turnover). This device, which has long been claimed by producers, should allow them to make more of their success with productions. But it risks benefiting recurring-heroes series, which lend themselves to reruns, to the detriment of one-off TV movies - seldom rebroadcast - which it will be more difficult to finance.

2. The Origin of Fiction: Small Evolutions

In 2001 total fiction supply, of all types, was stable and amounted to a fifth of total broadcasting volume of the five terrestrial channels. After the inflation of this genre, which characterized the arrival of commercial television during the second half of the 1980s, and the slight regression which followed, an equilibrium seemed to have been reached. Television fiction seems still to be the most popular genre with the public, but it no longer constitutes the absolute “joker” in the competition between channels. They also depend on new magazine formulae which, in one way or another, base themselves on testimony or the exhibition of the intimate lives of the participants.

The constant volume of fiction broadcast hides a number of small evolutions, above all between the two main channels. For three years, the total fiction broadcast fell on TF1, while it increased on France 2 whose supply almost reached that of the private channel. With a small rise, M6 clearly overtook them with almost a third of its schedule dedicated to TV fiction.

Tab. 2 - The Evolution of Total TV Fiction Supply
In hours and in % of each channel's supply

	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001	
	hours	%	hours	%	hours	%	hours	%	hours	%
TF1	2650	30.3	2821	31.7	2745	31.4	2600	29.8	2316	26.5
France 2	1578	18.1	1797	20.2	1801	20.6	1930	22.1	2110	24.2
France 3	1200	16.3	1049	14.0	1099	14.7	953	12.6	1038	14.0
La 5 ^e /Arte	841	11.1	600	7.7	676	7.9	483	5.5	421	4.8
M6	2 995	34.3	2931	32.9	2771	31.7	2754	31.5	2833	32.4
Total TV	9264	22.5	9198	21.9	9092	21.5	8720	20.5	8718	20.6

Source: *Médiamétrie*

As in previous years, national production, even counting reruns, was nowhere near enough to fill the many fiction slots offered to French viewers, especially in the daytime. The following table, on the sample week from 4 – 10 March 2001, furnishes the breakdown, by fiction origin, broadcast on each channel, including the pay TV channel Canal Plus.

The figures obtained are, on the whole, similar to those of previous years. The total volume of fiction broadcast over the sample week matches well with the annual volume provided above by Médiamétrie, except for France 2 which is placed at a good ten hours lower than its annual figure. French fictions are almost a fifth of fiction broadcast, i.e. a mediocre result, intermediate between those of previous years. The proportion of North American products is stable, with a little more than half of the fiction broadcast. European fiction took advantage of the decline in national fiction and achieved the remarkable level of a quarter of fiction broadcast, beating its record of 22% registered in 1996.

Tab. 3 - Origin of TV Fiction Broadcast (Sample Week 4-10 March 2001)

	FRANCE		EUROPE		USA		OTHER		TOTAL
	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours
TF1	5:16	11.0	12:01	25.1	30:39	63.9	-	-	47:55
France 2	9:13	30.4	10:27	34.4	10:21	34.1	0:21	1.1	30:23
France 3	3:03	15.0	3:50	18.8	13:29	66.2	-	-	20:22
Canal +	2:51	13.4	5:42	26.7	12:46	59.9	-	-	21:19
La 5ème	1:33	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1:33
Arte	2:51	33.0	5:48	67.0	-	-	-	-	8:39
M6	10:02	18.2	7:28	13.5	37:39	68.3	-	-	55:09
Total	34:49	18.8	45:16	24.4	104:54	56.6	0:21	0.2	185:20

Source: CSA/Eurofiction

However, each channel's list, concerning only one week, is not always representative of its programming over the entire year. TF1 is clearly at a lower place than in previous years in terms of its volume of French fiction (11% as against 25% in 2000). This result can be explained, without doubt, by a real fall, but also by the cancellation of a Saturday afternoon series to make place for a French Football Cup match during this week.

On main channels, American fiction is mainly broadcast in the daytime or the second half of the evening and only M6 grants it regularly two or three prime times a week. However, in the sample week, TF1 broadcast an episode of the *Colombo* series on Saturday in prime time, which dominated the evening, beating the new French TV movie broadcast by France 3 (*Le Parisien du village*) and the American series broadcast by M6 in its "*La trilogie du samedi*" slot (*Charmed, The Sentinel*).

Among European fiction suppliers, Germany is still at the top, with programmes broadcast in the afternoon on TF1 (*Alarm für Cobra, Die*

Rettungsflieger, Bei aller Liebe), on France 2 (*Im Namen des Gesetzes*), on France 3 (*Der Alte*) and on M6 (*Die Wüstenrose, Zur Zeit zu zweit*). British fiction is still the favourite on M6 with cult series like *The Persuaders*, broadcast on Saturday afternoon at 18:00. An Italian fiction was scheduled weekday mornings on TF1: *Lui e Lei*.

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: Production Down

In 2001, the recession in national production observed the year before was confirmed. The volume of new French fiction broadcast was down by sixty hours, i.e. a decline of 10%. Since 1996, the first year of Eurofiction, national production broadcast (except Canal Plus and Arte, which were taken into account from 1998 onwards) lost close on a third of its volume, going from 691 to 500 hours.

Tab. 4 - Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: First Run

	NBR. OF TITLES	NBR. OF EPISODES	HOURS
TF 1	47	131	156h30
France 2	52	343	187h45
France 3	33	42	63h15
M 6	19	138	92h15
Arte	17	26	32h45
Canal Plus	8	35	20h45
Total	176	715	553h15

Source: Eurofiction

Even more than the previous year, **TF1** was the main channel responsible for the decline in new national fiction in 2001, with 60 hours less. For the first time, it lost first place to France 2. If we consider the evolution since 1996, this commercial channel reduced its fiction volume by a half (from 325 to 157 hours).

This decline is basically due to the elimination of daytime fiction. From year to year, this channel has cancelled almost all the production destined for the end of the afternoon. In 2001, a further step was taken with the elimination of the Wednesday afternoon 50-minute series. Only the Saturday 18:00 slot remained with the series *Sous le soleil*. The other off-prime time broadcasts are not really the fruit of programming aims. We see on the one hand the practice of destocking - already experimented in the last three years - after midnight, those fictions considered too risky for prime time, with two TV movies, an isolated episode of four different series eliminated by the channel (including *Madame le Consul*) and two mini-series, including the European co-production in two episodes *Nana* broadcast in August. On the other hand, a 17x24' series, *Paradis d'enfer*, was programmed daily in December before 6 a.m., which seems to be more the result of respecting broadcast quotas (French spoken *œuvres*) than winning over an audience.

Fiction programmed in the prime time on TF1 also suffered a certain erosion with 66 episodes as against 69 the previous year and 72 in 1999. The channel's returning series like *Navarro*, *Julie Lescaut*, *Les Cordier*, *Une femme d'honneur*, have by now accumulated such a large number of episodes that the channel can arrange for optimal use of alternated broadcast of reruns and new episodes. While TF1 keeps itself to two regular fiction evenings in the week (Monday and Thursday), there is no significant increase to expect. As every year, certain series disappeared (*Marc Eliot*) and others were created, mostly detective stories, with six new titles, four of which were pilots in 2001. One of these, *Commissariat Bastille*, with the recurring-hero-cop Smâin, played by a North African immigrant comic artist, achieved good results (41.5% of the audience).

Apart from series, which were clearly in a dominant position, we find only a dozen TV movies and two mini-series. It is remarkable that, out of such a weak TV movie count, half were classified in the top 20! The first mini-series, in two episodes, takes advantage of the remake model, adapting a classic of French adventure cinema (*L'Aîné des Ferchaux*, Jean-Pierre Melville, 1963, the adaptation of a novel by Simenon), in which Jean-Paul Belmondo, who played the role of the young man at the time, now plays the old character. It was not exactly a failure but the remake did not entirely convince the public, the second episode coming well behind the first (45.9% and 30.7% of audience share). The other mini-series, in five episodes, was entitled *Méditerranée* and renews the summertime saga interrupted the year before (*Tramontane* in 1999), with a fair amount of success.

France 2 also contributed, but to a lesser extent, to the fallback in new national fiction volume with 18 hours less than the previous year. After the years of strong production (1998-1999), the public channel found itself at a level close to that of 1996.

The loss concerns exclusively daytime fiction. After the end of *Cap des pins* at the end of March 2000, which amounted to more than 25 hours that year, France 2 seems to have given up definitively on the possibility of successfully establishing a daily national soap opera in access prime time. On the other hand, *Conan*, the adventure series broadcast last year during the summer at about 16:30 (22 48-minute episodes), co-produced with Great Britain and the United States, resembling M6 series, did not continue in 2001.

This time, the public channel decided upon the sitcom for teenagers and after the summer came up with *Le groupe* at the end of the afternoon. It followed the daily lives of a group of six students. Produced by Jean-Luc Azoulay, the producer of *Hélène et les garçons*, the series takes up the same concept of light comedy, tackling sexual problems more clearly. But *Le groupe* did not achieve the success that was expected and it was replaced

by an American sitcom from the month of November on (*The 70's Show*), the last episodes being broadcast on Wednesdays.

Once more, we can make the same comment: investment on the part of French channels in daily fiction intended for access prime time (sitcom or soap) is not sufficient to convince a public which has, since a tender age, become used to consuming American products. The stripped programming on France 2 of a series like *Friends*, produced in the USA for a weekly prime time broadcast, does not help the acceptance of national products which are considerably inferior in quality.

The only success story in daily fiction terms on this channel remained *Un gars, une fille*, which began in October 1999, and which managed to challenge north-American competition, thanks to its 6-8 minute format and its eternal concept (the troubles that couples find themselves in). But in 2001, the series had thirty new episodes less and made up with reruns of old episodes.

In prime time, new national fiction offered by France 2 was remarkably stable compared to the previous year and continues to fill three regular evenings, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. As opposed to TF1, which clearly favours series, the public channel keeps an equilibrium between series on the one hand and TV movies and mini-series on the other.

The 52-minute series diminished slightly (48 episodes, i.e. 24 evenings, as against 56 in 2000) and are only to be found on Friday evening, dedicated to detective stories (*La Crèche*, on Wednesdays, was eliminated). France 2 decided to concentrate on 5 titles (as against 9 the year before), of which three achieved the 12-episode level in 2001 – exceptional in France (*PJ*, *La Crim*, *Avocats et associés*) as against one in 2000 (*PJ*). The two titles which have only six episodes are new (*Central nuit* and *Les Enquêtes d'Héloïse Rome*) and were broadcast in second place, after *La Crim* and *PJ*, getting good audience reactions.

The 90-minute series, programmed on Fridays or Wednesdays, increased by three episodes and constitute 22 evenings over the year 2001. We see here also an attempt at increasing the number of episodes of the recurring series, but much less than for the 52-minute series: 4 *Instit* in place of 3; 4 *Maigret* instead of 2, etc. The series *Quai n°1*, about the railway police, which began in 1997 and was suspended in 2000, reappeared in the form of a single episode and got a good reaction (28% of the audience). The actress who played the main role, the inspector, wanted to leave the series and this transition episode allowed her to be killed off and replaced with a young beginner who became the new recurring hero.

TV movies and mini-series episodes amount to about forty evenings. Six mini-series were in fact TV movies in two parts, the second of which was

broadcast either the same evening about 22:30 on Monday (*Agathe et le grand magasin*) or Wednesday (*Résurrection*, adaptation of a novel by Tolstoy), or two successive evenings, Monday and Tuesday, like *Nadia Coupeau dite Nana* from Zola. The only mini-series which had more than two episodes was *Rastignac*, free adaptation of Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, broadcast on four consecutive Mondays. With a market share which did not go over 17%, it was also the most burning failure for the channel in 2001. Of the 25 new TV movies broadcast, a good half got good audience reactions, with a market share higher than the average channel share and one of these, *Fatou la Malienne*, got into the top 20.

On **France 3**, after the clear decline in the previous year, new national fiction broadcast in 2001 increased slightly. The dozen hours gained did not mean it got back to its 1999 level and even less its 1996 level (63 hours as against 82) and this channel came fourth in terms of volume of new fiction, behind M6. To explain this weak volume, we should recall that, among the other mainstream channels, France 3 is historically the one which considers television fiction the least important, preferring information (including regional information), magazines and youth programmes.

As in previous years, new national fiction is concentrated in prime time, the only exception being the broadcast of the second episode of a mini-series following the first about 22:30. The year 2001 is characterised by a reduction of series compared to TV movies. Of the seven series presented the previous year, there are only three left: *Docteur Sylvestre* (4 episodes) and *Louis la Brocante* (3), both broadcast on Mondays, got very good results with respect to the channel's average (more than 20% of audience share); an episode of *Chercheurs d'héritiers* broadcast on Saturday is placed a little lower (19%). To these we should add a series pilot, *Duval*, which is about a police inspector in Saumur, a little town on the banks of the Loire, and also got 19% of audience share. But the series, which should have been developed in 52-minute episodes, was then dropped, the channel having halted its production of detective series in this format.

25 TV movies (as against 12 the previous year) and four two-episode mini-series (as against one in 2000) are thus the basis for fiction produced by France 3 which seems to have given up on the serialisation effort undertaken some years ago. This policy change has been a success in that most TV movies broadcast Saturday evening in 2001 got a good reception from the public. Seven of them were among the best audiences this channel got, with an audience share of over 25%, beating the Monday series. In programming works, often original, on the evening when cinema is prohibited and the competition is poor (entertainment on TF1 and France 2, American series on M6), France 3 offered a real alternative and created an event winning several times the competition with other channels. We should

mention the comedy *Les faux-fuyants* (24/11/01, 37.6% of audience share) which got into the year's top 20 (cf. Programmes index), the thriller *L'Inconnue du Val-Perdu* (27/01/02, 31.2%) and another comedy, *Le châtiment du Makhila* (30/10/01, 29.3%) which are, all three, in rural settings.

In 2001, the total of new national fiction broadcast on **M6** gained 5 hours. This slight increase, in no way sufficient to compensate the decline at TF1 and France 2, confirms the positive trend begun three years ago. Between 1998 and 2001, it went from 47 to 92 hours.

What is most remarkable is that the channel shifted its efforts concerning fiction on to prime time, to the detriment of afternoon fiction. In 2001, M6 offered its viewers 28 evenings full of new national fiction (both 90 minutes and the broadcast of two back-to-back 50-minute episodes), as against 22 evenings the year before. This offer was placed on Wednesdays. In a 90-minute format, the anthology is confirmed as one of the channel's favourite categories with the continuance of *Combats de femme* (4 episodes), *Vertiges* (9) and the creation of *Carnets d'ado* with three episodes. The 45 or 50-minute series created the previous year were repeated: *Le Lycée* went from six to twelve episodes and *Police District* remained at six episodes, with good audience reaction. A new title arrived, *Psy d'urgence*, with only two episodes.

The late-afternoon fiction, traditionally 45-minute international co-production series, lost 15 hours with the no-renewal of certain titles and the total elimination of daily broadcasts. In 2001, only two series remained, broadcast on Sundays at about 19:00: *Sydney Fox aventurière* (US/CA, 17 episodes) and *Largo Winch* (DE/US, 25 episodes). During the night, Sunday at about 23:30, eight new erotic TV movies were broadcast as against five the year before.

The great novelty on this small, growing channel took place at the beginning of September with the introduction, at about 20:45, of *Caméra café*, a daily 7-minute series, modelled on *Un gars, une fille*. Like France 2 at 19:50, M6, in choosing this slot, was cleverly taking advantage of the long advertising and promos slot which precedes the main programme of prime time.

Arte, which dedicates a very small part of its programming to television fiction, reduced by 5 hours its new national fiction volume in 2001. On this cultural channel, fiction is very weakly serialised and in the absence of anthology this year, was shared between TV movies and mini-series. The main innovation of the French-German channel is the programming six days consecutively, from Monday to Saturday, of a mini-series of 6x30', at about 20:15. *Campagnes*, which deals with the difficulties faced by farmers, is part of a collection of six mini-series financed by six different countries

(Wales, Czech Republic, Norway, Catalonia, Germany and France) and each tackles a problem of contemporary society.

On **Canal Plus**, new national fiction has regained a number of hours after the significant fall experienced in 2000, but this did not constitute a real recovery. The year 2001 took advantage of the broadcast of the sitcom *Mes pires potes*, which had only just begun at the end of 2000 and was cancelled afterwards. *H*, the only survivor of the sitcoms launched in 1998 for Saturday evening viewing, was renewed with 13 episodes as against only 9 the year before. Apart from these two sitcoms, the encrypted channel broadcast six episodes of a 45-minute series co-produced with Great Britain in a singularly erratic manner (from February to December, either at 17:00 or at 22:00), as well as a handful of TV movies, only one in prime time.

4. Successes and Failures: Some Surprises

A first glance at the Top 20 of the year 2001 leaves an impression of *déjà vu*: we see, above all, TF1's leadership, which the observer has become used to over the last fifteen years, as well as the absolute monopoly enjoyed by prime time fictions. We also see the prevalence of series compared to all other genres. Finally we recognise well-known titles of this commercial channel's established series (the only new series is *Commissariat Bastille*), accompanied traditionally by the France 2 series *L'Instit*.

However, this Top 20 has a number of surprises:

Above all, the highest ratings is only 21.5% as opposed to 22.5% the two previous years and more than 24% in 1997 and 1998. This does not mean less success for national fiction, but it does point up the erosion undergone by the large mainstream channels, and above all TF1, due to the development of digital supply.

France 3 for the first time managed to get one of its fictions classified, *Les Faux-fuyants*, which dominated the evening of Saturday, 24 November, achieving average ratings of 15.4%.

TV movies have found their way back to success. There are, indeed, eight in the top 20 as against two the year before. This might be explained partly by an increase in their global production, on France 2 and above all on France 3. But, for TF1, which reduced its production, it is to be explained above all by the effectiveness of the formulae. The channel has managed, over the years, to fine-tune its "Canada dry" TV movie recipe, as one of those responsible said to qualify these ambitious works which have the "colour of cinema" and can create an event: original subject, work on the text, actors from the cinema, etc. Beside the serialisation enterprise, which has produced its fruits, this TV movie presence shows that there is a place for one-off

works, and that one should not necessarily give in to the temptation, often disappointing, to transform all successful TV movies into series. Each category has its strengths, which it is better to distinguish clearly.

Tab. 5 – Top 20 Episodes in 2001⁴

N°	TITLE	CH.	FORMAT	GENRE	RAT	SHARE	*
1	Julie Lescaut: Le secret de Julie	TF1	Series	Action/crime	21.5	50.4	5
2	Une femme d'honneur: Double vue	TF1	Series	Action/crime	21.5	48.2	3
3	Navarro: Terreur à domicile	TF1	Series	Action/crime	21	47	4
4	Les Cordier juge et flic: Faux semblants	TF1	Series	Action/crime	18.4	42.7	3
5	Commissariat Bastille: En toute innocence	TF1	Series	Action/crime	17.6	41.5	
6	Commissaire Moulin: Un flic sous influence	TF1	Series	Action/crime	17.3	40.9	1
7	Une fille dans l'azur	TF1	TV Movie	Action/adventure	17.1	38.9	
8	Joséphine. ange gardien: Romain et Jamila	TF1	Series	Comedy	17	37.4	2
9	Un homme en colère: Pour un monde meilleur	TF1	Series	Action/crime	16.7	36.5	
10	Un couple modèle	TF1	TV Movie	Comedy	16.6	36.9	
11	L'aîné des Ferchaux (1/2)	TF1	Mini-series	Action/adventure	16.2	45.9	
12	Sauveur Giordano	TF1	TV Movie	General drama	16.1	37.8	
13	Brigade spéciale: Meurtre ultime	TF1	Series	Action/crime	15.9	34.1	
14	L'emmerdeuse	TF1	TV Movie	Comedy	15.8	35.5	
15	L'enfant perdu	TF1	TV Movie	General drama	15.8	34.3	
16	L'institut: Terre battue	F 2	Series	General drama	15.5	35.2	1
17	Les faux-fuyants	F 3	TV Movie	Comedy	15.4	37.6	
18	Cazas	TF1	TV Movie	Action/adventure	15.4	33.4	
19	Méditerranée (3/5)	TF1	Mini-series	General drama	15.1	39.5	
20	Fatou la malienne	F 2	TV Movie	General drama	15	35.7	

Source: Eurofiction

* : Extra episodes of the same programme that obtained more than 15 % of ratings

5. Success of Short-Format: Comedies

In France, the word comedy comes from the theatre and defines, above all, a work “represented” and played by actors. Then the word took on a wider meaning, on the one hand a work which makes one laugh, which entertains, and on the other, the work which denounces the defects of a society and the ridicules of characters. Molière’s comedies are both farces, funny

⁴ The table has been elaborated choosing, for each programme, the top-rated episode or instalment.

caricatures and tirades – sometimes gloomy – against society’s habits (*Tartuffe*, *Le Misanthrope*). In literature, Balzac leaves aside all intentions of making people laugh and points up, in his *Comédie humaine*, human passions and the laws holding society together. In the same way, on television, different meanings co-exist and a slot like that of Wednesday evening on France 2, entitled “*Comédies de la vie*” (afterwards re-baptised “*Mercredis de la vie*”) offers both light comedy and fictions tackling problems of contemporary society.

Over many years, in a lightly serialised fiction context mainly intended for prime time, the comic genre has, above all, been represented in French production by means of the TV movie. When the heads of newly privatised TF1 re-launched fiction production from 1987 onwards, comedy seemed to them one of the most profitable veins to win over the public, together with subjects concerning adventure or drama.

In fact, it was a comic TV movie, *Les mouettes*, which got television fiction into the top 20 for the first time (before *Navarro* and recurring heroes series), achieving third place in 1991 behind football (the European Cup Final) and a film (*Le grand bleu*) with 60% of audience share. The scriptwriter of *Mouettes*, Nelly Kaplan, who had made a name in cinema, developed the links which take shape between four prostitutes and the inhabitants of a small village in Provence. Ten years later, in 2001, we find two comedies on TF1 in the top 20 TV movies including *Un couple modèle* which take up all the forms of street theatre, with two experienced actors, Pierre Arditi and Bernard Le Coq. Sometimes the TV movie can extend into a mini-series (like *Une famille formidable*) or more recently, a series like *Joséphine, ange gardien* or *Chère Marianne*.

At the same time, there has not been a national tradition in popular sitcoms. A few success stories have marked the history of French television, but without ever producing a continuity, either in broadcaster demand or in the accumulation of know-how. The regular presence of sitcoms in the schedules has been assured by American products since the early 1960s (*I love Lucy*, *Bewitche*, etc.).

Among French attempts, we might mention *Le temps des copains* (1961), of which the 13-minute episodes, broadcast daily before the news, followed the lives of three provincials who had left to conquer Paris and shared the same flat. In 1965, *Les saintes chéries* appeared, broadcast on Saturday evening at 20:30 (in three 13x30’ series), and concerned the typical troubles of a couple played with talent and charm by Micheline Presle and Daniel Gélin. We have to wait twenty years for another success with the arrival of *Maguy* on Antenne 2 in the autumn of 1985, on Sundays at 19:30. *Maguy* was the first French sitcom presented as such. an adaptation of the American format *Maud*, produced by Télé-Images, which used dialogists from advertising,

under very strict constraints. The family life and the misadventures of a couple who are no longer young, played by two theatre actors, Rosy Varte and Jean-Marc Thibault, was such a success that it went on for eight consecutive seasons.

With the exception of few other attempts, popular sitcoms were dormant for some years, cannibalised by the development of a sub-category, the AB Productions sitcom, intended for adolescents, programmed in the late afternoon on TF1 from 1991 onwards (*Premiers baisers*, *Hélène et les garçons*; etc). This daily fiction, produced at low cost and quick time, met at first with a strong adherence on the part of the under-14s, before declining and disappearing progressively from TF1's schedules. In 2001, *Le groupe*, on France 2, seems to be the last offspring of this category.

It was Canal Plus which re-launched the sitcom in 1998 and dedicated Saturday evening to it, mixing French and American titles (*Spin City*). A few national sitcoms were produced using the American model, which means high costs. Three years later, only *H* (for hospital) is still part of the schedule. With the difficulty of achieving formulae which hold the road and the reduction of programme costs imposed by Vivendi, the encrypted channel has had to rethink its ambitions.

The great innovation took place in October 1999 with the broadcast on France 2 of a short format (6-7 minutes). *Un gar, une fille*, at 19:50 daily. An adaptation from a Canadian series of 26 minutes, *Un gars, une fille* deals with the eternal subject of man/woman relationship within a couple, with two young talented actors. The short format allows a clearly marked rhythm (no supporting characters, eight rapid scenes in a sequence shot and fixed camera, disjointed rhythm with fake endings and repeated gags). Above all, it is programmed in a strategic slot, just before the news at 20:00, during a long advertising and promos slot on the other channels.

Little by little, the public accepted the rendez-vous and the audience progressed regularly, with an average of 19% in 2000 and then 23% in 2001. This sitcom achieved very good results with young adults (15-24 year-olds), which has allowed France 2 to rejuvenate its audience. More remarkable, some episodes reached regularly a share more than 30% and manage to precede the 90 or 50-minute titles broadcast on the prime time by the public channel. Taking this success into account, the channel programmed two special 26-minute episodes at the end of the year, with guest stars, a first-timer in France.

In September 2001, *Caméra café* arrived in the same format on M6 at about 20:45. Here also programming during the 20:30 slot, just before the main programme of prime time, allowed M6 to offer an alternative to the viewer with 7 minutes dialogued continuity. The sitcom conquered its audience

immediately and amounts to one of the good regular results the channel had, with an average of 13% audience share in 2001. The humour is more vulgar than *Un gar, une fille*, and derives from relations between people in an office, as ten characters meet in turn at the coffee vending machine and exchange confidences and gossip. The two main actors, playing the commercial manager and the trade unionist, are the creator of the series. Their original idea was to divert the reality TV show wave and get a comic effect out of it.

The sitcom genre derives essentially from the theatre tradition (vaudeville, farce, *boulevard*) or variety (the sketch, *chansonniers*, one-man-show). Important elements: the dialogues, the characters and the actors, single set, live recording. In France, the difficulty of consolidating this genre into a long run seems to be due to a lack of connection with theatre and variety. Television has had little recourse to the talents of variety show or café theatre which the cinema has appropriated. In the opposite way, a category thought of as minor, compared to the movie or TV movie, has not been thought of as attractive to experienced authors or actors.

3. The Calm Before the Storm German TV Fiction in 2001

by Gerd Hallenberger

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: A Precarious Scenario

For several years already, German television as a whole has to deal with severe problems. For a start, the majority of all commercial channels has to struggle to at least break even because of the stiff competition of more than 30 national TV channels available to the average German household. With so much free-TV to choose from, pay-TV never really got off the ground. In spite of huge investments in programming and marketing PREMIERE WORLD continues to produce tremendous losses calculated by professional observers at 2 million euro per day - it is very difficult to persuade German viewers to pay additional money for even more channels. Add to this an ongoing general economic crisis - within the Euro zone Germany has become the weakest link in terms of economic growth - with diminishing expenditures in advertising plus no visible concepts for digital television and you arrive at a highly precarious scenario.

In the year 2001, German broadcasters had the additional problem that there was no obvious new trend in viewer preferences. After several real-life shows of the *Big Brother* type bombed in the year 2000 already, similar projects announced for 2001 (like *Taxi Orange*, originally a format from Austria) were put on hold or cancelled entirely. Quiz programmes still continued to grow in numbers - but not their audiences. In daytime programming, court shows took over the afternoon timeslots of talk shows with remarkable success but their heyday will probably be over soon, too.

Even more so than in previous years, German broadcasters basically followed a no-risk policy. If they could see a fairly reliable bandwagon to jump on, many did so (i.e. they added court and quiz shows to their line-up), but apart from that little to nothing changed. Only one channel surprised its (very few) viewers with a radically new concept. The channel formerly known as TM 3 was re-launched by its new owner as "9live". Traditionally, there are three ways to finance a television channel - by licence fees, by advertising or by direct payment for the channel or specific programmes. 9live introduced a new model and a new word to the German language - "Transaktionsfernsehen", or "transactional television". "Transaktionsfernsehen" means that viewers pay for the channel by phone calls. Wherever possible, viewers are urged to buy things or participate in games by phone and about half of the money for the calls goes to the channel. As a consequence, extremely cheap game and quiz shows make up a large part of 9live's programming. The questions in quiz shows are always very simple so no

viewer feels excluded because he doesn't know the right answer (sample: "Which city is called the holy city - Stuttgart or Rome?"). Even repeats of fiction programmes like *Love Boat* or *M*A*S*H* are turned into "transactional" programmes by adding a phone-in quiz element.

A closer look at the most-watched individual programmes of the major German channels in 2001 reveals three key observations with regard to audience preferences:

- 1) Sports broadcasts come first. All channels minus ProSieben got their highest audience figure with a sports event.
- 2) After sports, there are three "second-best" types of programming - very high but not exceptional audience figures can be obtained especially by games/quizzes, news shows and domestic TV fiction.
- 3) This pattern is anything but new. In fact, it has not changed considerably since the early days of German television. In many cases, even the top-rated formats themselves are the same as twenty years ago (for example the ZDF game show *Wetten., daß...?*) or thirty years ago (the *Tatort* of the ARD). The news shows of ARD and ZDF, still hugely successful in 2001, have a track-record of nearly forty (*heute*, ZDF) or fifty years (*Tagesschau*, ARD).

Because of their longer history, the two major public-service channels ARD and ZDF of course have the highest number of old programmes among their most successful programmes in 2001.

The ARD in principle has only three different programmes among its Top 20 list - There are four football matches (positions 1, 3, 4, and 8) with position 1 equalling 12.35 million viewers, 8 main editions of their news show *Tagesschau*, an institution in German broadcasting for decades plus 7 episodes of the long-running anthology crime series *Tatort*. There's only one odd programme out, that's the selection show for the German contribution to the Eurovision Song contest (position 15). Apart from this show, the line-up of the most-watched ARD programmes of 2001 basically shows the same pattern as all other lists since the early 1970s. Already then, the *Tagesschau*, the *Tatort* and football broadcasts constituted the ARD's main viewer attractions.

The second public-service channel ZDF achieved the highest individual audience figure of all German channels in 2001 and of course we're talking about football again. The re-match of the German side against the Ukraine which decided which of the two teams would participate in the 2002 world championship reached an audience of 17.80 million viewers. Just like the ARD the ZDF also attained many of its highest singular audiences with sports programmes (7 in all, including 5 live broadcasts of football matches) and its *heute* news programme (3), 7 of 20 positions of the ZDF's list of

most-watched programmes, however, are occupied by its 90-minute-plus Saturday night game show *Wetten, daß...?* (top result: position 2 and 16.14 million viewers), including a jubilee edition broadcast in late night, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the show. Although its Friday night crime series are no longer as successful as they used to be because of stiff competition, self-commissioned fiction programmes still play a crucial role in ZDF's programming. In 2001, two episodes of the *Traumschiff* and a TV-movie based on Rosamunde Pilcher's novels were among the most popular broadcasts of the ZDF. A conspicuous absence here are 60-minute crime series like *Der Alte* which have provided the ZDF with large audiences for decades (most so: *Derrick*).

The main reason for the ZDF's loss of viewers on Friday nights is the tremendous success of the German version of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, offered by RTL in the same timeslot. In Germany, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* usually is broadcast on Friday, Saturday and Monday nights at 20:15 as a 60-minute programme. In 2001, no less than 11 of the 20 most-watched RTL shows were instalments of this quiz with a celebrity special achieving position 4 (13.98 million viewers) and even the lowest-ranking show in this list (position 19) having a remarkable audience of 11.90 million viewers. All other entries are sports broadcasts, divided fairly equally between Champion's League Football (5 entries, including the top position - the penalties deciding the final match between Bayern München and Valencia had 15.7 million viewers) and Formula 1 racing (4 entries).

Compared to RTL, Germany's second largest commercial broadcaster SAT.1 has rather few programmes with extraordinary large audiences. If you compare the audience figures of the top 20 most-watched programmes of ARD, ZDF, RTL and SAT.1 you see that the lowest-ranking programme of all the other three would be at position 2 if broadcast by SAT.1. The top offering of SAT.1 was a football match (the first match between Germany and Ucraina. 13.64 million viewers), on the second position you find a boxing event with merely 7.39 million viewers. In general, SAT.1 shows the same pattern as the other major channels, i.e. sports broadcasts come first (6 entries out of 20, including the top two), but apart from that the figures demonstrate the particular role of domestic TV fiction in Germany. It is an excellent "second-best" option in prime time programming: if you go for extremely high audiences, you need sports broadcasts. With domestic TV fiction you have a fair chance of obtaining solid but not outstanding results. With little offerings of the first type at hand, SAT.1's list of most-watched programmes in 2001 mainly consists of domestic fiction programmes. Among the top 20 are both parts of the mini-series *Der Tunnel* (*The Tunnel*, best position: 3), 6 episodes of *Kommissar Rex* (best position: 8), three episodes of the crime series *Der Bulle von Tölz* (*The Cop of Tölz*, best

position: 12) plus one episode of the hospital drama *Für alle Fälle Stefanie* (position 17). In all, 12 out of 20 shows are domestic TV fiction.

ProSieben is the only major channel which does not fit this mould because it has neither sports broadcasts nor popular quiz/game shows nor successful self-commissioned fiction programmes. ProSieben's success almost exclusively relies on cinematic feature films (17 out of 20 entries, including position 1 - *Deep Impact* with 7.38 million viewers), most of them shown for the first time on free TV.

But today, in the spring of 2002, all the general problems of German television mentioned earlier appear only as minor. German television today is in a state of acute crisis which threatens the stability of the whole system. Over the years, a sort of equilibrium has developed in Germany. There were four key players, two on the side of public-service television (the ARD network and the ZDF), two on the side of commercial television (the Bertelsmann Group and Leo Kirch). This equilibrium is about to end because Leo Kirch was forced to declare the insolvency of parts of his enterprises, mainly due to losses of PREMIERE WORLD. As of the time of writing this text, it is highly unclear how the free-TV channels formerly controlled by Kirch (SAT.1, ProSieben, Kabel 1, N 24, DSF) will continue and what will become of PREMIERE WORLD. In spite of former denials, Rupert Murdoch seems to be willing to take over PREMIERE WORLD as long as the price is right but Bertelsmann also shows a certain interest. According to rumours, other parties might also come into play, for example from the telecommunications industry.

Apart from television, the insolvency of Leo Kirch also affects professional sports to a remarkable degree. Up to now, Kirch holds large stakes in Formula 1 racing and pays many of the bills of various football teams in the "Bundesliga" because the money paid by Kirch for broadcasting rights makes up about 50% of the overall budget of lesser known football teams of the German equivalent to the Premier League. The potential effects of Kirch's insolvency even alerted German politicians - some demanded that potential foreign investors like Silvio Berlusconi and Rupert Murdoch should be kept out at any cost because their involvement would disrupt the German TV system, some high-ranking politicians even toyed with the idea to spend taxpayers' money to help finance professional football. This idea, however, was strongly opposed by the German public. In the midst of a general economic crisis with high unemployment figures you cannot gain public support by proposing to subsidize the extraordinary salaries of professional football players with public money.

Tab. 1 - Market Shares of German TV Channels

	2001	2000	DIFFERENCE
RTL	14.7%	14.3%	+0.4%
ARD	13.9%	14.3%	-0.4%
ARD III	13.2%	12.7%	+0.5%
ZDF	13.2%	13.3%	-0.1%
SAT.1	10.1%	10.2%	-0.1%
ProSieben	8.0%	8.2%	-0.2%
Kabel 1	5.0%	5.5%	-0.5%
RTL 2	4.0%	4.8%	-0.8%
VOX	3.1%	2.8%	+0.3%
Super RTL	2.8%	2.8%	---
Kinderkanal	1.2%	1.2%	---
DSF	1.0%	1.2%	-0.2%
3sat	0.9%	0.9%	---
ntv	0.7%	0.7%	---
Phoenix	0.5%	0.4%	+0.1%
TM 3/9live*	0.5%	1.0%	-0.5%
ARTE	0.4%	0.3%	+0.1%

* On September 1, 2001, the channel changed name and concept

Source: GfK-Fernsehforschung

In terms of market shares of TV channels, 2001 again was a rather quiet year - the actual figures were very much like what could be predicted beforehand. As there were no outstanding sports events broadcast exclusively by public-service television it comes as no surprise that ARD and ZDF lost in audience shares and that RTL once more became the sole market leader.

A further winner were the 8 “ARD III” channels which are traditionally counted as one offer although they represent different programmes with a regional perspective but national distribution via cable and satellite. For several years now, their collected audience shares have grown and in 2001 even equalled the share of the ZDF. In a television landscape with so many channels to choose from, a TV programme with a focus on regions obviously is becoming more and more attractive because it offers orientation.

A roundup of Germany’s audiovisual landscape would not be complete, however, without mentioning German cinema. In 2001, the box office share of German productions rose to surprising 18.4%. First of all, this success of

domestic productions is due to one film. *Der Schuh des Manitu* (*Manitou's Shoe*), which had an audience of more than 11 million. At the box office, it was only beaten by *Harry Potter* and even surpassed *The Lord of the Rings*. *Der Schuh des Manitu*, made with a budget of less than 5 million euro, can best be described as a comic spoof based on a very peculiar aspect of German popular culture. In the 19th century, Karl May became a hugely popular author of juvenile adventure novels. In all, he wrote 65 novels, most of them either situated in the Orient or the American West, in both cases always employing the same lead characters. Especially his Western novels have remained bestselling books up to now. At the time of writing his novels, Karl May never had been to the USA, but he managed to produce a version of the American West which was "valid" for generations of young German readers. His simple stories always were part adventure and part *melodrama*, peopled with cardboard characters like the noble Indian chief *Winnetou* and his white blood brother *Old Shatterhand*. In the 1960s, several very successful movies were based on these "Western" novels. Some years ago, comedian Michael Herbig started a TV comedy show broadcast by ProSieben called the *Bullyparade* which contained several segments making fun of well-known films and TV series like *Star Trek* (with a proud-to-be-gay crew). One segment parodied the 1960s Karl-May-movies and was the basis for this low-budget feature film. Although it may be worth discussing whether *Der Schuh des Manitu* is mainly a parody of films based on Karl May's novels (with side glances to the genre of the *Spaghetti Western*) or rather adopting strategies invented by *Monty Python's Flying Circus* or the team of *Saturday Night Live* to a German popular cult, in any case it struck a chord with German moviegoers.

Apart from *Der Schuh des Manitu*, the most successful German film since the introduction of electronic movie audience measurement in 1986, other German movies also did remarkably well at the box office. Several films had an attendance of more than one million, two films even attracted more than two million moviegoers - *Der kleine Eisbär* (*The Little Polar Bear*), an animated feature film for juvenile audiences (2.6 million) and the co-production *Die fabelhafte Welt der Amélie* (original title: *Le fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain*; 2.8 million viewers). But 2001 was a very good year for German cinemas in general. Box office returns increased by 20% to 990 million euro, the number of tickets sold rose by 25.4 million to a total of 178 million.

2. The Origin of Fiction: Programming as Usual

As noted in the remarks on the most successful TV programmes in 2001, fiction programmes continue to be a main ingredient of the line-up of the major German broadcasters. With regard to the distribution of domestic

programmes versus imports, first-run offerings versus repeats and TV fiction versus cinematic movies basic strategies mentioned in earlier reports are still employed.

In prime time, nearly all major channels (public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF, commercial broadcasters RTL and SAT.1) prefer domestic TV fiction (including co-productions), and usually show first-run programmes. The only exception to this rule is commercial channel ProSieben, favouring American imports like the series *X-Files* or *Futurama* plus cinematic movies. So ProSieben's programming strategy in prime time is comparable to the general strategy of minor commercial broadcasters in all dayparts and major commercial channels outside prime time – imports, more often than not repeats of imported programmes, dominate the schedules. Minor public-service channels with the exception of ARTE rather serve repeats of domestic programmes instead (originally produced by other public-service broadcasters) and only a few American imports.

Tab. 2 - TV Fiction by Origin (prime time)
(Sample Week: March 4–10, 2001)

Channel	Domestic	Co-Production	US Import	Total
<i>Public Service Channels</i>				
ARD	4:35 (66.3%)	2:20 (33.7%)	---	6:55 (100.0%)
ZDF	4:55 (83.1%)	1:00 (16.9%)	---	5:55 (100.0%)
<i>Commercial Channels</i>				
RTL	7:00 (100.0%)	---	---	7:00 (100.0%)
SAT.1	10:00 (90.9%)	---	1:00 (9.1%)	11:00 (100.0%)
PRO7	1:00 (20.0%)	---	4:00 (80.0%)	5:00 (100.0%)

Source: Eurofiction

As the sample week analysis only includes the five major German channels, no total figures are noted. These five channels only represent a total audience market share of 60% and far less in terms of the overall offer of TV fiction.

Off prime time, TV fiction offerings of all major channels tend to mainly consist of repeats and imports. Public-service channels over the years have accumulated vast libraries of self-produced or commissioned domestic fiction programmes and so mainly rely on repeats of domestic (and co-produced) programmes plus a few imports. Commercial channels still have smaller archives to draw from and so have to buy more than their competitors - most frequently from American sources.

Tab. 3 - TV Fiction by Origin (off-prime time)
(Sample Week: March 4–10, 2001)

Channel	Domestic	Co-Production	US Import	Total
<i>Public Service Channels</i>				
ARD	14:01 (58.8%)	5:40 (23.8%)	4:10 (17.5%)	23:51 (100.0%)
ZDF	12:25 (57.3%)	7:45 (35.8%)	1:30 (6.9%)	21:40 (100.0%)
<i>Commercial Channels</i>				
RTL	16:20 (41.9%)	---	22:40 (58.1%)	39:00 (100.0%)
SAT.1	11:05 (33.7%)	1:50 (5.6%)	20:00 (60.8%)	32:55 (100.0%)
PRO7	2:30 (5.3%)	---	45:00 (94.7%)	47:30 (100.0%)

Source: Eurofiction

Compared to sample week results of previous years these figures may appear slightly different but they do not indicate a true change of programming strategies - with maybe one exception. ProSieben introduced a late-night comedy show broadcast 4 times a week which occupies a timeslot formerly taken by fiction. Apart from that, visible differences in absolute figures are caused by chance and the method of data collection. In 2001, ProSieben had weekly broadcasts of *Futurama* and *The Simpsons* in prime time - both programmes are “fiction” in a way but not counted because they are animation programmes. ARD and ZDF in that particular week had several live broadcasts of skiing events in the morning, in “normal” weeks repeats of fiction programmes would have been broadcast instead.

