

# Turkish Broadcasting Policy in a Historical Context: Continuities and Discontinuities in the 1990s

## Abstract

This article addresses the question of whether a radical change in Turkish broadcasting scene in the 1990s implies a similar trend in broadcasting policy process. Broadcasting history in Turkey is analyzed in terms of legal-institutional arrangements in order to shed light on basic characteristics of the broadcasting arena and policy process, including the factors and actors involved within that process. The analysis reveals the fact that in spite of the impact of worldwide privatization/deregulation movement and the entrance of new players to the Turkish broadcasting scene, powerful old players still endure and main characteristics of the policy process has not changed much.

**Beybin Kejanlıođlu**  
*Ankara Üniversitesi*  
*İletişim Fakültesi*

## Turkish Broadcasting Policy in a Historical Context: Continuities and Discontinuities in the 1990s<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I would like to express my gratitude to Nilgün Abisel, whose encouragement and support made this paper possible, and to Alaine Chanter, whose corrections made the final copy comprehensible.

<sup>2</sup> Most parts of the text below can be found in Turkish in B. Kejanlioğlu, "Türkiye'de Radyo TV Yayıncılığı Siyasası." *Bağımsız İletişim Ağı Yerel Medya Eğitim Projesi Seminer Notları*, 1997.

"Since the late 1980s Turkish broadcasting has undergone a rapid transformation." All the analyses of national media in the 1980s could begin with such a sentence because there is nothing specific to Turkey in terms of deregulation, liberalization, commercialization, privatization and internationalization processes. As a matter of fact, outlining some peculiar characteristics or different features of broadcasting policy in each country is not so much related to the question of *what* but *how*. In other words, what counts in such analyses is *not the product or outcome per se* but the *process* and the *factors and actors* involved within that process. Looking at the process can give us hints about politics and administration in that country, as well as broadcasting policy.

In this article I will tell you, first, the story of broadcasting policies in Turkey from their inception up until the early 1990s which, in turn, gives basic characteristics of the broadcasting arena and policy process. Most of these characteristics are still valid today, in spite of the fact that the broadcasting scene has changed dramatically. The 1990s broadcasting arena and the continuities and discontinuities in the broadcasting scene and policy will constitute the second part of this article.

### A Story of Broadcasting in Turkey: The Scene and Its Evaluation

Broadcasting in Turkey until the early 1990s can be divided into three broad phases in terms of legal-institutional arrangements<sup>2</sup>:

1. *Commercial radio (1926-1936)*
2. *State monopoly (1936-1964)*
3. *TRT's (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) monopoly (1964-early 1990s)*

#### Commercial Radio

A private company, *Türk Telsiz Telefon AŞ*, was granted a ten-year radio broadcasting monopoly license in 1926 and started regular broadcasts in May 1927, first in İstanbul, and then in Ankara. The company built two small radio studios (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 9-13; Gülizar, 1985: 2732) and used the PTT technical infrastructure, which had been installed by a French company, *Telephonie Sans Fil*. The first three years of radio broadcasting corresponded with "the period of reconstruction under the conditions of open economy." In those years, the state created and supported the national bourgeoisie and transferred the operation of public economic enterprises to private companies that included some politicians (MPs) as shareholders or as members of administrative boards. Thus, shareholders of *Türk Telsiz Telefon AŞ* were the Bank of Affairs, the Anatolian News Agency, two politicians and a merchant. However, in the 1930s, Turkey closed its doors to foreign capital and began a policy of industrialisation under statist policies (Boratav, 1988: 45). It is in this context that the state became more interventionist in broadcasting in the early 1930s and took radio under its direct control in 1936.

In cultural terms, "wireless telephony" or radio was initially regarded as "a kind of international hobby like dance and sports", or as a form of "civil and modern entertainment" (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 74). These terms, "civil" and "modern" meant "Western". By turning its face to the West, the Republic of Turkey has, from its very inception, been involved in cultivating a "new", "modern" culture. From the 1930s onwards, radio acquired an educational role. But in practice it continued primarily as a medium of entertainment and music. In an attempt to spread Western classical music through establishing music schools and organisations such as the Presidency's Philharmonic Band, the state also intervened in radio, which was mostly dependent upon disseminating music. In 1934, broadcasting Turkish music was even banned for a period (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980; Kocabaşoğlu, 1985: 2733).

