"Tapping the Diaspora" : A Political Economy of Turkish Transnational Broadcasting (Gökçen Karanfil)

With a whole array of political, economic and technological developments, a new media order is rapidly forming that renders geographic, national, cultural, ethnic and financial boundaries obsolete, and seeks its audiences transnationally. These developments in media technologies have become major factors in influencing the ways in which migrancies are being experienced around the world. Furthermore, they have also become highly effective and significant apparatuses for means of mobilizing diasporas around the world. This research proposes to scrutinise how the broadcast media in Turkey is positioning itself in relation to this new transnational media order. There are currently more then twenty Turkish television channels that broadcast transnationally – via satellites - to the Turkish diaspora around the world. While two of these are extensions of TRT, the Turkish Public Broadcasting Service, this plethora of channels also include both privately owned, commercial and religiously affiliated, ideological channels. Recognising that at the centre of any given contemporary society and culture, media play a constitutive rather than a reflexive role, the necessity to question how media institutions themselves perceive of their transnational audiences, becomes pressing. Drawing on policy, institutional, discourse and content analysis, this study aims to unravel the incentives, motives, intentions and expectations of Turkish satellite channels in relation to their transnational broadcasts. The research aims to ask the questions - from the media institutions’ stand point - who is the transnational audience? What is the importance of the Turkish diaspora? And within what sorts of frameworks is the Turkish expatriate conceived?