ONE STORY, TWO MEDIA
Strategies and Intended Audiences in Italian Productions for Cinema and Television

Abstract
In the long history of the enduring connection between Italian cinema and national television, recent years have brought several new developments. Due to the economic crisis, and hence a quest for creative and production methods to achieve greater return at lower cost, the ‘border’ between film and TV has become the arena for several textual and productive experiments, with varying degrees of success, contributing to the foundations of a new model. On the one hand, television is ‘serializing’ stories that were successes at the cinema presenting them as sequels or reinterpreting the original story in a different way. This trend is exemplified by several premium fictions associated with pay operator Sky Italia, as Romanzo criminale and Gomorrah, or the Netflix project Suburra. On the other hand, forms of actual ‘joint production’ for both film and TV are starting to emerge, representing not merely a desire to spread content over several TV slots, but also the wish (and need) to envisage a dual outlet for a text right from the time of writing and production. Two separate objects are planned and prepared from the outset, as in the case of Tutta colpa di Freud or Chiamatemi Francesco/Call Me Francesco, forcing the writing and production routines to adapt and take due account of the specific traits of the two media, and of their target audiences. Through interviews with professionals, viewing figures and promotional materials, it is possible to identify the motives behind these projects, the modifications in their production routines, and how concepts like taste, success and quality are being reformulated in such a scenario.

Keywords
Cinema; television; media industries; production studies; distribution.

1. CINEMA AND TV. A COMPLEX HISTORY OF PRODUCTION MODELS, IMAGERIES AND TASTE

On 5 October 2015, two weeks before the US-based online streaming service Netflix launched in Italy, the company announced that it would be producing its first original content made in the country: the 10-episode crime series Suburra. “The Suburra saga begins with a feature film distributed in Italian cinemas from 14 October 2015”, also available for US viewers on the digital platform. The series is expected for global dis-
distribution in 2017. Coproduced by Cattleya, Rai Cinema and Netflix, with support from the Direzione Generale Cinema at the Italian Ministry of Culture (MiBACT), the film is inspired by the novel of the same name by Giancarlo De Cataldo and Carlo Bonini, published by Einaudi in 2013. A follow-up, La notte di Roma (Einaudi, 2015), is already available.

The production of the Suburra ‘saga’ is interesting for many reasons. In particular, it seems to weave a web of at least partly new relationships among the various segments of the Italian cultural industries. The script is the work of not only De Cataldo and Bonini but also Sandro Petraglia and Stefano Rulli, two leading Italian screenwriters who have been highly active in cinema and television since the 1970s. The feature film, directed by Stefano Sollima, is the first chapter in a spiralling descent into the underworld (explored in the series) of organised crime that revolves around Rome and its province, echoing the string of arrests in the ‘Mafia capitale’ investigation reported in national news. Suburra exemplifies both continuity and change in the Italian audiovisual arena. On the one hand, besides Italian cinema’s traditional ‘supporters’, from Rai to MiBACT, there is an entirely new player on the scene: the global OTT operator Netflix is continually looking to extend its library of series and films by adding local content distributed globally on demand. On the other hand, Netflix seems to be following a path already trodden by pay television, which has ‘serialised’ and built sagas based on models at once literary and cinematic (such as Romanzo criminale and Gomorra).

At stake in this game, it appears, is more than just the emergence of new commissioners for audiovisual products such as films and TV series. Indeed, more generally, the borders between different media – cinema, television and digital media – are being redrawn, on at least three levels: production models and routines (to achieve greater fluidity and more extensive synergies); content and imageries that are given currency (characterised by an emergence of narratives that traverse several media to build extended stories and broad narrative ecosystems); and the expression of the audience’s tastes and consumption practices (where television, and TV series in particular, undergo an overall cultural reappraisal that grants a new idea of quality and legitimacy to the medium, historically deemed inferior to cinema, at least as regards its aesthetic discourse and its cultural ‘distinction’).

This essay is a part of a research perspective, well represented in scholarship, that focuses on the changing relations between cinema and TV, in the context of the historical evolution of both languages and of the overall cultural environment and media scenario. The hypothesis under investigation here concerns a current trend towards a

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4 An over-the-top (OTT) operator is a company that provides content and services via the Internet. Besides Netflix, other players in Italy include TIMvision, Chili, Now TV (formerly known as Sky Online) and Infinity.

5 On the models introduced by pay TV, see in particular M. Scaglioni, L. Barra, eds., Tutta un’altra fiction. La serialità pay in Italia e nel mondo. Il modello Sky, Rome: Carocci, 2013.


8 Among the many possible references, see V. Zagarrio, L’anello mancante. Storia e teoria del rapporto
greater degree of overlapping, synergy and cooperation in this relationship. In particular, this work studies a series of examples that reflect the increasingly permeable borders between cinema and TV, establishing an intermediate area for experimentation – with varying degrees of success – and exploring new possibilities in terms of both production models and target audiences.

