The Media in Europe's Small Nations

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CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING

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This book first published 2014

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-5417-4, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5417-7

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FOREWORD

In 2011 Cyfrwng, the organisation of scholars engaged in research about media and culture in Wales, asked the Centre for the Study of Media and Culture in Small Nations at the University of Glamorgan (now the University of South Wales) to host its annual conference. With Cyfrwng's permission the Centre used the opportunity to broaden the debate out from Wales to embrace similar national contexts across the world. The result was a wonderful gathering of scholars, all dedicated to the idea that in the era of globalisation the organisation of media and culture in small nations (in all the different senses of that term) offered insights that were of potential benefit to all nation-states. This volume offers a small selection of the large number of papers from the 2011 conference in the hope of stimulating future work and debate.

The definition of a "small" nation is of course a contested one and perhaps best seen in terms of power relations rather than, say, geographical area. In this sense, then, Canada, one of the largest countries in the world, becomes of interest through its relationship to the culture of the United States. In turn, Quebec's relationship to the rest of Canada creates another layer of complexity. Such instances have the potential to reveal both the problems facing nations so apparently dominated by larger neighbours, but also the clear advantages possessed by artists, cultural entrepreneurs and academics. Examples of the latter might include strong relationships to ideas of identity, better dialogue with government and large scale institutions and a sense of responsiveness to audiences.

It is in pursuit of an enhanced understanding of such contexts that this fascinating volume of essays is published in the hope of stimulating further work in what remains a small but rapidly expanding field.

At the time of writing, in Europe alone, the question of the role of the small nation has acquired a particular urgency as simultaneously the European Union continues to expand its membership whilst referenda on independence are pending in contexts as diverse as Scotland and Catalonia. At such a moment the way that the media approaches questions of national identity—and indeed the very idea of the nation—takes on special importance. It has become something of a cliché to cite films such as *Braveheart* (dir. Mel Gibson 1995) as key elements in the rise of, in this case, contemporary Scottish nationalism. Even if this kind of analysis is

somewhat crude and reductive, it is clear that the media has a crucial role to play in the way that people think of the nation in the formation of their individual identity. In small nations this is, arguably, particularly true where power relations with larger neighbours are themselves central to any sense of nationhood.

Conversely many people living in small nations long to be free of what can become sterile, reductive debates about an essentialist idea of national identity, one that limits the imagination and imprisons culture in a limiting sense of history. It is in this spirit that artists complain, particularly in small nations, about the "burden of representation", something that obliges every piece of work to be about the idea of national identity.

It is therefore vital that scholars working to open up the ways that the media operates with small national boundaries are conscious of such a diverse range of questions and remain vigilant about the dangers of narrow insularity whilst also understanding what there is to celebrate about diverse and pluralistic national identities.

The essays that have been collected in this volume are keenly conscious of how complex the questions are surrounding both the proliferation of small nations in a (predominantly) fracturing post-imperial environment and, in turn, the ways that media organisations and artists operate in diverse national contexts. They were all written after the benefit of coming together and discussing their perspectives with scholars from analogous contexts across the globe and therefore provide a highly stimulating and well-informed set of arguments which will in turn stimulate further debate.

In Mette Hjort and Duncan Petrie's collection *The Cinema of Small Nations* a fictional character is quoted wryly musing about the invisibility of his particular small nation:

> I watch the Pakistani news, mainly to see if they've included Iceland on their world map. The anchor is a ball of hair: hair all over Europe and Greenland. I wait for him to bend his head a little. Iceland isn't there. That's the deal with Iceland. Iceland is the kind of country that sometimes is there and sometimes isn't. (Helgason 2002 cited in Norðfjörð 2007, 43)

I am certain that this volume will make a strong contribution to the growing body of work that seeks to ensure that all small nations are permanently "there".

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INTRODUCTION

THE MEDIA IN EUROPE'S SMALL NATIONS

HUW DAVID JONES

This volume examines the media in Europe's small nations. It comes out of an international conference on the media and culture in small nations organised in summer 2011 at the University of Glamorgan (now part of the University of South Wales) by the Centre for the Study of Media and Culture in Small Nations on behalf of the Welsh media association Cyfrwng. The volume brings together perspectives from across Europe, including scholarship on Catalonia, the Basque Country, Iceland, Slovenia, Macedonia, Portugal, Scotland and Wales, and aims to build upon the growing body of work on the media in small nations and states, as well as contribute to wider debates about media policy, representation, national identity, audience reception and research methods.

