

TELEVISION SERIES: INVENTORY OF RESEARCH IN FRANCE

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KEYWORDS

TV series; French academic research; academic disciplines.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to propose an inventory of French academic research on TV series. Apart from the main publications (book, articles) of academics considered to be the most productive in this field in France, it draws on current or recently completed doctoral research in France. The TV series allow for a multidisciplinary discourse that can become a fruitful interdisciplinary discourse, provided that it is conceived of as such, opening new crossings and

This article provides an inventory of French academic research on TV series. Apart from the main publications (book and articles) of academics considered to be the most productive in this field in France, I draw on current or recently completed doctoral research in France, found on the website theses.fr¹. This study follows the panoramic work of Séverine Barthes during the “Premières Rencontres Universitaires des Séries Télévisées” in Paris, August 2004 (Barthes 2004). Since 2004, there has been a considerable increase in research on TV series that confirms some of Barthes’s conclusion but also forms points of contrast with others.

The list of articles, books and theses gathered in this article presents a broad panel of research on TV series, in various disciplines and in doctoral schools offering qualifications that meet the criteria of the CNU in France to which the academic researcher is affiliated². TV series were for a long time associated with media or television studies rather than with film studies, and so initially were not subject to aesthetic approaches more associated with the academic study of cinema. This spared them the domination (even the monopoly) of a formalist and possibly decontextualized methodology, as well as classification—in this case perilous—in the Art category. TV series therefore opened the way more easily to multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches, which also proved to have their own pitfalls. In view of the multiplicity of disciplines, theories, methods, and terminologies used around the “TV series” corpus³, in the limited scope of this article I propose an essentially heuristic typology. This I base on the (very French) categorization of the CNU, from Aesthetics (18th Section) to Sociology (19th Section), through Information and Communication Science (71st Section), History (22nd Section), Language and Literature (mainly English-language and French, 9th and 11th sections, respectively), to mention but the most heavily represented categories. Given the most recent academic research, the classification used in some universities to differentiate the “Arts, Literature and Languages” faculties from the “Social and Human Sciences” faculties highlights the theoretical divide in the analysis of TV series, one that is problematic to varying degrees. This interdisciplinarity points out what Séverine Barthes has already underlined:

1 77 PhDs are now counting returning results « séries télévisées » on website [theses.fr](http://www.theses.fr): <http://www.theses.fr/>, last connexion on 2 January 2016

2 In France, all PhDs, after being sustained, have to be evaluated and « qualified » by the CNU in order for its author to be recruited by a university as an assistant professor.

3 I mean by the term « corpus » the body of television series explored by academic research.

even the concept of “series TV” can be problematic. In a study of representations conveyed by TV, should the series that are used as an example be considered as products of the media? Is the research about this specific TV format? About a narrative content? About an aesthetic form?

1. REPRESENTATIONS, IDEOLOGIES, SYMPTOMS AND REFLECTIONS: THE POSITION OF THE SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES, BETWEEN TEXT AND CONTEXT

Despite the academy’s many years of legitimist contempt for television, there has been a proliferation of research on TV series in the last two decades, as Jean-Pierre Esquenazi pointed out (Esquenazi 2009). My aim here is not to analyse this development as such, but rather to show what each discipline with the social and human sciences has done with the corpus of television series they have approached, and with which theoretical tools.

Overall, when it comes to the Social and Human Sciences, TV series are a subject of reflection on representations and their negotiation, which relates to the different actors of their production, dissemination and reception. Dialogue has been initiated between Sociology and the Information and Communication Sciences (ICS), which has generated cross-pollination as well as theoretical and methodological divergences.

The circulation of representations in audiovisual contents are at the centre of theories focusing on the public and on usage. From the appearance of the notion of *sériophilie* (Glevarc 2012, Béliard 2014) in the theoretical and critical lexicon, the question of the uses and practices of TV series has been studied in both Sociology and ICS. Reflection on the domestic use of series—which are not consumed in the darkness of cinemas—justifies a sociological approach (Combes 2013), for TV series attest to a change of paradigm in the sociology of cultural publics and practices. Their current vitality seems to confirm the eclecticism of scholarly and popular cultures, rather than the distinction between them. TV series thus enable us to hone the study of current cultural practices and any “dissonances” they may have (Lahire 2004). Quite a few social science theses have therefore involved a reception study on audiences and their behaviours, involving sociological interviews. The proliferation of discourses on the Internet also calls into question the methods of investigation into audiences and their activities. A certain sociology

of cultural practices thus defends the possibility of using online interaction as a place of social exchange. For research, the Internet has facilitated the multiplication of analyses of online comments written by amateurs or fans, all of which are discursive sources, in addition to the social sciences' and humanities' interview methods — even though Sociology still has difficulty sometimes in defending this type of discourse analysis from a methodological point of view (Levaratto and Léontsini 2012). The proximity—and differences—with the approach in terms of cultural history will be more developed in the final section of this article.

