Zapping between Dutch and Turkish:
Satellite television and Amsterdam Turkish migrants[1]

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This paper is about the manifold and changing cultural identities of Turkish migrants and their offspring in the Netherlands, viewed from a perspective of citizenship, in an age of satellite television. It is a complex subject, on a theoretical as well as on an empirical level. The aim of this paper is to develop an approach which can take these different complexities into account, and enable us to decide what the really interesting questions are.

We will proceed as follows. First, we'll provide some background on the immigration history of the Turkish Dutch, and on the changing ethnic and social make-up of Dutch society, in particular of its capital, the city of Amsterdam. We'll also provide some data on Turkish television viewing. Next, we'll look at the different meanings of identity. How do people set about placing and identifying themselves in relation to others? What is universal, what is specific? How can outside forces - e.g., social policies and popular thinking - affect identities as experienced from within? The last part is an endeavour to understand how satellite TV might affect different people's understanding of themselves in relation to society.

Migration history: from migrants to minory

The majority of the Turkish people living in the Netherlands are either ex-guestworkers, or closely related to a guestworker. This means that permanent settlement in the Netherlands was far from the minds of the first generation of Turkish arrivals, back in the sixties and seventies. It also means that - on the average - the older people, the guestworkers and their wives, are less well schooled than the native Dutch of comparable age. Being unschooled was in fact precisely what made them suitable in the eyes of Dutch employers. The native Dutch labour force was rapidly becoming what is officially called 'overschooled', which meant that too few people could be recruited from within the country to keep the traditional industry - the textile mills and shipping wharves - in business. Employers, in that context, *prized* lack of formal educational. Potential workers in Turkey and Morocco who had more schooling than was strictly needed for the job might even fail the test for just that reason. Guestworkers were expected to work, to sleep in barracks or bachelors quarters, and to return after a few years to the country they came from.

But history took a different turn. Now, in 1998, the population of the Netherlands includes around 300.000 people who are statistically counted as belonging to the Turkish minority, which means that either they or at least one of their parents were born in that

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country. So, many guestworkers have not in fact gone back, though several have wanted to. All kinds of conditions and developments have interfered, in unforeseen and complicated ways. The oil crisis of 1973 eventually did away with the traditional industries, for which the guestworkers had been recruited, and where they had shown themselves to be capable workers and loyal colleagues . Retraining programs had not been invented yet - at least not for this class of workers. In sum: social advancement has been very hard to gain for this migrant group, many of whom still miss Turkey every hour of the day.

Meanwhile the children of the guestworkers have been adapting their lives and ways to fit in with Dutch society, where their own future lies. It is a demanding but interesting enterprise, involving many as yet unsolved or only tentatively solved questions of personal and collective identity. What does it mean to be a Muslim in a country whose traditions have been shaped by different religion? What does 'being Turkish' mean when you yourself were raised - and perhaps even born - in the Netherlands? How to use your family's cultural heritage in helping you to get a grip on the world as it presents itself here and now? These questions are partly universal - all young people have to address them in one variant or another - and partly unique. In families who have stayed put, only time and its inherit changes - socially, culturally, mentally - have to be bridged. In the case of migrant, a space factor is added, which complicates the task considerably. This is a crucial issue, to which I'll return later on. I'll first present you with some further background, this time about the host society, and the changes it has gone through.

Changes in make-up of Dutch society: the case of Amsterdam

Who are, in fact, the Dutch? Thirty years ago, this question was seldom asked. The answer seemed self-evident. This is no longer so. To illustrate my case, I'll take you on a trip trough mental time as represented by the experiences of four successive age groups within the population of Amsterdam.

Thirty years ago, the Amsterdam population was almost exclusively Dutch - traditionally Dutch that is. At present, sixty percent of the young people growing up in Amsterdam are of foreign descent. It is a dizzying change for all inhabitants.

The following table gives an indication of the different experiences of successive generations. Amsterdam (only the city itself, not the greater area) has 715.000 inhabitants. The population graph - with ages on the y-axis and numbers on the x-axis - is shaped like a Christmas tree (see Appendix 1). It is widest for the ages around 30, very narrow at age 16 or so, and broadens out a bit again for the very youngest. Table 1 shows the proportions of indigenous Dutch for five age groups, relative to the proportions of non- indigenous inhabitants. To drive my point home, I've lumped the four largest minority groups together into one category, named *Surantumars*. This fake concept includes the Surinamese (70.000 in all), the Antillians (11. 000), the Turks (31.000), and the Moroccans (49.000). Altogether, *Surantumars* make up twenty percent of the Amsterdam population. But look at the proportional changes over time.