The relationship between cinema and television in Italy dates back over sixty years. It is a story of disconnection and connection, separation and rapprochement, misunderstandings and alliances. It implicates the different phases in the development of the two media in terms of their technologies, economic situations and cultural bases, as well as how people habitually consume film and audiovisual texts in general. As Monteleone observes, the cinema – TV relationship “can be likened to a stormy marriage, studded with infidelities and betrayals. A marriage of convenience rather than a marriage of love […]”. This union is at the centre of the fundamental question of our time: the shift in consumption of the imaginary, from the limited opportunity in the darkened cinema theatre to the abundant offering in broad daylight by the TV channels, be they generalist or satellite, free or encrypted etc.”

The first phase of the television medium’s development was marked by scarcity of content, by a monopoly public-service broadcaster with a mainly pedagogical and educational role, and by the ideological contrast between the cinema industry, with its progressive spirit, and the television one, which aspired to a ‘Catholic humanism’. Politically, the Italian Communist Party exercised a certain hegemony over cinema’s professional practitioners, while television was rigidly controlled by the Christian Democrats through senior and middle managers parachuted into the public-service broadcaster. In this phase, television and cinema were worlds apart. Television looked elsewhere, primarily to radio and theatre, for models to graft its “technology without content” onto; films, with their unreachable aesthetic aloofness, seldom figured in Rai schedules in those years.

The 1960s and ’70s saw the two arenas come together, gradually and timidly, along at least three discernible lines. The first was the programming. As Bettetini notes, “cinema was then considered the ultimate expressive experience in the world of moving images […]. Cinema took pride of place in television scheduling, becoming a ritualised and celebrated cultural event; the chosen films were primarily the most important in cinema history; the screenings were organised in cycles, recalling the most common formats used in cineclubs”. Cinema, ‘eventised’ in the collections scheduled on the small screen, was presented to mass audiences with the ennobling aura of art. The second line


15 Quoted in Grasso, Storia della televisione italiana, 235-236.
comprised a greater linguistic and production integration. Drama series – the television genre closest to film – gradually abandoned their self-imposed ‘incarceration’ in the studio and their strong theatrical stamp in favour of a more “cinematic” story model, closer to film itself. Indeed, *Odyssea* (Franco Rossi, 1968), coproduced by Dino De Laurentis and commissioned by Rai and ORTF, established a tradition of medium-length series conceived for TV but created using the tools of cinema. Later works included Rossi’s *Eneide* (1971), *La vita di Leonardo da Vinci* (Renato Castellani, 1971), *Pinocchio* (Luigi Comencini, 1972), *Mosè* (Gianfranco De Bosio, 1976), *Gesù di Nazareth* (Franco Zeffirelli, 1977), *Sandokan* (Sergio Sollima, 1976), *La Certosa di Parma* (Mauro Bolognini, 1982), *Marco Polo* (Giuliano Montaldo, 1982) and *Cristoforo Colombo* (Alberto Lattuada, 1984). A third line consisted in Rai’s productions for cinema. The public-service broadcaster began to produce feature films in the late 1960s, with *Francesco d’Assisi*, the debut by Liliana Cavani, a young director who had joined the Rai in the 1960 recruitment drive. Her 126-minute film was screened in two episodes, on 6 and 8 May 1966. It was followed by *Strategia del ragno* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1970), *Prova d’orchestra* (Federico Fellini, 1979), *Il mistero di Oberwald* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1981), and many others. These three lines confirm two crucial aspects of how the relation between television and cinema was conceived then: TV’s growing economic importance in the media arena and the PSB managers’ ‘veneration’ for the film aesthetic and the director as auteur.

But television’s need for cultural legitimacy began to assume a different guise in the next decade, when the Rai monopoly ended and the medium entered an entirely new phase. Whereas the humanist managers at the Rai in the early days saw cinema as an aesthetic model, albeit a distant one, the problem arose from the 1980s of how to restore legitimacy to a public-service in permanent crisis. In the twenty-year-long imperfect duopoly between Rai and Fininvest (later Mediaset), film gradually became ‘one genre among many’, its presence in the schedules growing while its aura as a ‘rare event’ faded. Audiovisual output for TV increasingly took the form of ‘fiction’ (a term that was then entering common parlance) in short, medium and progressively longer series. Meanwhile, the broadcasters were producing cinema, especially auteur cinema, both to comply with the quota requirements that European and national parliament had introduced and to legitimate the continued existence of a cultural mission (especially for the PSB). Thus, the relationship between cinema and TV was reshaped from the 1980s onwards. A key moment in this process was the debate around the power relationships between the two segments, in a transition from television’s ‘reverential approach’ to cinema’s gradual dependency on the small screen. Television has been one of the main distribution windows for films after their release in cinemas – first in the free generalist window, later also through the proliferation of pay offerings. Television has been the cinema industry’s main bankroller, as over 40% of the total investment has come from national broadcasters.

