

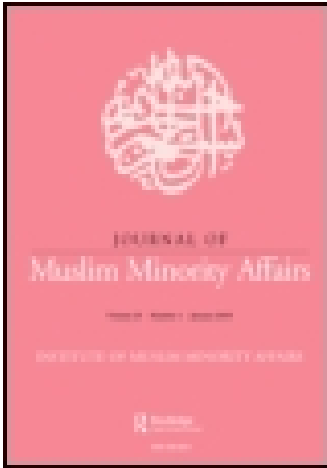
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Satellite Footprints as National Borders: MED-TV and the Extraterritoriality of State Sovereignty

AMIR HASSANPOUR

The launching of the first Kurdish satellite television channel, MED-TV, opened a new site of conflict between the Kurds and the Middle Eastern states that rule over Kurdistan. After more than 30 years of military engagement between the Kurdish people and the state of Iraq, Iran and Turkey, signals from the sky changed the theater of war in favor of the Kurds. Transcending the international borders which since 1918 have divided the land in which Kurds live, the channel allowed the Kurds, for the first time in their history, to establish a powerful mode of communication among themselves, and undermine the state-centered geopolitical order that has reduced them to the status of helpless minorities. Thus, failing to achieve self-rule in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria after decades of armed resistance, the Kurds feel that they have achieved sovereignty in the sky, i.e. a 'great historical leap' toward self-rule in their homeland.¹

Among the Middle Eastern countries, Turkey is the first and the only one to use its full state power to silence MED-TV. Accusing the channel of being the mouthpiece of the 'terrorist' Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Ankara unleashed its coercive forces to prevent the reception of the airwaves within Turkey, whereas in Europe, it used diplomatic power, espionage, jamming, and various forms of intimidation to stop the emission of television signals. Since MED-TV was licensed in Britain and its studios were located in Brussels, Berlin and Stockholm, a number of European Union countries and even the United States have been drawn into Turkey's satellite war. Ankara has also tried to mobilize satellite service providers, both private and state-owned, against the channel.

The role of communication technologies in the formation of empires and nations is well known.² Printing has been called the architect of nationalism³ and radio has served the centralization of political power and nation-building.⁴ As an audiovisual medium, television is more effective than radio and print media. Televisual messages generally cross the social boundaries of illiteracy, language, regionalism, age, gender, and religion. Combining visuality with sound and language, both spoken and written, television is a powerful vehicle for creating national culture and identity.

Up-linked from Europe to a satellite, MED-TV's signals are beamed to Europe, West Asia and North Africa eighteen hours a day. These satellite footprints have allowed the channel to create a transnational Kurdish audience by connecting the Kurds living in the Kurdish areas in the Middle East with the sizeable communities dispersed in the two continents of Europe and Asia. Ironically, Turkey's all-round war against the channel has turned it into a visible factor in the changing Eurasian geopolitical order. The conflict also poses many questions for current thinking about globalization.

State Sovereignty and Globalization: Theoretical Issues

The study of international relations, globalization or geopolitics has so far centered on the assumption that the sovereign state is the principal actor in world politics.⁵ According to the 'political realist' tradition, the world order can be best understood as the sum total of relations of conflict and coexistence among territorially based, sovereign states. The nation-state—modernity's ideal form of organizing political power—has the right as well as the power to exercise unrestricted sovereignty within its borders. The state monopolizes the power to, among other things, conduct diplomacy, levy taxes, and legislate and use force in the interest of national security and stability as it may define it. The exercise of sovereign power is inseparably tied to territory; in a realist sense, there is no sovereignty without territory.

The state's ability to exercise unrestricted power within its borders was itself rooted in the transition from the medieval to modern forms of social, economic and political organization.⁶ Thus, the centralization of economic, political, military and cultural power, made possible by capitalism, laid the foundation for the Western states' mutual recognition of the principle of non-interference in each other's affairs. This recognition, in turn, enhanced each state's exercise of sovereignty within its borders, and, at the same time, led to the formation of the present inter-state or international order. This system of inter-state relations was globalized through the formation of supra-state organs such as the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations. Today, all state formations exercise sovereign rights. From a realist perspective, the state is the only or most effective actor in shaping and changing the world order.

Although MED-TV, a private media institution, attempts to erode the sovereignty of the Turkish state, the international conflict over the channel seems to provide evidence in support of 'realist' or state-centered theories of globalization. As a non-state actor initiated and operated by members or supporters of a stateless nation, the channel is dwarfed by the power of states and their allies. On 2 July 1996, Turkey was able to silence the station for 45 days. One month later, three members of the European Union—Belgium, Britain and Germany—unleashed coordinated violence against the channel's staff, studio, and offices located in these countries. The unequal war continues on all fronts. However, explaining the fact that the channel was launched by a non-state actor and has survived for three years invites theoretical frameworks that are more adequate than political realism.

One trend of thinking, rooted in post-structuralism, rejects the realists' state-centrism by taking the extremist position of eliminating the state, and claiming that nationalism and nation-states are withering away. We are heading, according to this view, towards a borderless world in which non-state entities are the main actors. Others, including some post-structuralists, criticize this 'virtual geography' or 'cosmopolitan optimism' for failing to explain, among other things, the continuing trend of nationalist revival, ethnic cleansing, and formation of new nation-states.⁷ They recognize the role of the state but reject a state-centrist theoretical framework.

According to another narrative, sovereignty is 'leaking away' from the state in two directions, upwards to supranational institutions and downwards to subnational ones.⁸ In other words, the 'state is continually subject to internal and external forces impacting on the rationality of choices; the state is having to deal with increasing opposition from domestic social groups who are challenging state practices; or that non-state actors are interfering with state actions'.⁹ However, these developments do not yet challenge the basic assumptions of the realist view of world politics in so far as the state's sovereign

presence is undeniable. According to some post-structuralists, the critique of realist views should move to the epistemological level. Working within the framework of a non-Cartesian epistemology, some critics envision a 'global civil society' in which the actions of non-state actors allow the theorist to challenge the representation of the state as 'a pure presence and a sovereign identity reflecting a coherent source of meaning'. Here, the main concern is not the loss, real or imagined, of state sovereignty. The problematique is, rather, to deny the state 'a single coherent sovereign presence'. This may, then, bring into play 'other modes of sovereign being besides the privileged figure of the state'. Once the irreducibility of the state is abandoned, it will be possible to see alternative sources of sovereignty; closure may give way to new openings.¹⁰ These claims will be examined in light of the experience of MED-TV.

MED-TV: A Brief History¹¹

According to MED Broadcasting Ltd., the founder of the channel, this project 'evolved in response to calls over recent years, particularly from the Europe-wide Kurdish diaspora, for a television station of its own'.¹² Feasibility work began in May 1994; in October the Independent Television Commission (ITC) in London licensed MED-TV to provide a satellite television service from the United Kingdom for a period of 10 years. According to the ITC, the licensee should 'comply with the requirements of the ITC Codes on programme content, advertising standards and practice and program sponsorship' and observe 'due impartiality in the treatment of matters of political controversy or public policy'.¹³

Test transmissions, for a period of three hours a day, started on 30 March, 1995 with taped programs including music, animations, films and a number of live debates from its studio in Brussels. Normal broadcasting began on 15 May during the prime time in Kurdish areas (16:00–19:00 GMT). In October, transmission time was doubled from three to six hours daily and, later, to eighteen hours.

The channel gets its name from the Medes who, according to MED-TV, established one of West Asia's ancient civilizations and were the ancestors of the Kurds. Today 'Kurdish identity is still defined by its own distinct language, culture and traditions.' Yet the Kurds

numbering 35 million worldwide ... are the largest nation in the world today without a recognized homeland. The concept of Kurdish satellite television is therefore innovative and unique ... For the first time in history, the Kurdish people can now see their own lives, their own reality, reflected on television screens across the world. MED-TV hopes to assist in the regeneration of the Kurdish language and the identity of this dispossessed nation whilst informing the Kurdish public of the world, national and international events.¹⁴

The Kurdish Foundation Trust, which provides financial assistance pursues the following aims:

To assist in the development of the cultural identity of the Kurdish people and the Kurdish language throughout the world; to establish, promote and maintain media facilities and resources to educate and inform the Kurdish people; and to work for the relief of poverty and suffering amongst the Kurdish people.¹⁵

According to MED-TV sources, the channel 'is owned by private investors ... [and] owes its birth and survival to the Kurdish people, and in particular, to the continuing

support of the Kurdish business sector across Europe'.¹⁶ It also receives financial assistance from the Kurdish Foundation Trust, which is funded through private and individual donations. Another projected revenue source is advertising and program sponsorship. By mid-August 1995, the project had cost \$3.2 million (£2 million).¹⁷

MED-TV's office is in central London but most of the production work is undertaken in their studio in Brussels. While one studio in Berlin discontinued its work, another in Stockholm produces most of the children's programming, and provides dubbing and subtitling services.