Table 1. Proportions indigenous Dutch and Surantumar-Dutch in Amsterdam, for different age groups[4].

	Indigenous	Surantumars	Proportions
Age	%	%	
70-75	84	4	21 : 1
45-50	62	16	4 : 1
20-25	53	27	2 : 1
15-20	36	44	1 : 1....
Babies	39	39	1 : 1

This table indicates to what degree the Amsterdam identity has changed already, and will change in the near future. Let us take a brief look at the different age groups.

The oldest people in this table are the generation that grew up during the great depression in the thirties and the German occupation which followed it. During their childhood, a considerable part of the Amsterdam population was Jewish. Most of them have been deported and killed. Their absence is scar on the city, and in the memories of the older population in particular. And, as you see, few pensioners are 'foreign', so there is little occasion to mix. The proportions Dutch : Surantumar are 21 : 1.

These proportions change into 4 : 1 with the generations of babyboomers, the generations that was born right after the war. This does not mean, however, that they have much formative experience in common. You'll remember that the Turks only started to come in during the sixties and seventies, and the same hold for the Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antillians. So the formative years of this generation were spent in different countries.

Next comes the age group of students and young workers. There is a considerable presence of Surantumars here (proportion Dutch : Surantumar 2 : 1), but it should be born in mind that many of them are still migrants in the real sense: they were born in a different country, and may have entered the Dutch schools at a relatively late age. As you'll remember, their fathers and mothers often have very little schooling themselves, which makes it extra difficult to catch up. Givens these problems, it is not really surprising that only few of them have managed to get into University thus far. So, contacts between the different cultures will still be fairly limited for people of that age.

Let us now turn to the group which is very close to them in age, and will therefore often include younger brothers and sisters of the people in their early twenties. A small step in age here means a great change in proportional strengths. At this age, the indigenous Dutch are no longer a numeric majority. In a sense, this generation lives in an Amsterdam that is different from the city their parents and grandparents live in. So being Dutch should mean different things for them too. And this is how things will stay for a while, proportion-wise, as you can see by looking at bottom row in the table. De baby's are evenly distributed between natives and newcomers.

The objective of this research is to find out how these ex-foreigners, with their various affiliations and heritages - with their multiple *sources* of identity -   identify

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[4] The information used to produce this table was obtained from the Amsterdam statistical yearbook. See O+S, 1997.

themselves in terms of culture and citizenship. Why should that be important? In the previous section I've highlighted the changes going on within the Amsterdam population. What any society or community needs, of course, is that members take an interest in its well being. This requires that somehow all these people, old an new, coming from such various backgrounds, need to co-operate as citizens. Citizenship implies that you act and think of yourself as part of some larger community. It is a way of 'identifying with', which may show itself in acts as well as thoughts. Such relationships, of course, work both ways. Society also needs to consider and promote the well being of its members, whatever their background. This, too, is a matter of 'identifying with', which also has a practical component (taking care of people materially) and an ideational one (treating them with respect). So, from a social-political perspective, this research is informed by an interest in the functioning of migrants in their position as new citizens.

The decision to focus on the people who have roots in Turkey was partly taken from that perspective, but also because their behaviour invites all kinds of questions. The Dutch Turks have been very much in the picture lately, and that picture is ambiguous; it keeps changing with each new bit of information. The Dutch Turks, it seems, give off many contradictory signals. One the one hand they are very much involved with things Turkish. There are 130 Turkish organisations in Amsterdam, serving a population of 30.000. This is far more than any other minority group can boast of, both in absolute numbers and proportion-wise. Turks also keep up close connections to the country of origin, both privately, and by means of those organisations, most of which are in some way related to political and/or religious organisations in Turkey itself.

At the same time - and that is the other part of the picture - Turks also take an active interest in Dutch social and political life, and this interest appears to be rapidly growing. For instance: the Dutch house of representatives now includes several people of Turkish birth or descent, who have been elected on the tickets of different Dutch political parties. Also, more Turkish people make use of their rights to vote in local elections than do other migrants. So, there are several different form of citizenship on show, which might be competing, but might also be somehow enforcing one another.

