
Turkish radio broadcasts in The Netherlands: Community Communication or Ethnic Market?

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Abstract

With its multi-channel structure, including independent member-based and non-member-based organizations, the Dutch public broadcasting system is arguably a unique example in Europe for preserving diversity in its media landscape. In the Dutch framework there is a particular attention to minority groups in society, offering several models of participation on different scales. This article, part of a wider research project, examines Turkish radio broadcasts in The Netherlands assessing whether those radio stations and programmes are contributing to a participatory debate and to what extent they are reflecting the characteristics typical of community media. These issues are discussed around a number of axes, analysing the main contradictions occurred in community radio practice in recent years, threats of commercialization and ethnic marketing strategies, the Turkish immigrant's capacity to exist as a community and the increasing decline of multiculturalism policy in The Netherlands in recent years.

Introduction

In multicultural societies, the representation of minorities and immigrant populations through broadcasting and how their needs alongside with their common interests should be conveyed by the media constitutes a consistent part of an ongoing debate. Traditional public broadcasting systems in Europe have developed various strategies to try to overcome the problem. The Dutch broadcasting system constitutes an exception and, in this system, the implementation of pluralism utilizes the concept of vertical pluralism, which refers to pluriformity of society instead of unity (Wieten 1979, 172). Accordingly, the Dutch public broadcasting system is made up of a collection of individual, independent and member-based broadcasting organizations rather than a single broadcasting organization as in most of the European countries, where public broadcasting systems have tended to develop as parts of a centralizing and homogenizing apparatus of the state (Daalmeijer 2004, 33-34; Cormack 1993).

In fact, the Dutch local public broadcasting system accommodates most of the main characteristics of community media practice and also for this reason, The Netherlands have the largest number of community-oriented local radio stations in Europe, even since the period of broadcasting deregulation (Prehn 1992, 69). Yet, the community media movement has its own characteristics, which distinguishes it from traditional tendencies prevalent in public broadcasting systems – even in The Netherlands. Different as their targets and ways of defining the audience might seem, community media hold the idealism of creating a two-way, accessible and participatory media by dint of carrying the communication process far beyond where the mainstream media is (Girard 1992; Van Zyl 2003). The goal is to extend media practices, and to define the process of communication not with the emblematic terms (*for people*) but with a participatory concept (*from the people*) (Vatikiotis 2004, 4).

Community radio in Europe has faced a number of problems during the last two decades, including the threats posed by commercialization and the increased penetration of commercial networks at the local level, and tensions in community radio practice in areas such as the one summarised in Dunaway 2002, 72-73:

- access vs. audience building
- local/eclectic vs. national/standardized
- participatory vs. hierarchical
- amateurist/activist vs. professional

Moreover, the issue of the representation of ethnic minorities in the media has evolved into a marketing problem as well. As far as the commercial targets are concerned, the problem is that social groups are defined around market instruments and regarded as ethnic segments. In today's commercial media environment, it is essential to address not only an integrated mass of audience but also potential consumer groups, who have common and unequivocally defined characteristics. As communities are defined as a group of people sharing common characteristics and/or interests, they are seen also appropriate units to be marketed to advertisers. Thus, one of the main difficulties for ethnic minorities and community media is to be able to immunize themselves from audience segmentation strategies of commercialization.

With the tensions and issues mentioned above in mind, the purpose of this research is to analyze the dynamics of radio broadcasting addressed to the Turkish community in The Netherlands, assessing whether the sample of stations included here have ensured a participatory debate and to what extent they feature the main elements that characterise community media. In this sense we have also aimed to find out the extent to which these stations and programmes manage to answer the needs of the Turkish immigrant community for interaction and communication. In other words, if the members of the immigrant community are able to voice their

opinions freely, and to discuss their own agenda and problems, and defend their interests. We also discuss the relationships between the socio-political and cultural transformations in The Netherlands and the conditions of Turkish immigrants, and their capacity to exist as a community, in the sense of being able to organize itself around a community media network.

Our analysis is an organizational study, designed as qualitative research, including the managers and the hosts of the Turkish radio broadcasts of a sample of radio stations and programmes in The Netherlands, as well as non-governmental organization's workers active in the area of broadcasting. The stations we have selected to interrogate are representative of Turkish radio broadcasting in The Netherlands as, apart from some local stations and regional-local editorial boards broadcasting under the umbrella of some other municipality organizations (as Radio Vatan), our research contains all the existing Turkish radio stations in the country. Data collecting techniques used in this research have included semi-structured interviews and observations in a sample of stations.

A stimulating Model for Media Pluralism: the structure of Dutch Broadcasting

The specificity of the broadcasting system in The Netherlands depends on the 'pillarisation' of Dutch society, according to which the social structure has been divided into various social-religious groups (Wurff 2004, 222; McQuail 1992, 96). This particular form of social organization determines the legislative framework of the public broadcasting system, which depends on the allocation of air time, according to the number of members of associations licensed to broadcast. Beside the seven largest associations (KRO, NCRV, EO, AVRO, TROS, VARA, VPRO, NPS), the system also includes some other organizations addressing smaller religious groups or specific interests (NMO, Educom, etc.). Overall, the Dutch public broadcasting system includes thirty independent member-based and non member-based organizations (Daalmeijer 2004, 35). This pluralistic multi-channel structure owes its existence to the 1967 Broadcasting Act, which allowed new entrants into a broadcasting system that had only five associations allowed until then. The 1967 Act defined broadcasting organizations almost in the same way as the old regulations, the main difference being in the establishment of NOS, which incorporated all the broadcasting organizations existing in the system and classified broadcasting organizations in different categories according to the number of their members (Wieten, 1979: 171-180).