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**Notes:**

16 Bourdon, *Du service public à la télé-réalité*.
The 1980s, ’90s and early 2000s were a period of growing dependency, from both an economic and, in certain respects, a linguistic and cultural perspective, as the broadcasters saw cinema as a less important genre, prioritising content better fitting into the schedule. The last decade, however, has shown signs of change, and perhaps a new phase is beginning (after those of separation, reverential approach, and dependency). The contemporary scenario features a gradual shift away from the imperfect dupo- ly thanks to the emergence of other players, the advent of different business models, such as pay TV, and the proliferation of channels, offerings and distribution platforms (including on demand). Finally, a partially reformed regulatory framework has gradually introduced ever-stricter production and programming obligations for European audiovisual products and, from 2013, for Italian ones too. This new phase forms the background to the analysis in this essay. Indeed, forms of greater cooperation and synergy between the two media are emerging, as it is a more considered and strategic use of audiovisual storytelling to exploit the various distribution platforms’ specific features.

2. SERIALISATION OF FILMS (AND BRANDS). CINEMA AND PAY TV FICTION

One interesting area to explore in this context of greater synergy and cooperation between cinema and TV concerns the cases where television ‘serialises’ some narrative worlds that have been hits in the cinema (and sometimes before in the publishing arena). The pay TV operators active in Italy – primarily Sky Italia but also Netflix, as already mentioned – approach the production of original series by staying close to a previous cinematic world. And this is true both from a production perspective and in terms of the language used and of the audience taste and expectations. Examples include Quo vadis, baby? La serie, Romanzo criminale. La serie, Non pensare. La serie and Gomorra. La serie (with Suburra. La serie currently borrowing the same model). Starting from the subtitle ‘La serie’ that always explains the nature of this new incarnation of the franchise, they seem to confirm that the two worlds are coming together, in a way worth being explored from various standpoints.

One aspect is narrative continuity (or discontinuity). Indeed, the relationship between the series and the feature film appears to vacillate between the continuity of the sequel and the greater discontinuity of exploiting an already popular, well-known media brand to take the TV show in new directions. On the one hand, then, a case like Quo vadis, baby? (2008), Sky Italia’s debut fiction production, “from its very origins is a multiplatform product”. Indeed, the inspiration for the series can be traced not only to the film directed by Gabriele Salvatores but to Grazia Verasani’s novel. The book was the inaugural title from Colorado Noir, a publisher systematically seeking new Italian talent in the noir genre, precisely to adapt the stories for film and television. The transition from Salvatores’ film and the six TV episodes directed by Guido Chiesa under Salvatores’ ‘artistic supervision’ retains the identity of the protagonist, a young private investigator (Angela Baraldi) who moves through a Bologna reinterpreted in classic noir light, and the film language already established by Salvatores, centred on

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20 As shown by the growing attention given by major production companies, e.g. Medusa (part of Mediaset group), to comedies, often featuring well-known popular comedians.
21 Cucco, Manzoli, eds., Cinema di Stato.
the use of handheld high-definition digital cameras. At the other end of the continuum, the transition from film (and novel) to series results in a profound restructuring of the narrative and diegetic world. *Romanzo criminale* (2008-10, with two seasons of 12 and 10 episodes, respectively) and *Gomorra* (2014-present, with two 12-episode seasons) are perhaps the most successful examples of reworking a narrative universe to create a freestanding series. *Romanzo criminale*’s screenwriters (Daniele Cesarano, Leonardo Valenti, Barbara Petronio and Paolo Marchesini) have not only remained true to the spirit of the novel and film, but also gradually moved away from both to build a story inspired by high-quality US series. The direction, too, entrusted to the then virtually-unknown Stefano Sollima, departs markedly from the film’s artistic palette. Sollima aims to create an original “cheerful noir”, to depict the historical and political context of the 1970s in greater detail, and to lighten the tone with some genuinely comic moments. The undertaking of restructuring a narrative universe and reinterpreting a very well-known brand became even more radical with *Gomorra*, and the independent TV series was created by Sky Italia using the same approach already tested out with *Romanzo criminale*.