Now in come satellite dishes, further complicating the already complicated picture. Again, the signals our as loud as their meaning is unclear. Table 2 presents some bare data as provided by an 1995 survey, describing viewing habits and preferences of Dutch Turks, as compared Dutch Moroccans, many of whom also have satellite dishes on their roofs[5].

Table 2. Self-reported use of TV by Turkish and Moroccan minorities in the Netherlands in 1995.

		Turks	Moroccans
Hours per week		32.4 hrs	19.7 hrs
Owns satellite dish:		42 %	18 %
Hours per week	dish-owners:	34.1 hrs	21.0
	non-owners	31.8	19.4
Spent with T/M tv	dish-owners:	28.5 hrs	16.5 hrs
	non-owners	19.8	10.1

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[5] Source: Veldkamp, 1996.

This table suggests the following: Turks are heavy watchers, and watch much more Turkish than Dutch television. The introduction of a satellite dish in a household leads to even heavier watching, of Turkish channels in particular. The Moroccans are more moderate on all counts, it seems.

These data also served as a starting point of ours research. The question we asked was how satellite TV influenced Turkish people's way of identitying themselves from a perspective of citizenship. The subsequent parts of this paper should be viewed as a preliminary report, in which we try to establish what are, in our view, the issues, identity-wise and television-wise. What do we mean when talking about social and cultural identity, how do we think that such identities would express themselves, and what role can television be expected to play in the process of cultural change?[6]

The process of being identified: Appropriate and inappropriate identifications

If you were asked to identify yourself to a company of Aliens, you would probably say: I'm from the earth. To a company of wolves you'd say: I'm human. In the present international company I'll introduce myself as coming from the Netherlands. But when I phone home to my family I won't mention all these things but will just identity myself by name. Which element is the most important? That is very difficult to say. Leaving any of these elements out would change any of us beyond recognition.

So the choices we make when identifying ourselves to others depend primarily on the context. We can handle these distinctions quite well, but mistakes are also made, particularly in the case of people who are perceived to be of some different kind.

It is quite common and for certain purposes also useful to categorise people according to some easily to determine characteristics of birth (e.g., male or female), or subsequent attainments (e.g., educational level). It is a bottom-up registration in the sense that people are individually identified, and it is top-down in the sense that the categories are prepared ones, and may be used to generalise over individuals, for instance to monitor or analyse certain social developments. Without some such registration we would not have known, for instance, that in the Netherlands the proportion of female university students is now for the first time in history on par with that of males.

Such administrative categorisations often also venture into grey areas, where criteria are not obvious and have to elaborately defined, or may differ over uses and contexts. The obvious result is some social confusion about who is who, when and why. An example is the quite complicated matter of who is Dutch and who is foreign, and who, perhaps, is both.

One approach is to consider as Dutch all Dutch nationals, or those entitled to a Dutch passport. It is a clean, legal approach, but does not preclude some confusion, since people are entitled to also retain their previous nationality, and many immigrants and children of immigrants do in fact hold two passports. There is another, less clean but also functioning, administrative approach which distinguishes inhabitants according to their own or their

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[6] See also Ogan and Milikowski, 1998a, and 1998b.

parents' country of birth, disregarding the matter of passports. The rationale behind that approach is social, not legal. You belong to the category of 'allochtonen' or 'people from outside', if either you or at least one of your parents were born elsewhere. Social policies – e.g., distribution of educational funding - lean heavily on that distinction.

But of course, in the ordinary unofficial business of thinking, talking, and writing about nationality and Dutchness such fine and formal distinctions are never entirely observed, and often not observed at all, leading to *inappropriate identifications*. A black man, or a women with a headscarf, are by many other people automatically categorised as 'foreigners'. Each of them may be a Dutch national, and may have been born from parents who were also born, but neither of them is thought to look the part, which is what often counts in instant psychological categorisations. Blackness and headscarves could be said to function as a 'master status determining trait' - a term taken from the sociologist Becker[7], who defines it as a trait that takes precedence in identitying people socially. The process is also a manifestation of what the psychologist Eleanor Rosch[8] has called the basic level of association, and defined as the way of categorising that comes easiest. Basic level thinking leans heavily on perceptual distinctions. The mind will stubbornly create it own categories, those it can easily grasp and illustrate, and can only be educated or consciously train themselves into viewing things differently.