According to The Media Act (Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, 2000) and Media Decree (Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, 2001) public broadcasters are required to take account of the diversity of interests in Dutch society, allowing everyone to have their say in their own broadcasting time

and this determining the legislative framework of regional and local broadcasting. According to Article 30 of the Decree, a regional broadcaster is also obliged to produce a programme 'oriented to such a degree to the satisfaction of live social, cultural, religious and spiritual needs in the province'. Local stations are licensed in municipalities according to the policy of localization, which is formulated as part of the new decentralization policy and today (2008) there are approximately 300 local broadcasters in the Netherlands which regularly transmit radio programmes. The local broadcasters are united in the *Dutch Local Broadcasters' Organization*: (Organisatie van Lokale Omroepen in Nederland, OLON) (Bink 2002, 9-10), which can be regarded as a kind of 'trade-union' for non-commercial, public local radio and television organizations. Its aim is the promotion of local broadcasting and cable casting in general and to support and stimulate the cooperation between (independent, non-commercial) local broadcasting organizations in particular. Since 1988, OLON is officially recognized by the government in the media legislation as the official representative body for local broadcasting organizations in the Netherlands. That in turn led to OLON being partly financed on a more structural basis out of the national media budget. Apart from this subsidy, half of OLON's budget comes from membership fees, membership services and services to other parties with links to local stations (projects) (OLON [online], 2008).

Although formally non-commercial, the Dutch public broadcasting structure has increasingly developed into an industry with many commercial implications (Hamelink 1979, 293). As a result, there have been some changes in Dutch media policy towards the creation of a public broadcasting organization able to compete in a dual (public and commercial) broadcasting system. By 2007, there are ten commercial radio stations in The Netherlands and there are a number of regulations governing commercial broadcasting, mainly with roots in European directives, that focus mostly on advertising, protection of the nation's youth and percentages of national productions (Bink 2002, 10).

The most important aim of the legislative framework concerning the media, as mentioned in the *Memorandum of the Minister of Culture*, seems to be the preservation, and if possible the extension, of the already existing media diversity (as in Wieten 1979, 179). As a logical consequence, the Dutch system gives a particular attention to the role of minorities in society, offering several possibilities to access broadcasting practice on different levels (national, regional, and local) where immigrant communities can be able to express themselves. In this context, the place and the efficiency of Turkish broadcasts in such a formulation are related to the socio-political and cultural formations of Dutch-Turks and their historical positioning in the host country as an immigrant population.

Socio-political History of Emigration in the Netherlands and the Formation of the Turkish Community

Turkish emigration to The Netherlands began, as in the case of Germany, to help satisfy the demand for labour in the booming economy of the 1960s, according to the treaty between Turkey and the Netherlands in 1964 (Can & Can 2003, 22). The Turks arrived in Western Europe until 1973 – the year in which the influx of guest workers was officially halted - predominantly as ‘guest workers’. As the Turkish workers already in The Netherlands were entitled to reunite with their families, by the late 1970’s the Turks became a consistent migrant population (Vermeulen 2005, 63) and, therefore, a factor to be taken seriously into consideration by the Dutch government while redefining immigration policy in the early 1980s. Following the publication of a series of documents, namely *Ethnic Minorities* by the Advisory Council on Government Policy (WRR) in 1979, the *Government Reply Memorandum* in 1980 and its moderated version *Minorities Memorandum* in 1983, the Government did assume that the vast majority of the immigrants were there to stay (Vermeulen 1997, 44).

The first wave of Turkish emigration was fairly homogenous on a socio-political level. The first immigrants arrived mostly from rural areas of Turkey (Can & Can, 22) and, as they didn’t have any particular industrial working skills and were not well educated, they were faced with some major problems, especially adapting themselves to the difficult working conditions and daily life practices of the host country. In addition to this, by late 70s, with the arrival of their families from the home country, the range of problems multiplied and diversified. The growth in the Turkish population and the new immigration policies of Dutch governments led Turkish workers to consider themselves as immigrants who had certain rights and to form various organizations in order to solve common problems derived from their immigration experience, such as visa obligations, the Foreign Labourers’ Act and the issue of segregation. In this sense, during the 1980s the relationships between the Turkish immigrant community and the host society were shaped by the political struggles derived from these daily life problems.

The early associations and syndicates established to respond to these issues were both leftist and rightist political workers organizations that were strongly focused on Turkey and on each other (Vermeulen 2005, 69). Following the political traditions in Turkey, the Turkish immigrant organizations did fragment into the structures such as an oppositional left-wing movement, right-wing organizations, and religious organizations. Although each of these organizations had its own agenda, starting from 1985, they regrouped under an umbrella formation, *The Netherlands Consultative Committee for Turkish People* (Inspraak Orgaan Turken, IOT), whose aim was to respond to the issues concerning Turkish immigrants in all areas (Can & Can 2003, 61). By 2007, this committee included nine different organizations like the Dutch-Turkish Labourer Foundation (Hollanda Türkiyeli

İşçiler Birliği, HTIB), the Turk-Islam Cultural Federation (Turks-Islamitische Culturele Federatie, TIKF) to the Netherlands Turkish Woman Foundation (Hollanda Türkiyeli Kadınlar Birliği, HTKB) and the Netherlands Islamic Federation (NIF).