The emphasis in the 1930s on entertainment and education is comprehensible in the context of the Turkish State's cultural policy of "Westernization". Such a holistic attempt to educate from above people of different backgrounds, or to cultivate a somewhat Westernized culture, required that the means of communication be under the direct and strict control of the state. This was realized in 1936.

#### **State Monopoly**

The second phase (between 1936 and 1964) is usually referred to as the "period of state monopoly" in broadcasting. Radio was under the control of the PTT from 1936 to 1940. This period is considered a "transitional phase"; ie. the transition from a commercial to a state monopoly.

From 1940 onwards, the Press Department became responsible for radio broadcasting. Radio underwent institutional and administrative improvements during the Second World War: considerable funds from the state budget were devoted to radio's development; radio broadcasts started addressing different audiences; and radio became one of the main sources of information about the war.

Consequently, demand for radio sets and the number of radio listeners increased. However, despite all these developments, radio was still a part of the bureaucratic machine and was even labelled "the mouthpiece of the government/state and the ear of the nation" (Kocabaşoğlu, 1985: 2735).

During the Second World War, American correspondents and members of the British Council in Turkey used Radio Ankara. In 1944, there was a radio program exchange with the US. Moreover, US radio stations and the BBC inspired program production in Turkey. Radio program personnel were educated by Marshall Plan experts and a program on the Plan was broadcast, as was another entitled "NATO Hour".

In 1946, Turkey witnessed the first multi-party elections after 23 years of one party (Republican Peoples Party) rule. The opposition party, the Democrat Party (DP), won the next three successive general elections (1950, 1954 and 1957) and governed the country throughout the entire 1950s. What made radio a crucial subject in that decade was the ban on broadcasts by the opposition and its extensive use as a propaganda medium by the government. These years in broadcasting history in Turkey are called the period of 'partisan radio' (Aksoy, 1960). Leading DP figures were severely punished by the military regime after 1960 because of their use of the state radio along with other crimes (Şahin, 1974: 104-105). According to some scholars and professionals who worked at radio in those years (e.g., Aksoy, 1960; Gülizar, 1994: 69-79; Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 345-353), the economic crisis and criticisms by the opposition party and by the press had an important role in the DP's partisan use of radio.

Moreover, the DP's populist rhetoric, which included Islamist components, against the strict secularism of the Republican People's Party was directly reflected in the introduction of religious programs to radio. Immediately after winning the 1950 general elections, the DP allowed the calling for prayer in Arabic and introduced religious programs on

radio. From the mid-1950s onwards, religious broadcasts increased (Gülizar, 1994: 65-68; Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 316-317).

However, these developments did not mean that Turkey had turned its back on the West; instead, while a populist party program was being pursued, there was no break in relations with the US. Radio İzmir (1951) started operating in these years as a result of technical aid from the American News Center. In addition to technical aid, the American Embassy in Ankara, the USIS and the VOA produced programs for Turkish radio (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 356; Kocabaşoğlu, 1985: 2734-2735). In 1954, military agreements between the US and Turkey led to the broadcast of American radio stations for the personnel of military bases in Turkey. Also, Turkish people who liked listening to Western music became fans of those stations' broadcasts (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 363). (Even after the 1960 military intervention, listeners could tune in to the VOA-originated "anti-Communist" bands on several programs and state-funded public spots (Kocabaşoğlu, 1980: 417-419).

#### **TRT's Monopoly - Three Military Interventions and Successive Changes in the Legal Framework of Broadcasting**

After the military intervention of 1960, radio remained under the control of the Press (and Information) Department for a few more years. In the meantime, the 1961 Constitution was prepared and passed. That Constitution is generally regarded as Turkey's most democratic Constitution, yet the lack of democratic consensus and popular support in preparing it resulted in it being severely criticised throughout the 1960s. A new broadcasting law was passed in 1963—one of the last laws to be issued for two years in accordance with the Constitution (Şahin, 1974: 119-120). This law considered establishing an independent public corporation, resulting in the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) being created in May 1964 as an autonomous public body. Thus, the third phase in Turkey's broadcasting history is characterised

by TRT's monopoly, which came to a de facto end in the late 1980s, and legally in the early 1990s.