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: A Quantitative Approach

At first glance, the figures seem to hint at a very stable situation. The overall offer of domestic TV fiction is basically the same as in previous years (in spite of many programme changes after September 11), one parameter - the number of individual productions - even leave the impression that a further rise of the production volume can be expected. In fact, it is rather the opposite that will happen. Several commercial broadcasters have already announced that they will reduce the volume of commissioned domestically produced fiction programmes. RTL even scrapped the idea of a new hourly daily soap, announced in 2001 called *Licht und Schatten* (*Light and Shadow*). All available information concerning programming policies of the years 2001 and 2002 indicate this trend. In the years to come - including the current one - German TV audiences will most probably have less TV fiction than in previous years to choose from, but there will be more non-fiction entertainment (including stage comedy and real-life shows). Domestic fiction programmes are known to constitute rather expensive fare and in a crisis situation like the one German television is currently in you look for cheaper alternatives instead. First of all, of course, this goes for commercial

channels and less for public-service broadcasters which can rely on a continuous flow of income via fees.

So the slight re-distribution of TV fiction between commercial and public-service channels which becomes visible on second glance is not very surprising. The overall figures are more or less the same as in 2000 but the ratio has changed. The rise in terms of the number of productions is almost entirely due to public-service channels (25 out of 26 in all), as to the number of episodes and the volume of broadcasts in hours there is almost something like an exchange. Whereas the number of domestic TV fiction episodes offered by commercial channels went down by 108, the respective figure for public-service channels rose by 126. The overall volume of domestic TV fiction broadcast by public-service channels rose by 77 hours, commercial channels in all broadcast 78 hours less than in 2000. However, it should be taken into consideration that what we observe here is only a slight change - in both cases the difference is less than 5%.

In terms of formats and timeslots, German TV fiction shows familiar characteristics. New domestic TV fiction is first of all an ingredient of prime time programming (903:55 hours or 50.3%). A second important daypart is the early evening, most so because of four daily soaps (747:24 hours or 41.4%). The term “prime time” here refers to programmes starting 20:00-22:29. “early evening” to programmes beginning 17:30-19:59.

Tab. 4 - First-run Domestic TV-Fiction in 2001

	PRODUCTIONS	EPISODES	HOURS
	n=387	n=2628	n=1800:05
ARD	101 26.1%	947 36.0%	594:54 33.0%
ZDF	99 25.6%	403 15.3%	376:08 20.9%
other	64 16.5%	256 9.7%	166:25 9.2%
Public-Service Channels Total	264 68.2%	1606 61.1%	1137:27 63.1%
RTL	52 13.4%	755 28.7%	412:26 23.0%
SAT.1	44 11.4%	208 7.9%	185:53 10.3%
ProSieben	23 5.9%	55 2.1%	59:18 3.3%
other	4 1.0%	4 0.2%	5:01 0.3%
Commercial Channels Total	123 31.8%	1022 38.9%	662:38 36.9%
Overall Total	387 100%	2628 100%	1800:05 100%

Source: Eurofiction

A highly significant feature of German TV fiction production continues to be the massive amount of TV movies. In 2001, there were 229 TV movies i.e. 59.2% of all productions belonged to this type of format. The vast majority of TV movies (159 or 69%) were commissioned by public-service broadcasters ARD (63) and ZDF (49), each of their major commercial competitors only had about 20. RTL and SAT.1 premiered 23 TV movies each. ProSieben's offer rose from 15 to 20. It would be wrong, however, to interpret this rise as significant per se. As TV movies may take a very long time from concept to broadcast product, the figure may also reflect programming decisions taken years ago. In fact, this explanation is the most sensible as ProSieben has explicitly announced that they will reduce the number of TV movies they are going to commission in the years to come.

Tab. 5 - First-run Domestic TV-Fiction in Germany 2001 by Status of Production

	Domestic	With Austrian and/or Swiss partners	With euro partners	With non-euro partners	Intercont. Co-production	Total
ARD	82 81.2%	10 9.9%	7 6.9%	2 2.0%	0 0.0%	101 100.0%
ZDF	76 76.8%	19 19.2%	4 4.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	99 100.0%
other	46 71.9%	6 9.4%	8 12.5%	0 0.0%	4 6.3%	64 100.0%
Public-Service Channels Total	204 77.3%	35 13.3%	19 7.2%	2 0.8%	4 1.5%	264 100.0%
RTL	46 88.5%	2 3.8%	1 1.9%	3 5.8%	0 0.0%	52 100.0%
SAT.1	40 90.9%	2 4.5%	2 4.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	44 100.0%
ProSieben	16 69.6%	0 0.0%	1 4.3%	3 13.0%	3 13.0%	23 100.0%
Other	3 75.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%	4 100.0%
Commercial Channels Total	105 85.4%	4 3.3%	4 3.3%	6 4.9%	4 3.3%	123 100.0%
Overall Total	309 79.8%	39 10.1%	23 5.9%	8 2.1%	8 2.1%	387 100.0%

Source: Eurofiction

German TV fiction continues to be first and foremost German only, i.e. international co-productions are a fairly rare exception to the rule. If there are exceptions, it is mainly co-productions within the German language area - Germany plus Austria and/or the German-speaking part of Switzerland.

Truly international co-productions with partners speaking a different language happen very occasionally and contribute only a very small bit to the overall offer. For example, the share of co-productions with partners from non-German-speaking European countries was a meagre 5.9% of all productions, in terms of broadcast volume their ratio was just 3.7%.

Trying to group domestic TV fiction along genre lines in Germany traditionally allows for two observations. One, there is a very large number of individual fiction genres; two, only four of them are really important. This situation has not changed in 2001.

Although whenever possible related programmes with different official descriptions were counted as belonging to one genre (like “doctor” and “hospital” programmes under the joint headline of “medical fiction”) German TV fiction in 2001 had to be attributed to 50 different genres. But only four genres were really important: the “daily soap” (382:00 hours), “crime” (378:17 hours), “medical fiction” (198:29 hours) and “family” (165:11 hours). Even interpreted as a generic term, including as diverse manifestations as traditional comedy, satire and sitcom, “comedy” still only played a minor role (197:50 hours or 11.3%). Nonetheless it is worth noting that the amount of “comedy” in all has nearly doubled, most so in the schedules of public-service broadcasters. “Comedy” registered a rise of 77 broadcast hours, 64 of which were due to programmes of public-service channels. Even with all due caution this result allows for the interpretation that the general “comedy boom” of German TV finally has reached the most difficult type of comic TV, too - and that is fictional programmes. Whereas it is fairly simple to translate successful comic stage programmes to TV - and there have already been a lot - it is far more complicated to develop funny fiction programmes that work.

In order to gain further insights as to the cultural positioning of domestic TV fiction, the project “Eurofiction” also employs several “cultural indicators”. In this respect, Germany still leaves a rather monolithic impression. First-run domestic TV fiction is set in the present (2574 of 2628 individual broadcasts or 97.9%) and in Germany (2273 episodes or 86.5%). The environment is predominantly “metropolitan” (1737 episodes or 66.1%) and two German cities alone account for nearly half of all settings – Cologne, home of RTL and the biggest ARD station, the WDR (887 episodes or 33.8%), and the new capital Berlin (417 episodes or 15.9%). The main characters are usually a mixed-gender group (1886 episodes or 71.8%).

4. Successes, Failures and Innovations: A Special Year

Although the bulk of first-run domestic TV fiction which premiered in 2001 shows little difference compared to the output of previous years, 2001 in

two respects was a special year. There were quite a few productions of outstanding quality dealing with fairly serious subjects which were well-received both by the critics and at least substantial parts of the audience. Plus, some of these productions were commissioned by commercial channels which is truly remarkable. As a consequence, commercial channels received more Adolf-Grimme-Preise, which is the most important German TV award, than ever before.

Especially SAT.1, controlled by the Kirch group, had several fiction programmes of remarkable quality. The subject of the mini-series *Der Tunnel (The Tunnel)* is an authentic flight from East Berlin to West Berlin via a self-built tunnel in cold war times. Another mini-series belonging to the genre of docu-drama is *Tanz mit dem Teufel (Dance with the Devil)*, its topic being the kidnapping of the heir of an important German enterprise, the Oetker group of companies. The TV-movie *Wambo* is a bio-picture about the life of Walter Sedlmayer, a secretly gay "Volksschauspieler" (an actor based in - very conservative - folk culture) who was into s/m and later killed by - presumably - one of his lovers.

On the side of public-service television, the most important production of the year undoubtedly was the mini-series *Die Manns*. Mixing documentary and fiction, *Die Manns* is a portrait of the Mann family centred around Nobel-prize winning novelist Thomas Mann, here played by the internationally known actor Armin Müller-Stah.

Speaking of the most-watched new TV fiction programmes in 2001, there seem to be two very surprising results. One, for the first time since the start of the project "Eurofiction" commercial channels figure prominently in this list. Three out of the top 10 programmes and 8 out of the top 20 were broadcast either by SAT.1 or RTL. Observation two, the genre "comedy" finally appears to be a crucial element of TV fiction also in Germany because four comedy programmes are listed - more than ever before.

It would be wrong, however, to interpret these figures as indicating a real change in the viewing preferences of German viewers regarding TV fiction. Just like in previous years, most of the top positions in this list are occupied by familiar serial productions known for many years. *Tatort* and *Traumschiff* are audience favourites since decades, the same goes for *Ein Fall für Zwei* and *Polizeiruf*. The *Tatort*-spinoff *Schimanski* and the anthology series based on novels by Rosamunde Pilcher have a shorter track record but are familiar to German audiences nonetheless. Plus, the majority of most-watched programmes belongs to the crime/action genre - 5 out of the top 10, 11 out of the top 20.

Tab. 6 - Top 20 Episodes in 2001⁵

N.	TITLE	CHANNEL	FORMAT	GENRE	AUDIENCE
1	Tatort	ARD	Anthology/ Collection	crime/action	9.49
2	Das Traumschiff	ZDF	Series	general drama	9.41
3	Rosamunde Pilcher	ZDF	Anthology/ Collection	general drama	7.81
4	Schimanski	ARD	Series	crime/action	7.68
5	Nikola	RTL	Series	comedy	7.61
6	Ein Fall für Zwei	ZDF	Series	crime/action	7.53
7	Polizeiruf 110	ARD	Anthology/ Collection	crime/action	7.21
8	Der Tunnel (1)	SAT.1	Mini-series	general drama	7.20
9	Die Braut meines Freundes	ARD	TV Movie	general drama	6.73
10	Alarm für Cobra 11 (Pilot neue Staffel)	RTL	TV Movie	crime/action	6.64
11	Ritas Welt	RTL	Series	comedy	6.50
12	Der Alte	ZDF	Series	crime/action	6.48
13	Hinter Gittern	RTL	Series	crime/action	6.46
14	Im Namen des Gesetzes	RTL	Series	crime/action	6.43
15	Doppelter Einsatz	RTL	Series	crime/action	6.41
16	Rosa Roth	ZDF	Series	crime/action	6.40
17	Barbara Wood: Traumzeit (2)	ZDF	Mini-series	general drama	6.35
18	Stahlnetz	ARD	Anthology/ Collection	crime/action	6.28
19	Die Camper	RTL	Series	comedy	6.27
20	Ich schenke dir meinen Mann II (1)	ZDF	Mini-series	comedy	6.20

Source: Eurofiction

What has changed to a certain degree are general habits of TV viewing. In fact, the figures reflect two general trends. One trend is the ongoing process of market segmentation in Germany - the more viewers actually use the large number of channels they can choose from, the lower the market shares and audience figures of individual channels. The second trend is probably only temporary, the current success of quiz shows.

The first trend is visible when looking at the absolute audience figures in general. In the year 2000 it already took the smallest number of viewers to get both to the position of the most watched programme of the year and into the top 20 at all since the monitoring for the “Eurofiction” project began in 1996. In 2001, these figures went down again. The most-watched programme of 2001 had even less than 10 million viewers, the programme at the bottom of the list in 2000 had arrived at position 10 in 2001, were it broadcast with the same audience in that year. So programmes with a stable

⁵ The table has been elaborated choosing, for each programme, the top-rated episode or instalment.

but rather low audience compared to previous years in 2001 had a good chance to enter the Top 20 list.

The current quiz craze is reflected here in two ways. On Friday nights, the established crime series of the ZDF like *Ein Fall für Zwei* and *Der Alte* compete against the hugely successful German version of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* and have lost substantial parts of their audience. On the other hand, RTL had a massive audience flow from *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* to the following programmes which are 30-minute sitcoms. So it comes as no surprise that most of the sitcoms broadcast by RTL in the hour after *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* in 2001 made it into the Top 20 list – *Nikola*, *Die Camper*, and *Ritas Welt*.

With such a massive offer of domestic TV fiction to deal with, particular failures are hard to identify as something other than cases of individual underachievement. Worth noting, however is a case of two channels basically doing the same thing but with hugely different results. In previous Reports RTL's strategy of linking a non-fiction comedy programme, the funny weekly review *7 Tage - 7 Köpfe* (*7 Days - 7 Heads*), with sitcoms has been mentioned as a programming innovation in Germany. Both the host of the show, Jochen Busse, and one of the regular panellists, Gabi Köster, now also star in sitcoms tailor-made for them (*Das Amt/The Office* and *Ritas Welt/Rita's World*, respectively). In 2002 another regular of the show, Bernd Stelter joined the two, his sitcom being *Bernds Hexe* (*Bernd's Witch*). SAT.1 tried the very same strategy with its version of a funny review of events of the past week, the *Wochenshow*, broadcast on Saturday nights. Host Ingolf Lück had the role of a cosmetic surgeon in the sitcom *Der Doc*, the female star of the show Anke Engelke (who has left the *Wochenshow*) played the host of a fictitious talk show in *Anke*. Both sitcoms were broadcast on Friday, one day prior to the *Wochenshow* - and bombed in 2001, more so *Der Doc*. Weak scripts may have contributed considerably to this result but another possible reason for failure is also worth pondering - if you want to link programmes in this way, they should be broadcast in temporal proximity, i.e. at least on the same day.

Speaking of innovations in German TV fiction in 2001, well, there were none and this fact is not surprising. German TV channels right now have various problems to deal with but none of them shows a direct link to TV fiction. The basic problem, of course, is the future shape of German television in general - not least in terms of ownership. With regard to programming, other genres than fiction are the ones most thought about – quizzes, court shows, real-life-shows and sports, naturally. Bearing this in mind, even the observation that in 2001 commercial channels presented more ambitious fiction programmes than in previous years has little news value. Generally speaking, there are basically two types of TV fiction - one

which is closely linked to the everyday life of the viewers (most so daily soaps) and one which represents a tele-visual spectacular “other” to everyday life. This “other” is not quite as distant and spectacular as the “other” offered by the cinema but very different compared to type one nonetheless. Although individual productions commissioned by commercial channels in the past also belonged to the second type of TV fiction, 2001 was the year in which this fact was recognized more clearly than before by audiences and critics.

4. Cloudy Fictionscape Italian TV Fiction in 2001

by Milly Buonanno

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: (Almost) the Same as Before

If it is legitimate to compare small things with large things, and establish parallelism and analogies between events which have a disruptive international impact and other more modest happenings of local importance, it can be said that also for the Italian television system September 11, 2001 was a disastrous day. Just by chance, the day in which the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York collapsed, after the deathly terrorist attacks, in Italy hopes and expectations were dashed regarding the birth of a third television pole.

The wait for a third pole able to rupture the crystalised balance of the Rai-Mediaset duopoly, and create an opening on the Italian market for authentic competition has accompanied the national broadcasting history for more than ten years - since the duopolistic system was established and obtained legal recognition. During the year 2000 it had seemed that the conditions for achieving this had finally come about, thanks to the purchase of the two Telemontecarlo networks owned by the Cecchi Gori Group by Seat/Telecom. Telemontecarlo had never managed to obtain more than a skimpy 2% of the market, but the new owners had announced plans for expansion for the main network, renamed La7, and had successfully started an acquisition campaign of stars, managers and journalists taken from Rai and Mediaset as well as a fairly substantial advertising round-up. The operation could also boast a culturally progressive nature, being in the trendy wake of the multimedia convergence between telecommunications, television and Internet - although its lawfulness. according to current legislation was not completely a foregone conclusion.

The Italian mentality willingly indulges in “dietrologic” speculation, and thus it is not surprising that what happened afterwards was traced back, in some circles, to a craftily orchestrated plot to neutralise the challenge of La7 to the supremacy of the duopoly. The hard facts are that in July 2001 the companies, Pirelli and Benetton took over from the Luxembourg financial enterprise Bell the controlling share of Olivetti, in turn the major shareholder of Telecom. The new owners announced they did not intend to risk large investments in a television project which could not ensure results and - although the fall schedules had already been programmed and presented to the press - on the 11 September 2001, with the resignation of the main originator of this operation and the announcement that La7 would be eventually transformed into an all-news channel, the prospects of a third

Italian television pole melted away into thin air. While, with reference to the terrorist attack in the U.S.A. everybody said that “nothing would ever be the same again”, in the case of Italy we can honestly say that after the September 11- everything was exactly the same as before.

In the satellite television sector the forecasts and denials of a merger between the two digital platforms Tele+ and Stream continued in 2001. If, at the moment of writing, the purchase of Tele+ by Rupert Murdoch (already owner of 50% of Stream in partnership with Telecom) seems likely, one thing is certain - it is impossible to have two different digital platforms on the Italian market. As already happened in other parts of Europe (Germany, Great Britain and Spain) the Italian pay-TVs have lost money - raising the competition on the football and film rights - without managing to compensate them with the earnings from subscriptions and advertising; and what is more have had to deal with a pathologic rate of widespread piracy. The penetration of pay-TV, estimated at between 11% and 13% for a total of approximately 2.5 million subscribers, is not however irrelevant, and the audience survey in multi-channel homes - included in 2002 in the Auditel samples - assigns at least 2% of share to the satellite networks, touching 4% or 5% in prime time: a small but not insignificant wedge in the wall of the ratings of terrestrial television.

The beginning of an erosion process of the market shares of traditional broadcasting can already be observed in the 2001; with the exception of RAI 3 and Canale 5, public and private channels have lost audiences in the average day and/or in prime time. In the case of RAI, the data fits in a decreasing trend which has lasted for almost five years now and Mediaset is gradually gaining ground. 2001 was a particularly difficult year for Italian public television, hounded by the imminent end of term of the Board of Directors (and of the prospect of a radical exchange of management as a result of the new majority government led by Silvio Berlusconi). Evident traces of this “distress” can be seen in the prime time results of RAI 1 (23.66%) which for the first time during the duopoly was overtaken by the direct competitor Canale 5 (24.09%).

As far as the programming is concerned, 2001 was not marked by any particular phenomenon of popularity, as happened in 2000 thanks to the reality and game shows. The second edition of *Il Grande Fratello* obtained good results, but did not stand out as a media event; and *Saranno Famosi* - a similar format to *Star Academy* - began quietly on the youth channel Italia 1, and then had enormous success thus becoming an event in the spring of 2002 (the second edition was promoted to prime time on Canale 5).

Tab. 1 – Market Share – Prime Time – All Day

	2000		2001	
	Prime Time	All Day	Prime Time	All Day
Raiuno	25.07	23.29	23.66	23.87
Raidue	14.19	14.58	13.49	13.55
Raitre	9.98	9.44	10.43	9.60
Total RAI	49.24	47.31	47.58	47.02
Canale 5	22.54	22.49	24.09	23.56
Italia 1	11.74	11.30	10.89	10.30
Rete 4	7.92	9.60	8.08	9.33
Total Mediaset	42.19	43.39	43.05	43.20

Source: Auditel

On the other hand, in the same area of the entertainment genres, there were several unsuccessful programmes both on the public as well as private television channels: the most clamorous was that of *Survivor*, probably due to the concept inspired by a logic of interpersonal challenge somewhat alien to Italian culture. Other programmes with a more bitter and cynical tone, or more transgressive, due to be broadcast in the autumn, were swept away in the post-September 11 atmosphere.

The plethora of reality shows and the like does not seem to be showing signs of coming to a halt, at least for some time. Among other things they are sustained by the new television economies, impoverished by the fall in advertising investments. In Italy, as everywhere else, above all for the downswing in the telecommunications sector (investments reduced by a third compared to 2000) the advertising on television fell by 4% in 2001. Actually the public and private television channels felt this to quite a different degree. RAI's advertising revenue decreased by 12%, whereas Mediaset obtained a slight increase (of almost 1 million euro): an opposing trend which the Italian "dietrologia" supposes is not unrelated to the political circumstances.

2. The Origin of Fiction: Europe from Satellite

The transformation of the national mediascape, and in particular the multi-channel environment introduced by digital pay-TV broadcast via satellite, have only recently begun to affect - though slightly - television consumption; and to drain some of the enormous audience of the six terrestrial national channels (all of them together still holding 90% of the market). Two basic reasons are without a doubt responsible for slowing

down the process of penetration of the digital pay-TV: the widespread cultural resistance by most Italians to abandon the idea that television is free, and the scanty competition in offer by the satellite thematic channels compared to the programming of those terrestrial. In effect, although during the course of 2001 the contention on the shortfalls of traditional television did actually last for a long period. Italian broadcasting deploys a much richer and much more diversified offer than other countries. so much so that it makes the appeal of narrow-casting less urgent and only moderately pulling.

If the arrival of the multi-channel environment has not (or not yet) affected television audiences' habits and preferences, it has in fact had an immediate impact on the programming structure of the terrestrial television, draining quite large quotas of premium contents: particularly sport and cinema, which have consequently resulted in a downswing in the supply of traditional televisions. On the RAI channels, for example, the sports programmes went from 2280 hours in 1998 to 1426 in 2001, while - in the same period - cinematographic programmes fell from 3074 to 2344 hours.

Compared to this progressive downswing and other possible fluctuations of other genres, television fiction (domestic and imported) was omnipresent with an impressive result of over 10 thousand hours per year, both public and private televisions taken together. The positive correlation between television fiction and the commercial channels observed almost everywhere, doesn't fail to show itself in Italy; thus more than 6 out of 10 hours of annual fiction are normally broadcast on the Mediaset channels, where fiction represents the main genre with an incidence of over 30%. Instead in the programming of the public channels. fiction is in second place after information and represents more or less 15% of the total transmission hours per year.

In 2001 cracks are appearing for the first time in this scenario of substantial stability, where the total volume of fiction programming was reduced by almost 600 hours compared to the previous year.

Tab.2 – TV Fiction Percentage in the Programming of 2001

Raiuno	Raidue	Raitre	Tot. Rai	Tot. hours	Difference '00-'01
16.9	21.9	4.1	14.2	3499	-276 hours
Canale 5	Italia 1	Rete 4	Tot. Mediaset	Tot. hours	Difference '00-'01
32.5	34.1	25	30.5	6623	-297 hours

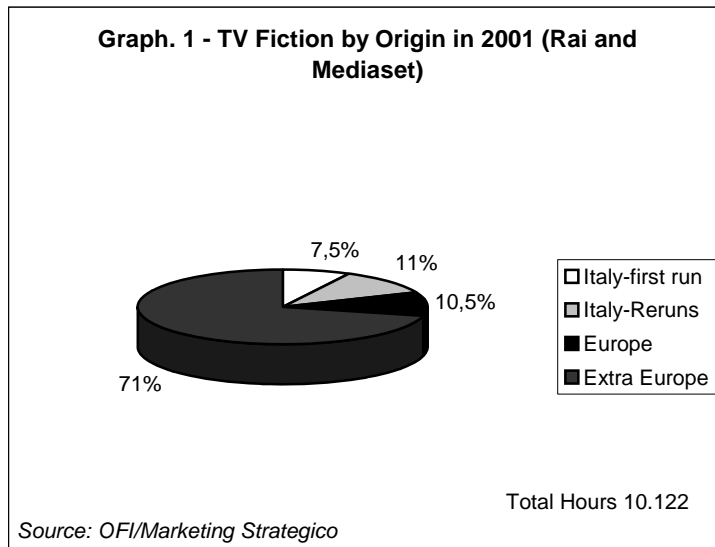
Source: Marketing strategico RAI

It is too early to say whether this is a signal of a new trend or a transitory event. However, since in 2001 the offer of first run domestic fiction increased considerably and the volume of repeats (as well as the European imports) remained more or less the same, it can be affirmed that those who have vanished to an extent of several hundred hours are the extra-European products, i.e. the fiction imported (mainly) from the USA and Latin American countries.

The Italian broadcasters have for some time now declared that they no longer want to invest in the extra-European fiction imports, which in any case have lost their ability to generate outstanding ratings. However the American series maintain, among the viewers, a hard core of faithful fans and they are generally able to guarantee audience in accordance with the average share of the channels, in off prime time, which is when they are normally shown. Only 6% of American products have access to prime time on the Italian channels - dominated by domestic fiction - and they are mostly TV movies or a small number of series suitable for a family audience or young adults. All the rest is spread over the daytime or in the case of harder or more edgy products late night or touching the night-time slots. In 2001 the programming of *The Sopranos* (Canale 5) round about midnight caused much controversy among television critics and some viewers. Although debatable, this innovative and intense series was destined to exploit only a handful of night wandering spectators.

On the other hand, the proposals for downsizing American imports find an objective stumbling block in the role of an authentic mainstay of the Italian schedules – specially for the commercial channels - played by television fiction. A programming volume of approximately 10 thousand hours a year would be impossible to keep up, without falling back on the great availability of the extra-European products. At present the ratio between European fiction (national and not) and extra-European is 1 in 3 hours on the public channels, and 1 in 4 on the commercial ones.

The possibility to exploit to a greater extent the patrimony of European fiction (non-Italian), which is placed at a modest 10%, is due to the good proposals declared but in fact denied by the broadcasters. As everybody knows, this is not just an Italian syndrome and it is not necessary to insist here on an issue - the skimpy circulation of European fiction inside the Europe itself - which is systematically dealt with in all the Eurofiction reports (see, Comparative Overview).



It is worth mentioning that, thrown out of the terrestrial television, the non-national European fiction has begun to appear at the window of the satellite channels. Canal Jimmy, included in the basic bouquet of Tele+, regularly shows English series, from the classical ones *The Prisoner* to the contemporary gay sitcom *Gimme Gimme Gimme*. At the beginning of 2001, the public television also launched an all-fiction satellite channel Raisatfiction, which alongside the domestic products, proposed offering and enhancing the little known productions of other European countries. English literary adaptations, the new French cop series and first run German action series were broadcast in multiprogramming during 2001, often in the original version with subtitles - something unusual and in reality not at all appreciated by the Italian viewers. However, the limited budget of the channel did not allow it to go any further with European acquisitions, or to face the costs of dubbing which was requested by many viewers; thus, in its second year Raisatfiction has now decided to exploit the American series, and has shown the complete series of *Friends* and *Emergency Room*, already broadcast by the terrestrial channels of RAI.

Tab. 3 – Origin of TV Fiction (Sample Week 4-10 March 2001)

ENTIRE DAY					
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Euro</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Raiuno	38%	16%	42%	3%	23h10
Raidue	13%	13%	74%	-	23h33
Raitre	100%	-	-	-	3h45
<i>tot. Rai</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>54%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>50h28</i>
Canale 5	23%	7%	66%	4%	47h15
Rete 4	12%	3%	31%	54%	44h05
Italia 1	3%	4%	93%		42h08
<i>Tot. Mediaset</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>133h28</i>
Total	33h40	13h10	111h26	26h05	184h21
Tot. %	18%	7%	61%	14%	100%
PRIME TIME					
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>euro</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Raiuno	100%	-	-	-	4h50
Raidue	32%	-	68%	-	4h40
Raitre	100%	-	-	-	3h45
<i>Tot. Rai</i>	<i>76%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>13h15</i>
Canale 5	64%	-	36%	-	4h40
Rete 4	-	47%	-	53%	3h10
Italia 1	-	-	100%	-	3h38
<i>Tot. Mediaset</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>46%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>11h28</i>
Total	13h05	1h30	8h28	1h40	24h43
Total %	53%	6%	34%	7%	100

Source: Eurofiction

The results for the sample week of 2001 (4 – 10 March) show the breakdown - channel by channel - of the fiction offer according to origin, throughout the entire day and in prime time. Since the week was selected from the most intense period of the television season - the so-called “guarantee period”, when the networks try to achieve the highest ratings - we cannot expect it to fully coincide with the data of the entire year seen above. However, all the components of the basic structure of the fiction offer can be seen: the higher concentration on the commercial channels, the ever significant incidence of the American imports, the marginality of the non-national European product, and the predominance of domestic fiction in prime time.

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: All-Time Peak

2001 was a record year as far as quantitative data are concerned and, if the unfavourable forecasts referred to later on in this report should materialise, it could be remembered as the year in which domestic fiction reached its

historical peak: 760 hours, more than 130 compared with the previous year and more than three and a half times the hourly volume of 1996: when the Italian television industry was at the tail-end of the five largest European countries. The “overtaking” of France (see, Comparative Overview) achieved in 2000 by a handful of hours, rapidly increased to establish a precedence of more than 200 hours.

The comparison with France, anything but simply gratifying national pride, can be used for calling attention to the top-most opposition between the production strategies of the Italian and French televisions. The former chose not to invest in daytime fiction and namely the long seriality of the soaps (*Cap des Pins* was the only unsuccessful experiment) during the second half of the nineties; the Italian broadcasters, overcoming almost immediately a long-lasting resistance and even aversion, decided once and for all to take the road of industrial production of serial fiction.

Tab. 4 – TV Fiction by Channels

CHANNEL	HOURS
RAIUNO	211h50
RAIDUE	50h55
RAITRE	145
TOT. RAI	407h45
CANALE5	333h50
RETE4	9h30
ITALIA1	9h36
TOT. MEDIASET	353h05
TOTAL	760h50

Source: Eurofiction

Three daily soaps, *Un posto al sole* and *Ricominciare* on the first Rai channel, *Vivere* on Canale 5, overtook and went alongside each other since 1996; in 2001 *Centro Vetrine* (Canale 5) was added. The temporal extension of the fourth soap (almost 100 hours) contributes significantly to the increase in hours recorded during the year. The latter immediately became the most popular of the domestic soaps with a share of approximately 30%: thanks, among other things, to the suitable scheduling in the early afternoon straight after *Beautiful* - still the most watched soap in Italy - in the time slot previously occupied by *Vivere*. The relegation of the latter to midday slot upset both actors and public, but it was beneficial for Canale 5 which at that time of the day was chronically weak; even if the audience of the soap dropped drastically in absolute figures, the share was satisfactory for the channel’s objectives.

45% of the entire hourly volume of offer, which increases to 55% in the case of private television, is supplied by the four domestic soaps. Abundant

and economical, although not always successful – *Ricominciare* was cancelled and the new soap in 2002 on the second RAI channel *Cuori rubati* is having trouble getting going - the daily serials present the further advantage of creating steady jobs for a wide range of professional people of the productive and creative world, as well as assisting a great quantity of related industries. The regionalistic character of Italian soaps, produced in the studios of Naples, Milan, Turin and Terni, does actually ensure a pluralistic representation of the geo-social reality of the country less than it intends to favour a decentralised distribution of the occupational resources of the seriality industry. On the other hand, the making of the soaps is in the hands of only two production companies, both owned by pan-European operators, and each company has a privileged relationship with one broadcaster: Aran-Endemol produces the soaps for Mediaset, and Grundy Pearson works for RAI.

A little more than half the fiction (53%) is commissioned by the public television for its three channels, whereas for private television the domestic product supplies almost exclusively the flag-ship Canale 5. The youth channel of the group, Italia 1, subsists on massive doses of American imports; for Rete 4 the perspective of programming quasi-domestic fiction is assigned to the co-production of the sequel of the Brazilian soap *Terra Nostra*, which will be shown in the autumn of 2002.

If, from the point of view of quantity of fiction production, the two broadcasters appear close to each other, the respective editorial strategies are very different indeed. Public television activates a greater number of programmes - 33 titles in 2001 compared to 24 of the private television – to be scheduled above all in prime time, included one of the two soaps; more than 8 out of 10 hours of Rai's fiction fill the prime time slots as can be seen by the high number and progressive growth of the evenings dedicated by the public channels to domestic productions.

Tab. 5 – Evenings

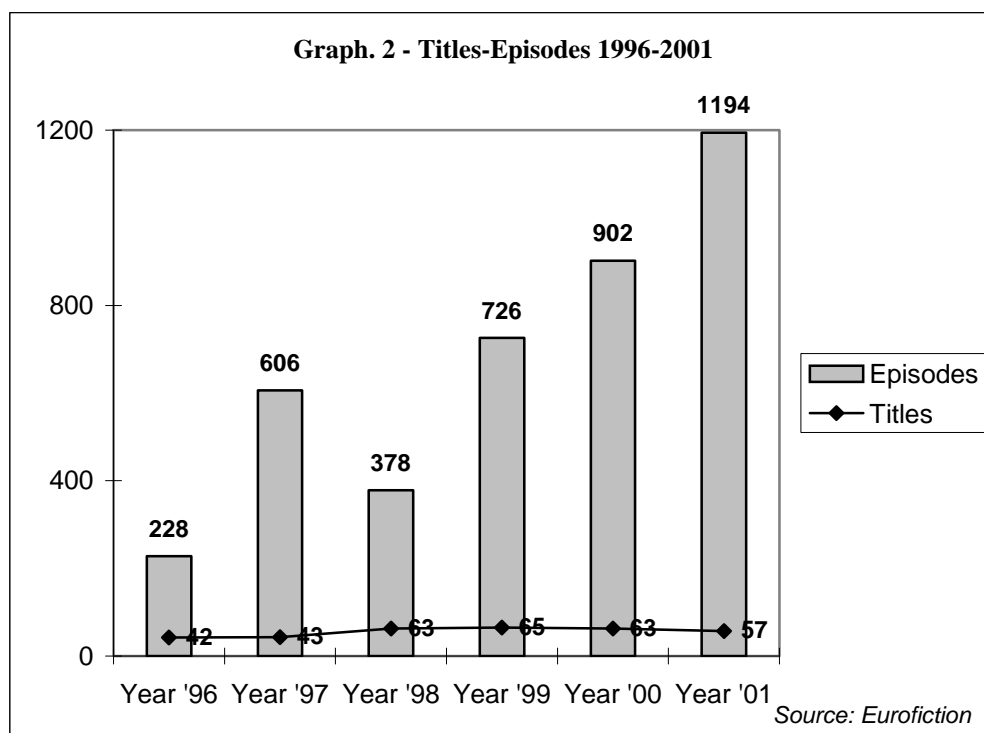
	1999	2000	2001
RAI	107	145	161
MEDIASET	61	79	72
TOTAL	168	224	233

Source: Eurofiction

In a complementary manner, the fiction on Mediaset is conceived of mainly for off prime time (70% of the hourly volume), otherwise it is placed in a makeshift slot should it not be successful. Apart from the soaps, two or three of the sitcoms produced each year are destined to daytime as well – usually late afternoon on Sundays on Canale 5 and more recently for early afternoon on Saturday. In the sitcom genre - a vehicle for some of the most popular

entertainers - commercial television has in fact the exclusive, since public television has stopped showing this type of programme after several mediocre results obtained in the past. Unlike the customs established in other countries, in Italy the sitcoms are not broadcast in prime time, owing to the fact that they are considered unsuitable because they are short; the experimental collocation of *Via Zanardi*, 33 in the evening of Italia 1 was, if not the main, one of the causes of the last unsuccessful attempt by Mediaset to produce original fiction for its youth channel.

Although they are far from occupying high levels in the standard of quality of Italian fiction, and are rather rough and ready productions, and lacking in bite, thought for a Sunday family audience and children, the private television sitcoms perform a worthy task: they provide the site where the comedy genre is regularly shown, which at least in its purest form is gradually disappearing from domestic fiction. Public television, for example, has not presented any comedy in their 2001 offer, though rich in



drama and cop-shows; it is however true that both dominant genres of RAI's fiction are often crossbreeds dotted with comical and humorous themes.

The process of serialisation of the domestic product - further accentuated in 2001, as evident from the linking between the fall in titles and the increase in episodes - has also earned itself a place in prime time. Concerning this time slot there is quite a widespread practice of *stretching*: in other words an expansion of the number of segments, episodes or instalments round which the narrative structure of a fiction is articulated. Apart from the mini-series and several Italian style series (4/8 cinematographic length episodes), for the prime time the so-called *seriali* are produced and this definition covers at

least three typologies: 1) episodic series of 50 minutes, in 24/25 parts to be programmed in pair to fill the lengthy slot of Italian prime time (*Una donna per amico*, *Distretto di Polizia* and *Compagni di scuola*); 2) episodic series of 90/100 minutes, with a variable number of parts from 12 (*Il bello delle donne*) to 30 (*La squadra*); real serials produced in blocks of 26 seasonal instalments (*Incantesimo* and in 2002 *Vento di Ponente*). This latter typology has been so far the prerogative of the public channels; private television is at present working on some similar projects.

But, although the broadcasters seem to have found a kind of “holy grail” in the *seriali* - at least concerning their size and partially for the economy of production - the serialisation process is not only connected with, but is even functional for the revaluation of the format embodied in the “genetic patrimony” and in the tradition of domestic fiction, established since the inception of the Italian public television: the mini-series, for which both RAI and Mediaset dedicate half of their titles, with more editorial care and higher investments.

Tab. 6 – TV Fiction in 2001

	PRIME TIME	OTHER TIME SLOTS	TOTAL
Episodes	509	685	1194
Titles	49	8	57
Hours	461h09	299h41	760h50

Source: Eurofiction

4. Successes and Failures: Back To the Past

The mini-series reward the high consideration that they enjoy with the broadcasters. Producers, authors and actors, and increase at the same time their own prestige, proving themselves year after year the “prince” of the formats of Italian fiction, that which is provided with more possibility of success. A large portion of the best ratings, also favoured by the historical familiarity of the domestic audience with this almost cinematographic format, and by the similarly historical sedimentation of experience by the producers, is guaranteed by the mini-series on a yearly basis. In 2001 it was exactly the same: starting from the first, 11 positions out of 20 in the list of most watched episodes are occupied by titles of mini-series. This is a peculiarity in the Italian Top 20 which cannot be seen in other countries, and reinforces the national preference for a format which is widely recognised to square the circle: i.e. to achieve the conciliation between ratings and quality, popularity and culture, requisites of which normally is complained about, or taken for granted, the polar opposition.

Therefore the new course of serialisation has not dethroned the mini-series, which in the year under analysis has 50% of the titles, instead has induced the broadcasters to develop a mixture - more or less well balanced and

rather often effective - between serial and non-serial titles, *stretching* and contraction (the mini-series are mostly in two parts). If the *seriali*, well represented among the Italian Top 20 together with the Italian style series, present a dual competitive advantage - moderate cost and the structural contribution to the prime time schedules (filling numerous evenings with one title only) - the mini-series possess a sole requirement: that which the broadcasters and the marketing operators call “channel illumination”, in other words a flattering return of image, and a positive lasting aura which surrounds the network and gives it a marked identity. This is not an absolute guarantee; the aforementioned illumination is the strong point of the small number of mini-series events (in 2001 *Uno Bianca*, *Come l’America* and *Cuore*), and the format is not without its mediocre results and failures; but the failure of a mini-series does not jeopardise in fact that the results of two evenings, and even at their worst do not result in painful and uneconomical reprogramming or cancellations.

The total of the 20 most watched episodes in 2001 is a meaningful extract of the tendencies and results observable in Italian fiction of today. The comparison with the same results of the previous year highlights the fall in highest ratings, both in terms of viewers as well as share. In 2000, 8 out of the first 10 positions were occupied by episodes with a viewing rate of more than 9 million (actually the top programme had 14 million): in 2001 they fall to 3 and the upper limit of 10 million was never exceeded. Similarly, the episodes with a share of over 30% decrease from 8 to 5, and the threshold of 40% passed by the first two in 2000 was never reached.

The more novel and significant data is however in the reshaping of the relative positions of RAI and Mediaset, and in particular the respective flagship channels Raiuno and Canale 5, in the production of successful fiction programmes. This aforementioned reshaping reflects the overshooting in 2001 of the main commercial channel on the main public network during the evening. and therefore shows the increasing impact capacity of fiction on private television. Because it produces more programmes and, as mentioned in another part of this chapter, it concentrates its efforts on prime time, as well as the fact that it can count on a long-lasting productive tradition dating back to the fifties, public television over the years has systematically been the unquestionable leader in audience ratings of domestic fiction: it has always held first place (the top programme in the classification) and has accumulated a number of placings among the top 20 clearly superior to those of private television. In 2000 there were 14 episodes, 8 of which among the first 10, and all were from Raiuno. The scenario for 2001 is different: There are still more of RAI’s successful programmes in evidence, but they decrease to 11 subdivided between Raiuno (8) and Radue (3); Canale 5 has 9 positions as already

Tab. 7 - Top 20 Episodes in 2001⁶

N.	TITLES	CHANNEL	FORMAT	GENRE	AUDIENCE	SHARE
1	Uno bianca	Canale 5	Miniseries	Crime	9936	34.98
2	Il Maresciallo Rocca 3	Raiuno	Series	Crime	9864	37.00
3	Come l'America	Raiuno	Miniseries	Drama	9442	34.03
4	Distretto di polizia	Canale 5	Series	Crime	8437	30.24
5	Cuore	Canale 5	Miniseries	Drama	8330	29.90
6	La memoria e il perdono	Raiuno	Miniseries	Drama	8176	29.46
7	Le ali della vita	Canale 5	Miniseries	Drama	8066	30.15
8	Piccolo mondo antico	Canale 5	Miniseries	Drama	7596	28.01
9	Angelo il custode	Raiuno	Series	Drama	7509	29.18
10	Il Commissario Montalbano	Raidue	Series	Crime	7357	29.65
11	Incantesimo	Raiuno	Serial	Drama	7329	25.05
12	Il testimone	Canale 5	Miniseries	Crime	7187	25.98
13	Brancaccio	Raidue	Miniseries	Drama	7108	26.18
14	Casa Famiglia	Raiuno	Series	Drama	7108	27.71
15	Non lasciamoci più 2	Raiuno	Series	Drama	7104	25.86
16	Don Matteo	Raiuno	Series	Crime	7031	26.55
17	Per amore per vendetta	Canale 5	Miniseries	Drama	7026	25.66
18	Il bello delle donne	Canale 5	Series	Drama	6660	24.69
19	La Piovra 10	Raidue	Miniseries	Crime	6624	23.51
20	L'impero	Canale 5	Miniseries	Crime	6419	24.97

Source: Eurofiction

happened in 1999, but with a difference in that there is a definite move towards the top of the classification (5 titles in the top 10); and above all, the most watched episode of the year coincides for the first time ever with a fiction from Canale 5, the mini-series-event *Uno bianca*. At the time of writing, the data at our knowledge do not appear to confirm similar performances over the current year; but it remains that 2001 will be remembered as the year in which the fiction produced by Italian private television was strongly confirmed.