During the 1990s some political rights, like dual citizenship, were determined according to positive discrimination (Doytcheva 2005, 59), but the overall immigration policy of The Netherlands, that attaches great importance to the concept of multicultural society, has not changed much (Özkaya, 2006). Under these circumstances, between the late 1980s and 1990s, the Turkish community had to deal mainly with economic problems such as unemployment and educational issues, especially concerning the second and third generation (Can & Can 2003, 67-75). However, with the 11 September 2001 attacks and the dominance of the 'clash of civilizations' discourse, the multi-cultural structure of The Netherlands was affected and the general Dutch policy towards migrants began to change negatively (Özkaya, 2006). New economic problems faced by the EU caused a contraction in welfare provision for the Dutch middle class, and new tensions arose with the immigrant communities who were then seen as a source of radicalism or of problems within the national economy.

The media consumption patterns of the Turkish community have also had an important effect on their positioning in the host country as an immigrant population. In recent years, the increasing opportunities of access to Turkish media through the internet, TV and radio broadcasting (Doğruöz 2007, 21), has been considered by Dutch governments as an obstacle to integration. However, it can be emphasized that no negative relationship has been found between a satellite link with the country of origin and the degree of integration in the Netherlands (Bink 2002, 17). Turkish immigrants' media use today is mostly characterized by television watching practice (20 hours per week, 51% of their total media time). Radio takes second place but, in contrast to native Dutch people, 92% of whom occasionally listen to the radio, Turks rarely tune in to it (4.7 hours per week, 8% of their total media time). The use of newspapers, magazines and the internet is far lower (5.6 hours per week in total) (Peeter and D'Haenens 2005, 216-218).

The inauguration of Turkish radio broadcasts in Netherlands dates back to 1963. The first was a music programme called *Madrid, Casablanca, Ankara* by the VARA Broadcasting Corporation. By 1967 these pioneering broadcasts in Spanish, Arabic and Turkish included also news and daily events. Turkish broadcasts were later taken over by NOS. In 1975 they were transferred to NPS, a non member-based broadcasting organization addressing ethnic minority groups (Can&Can 2003, 58).

Another association, NMO (Netherlands Muslim Broadcasting Corporation) broadcasts on a national scale, sharing transmissions with another institution,

NIO. Another medium used for Turkish broadcasts is also cable broadcasting. Whether under the auspices of a local or regional public broadcaster, or designed as a commercial activity, it remains relatively narrow in scope. Due to their rather low audience rates, they face a continuous struggle to survive and many of them have disappeared over time. At the municipal level, the number of Turkish stations on the FM wavelength is also quite small, with Radio Vatan, which maintains its existence in Venlo, being one of the best examples on this scale.

Among the web radio stations, Radio Deniz is the second Turkish broadcasting experiment in the Netherlands. Recently a new web radio has started broadcasting under the supervision of the magazine *Ekin*, but is currently at its early experimental stages. Currently there aren't any commercial broadcasting stations broadcasting entirely in Turkish on the FM wavelength, whether at the local or national scale.

Having described the main features of the broadcasts addressing the Turkish community in The Netherlands, we will examine now five main levels of broadcasters, categorized under two basic types: the first contains national public, independent national, independent local and amateur-alternative broadcasts. The second concerns commercial broadcasts.

NPS: Minority Broadcasts

NPS is a broadcasting company with no members but has been allocated a specific mission by government: to be the pre-eminent producer of cultural programming for ethnic minorities. The roots of the weekly Turkish broadcasts, within the structure of NPS today, date back to 1963. Started with VARA programmes under the umbrella of a socio-democratic foundation, an independent collective voice of the working class at the time, Turkish Broadcasts were later transferred to NOS, a public broadcasting company, and later to NPS in 1975. The most meaningful reason for their debut within VARA was that a great majority of the Turkish community was part of the working class. The fact that they were lacking a source of information and had an urgent need for communication was the backbone of the VARA's decision to take the initiative regarding the Turkish broadcasts.

Unlike VARA and other similar broadcasting associations, NOS and NPS bear the characteristics of typical public broadcast corporations, which have functions such as to provide a service for various minorities, including those suffering from some social or physical handicap (Tracey 1998, 26-32). As part of the community, dissimilarities as well as minority cultures are handled together under the same unifying umbrella (Cormak 1993, 101). The programmes addressed to the minorities are yet one of the contexts wherein public identity policies are reflected. Hence the changes in public policies inevitably have an influence on the merits of

the broadcast. The changes undergone through time in the content of the Turkish programme within the structure of NPS are therefore intriguing. At the heart of all these modifications appears the advent of workers migration and the requirements emerged in this process. During the first years of the broadcasts, the target audience included mainly workers who came to earn money in The Netherlands, were usually single, and aimed to return to Turkey in two or three years time.