While the terms "small nation", "small state" and "small country" enjoy growing currency within media and cultural studies, there is no comprehensive definition of what these terms actually mean. Of course, we can perhaps distinguish between "nations" and "states"—the latter being a sovereign political unit recognised by international law—but the question of what is meant by "small" is a little more problematic.

Maurice Paupis (2009, 8) suggests that "small" nations or states can be defined in absolute, attributive or relative terms. An absolute approach is one which uses measurements like population, territory or gross national product to determine a country's size. Paupis himself defines small states as countries with a population between 100,000 and 18 million inhabitants. The advantage of this approach, he argues, is that it provides an indication of the size and strength of a country's media system. Yet, as Paupis himself concedes, it also presents the problem of where to draw the line between a small country and a big one. A cut-off point of, say, 18 million can seem quite arbitrary and may lead to countries being miscategorised. Poland, for example, has about 38 million citizens. But in

terms of the size and strength of its media system, it has much more in common with countries with small populations.

The attributive approach rests upon the perception of smallness. A small nation is one "whose leaders consider that it can never… make a significant impact of the system" (Keohane 1969 cited in Paupis 2009, 8). "Smallness" can also be defined in relative terms. A country can be seen as "small" in some contexts and "big" in others. This is not solely a matter of population or territorial size. It also has to do with power relationships (Blandford 2012). Small countries are those which are seen as "peripheral" or "marginalised". They lack autonomy and are easily influenced by larger neighbours. Often this is the consequence of historical inequalities formed under colonialism or imperialism. Thus, for Miroslav Hroch (1985 cited in Hjort and Petrie 2007, 6), small countries are those which have existed "in subjection to a ruling nation for such a long period that the relation of subjection took on a structural character for both parties".

Attributive or relative definitions of "smallness" are useful in terms of understanding the particular challenges which small nations face. Yet they are also quite subjective. A country can choose to define itself as "small" in order to gain sympathy or moral support by identifying itself with the underdog. This may obscure its own contribution to inequalities of power. Wales, for example, is a small nation which for some has long lived under English domination. Yet it was also a junior partner in the British Empire (which at the height of its expansion in 1922 was led by a Welshman), and continues to enjoy a privileged position within the rich Western world. Small nations can be both coloniser and colonised.

Not only are small nations and states defined in different ways. They also fall into different categories. Paupis et al. (2009) argue that small states can be distinguished according to their political and historical traditions. Drawing on the work of Hallin and Macini (2004), they identify four basic categories: liberal (e.g. Ireland), democratic-corporatist (e.g. Austria), polarised-pluralist (e.g. Greece) and post-socialist (e.g. Czech Republic). They further distinguish between those small states which share a common language with a larger neighbour and those which do not. We might also distinguish between small nation-states and those small nations such as Wales, Scotland or Catalonia which are "stateless" or have some degree of "devolved" autonomy. Furthermore, Blandford (2012) argues that First Nations—i.e. the indigenous peoples of colonised territories like Canada or Australia—can also be seen as a type of small nation.

The present volume does not seek to resolve the issue of how small nations should be defined or categorised. While some contributors have chosen to make explicit the case for identifying their country of interest as

a "small nation", others use the term at the level of general intuition. What mattered more from an editorial point of view was to include a range of different national perspectives and approaches to the media as well as hear from those countries which are rarely or less frequently discussed in Anglophone academic literature. This is simply because media scholars in small nations often face particular difficulty in getting their work internationally recognised due to the relative smallness of their research community or because they publish in minority languages. Nevertheless, the fact that the initial call for papers generated such interest amongst scholars working in so many different contexts suggests the term "small nations" is one many do recognise and identify with.