Sociology of media has thus yielded the seminal work of Sabine Chalvon-Demersay who, in the screenplays written for France 2, identified the “fragments of a common culture” (Chalvon-Demersay 1994) that reveal a crisis of the social bonds. Her long survey on *Urgences (Emergency Room)* (Chalvon-Demersay 1999 and 2000) is still an anchoring point for current research. The question of the character and “moral sensitivities” (the ethic understanding of the characters) justified her sociological reading of the characters in TV series, thus opening the way to reflection on the “particular merging between the character and the actor” to which they give rise. That work on the nature of fictional characters in literature (Jouve 2008) is employed alongside the literature on stars in film and television.

In the wake of Chalvon-Demersay's work, some studies have combined the sociology of occupations with the sociology of work, from a point of view that links social studies to media policies (Mille 2013, Legagneur 2014). The approach can match up with ICS when the study concerns certain discourses and practices of interpretive communities (Doury 2011) and the various readings they imply — including divergent or oppositional ones. The question of the place given to contexts and conjunctures in the analyses is therefore crucial (Chambat-Houillon 2012).

Focusing on the analysis of the text, its reception, dissemination, and programming strategies may also mean entering into the field of economics and/or marketing. Where TV series are concerned, the economics of media can be based on the question of transmedia and/or multimedia, of “intermediality” (Smyrnaio and Vovou 2008), considered not only as a form of narrative but also as a commercial strategy of the culture industries (Bourdaa 2009, in a more economic approach Laurichesse 2011) or as a modality of reception (Boni 2011a, 2011b and 2017). These types of socio-economic or socio-technical approaches are represented mainly in ICS. The necessary contextualization of TV series as for-profit audiovi-

sual productions serves as a common objective for reflection on representations. The idea is to go further than the study of the text, to place the TV series in its economic, political and discursive context (Sepulchre 2011). Transmedia can so be taken as an “extended world” that could be mapped (Boni 2017) as imaginary universes, often recognisable as brands by fans and cultural industries.

Serial form can itself be seen as the consequence of socio-economic constraints embodied in a cultural history. The role of the “format” or the “formula” in serial narrative construction (Esquenazi 2011) — terms inherited from Rick Altman's genre theory, and often linked to the literary serial — is thus raised and addressed in relation to a particular work's historical, cultural and economic context. From this perspective, Esquenazi draws on a strong interdisciplinarity, including generic reflections or formalist and narratological analyses to determine an “aesthetic project”. At the interface between sociology and ICS, several standpoints can thus be identified: from the most severe—the TV series as an “ideological project” without “a credible social project” (Buxton 2011)—to the most nuanced: the TV series as the outcome of an “economic and cultural agreement” (Esquenazi 2013), or as a “symptom” (Jost 2011). It bears “traces”, according to Maigret, or, for Éric Macé, “media imaginaries” (Macé 2006). The approaches can vary: socio-economic, historical, format analysis from Buxton's point of view; qualitative inquiry, socio-history, and socio-critical perspective from Esquenazi's; sociology of media, cultural studies, gender studies and discourse analysis from Maigret's (Maigret 2007); and semiology of image and narratology, from Jost's. From these perspectives, the hypothesis of a “common imaginary” identifiable in media audiovisual discourses is more or less associated with sociological inquiry on reception.

The approaches therefore tend either towards the study of the context of the enunciation (the characteristics of the actors of production⁴), its semantic characteristics (the presence of generic and discursive codes), its reception (sometimes from an ethnographic perspective of participant observation [Shih], or by the analysis of online comments), or else an analysis of discourse as it prevails in and outside of the text. For example, Mélanie Bourdaa (from 71st section) crosses gender and fan studies with a cultural studies approach (Bourdaa 2017).

