

Elena de la Cuadra de Colmenares
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3057-2176>
 ecuadra@ucm.es
 Universidad Complutense de Madrid

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Use of archival images in mini-series “based on real events:” Spanish drama productions between 1990 and 2010

Abstract

Spanish series production between 1990 and 2010 (from the analogue switch-off to deregulation and the arrival of new TV channels and platforms) stands out for a large number of “based-on-real-events” dramas. These include historical events, traumatic events of little historical import and biographical accounts of eminent figures. This paper analyses the veracity of archival footage and other media resources (press, radio) included in these series and the way in which they used. A quantitative and qualitative analysis, combined with an extensive literature review, shows that some of the apparently real historical footage and images integrated into these series are in actual fact fake. The viewer’s possible confusion in decoding these images would suggest that the use of archival material in fictional drama brings it closer to genres traditionally considered non-fiction. Finally, the inclusion of real (and fake) archival footage in audio-visual accounts of past events appears to fulfil an ideological function.

Keywords

Television, fiction, archival footage, TV series, mini-series.

1. Introduction

The drama series produced in Spain between 1990 and 2010 cover a wide range of themes, ranging from literary adaptations (Rodríguez Merchán, 2014) to successful family sitcoms through to specific fictions that seek a language and audience of their own.

One of the most successful audience trends of this period were fictions based on a ‘real event.’ The five most viewed programmes of this time include two mini-series: TVE’s *23-F: el día más difícil del Rey*, which boasted an audience of 6,920,000 (a 35.5% share) in 2008 and the Antena 3 production *El castigo*, which in 2008 drew 5,333,000 viewers (a 27.8% share).

Table 1: The 5 most viewed dramas between 1990 and 2010.

	Title	Channel	Broadcast	Format	Audience	Share
1	<i>Compuesta y Sin Novio</i>	Antena 3	19/09/1994	Series	7,355,000	44.5
2	<i>23-F: el día más difícil del Rey</i>	TVE 1	12/02/2009	Made-for-TV movie	6,920,000	35.5
3	<i>La Regenta</i>	TVE 1	17/01/1995	Mini-series	6,029,000	33.9
4	<i>La Señora</i>	TVE 1	18/01/2010	Series	5,595,000	25.3
5	<i>El castigo</i>	Antena 3	16/12/2008	Mini-series	5,333,000	27.8

Source: Own elaboration.

This table also includes a series set in the past (*La Señora*, on TVE1), which, as a fictional account is not analysed in this study, shows the audience’s interest for this type of drama.

2. Mini-series “based on real events:” between fact and fiction

Many authors, including Bellido (2013, 2014, 2015 and 2018), Buonanno (2005), or Diego (2007), agree that mini-series are fiction products. This format was used by RTVE in the ‘70s and ‘80s in a number of productions, especially in literary adaptations. The mini-series has once again returned to Spanish screens, this time to recount both real events and the lives of real people. In the period under study, mini-series portraying real events or real people became one of the most successful trends (Bellido, 2015). As Buonanno (2005, p. 22) notes, the mini-series is the perfect format with which to recount historical events or the lives of deceased public figures, since, “it tells a story with a beginning, a development and an end; a story that concludes after a few episodes,” and both literary adaptations and real events meet that criterion of complete stories. Moreover, as Buonanno continues (2005, p. 23): “The mini-series [...] does not demand [audience] loyalty, or endurance, or the long-term habit of regular dates with the preferred programme. Their dates are quickly exhausted. The loyalty it demands is ‘short’.”

This paper does not address all the themes of these mini-series, but it is worth noting how they have varied down the years. According to Pastor-González’s classification (2016), the fictions of the decades 1990-2010 were produced by three channels (TVE1, Antena 3 and Telecinco), with a range of titles on “exemplary lives,” “celebrities and artists” and “crimes.” Pastor-González, whose research covers a longer time span than that of the present study, concludes that TVE preferred exemplary lives while Telecinco opted for celebrities and artists. However, our study shows that in the first years of this trend, the three channels covered all three themes irrespectively.

Despite being fictional products, their inclusion of images familiar to television viewers brings them closer to non-fiction. Many researchers have pondered the boundary between documentary and fiction (Weinrichter, Barroso, Bellido, Raventós, Torregrosa and Puig, Guadaño, Moral, Lipkin or López Ligeró, among others) in series combining historical footage with original film shot for the drama.

Antonio Weinrichter (1998, p. 109) speaks of the indeterminate nature of the concept of “non-fiction,” of the “freedom to mix formats, to point out established discourses, to create a synthesis of fiction and information.” Weinrichter’s reference to “information” is interesting in that academics usually draw parallels or dichotomies between fiction and documentary, and study the types of resources of one or the other. However, this research found a striking combination of “information” and fiction in the studied mini-series; despite featuring resources specific to the documentary, these productions were not made as documentaries. These resources include testimonies, archival footage and images, voiceovers, graphics displaying information such as dates or names, etc. According to Bellido, in his doctoral thesis (2014): how, when, and to what extent post-production resources are used in one product or another product is precisely what sets apart pure fiction from pure documentary. Jaime Barroso (2005, p. 174) refers to this as a fictional-reality hybrid. Lipkin (2002, p. 1) defines it as a hybrid format¹, as does Bellido (2014, p. 98), who proffers other terms for to define these hybrid products: “Names such as ‘docudrama,’ content using drama techniques (characteristic of fiction) to address real events (typical of the documentary genre) [...] with a preference to add the prefix “docu” to any television content in any way related to real events.” Elaborating on the role of archival footage in the “docudrama” format, Weinrichter (2004) maintains that: “The use of the archival material in a standard documentary tends to convey

¹ As its name suggests, “*docudrama*” is a hybrid form, wedding “documentary” material with “drama,” particularly melodrama.

the same meaning as the fragments of the expository ‘documentary’ or montages interspersed in a drama; they serve contextualise it. It is a question of achieving an effect of plausibility: legitimate historical fiction or non-fiction.” Aside from the author’s relevant observations, this research has shown that archival footage and images can be used for additional functions.

