European Television History Online

History And Challenges

Sonja de Leeuw

Utrecht University | Muntstraat 2A

3512 EV Utrecht | The Netherlands | J.S.deLeeuw@uu.nl

Abstract: Increasingly television heritage is being digitized and made accessible to non- industry users, enabling 'the archival turn': the study of online archives so as to revisit the dominant discourses in television historiography. This article discusses both conceptual and practical perspectives on online television heritage within a broader European frame- work. It starts from the notion of connectivity, pointing to the development of the archive as a network of connections and continues to address the dynamics involved in the trans- formation of the television archive into an online presentation including the most relevant actors. With the help of examples from Dutch and European television heritage projects the article discusses how the new archive is capable of mediating between the past and present, between history and memory, between curatorial perspectives and popular uses. It concludes on the challenges that (European) online television heritage offers in the field of television historiography and theory.

Keywords: European television heritage, cultural heritage, popular memory, television history

1   It's All About Connectivity

Online European television heritage is a fact. It represents what has been coined 'the archival turn'.[1] Television programming material that was until recently locked into archival vaults and mainly used by professionals has now become available and accessible to non-industry users.[2] The range of these potential users is large. Addressing their needs requires multi-layered access and a diversity of navigational routes, tailor-made functionalities, and tools to help make sense of the data. To this end, finding ways to serve the needs of users has become the central mission of audiovisual libraries and broadcasters, and has been supported by the European Commission. For television researchers, themselves representing a particular type of user, the opportunities and challenges are manifold, as the availability of sources, hitherto unknown or unseen, allows for a revisiting of television history, which until now has almost exclusively been known from institutional papers and records.

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1 Craig Robertson, 'Introduction: Thinking about Archives, Writing about History', in Craig Robertson, *Media History and the Archive*, Routledge, 2011, p.1.

2 See for a brief history of archival practices, Andy O'Dwyer, 'European Television Archives and the Search for Audiovisual Sources', in: Jonathan Bignell and Andreas Fickers, eds, *A European Television History*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2008, p. 257-263.

Given 'the archival turn', it is time to look upon the development of online European television heritage as the next stage in the cultural history of television where economic, political, cultural and technological developments come together in a new way; allowing for new questions, and new engagements with television's cultural history. An example of the kind of questions that can be asked relate to the status of the digital historical object, in particular online television material; the prerequisites for digitization with a view to future uses; the archive as dispositif; as well as the readdressing of the theoretical and historical notion of television in its digital presentation. These questions follow from the 'archival turn', which is central here and shapes how I address the history and challenges of European television heritage online.

Andrew Hoskins' notion of connectivity[3] is crucial here and will theoretically inform the way I consider these questions and how they are grouped together. Hoskins argues that the archive itself is changing from space to connectivity and questions to what extent this change impacts on curatorial practices, as well as on the construction of memory and how it is increasingly informed by the immateriality of the network by which it is generated. I consider connectivity instrumental in reflecting upon the history of the European television heritage online, and in discussing its challenges. In this essay connectivity is considered as functioning beyond the space and time relations of the immaterial archive it embodies.

2   Actors And Mediators

Connectivity involves the notion of a network - connections held together in configurations - and therefore I will use Bruno Latour's Actor Network Theory to frame the development of television heritage online along technological, political and cultural developments. Latour in his actor-network-theory describes the network as a tool that helps to understand the formation and transformation of the social through the power relations established by actors.[4] Acting is central here and involves agency; the exertion of power by which the agent constitutes and reconstitutes the social world.[5] According to Latour one should analyse the visible traces left by actors as these traces, themselves concrete actions, render visible the dynamics involved in social transformations.[6] The development of the archive into an online presentation can be considered such a transformation. To further frame and discuss European television heritage online in terms of connectivity I will also use understandings from cultural history and critical media theory.

For the purpose of this article I will address the 'traces' in so far as these have become visible in the transformation of European television into its digital form and that account for the development of European television heritage online. I consider European television heritage online to be the object of the social and cultural construct, however acknowledging that it acts as an agent itself in that it constructs and transforms social and cultural values, and knowledge, and in that it supports or transforms power relations. In discussing the transformation process I will refer to the actors and mediators who impacted upon the development of European television heritage online. Among these are, in random order: libraries, broadcasters, national governments, European politics, the cultural heritage discourse, users, right holders, technological developments, cultural needs, television historians and professionals. That is to say connectivity manifests itself in dynamic relationships between the named actors, creating meaningful links between them. Accordingly I construct the text as a chain of links, of connections, not necessarily as part of one grand narrative. Examples of European projects will be used to illustrate the practice of connectivity.