Small nations and states have certainly grown in prominence since the mid-twentieth century. The end of European colonialism after the Second World War and the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the early-1990s have led to the proliferation of new nation-states, many of them absolutely small or bearing the legacy of external domination which is seen as characteristic of small nations. In 1950, there were 22 sovereign European states with a population below 18 million. Today there are 36. Meanwhile, stateless nations like Wales, Scotland and Catalonia have pushed for greater political autonomy or even independence from their larger neighbours in order to address issues of economic inequality, democratic accountability, or cultural and linguistic rights. The number of European states may well increase further over the coming decades.

Media researchers first began to take an interest in small nations during the early-1990s (e.g. Trappel 1991; Wood 1992). At a time when broadcasting in Europe was entering a new era characterised by deregulation, commercialisation and globalisation, many questioned whether countries with a low population and limited media market were sustainable in this more competitive environment. Attention focused on the policies which governments and broadcasters in small nations could use to protect their media from foreign influence or domination.

Over the next 10-15 years, the study of the media in small nations seemed to fall off the research agenda (although there were exceptions – e.g. Siegert 2006). Attention turned instead to the transnational or globalised nature of the modern media industry (e.g. Higson 2000, Morris 2004). Nations—both big and small—seemed to matter less when content, technology, capital and labour could so easily flow across national boundaries. Yet, over the last five years or so, there has been a revival of interest in the media in small nations (e.g. Hjort and Petrie 2007; Puppis and d'Haenens 2009; Blandford et al. 2011; Lowe and Nissen 2011; Hand and Traynor 2012). Research continues to focus on how small nations and

states can create a sustainable media in a globalised world. But at the same time new lines of enquiry have also opened up into such questions as how small nations are represented in the media or what these images mean for audiences (e.g. Blandford and Lacey 2011). Scholars in related areas of research like theatre and performance studies have also begun to show an interest in small nations (Blandford 2012).

The present volume seeks to contribute to this existing body of work. Part one examines the challenges and potential advantages faced by small media systems, as well as the policies and strategies open to small nations to develop a sustainable media ecology. Part two looks at how small nations are represented in the media. And part three examines how audiences respond to the media in small nations. Although there is much overlap between the three sections, the chapters have been grouped together in this way in order to highlight common themes and connections.

Developing the media in small nations

Part of the reason why small nations remain an important area of research has to do with the particular challenges these countries face. Josef Trappel (1991), for example, argues that media companies operating in countries with a low population are hampered by certain obstacles (see also Burgelman and Pauwels 1992). They suffer from a shortage of resources and face higher production costs than larger countries. They are more vulnerable to foreign takeovers and are often dependent on importing media content, threatening both their economic potential and their national identity. Even domestically successful companies can struggle to break into larger markets. Their programmes are often seen as too culturally specific and they lack the capital reserves needed to market themselves abroad. Countries which share a common language with larger neighbours are seen as particularly vulnerable, because they are more easily penetrated by foreign competitors. At the same time, small nations and states lack influence over the international regulatory bodies which might help to resolve these issues. One clear example of this was the failure of Europe's small states to gain any special concessions within the 1989 "Television without Frontiers" Directive, which forms the cornerstone of the European Union's (EU) audiovisual policy (see Wood 1992).

But while attention has focused on the particular challenges faced by the media in small nations, there is a growing recognition that they may also possess certain advantages over their larger neighbours. Small nations may lack the sense of confidence which comes from being a large, powerful state, but as Blandford (2012, 5) points out, this lack of certainty

can also make them more willing to question and debate "the received wisdoms of globalisation and the hegemony of the superpower". As such, they are perhaps more willing to develop alternative models and innovative ways of doing things. Furthermore, as Olfasson (1998 cited in Hjort and Petrie 2007, 7) argues, "the citizen of a small state has a better possibility to influence decision making than a citizen in a large state", meaning they are more likely to see these models put into practice.

In the opening chapter of this volume, John Newbigin identifies some of the other advantages which small nations may possess. Newbigin observes that the old industrial economy based on mass production, heavy investments, transport infrastructure and concentrated labour is being replaced by a new economy based on intangibles like skills, knowledge, data and software. In this new "creative" economy, small nations are apparently leading the way. Because they rely on limited resources, they are used to thinking creatively. Their restricted size makes it easier for new policies to be developed and implemented, and they are more likely to have the ability, agility and survival instinct to respond to changing market conditions. In short, they are "nimble, niche and networked". Newbigin concludes that a handful of big countries and corporations may still dominate the global creative economy. But at the very least, being "big" is no longer automatically better than being "small".