As may already be clear, another significant dimension in establishing new relationships between cinema and TV is production. Here, too, the picture is a mix of strong continuity and contrast. Indeed, all these projects have sprung from a renewed community of independent Italian producers: in the 2000s a succession of companies emerged normally operating on the boundary between TV and cinema. Colorado Film, led by Maurizio Totti and Gabriele Salvatores, stands out for its broad cultural output on various fronts – including publishing, cinema and television – spanning entertainment and fiction (as with *Quo vadis, baby!*). Similar remarks, limited to audiovisual storytelling, apply to Cattleya: led by Riccardo Tozzi, Giovanni Stabilini and Marco Chimenz, this is the production company behind *Romanzo criminale* (the feature film, directed by Michele Placido), *Romanzo criminale. La serie*, *Gomorra. La serie* and *Suburra* (both film and TV series). *Non pensarci. La serie*, “an attempt to introduce interpersonal and entertainment elements associated with representing the family into premium fiction”23, originates in the serialisation of the comedy directed by Gianni Zanasi. The project is by Lorenzo Mieli’s and Mario Gianani’s Wildside production company (previously Wilder), operating between the cinema and television milieux. On a production level, then, one of the most important innovations of the 2000s has been the emergence of a swathe of independent production companies of different sizes, inhabiting the various segments of the cultural industry and devising projects for different media. In production cultures and routines, however, making a feature film and making a series are still rather different endeavours. In the production of series for pay TV, in particular, a new kind of professional is emerging in the Italian arena, explicitly based on international models. *Romanzo criminale. La serie*, in particular, has formalised a unique role – not figuring explicitly in the credits, however – that straddles both the creative and the production sides, overseeing the entire process of making the texts, from scriptwriting to postproduction and promotional launch. That person is the *showrunner*, coordinating and giving a consistent direction to the work of directors, writers, editors and professionals who work to create the complex24 product that is a long television series with high production values25.

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25 Scaglioni, Barra, eds., *Tutta un’altra fiction*.
That last observation brings out a third aspect, concerning the variations in taste that the television series seem to reflect and attest to, when considered in light of their cinematic roots. Elements of continuity and discontinuity can be discerned here, too. As remarked before, the old hierarchies in which the director takes the ultimate ownership of the film product as the *deus ex machina* of the entire production process seem less useful. Now production approaches of a more ‘industrial’ nature are adopted (albeit not yet on a comparable level to an industry like Hollywood), in a departure from the ‘artisanal’ dynamic traditionally associated with Italian cinema. Complex series shift the centre of gravity to a creative director or showrunner, which is closer to the traditional role of the producer than that of the director and, moreover, can be filled by more than one person. Besides, in many cases, the public ‘discursivisation’ of the series (which also includes broadcasters’ marketing and promotion strategies) tends to gravitate around the figure of a single auteur as creative source. This may well be the director (Salvatores and *Quo vadis, baby?*), the writer of the novel (Roberto Saviano and *Gomorra*), or even the star of the series (Stefano Accorsi and 1992). The production processes tend, therefore, to evolve, acquiring a more overtly industrial dimension, especially for projects devised more or less synergically for different media. However, the cinema tradition – hallmarked by a single auteur, mainly equated with the director – still has considerable importance and traction in the public discourse surrounding these contemporary media products.

3. A DUAL APPROACH TO PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.
VERSIONS FOR CINEMA AND FOR TELEVISION

In the long history of the cinema-television relationship and of the means via which those media have gradually become closer and influenced one another (in terms of languages, production processes and audience taste), another important stage concerns the forms that have led, especially in recent years, to a variety of ‘co-production’ experiments with content at once cinematic and televisual. Some of these experiences represent a sudden change, where an already existing production and distribution process is modified to create different outputs, to exploit an oversupplied content to better effect, transcending the limits of a typical film distributed in movie theatres. Instead, other projects are conceived from the outset for both cinema and TV: this requires a profound rethink of the text itself, of the mechanisms of creating it, and of the means of engaging audiences that are qualitatively and quantitatively different.

The decision, while the project is under development or only afterwards, to produce two versions of the same content – for cinema and the small screen – is motivated by production considerations: to contain costs, obtain economies of scale, and use resources more efficiently to achieve particular results. Whereas a production company, despite the inevitably bigger resources required, is able to make a film and a TV series simultaneously, a television broadcaster can spread a single film over several evenings, thus occupying more schedule slots and aiming to foster audience loyalty. The economic reasons are certainly important, but making two at least partly different versions in parallel is also a challenge in terms of the concept and writing. It demands a rethink of not only the production processes but also the narrative solutions, from character construction to plot development – the key elements of interest to the viewers in the cinema and at home. The dual version represents both a desire (an arena for testing out the quality of
projects larger than an individual film) and a necessity (to meet production requirements and differentiate the offering by emphasising distinct elements for the two audiences).