The content of these broadcasts was shaped by the basic knowledge requirements for such an audience so that they could meet their principal needs, like when they had to fill in financial aid forms for their children or learn how to send money back home. Later, the programmes were enriched by music. By the mid 1970s the migration dynamics had changed, with the families beginning to get involved, which brought forward a number of social concerns such as education, compatibility with the hosts' culture and working life. In this period labour organizations were established, and the Turkish community's endeavours to get organized as part of their mobilization kicked off. It was this mobilization and the changing needs of Turkish immigrants which inclined the producers of broadcasts directed to them to change their direction from being specific for the workers to something more multi-dimensional¹.

In this period of social mobility, when the Turkish community settled down and organized itself as a minority community, its 'Turkish' profile became more pronounced and broadcasting began to consider in more depth socio-cultural factors such as the immigrants' relationships with the majority community and to discuss areas of conflict. The duration of the Turkish broadcasts within NPS rose from ten minutes a day to twenty and a news format was introduced. It was the need for information on what was happening around them and the purpose of fulfilling the communication gaps between the Turkish minority and Dutch society, which adjusted the strategies in the new period at NPS. This new tendency was strongly related to the acceptance of the permanence of the Turkish presence in the host country and their positioning as a minority community².

These years witnessed an increase in broadcasting hours: the duration of Turkish broadcasts went up to 45 minutes daily, but in since the early 2000s it has rapidly decreased in the wake of September 11. Limited to 45 minutes within NPS, they broadcast under the name of *'Turkish Weekly Magazine'* one day a week, on Saturdays, from 18.30 to 19.15. The programmes within NPS are supposed to be transferred back to NOS as at September 2008. With this transfer, their function is to be re-defined as well. Its function, currently in a form of 'culture, education and multicultural life', is to be amended to 'culture, education and other information'. One of the producers of the Turkish weekly magazine programmes, Gunes Uz, has been emphasizing this point, putting it down as the beginning of the decline of the multicultural structure of Netherlands' society³.

To sum up, Turkish broadcasts, initially aiming to circulate basic and functional information to the immigrant working population, accompanied the Turkish community's transformation into a context with more sense of identity of a minority community. This function has developed through time in the direction of the Turkish migrants gaining a certain status within society, having their relationships with the majority community adjusted beneficially, and having areas of conflict eradicated. The influence of Turkish broadcasts is now on the decline due in part to a significant increase in the access to the broadcasts from Turkey, largely via satellite, and in part to the changes in ethnic minority policies. Turkish broadcasting evolved within the frameworks delineated by classical public service broadcasting models, which generally define themselves around concepts of representation, unilateral access and service. Being closer to the minority conception typical of public broadcasting, rather than upon community dynamics, their relationship with the target community is a in a one-way communication process from the corporation to the audience. As far as the broadcasts could not answer the changing needs of their listeners, the bond with community was lost.

NMO-NIO: Community or *Cemaat* ?⁴

The community-based broadcasting in Netherlands has been institutionalized as an alternative public service broadcasting model based on civic-foundation organizational units. As a pre-condition for the capacity to represent, the government assigns the 'pillars' on the national scale with the right to broadcast. Subsidized by the Government, this structure is differentiated from the traditional public service broadcasting by the fact that its basic quality: broadcasts are produced by the communities themselves under the auspices of an association and within the limits set out by the groups themselves. The structure reveals a non-centralist process. Based upon the concept of granting the community the right to speak up, instead of the notion of serving people from centralist systems, it contains the natural characteristics of an alternative public service broadcasting model.

In The Netherlands national broadcasts for immigrant communities are also carried out through religion-based associations. The Turkish immigrant community is represented under the same umbrella as are other immigrant Muslim communities. Religious references and *cemaat* particularities are the basic criteria in defining community instead of ethnic characteristics. The community's common identity is identified as 'Muslim'. Around the common Muslim identity are two broadcasting corporations addressing the Muslim immigrant Turkish communities: NMO and NIO. Composed of three one-hour programmes, previously in Dutch, Turkish and Arabic, respectively, these broadcasts of three hours a week are entirely in Dutch nowadays as a result of a decision taken in 2004. The explanation

for the change is that the third generation of immigrants has lost the habit of listening to the radio, due partly to satellite broadcasts, the first generation no longer having trouble in understanding Dutch. Another change in NMO's activity is that it has had its airtime reduced to 90 minutes because a new Islamist broadcasting corporation, established toward the end of 2005, has become NMO's broadcast partner. The lack of correlation in *cemaats'* religious approaches to narrating Islam generates problems about their representation under a common Muslim identity, that has resulted in the withdrawal of some of the *cemaat* in NMO from the administration.

The executive staff of the corporation consists of people who represent communities, (who constitute the association as entirely independent), and *cemaats*. These autonomous administrations have obligations, as an authority to arbitrate and supervise broadcasting policy and its objectives. With mission and objectives set out, the management assigns a professional manager to be the Head of the corporation. 'All that is pertinent to narrating Islam properly, which exclusively concerns Muslims, is included in our scope of broadcasting', as Burhannetin Carlak, programme designer in NIO redaction, defines the policy of the corporation. All the costs related to broadcasts and personnel expenses are paid by the government. Broadcasting activities of the corporation are undertaken by professional staff responsible for the content, flow of broadcast and the process of programme production. The Head of the broadcasting organization in NIO is Dutch and under his responsibility there are a professional editor and the programme producers. Belonging to the community and knowing it well is a not among the criteria used in composing the crew to be assigned to the production process; the basic standards require all professional criteria and having knowledge and experience of broadcast programming⁵.

