Faith-Based Diplomacy of Turkey: Diyanet in Africa

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Abstract

Faith-Based Diplomacy of Turkey: Diyanet in Africa

Bedirhan Kir, Master's Candidate at the Atatürk Institute
for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2022

Prof. Dr. Aydın Babuna, Thesis Advisor

The relationship between religion and foreign policy is a complex and controversial topic that has received attention from various academic theories. However, there are relatively few studies on the role of religion in international relations. The purpose of this research is to examine the implementation of faith-based diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy, specifically focusing on the role of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) in Turkey's Africa policy. The research will analyze how religion has been used by the Turkish state in its relations with Africa, how non-official channels are involved in faith-based diplomacy, and the dynamics that influence the cooperation between NGOs and state institutions in Turkish foreign policy. To do this, the research will analyze literature on concepts such as soft power, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and faith-based diplomacy, as well as the historical background of the relationship between Turkey and Africa. The research will also evaluate the official annual and regional reports on the activities of Diyanet. The research aims to show that the activities of Diyanet can be seen as an example of faith-based diplomacy, and that Turkish faith-based diplomacy has played a critical role in highlighting Turkey's anti-colonial history in Africa, which has helped to increase its attraction to the foreign public. The main argument of this thesis is that Turkish faith-based diplomacy differs from traditional faith-based diplomacy in some ways. While traditional faith-based diplomacy typically involves the state not actively participating in the field, in the Turkish case there has been cooperation between non-official channels and state institutions.

48,500 words

Özet

Türkiye’nin İnanç Temelli Diplomasisi: Afrika’da Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı

Bedirhan Kır, Yüksek Lisans Adayı, 2022
Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü

Prof. Dr. Aydın Babuna, Tez Danışmanı

Din ile dış politika arasındaki ilişki karmaşık ve tartışmalı bir konudur. Bu karmaşık ilişki çeşitli akademik teoriler tarafından incelenmiştir, ancak dinin uluslararası ilişkilerdeki rolü konusunda yeterince çalışma yapılmamıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, özellikle Türkiye'nin Afrika politikasında Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'nın rolünü inceleyerek Türkiye''nin inanç temelli diplomasi uygulamalarını araştırmaktır. Çalışma, Türkiye'nin Afrika ile olan ilişkisinde dinin nasıl kullanıldığını, sivil toplum kuruluşlarının inanç temelli diplomasi uygulamalarına nasıl katıldığını ve Türk dış politikasında sivil toplum ile devlet kurumları arasındaki işbirliğini etkileyen dinamikleri inceleyecektir. Yumuşak güç, kamu diplomasisi, kültürel diplomasi ve inanç temelli diplomasi gibi kavramların yanı sıra Türkiye ve Afrika arasındaki ilişkinin tarihsel arka planının da ele alınacağı çalışmada, ayrıca Diyanet ve diğer kamu diplomasisi kuruluşlarının Afrika'daki faaliyetlerine ilişkin resmi raporlar da değerlendirilecektir. Bu çalışma, Diyanet'in faaliyetlerinin inanç temelli diplomasi örneği olarak görülebileceğini ve Türkiye'nin Afrika'daki sömürgecilik karşıtı tarihine dikkat çeken inanç temelli diplomasi sayesinde sahada daha aktif rol alabildiğini söylemektedir. Bu tezde, Türkiye'nin inanç temelli diplomasisinin geleneksel inanç temelli diplomasi ile farklılıklar gösterdiği iddia edilmektedir. Geleneksel inanç temelli diplomasi genellikle sivil toplum kuruluşlarının faaliyetleri ile şekillenirken, Türk dış politikasında inanç temelli diplomasi bağlamında kamu kurumları ve sivil toplum kuruluşları arasındaki işbirliği Türkiye'yi diğer örneklerden farklı bir konuma koymaktadır.

48,500 kelime



To my precious wife

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Glossary of Non-English Terms

Diyanet	Presidency of Religious Affairs
Evkaf	Islamic Foundation
Imam	Islamic Religious Leader
Maarif	Education
Şer'iye	Sharia
Tanzimat	Reformation Process
Ulema	Islamic Scholars

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AA	Anadolu Agency
AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Authority
AKP	Justice and Development Party
AU	African Union
BBC	British Radio Television
CNN	Cable News Network
FETÖ	Fethullahist Terror Organization
IHH	Humanitarian Relief Foundation
IRCICA	Research Center For Islamic History, Art and Culture
SETA	Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research
TDK	Turkish Language Association
TDV	Turkey Diyanet Foundation
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
THY	Turkish Airlines
TRT	Turkish Radio Television
TOBB	The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchange of Turkey
TTK	Turkish Historical Society
YÖK	Board for Higher Education
YTB	Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities

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1

Introduction

The relationship between religion and foreign policy has long been a contentious issue, with various theories such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism attempting to explain its role. However, the role of religion in international relations has not been widely debated in academic circles. As the role of religion in international relations has increased, there have been numerous developments in the literature and changing paradigms in international relations have highlighted the need for further research on this topic. In this paper, I will examine the implementation of faith-based diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy and argue that it differs from traditional understandings in certain aspects. While in traditional faith-based diplomacy the state does not actively intervene in the field; in the Turkish case, there has been a cooperation between non-official channels and state institutions.

To begin with, I will analyze the role of the Diyanet (Presidency of Religious Affairs) in Turkey's Africa policy in order to demonstrate the non-traditional characteristics of Turkish faith-based diplomacy. I will also assess the Turkish foreign policy in Africa in terms of soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy, with a focus on how faith-

based diplomacy operates in the context of the activities of the Diyanet in Africa. Through this research, I aim to answer the following questions: How has religion been utilized by the Turkish state in Turkish-African relations? How are non-official channels deployed by the state in the context of faith-based diplomacy? What are the dynamics that influence the cooperation between NGOs and state institutions in Turkish foreign policy?

To address these questions, I will review the literature on the concepts of soft power, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and faith-based diplomacy. Additionally, I will examine the historical background of the relationship between Turkey and Africa, from the past to the present. Using this theoretical and historical context as a foundation, I will analyze the specific activities of the Diyanet and other Turkish public diplomacy institutions in Africa by examining official annual and regional reports.

This research aims to demonstrate that the activities of the Diyanet can be considered an example of faith-based diplomacy and can be viewed within the context of soft power as an institution of public diplomacy in international relations. A religion-based policy is crucial to the development of Turkey's relations with Africa because religion is used as a reference to common history and culture and to influence the foreign public. Additionally, this research aims to show that Turkish faith-based diplomacy plays a critical role in leveraging Turkey's anti-colonial history in Africa to increase its attractiveness to the foreign public. Religious discourses and implications in foreign policy refer to Turkey's anti-colonial history in Africa to enhance its appeal and strengthen its position in fields such as economic agreements and diplomatic relations. Therefore, Turkish faith-based diplomacy supports this anti-colonial discourse by highlighting Turkey's "innocent" history in Africa, which is also central to Islamic understanding.

§ 1.1 Methodology

In this research, the role of religion in foreign policy was examined with a focus on Turkey, using primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included the annual activity reports of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation from 2015 to 2021, which provided official statistics and information about the activities of the Diyanet in Africa. These reports were particularly helpful in understanding the numbers of students who were awarded scholarships from different countries and the numbers of water wells built in Africa. The period from 2011 to 2021 is important in evaluating the activities of the Diyanet in Africa because it marks the beginning of Turkey's Somalia policy and the increased importance of the relationship between Turkey and Africa. In addition to the annual and regional reports published by the Turkey Diyanet Foundation between 2015 and 2021, which described the activities, financial capabilities, and vision of the Diyanet in different regions, the use of khutbahs (Friday sermons) was also examined as a way to understand the position of the Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy. Historically, khutbahs have had symbolic significance, representing the sovereignty, independence, and power of political leaders. In Turkey, khutbahs are controlled by the Diyanet and often include a nationalist religious discourse.

In addition to the activity reports of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, the activity reports of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) and non-governmental organizations were also used as primary sources in this study to examine the shift towards religious diplomacy in foreign policy. Other primary sources included newspaper archives and news agencies such as Anadolu Agency and Hürriyet, as well as the official websites of the Diyanet, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, TİKA, YTB, Yunus Emre Institute, Turkish Airlines, and the African Union. In this study, graphs and tables were created using the statistics from the official reports to show the development of the

Diyanet's activities in Africa over the years. As a secondary source, academic literature on the position of the Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy was also consulted. Some existing studies on the activities of the Diyanet in the Balkans and Europe, such as Germany and the Netherlands, provided insight into the use of soft power in these regions.

The position of the Diyanet in Africa was chosen as a case study in this research in order to shed light on the complex relationship between religion and foreign policy. There are several reasons for this choice. Firstly, Africa is a key region in Turkish foreign policy, and the activities of the Diyanet in Africa offer insight into Turkey's approach to faith-based diplomacy in foreign policy. Additionally, Turkey seeks to establish an anti-colonial narrative in Africa through the use of religious symbols and activities, as a way to highlight its shared history and values with the African people. This approach is based on the idea that Islam is opposed to colonialism and slavery, and therefore there is potential to use faith-based diplomacy to build common heritage with African countries. In this context, the faith-based diplomacy of Turkey in Africa provides opportunities to establish a shared history with the African people and to counter Western domination in the continent, such as French imperialism.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the NGOs operating in Africa, I have devised a plan to interview 9 officials from these organizations. My research will focus on the areas of humanitarian aid, educational programs, construction of religious buildings and hospitals, and faith-based diplomacy activities. By examining various fields, I hope to gain insight into the role of NGOs in Africa and how they collaborate and face challenges when working with government institutions.

I carried out semi-structured interviews with 9 employees of various NGOs. I made an effort to primarily interview the founders of these organizations, but also included African experts from the NGOs in my research. The semi-structural interviews were carried out with

employees of NGOs that have direct activities in Africa, including Diyanet, Turkish Diyanet Foundation, Maarif Foundation, IHH, Hudayi Foundation, Beşir Association, and Adam-Der. These interviews took place between November 2022 and January 2023, with the first two interviews conducted in person and the remaining interviews conducted online using Zoom video calls and WhatsApp calls. The interviews lasted approximately one and a half hours each in the online platforms and phone calls. All participants were over 18 years of age and their ages ranged from 22 to 60. To protect the privacy of the participants and take into account their potentially sensitive positions in Turkey, the names of the participants and their specific NGOs were not included in my research.

Due to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, I conducted certain interviews with the participants online. Although this method proved to be efficient in terms of scheduling, some of the interviews were hindered by the poor internet connection of some participants. In terms of the research, I primarily focused on NGOs that publish official annual reports and have direct contact with state institutions in Africa. Additionally, I specifically targeted local NGOs that operate only in specific regions of Africa such as Nigeria and Kenya. Furthermore, I also utilized the snowball technique in the interviews as some NGO employees directed me to other NGOs that also have significant activities in Africa.

I formulated three sets of questions for the interviews, each set focusing on a different aspect of the research. The first set of questions aimed to gain an understanding of the types of activities that the NGOs are engaged in. I used the activity reports of these NGOs to evaluate their current positions and asked questions to understand how they analyze their activities in Africa. The second set of questions focused on the relationship between the NGOs and state institutions in foreign policy. I specifically asked questions about their perceptions of cooperation with state institutions in Africa. Lastly, the third set of questions aimed to

understand the limitations and capacities of this type of cooperation in the field. I focused on the potential risks of this relationship for the NGOs, and asked questions about the problematic aspects and limitations of cooperation between official and non-official channels in Africa.

§ 1.2 The Scope of the Study

This thesis focuses specifically on the activities of the Diyanet in Africa, rather than the overall role of Turkish public diplomacy institutions in foreign policy. This is because the activities of the Diyanet in Africa have not been thoroughly analyzed in academic literature and provide a valuable case study for understanding faith-based diplomacy in Turkey's foreign policy. While the activities of other institutions such as TİKA and YTB may be mentioned briefly, the main focus is on the Diyanet and its role in Turkey's foreign policy in Africa.

Africa is a region where Turkish public diplomacy is particularly active and effective. It is important to note that Africa is a diverse continent with a range of cultural, religious, and political differences that vary from region to region. However, the aim of this study is to examine Turkey's African policy by analyzing the activities of the Diyanet and to understand the role of faith-based diplomacy in this context. Therefore, it is not necessary to focus on the differences between regions in Africa. While there is significant cultural, ethnic, and social diversity within the continent, the activities of the Diyanet do not vary significantly from region to region. Within the scope of this study, the activities of the Diyanet and Turkish non-governmental organizations in Somalia and Nigeria were specifically examined. This study therefore has a geographical limitation, focusing on these two countries in Africa.

According to official reports, the Diyanet has the same policies and activities across Africa, with a focus on distributing the Qur'an in Muslim countries, organizing aid projects during Eid Al-Adha and Ramadan,

providing educational activities, building water wells, and holding international meetings on economic, political, and social collaborations. The main difference in the Diyanet's activities across the continent is in terms of funding, with more resources being directed towards countries that are central to Turkish foreign policy, such as Somalia. In countries with smaller Muslim populations, such as Nigeria, the activities of the Diyanet are more limited. This is demonstrated in the case of Turkey's Nigeria policy, which is informed by faith-based diplomacy but has a more limited scope compared to Somalia due to the smaller size of the Muslim population and financial development in Nigeria.

In terms of its chronological scope, this thesis focuses on the activities of the Diyanet during the Justice and Development Party (JDP) era in Turkey. However, the work also includes information about the historical background of the relationship between Turkey and Africa, beginning with the Ottoman era and continuing to the present day. In certain chapters, it may be necessary to provide historical context in order to give a more comprehensive understanding of the events being discussed.

§ 1.3 Academic Contribution of the Study

From an academic perspective, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature on Turkish foreign policy in Africa. It has an interdisciplinary structure that primarily examines the diplomatic history of the relationship between Turkey and Africa. While there are a number of studies on Turkish public diplomacy institutions such as TİKA, Yunus Emre Institute, and YTB, only a few studies have focused on the regional policies of the Diyanet in Africa. Most existing research on the Diyanet examines its historical development and its impact on the Balkans and European countries with Turkish diaspora communities, such as Germany and the Netherlands. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by focusing specifically on the activities of the Diyanet in Africa and its role in Turkish foreign policy.

There is a lack of substantial literature on the activities of the Diyanet in Africa, both in terms of quality and quantity. In order to address this gap in the literature, this study relies heavily on short academic articles and official annual and regional reports from the Diyanet. However, even these sources can be limited in their coverage of the Diyanet's activities in Africa. Additionally, when speaking with Diyanet officials, it was revealed that there has been little research on the short- and long-term consequences of the Diyanet's African policies on foreign public opinion. While the activities of the Diyanet are often evaluated in the context of soft power and public diplomacy, there is a lack of comprehensive reports or academic studies on how these activities affect the opinions of foreign publics. This thesis aims to provide a new perspective on the activities of the Diyanet and Turkish faith-based diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy by focusing specifically on their role in Africa.

To avoid duplicating existing research and provide new insights on Turkish foreign policy, this study aims to conduct a thorough analysis of Turkey's faith-based foreign policies in Africa. To help readers better understand the subject, the research includes a number of graphs and tables in almost all chapters to illustrate the transformation and focus of the Diyanet's activities. In addition, the comparison between Turkey and other states in Africa such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, France and Italy in the context of faith-based diplomacy has also contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the research. This comparison allows for a better understanding of the similarities and differences between the two countries' approaches to faith-based diplomacy in Africa.

This thesis aims to address a significant gap in the literature on the activities of the Diyanet in Africa and the concept of faith-based diplomacy. However, due to the limited sources available on this topic, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive analysis. This study therefore relies on official reports from the Diyanet, which may not provide a

complete picture of the impact and potential risks of faith-based diplomacy in the region. Extensive fieldwork would be necessary to fully assess the impact of the Diyanet's activities and identify any potential risks associated with the implementation of faith-based diplomacy in Africa. Despite these limitations, it is hoped that this study will stimulate further research on the topic and contribute to a better understanding of the role of the Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy in Africa. The research for this thesis was based on first-hand sources, annual reports, news reporting, and limited academic literature in both English and Turkish.

In the context of faith-based diplomacy, which involves the integration of religious dynamics with international peacemaking, it is typically the role of non-governmental organizations to carry out this type of diplomacy. However, in the case of Turkey, the state institution of the Diyanet has also been used as an official channel for faith-based diplomacy in Africa. This research therefore aims to examine the role and position of NGOs in Turkish foreign policy, as well as the non-traditional approach taken by Turkey in terms of combining both official state institutions (Track I) and unofficial actors (Track II) in its faith-based diplomacy efforts in Africa. This is in contrast to other cases, such as Mozambique and Nigeria, where states tend to take a more behind-the-scenes approach to faith-based diplomacy.

§ 1.4 Structure of the Chapters

In the first chapter of the thesis, the methodology, geographical and time scope of the study were outlined. The thesis is focused on the role of religion in foreign policy, specifically examining the activities of the Diyanet and other Turkish public diplomacy institutions in Africa. The time scope of the study covers the period from the Ottoman era to the present, with a particular focus on the activities of the Diyanet during the Justice and Development Party (JDP) era. The geographical scope of the study is limited to Africa, with a focus on the activities of the Diyanet in Somalia and Nigeria. The first chapter also discussed the academic

contributions of the thesis, highlighting the lack of comprehensive studies on the faith-based diplomacy of Turkey in Africa and the need for further research on the subject.

In the second chapter of this thesis, the theoretical background for the study will be outlined. This will include an exploration of the concept of soft power in international relations literature, as well as an examination of the concept of public diplomacy and its historical development. The chapter will also discuss the concept of cultural diplomacy and how student exchange programs can be used as a tool for cultural diplomacy. Additionally, the chapter will examine the various public and cultural diplomacy institutions of Turkey, such as TİKA, Turkish Airlines, YTB, and the Yunus Emre Institute. This will provide a foundation for understanding the role of these institutions in Turkish foreign policy and their use of faith-based diplomacy in Africa. The second chapter will also discuss the role of religion in foreign policy, with a focus on the position of the Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy. This will set the stage for the subsequent chapters, which will delve into the specifics of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy efforts in Africa.

In the second chapter of the thesis, the concept of faith-based diplomacy is examined in detail. This includes a literature review of existing studies on faith-based diplomacy and an examination of examples of faith-based diplomacy in different parts of the world. The chapter also includes a comparison of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy efforts in Africa with those of another Muslim-majority country, Iran. This comparison is based on official reports and statistics from Iranian institutions, and aims to highlight the differences between the two countries in their approaches to faith-based diplomacy in Africa. By examining the concept of faith-based diplomacy and its implementation in different parts of the world, this chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the subject and its significance in international relations.

In the third chapter, I will delve into the history of the relationship between Turkey and African countries. Starting with the Ottoman Empire period, I will discuss the developments in the relationship during the early republican era, including the Bandung Conference and the independence of African countries during World War II. I will then focus on the significant turning point in the relationship with the implementation of Turkey's African Initiative Policy in 1998. Additionally, I will examine the relationship between Turkey and the African Union, which has significant political, economic, and social implications for the future of the relationship. I will also assess the economic relations between Turkey and African countries, including a comparison of trade volume from 2007 to 2021 to demonstrate the increasing interest of Turkey in Africa. Finally, I will examine the impact of the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETO) on Turkey's African policy and the changes in Turkey's policy following the organization's attempted coup in 2016.

In the fourth chapter, the evolution of Diyanet from its early establishment to the present will be examined. The JDP period will be given particular attention. The establishment of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation and DITIB will also be discussed in this chapter. Additionally, the activities of Diyanet in foreign countries under the General Directorate of Foreign Relations will be explored. The organizational structure of Diyanet will also be analyzed, with a focus on the changes that occurred in 2010. These structural changes significantly increased the power and capacity of Diyanet, but may have also caused issues with the stability and sustainability of Diyanet's policies in various regions. In the fourth chapter, I will examine Diyanet's scholarship programs and humanitarian aid projects in Africa. This includes analyzing official statistics on the number of students participating in education and scholarship programs with the help of graphs. I will also discuss Diyanet's aid and water well projects in terms of humanitarian aid.

Additionally, I will explore Diyanet's political role in organizing international meetings and summits in this chapter.

In the fifth chapter, I will examine the impact and consequences of Turkish foreign policy in Somalia, with a particular focus on the country's role in Turkey's African policy following the 2011 humanitarian crisis. In addition to Somalia, I will also delve into Turkey's policies in Nigeria, which has a different demographic, religious, and social structure. This comparison between the two countries will provide a more comprehensive perspective on the main arguments of the thesis. I will also analyze the role of Turkish NGOs, which have humanitarian aid programs in Africa, and explore the non-traditional characteristics of Turkish faith-based diplomacy, which differs significantly from other examples of faith-based diplomacy implementation. While literature often focuses on Track II diplomacy, which uses unofficial channels in foreign policy, the Turkish case involves cooperation between official and unofficial channels. While Turkish NGOs seek to increase their focus on Africa through religious discourse and implications, state institutions, particularly Diyanet, play a prominent role in Africa in the context of faith-based diplomacy. In this chapter, I will also discuss the presence of FETÖ and its activities in Africa as a faith-based organization. The FETÖ example will support the arguments of the thesis regarding the increasing role of official channels in Turkish faith-based diplomacy. Finally, I will evaluate the limitations and potential of faith-based diplomacy, considering Diyanet's activities in Africa and its position in Turkish foreign policy, and explore the potential long-term outcomes and risks of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy agenda.

In the final chapter of the thesis, the main findings of the study will be summarized and discussed. This will include an analysis of the role and impact of Diyanet in Turkish faith-based diplomacy in Africa, as well as an evaluation of the limitations and potential outcomes of using this approach in international relations. Additionally, the potential risks and long-term impacts of Turkish foreign policy in Africa will be

examined. The conclusion chapter will also consider the broader implications of the study for the field of international relations and for future research on faith-based diplomacy.

2

Theoretical Background

§ 2.1 Soft Power

Power is a central concept in international relations theories. Political scientists and theorists analyze international issues by examining various explanations of power in the global arena. According to Samuel Huntington, power is the ability of one person or group to influence the actions of another person or group. He also argues that the power of a state can be gauged by assessing the resources it has available to use against other states.[1] Huntington's definition highlights the concept of hard power, which refers to a state's capacity to use military and economic coercion to force other states to comply in international relations. Historically, the economic and military power of states has been key indicators of their power. However, with the end of the Cold War, the impact of globalization and digitization on all aspects of life has led to the recognition that this narrow understanding of power is insufficient to explain international relations, and the importance of soft power has grown.[2]

1 Samuel P. Huntigton, *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), p. 83, 84.

2 Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Affairs, 2004, p. 30.

States are increasingly using non-coercive means to influence other states in the international arena, leading to the increased use of the concept of soft power in modern international relations. The term soft power was first introduced in the 1990s by political scientist Joseph Nye in his works "Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power" and "The Means to Success in World Politics."[3] According to Nye, soft power represents the power of attraction contrary to hard power in foreign policy. Nye claims that a state can obtain certain outcomes by using the power of attraction instead of military and economic coercion.[4] In other words, soft power is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments". Therefore, states need to persuade the other parties with rational and influential policies. Thus, the credibility of a state is considered to be one of the most critical elements of soft power.[5]

The strength of a country's soft power can be measured by the extent to which other countries accept its policies as legitimate. Soft power is enhanced by a country's culture, education, arts, film, literature, architecture, NGOs, tourism, and innovation. The combination of these factors determines a country's capacity for soft power. Additionally, the political system of a country can also be a factor in its soft power capacity. If a country has a political system that prioritizes human rights, democracy, and freedoms, it can increase its soft power by promoting a special foreign policy agenda that reflects these values..[6]

According to Nye, after the 9/11 attacks, the United States has lost its credibility and attractiveness because of the changing paradigm in its

3 Joseph Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); Nye, *Soft Power,* 19, 20.

4 Ibid, 31.

5 İbrahim Kalın, *"Soft Power and Public Diplomacy in Turkey",* (Perception, 2011), page 8.

6 Ibid, 9.

foreign policy[7]. While the United States achieved the power of credibility almost all around the world during the Cold War era, the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan damaged the perception of the United States due to its use of military power. Moreover, anti-Americanism has become a phenomenon in different parts of the world. The relationship between hard power and soft power is not strictly linked because just as the existence of hard power does not guarantee soft power, the absence of hard power is not an obstacle for the existence of soft power.[8]

The concept of soft power has been criticized for lacking a comprehensive theoretical framework. Some scholars have also linked the term soft power with the concept of "Cultural Hegemony" of Antonio Gramsci.[9] Moreover, writings of Nye were also criticized for constructing his theory based on the American foreign policy experience.[10] It has also been criticized by some authors for focusing on the conceptualization process of soft power which ignores the production step of it.[11] Additionally, many neorealist political scientists are against the separation between hard and soft power instruments in foreign policy by prioritizing the military and economic power of a state.[12]

While Nye emphasizes the effects of soft power, he also describes the potential limits of it by saying "if a foreigner drinks Coca-Cola doesn't

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7 For Joseph Nye and Richard Armitage's smart power project, Accessed on June 15, 2022 available at http://www.csis.org/ smart power.

8 İbrahim Kalın, *Soft Power*, 10.

9 Antonio Gramsci, *Selection from the Prison Notebooks*, (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971): 80. quoted in Umut Yukaruç, "*A Critical Approach to Soft Power*", Journal of Bitlis Eren University, Vol. 6, No. 2. (December, 2017), p. 497.

10 Brian Hocking, *"Rethinking the 'New' Public Diplomacy" in The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations,* ed. Jan Melissen, (New York: Palgrave Macmil-lan, 2005), p. 33-35.

11 Pınar Bilgin & Berivan Eliş*, "Hard Power, Soft Power: Toward a More Realistic Power Analysis"*, (Insight Turkey, 2008), p 12.

12 Robert O. Keohane (ed)., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 1-27.

mean that the US has power over him."[13] On the other hand, J.B. Mattern claims that soft power is not as soft as thought and is the continuation of hard power.[14] To respond to the critiques of soft power, Nye has developed a new concept of smart power which refers to using hard and soft power instruments within the same context.[15] The smart power approach allows policymakers to pragmatically seek opportunities for more action at the intersections of "idealism and realism," in a way that consolidates the power of the state.[16]

International relations theories don't have a consensus on the implication and scope of soft power in foreign policy. According to the neoliberal approach, the concept of soft power entails culture, political values and its policy.[17] According to neoliberalism, religion may fundamentally be an element of soft power in channeling various ideologies in foreign policy. Although some terrorist groups use religion for discursive persuasion, it is possible to use religion as a soft power instrument. Most Middle Eastern and North African countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Israel, utilize religion for the dominance of their own religious values.[18] The role of religion in foreign policy does not originate from the classical elements of hard power. However, it merits a definition both inside and outside of soft power. Perception of religious apparatuses can be considered in the context of the historical, cultural and economic relations between states.[19]

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13 Joseph S. Nye, *"Think Again: Soft Power",* Foreign Policy, February 23, 2006, Accessed on June 15, 2022, doi: https://foreignpolicy.com/2006/02/23/think-again-soft-power/

14 Janice Bially Mattern, "*Why soft power isn't so soft: representational force and the sociolinguistic construction of attraction in World politics",* (Milennium, 2005), p. 583-612.

15 Joseph S. Nye, *"Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power",* Foreign Affairs Vol. 88, No. 4, (July/August 2009), p. 160-163.

16 Suzanne Nossel, "*Smart Power",* (Foreign Affairs, 2004), p.138.

17 Nye, *Soft Power*, 138.

18 Ahmet Erdi Öztürk, *"Islam and foreign policy: Turkey's ambivalent religious soft power in the authoritarian turn",* (Religions, 2021), p.3.

19 Ibid, 7.

For neoliberalists, soft power has been an option that may be used both in the absence and presence of hard power. Hence, states can have a soft power strategy in foreign policy while not using their military and economic power. Moreover, certain religious actors and organizations can affect the political elites' decisions in foreign policy. In the neoliberal understanding, states can use religion as a tool for the legitimation of the regime. At the international level, religious identities have a critical role in cooperation with other actors in the neoliberal explanation.[20]

§ 2.2 Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is a modern diplomatic approach that uses public-oriented and civil society-based soft power tools and methods. In other words, public diplomacy is a way to implement soft power.[21] The concept of public diplomacy is still evolving and can be understood in various ways. States can use various mechanisms to practice public diplomacy in their foreign policies. For example, German public diplomacy is carried out by the Goethe Institute, which also promotes cultural diplomacy, while Russian public diplomacy relies on the media and information sector, and American public diplomacy focuses on digital diplomacy.[22]

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20 Nukhet Sandal & Jonathan Fox, *"Religion in International Relations Theory",* (Routlage, 2013), p.169.

21 Jan Melissen, *"The new public diplomacy."* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Peter Krause and Stephen Van Evera, *"Public Diplomacy: Ideas for the War of Ideas,"* Discussion Paper 09-10, (Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, 2009), p.1-31.

22 Oliver Zöllner, *"German Public Diplomacy: The Dialogue of Culture"*, Routlage Handbook of Public Diplomacy, ed. Nanacy Snow, Philip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 262; Muharrem Ekşi, "*Rusya'nın Kamu Diplomasisi: Dış Politika Davranışlarıyla Çelişme Paradoksu,"* Karadeniz Araştırmaları 45 (Spring 2015): 43-56, p.46; Wilson Dizdard Jr., "*Digital Diplomacy: US Foreign Policy in the Information Age"* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2001), p.2.