The variety of formats destined for prime time is totally represented in the ranking of successful programmes, where we can find:

- the Italian style short series, either when it prestigiously materialises into an event (the very popular cop show *Il Maresciallo Rocca* at its third edition) or coincides with productions of average stable standards (*Casa famiglia*), a “social” series on the theme of children’s condition with a priest as the main character; the second edition of *Non lasciamoci più*, where a lawyer specialised in divorce cases successfully manages to help couples in crisis to get back together again);

⁶ The table has been elaborated choosing, for each programme, the top-rated episode or instalment.

- the different types of *seriali* (the 50 minute long *Distretto di Polizia*, an interesting and well produced choral cop show now in its second edition, with a woman as head of the department; the 90 minute female choral series *Il bello delle donne*, set in a beauty salon and which deploys an all-star cast and was one of the most well promoted programme of the year; the seasonal serial *Incantesimo*, a classic melodrama which right from its debut in 1998 convincingly demonstrated the possibility of reconverting long serials to prime time);
- and naturally the mini-series (*Uno bianca*, *Come l'America*, *La memoria e il perdono*, the sequel to *Le ali della vita*, *Piccolo mondo antico* and others); once again confirming a further exchange of positions, in the forefront we find the mini-series (7 out of 9 titles) among the successful programmes from Canale 5, while the successes of the public channels (in 7 out of 11 cases) are produced by series and serials: this is also a rather unusual result since the mini-series, heir to the historical *sceneggiato* of the years during which RAI had the monopoly, is strongly identified with the public television and has always constituted its paramount factor of “illumination”.

Crimes committed in a provincial environment (*Il maresciallo Rocca*, *Don Matteo*, *Il commissario Montalbano*) and those on the urban outskirts (*Distretto di Polizia*); old and new organised crime (*Brancaccio*, *La piovra*, *L'impero*); the conflicts among generations (*Per amore per vendetta*); crises (*Non lasciamoci più*) and family hardship (*Casa famiglia*); the melodramatic conflicts between good and evil (*Le ali della vita*, *Incantesimo*); the world of relationships among women between sorority and antagonism (*Il bello delle donne*): a large slice of programmes which have touched success, as well as those which have not or which have remained in the background, articulate these and other traditional themes of Italian fiction, perhaps with a new turn towards the characters and the female point of view, and at the same time recuperating a social issues vein, now preferably devoted to characters and stories of common people.

More than ever before in the previous years, concerning successful programmes and speaking generally of the offer in 2001, a distinguishing feature can be noted: it is not universal or unifying, rather more the appearance of an inclination, which finds its preferential means in the mini-series (and which the perspective for 2002 fully confirms as a recognised editorial style, shared by both broadcasters). It is “*looking back*”.

In remembering news items and national history events, which highlight the moral and sometimes exceptional behaviour of “heroes” (*Uno bianca*, *Brancaccio*, *L'attentatuni*, *Senza confini*); in the literary adaptations

which revitalise the unforgettable season of Italian *sceneggiati* (*Cuore*, *Piccolo mondo antico*, *Nanà*); in the reconstruction of crucial events in social history (*Come l'America*, an intense account of the Italian emigration in America, a quality and wealthy international co-production); in the popular tales (*Le ali della vita*) and even in contemporary stories which are linked to events happened in the distant past (*La memoria e il perdono*). In a temporary itinerary which from the last decade just ended goes back to the fifties and the sixties, to the Second World War, to the nineteenth century and to the Middle Ages (*Crociati*), the past and the memory of the past dominate Italian fiction in 2001. and constitute its most significant new element.

As far as failures are concerned, it is only worth pointing out those likely to affect the future chances of narrative genres and production commitments. In this instance we must mention the disappointing results of the third edition of *Una donna per amico* (Raiuno) and the authentic failure of the amateurish and confusing *Camici bianchi* (Canale 5), which jeopardise for an indefinite period the Italian hospital genre, even though there had been some promising debuts. And there is no doubt at all that the rather mediocre result obtained by *Via Zanardi, 33*, a superficial imitation of *Friends*, put an end to the intermittent and unconvincing attempts of Italia 1 to produce fiction for its youthful audience. *Compagni di scuola*, a series based on the Spanish format *Compañero*, was also unconvincing in spite of the authoritative contribution of one of the most important Italian scriptwriters, but it has been given a chance to do a second season by Raidue.

5. Last Fires?

On the quantity front - in terms of volume of supply and audience data – and, speaking in a general way of quality, 2001 was once again a good year for Italian fiction, in the wake of its electrifying rediscovery and expansion starting from the second half of the nineties. But in the light of the present day, we must ask ourselves if this situation can be called “last fires⁷”: a really bizarre result for a sector of such recent renaissance and not totally well-developed.

On the health, and above all the prospective of domestic production in the near future, there are reasons for concern which increased during 2001 and intensified at the beginning of the autumn season. In the spring of 2002 professional circles of the producers and the creative people started spreading the word of an imminent crisis, following the cuts in budget that had been announced by the broadcasters since the beginning of the year. These cuts were motivated both by the fall in advertising resources as well

⁷ “ultimi fuochi” is an Italian idiom that takes origin from the final “crescendo” of the fireworks, and thus refers to the last radiance of phenomena drawn to an end.

as the necessity, according to those broadcasters, to downsize production costs which recently had been swollen out of all proportion.

Tab. 8 – Broadcaster’s Investments in Fiction

(in billion of Italian lira)

Year	Raifiction	Mediatrade
2000	330	270
2001	350	320
2002	320	280

Source: puntocom 3.7.2002

In the middle of 2002 the director of Raifiction resigned - Raifiction being the production structure of public television, which during the lengthy process of change regarding the leadership of the company had been working in slow motion - and at the same time the Mediatrade, its equivalent in private television, closed down (a decision officially justified by functional needs for reorganisation). Both of the events appeared as confirmation of the already widespread fears and accentuated the alarmist climate regarding the destiny of Italian fiction in the months or years to come.

If, during the many meetings which have taken place, the broadcasters continue to confirm their strategic commitment to fiction, the producers on their part mention the projects frozen or cancelled, the total inactivity of some companies, cut-backs in others and the beginnings of loss of work. On the other hand the Italian production apparatus is too undercapitalised to allow the same producers to go ahead with the projects on their own.

This problematic situation is not without its empiric indicators. For the first time in the last six years, the seasonal offer (2001-2002) did not show signs of growth compared to the previous one; and although some mini-series have obtained sensational ratings and popularity, the average audience for fiction lost half a million viewers and more than one point of share. It is not just the craze for reality shows (and in some cases the competition from American films) that has weakened the performances of domestic fiction, but the same inherent weakness of several titles; the episodic series in particular appears to be a critical format for national production and there are very few exceptions.

The most worrying effects of this situation concern, among others, the ability to renovate. Also because it is conceived and produced for a family and generalist audience (belonging to a population with a high rate of elderly people), even the most excellent example of Italian fiction generally clings to the certainty of tradition both from a cultural as well as an aesthetic

and linguistic point of view. A greater productive diversification together with adequate resources could help to face the risk of innovation - although being called for by many. Evidently this does not seem to be the case now or in the near future.

5. The Moment of Local Fiction Spanish TV Fiction in 2001

by Carlos Arnanz, Charo Lacalle and Lorenzo Vilches

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: The Year of *Operación Triunfo*

The year 2001 will be remembered for the terrorist attacks on September 11, which thanks to live TV became one of the most spectacular events in recent history. On a national level it was the year of *Operación Triunfo* which consolidated the reality show genre. Conventional programming risks permanent destabilisation due to this phenomenon. Furthermore the format has started to diversify its tentacles and to reinterpret all the other genres in a process which will have unpredictable consequences.

In 2001 the macro-sector of telecommunications and entertainment continued to gravitate round digital migration. The debate on the insufficient width of the band given to the television channels for digital terrestrial TV passed from a climate of distrust to an agreement on the standard MHP. Besides, notwithstanding the efforts made by the various administrations, the market of digital decoder is almost non-existent in Spain. Contracts concerning the transmission in DTT were signed both by already existing national analogical operators as well as two new competitors.

As far as the autonomic regions are concerned, the new channels (Castilla-La Mancha and the programming of Extremadura, backed by Andalusian television) are strangely enough, analogical. La Otra, the second public channel in DTT in Madrid has officially begun its transmissions. Also in Madrid, Onda 6, the first private DT regional broadcaster rapidly changed ideas a year after its debut and became a conventional local channel. La Rioja conceded their regional licenses in DTT. The autonomic regions of Madrid and Navarra created their own Audiovisual Committees who work alongside that already existing in Catalonia. Due to a lack of real interest by the government, Spain does not have a State Committee.

In 2001 only 7 programmes reached the average 20 points of share, the equivalent of 8 million viewers: of these, 3 are in fact the same programme (the football match, extra time and the penalties between Bayern Munich and Valencia in the European League Cup final) to which we can add another two matches on TVE 1, the final of *Gran Hermano 2* on Tele 5 and the New Year's Eve show on TVE1.

The figures for advertising fell for the first time in many years: 2001, according to Infoadex, closed with a decrease of 7.85% in traditional TV, compensated by a slight increase in the other optional markets.

In 2001 subscriptions to pay-TV went up. The net increase was 550 000 units which brings the total amount to almost 2.8 million. Canal Satélite Digital ended the year with 1.2 million subscribers. Via Digital with 800 thousand and the cable operators with 574 thousand. Notwithstanding, the economic results of many operators continued to be disastrous and the comments on the necessity of rationalised mergers were omnipresent. While this report was being finished, a merger has been announced (as is happening in several European countries) as well as the definite closure of the DTT platform Quiero TV due to financial difficulties.

There was a slight decrease in television viewing consumption for the second year running, and the result was 208 minutes daily per person. The erosion concerning the generalist channels was evident: the three great national broadcasters lost two points of share during the year in spite of the slight improvement in TVE1's results (24.8%). The private channels lost one point each (Tele 5 21.0% and Antena 3 TV 20.4%) while the autonomic televisions obtained one of their best results ever (17.0%): among these, only TV3 headed its market with 21.8% in Catalonia. Pay-TV gained more than one point of share and the local channels got a record-winning 1.9%. The interactive services of the digital platforms did not have a particularly brilliant year. Interactive advertising was experimented as well as interactive participation in programmes (*Quiere ser millonario*), a bit of restyling in choice and management of the users and the integration of the various communication functions put forward through TV-mail and SMS but there were certainly not mind-shattering innovations.

The digital cinema, at the centre of a pioneering experiment in Barcelona, showed its likelihood of becoming similar to TV; digital radio, on the other hand, did not arouse much interest: the total number of people receiving DAB are between 600 and 1 000 in the country. RTVE with their more classical series and Admira with *Padre Coraje*⁸ began the commercialisation of TV fiction in DVD: at the end of 2001 there were about one million Spanish homes with DVD equipment.

The reality formats have been diversified in new ways and have continued to absorb other genres. The revelation of the year *Operación Triunfo* was presented by TVE as a “worthy alternative” where young competitors had to reach their goals instead of the emptiness of *Gran Hermano*. All the resources of both the state broadcasters were thrown into the concept and even La2 changed its programming so as to transmit a daily summary. In a rather impromptu manner the programme was extended to the thematic TV (Canal Satélite Digital) and it was used as a backing for a successful telephonic and record business with the calls being used for voting.

⁸ Dramatic mini-series transmitted by Via Digital

Tab. 1 – Consumer Evolution and Channels Shares 1990-2001

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Target	10 years and +	10 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +	4 years and +
Universe (000)	33.038	33.208	35.918	35.918	36.135	36.539	36.601	36.658	38.345	38.414	38.634	39.282
Minutes TTV	184	187	194	204	210	211	214	209	210	213	210	208
TVE1	52.4	43.0	32.6	29.8	27.6	27.6	26.9	25.1	25.6	24.9	24.5	24.8
La2	20.2	14.2	12.9	9.6	9.8	9.2	9.0	8.9	8.8	8.1	7.9	7.8
TVE	72.6	57.2	45.5	39.4	37.4	36.8	35.9	34.0	34.4	33.0	32.4	32.6
TELE 5	6.5	15.9	20.8	21.4	19.0	18.5	20.2	21.5	20.4	21.0	22.3	21.0
Antena 3	3.7	10.1	14.7	21.1	25.7	26.0	25.0	22.7	22.8	22.8	21.5	20.4
Canal (+)	0.3	0.9	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.3
Private TV	10.5	26.9	37.2	44.4	46.6	46.8	47.4	46.8	45.5	46.2	45.9	43.7
Autonómicas	16.4	15.5	16.5	15.6	15.2	15.4	15.4	17.4	16.5	16.5	16.9	17.0
Other (*)	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.3	1.8	3.6	4.5	4.8	6.7

*	SHARE 1999	SHARE 2000	SHARE 2001
Digital	2.1	2.2	3.3
Local	1.2	1.5	1.9
Rest	1.1	1.2	1.5
Other	4.5	4.8	6.7

Source: SOFRES and Eurofiction

Area: 1990-1997 Spain (included only Balear Islands)
/ 1998-2001 Spain (included Balear and Canarian Islands)

Other examples of reality TV were shown by TV3 (*Explica'ns la teva vida* and *Barri*) and by Tele 5 with the second edition of *Gran Hermano* (without the devastating effects of the first but more cost-effective together with *Supervivientes* and *Esperando a Miss España*).

Films and sport programmes were less again this year in spite of the use of feature films in prime time to cover the slots that were weaker as far as competition or to replace unsuccessful new programmes. *Titanic* was the film with the highest ratings this year on Antena 3. As far as sport is concerned, Via Digital obtained the World Cup 2002 rights for the first time. Quiz programmes disappeared. Some old ones were cancelled (*Quiere ser Millonario* and *El juego del Euromillón* on Tele 5) and the new experiences in prime time were unsatisfactory (*Audacia* on TVE1, *Fort Boyard* on Tele 5) but there were others which had better luck in the horizontal slots (*Pasapalabra* on Antena 3).

The hybridisation of the genres gave titles such as *Investigación Policial* (Antena 3, a reconstruction of true cases that exploits the documentation created in the series *Policías*), *Cinco en el Corte Inglés* (Tele 5, a curious mix of fiction and television advertising), *Muchoviaje* (Antena 3 TV, a combination of a travel documentary and publicity for tourist resorts), the

quiz about economic issues *Mi cartera* (Tele 5), or the magazine about flamenco *Tirititrán* (with Lolita Flores on La 2).

On digital TV, Gran Via transmitted the mini-series *Padre Coraje* and the portal Plus.es was very active in the micro series planned for slow access to Internet, as well as in a 2 minute news programme. The regional election period and world events of the last three months permitted Gran Via to show the possibility of the multi-screen applications to information.

2. The Origin of Fiction: Fall in Offer

Television fiction offer during the sample week went right down to little more than 110 hours (124 last year). The fall is quite significant and indicates that some networks have stopped considering fiction - and in particular the domestic fiction - as an up and coming resource in the programming for trying to balance their centrality with other different types of contents. Neither can the drop be blamed on competition due to reality TV which was not included in the sample week.

Tab. 2 – Origin of TV Fiction (Sample Week 4-10 March 2001) - minutes

CHANNEL	DOMESTIC	%	EUROPE	%	OTHER	%	USA	%
TVE1	410	24.3	0	0.0	1050	62.1	230	13.6
La 2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	450	100
Tele 5	855	57.0	105	7.0	0	0.0	540	36.0
Antena 3	240	34.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	450	65.2
TV3	605	50.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	590	49.4
C33-K3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1080	100
Total National TV	1505	34.8	105	2.4	1050	24.2	1670	38.6
Total	2110	31.9	105	1.6	1050	15.9	3340	50.6

Source: Eurofiction

TVE1 and Tele 5 transmit respectively 28 and 25 hours a week of series. Just behind them are the two Catalan channels (19.9 hours a week on TV3 and 18 hours on 33-K3) while at the bottom of the list there is Antena 3 (11.5 hours) and La 2 (7.5 hours).

With reference to time slots, the major concentration is in daytime with 77.8% of the total time dedicated to fiction, while in prime time it's 15.4%. As in past years, domestic production is dominant in the peak viewing slot although to a lesser degree. The transmissions of fiction in the late night slots are residual (6%) and are mostly north American productions. These percentages are obtained by including in the calculations TV3 and 33-K3. If we only take into consideration the national channels, the daytime fiction

goes down to 73.4% while the concentration in prime time increases to 19.9%.

Domestic fiction does not manage to beat the North American one with regards to hours of transmission (1505 minutes compared to 1670 on the national channels and 3340 minutes of American series compared to 2110 of national product if we count the autonomic channels), but it does manage to do so when we speak about its prominent position in the programming: there are no series from America or non-European countries in prime time.

It is now quite normal for the non-domestic series to appear in prime time very occasionally, limited to launching new titles or seasonal tactics without too much continuity. As regards peak viewing slots the last few years have confirmed a very clear trend: the only fiction possible is films and domestic series.

Tab. 3 – Origin of TV Fiction by Time-Slot - minutes

	DOMESTIC	%	EUROPE	%	OTHER	%	USA	%
Daytime	1200	23.1	0	0.0	1050	20.2	2945	56.7
Nighttime	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	395	100.0
Prime time	910	89.7	105	10.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	2110	31.9	105	1.6	1050	15.9	3340	50.6

Source: Eurofiction

The space for TV fiction from the rest of Europe represents a very small percentage of the total (almost 2%) concentrated on Tele 5, while the series from other countries (mainly the South American *telenovelas*) on TVE1 total 1 050 minutes.

Tele 5 and TV3 continue to be the channels that give more attention to domestic fiction (more than 50% of total fiction): by the frequency and diversity they continue to obtain good results. Both networks cleverly make use of repeats of the domestic series in secondary time slots.

In the sample week, Tele 5 transmitted its traditional youthful serial in the daytime (*Al salir de clase*) and four titles of domestic fiction in prime time (*Hospital Central*, *El Comisario*, *Moncloa ¿Dígame?* and *Siete Vidas*). It is the channel offering the highest number of titles. Tele 5 also exploits a programming formula which is not very common in Spain, consisting of the transmission of two sitcoms back-to-back (*Moncloa ¿Dígame?* and *Siete Vidas*) which have themes, style and target in common. The remaining fiction (36% of the total) is made up of venerable North American series transmitted intermittently: *Sensación de vivir*, *Walker Texas Ranger* and *Diagnóstico Asesinato*.

TV3 divides exactly into two parts its offer of domestic series and North American. The latter are used to segment the daytime programming and

include well-known titles such as *Ironside*, *Los Angeles de Charlie* and *El Príncipe de Bel Air*. Among the original titles there are the serials *Nissaga de poder* (repeats in the morning), *El Cor de la Ciutat* and the prime time series *Temps de Silenci*.

TVE1 concentrates mostly on the South American *telenovelas* (*Terra Nostra* in the daytime and the morning repeats of *Rosalinda*). The non-Spanish and the non-American fiction represent 62% of transmission time. The American series are on in the morning (*Conor*) and the late night slots (*Urgencias* and *Misión Especial*). Domestic fiction has a daytime serial (*El secreto*) which forms a block with *Terra Nostra* and two prime time comedies (*Ala...Dina* and *Academia de baile Gloria*).

Antena 3 distributes the offer of TV fiction between American (65%) and national (35%) productions. All the North American fiction is aimed at the same youthful target: *Sabrina*, *cosas de brujas*, *Los Simpson* and *South Park*. As far as domestic production is concerned there are two evening series, *Dime que me quieres* and *Manos a la obra*.

The second public channels (La 2 in Spain and 33-K3 in Catalonia) do not transmit either national, European or anything else other than North American. In many cases they are series for a youthful or young-adult public. *Guillermo Tell* and *Infelices para Siempre* are the only two fiction programmes on La 2. The American productions are transmitted in the programming of 33-K3 channel in various time slots: *Jim West*, *Boig per Tu*, *La tata*, *Stargate*, *Dies de ràdio* and *Mitges de Seda*.

Foreign serial fiction has completely disappeared from prime time and the only survivors are *Ally McBeal* on Tele 5 and *El Fugitivo* on TVE1, even though *Los Simpson* have held out in the main time slot.

On the contrary, the important series have found new niches in the afternoon during the weekend (*Embrujadas* and *Cazatesoros* on Tele 5). The most successful American series have passed on to pay-TV.

On most channels fiction exceeds films. The channels that transmit more cinema are La 2 and Antena 3, which are exactly those transmitting less fiction than the others. On the other channels TV fiction is in the forefront: TV3 favours more series rather than films, preceding Tele 5 and TVE1.

If, in past years the TV fiction produced many cases of domestic programmes competing among themselves in the same evening, in 2001 the situation is slightly modified. However, domestic fiction in prime time continues to be highly concentrated on certain days for two reasons: the high occasional presence of football on the public channels and the traditional prejudice that the weekend, including Friday, is not suitable for fiction.

During the sample week, Thursday is the only day with three domestic series: *Academia de baile Gloria* (TVE1), *Hospital Central* (Tele 5) and *Manos a la obra* (Antena 3) in a situation which is becoming more and more exceptional.

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: Autonomic Channels On the Up

Judging by the purely quantitative results of domestic production, the panorama should be positive. Even if in other sections of this report a serious preoccupation is expressed for the future of national fiction, 2001 shows the highest number of titles for the last 10 years, still a small amount in comparison with the other European countries. Thus the hours lost in 2000 have been recuperated. The same goes for the programming of 2467 new episodes - the highest in recent years. Apart from this quantitative data we must point out that there has been a qualitative change in the geographical areas of production. Traditionally the contribution of episodes was due to short serials shown on the state channels off prime time. The autonomic channels, instead got the upper hand as far as the daily series are concerned, in a year in which the market penetration of all these channels reached 17%, while the two private broadcasters Antena 3 and Tele 5 lost some of their audience in favour of TVE1 and the digital channels.

Other information to point out concerns the high number of transmissions in prime time. Fiction in peak viewing hours has increased by 178 hours (for a total of 1544 episodes) compared to last year and all the television channels have reversed the trend, started in 1996, of investing mostly in low budget programmes for the daytime. As regards audience, the tendency was completely different, as we can see from other parts of this report, and unrewarding for most of the new projects. There is however still a steady effort by television to take a chance with domestic production in spite of the boom of reality shows.

Tab. 4 – TV Fiction Supply 1996-2001

	Total 2001	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Total 1996
N. Titles	61	54	51	33	36	27
N. Episodes	2 467	1 961	2 352	1 424	1 276	696
Hours	1.306:00	1.199:00	1.468:37	851:07	758:38	459:00

Source: Eurofiction

Tab. 5 – TV Fiction by Channel in 2001 (Hours)

NATIONAL CHANNELS	
TVE	153:25
Antena 3 TV	161:10
Telecinco	245:55

cont't – Tab. 5

AUTONOMICAS	
TVC	179:10
ETB	172:10
TVG	316:30
CSur	59:35
TVM	9:10
Canal 9	5:55

Source: Eurofiction

The other significant challenge in Spain is on short fiction which has increased a lot on TVE1 and Tele 5. This year TVE1 went as far as to transmit up to six short-length series in prime time even though this invasion was severely punished in terms of ratings. Vice versa the short format of 25' brought TV3 to a yearly average of 38.9%. The experience of fiction/clip on TV3 is interesting from many points of view and shows a certain reliance on audio-visual music, shorts, documentaries and series in Internet. *Ell i Ella*, which lasts 5 minutes has obtained almost 30% of audience.

But in general, the distribution of formats continues to dominate series over serials, TV movies and mini-series. Only for the number of episodes a well divided balance is maintained among the series and the serials thanks to the contribution of the autonomic channels. Europe and other countries are practically non-existent in an industry which does not believe in international co-productions.

Tab. 6 – Breakdown of formats by titles 1996-2001

	TOTAL 2001	TOTAL 2000	TOTAL 1999	TOTAL 1998	TOTAL 1997	TOTAL 1996
N. titles	61	54	51	33	36	27
Series	39	33	32	25	27	22
Open Serials	10	7	9	7	5	5
Mini-series	4	5	6	1	2	0
TVMovies	8	9	4	0	2	0

Source: Eurofiction

The national series were not favoured by the new situation of sharp competition with the format of reality shows. Only the dramedy *Cuéntame cómo pasó* and the mini-series *Severo Ochoa*, both on TVE1 obtained high ratings. The other successful series, coming mostly from previous seasons (*Periodistas*, *Compañeros...*) either did not obtain good results or they had to change day to avoid the clash with the reality shows.

A typical Spanish programme is a comedy, broadcast in peak time, choral, intergenerational and inter-sexual. In the sphere of narrative genres, crime

became less important and the comedies were on the increase (8 titles more compared to the year before and 25% more episodes). In this instance Spain is the leading country and this is reflected in the increase in hours (334 more hours of comedy in prime time and 8 in day time) as well as freeze of the cop show.

Tab. 7 - TV fiction offer in prime time / off prime time by episodes 1996-2001

	Total 2001	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997	Total 1996
N. Episodes	2 467	1 961	2 352	1 424	1 276	696
Prime time	1 544	904	836	461	444	379
off prime time	923	1 057	1 516	693	832	317

Source: Eurofiction

Tab. 8 - TV fiction offer in prime time / off prime time by hours 1997-2001

	Total 2001	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998	Total 1997
Hours	1.306:00	1.199	1.468:37	851:07	758:38
Prime time	894:15	717:45	690:47	462:00	371:41
off prime time	411:45	481:15	777:50	389:07	386:57

Source: Eurofiction

In terms of cultural identity, the Spanish macho is losing ground as leading character. If in 1999 he was represented in more than 125 episodes divided between drama and comedy, it is now less than 50. The results of this drift, however, does not favour the female but mixed sex groups which in 2001 were the protagonists of almost 500 episodes more compared to the previous year. Even so, the weight of male protagonists in the choral series, played by famous actors from cinema, theatre and television is qualitatively inevitable as we can see in the most watched series: *Cuéntame*, *Periodistas*, *El Comisario*, *Hospital Central* and *Policías*. These are all series which can also guarantee an accurate definition of the narrative universe and the identification with the viewers' feelings, leaving behind the policy of confused mixing of genres and target to please everybody or nobody.

The Spanish TV fiction industry cannot be understood without mapping out the autonomic channels. The support of the regional governments, more political than financial, the effort to produce quality programmes at low cost with the help of the television federation (FORTA) and the proposal for stories which are socially and linguistically closely located, represent an attempt at cultural diversification which cannot be underrated: the regional fiction is different from the state productions. We will take this opportunity to point out a singular case that cannot be considered just an anecdote for 2001. Something happened that had been expected for a long time: several channels were beaten by the autonomic channels not only in relative terms

but in absolute values. It is the case of Antena 3 with *Papa* (a series which did not go beyond the fifth episode, killed off by the conflict between the channel and the production company of Pepe Navarro) and *Dos + una* (with 13 episodes transmitted) whose audience only obtained respectively 900 thousand and 800 thousand viewers and are far below *Plats bruts* and *Temps de silenci* the two winning series from TV3 which have obtained 38.9% and 32.7% of share. With *El cor de la ciutat* (41% of share) the pure uncontaminated melodrama has recovered ground. These have good scripts, production, acting and realisation and are faithful to the society they represent.

On a general level, TVE1 (with 4 series) and Tele 5 (with another 4) share the top places for yearly audience ratings followed by Antena 3 with two series, one of which is the youthful drama *Compañeros* (Antena 3) the most recorded series. Regarding the autonomic channels, TV3 obtained the first 8 positions, followed by Canal Sur with two series in a fluctuation of share between 38.9% and 20%.

Tab. 9 - Breakdown of production

	Total 2001	Total 2000	Total 1999	Total 1998
N. titles	61	54	51	33
Domestic	59	50	46	33
Euro Partners	1	3	4	--
Other Partners	1	1	1	--

Source: Eurofiction

In terms of production the autonomic channels share of fiction is now almost 50% of the total titles on Spanish television and increases to 564 original episodes compared with last year. Televisión de Galicia is the channel which has increased its hours and episodes, while TV3 (100 more episodes) is the more balanced offer for formats and genres.

4. Successes and Failures: The Rise of Nostalgic Comedy

Caution is perhaps the right word to define the conservatism of Spanish fiction in 2001, built up of the great past successes (*Periodistas*, *El comisario* and *Compañeros*). On the most watched channel, *Cuéntame cómo pasó*, a nostalgic comedy set in Madrid at the end of the sixties obtained unquestionable success in a season which continues to shorten the distance between the first ranking programmes, while the rate of failures in new titles is more than 82%. On the FORTA networks *Temps de silenci*, a dramatic series structured as a serial on TV3 which tells of a love affair from a social and historical point of view, got the highest audience ratings of the regional debuts (32.7%) and is in second place in the annual classification just behind *Plats brut*, the cult sitcom from the Catalan channel. Another feature

which better illustrates the profile of the period under analysis is, generally speaking, the excellent situation of domestic fiction on the public channels which seem to have found the right way to reach the hearts of the audience.

In absolute terms Televisión Española is the winner after going through a period of constant decline which had moved away its fiction programmes from the top positions apart from *Ala...Dina!* or mini-series such as *Entre naranjos* or *El abuelo*. We must note however that on this occasion TVE1 has placed six of its productions (*Cuéntame*, *Severo Ochoa*, *Academia de baile Gloria*, *Ala...Dina!*, *Paraíso* and *El secreto*) among the 10 most successful programmes in terms of share with percentages of 31.1% for *Cuéntame* and 23.3% for *El Secreto*, *Academia de baile Gloria* the comedy starring Lina Morgan settles the score for the public corporation highly criticised in the 1998/1999 season for the absolute fiasco of the series *Una de dos* played by the same actress and whose costly special effects were not even able to attract the supposedly faithful part of the TV public. The mini-series *Severo Ochoa* which is in second place in the annual classification has the same actors as *Cuéntame* (Imanol Arias and Ana Duato) and has without doubt capitalised its success.

As far as the regional television is concerned the 41.2% of *El cor de la ciutat* the most watched serial among those broadcast up to now on TV3 or the 38.9% of *Plats bruts* represent ever more rare figures in the panorama of the extremely competitive Spanish television fiction. The 24.9% of *Terra de Miranda* is a good result for the new dramatic series on TVG even though it is placed at a certain distance from the veteran *Mareas vivas* (28.8%) or *Pratos Combinatos* (26.4%). The adaptation of *Love Bugs* a Canadian format of short sketches (from 2 to 6 minutes) experimented on three channels from the Autonomic Communities (Valencia, Catalonia and Madrid) were successful only on TV3 (29.9%).

Unlike recent years, the drama beats comedy even though we can already see the new trend to reintroduce comic elements in the most popular dramatic series (*Periodistas*, *Compañeros*, *Hospital Central*...), after the boom of the crime/action of last year. On the other hand the failure of *Mi teniente*, the new series centred on the work of the Guardia Civil, obviously managed to block the otherwise predictable expansion of the action genre, which for the present has found a viewing public of its own thanks to titles such as *El comisario* and *Policías en el corazón de la calle*. Actually the cop

Tab. 10 - Top 20 Episodes in 2001⁹

N.	TITLES	CHANNEL	FORMAT	GENRE	AUDIENCE	SHARE	RAT.
1	CUÉNTAME	TVE 1	Series	Comedy	5.733	34.6	14.6
2	PERIODISTAS	T5	Series	Drama	5.036	31	12.8
3	DIME QUE ME QUIERES	A3	Series	Comedy	5.030	28.9	12.8
4	ACADEMIA DE BAILE GLORIA	TVE1	Series	Comedy	4.774	30.5	12.2
5	MANOS A LA OBRA	A3	Series	Comedy	4.641	27.3	11.8
6	EL COMISARIO	T5	Series	Crime	4.629	29	11.8
7	COMPAÑEROS	A3	Series	Drama	4.614	29.8	11.7
8	HOSPITAL CENTRAL	T5	Series	Drama	4.279	25.4	10.9
9	POLICIAS. EN CORAZÓN	A3	Series	Crime	4.181	27.9	10.6
10	ALA...DINA!	TVE1	Series	Comedy	4.126	23.1	10.5
11	7 VIDAS	T5	Series	Comedy	4.050	24.9	10.3
12	MONCLOA. ¿DIGAME?	T5	Series	Comedy	3.812	22	9.7
13	EL SECRETO	TVE 1	Serial	Drama	3.281	28.8	8.4
14	SEVERO OCHOA	TVE1	Mini-series	Drama	3.246	30.9	8.3
15	PARAISO	TVE 1	Series	Drama	3.047	23	7.8
16	AL SALIR DE CLASE	T5	Serial	Drama	2.984	24.8	7.6
17	LUCÍA Y CARLOS	A3	Tvmovie	Crime	2.953	19.7	7.6
18	UN CHUPETE PARA ELLA	A3	Series	Comedy	2.926	19.1	7.4
19	MI TENIENTE	TVE 1	Series	Crime	2.911	18.7	7.4
20	EL BOTONES SACARINO	TVE1	Series	Comedy	2.677	15.5	6.8

Source: Eurofiction

story is totally missing from FORTA after the very bad ratings obtained by *Crims* (TV3) last year.

The differences between the national and the autonomic channels are more evident when it comes to formats, much more diversified on the regional channels. The series reigns on TVE1, Tele 5 and Antena 3, which threatened due to the progressive erosion of viewers from the reality shows (*Operación Triunfo* in this case) are looking for faithful viewers for a weekly appointment. Compared to the excellent health of the Catalan, Andalusian or Basque series (*El cor de la ciutat*, *Plaza alta*, *Goenkale*) this format shows several signs of depletion in the national panorama. After the failure in the launching of *Ciudad Sur* (Antena3) or *Esencia de poder* (Tele 5), *La verdad de Laura* (TVE1) suffers from the competition of the Colombian

⁹ The table has been elaborated choosing, for each programme, the top-rated episode or instalment.

telenovela *Yo soy Betty la fea* (on Antena 3 since September) and *Al salir de clase* is showing clear signs of natural wear and tear which has made Tele 5 decide to announce the end of this youthful classic in the Spring of 2002.

The mini-series *Severo Ochoa* based on the life of a Nobel prize winner for medicine, represents the only foray by the big broadcasters into the noble formats seeing that the TV movie *Lucía y Carlos* (19.7%) limits itself to reconstruct one of the themes of *Policías en el corazón de la calle* integrated with new scenes and with narrative autonomy compared to the matrix series on Antena 3. The audience for the TV movies on TV3 (the only one which systematically cultivates this type of format subsidised at the moment by the Catalan government) showed modest results but the mini-series *Des del balcó* (30.1%) has the same share of *Severo Ochoa* (30.9%). *Dune* and *Los Miserables*, the two international co-productions with the participation of Tele 5, are a long way from recuperating their cost as they only obtained 15.8% and 16.7% of share respectively.

In order to find out the causes of the season's failures, it would be better to differentiate the unsuccessful new titles (*Mi teniente*, *Abogados*, *Papá*) or the programmes that were unable to face the challenge of renewal (*Un chupete para ella*, *Abierto 24 horas*) from other productions that were just simply obsolete as regards the representation of the period (*Manos a la obra*). We do not even need to forget those fiction stocks from the previous season which the channels were forced to liquidate as in the case of *Robles investigador privado* and *El botones Sacarino* on TVE1 or *Antivicio* on Antena 3. In a year in which it is impossible to paint an automatic picture of the winning programme (the differences between *Cuéntame...*, *Severo Ochoa* and *Periodistas* are significant) any attempt at tracing a profile of the losing ones would be useless.

Compared to the bad results obtained by Tele 5 in other TV programmes this channel is fairly strong in the field of fiction and its more ambitious series (*Periodistas*, *El Comisario* and *Hospital Central*) are among those in first place on the list, even though it was unsuccessful with *Abogados* (13.1%) and was unable to stop the free fall of the clever sitcom *Moncloa, ¿Dígame?* (17.2%) a kind of Spanish *Yes, Minister* (BBC) characterised by the unmistakable style of the Catalan production company El Terrat (*Plats bruts*). Different from Tele 5 which almost always takes a chance on its new productions, Antena 3 tends to get rid of them after a few episodes if they do not reach the infamous 20% of share which represents the acceptable limit in the Spanish system, as happened with the serial *Ciudad Sur* (14.9%) or the comedy *Papá* (7.5%). TVE1 followed a similar path with *Mi teniente* (16.6%) and did not go beyond the five episodes agreed on initially with the production company.

In a period in which the ratings of some autonomic channel televisions beat some of their own records, the differences between the networks of FORTA do not at all contradict their vocation to reflect their more immediate reality, moulded around stories whose symbolism gives the viewer that strange identification which he does not seem to find in any other television genre. In a speculating and without doubt complementary way the stories told on the state TV drift progressively away from the mimicry of the family comedy which marked the fiction of the nineties, to deal with more global issues and take on characteristics of a more universal kind. The best and the worst of *Cuéntame* is that it probably represents an exception to the rule, something that turns it into a production difficult to imitate.

5. Focus: *Cuéntame cómo pasó* and *Temps de silenci*

There were very few television critics who were not tempted to compare *Cuéntame cómo pasó* with *The Wonder Years* (ABC 1988) even though Miguel Angel Bernardeau the executive producer and creator assures us that he referred mainly to *Die blechtrommel, le tambour* (Volker Schoedorft, 1979). Bernadeau had his idea for *Cuéntame*...seven years before TVE1 decided to bet on a programme so obviously *retrò*, becoming the natural destination of a series whose main attraction was in the quantity of footage (from RTVE and the TV news NODO).

Cuentame....portraits the story of a Spanish family during Franco's dictatorship in 1968, a year of great political and social importance systematically pushed into the background because of the emphasis put on the following decade: the transition to democracy. The family Alcántara of the low middle classes with three children and the wife's mother, become efficient narrative tools and privileged observers on the oncoming re-awakening of Spain towards modernity shown in an extremely exact reproduction of the customs and habits of that period.

For the purpose a very thorough research in the press of that period was carried out which permitted the opportunity of reproducing daily life in greatest detail. The streets of Madrid were combed in the search for original furniture and objects (which sometimes had been donated by the manufacturers); all the publications in the Cerván newsagents were copied and the street where the protagonist family lived was completely rebuilt - a mixture of real and virtual elements.

Carlos Alcántara, the youngest son, is the narrator who remembers a period in his family life and his childhood centred around several events which are used to present the different story-lines of the series: buying a television; his first communion, his brother Toni going to university; his sister's trip to London, etc. Even if the child's point of view dominates, the stories of

different characters constitute a choral protagonism where the relationships are interwoven with great skill in the main theme told according to the narrative structure used. Apart from the spectacularly and the truthfulness and the laborious treatment given to *Cuéntame...* what the Alcántara see on their television screens (Eurovision, strikes, police onslaughts...) and the different stories created, these are the main references of a type of collective self-portrait which turns this fiction into a social memorial.

On the other hand *Temps de silenci* prefers to deal with politics instead of portraying manners, and inserts the stories told into a framework of a historical and social review. The personal story of the narrator, Isabel Dalmau, a young lady from the Catalan high society in love with a man she cannot marry because he is from a lower class, is the main theme to which the recollection of the history of Catalonia from 1935 onwards is centred. Unlike the other historical sagas such as *Heimat* (ARD) or *Brideshead Revisited* (ITV) the genealogy of this series is rather like the Australian *Carson & Carson* or the British *Upstairs, Downstairs* (ITV). At first it was planned that *Temps de silenci* would end with the advent of democracy but due to the success of the series it went on to the attempted coup in 1981.

Compared to the exercise in style that we get in every episode of *Cuéntame...* the continuity and the consecution of the historical recollection and the different topics of this TV3 production, there is a narrative serial structure that runs in parallel with the historic reconstruction. The result is a pleasant didactic exposition which on this occasion institutionalises the fiction story as a social memorial.

6. Sclerosis of the Schedules UK TV Fiction in 2001

by Richard Paterson

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: Assessment for the Year

British television in 2001 was marked by an ever-intensifying platform battle for digital subscribers between satellite (BSkyB), digital terrestrial (ONDigital) and cable (Telewest and NTL). Almost unnoticed by the British public – indifferent as to the health of a system characterised by government as leading the world in the introduction of digital television – first the cable operators, NTL and Telewest, and then the digital terrestrial platform ONDigital (renamed ITV Digital during 2001 in an attempt to boost take up), began to show signs that their business plans were not being achieved and that their future was very uncertain. [By May 2002 ITVDigital had ceased operations and both NTL and Telewest were renegotiating their finances]. Meanwhile Sky Digital, the digital satellite platform continued to prosper after years of investing in its subscriber base; by year end it had 5.7 million subscribers and a very low churn rate of about ten per cent compared with 1.263 million subscribers for ITV Digital and just under two million for cable (out of 3.62 million cable subscribers).

The platform problems were paralleled by a downturn in advertising revenue for the commercial channels, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5. This had a particularly adverse effect on Carlton and Granada, the dominant owners of ITV franchises with only the small Ulster and Channel franchises alongside the Scottish franchises out with their control. Carlton and Granada were 50/50 partners in ITV Digital and the advertising downturn alongside an investment of nearly £1 billion in digital terrestrial proved unsustainable. There was a significant change in the shareholding of Channel 5 with Pearson selling its 22% stake in RTL to Bertelsmann so that Bertelsmann became the dominant shareholder in Channel 5. RTL also purchased the independent production company, Talkback, which became part of Fremantle Media and thereby was no longer deemed to be an independent production company for the purpose of the 25 per cent quota of independent commissions required from broadcasters. The difficulties of meeting these requirements was also behind the ongoing argument over the ‘independent’ status of Endemol which though deemed an independent in most European states was excluded from this status in the UK because of Telefonica’s ownership [this issue was finally resolved in early 2002 in Endemol’s favour].

Controversy surrounded the BBC’s request for permission to launch four new free-to-air BBC digital channels from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The BBC met concerted opposition from existing

children's channels – Nickelodeon, Disney – to its CBBC and CBeebies channels, and to its proposals for a youth oriented BBC3 from a range of channels. The only channel getting no opposition was BBC4 - a new arts and documentary channel – which, however, was seen by some commentators as a portent for the BBC ridding the schedules of BBC2 and BBC1 of serious, and particularly arts, programming. The only channel held back was BBC3 for which the BBC were asked to submit revised proposals.

The main press and political hare running in 2001 related to preparations for the Communications Bill to merge the regulatory bodies covering broadcasting and telecommunications in a single agency: OFCOM. Again the BBC came under close scrutiny in relation to the extent to which it would come within OFCOM's jurisdiction. This followed the publication of a preparatory White Paper, which proposed a dispensation for the BBC Governors to remain the predominant regulatory agency. There were particular concerns expressed when Gavyn Davies was appointed Chairman of the BBC Governors as his close connections with senior Labour Party politicians were seen as providing the BBC with undue influence in these political decisions. Other important personnel changes during the year included the replacement of Michael Jackson as Chief Executive of Channel Four (who took up a post with USA Networks in New York) by Mark Thompson, previously Director of Television at the BBC.