Volunteering and involvement from community members, often encountered in the community media, don't feature in the programme production stages, thus it is difficult for community members to participate in this professionally conducted process. To reconsider a definition for 'community', the fact that broadcasting corporations like NIO and NMO define social groups as religious '*cemaat*' induces a contradiction: at the core of such a paradox is the emphasis on the fact that the communities, defined within '*cemaat*' patterns, cannot go through socialization experiences specific to modern communities.

While community is a democratic structure recognized as part of wider society, other groups and entities, '*cemaat*' are defined as groups reserved, confined, with poor relations with other units of society, almost secluded. Community media should not seek to be insular, inward-looking, but to enable groups to obtain a powerful position for themselves as part of democratic community, thus becoming their voice. The more the definition is referred to a confined socialization, the

more difficult it becomes for the broadcasts devoted to religious '*cemaat*' to acquire community media qualities and functions. Nevertheless, some efforts to overcome confined *cemaat* relationships and to redefine Muslim identity around a modern conception of socialization have been observed, especially in NIO.

Another intriguing item in NIO and NMO is the increasing professionalism and the lack of community participation. This tendency towards ultimate-professionalism implying a centralist-programme production process, and the a priority given to an educational/formative mission, evokes the paternalist structure of classical public service broadcasting models based on the essence of unilateral access. This case does harm collectivism, and obstructs community members in their active and effective participation in broadcasts.

Radio seeking its listeners: Radio Vatan

Among the stations broadcasting to the Turkish community in Netherlands, independent public broadcasts on a local scale form another category. These broadcasts are of regional quality, and vary from one local administration to another in terms of their broadcast strategies and structures. Although the number of Turkish broadcasts via both cable and FM wavelength on the national scale are small, is worth mentioning them because they feature some of the elements of the community broadcasting concept. Broadcasting on 96.9 FM under the name of *Radio Vatan* for one hour once a week, the programme is realized under the auspices of a local radio station belonging to the Venlo Municipality. Provided in accordance with the principle that various ethnic and interest groups in the region share broadcast time through the Municipality, the programme has been organized with the purpose of creating a public sphere on a local scale. Women, students and members of civil society organizations representing ethnic communities all make up the broadcasting committee and undertake the task of organizing and directing the broadcasts within the frame outlined by NOS, the national public service broadcasting corporation. The purpose of the broadcasts is to make a contribution to community communication by supplying a cultural exchange and communication facility through which different communal groups and interest circles in Venlo can have their say. Within the broadcast establishment, the managing staff, except for the in-house Radio Station Manager and the technicians, consist of amateurs and volunteers. The members of the broadcasting board, composed of representatives from different groups, monitor the presented programmes. The rationale for these broadcasts is the pursuit of a participatory, multi-voiced and democratic concept of broadcasting. Music dominates the content and debates, along with a limited number of informational programmes, predominantly dedicated to culture and arts based are included. The main struggle the hosts have to fight against is the curtailments of broadcasting hours.

A one-hour, weekly-broadcast is insufficient to maintain uninterrupted and intimate relationships with the listeners. Finances are provided entirely by the municipality and this includes technical assistance for volunteers, the salaries of radio-workers employed on a permanent basis, who provide training and information, and the radio station's Director. This local broadcast in Venlo seems to have in theory a many features typical of community radio in terms of its mission, administrative lay-out, programme production process and financial structure. Nevertheless, it has yet to realize its most important missions precisely, - to permeate 'community' life efficiently and to engage the community in the production of broadcast content. Limited airtime is undoubtedly the heaviest obstacle in order to implement these objectives, therefore narrowing their audience range and the potential of the programme to engage fully in community communication⁶.

A Micro Global Radio: Radio Deniz

Established in Rotterdam by Ozcan Ozbay in 1999, Radio Deniz sets an intriguing example as it is the one and only web-radio in Netherlands currently broadcasting only in Turkish. The station is a personal enterprise, where amateurish broadcasting concept prevails, there is space for alternative formats to mainstream and for establishing as warm interaction through the Internet with its Turkish listeners not only in The Netherlands, but all over the world.

The station's ethos can be described as two-fold: that Turkish should be remembered and used well; and that the Turkish community in The Netherlands should acclimatize itself to the working standards of modern life⁷. In Radio Deniz' case it's hard to develop of the systematic analysis of its schedule and the organisational model, a quite amateurial one indeed without proper broadcasting output management. What emerges here is a 'collective' concept, where the audience, listening from various countries, has the possibility to participate to the programme production process thanks to the interactive features of the Internet. Radio programmes from a variety of countries including The Netherlands, Turkey, Belgium and England contribute to the radio stations output. Özcan Özbay is the only reference for regular listeners who desire to contribute programmes with. The participation is open to everyone wishing to make programmes, and it functions also as a meeting place for the target audience members tuning in from all over the world.

Turkish music, with a little portion of Kurdish songs and speech, dominates programmes at Radio Deniz, with the music prevailing during the daylight hours and weekday evening broadcasts allocated to culture and arts based programmes and debates. News bulletins, edited by a volunteer from Ankara, are also included.