After the end of the Cold War, the emergence and increasing importance of public diplomacy has been possible with the emergence of two critical facts in global politics: (1) globalization and (2) information technologies.[23] According to the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, information technologies have revealed a new form of society called the information society.[24] Therefore, states started to use information technologies as a tool in their foreign policies. The changing paradigm has also affected practices of state diplomacy in international relations. According to David Bollier, internet technologies have changed international politics and diplomacy into netpolitik.[25] "Netpolitik is a new style of diplomacy that seeks to exploit the powerful capabilities of the Internet to shape politics, culture, values, and personal identity. But unlike Realpolitik—which could advance a nation's political interests through amoral coercion—Netpolitik traffics in 'softer' issues such as moral legitimacy, cultural identity, societal values, and public perception"[26]

While in traditional diplomacy, international actors try to engage other international actors, in public diplomacy actors attempt to engage with a foreign public.[27] In other words, public diplomacy is an attempt of a state to communicate with a foreign nation's culture, history, policies

23 Muharrem Ekşi, *"Kamu Diplomasisi", Dönüşen Diplomasi ve Türkiye* (Küre Yayınları, 2020), p. 291.

24 Manuel Castells, "*Enformasyon Çağı: Ağ Toplumunun Yükselişi: Kimliğin Gücü*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2008), p.23.

25 David Bollier, *"Rise of Netpolitik: How the Internet Is Changing International Politics and Diplomacy"* (Washington, D.C.: A Report of the Eleventh Annual, Aspen Institute, 2003) p.2.

26 Ibid, 3.

27 Nicholas Cull, *"Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past"(*Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009), p. 12.

and national goals.[28] Public diplomacy was also considered a propaganda tool during the post-Cold War period by the states.[29]

The connection between soft power and public diplomacy is also a controversial topic among political scientists. Therefore, the success of a state's public diplomacy has often been measured through soft power opinion polls.[30] According to Nye, public diplomacy can be considered a significant element of "smart power" which includes hard and soft power.[31] For Nye, public diplomacy uses soft power instruments such as student exchange programs, and cultural activities in foreign policy.[32] The implications of soft power such as agenda setting, attraction and persuasion are implemented through public diplomacy.[33] The main purpose of public diplomacy is to gain public appeal.[34]

Increasing the reputation of states by doing image management in international relations is one of the methods of public diplomacy. Nation branding is used in order to manage the image and perception of the foreign public for public policy aims.[35] Another method of public diplomacy is the method of agenda setting.[36] Thanks to the agenda

28 Hans Tuch, *"Communicating with the World: US Public Diplomacy Overseas",* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), p. 3-12.

29 Mark Leonard, Catherine Stead and Conrad Smewing, *Public Diplomacy* (London: Foreign Policy Center, 2002), p. 6, 7.

30 Eytan Gilboa, *"Searching for a theory of public diplomacy."* The annals of the American academy of political and social science 616.1 (2008), p. 55-77

31 Joseph Nye, "*Public diplomacy and soft power.*" The annals of the American academy of political and social science 616.1 (2008), p.94-109.

32 Joseph Nye, *"The Future of Power*" (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), p.242.

33 Muharrem Ekşi, "*Kamu Diplomasisi",* p. 297.

34 Craig Hayden, *"The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts"* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2012), p.2.

35 Gyorgy Szondi, *"Public Diplomacy and Nationa Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences, Discussion Paper in Diplomacy* (Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2008), p.6.

36 Maxwell E. McCombs & Donald L. Shaw, "*The Agenda-setting Function of Mass Media,*" The Public Opinion Quarterly 36(2) (Summer 1972), p. 176-187.

setting method, states can block or promote news about them in international media in order to increase or to protect their reputation. According to Nicholas Cull, there are five important implications in public diplomacy: listening to the foreign audience, mobilizing the consent of the foreign audience, cultural diplomacy, student exchange and scholarship programs and international broadcasting.[37] Activities of public diplomacy can be implemented within two important frameworks: "state-to-public", and "public to public". The first one focuses on the official explanation of a state's action to a foreign public. On the other hand, the second framework aims to use civil elements in foreign policy.[38]

2.2.1 *Public Diplomacy in Turkish Foreign Policy*

While many states have considered public diplomacy in their foreign policies for some time, Turkey has particularly emphasized public diplomacy at the institutional level in the early 21st century. With the rise of the Justice and Development Party (JDP), Turkish foreign policy has pursued more ambitious goals in the regional and global sphere, leading to the need for different tools of public diplomacy.

While Turkey follows the developments of public diplomacy approaches in western countries, its public diplomacy institutions are still in the process of structural development.[39] Firstly, Turkey established TİKA in 1992 in the context of public diplomacy. Moreover, Yunus Emre Institute, YTB, TRT and Anadolu Agency have also had important roles in Turkish public diplomacy. The Office of Public Diplomacy within the Prime Ministry was launched in 2010.[40] According to the decree, the main aim of the office is declared as:

37 Cull, *Public Diplomacy*, 24.

38 Melissen, *The New Public Diplomacy*, 3-25.

39 Muharrem Ekşi, *Kamu Diplomasisi,* 303.

40 Decree 27478, Offical Gazette.

> *"In order for us to achieve success in explaining Turkey's position in the face of accusations and problems our country has long endured in the international arena, it is necessary to use public diplomacy tools and methods to inform accurately the international community. As noted in the decree, certain public institutions and foundations have been assigned tasks to provide information about Turkey abroad in such a way as to increase Turkey's respectability in the international community. However, in today's world, where national and regional problems can easily take on a global dimension, more efficient coordination, cooperation, and decision-making mechanism is necessary among public policy institutions in regard to developments in the information and communication technologies, opportunities and threats emerging in the international arena. In light of these observations, the foundation of an Office of Public Diplomacy has been decided upon under the supervision of a senior advisor to the Prime Minister, charged with conducting public diplomacy activities and securing cooperation and coordination between public institutions and non-governmental organizations."*[41]

According to the official information on the website, with these aims of the Office of Public Diplomacy, one of the most important target groups is the young generations of foreign countries in the context of public diplomacy. Education and scholarship programs were one of the

41 For full text of the decree and more information about Institute of Public Diplomacy activities, visit the official website of the Office of Public Diplomacy, Accessed on June 15, 2022 http://kdk.gov.tr/

main projects of the office for foreign publics. Therefore, African and Middle Eastern students seem to be given priority in the activities of the office.[42]

In today's global international relations, conventional and digital media have a critical position in influencing people's understanding and perceptions of a country. While many states established or sponsored their media companies such as CNN, BBC, Russia Today, CCTV, DW and Al Jazeera, Turkey has been relatively late in establishing a global media platform to promote its values and support its national interests.

According to Hans Tuch, public diplomacy is basically a communication activity.[43] With the changing of the paradigm in foreign policy to public diplomacy, the need for communication platforms have increased. Therefore, TRT Avaz was reorganized in order to address the Turkic republics in 2009. Moreover, TRT World was established in 2009 to promote Turkish national interests and culture. TRT Kürdi/Şeş was also established in 2009 in order to make connections with Kurdish-speaking people not only in Turkey but also in the broader Middle East region. TRT el-Arabiya was founded in 2010 to focus on the Middle Eastern and Northern African countries. Lastly, TRT Balkan started broadcasting in 2022 to establish ties with the region and promote Turkish culture in order to create a common history.[44]

Humanitarian aid is another form of public diplomacy for states. Humanitarianism was considered as a branch of religion until the end of the 19th century and, humanitarian activities were dominated by the

42 According to the participants nationalities, Tunusian, Libyan, Egyptian, Palestinian, Yemenian and Nigerian students make up majortiy. American, Polish and Balkan student participated only one activity, Accessed on June 15, 2022 http://kdk.gov.tr/

43 Tuch, *Communicating with the World*, 6.

44 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/trt-balkan-dijital-haber-platformu-yayina-basladi/2614882

church and the state.[45] However, the definition and implication of humanitarian aid has changed significantly. Today, most of the humanitarian aid programs are run by the non-governmental organizations in the world.[46] In accordance with the global trend in humanitarian aid, the role and impact of NGOs in Turkish foreign policy has also increased. Despite the increasing role of NGOs in humanitarian aid, Turkish government, official and semi-official institutions have also continued to conduct humanitarian aid missions in different regions. In fact, humanitarian aid has become a component of Turkish foreign policy in international relations. The Syrian Civil War also had a great impact on the increasing effort of humanitarian aid in Turkish foreign policy.

Table 2.1:International humanitarian assistance: largest donors

Ranking	Country	Million Dollars
1	The United States	9,768
2	Turkey	5,587
3	Germany	3,166
4	The United Kingdom	1,597
5	Japan	1,211
6	Sweden	954
7	Canada	752
8	United Arab Emirates	746

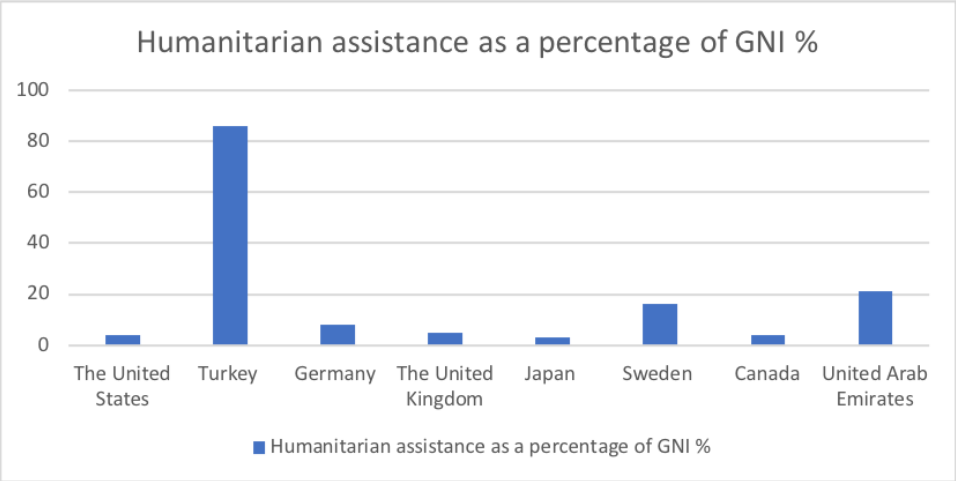
Source: "Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2022"[47]

45 Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 59.

46 Tim Büthe, Solomon Major, and André de Mello e Souza, "*The Politics of Private Foreign Aid: Humanitarian Principles, Economic Development Objectives, and Organizational Interests in NGO Private Aid Allocation,*" (International Organization, Vol. 66, No. 4, 2012), p. 571–607.

47 For detailed information, visit the official page of Development Initiatives, Accessed on June 15, 2022https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2022/donors-of-humanitarian-and-wider-crisis-financing/#43290279

Table 1.2 :Humanitarian assistance as a percentage of GNI %



Source: "Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2022"[48]

According to Global Humanitarian Overview 2022, while Turkey is the second largest donor in the global level, it has the highest proportion of gross national income (GNI) committed to humanitarian assistance. The increasing role of humanitarian aid in Turkish foreign policy can be observed in African countries, especially in Somalia. Turkey aimed to participate in the state-building and development process in Somalia through humanitarian aid programs.[49] Unlike other countries, Turkey did not wait for stability in the country to invest in Somalia. In the words of a Somali, "Turkey is the only country that invests in order to stabilize Somalia."[50]

48 For detailed information, visit the official page of Development Initiatives, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2022/donors-of-humanitarian-and-wider-crisis-financing/#43290279

49 Fuat Keyman, and Onur Sazak, *Turkey as a Humanitarian State*, 9-11.

50 Cemalettin Haşimi, *"Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy and development cooperation." (*Insight Turkey 16.1, 2014), p.128.

2.2.1.1 Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA)

After the end of the Cold War many new nation states emerged within the borders of the Soviet Socialist Republics. There was a shared cultural and historical tie between the newly emerged Turkic Republics and Turkey. *"In this context, Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA) was established in 1992 to develop strong collaborative ties especially in the Turkic Republics, and in the natural geography of our country, where we are historically and culturally attached."*[51]

In the beginning, TİKA focused on Central Asia's Turkic Republics. During this era, state elites showed a good amount of effort to establish the first TİKA office in Kyrgyzstan in 1993. While TİKA was linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992, it was entrusted to the Prime Ministry with a Presidential Order in 1999. In 2011, the organizational structure of TİKA was redefined because of the global and regional changes and to conduct a more dynamic foreign policy agenda in the international arena. Its flexible new structure helped its activities to continue in a broader perspective. Today, TİKA organizes many projects in 150 countries with 63 Program Coordination Offices in 60 countries from the Balkans to Africa, from the Middle East to Latin America. In brief, TİKA was used as an important public diplomacy instrument in foreign policy.[52]

2.2.1.2 Turkish Airlines (THY)

The changing paradigm of Turkish foreign policy can be observed in different fields. Certain state institutions have been used in the African

51 For full text of the history and more information about , Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, visit the official website of TİKA, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.tika.gov.tr/en/page/history_of_tika-8526

52 For full text of the history and more information about , Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, visit the official website of TİKA, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.tika.gov.tr/en/page/history_of_tika-8526

policy of Turkey in terms of soft power and public diplomacy. In the context of "state-to-public", Turkey used Turkish Airlines as a public diplomacy material by expanding its flights to almost all around the continent.[53] According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs *"Turkey aims to increase the number of Turkish Airlines flights to Africa and facilitate interaction among businesspeople in order to turn Turkey into an intersection point for the African people to access to the world and to strengthen the ties between Turkish people."*[54]

Turkish Airlines was established in 1933 with five planes and fewer than 30 employees under the Ministry of Defense with the name of the State Airlines Administration. In 1955, it was reorganized and renamed to Turkish Airlines and started to work as a public economic enterprise which was controlled by the state. The activities of Turkish Airlines are not only important for aviation history but also for Turkish foreign policy. Turkish Airlines increased the number of flights to Africa to facilitate interaction among different cultures. As of 2022, Turkish Airlines has 64 destinations in 40 African countries.[55]

Thanks to the expansion policy of Turkish Airlines in Africa, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of passengers between Africa and Turkey, especially from Africa to Turkey. African people were encouraged to come to Turkey, as well as given the opportunity to pass through Turkey and head to many different parts of the world. According to the statistics of TUIK, the number of African people who came to Turkey gradually increased year by year between 2006 and 2019.[56]

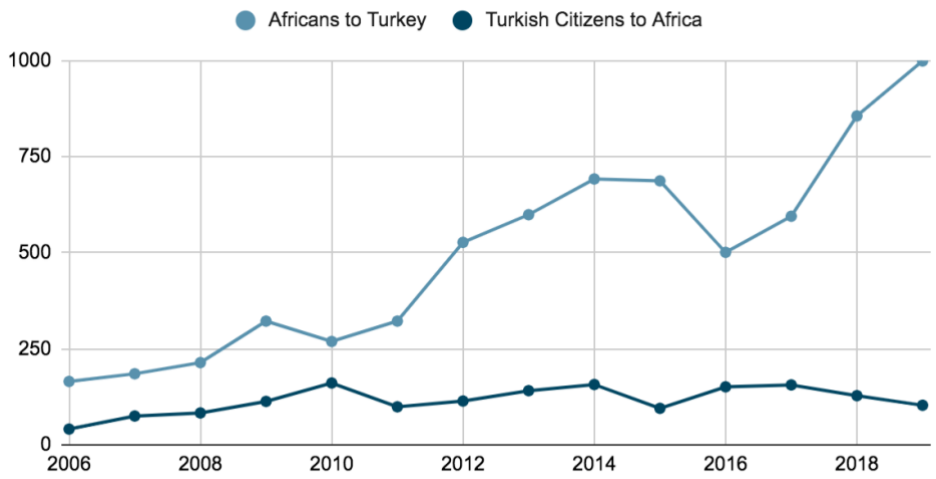
53 Kalın, *Soft Power,* 7.

54 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa

55 For full text of the history and more information, visit the official website of Turkish Airlines, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.turkishairlines.com/en-int/press-room/about-us/our-story/index.html

56 For detailed information, visit the official website of TUİK, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=Egitim,-Kultur,-Spor-ve-Turizm-105

Table 2.3 :Numbers of Border Crossing Between Turkey and Africa (in thousands)



Source: Turkish Statistical Institute[57]

§ 2.3 Cultural Diplomacy

In today's international relations, power is no longer the only determining factor. Instead, concepts such as soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy have become increasingly important, replacing older concepts like national security, military power, and nuclear armament.[58] Soft power involves attracting and persuading a target audience, and in this context, intangible and public resources such as culture, ideas, values, and institutions are crucial. Some political scientists see soft power as a form of cultural power, the power of ideas and ideals.[59] For Nye, "culture is the set of values and practices that create

57 For detailed information, visit the official website of TUİK, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=Egitim,-Kultur,-Spor-ve-Turizm-105

58 Nye, *Soft Power*, 30.

59 Walter Russels Mead, "*America's Sticky Power*" Foreign Policy (March/April 2004), p. 46-53; Hakan Altınay, "*Turkey's Soft Power: An Unpolished Gem or an Elusive Mirage?*" Insight Turkey 10(2) 2008, p.55.

meaning for society," and culture is also a key source of soft power.[60] In other words, culture is one of the most significant components in shaping a state's public diplomacy.[61]

According to the widely accepted definition of political scientist Milton Cummings, cultural diplomacy is the *"exchange of ideas, information, values systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of culture, with the intention of promoting mutual understanding."*[62] In other words, cultural diplomacy includes a wide range of fields from language teaching to education and cultural exchange programs, from cultural activities to expanding the sphere of influence in foreign policy in order to promote a country.[63]

The concepts of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy are intertwined, so there is a lot of overlap in the literature.[64] The most important issue that distinguishes public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy can be said to be humanitarian aid. While creating soft power through humanitarian aid comes to the fore in public diplomacy, it is aimed to create a center of attraction by conveying the culture and art of the country to the foreign public in cultural diplomacy.[65] In the post-Cold War period, states started to show more attention to cultural diplomacy instruments in international relations by establishing particular state institutions around the world such as Alliance Françoise, British Council, Goethe Institute, Confucius Institutes, Japan Foundation and Yunus Emre Institute.

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60 Nye, *Soft Power,* 11.

61 R. S. Zaharna, "*Battles to Bridges U.S. Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy after 9/11",* (New York: Palgrave, 2010), p. 118.

62 Milton Cummings, "*Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government*: A Survey (Washington, D.C.:Center for Asian Arts and Culture, 2003) p.1.

63 Kishore Chakraborty (ed), "*Cultural Diplomacy", (*The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, 2013), p.30.

64 Ebubekir Ceylan, *"Kültürel Diplomasi",* (Küre Yayınları, 2020), p.331.

65 Ibid, 329.

2.3.1 *Student Exchange Diplomacy*

Student exchange diplomacy, which falls under the umbrella of cultural diplomacy, is an effective way to increase a country's attractiveness to foreign audiences. Scholarship and student exchange programs are particularly useful for states to implement soft power policies in their foreign policies. For example, the United States began using student exchange diplomacy during the Cold War through the Fulbright Scholarship Program to counter Soviet influence on the younger generation in target countries. The UK has the Chevening Program, Austria has the Endeavour Scholarship Program, and Germany has the DAAD program, while France has the Eiffel Excellence Scholarship Program, all of which aim to promote their cultures to foreign audiences through student exchange programs.[66]

The Erasmus Program (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) is one of the most well-known student exchange programs in the field of student exchange diplomacy. It has been run by the European Union since 1987. The main goal of the program is to expose students to different cultures and to foster a shared European culture.[67]

2.3.2 *Cultural Diplomacy in Turkish Foreign Policy*

As global politics have evolved, Turkish foreign policy has undergone a transformation as well. As in other countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has played a significant role in the development of cultural diplomacy in Turkey. In 2010, the ministry revised its organizational law and began to prioritize public and cultural diplomacy tools in its foreign policy. The General Directorate of International Promotion and Cultural Relations, which operates under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, handles

66 Ibid, 331.

67 Ibid, 345.

bilateral and multilateral relations and cooperation with other countries and international organizations in the fields of culture, education, science, sports, and so on. It coordinates and implements projects and activities to promote Turkey abroad.[68]

Popular culture is described as the totality of ideas, perspectives and norms that has an immeasurable effect on people.[69] It has also been used as a political tool to affect an individual's feelings and political identity.[70] Popular culture which encompasses cinema, television and music, is also a major producer of soft power. Hence, products of popular culture can be characterized as another mode of cultural diplomacy.[71] Hollywood is a great example to show the effects of popular culture in cultural diplomacy because it has been very influential in promoting American values and positions in the world. On the other hand, Hollywood has also played an important role in shaping the global perception of American culture.[72]

Activities such as Turkey Days/Weeks, Turkish Cinema Days and Turkish Culture Days were organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' representatives abroad. On the other hand, Turkish TV series and soap operas have also had a significant role in promoting Turkish culture. The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) has also had a crucial role in cultural diplomacy.[73] Turkish soap operas and TV dramas are one of the most influential cultural diplomacy instruments in foreign policy with their success in domestic ratings in the Middle East, the Caucasus,

68 For detailed information, visit the official page of Resmi Gazete, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/07/20100713-3.htm

69 John Fiske, *"Understanding Popular Culture,"* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989), 22.

70 John Street, "*Politics and Popular Culture*", (Oxford: Polity Press, 1997), p. 24-44.

71 Michael Kunczik, *"Images of Nation and International Public Relations",* (Mahwah: New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997), p. 147.

72 Peter Van Hamm, _*Power, Public Diplomacy and the Pax Americana*', Melissen (Ed.) *The New Public Diplomacy,* p. 47-66.

73 Gaye Asli Sancar, *"Turkey's public diplomacy: Its actors, stakeholders, and tools."* (Turkey's Public Diplomacy. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015), p. 13-42.

the Balkans, Latin America, Western Europe and North Africa.[74] In 2019, Turkey was recognized as the second highest ranking in TV drama export after the US with over $350 million. [75]

African people also give importance to Turkish TV dramas. While North African people watch the TV series in Arabic, there are other language options for Sub-Saharan African countries. For example, the demand for Turkish TV series has grown in Uganda and a local private television GTV which is owned by Uganda Muslim Supreme Council is broadcasting the Turkish series five times a week.[76] Especially, historical Turkish series are among the programs that Africans watch more.[77] Moreover, Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan explained in an interview that she is a fan of Turkish TV series.[78]

Another important institution to promote Turkish culture is Yunus Emre Foundation which was established in 2009 under the control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Until recent years, the minister of foreign affairs was also the chairman of the foundation. The main purpose of the Yunus Emre Institute is to build bonds of friendship by strengthening cultural ties among societies. According to the 2020 activity report, Yunus Emre Institute has 60 cultural centers in 50

74 Federico Donelli, *"Persuading through Culture, Values, and Ideas."* (Insight Turkey 21.3, 2019), p.126.

75 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Guardian, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/sep/13/turkish-tv-magnificent-century-dizi-taking-over-world

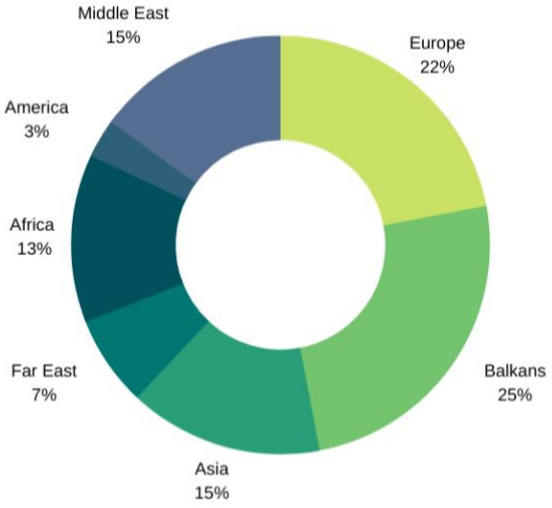
76 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/culture/turkish-tv-series-gains-traction-in-uganda-challenging-others/2436082

77 For detailed information, visit the official page of Sabah, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.dailysabah.com/arts/cinema/turkish-series-rise-to-the-top-overtaking-others-in-uganda

78 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/turkish-tv-series-gaining-popularity-in-tanzania/2489665

different countries.[79] There are 13 centers in Europe, 15 centers in the Balkans, 10 centers in the Middle East, 8 centers in Africa, 14 centers in Asia and 2 centers in America.[80]

Figure 2.1 :Distribution of Yunus Emre Institutes around the World



Source: Yunus Emre Institute Activity Report 2021[81]

Yunus Emre Institute carries out various studies in order to popularize Turkish as a world language at international standards. Turkish education, and Turcology departments are supported, and lessons are given in cultural centers. The institute carries out activities to create cultural interaction in the world through culture and art and to increase the recognition of Turkey. Moreover, Yunus Emre Institute has

79 Yunus Emre Institute Activity Report 2020, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.yee.org.tr/sites/default/files/yayin/faaliyet_raporu_2021_28.06_kucuk.pdf

80 Ibid, 14.

81 For more detailed information official page of Yunus Emte Institute, Accessed on August 28,2022, https://www.yee.org.tr/sites/default/files/yayin/faaliyet_raporu_2021_28.06_kucuk.pdf

established a cultural diplomacy academy to conduct theoretical studies on cultural diplomacy.[82]

2.3.2.1 Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB)

Educating foreign students is often seen as a long-term investment in public diplomacy and soft power in foreign policy. Turkey began implementing student exchange programs with Central Asia, the Balkans, and the Caucasus in the 1990s, with scholarship programs known as the "Great Student Project" being organized with the support of Turgut Özal. However, the scholarships were not attractive to students due to the economic conditions in Turkey at the time, and as a result, Turkish governments were unable to achieve their long-term goals through student exchange diplomacy in the 2000s due to the financial burden of the scholarship programs.[83]

In the early 2000s, Turkey's international education program expanded due to changes in foreign policy and economic development. The program focused on regions where there were large numbers of people with cultural ties to Turkey, known as the "heart geography," which includes the Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.[84]

Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) was established on 6 April 2010 in order to coordinate certain activities and meet the needs of Turks abroad and related communities. Moreover,

82 For more detailed information official page of Yunus Emte Institute, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.yee.org.tr/sites/default/files/yayin/faaliyet_raporu_2021_28.06_kucuk.pdf

83 Yunus Emre Institute Activity Report 2020, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.yee.org.tr/sites/default/files/yayin/faaliyet_raporu_2021_28.06_kucuk.pdf

84 Ahmet Davutoğlu, *"Turkey's foreign policy vision: an assessment of 2007."* (Insight Turkey, 2008) p. 77-96.

the presidency aims to establish closer economic, social and cultural relations between Turkish citizens and their sister communities. YTB continues its activities under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.[85]The main aim of YTB is described as establishing a uniform Turkish diaspora all around the world.[86] In this context, "Foreign Citizens Advisory Board" was established in 2012.

YTB is one of the most important actors for scholarship programs. In 2012, "Turkey Scholarships" program was implemented by the YTB. Turkic states were the main target for the Turkey Scholarships in the beginning; but , after 2012, the scope of the program also turned to Africa with the transformation of the Turkish foreign policy strategy. After the beginning of Syrian Civil War, YTB launched a special scholarship program for the Syrian refugees together with Diyanet.[87]

According to the official statistics of the Prime Minister's Office of Public Diplomacy Coordination, there were 34.973 students from Sub-Saharan Africa, 16.244 students from North Africa and 40.368 students from the Middle East in the Turkey Scholarship Program in 2020.[88] In 2021, 165,582 applications were received from 178 countries for the Turkey Scholarships program. In 2021, the total number of long and short-term scholarships within the scope of Turkey Scholarships was 4,108.[89]

85 For more information, visit official page of YTB, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.ytb.gov.tr/en/corporate/institution

86 Ekşi, *Kamu Diplomasisi*, 310.

87 For more information, visit official page of YTB, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://www.ytb.gov.tr/en/corporate/institution

88 YTB Activity Report 2020, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://storagetbbsweb.blob.core.windows.net/tbbsweb/Page/About/TB-Rapor-2020.pdf

89 YTB Activity Report 2021, Accessed on August 28, 2022, https://ytbweb1.blob.core.windows.net/files/2022/BELGELER2022/2021%20FAAL%C4%B0YET%20RAPORU.pdf

§ 2.4 Faith-Based Diplomacy

The relationship between religion and foreign policy has been a contentious issue in various contexts. While some scholars have emphasized the contrast between religious and national values in the international sphere, others have argued for the compatibility of these values by examining different examples from around the world. Religion has largely been neglected in international relations literature, but religious-based international and domestic crises have led scholars to take a closer look at the role of religion in foreign policy. After the Iranian Revolution and the September 11 attacks, the relationship between religion and foreign policy has been examined in the context of terrorism and security studies.[90] However, "religion has long been peripheral to the concerns of most political scientists." The connection between religion and nationalism has also been a subject of debate in political science literature. [91]

Daniel Philpott claims that "with few exceptions, international relations scholars have long assumed the absence of religion among the factors that influence states."[92] Some scholars assume that the effects of religion in politics have decreased with the Treaty of Westphalia which prioritized secular international relations and considered religion as a domestic issue.[93] Moreover, another problem in the study of the relationship between religion and foreign policy is the fact that the

90 Yusuf Sarfati, *"Mobilizing religion in Middle East politics: a comparative study of Israel and Turkey",* (Routledge, 2013), p.11; Jeffrey Haynes, "*The United Nations Alliance of Civilisations and the Pursuit of Global Justice: Overcoming Western Versus Muslim Conflict and the Creation of a Just World Order"*, (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2018); Jeffrey Haynes, *"From Huntington to Trump: Thirty Years of the Clash of Civilizations",* (New York: Lexington Books, 2019), p. 87-107.

91 Eva Bellin, "*Faith in politics. New trends in the study of religion and politics",* World Politics 60(2), 2008, p.315-347.

92 Daniel Philpott, *" The challenge of September 11 to secularism in international relations."* World Politics 55.1 (2002), p. 66-95.

93 Ibid, 82.

operationalization of religion is not easy in international relations.[94] It is impossible to draw sharp boundaries to measure the impact of religion on social and political life. Thus, it is not easy to measure the effects of religion in the international arena.