López Ligeró considers that archival footage and images serve a crucial role in lending the product a high degree of credibility. “These images,” he claims, “usually provide a historical reference, embroider a context and underpin a story, and their use in a montage benefits the film” (2015, p. 161).

Lipkin, Paget and Roscoe (2006) summarise that the functions of the docudrama, as shown in the productions reviewed in this paper, are to lend a new vision to, or to commemorate, a national or international “story;” to re-present the careers of a national or international figure; or to revisit interesting subjects with the intention of sparking debate. They also note that recently these productions have been used to portray ordinary citizens who have leapt into the media limelight due to some special (often traumatic) event. Such is the case of one of the series under study, the anthology *La huella del crimen*, which Guadaño (2009, p. 279) defines as “one of the first Spanish television docudramas.” According to Amparo Guerra (2017, p. 144), this type of mini-series is relevant in bringing a historical figure to public attention, in what she calls “media reconstructions of a historical nature, which television helps to shape and re-produce as a memory for intergenerational social consumption” (p. 155).

Besides defining the docudrama as a borderline format between fiction and non-fiction Raventós, Torregrosa and Cuevas (2012, p. 112), add two interesting concepts: these products usually contribute a “documentary style” or a “documentary attitude” (p. 129):

[...] The term documentary style refers to the aesthetics of documentaries; which docudrama can adopt [...] by mimicking the formal codes of the genre through fictional staging. And the term documentary attitude is used here to refer to the thorough background research work that can be found in a docudrama, albeit behind a wholly dramatic guise.

Both concepts were found in the analysed series. Regrettably, the documentary attitude, is often less apparent to the viewer than is the documentary aesthetic. We will return to this question in the description of the uses of archival footage.

Each of the many characteristics of the documentary genre to which Barroso and Bellido refer, separate it from fiction. Two of characteristics of particular relevance to this study are: the use of archival footage and of mass media resources. These two techniques, as Weinrichter confirms, are those the viewer most often recognises as “information.” Although this does not undertake a semiotic approach, but we can highlight the importance, as did Hall (2004), Sturken (1997) and others, of the viewer’s understanding (and “decoding” or “deciphering,” according to those authors) of the boundary between fiction and reality. Raventós, Torregrosa and Cuevas (2012, p. 118) called this “a reading pact.” Psychologists, such as Lamarre and Landreville (2009) or Konjin, Walma and Van Nes (2009), have also studied viewers’ emotional responses to documentaries and docudramas and their ability to tell reality from fiction. In this psychosocial approach, the viewer enters into an agreement with the narrator that the event was real, even though what they are watching is fiction, and therefore cannot be considered (or “decoded”) as a documentary.

This boundary is crossed when the archival footage is combined in a montage with images shot for the fiction, or with images converted to sepia tone to give them an archival quality. This creates a narrative in which it may be impossible to discern what is and what is not archival. Such confusion is compounded with the use of the so-called “Forrest Gump Effect,” consisting of digitally superimposing a contemporary actor over historical footage. Such material is referred to in this study as “fake” archival footage, which López Ligeró (2015, p. 162) calls apocryphal footage:

[...] apocryphal or doctored archival footage [that] usually invokes a supposed referential, historical and evidential value of reality. [...] Apocryphal archives are often treated in post-production [...] This practice reaches a point where black and white images seem to lend the discourse more authority and certainty, as the footage appears to be either unreleased or real.

The author’s allusion to black and white footage as a guarantee of veracity is entirely pertinent. The inclusion of archival footage in a fictional account, albeit “based on a real event,” implies adding to the discourse a historical reference that the viewer knows that they can decode as an aside in the fiction, an audio-visual citation. However, fake archival footage is unrecognisable. As the results of this study suggest, it is impossible to tell whether an excerpt from a newscast used in a mini-series is real archival material or new footage shot for the production. García Reyes’ (2003, p. 49) findings on advertising images, which can be applied to fake archival footage, warn: “any manipulation of an advertising image has an intention that often escapes the rationality of the people who observe it.” This danger is further highlighted by De la Cuadra and López de Solís (2012, p. 30):

[...The technique of] mixing archival footage with fictional material warrants a profound reflection on how digital technologies can be used to manipulate the audience. [...] It could be used in minor details that go unnoticed by the viewers and lead them to believe that what they are seeing is history. Similarly, the technique of combining fresh footage with archival material in a digital montage can mislead [and] can be used to shape [...] a determined opinion about how certain events unfolded.