In the ratings battle BBC 1 had the highest audience share for the first time since the launch of ITV in 1955: 26.9% (from 27.1%) over ITV 26.7% (from 29.4%); BBC2 11.1% (10.7%); Channel 4 10% (10.1%); Channel 5 5.8% (5.7%). Paradoxically all the terrestrial channels except BBC2 lost audience share to satellite and cable whose share rose to 19.6% (16.6%). In prime time, however, ITV remained ahead. ITV, which had resisted moving either of its channels (rebranded as ITV1 and ITV2 during the year) on to the Sky Digital platform for commercial reasons associated with the launch of ITV Digital and the desire for exclusivity, changed tack as its audience share began to slip among Sky Digital subscribers.

In programming terms the big successes in non-fiction programming were *Big Brother* (the second series), *Popstars*, *Pop Idol*, *Blue Planet*, and *Walking with Beasts*. What is noteworthy is that these all involved some element of interactivity. There was a significant advance in the application of interactive television during the year so that more was being offered than the capacity to vote with particularly impressive innovation in its use with the BBC's *Walking with Beasts*. The greatest controversy surrounded the transmission by Channel Four of an episode of the satirical *Brass Eye* lampooning media coverage of paedophilia and leading to condemnation by many politicians who had not even seen the programme. The most significant scheduling failure in 2001 was the attempt by ITV to introduce

Tab. 1 – Channels Share in 2001

	2000	2001	% POINT CHANGE
BBC 1	27.1%	26.9%	-0.2%
BBC 2	10.7%	11.1%	+0.4%
ITV	29.4%	26.7%	-2.7%
Channel 4	10.1%	10%	-0.1%
Channel 5	5.7%	5.8%	+0.1%
Others	16.6%	19.6%	3%

Source: BARB

Premier League football to the early evening schedule on Saturdays. The ratings were appalling and after a number of weeks the coverage returned to late evening where they had been for a number of years on BBC1.

2. The Origin of Fiction: UK Dominance

The sample week showed again the dominance of US narrative fiction across the schedules of the UK's terrestrial channels. Despite the greatest popularity always being for domestically produced fiction (in terms of the number of viewers watching) US series continue to provide the highest proportion of narrative fiction in the schedules with much of it in off-peak viewing hours. Digital and satellite channels are also very dependent on US narrative fiction although for the UK the secondary market for older UK drama series and situation comedies has existed for a number of years through channels like UK Gold and more recently UK Drama.

As in previous years, in the week of 4 March 2001, in terms of narrative fiction (i.e. both films and TV fiction) transmitted on the UK terrestrial channels in all day parts, US product was in the majority (61.4 per cent), with no non-UK European fiction transmitted and a total of 34.2 per cent of UK narrative fiction. When film is excluded domestic TV fiction programming increased from 47% in 2000 to 48.5% in 2001. Film made up 46% of all fiction transmitted in the week (as in 2000) with British films making up 17.4% of the films shown against only 9% in 2000. However, in prime time domestic fiction increased to 58.39% of the total fiction that week from 51% in 2000. It is noteworthy that 87% of the non-domestic fictional content shown in prime time is transmitted on Channel 5 which continued to have a 9.00 p.m. nightly slot for movies every weekday.

Tab. 2 – Origin of TV Fiction (Sample Week, March 2001)

	DOMESTIC	USA	OTHER	HOURS
BBC 1	58.45%	24.66%	16.89%	24h40
BBC 2	37.78%	62.22%	-	7h30
Total public	53.63%	33.42%	12.95%	32h10
ITV 1	75.75%	19.78%	4.48%	22h20
Channel 4	41.60%	58.40%	-	20h50
Channel 5	26.88%	67.63%	5.49%	28h50
Total private	46.30%	50.12%	3.59%	72h
Total in hours	50h35	46h50	6h45	104h10
Total %	48.56%	44.96%	6.48%	100%

Source: Eurofiction

Channel 5 was responsible for 37% of all fictional programming scheduled during prime time followed by ITV (26%) and BBC 1 (21%). In terms of total fiction at all times, Channel 5 again transmitted the largest proportion (31%) followed by BBC1 (20%) and Channel Four (19%). When film is excluded from the figures Channel 5 transmitted the lowest proportion (8%) while ITV transmits 38% and BBC1 32%. This is consistent with the very deliberate adoption of a low cost programming strategy adopted by Channel 5 at its inception modeled on the way the commercial services in Italy and Germany had first sought market share through using low cost US programming. Channel 5's limited programming budget continues to inhibit the commissioning of much domestic fiction with its main ongoing commitment being to the 5 days a week soap opera *Family Affairs*.

In general the BBC schedules less American material than any of the commercial stations with domestically produced fiction making up more than half the fiction transmitted on both BBC1 and BBC2. However, it is interesting that a greater percentage of films was transmitted in the sample week by the BBC channels than last year (up from 33% to 38%).

Tab. 3 – Origin of TV Fiction – Prime time Only
(Sample Week, March 2001)

	DOMESTIC	USA	HOURS
BBC 1	100%	-	8h40
BBC 2	61.11%	38.89%	3h
Total public	90%	10%	11h40
ITV 1	100%	-	10h30
Channel 4	66.67%	33.33%	3h
Channel 5	-	100%	2h15
Total private	79.37%	20.63%	15h45
Total in hours	23h	4h25	27h25
Total %	83.89%	16.11%	100%

Source: Eurofiction

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001: Marked Increase

Production of UK television fiction showed a marked increase in 2001 due in the main part to the introduction of two new continuous serials on ITV, *Crossroads* and *Night and Day*. However, in addition there was a marked increase in the number of programme titles, from 151 to 170, showing a growth in fiction across all genres. There was a significant increase in the number of short films produced and transmitted on BBC2 and Channel Four which in some ways distorts the picture.

Eurofiction's cultural indicators taxonomy provided few surprises or changes. The contemporary world dominates as subject matter and there is a continuing focus on stories with a national focus featuring mainly mixed groups of men and women. Within the national, the metropolitan and London based settings remain common although rural life (particularly through key Yorkshire TV produced programmes *Emmerdale* and *Heartbeat*) provide a leavening to the schedule. The UK production industry remains focused on London but the legacy of the powerful ITV federal system which allowed major production centers to be built up in Manchester and Leeds continues to provide some diversity of regional voice, and indeed the Carlton-produced revival of *Crossroads*, one of Britain's leading soaps in the 60s and 70s, was produced from its Nottingham studios.

The BBC maintains some fiction production in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. In 2001 BBC Scotland continued to produce *Monarch of the Glen* to the network, while BBC Northern Ireland oversaw *Ballykissangel* and *McCready and Daughter*. BBC Wales continued to produce the Welsh language soap opera *Pobol y Cwm* for S4C. Channel Four's commitment to spending 30 per cent of its programme budget on commissions outside the London area also had some effect. In terms of domestic TV fiction

production this was mainly reflected in the continuing commitment to two series from Liverpool: Mersey Television's *Brookside*, which has been part of the Channel's schedule since its launch in 1982, and the teenage soap *Hollyoaks*.

Tab. 4 - TV Fiction by Channel in 2001

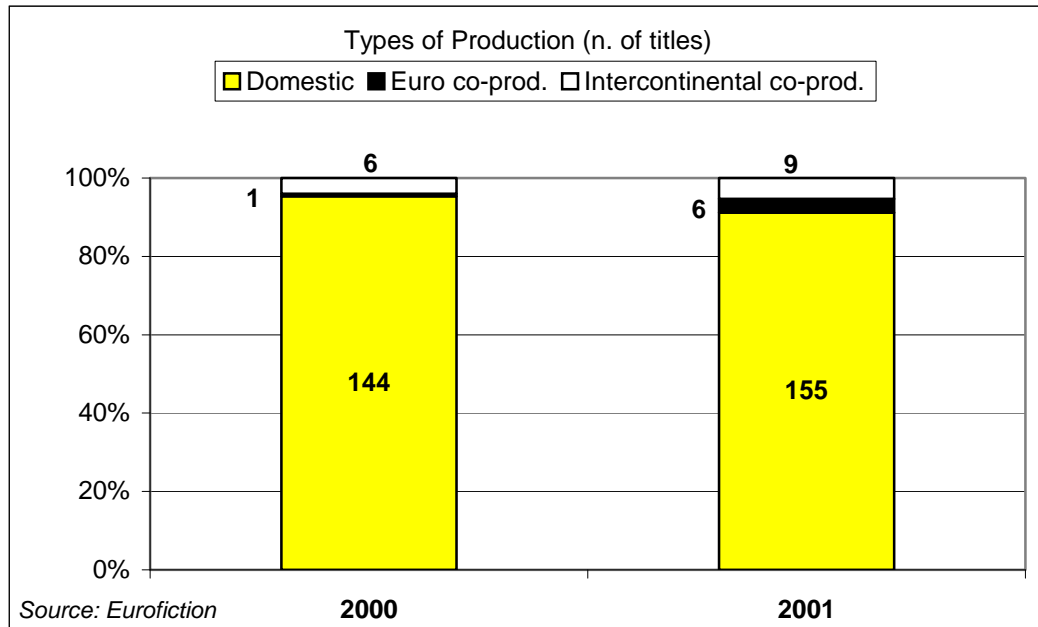
<i>CHANNEL</i>	<i>HOURS</i>	<i>%</i>
BBC1	423	28.9
BBC2	60	4.1
ITV1	654	44.7
Channel 4	205	14.1
Channel 5	119	8.2

Source: Eurofiction

The government has continued to emphasise the importance of an independent production sector to provide a diversity of centres of alternative supply as the restructuring of the regional ITV system has led to a dominance of two companies, Granada and Carlton, in both production and advertising revenue. Indeed Granada companies now supply more than 80 per cent of the non-independent sourced programmes to the ITV network. However, there are few large independent producers of drama, and there has been a significant shift in the market place with 'successful' independents courted and sometimes taken over by larger groups, so for example Talkback was taken over by Fremantle Media. Nicola Shindler's company Red Productions continues to prosper (with both *Bob and Rose*, *Linda Green* and *Bad Girl*) in the schedules in 2001). Other successful independents have struck deals with US partners. So, Bentley Productions' *Midsomer Murders* boasts the Arts and Entertainment Network as one of the commissioning broadcasters, while Carnival Films, a longstanding film and TV movie production company, produced *As If*, a Channel Four teen drama, in partnership with Columbia Tristar. This has subsequently led to a format deal for the series for US television. One of the problems is that producing fiction is capital intensive and few small companies have the requisite resources – a situation which parallels the dilemmas which have faced Britain's film industry for many decades. Notwithstanding these problems it is noteworthy that many of the most innovative TV fiction produced in 2001 came from the independent production sector.

Co-production is often critical for high cost programming whether fiction or documentary. One important – and high cost - co-production in the UK in 2001 was the Dreamworks/HBO/BBC series *Band of Brothers* filmed at a disused airfield north of London which to many commentators' surprise was then transmitted on BBC2 rather than BBC1 giving the minority channel an unexpected ratings boost.

European co-productions showed a significant increase in 2001 over the previous year as did other international co-productions but still remain secondary targets for funding for most UK companies.



The top ratings programmes in the UK have changed little in recent years with the stranglehold of soap operas on the early evening schedule imposing a sclerosis on the schedule. There are four *Coronation Street* episodes each week (Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday); four *EastEnders* episodes (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday); five episodes of *Emmerdale* (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday); two *Brookside* episodes (Wednesday, Thursday), five episodes of *Family Affairs* (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday); together with *Neighbours* (five weekdays); *Home and Away* (five weekdays); with the addition of *Crossroads* (four per week) and *Night and Day* (two) during the year.

The British addiction to long running serials is not always inevitable and ITV had problems with the audience figures achieved by both *Crossroads* and *Night and Day*. This bold commissioning move by ITV was partly necessitated by the move of *Home and Away* to Channel 5 whose overall ratings performance improved as a result. *Night and Day* was particularly interesting as it attempted to make the serial form more aesthetically challenging. Its focus was life in a London street but for whatever reason it failed to achieve a following.

Alongside the soap operas, returning series have become sedimented into the UK TV schedules so that there is little scope for renewal in this genre. Programmes like the medical drama *Casualty* on BBC1 (and its spin off

Holby City) and *London's Burning* and *The Bill* on ITV have proved enduring ratings winners and programme controllers have been loathe to remove them from the schedules. As Nick Elliott, the ITV Network Controller of Drama noted in *Television* ('The Write Stuff' p.8 November 2001) 'in the late 1980s all ITV companies started building that successful raft of all-film drama that was to pull ITV ahead of the BBC: *Morse*, *Soldier, Soldier*, *Peak Practice*, *London's Burning*, *Frost*, *Heartbeat* and *The Bill*'. As series age it is in the best interests of a broadcaster to seek to find replacements but it is arguable that ITV has been caught lagging behind the BBC in its renovation of its schedule because of the relative ease of recommissioning a known winner. And this in spite of the innovative spirit introduced to the ITV Network Centre by Chief Executive David Liddiment.

In prime time, as with most countries with well funded public service channels, domestically produced TV fiction has had little competition from other programming from other origins for many years with the Australian soaps *Neighbours* and *Home and Away* the only exceptions. The best US TV fiction is available and does figure centrally in the schedules of Channel Four (with *the Sopranos*, *The West Wing*, *Frasier* and *E.R.*) and now of Channel 5 (with *Crime Scene Investigation:CSI*). However US series remain the staple fictional fare on Sky One which had begun to commission further UK fiction programming (in addition to the long running *Dream Team*) before changing strategies when Tony Ball became Chief Executive.

Quality drama, once the hallmark of British television, tends to be kept at the edge of the schedule on ITV and BBC1, except on Sunday evenings which often feature direct competition between high cost mini-series on these two channels as well as Channel Four. As noted above one reason for this is that the rest of the week's schedule has so little flexibility, but historically it has proved to be the time of week when audiences are most receptive to more difficult fare. Linda Agran, one of the main producers of quality drama in Britain in the 1990s (*Minder*, *Widows*, *Poirot*) complained in an article in *The Times* in 2001 that there is a lack of creativity and originality in today's schedules which, she asserted, are dominated by a 'seamless loop of badly made dross'. In a later debate she too contended that drama's cultural role had been squeezed out by the profusion of soaps. However, despite these problems some quality programmes did get shown: on the BBC examples included *Babyfather* and an adaptation of Nancy Mitford's *Love in a Cold Climate*, while on ITV there were two contemporary adaptations of famous literature: *Othello* and *The Russian Bride* (based on *Therese Raquin*).

The production of quality television fiction was however encouraged in 2001 by the clever adaptation of a tax measure (a sale and leaseback arrangement which boosted budgets by as much as 10% through tax write-

offs) introduced to support feature film production. This had been so loosely drafted that TV fiction (and even entertainment series) were given clearance. The loophole was closed by the government in April 2002 leading to a high level of uncertainty about its impact on high budget TV drama productions and affecting already overstretched companies like Granada which had benefited from the arrangement for *Coronation Street*, amongst other programming.

4. Successes and Failures: Old Titles on Top

The top 10 TV fiction programmes in the UK change little year from year. In 2001 (as in 1996) the highest rated programme of the year was a special edition of *Only Fools and Horses* shown on BBC1 on Christmas Day. This revival of a programme which had its finale with the previous special brought the ever popular David Jason back to the screen and showed the intent of the BBC to use every means possible to regain its ratings position.

The populist approach of BBC1, with Greg Dyke as Director General encouraging the Controller of BBC1 to compete aggressively, disappointed many and it was indeed noticeable that experiment in drama was more likely to be seen on ITV than the BBC.

The ongoing popularity of the continuous serial, and their longevity (a blessing to channel schedulers) is shown by the placing of *Coronation Street* (first transmitted in 1960), *EastEnders* (which premiered in 1985) and *Emmerdale* (first broadcast in 1972 as *Emmerdale Farm*) in the top 10. Indeed of the top 10 programmes only one, *Buried Treasure*, a vehicle for John Thaw one of the most loved stars of British television, was new. *Only Fools and Horses* was first shown in 1981, *A Touch of Frost* in 1992, *Heartbeat* in 1992 (both Yorkshire Television productions), *London's Burning* in 1986 (LWT), *Casualty* in 1986 (BBC) and *Midsomer Murders* in 1997 (Bentley Productions for ITV and the only independent production company in this group).

Generically we see the continuing success of police and medical series. In the crime genre, the BBC introduced several series like *In Deep* and *NCS Manhunt* but both had little success. *Merseybeat*, a sort of Liverpool *Bill*, with soap elements, seemed the most likely to succeed and be recommissioned. Other new series included ITV's *Bad Girls*, set in a women's prison and *The Vice*, exploring metropolitan sexual mores through the prism of a police unit.

In all these cases the main motive for the commissioning seems to be more to improve ratings than to innovate. For ITV, the demographic imperatives of meeting the advertisers' needs in terms of range of audience by age and gender, have taken less priority than would be expected, while paradoxically

the BBC, not encumbered by these pressures, seemed to provide less challenging programming. Channel Four, with its reliance on a younger upmarket audience has normally approached this task by non-fictional

Tab. 5 - Top 20 Episodes in 2001¹⁰

N.	TITLES	CHANNEL	FORMAT	GENRE	AUDIENCE
1.	Only Fools and Horses	BBC 1	Series	Sitcom	21.35
2.	Eastenders	BBC 1	Serial	Soap	20.05
3.	Coronation Street	ITV 1	Serial	Soap	16.22
4.	A Touch of Frost	ITV 1	Mini-series	Action/crime	14.69
5.	Heartbeat	ITV 1	Series	Rural Drama	13.82
6.	Emmerdale	ITV 1	Serial	Soap	12.42
7.	London's Burning	ITV 1	Series	Action/crime	11.38
8.	Buried Treasure	ITV 1	TV Movie	General Drama	10.67
9.	Casualty	BBC 1	Series	Medical Drama	10.02
10.	Midsomer Murders	ITV 1	Series	Action/crime	10.00
11.	Back Home	ITV 1	TV Movie	General Drama	10.00
12.	The Innocent	ITV 1	Series	General Drama	9.87
13.	Cold Feet	ITV 1	Series	General Drama	9.78
14.	The Bill	ITV 1	Series	Action/crime	9.74
15.	My Uncle Silas	ITV 1	Mini-series	General Drama	9.71
16.	Hot Money	ITV 1	TV Movie	General Drama	9.62
17.	Silent Witness	BBC 1	Series	Action/crime	9.43
18.	Judge John Deed	BBC 1	Mini-series	General Drama	9.43
19.	Bad Girls	ITV 1	Series	General Drama	9.42
20.	At Home with the Barithwaites	ITV 1	Series	General Drama	9.17

Source: Taylor Nelson-Sofres/BARB

programming genre (like *Big Brother*) but has been the main supplier of teen dramas like *As If* and *Hollyoaks* as well as comedies *Spaced* and *Metrosexuality*.

5. Concluding Remarks

To conclude it is worth focusing on further comments by Nick Elliott in his article in the *Television* magazine. He asserts that the most important principle for any popular drama audience is 'to be at one with his audience' and claims to want to reflect small provincial town Britain over

¹⁰ The table has been elaborated choosing, for each programme, the top-rated episode or instalment.

metropolitan trendiness in the programming commissioned for ITV. His wish is to avoid condescension and to commission programmes which build characters who 'have warmth, humour, strength and principles....who stand out as individuals.' His final key principle is the need for renewal and innovation: 'Maybe not all new police dramas can reinvent the genre so thoroughly as *Morse* and *Cracker* did but equally there's no point just replicating old police shows on the grounds that that way should get a passable rating.' All of these general principles were offered in the wake of the advertising downturn and the looming troubles of the ITV Network Centre principal paymasters Carlton and Granada. He was arguing for ITV to sustain its spend on drama commissions at a level equivalent to that of the cash-rich BBC to provide a range of drama from writer-led series (like *Fat Friends* and *At Home with the Braithwaites*) to eccentric one-offs like *The Russian Bride*. In short, he was arguing publicly that British television fiction could be facing a cash crisis in the one broadcaster where innovation has been courted most assiduously in recent years. The reason for these looming problems are the downturn in advertising revenues in the last quarter of 2001 and the severe financial problems faced by Granada and Carlton. They will not manifest themselves fully in scheduling terms until late 2002 and early 2003 but do not augur well for the continuing vitality of British TV drama. One of the more bizarre consequences of the budget problems is that ITV has been unable to transmit some of the programmes it has commissioned because to do so would trigger licence payments – in short there is a growing stock of untransmitted programming at the ITV Network Centre and the companies which produced these programmes will not receive their payments in the timescale expected which may have other knock-on effects on those companies' futures.

The revenue downturn will also have an effect on the drama commissions from Channel Four whose FilmFour ventures (including film production and pay channels) lost heavily in 2001. No hits emerged from the slate of films it produced (including *Charlotte Gray* and *Lucky Break*) and the subscriber base stalled for the film channels at around 300 000. FilmFour's flirtation with Hollywood – through a production alliance with Warner Brothers – will have uncertain consequences as to the type of film commissioned by what was in the 1980s probably Europe's most innovative TV company investing in film production. The BBC remains the richest broadcaster for now as it benefits from a significant licence fee rise granted to assist its digital plans. Much responsibility lies with the main public service broadcaster to be innovative in drama commissioning and this needs to be as high a priority as the new competitiveness in seeking high audience figures.

This is an interesting moment in the evolution of British television fiction and of British film. For many years British television offered a cultural voice, and became the focus of training of many future film directors

(alongside advertising). After the success of Film on Four the BBC began a quest for more cultural credibility by abandoning TV films and plays for cinema film investment and somewhat undermined the vitality and contemporary relevance of stories which had been provided through innovative series and plays over many years. After a series of successes FilmFour has had a lean period but the BBC has invested in a number of critically well-received films in recent years like *Billy Elliott* and *Iris*. Such films have become the point of aspiration for many working in the British film and television industry but many believe the BBC should again invest and innovate with groundbreaking television genre alongside its film ventures.

Today the search for television's auteurs – for the writers and directors who can express more than an audience (and advertiser) pleasing populism - seems to be a forgotten task and the digital revolution, for all the potential for empowerment which it offers, is probably unsuited to the task of discovering these authentic voices. However, all is not gloom as despite the overwhelmingly negative climate some gems still manage to emerge, like FilmFour's *Gas Attack* disturbingly scheduled just as the letters containing anthrax were found in the US Congress, *Spaced*, a situation comedy from Channel Four which subverted many of the conventions of the genre, and above all *The Office* from the BBC. The nursery slopes of so many soap operas may continue to provide a nurturing space for writers like Jimmy McGovern or Jack Rosenthal, if the space for further development is provided. One other positive sign in this direction is the continuing presence of short films in the interstices of the schedule on BBC2 and Channel Four. These shorts – scheduled as strands like *Black Cabs* and *Table 12* - prove the continued possibility for innovation on television and, admittedly only for a small audience, balance the predictable offerings of soap operas, crime and medical series in Britain's TV schedules.

Focus Section
(Gerd Hallenberger Editor)

Note from the Editor

When the Eurofiction project was started in 1996 by research teams from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, its scope was initially limited to the five largest countries of Western Europe. Encouraged by the favourable response to our work, various models were discussed of how to turn Eurofiction into a truly European venture, acknowledging the many facets of Europe, European media cultures and European TV fiction.

Taking into account the well-known problems encountered by each and every international research project we decided to approach the enlargement of Eurofiction step by step - and rather small steps at that. In order to keep both the Eurofiction project as a whole and the annual reports within manageable proportions, we concluded to add only one or two new associated research teams each year and to give them ample space in a new section in the Eurofiction reports - the Focus Section.

Strictly speaking, this section is composed of two elements. One element is, longer overviews - year per year featuring different countries. Apart from up-to-date information on the TV fiction produced in the respective country they also relate insights concerning the shape of the national TV system, the state of the country's audiovisual industry, particular preferences of audiences and the embedding of TV fiction in national cultures. A second element is, short "Updates" from countries featured in previous years. "Updates" concentrate on what has changed compared to the last report - new developments in TV fiction, and, if necessary, changes in the audiovisual mediascape in general.

In spite of this rather slow model, researchers from quite a few countries have become associates of the Eurofiction network by now – Denmark, Greece, the Netherlands, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Last year even saw a guest contribution from a non-European country, Canada, as the Eurofiction concept for analysing TV fiction was picked up by researchers in other parts of the world, too. Apart from Canada, Brazil is another country where ideas and hypotheses developed by Eurofiction are tested as tools for researching domestic TV fiction.

The Focus Section of the current Report has updates from three older associates - the Netherlands, Switzerland and Turkey - plus two longer contributions from new additions to the network, Poland and Portugal.

Both texts, again, show examples for both the diversity and unity European (media) cultures display today. In spite of all differences between the two countries, two keywords related to media change pop up in both. One keyword is the "serial" which in commercialised mediascapes everywhere

plays a strategic role as the only type of domestic TV fiction with really low budgets, be it in the shape of “telenovelas” as in Portugal or as “soaps” as in most other countries. The second keyword, of course is “Big Brother”. References to national versions of this genre-mix between soap, documentary and game show as a competition to TV fiction proper have already been made in several contributions to previous Reports, in countries as varied as Poland and Portugal they have also played an important role last year.

So this Focus Section gives further proof to the truism that the component parts of “Europe” in fact can be described very easily - they are both all the same and extremely different at the same time.

Gerd Hallenberger

1. Saturated with Domestic TV Series and Soaps – The Mirror of Everyday Life Polish TV Fiction in 2001

by Hanna Andrzejczyk

1. The Audiovisual Landscape: Changes over Time

Like in many Central Eastern European countries, the Polish television landscape has undergone rapid and extensive changes. As recently as 1989, for example, the vast majority of Poles had access to only two channels of state-owned television, but by the end of 2001 over 50% of Polish households could receive around 40 channels via cable systems or satellite.

The history of public broadcasting in Poland started in 1992 when the Broadcasting Act abolished the legal monopoly of Polish Radio and Television and established both public radio and television in the form of one-person joint stock companies of the State Treasury. Public television is a single company operating both at a national level (with 2 nation-wide services TVP1 and TVP2 plus satellite channel TV Polonia) and a regional/local level (12 programme services covering different areas). The activity of public broadcasters is regulated by the Broadcasting Council. Public television is financed both from licence fees and advertising revenues with hardly any public funds expect for quite small subsidies from the Ministry of Education for the production of educational programming.

The Act of 2000 amending the Broadcasting Act of 1992 revised programming obligations, abolishing measures requiring the Polish nationality of the producer and introducing a quota system for programmes from European producers (50%), from European independent producers (10%), and programmes originally produced in the Polish language (30%, including 10% of recent productions). Also introduced were a quota for works sung in Polish language as well as a quota for musical works in general related to the Polish culture. The limit of foreign ownership in broadcasting companies amounting to 33% was preserved.

The most important development was the appearance in 1994 of a number of licensed channels (3 licences for supra-regional and 10 local terrestrial stations as well as numerous permissions for cable television programmes) from commercial television Polsat, which thus is the only national commercial broadcaster as of mid 1996. The duopoly situation has enabled public television to profit from advertising windfall and to develop almost unhindered so far. It has also given Polsat time to grow and extend its geographical reach without facing any serious commercial competition.

In that time the TV equipment of Polish households changed considerably – there was a rapid increase of VCRs and TV-text, as well as of cable and satellite penetration. In 1996 almost one of every two households with a television set also owned a VCR and 40% of households' TV sets were equipped with TV-text. At present the ownership of VCR is more or less at the same level and TV-text increased by 66%. Since 1996, the number of cable or satellite households has risen from 35% to 52% (from 4.2 million to 6.3 million households). Cable and satellite penetration provided interesting market opportunities for satellite broadcasters, and in 1996 RTL7 and HBO began transmitting from abroad. In 1997, Polsat launched its second satellite channel, Polsat2, and as a result of a process of consolidation and concentration two new channels emerged; the second important commercial channel TVN (current penetration 85%) and regional commercial channel Nasza TV (penetration 42%), both terrestrial.

The end of the 90s saw the introduction of the digital services Cyfra Plus and Vision TV via satellite transmission. Nowadays, only 5% of households have a digital decoder and further access is limited by its high cost. It was also the time of the PC and the Internet: PC penetration has grown from 13% of households in 1996 to 22% at present, and 13% of households today have access to the Internet.

Lack of capital has made further growth of Polish-owned commercial television difficult. By the end of 2000, Polsat bought the struggling station Nasza TV, and through joining with satellite Polsat2 launched its second terrestrial channel, TV4.

At the beginning of 2001 a new commercial channel, TV Puls, intended as family television and based entirely on Polish capital, was launched. The expected commercial success was not achieved because of low penetration (28%) and few commercials.

Also the first 24-hour news station, TVN24, owned by ITI Holdings and by Strategroup International, a part of SBS Broadcasting (founded in Scandinavia), was launched but distributed only by a few cable operators. At the end of 2001, ITI bought RTL7 (part of the RTL Group) and established its new channel TVN7, a third station owned by ITI. By that time, the merger of the two digital platforms Cyfra Plus and VisionTV was finalised. Tele 5, belonging to the Italian media group Finicast and distributed by satellite and cable started to broadcast in April 2002 with a schedule mainly consisting of European programmes.

A concentration of ownership is a defining characteristic of the commercial channels. The two key players are Polsat, owned by media industrialist Zygmunt Solorz, and ITI Holdings.

As the following table illustrates, the two main channels of TVP taken together continue to command the highest proportion of TV viewing, capturing 45% of the total viewership and the same share of the viewership in prime time. TVP has lost 1% of market share over the 1999-2001 period, however, dropping by 4% in prime time viewing, while main commercial competitor Polsat lost 2% of its share and the second commercial channel TVN increased sharply by 5% (both total and in prime time). Of the two TVP channels, TVP2 has smaller overall audience shares than TVP1, particularly during prime time hours, but seems to occupy the more stable position and even has managed to increase its share slightly by 2% (total) and 1% (prime time). TVP1 is the largest individual channel on the Polish market with an audience share of 25% in total and 27% in prime time.

Tab. 1 – Audience Shares 1999- 2001

	Total viewing				Prime time			
	1999	2000	2001	Diff. '99-'01	1999	2000	2001	Diff. '99-'01
TVP 1	28	26	25	-3	32	29	27	-5
TVP 2	18	20	20	2	17	17	18	1
TVP1&TVP2	46	46	45	-1	49	46	45	-4
Polsat	23	24	21	-2	24	26	22	-2
TV4	0	2	4	4	0	2	4	4
TVN	10	12	15	5	12	14	17	5
RTL 7*	4	3	2	-2	4	3	2	-1
Other	17	13	13	-4	11	9	10	-1

* TVN 7 from the end of 2001

Source: TNS OBOP

Polsat, which is TVP's main competitor, despite a slight drop since 1999 has retained its edge over TVP2. Polsat together with its second channel TV4 maintained to reach as much as TVP1 (25%). The second commercial channel TVN is the only terrestrial channel which has managed a rapid and extensive growth. both off and in prime time.

Although the remaining terrestrial regional stations (TVP3, TV Puls and some local TV stations) and satellite channels constitute quite considerable shares of viewership or despite of it, these channels have collectively experienced the greatest loss in overall viewing compared to the 'Big Four'. The strongest channels in this 'other' category are TVP3 – 3%, TV Puls – 1% and Eurosport, Discovery, VIVA1, MTV, Animal Planet and CNN.

The losses mentioned above since 2000 were caused to a large degree by the programming policy of TVN based on *Big Brother* and other reality shows as *Agent* and *Expedition*. Especially *Big Brother* which was a huge success. TVN holds in Poland exclusive rights to all Endemol formats including *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Big Brother* and has also signed long-term deals with major studios such as Warner Brothers and DreamWorks. As a reaction to TVN's *Big Brother*, Polsat started another reality show in 2001 (*Two Worlds*), however unsuccessfully. Apart from last year's success with ski jumping, public television TVP's key offerings in the competition for audiences are domestic serials and soap operas, news and more sports. The profiles of main channels can be summarised as follows:

TVP1 has the greatest diversity and offers a large range of both factual and entertainment-oriented programming with relatively a large proportion of children's and youth's programmes. TVP1 is also strongly oriented towards information and current affairs programmes, particularly during prime time. Most of TVP1's viewing time is taken up by information and films.

TVP2 also operates as a generalist channel but with a wide selection of entertaining programmes, TV series and soaps, especially during prime time and on weekends. Both TVP channels provide complementary offers as a key principle of programme scheduling.

Polsat is strongly oriented towards entertainment and tends to run feature films during prime time as well as reality-shows. The presence of sitcoms, soaps and children's cartoons is also massive.

TVN displays a strong entertainment profile in which reality-shows and docu-soaps are outstanding. Feature films, mainly from the USA, constitute quite a significant part of prime time programming.

2. Formats, Genres and the Origin of Fiction: The Stable Position of Domestic TV Fiction

The rule which says that the amount of fiction programming is positively correlated with the degree of channel commercialisation seems to be confirmed in Poland. As Table 2 shows, in the year 2001 the largest amount of fiction programming is aired on private channel Polsat, where it constitutes 49% of total programming. On the second commercial station TVN fiction amounts to 44% of all broadcasts. Public channel TVP1 devotes 36% of its total airtime to fiction, TVP2 39%. Although the percentage of fiction programmes is not that dissimilar between commercial and public channels there is a significant difference in absolute figures.

Tab. 2 - Extent of Fiction Programming, by Channel, 2001

	PUBLIC SERVICE						COMMERCIAL						TOTAL "BIG FOUR"		
	TVP 1			TVP 2			Polsat			TVN					
	Hours	%	% Total	Hours	%	% Total	Hours	%	% Total	Hours	%	% Total	Hours	%	% Total
TV Series	790	30	11	1241	47	18	1639	40	20	1469	37	17	5139	39	17
Soap Opera	430	16	6	189	7	3	873	22	10	636	16	7	2128	16	7
Sitcoms	78	3	1	63	3	1	308	8	4	82	2	1	531	4	2
Film	1354	51	18	1149	43	17	1230	30	15	1760	45	19	5493	41	17
Total	2652	100	36	2642	100	39	4050	100	49	3947	100	44	13291	100	43

Source: TNS OBOP

According to the data in Table 2, the sitcom is not a very important genre on the Polish market. Although all channels, public and commercial, broadcast a relatively low proportion of this form of fiction (between 2%-8% of fiction contents), this genre is present on Polsat almost four times more than on all other stations.

Over half of the fiction programming of commercial channels and of the second public station TVP2 consists of TV series and soap operas. These genres are more prominent on Polsat (62% of the fiction output) than on public TVP2 (54%) and private TVN (53%). TVP2 has the highest proportion (47%) of TV series, mainly drama, and the lowest percentage of soap operas. The first public channel TVP1 has a proportion of soap operas similar to commercial stations.

In all, the fiction programming of the 'Big Four' consists of about the same amount of TV series (39%) as of feature films (41%).

Table 3 shows the distribution of fiction programming according to time slots. During prime time, commercial channel Polsat airs the highest proportion of fiction, except sitcoms.

As far as prime time fiction in general is concerned, the most prominent genre in this slot in terms of scheduling, not overall volume, is the sitcom. Compared to commercial stations both public channels place sitcoms more frequently in prime time slots (45% of them are shown during prime time). However, sitcoms are the smallest genre among the fiction output of the 'Big Four'.

The other prominent fiction category in prime time is the soap opera (29% of the fiction output of the 'Big Four'), most so on private channel Polsat which broadcasts 41% of its soaps during prime time.

According to the data in this table, TVN shows a very small portion of its series during prime time, just 10%.

Finally, it is obvious that the majority of fiction programming on every channel is shown during non-prime time hours.

Tab. 3 – Distribution of Fiction Genres in Prime Time, by Channel, 2001 (%)

	TVP1+ TVP2		Polsat		TVN		Total 'Big Four'	
	Prime time	Off pt	Prime time	Off pt	Prime time	Off pt	Prime time	Off pt
TV Series	27	73	30	70	10	90	23	77
Soap operas	21	79	41	59	19	81	29	71
Sitcoms	45	55	30	70	22	78	33	67
Film	24	76	27	73	21	79	24	76

Source: TNS OBOP

While the prime time hours of commercial channel Polsat are dominated by fiction programming (70%), the figures for the public channels (34%) and commercial competitor TVN (30%) are considerably lower. The biggest segment of prime time fiction on both TVP's channels and Polsat consists of TV series (on TVP 48% of fiction programming in prime time, on Polsat 49%). In contrast the second commercial channel TVN prefers films (52%) in this slot. It is significant that Polsat airs three times more soap operas, mainly produced in Latin America, than other channels.

In prime time, all major channels prefer domestic TV fiction and always first-run programmes. In-house production on public channels amounts to 48% of their whole fiction programming, while corresponding figures for commercial channels are much lower – 19% for Polsat, 9% for TVN. Regardless of channel, the percentage of Polish fiction in prime time is higher than during the rest of the day.

As can be seen in Table 4, there are big differences between public and commercial channels in terms of the origins of fiction programming. The general pattern of commercialisation again presents itself: The more commercial a channel is, the higher the percentage of non-Polish programming. Furthermore, the more commercial a channel is; the greater the prominence of American productions. The exception to this pattern is the category of soap operas - only public channels have Polish soaps.

Polish fiction programming is most prominent on public channels. On TVP2 the percentage of national fiction programming is even higher (34%) than on TVP1 (22%). Polish soap operas are the most dominant form of national fiction on public channels. Furthermore, TVP2 airs only Polish soaps.

Commercial channels prefer American production in all fiction categories except soap operas which are 100% of Latin-American origin. As far as TVN is concerned, the fiction output (except soap operas) is dominated to 81% by American production. On Polsat, the percentage of American fiction amounts to 68%. Public television tends to prefer US productions in feature film, but on public channels the percentage of American feature films is much lower than on commercial stations.

The proportion of European fiction on both public channels is the almost the same (18%/19%) and has a considerable size while on private stations the percentage of European productions is very low (3%-5%).

Tab. 4 - Fiction Genres by Country of Origin, by Channel, 2001 (%)

	Public Service								Commercial							
	TVP 1				TVP 2				Polsat				TVN			
	Polish	Euro	USA	Other	Polish	Euro	USA	Other	Polish	Euro	USA	Other	Polish	Euro	USA	Other
TV series	15	26	48	11	39	14	42	5	19	1	71	9	4	6	80	10
Soap	74	0	20	6	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100
Sitcoms	46	12	42	0	70	30	0	0	46	0	54	0	23	0	77	0
Film	9	21	60	10	16	24	43	17	0	10	79	11	1	6	86	7
Total	22	19	49	10	34	18	39	9	12	3	57	28	2	5	70	23

Source: TNS OBOP

3. Domestic TV Fiction in 2001

Table 5 presents a more detailed breakdown of the types and amounts of fiction programming aired by the main Polish channels during the year 2001. The clearest pattern once again is the relative dominance of all fiction genres on commercial channels. The 'Big Four' broadcast 265 hours of fiction per average week, two thirds on commercial stations - Polsat 87 hours and TVN 76 hours, while public channels have far less, 51 hours each. In terms of genres, the 'Big Four' provide roughly the same amount of feature films (108 hours per week) and TV series (103 hours) and less than half as much soaps (43 hours) and hardly any sitcoms (11 hours).

Each of the main Polish channels presents a different mix of fiction programming. Public channel TVP1 shows drama films, soaps and TV series for children (including cartoons), while the second public channel TVP2 provides viewers mainly with TV series drama and films, although

they are less frequent than on TVP1. The biggest commercial channel Polsat competes with soaps and action series as well as with action movies. The second commercial station TVN can be described as a provider of drama and action films together with a huge amount of TV series for kids plus a considerable volume of daily soaps.

Browsing through a typical programme guide (as for autumn 2001), one notices that the early prime time hours (16:30-19:30) are dominated by telenovelas shown on commercial channels, in this slot public channels have non-fiction offers with only one 30-minute slot on each channel dedicated to Polish soaps). At the end of daytime Public TVP1 airs *The Bold and the Beautiful*, not to be missed for at least 2 million viewers. As far as Polsat is concerned, viewers are provided with American TV series like *Air America*, *Xena*, *Mc Gyver*, *Baywatch* and then episodes of 2 or 3 telenovelas (of Brazilian, Venezuelan or Mexican origin).

The second commercial channel TVN starts its prime time with telenovelas as well, but then airs *Big Brother* (at present the 3rd edition).

Late prime time (past 20:00) and post prime time hours bring a different offer of fiction programming on each channel. Commercial stations show a mixture of sitcoms and TV series which are mainly domestically produced, with well-known US series like *Ally McBeal* and *Chicago Hope* plus some feature films (mostly American) thrown in for a change. In periods when TVN broadcasts *Big Brother* the fiction offer is lower, of course. Both public channels have in general one slot at 20:00 for TV series like for example the American action/police series *The Sentinel*, *Viper*, *Nash Bridges* or films (on Mondays TVP1 broadcasts TV Theatre performances) and a second slot at about 23:00 dedicated to movies. Twice a week each channel has a slot for specially selected feature film, masterpieces of cinematography including a decent amount of European productions.

Sitcoms and TV series produced by the commercial channel Polsat and shown in prominent time slots like *Adam i Ewa* (Adam & Eve), *Rodzina Zastępcza* (Adopting Family), *13. Posterunek* (13. Police station), *Miodowe lata* (Honey years), *Graczykowie* (The Graczykowie), *Swait według Kiepskich* (Kiepscy Family) are very similar in content (talking about the life and work of plain people) as well as similar in being a sort of light comedy or even a farce. There is a tendency to imitate US sitcoms. The second commercial channel TVN is not so much involved in the production of sitcoms or TV series but concentrates on American supply - *The Fugitive*, *Police Academy*, *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Melrose Place*, *Trinity*, *Drew Carey Show*, *The Third Watch*, and the controversial drama *The Sopranos*.

Tab. 5 – Fiction Genres in Hours by Channel, 2001

	TVP1	TVP2	Polsat	TVN	Total
TV Series	790	1241	1834	1469	5334
Comedy	6	77	113	35	231
Drama	219	684	293	141	1337
Action	198	175	675	265	1313
For the family	32	161	196	134	523
Erotic	8	-	9		17
Other /e.g. Western/	21	76	136	23	256
For children	306	68	412	871	1657
Soap operas	430	189	976	636	2231
Sitcoms	78	63	353	82	576
Film	1354	1149	1365	1760	5628
Comedy	259	226	368	212	1065
Drama	608	479	288	700	2075
Action	259	314	474	622	1669
For the family	11	6	4	16	37
Animated	2	8	-		14
Erotic	7	2	73	41	123
Others /e.g. Western/	90	73	130	136	429
For Children	118	41	28	33	220
Total	2652	2642	4528	3947	13769

Source: TNS OBOP

Polish serials became one of the important ingredients of TV programming on all channels, but most of those making the top 20 list of most-watched programmes of the year 2001 are aired on public channels TVP. The ‘flagship’ Polish soap opera *Klan* (Clan), which has been running since 1997 on TVP1 is (about life and work of typical Polish family) and reflects the value system of the Polish middle class. The other most popular series shown on TVP2 are *Zlotopolscy* (The Zlotopolski saga), *Na dobre i na zle* (For better or worse), *M jak milosc* (L like love). They more or less in the same way portrait plain people in their family life and job environment, following the rules of political and moral correctness, as well as popularising socially accepted values.