Programming is quite diverse. There are three newscasts a day, in two Kurdish dialects and in Turkish. Current affairs and debates on politics and other topics are very popular. Leaders of Kurdish political parties from all parts of Kurdistan frequently participate in debates. Viewers from everywhere participate in live talk shows and debates through the telephone. Documentaries include in-house production and a diverse selection from various producers usually aired in Kurdish voice-over. Entertainment and cultural programming includes film, drama, music, theater, science, etc. Children's programming is extensive including Kurdish language teaching, plays, and cartoons. Religious programming is provided for the majority Muslim population as well as minorities such as Christians, Alevis, and Yezidis. There are also weekly one-hour slots in Assyrian, Arabic and Dimili or Zaza, the third major Kurdish dialect. Some of the current affairs and talk shows are in Turkish. MED-TV has been helped by television institutions of other non-state nations such as the Basque people who share their productions with the channel.

The Turkish State: Sanctity and Closure

The Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 on an official ideology, Kemalism, which prescribes Turkish ethno-nationalism, etatism and secularism as main pillars of the political system.¹⁸ The state, constitutionalized as a sacred institution, has virtually stifled civil society.¹⁹ The army, the most important state organ, has conducted, in less than 50 years, three coups d'état (1960–1961, 1971–1973 and 1980–1983) in order to keep Kemalism intact.²⁰ The leaders of the last coup arranged for the scripting of a constitution which praised them for protecting 'the integrity of the eternal Turkish Nation and motherland and the existence of the sacred Turkish State'.²¹

The Turkish constitution does not envisage any 'alternative sources of sovereignty' or 'other modes of sovereign being' for non-Turkish individuals, groups and peoples.²² The closing of political space is stated in absolute terms; no 'thought or consideration' deviating from Kemalism is tolerated. The boundaries of closure are Turkishness:

This Constitution, determining the eternal existence of the Turkish Homeland and Nation and the indivisible integrity of the Grand Turkish State is entrusted for safekeeping by the TURKISH NATION to the patriotism of its sons and daughters who are devoted to democracy, is to be understood, interpreted and implemented by its IDEAS, BELIEFS and COMMITMENT in deference to and with absolute loyalty to its letter and spirit ... no thought or consideration contrary to the Turkish national interests, the principle of indivisible integrity of the Turkish existence with its state and territory, Turkish historical and moral values, and the nationalism, principles and reforms and modernization of Atatürk can be protected ... [emphasis in the original].²³

The paramount concern of the constitution is ensuring the 'indivisible integrity' of the state. To give a few examples, one of the 'fundamental aims and duties of the state' is to safeguard 'the indivisibility of the country' (Article 5). Citizens are given a prominent place in many constitutions, and in the Turkish case, '[N]o Turk shall be deprived of citizenship, unless he commits an act incompatible with loyalty to motherland' (Article 66). A printing press 'duly established as a publishing house under law' cannot be suppressed 'except in cases where it is convicted of offences against the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation ...' (Article 30). The 'press is free, and shall not be censored', although '[A]nyone who writes or prints any news or articles which threaten the internal or external security of the state or the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation ... shall be held responsible under the law relevant to these offences' (Article 28). Academic freedom is granted to 'members of the teaching staff and their assistants' but they are not allowed to 'engage in activities directed against the existence and independence of the State, and against the integrity and indivisibility of the nation and the country' (Article 130).

In creating the Kemalist nation-state based on a single Turkish language, ethnicity and national identity, various governments have denied the existence of the Kurds and, at the same time, applied harsh measures of linguicide and ethnocide in order to Turkify their language and culture. However, not only did the Turkification policy fail but Kurdish resistance to assimilation since the mid-1980s has been more extensive in Turkey than Iraq, Iran or Syria.

Militarily, the guerrilla war waged by PKK since 1984 is the longest uninterrupted armed resistance on record in Kurdistan. Resistance on the political and cultural front, both by PKK supporters and others, has been equally unrelenting. People from all walks of life, from parliamentarians to journalists, to 'newsboys' and writers, persist in their demand for national rights—autonomy or independence. By the mid-1990s, some members of the Turkish intelligentsia and the business elite voiced their opposition to the military suppression of the Kurds, and called for their recognition as a non-Turkish people.²⁴ However, the government, including both the army and most of the civilian hierarchy, refuses to admit Kurdish presence. For the army generals and the majority of civil hierarchy it is an either/or situation, either the Kurds or the Turkish state. Since 1984, the war has led to the destruction and depopulation of about 2,685 villages (by 1996), displacement of about one million Kurds and other acts of violence.²⁵ These measures amount to 'ethnic cleansing' if not genocide.²⁶

Outside pressure on Turkey is relatively limited for the obvious reason that Ankara is an ally of the West in a strategically vital part of the world. Western non-state actors such as human rights activists and organizations, lawyers, physicians, artists, writers, journalists, academics, and others have opposed the violence, and called for both the recognition of the Kurds as a non-Turkish people and the democratization of the political system. However, Western states, the mainstream media and academia view the Kurds through the eyes of the Turkish state. Thus, they do not admit the existence of the Kurds as a nation, and refuse to endorse Kurdish demands for self-rule even within the boundaries of Turkey.²⁷ The agenda of Western powers is in no vague terms the protection of the sovereignty and 'territorial integrity' of the Turkish state by, among other things, providing extensive military and financial support to Ankara.²⁸ They do, however, encourage Turkey to integrate the Kurds by granting them cultural and linguistic rights such as native-tongue broadcasting, writing and reading, publishing and education.

The Erosion of Turkish Sovereignty

MED-TV has threatened the Turkish state's 'single coherent sovereign presence' in politically and culturally significant ways. It has eroded the State's ability to exercise, within its territory, full sovereignty over the Kurdish population. A few examples will show the scope of Kurdish presence in spaces fully closed by the authority of the constitution, legal system, the media, educational administration, and the coercive forces.

Article 42 of the constitution stipulates that 'no language other than Turkish shall be taught as mother tongue to Turkish citizens at any institutions of training or education'.²⁹ This article has been implemented with utmost force, making many teachers, textbook writers and publishers, and students pay a high price.³⁰ Ankara has even used diplomatic power to prevent Kurdish education outside its borders, in Denmark and elsewhere.³¹ While the Kurds have individually resisted the ban on education by secretly teaching themselves and their children to read and write in their language, MED-TV provides such instruction to millions of viewers on a daily basis.³² For example, the program *Roj Baş Mamosta* (Hello, Teacher!) consists of a classroom setting where a teacher instructs children in their native tongue, using a blackboard, books and other teaching materials. Children's programming promotes one of Kurdistan Parliament in Exile's slogans, which calls on the Kurds to learn, write and read in their language.³³ Equally serious is MED-TV's violation of another stipulation of Article 42 which requires that '[T] raining and education shall be conducted along the lines of the principles and reforms of Atatürk'. Thus, the channel tries, quite successfully, to dismantle Kemalist reforms aimed at building a nation-state based on Turkish ethnonationalism. Instead, it promotes the rights of the Kurds to self-determination.

Although Turkey repealed in 1991 the law that banned the use of non-Turkish languages such as Kurdish, the constitution and various laws allow the government to suppress the language. The introduction of private broadcasting in the early 1990s (without amending Article 133 of the Constitution which stipulates state monopoly over radio and television) led to the launching of hundreds of radio and television stations. However, broadcasting in Kurdish is still illegal. In order to divert audiences from viewing MED-TV, some government officials have considered lifting the ban on Kurdish broadcasting but this is still far from materializing. In 1992, Prime minister Turgut Özal suggested Kurdish programming by Turkey's state television but President Demirel dismissed the idea as 'unconstitutional'. In 1996, a television station in Diyarbakir was allowed to air Kurdish music selected from a list of songs approved by security officials.³⁴ This program was later discontinued. Under the conditions, the very fact that MED-TV broadcasts in Kurdish and is being extensively viewed amounts to violation of state sovereignty.