Part of the difficulty of abstractions is that they often fly in the face of perceptual input. The sun comes up, even though we know that, in actual fact, it doesn't. Hence the persistent informal association of Dutchness with a certain physical type - the prototypical 'Dutch' person. Yet it has also has been demonstrated that the outcomes of such automatic 'basic level' association processes are much more precise and to the point when performed by experts, than by those with only a superficial knowledge of the subject under consideration[9]. The relevant social expertise of Dutch publics is bound to grow when more 'foreign looking' people reveal themselves to be Dutch politicians, Dutch football players, Dutch artists, and Dutch officials.

Levels and content

Inappropriate identifications can involve inappropriate levels, as well as inappropriate content. Inappropriate levels of identification are often experienced by people who have some 'master status' feature. Thus a well know Dutch writer, who became an invalid, started to notice that invalids on TV are people being interviewed about their disease or handicap - and never people talking about the weather, or mathematics, never just people, who happen to be sitting[10]. Many Turkish respondents, particularly young ones, have complained to us that 'people do not see us as we really are', which may well refer to all of the inappropriate identifications they encounter.

Inappropriate content enters identifications when real of presumed group characteristics replace individual properties. It is a mental short cut which can becoming very

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[7] See Becker (1986), p. 143.

[8] See Rosch,(1978), pp. 27-48.

[9] See Tanaka & Tailor, (1971).

[10] Renate Rubenstein, Nee heb je. Meulenhof, 1974.

annoying when you are the object of it. Now is has been demonstrated by Elias and Scotson[11] that established groups don't need visible, audible, or any social differences to saddle newcomers with presumedly common, often negative, features. The established in their study of an English country town came to be primarily associated with their 'good' members and the group of newscomers with their 'bad' ones, though in fact the groups were quite alike in composition [12].

There are other mechanisms by which inappropriate identifications can be produced, or sustained. Social researchers and journalists may unwittingly foster these by highlighting differences between groups which may be statistically significant, but do not describe each case. This is also a kind of short cut, which may be proper in some contexts but not so proper in others[13]. A case in point are the reports about differences in educational success between 'the' children of new minorities and 'the' children of the established Dutch. Of course, the minority children are doing worse, *on the average*. But that is not what the newspapers say, because in headlines there is no room for an exposé on means and standard deviations, which many readers (and some journalists) would not understand anyhow. So, we read about 'the Turks' or the 'the Moroccans' who don't succeed, which is not true, because many do[14]. These are not, in most cases, intentional slights, but result from terminological and conceptual difficulties, which cannot be solved by good intentions only[15]. An other problem with a statistical comparison of means, in this context, is that it does as much as it may to suppress individual differences, which is very useful for some purposes, but not for others. In the context of a study of change, differences may often be more interesting to focus on than samenesses.

Importance of minority features

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[11] See Elias and Scotson, 1965. The edition used here is from 1994.

[12] Such mechanisms were also found to operate at the football pitch, where competing teams tend to describe the opposition in terms of their worst qualities, and themselves in terms of their best. See Kraan, 1993.

[13] The most shameful examples, I think, are to be found in the race-intelligence debate. The shame is not in the tests themselves, which may be quite usefull for diagnostic purposes. The shame is in the generalisations, and in the ways these are fed back into society.

[14] In a prize winning essay about the conditions of succesful scholastic performance by members of Turkish and Moroccan minority groups, Maurice Crul also observes that absolute numbers are sometimes more informative than percentages. The example he give is that in Amsterdam, Moroccan or Turkish 'drop out' from a certain school type need only be reduced by 68 *cases* to redress the seemingly solid proportional distance between these groups and the group of native Dutch pupils.

[15] I met with a related problem a few years ago in a very different context, having done some research on people's appreciation of individual numbers. By several measures, 67 came up as the number with the lowest average appreciation of all numbers from 1 to 100. In an article I subsequently called 67 the most disliked number[15]. A journalist made a headline out of it, calling 67 'universally disliked'. This was appealing, of course, but manifestly untrue, even within the limits of my research. Fortunately, 67 can't be touched by what I say of it. But minority members can. See Milikowski & Elshout, 1995.

The experience of being inappropriately identified because of it might explain the differences in the identity structures of majorities and minorities that were discovered by Francois-Pierre Gingras and Jean Laponce[16]. They found that people attach more importance to those aspects of their identity that bring them into a minority position than to those aspects that don't. Thus, 'home language' is more important to the French Canadians than it is to the Anglo Canadians. Similar results were obtained for sex (women being defined as a cultural minority), for religion, for (visible) ethnicity, for birthplace, and for place of residence. One's minority features evidently tend to play up or stand out, psychologically, and one's majority features don't. These findings have an intuitive plausibility, and fit in well with many goings on in the world.[17] But how to explain them?