After TRT started operating, there was a large increase in technical, administrative and program personnel; the corporation gained financial power; program making was improved; and broadcasting hours increased. All this occurred in a relatively short time span. However, TRT had intra-organizational problems such as an excess in personnel, a lack of co-ordination among staff, and a strict hierarchical structure (Öngören, 1985: 2748-2750). The introduction of television within this structure made the organizational operations worse.

In the context of a transition to a planned economy and the establishment of the State Planning Organization, television was considered to require extensive investment, which was not forthcoming in the 2nd development plan. However in 1968, television was introduced in Turkey with technical aid from Germany and professional training mainly from Germany and Britain. These countries also supplied programs.

Constitutional and legal guarantees were not sufficient to ensure TRT's autonomy, and the Corporation was subject to partisan use (Şahin, 1974). Formal rules applied in indirect ways and unwritten rules of power politics were used to intervene into its operation. The political pressures in the period 1964-1971 included the following: TRT was not allowed to develop relations with other institutions; TRT's accounts were controlled illegally; the Ministry of Finance attempted to keep revenue from license fees for itself; state funding was tardy or was not given; and staff appointments were delayed (Şahin, 1974; Topuz et.al., 1990: 95-98). From 1965, successive governments announced that there would be changes to TRT's legislation and an amendment was on Parliament's agenda when the military intervention of 1971 occurred.

Although radio broadcasting was under a TRT monopoly with TRT broadcasting one nation-wide channel, more than 70 radio stations existed in 1971 servicing some schools and institutions. Among these were a 'police radio' and a 'meteorology radio' that had relatively large audiences. Moreover, as stated earlier, there were American radio stations servicing military personnel at the American (NATO) bases in Turkey. (Aziz, 1981; Kocabaşoğlu, 1985: 2736-2737).

After the military intervention of 1971, a new Director-General, who had a military background, was appointed illegally to TRT. He tried to strengthen regional radio programs to protect Turkey from what was argued were harmful foreign broadcasts (Gülizar, 1985). Later, the government's interference in TRT occurred in the legal realm as well. An amendment to the Constitution ending TRT's autonomy was followed by an amendment to TRT's legislation which increased the government's political and financial control over the corporation.

An amendment to article 121 of the Constitution not only abolished the autonomy of TRT but also set the corporation's program policy to be the furtherance of the educational and informative role of radio and television. Article 121 required TRT's "Commitment to the unity of the State; to the national democratic, secular and social Republic which is based on respect for human rights; to general moral values; and to accuracy in news provision."

In the 1970s, TRT's programming often changed, usually following a change in the Director-General. For instance, İsmail Cem (who is now Minister of Foreign Affairs) initiated day-time broadcasts on TV; he supported the production of sports programs, documentaries, current affairs, new TV dramas and encouraged live broadcasts on radio (Dedeoğlu, 1991: 25-26; Gülizar, 1995: 78). However, when a conservative Director-General was in office (Nevzat Yalçıntaş, but mainly Şaban Karataş -interestingly, their surnames end with "taş", which

means "stone", and TRT was considered to be passing through the "Stone Age" under their directorate), both programming policy and program content changed dramatically toward a "Turkish-Islam synthesis". *The Koran Reading Contest*, *The Great Turks*, and *Conquest* are among the program titles produced in this period, and the use of some words and names in programs was forbidden (Gülizar, 1995: 141-143).

In the 1970s, 25-34 percent of radio programs were comprised of educational/cultural and news content; advertisements comprised 4-5 per cent and the remainder was filled with Turkish and foreign classical and pop music (Kocabaşoğlu, 1985). Until the mid-80s, there was only one black and white television channel, and foreign programs constituted 32-33 percent of total programming in the 1970s (Cankaya, 1990).

The 1980 military intervention differed from that of 1971 in clamping down completely on political activity rather than merely curtailing its parameters. Following this intervention, the National Security Council issued a new broadcasting law in November 1983, which was based on an article of the 1982 Constitution and introduced after the general elections that had brought the Motherland Party (ANAP) to power. That law was in force until the amendment of article 133 of the Constitution in 1993 and the passing of a new law in 1994.

The military rulers' strategy regarding broadcasting was to keep radio and television under military control for some time after 1983. To this end, the regulatory authority RTYK (*Radio Televizyon Yüksek Kurulu*) was established with a board of directors, most of whom were to be appointed by the president, Kenan Evren. Apart from the establishment of this agency, the structure of broadcasting remained more or less the same and TRT held its monopoly status (Kejanhoğlu, 1998).