It is important to note that Turkey's policy on MED-TV would not be different even if all the programming had been in Turkish. Content is also a target of state regulation. The conflict is over democracy, freedom of expression and opinion. Article 133 of the constitution imposes censorship of broadcast content: 'The law shall provide that broadcasts are made in a manner to safeguard the existence and independence of the Turkish State, the indivisible integrity of the country and the nation ...' Even the sciences and the arts are required to support the Kemalist state structure. According to Article 27, the 'right to disseminate [sciences and arts] shall not be exercised for the purpose of changing the provisions of Articles 1, 2 and 3 of this Constitution'. These articles deal with the 'form of the State' (Article 1), 'characteristics of the Republic,'

(Article 2) and ‘integrity of the State, official language, flag, national anthem, and capital’ (Article 3).

Given these constitutional prerogatives, it is clear that every second of MED-TV’s broadcasting seriously undermines Turkish sovereign rule. The logo ‘MED-TV’, which is always present in the upper left corner of the screen, is an assertion of Kurdishness (the Kurds are Medes not Turks). It also asserts Kurdish rights to statehood. The logo’s colours of red, yellow and green are the colours of the Kurdish flag; moreover, the flag itself appears frequently in the programming, ranging from news and information to entertainment and culture. The daily menu begins with a grand orchestra performing the Kurdish national anthem, *Ey Reqîb* (O Enemy!). The ever presence of the Kurdish national flag and anthem means that MED-TV has the power to treat the Kurds not as audiences but as citizens of a Kurdish state. This is, therefore, more than a war of meanings and identities. It is a conflict between two nationalisms—one that has achieved state power and one that struggles for statehood.³⁵ The scope of this war can be appreciated if we look at the ways Turkish nationalists have tried to build their nation-state by destroying Kurdish ethnic identity.³⁶

One nation-building strategy was to convince everyone that Kurds did not exist as a people. Using the name ‘Kurd’ was, therefore, made illegal and, when reference was inevitable, the people were referred to as ‘Mountain Turks’ (*Dağlı Türkler*). However, since the Kurds did exist, they had to be Turkified by eliminating their language and culture, physically removing many Kurds from their land and, at times, resettling Turks in Kurdistan. Ethnocide involved a ban on music, costume, weddings, dance and all cultural life that was distinctively Kurdish.

‘Symbolic violence’, i.e. making people ashamed of their language, culture and origins, against the Kurds was as extensive as physical violence.³⁷ The ‘Mountain Turks’ were treated as retrogressive tribal groups who resist the civilizing mission of the Turkish state. Kurdish was declared as a Turkish dialect corrupted by non-Turkish languages. Many Kurdish personal and geographic names were banned and replaced by Turkish names.³⁸ As recently as the 1980s, Turkish embassies were trying to extend the ban on Kurdish names to refugees and immigrants in Western countries.³⁹

Historically speaking, maps played a major role in the ‘emergence of sovereign territorial state and its progeny, the nation-state’.⁴⁰ It is not surprising, therefore, that cartography has also been a site of struggle between the Kurds and the central governments.⁴¹ In Turkey, for instance, the word ‘Kurdistan’ and maps carrying the name were banned. In the early 1980s, the US embassy in Ankara was told to remove two geographical atlases (*Readers Digest Atlas* and *National Geographic Atlas*) from the American Library because the books carried the names Armenia and Kurdistan on one of their maps. In Istanbul, the deputy manager of Lufthansa airlines was prosecuted for owning a globe and using it as part of a publicity photograph in the local Rotary Club magazine. The illegal names on the globe were Armenia, Kurdistan and Pontus.⁴² This cartographic exclusion has failed since MED-TV makes extensive use of the map of ‘Greater Kurdistan’ in its news, cultural and children’s programming. Not only does the name ‘Kurdistan’ appear on MED-TV’s maps of Turkey but the Kurdish provinces of Turkey become part of a map of greater Kurdistan. MED-TV also has a Web site with its logo, press releases and references to other sources including many Kurdish sites with maps of greater Kurdistan.

Symbolic violence is committed by both the state and non-state institutions. Kemal Atatürk’s saying ‘How happy I am to be called a Turk’ (*Ne mutlu Türkün diyene*) is inscribed on his statutes, public buildings, the entrance of many Kurdish cities and even

on the slopes of mountains underneath the crescent and star of the Turkish Republic.⁴³ Everyday, the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* displays on its masthead a flag of Turkey, a photograph of Atatürk, and the slogan '*Türkiye Türklerindir*', i.e. 'Turkey is for the Turks'. This message is endlessly repeated in the physical landscape of the cities and towns which are occupied by the statutes of Atatürk and the official flag. Other symbols of Turkish domination—the army, gendarmerie, portraits of Atatürk, the national anthem, etc.—pervade the physical and social spaces of the country.

State Power Territoriality and Satellite Television

Turkey has had relative success in closing the political space on the print media published by Kurdish and leftist groups within the borders of the country; for one thing, protest by individuals, groups or institutions outside the territorial state are regularly ignored. Moreover, the state has at its disposal the means and all the organs of repression—the constitution, the legislative power, the courts, and the coercive forces. Since the 1980s, Ankara has chosen to deploy death squads. This is apparently because resistance is too widespread to be easily or quickly eliminated through judicial processes; under the conditions, extrajudicial killings are practiced; the judicial elimination of all opposition would be too visible at a time Ankara actively seeks full membership in the European Union. However, like other states, Turkey is able to violate its own laws by legal means. For instance, a state of emergency has been declared in the Kurdish provinces since 1987. Together with a series of statutory orders and decrees, the emergency regime has increased 'the punitive effect of measures that could be applied to the region and to restrict the flow of information by imposing increasing restriction on the media.'⁴⁴ The widely condemned Anti-Terror Law of 1991 allows the government to convict almost anyone of terrorism.⁴⁵

Unlike the print media, the suppression of MED-TV, could not be confined within the borders of the country. The channel operated in multiple spaces that only in part coincided with the territorial boundaries of the state. The offices, their staff, and production facilities were outside the borders of Turkey and dispersed in at least three EU member states. The transmitter, unlike the offices of *Özgür Gündem* (simultaneously blown up in two different cities), was extraterrestrial and beyond the physical reach of Turkey. The audiences were also divided between the Middle East and Europe, and the 'southeast' and the Turkish provinces. Television initiatives, unlike print media, need to be licensed and MED-TV's license was issued in Britain, a country that would not readily comply with Turkish demands for the suppression of the channel. Helplessness was clearly voiced in the discourse of Turkish authorities.⁴⁶

Within Turkey, listening to Kurdish radio from neighbouring countries was always illegal. However, controlling the reception of radio waves was usually beyond the ability of the state. Although the technologies of distribution and delivery of television and print are clearly different, the suppression of MED-TV followed, to some extent, the pattern that had emerged in connection with the control of the print media—a combined use of legal action (e.g. confiscation, closing a paper, prosecution) and violence. The physical absence of owners, program producers and broadcasters made it difficult for the state to take legal action against the channel, although legal power could be used against anyone who dared to act as reporter, camera-person, interviewee, advertiser, and telephone caller.

Compared to all mass media, television is the most expensive and technologically advanced medium in production, transmission and reception. This makes it difficult for

non-state actors or non-business groups to have access to the medium. Privately owned television relies primarily on advertising revenues; it creates audiences by offering them entertainment and information programming and makes profit by selling the audience to advertisers. Faced with financial difficulties, MED-TV intends to collect advertising income. However, three problems prevent the sell of air-time. The first obstacle is the absence of a Kurdish state. The division of Kurdish audiences and their territory among four states means that they do not form a single market. Thus, although the size of the Kurdish audience, numbering perhaps 15 million, is attractive for any advertiser, it is difficult to find one who operates in all the markets covered by MED-TV's footprints (Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Europe).⁴⁷ The second problem is the absence of political freedom. Turkey, which has the largest Kurdish population and a more open market compared to Iran, Iraq and Syria, would prosecute advertisers who buy air-time on the channel. Thus, in the absence of political freedom, it is difficult if not impossible to conduct audience research, establish advertising rates and attract advertisers.