Armstrong (1992, p. 14), referring to the films of Oliver Stone, specifically *JFK* (Oliver Stone, 1991), comments: “I am troubled by Stone’s mix n’ match of recreated scenes and archival footage, concerned that the young viewers to whom he dedicates the film could take his far-reaching conjecture as literal truth. Sturken (1997) echoes this concern: “Stone’s techniques of editing evoke the fear among critics that viewers would be unable to decipher the difference between docudrama and documentary that they would uncritically read Stone’s history as objective truth.” In a society inundated with images, we might come to believe that if there is recorded evidence of an event, it is real, and if it is real, it is true. Enumerating the dangers of confusing “reality” with “truth,” Barry Hampe (1997, p. 23) states:

[...] one was the error of trying to stuff reality into a box, which came from confusing the truth of the documentary with the actuality of the situation in which it was shot. If it happened, it’s real, the argument went. And if it’s real, it’s true. Not really.

Mini-series frequently resort to excerpts from the news media to support to integrate real events into the fictional account. According to Bellido (2015, p. 44), the print press, magazines or radio fulfil the function of “media self-referentiality, [...] lending realism and veracity to the fiction as a whole.” As well as realism, Bellido holds that the inclusion of news media material brings fiction closer to the documentary genre.

However, as seen with the television excerpts, the other mass media that appear to support the storyline in mini-series are sometimes mock or fake. The degree of realism or similarity with the original medium (magazine, radio, newspaper) depends on the aims of the narrative, on whether or not the historical reality supports the plot. When it does not, the story is fabricated with new documents to support the narrative.

The decision to include real news media or invented media depends on several factors: the impossibility of locating the original document, the owner’s refusal to cede the material, the exorbitant prices that copyrighted material fetches or the legal implications of using archival footage (Hidalgo Goyanes & López de Solís, 2014). In any event, the viewer is unlikely to know whether the footage is a real news item or whether it is filmed for the fiction, thus its function in the drama is the same as whether the original document had been included.

3. Object and methodology

This study aimed to analyse how archival images and footage are used in mini-series based on real events. Other papers have considered the narrative implications of audio-visual material used in advertising (De la Cuadra de Colmenares, López de Solís & Nuño Moral, 2003) and their use in cinema fiction (De la Cuadra de Colmenares & López de Solís, 2012). The studies cited in the introduction provided a starting point for this research in terms of functions, such as contextualisation.

A sample of 26 mini-series aired between 1990 and 2010 were analysed (see Annex). Each mini-series recounts an event that actually took place.

Mini-series on an event that happened but that contain no archival footage of the event in which the story takes place were excluded from this study. An example of this is *Ojo por ojo*, which recounts the “Tragic Week” riots that took place in Barcelona in 1919). Also excluded were series that are not available on the platforms of their respective channels or for sale on DVD (*Los últimos días de Franco*, or *Marisol*, Antena 3).

Four of the 26 series (15.4% of the total) included in the sample contain no archival footage. These, as will be seen in the conclusions, were used to show that storylines not supported by archival footage have a narrative function.

The series were exhaustively reviewed to find the points where archival footage appears in them. Inclusion of “fake” archival footage was also noted. Similarly, fragments of dialogue that were easily recognisable as “historical” (official speeches, sessions at the Spanish Congress) were checked for authenticity, highlighting the “documentary attitude” described by Raventós, Torregrosa and Puig (2012).

Both the written information and the archive material were checked, to the extent possible, using open-access online newspaper libraries and audio-visual archives. For instance, the series *Severo Ochoa. La conquista del Nobel* (example below) features some NO-DO newsreel of the scientist receiving the Nobel Prize. To verify whether the award-giving ceremony footage was genuine or not, we consulted the Filmoteca Española and RTVE, which both offer open access to digitalised NO-DO newsreels. In this case, we found that the NO-DO footage used came not from the 1959 ceremony, but from another year. This footage was combined with film shot specifically for the series and aged to look like archival.

4. Results

After analysing the episodes of the sample series, the following archival resources (images and others) were found in the fictions:

- a) Real archival footage of an event. These genuine images, retrieved from an audio-visual archive, recount an event (historical or not).
- b) Real archival footage that does not belong to the story described in the plot. Even though these are images are genuine, they do not pertain to the event chronicled, but to a different historical event.
- c) Archival footage with altered audio. An audio file was created and superimposed over the footage, either because the original was filmed without sound or because it has been lost over time,
- d) “Fake” archive: images that mimic real archival material. Rather than genuine archival footage, this was filmed specifically for the series. Computer-generated effects were used to “dirty” the film with the characteristic flaws of footage that has survived the passage of time (jumps, scratches, faded colour, etc.).
- e) Others. These include the use of sound archive or fake sound archive, as well as newspapers (dailies and magazines), real or fake, retouched versions of the genuine originals, or directly invented. The use of fake home movie footage was also noted.

Regarding the subject matter (biography or historical event) of the mini-series, 7 biographies (26.9% of the total) and 19 mini-series “based on a real event” (73.1%) were found.

- 7 fictions (26.9%) narrating the life of an eminent person (Severo Ochoa, Miguel Hernández, Adolfo Suárez, The Duchess of Alba, Alfonso de Borbón or Raphael).
- 16 titles (61.5%) each concerning a shocking real life event (crimes, such as the murder of the Marquis and Marquise of Urquijo, the 2008 Spanair plane crash or the attempted coup d'état of 23 February 1981).
- 3 fictions (11.5%) halfway between biography and event: the wedding of then Crown Prince Felipe to Letizia Ortiz, or the life experiences of Sara (abuse) or Maria (a western woman caught up in the Taliban conflict). Because the latter three series do not chronicle the entire life of their protagonists, but rather a specific event that marked their lives, these belong in the real-life event category.