3   What About The Sources?

Audiovisual heritage is cultural memory, a vital component of historical knowledge and an equally important social and cultural component of European cultural heritage. Moving images are the most prominent tools for cultural expression and transmission of information. Europe's audiovisual heritage contains both a record and a representation of the past and, as such, it demonstrates the different levels of development of the 'audiovisual culture' we inhabit today. Television, by making and showing images about us in past and present, has become a very productive cultural space, particularly in the sense that it has strongly contributed to the construction of

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3 Andrew Hoskins' keynote address, 'Media, Memory and the Connective Turn' at the first EUscreen International Conference in Rome in October 2010.
4 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory,* Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 131.
5 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Polity, 1991, p. 175.
6 Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, p. 147-150.

identities; national, European and, of course, global. Identity is a contested concept, at best a hybrid involving both collective and diversified identities at the same time, and one which television is deemed to construct and address in various ways: by transmitting live events and regional programmes, by distributing global formats either or not adapted to the local culture, by broadcasting television fiction on national history and by celebrating sports, etc. Until the recent past programmes such as these were only watched at the time of their transmission. With the arrival of the VHS and later DVD programmes were recorded and were thus available to watch at a later date. Occasionally, television historians who were granted access to the vaults were able to watch those again. Furthermore some television broadcasters before the Internet recycled programmes on television, constructing collective memory through the use of homemade television material.[7]

With the advent of new technologies television programmes from the past have become available, visible and accessible on a much larger scale on online platforms and in digital libraries – however limited - thus extending the potential cultural space that television as a medium occupies.

According to Seamus Ross, digital libraries play a role in the creation and transmission of scientific knowledge and culture. As such they are curators of our cultural and scientific memory.[8] Or in a different paradigm, they contain cultural capital. In addition, John Mackenzie Owen mentions how much modern society is characterized by a multitude of digital forms that far exceed what is preserved in the majority of heritage institutions, even when they make the shift to digital material. These digital artefacts constitute what he describes as the 'digital fabric of society'. It is through this digital fabric that our culture expresses itself, and it is therefore this fabric that constitutes the cultural heritage that needs to be preserved.[9]

Theoretically online television programme sources are objects that function as mediators between past and present, between history and memory, but also between the self and the past as represented in the online archive. They are capable of bridging the gap between what is called academic history or archive history and popular memory.[10] Lynn Spigel further elaborates on this by focusing on how much digital archives foreground the relation between popular memory on one hand and academic television history on the other.[11] The activity of connecting history and memory with and through the online archive creates not only a memory culture, but also it reframes memory as networked practice, presenting the past as present.[12]

4   The Past Of The Researcher

As a television researcher I spent countless hours in the archives of many Dutch public broadcasters, struggling with the paper trails that were organized differently in each one. The history of Dutch public broadcasting is fragmented and the way in which the archive is stored reflects this history of fragmentation. The 'official' archives do not contain the actual programmes and, as I was looking into the history of Dutch television fiction production over a long period of time, I had to contact the drama departments of each broadcaster. All of these departments kindly allowed me to view the programmes on their internal Umatic and VHS systems; nothing was digitized, many programmes had already 'disappeared', DVD series were not available (as they are now). It was all a matter of personal contacts, goodwill and trust. Only many years later, in a collaborative European project, Video Active, did I understand how exceptional the Dutch situation was; most of my European colleagues found it extremely difficult to gain access to the programme archive, let alone view 'old' television programmes at editorial offices. And whereas in the past many institutional audiovisual archives functioned primarily to supply

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7 Derek Compare discusses this for the American situation in *Rerun nation: How Repeats Invented American Television*, Routledge, 2005.

8 Seamus Ross, 'Digital Preservation, Archival Science and Methodological Foundations for Digital Libraries', keynote address at the 11th European Conference on Digital Libraries (ECDL), Budapest, 17 September 2007. © Seamus Ross, HATII at the University of Glasgow. The paper is online in pdf.