The absence of Kurdish state power or political freedom also limits the ability of the channel to report from Kurdistan. As an audiovisual medium, television reporting requires a crew of at least one camera-person and a reporter, which is difficult if not impossible to hide in police states. Also needed in trans-national broadcasting is studio facilities and satellite links. Moreover, it is risky for individuals, whether officials or members of the public, to participate in interviewing, perform music, or appear on the screen. Another form of censorship is the Turkish officials' refusal to be interviewed by MED-TV. Thus, by closing the journalistic space, Turkey has been able to limit the scope and quality of programming. However, resistance is also extensive. In a society with insatiable hunger for native-tongue television, clandestine reporters and audience members use telephones, fax machines, camcorders, and smuggle videos out of the country. During the early days of the Turkish invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan in mid-May 1997 when reporters were not allowed to enter the area, MED-TV aired phone calls from Arbil which provided detailed accounts of the operations of the Turkish forces and their local allies. One MED-TV reporter in Arbil disappeared.⁴⁸

State terrorism against the media (book burning, appropriating printing presses, execution of writers, publishers and journalists, etc.) has a long history in the Middle East. In Turkey, new forms of violence were used against MED-TV in the Kurdish provinces: the smashing of satellite dishes, the intimidation of viewers, dish vendors, dish installers, and coffee-houses;⁴⁹ a more effective form of repression is cutting off electricity from villages and small towns during prime time hours when MED-TV is on the air.⁵⁰ Since the channel had to change its satellite provider in 1996, audiences had to adjust their dishes to an angle different from Turkey's satellite channels. This allowed the police to detect viewers, resulting in more violence against them. As a result of technical problems as well as political pressure, the channel lost some of its audiences. On 1 July 1997, MED-TV began airing on Eutelsat in addition to Intelsat. However, jamming, most probably by Turkey, prevented its reception from the Eutelsat transponder.⁵¹

Diplomacy: The Extraterritoriality of State Power

Diplomacy extends state power beyond its territorial base. Turkey is a European state, a member of NATO, and has the second largest army in this organization. It is the Western powers' reliable ally in the strategically important regions of the Mediterranean and Black Sea, and Western and Central Asia. By contrast, a non-state institution like

MED-TV has no access to diplomatic power and becomes a target of repression through diplomacy.

Combining diplomacy with espionage, Turkey moved to silence the channel in Europe. According to the daily *Hürriyet* (1 April 1995), the Turkish Foreign Ministry

launched an intensive diplomatic effort against MED-TV's Kurdish programmes in various European capitals. Foreign Minister Erdal İnönü has personally called the Turkish embassies in Europe to ask them to establish who has financed MED-TV and how the channel has been able to broadcast through Eutelsat.⁵²

The *Daily Telegraph* reported that Turkish 'anger with Britain is being expressed at the highest level'.⁵³ Ankara complained to Britain's Foreign Office about the licensing of the channel, and the Office asked the ITC to withdraw the license.⁵⁴

Under the terms of the Council of Europe Convention on Trans-Frontier Television, the Independent Television Commission (ITC) provided the Turkish government with information about the licensing of MED-TV. The Turkish embassy asked the ITC to investigate the licensing, ownership, and content of the channel to determine if there was a breach of the Commission's regulations. The Turkish government tries to persuade the ITC to revoke the license, claiming that the channel belongs to PKK, and that such party affiliation amounts to a breach of the terms of the license. The ITC does not allow political organizations to hold a license. This prohibition extends to companies which are affiliated to or controlled by a political body or controlled by a person who is an officer of a political body. Lacking evidence to connect the license to PKK or any political organization, the Commission is not in a position to comply with Turkey's demands. The embassy also claimed that the channel had violated the terms of the Broadcasting Act by airing programs not specified in the license. The ITC rejected this objection since the license specifies a variety of programming such as documentaries, news, and other features. Moreover, licensees are allowed to air programs not specified in their license application. Under continuing pressure from Turkey, the ITC is carefully monitoring the channel.

Turkey chose to pressure Britain also by invoking the issue of terrorism. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Turkey's President Suleyman Demirel 'attacked the British authorities for granting a license to MED-TV'. 'Is there any doubt in anybody's mind that the PKK guides these broadcasts?' he said. 'Our European friends should not forget that terrorism can in the end come to trip themselves up too'. The Turkish embassy in London directly contacted the ITC to express their concern about the 'political content' of the programmes.⁵⁵ A statement by the Turkish Foreign Ministry claimed that the "broadcasts go beyond the "entertainment" aim listed in the license ... The broadcasts threaten Turkey's territorial integrity and make propaganda for the terrorist organization PKK".⁵⁶

In her visit to London, according to *Hürriyet* (23 November 1995), Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller received assurances from British Prime Minister John Major for controlling the broadcasts of MED-TV.⁵⁷ Soon thereafter the Foreign and Commonwealth Office withdrew its British Satellite News service from MED-TV.⁵⁸

The Turkish embassy has also mobilized Turkish immigrants in England to write letters and petitions to the ITC which repeat Ankara's campaign against the channel, accusing it of 'terrorism' and 'hate propaganda', and calling for the revocation of its license.⁵⁹ MED-TV's former director, Haluk Sayan, said in an interview that he had received threatening letters from the Turks.⁶⁰ Physical violence was not lacking, either.

In December 1996, one Med-TV director, İlhan Kizilhan, was physically attacked by four men at a train station in Germany.

Considering the pressure from Turkey, the ITC's ability to maintain an arm's length relationship with the executive branch of the British government is significant. The Commission's resistance to become a springboard for extending Turkey's media policy to Europe has implications beyond MED-TV. Whatever the outcome, British and EU policy on MED-TV will establish a precedent for communication rights and freedoms in the evolving global regulation of media. The question is of allowing dissident voices or non-state peoples a space in the global village. Will the gigantic global information highway be a public sphere with openings for non-state, non-market voices or will it remain the exclusive domain of sovereign states?

If the most convenient legal action, i.e. revoking the license, is not forthcoming, the democratic state has still recourse to other venues. On 18 September 1996, Turkey's EU allies—Britain, Belgium and Germany—conducted one of the worst offensives against a media institution. Police simultaneously raided MED-TV offices in London and its studio, Roj NV, in Brussels while in Germany Kurdish homes were searched. The office's files, diskettes and computers were seized in a three-hour search by Special Branch officers.⁶¹ The raid in London was carried out under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). The police stated that the aim was financial investigation (the Police and Criminal Justice Act of 1993 allows the police to engage in financial investigation under the PTA).

In Brussels, a 200-strong special forces unit attacked the studio and detained 97 people. Everyone was handcuffed, forced to lie on the floor, and forbidden to speak to each other. Five employees of the channel were issued arrest warrants on charges of money laundering and criminal conspiracy. The special forces took files, mailing lists, videos and computers, damaged the premises, and sealed the studio. The office of the 'Kurdistan parliament in exile' in Brussels, too, was searched. On 9 October, police searched houses belonging to Kurds in six Belgian cities. The aim was apparently to seek confirmation from the Kurdish community that MED-TV raised money through extortion. On 27 October, the Turkish daily, *Hürriyet*, wrote that the raids in Brussels followed an agreement between Belgian police and the chief of Turkey's internal security.⁶² The arrested staff were released and re-arrested several times from 18 September to 30 October when the last four were finally released.⁶³

MED-TV's decision to expand its delivery system in Europe, invited further Turkish interference in the internal affairs of other countries. During her December visit to Germany, Ciller lobbied the government to prevent the channel going on cable.⁶⁴ In the past, Germany has, to a large extent, complied with Turkey's demands.⁶⁵ Ankara has also tried to use the Council of Europe Convention on Trans-Frontier Television to stop the channel. However, the Convention does not provide a sound basis for such action.⁶⁶

The market is an important actor in the world of satellite television. Satellite technology was first developed and monopolized by the state but the market today is a partner in launching, owning and running communication satellites. According to one observer, a 'satellite aristocracy' now rules in the sky.⁶⁷ Commenting on media baron Rupert Murdoch's equation of freedom with lack of regulation, Hird argues that at present ... 'satellite and dictatorship are natural allies; and it is the regulatory framework of the liberal democracies ... that can ensure diversity and plurality in broadcasting'.⁶⁸ However, while Turkey was most successful in working with telecommunication businesses, the satellite market proved not to be a totally closed space.