There were strict rules on content concerning "national economic interests", "national security policy" and the unity of

the state, though most problematic of all in the 1980s was article 19, which allowed the government to produce a 30 minute program without using TRT's facilities, and requiring that it be broadcast monthly on TRT channels. This development relates to both the arguments concerning the growth of independent/private production companies and to those regarding the partisan use of radio and TV (Çelenk, 1998; Kejanlıođlu, 1998).

The main indicators of a movement towards commercial broadcasting, or the change in the 1980s from a system of state monopoly to a dual broadcasting system were: (a) the airing of independent productions by TRT from 1985 onwards, (b) the launch by the PTT of cable television in 1988, and (c) the transfer of the control of transmitters from TRT to the PTT in 1989. These developments did not seem to directly influence the state monopoly in broadcasting but did actually have a crucial impact on the transformation process, when interpreted in the light of worldwide deregulation and privatization policies, a restructuring of world markets, and technological convergence. In fact, Prime Minister Turgut Özal announced in March 1989 that he would increase the number of television channels, including channels funded by foreign capital, to 15-16. He added that because of the convergence of broadcasting and telecommunications, broadcasting would be taken under the control of the PTT (Kejanlıođlu, 1998).

### Characteristics of Policy: An Evaluation

This story of broadcasting brings some significant actors and factors to the fore and gives the basic characteristics of broadcasting policy and the policy process in Turkey.

#### *The main actors and factors:*

1. In Turkish broadcasting, the state has always been the main, active agent. The authoritarian understanding of the

state and its control over broadcasting was evident even when a private company ran radio in its first years. When I say the state, I refer particularly to the military branch of the state—the Constitutions and most important laws have been put into force directly or indirectly by the military: for instance, the 1961 Constitution, the 1963 Broadcasting Law, the 1971 and 1972 amendments to the Constitution and the law, the 1982 Constitution, and the 1983 Broadcasting law. The military also established or strengthened radio stations close to national borders.

2. Despite the military's dominant role, there has also been civil government influence in broadcasting. This can be seen in the Democrat Party's use of radio in the 1950s which, although severely punished by the military, established the principle of the partisan use of radio and television. It also demonstrates that the media was perceived as an instrument of manipulation and propaganda. Within the limits drawn by the military ("national security"), governments have always found a way to intervene into the operation of radio and TV, even when TRT was an autonomous public corporation.

3. Whether the military was in power or not, all governments have had one common tendency—Westernization, and particularly Americanization after the Second World War. Contrary to recent arguments, I believe we can argue that a situation of "dependency" existed in those days in relation to technical infrastructures, training, and programming. The wireless technical infrastructure was installed by a French company and the television one through financial aid from Germany. Radio İzmir was built with aid from the US, and as late as 1985, the US Armed Forces provided new technology and capacity for television. In addition, German and British experts trained Turkish broadcasting personnel. Even Ankara University's Communication Faculty was established with UNESCO aid to educate students in the media professions.

*Basic characteristics of broadcasting policies and the policy process:*

1. Broadcasting policies have not been subject to long-term or even short-term planning. The only exception was the Broadcasting Law of 1963 and related reports by TRT and the State Planning Organization on the role of radio as a tool of cultural promotion and education. The fact that TRT was given this role after radio had been well established as a propaganda medium suggests that it was, in a sense, a reactive policy and its implementation failed. Inadequate technical resources made the attainment of this goal difficult, along with an elitist and didactic understanding of education. The policy therefore did not result in concrete reforms or any improvement in people's daily lives (Oskay, 1978).

2. Even when broadcasting was subject to planning, the plans were not carried out. For instance, although the State Planning Organization knew that television required expensive investment and did not include provision for such investment in its development plan, Turkey nonetheless witnessed the introduction of television broadcasting. Similarly, from a legal perspective, broadcasting was always among the last areas to be considered. From the mid-1960s to 1971, successive governments announced that there would be changes in broadcasting law, but an amendment was made only after the military intervention. However, the regulation of broadcasting did not have a priority status for the military either: the 1963 and 1983 broadcasting laws were among the last to be passed at the time.

3. Broadcasting policy usually occurred after the fact—several changes and innovations having been introduced *de facto*. Examples include the introduction of radio advertisements in 1950, the broadcasting of several radio stations in 1971, the PTT's introduction of cable TV in 1988 against the constitutional mandate of TRT's monopoly, and the existence of two Director-Generals for TRT in 1975-8.