In addition to the Iranian Revolution and the 9/11 attacks, the attacks of Serbia on Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991-2001) is another important turning point in international relations studies on the role of religion. According to some scholars, religious differences were one of the most important reasons behind the war between Muslim Bosnians, Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs.[95] Haynes explains the relationship between religion and international relations by focusing on two separate periods: the pre-9/11 era which includes the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the post-9/11 era which focuses on the international securitization of Islam.[96]

Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilization" concept has an important role for explaining religion and culture as a main component of the theoretical background of international relations.[97] Vendulka Kubalkova developed her studies on the light of Huntington's paradigm.[98] She explains the role of religion by using the concept of "international political theology" which is considered as a particular approach to

94 Scott Thomas, *"The Global Transformation of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations. The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 47-71.

95 Jeffrey Haynes, *"Religion and International Relations: What do we Know and how do we Know it?",* Religions 12.5 (2021), p.2.

96 Ibid, 3.

97 Samuel Huntington, "*The clash of civilisations?",* Foreign Affairs 72 (1993), pp.22-49; Samuel Huntington, "*The Clash of Civilizations",* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 209-218.

98 Vendulka Kubalkova, *"Toward an International Political Theology*", (Millennium 29, 2000), pp. 675-704.

constructivism.[99] According to Kubalkova, there is an ontological distinction between the secular and religious worldviews.[100]

The main international relations theories cannot explain the role of religion because many of the important works in this regard were published before the 9/11 attacks.[101] In other words, religion was not seen as a decisive factor in international relations.[102] However, different international relations theories try to explain the role of religion in international politics. In "Religion and International Theory", Fox and Sandal (2013) claims that the role of religion in international relations can be incorporated into theories of realism and liberalism.[103]

In international relations theories, religion is viewed as a source of power that can be analyzed using the realist approach, but it also includes norms, values, and identities that can be examined through a constructivist perspective. Scholars generally agree that religion is not a traditional form of hard power. There are various conceptualizations and definitions of religion in international relations literature, but scholars generally agree on three points: (1) the increasing role of religion in international relations, (2) traditional mainstream secular international theories are inadequate in explaining the role of religion, and (3) the impact of religious factors is often underestimated in analyses of international relations.[104]

According to the classical realists, religion is an engine of power in society. For Machiavelli, "religion was something that demanded scrupulous attention, but its importance derived from its impact on the

99 Haynes, *Religion and International Relations*, 10.

100 Kubalkova, *Toward an International Political Theology*, 79-105.

101 Haynes, *Religion and International Relations*, 6.

102 Jürgen Habermas, *"Religion in the public sphere",* (European Journal of Philosophy, 2006), p. 1-25.

103 Sandal & Fox, *Religion,* p. 60-118.

104 Haynes, *Religion and International Relations*, 21.

causes of men's actions not for its truth.[105] Religion is a significant force in affecting the beliefs of policymakers in classical realism. Moreover, it doesn't exclude religion as an explanatory element in the decision-making process, despite putting distance from moral arguments.[106] For many classical realists, religion can shape national interests. In addition to its effects on national interests, religion has also been seen as a form of social power which induces solidarity among citizens in classical realism. [107]

When it comes to neorealism, there are certain limitations in the issue of religion because neorealism is not the most applicable approach in the context of interfaith cooperation and any soft power functions of religion.[108] Hence, neorealism evaluates religion by focusing on the security agenda in international relations. Neorealists also evaluate religion with the concept of nationalism. For the neorealist approach, religion and nationalism are intertwined concepts. 'Religion is a new form of nationalism' according to Mark Jurgensmeyer, in his prominent book *The New Cold War.*[109] Religion has been seen as a power to change international crises and it shapes the balance of power in international relations according to neorealist scholars. While classical realism focuses on the actor-level effects of religion, neorealism explains religion as a game-changer at the state level. States can define their goals in accordance with their religious identity.[110]

For Mearsheimer, religious ideologies have begun to replace national counterparts in today's world.[111] Brubaker also criticizes the

105 Machiavelli, *"Prens",* (Can Yayınları, 2004), p.173.

106 Sandal & Fox, *Religion,* 174.

107 Ibid, 177.

108 Ibid, 87.

109 Mark Jurgensmeyer, "*The new cold war?: Religious nationalism confronts the secular state"* (University of California Press, 1993), p. 39-45.

110 Sandal & Fox, *Religion,* 177.

111 John Mearsheimer & Stephen M. Walt. *"An unnecessary war."* Foreign Policy 134 (2003), p.59.

understanding of nationalism as a secular phenomenon.[112] Brubaker classified the relationship between religion and nationalism into four categories. As the first category, religion and nationalism can be analogous phenomena. Secondly, religion can be beneficial in explaining the power of nationalism. Thirdly, religion can be a part of nationalism and fourthly there can be religious nationalism.[113]

Unlike classical realism and neorealism, neoliberalism does not separate security from economics and social issues because of the multiple linkages among actors in the international arena.[114] Thanks to this distinctive feature of the theory, the interaction between religion and human rights and economic development can be studied by using neoliberal theory. According to the neoliberal approach, the concept of soft power entails culture, political values and its policy.[115] According to neoliberalism, religion may fundamentally be an element of soft power in channeling various ideologies in foreign policy. In addition to Nye, Jeffrey Haynes also includes religion within the scope of soft power. He claims that, both religion and religious actors are determinants of foreign policy influence and that this influence must be defined as religious soft power.[116]

Although some terrorist groups use religion for discursive persuasion, it is possible to use religion as an effective soft power instrument. Most Middle Eastern and North African countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Israel, utilize religion for the dominance of their own values.[117] The role of religion in foreign policy does not originate from the classical elements of hard power. However, it merits a definition

112 Rogers Brubaker, *"Religion and nationalism: Four approaches."* Nations and nationalism 18.1 (2012), p.3.

113 Ibid, 13.

114 Sandal & Fox, *Religion,* 117.

115 Nye, *Soft Power*, 11.

116 Haynes, *Religious transnational actors and soft power*, p. 95-115.

117 Öztürk, *Islam and foreign policy*, 3.

both inside and outside of the context of soft power. Religious discourse in foreign policy can be considered in the context of historical and cultural relations between states. [118]

For neoliberalists, soft power is a tool that can be used in both the absence and presence of hard power. This means that leaders and states can use soft power instruments to achieve long-term goals while also relying on military and economic power. In addition, certain religious actors and organizations can influence the foreign policy decision-making of political elites. In the neoliberal view, states use religion as a means of legitimizing their regimes. At the international level, religious identities are seen as playing a crucial role in cooperation according to neoliberal theory.[119]

The international relations theories focus on the concept of faith-based diplomacy in the context of soft power while they try to explain the relationship between religion and foreign policy. There is a growing literature on faith-based diplomacy. The concept of faith-based diplomacy was popularized by Lee Hamilton in "Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik."[120] The concept was also expanded in the context of conflict resolution.[121] According to Johnston, faith-based diplomacy *"means incorporating religious concerns into the practice of international politics.[122] Even more simply put, it means making religion part of the*

118 Ibid, 7.

119 Sandal & Fox, *Religion,* 169.

120 Lee Hamilton, *"Faith-based diplomacy: Trumping realpolitik",* (Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 3-30.

121 Jonathan Chaplin & Robert Joustra. *"God and global order: The power of religion in American foreign policy"* (Baylor University Press, 2010); Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, "*God's Century. Resurgent Religion and Global Politics"* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011).

122 Douglas Johnston & Cynthia Sampson, eds. "Religion, the missing dimension of statecraft" (Oxford University Press, 1995); Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Conflict resolution, culture, and religion: Toward a training model of interreligious peacebuilding." Journal of Peace Research 38.6 (2001), p.685-704.

solution in some of the intractable, identity-based conflicts that exceed the grasp of traditional diplomacy."[123] In other words, faith-based diplomacy combines religious perspectives and effects with traditional diplomacy practices (realpolitik) with the motivation of peacemaking.[124] Moreover, faith-based diplomacy benefits from peacemaking tenants within religious traditions to express respectful relationships, mutual understanding and forbearance that are generally neglected in the practices of official diplomacy. He also describes faith-based diplomacy as "a form of unofficial (Track II) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religion with the conduct of international peacemaking"[125], For Cox and Philpott, orientation towards the divine is the distinctive feature of faith-based diplomacy.[126]

§ 2.5 Practices of Faith-Based Diplomacy in Different Countries

States engage in faith-based diplomacy with other states for a variety of reasons and motivations. Faith-based diplomacy can increase the acceptance of a state's foreign policy and can also be used to influence the understandings and policy preferences of targeted societies.[127] Faith-based organizations are increasingly playing a key role in efforts to end conflicts and support stabilization efforts in post-conflict periods in various parts of the world.[128]

123 Johnston & Cox, *Faith-based diplomacy*, 179-196.

124 Ibid, 185.

125 Ibid, 186.

126 Cox & Philpott, Faith-based diplomacy, 31-40.

127 Elem Eyrice Tepeciklioğlu, "*Turkey's religious diplomacy in Africa"* (Routlege,2021) p.199.

128 Tsjeard Bouta, S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. *Faith-based peace-building: Mapping and analysis of Christian, Muslim and multi-faith actors.* (Clingendael Institute, 2005); David R. Smock, ed. *Religious contributions to peacemaking: When religion brings peace, not war*. (US Institute of Peace, 2006).

One of the most notable examples of non-official diplomacy in the literature is the Mozambique peace process, where non-official diplomacy was successfully employed[129]. Through coordination between official and non-official channels, social conflict in Mozambique was resolved peacefully. On the non-official side, the Community of Sant'Egidio, a Catholic charity organization, played a crucial role as a mediator in ending the war. The Community of Sant'Egidio, originally focused on serving the needs of the poor in Italy, expanded its international activities through humanitarian assistance, particularly in African countries. The organization's goal was to reduce tensions in various parts of Africa, from Algeria to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, during the 1980s.[130].

In the Mozambique peace process, the Sant'Egidio organization contributed to the peace process by mediating between the government and the rebels of the Mozambican National resistance. The community brought the warring sides together, by using its religious power[131]. The initiative of the community of Sant'Egidio was supported by the Vatican, the Italian government, the United States, the United Nations and other significant actors in the international arena. The mediating role of the community resulted in the signing of the Rome Agreement in 1992[132].

129 Richard Jackson, "*Internal War, International Mediation, and Non-Official Diplomacy: Lessons from Mozambique.*" (Journal of Conflict Studies 25.1, 2005), pp. 153-176.

130 Jeffrey Haynes, *"Conflict, conflict resolution and peace-building: The role of religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia."* (Commonwealth & Comparative Politics 47.1, 2009), p.63.

131 Ibrahim Msabaha, *"Negotiating an end to Mozambique's murderous rebellion."* (Elusive peace: Negotiating an end to civil wars, 1995): 204-230; Cameron R. Hume, *"Ending Mozambique's war: the role of mediation and good offices."* (US Institute of Peace Press, 1994), p. 25-47.

132 Jacob Bercovitch, Richard Jackson, and Richard Dean Wells Jackson. "*Conflict resolution in the twenty-first century: principles, methods, and approaches"* (University of Michigan Press, 2009), p.143.

Another significant example of faith-based diplomacy can be observed in the Nigerian case. Nigeria had experienced a religious conflict between Muslims and Christians. This religious conflict transformed into political violence in the beginning of 1990s[133]. As a result, in 1995, a Christian pastor and Muslim imam established the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum to seek stability in Nigeria. They co-authored a book to show the references to peace in the Quran and the Bible. At the end of the efforts of the forum, the US Institute of Peace participated in the peace-building process in Nigeria. The forum cooperated with the United States Institute of Peace to organize a dialogue workshop in Nigeria. Christian and Muslim youth leaders participated in the workshop to protect peace and stability in the country[134].

Moreover, the Israeli government is also using faith-based diplomacy in foreign policy. According to the president of the Israel Allies Foundation which was established to lobby all around the world to support Israel-based Jewish values, faith-based diplomacy is the strongest weapon of Israel at the international level.[135] Scholars focus on religious soft power while explaining the position of religion in international relations. Haynes focuses on American Evangelical Protestants, Roman Catholics, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation groups in his writings.[136] According to Haynes, certain states began to incorporate religion into their foreign policies such as Turkey and the United States.[137] According to Johnston, ignorance of other

133 Jeff Haynes, *"Power, politics and environmental movements in the Third World."* (Environmental politics 8.1, 1999), p.222.

134 Haynes, *Conflict,* 67.

135 Edward Wastnidge, *"Iran's Own 'War on Terror': Iranian Foreign Policy Towards Syria and Iraq During the Rouhani Era."* Foreign Policy of Iran under President Hassan Rouhani's First Term (2013–2017), (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), pp. 107-129.

136 Haynes, *Religion,* p.47-73.

137 Ibid, 3.

people's religious values and beliefs damaged the attainment of US foreign policy aims.[138]

Certain Middle Eastern countries also engage in non-traditional faith-based diplomacies which are extremely controlled by the state institutions and royal families. Saudi Arabia has been promoting an ultraconservative and strict interpretation of Islam globally since the 1960s.[139] The Iranian Revolution was a significant event that had a major impact on Saudi Arabia's foreign policy. In response to Iran's efforts to export its revolution to other parts of the world, Saudi Arabia began promoting Wahhabism, a Saudi variant of Salafism that is closely aligned with the Hanbali school of Sunni jurisprudence. This represented a shift in Saudi Arabia's foreign policy as it sought to counter the influence of the Iranian Revolution.[140] There are various instruments that Saudi Arabia uses to promote Wahhabism as part of its faith-based diplomacy. Some of these instruments are governmental ministries and agencies, while others are quasi-governmental and funded by the Saudi royal family. These instruments can take various forms, including funding for religious education and the construction of mosques and other religious institutions, as well as efforts to influence media and public opinion. The specific activities undertaken through these instruments can vary, but they generally aim to spread the principles of Wahhabism and increase its influence around the world.

There are certain significant instruments in Saudi Arabia's foreign policy in the context of faith-based diplomacy. The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Da'wa and Guidance is an important instrument in Saudi Arabia's faith-based diplomacy. It is a governmental body that manages religious affairs and provides resources for international activities, including the construction of mosques and religious schools. Officials from the

138 Johnston & Cox, *Faith-based diplomacy*,9.

139 Mandaville, Peter, and Shadi Hamid. *"Islam as statecraft: How governments use religion in foreign policy."* Washington, DC: Brookings (2018), p.9.

140 Ibid, 8.

ministry also serve as religious attachés in various countries to promote Saudi Arabia's interpretation of Islam, Wahhabism. This ministry is just one of the tools that Saudi Arabia uses as part of its faith-based diplomacy efforts. Other instruments include funding for religious education and media influence efforts. These activities aim to spread the principles of Wahhabism and increase its influence around the world.

The Muslim World League (MWL) and the Islamic University of Medina (IUM) are two more instruments of Saudi Arabia's faith-based diplomacy. The MWL is a parastatal organization that is not an official part of the government, but it is funded and controlled by the government. Its primary aim is to promote Muslim solidarity and the spread of Saudi Arabia's interpretation of Islam, Wahhabism, around the world. The IUM, meanwhile, was founded in 1961 with the support of the Saudi royal family. Its primary mission is to provide training in classical Islamic sciences to Muslims from around the world, with scholarship programs playing a key role in this effort. The IUM also aims to spread Wahhabism globally through the training of religious scholars from different countries. These institutions are used by Saudi Arabia as part of its efforts to promote its interpretation of Islam and increase its influence around the world through faith-based diplomacy.

In addition to Saudi Arabia, other Muslim countries have also focused on the faith-based diplomacy in foreign policy. The Morocco-based Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization was established in 1982 to promote the "correct image of Islam and Islamic culture" in different parts of the world.[141] Similarly, the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought was founded in 1980 in Jordan to promote "awareness of Islam and Islamic thought".[142] Moreover, the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies in Jordan is another quasi-governmental

141 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://www.icesco.org/

142 For more detailed information, visit the official page of The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://www.aalalbayt.org/

institution which focuses on foreign policy and is controlled by the royal family.[143] Mandaville and Hamid also explain religious institutions associated with the state in order to promote "moderate Islam" in Egypt, Morocco and Jordan.[144] Öztürk investigates the Turkish case and transnational actors such as Diyanet in foreign policy which try to encourage the spread of Islamic and nationalistic values and norms in Balkans.[145]

It is important to study the faith-based diplomacy activities of Muslim-majority countries in different parts of the world, including both Sunni-majority countries and Iran, which is the center of the Shia interpretation of Islam. Iran has a significant role in this area, as it has sought to export the principles of the Iranian Revolution, including calls for liberation from western dominance and imperialism, to Africa. Iran has also engaged with African countries through various international organizations, such as the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the African Union, and the United Nations (UN). These efforts are part of Iran's broader foreign policy objectives and its efforts to promote its interpretation of Islam and increase its influence around the world.

After the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), Iran started to open embassies across Africa to contain Iraq's superior influence in the continent which directly affected the votes of African countries at the UN. In the 1990s, Iran engaged with African countries in the context of the Group of 77 to avoid the isolation policies of the United States. The Group of 77 is an intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the UN which tries to promote a collective economic system and cooperation

143 For more detailed information, visit the official page of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://riifs.org/en/

144 Mandaville & Hamid. Islam, p. 2-27.

145 Öztürk, Islam, p.55.

for the development.[146] In spite of the attempts of Iran to establish a strong relation with Africa, most African countries preferred to retain a relation with the Western powers. Additionally, some African countries (Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Somalia, Senegal etc.) joined the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) which was established in 2015 to contain Iran's military power.[147]

The relationship between Iran and African countries was limited in the 1990s, but during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013), Iran began to increase its engagement with Africa. This was in part due to the isolation policies of Western countries towards Iran, and Iran's efforts to increase its influence through Africa as a way to counter this isolation.[148] Iran sought to strengthen its ties with sub-Saharan countries by building infrastructure such as hospitals and establishing companies. However, Iran's efforts in Africa were ultimately unsuccessful due to domestic political and economic crises, as well as the increasing tension between Iran and the United States.[149]

Under the Rouhani administration, which began in 2013, Iran's foreign policy shifted to prioritize dialogue with the West. However, the election of Raisi as president has significantly altered this approach. Raisi's foreign policy stance, both during his campaign and after his victory, has many similarities to the foreign policy pursued during the Ahmedinejad administration. As such, the Raisi administration has renewed and reinvigorated its focus on Africa, following three main

146 For more detailed information, visit the official page of the Group 77 at the United Nationas, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://www.g77.org/doc/index.html

147 For more detailed information, visit the official page of IMCTC, Member Countries, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://imctc.org/en/AboutUs/MemberCountries/Pages/default.aspx

148 Mohammad Rahim Eivazi (2008*), An Analysis of Foreign Policy of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*, Rahbord Yas, Vol 14.

149 Vatanka Alex. 2016, *Iran's Awkward Diplomacy in Africa, The National Interest*, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://nationalinterest.org/feature/irans-awkward-diplomacy-africa-15571

points. Firstly, Iranian authorities have long emphasized the idea that "the world is not limited to the West." This slogan became a driving force behind Iran's African policy during Ahmedinejad's presidency, and the number of Iranian embassies in Africa increased at this time. While Western countries were applying pressure on Iran, Africa was seen as an opportunity for economic and political gain.[150]

After Ahmedinejad's presidency, Ayatollah Khamenei also prioritized Africa in Iran's foreign policy. In 2012, he emphasized the importance of Africa in a meeting with the president of Benin and chair of the African Union, stating that "the African continent is part of the main framework of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran."[151] However, under the Rouhani administration, this emphasis on Africa in foreign policy diminished. With Raisi's election as president, the slogan "the world is not limited to the West" has once again become a central aspect of Iran's foreign policy, indicating a shift back towards a focus on Africa.[152]

In addition to economic and political goals, focusing on Africa in foreign policy also serves an ideological purpose for Iran. Iranian authorities believe that the Shi'a worldview allows for the enhancement of Iran's influence in Africa through faith-based diplomacy. In line with this, the Raisi administration has focused on strengthening relations with Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania. Like Turkey and other Eastern countries,

150 Heibach, Jens. 2020. "*Sub-Saharan Africa: A Theater for Middle East Power struggles." Middle East Policy*, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12495

151 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Khamenei.Ir, Supreme Leader Meets with President of Benin, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://farsi.khamenei.ir/news-content?id=101681

152 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Aljazeera, Iran’s Foreign Policy Under Raisi, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/iran%E2%80%99s-foreign-policy-under-raisi

anti-colonial sentiment in some parts of Africa provides an opportunity for Iran to expand its presence in the region..[153]

Iran seeks to build relationships with African member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Islamic and anti-Western movements in Africa. In doing so, Iran targets Christian populations influenced by Western countries, Muslim communities influenced by Saudi Arabia, and Shi'a communities oppressed by Iraq's Ba'ath ideology in Africa. One of Iran's main cultural objectives is to reduce Western influence in Africa and empower the Muslim population with a sympathetic view towards Iran's revolution..[154] Like Turkey, religious institutions, charitable and humanitarian organizations have played a significant role in Iran's faith-based diplomacy efforts. The Iranian Red Crescent Society, the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly, and branches of Al-Mustafa University, which were subject to sanctions by the United States in 2020, are some of the important organizations that have a presence in various parts of Africa. These organizations provide humanitarian and development assistance, and promote religious and cultural exchange as a way to build ties with African countries.[155]

Based on its organizational structure, it is clear that Iran is also pursuing faith-based diplomacy in Africa. However, the tools used in this diplomacy do not align with traditional non-official diplomacy instruments. In other words, Iran conducts faith-based diplomacy through the use of state power and its institutions. The state plays an

153 Keynoush, Banafsheh. *"Iran's Africa-Pivot Policy." Middle East Policy 28.3-4* (2021): 228-248.

154 For more detailed information, visit the official page of King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://kfcris.com/pdf/dd448fcd67b35ab48903bd18c6fcffd160d99d2290923.pdf

155 For more detailed information, visit the official page of King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Accessed on September 16, 2022,https://kfcris.com/pdf/dd448fcd67b35ab48903bd18c6fcffd160d99d2290923.pdf

active role in these processes because civil society and civil organizations in Iran do not have the capacity to manage activities abroad. In contrast, in the case of Turkey, there is cooperation between official and non-official channels in Africa within the context of faith-based diplomacy.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society has a similar structure with the Turkish Red Crescent in the organizational level because, according to the law enacted by the Iranian Parliament, the Iranian Red Crescent is run by a chairman appointed by the President of Iran. In other words, it has a semi-public structure.[156] The Imam Khomeini Relief Committee was founded in 1979 after the revolution to support poor families. Like the Iranian Red Crescent Society, the committee was also supported by the Iranian government and also receives the Islamic taxes of the big cities of Iran.[157] The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly is a civil organization in the context of the laws, but it was founded in 1990s by the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and a group of Shiite elites in order to educate, organize and support the followers of the Iranian understanding of Islam. In addition to its organic ties with the government and state institutions, the assembly also supports the militant groups in Africa and the Middle East.[158]

In 1979, the Iranian state established the Islamic institute Al-Mustafa University with the goal of promoting the Iranian regime's ideology and Shi'a understanding of Islam globally. One of the main targets of Al-Mustafa University in Africa is Nigeria, which has a large Shi'a population. The university operates five schools and seminaries in Nigeria and neighboring countries, with nearly 1,000 students. In

156 For more detailed information, visit the official page of IFRC, Accessed on September 16, 2022,https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/about-ifrc/our-history-and-archives

157 For more detailed information, visit the official page of United Against Nuclear Iran, Accessed on September 16, 2022,https://www.unitedagainstnucleariran.com/ideological-expansion/imam-khomeini-relief-committee

158 For more detailed information, visit the official page of The Ahlul Bayt world Assembly, Accessed on September 16, 2022,https://www.ahl-ul-bayt.org/en/about-ahlulbayt-a-s-world-assembly/objectives

addition, the university has opened a branch in Senegal to promote Shi'ite Muslim theology among Senegalese students. Through these efforts, Al-Mustafa University aims to spread the influence of the Iranian regime and Shi'a Islam in Africa.[159]

§ 2.6 Conclusion

After the Cold War ended, theories of international relations began to focus on the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy. As information technology and globalization advanced, the need for public diplomacy grew for global and regional actors in the international arena. There were also changes in the way cultural diplomacy was viewed in the context of soft power. The Iranian Revolution and 9/11 attacks also brought attention to the role of religion in international politics. While existing theories only partially explain the relationship between religion and diplomacy, the concept of faith-based diplomacy has been introduced to describe the foreign policy agendas of countries that are based on religion.

Despite the increasing number of studies on faith-based diplomacy, there has not been a thorough analysis of its potential risks and long-term consequences by political scientists. Some scholars have examined faith-based diplomacy in the context of soft power, arguing that religion can be seen as a part of a nation's culture and history. However, there is a distinction between using religion as a legitimizing or soft power tool and conducting a foreign policy based on religion or identity in international relations. These different strategies can have different long-term outcomes.

159 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Al Mustafa Open University, Accessed on September 16, 2022, https://old.mou.ir/en/about-us/introduction-of-university

There has also been a lack of attention given to the potential risks and limitations of implementing faith-based diplomacy in international relations theories. Many scholars have treated religion as part of a nation's cultural and traditional values. However, religion-based policies can lead to more extreme and ideological foreign policies unless the boundaries of religion are clearly defined. There is also a gap in the literature on how and why states might incorporate religion into their foreign policy and on the motivations behind faith-based diplomacy. These are important considerations that need to be addressed in order to fully understand the implications of faith-based diplomacy.

The limitations of faith-based diplomacy can become particularly evident in situations where there is a history of unstable peace negotiations. Factors such as an increase in terrorism, natural disasters, transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes, and changes in leadership can all undermine faith-based diplomacy efforts. To minimize the negative impacts of these potential limitations, it is important to establish cooperation between official and non-official channels and to have direct contact with policymakers in order to achieve lasting results.[160]

In my thesis, I can draw on the literature on soft power, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and faith-based diplomacy to examine Turkish foreign policy. The Justice and Development Party (JDP) has significantly increased the use of public diplomacy tools in foreign policy. The structure and organizational frameworks of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and Turkish Airlines have been modified during this period and both institutions have a strong influence on foreign publics, particularly in Africa. In the 21st century, changes in the way foreign policy is understood have also influenced the tools used

160 Kaye, Dalia Dassa. *Talking to the enemy: Track two diplomacy in the Middle East and South Asia.* Rand Corporation, 2007, p.113.

in foreign policy. Humanitarian aid projects and programs have become a distinctive feature of Turkish foreign policy in the international arena.

In addition to establishing new public diplomacy institutions, Turkey has also increased its focus on cultural diplomacy in its foreign policy. State institutions such as the Yunus Emre Institute and the Turkish Culture and Tourism Office (YTB) were created to promote Turkish culture and values among foreign publics. Scholarship programs have also played a significant role in Turkish foreign policy by targeting younger generations of foreign publics. The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) is also an important player in cultural diplomacy, as it broadcasts in various languages. Turkish television dramas and soap operas have also contributed to Turkey's cultural diplomacy efforts.

In the context of faith-based diplomacy, I will focus on the activities of Diyanet in Africa. With the beginning of the JDP era, religious instruments and discourses in foreign policy started to appear. While non-governmental and unofficial channels have played an important role in the faith-based diplomacy agenda, the state institutions have also had a significant position through their activities and cooperation with the NGOs in Africa. The faith-based diplomacy of Turkey can be instrumental in evaluating potential risks and limitations of the institutionalization of religion in foreign policy.

3

Historical Background

§ 3.1 Political Relations Between Turkey and Africa: From Past to Present

The history of political relations between Turkey and Africa can be divided into three distinct periods: the Ottoman Empire's interactions with Africa until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, a period of low engagement between 1923 and 1998, and a resurgence in relations since 1998, culminating in a peak in 2005.[1]

It would be a mistake to only consider the past twenty years of Turkish-African relations without taking into account the history of Ottoman-African relations. During the Ottoman Empire, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan were all controlled by the empire for an extended period. Additionally, the Ottoman Empire maintained close political, economic, and cultural ties with Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, South Africa, Kenya, and Tanzania.[2] However, as

1 Ahmet Kavas, *"Afrika Raporu"* (Istanbul: TASAM, 2005), p. 7-18.

2 Numan Hazar, *"Türkiye-Afrika Siyasal İlişkileri: Geçmişten Bugüne"* (Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık, 2019), p.384.

colonialism and imperialism began in Africa, the Ottoman Empire began to lose its territories. The last Ottoman territory in Africa, Libya, was lost to Italy during the end of the Tripoli War in 1911.[3]

According to some scholars, Turkey did not have colonial interests in Africa throughout its history. Ali Al'amin Mazrui, a Kenyan-born American professor of political science, divides slavery in Africa into three parts. The first type of slavery was a system that existed among Africans and was not based on race. The second type of slavery system took place between Africans and Muslims, where the master and slave could be of any race. This system is considered a multi-ethnic system of slavery. Islam aimed to gradually end slavery by encouraging the emancipation of slaves. In the first two types of slavery, the main distinction was not skin color, meaning that a race-based system was not established in these two types of slavery. In contrast, the Atlantic slave system was a bi-racial system with white Europeans on one side and black Africans on the other. This type of slavery system was developed purely for economic and commercial interests, with slaves being treated as commercial commodities.[4]

The Ottoman Empire has historically been seen as not participating in the "Scramble for Africa" and maintaining its territory through granting political autonomy to its African provinces. Additionally, the Ottoman Empire was recognized as a leading Muslim power in neighboring African countries. For instance, the Fuji Sultanate, a Muslim monarchy established in 1504, referenced Ottoman sultans in Friday sermons and was influenced by Ottoman religious sources.[5]

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3 Ahmet Kavas, *"Osmanlı-Afrika İlişkileri"* (Tasam Yayınları, 2006), p. 1-47.

4 Ali Al'amin Mazrui , "*Islamic and Western values."* Foreign Aff. 76 (1997), p.118.

5 Peacock, "*The Ottomans and the Funj sultanate in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries",* (Bulletin od the School of Oriental and African Studies, 2012), p.87-111.