4 Such as: «Les mines de sel : auteurs et scénaristes de télévision», Dominique Pasquier and Sabine Chalvon-Demersay, in *Sociologie du Travail*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (octobre 1993), pp. 409-430

Discourse analysis considers discourse as the “reflection” that is a “symptom” of reality, whereas discourse in discourse analysis of Foucauldian inspiration is *reality itself*. Éric Maigret and the PhD students working under his supervision use, more than lexical studies, a discourse analysis inherited from Michel Foucault. From this approach, they study the context and content of discourse and seek to identify therein multiple re-negotiations of identifiable representations in the TV series. These are then taken to manifest the states of a social space, which may be conflictual or hegemonic (Morin 2014, Lécossais 2015 Lallet 2017). In the sociological dynamic, the TV series is logically set in a corpus of adjacent TV programmes, sometimes completed by interviews, to identify the dominant representations. This is how Éric Macé employs this approach when he examines the “effects of ethno-racialization in television programmes”, to which fiction series contribute. More recently in his research, *Homeland* serves as a tool for “a heuristic critique of post-2001 wars”. Here, discourse and content analysis are based on a sociological inquiry into the agents of the series’ production (Macé 2009).

These cultural approaches take into account, to varying degrees, the particularities of television enunciation, and the economic conditions of series production and broadcasting in the complex context of cultural industries. This is undertaken in within a framework of sociological or communicational theories that are contextualized to a greater or lesser degree. The methods of investigation differ however: reception studies confirm or propose new theoretical hypotheses. The semiology of media and images thus propose categorizations (Jost 2016) that imply unified representations based on what a semantic analysis of content allows. Narratological and enunciatory figures of the reader/spectator and the narrator/author are articulated differently, depending on the theory. The impression that the TV series “talks to us” reinforces the “power of series” (Esquenazi 2013). Esquenazi sees “immersion” as spreading out from theories of fiction, mainly with reference to the works of Jean-Marie Schaeffer and Arthur Danto⁵. The “empathy” for the characters, described by François Jost, is based on the rigorous study of enunciation and narration (Jost 1992), and on his theory of television genres and the different “mimetic modes” and “promises” of “proximity” to which they give rise (Jost 2001). Jost discusses the Genetian model of narratology in a communicational schema based on cognition and other theories. He looks, *inter alia*, at the

as yet largely unexplored field of web series, starting from an analysis of their situation of enunciation (Jost 2014).

Finding a balance between the analysis of text in an aesthetic point of view and that of context is clearly a task for all who study TV series. Coming from the ICS section, Stéphane Benassi’s work (Benassi 2000, 2009, 2010) can be considered among the first to work on formula and seriality in aesthetic terms, considering the aesthetic as a sensible experience in a global interaction with fiction and TV seriality as an experience of fiction.

For his pragmatics of television seriality, Guillaume Soulez proposes a “genetic” model of reading that transcends interest in serial repetition as the only narrative pleasure (generic reading related to the pleasure of recognizing a genre), to evoke an “interpretive opening” “in the terms of a productive or even creative repetition” (Soulez 2011a). The spectator implements his or her reception in a “deliberative” reading (Soulez 2011b), between meta-psychology (seeking to solve the mystery of the fantasy character), meta-poetics (understanding the narrative codes and their transgressions), and the link with a social and political world on which the TV series has an impact. Some research that he supervises in cinema and audiovisual studies thus seeks to connect approaches from narratology and cultural studies (Breda 2015⁶, who defends a “narratology of connexion” that addresses the issue of socio-cultural bonds and community) — a sign of the overlap between aesthetics and ICS in the field of film studies.

The difference between ICS and aesthetics also concerns the place given to a formalist reading of the audiovisual *mise en scène* according to sometimes more aesthetic approaches of the serial narrative and of its textual or inter-textual “processes”. It is not possible within the scope of this article to distinguish between the shares of formal, structural or semiological invariants on which these theories agree or not when they study TV series (for exemple, Buxton clearly refuses cultural studies, which Maigret defends). I will simply note that the studies are carried out in a perpetual continuum between sociology — which includes diverse approaches and methods — semiology, narratology, pragmatics and semio-pragmatics, oriented towards discourse Analysis or content analysis. I would agree with Roger Odin that “theories, in themselves, can be contradictory; they are taken here for the questions they raise” (Odin 2007: 22).