The results of the type of resource that features (footage, stills or others) are as follows:

- Series featuring no type of resource: 4, 15.4%.
- Series featuring genuine archival footage: 14, 53.8%.
- Series featuring fake archival material: 14, 53.8%.
- Series featuring genuine archival material that does not correspond to the event recounted: 3, 11.5%.
- Series featuring other media, such as the print press (generalist or sensationalist press) or radio: 16, 61.5% of the total.

Regarding the use of archival material or other similar techniques, the table shows those series featuring real archival material (A), real but not contemporaneous archival material (B), real archival material with altered sound (C), fake archival material (D) and other media (E).

Table 2

Series	A	B	C	D	E
<i>Severo Ochoa, la conquista del Nobel</i>					
<i>Viento del pueblo. Miguel Hernández</i>					
<i>Padre coraje</i>					
<i>Soy el solitario</i>					
<i>Fago</i>					
<i>El caso Wanninkhof</i>					
<i>El Castigo</i>					
<i>Días sin luz</i>					
<i>23-F: historia de una traición</i>					
<i>23-F: el día más difícil del rey</i>					
<i>Una bala para el rey</i>					
<i>El bloke. Coslada cero</i>					
<i>Paquirri</i>					
<i>LHdC: El crimen de los marqueses de Urquijo</i>					
<i>La ira</i>					
<i>Un Burka Por Amor</i>					
<i>No Estás Sola, Sara</i>					
<i>Adolfo Suárez, el presidente</i>					
<i>El Pacto</i>					
<i>LHdC: El secuestro de Anabel</i>					
<i>LHdC: el asesino dentro del círculo</i>					
<i>La Duquesa</i>					
<i>Alfonso, el príncipe maldito</i>					
<i>Vuelo IL 8714</i>					
<i>Felipe y Letizia</i>					
<i>Raphael</i>					

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Use of archival footage

The archival footage used, whether genuine or invented, acquire different meanings depending on the desired intention of the fiction.

5.1. *Genuine archival footage*

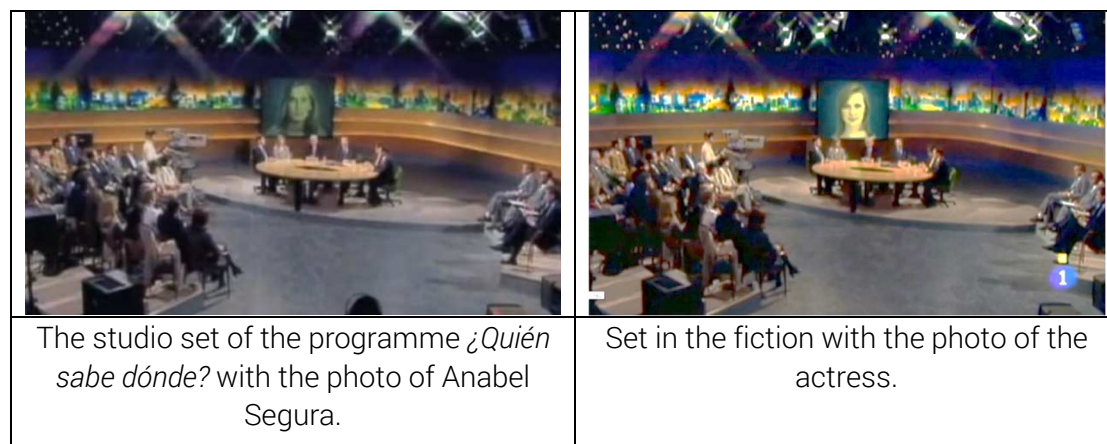
Archival material added to a mini-series based on a real event is used for the following narrative strategies:

5.1.1. Bringing fiction closer to documentary genres

Among the various television genres, documentaries are usually those that are decoded as productions verging on truth. The studied fictions mimic these techniques; the series “based on a real event” use narrative strategies that are come closer to documentary “veracity:” use of archival material (real or invented), statements by famous people, shots of newspapers (real or invented) showing newscasts that the fiction is about and audio clips evoking a historical moment.

The archival footage in *La huella del crimen: el secuestro de Anabel* comes from an RTVE programme *¿Quién sabe dónde?* The series includes almost 5 minutes from the episode covering the kidnapping of Anabel Segura. The set design is the authentic one from the original episode, the presenter and guests are those who were actually in the studio at the time of the broadcast. The one detail that does not appear in the real archival footage is the photograph on the set of the actor playing Anabel Segura, which was substituted for the photograph of the real Anabel Segura.

Figure 1: *La huella del crimen: el secuestro de Anabel.*




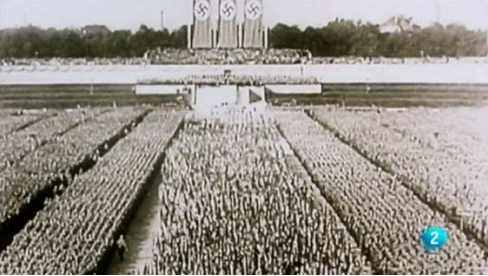
5.1.2. Portraying the media as just another character

The mass media play a major role in this type of television fiction; both in their journalistic output (newspaper covers, TV or NO-DO footage, sound archival) and in the character of the journalists covering the news on which these series are focused. They are sometimes portrayed as an intrusive swarm, other times as beneficial to the lead character. In these mini-series, journalists can be said to play just another character: they supply information, either to the viewer or to the protagonists. Like a modern-day version of the chorus in Classical Greek drama, the media act as intermediaries between the protagonists and society, lending their voice to, and providing information about, what is being discussed in the street. Without playing a lead role in the drama, journalists give their thoughts on the events being played out and express how these affect them.