4. Broadcasting policies were usually made by the military as reactions to the perceived threat to national security, or, in case of TRT's policies, as an attempt at manipulation. What was missing in these policy processes was the *audience* or *public*. The "public" as a body of "citizens" and as a part of the policy-making process is nonexistent, its representatives serving to only 'legitimate the ruling group' (Habermas, 1973: 67).

### The Dual Broadcasting System: TRT and Commercial Radio and TV Stations in the 1990s<sup>3</sup>

#### Broadcasting in the Early 1990s

Turkish broadcasting once again underwent *de facto* changes in 1990. In January of that year, President Turgut Özal announced that "there is no rule to prevent broadcasting in Turkish from other countries... If a person leases a channel, he can broadcast programs to Turkey via satellite". Following this announcement it was reported that the Rumeli Holding's company Magic Box Incorporated (MBI), which had been established in Liechtenstein, had leased a transponder in Germany in order to launch a Turkish television channel. Consequently, *Star 1* began broadcasting on 1 March 1990 and it later became public that President Turgut Özal's son, Ahmet Özal, was one of the part owners of MBI (Çaplı, 1994: 136).

*Star 1* initially began with a campaign to sell satellite dishes to extend its penetration. However, this marketing strategy ceased to be successful because of the attempt by several municipal governments to build receivers and transmitters in their own regions. Although dish manufacturing was reduced, *Star 1* nonetheless reached its target audience through municipalities, most of which were ruled by the main opposition party, the Social Democratic Populist Party. In addition, despite the fact that the transfer of transmitters from TRT to the PTT was against the

<sup>3</sup> Some parts of the text below are taken from D. B. Kejanlıoğlu, "Broadcasting Policy in Turkey since 1980," *Boğaziçi Journal*, Summer 2001, where a more detailed analysis of Turkish broadcasting policy in the 1990s can be found.

Constitution, no new law was prepared and the PTT also mobilized its facilities in the service of *Star 1* (Kejanlıoğlu, 2001).

Although the Social Democratic Populist Party claimed the 'illegality' of the private channel and was against the PTT's extended role in broadcasting, it also tried to launch a private channel, *Mega-10*, and to use PTT services just before the 1991 general elections. However, the life of the channel corresponded only with that of the election campaign period.

In 1992 and 1993 several commercial television channels started broadcasting. At first, *Star 1* had to change its name to *Interstar* because of the dispute between the company's owners, Ahmet Özal and the Uzan family. The Uzan family added a sister channel, *Teleon*, to its capacity, and Ahmet Özal started the channel *Kanal 6* in 1992. Four more television channels became available in 1992: *ShowTV*, *FlashTV*, *HBB*, and *Kanal E*. The following year saw the entrance of major national newspapers into the broadcasting arena with *Türkiye's TGRT*, *Milliyet's* (and then *Hürriyet's*) *Kanal D*, *Sabah's ATV*, and *Zaman's STV*. Moreover, the first Turkish pay TV service, *Cine5*, started broadcasting in March 1993 (Kejanlıoğlu, 1998: 256-7; Kejanlıoğlu, 2001). Each year a new genre has acquired popularity in the content of the major national channels: for example, the predominance one year of talk shows is followed the next by game shows and then reality television etc.

Commercial radio stations proliferated even faster from the mid-1992 onwards. From June to October 1992, nine stations went on air and in March 1993 the number of radio stations was estimated to be between 400 and 700 (Kejanlıoğlu, 1998: 257-260; Kejanlıoğlu, 2001). These stations were and continue to be mostly reliant on popular music and call-ins.

The city governors who had received in January and March 1993 directives from the ministries of Internal Affairs and Transportation to close private radio stations and some television channels that were not beaming broadcasts outside Turkey via satellite, banned their broadcasts on 30th March 1993. The official

reason for this ban was technical; this being that the proliferation of stations was resulting in a polluting of the frequency spectrum. Another official reason was to convince the opposition to work on a Constitutional amendment relating to broadcasting (Art. 133). Other plausible reasons revealed by the press included the taking of measures against the dissemination of Islamic radios (Çaplı, 1994: 139) and a plan by the Government to direct attention away from its unfulfilled promises (Kejanlıoğlu, 1998: 260-3). There were also claims that the decision was related to the lobbying activities of the music industry looking for copyright revenues (Aksoy & Robins, 1993).