A traditional case of dual distribution comprises those Italian films, often medium-long in duration and with historical settings, that air on television after their release in cinemas, joining the ranks of the two-part miniseries that are the backbone of the Rai public-service broadcaster’s original fiction output. In other words, the film ‘becomes’ a miniseries and is promoted as such on television, often without any reference to its previous cinema incarnation. I viceré by Roberto Faenza was released to theatres in the 2007-08 season as a 120-minute film; it re-emerged on Raiuno a year later, on 23 and 24 November 2008, as two episodes of over 90 minutes each. This approach brought the work to a much larger audience, rising from the 318,071 cinema viewers \(^{26}\) to the 6,097,000 and 5,138,000 who watched the episodes on TV \(^{27}\). Despite the drop-off from the first to the second episode, the ‘transformation into fiction’ brought the adaptation of Federico De Roberto’s novel to a much broader audience. Other works received a similar treatment, with similar results. These include Sanguepazzo, by Marco Tullio Giordana, with a 150-minute cinema version and a television adaptation lasting about ten minutes more \(^{28}\), and Barbarossa, by Renzo Martinelli, where the 139-minute film became a TV miniseries with a pair of 2-hour episodes \(^{29}\). In all these cases, the television airing as a fiction offering prevents the film’s ‘original’ cinema version from being broadcast on TV. Even the reruns finish up on Rai Premium, the thematic channel dedicated to Italian TV fiction. To accommodate the taste of a (very) broad audience, the film’s origins in cinema and the director-auteur role take a back seat, as the PSB prefers to pour this content into the homogeneous pool of the historical and biographical miniseries that it usually airs.

Looking beyond this classic model, three recent “dual versions” for cinema and television highlight the emergence of more sophisticated production and distribution models. Both commercial networks and pay television operators are experimenting with hybrid content that offers economic and efficiency benefits and ‘works’ at a narrative and textual level with multiple audiences.

An initial example is Venuto al mondo, a film directed by Sergio Castellitto and based on Margaret Mazzantini’s novel of the same name. It was produced by Picomedia, distributed by Medusa, and released in Italian cinemas in 2012 \(^{30}\). Two years later, when the new Sky Atlantic channel dedicated to US series and original fiction productions was launched, it aired Venuto al mondo. Extended Version; the 127-minute film became five 50-minute episodes, with a new episode screened in prime time every Tuesday from 15 April 2014. As the title suggests, it was not planned from the outset as a dual project. A decision was made later to recoup the excess footage and edit it into a longer version, in a second “repackaging” for television of a film that had already been aired on TV in its classic form (on Mediaset Premium, from 9 August 2013). The idea came

\(^{26}\) €1,643,344 box office revenues across 559 cinemas, where it ran for 149 days. \textit{Source}: Cinetel.

\(^{27}\) Representing a 25.27% and 17.54% share, respectively. \textit{Source}: Auditel.

\(^{28}\) In the 2007-08 season, the film was seen by 113,814 viewers, taking €611,221 across 486 cinemas over 117 days. The TV version, screened on Raiuno on 30 and 31 May 2010, drew 3,899,000 viewers (17.41% share) for the first episode and 3,562,000 (14.25%) for the second. \textit{Source}: Cinetel and Auditel.

\(^{29}\) In the 2009-10 season, the film was seen by 134,641 viewers, taking €838,147 across 519 cinemas over 53 days. The two-part TV version, screened on Raiuno on 25 and 26 March 2012, drew 3,559,000 and 3,723,000 spectators, respectively (13.55% and 13.29% share). \textit{Source}: Cinetel and Auditel.

\(^{30}\) With €5,068,922 in box office revenues, the film was seen by 878,151 viewers across 1,138 cinemas over 158 days.
straight from director and author, who suggested to Sky that the film should be serialised: “Mazzantini and Castellitto realised during the film production or soon after that they had shot a great deal of high-quality material, enough for a longer version. We were interested, so they began working on these five episodes”31. As the film had never been screened on Sky, after an agreement was reached with the distributor, the miniseries became a distinctive feature of the pay TV offering, distinguishing it from its competitor, Premium. The promotional messages around the launch of the Extended Version on Sky Atlantic (and, later, on Sky Cinema channels) reveal an interesting and continual reworking of the relationship between cinema and the small screen. On the one hand, television’s strength is that it can accommodate a broader narrative while overcoming the constraints of the standard film duration. Television enables re-use of “all the extant material that demanded to be seen, material that was not rejected but sacrificed, that I had to cut for cinematic narrative ends”32, thus recovering valuable elements and giving the auteur greater editorial control. “A serial allows greater completeness”33, a factor that is even more important when adapting a novel, and “television offers viewers a freedom that cinema no longer provides: the big screen has got bogged down in comedy, so if you want drama, you look to television”34. As befits its home on a channel like Sky Atlantic, the film’s extended version is naturalised into a US TV series, as a symbol of creativity and experimentation through language, narrative range, and greater authorial freedom. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the television version does not lose its cinematic feel (or quality) here, which is also constantly emphasised (as befits its home on Sky Cinema). *Venuto al mondo. Extended Version* is “a product that is qualitatively right for the cinema but impossible to put on the big screen because of its length. And yet, I had to cut something here, too! [jokingly]”35. Again, “the possibility of working again on the footage where a great many hours had been cut was a real luxury […]”; being able to tell a story in greater detail is a way to restore more dignity to the viewer’s experience, when television has generally become just noise”36, thus underlining the importance of the relationship with the audience. ‘Quality’ evokes the world of cinema, in contrast to ‘normal’ television, which is less carefully made, or even harmful. Content originating in cinema thus finds itself squashed between the dual rhetoric of cinema’s superiority to TV and the radical ‘difference’ between a television genre like the series (especially US-made) and the trite everyday flow of current programming. This dialectic is also evident in the debate about the feasibility of similar projects involving both cinema and television. On the one hand, such undertakings are “an experiment […] that could set a precedent in cinema”37; on the other, the imbalance in terms of the value attributed not just by the professionals but also by the audience to the two media creates the risk of “this becoming a way for producers to ask directors to make a commercial film and then an extended version to have fun with… But only up to a point! You must respect the people