Newbigin's chapter raises the question of how small nations can strengthen their media in the global creative economy. This has long been a concern for scholars interested in government media policy and the business strategies of broadcasters. According to Puppis (2009, 14), small states, particularly those which conform to a democratic-corporatist model of government, tend to favour interventionist policies rather than the competitive, free-market approach seen in larger countries (although Wood (1992) argues there is often a mismatch between rhetoric and reality). "Achieving diversity through competition between several domestic media organisations is not possible given the small audience and advertising market," he explains. Thus broadcasting licences in small nations tend to be issued with strong public service obligations. Broadcasters and the press often receive generous public subsidies. Tough regulation prevents media concentration and cross-ownership, and in some cases quotas may even be used to limit foreign programming, even at the risk of restricting diversity and audience choice.

However, in today's ultra-competitive globalised media market, interventionist policies—let alone protectionist ones—are much harder to implement. EU rules limit the subsidies which can be offered to media providers, and policies which restrict the free flow of media content

between member states are outlawed. Moreover, the financial crisis which began in 2008 and which became a sovereign debt crisis in 2010 has forced governments across Europe to cut subsidies for broadcasters, filmmakers and the press. According to Petros Iosifidis (2007), for small countries to maintain a healthy media in this hostile climate they not only need strong political support for government intervention and public service broadcasting. They also need broadcasters which are willing to embrace new digital technology and combine their traditional public service obligations with more mainstream, populist programming.

But while these observations come largely from the experience of countries in western Europe, scholars has only recently begun to consider the policies and strategies used to strengthen their media in other political contexts, such as former communist states in central and eastern Europe (e.g. Balčytienė and Juraitė 2009). Sally Broughton Micova's chapter contributes to this literature by examining the situation in Slovenia and Macedonia—two states which became independent only in the early-1990s after splitting from the former Yugoslavia.

Slovenia and Macedonia first developed their own "regional" broadcasting institutions when part of the federal Yugoslavia, but with independence, these were suddenly transformed into "national" public service broadcasters. Faced with new competition from foreign and commercial operators as well as audience fragmentation—with older generations tuning into programmes in neighbouring Serbia and Croatia and younger viewers switching to global English-language media—quotas were introduced to protect domestic content. Yet, with only a limited pool of local talent, these proved hard to meet.

Drawing on her interviews with senior media executives, Broughton Micova explores some of the ways Slovenian and Macedonian broadcasters have tried to overcome these challenges. One strategy has been to create new talent or "stars" through investing in events like the Eurovision song contest or international formats like *Pop Idol* or *X-Factor*. While such programmes can be seen as part of the process of globalisation through which indigenous cultures are eroded, they have also helped to generate new talent who can go on to provide content for other television and radio programmes. Despite the commercialistic nature of this strategy, Broughton Micova concludes that public service broadcasters are better placed than commercial operators to invest in new talent, because their production budgets are bigger. Thus, as is the case in western Europe, interventionist policies combined with populist programming strategies seem to be the preferred way of strengthening the media in the small, post-socialist countries of central and eastern Europe.

One of the reasons why small nations place such emphasis on developing a strong media is because of the media's capacity to strengthen and promote national identity. While media systems do not always coincide with national territory, film, television, radio and the press can certainly help to create a national "imagined community" through constructing and circulating national imagery amongst a mass audience (Anderson 1983). For small nations, the power of the media to strengthen and promote national identity is particularly important, because it increases their visibility and helps legitimise their claims to political and cultural sovereignty. This is particularly the case for new nation-states or stateless nations which lack real geopolitical power (Wood 1992).