MED-TV began broadcasting on a contract with the French satellite provider Eutelsat. According to one Turkish source, '[B]owing to pressure from Turkey, and no doubt at the same time concerned that it may be pinned down as aiding and abetting a terrorist organization, France Telecom refused to renew MED-TV's transponder lease when it expired'.⁶⁹ On 30 April 1996, Eutelsat refused to renew its contract with the channel. On 30 June, Portuguese Telecom refused to renew its contract suggesting political pressure. The third service provider, the Polish PTT, unilaterally breached a contract when the Polish government vetoed it. This forced the channel off the air on 2 July.⁷⁰ Portuguese, Spanish and German companies, also terminated their contracts.⁷¹ According to a report by Turkey's Anatolian News Agency on 3 July 1996, Ankara was 'pleased with the suspension of transmission by MED-TV, a periphery organization of the separatist terrorist organization'. A speaker for the Foreign Minister noted that Poland's act constituted 'a new and important example of international cooperation against terrorism'. Turkey had raised the issue at the international summit on terrorism in Egypt. According to a report by *Hürriyet*, Turkey had 'informed all European countries about MED-TV's effort to use their satellite channels to continue its clandestine broadcasts'.⁷² However, MED-TV resumed test transmissions on 13 August, after signing a contract with an American company, Intelsat. Ankara protested the deal and called for US government intervention. The United States informed Turkey that they cannot interfere with a company's business decision. As mentioned earlier, Eutelsat resumed airing MED-TV's programming in July 1997.

Turkey was apparently involved in the resignation of three lawyers who had been working for MED-TV and in the closing of the channel's bank account.⁷³ According to one source, 'several West European banks, legal firms and other companies have refused to work with MED-TV, apparently for fear of alienating the Turkish authorities'.⁷⁴

Turkey has pioneered new forms of sabotage in international broadcasting. During a live studio debate on MED-TV in December 1996, telephone calls from two guest speakers phoning from their home in Diyarbakir in Turkey were intercepted and replaced with music and electronic jamming. The two callers were candidates from a pro-Kurdish political party, HADEP (People's Democratic Party), for a forthcoming parliamentary election.⁷⁵

Satellite broadcasting was jammed, probably for the first time, on 14 December, when Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party, was scheduled to announce a cease-fire in order to facilitate a peaceful parliamentary election on 24 December. Interception began when Öcalan revealed that Turkey had considered to negotiate with his organization during the unilateral cease-fire of 1993. Interference continued intermittently for about 20 minutes. Starbird Satellite Services, the company providing the service, was not able to track down the source of interference.⁷⁶ However, this 'uplink testing' could be politically motivated and sponsored by Turkey if we take into consideration its timing as well as other forms of telephone interception conducted by Ankara.⁷⁷

Deterritorializing Sovereignty: Satellite Dishes as National Flags

It is clear from the above that a separation, however limited, between sovereign rule and its territory has already occurred in Turkey. MED-TV and Turkey share the same land and population, i.e. the northern parts of greater Kurdistan or, to use state discourse, Turkey's 'southeast'. There is one territorial base and two contenders for sovereign

rule. The channel's power derives from a Kurdish audience politicized by the nationalist movement led, in Turkey, primarily by PKK. Under conditions of ethnocide and genocidal repression, this audience is loyal to and mobilized by the channel. However, lacking state power, the channel does not enjoy the right or power to levy taxes on citizens and, when it collects financial support, it is liable to charges of 'money laundering' or 'extortion'. Enjoying sovereignty, the states involved in the conflict—Britain, Belgium, Germany, and Turkey—collect and share information about the channel, its finances, and staff through various means including police raids and intelligence sources.

In spite of the imbalance of power between Turkey and MED-TV on the international level, the channel is not totally helpless. One of its weaknesses, i.e. the enormous cost of satellite broadcasting, is in part compensated by running the station along the lines of community television. The dedication of the staff and the voluntary work of many viewers and supporters is a source of strength.⁷⁸ It is remarkable that broadcasting resumed immediately after the main studio in Brussels was ransacked and closed down.⁷⁹

MED-TV is supported by non-state actors, both individuals and organizations, throughout Europe. Individuals include viewers, writers, parliamentarians, journalists, academics, lawyers, artists, human rights activists, and others. To give a few examples, Britain's Lord Avebury, who chaired the Parliamentary Human Rights Group in London, wrote to ITC in August 1995 and expressed his concerns about Turkey's intentions. In an Early Day motion one day after the channel was forced off the air in July 1996, the British MP John Austin-Walker protested the European governments' bowing to Turkish pressure.⁸⁰ Members of the European Parliament, Stanley Newens and Joe Wilson, tabled questions to the Council of Europe about the cooperation of EU members with Turkey in the raid on MED-TV in London and Brussels in September 1996. Paulin Green, the leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, condemned Turkey for actions against MED-TV and against the 'Kurdish people as a whole'.⁸¹ Non-state institutions and individuals have also supported MED-TV's right to broadcast. For instance, the executive director of 'Article XIX International Centre Against Censorship' protested to Belgium's prime minister about the police raid in Brussels. The International Federation of Journalists and the Association of Professional Journalists of Belgium submitted a strong protest to the court in Brussels.

MED-TV is also supported by other minority broadcasting institutions and individuals. For instance, the television network of the Basque non-state nation has provided MED-TV with material to be aired by the channel. Turkey's fight against MED-TV has raised consciousness about the need for solidarity among minority broadcasting institutions.

While the silencing of MED-TV requires coordinated efforts by several states and the market forces, the survival of MED-TV would also require cooperation among the forces of civil society on the global level. The imbalance of power is evident here, too. The inter-state system of cooperation is well established, and lavishly funded by taxes including the ones collected from the viewers of MED-TV. By contrast, while actors in civil society are numerous and potentially powerful, they are scattered and fragmented; they have no embassy networks, no legislative organs, and no intelligence and military coalitions. Any non-state institution such as MED-TV would need considerable financial and organizational resources to rally a support that is vital but not automatically available.

MED-TV has disturbed Turkey's constitutional blueprint for a pure, sovereign Turkish presence in the 'southeast'. It has established relations with Kurdish viewers not as members of an audience but rather as citizens of a Kurdish state, and, by doing so, it is exercising deterritorialized sovereignty. Everyday, viewers experience the citizenship of a state with its national flag, national anthem, national television and national news agency. Indeed, everyday MED-TV raises the Kurdish flag in about two million homes. It is obvious that Turkey treats each satellite dish as a Kurdish flag hoisted on the rooftops of every building in the 'southeast'. Government authorities have, in fact, considered banning dishes in Kurdish provinces. In the town of Batman, officials changed the colors of traffic lights from the red–yellow–green of the Kurdish flag to red–yellow–blue.⁸² The experience of Kurdish citizenship is further enhanced every time the Europe based Kurdistan Parliament in Exile sets its foot on Kurdish homes through the channel's regular coverage.

Banning satellite dishes is difficult to enforce in larger urban areas.⁸³ Another alternative, cutting off electricity to many communities, would also be difficult to continue for a long time. A more effective option, democratization of the political system, has not been considered yet. This would entail, among many changes, discarding Turkish ethnonationalism as a foundation of state and society. It is interesting that the option of legalizing Kurdish broadcasting, as put forward by some Turkish authorities, has no pretense of democratization. The discourse of government officials is straightforward; if Kurdish broadcasting is allowed, it would aim at replacing MED-TV's Kurdish nationalism with Kemalism. A pro-Kurdish paper, *Demokrasi*, called this 'Contra-TV', referring to the US backed Contras of Nicaragua. Such a television initiative, whether private or public, would be in a difficult position to compete with MED-TV as long as the Kurds are suppressed.⁸⁴

The threat to MED-TV's continued presence on the international scene comes both from Turkey and the world state system that supports it. It is clear that without Western backing Turkey would be in a much weaker position in its fight against the Kurds. Few doubt that *Realpolitik* continues to guide the Western powers' approach to the Kurds and MED-TV.⁸⁵ Very simply, the Kurds and their television channel are dispensable, Turkey is not. At the same time, it is true that MED-TV could not be born or continue its turbulent short life had it looked at the world order as a totally closed space.

NOTES

1. The monthly *Hengaw* (Nos. 17–18, June 1995, p. 1), published in London, celebrated the channel as 'the MED revolution ..., more important than all our armed revolutions; that is why it has more than anything else disturbed the racist Ataturkist regime ...'
2. For an early study and theorization see, Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications*. London: Oxford University Press, 1950. A more recent source with references is Ronald Deibert, 'Typographica: The medium and the medieval-to-modern transformation,' *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 22, 1996, pp. 29–56.
3. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, New York: Mentor Books, 1964, p. 155.
4. Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971, pp. 82, 188, 202.
5. See, among others, Andrew Linklater and John MacMillan, 'Introduction: Boundaries in Question', in *Boundaries in Question: New Directions in International Relations*, eds by John MacMillan and Andrew Linklater. London: Pinter Publishers, 1995, pp. 1–15.
6. The international order began to form with the rise of capitalism in Europe and has evolved as a world system. See, among others, Mandy Turner, 'Demystifying the Expansion of International

Society', paper presented at the 38th annual convention of International Studies Association, Toronto, Canada, March 1997.