5 Mainly referring to Jean-Marie Schaeffer and Arthur Danto

6 She defends a «narratology of connexion» that addresses the issue of socio-cultural bonds and community.

2. CINEMA STUDIES, AT THE INTERFACE OF VARIOUS DISCIPLINES

“Cinema and audiovisual” PhD theses pay close attention to the specific features of audiovisual forms: the context, the editing, the sound/image connection, or the genres (Mathieu-Jacques 2016), without excluding the question of reception (Engammare, who combines a semio-pragmatic approach with ethnography⁷). An overlap with cultural approaches is easily identified: at Bordeaux Montaigne University, Geneviève Sellier, a specialist in gender studies, affiliated with the 18th Section, has written many articles on a corpus of French TV series (Sellier 2004, 2007). These are characterized by reflection on gendered and sexual representations, with content and discourse analysis applied to the study of gender and class relations. Sellier sometimes collaborates with her colleague Pierre Beylot, a specialist in fiction narrative (Guillot), who is situated at the interface between the Science of Art, the Humanities, and ICS. Also at Bordeaux Montaigne, the young journal *Genre en série*⁸ – co-edited by Gwenaëlle Le Gras (in film studies) and Laetitia Biscarrat (in ICT) – has a basis in “media and audiovisual studies” oriented towards gender studies and cultural studies, and raises questions relevant to TV series, between aesthetics and communication. The subjects of PhD theses in film studies reveal the interdisciplinarity used by researchers in “Cinema and Audiovisual” to reflect on TV series; their approaches sit between narratology, poetic reading, and contextual perspectives (Favard 2015, who develops a theory of the denouement in a production context where the end is not always provided⁹). These overlaps reflect the use of critical tools from sociology (studies of fans’ usage), transmedia theories (with Jenkins and others), literature, and from work that considers the issue of fictional worlds (Boni 2011, 2017); the use of narratology is sometimes further nuanced by the pursuit of ethnographic inquiry (Arbogast).

It should also be noted that while film studies’ increasing theoretical and epistemological interest in TV series has generally been a progressive move, it has in some instances been shaped by a process of legitimization, by which some television is elevated in value as it comes to more closely resemble cinema. The *Forum des images* “Série Mania” festival comes

to mind¹⁰, as do the headlines and special files of the *Cahiers du Cinéma*¹¹ which are accompanied by many critical publications outside of the academic sphere (Winkler et Petit 1999).

3. ART, LITERATURE, LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATION — THE ALL POSTURE

From the point of view of Art, Literature, and Languages (ALL), the study of serial narrative is anchored to a number of PhD theses in languages and literature. Generic or narratological analyses are included in theses that are, moreover, not recent (Le Guern 1995). The particularities of serial narrative, the development of its temporality and of continuity, and its “intermedial” nature (Bataille et Cabaret 2013), motivate literary studies to explore the discursive origins of seriality, that is, in repetitive literature (tales in the oral tradition, serialized novels) and especially popular literature, as Umberto Eco did from a structuralist perspective (Eco 1997). Television series are then analysed, sometimes from a semiological perspective, as a contemporary modality of the serial narrative, without foregoing contributions from narratology nor the socio-cultural approach sometimes common to ICS.

The question of representations also marks research in languages, where TV series are envisaged as a cultural object. English departments in universities have based analyses of English-speaking societies on TV series. The strength of these analyses lies precisely in a very sound knowledge of these native cultural spaces, which enables us to understand better certain cultural aspects that are not necessarily apparent to European audiences. In English and North American literature studies, content analysis is based on different terminologies: the word “symptom” is less used than the word “mirror”. (Fouilleul), and there is a question of studying in particular TV series, the “visibility” of the “phenomena” and the “construction of representations” (Lemoine 2013) running through the society represented in the series (Marcucci 2012). While such studies are not isolated to English departments alone (Rose), they are represented on a larger scale. While the terminology used is not the same as that of ICS and of sociology, it converges, via different methods, towards the study of representations and thus towards the analysis of

7 Engammare combines a semio-pragmatic approach with ethnography.

8 Revue en ligne: <http://genreenseries.weebly.com/agrave-propos.html>

9 Favard develops a theory of the denouement in a production context where the end is not always provided

10 *Forum des images*: series of screenings and lectures as part of the «Series mania» event

11 «Séries: une passion américaine», July-August 2010 - n°658, <http://www.cahiersducinema.com/juillet-aout-2010-no658.html>

discourse and content. The inadequacy of terminologies leads certain researchers to specify their approach using compound words such as Aurélie Blot's "semio-sociocultural perspective" (Blot 2011).