Tab. 6 – TV series, sitcoms, soaps Top 20 in 2001

TOP 20 (excl. Films)						All 4+	
	Start	Ch.	Title			Rat%	Shr%
<i>Aver.</i>						15	38
1	20:22	TVP 1	With fire and sword	Series	Pl	28	59
2	16:33	TVP 2	For better or worse	Series	Pl	27	64
3	17:35	TVP 1	Clan	Soaps	Pl	25	65
4	15:01	TVP 2	The Zlotopolski saga	Series	Pl	24	64
5	20:00	Polsat	Kiepscy Family	Sitcom	Pl	20	40
6	17:34	TVP 1	Presbytery	Soap	Pl	19	55
7	19:18	Polsat	The rebellious angel	Telenovela	Bras	18	39
8	20:00	Polsat	Honey years	Sitcom	Pl	16	38
9	17:35	TVP 1	The tenants	Sitcom	Pl	16	40
10	20:52	Polsat	The Graczykowie	Sitcom	Pl	15	35
11	20:30	Polsat	Adopting Family	Series	Pl	15	36
12	20:02	Polsat	Adam and Eve	Soaps	Pl	15	33
13	18:58	TVP 2	The sacred war	Sitcom	Pl	15	32
14	20:00	TVP 2	L like love	Series	Pl	14	32
15	20:11	TVP 1	18. wheels of justice	Series	US	14	32
16	20:15	TVP 1	The life at stake	Series	Pl	14	38
17	17:44	Polsat	Fiorella	Telenovela	Venez	14	44
18	20:07	TVP 1	The thorn birds	Series	US	13	42
19	20:33	Polsat	I love Klara	Sitcom	Pl	13	31
20	20:15	TVP 1	Nash Bridges	Series	US	13	29

Source: TNS OBOP

4. Trends and Developments

Looking at the composition of fiction programming on the various channels over time, Table 7 shows that the level of fiction aired on TVN has remained stable during the period 1997 – 2001, constituting 44% of total programming, while the ratio of fiction to total programming has increased on the other channels. The most marked increase can be found on public channel TVP2, where fiction jumped from 22% in 1997 to 39% in 2001. On TVP1 the fiction proportion has been stable since 1999. The level of fiction programming on Polsat increased by 3% in 1999 and then has risen further by 1% each year.

Tab. 7 – Percent Distribution of Fiction Programming, by Channel, 1997-2001 (%)

	Public Service			Commercial	
	TVP1	TVP2	TVP1+TVP2	Polsat	TVN
1997	30	22	26	44	45
1998	33	29	31	44	45
1999	36	34	35	47	44
2000	35	38	37	48	44
2001	36	39	39	49	44

Source: TNS OBOP

In terms of specific fiction genres we have observed that the general pattern of fiction broadcasting of TVP1 has been stable. The most important changes during the period 2000 – 2001 occur in the realm of TV series and soap operas on public channel TVP2, where the percentage of this type of fiction increased by 3%. This would seem to reflect TVP2’s relative emphasis on Polish TV series and soap operas. While these genres become more important on TVP 2, however, an almost identically decrease takes place on commercial channel TVN.

The explanation for the changes is the recent rise of reality shows. As can be seen in Table 8, commercial channels, mainly TVN, show a strong increase in the number of hours devoted to reality shows and docu-soaps over past two years. Taken as a whole, this genre jumped from a combined total of 4 hours per week in 2000 to 21 hours in the year 2001.

Tab. 8 - Hours of Docu-soap and Reality Shows per Year, by Channel, 2000 - 2001

	Public Service		Commercial			
	TVP1+TVP2		Polsat		TVN	
	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
docu-soap	82:08	56:52	0	1:40	26:36	93:24
reality shows	0	0	0	84:00	31:29	847:19

Source: TNS OBOP

On TVN, this type of programming skyrocketed from 1 hour per week in 2000 to 18 hours in 2001. Reality shows such as *Big Brother* are aired on TVN at least three times each day. So a single programme can account for 16 hours of broadcasting per week. The reality show fever has not struck Polsat as hard, although this channel, too, has increased the volume of this type of programming.

This chapter has outlined the basic patterns associated with fiction programming on the four main Polish television channels during the year 2001 and in the recent past. Based on the above data, TV fiction on Polish television in the year 2001 can be summarised as follows:

1. The more commercial the channel, the greater the proportion of fiction to total programming. Similarly, the more commercial the channel, the smaller the proportion of Polish fiction compared to the fiction total and the greater the percentage of American productions.
2. The offer of commercial channels is strongly biased towards Latin American telenovelas, while public service channels are focused on fiction produced in Poland. Both TVP's channels air higher percentage of Polish production in every fiction genre.
3. Because of the tendency of public service channels to be more selective in terms of the quantity and geographic origin of fiction programming, a larger proportion of their fiction TV programmes appears during prime time.
4. The patterns associated with fiction programming have been stable since 1999 when all major channels increased their supply of TV fiction.
5. The most important change during the period 2000–2001 is the increasing popularity of reality shows, which influences the level of TV fiction on the channel most involved in this trend (TVN) and, which is likely to intensify in the coming years.

In terms of public-service TV's need to maintain legitimacy such programming as reality shows seems to be highly controversial, therefore public television maintains its audience share by airing Polish fiction, TV series and daily drama.

2. Domestic Soap Operas Overtake Brazilian Imports Portuguese TV Fiction in 2001

by Isabel Ferin and Francisco Rui Cádima

1. The Audiovisual Landscape

On 6 October 1992 and 20 February 1993, respectively, the first two private TV channels began broadcasting in Portugal: the Sociedade Independente de Televisão SIC was a project led by former Prime Minister Francisco Pinto Balsemão, the Televisão Independente TVI/Quatro was run by former Education Minister Roberto Carneiro, whose shares were then held by organisations connected with the Portuguese Catholic Church. With the launching of the two private channels a long state monopoly of the Portuguese Television (RTP) since 1957 came to an end.

RTP had been broadcasting on a national level since the mid-1960s but only in late 1968 (on 25 December) did its second channel (RTP-2) start operating. RTP International began broadcasting on 10 June 1992. Meanwhile, cable television had begun as a pilot project for 80 households in Lisbon and Oporto. The marketing of this system started in October 1994 and by 2001 Cable TV had attracted over a million subscribers.

In recent years, RTP's financial situation had been deteriorating, and in 2000 losses were totalled at around 164.6 million euro, 49.9 million euro more than the previous year. On the other hand, SIC has had positive results since 1995, with profits reaching around 20.5 million euro in 2000. In 2001 the situation changed drastically: The other commercial broadcaster TVI managed to lead the ratings in the last quarter of the year while it strengthened its share in the advertising market. TVI already had made a record profit of 15.5 million euro in 2000.

The overall turnover of the television sector in Portugal amounted to 325.2 million euro in 2000, around 43.8 million euro more than in the previous year. This rise is mainly due to an increase in SIC's turnover and the significant growth of TVI.

Tab. 1 - Turnover in Television (in M euro)

	1997	1998	1999	2000
RTP*	65.7	76.7	83.8	74.6
SIC	109.8	132.7	148.9	172.6
TVI	24.3	28.6	48.7	78.0
TOTAL	199.8	238.0	281.4	325.2

*Excludes compensation for losses from public service

Source: Obercom

With the inclusion of Cable TV in the television global estimates, the total turnover in the television sector is over 500 million euro, given the good performance of the cable sector in Portugal. It should be noted that the cable business since it is the sector with the fastest growth in terms of turnover during the year 2000, represents 16.6% of the invoicing of all the media in Portugal.

Tab. 2 - Total TV Turnover in Portugal* (1999/2000)

	1999 (M€)	2000 (M€)	% OF ALL MEDIA	DIFFERENCE IN %
Generalist Television	281.5	325.2	25.4	+16
Cable TV (3)	149.6	212.8	16.6	+42
Total TV	431.1	538.0	42.0	+25

Source: Obercom

2. The Role and Origin of Fiction

Fiction is one of the predominant genres of Portuguese television, sharing prime time with the news. As of September 2000, TVI sub-director José Eduardo Moniz took on a strategy that was based on three pillars: news, Portuguese fiction and entertainment. After the launching of the reality show *Big Brother*, the series attracted a new audience and took on a leading role in terms of ratings. A new era of fiction started with the soap operas *Todo o Tempo do Mundo [All the Time in the World]* and *Jardins Proibidos [Forbidden Gardens]*, followed by *Olhos de Água [Water Eyes]*, *Anjo Selvagem [Wild Angel]* and *Filha do Mar [Daughter of the Sea]*.

It should be noted that both *Jardins Proibidos* and *Olhos de Água* managed to obtain ratings and shares that surpass everything ever achieved by Portuguese fiction after the monopoly period of state television. Series

production is currently an emerging industry, with channel three broadcasting three soap operas per day.

Fiction takes on a leading role on SIC as well. The prime time is usually taken up with soap operas from Globo, the Brazilian television channel whose exclusive broadcasting rights SIC holds for Portugal. Initially the Brazilian soap operas were the factor that kept SIC's audience faithful to the channel.

Portuguese fiction has always been strong on both RTP1 and RTP2, the protocols signed with ICAM [Multimedia and Audiovisual Film Institute] for the production of series and documentaries in Portuguese dating back to 1996.

In 2000, according to data supplied by the company, RTP1 broadcast around 1600 hours of fiction while RTP2 broadcast around 1181 hours (Tab. 3). On SIC, the leading genres were children's and teenagers' programmes, contests and the news. As for fiction, SIC broadcast 1121 hours of foreign programmes as opposed to 185 hours of fiction in Portuguese (Tab. 4). From these 185 hours, 170 hours were series produced in Portugal and the remaining 15 hours were telefilms. In 1999, SIC signed a protocol with the Ministry of Culture/ICAM in order to co-finance 30 telefilms in the following three years. To that effect, SIC Filmes Lda. was founded. This company will produce ten films per year. As far as foreign fiction is concerned, soap operas account for 882 hours of a total 1121 hours devoted to this genre. They are mainly produced by Globo – the Carnaxide television station owns the exclusive broadcasting rights for Portugal – and are shown in prime time.

Tab. 3 - Total Hours devoted to Fiction Programmes on RTP1 e RTP2 in 1999 and 2000 (H:M:S / %)

	RTP1				RTP2			
	1999		2000		1999		2000	
	H:M:S	%	H:M:S	%	H:M:S	%	H:M:S	%
Total Hours of Transmission	7967:29:00	100	8825:32:56	100	5333:16:27	100	7521:19:42	100
Fiction programmes	1486:06:26	18.7	1601:31:38	18.1	1128:45:12	21.2	1181:56:25	15.7

Source: RTP / Obercom

Tab. 4 - Total Hours dedicated to Fiction programmes on SIC in 2000 (H:M:S / %)

Total Hours of Transmission	8721:34:01	100
Total Hours of Programming	6139:52:58	70.40
Foreign TV Fiction	1121:49:46	12.86
- Fiction Series (only Foreign Production)	239:26:19	2.75
- Soap Operas	882:23:27	10.12
Portuguese TV Fiction	185:26:02	2.13
- Series of Portuguese Fiction	170:09:15	1.95
- Telefilms	15:16:47	0.18
Cinema	937:03:31	10.74
- Foreign Production	930:15:38	10.67
- National Production	06:47:53	0.08

Source: SIC

According to data supplied by Marktest regarding the main genres of programmes broadcast in 2000 on the four domestic channels, fiction programmes were the leaders, accounting for 24.6%. Regarding the relative importance of fiction per channel (see Tab. 5), TVI showed the most. Compared to other genres, fiction plays the leading role on all channels and - together with the news - is the type of programme shown most frequently.

Tab. 5 - Overall Length of Fiction Programmes per Channel in 1999 and 2000 (in Minutes and % of Total Broadcasting Time of Channel)

	1999		2000	
	Minutes	%	Minutes	%
RTP 1	90.007	19.1	101.796	19.4
RTP 2	68.751	22.0	77.593	17.4
SIC	137.305	27.2	147.887	28.3
TVI	187.745	40.0	169.508	32.2

Source: Marktest

As can be seen from tab. 6, programme imports on SIC have increased significantly. The number of hours of programmes commissioned from external domestic producers has also increased, whereas in-house production went down.

Tab. 6 - Origin of Television Contents on SIC (H:M:S)

		1998	2000
Internal National Production		397:36:23	229:22:27
External National Production		1425:52:35	1813:24:19
Co-production with national entities		n/d	15:16:47
Foreign Production originating in the EU		559:05:59	2763:19:49
International Production		2989:54:55	5476:45:53

Source: SIC

In the following table the year 2000 you see that the USA is the most important source for foreign fiction. The role played by Brazil on SIC with 1113 hours should also be noted.

Tab. 7 - Origin of Television Contents per Country in 2000 (H:M:S)

	RTP1	RTP2	SIC
Germany	37:17:23	20:57:26	2:47:26
Australia	196:37:04	50:36:59	10:51:50
Brazil	31:03:38	18:05:53	1113:22:55
Canada	40:27:25	55:03:56	61:54:29
Spain	20:52:17	90:11:30	33:10:19
United States of America	1218:04:47	1236:12:26	1332:18:34
France	50:29:01	157:34:51	250:25:06
Holland	1:13:20	n/d	7:26:12
Italy	5:19:03	57:33:49	21:29:41
Japan	24:31:05	29:41:42	238:36:46
Mexico	115:17:29	7:19:20	n/d
United Kingdom	419:53:34	1964:02:57	236:04:16
Sweden	21:46:25	1:27:04	15:39:20
Venezuela	60:42:18	n/d	n/d
Other	30:38:42*	62:14:09**	94:35:26***

*South Africa. Austria. Belgium. Egypt. Hong Kong. New Zealand. Poland. Switzerland. Uruguay

**South Africa. Belgium. Denmark. Finland. Hong Kong. Iran. Ireland. Yugoslavia. Lithuania. Macao. Poland. People's Republic of China. Switzerland

***South Africa. Netherlands Antilles. Asia. Austria. Belgium. Denmark. Ireland. Eastern Europe

Source: RTP and SIC

According to a study conducted by the Media Planning Group (basis: broadcasts of terrestrial channels in June 2000 and June 2001), TVI is the channel with the highest ratio of local fiction in the evening. Also worth

mentioning is the strong increase of domestic programmes in 2001 on both RTP2 and SIC.

Tab. 8 - Transmission Share per Country of Production in June 2000 and 2001 from 20h to 24h (%)

	RTP1		RTP2		SIC		TVI	
	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
National	63.1	60.4	48.9	68.6	49.0	67.9	49.7	75.1
Brazil	-	-	-	-	32.9	12.8	-	-
USA.	-	14.4	15.9	8.8	1.9	1.0	20.9	5.0
Other	36.9	25.2	35.2	22.6	16.2	18.3	29.4	19.9

Source: Media Planning Group

3. A Case Study of Portuguese TV Fiction on Public and Private Television

A case study to detect tendencies in fiction programming was done based on two weeks' data – one immediately before the beginning of Summer (21 to 28 May 2001), one after the start of the winter programme (14 to 21 January 2002). Channels included are RTP1 and RTP2, SIC and TVI. The source used for this study was Marktest, the only enterprise in Portugal at present doing systematic research work both on contents and in terms of audience ratings. The Portuguese market consists of 8 972 000 homes. Marktest uses a sample of 850 homes connected by audiometer. On the average, a Portuguese watches 3.5 hours of television every day. The timeslots mentioned are defined as: “overnight” (24:01 to 06:30), “morning” (06:31 to 14:00), “afternoon” (14:01 to 19:30), prime time (19:31 to 24:00). Programme's length includes advertising because no data are available about the breaks.

It must be noted that in Portugal two types of “sandwich programming” shape prime time television to a large degree. In 1977 RTP1 introduced a model telenovela-news-telenovela which was used successfully until 1994. The Brazilian telenovelas shown during those years, before and after the news, had a notable impact on Portuguese public opinion, such as *Gabriela*, *Cravo e Canela*, *Dancin' Days*, *Roque Santeiro*, *Escrava Isaura* and *Tieta do Agreste*. When competition between private and public television channels started in 1992, Globo's telenovelas were shown by RTP1 and commercial channel SIC achieving huge audiences for both. Since 1994, private channel SIC has exclusive access to Brazilian telenovelas, continuing the old RTP1 model of programming and being quite successful at that.

A second type of “sandwich programming” was presented in November 2002 by the commercial channel TVI, here the formula is reality show-fiction-news-fiction-reality show, fiction meaning Portuguese telenovelas and series. A key role here is played by the Portuguese serials of *Big Brother*, which was promoted in new ways (the show was spoken about in the channel’s news) and used as a platform for product placement. *Big Brother* also made evident a gradual decline of viewers’ interests in telenovelas. According to the available data, already in 1999 the share of *Terra Nostra* fell from approximately 80% to 65%. One year later, the Brazilian telenovela *Laços de Família* even experienced a drop from 53% to 34% on SIC when competing against *Big Brother* on TVI. Another important aspect of this programming strategy is the attempt to extend TVI’s prime time with sandwiching 5 programmes instead of 3 as in the old RTP1 model.

Before the presentation of the data collected during the two weeks, we should make a brief reference to the particular characteristics of Portuguese television fiction. Public television survived for many years with the acquisition of foreign products like detective series, television movies or telenovelas (Brazilian or others). Contests or quizzes, either self-developed or international formats adapted to the local audience’s tastes were also very popular, as well as comedies, such as *Eu Show Nico* or *O Tal Canal*. For many years, Portuguese fiction was given an important place in televised theatre and by re-runs of famous Portuguese movies made in the forties and fifties. In 1982 premiered the first Portuguese telenovela, *Vila Faia* directed by Nuno Teixeira with a screenplay by Francisco Nicholson and Nicolau Breyner (based on Globo patterns). Shown on RTP1 immediately after the evening news, it lasted for far more than the expected 75 episodes. Other Portuguese telenovelas followed, for example, *Origens*, *Chuva na Areia*, *Palavras Cruzadas*, *Verão Quente* and *Terra Mãe*, with moderate success.

Until the end of the nineties the production of television fiction suffered significant ups and downs, but it is worth noting that several attempts were made in the production of television movies and telenovelas.

As from 1994, the fact that SIC had sole rights to the Globo Brazilian telenovelas created a new market for producers, actors and other audiovisual professionals, with NBP-Produção em Video investing not only in the adaptation of foreign formats of series and telenovelas to the Portuguese reality but also attempting to develop original fictional contents through *Casa da Criação* (*Creation House*).

Although not considered fiction, a peculiar product of reasonable success common to all channels should also be mentioned. This is the comic sketch,

used as a filler between the end of the evening news and the beginning of fiction programmes, for example *Os Malucos do Riso* (SIC, both weeks) or *Bora Lá Marina* (TVI, second week).

3.1 Data Analysis

When comparing the two weeks it has to be mentioned that the week of 21 to 28 May 2001 (1st week) is characterised by the showing of a television movie on SIC and the transmission of two important reality shows (*Big Brother* and *Bar da TV*, called real life telenovelas) which make up the larger part of prime time programming on SIC and TVI, either as live shows or as replays. The week of 14 to 21 January 2002 (2nd week) has as unique feature a large number of new fiction episodes in new time slots. Some channels have implemented new programming strategies, caused by a new management both on RTP1 and SIC. The weeks surrounding the sample weeks more or less show the same characteristics as the ones chosen.

It is important to note the different balance between the number of new episodes and reruns/replays in the two weeks. In both weeks reruns are preferably programmed in the morning and the afternoon. During the first week the large number of minutes given to reality shows (in all more or less 1997 minutes) of course leave comparatively little time for Portuguese television fiction (about 720 minutes). In the second week there is an increase of broadcasting time for Portuguese fiction (around 1520 minutes) but with an emphasis on reruns, namely on TVI.

Another analysis concerns the network station that shows more Portuguese fiction and presents the larger variety of formats. In both weeks this is RTP1. In the first week RTP1 shows one daily telenovela and three series, in the second week the same channel presents three daily telenovelas (two of which are reruns) one miniseries, two series (one a rerun) one long series, one sketch/comedy show and one telenovela. RTP 2 has only one series in the first week, a rerun broadcast four times a week, and nothing at all in the second week.

In the first week, commercial channel SIC does not have a Portuguese fiction programme regularly except for the sketches. SIC's fiction offering that week includes one TV movie (*Teorema de Pitágoras*), one series (one episode a week) and reruns (on a Monday at 17:00 hours) of a Portuguese telenovela with Brazilian actors. In the second week, the same channel shows one telenovela daily, one weekly episode of a long series and comedy sketches.

Commercial competitor TVI in the first week has a daily telenovela, one series with two episodes a week and a rerun on Saturdays plus another series twice a week. In the second week, TVI dedicates far more time to Portuguese fiction, but closer observation shows that the majority of the time is dedicated to reruns and replays. That is, the telenovelas that are being shown (three) repeat past episodes, the series repeats the episodes twice a week at different times, and at the same time the channel has another rerun of a series. It is worth noting that the telenovelas and series episodes last about 45 to 50 minutes, slightly less than the times allotted by other channels.

It is also worth observing that Portuguese fiction is shown in different timeslots. In the first week, the programmes with larger ratings included on prime time are *Big Brother* (TVI); *O Bar da TV*, the Brazilian telenovelas *Um Anjo Caiu do Céu* and *Porto dos Milagres* and the Portuguese series *A Minha Família é uma Animação* (SIC) and on RTP1 the Portuguese telenovela “*Ajuste de Contas*”. In the second week the presence of Portuguese fiction in prime time is consolidated on TVI with the presentation of episodes of three telenovelas and one series. SIC presents a daily episode of a Portuguese telenovela and one episode of a series on week-ends. RTP1 shows episodes (not daily) of two series. In this second week TVI has the prime time top rating with an average of 54.4% (the telenovela *Anjo Selvagem*, based on an Argentinian format, *Muñeca Brava*).

Brazilian telenovelas are nevertheless always present in the national top ratings — including both reruns and new episodes. To give an impression of their number, daily Brazilian telenovelas shown in the first week are: *A Viagem* (rerun, starting at 16:15), *New Wave* (starting at 17:00), *Estrela Guia* (starting at 17:20), *Um Anjo Caiu do Céu* (starting at 18:30), *Porto dos Milagres* (starting at 22:00). In the second week we have: *Malhação* (rerun, starting at 14:10), *New Wave* (starting at 16:40), *A Padroeira* (starting at 17:35), *As Filhas da Mãe* (starting at 18:45) and *O Clone* (starting at 22:25).

3.2 Analysis of Cultural Settings

Regardless of the fact that we are speaking about Portuguese fiction made in Portugal one must mention that a large number of Brazilian professional (actors, set designers, artistic directors, lighting engineers, screenwriters and cameramen) take part in these productions. One must note that a large part of the formats are foreign, the majority from Latin-America (Argentina, Venezuela and Mexico) and also from Italy (for example SIC’s telenovela *Fúria de Viver*). From this perspective, these telenovelas appear as a ‘closed serial’, receiving only scenic adaptations to the Portuguese reality. But

telenovelas like *Ganância* (shown on SIC) which are original creations are being subjected to continuous adjustments, usually after audience consultation and therefore are considered 'open serials'. The majority of the series are also imported formats, mainly from Spain (for example *Crianças SOS* on TVI), original Portuguese creations are usually historical reconstructions (for example *Alves dos Reis* on RTP1).

The majority of the Portuguese fiction (the telenovelas and also some series) of the general drama type can be attributed to one of two basic social models - dynastic or communitarian. The first model is about a powerful family that congregates huge numbers of employees or aggregates, linked by romance, rivalry and secrets (for example, *Anjo Selvagem*, TVI).

The community model focuses basically on extended and multi-generation middle-class or working class families linked by neighbourhood relationships, romance and social preoccupations (for example, *Fúria de Viver*, on SIC). Another version of this model is also possible - the dyadic or generational model centred on groups of people of the same age, usually youngsters or young adults who share the same sentiments, hopes, age and professional problems (for example the series *Riscos* on RTP1). Hybrid models between the dynastic and the communitarian also appear quite frequently (for example *Olhos de Água* on TVI).

The action or detective genre is less common, and some series are based on business activities (for example, the series *Sociedade Anónima* on RTP1), police stories or related matters (for example *Elsa*, on RTP1). As mentioned before, comedy is present on all channels through the sketches.

Concerning the setting in time, the two-week analysis points to a tendency to place the stories in the present but often the narrative strategy is to start the story decades before. Some series, especially those that are Portuguese creations, are placed in the past, but for the period in question only two are placed at the beginning of the 20th century. Portugal is the location of choice for fiction development but there is a new trend of telenovelas being filmed in other countries (Brazil and France).

An effort has been made especially in the productions by NBP for TVI to diversify the scenery introducing well-known tourist spots (Açores, Douro, Ribatejo or Alentejo), historical monuments or types of regional housing. The environment is generally urban, medium-sized coastal or interior cities but some alternation with rural areas is frequent.

The casting of the principal roles varies. In telenovelas there is a marked tendency for the creation of strong feminine characters, within certain stereotypes: the matriarch, the heroine, the villain. A dynastic model is

frequently used, based on the matriarch and her rebel daughter and heir, while men have secondary roles and children are almost never present. Series appear to have a more diversified distribution of roles with a balance between the sexes and the generations (for example *A Minha Família é uma Animação*, SIC), or with man/woman playing the principal role assisted by several characters of the opposite sex, young people or children (for example, the woman role in *Elsa* on RTP1 or the man's in *Super Pai*, TVI).

After this study and taking into consideration additional data concerning the entire period it is possible to conclude that from May 2001 to January 2002 the channels made a significant investment in Portuguese fiction. This investment consists of Portuguese TV movies' premieres (SIC), telenovelas (TVI) and series (RTP1). Nevertheless one must not fail to mention that a large number of Brazilian telenovelas is shown continuously with an interruption for the evening news and comic sketches from early evening to latenight, on SIC. It must also be remembered that TVI's schedule and audience figures are dominated by reality shows.

4. TV Movies

TV Movies are a fairly recent phenomenon on Portuguese television. They were initially produced in collaboration with the ICAM and the general television operators. Protocols were signed between the ICAM and three national generalist television operators (SIC; RTP and TVI). These protocols contemplate the joint financing of audiovisual works with a special emphasis on fiction series and TV movies.

In 1999, SIC signed a protocol with the Ministry of Culture, ICAM, for the joint financing of thirty TV movies to be made in the next three years. On the average, the ICAM supports each telefilm produced by SIC with approximately ten thousand euro. The first TV movies shown in 2000 were a success in terms of ratings. The first film, *Amo-te Teresa [I love you, Teresa]* obtained an audience share of 68.7% of thus becoming the most watched film ever in the history of Portuguese television, (see Tab. 9).

It should also be noted that SIC highly promoted these films. According to a study conducted by Tempo OMD about the first five TV movies shown on SIC until May 2000, promotional clips on this channel started to be aired five weeks before the date they were shown together with programmes on the making of these films.

As for RTP, the first protocol with ICAM was signed in September 1996 and resulted mainly in the joint financing of documentaries and fiction series in Portuguese. Following that, a new protocol was signed on

Tab. 9 - TV Movies shown on SIC

	Date	Hour	Duration	Programme	Universe	
					rat%	shr%
1	000111	22:00:08	1:41:39	AMO-TE TERESA	26.8	68.7
2	000215	21:59:03	1:38:14	MONSANTO	16.7	46.9
3	000314	22:00:38	1:41:23	FACAS E ANJOS	19.7	58.7
4	000418	22:08:58	1:38:48	MUSTANG	17.6	50.8
5	000530	22:11:55	1:57:05	O LAMPIAO DA ESTRELA	20.4	61.9
6	000627	22:15:52	1:49:20	A NOIVA	18.2	53.7
7	000912	22:59:03	1:52:00	UM PASSEIO NO PARQUE	10.2	40.4
8	001019	22:46:47	1:54:47	ANIVERSARIO	10.0	36.9
9	001116	22:43:37	1:58:51	ALTA FIDELIDADE	6.8	29.6
10	010128	14:01:31	1:49:49	OS CAVALEIROS DE AGUA DOCE	9.6	40.4
11	010304	21:11:51	1:44:58	O SEGREDO	10.1	26.1
12	010329	21:52:43	1:54:44	QUERIDA MAE	15.2	42.4
13	010430	20:59:37	1:56:16	MAIS TARDE	10.1	27.2
14	010527	17:58:54	1:57:25	TEOREMA DE PITAGORAS	7.7	40.6
15	010625	22:13:51	2:10:53	UMA NOITE INESQUECIVEL	6.8	22.5
16	010901	21:44:54	2:12:04	AMO-TE TERESA	3.9	12.5
17	010929	21:05:22	1:39:25	ANJO CAIDO	6.8	20.3
18	011027	21:05:18	1:50:46	UM HOMEM NAO E UM GATO	5.8	15.6

Source: Marktest

29 December 2000 with a view to the cooperation between the two entities in order to encourage television programmes by means of joint financing of original projects produced and directed in Portugal and made by independent producers.

The ICAM's financial participation in each project will be set by the Institute itself and the respective amounts must correspond to percentages neither below 30% nor above 50% of the RTP's participation, without jeopardising participations above that percentage for projects that might be considered of major interest, opportunity and cultural relevance.

A series of three TV movies, a project called *Crimes Portugueses [Portuguese Crimes]* was also financed. This project had taken around a decade to mature and was only shown in early 2002. This project is made up of three independent films that have in common the fact of being based on fait divers, tackling the issues of love and death in Portugal. The three films – a co-production of RTP and Madragoa Filmes, the film production company owned by Paulo Branco – have been written by Paulo Filipe and João Mário Grilo. The films were shown on RTP2 on three consecutive Sundays.

What distinguishes the RTP telefilms from those broadcast by SIC is that the former are more directly connected with the logic of film-making, which can be seen by considering the directors, the scriptwriters and the plots, whereas those shown by SIC are more in line with television production as they are films with scripts signed by young screenwriters who made their debut in this project undertaken by SIC Filmes.

By the end of February 2002, RTP resumed its collaboration with the producer Paulo Branco, in the form of an agreement for the co-production of five TV movies to be shown in prime time. The films will amount to between 450 thousand euro and 600 thousand euro each, one third of which will be financed by the state-owned channel and the remainder by the producer himself, either by means of ICAM's subsidies or by foreign or national partnerships – as was the case with the first films.

TVI also signed on 29 December 2000 a first protocol with ICAM for the production and direction of original Portuguese TV movies. ICAM and TVI have undertaken to co-finance the production of five TV movies produced for digital video, the Institute contributing with around 100 thousand euro per film as an advance on revenues granted to the respective independent producer. These projects are still under appreciation and none of the films have been shown yet.

5. General Trends

The reversal in the Portuguese audiovisual scene in terms of fiction is highly significant for the television industry. From the moment the soap operas produced by Rede Globo, shown exclusively by SIC, were surpassed in terms of ratings by the Portuguese soap operas broadcast by TVI (which happened in the 1999/2000 grid) there was in fact a highly important change. This change has to be considered within the context of reinforcement of competences and abilities of the European audiovisual

sector on the European market in competition with the USA and Brazil (the latter being extremely important in the case of Portugal).

This led, in fact, to a small revolution in the industry of television fiction among the main fiction producers. Namely NBP (Nicolau Breyner Produções) has seen its shareholders' structure reinforced by a major Portuguese group – Media Capital – which participates as well in the development of independent production for television: Obercom estimates that in 2002 the turnover amounted to 137.1 million euro, around eight times the estimated amount for the national film production.

On the other hand, TVI entered into exclusive contracts with many of the best Portuguese television actors while reinforcing its business in the areas of scenery, clothes, script, international distribution, etc. And as it has found the key to be the leading television station in terms of ratings on a national level, this station intends to maintain as the main axis of its strategy its investment in national fiction – soaps, series and TV movies. The competing television channels inevitably follow this strategy closely. Both RTP1 and SIC have other projects in the soap opera area for 2002-2003.

However, the crisis of Portuguese public television mentioned earlier tends to show itself in all national fiction production. The measures of economic contention, announced after the elections of 17 March 2002, if effectively put into practice, will have important consequences. Namely, they will affect a great number of independent television producers who will get less commissions and thus are faced bankruptcy. This being so, the Association of Independent Television Producers has been stressing the need to define special policies to support the industry of fiction, in order to prevent a decrease of commissions by public television. Such a decrease would mean wasting the large investments made in the last two years by all television channels. An investment that turned into a considerable growth of the amount of produced fiction, as well as an important technical evolution and a conquest of new audiences.

UPDATES

3. Historical Fiction and the Telefilm Dutch TV Fiction in 2001

By *Sonja de Leeuw*

The results of the restructuring of the three public channels which was effectuated in 2000, was visible in the different accents that the channels showed in the *programming* of fiction in 2001. Since the *production* of fiction takes a few years from concept to realisation, the fiction output in 2001 was the result of plans made years earlier. Changes only took place in 2001 within public broadcasting which therefore will be the focus of this update.

The average percentage of domestic fiction increased by 3.6% (in 2000 it rose by only 2.4%), mainly due to the efforts of the third (cultural progressive) channel. It not only produced a fair amount of ‘progressive’ comedies and parodies, it also continued its efforts in developing and producing single plays, some in co-production with the cinema. One of the most remarkable phenomena on Dutch television in 2001 was the presence of the “Telefilm”. The television movie is a well-known format, but it has only recently been introduced on Dutch television for strategic reasons. As one of the several measures initiated by the government to create a better infrastructure for a healthy audiovisual industry (next to tax measures and economic investments), the Telefilm was supposed to intensify the relationship between film and television. The restrictions given to the script writers are the actuality of subject, a maximum length of 90 minutes, and a budget of around 800 000 euro.

Scriptwriters are invited to send in a synopsis and treatment that are to be judged by all broadcasting companies. Six to eight are selected for further elaboration and finally for production. This means that the Telefilms by definition are broadcast by different broadcasters of the public service.

The first collection (in 1999) was realised as an experiment to be continued if funding could be continued, whatever the results were. The new collection of Telefilms in 2001 showed the potential of the format and good quality: a great variety of subjects and themes, all rooted in present-day Dutch society, next to personal approaches in diverse narrative styles. A nice example is *Ochtendzwemmers* (*Morning Swimmers*, AVRO and NCRV). This production reveals how a group of diverse people, who only meet during the morning swim, are getting closer connected, even in the sense that they are accused of forming a criminal group. All are looking for a ‘home’ which cannot be found in the literal sense. In the end, friendship turns out to be the

only thing that makes people feel at home. *Morning Swimmers* shows a mix of genres, such as the musical comedy and the light tragedy. As the quality of the second collection indicates, the Telefilm is a good ground to explore the domain of fiction.

The most remarkable event was the top-rated production *Wilhelmina* about the former queen, made by NCRV and broadcast on channel 1. *Wilhelmina* is a conventional historical drama in four parts, which traces the story of the queen's life until her abdication in 1948. The mini-series focuses especially on her role during the Second World War, reflecting the ongoing public debate on the question if her leaving the country was well chosen. Its being the most popular fiction program in 2001 can be explained by the way this mini-series brings together the two main points of reference in our national history: the relationship between the state and the monarchy and the Second World War. It showed how Wilhelmina wanted to stay to help her people, but couldn't due to the circumstances. Moreover, the mini-series showed how tough her struggle was against the male politicians around her and how she demanded the utmost of her self to really become the motherly symbol of her country. The popularity of *Wilhelmina* can also be explained by the way it celebrates the nation's unity in postmodernist times. It stresses the importance of historical drama in telling and retelling the stories of the recent past, from different points of view, including its controversies and its changes. The fact is however that broadcasters nowadays are very reluctant in producing historical drama because of its high cost since the Dutch Cultural Broadcasting Promotion Fund decided, for financial reason also, to only subsidize the developments of the scripts. Thus, the new trend for the following years becomes the mini-series situated in the present!

4. Less Money to Spend, More Movies Made for SBC Swiss Television Fiction in 2001

by Ursula Ganz-Blättler

Switzerland's population of 7.2 million people is for the majority German-speaking (64 percent), with a large minority of French-speaking natives (19%), a small minority of Italian-speaking natives (8%) and an even smaller congregation speaking Rhaetoromanic (1%). The remaining 8% of (mostly) immigrants speak different languages and do watch different (foreign) television programmes, thanks to either cable (in 84% of Swiss households) and / or satellite dishes. 91% of all Swiss households do have access to television, while 63.3% have access to VCR technology. The Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, as major (public) broadcaster, distributes television programmes in three languages via six stations ("Schweizer Fernsehen 1 & 2", "Télévision Suisse Romande 1 & 2" and "Televisione svizzera di lingua italiana 1 & 2", with regular programmes in Rhaetoromanic offered mainly by SF 1).

Two events dominated the Swiss mediascape in 2001 with regards to television fiction: one, for the first time in years, a series of five new dialect movies-made-for-television premiered on the German-speaking affiliate of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, SF DRS. Two, the two serious private competitors of public broadcaster SBC, the German-speaking stations Tele 24 and TV3, closed down after only a few years on air. While Tele 24 was a news-oriented station (and lives on as a local Zurich channel called Tele Zueri), TV3 - owned by Zurich-based news corporation "TA Media" - concentrated on entertainment such as daily talk shows, stand-up comedy, imported feature films and television series as well as reality soaps such as *Abenteuer Robinson* (a *Survival* adaptation), *Big Brother* or *Popstars* (a Swiss version of *Pop Idol*). Both breakdowns left a considerable number of young journalists as well as creative people and technical staff unemployed - a considerable loss, even if the Swiss film industry, as movie-making community, did not seem too concerned.

With regards to domestic television fiction both the French-speaking and the Italian-speaking SBC affiliates TSR and TSI went on producing new episodes for sitcoms such as *Paul et Virginie* and *La chronique* (TSR) or *Fitness Club* and *Sergio Colmes Indaga* (TSI). They continued producing as well as broadcasting domestic TV movies in their respective language (TSR: *15, rue de bains* by Nicolas Wadimoff and *Newsman* by Yvan Butler; TSI: *Radionotte* by Bruno Soldini and *Angeli non ne ho mai visti* by Matteo

Bellinelli). While SF DRS did continue its weekly broadcasts of the highly successful prime time soap *Luethi and Blanc*, the development of new sitcom concepts in German language was eventually stopped, due to an overall and rigid SF DRS savings programme. On the other hand, SF DRS presented the first results of a new movie development program called *Telefilm 2000* - which has since taken on a regular frequency, with follow-up seasons *Telefilm 2001* (movies to be presented in 2002) and *Telefilm 2002* (dito, 2003). The programme aims at close collaboration with established production companies and offers authors courses in project development as well as professional support by script doctors. Those 90-minute TV movies should tell popular stories with a distinct Swiss angle, make use of the native Swiss German dialect and address a large public. A generic affiliation is encouraged, such as comedy, thriller, melodrama, family movie or milieu movie.

While the initial budget for each TV movie was set at 1.4 million Swiss francs, the projects realized and broadcast by SF DRS in 2001 did cost between 1.6 and 2 million Swiss Francs each (2.4 - 3 million euro). About the same costs apply for TV movies made by French-speaking SBC-affiliate TSR, with one project actually granted 2.3 million Swiss francs. Financing was mixed, with biggest contributions done by SBC and its local affiliate SF DRS or TSR and additional support (about 10% of actual costs) offered by the Federal Office for Cultural Affairs. There was also the "Teleproduktions-Fond" as subsidizing organization as well as eventual co-production with German or French TV stations, and ARTE (3 projects).

And so, for the first time in about ten years, SF DRS did broadcast domestic TV movies in Swiss German dialect, aiming for high ratings and for a recurring prime time programme slot. As the table shows, both institutional goals were attained, with ratings improving considerably when the programme slot was changed from Wednesdays to Sundays and from (more youth and culture-oriented) SF 2 to (more general, and popular) SF 1.

It is also worth noting that the increase of domestic television movies made and shown on one of the SBC affiliates has led to an increase of respective program exchange among SBC affiliates, with fictional programmes from one linguistic region dubbed into another language before being broadcast. And so, *15, rue des bains* has been shown as *Il testamento di Madeleine* on TSI 2 in November 2001, with *Lieber Brad (Caro Brad)*, *Studers erster Fall (Il primo caso del commissario Studer)*, several TV movies produced earlier by TSR (*Charmants voisins, Kilimanjaro*) and finally *Tod durch Entlassung (Licenziamento colposo)* following on either TSI 2 or TSI.

Tab. 1 - TV movies commissioned by the German service of Swiss TV in 2000

Title of Movie	Script / Dir.	Station	Program Slot	Audience
Lieber Brad (Dear Brad)	Güzin Kar / Luz Konermann	SF 2 (first run)	28.2.2001 (Wednesday. 8pm)	222'000
Studers erster Fall (Studer's First Case)	Sabine Boss (script and direction)	SF 2 (first run)	21.3.2001 (Wednesday. 8pm)	195'000
Lieber Brad (Dear Brad)	Güzin Kar / Luz Konermann	SF 2 (second run)	15.4.2001 (Sunday. 8 pm)	144'000
Studers erster Fall (Studer's First Case)	Sabine Boss (script and direction)	SF 1 (second run)	1.7.2001 (Sunday. 8.30 pm)	325'000
Dragan und Madlaina (Dragan and Madlaina)	Linard Bardyll / Kaspar Kasics	SF 1 (first run)	7.10.2001 (Sunday. 8 pm)	225'000
Tod durch Entlassung (Death by Dismissal)	Christa Capaul / Christian Kohlund	SF 1 (first run)	11.11.2001 (Sunday. 8.30 pm)	361'000
Spital in Angst (Hospital Under Siege)	Jürg Brändli / Michael Steiner	SF 1 (first run)	9.12.2001 (Sunday. 8.30 pm)	399'000

The author wishes to thank Tiziana Mona, Alberto Chollet, Brunella Steger and Susann Wach (all of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation SBC) for information and access to programme statistics regarding the year 2001.

5. Indirect Ways of Foreign Penetration Turkish TV Fiction in 2001

by Sevilay Celenk

For the Turkish television industry, the most important aspect about broadcasting is the prevention of foreign products dominating Turkish screens, especially in prime time. Among domestically produced programmes, domestic fiction is the most favourite offering of Turkish prime time television. As previously reported, five of the major commercial channels (ATV, Kanal D, Star TV, Show TV, TGRT) and TRT broadcast approximately 30-35 different domestic fiction programmes every week, they are mostly first-run.

In 2001, despite a stability in figures, there was a new trend worth mentioning. During the course of the year, a distinct tendency related to preferred generic formulation of domestic TV fiction has become apparent. This tendency was a growing number of format adaptations and can be seen as an "indirect foreign penetration". It has become most visible with respect to two different types of programming.