#### **The Process Leading to the Broadcasting Bill, the New Law and its Implementation**

The coalition agreement between the True Path Party (DYP) and the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) included as a priority the provision of a legal environment for private television and radio stations (*Cumhuriyet*, 21.11.1991). However, it took more than one and a half years to make an amendment in the Constitution. The National Assembly passed the amendment of article 133 of the Constitution on 8th July 1993. This new article abolished the state monopoly in broadcasting and was only realized by silencing the radio stations in order to endorse the necessity to make a change. The attempt in 1992 by the Minister of State responsible for broadcasting, Gökberk Ergenekon, to prepare a consensual draft bill was simply set aside, despite the fact that he had asked 180 public and private institutions to submit their proposals for the new broadcasting law and had collected views and advice from 83 (*Özel Radyo-Televizyon Kanunu Konusundaki Görüş ve Düşünceler*, 1992).

Although the Head of the National Assembly and the representatives of the True Path Party, the Social Democratic Populist Party, and the Motherland Party had signed an agreement relating to the then forthcoming broadcasting law, large media interests tried to influence the members of the True Path Party and continued lobbying while the bill was on the agenda of the

<sup>4</sup> According to the article 29, private radio and television broadcasters can only be established as incorporated, Inc., companies. A company can own only one radio station and one television channel. A shareholder can only hold a maximum 20% share of a company or of different companies. Foreign capital's and Turkish newspaper owners' share in a company cannot exceed 20%. Foreign shareholdership is limited to only one private radio and television company. People or institutions that hold more than a 10% share of a particular radio and television company cannot have undertakings from the State or public institutions. The terms of administrative, financial and technical conditions would be set by RTÜK (Article 30) and all the private stations should obey program quotas (Article 31).

National Assembly. The Assembly passed only the first 24 articles of the bill in November. MPs could not reach an agreement on the remaining articles, especially the 29th which regulates ownership,<sup>4</sup> and the bill languished for five months. It returned to the Assembly's agenda after some provocative reporting by private television channels on the Serbian action in Bosnia and the live broadcasting of the related demonstrations, later labeled as the "sheria demonstrations". The National Assembly passed the bill in a single day on 13th April 1994 (Kejanlioğlu, 2001).

The articles relating to the RTÜK (*Radio ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu* -Radio and Television Supreme Board)—nos. 5 to 15—are the most important because they establish this Board as the supreme regulatory agency responsible for the application of all the rules (or almost all the other articles of the law). The RTÜK consists of nine members nominated for a period of six years by the National Assembly—five nominated by the party/parties in power and four by opposition parties. Three new members are appointed every two years. The RTÜK is supposed to make organizational interventions into the broadcasting arena (e.g., allocating frequencies), to set rules and regulations related to broadcasting, and to monitor programs and impose appropriate sanctions in the case of violations of rules and regulations.

In its seven-year history, the RTÜK has issued some regulations and taken mostly punitive action against broadcasters (Kejanlioğlu, et.al., 2001). The suspension of broadcasts has become a common response of the Board and has led to severe criticism against it and the claim that it acts as a "Censure Board". Even though the RTÜK has been able to fulfill its requirements in the areas of regulation, monitoring and punishment, it was stopped from auctioning frequencies, which it was mandated and intended to do in the last quarter of 1997, by the National Security Board, more than half of whose members are military commanders.

Today, there are 16 registered national television channels on air. When we include all terrestrial, cable and satellite channels except digital packages, the number rises to 55, and if all local and regional channels are included, this number quintuples (*MediaScape Raporları: Türkiye'de Medya 2000*: 31). The total number of radio stations, most of which are local, is more than 1200. All of these channels and stations are operating without licenses and are thus still not legal!

### Conclusions: Discontinuities and Continuities in Broadcasting Policy

The first sentence of the conclusion is the first sentence of this piece: "Since the late 1980s Turkish broadcasting has undergone a rapid transformation." Today, we have hundreds of television channels and more than a thousand radio stations. All of them are commercial except those of TRT. This rapid proliferation of channels demonstrates that new actors have entered into the broadcasting arena. Although most of them—especially local and regional broadcasters—do not seem powerful, big businesses have always found loopholes in regulations which have enabled them to pursue their goals. Media moguls have come and gone. Now, all have investments in other sectors of the economy, especially in banking, and two of them have the global giants CNN and CNBC as shareholders.

