Television was not invented overnight by a single

person. The work of many people over a number of

decades contributed to its evolution.

In the early days, two distinct schools of thought in

technology influenced different researchers and the

course of their investigation. The first one was based

on the technology of Paul Nipkow’s rotating disks that

supported a mechanical television system, and the

second one on an electronic television system that

used a cathode-ray tube developed independently by

two inventors, Campbell-Swinton and Rosing.

Paul Nipkow (1860-1940), who invented the Nipkow

disk in 1884, was the first person to discover the

scanning principle that allowed small portions of an

image to be analyzed and transmitted. However, it

is unclear whether Nipkow actually built a working

prototype of his television system.

Electronic television is based on the development

of the cathode-ray tube, which can still be found in

modern television sets. Philo Farnsworth (1906-1971)

was the first inventor to transmit a television image, a

dollar sign, using the dissector tube which is the basis

of all current electronic televisions. The American

engineer started experimenting with electricity when he

was 12.