5.1.3. Informative/educational function

Some titles have an informative function of reporting directly to the viewer. Although archival footage appears on shows some of the characters TVs (offering diegetic information that frames the narrative in their universe when they are watching the news), this footage is seldom aimed exclusively at the real viewer. The convention of showing the frame of a television set separates the diegetic universe from the extra-diegetic one: if the frame is visible, it is within the narrative. This is seen in *Una bala para el rey*, where the terrorists watch the news to learn about the movements of the Royal Family. If there is no frame, the information is aimed at the viewers. In *Severo Ochoa, la conquista del Nobel*, for instance, archival footage of Nazi rallies is used to place the viewer within the historical context in which the scientist lived.

Figure 2

<i>Una bala para el Rey</i>	<i>Severo Ochoa. La conquista del Nobel</i>
	
TV seen by the protagonists.	TV seen by the viewer.

5.1.4. Clichéd contents on television

“Archival footage” usually conjures up images of immense historical or informational import. However, stock reels, images shot at any time prior to the news story being aired, also fall within this category. This footage, initially anodyne, is also used to provide information about the characters’ personality. Hence, the paedophile in *Días sin luz* is absorbed in watching some girls on TV, until his mother arrives and turns it off; the same series also shows the whole family eating in silence while excessively engrossed in some boats on TV. This information tells the audience that these people are remote and withdrawn.

5.2. Fake archive

5.2.1. Non-existent / hard-to-procure images

The presence of fake archival material fulfils an essential role: to compensate for the absence of real archival footage. There are various reasons to “fake” archive material, ranging from financial reasons (archival images can fetch high prices that add to the production costs), to political or other reasons, or simple because there are no such images.

An example of political reasons is found in *Severo Ochoa. La conquista del Nobel*. Because the Noble laureate Severo Ochoa had refused to return to Spain under the Franco dictatorship, the NO-DO newsreel of 1959, the year when the scientist was awarded the Nobel Prize did not report the achievement. The fictional version resorts to a montage of NO-DO fragments from the following year combined with fake archival footage of the award ceremony. The fact that the series invents fragments of history that never took place can have a misleading educational function. Such a falsification of history has two objectives. The first is cinematic in nature, according to which the fiction seeks to recount the reaction Ochoa

would have received today for an accolade of this prestige. In line with the audio-visual narrative, the codification expected by the viewer follows the learned (and apprehended) canons in the collective filmic memory of the type of images seen when the protagonist receives an award. The second function, of a political-social nature, lauds the figure of the scientist, lending Spanish society (through the media) the voice of appreciation that he did not receive in his day.

Figure 3: *Severo Ochoa. La conquista del Nobel.*



Fake archival material is also found in *Felipe y Letizia. Deber y querer*, in which footage is used to faithfully imitate re-enact Letizia Ortiz as a newsreader in her day.