There are some critiques of the traditional narrative that focus on the moral stance of the Ottoman Empire during the colonial period in Africa. According to Mostafa Minawi, like Western states, the Ottoman Empire also had complex relationships with local powers in an effort to expand its influence over the Tripoli province, the Sahara Desert, Chad, and Western Arabia. In other words, the Ottoman Empire pursued a policy of expansion in these regions, similar to that of Western states.[6]

According to Minawi, the Ottoman Empire also played a role in the imperialism and colonization of Africa, just like the British and French empires. This challenges the traditional narrative of the Ottoman Empire as a weak and declining power, and suggests that it should be included in the historical understanding of imperialism in Africa alongside other European powers.[7] The most important reason put forward for this is that the Ottoman Empire was one of the fourteen European states that participated in the Berlin Conference, which was later accepted as the turning point of the Scramble for Africa. According to Minawi, the Ottoman Empire participated in the Berlin Conference in 1884 in order to show its interest in sharing Africa. Moreover, he also states that the Ottoman Empire tried to show new diplomatic tactics in order to challenge the European states in Africa.[8] The Berlin Conference was a meeting of European powers to address their competing claims in Africa and decide on the means of achieving them. African nations were not invited to this conference. The German chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, who organized the conference, was more concerned with the balance of power in Europe than the fate of Africa. The conference provided an

6 Mostafa Minawi, "*The Ottoman Scramble for Africa: Empire and Diplomacy in the Sahara and the Hijaz",* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), p. 41-60.

7 Ibid, 11.

8 Hatice Uğur, *"Mostafa Minawi. The Ottoman Scramble for Africa: Empire and Diplomacy in the Sahara and the Hijaz*." (Dîvân: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi 21), p.146.

opportunity for European states to legitimize their demands in Africa.[9] Although Minawi focuses on Ottoman imperialism, they emphasize that it is not equivalent to western imperialism in Africa.[10]

The relationship between Turkey and Africa was interrupted for a long time after the establishment of the Republic. For much of the 20th century, Africa was not a priority in Turkey's foreign policy, with a few exceptions. As African countries gained independence from their colonial rulers after WWII, Turkey took a supportive stance towards the United States and other colonial powers in international meetings, prioritizing its national interests.[11] After African countries gained independence, Turkey began to strengthen its relationship with Africa and opened embassies in various countries. Between 1923 and 1998, there were three significant events that impacted Turkish-African relations: (1) Turkey's response to the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, (2) Turkey's stance at the Bandung conference in 1955, and (3) Turkey's vote on the independence of Algeria in the United Nations.

The first Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Sub-Saharan Africa was opened in Addis Ababa in 1926 to recognize Ethiopia's independence. Turkish-Ethiopian relations, which were interrupted for a short time with the end of the Ottoman period, started to revive with the opening of the consulate. Sincere correspondence was carried out between Mustafa Kemal and Ethiopian rulers during this process. Turkey's Ambassador to Cairo, Muhiddin Pasha, was commissioned by Atatürk for the coronation ceremony of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I. In 1933, Ethiopia also

9 Erik Gilbert, and Jonathan T. Reynolds, "*Africa in world history",* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2011), p.422.

10 Makdisi, Ussama. *"Ottoman Orientalism."* The American historical review 107.3 (2002), p.768-796.

11 Serhat Orakçı, *"Türkiye Afrika İlişkileri",* (İnsamer, 2018), p. 145.

opened its embassy in Turkey.[12] Between 1934 and 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia. Turkey closely followed the developments in this period. In the session of the League of Nations on the economic sanctions against Italy, Turkey did not oppose the decision and many countries started to impose sanctions on Italy.

After the capture of Addis Ababa in 1936, Italy claimed full sovereignty over Ethiopia. After this, the front against Italy in the League of Nations lost power and the countries, in turn, abolished the sanctions they had imposed on Italy. Turkey also canceled the sanctions it had imposed on Italy during this process. The resumption of the Addis Ababa embassy was understood as Turkey's recognition of Italian sovereignty. As a matter of fact, Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, who was exiled after the invasion, harshly criticized Turkey's attitude in this process.[13] Turkish-Ethiopian relations, which were interrupted by the invasion of Italy, could not be restored until 1957.[14]

The Bandung Conference, held in 1955 in Indonesia, marked a significant moment in the history of African independence movements and the end of colonial activities. A total of 29 countries participated in the conference, including five African nations (Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Ghana and Libya). Additionally, almost 30 national independence movements were present at the conference as observers. Turkey also

12 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-etiyopya-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa

13 For detailed information, visit the archive of the New York Times, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/1938/04/10/archives/protests-are-sent-by-haile-selassie-he-decries-turkish-and-greek.html

14 Abdu Muhammed Ali, *"Etiyopya-Türkiye İlişkileri: Karşılıklı Şüphe ve Anlaşmazlıktan Karşılıklı Anlayış ve İşbirliğine."* (2012), p.175; Negesso, J. I. M. A. "*Turkey and Ethiopia Relations: Historical Perspective* (1920's to 1991)." (Cedrus 9, 2021), p.473-483.

participated in the conference and demonstrated strong interest in the independence movements occurring in Africa.

During the Bandung Conference, held in 1955, it was recognized that African people have the right to self-governance, and calls were made for Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia to achieve independence as soon as possible. The conference also stated that Asian and African countries should form an independent front during the Cold War period. Fatin Şükrü Zorlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, represented Turkey at the conference and opposed this decision, stating that remaining independent in this process would be favorable to the Soviet Union. This position taken by Turkey was not well received by African nations fighting for independence.[15]

During the discussion of Algerian independence at the UN Security Council in 1955, Turkey did not vote in favor of Algerian independence and continued to oppose it in the second vote in 1956. In fact, French Prime Minister Felix Gaillard praised Turkey for its stance on the Algerian issue in 1957.[16] The attitude of the Menderes government towards Algeria in the UN General Assembly were caused by two non-material reasons. Firstly, the foreign policy understanding of the government was shaped by the binary world politics. Secondly, the conditions of the 1950s affected the foreign policy understanding of the government.[17] After the end of the Menderes government with a military coup in 1960, Turkey voted in favor of the independence of Algeria and in 1962 Algeria gained its independence. Turkey's attitude in this process was evaluated under the conditions of the period and interpreted as not wanting to confront the Western bloc.[18] During his visit to Algeria in 1985,

15 Ahmet Davutoğlu, *"Stratejik derinlik."* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001), p.259.

16 Eyüp Ersoy, "*Turkish foreign policy toward the Algerian War of Independence (1954–62).*" Turkish Studies 13.4, 2012), p. 688

17 Ibid, 689.

18 Ibid, 695.

Turgut Özal apologized to all Algerians on behalf of the State of the Republic of Turkey for Turkey's attitude at the UN Security Council.[19]

Turkey started to establish embassies in African countries after they gained independence. Turkey opened embassies in Lagos, the capital of Nigeria in 1962[20] and in Algeria in 1963 after its independence.[21] While diplomatic relations with Ghana, which gained its independence in 1957, were established in 1964[22], an embassy was opened in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, in 1968.[23] In the 1970s and the 1980s, visits were made at the level of leaders and close relations were established with countries such as Libya, Senegal and Sudan.[24]

Until 1998, the relationship between Turkey and Africa was limited due to Turkey's own political and economic problems. It is said that before the beginning of the JDP (Justice and Development Party) era, Africa was one of the most neglected regions in Turkey's foreign policy. However, Ahmet Davutoglu, who played a central role in shaping foreign

19 For more detailed information, visit the official page oft he Hürriyet, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/42-yil-sonra-aciklanan-tarihi-gercek-turkiye-cezayire-silah-vermis-39060208

20 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-nigeria.en.mfa

21 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey%E2%80%93algeria.en.mfa

22 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-ghana.en.mfa

23 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kenya.en.mfa

24 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-afrika-iliskileri.tr.mfa

policy at the start of the JDP era, emphasized the importance of Africa for Turkish foreign policy in his writings.[25]

Turkey has certain advantages in comparison with other foreign countries in Africa. First of all, Turkey has historical ties with the region that dates back to the Ottoman era. In addition to the historical heritage of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey was not a part of the colonial history in Africa in 20th century. In fact, according to the certain historians, the Ottoman Empire struggled against colonization in the Mediterranean region and North African countries.[26] In addition to shared culture and history, religion has also established a strong tie between Turkey and African countries. Despite the religious heterogeneity, Islam is considered to be one of the dominant religions in Africa.[27]

Turkey has benefited from these ties in its relations with African countries. Diyanet has played an important role in the development of this relationship by conducting religion-based diplomacy in foreign policy. According to the vice president of Diyanet Dr. Selim Argun, "Diyanet does not encounter major problems and difficulties when cooperating or collaborating in African countries. Diyanet doesn't see any obstacles to this situation, because its activities cannot be classified as a missionary activity. Turkey has had no imperialist history in Africa, and it has no hidden agenda there today."[28]

The traditional narrative has been also used by the political elites in Turkey. President Erdogan used the following statements regarding Turkey's African policy during his visit to Uganda: *"Turkey has never had a colonial past in Africa. The relationship we want to establish with*

25 Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik,* 208.

26 Orakçı, *Türkiye Afrika*, 103.

27 Hazar, *Türkiye-Afrika*, 386.

28 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on July 23, 2022,https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/afrikadaki-dini-kuruluslar-arasinda-birligin-tesisi-icin-calisiyoruz/1620047

continental countries is based on equal partnership, mutual respect and a win-win situation. We can make joint investments in all fields, defense industry, tourism, economy, trade and agriculture."[29] Moreover, during his visit to Angola, President Erdoğan made the following statements in his speech at the National Assembly: *"We are a nation without the stain of colonialism in its history and without the shame of colonialism. Besides, we are a country that waged the War of Independence, which was crowned with victory a century ago, against the imperialist powers of the time. Today, we are fighting against injustices in the global system by saying that the world is bigger than five."*[30]

§ 3.2 Turkey's African Initiative Policy

In 1998, the relationship between Turkey and Sub-Saharan African countries entered a new era with the declaration of Turkey's African Initiative Policy process.[31] According to the African Initiative Policy, Turkey tried to strengthen the political, economic, social and cultural relationship with 48 Sub-Saharan African countries in the long-term. [32] The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the period, who prepared the plan, clearly stated that it was time for Turkey, which has political and economic ties with its close geopolitical environment to develop a vision

29 For detailed information, visit the official page of Aljazeera, Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/erdogan-turkiyenin-afrikada-somurgeci-gecmisi-olmadi

30 For detailed information, visit the official page of TRT Haber, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.trthaber.com/foto-galeri/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-angola-meclisinde-hitap-etti/39542.html

31 Ali Balcı, "*Türkiye Dış Poltiikası"* (İstanbul: Etkileşim, 2015), p. 279; For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa

32 Hazar, *Türkiye-Afrika*, 386: Numan Hazar, Türkiye Afrika'da: *Eylem Planının Uygulanması ve Değerlendirme Onbeş Yıl Sonra*, Orsam Rapor No: 124, Ankara, 2012, p. 7.

for the African continent. [33] The plan consisted of 3 phases: diplomatic, economic and socio-cultural relations.[34]

The diplomatic phase of the initiative plan included high-level official visits and invitations, the establishment of a political consultation mechanism between foreign ministries, increased diplomatic representation, increased contacts and cooperation with African countries within international organizations such as the United Nations, visits from parliamentary delegations, the sending of official delegations to African countries, and the organization of humanitarian aid activities.[35]

In the second phase of the Africa Action Plan, it was planned to establish economic, commercial, technical, and scientific cooperation through the signing of basic agreements. Additionally, coordination meetings between ministers in charge of specialized areas such as trade, health, agriculture were planned, as well as technical assistance programs for African countries, membership in the African Development Bank, and mutual business visits.[36] In the third phase of the Africa Initiative Plan, steps will be taken to increase the scholarship opportunities offered to African students in order to increase Turkey's cultural influence on the continent. This will include increasing academic cooperation between universities and establishing academic and cultural exchange programs.[37]

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33 Ali Engin Oba, *"Türkiye'nin Afrika Politikası ve Türk Dünyası",* Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://www.tasam.org/trTR/Icerik/29884/turkiyenin_afrika_politikasi_ve_turk_dunyasi

34 Mehmet Özkan and Birol Akgün, "*Turkey's Opening to Africa",* The Journal of Modern African Studies, 48 (4), 2010, p. 533.

35 Ebru Oğurlu, *"1998-2018 Arası Dönemde Türkiye'nin Afrika Deneyimi: Fikirden Eyleme Bir Dönüşüm."* (Avrasya Etüdleri 54.2, 2018) p.74.

36 Ibid, p.76.

37 Ibid, p.78.

In brief, the African Initiative Plan aimed to establish a strong relation with African countries in political, economic and social aspects. Additionally, it aimed to create a systematic and progressive development in Turkish-African relations. However, the African Initiative Plan process couldn't be achieved in the desired level because of the domestic political and economic problems of Turkey.[38] Turkey faced a major economic crisis in the early 2000s after the Marmara earthquake in 1999, and foreign policy agendas could not find the necessary support. Therefore, the African Initiative Policy remained only as a plan. According to retired South African ambassador Tom Wheeler, who closely follows Turkish-African relations, the lack of high-level political support behind this plan also caused negative outcomes in the initiative plan.[39]

§ 3.3 Relations with the African Union

The Organization of African Unity was established in 1963, founded on the principles of African states that had gained independence from colonialism in Africa. In the post-Cold War era, the organization aimed to address the continent's conflicts, political instability, economic issues, and epidemics by becoming more active in diplomacy, finance, and social affairs. In 2002, the organization was renamed the African Union and set new goals of promoting political, social, and economic integration, accelerating development, maintaining peace and stability, and upholding the principles of democracy and good governance..[40]

The African Union, which is the common platform where African countries meet, tries to find solutions and produce policies in accordance

38 Melek Fırat, *"Türkiye- Afrika İlişkilerinin Tarihselarka Planı ve Afrika Açılımında Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının Rolü",* (Uluslararası Türk-Afrika Kongresi, TASAM, 2007), p.4.

39 Tom Wheeler, "*Ankara to Africa: Turkey's outreach since 2005",* (South African Journal of International Affairs 18:1, 2011), p.46.

40 For detailed information, visit the official page of the African Union, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://au.int/en/overview

with the principle of "African solutions to African problems" for every problem encountered in the continent. According to the official website of the African Union, the aims are stated as:

- *"Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and their people,*
- *Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States,*
- *Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent,*
- *Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples,*
- *Encourage international cooperation,*
- *Promote peace, security, and stability on the continent,*
- *Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance,*
- *Promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments,*
- *Establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations,*
- *Promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies,*
- *Invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our Continent, in the building of the African Union."*[41]

The union has a long-term policy plan, Agenda 2063, in which there is a strategic framework of the socio-economic transformation of the continent.[42] Agenda 2063 aims to prepare Africa for growth over the next 50 years. The ultimate goal is to secure the three ideals of *"unity, prosperity and peace for all its citizens."* It includes three steps: short-term plan (10 years), medium-term plan (20-25 years), and long-term plan (25-50 years). In other words, Agenda 2063 aims *"an integrated prosperous*

41 For detailed information, visit the official page of the African Union, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://au.int/en/overview

42 For detailed information, visit the official page of the African Union, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://au.int/agenda2063/overview

and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena."[43] In spite of the long-term planning, Agenda 2063 is criticized for not establishing inclusive regional institutions and not strengthening national institutions during the short-term perspective era.[44]

Turkey's relationship with the African Union was limited until 2002. In that year, Turkey attended the African Union summits as a guest country. In 2005, the ruling JDP government declared that year to be the "Year of Africa," a significant step in the shift of Turkey's foreign policy towards Africa. As a result, Turkey's status within the African Union was upgraded to that of an "observer state."[45]

In 2008, the African Union declared Turkey a strategic partner of Africa. In addition to this decision, the "First Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit" was organized in the same year in Istanbul.[46] 50 African countries participated in the summit with high-level representation. [47] "The Istanbul Declaration on Turkey-Africa Partnership: Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future'' started to be implemented. According to the declaration, "intergovernmental cooperation; trade and investment; agriculture, agribusiness, rural development, water resources management, small and medium scale enterprises; health; peace and security; infrastructure, energy and transport; culture, tourism and education; media, information and communication

43 For detailed information, visit the official page of the African Union, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://au.int/agenda2063/overview

44 Kaitlyn DeGhetto, Jacob R. Gray, and Moses N. Kiggundu. "*The African Union's Agenda 2063: aspirations, challenges, and opportunities for management research.*" (Africa Journal of Management 2.1, 2016), p.103.

45 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-and-the-african-union.en.mfa

46 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-and-the-african-union.en.mfa

47 Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası*, 279.

technology and environment were determined as the priority cooperation fields".[48] Moreover, in the same days as the first summit, "Turkey African Business Forum" was also organized by Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK) in order to promote Turkey's economic power in the African business community.[49]

In 2010 "The African Strategy" was announced by the Prime Ministry to implement a significant policy which aims to strengthen the partnership between Turkey and African Union countries.[50] In addition to announcing the strategy, "First High-Level Officials Meetings of Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit" was also organized in 2010. In the summit, "Turkey-Africa Partnership Implementation Plan" was declared by both sides.[51] Parallel with the increasing attention to the relationship, the importance of the coordination and cooperation plans have also increased.

"Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Program" was held in 2014 in Equatorial Guinea in the context of "A New Model of Partnership to Enhance Sustainable Development and Integration".[52] Before this summit, Turkey declared that the relationship between Turkey and African countries evolved from the 'opening to Africa', to a "strategic partnership with Africa".[53] Moreover, the "Third Turkey Africa Partnership Summit" was also organized in

48 For detailed information, visit the official page of Turkey Africa Forum, Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://turkeyafricaforum.org/about-overview.html

49 For detailed information, visit the official page of DEİK, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.deik.org.tr/turkiye-afrika-is-konseyleri

50 For detailed information, visit the official page of Resmi Gazete, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/03/20100326-16.htm

51 Serhat Orakçı, "Türkiye Afrika İlişkileri", (İnsamer, 2018), p. 176.

52 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-and-the-african-union.en.mfa

53 Orakçı, *Türkiye* , 179.

Istanbul in 2021.[54]

At the third summit, a declaration was published which focused on three main issues: (1)peace, security and justice, (2) human-focused development and (3) strong and sustainable growth.[55] These focus points will be implemented in the context of 5 strategic fields from 2022 to 2026: "Peace, Security and Governance", "Trade, Investment and Industry", "Education, Science-Technology-Innovation skills, Youth and Women Development", "Infrastructure Development and Agriculture" and "Promoting Resilient Health Systems." Furthermore, it has been announced in the declaration that the next summit will be held in Africa.[56]

§ 3.4 Economic Relations with Africa

Turkey's economic relations with Africa have strengthened significantly since the start of the JDP era. This is due in part to increasing stability in Africa and economic developments in Turkey. There are three main aspects to consider when examining the economic developments between Turkey and African countries: the increasing volume of trade,

54 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Directorate of Communication, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/english/duyurular/detay/third-turkiye-africa-partnership-summit-25-november-2021#:~:text=T%C3%BCrkiye%2DAfrica%20Partnership%20Summit%20(December,%2D18%2C%202021%2C%20Istanbul)&text=The%20Third%20Turkey%2DAfrica%20Partnership,and%20the%20African%20Union%20Commission.

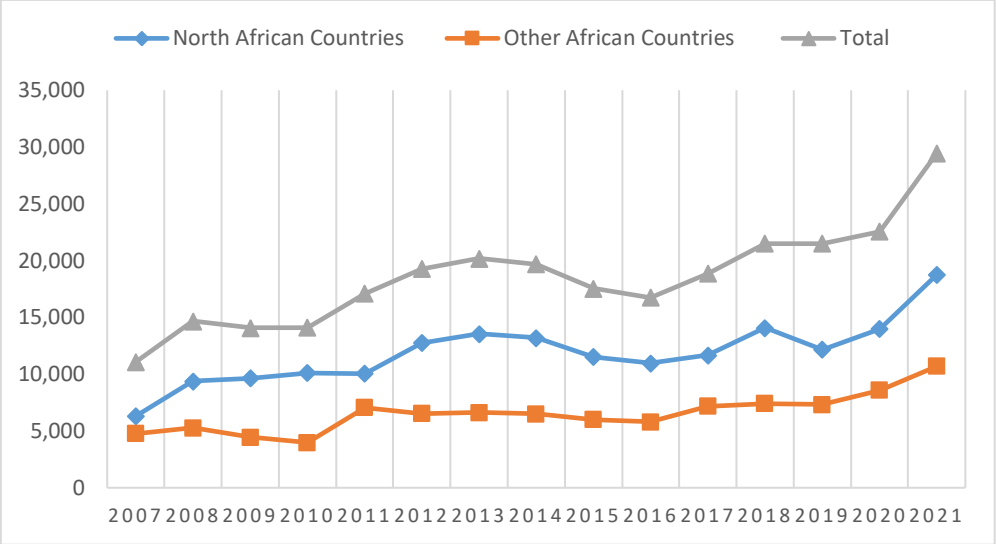
55 For detailed information, visit the Anadolu Agency, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/turkey-africa-partnership-summit-adopts-joint-declaration/2451160

56 For detailed information, visit the Anadolu Agency, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/turkey-africa-partnership-summit-adopts-joint-declaration/2451160

financial aid programs from Turkey, and initiatives for economic integration..[57]

As can be seen in Table 4, Turkey's commercial relations and total trade with Africa have increased significantly since 2005, when the Year of Africa was announced. This figure increased by almost 30% in 2021 compared to the previous year and reached 29,442 million dollars. With this increase, it is aimed to increase the trade volume in a way that will benefit both sides such as development, investment and employment opportunities and to enable a change and transformation in the African economy. [58]

Table 3.1:Foreign Trade between Turkey and African Countries (Million Dollars)



Source: Turkish Statistical Institute[59]

57 Ayodele Odusola, "*Income Inequality Trends in sub-Saharan Africa Overview*" (UNDP, 2017), p.24.

58 Chigozie Enwere and Mesut Yılmaz, *"Turkey's Strategic Economic Relations with Africa: Trends and Challenges",* Journal of Economics and Political Economy, 1 (2), December 2014, p. 226-227.

59 For detailed information, visit the page of Turkish Statistical Institute, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=dis-ticaret-104&dil=1

According to the statistics, Turkey's export items to African countries are iron, steel, machines, automotive, electrical devices, plastics, energy, cement, stone and soil products, flour, and animal and vegetable oils. It is seen that iron-steel, machinery and automotive sectors have the largest portion among the top 10 product groups in Turkey's exports to African countries. On the other hand, Turkey's import items from African countries are gold, jewelry, energy, plastics, cocoa, automotive, fertilizers, oilseeds and inorganic chemicals. Gold imports correspond to approximately 30% of Turkey's imports in Africa.[60]

Turkey has entered into free trade agreements with several African countries in an effort to improve its commercial relations with the continent. These agreements were signed with Tunisia in 2005, Morocco in 2006, and Egypt in 2007, and negotiations are ongoing with Democratic Congo, Sudan, Cameroon, Seychelles, Libya, Djibouti, and Chad. In addition, Turkey is also working towards signing agreements with Algeria, South Africa, and the African-Caribbean-Pacific countries. Turkish Trade Counselors in various African countries, including Angola, Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Ghana, South Africa, Cameroon, Kenya, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zambia, have played a key role in maintaining these relationships. Overall, Turkey's trade with Africa has increased significantly since 2005, reaching almost 30% in 2021.[61]

Turkey has established economic relationships with African countries through the use of free trade agreements, the "Agreement on the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments," and the "Avoiding Double Taxation Agreement." To institutionalize these relationships,

60 For detailed information, visit the page of Board and Business Councils, Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://turkeyafricaforum.org/assets/files/2021-Afrika-Notu.pdf

61 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Trade, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://ticaret.gov.tr/yurtdisi-teskilati/afrika

Turkey has signed a "Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments Agreement" with Ethiopia, Morocco, Libya, Senegal, and Tunisia, and a "Double Taxation Agreement" with Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Kenya, South Africa, Tunisia, and Sudan. In an effort to further strengthen these relations, Turkish Trade Counselors in various African countries have played a crucial role in maintaining connections.[62]

Financial aid is the second dimension of the economic cooperation between Turkey and Africa. The aid provided to African countries since 2005 is one of the strongest dynamics of Turkey's African policy.[63] Under the name of humanitarian and developmental aid, Turkey's aid policy which has been provided to Africa in the last 10 years by both state institutions and non-governmental organizations covers different fields such as healthcare, education, agriculture, environment and infrastructure. Total official aid was estimated to be 3 billion dollars.[64] The trade volume, which was 5.3 billion dollars in 2003, increased to 34.5 billion dollars at the end of 2021. It is aimed to create a trading volume of 50 billion dollars between Turkey and Africa in the short term.[65]

Turkey has increased its efforts to promote economic integration and institutionalization with Africa, especially in East and West Africa. In 2008, Turkey applied for membership in the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund and was accepted as a member that same year. With the approval of relevant agreements by the Turkish

62 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Trade, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://ticaret.gov.tr/yurtdisi-teskilati/afrika

63 Özkan, *Turkey's African Experience: From Venture to Normalisation*, p. 8.

64 Başbakan Yardımcısı Çavuşoğlu: Afrika'ya sağlanan kalkınma yardımı 3 milyar dolara yaklaştı", Anadolu Ajansı, Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/basbakan-yardimcisi-cavusoglu-afrikaya-saglanan-kalkinma-yardimi-3-milyar-dolara-yaklasti/875903;

65 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/tarim-ve-orman-bakani-kirisci-afrika-ile-toplam-ticaret-hedefi-50-milyar-dolar/2599558

Grand National Assembly, Turkey joined both the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund as the 26th member from outside the region in 2013. Turkey is also a member of the International Partners Forum of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development, which aims to develop a regional identity and combat poverty through sustainable development programs in East Africa.[66]

Turkey's economic initiatives towards Africa have been led by state institutions as well as business representatives such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchange of Turkey (TOBB) and the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK). To further advance economic and business relations with Africa, DEIK has established Business Councils with 45 African countries, with the aim of creating effective tools to achieve economic goals outlined in the Africa Action Plan. TOBB has also played a role in these efforts, working towards the establishment of Chambers of Commerce as part of the plan. Overall, these initiatives are designed to help consolidate and strengthen economic ties between Turkey and Africa.[67]

In addition to the activities and contribution of DEİK, the Turkey-Africa Chamber was established in 2015 with the cooperation of TOBB and the "Union of African Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Professions" (UACCIAP), as stipulated in the Africa Action Plan. Among the objectives of the chamber are "coordinating and developing the cooperation between the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchange of Turkey (TOBB) and UACCIAP, establishing a permanent

66 For detailed information, visit the official page of IGAD, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://igad.int/about/

67 Business Councils were established in the following countries: Angola, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Egypt, Mauritania, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Benin, Burundi, Chad, Gabon, Guinea, Morocco, Kenya, Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Uganda, Algeria, Ivory Coast, Gambia, South Africa, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Namibia, Nigeria, Mali, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zambia. Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.deik.org.tr/ulke-bazli-is-konseyleri

dialogue mechanism between the Turkish and African business circles, and promoting Turkish-African trade, investments and technology transfer".[68]

For the 2022-2023 period, 24 Target Countries and 23 Priority Countries have been determined by the Ministry of Trade. Among the 24 target countries, there are 5 African countries: Ethiopia, the Republic of South Africa, Nigeria, Libya and Egypt. Among the 23 priority countries, there are 8 African countries, namely Angola, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania and Morocco. In this context, the main objective of the Ministry of Commerce is to increase exports to Africa, and to carry out a comprehensive study on products for which Turkey's competitive power is high.[69]The main aims of the Ministry of Trade in Africa are also stated on the website of the ministry:

- *"Opening branches or representative offices of Turkish banks in African countries in order to transfer export costs more quickly and safely, and to carry out the necessary works with other relevant institutions to facilitate banking transactions.*
- *Continuing diplomatic activities in order to better exploit the export potential for African countries.*
- *Increasing Turkey's exports to African countries with the help of target product strategy."*[70]

§ 3.5 The Role of Fetullahist Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) in the Relationship between Turkey and Africa

Another NGO in Africa was the Gülen Movement which came to be known as the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) after the military

68 Oba, "Türk Diplomasisi ve Afrika", Accessed on July 23, 2022,http://www.tasam.org/tr-TR/Icerik/1359/

69 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Trade, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://ticaret.gov.tr/ihracat/pazara-giris/hedef-ve-oncelikli-ulkeler

70 For detailed information, visit the page of Turkey-Africa Forum, Accessed on July 23, 2022, http://turkeyafricaforum.org/tr/bilateral-relations.html

coup attempt on Jul 15, 2016. FETÖ, which emerged with an imam named Fetullah Gülen under the guise of an Islamic community in Turkey, has undergone many transformations and has turned into a criminal organization with international connections[71]. The main purpose of the organization was to glorify the figure of Fetullah Gülen[72]. As in many messianic movements, Fetullah Gülen did not refrain from inciting the emergence of movements and giving fatwas and directions that would distort religion. With this "heresy", the organization clearly separated from the mainstream Islamic movements in Turkey[73].

FETÖ expanded its activities during 1980s through education programs in Turkey. One of the most significant activities of the organization was the formation of student houses in which university students lived together. The organization aimed to increase its effectiveness by using alternative education methods in their houses and their educational institutions[74]. Educational activities of the organization were not limited to Turkey. The Turkic Republics, Balkan countries, the Middle East and Africa were the main targeted regions of the organization. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian region was chosen as the first field of activity for FETÖ. The presence of the Muslim and Turkish population in this region and the similarity of the cultural structure allowed the organization to increase its power in this region[75].

Like other Islamic NGOs and the Diyanet, FETÖ had also implemented a religion-based strategy in Africa with its use of education programs to enhance its power. Its activities in Sub-Saharan Africa started as of the late 1990s. In addition to humanitarian aid projects,

71 Enes Bayraklı - Ufuk Ulutaş, *Fetö'nün Anatomisi* (Ankara: SETA Yayınları, 2017), p. 25-52.

72 Mehmet Ali Büyükkara vd., *Gülen Yapılanması* (İstanbul: İsam Yayınları, 2017), p. 65-99.

73 Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Başkanlığı (DİYKB), Kendi Dilinden Fetö: Örgütlü Bir Din İstismarı (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2017), p.73-107.

