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## Editorial

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## EDITORIAL

Doing European television history is as much a theoretical and methodological challenge as it is a practical one. This novice field of study requires first and foremost answers to a few fundamental questions:

How do we define European television?

What tools do we employ to engage in television research that goes beyond or against national borders of television in Europe?

How do we integrate Europe in a field of research that has been predominantly Western?

The *Journal of European Television History and Culture* is proud to present its second issue that takes the idea of European television to its heart. Suggestively entitled 'Europe on and behind the Screen', this issue brings together a collection of articles that address in various ways the complexities of doing European television research. This issue enables a discussion of European television through different themes, approaches and case studies. Television historians are still new in the field of writing European television history. 'Europe on and behind the Screen' provides one further step in enhancing and enabling scholarship in this field. In many ways, this issue continues the pioneering work presented in the edited volume *A European Television History* by Jonathan Bignell and Andreas Fickers (Wiley-Blackwell, 2008). While *A European Television History* addresses established themes in television history and approaches them comparatively through collaborative, multi-authored articles, this issue adds new themes to the understanding of European television.

Transnational relations, co-productions, European television events (e.g. the Eurovision Song Contest) or pan-European channels (e.g. Euronews) are central themes in this issue that articulate different discussions of and perspectives on European television history and culture. Articles in this issue cover different geopolitical areas of Europe, present research from various European countries and emphasize in one way or another how the idea of 'Europe' played out in different national contexts. Whether 'Europe' has been something that different actors in national broadcasting have strived for, competed against, attempted to construct, praised or criticized, 'Europe' is introduced in this issue as a point of reference, a worth-to-attain ideal and as concrete practices that have undermined national borders.

The collection of scholarship included in this issue comes with different propositions of how to go about researching European television. Mari Pajala's article encourages the study of shared European visuals - such as the maps of Europe in the *Eurovision Song Contest* - as a way to gain an insight into the shared culture of Europe. Christian Potschka's article emphasizes the need for actor-centered approaches to the study of transnational broadcast relations. Ira Wagman's article proposes instrumental approaches to (early) television history as a way to step away from the national borders of television and map out new repositories of knowledge for comparative, transnational television history. Jeremy Strong's illustrates the added value of interviewing the producer so as to gain insights into how pragmatic challenges and decisions behind European co-productions are resolved.

Perhaps the biggest challenge in doing European television research is a practical one, one that is heavily misunderstood, undermined and under-addressed. How do we enable a *different* television scholarship in Europe, one that does justice to *other* geopolitical realities and histories of television in Europe? We know by now that Europe is as much about differences as it is about concerted efforts to bridge between different nations. With the recent transnational turn or paradigm-shift in television historiography, we are grateful to know more about historical processes and phenomena that have challenged national borders of television in Europe. Nevertheless, while writing transnational television history is popular, *different* television histories remain highly invisible on the European agenda. While looking for commonalities across television in Europe, are we sure we have properly learnt about and most importantly, learnt from the differences in television histories across Europe? We may well run the risk of knowing so much less about differences in television histories across Europe than we know about shared cultures of television in Europe.

Bringing television research on and from different parts of Europe into discussion and dialogue with existing scholarship is important for doing European television research. Scholarship from the *other* Europe of television history is still highly impeded by linguistic barriers as well as by barriers of different scientific traditions and limited access to the European canon of television scholarship. Raymond Williams' *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (1974) has only been [translated into Spanish](#) in 2011 and this gives us just a slight idea of the place where the *other* Europe of television history addresses us from.

Several articles on Spain, Poland, Romania, Russia and Ukraine introduce us to different stories of television emerging from these geopolitical areas of Europe. Sylvia Szostak's article on 'Poland's Return to Europe - Polish Terrestrial Broadcasters and TV Fiction' draws upon television schedules, audiovisual and oral history sources to demonstrate how changes in the post-communist Polish television market mirrored similar past structural developments of Western television, something that has been experienced by television markets throughout Eastern Europe. Alexandru Matei's article on the international music festival 'The Golden Stag' in Ceausescu's Romania takes us behind the scenes of this national television event, demonstrating its European ambitions and the enthusiasm that it incited among French critics at the time. Kateryna Khinkulova's article 'Hello Lenin? Nostalgia on Post-Soviet Television in Russia and Ukraine' shows how these two states that emerged from the former Soviet empire developed different programming strategies in relation to their national past and the West. The process that Khinkulova describes may well be evocative of the divergent programming strategies between state broadcasters and the newly emerged (private) broadcasters throughout the former socialist Europe.

Starting with this issue, we present a brand new structure of our journal. Articles are included in two main sections: *Discoveries* and *Explorations*, each section emphasizing a different type of contribution to the field of European television. Discovery articles zoom in on specific case studies from different geopolitical areas of Europe or illustrate innovative use of sources in television history. Exploratory articles emphasize different approaches to writing European television history and advance theoretical discussions in the field.

This issue of the *Journal of European Television History and Culture* comes to you in a brand new form, with a new title: VIEW, a new URL: [www.viewjournal.eu](http://www.viewjournal.eu), a fresh design and a new member in the team of editors-in-chief: John Ellis from Royal Holloway, University of London.

I wish you a pleasant and inspiring journey through 'Europe on and behind the Screen'!

Dana Mustata

## Biography

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