9 John Mackenzie Owen, 'Preserving the digital heritage: roles and responsibilities for heritage repositories', paper at the UNESCO/KNAW conference Preserving the Digital Heritage, The Hague, Netherlands, 4-5 November 2005. All conference papers are online in pdf.

10 Robertson, 'Introduction: Thinking about Archives, Writing about History', p. 5.

11 Lynn Spigel, 'Housing Television: Architectures of the Archive', in Craig Robertson, *Media History and the Archive*, Routledge, 2011, p. 71.

12 Hoskins in his key note address, 'Media, memory and the connective turn', EUscreen International conference, Rome, 7 October 2010. See also Andrew Hoskins, 'Television and the collapse of memory', *Time Society*, 13, 2004, p. 109-127.

audiovisual material to broadcasters, a fact that determined their construction in the first place, programmes are nowadays digitized primarily for preservation purposes.[13]

Digitization allows access to the history of television and the history of the nation as represented in the programmes. Seemingly this is in the interest of the broadcasters as it fosters new engagements with their holdings. In addition, several online video platforms such as YouTube have originated, fostering the users' needs and expectations about ease of access and exchange, as well as blurring the boundaries between producers and users, between archival object and online source, between the archive and the present, changing the experience of archival search.[14] William Uricchio takes this notion further by pointing to a shift underway from the art of selection in the era of broadcast and cable to the art of aggregation, which opens up possibilities for active reassembling of sequences.[15] New challenges emerge here, particularly in the context of an online television heritage, which bring both conceptual and practical problems to the fore. We must trace these problems back to their source.

5   Linking Back To The Original

Cultural heritage discourse argues for the continuation of the link back to the original form. It addresses issues related to the transformation of the real object as it could be seen in museums into a digital object and, for example, how this transformation impacts upon the relationship between museums and their audiences in terms of knowledge, as well as on the link between the real and the copy.[16] This recalls the debate initiated by Walter Benjamin on aura in the age of electronic reproduction, which is considered equally applicable in the age of digital reproduction. Is this debate relevant to the context of European television heritage online? Can we trace 'unique' exemplars in online platforms or digital libraries, and if not, does it matter?[17]

Generally put this is not the bedrock for debates on television heritage, as most of it has not been presented to the audience on a permanent basis before going digital. Television heritage constitutes cultural memory, however only to a limited extent, namely that it has not been kept alive collectively; it exists only in the minds of those who watched the programme at the time of its transmission. Most of it becomes available to a wider audience only because of digitization, it was not known as an historical object before; it was not tangible or visible as such. This does not necessarily mean that the questions posed by digital heritage theory do not apply to television heritage; they do indeed. Moreover the very fact that television heritage has only recently become available as public heritage, allows us to address some relevant issues in a fresh manner without the constraints of museums. Here are some chances and challenges to take up, which will help to see digital television heritage as a collection of historical objects that are open to a variety of interpretations. In that sense digital television heritage should be seen as heritage in its own right; the television programme has become a digital historical object.[18]

Some scholars go so far as to advocate retaining the original bit streams after migration to a new format and representation. Archives, libraries and museums, it is argued, should record transformations of digital objects from the moment of their creation. This would require documenting the processes of the digital entity ingestion, management and delivery. Additionally this would require sustainable information on how the object was created, how it was used in the past, and other contextual information needed to make meaning of the object.[19]

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13 Andy O'Dwyer, 'European Television Archives and the Search for Audiovisual Sources', in: Jonathan Bignell and Andreas Fickers, eds, *A European Television History*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2008, p. 257-263.

14 Rick Prelinger, 'The Appearance of the Archives', in: Pelle Snickars and Patrick Vonderau, eds, *The YouTube Reader,* National Library of Sweden, 2009, p. 269-274. See also Julia Noordegraaf, 'Who Knows Television? Online Access and the Gatekeepers of Knowledge', *Critical Studies in Television, Scholarly Studies in Small Screen Fictions*. Special issue 'Television Archives: Accessing TV History', eds. Lez Cooke and Robin Nelson, 2010, 2, p. 1-19.

15 William Uricchio, 'TV as time machine: television's changing heterochronic regimes and the production of history', in: Jostein Gripsrud, eds, *Relocating Television. Television in the digital context*, Routledge, 2010, p. 37.