Research can be done on a corpus formed for comparative purposes, which was the starting point of Sarah Hatchuel's work¹² between English literature and TV series (Pauchet), or through the lens of a narrative problematic such as reflexivity, meta-textual, or hyper-serial (Hatchuel 2012), or through thematic and/or inter-textual analyses of diegetic content, which also often take character analysis as a base. These characters as "paper beings" and their narrative and symbolic functions thus bring together diverse approaches while differentiating them. Although audiovisual analysis is not neglected, the formalist study of links between images and sounds is sometimes less informed than in film studies. The specific characteristic of audiovisual writing thus appears, in the worst cases, to be reduced to its ability to illustrate civilization-related themes. The implications of such disciplinary turns are therefore also methodological: can one talk of an American TV series without being American? Everything depends once again on the approach: a more text-centred approach that posits the universalism of forms will have fewer implicit cultural references that non-Anglophones would tend to miss, while a more communicational or civilization-centered approach will emphasize cultural particularities more strongly (Le Fèvre-Berthelot). Before Hatchuel, Barbara Villez – director of the "réseaux S.E.R.I.E.S." (Scholars Exchanging and Researching on International Entertainment Series), and author of *Séries télé: visions de la justice* (Villez 2005) – was an example of this kind of approach, mixing an American background, her field (issue of Justice), and questions of representations and informal education through television.

Many theses which, at the time of writing, are currently underway fall within the field of language science and language didactics, even linguistics. The dialogue on form and content therefore persists between literary studies and language studies. Séverine Barthes' PhD thesis in French language is particularly representative in this regard, defending a "rhetoric and semio-stylistic rhetoric" perspective (Barthes 2010). While these studies remain in the minority, in such approaches TV series are an ideal object to illustrate certain

aspects of language (Kossi Seto Yibokou). Due to the massive diffusion of TV series they provide fertile ground for exploring language practices and their evolution.

4. MORE MARGINAL DISCIPLINES, IN OR OUT OF THE ACADEMIC CONTEXT

Some disciplines are represented more marginally, whereas they could very legitimately cover some series. For example, whereas animation TV series abound, I have found no PhD thesis on animated television series in the applied or fine arts, even though a few theses on animated films have commenced (Pailler 2016). Every discipline delimits its field as well as its centres of interest.

A contrary example would be the fascination that some TV series have incited in philosophy, in and beyond the academic sphere (for example, among others, see: de Saint-Maurice 2010, Colonna 2015). Laurent Jullier and I, who are not philosophers, analysed *Grey's Anatomy* from the angle of social philosophy and the "ethics of care" (Jullier et Laborde 2012). Our perspective was interdisciplinary since the book aimed to show that care is present at three levels in *Grey's Anatomy*, each of which calls for analysis from a different disciplinary perspective: in the narrative events (narratological approach); the staging or stylistic presentation (formalist approach); and in the fans' comments (pragmatic approach). However, only a few philosophy theses in the online index these.fr address TV series. Hugo Clémot's research is a noteworthy exception; based on the work of both Noël Carroll and Stanley Cavell, amongst others, Clémot argues for the relevance of a "philosophy of cinema", and particularly of TV series (Clémot 2011). Yet these practices are flourishing in the USA¹³: Philosophy as a discipline can use the TV series as a corpus to illustrate an idea or concept, and/or philosophy will appear as a heuristic tool for the understanding of TV series. In the French academic paradigm, they nevertheless seem to be carefully solicited: it is publications for the general public that have to a large extent taken over these possible overlaps of TV series with philosophical reflections. These differences also reflect the particular academic contexts that have developed in France and the USA.

Even marginally, unexpected disciplines such as computer science can study TV series and, for example, their "multimodal" structure (Ercolessi 2013). This attests to a fact with which I would like to end this (necessarily partial) review of the main

12 See the academic works of Sarah Hatchuel : <http://www.series.cnrs.fr/spip.php?article17>. She leads ambitious research projects around the Université du Havre with other colleagues in different disciplines such as Shannon Wells-Lassagne for example who links TV series and literature. The online review TV/series is one of the results of this research group : <https://tvseries.revues.org/>.