74 Bayraklı & Ulutaş, *Fetö'nün Anatomisi*, 48,49.

75 Ibid, 14,15.

FETÖ had focused on educational activities abroad to establish an international network[76]. In 2013, FETÖ had over 100 schools in 50 various countries in Africa. When the Turkish government decided to control the activities of the organization in 2013, the schools of the organization were closed and transferred to other authorities in Africa[77].After the coup attempt, the Turkish government organized meetings with the African leaders in order to either transfer the FETÖ-run schools to Turkish authorities or to shut them down. In this process, the Turkish Maarif Foundation has played a crucial role in controlling the FETÖ-run schools or opening alternative schools to promote Turkish culture[78]. According to the official statistics, the foundation provides educational opportunities to 50,000 students in 49 countries[79].

The Turkish Maarif Foundation was established just before the coup attempt in June 2016 with the adoption of Law No.6721 by the Turkish Grand National Assembly[80]. The purpose of the foundation was determined in the law as *"to award scholarships in all educational processes from preschool to University education, to open facilities such as educational organizations and dormitories, to train educators to be assigned to these organizations including domestic organizations, to conduct scientific research, and to carry out research and development studies, publish academic works and develop methods and conduct other*

76 Celaleddin Çelik, "*Örgütlü Dini Gruplarda Hegemonik Dönüşüm: Nurculuktan Post-Nurculuğa, Cemaatten Örgüte Gülenist Yapının Sosyolojik Kodları", İnsan & Toplum Dergisi* 7/1 (2017); Mehmet Şahin vd., *Uluslararası Bir Tehdit Olarak FETÖ* (Ankara: Polis Akademisi Yayınları, 2018).

77 Gabrielle Angey, "*The gülen movement and the transfer of a political conflict from Turkey to Senegal.*" (Politics, religion & ideology 19.1, 2018), p. 53-68.

78 Birol Akgün, and Mehmet Özkan. "*Turkey's Entrance to International Education.*" (Insight Turkey 22.1, 2020), p.59-71.

79 Maarif July, 2022 Bulletin, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.turkiyemaarif.org/uploads/MaarifBultenEN/MaarifBultenEN21.pdf

80 For detailed information, visit the offical page of Resmi Gazete, Law No:6721 Türkiye Maarif Vakfı Kanunu, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/06/20160628-17.htm

educational activities which are in accordance with the laws and regulations of that country where these are operated in order to service and improve formal and informal education by taking common human values and knowledge as a basis"[81].

After the coup attempt, the Turkish Maarif Foundation has established an official contact with 104 countries. Three-fourths of FETO affiliated schools were completely transferred to the control of the foundation all around the world. According to the official statistics of the foundation, 234 FETO affiliated schools were transferred in 20 countries and 172 new schools were established in 29 countries. In the context of Africa, the Turkish Maarif Foundation started to control 118 FETO affiliated schools in 16 different countries since 2016. On the other hand, FETO affiliated schools continue their activities in 17 African countries. In addition to taking control of FETO affiliated schools, the foundation has also opened new schools in Africa. According to the official statistics of the foundation the number of schools in Africa has increased dramatically in the last 5 years. The number of educational institutions in Africa increased from 18 in 2016 to 76 in 2017, 125 in 2018, 144 in 2019, 151 in 2020 and 175 in 2021. Moreover, the foundation also runs 18 student dormitories in the continent.[82]

The Turkish government benefited from the Gülen movement as "groundbreakers" in establishing Turkish-African relations by finding new markets for Turkish firms. In addition to the economic aspects of this relationship, FETO-oriented NGOs found opportunities to establish schools in different parts of Africa. [83] The Fetullah Terrorist Organization was at the forefront of educational projects of Turkey in foreign countries

81 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Maarif Foundation, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://turkiyemaarif.org/page/51-TMF-Law-11

82 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Maarif Foundation, Accessed on July 23, 2022, https://turkiyemaarif.org/page/524-Turkish-Maarif-Foundation-12

83 İpek, Volkan, and Gonca Biltekin. *"Turkey's foreign policy implementation in sub-Saharan Africa: A post-international approach."* New Perspectives on Turkey 49 (2013), p. 121-15

with approximately 100 schools in Sub-Saharan Africa. The first schools were opened in Algeria (1994), Senegal (1997), Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania (1998) where there was an official presence of Turkey with its embassies. Interestingly, the FETO affiliated schools served as unofficial embassies before official diplomatic relations in Rwanda, Togo, Benin, Liberia, Malawi, the Central African Republic and other countries. Moreover, it controlled and administered a university in Abuja, Nigeria, which is called the Nigerian Turkish Nile University. [84]

The Turkish government started to initiate a policy of pressuring to close down the FETO affiliated schools in African countries. After the coup attempt in 2016, the pressure to close down or transfer FETO affiliated schools to the Turkish authorities increased on the African countries and its leaders. The educational instituitions of FETO organized festivals, fairs, language courses, trips to Turkey and provided scholarship programs in Africa. In other words, they worked as a cultural diplomacy instrument in Africa on the behalf of the state.[85]

FETO established strong ties with local African elites in accordance with a strategy. A Gülenist NGO, Kimse Yok Mu which was founded to support the victims of the 1999 earthquakes in Turkey, participated in the African policy of FETO in 2006 in the form of humanitarian assistance programs in 43 countries. According to the official statistics of the association, it mobilized almost $20 million for the projects in Africa in 2011. Like other NGOs, the association also built nearly 2,000 water wells and organized medical support programs for African people. In addition to the humanitarian aid programs, Kimse Yok Mu association had a political role in the continent. In 2015, the African Union's Commissioner for Political Affairs signed a cooperation agreement with the association to support its activities all around the

84 Donelli, *Persuading through Culture, Values, and Ideas*, 119.

85 Czerep, Jedrzej. "*Turkey's Soft Power Crisis in Africa.*" The Polish Institute of International Affairs 3 (2019), p. 173.

continent. After the coup attempt, Kimse Yok Mu association was closed due to its inherent relation with FETO.

After the coup attempt, the influence of FETO gradually decreased in Africa. However, its negative effects continue to damage the relationship between Turkey and some African countries. In addition to its negative impacts on the bilateral relations with certain states which reject to close FETO affiliated schools, the soft power and strategy of cultural diplomacy has been negatively affected by this process.[86]

§ 3.6 Conclusion

Turkey's relationship with Africa can be divided into three different periods. The first period covers the time during which the Ottoman Empire had relations with Africa, until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. The second period, from 1923 to 1998, saw a decline in the relationship between Turkey and Africa. The third and current period, beginning in 1998, marks a resurgence in relations between the two regions.

Some scholars have examined the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Africa in the context of colonialism. Despite the idea that this relationship was "strong and innocent," some argue that the Ottoman Empire pursued policies that supported colonialist views in the late 19th century. These scholars describe the Ottoman Empire's activities as imperialism, but also highlight the differences between Ottoman imperialism and the more aggressive forms of imperialism practiced by Western powers in Africa. While they examine Ottoman imperialism,

86 Idib, 173.

they emphasize that it was not on par with the imperialistic actions of the West in Africa.[87]

With the establishment of the republic, the relationship between Turkey and Africa was interrupted with a few exceptions. Until the end of 20th century, although Turkey had not completely distanced itself from Africa, its activities on the continent had remained limited. After 1998 and the beginning of the JDP era, the relationship between Turkey and Africa transformed into a new phase. In 1998, "the Opening up to Africa policy" was accepted and the year 2005 was declared as the Year of Africa. Turkey's African foreign policy began to change in a positive way. Humanitarian aid and development programs along with an important interest in trade are the main elements of this transformed foreign policy towards Africa. On the other hand, religion and religious institutions were the other key elements in the policy.

Turkey's relationship with Africa has undergone several significant changes since the beginning of "the Opening up to Africa policy" in 1998. As part of this policy, Turkey has actively engaged with international and regional organizations in Africa, such as the African Union. As a result, Turkey has gone from being a guest member to an observer member to a strategic partner with the African Union. In addition to strengthening political ties, the number of Turkish embassies in Africa has also increased, going from 12 in 2002 to 43 in 2021. African countries have also shown interest in deepening their relationship with Turkey, with the number of African embassies in Turkey increasing from 10 in 2008 to 37 in 2021.

The relationship between Turkey and African countries has seen significant progress in the economic realm since the implementation of the African Initiative Plan in 1998. This progress has been particularly

87 Makdisi. *Ottoman Orientalism*, 768-796.

noticeable after 2005, when financial aid programs, free trade agreements, and economic integration policies were put in place to strengthen the economic ties between Turkey and Africa. As a result of these efforts, trade between Turkey and African countries increased from $11,082 million in 2007 to $29,442 by the end of 2021.

The FETO organization played a significant role in the relationship between Turkey and African countries until the coup attempt in 2016. During this time, FETO actively supported Turkey's African policy through providing humanitarian aid and educational assistance to African countries. However, after the coup attempt, many FETO-affiliated NGOs and schools in Africa were either closed or transferred to the Turkish state through diplomatic negotiations between Turkey and African countries. The majority of the schools were transferred to the Turkish Maarif Foundation, but there were some exceptions in certain African countries.

Turkey's relations with Africa, which were interrupted with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, have been steadily improving since the beginning of the 21st century. These improvements are seen in all areas, including political, economic, and social policies. One reason for Turkey's rapid success in Africa is that it has not been involved in the exploitation of the continent's resources. Additionally, shared heritage and culture have contributed to the improvement of relations. The use of Islam, a dominant religion in Africa, in Turkish foreign policy and the promotion of faith-based diplomacy have also had a positive impact on the relationship between Turkey and Africa.

4

Diyanet in Turkish Foreign Policy

The relationship between religion and foreign policy has long been a controversial issue. One contentious aspect of this relationship is the ways in which state institutions offer religious services. In Turkey, the state has traditionally provided religious services as a public service. During the Ottoman Empire, Islam was the state religion and the highest religious authority, known as the Şeyhülislam, oversaw the administration and organization of religious affairs and services. However, during the 19th century's Tanzimat era, the Şeyhülislam's jurisdiction was limited to religious services. After the transition to a cabinet system, the Şeyhülislam was represented in the cabinet as the "Minister of Religious Affairs and Charitable Foundations."[1]

Before the foundation of the republic, the government of the Turkish Grand National Assembly established a ministry under the same name as that in the Ottoman government on 3 May 1920, The Ministry of

1 İştar Gözaydın, *"A Religious Administration to Secure Secularism: The Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey",* (Marburg Journal of Religion, 2006), p. 2.

Religious Affairs and Charitable Foundations (Şer'iye ve Evkaf Vekaleti), with the aim of controlling and administering religious services[2]. After the foundation of the republic, the ruling elites had two major problems: (i) the multi-ethnic structure of the population and (ii) the effects of religion in social and political life[3]. The first ethnic diversity problem of the population was solved by following a political and social agenda in order to create a uniform homogenous Turkish nation by the ruling elites. In the 1924 Constitution, being a Turk refers to having a Turkish citizenship despite the ethnic diversity in the society[4].

The population exchange between Turkey and Greece in 1923 had the important role of creating a religiously homogeneous society in the Turkish Republic[5]. When it comes to the non-Turk Muslim minorities, during the early republican era, nationalism was used as a tool of assimilation for these minorities in the society[6]. To solve the second problem, that is, the effects of religion, state elites had replaced religion with nationalism. The religion-based unification of the social structure transformed into the national unification of the population. Moreover, the instrumentalization of religion by strengthening the understanding of the nation-state was another strategy of the ruling elites. In the Muslim-majority society, the ruling elites didn't want to radicalize the people against the republican reforms.

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2 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Diyanet, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.diyanet.gov.tr/en-US/Institutional/Detail//1/establishment-and-a-brief-history

3 Muhammet Habib Saçmalı, *"Compliance and negotiation: The role of Turkish Diyanet in the production of Friday Khutbasi",* (Boğaziçi University, 2013), p. 10.

4 The 1924 Constitution, Article 88.; The 1961 Constitution, Article 54.; The 1982 Constitution, Article 66. 1961 and 1982 Constitutions define with the same sentences: "Everyone who is bound to the Turkish state by ties of citizenship is Turk,", "Türk Devletine vatandaşlık bağı ile bağlı olan herkes Türktür."

5 Onur Yıldırım , "*Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange ofPopulations, 1922-1934",* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p.143-169.

6 Christian Rumpf, *Türk Anayasa Hukukuna Giriş,* (Ankara: Friedrick-Naumann Vakfı Yayını, 1995), p. 49-51.

§ 4.1 Establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs

The relationship between the state and religious institutions in Turkey has always been complex. While the state was founded on secular principles, it has always sought to control religious affairs. One significant transformation in this regard was the establishment of the Diyanet, an institution designed to regulate the social and religious sphere and facilitate the transition from Ottoman religious heritage to a secular political landscape. Additionally, Turkish nationalism during the early republican period was based on secularism and positivism rather than religion[7].

The establishment of the Diyanet, or the Presidency of Religious Affairs, marked a significant change in the role of religion in Turkey. Previously, the Caliphate had held significant power and influence, but with the establishment of the Diyanet, the government sought to exert more control over religious affairs [8]. This shift was seen as an effort to redefine and control Islam within the new regime, and it was implemented alongside the abolition of the Caliphate.

Emphasis on secularism and national solidarity in the constitution demonstrates the role of religion in the early periods of the republic. The main tasks of the Diyanet could be ranked in four points during this period: (I) the purification of religion, (II) taking away the role of Islam in politics, (III) strengthening Turkish nationhood, (IV) using the legitimacy of religion in the process of secularization[9] . The Diyanet was instrumental in the separation of Muslim Turks living in Turkey from the global Muslim community, the 'ummah', as Mustafa Kemal aimed. According to Barkey, the Diyanet became a national institution, with a

7 İştar Gözaydın, *"Diyanet and Politic.",* (The Muslim World 98, 2008), p. 217.

8 Ibid, 218.

9 Saçmalı, *Compliance and Negotiation*, 27.

forceful message of the nation-building process of the early republicans[10].

On 3 March 1924, state and religious relations in Turkey started a new era[11]. Three important and radical reforms: the Abolition of the Caliphate, Abolition of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Charitable Foundations (Şer'iye ve Evkaf Vekaleti), and the Law on the Unification of Education were passed in the Grand National Assembly. The establishment of the Diyanet after the abolition of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Charitable Foundations (Şer'iye ve Evkaf Vekaleti), was a step towards the restriction of the role of institutionalized religion in the public sphere[12]. In other words, the state elites took control of religion by institutionalizing religion. The secularization agenda of the ruling elites was strengthened by the reformist policies during that era. The responsibilities of Diyanet were not only the control of mosques in the country but also the control of dervish lodges and the religious personnel in small towns. In 1925, after the closing of dervish lodges, the target of Diyanet turned into the control and organization of religious officials and mosques[13].

§ 4.2 The Development of Diyanet

The removal of Islam from the Constitution as the state religion in 1928 had a number of impacts on various aspects of society. State institutions such as the Türk Tarih Kurumu (TTK) and Türk Dil Kurumu

10 Barkey, "*Rethinking Ottoman Management of Diversity: What Can We Learn for Modern Turkey?",* (Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 27.

11 With the Law no. 5634 Diyanet İşleri Reisliği will be renamed as Diyanet Işleri Başkanlığı in 1950.1924 Anayasası, Şeriye ve Evkaf ve Erkanı harbiyei umumiye vekaletlerinin ilgasına dair kanun, No. 429.

12 Gözaydın, *Diyanet and Politics*, 217.

13 Ayşe Kadıoğlu, *"The Pathologies of Turkish Republican Laicism",* (Philosophy & Social Criticism, 2010), p. 492-93.

(TDK), which were established in the 1930s and 1940s, were used to create a Turkish national history that was based on a secular understanding rather than a religious one. Additionally, the 1934 law on surnames aimed to eliminate religious hierarchy from social life by banning titles such as hoca, şeyh, and alim. These measures reflected the influence of Turkish nationalism on the country[14].

During the early republican period, the government implemented policies to secularize and modernize society through the control of religion by state institutions such as the Diyanet. These policies included the Turkification of the call to prayer, the creation of a national history based on a secular understanding, and the prohibition of religious titles in social life. The Diyanet played a key role in supporting these efforts to remove religion from political life until 1947.[15]

With the beginning of the 1950s, religious rhetoric and discourses had appeared in the political arena within the multi-party system[16]. Between 1960 and 1980, the Diyanet was seen as the center for official Islam, thanks to the 1961 constitution which had expanded the religious freedoms in Turkey[17]. During the right-wing government era, the importance of Diyanet had increased day by day. The Turkey Diyanet Foundation was established in 1975 under the right-wing coalition government which includes the National Salvation Party with its Islamic agenda[18].

14 With the Law no 2525, all Turkish citizens required to adopt the use of fixed hereditary surmanes in 1934, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.2525.pdf

15 Gözaydın, *Diyanet and Politics,* p.218.

16 İsmail Kara, "*Şeyh Efendinin Rüyasındaki Türkiye",* (Dergah, 2021), 94.

17 Ibid, 104.

18 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/kurumsal/

In the last period of the Ottoman Empire and the era of the government of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, foundations were controlled by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Charitable Foundations (Şer'iye ve Evkaf Vekaleti). After the foundation of the republic, foundations and religious affairs were separated from each other and the primary mission of Diyanet was specified as the administration and control of religious services. The separation negatively affected Diyanet, because the allocation from the state budget remained insufficient during this era. With the changes in the law which organized the structure of the foundations during 1960s, the president of Diyanet at that time, Dr. Lütfi Doğan, founded the Turkey Diyanet Foundation. According to the articles of Diyanet's foundation deed, the main purpose of the foundation is supporting the services provided by Diyanet. Although Diyanet would aim to provide social services that are beneficial for the whole of society, religious services would still be given the priority. Moreover, activities such as establishing research centers, publishing on Islamic sciences and art, dealing with the religious and cultural life of Turks outside Turkey, helping the poor, providing educational scholarships and opening student dormitories are among the other services of the foundation[19]. In accordance with these aims, the foundation has enhanced Diyanet's areas of responsibility, not only in terms of the local people and mosques but also in terms of its foreign policy. The emphasis on "religious and cultural life of Turks outside Turkey" can be considered as a turning point for the Diyanet. In 1978, the Turkish Consulates for Religious Services were established[20].

19 Turkey Diyanet Foundation, visit official page of Islam Ansiklopedisi, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/diyanet-vakfi-turkiye-diyanet-vakfi

20 Gazi Erdem, *"Religious Services in Turkey: From the Office of Şeyhülislām to Diyanet."* (The Muslim World 98, 2008), pp. 199-215; Zana Çitak, "*Between 'Turkish Islam'and 'French Islam': The role of Diyanet in the conseil Français du culte musulman.*" (Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 36, 2010), p. 619-634.

The emergence of Islamic rhetoric as the unofficial ideology of Turkey was another important factor in the increasing role of Diyanet[21]. In spite of its domestic agenda, the Diyanet aimed to meet the needs of Turkish immigrants abroad in the beginning of the 1980s. Diyanet became a prominent actor in foreign policy by controlling and constructing mosques with the foundation of Diyanet Religious Affairs Turkish-Islamic Union (DITIB) in Germany in 1984[22]. DITIB turned into a center for the Muslims who lived in European countries. In their official website, the main aims of DITIB are stated as carrying out religious, social, cultural activities and sporting events throughout Germany[23].

According to the official report of the Diyanet on its activities in foreign countries, Diyanet appointed 720 imams in 1991[24]. 434 of them were appointed to the mosques in Germany. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey paid the salaries of the imams who were appointed to the DITIB-mosques[25]. These imams and religious staff had a diplomatic passport by representing the state's understanding towards the diaspora and by providing a Turkish-Islam synthesis. In other words, with the foundation of DITIB, the Diyanet increased its effectiveness in foreign countries, especially in Germany. The state started to consider the Diyanet as a foreign policy actor which could be used to meet the needs of the Turkish diaspora, with the support of DITIB[26].

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21 Gökhan Çetinsaya, *"Rethinking nationalism and Islam: some preliminary notes on the roots of "Turkish-Islamic Synthesisi" in modern Turkish political thought*" (The Muslim World 89, 1999), p. 350-376.

22 Çitak, *Turkish Islam*, 619-634.

23 For detailed information, visit the official page of DITIB, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.ditib.de/default1.php?id=5&sid=8&lang=en

24 Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Faaliyet Raporu 1992, p. 51.

25 Ibid, 82.

26 Zana Çitak, et al. "*The Transformation of the State–Religion Relationship Under the JDP: The Case of Diyanet.*" Turkey's New State in the Making: Transformations in Legality, Economy and Coercion (2020), p. 167-187.

According to a religious attaché in Germany, DITIB was seen as a state institution directly administered from Turkey. *"DITIB is a state institution. The number of citizens who love their homeland and nation, apply their customs and traditions, and who want to raise their children within this framework without being assimilated in practice and moral values are very important there"*[27]. In addition to the protective role of DITIB, Diyanet's external services report in 1991 indicates that Diyanet focused on the Turkish-Muslims' marriages to non-Muslim foreigners because of the issues of "unlawful cohabitation and the religion of the child"[28].

While the Constitution of 1961 designed the Diyanet as a constitutional institution, the Constitution of 1982 gave Diyanet a very critical role and position within the structure of Turkish policy. According to Article 136 of the Constitution of Turkey, *Diyanet, which is within the General Administration, fulfils the duties specified in its special law by staying out of all political views and thoughts in line with the principle of laicism and aiming at national solidarity and integration*. Constitutional emphasis on laicism and national solidarity indicates the main role of the Diyanet since the beginning of the Republic. In other words, Diyanet has been considered as a critical institution with a leading role in the national unity of Turkey since the beginning of the Turkish Republic[29].

Nevertheless, the military interventions in 1960 and 1980 legally advanced the societal power, reach and influence of Diyanet and made the institution a more powerful ideological apparatus of the state[30].

27 Murat Çakır, *"Lobiciler, İslamistler, Millliyetçiler ve Antiırkçılık",* (Düsseldorf: GDF yayınları, 1998), p.41.

28 Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Faaliyet Raporu 1992, p.23.

29 Ahmet Erdi Öztürk and Semiha Sözeri. *"Diyanet as a Turkish foreign policy tool: Evidence from the Netherlands and Bulgaria."* (Politics and Religion 11, 2018), p. 5.

30 Ahmet Erdi Öztürk, *"Turkey's Diyanet under JDP rule: from protector to imposer of state ideology?."* (Southeast European and Black Sea Studies 16, 2016), p. 619-635.

Diyanet was coded to preserve both nationalism and societal integrity in domestic politics in the early 1960s and was forced to facilitate the collaboration with domestic and international religious communal organizations. After the military coup, the military government started to use the Diyanet to promote the moderation of the Islamic tradition to prevent radical understanding, not only on a local level but also among the migrant communities of Europe[31]. Until the end of the 20th century, Diyanet had stayed in the background because of political instability, economic and financial crises in Turkey[32].

§ 4.3 Role of Diyanet during the JDP Era

Diyanet, Turkey's state-run religious affairs agency, has grown in influence both domestically and internationally under the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP). The budget and administrative capabilities of Diyanet have been increased and it has been used as a tool in foreign policy in regions such as the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East. The expansion of Diyanet's reach, referred to as trans nationalization, has also impacted Turkey's foreign policy through the use of religion as a part of public policy and faith-based diplomacy under the JDP.

Although Erdoğan had strong ties with the Political Islamist groups and parties, he was reluctant to define JDP as an Islamist party and he chose a more inclusive discourse to integrate different segments of the society. Nevertheless, the government has strictly controlled religion and Diyanet has become the backbone of the official religious understanding of the government. Erdoğan has always been the main

31 Ibid, 620.

32 Ibid, 621.

supporter of traditional and religious values and propagated these values since his entrance into the political arena[33].

The secular and Western-oriented identity of the state has transformed with the beginning of the 1970s in Turkey. Under the JDP rule, it was observed that the paradigm has shifted to a more religious-oriented understanding of the state. With their ideological background, JDP governments have used religious discourses in their foreign policy agendas. Ahmet Davutoğlu had a very important influence at the beginning of this period by serving as an advisor (2003-2009), minister (2009-2014) and prime minister (2014-2016). Davutoğlu claimed that Turkey could become a great power "as long as it followed an expansionist foreign policy based on Islamic ideology"[34]. According to Bülent Aras, "Davutoglu developed his foreign policy on the basis of a novel geographical imagination which put an end to what he calls the alienation of Turkey's neighboring countries"[35]. According to Davutoglu, the Turkish foreign policy must be built on a shared Ottoman-Islamic identity, with the denial of "artificial '' national borders that were created after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. For Ahmet Davutoğlu, there were five principles to guide Turkey's foreign policy-making process: the balance between security and democracy, a zero-problem approach towards the neighbors, a proactive and preemptive peace diplomacy, a multi-dimensional foreign policy and lastly a rhythmic diplomacy in international relations[36]. Davutoğlu used the discourse of neo-Ottomanism which aims to establish a common

33 Hakan Hakan, and Meryem Açıkgöz. "*Politics of religion in Turkey from national view to the justice and development party.*" (International Journal of Research in Social Sciences 3.2, 2013), p. 48-56.

34 Behlül, Özkan *"Turkey, Davutoglu and the idea of pan-Islamism."* (Survival 56.4, 2014) p.119-140.

35 Bülent Aras, "*Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy Revisited,"* (Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, 2014), p. 1-15.

36 Ahmet Davutoğlu, *"Turkey's zero-problems foreign policy."* (Foreign Policy 20.5, 2010), Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/

future ideal, based on shared cultural and religious ties that had been created under the rule of the Ottoman Empire from the Middle East to the Balkans[37].

Another focus point of the Turkish foreign policy with the beginning of the JDP era is Africa. Turkey had significant progress in its relations with the Sub-Saharan African countries in many different fields. In 1998, Turkey's African Initiative Policy, which aims to strengthen the political, economic, social and cultural relationship between Turkey and 48 Sub-Saharan African countries in the long-term, was initiated.[38]. Thanks to these policies, Turkey became an observing member in 2005 and a strategic partner of the African Union in 2008. After trade investments, cultural projects, security and military cooperation, and development projects with African countries, the African Initiative Policy has since been replaced by the African Partnership Policy as of 2013[39].

Turkey's activities in Africa are considered in the context of the struggle for global dominance because Turkey has competed with countries such as France, which had dominated the North and West African countries for a long time. In this struggle in Africa, religious intuitions were used as weapons to promote and justify the activities of Turkey in the region. Former president of Diyanet Mehmet Görmez explained the religious characteristic of Turkish foreign policy in a 2016 interview: "We have a legacy from the Ottoman Empire in that region and a responsibility to our religious brothers. We cannot leave them struggling or abandoned."[40]

37 Özkan, *Turkey, Davutoglu,* 119-140; Ahmet Davutoğlu, *"Medeniyetlerin Ben-idraki,"* (Divan: Disiplinlerarası çalışmalar Dergisi, no. 1, 997) p. 1–53.

38 Hazar, *Türkiye-Afrika*, 386; Hazar, *Türkiye Afrika'da*, 7.

39 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on September 11, 2022. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa

40 Öztürk, Ahmet Erdi, and Bahar Baser. "*The transnational politics of religion: Turkey's Diyanet, Islamic communities and beyond.*" Turkish Studies (2022), p.14

Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans has also certain similarities with Turkey's African policy in the context of the faith-based diplomacy. Using religious institutions in the Balkans has been evaluated from two perspectives. First of all, religious discourses and implications in foreign policy provide to preserve the electoral base of the JDP which is called the boomerang effect in the literature.[41] In other words, the government used the effects it engendered in the Balkan countries by faith-based diplomacy to explain the power of the party in domestic politics.[42] Secondly, instrumentalizing the religion in foreign policy can mostly be observed in populist regimes to enhance their support at the domestic level.[43] When it comes to the Turkish case, the increasing role of the religion in Turkey's Balkan policy is paralleled by the departure from the ideals of the EU.[44]

§ 4.4 Diyanet in Diplomacy: General Directorate of Foreign Relations

After World War II, Germany faced a labor shortage and signed bilateral labor recruitment agreements with southern European countries to address the issue n 1961, a bilateral agreement between Germany and Turkey allowed for the settlement of approximately 2.5 million Turkish workers in Germany. However, the increasing Turkish population in Germany created various problems, including the lack of mosques in cities. While the first mosques and masjids were built

41 Liotta, Peter H. *"Boomerang effect: The convergence of national and human security."* Security Dialogue 33.4 (2002), p.473-488.

42 Alpan, Başak, and Ahmet Erdi Öztürk. *"Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans amidst 'soft power'and 'de-Europeanisation'."* Southeast European and Black Sea Studies 22.1 (2022), p. 45-63.

43 Kuru, Ahmet T. *Islam, authoritarianism, and underdevelopment: A global and historical comparison*. Cambridge University Press, 2019; Koesel, Karrie J. *Religion and authoritarianism: Cooperation, conflict, and the consequences.* Cambridge University Press, 2014.

44 Başak, and Öztürk, *Turkish foreign policy,* 45-63.

through the initiatives of workers, there was still a need for religious personnel. Bülent Ecevit, a former prime minister of Turkey, explained the need for imams in Germany by stating that "I have concluded that our workers abroad have a growing need for religious personnel. Although many employers have set up beautiful and large masjids for Turkish workers, our citizens who come to worship need these masjids only on religious holidays. (...) We should send religious personnel who have the intellectual background and revolutionist motivations, to Germany"[45].