Several processes could be at work here, even within the same individual. The first is: reactance. to experienced harm. While people can choose how to identity themselves, they can't, mostly, choose how they are identified by others. Minority members, it is evident, have to suffer many more inappropriate identifications than majority members. Visible minority characteristics in particular lay you open to these. You are imprisoned, as it were, by other people's cognitive failures. And a prison is more important to those who are in it, than to the majority outside.

On the other hand, the relative importance of minority characteristics may also refer to a greater degree of self-awareness, in the sense of more elaborated knowledge and convictions. Because one's identity is not self-evident , and also socially problematic, in that one's surroundings so often fail to provide a decent fit, one has to think for oneself. Generally, people will only start to think really hard when there is a problem to be solved. Things in which you have invested a lot of mental effort become important to you; they grow on you, so to speak. This is a more hopeful way of explaining the *importance* findings. It would imply that minority membership would tend to go with a certain special sophistication on the subject concerned.

It is interesting in this context to examine the story told us by a young Turkish women who has been living in Amsterdam since she was one year old. When we asked her how important her religion was to her, she answered that it played a very important part in her life. And she went on to explain:

> 'It is unconscious, but it is there, in me. Even if you don't want it. It is in the way you behave to your parents: polite, respectful. You must respect everyone. I may find somebody disgusting, but right away I feel oh no, I'm not allowed to think that. And eating: I eat nothing I don't know. I used to eat a hamburger at MacDonalds' quite often, but then they told me I couldn't , which had to do with being a Muslim.'

So she started to find out about the Koran: what it really said, as opposed what others had told her that it said. It was quite an adventure, which brought her to the point of being almost brainwashed (her words) by a woman in a mosque who claimed to give lessons, but was in fact stuffing her mind with even more prohibitions and scares. She was changing

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[16] See Gingras and Laponce 1998 (?)

[17] To limit myself to the subject of language: Dutch is indeed more important to the Flemish, who live in the bi-lingual Belgium, than it is to the Dutch. The official suppression of Dutch in Belgium is a thing of the past, but social groups have long memories for wrongs done to them.

beyond recognition, she says, so her best friend, together with her father, ultimately convinced her that she should stop with these lessons. But she is still searching and thinking, because the issues are so important to her.

Identities: inherited and self-made

Identity is a concept with several ins, and many more outs. It refers not only to our naked selves, but also to our stable extensions in the world: to the people, conditions and things, material and immaterial, that have become 'ours' by physical and mental appropriation. The concept of identity is, in my view, closely related to the concept of concern, as used by Frijda[18] in his theory of emotions. A person's concerns are those things this particular person will get emotional about when they are threatened, lost, saved, or unexpectedly satisfied: they are what we need to feel at peace with the world. Our identities could be viewed as the whole of these concerns, bound together by a person's own narrative (Giddens[19]). In sum: the identities of all humans are rooted in such basic needs, but there is cultural variation in the ways they are fulfilled, much individual variation in inclination, abilities and tastes.

Take the case of a baby born from Japanese parents. This baby will come to look Japanese; that is nature at work. If she is raised in Japan, Japanese will become her basic language, because the neural circuits of a new-born adapt within months to the distinguishing features of the spoken sounds around them - never to be as sensitive again to any other language that comes their way. This is nature and culture fused, producing competent native speakers all over the world.

This baby also has its unique set of parents, with whom it will bond in a basically non-unique way. And it has its own unique personality, which it will need to assert, giving her parents pain but also joy, because this is how people are. The place in which she grew up, its smells and tastes, her house, her school, the skies she watches from her window, the sounds of the people, will always have a special meaning for her, because this, again, is how people are. But ultimately this baby will stand on her own feet, equipped with experience, knowledge (perhaps including other languages), values and ideas which are her own, and which may connect her to a variety other people, in Japan and elsewhere.

The point is that the processes of reproduction, of bonding, and of separating and individuation are universal, but their outcomes can differ greatly, and depend very much on what individuals choose to make of themselves and of the world. By reducing identities to those features that are in fact predetermined by birthplace and parentage we would turn a blind eye to much what makes human identities interesting.