16 Fiona Cameron and Sarah Kenderdine, eds, *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage. A Critical Discourse,* MIT Press, 2007.

17 Ross asserts that also digital libraries are archives by nature as they hold unique exemplars: 'Digital Preservation, Archival Science and Methodological Foundations for Digital Libraries'.

18 Fiona Cameron, 'Beyond the Cult of the Replicant', in: Cameron and Kenderdine, eds., Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage, p. 54.

19 To mention David Bearman, 'Addressing selection and digital preservation as systematic problems', paper at the UNESCO/KNAW conference Preserving the Digital Heritage, The Hague, Netherlands, 4-5 November 2005. And also Ross, 'Digital Preservation, Archival Science and Methodological Foundations for Digital Libraries'.

According to MacKenzie Owen traditional heritage institutions are not per se suited for preserving cultural heritage. He argues for a transformation of the institution into a memory institution for the digital society encompassing the whole range of digital materials as well as their underlying process of creation and use. This would be the only way to catch the 'digital fabric' through which society expresses itself.[20]

6   Cultural Institutions And The New Interface

It may be true that we are only now beginning to see the transition of audiovisual heritage institutions and, more importantly, their collections, to digital culture. Institutional audiovisual archives safeguarded and maintained their analogue collections, through preservation. They acted as archives, keeping safe their collections of static, non-movable data with limited access. Given the locked status of their materials there was no need to develop narratives to explore the collection, let alone curatorial views on the collection as a whole.

Now that audiovisual content is being digitized, some is freely available via the Internet, albeit mainly at a national institutional level. Many broadcasters in Europe have their own websites, with a few hundred video items. Much of it is distributed across programme and subject-related pages. Broadcasters and institutions still seemingly struggle with questions of access and use, let alone contextualizing their materials via curatorial practices. With the advent of new technologies one could also observe how relevant institutions such as broadcasters and national libraries tend to 'museumify' television programmes into historical objects, providing institutional representations of a shared past.[21] They create new buildings, in which they present exhibitions looking for narratives along which the national history of television could be told. However issues of restoration, preservation, and rights have restricted the construction of these narratives. Still, within the new housing the digital library as institution reclaims its power as a cultural and social agent.[22]

The housing itself becomes a new interface that obscures how much the digital library is an essential kind of communication medium.[23] Spigel elaborates this idea further by arguing that the television archive, analogue or digital, is not just a record of what used to be on television, but is also a re-interpretation and re-ordering of it.[24] She points to the archive as apparatus. One might call it a dispositif as well and as such it is the product of a discourse involving all actors and mediators acting to support the emergence and existence of the objects.[25] From a research point of view one could argue that the digital library or archive as institution should include reflections on its dispositif character so as to enable investigations into the construction of the apparatus as an act of connectivity, linking objects, information and people. Such reflections are not to be found as yet, but we can clearly see attempts to bridge institutional views on digital heritage and their potential use as a digital object, allowing users to become active, participative and collaborative. Examples are Waisda? - a video labelling game developed by the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision to search and tag television heritage by non-industry users. And at another level the Sharing Memory project of the BBC. Here experiences of users are connected to content, constructing a living archive of memories.

Institutions and digital libraries are challenged to meet the needs of users, to construct new interfaces not only in-house but also through online platforms. This requires fresh conceptual thinking about topical relations and medium specific curatorial approaches as well as user-led navigation and the production of meaning. These developments have just started; but once realised will support the necessary transition from inward to outward service, from curators to users.

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20 John Mackenzie Owen, 'Preserving the digital heritage: roles and responsibilities for heritage repositories'.

21 Cameron coins the term museumify in 'Beyond the Cult of the Replicant', in: Cameron and Kenderdine, eds, *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage*, p. 54.

22 William Uricchio, 'Moving beyond the artifact: lessons from participatory culture', paper at the UNESCO/KNAW conference Preserving the Digital Heritage, The Hague, Netherlands, 4-5 November 2005.

23 John Durham Peters, 'Why We Use Pencils and Other Thoughts on the Archive (An Afterword)', in Craig Robertson, *Media History and the Archive*, Routledge, 2011, p. 109.