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31 Interview with Margherita Amedei, Head of the Sky Cinema channels (12 November 2015).
at home. TV slots have a value; there is no sense in making a piece of divertissement and expecting someone to just buy it from you”\textsuperscript{38}. \textit{Venuto al mondo. Extended version} thus emerges as a pivotal moment of transition, a change in the film’s release to market and consumption that evidences the television version’s strengths while also illuminating some of its real and symbolic weaknesses.

\textit{Tutta colpa di Freud}, a comedy written and directed by Paolo Genovese, is more structured and, above all, was planned for dual release right from the start of the writing and production process. Produced and distributed by Medusa, it was released to cinemas in 2013 and aired in the Canale 5 prime-time schedule a year later as a two-parter, on 17 and 18 December 2014. The television version stretched to 76 minutes per episode from the cinema version’s original 120. As with the Rai’s miniseries, here too the audience grew in number and multiplied the types and layers of viewers involved: the film, a big hit in its own right, was seen by 1,280,021 paying cinemagoers\textsuperscript{39}, while the two television episodes drew 4,383,000 and 3,535,000 viewers, respectively\textsuperscript{40}. In this case, what changed was the classic distribution model. This was partly because the television broadcaster and the cinema production/distribution company belonged to the same group. “By making the two episodes, the content can be aired on the generalist networks before or in parallel with the pay TV window”\textsuperscript{41}; thus, they altered the standard life cycle of the cinema product on TV, which traditionally comprised successive one-year windows – first pay, then free-to-air. The creation of new viewing opportunities and practices impacts directly on the audience that watches the film, the miniseries or both. For “it is a form of potential enrichment, one that gives another, fuller life to products that have already had one on a smaller stage, namely cinema, making it possible to do so on the back of that, through a different version […]. And you can show the product to a slightly broader audience”\textsuperscript{42}. In a project like this, moreover, the differences in how the text is distributed and how audiences experience it are the result downstream of a real revolution upstream. Indeed, there is an original economic and production model aimed at spreading the film’s costs across its two formats, and the writing and production routines have had to change to take due account of the specific characteristics of the two media (and, once again, their respective target audiences). As the director confirms, “during these recessionary times of tighter budgets, you need to be creative on the production front, too […]. The idea of cross-fertilising cinema and TV did not occur to us after the film had gone on general release: the experiment was carefully planned right from the start of pre-production”\textsuperscript{43}. This decision has ramifications for both the writing – with characters and storylines added especially for the television version – and the practical implementation of the project. In the scripts, for example, the traditional list of scenes and lines is complemented by additional sheets (in red) for the scenes to shoot ad hoc for television. The film and its brand receive a boost from this dual exposure that, once again, embraces the small screen’s strengths (primarily the longer duration and the chance to build audience loyalty) while ‘cross-fertilising’ television by introducing

\textsuperscript{38} Interview with Andrea Scrosati, Executive Vice President Programming, Sky Italia (6 November 2015).
\textsuperscript{39} Revenues: €7,928,847 across 1,456 cinemas over 166 days. Source: Cinetel.
\textsuperscript{40} Representing 16.96% and 14% share. Source: Auditel.
\textsuperscript{41} Interview with Giampaolo Letta, Vice President and Managing Director of Medusa, Mediaset (25 September 2015).
\textsuperscript{42} Interview with Carlo Panzeri, Deputy Head of Canale 5, Mediaset (27 November 2015).
distinctively cinematic rhetorical traits, in creative and production terms. For “if the film was a hit in the cinema, those who have not seen it want to watch it, and they have a high-quality product to enjoy: without being snobbish, cinema stories are shown on a big screen and require people to pay for a ticket, so they have greater attention to detail […] At the same time, those who have already seen the film and liked it have another reason to watch it again. It is also a way to attract audiences to films on the generalist networks, as, when aired unencrypted after doing the previous runs, they no longer manage to achieve high ratings as they once did”44. The dual-version approach not only offers production savings, greater creative freedom, and a multifaceted engagement with audiences. It also boosts the generalist free-to-air viewing of cinema. It provides additional content to offset the reduced value of the ‘regular’ film that is often milked dry after airing on pay TV. The difficulty, then, is how to find narratives and projects able to ‘sustain’ such a production effort, to really maintain this added value for audiences: “it is an operation that demands intellectual honesty: not all stories lend themselves to being serialised; you mustn’t water them down by using deleted scenes. They have been deleted for a reason”45.