Other aspects of identity
Look at this story, taken from an interview with one of our respondents.

The Russian are becoming terribly nationalistic, he said, as are the Yugoslavians. He does not like this talk about people being Turks, or Kurds, or Armenians. Yugoslavia used to be better. He himself worked at the NDSM, the largest Amsterdam ship

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[18] See Frijda, 1986.

[19] See Giddens, 1991.

building company, when Tito died. "There was a boy who cried, a Yugoslavian Muslim boy. I asked, what are you doing, you, a Muslim, crying over Tito? Yes, he said, because Tito was my father too."

Now what would you conclude or guess about this person's identity? He is Turkish - I more or less told you. He is a Muslim, probably. He also worked at the NDSM, so very likely he was a guestworker. All true. What you would not so easily guess it that the person speaking is the president of a large Amsterdam mosque society. Knowing this, you might ask: what is this man doing, a Turkish mosque official, crying down the importance of religion to people's identity?

The way we view it, the convictions, or values, that he expressed in this story are an important part of his identity. It also is a part that cannot be reduced to either nationality, or ethnicity, or religion. It is a way of looking at people, and what unites them, that no country or group has a monopoly on.

An other example is the story told us by a 22 year old woman who, growing up in Amsterdam, only discovered that some such thing as a 'Kurdish identity' existed, to which she was related by birth. Her parents were from Kurdistan, but in Amsterdam she had never met an other Kurd, at least not knowingly. So she decided to join a Kurdish cultural club. She enjoyed the colours, the music, and the dancing. But she has stopped going, because she did not like the way these people thought and talked about Turks.

"I've grown up among Turkish people, and I still have good friends among them. So I thought, if Turkish people are so bad, why did I never notice? I can't say: you are a Turk, and I am a Kurd. It does not matter if you are Kurdish, Turkish, or Dutch, as long as you are a good person."

So being Kurdish *is* part of her cultural identity, but the friendship with Turkish people is too. And her aversion to the 'cultural' practice of judging individuals on such a priori grounds is part of her own set of values, which connect her to people who think alike, and by which she identifies herself in telling this story.

Satellite television and identity

Satellite television is part of what Giddens calls high modernity, which is changing the relationships between individuals and the institutions they participate in. People who put a dish on their roof in Amsterdam and use it to plug into Turkey whenever they feel like it, thus partake in the 'social reorganisation of time and space' brought about by modern means of communication. In that sense, it is a very modern experience, and people are aware of that.

There is also an awareness that buying and using a dish is a choice you make, which has certain implications, and that pro's must be weighed against cons. This awareness may be expressed defiantly by dish owners, who know that their love for Turkish TV is frowned upon by most Dutch and by several fellow Turks, who are concerned about its effects on linguistic competence , and/or on political agenda's.

"What more do you want from us", cried out an older man (in Turkish) during a discussion about dishes. "I've raised my children to make their way into Dutch society. My first daughter is in University, my second is still in school, working hard.

We 've always told them to work hard, because we want them to succeed this society. But for me it is different. I need Turkey, it is my life."

Young people often explicitly assert that their priorities are Dutch: " I watch Dutch TV more, because this is *my* society, and it is more important that I know what is going on here then that I know what happens in Turkey", says a female student in communications. She is the daughter of a guestworker also, but her parents refuse to buy a dish on the grounds that it may interfere with their children's studies, which come first.

It is not surprising, but nonetheless important to bear in mind, that social ambition, and educational ambition, influences the intensity of watching. A Belgian study on TV use by native Belgian and Turkish students in secondary school confirms this observation. The main determinant of hours spent in front of the TV is scholastic level, not ethnicity[20]. But of course, few children from guestworker backgrounds have made it to the highest educational levels yet[21]. Thus, the daily decisions to watch or not to watch, to resists television's easy appeals or fall for them, may make a real difference; and many Turkish people are aware of this.

There is a general consensus that the needs of the generations differ. The older generation *need* Turkish TV, for emotional reasons, but also - paradoxically - to keep themselves properly informed about the world. You don't pick up much from Dutch TV if you don't understand the language. As girl told us she had first objected to the purchase of a dish, "but then I thought, all right, get yourself one, so you can understand what you watch." It is a comfort to the older women in particular, everyone says, because many live such an isolated life, even more so than the men, who have their mosques, and their coffee-houses. And for older Turkish people, who have left their country as adults, 'a Turkish soap is somehow more real than a Dutch soap', as it was observed by one of them.[22]

For many younger people, especially for those who have lived in Holland from birth on or from a very early age, Dutch soaps seem to be 'more real'. In a survey among pupils of a Amsterdam secondary school the popular Dutch soap Goede Tijden Slechte Tijden (Good Times, Bad Times) came up as the top one favourite of Dutch, Turkish and Moroccan kids alike[23]. But the younger generation *loves* Turkish pop music which, they say, is very good and very interesting.