24 Lynn Spigel, 'Housing Television: Architectures of the Archive', p. 66-67.

25 The notion of the archive as apparatus and communication medium is further discussed by Jeremy Packer, 'What is an Archive?: An Apparatus Model for Communications and Media History', in: Craig Robertson, *Media History and the Archive*, Routledge, 2011, p. 93.

7   What About Europe?

This shift in emphasis from inward to outward and from curators to users is also reflected in the heritage pro-grammes of the European Commission, such as the eContentplus programme, which was set up following the decision of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe of 9 March 2005 to establish:

> *a multiannual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable, facilitating the creation and diffusion of information, in areas of public interest, at Community level.*[26]

This 4-year programme (2005–08), proposed by the European Commission, had a budget of € 149 million 'to tackle organisational barriers and promote leading-edge technical solutions to improve accessibility and usability of digital material in a multilingual environment'.[27] The programme follows the conclusions of the Lisbon agenda set on 23 and 24 March 2000 where the European Council stressed that the shift to a digital, knowledge-based economy, prompted by new goods and services, will be 'a powerful engine for growth, competitiveness and jobs.' The programme will create better conditions for accessing and managing digital content and services in multilingual and multicultural environments. The programme also focused on promoting the emergence of trans-European information infrastructures for accessing and using high quality European digital cultural and scientific resources through the linking of virtual libraries, community memories, etc.[28]

The work programme of eContentplus under the Directorate General Information Society and Media of the European Commission called for proposals that would support the specific aims of the programme, such as:
- Supporting Europe to be present in the cultural and creative industries of the 21st century;
- Enabling the development of value-added services for research, learning and leisure;
- Allowing citizens to access the collection;
- Preparing more content for inclusion in European Digital Library (edl), funded under the eContentplus programme itself, and improving the use of EDL collection by users.

The eContentplus programme enabled audiovisual libraries and broadcasters to take up some challenges and address remaining problems in terms of access and use.[29]

8   Connectivity Again

The biggest problem with the television archive is the incoherent and inconsistent access to audiovisual content across Europe. If we are ever to be able to understand the national and European dimensions of European tele-vision heritage it is vital to overcome these problems and gain access. Certainly, in the audiovisual domain im-portant steps in digitization have been taken relating to the increased openness of broadcasting archives and film libraries. However access across Europe remains restricted owing to issues with technology, rights and the presentation of sources. Due to uneven technical and metadata standards, exchange across borders is still im-possible. Rights issues complicate access in a specific way; harmonization is difficult as publishing is usually only allowed within national borders, due to legislation. On top of that, descriptions of the original source and its context are seldom to be found, thus signifying practices to produce cross-cultural interpretations or histories are lacking. These are just some of the observations outlined in 2005 when the Video Active project proposal was submitted to the EC.

Video Active (2006-2009), a content enrichment project supported within the eContentplus programme, has created a pool of television archive content, as well as digitized programme assets, which represent national and culturally specific themes relating to different European countries over the second half of the Twentieth Century.[30] The project can be seen as the first attempt at removing barriers to technical exchange, rights and

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26 Official Journal of the European Union, 23/3/2005, L 79/1 – L 79/8

27 Ibid.

28 According to the Programme Decision No 456/2005/EC of the European parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2005. In: Official Journal of the European Union, 23/3/2005, L 79/1 – L 79/8.

29 The EC started earlier with funding digitization followed by programmes funding to provide technical solutions and inte-grated systems for a complete digital preservation of all kinds of audiovisual collections, such as the PrestoSpace project, under the EC's 6th Framework Programme for Research: http://prestospace.org/.

30 For a description of the project see Rob Turnock, 'Video Active and the Challenges of Developing Online Access to Com-pare European Television Programmes from the Archive', *Media History*, 16, 1, February 2010, p. 125-134.

signifying practice, thus creating multilingual access to Europe's television heritage online. To that end it has established an interoperable platform for eleven partner archives on the level of both cataloguing and video access. Despite the effectiveness of Video Active in delivering innovative access to comparative content some of its impacts have been hampered by developments in the EU (such as new cultural strategies and projects and the inclusion of new member states), and rapid changes in technologies, broadcasting policies and user expectations and demands. In these contexts Video Active is not fully integrated with Europeana, a project executed by the European Digital Library, enabling people to explore the digital resources of Europe's cultural heritage by bringing together museums, libraries, archives and audiovisual collections. Video Active was not designed to engage in outreach activity or user development. Some of the positive advances in Video Active, however, are now used by EUscreen (2009-2012), funded under the eContentplus programme, providing multilingual and multicultural access to television heritage and taking up some of the remaining challenges.