Figure 4: *Felipe y Letizia. Deber y querer.*

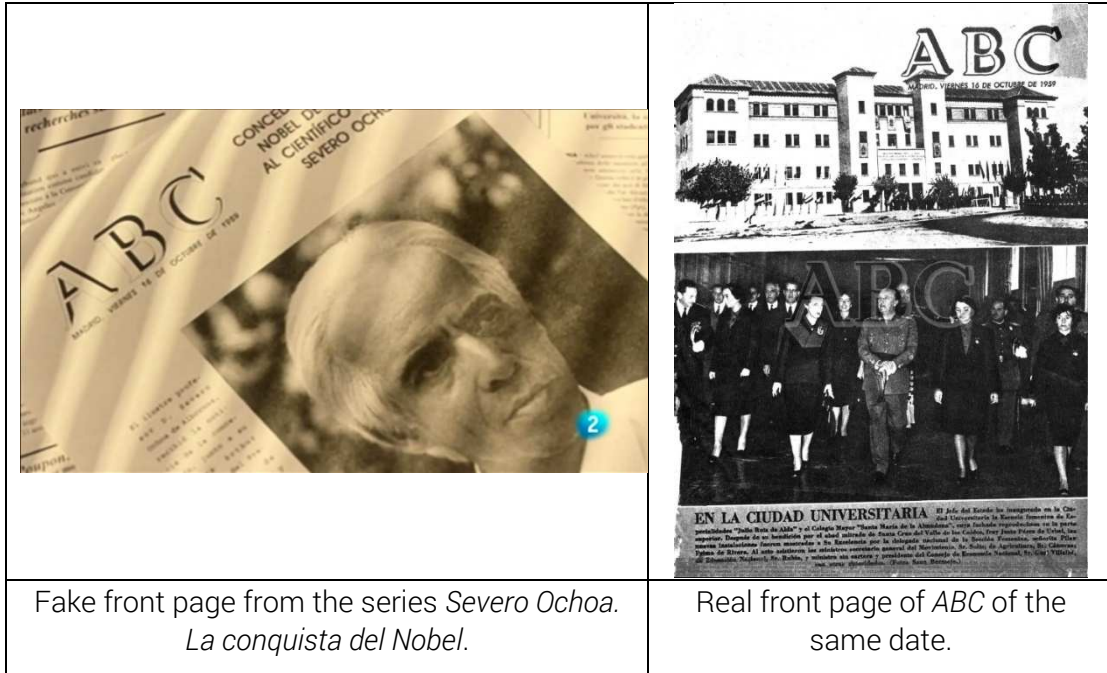


5.2.2. Press, sound archive: documentary attitude, ideological function, plot twists

Several productions contain fake sound archives. The documentary attitude is found in some reconstructions, including *Adolfo Suárez, el presidente*, which features a fake audio recording of the moment the Spanish Communist Party was legalised, imitating Suárez’s breathless and faltering voice in the original recording. Likewise, the fictional drama *El caso Waninkoff* in which the voice of Iñaki Gabilondo is heard describing a murder of different young woman (which would also lead to the arrest of Rocío’s murderer). In the manner of a news report, the audio lends a journalistic touch to the drama. It could have been any voice-over, but such a well-known journalist gives an interesting veneer of journalistic reporting and credibility to the series. By mimicking the documentary style, this fake sound archive brings the viewer closer to the informative-realistic side of this type of narrative.

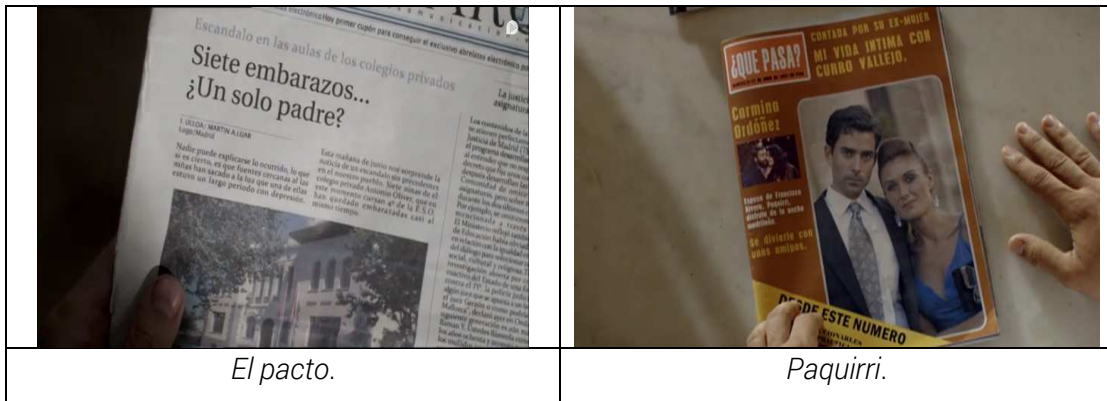
Many of the fiction series, such as *Severo Ochoa. La conquista del Nobel*, also include fake newspapers. Similar to the doctored archival footage used that production to suggest that the NO-DO covered the ceremony, a front page of the newspaper *ABC* was created to infer that the scientist’s prize was headline news.

Figure 5: Fake newspaper archive.



Pages from a fake gossip magazine are sometimes used to add a twist to the story, providing new sub plots that, although not factual, provide the characters with information that prompts a response. This is found in a sensationalist report in *El pacto*. Likewise, in *Paquirri*, the bullfighter learns from a fake gossip magazine about an alleged infidelity of his wife, Carmina.

Figure 6: Fake newspaper archive.



5.3. Fictions with no archival images

Four series in the studied sample (15.4%) contain no footage, stills, mass media clips or audio of any kind. These four series –*El Bloke*, *Coslada zero*; *La ira*; *Un burka por amor*; and *No estás sola, Sara*– attach more importance to the psychological aspects that motivate the characters than to the events themselves.

5.4. Documentary attitude

Some series reflect the “documentary attitude” mentioned by Raventós, Torregrosa and Cuevas (2012). In reality, the exhaustive work of documentary makers, hardly reflected in the series, is what affords a hint of credibility and expertise to the series with an authenticity beyond the tangible or the visual effects. This attitude is found in several cases: in *Felipe y Letizia*, the speech delivered by the fictional crown prince at the Prince of Asturias Award ceremony is a part of one given by the real Prince of Asturias, as corroborated on the official website of the Princess of Asturias Foundation². Similarly, the information on the euro featured in the original piece aired by TVE is identical to that used in the series. The excerpt from the Christmas message is taken from the message delivered by King Juan Carlos in 2003; in *La huella del crimen: El secuestro de Anabel*, the abductor, in a phone call, utters the exact same words as those used by the real kidnapper; and in *Adolfo Suárez, el presidente*, the “documentary attitude” is evident at key moments. These include the moment when the King delivers his message in the early hours of February 24, and the words of Milans del Bosch, both of which are identical to those spoken at the time, demonstrating the huge effort made by the documentation team.

The documentary attitude is also evident in details that go almost undetected: the magazine that the fictionalised Alfonso de Borbón reads in his biopic is the genuine *Hola!* of that time, to which the photos of the actors have been added.

Figure 7: *Alfonso, el príncipe maldito*.



² The speech is available on the official website of the Princess of Asturias Foundation, <http://www.fpa.es/recursos/discursos/files/basic-html/index.html#327>.

6. Conclusions

The archival images included in a fictional product perform different roles, whether historicist, contextualising or informative. The historicist role shows the viewer the historical reality of the time through documents and journalistic products such as television news or daily newspapers that, in the historical present recounted, are considered “true.” The informative role provides the plot with relevant information to support the storyline, thus confirming that it is “based on a real story” and making the historical facts a key part of the plot. This happens, for instance, in titles such as *Felipe y Letizia* and *Adolfo Suárez, presidente*.