With its structure designed as an Internet portal, Radio Deniz can liaise with its audience not only through the radio activities but also work as a medium based only on on-line operations, providing round the clock access seven days a week. Thanks also to chat-rooms, forums, quizzes and other written material the provision of such a continuous and uninterrupted interaction becomes possible. Even the flow of data and news in the portal is organized by volunteer moderators.

Radio Deniz is formally a private enterprise, but, nonetheless, it looks faraway from being a classical commercial operation. In trying to gain revenues to ensure its survival, Radio Deniz may make room for commercial ads; not for a commercial purposes though. The station, broadcasts 5-6 commercials daily, and is not heavily dependent on the financial leverage of any organization. Founded by a personal initiative and entirely dependent on the active participation of interested people, Radio Deniz is a station that could be described as 'micro radio' rather than community radio. The station broadcasts on a platform where regulation has been so far much lighter than for traditional AM/FM stations, and license fees and copyright laws often unclear or non existing. When compared to legal community radio, their tendency to deal with the issue of freedom of speech on a personal scale is stronger than it is at community scale (Hendy 2000, 16). Therefore, Radio Deniz would be more accurately described as an amateurish alternative web radio based on the micro-broadcasting philosophy.

However, by having little coordination or centralised organisation, Radio Deniz has such a broad scope of influence that it is incomparable to that of micro-broadcasts. The station's intimate and mutual relationship with its audience is also worth noting. With its structure facilitating participation in programming, it occasionally acquires community radio features as well. Unlike community broadcasters though, it doesn't have a proper organisational structure, it is not subsidized systematically by a particular community; and finances, administration and programme-production are not realized in an organized way nor based on specific missions set before. This is why the radio works as a meeting place wherein listeners from various countries and social backgrounds share their common feelings such as living abroad, longing for home and nostalgia and so on. This is also the place where they can have their say, and alleviate their emotional inconveniences experienced by sharing them with others.

Listener as Ethnic Segment: Commercial Stations

The rise of stations having a non-centralist structure is due also to the fact that audiences are no longer only characterised as a uniform mass, but more often been more and more segmented in smaller communities. From the point of view of market instruments, this segmentation in the audience sector has to a large extent altered commercial broadcasting, as well. Technological advancements in the broadcasting field offer the audience a wider range of options, and this has led to

the evolution of a new broadcasting environment, where the popular audience is classified into segmented markets (Cantor 1994, 162). Addressing niches of potential consumers seems much more efficient than reaching a mass audience as big as possible. Advertisers have embraced programmes targeted at a certain age, sex or income group as a more efficient way for their products to be sold and commercialized rather than traditional commercial broadcasting directed to large masses (Gans 1974, 157). The thought here is that it is a more efficient method of addressing potential specific audiences rather than reaching as many listeners as possible. As communities are defined to be a group of people who share common characteristics and/or interests, they are all but units available to be marketed. This is the point which distinguishes specialized mass media from community media. At the bottom of this separation lies the nature of the relationships between transmitters, receivers and the messages flowing between themselves. In community communication, both transmitters and receivers are assessed as elements united around common characteristics. The segments have the same domains of interest and are concerned with the same affairs. They share the same base and the same background. This is the primary feature which distinguishes community communication from the segmentation of audience used in commercial broadcasting (Hollander et al. 2002, 23).

No matter whether integrated around community media or targeted by specialized mass media, one of the serious threats for communities is to have been surrounded by 'technical-rational production strategies' (Ahlkvist 2001, 339-340), which are increasingly becoming dominant. It is possible to mention some examples in Europe, which have gained 'success' by means of addressing immigrant communities as an identified target audience (for a successful example of ethnic broadcasting see Cankaya et al. 2005). Nevertheless, in the Dutch case, it can be observed that a powerful and effective commercial radio operation referring to the immigrant Turkish community, identified as an 'ethnic segment', has yet to be formed. There is no Turkish radio in the Netherlands producing commercial broadcasts on the FM wavelength and Turkish commercial broadcasts have usually been transmitted via cable as in the case of Son FM, and Som Media, both ended in failure. Radio Ekin, cited earlier, is another commercial web broadcast attempt, still in its trial stages, which can not be thoroughly assessed yet.

Commercial radio broadcasting has yet to develop in the Netherlands for the following three reasons: 1) audiences are still too small despite Turkish listeners being an identified target audience; 2) Dutch-Turks do not possess sufficient financial power, nor are they enterprise sufficiently developed to sustain such a service; 3) FM broadcasting fees are too high, so cable broadcasts have been preferred so far. Cable broadcasting is unable to match FM radio's widespread accessibility to its listeners, and their credibility still rate remains low. As a result, it wouldn't be implausible to assume that public, independent public, alternative-

amateur and commercial broadcasts towards Turkish people in Netherlands, failed in varying degrees as they usually couldn't establish a strong bond with their audience and permeate among them thoroughly. The reasons why these stations could not institutionalize their power as a means of communication and become potent community media, could shed light on the nature and interests of the Turkish community.

The Turkish Immigrant Community and Community Communication: Restrictions and Problems

Out of the analysis of the formation of the Turkish immigrants as a community and their relationship with media such as a community radio, there are three inter-related dimensions to be prioritized. The first is the existing structure of the Dutch system and the recent changes in immigration policy which implies some negative effects on minority media and on radio programmes. The second is the relationship between radio and the Turkish community in regard to their changing listening habits. The last is the way in which the Turkish community can itself set up a community media to create and discuss its own agendas.