Josep Àngel Guimerà and Ana Fernández Viso illustrate the importance of the media to the process of nation-building in stateless nations in their chapter on media policy in Catalonia. During the Franco dictatorship (1939-1978), Catalonia lost political autonomy, and the use of the Catalan language was proscribed. Following the advent of democracy in Spain in the late 1970s, Catalonia became an "autonomous community" and began a project of national, cultural and linguistic reconstruction. Guimerà and Fernández Viso argue that the Catalan Government's media and communications policy formed an essential part of this process. It helped to normalise the everyday use of Catalan and create an autonomous public sphere in Catalonia. Though power over the media officially rested with the Spanish state, the Catalan Government managed to achieve these goals through wrestling more and more control away from Madrid. In 1983, it established the Catalan Radio and Television Corporation (*Corporación Catalana de Radio y Televisión*), and more recently it has formed its own media regulator, the Catalan Audiovisual Council, which has the power to grant radio and television licences. The Catalan News Agency, a Catalan internet domain and three multiplex channels for digital television have also been established in recent years. At the same time, Europe's sovereign debt crisis threatens to undermine Catalonia's autonomous media system. The Catalan Radio and Television Corporation (or *Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals* as it was renamed in 2007) has seen its budget slashed by 21.1% from €330m to €260m between 2010 and 2012, forcing it to reduce its portfolio of television channels from seven to five. Cuts in public subsidies to private media companies have been even more severe. Guimerà and Fernández Viso conclude that the Catalan Government has managed to build up an autonomous media system through strong political will and its efforts to secure increased control over media policy. How much of this system will survive the current economic crisis remains to be seen.

Media representation of small nations

Given the importance which small nations place on the media for strengthening and promoting their national identity, it is no surprise that scholars have become increasingly interested in how small nations are represented. Much of this work involves the close textual analysis of the films and television programmes which construct and circulate national imagery. But in Agnes Schindler's chapter on Icelandic cinema, we are offered one of the few examples to consider how national portrayal may be influenced by the wider structural context in which small media systems operate.

Like many small nations faced with the challenge of operating in with limited resources, Icelandic cinema is heavily dependent on state aid. Even so, rising production costs, demands for better quality films, and the limitations imposed by the size of the island's market means that local filmmakers often need to secure additional funding through international co-financing and distribution deals. This has led to the appearance of "transnational" patterns within Icelandic cinema, such as the targeted use of international stars in lead roles or the use of foreign characters or storylines, as filmmakers look to cater for an international audience. Whereas in the past Icelandic films drew their inspiration primarily from national literary sources and subject matter, many now deal with international themes. Yet Schindler argues that the appearance of transnational patterns has not necessarily eroded the identity of Icelandic cinema. Indeed, they may even have helped to maintain its distinctiveness, for the use of foreign characters often helps to accentuate Icelandic national identity. Films like *Cold Fever* (dir. Friorik Por Friorikssson 1995), in which a Japanese businessman visits Iceland to perform a memorial service for his parents who died on the island, certainly deal with international themes, but do so through an "Icelandic canvas, where the travelling through—and discovering of—the country play a central role". Schindler concludes that, "While international financing and funding is undoubtedly necessary for small national cinemas—and in some cases even the only possibility for a small national cinema to keep a continued film production alive—the Icelandic case shows that maintaining a distinctive national cinema in a globalised world is yet possible". The categories of "national" and "transnational" cinema are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Just as few close textual readings of the way small nations are represented consider the broader structural context in which these texts are produced and circulated, there is also little comparative analysis on how

small nations are portrayed. Comparative analysis is a useful approach, because it can potentially reveal common patterns in the way small nations are represented, or help to explain why some small countries have, say, a more diverse or progressive national image than others.

Dilys Jones's contribution to this volume provides some answers to these questions. Drawing on an exhaustive survey of 123 Welsh and Basque films and documentaries, Jones presents a threefold classification system for minority national cinema. The first category of film, which she calls the "Preserved", refers to films which present an uncontroversial or stereotypical idea of the nation, its history and identities. Jones argues these types of film act like a "comfort blanket", providing a reassuring safety-net during times of national anxiety, yet can also perpetuate stereotypical and potentially oppressive ideas of gender, race, sexuality, national identity, community and family. The second category of film, "Reserved", challenges and subverts the stereotypes of the "Preserved", yet only ends up creating equally oppressive images of identity. Gender roles, for example, may be inverted so that men are shown as figures of ridicule and fun rather than authority and respect.