Similar conditions underpin a third project, another Mediaset idea. Chiamatemi Francesco, directed by Daniele Luchetti, produced by Taodue and distributed by Medusa, was released in Italian cinemas on 3 December 2015 and then had a television run in four episodes over two evenings on Canale 5 in December 2016. In this case, too, the project went ahead on a dual cinema/TV footing from the outset, for economic, production and also editorial reasons. On the one hand, with such a substantial investment, the potential audience had to be maximised: “the aim there was to have two products, to have money from television, too, for a film like that is very expensive. We could not have afforded to make it for cinema or television alone. So there is a synergy, a coming together of goals, that makes the project feasible and moves it forward. In practice, it is all more fluid and less structured”46. On the other hand, aspects of the biopic of the future Pope that would have been out of place in the film could be used in the TV version: “editorially speaking, the two episodes will be very different from the film, since we have shot various situations, events and historical periods that really did not fit in a biographical film”47. The marketing of the movie reveals two other important aspects of this cinema-TV relationship. When the film was launched, the quality aspect and the investment made were considered part of its cinematic power and never linked to the small screen (even in the broadcaster’s media release): “the project proved very demanding and took 15 weeks to shoot in Argentina, Germany and Italy, involving 3,000 extras and intensive historical and religious research to make a film that seeks to combine due respect for historical truth with captivating cinematic language”48. The television version’s existence, moreover, is attributed directly to international market demand, to encourage foreign broadcasters to buy and screen it: “a great challenge in both artistic and investment terms […] . The film has an international cast and is about to be sold to 40 countries as both a film and a television version of four 50-minute episodes […] . It is the first in a series of projects produced in Italy for international distribution”49.

44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Interview with Giorgio Grignaffini, Editor in Chief at Taodue (22 October 2015).
47 Interview with Grignaffini.
48 From the Mediaset press release of 4 November 2015.
49 Alessandro Salem, Head of Content at Mediaset, from the Mediaset press release of 26 November 2015.
barriers between cinema and TV are breaking down, at least partly in pursuit of global distribution: such a distinction is often a constraint to be overcome to take into account foreign markets' needs, circulation habits and professionals' choices, resulting in an even more fluid scenario.

4. CONCLUSIONS. REMIXING PRODUCTION, STORYTELLING AND CONSUMPTION FORMS

The last decade has brought to light several directions in which cinema and television are becoming increasingly connected and hybridised across different production and distribution contexts, in terms of the artistic languages involved and of the processes of producing, distributing and consuming the texts. On the one hand, some cinema content (and, before that, editorial content) is being turned into brands with a TV dimension, narratives to be extended or rethought, intellectual properties that define a transmedia imaginary and ecosystem. On the other hand, and to an even more radical extent, projects and models are being developed that seek, from the outset or through a later execution phase, to double (or more) the fruits of a single production process, by offering at least partially different versions to the different viewers that encounter the same content in cinema, on the small screen, or on both media. Sometimes, it is simply about re-using content discarded (with varying degrees of regret) from the cinema version, to give it room and a renewed value in a broader narrative for television. Increasingly often, though, the decision is taken from the beginning, at a preliminary production stage, to plan the work as a dual project – to include a television miniseries or expand the film into multiple episodes – and to optimise the shooting to meet the twofold aim and to allow for a dual editing process. In all these cases, however, there are many underlying motives for embarking on this kind of operation. They include editorial, economic, production and distribution reasons (directly linked to future consumption) that are often overlapping or interdependent. In editorial terms, then, the dual output for cinema and television prompts consideration of the specific nature of their respective languages, while resulting in the development of a broader narrative world. That world will include both media, adding storylines and characters, telling some portions of the narrative in more detail, focusing on some elements or on other ones, and expanding or narrowing the story’s scope. On an economic level, the dual cinema-TV approach makes it possible to rationalise investment – a vital matter especially when the sector is in crisis, as in recent years – and maximise the profit from both media, thus (hopefully) offsetting and covering the inevitably higher cost. From a production perspective, planning a dual approach has two benefits. First, some existing footage can be recovered and put to good use rather than just discarded. Second, the processes, routines and approaches can all be revisited, as can the objectives of all the professionals involved in writing, shooting, editing and postproduction. Finally, as regards distribution, these projects seek to deploy an expensive production across two distinct markets, thus addressing different audiences in different ways and with ever-broader aims, to attract audiences both in greater numbers and from different age groups and socio-demographic classes. In addition, a fluid and modular audiovisual content hopefully can circulate more widely both on an international level and on digital platforms (i.e. on demand streaming services). An operational decision on any of those levels inevitably has strong repercussions on all the others. Indeed, the distribution dimension affects the forms of production and the way in which the content is devised, written and staged; the economic aspect demands
that good enough stories are found and marketed to the most suitable kind of audience; a story to expand has to be financially sustainable and effectively achievable from a distribution and production standpoint, and so on. Other variables further complicate the picture. Together, they constitute an element of resistance as well as of innovation, regarding both the full adoption of a hybrid model and thus the elimination of the (editorial, production and also discursive) barriers that still are separating cinema and TV.