With the increasing need for religious services abroad, the General Directorate of Foreign Relations under the organization of Diyanet was established in 1971, with the purpose of sending religious staff to foreign countries. The main purposes of the directorate are indicated as:

> ● *"To share Turkey's richness in the tradition of Islamic thought, its understanding of religion that accepts true knowledge as essential, and its experience in religious services, upon request, with our citizens and co-religionists living abroad.*
> ● *To bring to the attention of Turkish citizens, compatriots and co-religionists information that will not leave room for abuses that may arise due to wrong and biased interpretation of religion, both at home and abroad.*
> ● *Contributing to the elimination of tensions by pointing out the sources of false information or prejudices about Islam and Muslim identity that hinder respect and understanding between individuals; To ensure the correct understanding of the religion of Islam.*
> ● *To support the execution of integration studies on the right ground, by encouraging Turkish citizens living in Western countries*

45 Bülent Ecevit, *"Dış ülkelerdeki İşçilerimizin Sorunları."* (Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları Dergisi, 2011), p.71.

to protect their own identities and to benefit from all kinds of rights and opportunities as equal individuals in harmony with the society they live in.

● *To protect Turkish historical-cultural common heritage and values"* [46]

The importance of the Directorate of Foreign Relations increased with the beginning of the JDP era. The budget which is allocated from the state treasury to the Diyanet increased significantly with the JDP government. Financial developments enabled the directorate to work more actively abroad. The religious activities of the Turkish state institutions in foreign policy can be evaluated as a strategy to have more prominent influence in the global stage[47].

Another significant turning point in the organizational structure of Diyanet was a revision of the law on Diyanet in 2010. The Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Presidency of Religious Affairs dated 22/6/1965 and numbered 633 was revised. With the changes made to the law, the article to ensure cooperation and coordination with public institutions, non-governmental organizations and foreign organizations has been added among the duties of the President of Diyanet. One of the main duties of Diyanet was defined as preparing and distributing publications in different languages for communities living abroad and belonging to the Islamic religion. In addition, the implementation of educational programs and projects for Muslims living abroad as a means to provide religious education has been among the main duties added to that of Diyanet with the new regulation.[48]

46 For detailed information, visit the official page of Diyanet, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://disiliskiler.diyanet.gov.tr/sayfa/51/ilkeler-ve-hedefler

47 Mandaville and Hamid, *Islam as statecraft*, 22.

48 13 Temmuz 2010 tarihli 27640 numaralı Resmi Gazete'de yayınlanan kanun değişikliği, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/07/20100713-2.htm

After the changing in the organizational structure of Diyanet, the president also changed in 2010. The organizational and personnel changes were caused by several reasons. One of the most important reasons behind this change was the transformation of the interreligious dialogue strategy of Turkey. With the beginning of the JDP era, the "International Muslim-Christian Dialogue Symposium" was organized in the context of the interreligious dialogue strategy. This strategy was promoted by FETO at the global level in order to increase its power in different countries. However, at the beginning of the conflict between the government and FETO, the strategy of interreligious dialogue was srepealed. With the change of the head of Diyanet, the interreligious dialogue strategy completely disappeared. The president of Diyanet at that time, Prof. Dr Mehmet Görmez explained his ideas in a meeting with the secretary of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in 2013 by saying "every single religion is based on its own spiritual truths and there cannot be a dialogue between truths."[49]

Thanks to the revision in the organizational structure, Diyanet replaced the activities of FETO in Africa with its increasing budget and capacity. While the regulations increased the power of Diyanet in foreign countries, it also created certain potential risks in the long-term. According to the regulation, the Prime Minister can transfer his powers for the administration of Diyanet to a minister of state. Transferring the power of administration can cause instability in the activities of Diyanet because the change in the responsible ministry may also change the policies of Diyanet in different countries.

49 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/dinlerarasi-diyalog-kavrami-yeniden-ele-alinmali/241452#:~:text=G%C3%B6rmez%2C%20dinleraras%C4%B1%20diyalog%20kavram%C4%B1n%C4%B1n%20bug%C3%BCne,de%20do%C4%9Fru%20ve%20ahlaki%20de%C4%9Fildir.

After the arrangement made in 2010, the management style of Diyanet and the establishment of the board of directors also changed. According to the regulation, members of the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs who have the responsibility to organize activities of Diyanet both in the domestic and international level, are appointed by the president. Moreover, with the regulation, the term of office of the President is five years and one person can be appointed as President a maximum of two times. With these changes in the organizational structure, the government control of Diyanet became tighter. [50]

§ 4.5 The Education Diplomacy of Diyanet: Scholarship Programs

One of the most important activities of the Diyanet in the context of foreign policy is education programs for foreign students. In cooperation with the Diyanet and the Ministry of National Education, the Turkey Diyanet Foundation provides education programs and scholarship opportunities to raise a generation who are "*experts in their fields, respect the freedom of religion, understand the cultural heritage of Turkey, worry about the problems of the other Muslims and have high self-confidence.*" International students from 105 different countries are the focus of the education and scholarship programs[51].

The Turkey Diyanet Foundation has a number of education and scholarship programs in its official agenda. According to the foundation's annual reports, there has been a steady increase in the number of students and activities over time. These programs aim to engage with the

50 13 Temmuz 2010 tarihli 27640 numaralı Resmi Gazete'de yayınlanan kanun değişikliği, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/07/20100713-2.htm

51 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2015, p.6, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20-%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%20-%202015.pdf

new generations of Turkey's "heart geography", to provide religious education and services in countries with Muslim populations and in other countries where Muslims live, and to cultivate individuals who can build diplomatic ties with Turkey and foster cultural cooperation among Muslim societies. Additionally, the foundation's scholarship programs aim to contribute to the training of human resources. [52]

The foundation provides education and scholarship programs for various levels of students. Firstly, International Imam Khatib High School Program (UIL) is an education program for foreign and Turkish-origin students. The first international 'imam khatib high school' was established in 1993 in Mersin to raise the children of Turkish citizens who were working in the Western European countries and especially in the Netherlands, and to protect their national identity[53]. With the increase in the budget of the Diyanet, the foundation established more high schools and, as of 2022, there are 17 international imam khatib high schools in different cities of Turkey[54]. While total number of students in international imam khatib high school was 1034 in 2015, the number was recognized as 1064 in 2016, 1068 in 2017, 1121 in 2018, 1185 in 2019, 1359 in 2020, 1035 in 2021 and 1065 in 2021[55] .

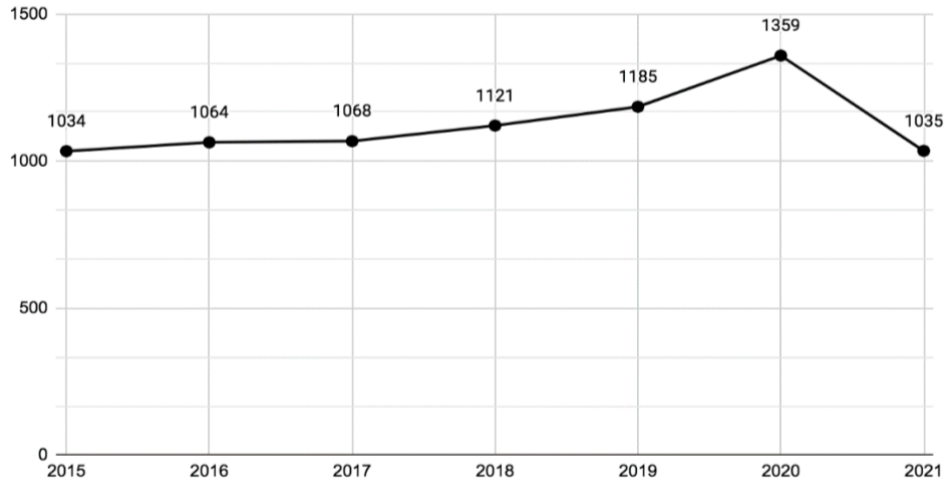
52 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of National Education, Accessed on September 11, 2022, http://religiouseducation.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/UAIHL_TR.pdf

53 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of National Education, Accessed on September 11, 2022, http://religiouseducation.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/UAIHL_TR.pdf 2,

54 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Ministy of National Education, Accessed on September 11, 2022, http://religiouseducation.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/UAIHL_TR.pdf

55 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

Table 4.1:Numbers of Students in the International Imam Khatib High School Program



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports[56]

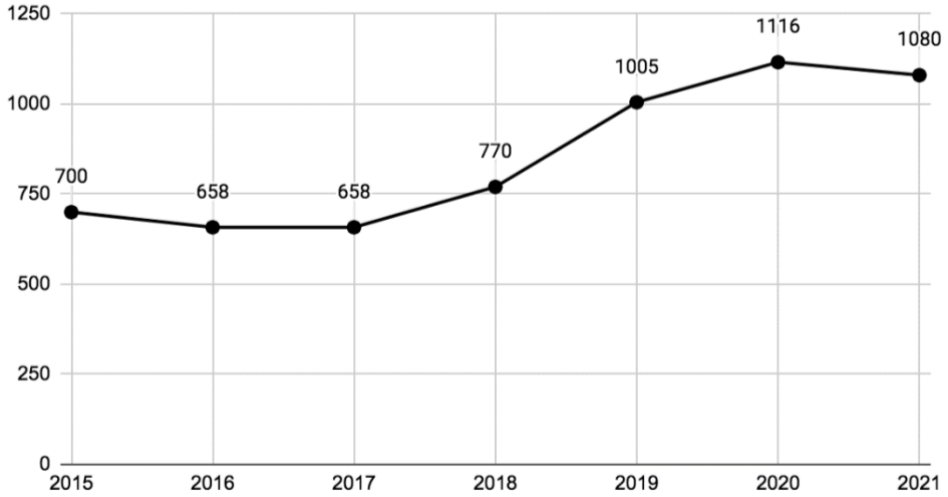
International Theology Program (UIP) is also another project of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation which focuses on university students from different countries. This program is carried out with the aim of raising qualified human resources among Turkish citizens living abroad. Other aims of the program are to share experiences in the field of education with these countries and to train volunteers and cultural ambassadors for Turkey around the world[57]. The International Theology Program started in 2006 and the number of students attending the program has increased with each passing year. According to the official annual activity reports of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, while the total number of students in the International Theology Program was 700 in

56 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

57 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%202021.pdf

2015, the number was recognized as 658 in 2016 and 2017, 770 in 2018, 1005 in 2019, 1116 in 2020, 1020 in 2021 and 1080 in 2020[58].

Table 4.2 :Numbers of Students in the International Theology Program



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015-2021)[59]

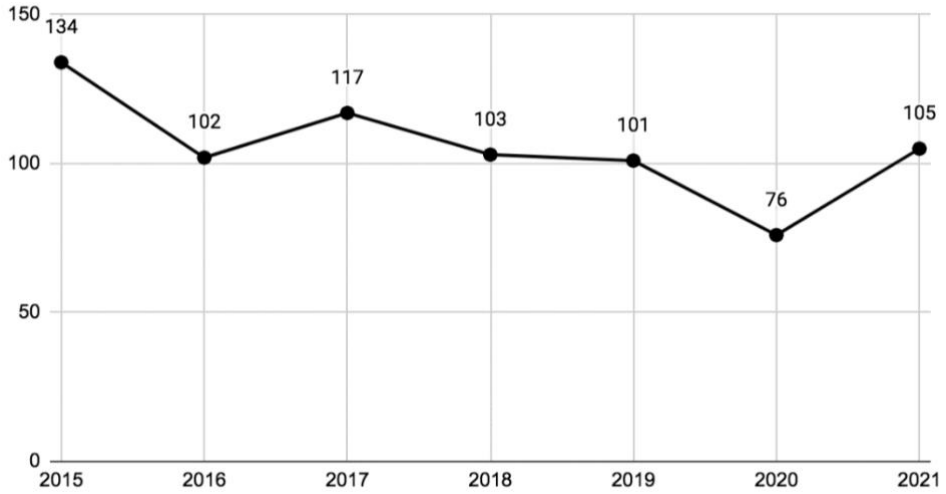
International Theology Graduate Scholarship Program is another scholarship program of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation. This program is designed to train academics providing education in the field of theology of Muslim countries and communities for Turkish citizens living abroad, Muslim minorities living in various countries, and higher education institutions, as well as to support the development of the academic level and staff of universities in those countries. According to the official annual activity reports of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, while the total number of students in the International Theology Graduate Scholarship Program was 134 in 2015, the number was recognized as 102 in 2016, 117 in

58 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

59 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

2017, 103 in 2018, 101 in 2019, 76 in 2020 and 105 in 2021. To date, 337 doctoral candidates have graduated from the program[60].

Table 4.3 :Numbers of Students in the International Theology Graduate Scholarship Program



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015-2021)[61]

International Qur'an Course Education Program is another important program of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation. In order to contribute to the Qur'an memorization education of Muslim countries and communities, and to train hafizes and Qur'an course trainers in this field, Diyanet offers training opportunities in the Qur'an Courses in Turkey. All expenses of the students are covered by the foundation. According to the annual reports of the foundation, while 77 students from 8 different countries were included in the International Qur'an Course

60 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%202021.pdf

61 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

Education Program in 2019, the number was recognized as 137 in 2020 and 141 in 2021[62].

According to the 2021 annual activity report of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, the total number of students who participated in one of the scholarship programs from 112 different countries is 2728. Since the beginning, 10091 students have graduated from these programs. The Turkey Diyanet Foundation also provides educational support to 27 institutions at high school and university levels in 14 different foreign countries. The main goal of these institutions is to contribute to the scientific, religious and cultural developments of these countries. While the current number of students in these institutions is 7313, 10982 students graduated from the program and started to work in the universities, ministries and schools in their home countries[63].

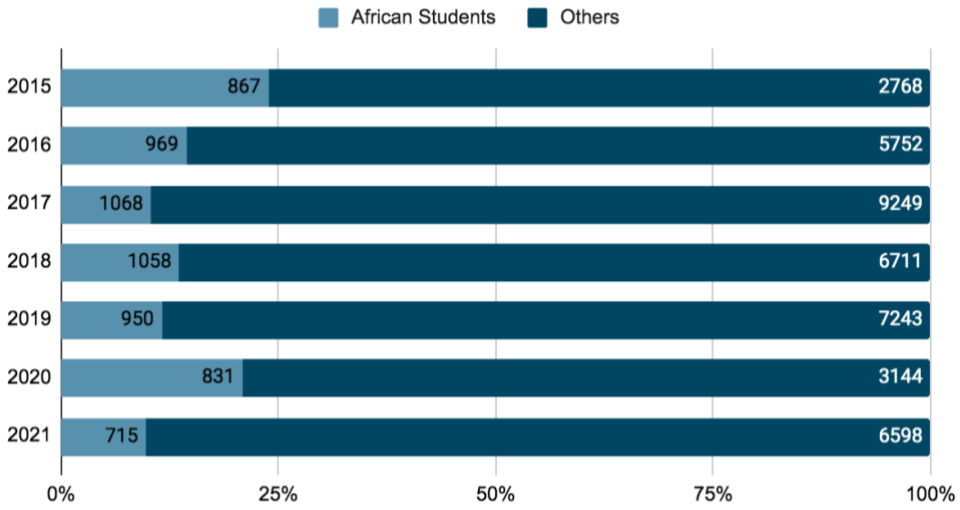
In the education program, while Diyanet focuses on the Central Asian Turkic Republics, the Balkans and the Middle East, one of the most important target areas of the scholarship and education program is Africa. In addition to other state institutions' efforts to provide scholarships for African students, Diyanet gives priority to African students, and especially to Somalian students. According to the official annual reports, the number of African students who benefited from these education support opportunities was 897 in 2015. While the number of African students was 969 in 2016, it increased to 1068 and 1058 in 2017 and 2018 consecutively. In 2019, there were 950 registered African students. In the last two years, the number of students decreased to 831 in 2020 and 715 in 2021. When compared with the total number of supported students, it is seen that African students are among the main

62 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

63 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

targets of the scholarship and education programs of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation[64].

Figure 4.1:African Students and Others in Turkish Schools and Institutions Abroad



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015-2021)[65]

The Turkey Diyanet Foundation publishes basic books on various fields of Islamic sciences and translates most of them into foreign languages. In order to facilitate the donation of these basic Islamic books, the Turkey Diyanet Foundation organized the program "My Present Is the Quran" to support efforts to read and understand the Quran. Moreover, it aims to spread the awareness and culture of Islamic civilization throughout the world. According to the official statistics of the Diyanet, the foundation has exceeded 1 million translated versions of Quran[66]. In the context of the project, many Qurans in different languages has been sent to 85 countries in Asia, Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East, and

64 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

65 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

66 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://bagis.tdv.org/kuran/hediyem-kur-an-olsun-13

the Caucasus. When it comes to Africa, the Quran was translated into local African languages such as Swahili, Hausa, Bambara, Chichewa and Samoan. According to the 2017 annual activity report of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, 154.527 Quran copies had been distributed to different countries in Africa in English, French, Arabic and some other local languages[67].

§ 4.6 Humanitarian Aid Projects of Diyanet

In addition to the education and scholarship programs for African countries, Diyanet also focuses on humanitarian aid projects throughout the continent. One of the most important projects of the foundation is the "Water Wells" because water cannot be extracted due to financial difficulties in Africa. The foundation developed the "A Drop of Life" project in the context of humanitarian aid and aimed to meet the daily needs of African people and to prevent agricultural inefficiencies[68].

"A Drop of Life" project was implemented in 2015 by the drilling of 9 water wells. The number of water wells has increased each passing year with the increasing capacity of the foundation in the field. According to the official statistics of the Diyanet, 15 water wells were drilled in 2016, 51 in 2017, 110 in 2018, 112 in 2019, 145 in 2020 and 320 in 2021. In 2022, up to today, 17 water wells have been drilled, and 99 water wells are in progress[69]. While the main target area of the "A Drop of Life" project is Africa, Diyanet has also drilled water wells in Afghanistan, Pakistan,

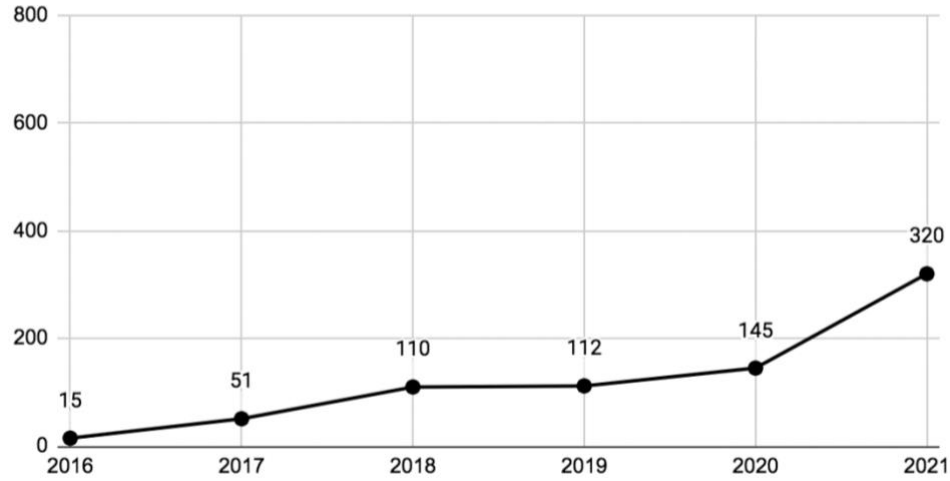
67 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

68 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/su-kuyusu/

69 For detailed information, visit the Turkey Diyanet Foundation Annual Activity Reports from 2015 to 2021, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/medya-odasi/raporlar/

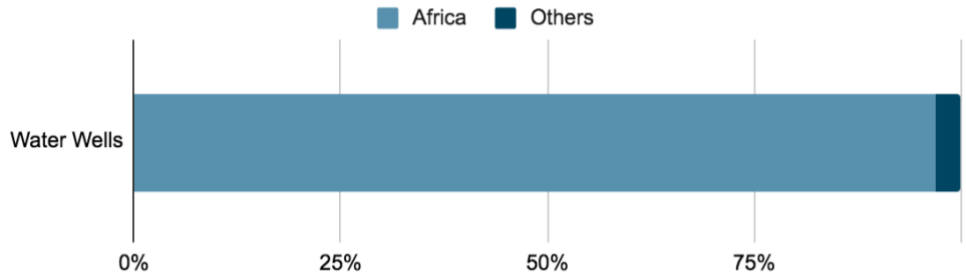
Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In the official reports, over 95% of these water wells were drilled in Africa. However, this situation is not only due to the importance given to the African region, but also because of the fact that Africa is among the regions that suffer from drought the most due to its geographical characteristics[70].

Table 4.4:Numbers of Water Wells in Africa



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015-2021)[71]

Figure 4.2 :Percentage of the Water Wells in Africa and Other Countries



Source: The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015 - 2021)[72]

70 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdv.org/tr-TR/su-kuyusu/

71 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

72 The Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Reports (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

Moreover, Diyanet aims to influence African Muslim population by increasing its aid campaigns. One of the most important aid campaigns in the continent are the qurban (sacrifice) organization in African countries. According to the Islamic tradition, the Qurbani is a ritual sacrifice of livestock and sharing the meat of the animal with people in need. According to the official statistic, the Turkey Diyanet Foundation organizes a systematic Qurban organization in 75 countries and 280 regions. In Africa, the foundation organizes the distribution of Qurban in all African countries and regions except Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Western Sahara and Eritrea[73]. In 2018, Diyanet started "qurban by proxy" program which targets conflict-ridden African countries Burundi, Chad, Sudan, Niger and Mali. According to the official statistics, Diyanet collected 195 million Turkish liras in donations for the Mali campaign in 2012[74]. Additionally, in 2019 Sudan campaigns, 4 million dollars was collected by Diyanet after the flood disaster which damaged many parts of the country[75].

The president of Diyanet Ali Erbaş emphasizes the role of Diyanet in faith-based diplomacy by saying that *"…every foreign aid activity of Diyanet contributes to Turkey's multi-faceted diplomacy and has a positive effect on the development of bilateral relations"* [76]. Moreover, Erbaş also indicates that *"Diyanet continues to work with the awareness that aids such as sacrifices, Ramadan, educational activities and*

73 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://bagis.tdv.org/#kurban

74 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2020, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20-%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%20-%202020.pdf

75 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2020, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20-%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%20-%202020.pdf

76 Burak İnce, "*Türkiyenin dış yardımlarında bir ulus markalama aracı olarak diyanet dış yardımları.*" MA thesis. (Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2019), p.53

mosque constructions act as a shield against the distorted structures that drag the world into disaster"[77].

One of the most visible soft power policies of Diyanet is the construction projects of religious buildings in Africa. Specifically, Diyanet prefers to construct Ottoman-style mega mosques in strategic locations in Africa[78]. Since 2015, Diyanet has constructed and repaired the Somalia Mosque, Djibouti Sultan Abdulhamid Khan II Mosque and Complex, Sudan Sheikh Saim Dima Mosque and Ghana Accra Furkan Mosque and Complex.[79]. In the southern part of Africa, the Nizamiye Mosque, which was built by the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, is the largest mosque. While Accra Mosque in Ghana is the largest mosque in West Africa, Abdulhamid Han II Mosque in Djibouti is the biggest mosque of East Africa[80].

The president of Diyanet Ali Erbaş describes the activities of Diyanet and its faith-based diplomacy by stating that *"the most important feature of Diyanet's aid is that it has a constructive character and is done away from a colonial understanding. In addition, Diyanet's aids are carried out more continuously and more comprehensively not only in times of crisis, but also in different times such as the Feast of Sacrifice, the Ramadan Feast period, the education period, and the opening of water wells"*[81].

77 Ibid, 54

78 Jones Dorian, *"Does Turkey Aspire to the Leadership of the Islamic World?."* (Qantara. de, March 13, 2015), Accessed on September 11, 2022 https://en.qantara.de/content/turkeys-mosque-building-programme-does-turkey-aspire-to-the-leadership-of-the-islamic-world

79 Siljia Frohlich, "Mosques in Africa: A test of Strength in the Middle East, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.dw.com/en/mosques-in-africa-a-test-of-strength-in-the-middle-east/a-51717439

80 Addis Getachew, Turkey to Inaugurate Largest Mosque in Djibouti in Feb., 2018, Accessed on September 11, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/turkey-to-inaugurate-largest-mosque-in-djibouti-in-feb/1332035

81 İnce, *Türkiyenin Dış Yardımlarında*, 52

§ 4.7 Conclusion

The Justice and Development Party (JDP) has used religion as a significant tool in its foreign policy, with the aim of increasing Turkey's influence in various countries around the world, including Latin America and Africa. As the JDP has gained more power, it has also increased the budget and administrative capacity of the Diyanet, thereby expanding its sphere of influence. The use of religion in foreign policy has included efforts to promote faith-based diplomacy and to instrumentalize Islam in public policy. These efforts have included the provision of religious education and services, as well as the funding of humanitarian aid projects in countries with Muslim populations.

Religion has become a key element of Turkey's foreign policy agenda in Africa, with its inclusion serving to legitimize the country's actions in the region. This shift in Turkey's perspective on international relations has led to the incorporation of religion as a prominent aspect of its foreign policy in Africa [82]. In this process, Diyanet has played an important role in Turkey's African policy. In the context of soft power, Diyanet has followed up with a scholarship program in Africa. Education programs have a great impact on the long-term foreign policy goals of Turkey in the region. Moreover, promoting Turkish culture and Islamic tradition in Africa is one of the most important motivations behind the activities of Diyanet, with the translation of the Quran and other basic Islamic texts into many different languages including local African languages serving these ends. The structural change in the framework of Diyanet in 2010 has also played a significant role for the institution to increase its power in the domestic and international level. According to the regulation in 2010, the activities of Diyanet has increased

82 Mehmet Özkan, *"Turkey's Religious and Socio-Political Depth in Africa."* (Emerging Powers in Africa, LSE IDEAS Special Report 16 2013), p.45.

in different fields and regions. Additionally, the power of the governments over Diyanet has gradually risen after the regulation in the organizational structure.

In addition to initiating education programs, Diyanet also focuses on carrying out humanitarian aid programs in Africa. It has delivered an estimated $111.6 million dollars in the context of humanitarian aid to African countries in the last 44 years[83]. Construction projects of mosques also indicate the religious diplomacy of Turkey in Africa with the use of Diyanet as a foreign policy actor. In the context of humanitarian aid projects, Diyanet has also drilled water wells in different parts of Africa. These programs aim to provide cooperation between Turkey and Africa, while scholarship programs try to create long term achievement.

83 Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Activity Report 2019, (TDV, 2019).

5

Faith-Based Diplomacy in Turkish Foreign Policy

There are two types of actors involved in diplomatic relations: official diplomatic and governmental actors, known as "Track I diplomacy," and informal, non-official, and private actors, known as "Track II diplomacy." While traditional diplomacy represents the official actors at the international level, non-official diplomacy has become increasingly important in resolving conflicts and implementing public diplomacy efforts. In the field of international relations, non-official diplomacy is understood as encompassing various forms of non-official interaction between members of opposing groups or nations that aim to create strategies, influence public opinion, and organize resources in order to resolve conflicts.[1]

1 Cynthia J. Chataway, "*Track II diplomacy: From a Track I perspective.*" (Negotiation Journal 14.3, 1998), pp. 270; Joseph V. Montville, "*Track two diplomacy: The work of healing history.*" (Whitehead J. Dipl. & Int'l Rel. 7, 2006), p.15.

The concept of faith-based diplomacy was first used in the context of conflict resolution[2]. It is defined as *"incorporating religious concerns into the practice of international politics. Even more simply put, it means making religion part of the solution in some of the intractable, identity-based conflicts that exceed the grasp of traditional diplomacy"*[3]. It is also described as "*a form of non-official (Track II) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religion with the conduct of international peacemaking".* In other words, faith-based diplomacy is different from traditional diplomacy in terms of the instruments used in foreign policy because it is a type of diplomacy that prioritizes non-official channels such as non-governmental organizations[4].

In the literature, there are three objectives which generally explain the instrumentalization of the religion both in domestic and foreign policy areas: (a) to bolster regional and global influence (b) to access regions and groups that are difficult to reach through conventional foreign policy tools and (c) to alter domestic political balances or amass power.[5]According to Fox, the use of religion in foreign policy directly relates with the state's domestic political environment.[6] In other words, the use of religion by states in the international arena can be traced back

2 Douglas Johnston & Cynthia Sampson, eds. *"Religion, the missing dimension of statecraft"* (Oxford University Press, 1995); Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *"Conflict resolution, culture, and religion: Toward a training model of interreligious peacebuilding*." *Journal of* Peace Research 38.6 (2001) pp.685-704: Jonathan Chaplin & Robert Joustra, *"God and global order: The power of religion in American foreign policy"* (Baylor University Press, 2010); Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *"God's Century. Resurgent Religion and Global Politics"* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011).

3 Douglas M. Johnston & Brian Cox, "*Faith-based diplomacy and preventive engagement.*" *Religion and peace* (2016), p. 179-196.

4 Ibid, 15.

5 Öztürk, Ahmet Erdi, and Bahar Baser. "*The transnational politics of religion: Turkey's Diyanet, Islamic communities and beyond.*" Turkish Studies (2022), p. 1-21.

6 Fox, Jonathan. "*Religion as an overlooked element of international relations.*" International Studies Review 3.3 (2001), p.53-73.

to domestic political developments.[7] In the non-official diplomacy level, non-state actors have also used religion as a foreign policy instrument. The role of religion for non-state actors is different from the state's goals. While states focus on the power relations[8], non-state actors serve the purpose of searching for peace and rapprochement[9], and to disseminate violent narratives.[10]

Turkey's rapprochement with African countries has made it a non-traditional actor in Africa, as seen in the literature and studies on Turkey-Africa relations According to Federico Donelli, Track-II diplomacy and coordination between official and non-official actors on the ground demonstrates the different characteristics of Turkey's engagements in Africa.[11] The use of non-official, or Track-II, diplomacy in the context of faith-based diplomacy is not a unique characteristic of Turkish foreign policy. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have often been involved in international activities related to humanitarian emergencies, human rights issues, and social reconstruction processes. However, in certain circumstances, they have also participated in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and state-building processes.[12] The cooperation and coordination of official and non-official diplomacy in foreign policy provides more opportunities to solve internal conflicts and preserve stability in a country. The coordination of both diplomacies is

7 Fox, Jonathan, Shmuel Sandler, and Shmuel Sandier. *Bringing religion into international relations.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p.168.