The changing Minority Broadcast Policy in the Dutch System

With regards to minority broadcasting, the Dutch broadcasting system displays a quite intricate structure. Recently attached to migration policy, Netherlands' approach to the issue of multiculturalism is less familiar than other examples in Europe. In this sense, broadcasts addressing minority groups are organized according to religious and/or political associations rather than distinctive ethnic groups.

The clash between Catholics and Protestants in the early 20th century laid the foundations for a multicultural approach based upon the recognition of existing religious communities. By 2007, at least at the Constitutional Law level, this approach gives some privileges to religious communities, allowing them the possibility of carrying out radio broadcasts. This is one of the main arguments used by the Turkish immigrant community to demand for broadcasting addressing to Dutch-Turks⁸. This is also the reason which obliges Turkish broadcasting to operate under the umbrella of a religious association such as NMO and NIO, instead of organizing a distinctive broadcast for the Turkish community.

At the time of our research, the immigrant Muslim groups within the body of NMO and NIO seem to be benefiting more from the constitutional rights given to religious communities. Rather than producing and sharing information about the common agenda of the Turkish community, the chief aim here is to share all that is pertinent to narrating Islam properly, which exclusively concerns Muslims⁹. These associations define their own groups generally as *cemaat*, and fail to

contribute to programme productions accurately. Therefore, these stations cannot represent a common agenda about social life in The Netherlands. But, nevertheless, the right to broadcast is not granted solely to religious foundations and affiliated societies. Although it is legally possible to constitute an ethnic based broadcasting organization, there are some obstacles in practice. The most insurmountable barrier is Netherlands' assessment of communities as structural bodies including as many people with particular purposes as they possibly can. The Turkish community is not a homogenous group which is able to define itself around common socio-political and cultural interests. This heterogeneity makes it difficult for the Turkish community to organize a unified body such as an association which is licensed for broadcasting such as VARA, KRO or VPRO and so on. This partitioned social structure of the Turkish community only makes it possible to apply for airtime on existing broadcast associations. However, at this point definite objectives and explanations are required from would be broadcasters by the relevant institution before an official approval to broadcast¹⁰.

Additionally, the recent changes in the immigration policy by Dutch Governments makes it difficult to organize a distinctive minority language media addressed to the Turkish community. The transformations experienced in Netherlands' immigration policy, have meant significant changes in the broadcasts for ethnic groups. As Entzinger stressed, a new emphasis on the necessity for integration, first mentioned in the 1990s, has grown stronger. At its heart there are a few points to be brought forward, namely problems with Netherlands' economy; the incompatibility of the minority communities in Netherlands, which still have problems relating to language and education; and the immigrants' preference for sustaining a secluded life (Entzinger 1994, 22), this at a time when Governments have developed policies of integration, with consequences throughout the entire social structure.

Listening Practice

Another reason of why Turkish broadcasts have failed to answer the needs of the Turkish community for interaction and communication is the diminishing interest in radio. The decline is interpreted by the Dutch authorities as an absolute reason for the Turkish broadcasts to be reduced especially at a national level. The reasons why Turkish radio broadcasts have lost their appeal can be associated with two main changes in listening practices in the Turkish community. The first is related to the limited distribution capacity, which constrains local stations to produce minority-oriented programmes to be transmitted only by cable. The Turkish community is more likely to tune in to AM/FM broadcasts and this constitutes an handicap for local minority programmes wishing to reach their potential audience¹¹. The second can also be associated with the increasing interest for transnational satellite broadcasts¹². A recent study, exclusively on the media reception of immigrant communities, shows that no Turkish broadcasts have satisfactory

audiences (Peeters & D'Haenens 2005, 216), which brings the government or other institutions to regard radio as a media that can be ignored. Satellite broadcasts that permit to receive all the information and news that meets the needs of its potential audience (largely provided from by Turkey-based media) have opened up the doors exactly to the kind of world which Turkish immigrants in The Netherlands crave for, who refuse to become Dutch citizens and avoid facing the real problems brought on by their long residence there (Milikowski 2000, 444).

Organizational Capacity

One of the reasons of the failure to create a community media network, including radio as well, is that Turkish community's capacity to become organized around common interests and objectives has remained quite low. The attempts to express themselves as a minority group actually date back to as early as the 1970s. The period following those years, witnessed the establishment of some unions and federations, which aimed to formulate agendas of the own Turkish immigrant community and to allow their problems to be taken into consideration by the host country. In 1985 all the unions and federations established in the last 15 years were reorganized with government's backing, becoming *The Netherlands Consultative Committee for Turkish People (IOT)*. However, despite this entirely well-intentioned attempt, the committee is currently facing challenges, mainly concerning the number of participants and the active involvement of the represented community. To this, we can add some other problems, such as the scarcity of human, capital and physical resources and the language-gap (Can & Can 2003, 62). All of these taken together not only hamper the Dutch government in its efforts to be well informed about the problems of Turkish immigrants, but also prevent the Turkish people from being able to organize themselves as a powerful and active community.