Not surprisingly, Turkish TV is watched mostly for amusement. Turkish commercial channels provide a lot of this, which is modern also. The names of the preferred channels are Show TV, and Star TV, which give a good indication of what they offer. But *mostly* must not be read as *only*. Beside amusement, people watch news - Turkish as well as Dutch -, political discussion programs and talk shows, very often Turkish ones. Turkish people of all ages watch some Turkish TV. Young people may sometimes watch because the set is on in the living-room, and other times because they like that particular show, or because they want to

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[20] See De Sutter & Saeys, 1996.

[21] But see Crul, 1997

[22] See Staring and Zorlu , 1996.

[23] The survey was performed by two former students, Sebastiaan Berkvens and Mariette Schippers, and is available as an internal report.

know about Turkey, which is - somehow - part of their personal narratives (Giddens[24]). Some may refuse to watch, as one young male respondent does, who told us he will grab the remote control to change channels any time his mother wants to watch Turkish tv in his presence. "I'm living here. What have *I* to do with the affairs of an other country?" But many young people do watch, and think about what they see.

One of the themes in the interviews we did thus far are the differences between Dutch and Turkish society. Several girls say they are struck by the poverty they see on Turkish TV. One girl said that it made her want to go there and help, for instance in a children's home. An other girl said that it makes her realise how lucky she is to live in Amsterdam. Also, people comment on the contrast between the fierceness of Turkish politics, and the placidity of political life in the Netherlands. There is some ambivalence as to the pro's and con's of each. It is interesting to watch all this strife and excitement, but it would not be so nice to be in the middle of it. Dutch news is comparatively dull, but in terms of real life this dullness has its advantages.

An other theme is similarities. "People see that in Turkey girls also go to disco's and have boyfriends', a student comments. She knew this already, because she lived in Istanbul as a teenager. But for an other girl, whose unschooled parents came from a distant rural area, commercial Turkish TV has been a revelation.

"I used to think: these Dutch, they just don't care, everything is allowed, the only thing they care about is drinking. But when you are watching Turkish TV you don't even see the difference. These Turks also think that everything is allowed. You don't see the difference in young people. Older Christians and Muslims - they all think that the younger people are out of control."

There is another difference which may make Turkish TV interesting to young Turkish migrants. In the Netherlands, the ins and out of Turkish and Islamic identities are not part of *informed* TV-discourse. In Turkey they are[25]. Thus, satellite TV may considerably widen immigrants' horizons. Some may prefer to cling to the certainties of the past , but for them, also, it will go with a realisation that such certainties are far from being shared by all Turks, or all Muslims. For the second generation in particular, many of whom have been raised within a limited and publicly uncontested definition of the Islamic or Turkish identity, the experience of watching these very concepts being openly debated and differently filled in night after night on several Turkish channels could be an illuminating one.

Conclusions

Some summarizing conclusions can be drawn from the above. These concern a) aspects of identities we should focus on in the context of citizenship, b) the method by which information is best to be obtained, and c) possible predictions. As to the first point: we should try the avoid the trap of focussing on the obvious. Some components of people's identities are plain impossible to change, and some others will predictably remain important for at least one of two generations to come. And, what is even more important, 'feeling Turkish' does

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[24] See Giddens, 1991

[25] See Oncu, 1995.

not preclude participating in social actions and thought shared by people who do not feel Turkish in the least. We have given some examples, and intend to get more.

As to the second point: people will express such the non-obvious features of their identity much sooner when arguing against some other person's views, or explain what they think is the case, than when we ask them to 'place' themselves in terms of a category, be it ethnic, social, cultural, or political. Thus we'll need well thought out stimulus material to work with.

Concerning the last point: the implicit prediction, made in the last section, that satellite TV may help migrants to adapt to their new world, instead of keeping them captured in the old one, is only a prediction. So we'll end this paper with the standard observation that further research is needed to decide if we are right.

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