Another new actor is the regulatory authority, the RTÜK. It seems very powerful on paper and its punitive actions, which are heavily publicized by the major media, reinforce such an image. However, the RTÜK has largely ignored regulations about advertisements and has published new ones in contradiction to the European Convention (Pekman, 2001). Therefore, both the RTÜK and the major media can easily infringe the rules and regulations on advertising in order to enhance their major source of revenue—advertising! In fact, not only does the RTÜK seem to be financially vulnerable<sup>5</sup> but advertising has become a very important sector as well.

<sup>5</sup> Moreover, as RTÜK could not allocate frequencies and issue licenses after the National Security Board's intervention in 1997, it is, not as administratively (and thinking of revenues from licenses, again financially) powerful as it seems to be.

Partisan use of state radio and TRT until the 1980s has carried over to private channels, each of which takes sides with a particular political party in order to enhance potential investments in different sectors. In other words, business ventures today are also political ventures, and the unwritten rules of power politics still dominate the scene.

In addition, old players in the broadcasting scene still endure. In the 1990s, we still witnessed the military's active role in broadcasting. The ban on broadcasts in 1993, the issuing of the 1994 broadcasting law, and the cancellation of the frequency allocation in 1997, were all related to the military's pursuit of 'national security'. Moreover, the military has always been the main agent in the development, importation and dissemination of technology. In an age of "convergence", it thinks that it holds the right to intervene for technical reasons into every area of life.

As mentioned above, in the 1980s, broadcasting policies in Turkey were not at all the product of rational models of policy-making, and nothing much has changed. Although anticipated, no policy formulation or planning had taken place when the first commercial TV channel was launched in 1990. Both the amendment to the Constitution and the new broadcasting bill occurred as a result of particular events—the ban on broadcasts of Islamic radio and television stations, and the private channels' broadcasting of the "sharia demonstrations"—that were considered to threaten "national security"

Such an attitude towards broadcasting implies a bureaucratic (and technocratic) view of policy in which the professional becomes the mere agent. Even when politicians decide, as in the case of Turgut Özal's decisions, it is like a one-man show where decisions are made out of sight and the public/s experience policy as a *fait accompli* (Kaya, 1994).

As Habermas argues, "the specialization of large-scale research and a bureaucratized apparatus of power reinforce each other only too well while the public is excluded as a political

force" (79). So long as public deliberation is excluded from the policy process, and so long as broadcasting policies and laws carry the burden of illegitimate acts, the audience/s will go on consuming as "consumers" and experiencing *déjà vu* as "spectators."

#### References

- Aksoy, Asu & Kevin Robins (1993). "Gecekondu-Style Broadcasting in Turkey: A Confrontation of Cultural Values." *InterMedia* 21(3): 15-17.
- Aksoy, Muammer (1960). *Partizan Radyo ve DP*. Ankara: Forum.
- Aziz, Aysel (1981). *Radyo ve Televizyona Giriş*. 2. Basım. Ankara: AÜ SBF Yayınları.
- Boratav, Korkut (1988). *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi: 1908-1995*. İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi.
- Cankaya, Özden (1990). *Türk Televizyonunun Program Yapısı (1968-1985)*. İstanbul: Mozaik.
- Cumhuriyet*. 21.11.1991.
- Çaplı, Bülent (1994). "Turkey." In *Television and the Viewer Interest*. J. Mitchell and J. G. Blumler (ed.). London: John Libbey. 135-146.
- Çelenk, Sevilay (1998). *Türkiye'de Televizyon Program Üretimi: Bağımsız Prodüksiyon Şirketleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, an unpublished M.A. dissertation.
- Dedeoğlu, Taner (1991). *Anılarla Televizyon*. İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları.
- Gülizar, Jülide (1985). "Türkiye Radyoları." *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ansiklopedisi*. Cilt 10. İstanbul: İletişim. 2738-2747.
- Gülizar, Jülide (1994). *Haberler Bitti Şimdi Oyun Havaları*. Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık.
- Gülizar, Jülide (1995). *TRT Meydan Savaşı*. Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1973). *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics*. J. J. Shapiro (trans.) Londra: Heinemann.
- Kaya, Raşit (1994). "A Fait Accompli: Transformation of Media Structures in Turkey." *METU Studies in Development* 21(3): 383-404.
- Kejanhoğlu, Beybin (1997). "Türkiye'de Radyo TV Yayıncılığı Siyaseti." *Bağımsız İletişim Ağı Yerel Medya Eğitim Projesi Seminer Notları*. Ankara: AÜ İLEF. 11-12 Ekim.
- Kejanhoğlu, D. Beybin (1998). *Türkiye'de Yayıncılık Politikası: Ekonomik ve Siyasal Boyutlarıyla Türkiye'de Radyo Televizyon Yayıncılığı*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, an unpublished PhD dissertation.
- Kejanhoğlu, D. Beybin (2001). "Broadcasting Policy in Turkey since 1980." *Boğaziçi Journal*. Summer.
- Kejanhoğlu, Beybin, Gülseren Adaklı & Sevilay Çelenk (2001). "Yayıncılıkta Düzenleyici Kurullar ve RTÜK." In *Medya Politikaları: Türkiye'de Televizyon Yayıncılığının Dinamikleri*. B. Kejanhoğlu et al. (eds.) Ankara: İmge. 93-144.