At first, the continued expansion of domestic fiction in prime time started to be challenged by imported formats of various game shows and contest programmes such as *Taxi Orange*, a slightly different version of *Big Brother* which is a well-known reality-based contest programme in Europe. Show TV owns the rights to this program and has re-formulated it with Turkish contestants under the name of *Biri Bizi Gözetliyor* or *BBG* for short. After seeing *BBG*'s salient achievement in capturing the interests of the audience, Turkish television institutions have attempted to broadcast several other adaptations of foreign contest programmes. The result was a fast and successful invasion of television schedules by this kind of reality-based programming.

A second and related development was that Turkish broadcasters finally became aware of the possible power of situation comedies to capture viewers' attention. As soon as they came to realise its potential, adaptations of foreign programmes permeated fiction production, too.

The first channel to do so was Show TV. The channel has made a contract with Columbia Tristar International to produce a domestic version of the sitcom *The Nanny*. It can be said that Show TV's sitcom *Dadi* was the first typical example of situation comedies to appear on Turkish television.

A lot of “Dadi’s” fast-won popularity is owed to its leading woman character, played by a popular singer who is also a famous TV star. “Dadi’s” script was a full translation of the original programme with small differences regarding Turkish names of locations, people, meals etc. When industry’s majors came to realize the success of *Dadi*, they immediately began to search for other successful examples of foreign sitcoms. In the last quarter of 2001, there was a boom in sitcom production, in the shape of format adaptations, loose adaptations programmes originally written for Turkish television.

As a result, family serials representing the relations of low or middle class communities have been challenged as the most common formula of domestic fiction on prime time TV by sitcoms which also quickly reached equal peaks in ratings. It is no exaggeration to say that this change also relates to a struggle over meanings and their social grounding. Previously, stories screened by prime time TV focused on middle class majorities and not on upper class minorities. Suddenly, people who appeared on prime time TV serials started to talk with a different sense of humour, about different social and personal problems; they share an obviously Westernised life style and a different way of thinking compared to the familiar people of older Turkish serials. This thematic shift did not reflect any real changes in cultural, social or economic respect.

It is known that TV genres become inevitably exhausted over time and new genres spring up, but the current shift has little to do with processes of that kind. The main factor here as well as in the general process of “indirect penetration” through format adaptations is the logic of major broadcasters, and that is largely defined by their short-term commercial interests. Turkish broadcasters still have no long-term scheduling strategies what may also explain why they stuck to producing very similar family and community serials for so many years and why they detected the sitcom genre so late.

Part Two

Programmes Index

The programmes index is a compilation of 100 sheets for fiction programmes broadcast in 2001, with 20 entries for each of the five largest European countries members of Eurofiction.

Each programme sheet is articulated into two sections: Section One contains technical specifications and credits, while Section Two gives a brief synopsis of the programme.

Generally speaking, the Ten “Programmes of the Year” selected for each country correspond to the most successful or interesting fiction productions. It was deemed appropriate however to give the individual research teams free rein in compiling the indexes. This flexibility means that criteria for selection was based not only on ratings, but on other factors as well.

Therefore, in addition to the top “hits” of the year, each index also includes entries for programmes which created fads or niche markets, shows garnering acclaim from the critics, or even certain “interesting” flops.

If not differently specified, the date of broadcast and the viewing figures quoted for each entry, apply – when it comes to multi-parts productions - to the top rated episode.

FRANCE

TOP 10 PROGRAMMES

1. JULIE LESCAUT (Le secret de Julie)

Format: Series (6x90')

Date of broadcast: 15.3.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 21,5% (rating), 50,4% (share)

Produced by: GMT

Director: Alain Wermus

Writer: Alexis Lecaye

Music: Didier Vasseur

Cast: Veronique Genest, Mouss Diouf, Sophie Artur, Daniel Ceccaldi, Jean-Philippe Puymartin

This episode of Julie Lescaut stands out because of the appearance of a character we have not yet met, Julie's father, who turns up after 20 years absence. He had left the family suddenly, abandoning mother and children, and Julie Lescaut had never really forgiven him for this. The encounter is difficult, especially since her father is only seeking help for his half-sister (whose existence was unknown to Julie), who is suspected of murdering her husband.

Once more, the success of this episode can largely be attributed to the subtle intertwining of an event in the private life of the inspector with her daily life as detective.

2. UNE FEMME D'HONNEUR (Double vue)

Format: Series (4x90')

Date of broadcast: 25.1.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 21,5% (rating), 48,2% (share)

Produced by: Via Productions

Director: Dominique Tabuteau

Writers: Nicolas Cuche, Eric Teraud

Musics: Laurent and Edouard Ferlet

Cast: Corinne Touzet, Dominique Guillo, Pierre-Marie Escourrou, Charlotte Véry

This episode sees the police inspector and her men having to tackle the kidnap of a new-born baby from a clinic. They have to move fast if they want to find the baby alive. The real objective of the kidnappers, the director of the clinic and the baby's relatives is a puzzle, complicated as it is by the intervention of a medium, hired by the latter.

As has always been the case since the beginning of the series, this episode deals with a social topic, the increasing tendency to turn to clairvoyants and the abuse which can be made of this, especially in dramatic circumstances.

3. NAVARRO (Terreur à domicile)

Format: Series (5x95')

Date of broadcast: 1.2.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 21% (rating), 47% (share)

Produced by: Hamster

Director: José Pinheiro

Writer: Pierre-Yves Pruvost

Music: Jannick Top

Cast: Roger Hanin, Christian Rauth, Daniel Rialet, Jacques Martial, Jean-Claude Caron, Maurice Vaudaux, Emmanuelle Boidron, Catherine Allégret

In this episode, Yolande, inspector Navarro's only daughter and a secondary character who is still indispensable for the equilibrium of the series, has a major role in the investigation carried out by her father. He has to investigate six murders concerning blind people, all of them strangled at their homes, the murderer leaving his mark in the form of writing in red paint on the door of the victims' flats. Having no concrete element to help him with the investigation, Navarro makes use of his daughter, who is doing her legal training with a blind lawyer, to ensnare the serial killer.

4. LES CORDIER JUGE ET FLIC (Faux semblants)

Format: Series (5x95')

Date of broadcast: 15.2.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 18,4% (rating), 42,7% (share)

Produced by: Telfrance

Director: Paul Planchon

Writer: Paul Planchon

Music: Frédéric Porte

Cast: Pierre Mondy, Bruno Madinier, Charlotte Valandrey, Jean-Claude Adelin, Ivan Franek, Luc Lavandier, François Negret, Antonella Lualdi

This episode tackles the question of police methods and brutality by the police force in a context of urban criminality. Thus, the police officer Pierre Cordier, as a result of increasing delinquency rates in his province, is assigned a new assistant with a reputation for tough methods. This assistant manages to get a confession out of a Serbian refugee for having raped and killed a twelve years-old girl. There are serious doubts about how the interrogation was carried out and a campaign for the liberation of the presumed murderer is begun by the press and by Pierre Cordier's daughter, Myriam. After a suicide attempt by the Serb, Cordier decides to delve into the personality of his subordinate.

5. COMMISSARIAT BASTILLE (En toute innocence)

Format: Series (pilot) (1x88')

Date of broadcast: 22.2.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: 20:59

Audience: 17,6% (rating), 41,5% (share)

Produced by: DEMD

Director: Jacques Malaterre

Writers: Marc-Antoine Laurent, Bernard

Marié

Music: Alain Pewzner

Cast: Smaïn, Nathalie Roussel, Jacques Boudet, Laure Killing, Maureen Dor

For the first time on TF1, a detective series introduces a second generation immigrant as main character, the police captain Mo, played by a well known French comic, Smaïn. *Commissariat Bastille* adds the account of the daily lives of the police in a popular area of Paris, to a 90-minute traditional fiction framework with a central hero. Thus Mo unites the role of classical investigator and social mediator, since, besides his relationship with the owner of a local bar (an element which had already been used in *Navarro*, reinforcing the realist anchorage of the series), he is equally involved in the rehabilitation of young people, as well as in the local basketball team.

The success obtained by this pilot encouraged TF1 to order six new episodes of the series.

6. COMMISSAIRE MOULIN (Un flic sous influence)

Format: Series (3x90')

Date of broadcast: 22.3.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 17,6% (rating), 41,5% (share)

Produced by: PM Audiovisuel, PM Films, Gram production, Optima

Director: Gilles Béhat

Writer: Franck Moreno

Music: Jean-Pierre Mas

Cast: Yves Rénier, Natacha Amal, Jean-Claude Bouillon, Sonja Codhant, Roger Dumas

Concentrating on those particularly difficult subjects taken from real life or serious social problems (paedophilia, juvenile delinquency), the series *Commissaire Moulin* breaks with the classical production of early evening detective series. The public is warned moreover regularly about the crudeness or violence of certain scenes or certain topics, in compliance with the outline laid down in France by the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel concerning the protection of minors.

This episode plunges inspector Moulin into the world of pornographic film production, since he has to investigate the murder of a young actress - who turns out to be the daughter of one of his best friends - found dead in her

flat. Moulin suspects the producer of the films, who has a young assistant who also turns out to be a police officer.

7. UNE FILLE DANS L'AZUR

Format: Series (pilot) (100')

Date of broadcast: 8.1.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: 20:57

Audience: 17,1% (rating), 38,9% (share)

Produced by: PM Audiovisuel, PM Films

Director: Jean-Pierre Vergne

Writers: Nicole Jamet, Pierre Jean Rey

Music: Lewis Furey

Cast: Claire Borotra, Jérôme Anger, Bernard Giraudeau, Richard Borhinger, Gérard Lartigau

First one-off TV movie in the Top 10. *Une fille dans l'azur* owes its success to a combination of four elements: spectacular new setting with the Foch, prestigious old aircraft-carrier of the French navy; a need for realism basing itself on the existence of the first woman combat helicopter pilot; a well constructed script mixing description of the daily life of a woman in the armed forces, a love story and an intrigue concerning her origins; finally, a cast made up of prestigious and popular secondary roles (Bernard Giraudeau, Richard Borhinger).

This immersion of a young woman into a male world, with her passions and fragility, drew both male and female audience. As is often the case with one-off TV movie, this success justified the production of a follow-up, with another actress in the main role. Broadcast exactly a year after the pilot, early January 2002, the second episode proved to be a failure (only 11.3% of average audience).

8. JOSEPHINE, ANGE GARDIEN (Romain et Jamila)

Format: Series (4x95')

Date of broadcast: 12.2.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 17% (rating), 37,4% (share)

Produced by: DEMD

Director: Jacob Berger

Writers: Marie-Hélène Saller, Hélène Woillot

Music: Didier Vasseur

Cast: Mimie Mathy, Amidou, Souad Amidou, Jean-Noël Brouté

As its title leads us to believe, this episode transfers the classical intrigue of Romeo and Juliet to the setting of the multicultural Parisian district of Belleville. A young orphan and a second generation north African immigrant are planning to marry but they clash with the refusal of the young woman's family to let her marry outside the original community, a situation which is further complicated by the revelation of secrets concerning her

fiancé's past. Joséphine, the guardian angel, has, once more, to make sure that the two people come together.

Sustained by the popularity of the actress Mimie Mathy, this series continues to mix comedy with messages of tolerance and respect for the differences of others.

9. UN HOMME EN COLERE (Pour un monde meilleur)

Format: Series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 15.1.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: prime time

Audience: 16,7% (rating), 36,5% (share)

Produced by: Alya

Director: Didier Albert

Writer: Sylvie Simon-Sfez

Music: Thierry Geoffroy, Christian Loigerot

Cast: Richard Bohringer, Richaud Valls, Annie Gregorio, Olivia Brunaux, Philippe Magnan, François Bourcier, Cécile Thiry, Marie Matheron

The series is about a journalist, Paul Brissac, once the victim of a judicial error who dedicates his life to denouncing the excesses and defects of French justice. This episode deals once more with different social topics and concerns an investigation by the journalist who attempts to prove the innocence of the daughter of the newspaper editor he works for, accused of a murder that she insists she is guilty of. Obviously the young woman, in accusing herself, is trying to protect someone else.

The treatment of social questions at the heart of a fiction with a detective flavour, but in which the hero is a character from a civil society avid for justice (the second episode broadcast in 2001 dealt with homosexual couples), explains most of the success of this series.

10. UN COUPLE MODELE

Format: TV movie (92')

Date of broadcast: 11.6.2001

Channel: TF1

Time-slot: 20:51

Audience: 16,6% (rating), 39,5% (share)

Produced by: PM Audiovisuel, PM Films

Director: Charlotte Brändström

Writers: Pierre Colin Thibert, Jean-Claude Islet

Music: Frédéric Porte

Cast: Pierre Arditi, Bernard Le Coq, Natacha Lindinger, Elise Tielrooy, Maria Pacôme, Quentin Darras, Charley Fouquet, François Gamard, Jean-Philippe Puymartin

This one-off TV movie cleverly takes up a daily life situation, two men who have to get used to celibacy, once more, after a divorce, adding a classic

element of comedy, the confrontation of two personalities which are opposed in everything and who are obliged to live together.

Thomas and Romain are two forty-years old, one down to earth, pragmatic and laborious, the other, moody, egoist and womanizer, who meet at the tribunal before the preliminary conciliation session for their divorce. Thrown out of his home, Thomas goes to stay with Romain for a night, which then becomes a week, then a month. Despite their differences, a common strategy of reconquest of their ex-wives, brings them together.

6 INTERESTING PROGRAMMES

1. FATOU LA MALIENNE

Format: TV movie (99')

Date of broadcast: 14.3.2001

Channel: France 2

Time-slot: prime time (20:54)

Audience: 15% (rating), 35,7% (share)

Produced by: Cinétévé

Director: Daniel Vigne

Writers: Daniel Vigne, Chantal Renaud

Cast: Fatou N'Diaye, Élodie Navarre, Faïsa Younsi, Pascal Nzonzi, Mariam Kaba, Paulin F. Fodouop, Dioucounda Koma, etc.

This TV movie, based on real life, tackles a complex subject, the forced marriage of a young girl whose parents originally came from Mali, with a rich cousin, according to tradition. The young woman refuses the marriage and is able to escape with the help of a friend and her young brother.

France 2 got very good results with this difficult topic, the TV movie classifying at twentieth place in the new national fiction Top 20 in 2001.

2. LES FAUX-FUYANTS

Format: TV movie (87')

Date of broadcast: 24.11.2001

Channel: France 3

Time-slot: prime time (20:52)

Audience: 15,4% (rating), 37,6% (share)

Produced by: Progefi Kirchmedia

Director: Pierre Boutron

Writer: Françoise Sagan

Adaptation: Pierre Boutron

Music: Roland Romanelli

Cast: Catherine Jacob, Arielle Dombasle, Laurent Spielvogel, Nicolas Vaude, Nada Strancar, Thomas Heinze, François Perrot

The very good results of this TV movie programmed on one Saturday evening allowed France 3, for the first time, to get into the Top 20 established by Eurofiction since 1996. On the whole, it dominated the

evening, beating entertainment on TF1 (*Star Academy*) and France 2, and even more, the American series on M6.

Adaptation of a novel by Françoise Sagan, the comedy is set in World War II and recounts the «débâcle», i.e. the exodus of Parisians in June 1940, through the adventure of four snobs. When a bombardment kills their chauffeur and writes off their car, they find refuge in a farm in Beauce where they are obliged to help with the agricultural work. The humour rests on the old opposition between the Parisian and the peasant.

3. PIERRE OU LES AMBIGUITES

Format: Miniseries (3x55')

Date of broadcast: 24.9.2001

Channel: ARTE

Time-slot: 22:31, 23:30 and 00:25

Audience: 22:31: 0,7% (rating), 2,9% (share); 23:30: 0,3% (rating), 3,1% (share); 00:25: 0,2% (rating), 5,1% (share)

Produced by: Arena Films, Pola Productions, Théo Films, Euro Space, Vaga Film

Director: Leos Carax

Writers: Leos Carax, Jean-Pol Fargeau, Lauren Sedofsky

Music: Scott Walker

Cast: Guillaume Depardieu, Catherine Deneuve, Laurent Lucas, Patachou, Sharunas Bartas

In 2001, in original fashion, France 3 and ARTE offered the television version of two cinematographic works, which had released many years before, *Roselyne et les lions* by Jean-Jacques Beineix on France 3 and *Pola X* by Leos Carax on ARTE. These two films, ambitious both for the elaboration of their screenplay and set design and for their duration (3 hours and 2 hours and 14 minutes respectively), had not been able to capture a public at the cinema. Edited in a new 30 minute version, *Pola X* became *Pierre ou les ambiguïtés* and was divided into three episodes, which take up – insisting on its unreal dimension – the account of a young man of good family who, discovering the existence of a hidden, abandoned sister, decides to rebuild his life with her and abandon everything else.

4. CAMPAGNES

Format: Miniseries (6x26')

Date of broadcast: daily, from 19.11.2001 to 24.11.2001

Channel: Arte

Time-slot: prime time (20:15)

Audience: 0,7% (rating), 1,7% (share)

Produced by: Cipango

Director: Olivier Langlois

Writers: Catherine Hertault, Olivier Langlois

Music: Alexandre Desplats

Cast: Serge Riaboukine, Catherine Davenier, Antoine Chappey, Lara Guirao, Frédérique Ruchaud, Serge Sauvion, Xavier Roger, Clément Brasseur, etc.

This feuilleton, which deals with the difficulties of farmers in debt, recounting the conflicting relations of two brothers, is part of a European collection of six miniseries, entitled *Histoires de familles*, each with six episodes broadcast from 5 November to 15 December:

- *Trop. c'est trop* (*Enough is enough*) Wales (S4C)
- *Le dernier prof en bohème* Czech Republic (CZK)
- *La rédemptrice* Norway (NRK)
- *Maca mon amour* Catalonia (TV3)
- *Comme un lundi* Germany (SWR and MDR)

As with other collections initiated on Arte, this is a co-production with five different countries, plus France, associated in the same topic, the family having to face social, economic, contemporary political evolution. The five countries are part of Europe and through a variety of different situations, this collection photographs European society as it is today.

The innovation is to be found in the format used, unusual for this type of international collection, and in daily programming, from Monday to Saturday at 20:15.

It is expected that each mini-series will be the object of a rerun in a 2 x 80'.

5. CARNETS D'ADO

Format: Anthology (3 TV movies, from 85' to 88')

Date of broadcast: 13.2.2000

Channel: M6

Time-slot: 20:55

Audience: (most watched TV movie, 16.5.2001, 20:56) 6,3% (rating), 14,7% (share)

Produced by: Pierre Javaux prod.,
Rendez-vous prod., Telecip

Directors: - *Des parents pas comme les autres* : Laurence Katrian

- *Maman a 16 ans* : Didier Bivel

- *Grosse bêtise* : Olivier Peray

It was the success of the TV movie *Le Choix d'Elodie*, broadcast in 1999 by M6 as part of its *Combats de Femme* collection, which gave the channel the desire to expand, in a new collection, the topic of the questions and problems of the young, after childhood. These programmes are part of the straight editorial policy explored equally by the series *Le Lycée* and allow the broadcaster to respond to its desire to rejuvenate the French fiction public.

6. CAMERA CAFE

Format: Series (50x7')
Date of broadcast: 3.9.2001
Channel: M6
Time-slot: 20:40
Audience: 3,8% (rating); 13,1% (share)

Produced by: Anabase, Calt productions
Directors: Jean-Pierre Devillers, Mathias Ledoux, Raynal Pellicer
Writers: Yvan Le Bolloc'h, Bruno Solo, Alain Kappauf
Cast: Yvan Le Bolloc'h, Bruno Solo, Jeanne Savary, Valérie Decobert, Alexandre Pesle, Armelle

This series takes up the successful format offered in 1999 by France 2 with *Un gars, une fille*. Proposed by the two main actors, *Caméra Café* is a parody of life at a small business, around its coffee vending machine (we see these scenes from the machine's point of view).

4 DISAPPOINTING PROGRAMMES

1. RASTIGNAC OU LES AMBITIEUX

Format: Miniseries (4x90')
Date of broadcast: 26.2/5.3/12.3/19.3.2001
Channel: France 2
Time-slot: prime time (20:55)
Audience: 7.7/6.8/7.1/6.1% (rating). 16.9/15.6/16.4/13.6% (share)

Produced by: Image et Compagnie (groupe Lagardère)
Director: Alain Tasma
Writers: Ève de Castro, Christian Sauttern, d'après Honoré de Balzac
Music: Christophe Boutin
Cast: Jocelyn Quivrin, Flannan Obé, Alicia del Sol, Michel Aumont, Jean-Pierre Cassel

The authors of this prestigious mini-series have taken certain emblematic characters of *La Comédie humaine* by Balzac and have dropped them into a contemporary society. Rastignac and de Rubempré are two social climbers who are to have different fortunes and directions on the road to achievement. As is said explicitly in the dialogue, the objective of the scriptwriters is to show that nothing has changed since Balzac's day: "sex, money and power" continue to rule the world. Besides the vulgarities which the mini-series seems to claim a right to, the adaptation accumulates clichés: corruption in politics and business, the drama of the environment, homosexuality, the young girl of north African origin...

Even less than the critics, the public was not convinced by a fiction which has lost all credibility in its stance it takes of denouncing (or exhibiting complacently) society's defects. The channel had great expectations about this mini-series and provided it with an important promotion campaign, but it got one of the worst audience scores of the year's new fictions.

2. UN PIQUE-NIQUE CHEZ OSIRIS

Format: Mini-series (2x100')
Date of broadcast: 21 et 22.5.2001
Channel: France 2
Time-slot: prime time (20:52)
Audience: 8,8 et 9% (rating), 21 et 20,8% (share)

Produced by: Ciné-Mag Bodard, SFP, Radio-Télévision Belge Francophone
Director: Nina Companeez
Writer: Nina Companeez
Music: Bruno Bontempelli
Cast: Dominique Blanc, Marina Hands, Dominique Reymond, Jean-Claude Drouot, Daniel Mesguich, Anny Duperey

At the end of the 19th century, three women of the same family (mother, daughter and her cousin) go on a voyage in Egypt to get away from the troubles which followed the Dreyfus affair and their sentimental problems. With the help of the exoticism of the Orient, they discover a new freedom.

Benefitting from an outstanding cast, realised by an experienced script-writer/director who also works in cinema, required costly means. It received a number of prizes at different festivals. The channel had great expectations about this prestigious operation which also benefitted from an important promotion campaign. The audience was modest – but not catastrophic – for a fiction on this channel, and amounted to a relative disappointment.

3. LE GROUPE

Format: Series (57x27')
Date of broadcast: daily, from 27.8 to 6.11; weekly from 7.11 to 19.12.2001
Channel: France 2
Time-slot: access prime time (18:00)
Audience: from 1,2 to 2,6% (rating), from 9,4 to 16,2% (share)

Produced by: JLA Productions
Directors: Jean Sagols and others
Writers: Jean-Luc Azoulay, Bénédicte Laplace
Cast: Sandra Bretonès, Franck Geney, Julien Zuccolin, Barbara Cabrita, Géraldine Lapallus, Julien Michalak

Jean-Luc Azoulay, producer and author of this series, was the A of AB Productions (together with Claude Berda) and, thus, initiator of sitcoms for adolescents which appeared on TF1 in 1991 (*Premiers baisers*, *Hélène et les garçons*, etc). With this series, he takes up the same concept, the account of the lives of six students, and brings it up to date, by introducing dialogues a little cruder - and mobile telephones!

A low-cost product, the series was not able to win over the young who preferred *Beverly Hills* programmed at the same time on TF1.

From 7 November, France 2 gave up on the daily programming and broadcast the last episodes Wednesdays at 17:30.

4. PSY D'URGENCE

Format: Series (2x45')

Date of broadcast: 10.1.2001

Channel: M6

Time-slot: 20:55 and 21:41

Audience: 20:55: 5% (rating),
11,7% (share); 21:41: 4,3% (rating),
10,8% (share)

Produced by: Dune

Director: Edwin Bailly

Music: Frédéric Porte

Cast: Brigitte Bémol, Eric Boucher, Yves
Lambrecht

This series follows the adventures of a group of psychiatrists operating in an emergency service in a hospital of the Paris region.

Initially envisaged as a series of six episodes, as was the case with the two other recurring heroes series launched in 2000. *Police district* and *Le Lycée*, the channel has not done a follow-up of this fiction which was not in fact a real failure for M6.

GERMANY

TOP 10 PROGRAMMES

1. TATORT

Format: Anthology (29x90')

Date of broadcast: 07.01.2001

Channel: ARD

Time-slot: 20:15

Highest audience: 9,94
(07.01.2001)

Produced by: various (D. A. CH)

Producers: various

Directors: various

Writers: various

Music: various

Cast: various

This is the last criminal case of the police inspectors Stoever and Brockmöller in this successful German anthology.

Just before retiring from duty, their colleague Weckwoerth is found shot. By checking on the last case their colleague worked on, Stoever and Brockmöller find a trace into his family background. His brother-in-law is suspected of fraud and enrichment, which Weckenworth was about to reveal. But he has an alibi. A second trace leads the inspectors to a very small island Weckenworth was supposed to visit on the day he died. On that island a refugee is found. Step by step the inspectors find out that their colleague was involved in some drama concerning refugees.

2. DAS TRAUMSCHIFF

Format: Series (3 x ca. 95')

Date of broadcast: 01.01.2001

Channel: ZDF

Time-slot: 20:15

Highest audience: 9,41
(01.01.2001)

Produced by: Polyphon Film- und
Fernsehgesellschaft mbH (D. A)

Producer: Wolfgang Rademann

Directors: various

Writers: various

Music: Hans Hammerschmitt, title theme:
James Last

Cast: Siegfried Rauch, Heide Keller, Horst
Naumann

This time the German re-invention of *Loveboat* is on its way to the shores of Mexico. As in every other episode, the story is based on romance developing between some passengers and a portion of tragic that always comes to an happy-end in the midst of palm trees, exotic scenery and deep blue water.

3. ROSAMUNDE PILCHER

Format: Anthology (4 x 90')
Date of broadcast: 07.01.2001
Channel: ZDF
Time-slot: 20:15
Highest audience: 7,81
(16.12.2001)

Produced by: various
Producers: various
Directors: various
Writers: various
Music: various
Cast: various

Set in rural locations in Great Britain, the episodes of the TV adaptations of the Rosamunde Pilcher novels are all about love, romance and intrigues in some upper class families.

In *Blumen im Regen*, the photographer Sheila (Katja Woywood) threatens to destroy the luck of Lavinia (Karina Kraushaar) and John (Oliver Hörner). As Lavinia realizes the strong allurements between John and Sheila she decides to break her engagement with heavy heart. But then grandmother Helena (Winnie Markus) discovers some dark secret in the past of Sheila.

4. SCHIMANSKI

Format: Series (1 x 90')
Date of broadcast: 09.12.2001
Channel: ARD
Time-slot: 20:15
Audience: 7,68 (09.12.2001)

Produced by: Colonia Media
Producer: Sonja Goslicki
Director: Edward Berger
Writer: Hansjörg Thurn
Music: Günther Illi
Cast: Götz George, Julian Weigend, Sabine Timoteo

Ex-Police inspector Schimanski, formerly belonging to the staff of one *Tatort*-team, is about to get married. This would have been news for the fans of Schimanski: the roughneck finally is tamed! But, as the story goes, in the midst of the wedding preparations an eight year old girl is found dead on a campground. Unquestionably, Schimanski has to solve this case first, particularly since the girl is the daughter of his friend and former colleague Keller. During the investigations Schimanski meets Niki, a prostitute. She tells him that on this very campground young girls are frequently offered to men. The further investigations lead into the mire of pederasty in which even Keller seems to be involved.

5. NICOLA

Format: Series (5 x 24')
Date of broadcast: 23.11.2001
Channel: RTL
Time-slot: 21:15

Highest audience: 7,61 (21.12.2001)

Produced by: Columbia Tristar
Producer: Christiane Ruff
Director: Uli Baumann
Writers: Ken Cinnamon, Karen Wengod, Mark Werner, Marcus Raffel, Gerd Lurz

Music: Peter Wischermann
Cast: Mariele Millowitsch, Walter Sittler, Guntbert Warns, Oliver Reinhard, Friederike Grasshoff

A comedy series set in the environment of a hospital.

In the hospital everybody is in a relaxed Christmas mood, except for Dr Schmidt who has an aversion to this annual festivity. Grumpily he sneaks through the halls trying to spoil everybody's mood. To escape this hustle he has his private secretary book a flight for him to Tenerife. Unfortunately he doesn't notice a memo from his secretary saying that his flight is advanced. Embittered he has to stay home, all by himself! The first victim of his rage about this situation is Lena, his secretary. He fires her. Lena, completely dissolved, moves in with Nikola. The festive mood is gone. But it gets from bad to worse. To hide the disgrace of being alone for Christmas, Dr Schmidt fakes an excessive Christmas-party at home. By mistake he releases the fire alarm. When the rescue team begins evacuating the apartments, his swindle is threatened to be exposed.

6. EIN FALL F ÜR ZWEI

Format: Series (10 x 60')
Date of broadcast: 05.01.2001
Channel: ZDF
Time-slot: 20:15
Highest audience: 7,53
(05.01.2001)

Produced by: Odeon Film (D. A. CH)
Producers: Georg Althammer, H. Joachim Mendig
Directors: various
Writers: various
Music: Klaus Doldinger
Cast: Claus Theo Gärtner, Paul Frielinghaus

An unusual scene outside the hall of the jury court: in an interview with a journalist the defendant Rainer Kern says that he is looking forward to being sentenced to life. He confessed the insidious murder of his companion Melinda Melzer. Later before court Kern revokes his confession, to the surprise of all persons present. Obviously he confessed under the pressure of the investigators. Dr Albrecht, lawyer of the victim's mother sees only two reasons for this change of mind: either Kern tries to protract the trial or his confession then had the aim to cover the real offender. However, Dr Lessing wants to find out the truth and puts his partner and private eye Matula in charge of the case. Matula in his own manner takes a closer look at the complex attendant circumstances of the family drama. He finds details that raise a lot of new questions.

7. POLIZEIRUF 110

Format: Anthology (11 x 90')
Date of broadcast: 14.01.2001
Channel: ARD
Time-slot: 20:15
Highest audience: 7,21
(18.02.2001)

Produced by: various
Producers: various
Directors: various
Writers: various
Music: various
Cast: various

Commissioner Wanda Rosenbaum investigates the murder of a teacher in Brandenburg, who is stabbed during class. There are 28 witnesses, but none of them names the offender. During the investigations Rosenbaum and her colleague Krause face a wall of silence. When reconstructing the last hours of the victim's life, they discover that there has been an unbearable tension between the teacher and her students: a charged, explosive mixture of indifference, despair, revenge and hatred.

8. DER TUNNEL

Format: Mini-series (2 x 94')
Date of broadcast: 21.01.2001
Channel: Sat.1
Time-slot: 20:15
Highest audience: 7,20
(21.01.2001)

Produced by: teamworx production
Producers: Nico Hoffmann, Ariane Krampe
Director: Roland Suso Richter
Writer: Johannes W. Betz
Music: Harald Kloser
Cast: Felix Eitner, Heino Ferch, Sebastian Koch, Uwe Kockisch, Nicolette Krebitz

The Berlin Wall inspired some of the most daring escape attempts. This is the true story of one of them, told in a 2-part mini-series.

It is 1961, the same year that communist East Germany begins the building of the Berlin Wall. East German Harry Melchior is already suffocating in the stench of oppression. He wants out, but his beloved sister Lotte fears that an escape attempt into West Berlin would be too dangerous for her young daughter. Harry reluctantly leaves Lotte behind, but he swears to return and rescue her. Once safely in the West, he teams up with his best friend Matthis, an engineer, and they plan their nearly impossible project. Nine harrowing months and 145 meters later, despite cave-ins, flooding and Stasi spies, the team breaks through the cellar of a building in East Berlin. Having defied the ever-present dangers of failure and death. Harry and his team now guide Lotte, as well as 28 others, into the freedom of the West.

9. DIE BRAUT MEINES FREUNDES

Format: TV Movie (90')

Date of broadcast: 10.01.2001

Channel: ARD

Time-slot: 20:15

Audience: 6,73

Produced by: Saxonia Media

Producer: Hans-Werner Honert

Director: Gabi Kubach

Writer: Christiane Sadlo

Music: Paul Vincent Gunia

Cast: Michael von Au, Katharina Boehm,
Florian Fitz, Wolfgang Winkler, Herbert
Olschock

Dr Michael Mangold works as a surgeon in Leipzig. He seems to have it all: he is good-looking, a successful career lies ahead of him and a life that runs well in order. Until he gets a phone call from his dear friend Dr Joerg Klein, asking him to help out in his medical practice while he attends a congress. Michael arrives in the rural idyll, not knowing that his friend is also in the midst of his wedding preparations. As fate goes, Michael falls in love with his friend's intended bride Lena Stern. While Dr Klein is gone for the congress, Michael and Lena can't fight their feelings anymore. Just when they admit their love to each other, Klein returns home. A romantic love story dealing with the search for perfect harmony and the courage to take frankly and openly the responsibility for one's aims in life.

10. ALARM FÜR COBRA 11

Format: TV movie (90')

Date of broadcast: 05.04.2001

Channel: RTL

Time-slot: 20:15

Audience: 6,64

Produced by: action concept Film - und
Fernsehproduktion

Producer: Hermann Joha

Director: Raoul W. Heinrich

Writers: Dieter Tarnowski, Ralf Ruland

Cast: René Steinke, Erdogan Atalay,
Charlotte Schwab

A gang of four former American-football players and daring skydivers land atop a bank high rise and rob 20 million German Marks. Special agents Tom Kranich and Semir Gerkhan almost manage to thwart their attempt to escape. During the gunfight one thief is shot, another escapes and the two left highjack a bus. Not even a road block can stop the bus. The situation gets worse, when the bus is about to run out of gas. Without hesitation, special agent Semir drives the requested tanker and then is forced by the hijackers to replace the wounded bus driver. In this situation, Semir realizes, that there is a time bomb aboard. As is usual in the series this film was a pilot for, a lot of cars, trucks and motorcycles are damaged in a fireworks of explosions and stunt scenes. The production company is well known for its high-quality action scenes.

5 INTERESTING PROGRAMMES

1. DIE MANNS EIN JAHRHUNDERTROMAN

Format: Mini-series (3 x 105')
Date of broadcast: 17.12.2001
Channel: ARD
Time-slot: 20:15
Highest audience: 4,74
(17.12.2001)

Produced by: Bavaria Film
Producers: Thilo Kleine, Katharina Gräfin
Lambsdorff
Director: Heinrich Breleur
Writers: Heinrich Breleur, Horst Königstein
Music: Hans-Peter Stroer
Cast: Armin Mueller-Stahl, Moritz Bleibtreu,
Jürgen Hentsch, Veronica Ferres, Sophie Rois

A televisual biography about the life and work of the Mann family in three episodes, combining documentary and fictional parts.

1999: Elisabeth Mann-Borgese enters her former parents' home in Munich, which they were forced to leave in 1933. Only the now deserted ground floor still exists. She opens the door to history, to her childhood. Memories come back to her: the fancydress ball with her father Thomas Mann (played by Armin Mueller-Stahl) appearing as a magician, her brothers Klaus, Golo, Michael and sisters Erika and Monika enjoying the moment.

Interspersed with interview segments with Elisabeth Mann-Borgese and contemporary witnesses, the mini-series brings to fictional life the complicated family history of the Manns in the 20th century, the most famous German family of writers.

2. WAMBO

Format: TV Movie (101')
Date of broadcast: 13.05.2001
Channel: Sat.1
Time-slot: 20:15
Audience: 2,95

Produced by: Diana Film
Producer: Helmut Dietl
Director: Jo Baier
Writer: Jo Baier
Music: Thomas Osterhoff
Cast: Jürgen Tarrach, Ruth Drexel, Alexander
Lutz, Bettina Redlich, Steffen Wink

As a personification of the Bavarian spirit, actor Herbert Stieglmeier celebrates great success. With just the same effort in acting he tries to keep his double life as a gay from being exposed to the public. As success fades, enemies turn up in his conflicting life and the story comes to a tragic end. Director Jo Baier's TV movie is inspired by the real life of the thoroughly Bavarian actor Walter Sedlmayr, who is believed to having been killed by his (gay) friend and secretary in 1990. The director created a mixture of documentation (in black and white) and TV movie. Well-known lead actor

Juergen Tarrach does an outstanding job presenting a Bavarian legend with a torn personality.

3. RIEKES LIEBE

Format: TV Movie (89')

Date of broadcast: 29.10.2001

Channel: ZDF

Time-slot: 20:15

Audience: 3,27

Produced by: Odeon Film

Producer: Georg Althammer

Director: Kilian Riehof

Writers: Peter Hinderthür, Sophia Krapoth, Killian Riedhof

Music: Peter Hinderthür

Cast: Laura-Charlotte Syniawa, Florian Stetter, Axel Milberg, Isabell Gerschke, Christoph Waltz

For the 16-years old Rieke (Laura-Charlotte Syniawa) the whole world comprises nothing but figure skating and the deep love towards her older brother Nils (Florian Stetter), who is her partner and confident. Their mother is dead and their father is only interested in their training and career. Although he feels responsible for his sister, Nils wants to escape from the narrowness of his home. When he falls in love, Rieke intrigues against his girl friend and tries to seduce Nils, which ends tragically.

A very courageous and insistent drama about the pressures of competitive sports and the love between brother and sister, sensitively staged with impressive actors.

4. MEIN LEBEN & ICH

Format: Series (9 x 25')

Date of broadcast: 14.09.2001

Channel: RTL

Time-slot: 21:15

Highest audience: 5,33
(09.11.2001)

Producer: Christiane Ruff

Directors: Uli Baumann, Sophie Alett-Coche, Richard Huber

Writers: Mark Werner, Paula Roth, David Safier, Cheryl Alu

Music: various

Cast: Wolke Hegenbarth, Maren Kroymann, Gottfried Vollmer, Frederic Hunschede, Nora Binder

Produced by: Columbia Tristar

A new sitcom about a cynical, brooding teenage girl named Alex. She is annoyed by everything life brings, especially her own one. All that she desires is to be left in peace, especially by her family.

The series presents a critical and comic mirror of themselves to the so-called "MTV-generation" without offending them. At the same time it manages to appeal to all age groups equally. Refreshingly different from many other

German sitcoms with unerring and wonderful sarcastic dialogues that always hit the bulls eye. The character of Alex seems to be tailor-made for the main actress Wolke Hegenbarth.

5. BLIND DATE

Format: TV Movie (80')

Date of broadcast: 20.05.2001

Channel: ZDF

Time-slot: 23:30

Audience: 0,48

Produced by: ndf

Producer: Wolfgang Weber

Directors: Andy Bierschenk, Olli

Dittrich, Anke Engelke

Writers: Olli Dittrich, Anke Engelke

Cast: Olli Dittrich, Anke Engelke

80 minutes of pure improvisation by comedy stars Olli Dittrich and Anke Engelke.

The car salesman Rainer (Olli Dittrich) and secretary Yvonne (Anke Engelke) get in contact through a lonely hearts ad and have a blind date in an Italian restaurant. To make this first encounter as authentic as possible the actors had no scripts and didn't know anything about the other character. The result is an encounter full of embarrassing, uptight advances, full of clumsiness, poor blatancy and bad table manners: a very special milieu-study.

A very interesting and successful experiment by public broadcaster ZDF. A sequel was broadcast in June 2002.

5 DISAPPOINTING PROGRAMMES

1. DER DOC - SCH ÖNHEIT IST MACHBAR

Format: Series (9 x 25')

Date of broadcast: 02.02.2001

Channel: Sat.1

Time-slot: 21:15

Highest audience: 2,72
(02.02.2001)

Produced by: Brainpool TV

Producer: Ralf Husmann

Director: Axel Bock

Writer: Ralf Husmann

Cast: Ingolf Lück, Alexandra Helmig, Lucia Gailova, Bernd Michael Lade, Billie Zöckler

Another disappointing attempt to produce a German sitcom by private broadcaster Sat.1. It deals with the booming cosmetic surgery business and with totally normal people who are just trying to get their lives back on track. Main character is Dr. Konrad Arnold (Ingolf Lück, a very successful German comedian), who runs this clinic which is financed by the father of his girlfriend.

The good actors cannot compensate the poor scripts. Instead of a real story there is nothing more than a line-up of more or less funny gags.

2. DIE BOEGERS

Format: Series (13 x 30')

Date of broadcast: 05.06.2001

Channel: ARD

Time-slot: 21:05

Highest audience: 3,41
(05.06.2001)

Produced by: Hessischer Rundfunk, U5
Filmproduktion

Director: Rudolf Bergmann

Writer: Rudolf Bergmann

Music: Michael Fitz

Cast: Michael Fitz, Sabine Kaack,
Constantin von Jascherhoff, Jacqueline
Svilarov

A sitcom about an unconventional family that seems to be made for frequent trouble. Robi (Michael Fitz) is a former rock musician who exchanged his career for family and household. Sometimes he asks himself if he should return to the music business. His wife Gisi (Sabine Kaack) is a successful banker. Daughter Melanie (Jacqueline Svilarov) is very gifted but quarrels with her intelligence because she doesn't want to be sent to a special school for highly intelligent kids. The younger brother Linus (Constantin von Jascherhoff) regards his sister, all adults and his own life from an ironic point of view and doesn't hide this attitude.

After some rave reviews of the pilot movie the episodes turned out to be just another pointless family-sitcom that wasn't accepted by neither the audience nor professional reviewers. The congeniality of the characters was lost and the story lacks all authenticity.

After the troubles of September 11 the last episodes were not broadcast.

3. UNTER DER SONNE AFRIKAS

Format: Series (3 x 85')

Date of broadcast: 08.06.2001

Channel: ARD

Time-slot: 20:15

Highest audience: 3.69
(08.06.2001)

Produced by: Together Production
International

Producer: Guido De Angelis

Director: Ruggero Deodato

Writers: various

Music: Roland Kaiser (Title Theme)

Cast: Carol Alt, Rüdiger Joswig, Hans von
Borsody, Michelle Donati, John Indi

A melodram about some likable white people living a life of luxury in an unknown African country. Wealth and trimmed parks, European interiors and a well-equipped private clinic don't actually reveal on which continent we are, where there are not the troubles with the telephone line, wild animals and some black supporting actors.

In *Paradies in Gefahr* the unscrupulous investor Mr Pons (Clayton Norcross) tries to mulct Alexander Brandt (Rüdiger Joswig) of his farm and to murder him through a car accident. Brandt survives and ends up captured in a mine. His wife and doctor Monica (Carol Alt) tries to rescue him, which in turn is tried to sabotage by Pons.

The story could be told in detail within 20 minutes, but silly dialogues, wildlife scenes and other fillers stretch the episode to 90 boring minutes. Once more the “dark continent“ is nothing more than an exotic accessory full of colonial clichés and the chance is missed to show Africa as it really is.