8 Fox, *Bringing Religion*, 176.

9 Sandal, Nukhet Ahu. "*Religious actors as epistemic communities in conflict transformation: The cases of South Africa and Northern Ireland.*" Review of International Studies 37.3 (2011), p. 929-949.

10 Gurses, Mehmet. "*Is Islam a cure for ethnic conflict? Evidence from Turkey.*" Politics and Religion 8.1 (2015), p. 135-154.

11 Donelli, Federico. "*The Ankara consensus: the significance of Turkey's engagement in sub-Saharan Africa.*" Global Change, Peace & Security 30.1 (2018), p. 57-76.

12 Jacob Bercovitch, Richard Jackson, and Richard Dean Wells Jackson. "*Conflict resolution in the twenty-first century: principles, methods, and approaches"* (University of Michigan Press, 2009), p. 138-150.

referred to as "Track 1.5" diplomacy in certain cases[13]. The coordination provides more opportunities to mobilize humanitarian assistance and resources more successfully[14].

The activities of non-official actors in the international arena are not limited to humanitarian assistance, civil society, and resource mobilization. They can also have an impact on peacekeeping processes. In the context of faith-based diplomacy, non-official actors may seek to influence the foreign public's perceptions through education and training programs[15]. Non-official diplomacy has several advantages, including its heterogeneous characteristics, various time frames (short-term or long-term), and diverse parties (politicians, military leaders, and community-level leaders). These characteristics can provide a variety of solutions in the field of diplomacy. However, non-official actors, particularly in the context of faith-based diplomacy, may have biased opinions. As a result, religion-based diplomacy has been more successful in conflicts and regions where religion is not a major factor or dominant characteristic[16]. However, the lack of an official status can also create economic, political, and social problems for non-official diplomacy. In other words, non-official actors do not have political or economic power to apply pressure in finding solutions for crises.[17].

13 Jacob Bercovitch, Richard Jackson, and Richard Dean Wells Jackson. *"Conflict resolution in the twenty-first century: principles, methods, and approaches"* (University of Michigan Press, 2009), p.139.

14 Nadim N. Rouhana, *"Non-official third-party intervention in international conflict: Between legitimacy and disarray."* (Negotiation Journal 11.3, 1995), p.255-270.

15 Cynthia Sampson, *"Religion and peacebuilding."* (Peacemaking in international conflict: Methods and techniques, 2007), p. 273-323.

16 Ibid, 274.

17 Farouk Mawlawi, "*New conflicts, new challenges: The evolving role for non-governmental actors.*" (Journal of International Affairs, 1993), p.391-413.

§ 5.1 The Political Role of Diyanet in Africa

In Turkey, Diyanet has served as an official channel in Turkish faith-based diplomacy. In addition to education programs, scholarship diplomacy, humanitarian aid programs, and other projects to promote Turkish and Islamic culture in Africa, Diyanet has also participated in international politics through the organization of "African Muslim Religious Leaders" summits since 2006. Following the Turkish government's declaration of 2005 as the "Year of Africa," Diyanet hosted the African Muslim Religious Leaders Summit in Istanbul in 2006. The main topics of the summit were the challenges faced by African countries in the 21st century, and 19 African countries participated in the event.[18]. This can be seen as part of the process of addressing issues in Africa. In 2011, Diyanet organized the second African Muslim Religious Leaders Summit, which was attended by 42 religious' authorities from Africa. The main goal for the Turkish side was to improve the understanding and representation of Islam around the world. The President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, participated in both summits to represent Turkey's position in Africa[19].

In 2019, Diyanet organized the third African Muslim Religious Leaders Summit in Istanbul. The theme of the summit was "Disinterested Solidarity, Solidarity in Goodness," with the aim of increasing cooperation between Turkey and Africa. A total of 112 Muslim leaders, including ministers, the president of religious affairs, muftis, and academicians from 51 different countries participated in the summit. According to official reports, the meetings were intended to promote Turkish culture and history.[20]. Furthermore, expanding the political and economic

18 Özkan, *Turkey's Religious*, 48.

19 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-aramizdaki-yapay-sinirlar-bizim-ufkumuzu-belirleyemez/1619296

20 For detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/afrikadaki-dini-kuruluslar-arasinda-birligin-tesisi-icin-calisiyoruz/1620047

relations between Turkey and African countries was another motivation for the summit. At the end of the summit, a statement of results was prepared, which highlighted the importance of Turkey's education and scholarship programs in combating terrorist organizations such as ISIS, Boko Haram, and FETÖ. The statement also emphasized the need for effective and authentic religious education, including the establishment of schools and other educational institutions, student exchange programs, and international Qur'an courses. These initiatives, such as the Imam-Khatip High Schools and faculties of divinity, were seen as important achievements that should be continued and strengthened through increased cooperation with African countries.

> *"Religious education must be performed with an effective approach and method. In this direction, creating schools and organizational bodies where young generations will have sufficient and authentic religious education must be a priority. We need to give weight on[sic] establishing powerful educational institutions and joint works with mutual discussions such as student exchange programs. In this direction, international Qur'an courses, Imam-Khatip High Schools and faculties of divinity are such great achievements and must continue by developing the cooperation with African countries.*
>
> *It is being[sic] more important day by day to develop the cooperation in the field of education at all levels, especially in religious education in Africa. We must designate joint strategies to institutionalize religious education and services by Muslims and benefit from different experiences. In this context, it is vitally important to determine and analyze the present situation in religious education according to each country, present the right*

> *religious education model in Africa, determine a joint curriculum and improve written, visual and digital materials according to this. Turkey is ready to share the present experience and sources in this matter and provide all kind of support"*[21].

During the meeting, President Erdogan explained Turkey's presence in Africa and its areas of activity on behalf of Turkey. Firstly, he focused on the scholarship programs which were implemented in Africa: *"Many students who have graduated for [sic] the past 25 years in Turkish schools, serve our African brothers and sisters as voluntary envoys of Turkey. Alhamdulillah, we feel proud when we see doctors, imams, politicians, academics, engineers and businessmen who graduated from Turkey in the countries we visit"*[22]. In his speech, Erdoğan indicated the main motivations of Turkey in Africa by giving religious references in the summit: *"As Muslims, we will always observe the consciousness of the Ummah, the morality and law of brotherhood. Artificial boundaries drawn between us cannot define our horizons. Our horizon should encompass the whole of Africa starting from our countries and the whole world starting from Africa"*[23].

In addition to organizing the international summit, Diyanet has also implemented the "sister-city" project, which aims to increase the cooperation between Muslim communities and preserve Islamic culture and identity. The origins of the project go back to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, with an aim to protect the Turkish and Islamic

21 For detailed information, visit the official page of Diyanet, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.diyanet.gov.tr/en-us/Content/PrintDetail/26049

22 For detailed information, visit the official page of Diyanet, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.diyanet.gov.tr/fr-FR/Institutionnel/d%C3%A9tail/26043/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-3-afrika-ulkeleri-musluman-dini-liderler-zirvesinde-konustu

23 For detailed information, visit the official page of Diyanet, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.diyanet.gov.tr/fr-FR/Institutionnel/d%C3%A9tail/26043/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-3-afrika-ulkeleri-musluman-dini-liderler-zirvesinde-konustu

identity in the Turkic Republics in the name of a “bond of brotherhood”. The name of the project has evolved into the “Sister-City Project” since the beginning of the JDP era. The "Sister-City" is a project that was initiated to meet the religious, cultural and social needs of Muslims in developing geographies, and to reinforce their sense of brotherhood and cooperation[24]. Within the scope of the project, the Turkey Diyanet Foundation branches were paired with 209 cities in 95 countries in cooperation with the Mufti's offices and they were given the opportunity to carry out projects together. Between 2015 and 2016, universities, mosques, cultural centers and libraries were built in 18 countries by their 26 branches. Moreover, religious events were held and cash as well as equipment donations were made [25]. Various African capitals were included in the project and paired with the Mufti’s offices. For instance, the Mufti Office of Amasya has become a sister-city with Dakar in Senegal and the Mufti Office of Rize has become sister-city with Madagascar[26].

§ 5.2 Non-official Channels in the Faith-Based Diplomacy

In the case of Turkey, the state has pursued faith-based diplomacy through its institutions such as the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and other track-two diplomacy instruments, such as Islamic NGOs. In other words, Turkish faith-based diplomacy involves both state institutions and non-governmental actors in Africa. While Diyanet plays a central role in Turkey's faith-based diplomatic approach in Africa, the

24 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2021, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%202021.pdf

25 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2016, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20-%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%20-%202016.pdf

26 Turkey Diyanet Foundation Activity Report 2021, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://tdvmedia.blob.core.windows.net/tdv/MedyaOdas%C4%B1/Raporlar/TDV%20Faaliyet%20Raporu%202021.pdf

activities of Turkish NGOs in the continent are also significant in understanding the scope of faith-based diplomacy.

While several Islamic NGOs such as the Hudayi Foundation, IDDEF (İnsana Değer Veren Dernekler Federasyonu), the Deniz Feneri Association, and the Beşir Association operate in Africa, the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) has the largest capacity among them. The activities of IHH in Africa exemplify Turkey's track-two diplomacy approach in the context of faith-based diplomacy. In selecting NGOs for this research, I focused on those that are known for their active involvement in humanitarian aid abroad and their close relationships with the Turkish state. Official reports from the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) indicate that IHH works closely with state instruments. On the other hand, Fehmi Bülent Yıldırım, chairman of IHH, argues that the foundation played a significant role in raising awareness about humanitarian issues in Africa in Turkey: "We organized the first African conference in Turkey. No one was talking about Africa at that time; we managed to place African issues on Turkey's agenda. After our activities, an African conscience has been raised in Turkey. Moreover, we shared our field experience with other NGOs and government agencies in Africa and encouraged them. In this sense, we paved the way for state-NGO cooperation in the African case."[27]

Like Diyanet, IHH has focused on humanitarian aid, medical projects, education programs, the restoration of places of worship, and the drilling of water wells in Africa. In 2021, IHH donated over one billion Turkish Liras to various parts of the world, particularly to African countries facing crises. According to the statistics, 4.4% of these funds were given to Sudan and Niger, while 3.6% were given to Somalia and Ethiopia to be used in different fields such as education and medical assistance. Like Diyanet, IHH has also concentrated its efforts on Syria

27 Interview with Fehmi Bülent Yıldırım, cited in Sabancı, "Türkiye–Afrika İlişkilerinde Sivil Toplum," 80.

following the civil war. In 2021, IHH spent 438 million Turkish Liras in Syria, which is equivalent to 42% of the foundation's total donations. [28].

Due to the ongoing Darfur crisis and the secession of South Sudan, many people in the region have been in need of humanitarian aid. The high population density in camps has led to epidemics and food shortages, and there are increasing problems with education and housing for those living in the camps. The number of refugees in the country has exceeded one million, including those who have had to migrate to Sudan due to conflicts in Ethiopia. To meet the urgent needs of refugees in Sudan, particularly their need for food and shelter, IHH has developed 50 projects in 2021 to address needs such as food, water, agriculture, and other essential needs. According to the foundation's annual report, more than 170,000 Sudanese people in need benefited from IHH's activities in 2021. These activities focused on life and food security, education, water wells, and the cultural field in Sudan.[29]

While IHH has carried out 61 projects in Niger which is one of the poorest countries in the world, it has also focused on Ethiopia which has been challenged with political crises and drought. In addition to Turkish state institutions' mobilization of humanitarian aid, IHH has also been actively working in Somalia to resolve the complications brought on to the region with the drought in 2011, in which more than 260 thousand people lost their lives. According to the statistics shared in the foundation's annual reports, IHH donated 26 million Turkish liras to Somalia in 2020. In addition, IHH has established an agricultural school in order to ensure the sustainability of agriculture in Somalia[30].

28 IHH 2021 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/163/ihh-yillik-rapor-2021---web.pdf

29 IHH 2021 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/163/ihh-yillik-rapor-2021---web.pdf

30 IHH 2020 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/154/faaliyet-raporu0.1.pdf

The education programs of IHH are similar to those of Diyanet's activities in Africa. In 2021, IHH implemented 141 projects in 29 different countries, including the construction and renovation of schools, the building of dormitories, the installation of computer and chemistry laboratories, gymnasiums, educational equipment assistance, the organization of vocational courses, and the publishing and distribution of books. Disabled children in Africa often lack access to education and are at risk of nutritional disorders due to limited opportunities. To address these issues, IHH has implemented various projects in Africa to care for children with disabilities and ensure that they receive adequate education. One such project was the IQRA Deaf Education Center in Burundi, which focuses on the education of deaf, poor, and orphan children.[31]

IHH has also implemented various health projects in Africa. These projects include the construction and repair of hospitals, construction of rehabilitation centers, establishment of blood donation centers, medical equipment assistance, drug assistance, health screenings, vaccination campaigns, and mass circumcision programs. In 2021, 760,000 people in 23 countries benefited from the foundation's health activities. The cataract project, initiated in 2007, has resulted in the operation of 157,000 people for cataracts. African people are the main target of the foundation's health projects. Medicine and aid materials were also provided to the people of Niger for the treatment of malaria. The delivery of these materials to the Niger Ministry of Health by IHH aims to prevent deaths caused by malaria and provide free access to medicine for those in need.[32]

Similar to Diyanet, IHH has drilled more than 12,000 water wells in 41 countries to date. The main targets of the water well projects are

31 IHH 2021 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/163/ihh-yillik-rapor-2021---web.pdf

32 IHH 2021 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/163/ihh-yillik-rapor-2021---web.pdf

Somalia, Tanzania, Ghana, Kenya, Chad, Guinea, and Mali, with 45 projects. IHH has also actively used track-two diplomacy to play a role in peacebuilding processes in Africa, similar to Diyanet. It has carried out humanitarian diplomacy activities by taking steps to protect civilians in crisis regions, finding missing persons, and rescuing hostages. To address these issues, IHH has organized international meetings and played a mediating role. For example, while negotiations were held for the liberation of nine Turkish citizens held captive in Libya, efforts were also made to reunite Sudanese and Ethiopian families separated due to the civil war and migration. In addition, IHH has worked as the main partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, providing shelter and rehabilitation of camp areas for more than 60,000 Ethiopian refugees who had to migrate to Sudan due to internal turmoil in Ethiopia. Within the scope of this project, IHH installed more than 6,000 tents and built more than 750 treehouses for refugee shelters.[33]

Another NGO in Africa was the Gülen Movement which came to be known as the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) after the military coup attempt on Jul 15, 2016. FETÖ, which emerged with an imam named Fetullah Gülen under the guise of an Islamic community in Turkey, has undergone many transformations and has turned into a criminal organization with international connections[34]. The main purpose of the organization was to glorify the figure of Fetullah Gülen[35]. As in many messianic movements, Fetullah Gülen did not refrain from inciting the emergence of movements and giving fatwas and directions that would distort religion. With this "heresy", the organization clearly separated from the mainstream Islamic movements in Turkey[36].

33 IHH 2021 Activity Report, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/public/publish/0/163/ihh-yillik-rapor-2021---web.pdf

34 Bayraklı & Ulutaş, *Fetö'nün Anatomisi*, 48.

35 Büyükkara, *Gülen Yapılanması, 75.*

36 Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Başkanlığı (DİYKB), Kendi Dilinden Fetö: Örgütlü Bir Din İstismarı (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2017).

FETÖ expanded its activities during the 1980s through education programs in Turkey. One of the most significant activities of the organization was the formation of student houses in which university students lived together. The organization aimed to increase its effectiveness by using alternative education methods in their houses and their educational institutions[37]. Educational activities of the organization were not limited to Turkey. The Turkic Republics, the Balkan countries, the Middle East and Africa were the main targeted regions of the organization. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian region was chosen as the first field of activity for FETÖ. The presence of the Muslim and Turkic populations in this region and the similarity of the cultural structure allowed the organization to increase its power[38].

Like other Islamic NGOs and Diyanet, FETÖ had also implemented a religion-based strategy in Africa with its use of education programs to enhance its power. Its activities in Sub-Saharan Africa started as of the late 1990s. In addition to humanitarian aid projects, FETÖ had focused on educational activities abroad to establish an international network[39]. In 2013, FETÖ had over 100 schools in 50 various countries in Africa. When the Turkish government decided to control the activities of the organization in 2013, the schools of the organization were closed and transferred to other authorities in Africa[40]. According to the official statistics, 234 FETO-affiliated schools were transferred in 20 countries. In the context of Africa, the Turkish Maarif Foundation started to control 118 FETO-affiliated schools in 16 different countries since 2016. On the other hand, FETO-affiliated schools continue their activities in 17 African countries. In addition to transferring FETO-affiliated schools, the foundation has also opened new schools in Africa. After the coup attempt, the Turkish government organized meetings with African leaders in order to either transfer the FETÖ-run schools to Turkish authorities or to

37 Bayraklı & Ulutaş, *Fetö'nün Anatomisi*, 48,49.

38 Ibid, 14,15.

39 Çelik, *Örgütlü Dini Gruplar*, 27.

40 Angey, *The gülen movement*, 53-68. .

shut them down. In this process, the Turkish Maarif Foundation has played a crucial role by controlling the FETÖ-run schools or opening alternative schools to promote Turkish culture[41]. According to the official statistics, the foundation provides educational opportunities to 50,000 students in 49 countries[42].

The Turkish Maarif Foundation was established just before the coup attempt in June 2016 with the adoption of Law No.6721 by the Turkish Grand National Assembly[43]. The purpose of the foundation was determined in the law as *"to award scholarships in all educational processes from preschool to University education, to open facilities such as educational organizations and dormitories, to train educators to be assigned to these organizations including domestic organizations, to conduct scientific research, and to carry out research and development studies, publish academic works and develop methods and conduct other educational activities which are in accordance with the laws and regulations of that country where these are operated in order to service and improve formal and informal education by taking common human values and knowledge as a basis*"[44].

§ 5.3 Cooperation and Coordination of Official and Non-official Channels

In the context of faith-based diplomacy, the state works in cooperation and coordination with non-governmental organizations in the case of

41 Akgün and Özkan, *Turkey's Entrance*, 59-71.

42 Maarif July, 2022 Bulletin, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.turkiyemaarif.org/uploads/MaarifBultenEN/MaarifBultenEN21.pdf

43 For detailed information, visit the offical page of Resmi Gazete, Law No:6721 Türkiye Maarif Vakfı Kanunu, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/06/20160628-17.htm

44 For detailed information, visit the official page of the Maarif Foundation, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://turkiyemaarif.org/page/51-TMF-Law-11

Turkey. In order to prevent drought in Africa and improve quality of life through sustainable agricultural activities, the Somalia Agricultural School Project was initiated in cooperation with IHH and TIKA in December 2012. The project, which operated as a short-term applied farmer training course between 2013 and 2015, was renamed the Anadolu Agricultural Faculty in 2014. The faculty was established under the University of Zamzam, a Somali state university. In addition to theoretical and practical training, its purpose was to provide training on agricultural tools to students enrolled in the program. The cooperation of IHH with TIKA in this project and the training of teachers under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry demonstrate the support given by state institutions to the activities of NGOs.[45]

On the other hand, IHH cooperates with other international actors and government institutions in its activities in Somalia. For example, the Project Training Program was organized by the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Qatar Red Crescent with the goal of developing local Somali associations. Another example of cooperation between official and non-official channels in Turkish faith-based diplomacy is the opening of a mosque in Somalia by IHH. In 2012, IHH constructed a mosque in the city center, and Bekir Bozdağ, the Deputy Prime Minister at the time, attended the opening ceremony.[46] Especially after the Syrian civil war, IHH has often cooperated with state institutions. For example, with the support of state institutions in the region, IHH established a campus for children orphaned during the Syrian conflict in Hatay, a Turkish city on the Syrian border. In addition, other Islamic NGOs have also cooperated with the state in foreign countries. The Deniz Feneri Association has worked with the Türkiye Maarif Foundation in Kenya, where the foundation pays the

45 For detailed information, visit the page of IHH, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/en/news/ihhnin-destegiyle-somaliye-ilk-ziraat-fakultesi-2656

46 For detailed information, visit the page of IHH, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://ihh.org.tr/haber/basbakan-yardimcisi-bekir-bozdagdan-cami-acilisi-788

salaries of staff employed by the Association.[47] According to Federico Donelli, despite the of the achievements in the multitrack diplomacy of Turkey which includes official and non-official actors, the level of coordination and cooperation with the agencies can be evaluated as being low in comparison with the other countries.[48]

Another aspect of Turkish faith-based diplomacy is the transfer of FETÖ-run schools in Africa to the semi-public organization Turkish Maarif Foundation. While the dormitories of FETÖ were transferred to other Islamic NGOs at the local level, the state sought to take control of the FETÖ-run schools by having them transferred to the foundation[49].

Turkey seeks to improve its position in Africa through the delivery of humanitarian aid via faith-based diplomacy institutions like Diyanet and its non-official diplomacy instruments such as Islamic NGOs[50]. There are various reasons for the cooperation between state institutions and non-official diplomacy instruments within the scope of faith-based diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy. A more effective policy can be pursued through cooperation between official and non-official channels, as in the case of Mozambique. On the other hand, this cooperation is not only based on a voluntary basis. The changing understanding and practices of civil society in Turkey is another element that forms the basis of the cooperation in foreign policy. In other words, the Islamic NGOs have accepted to cooperate with Turkish state institutions because of the transformation in the relationship between the state and certain Islamic civil society organizations in Turkey.

47 Şerif, and Turhan, *Mapping relations*, 988.

48 Donelli, *The Ankara consensus*, 57-76.

49 Akgün and Özkan, *Turkey's Entrance*, 59-71.

50 Fuat Keyman, and Onur Sazak. "*Turkey as a" Humanitarian State"*." (2014); Senem Cevik, "*The benefactor: NGOs and humanitarian aid.*" Turkey's public diplomacy. (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015), p.121-152.

The cooperation and coordination between official channels like Diyanet and non-official actors like IHH can be viewed from two different perspectives. On one hand, using religious discourse and religious instruments in Africa allows Turkey to take advantage of its position in Muslim-majority African countries. According to traditional narratives, Islam stands against colonialism and slavery, which can be appealing to African countries that have a history of colonialism[51]. Using faith-based diplomacy in Africa represents Turkey's sincere position in prioritizing humanitarian aid projects and education programs. Islamic NGOs like IHH have also implemented religion-based policies in various parts of Africa. Therefore, the cooperation between state institutions and IHH has a strategic aim in Turkish foreign policy. In other words, Turkey seeks to position its activities in Africa within a religious framework by using Diyanet and its cooperation with NGOs in the field.

Faith-based diplomacy of Turkey and its differences with the traditional faith-based diplomacy can be observed in the interviews with the employees and founders of the Turkish NGOs which have activities in Africa. In the interviews, the employees from including Diyanet, Turkish Diyanet Foundation, Maarif Foundation, IHH, Hudayi Foundation, Beşir Association, and Adam-Der answered the questions about the activities of the NGOs in foreign countries by focusing on the African case. In the first set of questions, the participants mostly talked based on the reports they have prepared. They stated that the organizations do not have systematic and high-level organization within themselves. Only small local NGOs claim that they keep their goals simple and channeled to specific areas. For example, an NGO that only works in Nigeria claims that they can easily reach their annual goals.

The employees of the Turkish NGOs in Africa stated that their main goal is to strengthen the relationship between Turkey and African countries by implementing humanitarian aid programs, scholarship

51 Mazrui, *Islamic and Western*, 118.

organizations, and reconstruction activities. They stated that their activities have increased in Africa with the increase in efforts by the Turkish government. However, one founder of IHH, which has more capacity compared to other NGOs, claimed that the Turkish government follows their advice and activities in Africa, and that IHH plays a crucial role in Turkey's African policy, with faith-based diplomacy being a result of IHH's activities in Africa.[52]

The employees explain that their financial support comes primarily from individuals with a religious background and identity. The image of African people as oppressed due to their ethnicity, race, and religious beliefs has contributed to the increasing role of religious NGOs in providing aid and support. The religious identity and background of the majority of financial donors has also influenced the religious focus of the NGOs' activities.

In the interviews with employees of small NGOs, they express that they direct their activities according to the needs of the region. Employees of larger NGOs with higher capacity also indicate that they take into consideration the dynamics of the region where they operate, and they provide a specific program for each country through the representations of the country. However, one employee also mentioned that small associations are more successful and pointed out that organizations working based on a national basis achieve more successful results in certain fields. In an interview with a former employee of the Turkish Diyanet Foundation, the person stated that the foundation, which is completely independent from the government, has more flexible working areas compared to other organizations. He also claimed that the foundation uses the same methods in most countries, but small changes

52 Interview by Bedirhan Kir, In-person interview with an employee of IHH, Conducted on January 5, 2023.

can get caught in bureaucratic barriers and the processes can take too long.[53]

In the second set of questions, the officials stated that only NGOs that work in coordination with government institutions are taken seriously by the state officials. Here, the system is based on individual relationships and trust-based progress, which leads to coordination problems between official and non-official channels in Africa. As a result, they mention that the possibility of using human resources and capital more effectively has been eliminated.

The Africa representative of a Turkish NGO operating in Kenya stated that they faced difficulties in carrying out their activities on the ground because they could not develop personal relationships with the Turkish diplomats in the region. On the other hand, the same NGO reported that they could move more comfortably in Nigeria and other African countries thanks to the good relationships they developed with the Turkish diplomats.[54] Moreover, smaller NGOs also expressed their concerns about this issue. These NGOs that target specific regions in Africa state that they are subject to various restrictions despite being able to work more efficiently or that Turkish institutions do not take any steps to communicate with African states and solve problems.

According to interviews with employees of Turkish NGOs in Africa, the relationship between these organizations and the state changed after the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey. The shift towards a more nationalistic discourse by the state resulted in limited cooperation with the NGOs, who often have an Islamic perspective in their activities. The employees argue that this cooperation is beneficial for Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in Africa, but it is seen as a potential long-term risk by the state. The

53 Interview by Bedirhan Kir, Online interview with an employee of Turkish Diyanet Foundation, Conducted on January 17, 2023.

54 Interview by Bedirhan Kir, Online interview with an employee of Hudayi Foundation, Conducted on December 12, 2022.

coordination between official and non-official channels is not systematic and mostly relies on personal relationships between the leaders of the NGOs and state elites.[55] For example, the religious community known as the Süleymancılar, who have a strained relationship with the AKP government, face challenges in their cooperation with the state. In conclusion, having a problem with the government domestically can affect the coordination between official and non-official channels in the field of foreign policy.

Using religion in foreign policy also indicates the ruling elites' position Turkey vis-à-vis Africa. According to the traditional narrative, "the glorious history" of the Turks in Africa is an "honorable stance" against colonial history. Another important parameter to understand the position of the religion is the khutbah, which serves as public preaching in the Islamic tradition. The khutbah has had a symbolic meaning throughout Islamic history as it demonstrates the sovereignty, independence and power of the political leaders. During Turkey's Friday khutbas, the five pillars of Islam are narrated in a nationalist religious discourse under Diyanet. In that sense, the effects of traditionalism can be observed in the khutbahs[56].

Diyanet has positioned itself as a protector of the oppressed and destitute around the world through its khutbahs. *"The goal of those who seek to threaten our independence and future is to make our nation no longer a source of hope for the oppressed, downtrodden, and destitute around the world. However, we must continue to be a source of hope for innocent children, grief-stricken women, and helpless elderly people in Aleppo. We must also continue to be a source of hope for the oppressed Rohingya and the destitute in Africa, which has been exploited for centuries.*

55 Interview by Bedirhan Kir, In-person interview with an employee of IHH, Conducted on January 5, 2023.

56 Saçmalı, *Compliance and negotiation,* 65.

With this mindset, we must continue to stand with the good against evil, with the truth against lies, and with the oppressed against the oppressor"[57].

In the khutbah on the anniversary of the July 15 coup attempt in 2017, it was stated that Africans saw Turkey as the savior and the last bastion of Islam. The khutbah highlighted that on the night of the coup attempt, people from all over the world, from Gaza to Sarajevo, Kirkuk to Somalia, Sudan to Pakistan, and from the steppes of Asia to the other end of Africa, prayed for Turkey and shed tears in prostration, asking for the "last bastion of Islam's Ummah" not to fall. *"Another fact we must never forget is the prayers and supplications said in tears that night by oppressed, aggrieved, and deprived brothers and sisters around the world who have pinned their hopes on us. We all witnessed that night that from Gaza to Sarajevo, Kirkuk to Somalia, Sudan to Pakistan, the steppes of Asia to the other end of Africa all the oppressed, the downtrodden, the deprived, the immigrants, and the refugees of the world prayed for our nation. They shed tears in prostration praying "Do not let the last bastion of Islam's Ummah fall." That night, we all experienced the meaning of our Beloved Prophet's (pbuh) hadith, "Believers are like building blocks of a structure. They make sure the survival of one another"*[58].

Another motivation behind the cooperation and coordination between official and non-official channels in foreign policy is a structural problem in state-civil society relations in Turkey. The relationship between civil society and the state has always had a complex structure in Turkey. This relationship has always been complicated in Turkey due to the influence of the Ottoman understanding of the all-powerful state on the culture of the state, which has persisted since the early republican

57 Friday Khutbah at December 23, 2016, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://dinhizmetleri.diyanet.gov.tr/Documents/2016%20%C4%Bongilizce%20Hutbeler.pdf

58 Friday Khutbah at July 7, 2017, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://dinhizmetleri.diyanet.gov.tr/Documents/2017%20%C4%Bongilizce%20Hutbeler.pdf

era.[59] The state and civil society relations have a historical background in the Turkish case. Service provision by civil society actors is rooted to as early as Seljuk Dynasty with the charitable foundation tradition. Foundations were the most significant institutions in the Ottoman Empire because they had important functions in social and economic life.[60] Members of the dynasty and high-ranking state officials founded various of foundations to contribute to the economic and social welfare of the society.[61] In 1922, when the Ottoman Empire collapsed, there were 26,798 established foundations.[62] Civil society in parallel with the democratization of the regime, remained limited until the beginning of the multi-party system[63]. The 1980 coup was considered a turning point in the relationship between the state and the civil society as it thwarted the activities of NGOs[64]. However, especially the people who were oppressed by the state because of their ethnic background and religious identity, started to engage with civil society organizations during the 1990s[65].