İnanç Kutluer, the former president of IOT relates also the organizational problems of the Turkish community to the non-existence of a common identity which comprises every single person in Netherlands, as well as to possible disputes arising amongst the groups possessing mixed agendas¹³. As well as possessing different agendas in IOT, where the representatives of all these movements convene, one cannot broadcast around a common set of objectives. IOT General Secretary and President of *Netherlands Turkish Labors Union*, Mustafa Ayrancı has made it clear that although discussing terms of reference concerning the Netherlands only, and promising never to propose any issues on Turkey itself and religion for discussion on the IOT's agenda, the committee cannot agree on broadcasting principles to which all the members of the committee would compromise.

As a result, organizational weakness is deemed to be one of the main reasons, preventing the Turkish community from benefiting from the solutions on offer

from the Dutch broadcasting system to the problems of the representation of minorities. That is why the broadcasts addressing the Turkish minority mostly reflect the official discourse rather than the expectations and the needs of the community.

Conclusion

In our concluding remarks we can surely state that Turkish radio broadcasting in The Netherlands can be evaluated neither as an exact community media model nor as commercial radio broadcasting defining its community as an ethnic segment. During the period when this study was made - May-June 2006 - Turkish radio broadcasts seem to have remained limited with NPS as an example of centralist public service broadcasting, NMO and NIO as a religious community broadcaster, Radio Vatan as an example of a community based local radio, and Radio Deniz, an Internet Radio. It has clearly been observed that none of these broadcasters have yet fully reflected some of community radio's main features such as gathering around a common goal or a geographical sharing, giving voice to their own expectations, desires, necessities and agendas, and sharing information. Dissimilar though their broadcasting concepts might be, NPS, NMO and NIO resemble each other in defining the audience as an 'imagined community'¹⁴. Their centralist structures, as their relationship with the audience, are far from putting in place a communication environment that allows direct participation and interaction with the represented community, although they address a particular community and/or society without having any commercial targets. Suitable to be set as an example for alternative small-scale, public broadcasts, Radio Vatan has aimed to contribute to community communication by providing different social groups in their own territories with a cultural exchange and communication facility; but nevertheless it has in practice yet to achieve fully its purpose both because of the lack of an explicit interaction with the community and because of its low listening rates caused by the cable broadcasting platform. As for Radio Deniz, it is a private station, even though it can be identified as reasonably open to interaction through the possibilities provided by Internet-based platforms and based on a micro broadcasting philosophy.

Netherlands's conception of multiculturalism depends on the 'pillarisation' of its society according to which the social structure was divided into various socio-religious groups instead of ethnic communities. As a solution to the problem of representation of ethnic communities in the media, the Dutch system integrates the broadcasts addressing minorities into bodies of public channels as well as religious or non-religious associations. That is why, on the one hand, Turkish immigrants could not generate their own community media network which distinctively addresses their own issues and interests. On the other hand, another serious drawback before for an effective community radio station is that the

Turkish immigrant community's organizational weakness in framing its common interests and objectives, as well as a diminishing interest in radio, at a time of the increasing popularity of satellite broadcasts from Turkey.

Finally, our study has analyzed whether broadcasts addressing the Turkish immigrant community in The Netherlands are realized within the framework of community communication or in the direction of an ethnic market; and yet none of these concepts is noted to have been rigorously reflected in the broadcasts.

In this research we have focused our attention on the participants to the radio production process, but we acknowledge that future research, by using ethnographic methods, would surely provide a more comprehensive and holistic analysis of the use of radio as a means of community communication.

Notes

¹ Interview with İnanç Kutluer, Amsterdam, May 2006.

² Interview with Ahmet Erduran, Amsterdam, May 2006.

³ Interview with Güneş Uz, Amsterdam, May 2006.

⁴ Unlike all democratic countries peculiar to modern western communities, *cemaats* can be considerate introverted communal structures. Typical mostly to Islamic Culture, *cemaat* has almost no equivalent in meaning to that in western languages. That word in Islam is used to mean groups of people who convene to pray. One basic feature that separates one from another is the *cemaat's* idiosyncratic structure that excludes the modern individual concept. What counts in *cemaats* is the state of belonging and submissiveness to the *cemaat* rules. While the joint decisions in modern societies are taken by the individuals' participation, it is loyalty that is essence in *cemaats*.

⁵ Interview with Burhanettin Carlak, Hilversum, May 2006.

⁶ Interview with Muhlis Ayboğan, Venlo, May 2006.

⁷ Interview with Özcan Özbay, Rotterdam, May 2006.

⁸ Interview with Mustafa Ayrancı, Utrecht, May 2006.

⁹ Interview with Burhanettin Carlak, Hilversum, May 2006.

¹⁰ Interview with İnanç Kutluer, Amsterdam, May 2006.

¹¹ Interview with Yavuz Nufel, Rotterdam, May 2006.

¹² Interview with Burhanettin Carlak, Hilversum, May 2006.

¹³ Interview with İnanç Kutluer, Amsterdam, May 2006.

¹⁴ For an assessment of this concept, articulated by Charles Taylor first, in relation to 'the broadcasts of the media in general and the radio in particular', see Cankaya Ö., Güney H.S., Köksalan E., Mahmutoğlu V. (2005) 'The Turkish Media in Germany : Integration Problem' , 'İleti-ş-im', issue 3, December 2005, p.8-44.

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