Jones's third category of film, "postcolonial", seeks to transcend the binary division between the "Preserved" and the "Reversed" by offering a new way of thinking about minority national identity—one which is both pluralistic and different. This final category partly corresponds with the end of external dominance and the start of a new phase of political autonomy. Yet it is not necessarily a moment of liberation, for it also "incorporates narratives of identity collapsing inwards from collective towards the individual and a movement towards a sense of placelessness", as the country faces the new challenge of operating in a globalised world. Of course, Wales and the Basque Country are different countries with very different cultures. But in showing the similar ways in which they have been represented in film, Jones offers a classification system which could be applied to the analysis of media texts produced in other small nations.

Trish Reid's chapter on the National Theatre of Scotland also deals with shifting conceptions of national identity in a small nation. Although more in the remit of theatre and performance studies, it nevertheless offers important lessons for media scholars. The National Theatre of Scotland was founded in 2006. Although the idea of establishing a Scottish national theatre had been an aspiration for many since the early-twentieth century, it took the introduction of political devolution in 1999 and the backing of the new Scottish Government to fulfil this goal. Reid argues that the National Theatre of Scotland has helped to redefine national identity in post-devolution Scotland. Rather than looking to the past, the new

company has chosen to produce theatre that is "contemporary, confident and forward-looking". Its innovative production model—the company has no building and produces work in collaboration with existing theatres, companies and venues—has allowed it to reach out to a broader section of Scottish society than conventional theatre.

Yet, although critically acclaimed by the theatre community and audiences alike, some traditional Scottish nationalists have attacked the new company for failing to fulfil what they see as the primary duty of a national theatre: "creating a national repertoire by performances of the best plays the country has produced". The lack of Scottish personal on the senior management board has also been a bone of contention. Reid suggests that these disputes might be generational, and concludes that it is time for the debate to move on from the question of what is a "Scottish" theatre or play, to consider more pressing issues, such as the implications for the rest of the theatre scene in Scotland of having such a dominant national theatre. This is an important reminder that, although the issue of national identity remains important to the media in small nations, there is a danger of burdening media practitioners and institutions with the responsibility of representing the nation at the expense of other creative considerations.

Audiences in small nations

The last three chapters all focus on audiences. This represents a relatively new area of research on the media in small nations, although the methods and techniques audience analysis are well established. It can be argued that audiences in small nations have a slightly different relationship with the media to those who live in larger countries. Because their media system is more localised, they often have a closer relationship with broadcasters and policymakers, who can more easily respond to their needs and interests. They are also said to value locally-produced media content more highly. Blandford el al. (2010), for example, note the appeal in Wales of locally-made television dramas like *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood*. Similar observations have been made by Dhoest (2011) in relation to Flemish soap operas. On the other hand, Chan (2011) argues that the popularity of locally-produced television dramas in Singapore has declined in recent years due to an increasingly fragmented television market, coupled with competition from Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan, suggesting that the loyalty of audiences in small nations is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain within a globalised media.

Jacqui Cochrane's chapter on the Scottish film *16 Years of Alcohol* (dir. Richard Jobson 2003) adds to this growing body of work. She pays particular attention to how audiences respond to the accent of the film's protagonist, Frankie Mac, a working-class Scot whose "hard man" voice belies a thoughtful and reflective side to his personality. Accents can present particular obstacles for filmmakers in small nations. As with the use of language, the right accent can lend authenticity to a film. But it can also limit its appeal outside the nation. It is not unknown for Scottish working-class accents to be subtitled or dubbed into mainstream English for the benefit of international audiences. Accents also come loaded with certain connotations. Cochrane, for example, notes that critics of *16 Years of Alcohol* remained unconvinced that someone with Frankie's accent would be quite so reflective and thoughtful about his life. Focus groups likewise associated the lowland working-class accent with low education and social status. Films like *16 Years of Alcohol* may well seek to challenge stereotypes and offer new images of social and national identity. But there is no guarantee these will be accepted by audiences.