Three keywords that have already emerged between the lines in this analysis of case studies highlight what is at stake and the contradictions, negotiations and clashes accompanying the emergence of this hybrid model, at least differing from traditional approaches. The first is ‘taste’. In imagining and then creating different versions of the same content for cinema and television – sometimes with the same title, sometimes with an added qualifier – the production aims to embrace cinema and TV viewers’ different needs and expectations. Each medium’s typical spectator is imagined, envisaged and, to a certain extent, studied and modelled in ad hoc fashion by production cultures, processes and professionals. The resulting texts differ, at least in part, and some elements are given different value in the distribution and marketing processes. In many cases, though, this mechanism seeks not only to define the distinctive traits ‘most suited’ to the different audiences but also, in a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy, to affirm traditions, stereotypes, presuppositions and preconceived ideas that come true partly through being continually affirmed. So the television version must be broad enough to appeal to a wider audience, perhaps by adding humorous or light-hearted elements absent from the drama made for cinema; or the story structure must build in a cliff-hanger at episode’s end (or before the ads).

A second aspect is bound up with the idea of ‘success’, another element that often looks very different for cinema and TV. In quantitative terms, the orders of magnitude differ between the two media, as mainstream television brings at least ten times as many viewers as cinema (without their having to pay for a ticket or watch the entire film at a single stretch). More generally, then, assessing the success of a piece of content and the indicators thereof – not just statistical indicators but also, broadly speaking, discursive ones – brings in factors associated with the single medium (awards, the critics’ reviews, the ability to synchronise a shared discourse and vision) along with features that cut across the product’s entire life cycle. By the latter, we mean the ramifications and repercussions of success in the cinema for the new versions’ runs on TV, the impact on the communication and promotion plans for the various media, word of mouth (or lack of it) etc. While the production and distribution are redefined and hybridised, the sequentiality of the various media is still a key factor in building success.

The third, and final, element that can complicate matters and provide a boost is ‘quality’. In cinema, for some titles in particular, this aspect is at least partly taken for granted, as being closely linked to the subject addressed or to the idea of an authorial work. In television, however, quality has historically been questioned; only recently it has been ‘rediscovered’ and reclaimed in specific genres.50 Cinema and television have a different cultural capital, bound up with how they evolved and acquired value in the public debate. This difference has inevitable consequences and ramifications for how spectators approach, interpret and ascribe value to the respective content (and therefore, in turn, for how taste is shaped and success is constructed). As the examples clearly

show, for content intended towards a dual audience of cinemagoers and TV watchers, quality is built by the agents and processes of production and accepted by the viewers, sometimes jointly, sometimes separately for the two media, with common factors and differences, overlaps and contradictions. On the one hand, a work’s genesis (and debut) in the cinema scenario helps to add a veneer of value to its television screening, to make it stand out from the rest of the schedule, and to evoke a separate and distant world of narrative and production values and of acting skills. On the other, the television airing can acquire value in its own right, over and above the film’s run in cinemas alone, according to two lines of interpretation and communication that are at least partially conflicting: the assimilation with a TV genre considered particularly prestigious, namely US series (often deemed an explicit extension of cinema) and, in contrast, the association with the most popular Italian fiction (as a broadening of outlook from the ‘elitist’ or ‘niche’ cinematic experience).

In attempting to bridge the divide between cinema and television, then, joint projects or the connections and hybridisations between the two media are hallmarks of a scenario that is still uncertain and in flux. This is made of attempts and initial successes, of brand-new ideas and adaptations of existing editorial, economic, production, distribution and consumption forms. The existence of companies operating across several media, the establishment of original writing and production models, the more or less courageous rethink of distribution and of the content life-cycle are steps forward towards a removal (or at least a blurring) of the boundaries between cinema and the small screen. Yet the leveraging of the content, the public discourse, the official promotion and, at least in part, the audience’s consumption choices still reflect more traditional parameters. The construction of transversal brands and the successful development of content across both cinematic and television universes thus define a trend that is evolving very fast, but still remains unclear.