7. See, e.g. Peter Marden, 'Geographies of Dissent: Globalization, Identity and the Nation', *Political Geography*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1997, p. 39. See, also, Robin Brown, 'Globalization and the End of the National Project', in John MacMillan and Andrew Linklater, *Boundaries in Question, op. cit.*, pp. 55–68.
8. Peter Marden, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 51. See this source for a more detailed discussion of sovereignty and other trends in globalization.
11. Amir Hassanpour, 'Med-TV, Großbritannien und der Türkische Staat: Die Suche Einer Staatenlosen Nation Nach Souveranität im Ather', in *Ethnizität, Nationalismus, Religion und Politik in Kurdistan*, eds Carsten Borck, Eva Savelsberg and Siamend Hajo, Münster: LIT Verlag, 1997, pp. 239–278.
12. MED-TV, *Kurdish Satellite Television*, Brochure published in London, Fall 1995.
13. Jon Davey, Director of Cable & Satellite, Independent Television Commission., response to my inquiry, 13 October 1995.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. The Associated Press, 'Kurds Pioneer Broadcasting to Ethnic Groups Without Homeland', 14 August 1995.
18. Mark Muller, 'Nationalism and the Rule of Law in Turkey: The Elimination of Kurdish Representation during the 1990s', in *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, ed. Robert Olson, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996, pp. 173–199.
19. Aysel Kadioğlu, 'The paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, April, 1996, pp. 177–193. In a two-part article, 'We, the Turks', Doğu Ergil, wrote: 'We Turks belong to a state-nation rather than a nation-state. It is not the nation that has created the state in Turkish history. At least our political philosophy emphasizes the primacy of the state over the nation ... We Turks could not wholeheartedly criticize the state or official policies because it was "sacred"', *Turkish Daily News*, 14 August 1996.
20. In June 1997, the army hinted at yet another coup when a senior Turkish general visiting Washington talked about the need to protect the country against internal threats, this time 'Islamic fundamentalism'. The U.S. secretary of State Madeleine Albright warned against such 'extra-constitutional changes' (Reuters and Associated Press reports of 13 June 1997 on the Internet).
21. 'Turkey', by G. H. Flanz in *Constitutions of the Countries of the World*, eds A. Blaustein and G. Flanz, Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., August 1994, p. 3. The part of the sentence from the Preamble quoted above was dropped in the 1995 amendments. See 'An Act Amending the Preamble and Some Articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey No. 2709 of 7.11.1982', in 'Republic of Turkey Supplement' by Omer Faruk Gençkaya, in *Constitutions of the Countries of the World*. Turkey, ed. G. H. Flanz, Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., November 1995, p. 1.
22. The quoted words are from P. Marden, 'Geographies of Dissent ...,' *op. cit.*, p. 51.
23. 'An Act amending the preamble ...' in *Republic of Turkey Supplement* by Omer Faruk Gençkaya, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
24. The Turkish writer Yaşar Kemal criticized the treatment of the Kurds by the Turkish state in 1995. He was tried and convicted in March 1996 on charges of 'inciting racial hatred'. See, among an extensive media coverage of Kemal, John Daniton, 'A prophet tests the honor of his own country', *The New York Times*, 14 March 1995. See also endnote No. 26. Since the mid-1990s, a section of Turkish business, affected by the war in Kurdistan, advocates a political solution to the conflict. See, e.g. Robert Olson and Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, 'The New Democracy Movement in Turkey: A Response to Liberal Capitalism and Kurdish Ethnonationalism', in Robert Olson *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement ...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 154–172.
25. According to a statement by the Super-Governor for the State of Emergency Region, Necati Bilican, on 26 May 1996, a total of 2,685 villages or hamlets were completely or partially destroyed. (Update No. 67, 'State of Affairs in Turkey', prepared by the Washington Kurdish Institute, 4 July 1997, Internet source).

26. Turkey, a Western ally, is usually identified by governments, mainstream media and academics as a democracy (for a study of differential treatment of enemy and friendly states, see Noam Chomsky, *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*, Montreal: CBC Enterprises, 1989). According to one pro-Turkish source, Turkey's practice has been no more than the suppression of language: 'Turkish authorities under the republic have sought to suppress the Kurdish language, and not to exterminate the Kurds' (Andrew Mango, 'A Speaking Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, January 1997, pp. 154–155). Some Turkish observers would disagree with such underrating of Turkey's policy and practice. Yaşar Kemal, for instance, talks about 'anonymous acts of genocide' and 'a racist, oppressive regime' (See, Yasar Kemal, 'The dark cloud over Turkey', *Index on Censorship*, Vol. 24, No. 1, January–February 1995, pp. 141–147). He was given a 20-month sentence in connection with the cited article and other writings. Another observer talks about 'state terror' and a 'Kurdish reality reminiscent of pacification programmes and ethnic cleansing programs' (Haluk Gerger, 'Journey to Haymana', *Index on Censorship*, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–149). See, also, 'Turkey and the Kurds: Ethnic Cleansing', *The Economist*, 17 December 1994, Vol. 333, No. 7894, pp. 52–53.
27. State-centrism is not limited to a circle of 'realist' theorists of international relations. Neither is it limited to treating the state as the only actor in the international order. It involves, also, an ideological or intellectual preference for the institution of the state. For instance, Western academics and journalists, with very few exceptions, do not treat the Turkish state and the non-state Kurdish people on equal terms. In the conflict between the two sides, they readily adopt the discourse of Ankara; they class Turkey as a 'secular democracy', label the Kurdish struggle for self-rule as 'separatism' or 'secessionism', and unequivocally treat Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) as a terrorist organization; the other side of this ideological commitment is their refusal to conceptualize as state terrorism Turkey's frequent use of extreme forms of violence against the civilian population within the borders of the country and even in the neighbouring state of Iraq. This is in spite of the fact that political scientists have developed a body of theory and analysis on 'state terrorism' (e.g. Donald Hanle, *Terrorism: The Newest Face of Warfare*, Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, Inc., 1989; William Perdue, *Terrorism and the State; A Critique of Domination Through Fear*, New York: Praeger, 1989), and have made a distinction between guerrilla war and terrorism (see, e.g. Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newham, *The Dictionary of World Politics*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, p. 316). Consistent with this political alignment, the Kurds of Iraq, fighting a state that is ranked an enemy of the West since August 1990, are treated more favourably compared with the Kurds of Turkey who resist a pro-Western state (see, e.g. Edward Herman and Gerry O'Sullivan, *The 'Terrorism' Industry: The Experts and Institutions that Shape our View of Terror*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1989, pp. 222–223; Noam Chomsky, *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*. *Op. cit.*, pp. 286–287).
28. According to U.S. government sources, Turkey imported \$950 million worth of arms mainly from the U.S. in 1994. With a total of 811,000 troops, it ranks seventh among the world's armed forces see 'Turkey is World's Sixth Largest Arms Importer', *Turkish Daily News*, 5 July 1996.
29. *Turkey*, by G. H. Flanz, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
30. To give one example, when M. Emin Bozarslan published *Alfabe* (Alphabet), an Kurdish ABC book in Istanbul in 1968, two courts, one in Istanbul and the other in Diyarbakir banned the book and declared it illegal throughout Turkey. The author was accused of secessionism and spent four months in jail (M. Emin Bozarslan, 'On the Suppression of the Kurdish Language and Literature', *Turkey Today*, London, Autumn 1981, pp. 14–17).
31. In the early 1980s, a group of activists and Kurdish immigrants in Denmark received funding from the Nordic Cultural Foundation to offer a course to train Kurdish teachers who would be able to teach Kurdish to immigrant children. The Turkish embassy tried to prevent the course arguing that the participants were Turkish citizens and thus were not entitled to break Turkish law, which proscribes education in Kurdish. The embassy gave up only when the media covered the story, and protesters called on the Danish government not to allow Turkey's interference in the cultural affairs of the country (Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, *Bilingualism or Not: The Education of Minorities*. Translated by L. Malberg and D. Crane, London: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 1981, pp. 299–280). In Sweden, the Turkish embassy objected to the establishment of Kurdish day care centres in Stockholm (Helsinki Watch, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Kurds of Turkey*, New York: Helsinki Watch, March 1988, p. 10.)
32. Michael Chyet tells the story of a teacher who taught a 'hand-picked group of Kurdish children