The real challenge is in establishing connectivity at different levels. Metadata is still scattered, technical interoperability is almost zero, rights issues are restrictive and the potential educational value is vague and ill served. The aim of the project is to achieve a highly interoperable digitized collection of television material, which supports the exploration of Europe's television heritage in a changing context in which users access and play with online television material. Technical interoperability and metadata mapping is key to this level of connectivity, linking data and content from different television repositories. Interoperability between collections of European television archives concerns the conceptual level of metadata, which tends to vary greatly across countries and institutions for industrial, technological, cultural and historical reasons. This includes the kinds of particular programme production information that archives record, the different classificatory schemes that the archives use (such as genre) and the culturally variable assessments and descriptions that archives incorporate in their metadata for broadcasting use and re-use. EUscreen works towards standardization and provides the technical solutions needed to achieve this level of interoperability between the audiovisual collections of Europe themselves and with Europeana in particular, for which EUscreen delivers the audiovisual content. EUscreen is built as a network itself, linking expertise from across Europe in the fields of technology (interoperability issues and multilingual access), archiving and digitisation practices, rights issues, exploitation and business models for sustained access to audiovisual content, and subject expertise in European television history and culture.

9   What About The User?

The experience with Video Active demonstrated that usability is very much bound up with contextualisation. Users might be able to retrieve items, yet without context and a framework for interpretation, the cultural and material understanding of selected content remains limited. In the end this hampers the realization of the full potential of audiovisual content. There is still little television (video) material presented in a contextualised way and as a result there is limited use of television material for research, learning, and leisure. That is why EUscreen has developed scenarios for using European television heritage in different contexts (research, learning, leisure and creative reuse), based upon information from users themselves on what they want and how they want it to be accessible and searchable. This is necessary, as existing surveys have so far focused mainly on numbers of users and not so much on the profiles, backgrounds and wishes of the digital public. One important outcome of the user consultation is the need for contextual information on the available resources, as well as the creation of meaningful links between them. This involves concrete use case scenarios developed in collaboration with the intended user groups themselves. EUscreen also provides analyses of material online, it supports comments and the use of online social media to reflect upon television heritage as well as services for exporting metadata to e-learning formats, and the facilitation of open culture production practices to citizens and various user communities. The latter is emerging yet puts up new barriers.

The technological possibilities of the Internet and social media enable users to exploit and reuse audiovisual content creatively (ranging from professionals and students to fans and subcultural niches). Consequently rights issues have become radically more complex. Audiovisual archives and institutions cannot easily support open cultural productions that take place outside of carefully controlled circumstances. There are several solutions here, such as creating specific virtual spaces for re-using audiovisual content from across Europe, an example of which is Open Images, a carefully controlled virtual space. Another way, also pursued in EUscreen, is to develop best practice maps and scenarios for creative reuse of television material online, following Creative Commons policy, for using television heritage content online across borders, e.g. for educational purposes and for critical comments and reflection.

10 More Challenges

As I have discussed there are various challenges, firstly at the technological level of connecting metadata and content, secondly at a legal level which enables users to browse and reassemble in connection with other users and thirdly, at the level of giving meaning to an online European television heritage. At all these levels the need for close cooperation between television archivists and television scholars is evident as is the development of highly relevant case studies in European media history (comparative and cross cultural).

Also within the 'archival turn' questions were raised about the archive as a technology and dispositif, which also pointed to ways that the preservation, digitization and ingestion of the archive would be managed and included in the analysis of the online television archive. This would not only include objects, but also the discursive formation of the archive itself.[31] As a matter of course analysing the archive's discourse involves the creation of 'authoritive' narratives as well as users' archival practices; how they browse, tag and comment on the dynamic digital object that appears in continuously changing contexts. This calls for the preservation of social media, such as blogs and wikis.[32]

Now we have begun to see European television heritage online, what are we really going to do with it? Here we need to take up challenges both in doing European television history and in theorizing the very notion of television in European television online. The connection is found in the phrase 'understanding the past of European television in the present'.