4. DUNE DER WÜSTENPLANET

Format: Mini-series (3 x 96')

Date of broadcast: 22.04.2001

Channel: Pro Sieben

Time-slot: 20:15

Highest audience: 5,10
(22.04.2001)

Produced by: Beta Film GmbH, New
Amsterdam Entertainment Inc., Tandem
Communications, Victor Television
Productions Inc.

Producer: David R. Kappes

Director: John Harrison

Writer: John Harrison

Music: Graeme Revell

Cast: Alec Newman, Saskia Reeves, William
Hurt, James Watson, Jan Vlasák

16 years after David Lynch's unsuccessful cinematic adaption of Frank Herbert's science fiction epic John Harrison makes another attempt with this TV mini-series. The expectations of the novel's big fan community in this 20 million Euro production were high. But with a seemingly endless budget for sets, the new film completely loses track of both the characters and the larger epic scope, dwelling instead on lengthy and rather boring, unnecessary scenes involving characters whose actors don't seem to care one bit for their roles. The acting in the 2000 film is a stunning embarrassment, with William Hurt as an expressionless and seemingly medicated Duke Leto and Alec Newman portraying an uninspiring and desensitized Paul Atreides.

5. DAS MÄDCHENINTERNAT - DEINE SCHREIE WIRD NIEMAND HÖREN...

Format: TV Movie (94')

Date of broadcast: 28.02.2001

Channel: RTL

Time-slot: 20:15

Audience: 4,05

Produced by: Real Film

Director: Robert Sigl

Writer: Kai Meyer

Music: Jörg Rausch

Cast: Katharina Wackernagel, Anne Kanis, Luise Bähr, Alexandra Finder, Barnaby Metschurat

A sequel to *Schrei, denn ich werde dich töten*. Nina (Katharina Wackernagel) is sent to a sanatorium in the Bretagne in order to recover from the horrors of the first movie. But the historic building is said to be haunted by a ghost every 10 years. On the first of May, a faceless nun appears and a series of murders starts.

Dark vaults, mists in the night and scared and screaming faces - the movie offers most of the out-worn horror clichés. Like the the first movie, *Das Mädcheninternat* was condemned by the authority for commercial broadcasting of the state of Lower Saxony (NLM) because of its violence and bad influence on young viewers.

ITALY

Top 10 Programmes

1. UNO BIANCA

Format: Mini-series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 6.02.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 9,936

Produced by: Mediatrade.
Taodue

Producers: Simone de Rita
(Mediatrade), Pietro
Valsecchi (Taodue)

Director: Michele Soavi

Writers: Luigi Montefiori, Gabriele Romagnoli,
Marco Melega, Michele Soavi

Music: Gianni Bella

Cast: Kim Rossi Stuart, Dino Abbrescia, Valeria
Milillo, Pietro Bontempo, Massimo de Rossi,
Bruno Armando, Luciano Curreli, Claudio Botosso,
Giorgio Crisafi, Dario D'Ambrosio, Gippy Soprani,
Matteo Chioatto, Paolo D'Agostino, Silvia De
Santis

This miniseries dramatises one of the most disturbing cases of crime in recent years. Between 1987 and 1994 a gang of ruthless criminals carried out a series of murderous robberies leaving behind numerous dead and injured. The only clue was the car used by the gang: a white Fiat Uno. The story is told from the point of view of two obstinate and brave policemen who - after painstakingly rigorous enquiries - manage to capture the criminals in spite of the disbelief and short-sightedness of their superiors. They make a shattering discovery: the gang was headed by policemen. A particularly inspired script, direction and acting animate a story where the clash between good and evil is clear as well as disturbing: the enemy is the colleague sitting next to you. The authors have been able to filter the crime news facts using the generic codes and the result was one of the hardest and most gripping cop-stories ever in the history of Italian television fiction.

2. MARESCIALLO ROCCA 3

Format: Series (4x100')

Date of broadcast: 25.03.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 9,864

Produced by: RaiFiction. Solaris
Cinematografica (IT)

Producers: Cecilia Cope (Rai), Adriano and
Guglielmo Ariè (Solaris Cinematografica)

Directors: Giorgio Capitani, José Maria
Sanchez

Writers: Laura Toscano, Franco Marotta

Music: Natale Massara, Pino Donaggio; titles
theme: Guido e Maurizio De Angelis

Cast: Gigi Proietti, con Stefania Sandrelli,
Sergio Fiorentini, Mattia Sbragia, Alberto
Molinari, Daniela Scarlatti, Angelo Sorino,

Francesca Rinaldi, Francesco
Lodolo, Paolo Gasparini,
Massimiliano Virgilio, Gabriele

Corsi, Massimiliano Pazzaglia, Maurizio
Aiello, Maurizio Rapotec

Maresciallo Rocca is one of the most popular heroes of Italian fiction. The first edition of the programme was in 1996 and since then – in spite of the series’ huge success – the episodes were not many (12 in all). The reasons are that the production standard was 90 minutes coupled with the resistance of the authors and the leading actor to be tied to the same character; an attitude particularly widespread among the stars of Italian fiction. The formula of the programme is well adapted: a leading actor, a leading character capable of resolving both crimes as well as problems with his children, an clear intermingling of comedy and thriller contents. In the new episodes however there were several changes: the main character looked older and managed to handle both family and work relationships more rapidly while the police drama overshadowed the comedy. The climax of the series was the killing of Rocca’s wife by the local Mafia.

3. COME L’AMERICA

Format: Mini-series (2x90’)

Date of broadcast: 24.04.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 9,442

Produced by: RaiFiction, Eagle
Pictures (IT), Illusions
Entertainment (CA)

Producers: Cecilia Cope
(RaiFiction), Giampaolo Sodano,

Ciro and Stefano Dammicco (Eagle Pictures),
Bruce Harvey (Illusions Entertainment)

Directors: Andrea and Antonio Frazzi

Writers: Sandro Petraglia, Stefano Rulli

Music: Luis Bacalov

Cast: Sabrina Ferilli, Massimo Ghini, Henry
Czerny, Dominic Zamprogna, Gioia Spaziani,
Cosimo Bani, Veronica Niccolai, Frank
Crudele, Byron Chief Moon, Joseph Scoren,
Tony Nardi

This programme is a very intense melodrama set in the fifties and tells the ups and downs of an Italian woman forced to leave for Canada with her two children because of serious economic difficulties. The idea is to be reunited with her husband who had emigrated several years earlier, but he has by now another family and the main character has to start from scratch, determined to guarantee a better future for herself and her children. Thus she sets off on a journey full of obstacles and problems but in the end everything turns up trumps: her son becomes famous in sport, her daughter gets a degree and the protagonist reaches a better position in society thanks to her work as a nurse and her marriage to a wealthy doctor. *Come l’America* has all the winning elements to make it a television “event”: a deep-rooted and well-remembered part of Italian history, the importance of the female character played by one of the most popular Italian actresses of the moment, a prestigious package resulting from an international co-

production. Apart from a short prologue the miniseries is set almost entirely in Canada against a background of beautiful natural scenery.

4. DISTRETTO DI POLIZIA 2

Format: Series (24x50')

Date of broadcast: 23.10.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 8,437

Produced by: Mediatrade, Taodue

Producers: Pietro Valsecchi, Camilla Nesbitt (Taodue)

Director: Antonello Grimaldi

Writers: Antonio Antonelli, Sara Beltrame, Daniele Cesarano, Guglielmo Enea, Marcello Fois, Dino Gentili, Filippo Gentili, Grazia Giardiello, Roberto Iannone, Valter Lupo, Paolo Marchesini, Lucia Moisiso, Gabriele Romagnoli, Luca Rossi, Augusto Zucchi,

Giorgio Tausani, Elisabetta Arnaboldi,

Francesco Apolloni, Gianni Cardillo;

editors Taodue: Fabrizio Bettelli,

Marcello Fois, Gabriele Romagnoli;

editor Mediatrade: Marco Videtta

Music: Pivio e Aldo De Scalzi

Cast: Isabella Ferrari, Ricky Memphis,

Giorgio Tirabassi, Lorenzo Flaherty,

Carlotta Natoli, Simone Corrente,

Roberto Nobile, Giovanni Ferreri, Marco

Marzocca, Daniela Morozzi, Augusto

Zucchi, Soraya Castillo, Cristina Moglia,

Barbara Cupisti, Lavinia Guglielman,

Alessandro Sperduti, Ivana Monti,

Sergio Fiorentini, Vincenzo Crivello, e

con la partecipazione di Tony Sperandeo

This is a classic choral cop-story which deals with the public and private lives of some policemen in a police station in Rome which is headed by a woman. The programme is constructed according to a formula which seeks refuge in its realistic style thus obtaining with great ability a good dose of both suspense, comedy and melodrama. The private lives of the policemen are given the most importance and even the investigations are carried out from a humane point of view. The suspense is concentrated on the continuing story in the series with the chief officer who is pregnant, facing the threat of death from a Mafia boss. *Distretto di Polizia* is one of those rare examples of Italian fiction capable of linking quality with the almost industrial work pace of the production. Exactly one year after the successful first edition, the series came back with 24 new episodes, with the same cast, concept and style consolidating its position as the best technically achieved long-series programme in present-day Italian fiction. An example of productive efficiency timely rewarded by its high audience ratings.

5. CUORE

Format: Mini-series (6x90')

Date of broadcast: 12.11.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 8,330

Produced by: Mediatriade, Rizzoli
Audiovisivi

Producers: Anna Stoppoloni
(Mediatriade), Angelo Rizzoli (Rizzoli
Audiovisivi)

Director: Maurizio Zaccaro

Writers: Massimo De Rita e Mario
Falcone, con la collaborazione di
Maurizio Zaccaro

Music: Franco Piersanti

Cast: Giulio Scarpati, Anna Valle, con la
partecipazione di Leo Gullotta, e con
Antonella Ponziani, Daniela Giordano,
Valeria D'Obici, Luca Bardella,
Francesco Bono, Davide Brivio, Simone
Cipriani, Luca De Giosa, Antonio
Faruzzi, Ginevra Casseti, Ivan Ieri,
Francesco Lucarelli, Christian
Napoleone, Federico Previati, Marcello
Zuccaro, Stefano Pronesti, Alessio
Santini, Giuseppe Battiston, Antonio
Catania, Roberto Accornero, Anna Goel,
Gisella Burinato, Marina Suma, Laura
Curino, Franco Pennasilico, Roberto
D'Alessandro, Augusto Zucchi

Cuore is the most famous Italian children's book and has been adapted for cinema and television several times. Set in the late '800 in a primary school of a large town. *Cuore* tells the story of a group of pupils and their teacher. He is an anti-conformist whose aim is to stimulate his pupils also by means of a series of realistic accounts in an educational style. Each episode is built around one of these "monthly stories" where what is happening at the school and the private lives of the pupils and their teachers are cleverly intermingled. An accurate reconstruction in the scenic design guarantees the atmosphere of the era while the mental attitudes and themes are given a topical aspect. Among the issues dealt with are poverty and injustice and discrimination of class and often the teacher takes on the role of a modern social worker. A love story between the two main characters has been introduced (the teacher and a female colleague played by two popular actors of Italian fiction) which is non-existent in the book. More than an adaptation, this was a re-elaboration of the original novel.

6. LA MEMORIA E IL PERDONO

Format: Mini-series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 17.12.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 8,176

Produced by: RaiFiction. Compagnia
Leone Cinematografica (IT), Televisio'

de Catalunya (ES). Factotum (ES) with
participation of Via Digital (ES)

Producers: Cecilia Cope and Fania
Petrocchi (Rai), Elio and Francesco
Scardamaglia (Compagnia Leone
Cinematografica)

Director: Giorgio Capitani

Writer: Francesco Scardamaglia

Music: Natale Massara

Cast: Virna Lisi, Jean Pierre Cassel, Anna Valle, Xabier Elorriaga, Bianca Guaccero, Augusto Stucchi, Eugenio Marinelli, Osvaldo Ruggieri, Mirko

Petrini, Jesus Emiliano Coltorti, Ivan Desny, Antonio Sarasso, Imma Colomer, Pep Cruz, Angel Cerdanya "El Sueco", Josep M. Blanco, con la partecipazione di Andrea Giordana

The main character of *La memoria e il perdono* is a middle-aged teacher who leaves for Argentina in the hope of tracing her grandson that she had never met. The child had been taken away at birth from her daughter, who had disappeared twenty years before. In Argentina she meets and sympathises with a French businessman with the same problem. The appalling and painful drama of the *desaparecidos* in Argentina is dealt with from an intimistic point of view. At the end the tranquil tones of reconciliation prevail over indignation and anger. In this case the theme of the search for the origins is reversed: here we have the older people who try to join the broken threads of generations. The most successful aspect of the miniseries was to show two elderly but very fit and healthy people determined to do what they set out to do but who are able to understand and forgive.

7. LE ALI DELLA VITA 2

Format: Mini-series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 28.11.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 8,066

Produced by: Rizzoli Audiovisivi, Mediatrade

Producers: Angelo Rizzoli (Rizzoli Audiovisivi), Marco Videtta (Mediatrade)

Director: Stefano Reali

Writers: Stefano Reali, Laura Ippoliti, Francesca Panzarella, with the collaboration of Mariangela Barbanente

Music: Stefano Reali, Iacopo Fiastrì

Cast: Sabrina Ferilli, Virna Lisi, Giovanna Di Rauso, Rita Del Piano, Renato De Carmine, Pier Luigi Coppola, Gino Lavagetto, Glauco Onorato, Ivan Bacchi, Danny Baldini, Domenico Fortunato e con Lia Tanzi, Marisa Merlini, Emilio Bonucci

Set in Italy in the 60's this is an elegant female melodrama full of pathos and memorable scenes which deals with intense issues such as the fight to establish one's own identity. As in the first of the miniseries, the main characters are an unconventional and vital teacher of music (Rosanna) and a strict and cruel nun obsessed with discipline (Sister Alberta). They meet again in an orphanage run by sister Alberta who seems to have changed quite a bit and enthusiastically welcomes Rosanna giving her a retarded boy unable to speak to look after. Rosanna manages to discover the psychological trauma which is the cause of the boy's disturbed behaviour, and helps him to speak again, as well as finding out who he actually is: he is the missing heir of a rich family. But here we have the trap set by Sister

Alberta: Rosanna gets taken to court accused of undue influence and circumvention. All the final part of the miniseries deals with the trial against Rosanna. Initially the protagonist seems to be defeated but the truth will come out and sister Alberta's real character and intentions are revealed and she is taken to a mental institution. It was a difficult task to produce the sequel of a story already perfectly brought to an end in the first miniseries. but the result was actually quite convincing and if possible - better - than the original one.

8. PICCOLO MONDO ANTICO

Format: Mini-series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 15.02.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 7,596

Produced by: Mediatrade, Videotrade
Audiovisivi

Producers: Anna Maria Morelli
(Mediatrade). Angelo Rizzoli
(Videotrade Audiovisivi)

Director: Cinzia TH Torrini

Writers: Massimo De Rita, Ottavio

Iemma; freely inspired by the novel of
Antonio Fogazzaro

Music: Savio Riccardi

Cast: Alessandro Gassman, Claudia
Pandolfi, Helmut Griem, Renato

Carpentieri, Adalberto Maria Merli,
Enrico Beruschi, Ralph Palka, Mario

Perrotta, Franco Diogene, Sonia Gessner,

Paolo Lombardi, Sonia Martinelli,

Franco Mescolini, Arnaldo Ninchi,

Kaspar Capparoni, e con Virna Lisi

This is a typical product of Italian fiction's renewed interest in literary adaptations. It tells the story of a nobleman with liberal ideas who marries a girl of humble origins against his grandmother's wishes - a grim and severe advocate of class privilege. The life of the young couple is made difficult by economic problems because the grandmother has taken away all his rights. *Piccolo mondo antico*, one of the Italian literary classics which had already been televised in 1957 and 1983, through intense, dramatic and emotional events gives us an important historical tapestry of the Italian *Risorgimento*. The fiction production, fairly accurate as regards the literary text, is of good quality, achieved with great awareness: produced with extreme care, there are important actors and more attention has been given to the private aspects rather than to the historical and political implications of the time.

9. IL COMMISSARIO MONTALBANO

Format: Series (1x105'. 1x90')

Date of broadcast: 9.05.01

Channel: Raidue

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 7,357

Produced by: RaiFiction, Sveriges
Television (SE), PALOMAR (IT)

Producers: Cecilia Cope, Erica
Pellegrini (Rai), Carlo Degli Esposti
(PALOMAR)

Director: Alberto Sironi

Writers: Francesco Bruni, Andrea Camilleri

Music: Franco Piersanti

Cast: Luca Zingaretti, Katharina Böhm, Cesare Bocci, Davide Lo Verde, Peppino

Mazzotta, Angelo Russo, Giovanni Guardiano, Roberto Nobile, Marcello Perracchio

A series based on a best-seller, this high quality fiction brilliantly joins together the strength of a universal genre like the cop-story with elements of cultural particularity. Along with Jean-Claude Izzo, and Manuel Vazquez Montalban, Andrea Camilleri (the author of the books and co-scriptwriter of the adaptation) is one of the leading exponents of the new-born tradition of “Mediterranean crime stories”. Montalbano moves around in sunlit Sicily suspended between ancient and modern and is the protagonist of complex investigations where in the cases of crimes of passion often reveal hidden implications (organised crime, political corruption). The main character is an all-round hero, a fascinating package of contradiction: he is reflexive but hot-headed, clever but ready for a violent head-on confrontation. Montalbano is played by an actor whose outstanding personality has transformed a literary character into a popular television icon. The series began in 1999 and since then there have been two episodes each year with cinematographic production standards and duration. *Il commissario Montalbano* is one of the few titles of recent Italian fiction capable of sparking off enthusiasm both from critics as well as the public.

10. INCANTESIMO

Format: Serial (26x100’)

Date of broadcast: 16.01.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 7,329

Produced by: RaiFiction, TPI – Victory Multimedia Fonds realised by Guido De Angelis and Maurizio De Angelis

Producer: Daniela Valentini

Directors: Alessandro Cane, Tomaso Sherman, Leandro Castellani

Writers: Gianfranco Clerici, Daniele Stroppa (story editor), written with Gigliola Battaglini, Marcello Coscia, Gianni Fortis, Daniele Stroppa, Giancarlo Clerici, Giuditta Rinaldi

Music: Guido and Maurizio De Angelis

Cast: Alessio Boni, Valentina Chico, Giorgio Borghetti, Vanessa Gravina,

Giuseppe Pambieri, Paola Pitagora, Delia Boccardo, Emilio Bonucci, Paolo Malco, Marco Quaglia, Giada Carlucci, Valentina Vicario, Hélène Nardini, Gino Lavagetto, Angiola Baggi, Lorenzo Majnoni, Carlo Valli, Davide Bechini, Sebastiano Bianco, Francesco Prando, Antonio Faa, Guido Morbello, Roberto Posse, Livia Bonifazi, Gea Lionello, Valentina Lainati, Tiziana Sensi, Warner Bentivegna, Laura Nardi, Daniela Piazza, Luigi Maria Burruano, Chiara Conti, Giusy Frallonardo, Lorenzo De Angelis, Stefano Quatrosi, Antonio Tallura, Kaspar Capparoni, Linda Batista, Carmen Scarpitta, Cinzia Veronesi, Loredana Martinez, Elisabetta Carta, Claudio Trionfi, Alessandra Acciai

Broadcast since 1998, this programme is a prime-time serial which has managed to win and maintain much higher than expected audience ratings. Starting from the second season it was switched from the second to the first channel of Italian public television. It is a classic *feuilleton* whose authors skilfully use all the typical ingredients of a popular melodrama: blackmail, infidelity, contrasted love affairs and the search for identity. The most original element of *Incantesimo* is the narrative structure. The principle setting is a private clinic and the group of secondary characters are confirmed each season while the main couple, unfailingly doomed to go through moments of torment and heartache, change with each new edition.

5 INTERESTING PROGRAMMES

1. CENTROVETRINE

Format: Serial (242x25')

Date of broadcast: 8.01.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Daytime

Audience (average): 3,933

Produced by: Mediatrade, Aran
Endemol

Producers: Daniele Carnacina (creative producer); Bruno Stefani (executive producer); Silvia Colavizza (associate producer), Massimo Del Frate (editorial manager Canale5); Alfonso Cometti, Roberto Palamara (producers Mediatrade)

Directors: Giovanni Barbaro, Michele Rovini, Renzo Badolisani, Marco Maccaferri, Giuseppina Romagnoli,

Giorgio Molteni, Carlo Timpanaro, Pepi Romagnoli, Giorgio Bardelli, Michele Ferrari, Marco Foti

Writers: Eleonora Fiorini, Luca Pellegrini, Luca De Bei, Giorgia Mariani, Laura Rigoni, Davide Sala, Anna Maria Sorbo, Christian Bisceglia, Gerardo Fontana, Margherita Pauselli

Music: Silvio Amato

Cast: Roberto Alpi, Mary Asiride, Andrea Bermani, Serena Bonanno, Massimo Bulla, Elisabetta Coraini, Roberto Farnesi, Daniela Fazzolari, Pietro Genuardi, Melania Maccaferri, Sabrina Marinucci, Camillo Milli, Clemente Pernarella, Francesca Reviglio, Sergio Troiano

Set in a shopping mall, this soap is able to kindle the flame of the narration based on private (sentimental and domestic) story lines. The melodramatic tone prevails tainted with elements of mystery and legal drama. The mainstay of the first season was the conflict linked to a classical situation of stories of this kind: the greedy and cruel director of the shopping mall, his stepson swearing revenge and a girl who is loved by both men. None of them know yet that she is the illegitimate daughter of the villain. The second soap of a private channel, produced as the first by Endemol, is a fairly good professional production and thanks also to a well-placed position in the programme schedules, it courted success from the onset.

2. UNA LUNGA NOTTE

Format: TV Movie (90')

Date of broadcast: 19.01.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 5,578

Produced by: RaiFiction, Clemart

Producers: Massimo Martino (Clemart),
Fabrizio Zappi (Rai)

Director: Ilaria Cirino

Writers: Robert F. Jordan, Gioia
Magrini

Music: Andrea Guerra

Cast: Stefania Orsola Garello, Massimo
Venturiello, Julienne Liberto, Brando
Spainì, Nicola Di Pinto, Claudio di
Benedetto, Giuliano Manetti, Eleonora
Pariante, Lucio Gardin, Annalisa
Picconi, Giovanni Visentin, Francesco
Figus, Stefano Macchi, Giovanna
Nodari, Mariano Rigillo, Leila Durante,
Carlo Croccolo

This TV movie tells of the ordeal of a mother and father whose daughter needs a heart transplant. They do everything they can to save the child and even get to the point where they get in touch with a shady and dishonest dealer in human organs. In the end they decide to report him to the police even though this means condemning their daughter to death. However, all is not lost and a heart ready for the transplant is found through officially recognised channels. *Una lunga notte* is a rare example of Italian fiction capable of facing a serious and very delicate issue of topicality. Moderate and convincing this TV film was able to avoid the danger of didactic narration managing to express a clear moral point of view and at the same time totally respecting the internal developments in the story. An excellent medium-budget product by a director at the start of his career.

3. IL BELLO DELLE DONNE

Format: Series (12x90')

Date of broadcast: 7.03.01

Channel: Canale 5

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 6,225

Produced by: Mediatrade, Janus

Producers: Fabiana Moccia
(Mediatrade), Alberto Tarallo (Janus)

Directors: Maurizio Ponzi, Giovanni
Soldati, Luigi Parisi, Lidia Montanari

Writers: Teodosio Losito, Stefano
Tummolini, Luigi Spagnol, Dorian
Leondeff

Music: Antonio Sechi

Cast: Stefania Sandrelli, Giuliana De
Sio, Gabriel Garko, Eva Grimaldi,
Nicole Grimaudo, Antonella Ponziani,
Lunetta Savino, Caterina Vertova, Nancy
Brilli, Virna Lisi, Massimo Bellinzoni,
Urbano Barberini, Tereza Zajickova,
Stefano Davanzati, Pino Colizzi,
PierMaria Cecchini, Cristina Ascani,
Azzurra Antonacci, Damiano Adriano,
Matteo Ripaldi, Armando Pucci, Maria
Michela Mari, Simone Serra, Georgia
Luzi, Felice Andreasi

A pleasant provincial environment is the ideal setting for this choral all-female series, which ransacks the repertoire of the tabloids: love stories, sex, infidelity and gossip. The events are centred round a beauty salon run by the main characters whose principal adversary is an immoral and nasty man-eater who is the owner of a rival beauty salon. Almost all the male characters are stupid, arrogant and unpleasant with one exception - a gay hairdresser. Among the strong points of this series, apart from a cast full of famous and attractive actresses, there is some clever eye-winking at several prickly questions (gay and lesbian love affairs, a few short nude scenes). An intelligent coating of transgression covers the traditional imagination of a female world, where feelings represent the major purpose in life, a never-ending source of joy and heartache.

4. BRANCACCIO

Format: Mini-series (2x100')

Date of broadcast: 11.04.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 6,935

Produced by: RaiFiction, Tangram Film

Producers: Doriana Caputi (RaiFiction), Roberto and Matteo Levi (Tangram)

Directors: Maurizio Ponzi, Giovanni Soldati, Luigi Parisi, Lidia Montanari

Writer: Gianfranco Albano

Music: Carlo Siliotto

Cast: Ugo Dighero, Beppe Fiorello, Tiziana Lodato, Lucia Sardo, Alessandro Agnello, Marco Zora, Paride Benassai, Calogero Buttà, Raffaele Gengale, Orazio Alba, Alessandra Costanzo, Orio Scaduto, Carlo Vitale, con l'amichevole partecipazione di Sergio Fiorentini

This is based on a true story and tells of the dramatic exploits of a priest who tries to open a school in a run-down area of a Sicilian town. The protagonist uses all his courage, vitality and moral strength to fight the Mafia - omnipresent in every sphere of the life of the inhabitants until his ultimate sacrifice - his death. He is killed by the brother of a boy who the priest had managed to snatch from the Mafia dogma. The style is very brisk, without rhetoric or melodramatic exaggeration, the main character is portrayed very convincingly by a comic actor in his first attempt at a dramatic role. *Brancaccio* is a clever mixture of dramatic strength and social obligation and has obtained a leading position in the current trend of stories about the Mafia, very popular with recent Italian fiction.

5. COMPAGNI DI SCUOLA

Format: Series (26x50')

Date of broadcast: 25.09.01

Channel: Raidue

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 3,257

Produced by: RaiFiction, Publiglobo (IT)

Producers: Carlo Bixio, Marco Ravera (Publiglobo); Anouk Andaloro (Rai)

Directors: Claudio Norza, Tiziana Aristarco

Writers: Sandro Petraglia, written with Fidel Signorile, Mattia Betti, Diego Cestino, Chiara Cremaschi, Riccardo Irrera, Alessandro Pondi, Stefano Tummolini, Andrea Valentini

Music: Andrea Guerra

Cast: Massimo Lopez, Paolo Sassanelli, Paola Tiziana Cruciani, Imma Piro, Camilla Filippi, Samuela Sardo, Luigi Petrucci, Carlotta Miti, Elisabetta Pellini, Ruben Rigillo, Brando De Sica, Laura Chiatti, Raffaello Balzo, Riccardo Scamarcio, Damiano Russo, Anna Flati, Vito Di Bella, Mauro Pirovano, Andrea Bove, Enzo Limardi, Giulia Cirri, Andrea Refuto, Cristiana Capotondi, Valeria Valeri

This programme is a long series filmed in electronics and is an adaptation of the Spanish format *Compañeros*. The main setting is that of a high school but the series is deliberately intergenerational: there are teenagers and adults (students, professors and parents) but there are also elderly people and children from the primary school.

Complex parental and relational ties hold together the particularly broad bunch of characters. In the end it is the strict deputy headmaster and the extrovert science professor who are given more space as protagonists, they are poles apart and the series highlights the difficulties of their living together in the same flat. This debatable choice ends up by penalising the more original ideas and freshness of the series: the gentler tones of a dramedy are used to deal with the teenagers' problems and conflicts with the adults.

5 DISAPPOINTING PROGRAMMES

1. ANGELO IL CUSTODE

Format: Series (8x90')

Date of broadcast: 1.04.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 5,221

Produced by: RaiFiction, Lux Vide (IT)

Producers: Carla Capotondi (Rai), Alessandro Jacchia (Lux Vide)

Director: Gianfrancesco Lazotti

Writers: Dido Castelli, Cecilia Calvi,

Mauro Marsili, Carlo Mazzotta,

Massimo Torre, Francesca Panzarella

Music: Nicola Piovani

Cast: Lino Banfi, Giovanna Ralli,

Edoardo Costa, Francesca Rettondini,

con Gian, Rosanna Banfi, Paolo De Vita,

Domenico Mancini, Yuri Gugliucci,

Sabrina Colle, Federico Maria Galante,

Cristiana Capotondi, Sydne Rome, Anna

Safroncick, e con la partecipazione

straordinaria di Giuliano Gemma

The main character of this series is an elderly immigrant who, after spending forty years in Argentina, comes back to Italy to solve a tedious question of red-tape. The problem takes longer than he imagines and he finds a job as a concierge in a sports club run by one of his past girlfriends. Around the golf courses and swimming pools he becomes everybody's friend and ally, helping to resolve the daily difficulties of the children and grandchildren of his employer as well as the problems which from time to time worry the people who come and go from the club. *Angelo il custode* stems from an idea of exploiting the popularity of the main actor, now an expert in the role of a "sensible granddad", but the scheme is no more than a shallow and unoriginal concept of style. The main character stuck on the face of the actor, predictable relationships, and a pleasant but perhaps inappropriate setting gathering inspiration for interesting episodes are the main faults of this fiction programme which obtained much lower than expected ratings.

2. VIA ZANARDI, 33

Format: Series (24x25')

Date of broadcast: 28.01.01

Channel: Italia 1

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 1,295

Produced by: Mediatrade, Pequod

Producers: Alfonso Cometti
(Mediatrade), Rosario Rinaldo (Pequod)

Directors: Antonello De Leo, Andrea Serafini

Writers: Nicola Alvau, Andrea Garellò

Music: Lunapop

Cast: Enrico Silvestrin, Dino Abbrescia, Elio Germano, Ginevra Colonna, Antonia Liskova, Alessandra Bertin

The sitcom is a less important genre of Italian fiction (there are few and of poor quality) and it has been years since there was a domestic series created for a youthful public, *Via Zanardi, 33* has tried to beat this double challenge telling the amusing life together of six university students (three girls and three boys) who share two flats. Quick-paced and not without interesting ideas the sitcom presented us with rather impromptu comedy and without the essential depth of character or clearly defined situations. The programme was received with interest but the obvious faults in structure and the far too evident reference to the cult sitcom, *Friends*, immediately turned public favour away. Produced by authors without adequate experience and professional know-how, although destined to be a one-off fiction production, *Via Zanardi 33* was in any case an interesting experiment.

3. CROCIATI

Format: Mini-series (2x90')

Date of broadcast: 14.10.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 5,264

Produced by: RaiFiction; Lux Vide (IT); Kirch Media (DE)

Producers: Luca Bernabei (Lux Vide); Roberta Cadringer (RaiFiction); Alessandro Jacchia (Lux Vide); Sabine Tettenborn (associate producer)

Director: Dominique Othenin-Girard

Writer: Andrea Porporati; story editor: Luca Manzi

Music: Harold Kloser, Thomas Wanker

Cast: Alessandro Gassman, Johannes Brandrup, Thure Riefenstein, Barbara Bobulova, Karin Proia, Antonino Iuorio, Uwe Ochsenknecht, Thomas Heinze, Flavio Insinna, Dieter Kirchlechner, Rodolfo Corsato, Renzo Stacchi, Dubravo Jovanovic, Elizabeth Djorevska, Nebojsa Milovanovic, Slobodan Ninkovic, Slobodan Custic, Franco Nero, Armin Mueller-Stahl

This tells the story of three young men, just after the year 1000 who set off from the south of Italy to take part in the Crusades. They are quite different from each other (the son of a Saracen and a Christian woman, a servant, a nobleman whose land has been confiscated) and they all react in a different way to the Crusades and their contradictions. The miniseries, a high budget fiction by a European co-production deals with a crucial period of time in the Middle Ages. And it is precisely the extremely controversial nature of the issues dealt with (the meeting and confrontation between the Christian faith and Islam) which is the main problem of this fiction. The approach is characterised by an excess of political correctness and the wish for impartiality which has taken away power and originality from the project. Characterised by confused narrative development *Crociati* is neither convincing as a story of growth and maturity of the protagonists, nor as a respectful historical fresco of cultural differences.

4. UNA DONNA PER AMICO 3

Format: Series (12x100')

Date of broadcast: 2.02.01

Channel: Raiuno

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience (average): 5,504

Produced by: RaiFiction, Aran Endemol (IT)

Producers: Daniela Valentini (Rai). Marco Bassetti (Aran Endemol)

Directors: Alberto Manni, Marcantonio Graffeo

Writers: Maria Carmela Cicinnati, Peter Exacoustos, Doriana Leondeff, Antonio Cosentino, Emanuela Del Monaco, Ivan Cotroneo, Chiara Balestrazzi, Roberto Tiraboschi, Elena Cantarone, Grazia

Giardiello, Roberto Jannone, Daniela Bortignoni, Story editors: Maria Carmela Cicinnati, Peter Exacoustos, collaboration to story editing: Antonio Cosentino, Emanuela Del Monaco

Music: Antonio Di Pofi

Cast: Elisabetta Gardini, Enzo Decaro, Vanni Corbellini, Massimo Ciavarro, Paolo Triestino, Antonio Manzini, Luigi La Monica, Stefano Benassi, Gabriele Corsi, Gloria Sirabella, Emanuela Rossi, Ludovica Modugno, Francesca Nunzi, Graziella Polesinanti, Felicitè Mbezelè, Viviana Natale, Antonio Petrocelli, Lucio Allocca, Cosimo Fusco, Fiorenza Tessari, Alessandro Prete, Isabella Salvato, Elena D'Ippolito, Pietro

The first series of this hospital drama made in the format 8x90' was acclaimed as a successful quality product, In its third edition the producers decided to change the essence of the fiction, transforming it into a long serial shot in electronics. The redefinition of the concept, however, is unaccomplished. On the one hand they tried to reintroduce the scheme of the first two series by keeping the main scenes centred on a married couple - both gynaecologists - who live and work together (in this latest series they have their third marital crisis), on the other they tried to extend the centre of attention to the doctors working in the other wards (from emergency to paediatrics) pushing the series into an accumulation of superficially dramatised situations. The drop in audience ratings compared to the first two editions were due to confused narration and poor technical realisation and the series is not going to be repeated for these reasons.

5. CAMICI BIANCHI

Format: Series (9x100')

Date of broadcast: 28.06.01

Channel: Canale 5. Rete 4

Time-slot: Prime time

Audience: 1,096

Produced by: Mediatrade

Producer: Achille Manzotti

Directors: Stefano Amatucci, Fabio Jephcott

Writers: Marco Amato, Gerardo Fontana, Paolo Girelli, Giordano Raggi,

Daniele Cesarano, Paolo Marchesini,

Achille Manzotti

Music: Fabrizio Siciliano

Cast: Enrico Mutti, Valentina Sperli,

Lorenzo Majnoni, Bettina Giovannini,

Roberto Accornero, Ines Nobili, Luigi

Petrucci, Violante Placido, Chiara

Stampone, Federico Di Pofi, Ciro

Scalera, Loredana Martinez, Antonello

Soarano, e con la partecipazione di

Caterina Deregibus, e con la

partecipazione straordinaria di Ugo

Pagliai

This is a classical hospital choral series which tells about the doings of a group of doctors (the surgeon, his assistant, the paediatrician, the psychologist and the consultant) as well as paramedics that work in a public hospital, The series is unsatisfactory from every aspect: superficial and inconsistent characters from a professional point of view, uninspiring and feeble case histories mingled with trivial stories of private life, dysfunctional setting arrangements and a production incapable of masking the claustrophobic effects of a programme with only interior shots. This series, filmed at a moderate cost confirmed the difficulty that Italian fiction has with a hospital series, one of the canonical genres of television seriality which enjoys great popularity in many important television markets.

SPAIN

TOP 10 PROGRAMMES

1. CUÉNTAME

Format: Series (13x60')

Date of broadcast* 3.09.2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 5.733.000

Produced by: Cartel, Ganga

Producers: Manuel Guijarro (TVE1),
Miguel Ángel Bernadeau (ex. Prod.)

Author: Miguel Ángel Bernadeau

Writers: Miguel Ángel Fernández,
Joaquín Górriz

Cast: Imanol Arias, Ana Duato, María
Galiana, Ricardo Gómez, Irene Visedo,
Pablo Rivero, Fernando Fernán Gómez,
Toni Leblanc, José Sancho, Rosario
Pardo, Zoe Briatúa, Enrique San
Francisco

* it refers to the starting date of the programme

Nostalgic comedy set in Madrid in 1968 about the events in the everyday life of Antonio and Mercedes Alcántara, a middle class couple, their three children and Mercedes' mother. Carlos, the younger son narrates his memories, the story of a family that is representative of a country, and, above all, of an historical period. The most important element in this series is, without doubt, the elaborate staging and the verisimilitude of the abundant archive material used, including the morphing of certain images. Situated somewhere between a critique of customs, nostalgia for aroused memories and 1970s *retro* pop fashions, *Cuéntame* is one of the TVE's major successes in recent years and of the Spanish fiction in 2001. Participating in the series is the veteran actor Toni Leblanc, in the role of an amusing newspaper seller, undoubtedly happy about reliving the era of his successes.

2. PERIODISTAS

Format: Series (107x60'; 27 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 9.04.2001

Channel: Tele5

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 5.036.000

Produced by: Globo Media

Producers: Daniel Écija, Felipe Pontón
(ex. prods.)

Directors: Daniel Écija, Felipe Pontón

Writers: Felipe Mellizo (coord.), Ignasi
Rubio, Rocío Sobrino, Salvador Perpiñá,
Pilar Nadal

Cast: José Coronado, Belén Rueda, Álex Angulo, Esther Arroyo, María Pujalte, Pepón Nieto, Alicia Borrachero, Paco Marín, María Jesús Valdés, Paco Català, Enric Arredondo, Joaquín Salvador, José

González, Nadia Henche, Pep Munné, Jorge Bosch, Miriam Gallego, Enrique Arce, Aníbal Soto, Isabel Aboy, Ginés García Millán, Unax Ugalde, Miguel Ortiz

As in recent seasons, *Periodistas* has increased the suspense and the action, even though it has not relinquished analysing the characters and their chaotic relations. The social topics dealt with by our journalists concern increasingly delicate and complex issues in contemporary Spanish society (the rights of minors, computing piracy, health scandals, exorcism, donation of egg cells, bigamy...) while the temperature in the editorial office is kept boiling thanks to personal events. After a brief flirt between Clara and Luis, and after the editor decides to stop covering local news, the uncertainty about the child Ana is expecting, the love story between Berta's father and the trainee Isabel, the problems Mamen and Blas have to face with after the fostering of a child, the love affair between Claudia and Pablo's son and the possible marriage between Ali and Clara's ex-husband are the main issues of 2001. All these constitute a complex sentimental framework supporting the exciting plots, which seem almost police stories, which the series is developing in this season.

3. DIME QUE ME QUIERES

Format: Series (12x60')

Date of broadcast: 11.01.2001

Channel: Antena3

Time-slot: 21:55

Audience: 5.030.000

Produced by: Cartel

Producer: Pilar Roble

Directors: Fernando Colomo, Miguel

Ángel Díez, Raúl de la Morena

Writers: Manuel Ángel Egea, José

Ángel Esteban, Carlos López

Cast: Imanol Arias, Lydia Bosch,

Andrea Muñoz, Talía del Val, Pastora

Vega, Fernando Cayo, Manuel Hormigo,

Marta Belenguer, María Fernanda Ocón,

Miguel Palenzuela

Adult comedy narrated by Laura, the 11 year old daughter of Teresa Lugo, a pianist who is attending to her divorce papers. As a result of a prank by Laura and David, the son of Guillermo Castillo, Teresa and Guillermo meet and fall in love, but this passionate relationship is to be tormented by continuous ambiguities and misunderstandings which impede the pianist and the manager from achieving their longed-for life together. Teresa writes advertising jingles and is part of a jazz group, while Guillermo is trying to launch a catering service which, for the moment, is giving him more problems than satisfaction. In the meantime, Teresa's sister separates from her husband who is a friend and employee of Guillermo, and the sisters' mother begins a love affair with Guillermo's father which complicates even more the conflict in the couple's relationship. The attraction of the main

characters was not enough to prevent the progressive weakening of a comedy which is perhaps brilliant and well done but which is also a little superfluous.

4. ACADEMIA DE BAILE GLORIA

Format: Series (17x60')

Date of broadcast: 08.03.2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.774.000

Produced by: José Frade PCSA

Producers: José Frade (ex. prod. José Frade PCSA), José Luis Gracia (TVE)

Director: Sebantián Junyent

Author: Sebastián Junyent

Writer: Sebastián Junyent

Cast: Lina Morgan, Marta Puig, Charo Reina, Eugenia Roca, Carmen Morales, Paco Racionero, Jesús Olmedo, José Luis Mosquera, Kako Larrañaga, Vura Serra, Marisa Lahoz, Beatriz Santiago, Esther del Prado, Natalia Robles

Asun, known in the artistic world as Gloria Grant, whose husband has left her with two children to look after, decides to open a dance school at her home. Her mother lives with them and passes herself off as disabled, although she is not. She is constantly interfering in the professional and personal life of her daughter. Making up the cast of this comedy, which follows in the footsteps of *Hostal Royal Manzanares*, (starring, once more, the popular actress Lina Morgan), we have a Moroccan domestic help, three gossips who are always poking their noses into school business: a half-crazy pianist, Asun's landlord whom she never pays, a lorry driver who wants to be a woman, a gay dance teacher and one or two other Don Juans who steal away Gloria's heart from time to time. A number of famous people appear in different episodes of the series.

5. MANOS A LA OBRA

Format: Series (176x60'; 38 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 2.1.2001

Channel: Antena3

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.641.000

Produced by: Aspa Vídeo for Antena3 TV

Producer: Vicente Escrivá

Director: José Antonio Escrivá

Writer: Vicente Escrivá

Cast: Carlos Iglesias, Ángel de Andrés López, Carmen Rossi, Jesús Vázquez, Antonio Medina, Jorge San José, Núria González, Mónica Cano, Mónica Cervera, Tomás Sáez, Mariana Carvallés

Benito and Manolo are neighbours and partners in a plumbing business which doesn't bring them much profit but endless complications. Benito is single and lives with his mother who continues to treat him with the care and attention she gave him as a child. Manolo is married to the short-tempered Adela (who, in the 2000 season decided to move to the Caribbean) and living with them is her nephew Lolo, a shirker who complicates the

absurd working activities of the two partners even more. The other characters of the series make up a sort of animated comic sketch in which the work affairs of the two main characters are based on a stereotyped humour linked to colourful elements of the Spanish burlesque tradition, which are getting more and more outrageous, season after season, given the unquestionable success of the series. In the latest season, the arrival of Loren upsets the two friends, although the introduction of new characters (a policeman, the bar owner, etc.) does not modify substantially the identity of this continuous celebration of the absurd.