- to read and write in Kurdish—in secret after school'. Someone reported him to the authorities and he 'was imprisoned and tortured, and never again allowed to follow his life's calling—teaching'. Sabri was assassinated by a death squad in 1995 ('Sabri, the Teacher', *Kurdistan Report*, No. 21, May–June 1995, pp. 51,57).
33. The 'Kurdistan Parliament in Exile' was formed in the Hague in April 1995. Turkey denounced the organization as a PKK conspiracy.
 34. Katherine Pierse, *Cultural and Language Rights of the Kurds*. London: Medico International and Kurdish Human Rights Project. 1997, pp. 27–28. The station, CAN-TV, aired several hours of music every day. The owner told the Anatolia News Agency that although Kurdish was legal, the courts were ready to sentence 'you on the grounds that you are spreading separatism propaganda', quoted in 'First Kurdish TV in Southeast', *Turkish Daily News*, 11 July 1996.
 35. Some observers claim that television creates a post-national identity based on the blurring and merging of boundaries. Others argue that television brings about 'the death of nations' or, rather, multinational states. (e.g. Tom Lodge, 'TV Spells the Death of Nations', *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 19 April 1990, p. A7). It would be more appropriate, however, to view television in its historical context. Like other media, television does not have a single pre-given impact. Kurdish access to satellite television is indeed contributing to the disintegration of the Turkish state (unless it is democratized) but at the same time it contributes to the formation of Kurdish nationhood and statehood.
 36. See Helsinki Watch, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Kurds of Turkey*, A Helsinki Watch Report. New York: Helsinki Watch, March 1988.
 37. For a brief account of Kurdish revolts and their suppression in Turkey, see David MacDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1995, pp. 184–213 and 395–444.
 38. See, e.g. Salih Akin, *Designation du peuple, du territoire et de la langue kurde dans le discours scientifique et politique turc*. Thèse, Doctorat en Sciences du Langage, École doctorale de Lettres, Université de Rouen, France, 1995.
 39. For instance, the embassy informed German officials not to accept Kurdish names for children born in Germany. In Canada, the embassy issued legal forms to a refugee who had become a Canadian citizen only when he erased 'Kurdish' and replaced it with 'Turkish' in answer to a question about his mother tongue (Helsinki Watch, *Destroying Ethnic Identity ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 10). After a court ruling in 1992, the government allowed the use of non-Turkish names in 1993. In practice, however, there is pressure on individuals to use a Turkish name. By 1986, the names of four out of every five villages had been changed, i.e. 2,842 of 3,524 villages in six Kurdish provinces. Although the Minister of Interior announced in 1991 that restoration of changed names would be allowed but this has not materialized yet (Katherine Pierse, *op. cit.*, pp. 23–24).
 40. James R. Akerman, 'The structuring of political territory in early printed atlases', *Imago Mundi: The International Journal for the History of Cartography*, Vol. 47, 1995, p. 139.
 41. Ferhad Pirbal, 'Xöndineweyeki Kartograf iyaney Koionyalizm le Kurdistan da', [A Cartographic Reading of Colonialism in Kurdistan], *Rabûn* Sweden, (in Arabic script), No. 6, 1993, pp. 61–81.
 42. David Barchard, 'Western Silence on Turkey', *Merip Reports*, February 1984, p. 6 and David Barchard, 'Turkey Makes Map Reference a Crime', *The Guardian* London, 23 March 1983.
 43. The Turkish writer Y. Kemal wrote, 'I first went to eastern Anatolia [Kurdish provinces] in 1951, and saw that on the mountain sides everywhere they had written in enormous letters visible from a distance of 3, 5 and 10 kilometers, "Happy is he who calls himself a Turk". They had embellished the slopes of Mount Ararat, too. The entire mountain had become happy to be Turkish. And, worse even they made the children declare: "I am a Turk, I am honest, I am hard-working", every morning' (Yasar Kemal, 'The dark cloud ...', *op. cit.*, p. 144).
 44. Mark Muller, 'Nationalism and the Rule of Law in Turkey ...' *op. cit.*, p. 180.
 45. Helsinki Watch, *Turkey: New Restrictive Anti-Terror Law*, New York; Helsinki Watch, 10 June 1991, pp. 6. See, also, Gülistan Gürbey, 'The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey Since the 1980s' in Robert Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
 46. Turkish leaders have repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction with European states' handling of MED-TV. They expect the Western states to follow Turkey's way of eliminating 'terrorism'. According to a Turkish daily, a former Chief of Staff, K. Güres, complained that 'Germany, along with France, Belgium, Sweden and the United States were discretely supporting the separatist gang [PKK] while publicly trying to give the image that they are against it. These countries provide every means to the terrorists. But for the means provided by the United States and Belgium could the MED-TV continue its broadcasts?' Güres asked ('Demirel to urge firmer German move on

- terror', *Turkish Daily News*, 4 November 1996). See, also, Semih D. Idiz, 'Ankara's sleuthing providing the facts Europeans maintain they lack on PKK's cover organizations', *Turkish Daily News*, 26 June 1996. The Turkish President Suleyman Demirel said: 'Isn't the permission granted by the Netherlands for a Kurdish parliament such an injustice to Turkey? ... Britain gave a licence for a Kurdish TV station and France provided TV channels. Is there any doubt that the PKK guides these broadcasts?' (AP report: 'Demirel Blasts Europe over "sympathy" for Kurd Rebels', *Athens News*, 23 May 1995).
47. A Med-TV director estimated the number of viewers at about fifteen million ('MED-TV émet à nouveau', *Le Figaro*, août 21 1996). According to Turkish government sources, about 90% of people watch the channel in the southeast. It is watched even by 'village guards' hired by the government to fight PKK; also, the refugees of the war who relocate 'in shanties in western towns invest in satellite dishes to see it' ('Turkey Said to be Considering Allowing Kurdish Broadcasts', *Turkish Daily News*, 2 June 1996).
 48. MED-TV press release, 'Massacre in Arbil: MED-TV Correspondent Disappears' n.d. MED-TV's Web site.
 49. Throughout the Kurdish provinces, the police and the gendarmerie destroyed the receiving equipment. For instance, in Eruh (Batman), the army banned the sale of dishes and warned the public not to buy them. In Kiziltepe, Mardin, police raided a dish-seller's shop and confiscated ten dishes. Coffee-house owners in Kurdistan have been warned not to buy dishes. When MED-TV announced the forthcoming broadcasting of the opening of the 'Kurdistan parliament in exile' (12 April, 1995), the police raided coffee-houses which had satellite dishes, arrested viewers and destroyed the receiving equipment. The Kurdish newspaper *Yeni Politika*, now banned in Turkey, published reports of the arrest and torture of viewers (see, for example, reports in *Yeni Politika* in May 1995, especially on 11 May 1995). Quoting a Kurdish source, *The Daily Telegraph* (25 May 1995, p. 11) reported that security forces had smashed at least 30 dishes in Batman and Diyarbakir provinces. Some audience members felt intimidated throughout Turkey. One Kurdish man said, 'We have to watch secretly, of course. It is not safe to watch openly. It is only illegal for us Kurds. They want to oppress us'. A woman from a village said, 'We do not have satellite in our village, but the villages near to us had it. They didn't allow it. They came and destroyed their dishes. They wouldn't accept it'. (*Beating the Censor*, a Frontline News (London) report produced by Tony Smith and Tim Exton aired on Sweden's Channel 1, 25 September 1995). In spite of repression, one shop sold about 150 dishes a week. A Kurdish technician whose shop was raided by the police said that dish installers in Kurdish areas face repression. Fearing to speak on the camera, he said that he installed 15 dishes every evening under the cover of darkness (*Ibid.*).
 50. Nick Ryan, 'The Land of Sun', unpublished paper, May 1997.
 51. 'Kurdish MED-TV Jammed: Foul Play Suspected', Med-TV press release, 2 July 1997.
 52. Reported in BBC *Summary of World Broadcasts*, Part 2 Central Europe and the Balkans; BALKANS; TURKEY; EE/2270/b, 5 April 1995.
 53. 'Turkey Protests as Kurds Beam TV from Britain', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1995, p. 11.
 54. 'Turkey Protests to ITC Over Kurdish Channel License', *The Financial Times*, 27 April 1995.
 55. 'Turkey Protests as Kurds Beam TV from Britain', *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 1995, p. 11.
 56. The Associated Press, 'Kurds Pioneer Broadcasting to Ethnic Groups Without a Homeland', 15 August 1995.
 57. Çiller presented Major with a dossier of 'remarks made by [PKK leader] Abdullah Öcalan on this channel in relation to activities in Turkey and broadcasts related to PKK activities. After receiving these documents Major said, 'I did not know it was that much. I will show you the necessary support on this issue. However we have a radio television board which is concerned with these broadcasts. We cannot intervene in this. But as the government, we will do whatever is within our hands ...' (*Hürriyet*, 23 November 1995).
 58. This is a 10-minute daily news feed with a weekly edition provided free of charge to any channel interested in using it. The service includes news and features 'from the British point of view' on subjects including culture, environment, politics, finance, medicine, science, sport and technology. While MED-TV could still directly down-link these news feed via three transmitting satellites, BSN refused to provide scripts and other necessary information.
 59. See for example, 'MED-TV Şikâyet Edildi (Complaint Made Against MED-TV)', *Türkiye*, 4 November 1995. An official with Turkey's Radio and Television High Commission claimed: 'I think this goes against the European conventions on television and human rights, because it stirs up racial hatred and is against the territorial integrity of Turkey', quoted by Aliza Marcus, 'Kurdish TV from Britain is Nationalist Voice', *Reuters*, 15 May 1995.