The contextualising function arises when the images provide information that reflects the reality around the story in question, without necessarily being key to the plot development. Music, echoes of society, magazine covers, etc. supply more or less anecdotal information that help the viewer remember an era and contextualise the world in which the characters move. Examples of this function are seen in *Paquirri* or in *Días sin Luz*.

The informative function directly addresses the viewer. It relates the events that take place through the images of the present narrative. What for the viewer is archival material, for the character is a news. Newspaper headlines or newscasts inform the characters, who react to the news provided by the media: the events and plot twists provide the reality of the time, which is confirmed by the media.

As borne out in the results, this informative function has several peculiarities. If the scenes appear on a television screen, it means that the characters are watching them. The informative function in this case is to give information to both the characters and the viewers. On the other hand, where the images fill the entire frame, they are aimed at the viewers (as in *Severo Ochoa, el conquista del Nobel*) in order to supply them with “true” information about what was happening at that time.

Besides the historicist, contextualising and informative functions, it is interesting to note the interpretive role of this archival footage: the news media, the newscasters (whether real or invented) are part of our daily lives, and fiction presupposes the presence of the media as bearers of the events of social reality; they constitute another character that has a role in the events and the lives of the characters.

In addition to the archive material, there are cases in which two other distinctive techniques are observed: the absence of historical media and the invention of what we have termed “fake” archival material. The absence of archival footage also lends meaning to the narrative. The fact that a real story is recounted without the support of images describing what happened deprives the story of the functions described above: the aim is not to enlighten the viewer, nor is it to offer them information or context; and the characters are not warned or given any information either. In this case, the story is grounded on the characters’ motivations, in the most intimate sense. These titles attempt to delve deeper into the protagonist’s character, without resorting to historical material to affirm or deny what has happened. As far as the fake archival material is concerned (regardless of the reason why it is included, whether because it is impossible to obtain or due to artistic-narrative motivations), we find an ideological function. The viewer is shown a false reality that never existed, making it appear as something that could have been, bringing the narrative and the final message closer to the ideological message sought by the production.

In conclusion, we can confirm that the functions of archival footage in a fictional product (and any of those mentioned above) bring fiction closer to news and the documentary. We do not believe that these stories are intended to resemble or replace the documentary: they are fiction and they were produced for that purpose. Yet there is a clear informative value, a media presence in what López Ligeró calls “being here” (2015, p. 157), which shows the daily reality of many citizens who perceive the world through the television news.

In short, the integration of these images in fictional productions constitutes a new re-contextualised discourse. In part, the images are de-contextualised, as they leave the frame in which they were filmed and exhibited and are given a new value in a new context, similar, yet fictitious, to that which is real (or true?) for which they were filmed. By re-codifying the message, the manipulation becomes invisible to the viewer, who may decipher it with incorrect codes. Academics warn of the dangers that manipulation poses to the collective audio-visual memory, especially for the young, and even more so if we were to consider this audio-visual material as a substitute for history books.

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Annex. List of the series analysed

- *Severo Ochoa, la conquista del Nobel* (TVE 1, December 2001). A two-episode mini-series recounting the life of Spanish scientist Severo Ochoa, his early research, his exile and the Nobel Prize. Directed by Sergio Cabrera and starring Imanol Arias and Ana Duato³.
- *Viento del pueblo. Miguel Hernández* (TVE 1, February 2002). A two-part account of the life of Alicante poet Miguel Hernández, exile, persecution and prison, and his murder. Directed by Ramón Larraz and starring Liberto Rabal and Silvia Abascal⁴.
- *Padre coraje* (Antena 3, March 2002). A three-part fiction recounting a father’s struggle to solve the murder of his son in 1995. Directed by Benito Zambrano and played by Juan Diego and Félix Gómez.
- *Soy el solitario* (Antena 3, January 2008). A two-part re-enactment of the police investigation launched to apprehend one of the most dangerous bank robbers in Spanish history. Directed by Manuel Ríos San Martín and starring Pepo Oliva and Emilio Gutiérrez Caba.
- *Fago* (TVE 1, March 2008). A three-part account of the police investigations into the murder of the mayor of Fago in 2007. Directed by Roberto Bodegas and starring Jordi Rebellón⁵ and Joaquín Notario.
- *El caso Wanninkhof* (TVE 1, June 2008). A two-part mini-series on the investigations into the murder of the young Rocío Wanninkhof in 1999⁶. Directed by Pedro Costa and Fernando Cámara, and played by Luisa Martín and Juanjo Puigcorbé.
- *El Castigo* (Antena 3, 3, December 2008). A two-part fiction about a group of young people held in an illegal reformatory discovered in Barcelona in 2004. Directed by Daniel Calparsoro and starring Marta Calvo and Guillermo Barrientos.
- *Días sin luz* (Antena 3, January 2009). This two-episode miniseries recounts the anguish of the family of Mari Luz Cortés, who disappeared in 2008 at the age of five. Directed by Antonio Hernández and starring Antonio Chamizo and María Isasi.
- *23-F: historia de una traición* (Antena 3, February 2009). A two-part account of the 1983 attempted coup d’état, focusing on the lives of two servicemen friends. Directed by Antonio Recio Beladiez and starring Sergio Peris-Mancheta and Héctor Colomé.
- *23-F: el día más difícil del rey* (TVE 1, February 2009). A second two-episode miniseries, about February 23rd, 1983, this time focused on the afternoon of the assault on the Spanish parliament and on the figure of King Juan Carlos. Directed by Silvia Quer and starring Lluís Homar and Emilio Gutiérrez Caba.
- *Una bala para el rey* (Antena 3, March 2009). A two-part fiction based on the attempted assassination of King Juan Carlos in the summer of 1995. Focusing on the ETA commando who planned the assassination, it is enhanced with a large dose of fiction (or conjecture). Directed by Pablo Barrera and starring Carlos Blanco and Víctor Clavijo.
- *El bloke. Coslada cero* (TVE 1, July 2009). July 2009). Two-episode mini-series about the controversial methods of Ginés Jiménez, Chief of Police of Coslada⁷. Directed by Manuel Estudillo and starring José Pedro Carrión and José Manuel Seda.
- *Paquirri* (Telecinco, September 2009). A two-part account of the life of bullfighter Francisco Rivera, Paquirri⁸. Directed by Salvador Calvo and starring Antonio Velázquez and María Ruiz.