- Kocabaşoğlu, Uygur (1980). *Şirket Telsizinden Devlet Radyosuna (TRT Öncesi Dönemde Radyonun Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türk Siyasal Hayatı İçindeki Yeri)*. Ankara: AÜ SBF Yayınları.
- Kocabaşoğlu, Uygur (1985). "Radyo." *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ansiklopedisi*. Cilt 10. İstanbul: İletişim. 2732-2737.
- MediaScape Raporları: Türkiye'de Medya 2000*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basın Yayın Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi (BYAUM).
- Oskay, Ünsal (1978). *Toplumsal Gelişimde Radyo ve Televizyon: Azgelişmişlik Açısından Olanaklar ve Sınırlar*. 2. Basım. Ankara: AÜ SBF Yayınları.
- Öngören, Mahmut Tali (1985). *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ansiklopedisi*. Cilt 10. İstanbul: İletişim. 2748-2756.
- Özel Radyo-Televizyon Kanunu Konusundaki Görüş ve Düşünceler* (1992). Ankara: Desen Ofset.
- Pekman, Cem (2001). "Çokuluslu Reklamcılık, Uluslararası Düzenlemeler ve Ulusal Uygulamalar: Kuralları Kim İster?" In *Medya Politikaları: Türkiye'de Televizyon Yayıncılığının Dinamikleri*. B. Kejanlıoğlu, S. Çelenk ve G. Adaklı (eds.). Ankara: İmge. 205-241.
- Şahin, Haluk (1974). *Broadcasting Autonomy in Turkey, 1961-1971*. Indiana University, an unpublished PhD thesis.
- Topuz, Hıfzı, et.al. (1990). *Yarımın Radyo ve Televizyon Düzeni: Özgür, Özerk ve Çoğulcu Bir Alternatif*. İstanbul: İLAD ve TÜSES yayınları.
- TC Anayasası 1961; 121. Madde değişikliği 1972.*
- TC Anayasası 1982; 133. Madde değişikliği 1993.*
- 2954 sayılı Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kanunu 1983.*
- 3517 sayılı Radyo ve Televizyon Verici İstasyonlarının Posta Telgraf ve Telefon İşletmesi Genel Müdürlüğü Tarafından Kurulması ve İşletilmesi Hakkında Kanun 1989.*
- 3984 sayılı Radyo ve Televizyonların Kuruluş ve Yayınları Hakkında Kanun, Yönetmelikler ve Tebliğler* (1996). Ankara: RTÜK.

## Olympic Dreams: Representations of Aborigines in the Australian Media

### Abstract

The paper discusses the manner in which indigenous Australians are represented in the Australian media. It queries whether the seemingly positive representations in the Opening Ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics are representative of more general media representations of Australia's indigenous peoples. It reads the indigenous presence in the Opening Ceremony as an engagement with politically charged debates in Australia on whether and how to promote reconciliation between indigenous and settler communities. It concludes by arguing that, while the Opening Ceremony can be read as a significant improvement on mainstream media representations, it fell significantly short of constituting a progressive rearticulation of the central place of Aborigines in Australia's colonial history and contemporary society.

Alaine Chanter

University of  
Canberra  
Division of  
Communication  
and Education