60. The Associated Press, 'Kurds Pioneer Broadcasting to Ethnic Groups Without Homeland', 14 August 1995.
61. Ian Black, 'Police Raid Kurdish TV in London', *The Guardian*, 20 September 1996.
62. According to an earlier report, the 'security agreement', signed between Turkey and Belgium in July 1996, included cooperation in areas such as 'international drug smuggling, terrorism, organized crime, cooperation on illegal migration, illegal workers, expert training and the appointment of liaison teams'. Asked about MED-TV, the Belgian General Commander of Gendarmerie who signed the agreement on behalf of his government, answered that 'the Belgian police would do its best as soon as they had concrete evidence', in 'Turkey and Belgium Sign Security Agreement', *Turkish Daily News*, 10 July 1996.
63. Information is based on press releases by MED-TV and European media reports. See, especially, the following MED-TV statements: 'MED-TV: A Thorn in the Flesh of the Turkish Government', 29 October 1996, 3 pages, and 'MED-TV Detainees Released. MED-TV Will Fight Further Attacks', 31 October 1996, 1 page.
64. *Hürriyet*, 6 December 1995, quoted in Miranda Watson, 'Turkey and MED-TV', unpublished paper presented at the seminar on 'Critical Press and Repression in the Middle East', The Middle East Centre, St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, 1995.
65. According to one observer, although 'no Kurdish books are being burnt in the FRG, and nobody in being persecuted for having written something in Kurdish, in a subtle way the FRG is systematically implementing the Turkish policy of prohibiting non-Turkish languages' (Johannes Meyer-Ingwersen), 'The Kurdish Language and the Formation of Identity in Kurdish Children and Youths', in *Documentation of the International Conference on Human Rights in Kurdistan, Bremen, Germany, the Initiative for Human Rights in Kurdistan, 1989*, p. 46.
66. According to a report by Anatolian Agency dated 28 November 1995, Turkey 'would activate the European Convention on Trans-Frontier Television within the framework of the European Council against Belgium and England'. Quoting Turkey's Foreign Ministry, another report (30 November) noted that 'the Radio Television Supreme Board (RTUK), responsible for the implementation of the Convention in Turkey, has made initial contact with its counterpart, the English Independent Television Commission, but has to date not received positive result . . .'
67. Alain Joxe, 'Stratégique de L'aristocratie satellitaire', *Les conquêtes de l'espace*, Paris: Le Monde diplomatique: [Série] Savoie 3, 1994, pp. 64-67.
68. Christopher Hird, 'Reach for the Sky,' *Index on Censorship*, No. 4/5, 1994, pp. 27-35.
69. See, Semih D. Idiz, 'Ankara's sleuthing providing the facts ...,' *op. cit.*
70. Information is based on MED-TV press releases dated 14 and 16 August.
71. O. S. Halisdemir, 'British TV News Program Highlights MED-TV's Plight', *Turkish Daily News*, 3 August 1996.
72. Anatolian News Agency, 'Poland's Role in Suspension of MED-TV', and *Hürriyet*, 'MED-TV's Efforts to Continue Broadcasting', in *World Media. Broadcasting News*, No. 28, 12 July 1996.
73. My interview with Mr. Haluk Sayan, London, 12 July 1995.
74. Edward Mortimer, 'An identity crisis ...' *The Financial Times*, 3 January 1996, quoted in MED-TV, *The International Impact of MED-TV*, London, March 1995, p. 29.
75. HADEP, People's Democratic Party, was created by some of the former members of the banned pro-Kurdish Party for Democracy (DEP), which was dissolved in July 1994. Although apparently tolerated, the activists of this party are being persecuted.
76. Richard Aggus, General Manager, Starbird Satellite Services (London), Fax to Phillip Declercq, and MED-TV, 18 December 1995; MED-TV (London), Press Release, 18 December 1995.
77. See Ismet Ismet's cover story in the Turkish weekly *Özgür Yaşam* (23-29 December 1995), published in English, under the title 'Technological Sabotage Against Peace', in *The International Impact of MED-TV Kurdish Satellite Television, March 1995-March 1996*, London, MED-TV, 1996, pp. 20-22.
78. Many individuals volunteer their time and resources for, e.g. driving guests and staff between the studio, the airport, train station or places of residence; many guests (interviewees, performers, etc.) are lodged not in hotels but in a house with minimal facilities (e.g. a bed and breakfast); whenever possible, guests are asked to pay for their airline or train tickets. In the studio, food is prepared and provided for the staff and guests.
79. Although broadcasting time was reduced and live programming stopped, the staff at the Stockholm studio were able to resume programming by working round the clock.
80. Catherine Drucker, 'MED-TV: Satellite Television for Kurdish Speakers', *Contact Bulletin* (The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages), Vol. 13, No. 3, Autumn 1996, p. 9.

81. O. S. Halisdemir, *op. cit.*
82. After protests, the colours were changed back again. See Reuben Loewy, 'Kurdish Problem Just Won't Go Away for Turkish Leaders', *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 2 January 1996.
83. According to a MED-TV press release, Necati Bilican, the governor of the state of emergency area, threatened in February 1997 the banning of satellite dishes in the Kurdish region. Operations were conducted against dishes in at least 48 villages ('More Threats Against MED-TV', London, 17 February 1997).
84. For a brief report, see 'Turkey Said to be Considering Allowing Kurdish Broadcasts', *Turkish Daily News*, 2 June 1996.
85. European powers, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the smaller states criticize Turkey's treatment of the Kurds but they all support Ankara. See, Philip Robins, 'More Apparent Than Real? The Impact of the Kurdish Issue on Euro-Turkish Relations', in Robert Olson, *op. cit.*, pp. 114–132. The United States is even more supportive of Turkey and much less critical. According to Reuter report from Washington on 12 June 1997, the United States expressed support for Turkey's third military incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan. Nicholas Burns of the State Department said, 'The Turks have, we believe, reason to be concerned about the actions of the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) and the threat that the PKK poses to southeastern Turkey. We accept that. Turkey's an ally. And we have no reason to question the need for an incursion across the border ... There is a job to be done. Once that job is finished, I'm sure that the Turkish military will go back across the border into southeastern Turkey.' He downplayed the significance of the four-week old occupation by saying that the incursions into northern Iraq had 'become an annual exercise in Turkey's fight against a terrorist organization. And if you look at past incursions, this one is not longer than past incursions.' (Source: KURD-L Archives—<http://burn.ucsd.edu/archives/Kurd-l>). Washington's support of Turkey is usually unconditional. On 28 June 1997, the German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, expressed his resentment at the pressure being exerted by the United States on the Europeans to admit Turkey into the European Union: 'It is impossible for us to subscribe to the American views that stress Turkey's strategic position and use that as the sole criteria for its admission to the EU.' He stressed that Turkey was an 'indispensable ally that we cannot allow ourselves to lose' but noted that Ankara can be admitted into the union only if they address, among others, 'the question of Human Rights, the Kurdish question and the cleaning up of their economy.' (Update No. 67, 'State of Affairs in Turkey,' prepared by the Washington Kurdish Institute, 4 July 1997, Internet source).