First of all, television has now become an active agent in the construction of memory. It is therefore important to ask how curatorial practices frame the emergence of popular memory and how users make sense of these practices by sharing their memories of European television heritage online. I would especially suggest looking at time lines and generational spaces for memories across boundaries.

Secondly, as has been extensively argued, the emergence of European television heritage online opens up the space for a truly transnational comparative approach to European television, one that accounts for the 'complex processes of interaction, circulation and appropriation between objects of study.'[33] This has only just begun and would involve cross-cultural television historiography.[34]

Thirdly, and lastly, the presentation of European television heritage online raises questions about the ontological character of the medium of television. Online television programmes (either full programmes or clips) differ from analogue television programmes in many ways. The 'key metaphors' of television – television, broadcasting, flow – have become invisible.[35] Online programmes appear out of their original context of 'live-ness', the broadcasting frame, the programming flow, the everyday spaces of communication, the schedule and the synchrony of reception.[36] These observations all put challenges to the future study of television, on and through the Internet. They challenge the user to see the texts as historical objects and to explore the technological and historical contexts that are not visible in the online objects.[37]

Maybe finally we have reached to realise the full potential of television's original scope, to look beyond borders (in many ways), which at the time was advocated from television's (electronic) technological basis to simultaneously transmit and receive at distant places. In the digital era this ideal has only become closer through the very

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31 See also Noordegraaf, 'Who Knows Television? Online Access and the Gatekeepers of Knowledge', and Ross, 'Digital Preservation, Archival Science and Methodological Foundations for Digital Libraries'.
32 See Robertson, 'Introduction: Thinking about Archives, Writing about History', p. 11; and Uricchio, 'Moving beyond the artifact: lessons from participatory culture'.
33 Andreas Fickers and Catherine Johnson, 'Transnational Television History: A Comparative Approach: Introduction', *Media History,* Vol. 16. Nr. 1, February 2010, p. 4. See also Bignell and Andreas Fickers, eds, A European Television History, p.9-12.
34 An example is Bignell and Andreas Fickers, eds, *A European Television History*.
35 Discussed by Jostein Gripsrud, 'Television, Broadcasting, Flow: Key Metaphors in TV Theory', in: Christine Geraghty and David Lusted, eds, *The Television Studies Book*, Arnold, 1998, p. 17-32. For an account of television's production presence over time see also John Ellis, *Seeing Things. Television in the Age of Uncertainty*, I.B. Tauris, 2000.
36 Milly Buonanno, *The Age of Television. Experiences and Theories*, Intellect, 2008, p. 68-70; and Urichhio, 'TV as time machine: television's changing heterochronic regimes and the production of history', p. 31-37
37 In this respect Scannell points to the necessity to analyse the data as stand alones and in context: what do they tell us about the production, and reception of media, television in particular: Paddy Scannell, 'Television and History: Questioning the Archive', in Craig Robertson, *Media History and the Archive*, p. 52-53.

notion of connectivity, established by online television platforms and portals. These can be seen as connected networks, linking data from different sources and different places, to multiple uses, offering multiple perspectives, and multiple relations. Again, this centres on the notion of connectivity, between the real and the virtual, between past and present, between multiple users, between top-down and bottom-up perspectives on television's past, between history and memory.

Biography

Sonja de Leeuw is Professor at the Department of Media and Culture Studies at the Utrecht University. Her research and teaching interests are Dutch television culture in an international context (history and theory, genres and productions practices) and Media and cultural diversity (diasporic media, representation of ethnicity). She published on television culture in the broadest sense, on diasporic media and on children's media. She is vice-chair of the section Diaspora, Migration and the Media of the international research association ECREA. Sonja de Leeuw participated in the EU funded research project CHICAM, Children in Communication about Migration (2001-2004) and coordinated the EU funded project Video Active, Creating Access to Europe's Television Heritage (2006-2009). She co-founded and coordinates the European Television History Network (with dr. A. Fickers, University of Maastricht).

Currently she is coordinator of the EU funded research project EUscreen, Exploring Europe's Television Heritage in Changing Contexts (October 2009-2012) and co-leader of a research project on satire The Power of Satire: Cultural Boundaries Contested.