Anabela de Sousa Lopes offers a slightly different approach to audience research. Drawing on the theory of "domestication", which seeks to explain how people integrate new and potentially disruptive forms of technology into their homes, Lopes examines the role of television in Portuguese family life. Television was first introduced into Portugal in the late-1950s. The visit of the British monarch Queen Elizabeth II to Portugal in 1957 provided the country's first major broadcasting event, and like the Queen's Coronation in Britain in 1953, it generated huge interest in the new medium. Television was something people first saw in public places. Many of Lopes' older interviewees recall gathering in cafes and theatres to watch shows like the popular Brazilian *telenovela Gabriele*. But gradually television entered people's homes and living rooms, often on the insistence of the male head of the household—something which Lopes says reflects the patriarchal structure of Portuguese society in the decades following television's introduction.

The television landscape has continued to change over the years. The monopoly of the Portuguese state broadcaster was broken in the early-1990s with the creation of the first private television station, and the number of channels has continued to increase with the introduction of cable and most recently digital television. Since then, the Portuguese audience—like audiences across Europe—has fragmented. Yet, despite competition from new forms of media like the Internet, television consumption remains high. For the older people Lopes interviewed, television is often seen as part of the family. It has become "part of their

lives, marking important moments in their collective experience". For young people, the story is slightly different. Television is described as "just another medium", ranking second or third in terms of media preference. Yet it continues to punctuate family life—Lopes, for instance, found that watching television news at 8pm while eating an evening meal was still a common ritual for many of the families she interviewed. In a sense, Portugal is much like any other European country in terms of its patterns of television consumption. Yet one thing which stands out from Lopes' research is the fact that, since the financial crash in 2008, television consumption has increased within many Portugal households. Lopes suggests this is not only because television provides a relatively cheap form of entertainment. It can also, as the process of domestication reveals, be a familiar "friend" for families during periods of increased anxiety.

The final chapter by Merris Griffiths reflects on some of the challenges of doing audience research in small nations. Her case-study is a two-year Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) which she conducted in collaboration with the Cardiff-based media production company Boomerang+ on how children in Wales engage with multiplatform media. KTP partnerships differ from conventional academic projects in the sense that researchers need to work closely with commercial businesses and industry. Griffiths argues that this is perhaps easier to do within a small national context. Relationships are easier to forge, and the research potentially has more impact. At the same time, this can make KTP partnerships more politically or commercially sensitive—which is one reason why Griffiths is unable to discuss the actual findings of her research. She concludes that, in a small nation like Wales, researchers need a clear understanding of how organisations interrelate and co-exist, because such linkages are often carefully balanced.

Conclusion

It is perhaps appropriate to end with a chapter on research methods, for part of the purpose of this volume is to encourage further research on the media in small nations. These are interesting times for small media systems. While new digital technology makes them more vulnerable to foreign penetration, it has also made it easier for small nations to reach a global market. The worldwide success of Scandinavian crime dramas like *The Killing* (2007-) and *The Bridge* (2011-) illustrates that small nations can make an impact on the global stage without losing their distinctive identity. At the same time, as has been alluded to throughout this introduction, the European sovereign debt crisis is having a devastating

effect on public service broadcasting and the other forms of subsidised media on which small nations traditionally depend. As noted above, the Catalan Media Corporation saw its budget slashed by 21.1% from 330m to 260m between 2010 and 2013. Similarly, the Welsh language broadcaster S4C and BBC Cymru Wales, which provides both Welsh- and English-language media services in Wales, are facing budget cuts of 24.4% and 16% respectively in the period up to 2015 (BBC News 2010; BBC News 2011). In Greece, the situation has got even worse. In June 2013, the Greek government decided to completely switch off the state television and radio service and sack its 2,300 workers in order to address the country's mounting debt problems (BBC News 2013).

Within this context, it is never been more important for scholars to understand the media in small nations—the particular challenges it faces but also its potential advantages; the strategies and policies used to strengthen small media systems; and the question of how small countries are represented and what these images mean to audiences. It is hoped that the reader will not only find answers to these questions in this volume, but will also be inspired to pursue new lines of inquiry.

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PART I:

DEVELOPING THE MEDIA IN SMALL NATIONS