³ Available at the official website of RTVE: <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/severo-ochoa-la-conquista-de-un-nobel/>.

⁴ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/viento-del-pueblo/>.

⁵ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/fago/>.

⁶ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/el-caso-wanninkhof/>.

⁷ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/television/el-bloke/>.

⁸ Available at the official website of Telecinco. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/paquirri/000000003506/>.

- *La huella del crimen: El crimen de los marqueses de Urquijo* (TVE 1, September 2009). A two-party miniseries recounting the investigation into the murder Marquis and Marquise of Urquijo in 1980⁹. Directed by Pedro Costa and Fernando Cámara and starring Félix Gómez and Juanjo Puigcorbé.
- *La ira* (Telecinco, September 2009). A two-part fiction about the brutal murder of a couple at the hands of another couple¹⁰. Directed by Daniel Calparsoro and starring Marian Álvarez and Tamar Novas.
- *Un Burka Por Amor* (Antena 3, November 2009). A two-part story that tells the story of Maria Galera, a young woman who departs with her Muslim husband for war-torn Afghanistan. Directed by Manuel Estudillo and played by Olivia Molina and Rafa Rojas.
- *No Estás Sola, Sara* (TVE 1, November 2009). TV movie based on a true story, in which a young woman describes through flashbacks the hell she endured with an abusive boyfriend¹¹. Directed by Carlos Sedes and starring Amaia Salamanca and Ricard Sales.
- *Adolfo Suárez, el presidente* (Antena 3, January 2010). Political biography of Adolfo Suárez through flashbacks while he is held in the Congress on February 23rd, 1981. Directed by Sergio Cabrera and starring Ginés García Millán and Toni Acosta.
- *El Pacto* (Antena 3, January 2010). Spanish adaptation of an event that took place in the United States when 17 teenagers decided to become pregnant at the same time. Directed by Fernando Colomo and played by Marina Salas and Macarena García.
- *La huella del crimen: El secuestro de Anabel* (TVE 1, March 2010). A two-part story about the kidnapping and murder of Anabel Segura in 1993¹². Directed by Pedro Costa and Luis Oliveros and starring Enrique Villén and Luisa Martín.
- *La huella del crimen: el asesino dentro del círculo* (TVE 1, March 2010). A two-part re-enactment of the true story of a serial killer who was active in Alicante between 1995 and 1998¹³. Directed by Pedro Costa and Fernando Cámara and starring Roger Coma and Fernando Huesca.
- *La Duquesa* (Telecinco, April 2010). A two-part mini-series chronicling the life of the Duchess of Alba up to her marriage to Jesus Aguirre. Directed by Salvador Calvo and starring Adriana Ozores and Carlos Hipolito¹⁴.
- *Alfonso, el príncipe maldito* (Telecinco, September 2010). A two-part biography of Alfonso de Borbón. Directed by Álvaro Fernández Armero and starring José Luis García Pérez and Cristina Peña¹⁵.
- *Vuelo IL 8714* (Telecinco, September 2010). A two-episode reconstruction of the investigation that took place after the Spanair plane crash in Madrid in 2008. Directed by Norberto López Amado, the cast is headed by Emma Suárez and Carmelo Gómez¹⁶.
- *Felipe y Letizia* (Telecinco, October 2010). A two-part account of the courtship and wedding of Prince Felipe and Letizia Ortiz. Directed by Joaquín Oristrell and starring Amaia Salamanca and Fernando Gil¹⁷.

⁹ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/television/la-huella-del-crimen/marqueses-de-urquijo/>.

¹⁰ Available at the official website of Tele5. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/la-ira/1488576681613/>.

¹¹ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/no-estas-sola-sara/no-estas-sola-sara/637137/>.

¹² Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/television/la-huella-del-crimen/el-secuestro-de-anabel/>.

¹³ Available at the official website of RTVE. <http://www.rtve.es/television/la-huella-del-crimen/asesino-dentro-del-circulo/>.

¹⁴ Available at the official website of Telecinco. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/la-duquesa/000000000999/>.

¹⁵ Available at the official website of Telecinco. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/alfonso-el-principe-maldito/1488549013493/>.

¹⁶ Available at the official website of Telecinco. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/vuelo-il-8714/000000000802/>.

¹⁷ Available at the official website of Telecinco. <https://www.mitele.es/miniseries/felipe-y-letizia/000000003227/>.

[Consulted on 22 May, 2019]

- *Raphael* (Antena 3, October 2010). A two-part account of the stage in the life of the singer Raphael when he underwent a liver transplant. Directed by Manuel Ríos San Martí, with Juan Ribó as the adult Raphael and Félix Gómez as the young Raphael.