13 See: <http://www.opencourtbooks.com/categories/pcp.htm>

French research on TV series. The current development of series's studies, the taste and the affection that they generate, are probably conjunctural, and it is logical that they give rise to interdisciplinary contributions. Different implications of this corpus for the discipline envisaged confirm the distribution of objects according to disciplines. While ultimately "film studies" does not seem dominant in the theses selected, it is probably because, even though the body of television series provides narrative or narratological originality, it does not provide any real theoretical novelty, in so far as cinema and audiovisual are themselves also objects rather than a discipline. In this framework, TV series have simply opened onto another object, which is characterized mainly by its plethoric nature. This "new" corpus has nevertheless had the advantage of compelling the advocates of highly formalist approaches to focus more on matters of reception—insofar as the texts themselves are often influenced by what the spectators say about them—and production, since the very existence of the TV series clearly depends on the economic constraints linked to the diverse modalities of its broad dissemination.

5. THE VICTORY OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND NEW DISCIPLINARY BOUNDARIES.

Finally, everything depends on "where one is talking from". This comment could be made in regard to history, a discipline where some theses see TV series as objects of study. The question is perhaps as much methodological as cultural. Based on the question of *representations* of history (Boutet 2017), academic research in contemporary history seem to be reluctant to take the epistemological risk of working on this very recent corpus, except with the prospect of an overlap between the study of history and contemporary civilization, between history and sociology, such as the approach proposed by certain academic of the École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)¹⁴. A very fecund approach in this case is certainly the cultural and/or social history approach, which is not limited to the theory of the reflection of reality or theory of the effects of context (Ahn). As it can be done in the ICS approach but with other methodological tools (including the use of archives), the historical approach underlines the links between forms and representations in a historical perspective of the societies in which TV is situated as a medium. Isabelle Veyrat-Masson should be mentioned here,

14 Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales

as one of the first historians who studies TV Series (Veyrat-Masson 1989, 2008). A media historian, Veyrat-Masson built a link between a historical point of view on the media and an approach drawing on information and communication sciences. These kinds of interdisciplinary approaches can be further taken up in order to reinforce them.

In the historical field, questions can cross cultural, social and discursive analyses. The work of Sébastien Ledoux on *Un village français* around the french notion of "devoir de mémoire" can be cited¹⁵. As well, work by historians on the representation of the the Dark Ages in *Game of Thrones* (Besson, Kikuchi et Troadec 2015) is an example of scholars working across cultural history and sociology. TV series are specially suitable for this kind of interdisciplinary crossbreeding.

With a different corpus, the works of certain academics such as Jean-Marie Schaeffer or Raphael Baroni (Baroni 2007) – rethinking aesthetic and narratology or semiology – open rich perspectives, resolutely crossing disciplinary fields: philosophy, sociology, anthropology, art theory, linguistics, psychology, and cognition (Goudmand 2016¹⁶; the author is currently is working on a theses called *Sérialité et fictionnalité: pour une poétique du récit sériel*). Moreover, this kind of "piecemeal theory" (Bordwell and Carroll 1996) can also extend questions of intermediality, even within the disciplines already quoted. For example, the intermedial aspect cannot be reduced to the links between film studies and researches on the audiovisual. From a historical point of view, the links with the uses of radio explored by Glevarec (Glevarec 2017) are relevant, as well as the new opportunities offered to older media by the Internet¹⁷. Rethinking seriality, fiction, the poetics of the serial from a transmedial and interdisciplinary point of view allows better understanding of the transformations and novelty embodied in social reality (Mille 2016).

CONCLUSION

Studying TV series through the lens of the different disciplinary approaches outlined above is ultimately very natural: the popular origins of television series, designed to please

15 Analyse de la série télévisée «Un village français» dans le cadre du projet ANR Epistémè (2014-2017). Edition « Les controverses d'Un village français », Mediapart <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/edition/les-controverses-d-un-village-francais>

16 She is working on a theses called: «Sérialité et fictionnalité: pour une poétique du récit sériel.»

17 See the last numbers of the review *Télévision* or *Sociétés et Représentations*

the masses, have been largely designed in ways that enable the plasticity of the approaches and the meanings produced. Whatever coherence emerges from the categorization proposed in this article, it should not mask the many tensions between disciplines: the particular narrative mode, the serial characters, and the representations and uses to which the TV series attest, appear as nodal points, irrespective of any particular approach being used or drawn upon.

The mass media or “media-culture” dimension of TV series (Maigret et Macé 2005), and the plurality of forms, formats and types of scenario that they stage, also explain why they have escaped from the very French paradigm of the divorce between cinema and media that I mentioned in the introduction to this essay. They therefore allow for a multidisciplinary discourse—and that is not the least of their virtues—that can become a fruitful interdisciplinary discourse, provided that it is conceived of as such, opening new crossings and boundaries between disciplines.

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