6. EL COMISARIO

Format: Series (48x60';13 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 0.01.2001

Channel: Tele5

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.629.000

Produced by: Boca TV S.A., Estudios Picasso

Producers: Emilio A. Pina (dir.), César Benítez (ex. prod.) Esther Jiménez (Estudios Picasso)

Directors: Jesús Font, José Ramón Paino

Writers: Ignacio del Moral, Carmen Abarca, Juan Barbero

Cast: Tito Valverde, María Jesús Sirvent, Elena Irureta, Joaquín Climent, Laura Domínguez, Jaime Pujol, Marcial Álvarez, Nathalie Poza, Margarita Lascoiti, Francesc Orella, Mar Regueras, Paula Sebastián

El comisario is the first Spanish police series of the new batch of Spanish television fiction. Planned initially as a dramedy, it was completely transformed - the characters and the topics - by its creators. Having destroyed the three episodes already recorded it was rewritten as a police drama. This series, which has received a number of prizes, concerns the daily life of a local police station in Madrid and, despite its title, it has developed towards choral representation, which, this season, was characterised by action in the professional plots. On a structural plane, the private stories of the characters in *El Comisario* are developed in serial fashion (the relationship between Pope and the prostitute Elo; the loves and disaffections of Charly and Lola; Telmo's handling of his AIDS infection etc), while the main plot in each episode is concluded over a span of a few episodes the professional subplots which complete it begin and end in each episode.

7. COMPAÑEROS

Format: Series (115x60'; 29 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 10.04.2001

Channel: Antena 3

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.614.000

Produced by: Globo Media

Producer: Manuel Ríos (prod. es.)

Director: César Vidal, José Ramón Ayerra
Writers: Ignasi García, Carmen Montesa, César Vidal, Mónica Martín-Grande, Manuel Ríos San Martín
Cast: Beatriz Carvajal, Tina Sáinz, Mercè Pons, Antonio Zabalburu, Dunia Jove, Francis Lorenzo, Olga Molina,

Miguel Rellán, Estrella Zapatero, César Vea, María Garralón, Daniel Retuerta, Manuel Morón, Julián González, Lara de Miguel, Manuel Feijoo, Amalia García, Armando del Río Juan José Ballesta, Lola Baldrich, Ramón Barea, Cristina Peña, Alejandro Sigüenza

The series narrates the difficult relations between teachers, students and parents in a Madrid high school. The departure of the actress Concha Velasco, the main character in *Compañeros*, and the end of the rival series *Querido Maestro* in 1998, led to increased concentration on young people and their problems (personal and social) which ended up transforming this production into an alternative to juvenile series, which have had difficulty taking root in Spain. It has practically become a cult programme, with fan clubs for favourite characters. The countless narrative strands in this very much “serialised” series mix the existential problems of the young with the social problems and personal dramas of certain adults (Marisa’s alcohol problem; the headmistress’ sister who has Alzheimers disease, etc.). Although *Compañeros* is choral, the couple, Quimi and Valle, who left the series the last season, have been one of the main attractions in recent years.

8. HOSPITAL CENTRAL

Format: Series (26x60’; 13 eps. in 2001)
Date of broadcast: 11.01.2001
Channel: Tele5
Time-slot: 22:00
Audience: 4.279.000

Produced by: Estudios Picasso, Videomedia
Producers: Santiago G. Lillo (prod. Estudios Picasso), Manuel Requena (ex.

prod. Estudios Picasso), Sonia Martínez (prod. director)
Director: Jacabo Rispa
Writer: Jorge Díaz (coord.)
Cast: María Casal, Sergi Mateu, Jesús Cabrero, Rosa Mariscal, Jordi Rebellón, Lola Marcelli, Lola Casamayor, Antonio Zabalburu, Diana Ázaro, Fátima Baeza, Ángel Pardo, Reyes Moleres, Marisol Molandi, Ángel Rouco

Hospital Central is a Spanish *ER* with a lots of scenes shot on location and meticulous camera and cutting work, which mixes close-ups and mid shots with others reaching a depth of 37 metres. In the footsteps of the north American model, the Tele 5 series, which had the collaboration of the Madrid First Aid Service (SAMUR) and Civil Protection, reproduces daily life in a hospital with a certain accuracy and at a good pace. The characters deal with emerging social problems: overdoses among the young or ethyl coma, sexual abuse, domestic violence, etc. The personal relations between the main characters have less importance than the professional plots, although the solidity of the features which define the different characters in

Hospital Central reflect an undeniable realism. This year, the series has reinforced the loyalty of its viewers,

9. POLICÍAS, EN EL CORAZÓN DE LA CALLE

Format: Series (47 x 60'; 31 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 29.03.2001

Channel: Antena3

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.181.000

Produced by: Globo Media

Producers: Manuel Valdivia (ex. prod.)

Tino Pont (prod. Antena3), César

Rodríguez Blanco e Chus Vallejo (ex. prod.)

Directors: Manuel Valdivia, Guillermo

Fernández, Jesús del Cerro, Sandra

Gallego

Writers: Nacho Cabana, Chus Vallejo,

J. M. Ruiz Córdoba, Beatriz G. Cruz,

Verónica Viñé

Cast: José María Pou, Adolfo

Fernández, Natalia Millán, Daniel

Guzmán, Toni Sevilla, Natalie Poza,

Diego Martín, Laura Pamplona, Lola

Dueñas, Andrés Lima, Toni Acosta,

Pedro Casablanc

The series narrates the daily life of a police station in Madrid whose chief inspector Héctor Ferrer is a hard-working policeman, honest, but willing to violate regulations if the situation requires it. Attached to the station there is a first aid medical centre whose interventions often cross over with those of the police officers. The main plots consist of cases which arrive at the police station but the personal relations and the private life of the policemen have considerable importance. The north American influence of products like *Turno de guardia* are obvious references for this series, with frenetic shooting, often on location, which is rather well done in the action sequences and special effects. The horizontal plot of the latest season is structured around Álex, a serial killer who has become Carlos' obsession; Rafa becomes disabled after a shooting and resigns from the police; Ferrer has difficult moments because of his daughter Chus, while the members of the medical centre gain visibility.

10. ALA...DINA!

Format: Series (57x30', 60'; 25 eps. in 2001)

Date of broadcast: 2.01.2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 4.126.000

Produced by: Cartel and Calcon, with TVE

Producers: Eduardo Campoy and Paco Arango (ex. prods.) Carlos I. Manrique (TVE)

Director: Rafael de la Cueva

Author: Paco Arango

Writer: Javier G. Amezua

Cast: Miriam Díaz Aroca, Gary Piquer,

Lydia San José, José González,

Alejandro Relló, Alfonso Vallejo,

Verónica Mengod, Carmen Ramírez,

Eduardo McGregor, Nathalie Seseña,

Carmen Segarra

Dina is from a magician's school in Persia, but her disastrous reputation led to her being shut up in a lamp in 1900. A child frees her in 1999 and takes her home. Despite the initial doubts of the family, Dina stays with them as a domestic help. Her work gives her the chance to get involved in all sorts of enterprises, thanks to her magic, which Tomas, Bolita's father has expressly asked her not to use. After Dina's marriage to Tomas, the family takes on another domestic help and in the last five episodes, the character changes body so that the actress Míriam Díaz Aroca can replace Paz Padilla. At the same time the importance of the secondary characters increases, there is a greater continuity between the plots of the different episodes and the duration of the series has lengthened. Cameos are often used.

5 INTERESTING PROGRAMMES

1. SEVERO OCHOA

Format: Mini-series (2x105')

Date of broadcast: 06.12. 2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 3.246.000

Produced by: TVE1, Trivisión, APC,
Nisa, Intercartel

Producer: Tximo Pérez (ex. prod.)

Director: Sergio Cabrera

Writer: Javier Rioyo (coord.)

Cast: Imanol Arias, Ana Duato, Jon
Arias, Tximo Solano, Artur Valls, Daniel
Guzmán, Carolina Marco

Mini-series on the life of the Asturian biochemist, Severo Ochoa (1905-1993). Nobel prize winner for medicine in 1959, Ochoa was born into a Republican family which was exiled after the Civil War but later went back to Spain, where the young researcher began his brilliant career. Severo Ochoa focusses particularly on the personal life of the scientist, above all with his wife Carmen García Coiván. Shot in the Universidad Politécnica and in the Model prison of Valencia, in Paris and in Lurca, the mini-series required the construction of 120 sets, and the participation of 1,500 extras, all of which meant a budget of 500 million pesetas, partially financed by the Valencian Government. The success of *Cuéntame como pasó*, played by Imanol Arias and Ana Duato (the two main characters), contributed to the good audience results this TVE production got.

2. MONCLOA, ¿DÍGAME?

Format: series (13x25')

Date of broadcast: 10.01.2001

Channel: Tele5

Time-slot: 22:,00

Audience: 3.812.000

Produced by: El Terrat, Diagonal TV S.A. and Estudios Picasso

Producers: Andreu Buenafuente (ex. prod. El Terrat), Joan Bas and Jaume Banacolocha (ex. prods. Diagonal TV, S.A.), Alejandra Balsa and Esther Jiménez (ex. prods. Estudios Picasso)

Director: Oriol Grau Elias

Writers: Sergi Pompermayer (coord.), Roberto García, Lluís Llor, Sergi Pompermayer, David Plana, Maite Carranza

Cast: Javier Veiga, Manuel Manquiña, Ana Maria Barbany, Ana Rayo, Mercè Mariné

The adventures and misadventures of a group of employees at the Moncloa, the residence of the president of the Spanish government. The main character is initially head of the press office but because of a strange series of events, he ends up becoming his replacement's subordinate, an aggressive head of department, who is a snob and who is rather out of place. There is also a mature Catalan secretary who knows everything about politics and who does not miss out on any gossip, a lesbian who is constantly going through some sentimental crisis, an Andalusian who often has to pay for the mistakes made by others and a hedonist Galician. Inspired by the British series *Yes, minister* (which later became *Yes, Prime Minister*), this El Terrat sitcom mixes personal relations and work conflicts in an agile plot with a corrosive humour which has been fine-tuned by its creators in the many entertainment and fiction programmes created by Televisió de Catalunya (TVC). The increasing use of cameos and the multiplication of amusing ideas were not able to halt the decline of a product which deserved better luck.

3. EL SECRETO

Format: Open Serial (178x25')

Date of broadcast: 22.01.2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 16:00

Audience: 3.281.000

Produced by: Europroducciones (Euroficción), Televisa

Producer: Carlos Orengo, Carlos Moreno

Directors: Valero Bosserman (Tele5), Julián Pastor (Europroducciones)

Writers: Susana Prieto, Lea Vélez

Cast: Lola Forner, Manuel Navarro, Eduardo Capretillo, Cristina Higuera, Concha Leza, Mabel Karr, Fernando Díaz, Lorena Bernal, Verónica Jiménez

Spanish adaptation of a Televisa *telenovela* which narrates the events of the main characters – a family – in the struggle to keep their plastic surgery clinic open. Elena, the *good* daughter of the Vega Montalbans, unhappily married and affectionate mother of three children, falls in love with Eduardo, a young Mexican doctor who comes to work in the clinic, complicating the sad but so far ordered life of Elena. Mercedes, the *bad* sister of the serial, adores Virginia, Elena's deceitful elder daughter (later on we learn that she is, in fact, Mercedes' daughter) and does all she can to

complicate the life of those who surround her. Rigidly polarised between good and bad, with the typical ingredients of a *telenovela*, this Hispanic-Mexican experiment was a big success for TVE, which has already made clear it intends to repeat the formula. Besides playing the character of Eduardo, the Mexican actor Eduardo Capretillo also sings the serial's signature tune.

4. TEMPS DE SILENCI

Format: Series (40x45')

Date of broadcast: 17.01.2001

Channel: TV3

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 1.042.000

Produced by: Diagonal TV, TVC

Producers: Joan Bas and Jaume

Banacolocha (ex. prods.) Mercè

Managuerra (TVC)

Director: Xavier Borrell

Writer: Rudolf Cirera, Gisela Pou

Cast: Cristina Dilla, Àlex Casanovas,

Josep Maria Pou, Isabel Rocatti, Pep Pla,

David Bages, Rosa Gàmitz, Pep Ferrer,

Òscar Molina, Àngels Poch, Sara

Loscós, Bruno Bergonzini, Miquel

Gelabert, Maite Caballero, Julio

Manrique, Julieta Serrano, Montse

Murillo, Xio Massó, Santi Pons, Rosa

Boladeras, Lluïsa Castells, Txé Arana,

Marcel Tomàs, Xavier Soler, Santi

Ibàñez, Asun Planas, Biel Duran, Aina

Clotet, Mercè Dieman-Hartz, Marc

Cartes

Drama series which runs parallel to the history of Catalonia between 1935 and 1978, narrated by Isabel Dalmau, a woman of the upper Catalanian class whose love for her cook's son resists time and difficulty. Archive images are used as a conjunction between the different plots and period images supposedly shot by one of the characters. The square is the emblematic location of the series, and together with the two families (the Dalmaus and the Comes), the Hernández, Andalusian immigrants and porters in the building where Isabel lives, are the main character group for the first series. The great success with the public resulted in the series being continued, twice, the first up to 1981, the second up to the change of century. Josep Maria Güell is the historical expert behind this production which was awarded the "Micrófono de plata" of the *Asociación Española de Radio, Prensa y Televisión* (Spanish Radio, Press and Television Association).

5. CARLES, PRÍncep DE VIANA

Format: TV Movie, 90'

Date of broadcast: 25.12. 2001

Channel: TV3

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 321.000

Produced by: TVC, Institut Català del Teatre, Solaris, Hamster Productions

Producers: Juan Antonio González,

Miguel Àngel González (ex. prod.)

Director: Silvia Quer

Writers: Miquel Pairoli, Esther Cases

Cast: David Selvas, Josep Maria Pou, Florence Darel, Massimo Wertmuller, Irene Montalà, Marc Cartes, Ramon Madaula, Manel Barceló, Eduard Farelo, Jordi Martínez, Gary Piquer, Pep Planas, Boris Ruíz, Albert Pérez, Lluís Hostalot,

Eugeni Roig, Julio Manrique, Joan Borràs, Pep Jové, Jesús Ferrer, Ferran Audi, Juli Mira, Joan Minguell, Abraham Hurtado, Carme Sansa, Belén Fabra, Aina de Cos

Carlos, prince of Viana and duke of Nemours, eldest son of queen Bianca of Navarre and Juan of Trastamara, arrives incognito in Barcelona after an exile of ten years to conquer the reign of Navarre which his father had taken from him on the death of Bianca. In Barcelona, his life changes unexpectedly because of his alliance with Joan II, the enemy of Trastamara, with whom he joins to challenge his father. Joan II compels him to marry Caterina of Portugal which is against his wishes because it distances him from the throne. He immediately carries out the wishes of the king to gain time, but while he is negotiating with the government of Barcelona, he receives the ambassadors of Castille in secret and gets involved in a series of intrigues and quarrels which are to cost him imprisonment and death. *Carles, príncep de Viana* was entirely shot in the Monastery of Poblet and Santa Creus and in the city of Barcelona.

5 DISAPPOINTING PROGRAMMES

1. MI TENIENTE

Format: Series (5x45')

Date of broadcast: 11.09.2001

Channel: TVE1

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 2.911.000

Produced by: Alma-Ata

Producers: Enrique Bellot (prod. director), Rafael V. Pastrana (prod

coord.), José María Calleja and Juan Luis Galiardo (ex. prods.)

Director: Josetxo Sanmateo

Writer: Agustín Poveda (coord.)

Cast: Juan Luis Galiardo, Beatriz Argüello, Josep Linuesa, Simón Andreu, Manuel Alexandre, Carlos Fuentes

The main character of the series is Pilar, a young lieutenant who works in the press office of the Spanish Civil Guard, and whose father is also a Civil Guard agent in a small town near Madrid. The generational difference between the two allows *Mi teniente* to compare different perspectives and methodologies, trying to stress the recent modernization of the Civil Guard. Each episode concentrates on one of the settings in which the Civil Guard's operations take place (immigration, smuggling, homicide, terrorism, counterfeiting), but these plots intertwine with those concerning the family and personal affairs of the main character. Sponsored by the Civil Guard,

shot mostly on location and well acted, *Mi teniente* was not able to get up to the minimum audience barrier in its first five episodes, indispensable for a continuity which has never been realised.

2. PAPÁ

Format: Series (5x25')

Date of broadcast: 18.01.2001

Channel: Antena3

Time-slot: 24:00

Audience: 1.715.000

Produced by: Cedipe

Producers: Pepe Navarro, Pepe Torrecusa (ex. prod. Antena3)

Director: Pepe Navarro

Writer: Claro García, Pepe Navarro

Cast: Javivi, Mónica Molina, María Isbert, Eva Fernández, Aitor Mazo, Juan Jesús Valverde, Carmen Roldán, Eva Escudero, Ian Gibbs, Julia Martínez, Luis Varela, Fernando Albizo, Lázaro Escarceller

A sitcom about Luis and Eva, a couple who have just had their first child and are trying to adapt themselves to the new situation, in the midst of a series of unexpected happenings of every type, with friends and relations who, despite their willingness, end up complicating even more the situation. The first episode, set after the birth of the child, served as an introduction for the main characters (their parents, the grandmother Emilia, the friend Charito). Later, Eva's pregnancy is narrated in flashbacks with the many doubts Luis has about the paternity he is about to take on, mixed with the continuing adventures in which they get involved (the disappearance of the grandmother; Charito's flirts). Antena 3 has decided to interrupt *Papá*, given its small audience, which according to the producer, Pepe Navarro, was due to the lack of promotion and the inadequacy of the night-time programming.

3. ABOGADOS

Format: Series (5x60')

Date of broadcast: 26.04.2001

Channel: Tele5

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 2.318.000

Produced by: Estudios Picasso, Boca Boca Producciones S.A.
producers: Alejandra Balsa and Manuel Requena (ex. Prods. Estudios Picasso),

César Benítez and Emilio A. Pina (ex. Prods.)

Director: Jesús Font

Writers: Moisés Gómez Ramos (coord.), Ignacio del Moral, Pedro Gómez

Cast: Javier Albalá, Sonia Almarcha, Roberto Álvarez, Carmen del Valle, Cristina Brondo, Ana Goya, José Luis Pellicena

Abogados is a series with a clearly realist vocation and has been short-lived, since Tele5 broadcast only five of the seven episodes shot in 2001 because

of lack of viewer interest. This BocaBoca production narrates the professional activity and sentimental and personal lives of four expert lawyers and two trainees. Cortés, the head of the studio, tries to relaunch it on the return of Pablo after two years absence. Navarro does her best to fit together her professional tasks with the obligations of motherhood. That is why clashes constantly with the frivolity of Eva, who joins the studio after her divorce. Rodri is a tireless professional who has studied law in prison; his skepticism counterbalances Maria's idealism: she is newly graduated, full of faith in her profession. The series was shot in an enormous set in the Seseña industrial area (Madrid), which reconstructs the lawyers' studio, life size and which includes the indispensable bar, a setting with many resources, both in professional dramas and in comedies.

4. ESENCIA DE PODER

Format: Serial (121x25')

Date of broadcast: 25.06.2001

Time-slot: 16:15 and 17:15

Channel: Tele5

Audience: 2.128.000

Produced by: Zeppelin, Estudios

Picasso

producers: Lola Moreno (ex. Prod. Estudios Picasso), Eduardo Galdo and Vicente Torres (ex. Prods. Zeppelin)

Director: Juan Navarrete Parrondo

Author: Antonio Prieto, Maria Helena Portas

Writer: Marco Tulio Socorro, (coord.), Maika Bellido

Cast: Marian Aguilera, Roberto Enríquez, Jesús Olmedo, Raquel Meroño, Juan Gea, Arantxa del Sol, Patricia Alcocer, Manuel San Martín, Fabiola Toledo, Ángel Hidalgo, Pedro Miguel Martínez, Jordi Dauder, Inés Morales, Alex O'Dogherty, Mar Bordallo, Manuel San Martín, Belén López

After the success of *El súper*, Tele 5 steps into the daytime slot with a serial of a realist nature and with topical subjects since it is set in the world of perfumes and fashion, Alicia Galván is the heir of a family of perfumer makers who, at 28, is about to marry Diego Rivera. This is a perfect union which will compensate for the Galván's money problems and will offer the Riveras and their fashion business a longed-for social status. The arrival of Javier, a young man of lowly status, assistant in Alicia's laboratory, rouses her passion and jeopardises her future plans with Diego. But the pressure of her mother and Diego's refusal to end the relationship weave a series of intrigues around the two characters which is to end fatally. After Alicia's death in an accident, the serial concentrates mainly on the Galván family inheritance.

5. CIUDAD SUR

Format: Serial (40x25')

Date of broadcast: 8.01.2001

Channel: Antena 3

Time-slot: 20:25

Audience: 2.027.000

Produced by: Globomedia and Pol-ka
Producciones for Antena3

Producers: Ernesto Pozuelo and Diego
Lublinsky (ex. Prods.) Pedro García Caja
(del. Prod. Antena3)

Director: Diego Lublinsky, Jorge Nisco

Writers: Ernesto Pozuelo, Marina Efrón

Cast: Miguel Ortiz, María Lanau,
Yolanda Arestegui, Loli Astoreka, José
Ángel Egido, Jacobo Martín, Vanesa
Cabeza, Verónica Moral, Óscar Jaenada,
Emilio Línder, Adán Black, Teresa Calo,
Teresa Manresa, Pilar Barrera, Víctor
Gil, Ismael Martínez, Pablo Rivero, J. C.
Gurutxaga, Arantxa Valdivia, Carolina
Román, Jaime Blanch

Antena 3 has tried to capitalize on the last hour of the afternoon slot with a serial structured around a gym in a middle class urban area, where the characters meet. Defined by its creators as a mixture of youthful stories of passion, power and boxing, *Ciudad Sur* makes a number of forays out of the ring too, with the aim of describing the sentimental relations on which it is based. Family clashes, adolescents with drug problems, the difficulties of a fifty-year old unemployed man returning to the world of work, a divorced woman with an adolescent son and the skepticism of an ex-boxer who has known better times, link up the adventures of the characters, in a wasted attempt – because of the lack of interest on the part of the public - to portray daily passions realistically.

UNITED KINGDOM

TOP 10 PROGRAMMES

1. ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES

Format: Series (Sitcom)

Date of broadcast* 25.12.01

Channel: BBC1

Time-slot: 21:10

Audience: 21,35

Produced by: BBC1

Producer: Gareth Gwenlan

Executive producers: Geoffrey Perkins,
John Sullivan

Writer: John Sullivan

Cast: David Jason, Nicholas Lyndhurst,
Tessa Peake-Jones, Gwyneth Strong,
John Challis, Sue Holderness, Paul
Barber, Roger Lloyd Pack, Roy Heather

* *It refers to the top rated episodes.*

Only Fools and Horses hit the TV screens in September 1981 when Derek 'Del-boy' Trotter was introduced to the British public trying to sell one-legged turkeys from the back of his van. Del is an eternal optimist, "This time next year, we'll be millionaires!" he keeps telling his brother. He runs a 'business' of selling second-hand (or stolen) goods in partnership with his brother, the younger and more vulnerable Rodney Trotter, who always comes off worst in many of Del-boy's schemes. The Trotter brothers live with their Grandad in a tower block in Peckham, South London. After Grandad's death, 'Uncle' Albert comes to stay. Later, Rodney marries Cassandra and Racquel comes to live with Del. There have been a total of seven series running from 1981 to 1991 and numerous Christmas specials. The 'if they could see us now' 2001 Christmas special shows the Trotters celebrating the festive season in Monte Carlo. Its high ratings testified to how this BBC comedy series had become a part of popular culture in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s.

2. EASTENDERS

Format: Serial (Soap Opera)

Date of broadcast: 05.04.01

Channel: BBC1

Time-slot: 19:30

Audience: 20,05

Produced by: BBC (GBR)

Executive Producer: John Yorke

Writers: Various

Cast: Lindsey Coulson, Barbara Windsor, Mike Reid, Sid Owen, Pam St Clement, Tony Caunter, Shaun Williamson, Lucy Speed, Joe Absolom, Leila Birch, Ross Kemp, Steve McFadden, Marc Bannerman, Michael Greco, Martin Kemp, June Brown, Tazmin Outwaithe, Dean Gaffney,

This is the second programme that broke the 20 million ratings barrier. On 5 April *EastEnders* reached an audience with over a million more viewers than last year's highest soap, ITV's *Coronation Street*. Set in the fictional East London borough of Walford E20, *EastEnders* revolves around those living in Albert Square. In this episode sparks fly as Phil, Albert Square's hard man, confronts his assailants after spending four weeks in the Hospital after being shot. Phil believed the person who shot him was Lisa, who had recently been pregnant with his baby and then suffered a miscarriage. They got through the tragedy together but their relationship never fully recovered, especially after Phil slept with her best friend.

3. CORONATION STREET

Format: Serial (Soap Opera)

Date of broadcast: 01.01.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 19:30

Audience: 16,22

Produced by: Granada Television
(GBR)

Producer: Jane Macnaugh

Writers: Various

Cast: Helen Worth, Tina O'Brien, Sean Wilson, Denise Welch, Gabrielle

Glaister, John Bowe, Simon Gregson,

Steven Arnold, Tracy Shaw, Jon Savient,

Alan Halsall, Bill Tarney, Vicky

Entwistle, Johnny Briggs, Anne

Kirkbride, Martin Hancock, Charles

Lawson

Coronation Street the UK's best loved soap has been running since the 1960s. It is set in a close-knot terraced-house community at the fictional Manchester district of Weatherfield. In recent years its casting has been updated with younger and trendier characters and storylines such as teen pregnancy, rape, adoption and fostering have been introduced. Yet compared with the rest of the UK soaps *Coronation Street* remains the lightest and most humorous.

4. A TOUCH OF FROST

Format: Mini-series (Detective Drama)

Date of broadcast: 14.01.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 21:15

Audience: 14,69

Produced by: Yorkshire TV

Producers: Richard Bates, David Reynolds

Script: David Gilman

Cast: David Jason, Bruce Alexander,

Robert Glenister, Jon Lyons, Joanne

Froggatt, David Horovitch, Arkie

Whiteley, Dermot Crowley, Frank

Kovacs, Domonic West

A Touch of Frost started in 1992 as a feature length drama mini series. Detective Inspector Jack Frost is an unconventional policeman, who threw

away the rule book years ago. He is sloppy, disorganized and disrespectful, attracts trouble like a magnet, and has sympathy for the underdog and an instinct for natural justice. Frost investigates a variety of serious crimes with his unique blend of razor-sharp intuition and unorthodox methods. In this episode a woman's body is found on a railway line, a highly skilled surgeon is reported missing and mystery surrounds Frost's personal life.

5. HEARTBEAT

Format: Series (Rural Drama)
Date of broadcast: 21.01.01
Channel: ITV1
Time-slot: 20:00
Audience: 13,82

Produced by: Yorkshire Television
Producer: Gerry Mill
Script: Neil McKay
Cast: Jason Durr, Fiona Dolman, Philip Franks, Mark Jordon, Tricia Penrose, William Simons

This drama series has relied on the tried and tested formula of introducing a foreign element into a local and unfamiliar situation. *Heartbeat* began in April 1992 when a London policeman and his recently qualified doctor-wife moved away from the city and went to the rural surroundings of Aidensfield, a village in the heart of the North Yorkshire Moors, where PC Nick Rowan would be the new village policeman. The series lost its central character after the seventh series but has retained its popularity.

6. EMMERDALE

Format: Serial (Soap Opera)
Date of broadcast: 03.01.01
Channel: ITV1
Time-slot: 19:00
Audience: 12,42
Produced by: Yorkshire Television
Producer: Kieran Roberts

Writers: Various
Cast: Steve Haliwell, Jane Cox, Leah Bracknell, Deena Payne, Kate McGregor, Clive Hornby, Samantha Giles, Elizabeth Estensen, John Middleton, Billy Hartmann, Ben Freeman, Richard Thorp, Alyson Spiro, Peter Amory

Emmerdale, the only TV soap to be set in a rural community, the fictional village of Beckindale in Yorkshire. *Emmerdale Farm* began with the funeral of Jacob Sugden, husband of Annie, in 1972. After reinventing itself in the early 1990s when a plane crash devastated much of the village *Emmerdale* has secured regular following.

7. LONDON'S BURNING

Format: Series (Action Crime)

Date of broadcast: 28.01.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 21: 05

Audience: 11,38

Produced by: LWT

Producer: David Newcombe

Script: Julie Wassner

Cast: Richard Walsh, Glen Murphy, Michael Garner, Ben Onwukwe, Heather Peace, Brad Gordon, Jim Alexander, Connor Byrne, Edward Peel, Shirley Greenwood, Fuman Dar

This fire fighting drama series is set at *Bluewatch B25* Blackwall Fire Station. It has been on-air since 1988 and was developed from a feature length TV film written by Jack Rosenthal. In this episode *Bluewatch* try to rescue their colleagues Racall and Pearce after a block of flats collapse.

8. BURIED TREASURE

Format: TV Movie

Date of broadcast: 14.10.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 20:00

Audience: 1067

Produced by: LWT

Producer: Joshua St Johnston

Director: Adrian Shergold

Script: Peter Bowker

Cast: John Thaw, Dominique Jackson, Rachel Davies, Wil Johnson, Ellen Thomas, Jennifer Hennessy, Eamon Boland, Norman Gregory, Daniel Ainsleigh, Catherine York

In this TV movie John Thaw, one of Britain's best loved actors, played his final role as Harry Jenkins, before succumbing to cancer in early 2002. Harry Jenkins is a successful businessman and captain of the local golf club, who has been estranged from his daughter for the past ten years. When she dies in a car accident he discovers that he has an eight year old granddaughter and he has been given custody, since his daughter was a single mother. Saffron is of mixed-race and in spite of initial problems the two develop a close bond and relationship. Harry helps Saffron find her father, who then wants to look after her. Realising how much he will miss her, Harry decides to give up his job and home and move to London to be close to his granddaughter.

9. CASUALTY

Format: Series (Medical Drama)

Date of broadcast: 13.01.01

Channel: BBC

Time-slot: 20:00

Audience: 10,02

Produced by: BBC TV

Executive Producer: Mal Young

Writers: Various

Cast: Derek Thomson, Ian Bleasdale, Catherine Shipton, Robert Gwilym, Jan Anderson, Donna Alexander, Rebecca Wheatley, Pal Aaron, Sandra Huggett, Ian Kelsey

This fifteen year old BBC 1 series was the ninth most watched drama in UK television for the second consecutive year. *Casualty* is an award winning medical drama set in the Accident and Emergency department of Holby City hospital. Its sensitive portrayal of medical matters and documenting of important issues relating to the state of the British National Health Service, are achieved through a format which introduces a new set of characters in each episode alongside the regular cast.

10. MIDSOMER MURDERS

Format: Series (Murder Mystery)

Date of broadcast: 26.08.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 20:00

Audience: 10,00

Produced by: Bentley Productions

Producer: Brian Trueman

Script: D, Hoskins

Cast: John Nettles, Daniel Casey, Jane Wymark, Philip Bowen, Samantha Bond, Barry Jackson, Rosemary Leah, Robert Lang, Adie Allen, Tom Ward,

This is the fourth murder mystery series set in the idyllic English country side of the fictional Midsomer. In this episode Detective Chief Inspector Barnaby has to contend with the murder of a man in the woods and several other murders that emerge as revenge against those involved with the first murder.

5 INTERESTING PROGRAMMES

1. GAS ATTACK

Format: TV Movie

Date of Broadcast: 08.10.01

Channel: Channel Four

Time-slot: 21:00

Audience: 1,199

Produced by: Hart Ryan

Productions/Film Four for Channel 4

Director: Kenneth Glenaan

Writer: Rowan Joffe

Producer: Samantha Kingsley

Cast: Sherko Zne-Aloush, Benae Hassan, Robina Qureshi, Morag Calder,

Laurie Ventry

British television fiction has often provided timely and incisive contributions to public debate. In 2001 by a bizarre quirk of coincidence Channel Four's tv movie *Gas Attack* provided a talking point in the post September 11 climate of fear and apprehension which was accentuated by the letters containing anthrax sent to US politicians. The premise of *Gas Attack* was an anthrax attack on Glasgow and the consequent efforts of the public authorities to cope with the panic. A girl falls ill in Glasgow in an area inhabited predominantly by refugees and an asylum support officer begins to suspect that a right-wing terrorist might be targeting the area with biological weapons.

2. THE OFFICE

Format: Series (Sitcom)

Date of Broadcast: 09.07.01

Channel: BBC2

Time-slot: 21:30

Audience: 2,042

Produced by: BBC

Directors: Ricky Gervais, Stephen Merchant

Writers: Ricky Gervais, Stephen Merchant

Producer: Ash Atalla

Executive Producer: Anil Gupta

Cast: Ricky Gervais, Mackenzie Crook, Martin Freeman, Lucy Davis, Oliver Chris, Stirling Gallagher, Joel Beckett, Robin Hooper

A situation comedy written by Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant based around the character of David Brent (played by Ricky Gervais), a self-possessed office manager in a Slough paper merchant. The series is deliberately gauche in its use of political incorrect language and uses a style of direct to camera address to unsettle the audience. The style of humour is offputting and funny and the series won many awards.

3. VACUUMING IN PARADISE COMPLETELY NUDE

Format: TV Movie

Date of Broadcast: 30.09.01

Channel: BBC2

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 1,364

Produced by: Destiny Films/BBC Films for BBC

Producer: Martin Carr

Executive Producers: Hilary Salmon, David M, Thompson

Director: Danny Boyle

Writer: Jim Cartwright

Cast: Timothy Spall, Michael Begley, David Crellin, Katy Cavanagh, Sandra Gough, Lorraine Cheshire, Keith Clifford, Maggie Tagney, Caroline Ashley, James Cartwright

A tv directorial outing for Danny Boyle, the director of *Trainspotting*. A drama about a door-to-door Hoover salesman, Tommy (played by Timothy Spall), and his protege Pete. Both head off for their company's annual dinner where the 'salesman of the year' will be announced. Tommy's expected success is thwarted and he wanders on to a beach where he collapses naked.

4. PERFECT STRANGERS

Format: Mini-series (General drama)

Date of Broadcast:

Channel: BBC 2

Time-slot: 21:00

Audience: 3,107

Produced by: Talkback Productions for
BBC

Producer: John Chapman

Executive Producers: David M.

Thompson, Peter Fincham

Director: Stephen Poliakoff

Writer: Stephen Poliakoff

Cast: Michael Gambon, Lindsay

Duncan, Matthew McFadyen, Claire

Skinner, Toby Stephens, Jill Baker,

Timothy Spall, Anton Lesser, Michael

Culkin, Kelly Hunter, Kathleen Byron

A superlative two part drama written and directed by Stephen Poliakoff. When only child, Daniel, attends a family reunion with his parents at a luxurious London hotel, he discovers an exciting new world of possibilities. The father Raymond (played by Michael Gambon) suffers a stroke and Daniel discovers the extraordinary wartime memories of Edith, Violet and Grace.

5. TINA TAKES A BREAK

Format: TV Movie

Date of Broadcast: 23.05.01

Channel: Channel Four

Time-slot: 22:00

Audience: 1,933

Produced by: Blast! Films for Channel
Four

Producer: Penny Woolcock

Director: Penny Woolcock

Writer: Penny Woolcock

Cast: Kelly Hollis, Nathaniel Robson,

Sally Garrod, Mark Hargrave, Mark

Catley, Lee Bramble

Penny Woolcock wrote and directed this sequel to *Tina Goes Shopping* showing the chaotic existence of a mother in a northern council estate. Tina promises her children a trip to Blackpool, but then spends the money on drugs. After attempting to hold-up a shop she is arrested and the children are sent to live with their alcoholic father where they are neglected, knocked about and locked in the house. A friend manages to break into the house and free them and they run off to Blackpool with a huge stash of money their father was minding for a local drug dealer.

5 DISAPPOINTING PROGRAMMES

1. SAM'S GAME

Format: Series (Sitcom)

Date of first broadcast: 14.05.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 2100

Audience: 5,696

Produced by: Chrysalis Entertainment
for ITV

Producer: Sue Birbeck

Executive Producers: Michael
Pilsworth, John Bishop

Writer: Paul Waite

Cast: Davina McCall, Ed Byrne, Tristan
Gemmill, Tameka Empson, Debra
Stephenson, George Yiasoumi

ITV's attempt to capitalise on the success of the presenter of Britain's Big Brother – Davina McCall – in a sit com about four friends who get involved in each others lives and loves, while renting flats in a large London house. The series found no favour with audiences and was relegated to ITV 2 for its final parts.

2. IN DEEP

Format: Mini-series (Detective drama)

Date of broadcast:

Channel: BBC1

Time-slot: 21:05

Audience: 7,758

Produced by: Valentine Productions for
BBC TV

Director: Roberto Bangura

Producer: Steve Lanning

Executive Producer: Mal Young

Writer: Peter Jukes

Cast: Nick Berry, Stephen Tompkinson,
Lisa Maxwell, Meera Syal, Michelle
Fairley, Reece Dinsdale

This two-part drama continued the BBC's "Crime Doubles" season. The story follows a couple of undercover cops including ex-*EastEnders* and *Heartbeat* star Nick Berry, investigating fellow officers suspected of collusion with a powerful vice ring. It attempts to offer a fresh take on modern-life villains, informants and the police. Despite the best intentions in remaking the crime genre it failed to gell despite the focus on the world of undercover cops, and their dangerous and psychologically challenging work.

3. NCS MANHUNT

Format: Mini-series (Crime Drama)

Date of broadcast: 26.03.01

Channel: BBC1

Time-slot: 21:00

Audience: 7,410

Produced by: BBC Drama

Producer: Sue Austen

Executive Producers: Jane Tranter,
Malcolm McKay

Director: Michael Whyte

Writer: Malcolm McKay

Cast: David Suchet, Samantha Bond,
Keith Baron, Kenneth Cranham, Phyllis
Logan, Melanie Hill, Jonny Phillips,
Gerard Horan

Despite having an all star cast, with David Suchet in the lead role as Detective Inspector John Borne, yet another try by the BBC at creating a police series, *NCS: Manhunt*, disappointed. In this one the National Crime Squad investigates various plots involving murder, conspiracy and betrayal.

4. METROSEXUALITY

Format: Series (Sitcom)

Date of broadcast: 21.02.01

Channel: Channel Four

Time-slot: 23:15

Audience: 1,081

Produced by: A Feelgood Fiction/
Vicarious production for Channel Four

Producer: Carol Harding

Director: Rikki Beadle-Blair

Writer: Rikki Beadle-Blair

Cast: Rikki Beadle-Blair, Noel Clarke,
Paul Keating, Matthew Fraser, Karl
Collins, Pui-Fan Lee, Silas Carson,
Rebecca Varney, Carleen Beadle, David
Squire

Derived from a pilot entitled *Heterosexuality* from the anthology series *Acts of Passion* screened in 1999 *Metrosexuality* was a comedy drama set in Notting Hill about seventeen-year old Kwame who lives in Notting Hill, London with his gay dad played by Rikki Beadle-Blair. His family and friends include just about every sexual, racial and social type imaginable plotting their complicated love lives. With a highly stylized look the series received mixed reviews for its attempt to outrage and push the boundaries.

5. CROSSROADS

Format: Open Series (Soap Opera)

Date of broadcast: 01.05.01

Channel: ITV1

Time-slot: 13:30 and 17:05

Audience: 3,174

Produced by: Carlton for ITV

Producers: David Shanks, Kay Patrick

Executive Producer: Stephen Bloom

Directors: Various

Writers: Various

Cast: Various

A revival of a soap opera that ran from the mid-sixties to the late-eighties to fill a slot on ITV caused by the move of the Australian *Home and Away* to Channel 5. With an updated location (a hotel rather than a motel) the serial failed to win over either its old or a new audience. The staff and visitors weave their lives around the infamous hotel with high soap drama, comedy and tragic circumstances. The predictable soap-by-numbers: nasty villain, powerful matriarch, meeting places like the café and inevitable and recurring family feuds are alleviated only by its awareness of a multi-cultural Britain.

Appendix

Appendix

The Eurofiction Project

The EUROFICTION project was born of the firm belief on the part of its Italian promoters (Fondazione Hypercampo in association with the University of Firenze, and Osservatorio sulla Fiction Italiana) that, in order to put in action appropriate policies and strategies intended to strengthen and make more competitive the European television industry, a systematic, well documented, analytical and comprehensive information and knowledge is an absolute priority.

Thus EUROFICTION was established in 1996 as a European network basically aimed at quantitative and qualitative monitoring and analysis of domestic television fiction produced and offered in the five main European countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom - without precluding the possibility for other countries to join the project in the future.

Five national research teams and seven institutions are currently involved in the Eurofiction project:

- in Italy: Fondazione Hypercampo and Osservatorio sulla Fiction Italiana (co-ord. Milly Buonanno)
- in France: Institut National de l'Audiovisuel and Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (co-ord. Régine Chaniac)
- in Germany: Universität Siegen (co-ord. Gerd Hallenberger)
- in Spain: Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (co-ord, Lorenzo Vilches)
- in United Kingdom: British Film Institute (co-ord. Richard Paterson),

Carried out on the basis of harmonised data-gathering criteria and data elaboration, the annual work of the EUROFICTION involves:

- monitoring the main variables of the first-run fiction supply: hours, titles, episodes, scheduling, format, genre, rating and share,
- classifying basic dimensions of the story content as cultural indicators: time, place, environment and main character,
- making in-depth analysis of the most successful or trendy productions of the year, compiling a filmografic index and a synopsis of 100 selected programmes.

The main output of EUROFICTION is an Annual Report offering comparative overviews and analysis and synthesis of the most significant trends in the field of television fiction within and across the European countries.

The aim is two-fold:

- 1) produce and circulate knowledge likely to meet the interests of different categories of operators: television professionals, policy-makers and media researchers,
- 2) foster the conditions for a greater exploitation and valorization of European television fiction and its cultural and economic functions.

Most of the data and information that EUROFICTION supplies cannot be found elsewhere or is dispersed and fragmented. Rearranging all this into an organic whole, following its evolution in time, provides us with new and fruitful knowledge.

It is the knowledge of a significant part of European cultural production and consumption that is thus rendered transparent and available, with the added value of the reciprocity favoured by a comparative framework of research.

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