The separation between state and civil society in Turkey has become less distinct with the increase in the presence of Islamists in the public sphere. As a result, NGOs in Turkey have gained political power due to their tendency to view themselves as closely connected to the state

59 Şerif Mardin, *"Power, civil society and culture in the Ottoman Empire."* (Comparative Studies in Society and History 11.3, 1969), p.258-281.

60 Sedar, A. "*The Impact of Waqfs on Economic Development of the Ottoman Empire: The Case of Western Thrace."* Research Gate (2015), p.1-32.

61 Bulut, Mehmet, and Cem Korkut. *"Osmanlı Para Vakıfları ve Çağdaş Faizsiz Finans Kurumlarının Karşılaştırılması."* Vakıflar Dergisi 46 (2016), p. 23-46.

62 Şerif, and Turhan, *Mapping relations*, 979-996.

63 Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, *"Civil society in Turkey: continuity or change?."* (2002), p.59-78.

64 Fuat Keyman, Sebnem Gumüşçu, and Sebnem Gumuscu, *Democracy, identity and foreign policy in Turkey: Hegemony through transformation.* (Springer, 2014), p.116-141.

65 Stefanos Yerasimos, *"Civil Society, Europe and Turkey."* (Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism, 2000), p.11-24.

rather than functioning as independent actors.[66] Additionally, the Islamic background of the NGOs is also another significant reason for this unclear distinction between civil society and the Islamic-based government with the beginning of the JDP era. Islamic civil society organizations had a crucial role in the Islamic movements which also affected the foundation of the JDP in Turkey.[67] Especially, after the July 15 coup attempt, the state has tightened its control in the field of civil society[68]. In 2020, the Turkish parliament drafted new regulations on the activities of civil society in Turkey to block illegal financial acts of terrorism. Thus, it can be said that these regulations have damaged the independent structure of NGOs in Turkey[69].

With the adoption of the new regulations in the parliament, the Ministry of Interior expanded its control over the NGOs[70]. While the main aim of the regulation is to prevent the financial activities of terrorist organizations through civil society instruments, it has also given authority to the state to detect the activities of NGOs. On the other hand, the close relationship between the state and civil society cannot be ascribed to a top-down regulation, but to a more horizontal one. Islamic NGOs have a tendency to cooperate with state institutions and benefit from state resources in their activities. On the other hand, the government has also tried to share its power with the non-governmental

66 Yael Navaro-Yashin, "*Uses and abuses of "state and civil society"* in contemporary Turkey." (New Perspectives on Turkey 18, 1998), p.1-22.

67 Tuğal, Cihan, *Passive revolution: Absorbing the Islamic challenge to capitalism*, Stanford University Press, 2009, p.147-234.

68 Bülent Aras, *State, Institutions and Reform in Turkey after July 15*. (Istanbul Policy Center, 2017), p.135-157.

69 For detailed information, visit the official page of Resmi Gazete, Law No:7262 "Kitle İmha Silahlarının Yayılmasının Finansmanının Önlenmesine İlişkin Kanun'da Yardım Toplama Kanunu ve Dernekler Kanunu'nda Yapılan Değişiklikler", Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2020/12/20201231M5-19.htm

70 For detailed information, visit the official page of Resmi Gazete, Law No:5253 Dernekler Kanunu 30/A, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2004/11/20041123.htm#1

organizations that brought it to power and supported it to stay in power. Cooperation and coordination have a crucial role in the case of Turkey[71].

§ 5.4 Role of Diyanet in Turkey's Somalia Policy

Somalia has been a key focus of Turkish foreign policy during the Justice and Development Party (JDP) era. The implementation of faith-based diplomacy through Turkish state institutions, particularly Diyanet, can be clearly seen in the Somali context. In 2011, Somalia struggled with civil conflict, famine, and a devastating drought. Somalis were unable to meet their most basic needs, such as food and water. Moreover, they didn't have any contact with their government officials because of the outbreak of civil conflicts all around the country. Additionally, they didn't have enough power to alleviate their indigent conditions [72]. After the visit of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Somalia on 19 August 2011, Turkey's humanitarian aid projects turned into a comprehensive African policy for Turkey with the use of different strategies in the field. Turkey's involvement in Somalia has two critical points: (1) Somalia has returned to the international scene thanks to Turkey's support and (2) the Turkish state officials have been given the opportunity to measure their capacities in foreign policy[73].

Turkey has allocated an important part of its aid budget to Somalia in order to overcome the instability caused by the Al-Shabaab terrorist attacks and their effort to establish an independent authority in the country. Motivations behind the focus on Somalia have been discussed for a long time. While some analysts explain this policy agenda

71 Yasemin İpek Can, *"Türkiye'de sivil toplumu yeniden düşünmek: Neo-liberal dönüşümler ve gönüllülük."* (Toplum ve Bilim 108, 2007), p.88-128.

72 Mehmet Özkan, *"Turkey's involvement in Somalia"*, (SETA, 2014), p.21.

73 Özkan, *Turkey's involvement*, 10.

as a chance for Turkey to become a political actor in the continent[74], others describe this focus by referring to humanitarian concerns [75] and the virtuous/moral power paradigm[76].

Turkey's Somalia policy has been seen as an attempt of Turkey to increase its power in Muslim African countries.[77] Whatever the motivation behind Turkey's Somalia policy is, any accomplishment or failure in the Somali policy can determine the future of Turkey in the region[78]. Therefore, various civil institutions such as TİKA, AFAD, Kızılay and some Turkish NGOs have directly participated in Turkey's Somalia policy. In addition to these state institutions and NGOs, Diyanet has also played an active role in achieving the intended goals. There are certain strengths and weaknesses in Turkey's Somalia policy. Some Somalians believe that Turkey is impartial in local politics and local disputes among clans. Moreover, religion is considered as an important asset for Turkish foreign policy in Somalia. On the other hand, the concentration of Turkish assistance and state institutions in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, creates another problem for the local population because of the multiethnic and fragmented social structure of Somalia. Additionally, although the presence of Turkish institutions in the region is considered to have positive effects, the excessive presence of Turkish symbols such as Turkish flags creates discomfort among the Somali people[79].

There is a religious and historical tie between Turkey and African countries. Hence, these elements can legitimize and support the newly

74 Mehmet Özkan, "*Does 'Rising Power' Mean 'Rising Donor'? Turkey's development aid in Africa"*, (Africa Review, 2013), p. 139-147.

75 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey: Speech to the 66th UN General Assembly", (The United Nations, New York, 22 September 2011). Accessed on June 5, 2022, http://gadebate.un.org/66/turkey

76 Julia Harte, "*Turkey Shocks Africa",* (World Policy Journal, 2012), p. 27-38.

77 Yusuf Kenan Küçük, "*Ten Years of Turkish Engagement With Africa: Discourse, implementation and perception in Somalia",* (University of Oxford, 2015), p. 61.

78 Özkan, *Turkey's involvement*, 11.

79 Küçük, *Ten Years*, 62.

established relationship between Turkey and the Muslim countries in Africa. In other words, religion has a critical role in Turkey's Africa policy, which can be considered as a part of its soft power policy agenda. Somalia is also one of the targeted areas in the scope of the Turkish religion-based foreign policy agenda.

Diyanet has played a number of significant roles in Somalia over the years. Initially, it focused on providing humanitarian aid to the country. Once state authority was established and stability was achieved, Diyanet shifted its focus to education programs, religious services, and offering scholarships to bring Somali students to study in Turkey.[80] Diyanet has also prioritized the providing of educational opportunities within the country to disseminate education in society. Turkey Diyanet Foundation has also supported the reconstruction and maintenance of the Sheikh Sufi School building in Mogadishu in 2012[81]. Moreover, Diyanet established religious counseling services in Mogadishu in 2014, in order to respond to the region's religious needs and to establish a religious representation of Turkey in the region[82]. In addition to Turkey's humanitarian aid programs carried out by Diyanet and other state institutions, the Somalian state allowed Turkey to establish a military base in the capital of Somalia. Therefore, the example of Somalia is evidence of successful faith-based diplomacy and soft power in Turkish foreign policy that directly affected the hard power capacity of Turkey in the region[83].

80 Özkan, Turkey's involvement, 43.

81 İbrahim İsmail Abdi, Çiğdem Nas & Faruk Taşçı, *"Somali Örneğinde Türkiye Kalkına Yardımı Modeli"*, (Toplumsal Politika Dergisi, 2021), p. 74.

82 Ibid, p.75.

83 For detailed information, visit the page of Al-Jazeera, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/1/turkey-sets-up-largest-overseas-army-base-in-somalia

§ 5.5 Role of Diyanet in Turkey's Nigeria Policy

Turkey and Nigeria have a long history of relations, despite being in different continents and having different historical backgrounds. The relationship between the Kanem-Bornu Empire, located in the present-day countries of Nigeria, Chad, and Libya, and the Ottoman Empire began at the local level when the Ottoman Empire conquered Egypt and Tripoli. During the reign of Murad III, the bilateral relationship between the Kanem Bornu Empire and the Ottoman Empire continued through the provision of military aid to the Kanem Bornu Empire.[84]

During the 19th century, the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Nigeria was negatively impacted by French expansion in the region. However, during the reign of Abdulhamid II, the Ottoman Empire attempted to support the Muslim community in Nigeria. This is exemplified by the construction of the Şitta Bey Mosque in Lagos, the first capital of Nigeria located in the south of the country. The mosque was started by Mohammed Sitta, a member of one of the leading families of Lagos, in 1892 and completed two years later.[85]

After the establishment of the republic, the relationship between Turkey and Nigeria stagnated. The efforts of individual enabled this relationship to continue until the 1960s. Before Nigeria gained its independence, in the 1950s M. Muhammed, the governor of Bornu, one of the northern states where the Muslim population is densely populated, sent a letter to the journal Sebilürreşad which was a famous magazine created by Mehmet Akif Ersoy and Eşref Edip Fergan. He explained his expectations from Turkey by saying that *"we Nigerians are devoted to our Turkish brothers with the greatest respect and affection, because in Turkey*

84 Toyin Falola, Abdullahi Mahadi, Martin Uhomohibhi, Ukachukwu Anyanwu, *Nigerian of History 1: Nigeria before 1800 AD*, Longman Nigeria Plc, Lagos, 2007, p.45.

85 Gökhan Kavak, Adam Abu Bashal, Rafiu Oriyomi Ajakaye "2. Abdülhamid'in emaneti, Nijerya'nın 'Türk Camisi'", For more detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/kultur-sanat/2-abdulhamidin-emaneti-nijeryanin-turk-camisi-/1286404, E.T:13 Kasım 2018.

there was the Islamic caliph. Turkey has taken a place in the hearts of us, Nigerian Muslims, in every respect." Moreover, in the letter, he also made a request to establish cooperation in the field of Islamic education of the Nigerian students in Turkey.[86]

Although an ambassador was appointed to Nigeria in 1962, just two years after its independence, there was no remarkable progress in relations until the D-8 summit in 1996. The foundations of the D-8 initiative were laid with the Prime Minister of the time, Necmettin Erbakan's first visit to Nigeria, and the "Conference for Cooperation in Development" was held in Istanbul Çırağan Palace in October 1996.[87] Former Turkish President H.E. Abdullah Gül participated in the D-8 Summit and paid an official state visit to Nigeria in July 2010. This was the first Turkish visit to the country at the level of the head of state.[88]

As part of its African Initiative Policy, Turkey placed significant emphasis on strengthening its relations with Nigeria. As part of this effort, the Turkish embassy in the capital of Abuja was strengthened with additional staff and funding. Other elements of the policy included mutual visits, student scholarship programs, and the establishment of the "Black African Studies Institute" under the Turkish International Relations and Strategic Research Foundation. However, despite progress in official visits and scholarship programs, the institute was not established.[89]

86 "İslam Dünyasından mektuplar", Sebilürreşad, 1950 Ocak, C.3, S.69, s.298-299.

87 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/gelisen-sekiz-ulke-_d-8_.tr.mfa

88 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-nigeria.en.mfa

89 T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Afrika'ya Açılım Eylem Planı (Gözden geçirilmiş II. basım) Ağustos 1999, s.10.

After the African Initiative Policy, activities of the state institutions have also increased. The Turkish Airlines started to direct flights to the capital of Nigeria Abuja in 2006.90 Another significant public policy and cultural diplomacy instrument of Turkey in foreign policy YTB has also focused on Nigeria by providing scholarships for Nigerian students. Within the scope of "Türkiye Scholarships," only 322 Nigerian students were educated in Turkey since 1992. 91 Although Turkey does not have an Education Counsellor in Nigeria, the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) representative started to work in Nigeria in 2019. Yunus Emre Institute does not have an office in Nigeria. Moreover, one of the most important instruments of Turkish foreign policy in the context of public diplomacy, TIKA also does not have an office in Nigeria. Therefore, the capacity of Turkish NGOs in Nigeria is sufficient.

Since 2015, Diyanet has had a representative in Nigeria, where international aid organizations such as the United Nations and the Red Cross are active. The Abuja Religious Affairs Consultancy, which began its operations in 2015, drills water wells in addition to distributing food. The term of the first religious affairs counselor sent to Nigeria ended in July 2019, but a new counselor was not appointed to replace him.

In addition the Adamder Association, the Dar'ul Erkam Foundation, the Federation of Associations that Value Humanity (IDDEF) and the Beşir Association carry out education and humanitarian aid activities in Nigeria, especially in the capital Abuja. The Adamder Association, which was established in 2011, and the Dar'ul Erkam Foundation, which was established in 2016 in Nigeria both have an

90 THY Afrika'da 56. destinasyonunu uçuş ağına ekledi", For more detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/thy-afrikada-56-destinasyonunu-ucus-agina-ekledi/1515362

91 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-nigeria.en.mfa

Islamic background, and they have a vision to promote Islam in Nigeria.92 Two primary schools were opened and are operated by Turkish non-governmental organizations in Nigeria and nearly 500 students have benefited from these schools. In addition to following the Nigerian education curriculum, these schools also offer students the opportunity to study Islamic sciences.93 Moreover, Turkish NGOs have built an orphanage for orphans in Nigeria in addition to their educational activities.94

There are two main reasons why Turkey's faith-based diplomacy and public diplomacy instruments are not as active in Nigeria as they are in Somalia and other Muslim-majority countries. Firstly, the religious demographics of the two countries are quite different. According to the World Bank, Somalia has a population of at least 14.7 million, with over 99% of the population being Sunni Muslim, according to the official statistics of the federal Ministry of Religious Affairs. In contrast, Nigeria has a population of at least 203.5 million, with 49.3% of the population being Christian and 48.8% being Muslim, according to certain surveys on religious demographics. The remaining 2% consists of people from other religions, including Shia Muslims, which make up a higher percentage in Nigeria than in Somalia.95

Secondly, there is a difference in economic development between the two countries. According to the UN's Human Development Report

92 For more detailed information, visit the official page of the NGOS, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.darulerkam.org.tr/

93 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/nijeryada-yuzlerce-ogrenci-turkiyeden-yardimlarla-okuyor/991920

94 For more detailed information, visit the official page of Anadolu Agency, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/nijeryali-yetimler-turklerin-yardimiyla-sicak-yuvaya-kavusacak/1189515

95 For more. Detailed information,visit the official page of US Department of State, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom/nigeria/

2021-2022, Nigeria ranks 163rd in the world in terms of the human development index, which measures life expectancy, expected years of schooling, mean years of schooling, and gross national income per capita. On the other hand, Somalia is not included on the list due to the high level of instability in the region, meaning that it has a much lower level of human and economic development compared to Nigeria. In other words, Somalia has a much worse level of human and economic development than Nigeria. Due to the instability in Somalia, foreign countries do not invest in the region. Therefore, the Somalian market for Turkey is less competitive than the Nigerian market.[96] As a result, foreign countries are less likely to invest in Somalia, making the market less competitive for Turkey compared to Nigeria.

§ 5.6 Limits and Capabilities of Turkish Faith-Based Diplomacy

As it is stated by Nye, Turkish public diplomacy uses soft power instruments such as student exchange programs, and cultural activities in its foreign policy[97]. Diyanet is working as a public diplomacy institution in Turkish foreign policy, by focusing on education and scholarship programs. In other words, Diyanet is considered to be an instrument of Turkish public diplomacy[98]. A country's soft power is comprised of the country's culture, education, art, tradition and religion; thus, it can be asserted that soft power functions within the scope of cultural values[99]. Therefore, the activities of Diyanet are suitable for the soft power policy implementations of Turkey.

96 For more detailed information, visit the official page of UNDP, Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2021-22pdf_1.pdf

97 Nye, *The Future of Power*, 242.

98 Kalın, *Soft Power,* 19.

99 Ibid, 9.

Diyanet is one of the main instruments of Turkish foreign policy. There are different motivations and reasons why governments conduct faith-based diplomacy in their relations with other states. Firstly, faith-based diplomacy can promote the acceptance of a state's foreign policy at the domestic level. Moreover, religious diplomacy can convey a particular aim to targeted societies in order to influence their understandings and policy preferences[100]. Therefore, religion can be a very useful tool in legitimizing policies and creating common cultural ties in order to attract the foreign public. Turkey's faith-based diplomacy initially targeted the countries where Turkey has historical, cultural and religious heritage based on its Ottoman legacy[101].

The role of religion has become a critical foreign policy instrument in enhancing Turkey's power in countries from Latin America to Africa[102]. After the beginning of the JDP era, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu was elected as the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in 2004 with the support and lobbying of the Turkish government. It was considered to be an important change in the foreign policy paradigm. Turkey hesitated to join this organization when it was founded in 1969 due to its challenging structure to the "Western-oriented secular modernization process"[103]. The organization of the African Muslim Leaders Summit in Istanbul, three times under the control of Diyanet, indicates the changing pattern of Turkish foreign policy.

With the beginning of the JDP era Turkey tried to use public diplomacy and soft power instruments more intensively in international

100 Tepeciklioğlu, *Turkey's religious diplomacy*, 199.

101 Mandaville & Hamid, *Islam as Statecraft,* p.112.

102 Gönül Tol, "*Turkey's Bid for Religious Leadership: How the AKP Uses Islami Soft Power",* (Foreign Affairs, 2019), Accessed on June 5, 2022, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2019-01-10/turkeys-bid-religious-leadership

103 Tarık Oğuzlu, "*Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy",* (Australian Journal of International Affairs, 2007), p.81-97.

relations. The governments have increased the budget of their foreign policy institutions to enhance the scope of these activities. Hence, the increase in the budget and administrative capacities of state institutions like Diyanet, TİKA, YTB and the Yunus Emre Institute has contributed to the image of Turkey in the eyes of the other nations and its operational power in the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus and especially in Africa.

Using religion as a soft power instrument in foreign policy refers to utilizing cultural and religious traditions as a means of influence and attraction, while implementing faith-based diplomacy involves using religious institutions and practices as a means of conducting diplomatic relations. While the use of religion as a soft power tool can have long-term, explainable consequences, the implementation of faith-based diplomacy in foreign policy can be more risky due to the complex relationship between religion and politics in Turkey. This complexity can result in changes in the domestic political landscape affecting the role of religion in foreign policy and potentially decreasing the organizational and financial capabilities of state institutions abroad.

In order to reach long-term goals, sustainable soft power policies can be effective. However, frequent changes in foreign policy can damage the foreign public's perception and acceptance of a country, which can have a negative impact on the achievement of those long-term goals. While Turkey's foreign policy includes humanitarian aid programs, it is important to recognize that faith-based or religious diplomacy is a reflection of the JDP government in international relations. If the potential risks and issues are not thoroughly analyzed, religious diplomacy is more likely to have negative outcomes rather than achieve long-term objectives.

It is important to note that the TDV annual reports and certain NGO reports used in this research as primary sources may not provide completely objective and systematic statistics on their activities in Africa.

These reports do not contain enough information on whether Diyanet has systematically collaborated with other state institutions or non-official channels. Additionally, there is no discussion of potential problems that may arise from Diyanet's active work in Africa, nor is there any comprehensive study or report on how Africans perceive Diyanet's activities in the field.

The lack of systematic coordination among Turkish public diplomacy institutions and non-official diplomacy instruments like NGOs in Africa is one of the most significant challenges. Although there is cooperation and coordination between these channels in some areas of Africa, Turkey's "new faith-based diplomacy" remains incomplete without comprehensive coordination and strategic planning in the field.[104] Unsystematic cooperation is not only a characteristic of the relationship between the state and civil society but also between NGOs in foreign policy. However, according to the reports of the NGOS, there is a de facto task sharing of the problems and regions among the NGOs. While the IHH plays a significant role on the eastern coast of Africa, the Cansuyu Association actively operates on the western coast.[105] Moreover, another potential problem caused by Turkish faith-based diplomacy is that NGOs in Africa may have different agendas. It can create a separation between official and non-official channels which can cause a failure in the achievement of long-term goals in implementation of faith-based diplomacy[106].

Cooperation and coordination between official and unofficial channels in faith-based diplomacy has distinguished Turkey from other examples in Africa. However, the lack of systematic cooperation can damage Turkey's perception in the field, as seen in the example of FETÖ.

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104 Jahja Muhasilovic, *"Turkey's Faith-based Diplomacy in the Balkans."* (Rising Powers Quarterly 3.3, 2018), p.71.

105 Şerif, and Turhan, *Mapping relations*, 979-996.

106 Jan, Melissen, ed. *The new public diplomacy*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.28-40.

FETÖ-run schools were perceived as state institutions by the foreign public, making it difficult for the ruling elites to change them and transfer them to the semi-public Turkish Maarif Foundation after the coup attempt. Additionally, there is not enough information in the literature to evaluate Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in Africa. The lack of sufficient studies on the effects of faith-based diplomacy in Africa can lead to misunderstandings in evaluating the long-term effects of Turkey's policy in Africa.

In foreign policy, faith-based diplomacy can be limited when there is a history of unstable peace agreements and conflicts. Public diplomacy efforts require stability in governance to be effective. Acts of terrorism, democratic revolutions, coups, and other significant changes in a country can negatively impact the success of faith-based diplomacy. Furthermore, a lack of contact with policymakers can lead to the failure of faith-based diplomacy.[107]

Despite the increasing budget and capacity of Diyanet during the JDP era, there are still some shortcomings in Africa. For instance, there are not enough religious counsellors in Africa to directly organize the activities of the institution in the field. Moreover, in almost every region of Africa, Diyanet has implemented the same type of project such as distribution of Islamic books, and aid projects organized during the Eid Al-Adha and Ramadan holidays, educational activities, water well projects. It is a fact that Africa contains very different cultures, religious beliefs, lifestyles and political realities from east to west, from north to south. Therefore, organizing the same activities in each part of Africa cannot align with the achievement of long-term goals of faith-based diplomacy.[108] On the other hand, with the changes in the organizational structure, Diyanet has become more open to government intervention. It

107 Kaye, Dalia Dassa. *Talking to the enemy: Track two diplomacy in the Middle East and South Asia.* Rand Corporation, 2007, p. 25-30.

108 Gilbert ND Reynolds*, Africa in world history,* p.16.

also creates a potential risk of instability in the mission of Diyanet when the responsible minister or the government changes.

When it comes to the interviews, I asked certain questions about the limitations and potential problems in cooperation between state institutions and NGOs in Turkish foreign policy in the context of non-traditional faith-based diplomacy in Africa.[109] In the third set of questions, the employees of Turkish NGOs in Africa focus on the limitations of their cooperation with the Turkish state institutions in Africa. They claim that the Turkish state officials do not have a good understanding of the local needs and that they lack enough quality personnel. The lack of knowledge of the officials on the field causes difficulties in identifying local needs. The employees of these NGOs state that they have always been against the FETÖ, but the state's harsh response to the FETÖ members in Africa may lead to negative opinions about the NGOs in the future, as the African state officials may associate them with FETÖ. The closure of schools and the harsh changes that took place in Africa after the FETÖ coup attempt have created a negative perception of Turkish NGOs in African countries. This is why direct diplomacy through official channels has become more important than civil society organizations.

In addition, the employees of the NGOs stated that they do not generally consider it appropriate for government institutions to interfere with activities that can be carried out in the civil society organizations. They stressed that government institutions should support the civil society organizations operating in the field during difficult times, but that the field should be left to the civil society organizations during normal times. The NGO employees also added to their statements that they consider it appropriate for the government to have a specific Africa

109 Interview by Bedirhan Kir, In-person interview with an employee of IHH, Conducted on January 5, 2023.

policy. However, they emphasized the importance of division of labor and coordination work, pointing out that there are many stages of this policy.

According to the interviews with the employees of the NGOs operating in Africa, it is necessary for these organizations to have strong personal relationships with government institutions in order to receive support from them. They also emphasized the need for a more systematic structure for the cooperation between the state and NGOs in order for their activities to be effective. The employees also expressed their views on the need for a separate financial oversight mechanism for their overseas activities. Some of the employees reported that they have been able to expand their activities with the help of the AKP governments, while others have expressed complaints. The employees acknowledged that a sharp line between the state and civil society cannot be drawn, but stressed that the disappearance of this line could threaten the existence of the civil sector. Some of the NGO employees suggested that the Western countries' models of cooperation with civil society organizations should serve as a model for Turkey.

§ 5.7 Conclusion

As diplomacy has evolved, the use of both official and non-official channels in Turkish foreign policy has involved a range of actors. The state institution Diyanet has played a significant role in Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in Africa, implementing humanitarian aid projects and education initiatives, as well as undertaking political missions on the continent. Diyanet's organization of African Muslim Religious Leaders Summits and its "sister-city" project, which includes Turkish municipalities, demonstrates the importance of its role in religious diplomacy in Africa.

Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in Africa has involved a variety of actors, including state institutions like Diyanet and non-official channels such as NGOs. The implementation of this diplomacy has been

particularly successful in Somalia, where the activities of the religious NGO IHH stand out. In contrast, faith-based diplomacy in Nigeria has been less prominent due to the country's diverse religious and economic landscape. While Somalia has a predominantly Muslim population and lower levels of economic development, Nigeria has a larger minority of Muslims and higher levels of economic development. As a result, Turkey has prioritized its focus on Somalia rather than Nigeria, where there are many other international actors present.

Faith-based diplomacy has been implemented through official channels in various parts of the world, including Africa. In these efforts, Turkey actively engages with religious non-governmental organizations and works to coordinate their activities. The country's approach to faith-based diplomacy in Africa differs from others on the continent due to two main factors. Firstly, Turkey seeks to increase its power and influence through the use of religious discourse. Secondly, the lack of a clear separation between state and civil society, as well as the decreasing autonomy of civil society in Turkey, has led to cooperation between official and non-official channels in Africa. It is important to thoroughly evaluate the non-traditional form of faith-based diplomacy practiced by Turkey and consider any potential problems that may arise from it.

6

Conclusion

The relationship between religion and foreign policy has long been a controversial topic in international relations literature. The events such as the Iranian Revolution, the 9/11 attacks, and the spread of religion-based terrorist organizations have made it necessary to reconsider the complicated relationship between religion and foreign policy. In this context, Turkish foreign policy provides an opportunity to analyze the role of religion in international relations because Diyanet, a state institution, actively participated in the foreign policy agenda of Turkey during the JDP era. This study examines the activities of Diyanet in Africa and sheds light on the blurred boundaries between non-official organizations that actively operate in Africa and the Turkish state, emphasizing the religious repertoire of Turkish diplomatic relations.

In the first chapter, I explained the purpose and arguments of the study. I argue that the Turkish faith-based diplomacy has a different characteristic in comparison with the traditional understanding of faith-based diplomacy. In Turkish faith-based diplomacy, there has been a cooperation between non-official channels and state institutions, however in traditional faith-based diplomacy the cooperation between both channels is a rare occurrence. Moreover, I clarified the geographical and chronological scope of the study. Lastly, I emphasized the academic

contribution of this thesis by explaining the gap in faith-based diplomacy and Turkey-Africa relations literature.

In the second chapter, I examined the theoretical approaches and the soft power, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and faith-based diplomacy literature to understand how the role of Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy can be evaluated. With the end of the Cold War, developments in technology and the spread of globalization, the international relations theories started to focus on the concepts of soft power, public and cultural diplomacy. On the other hand, research on faith-based diplomacy has remained limited in international relations literature. Considering the theoretical background, I explained the changing understanding of Turkish foreign policy with the beginning of the JDP era. While there was some public diplomacy instruments in Turkey like TİKA and Kızılay before the beginning of the JDP era, the ruling elites of the party created new public and cultural diplomacy instruments and redefined the purpose of old institutions to use in Central Asia, the Balkans, the Middle East and Africa. During this process, in addition to reorganizing the existing institutions like TİKA, TRT and THY, the state has also established new institutions like the Yunus Emre Institute and YTB to promote Turkish values among foreign publics. Moreover, religion had a more important impact on Turkish foreign policy instruments. Diyanet has actively participated in the Turkish foreign policy agendas in different parts of the world. One of the main targeted areas has been Africa. Hence, Diyanet has also focused on Africa in the context of faith-based diplomacy.

As discussed in the third chapter the relations between Turkey and Africa have huge and complex historical ties. The relationship can be separated into three periods: (I)the relations during the Ottoman era, (II) the relations during the republican era until the end of the 20th century and (III) the relations under the JDP rule. According to the traditional understanding, the Ottoman Empire had a glorious history in Africa by governing the territory without participating in colonial activities and

giving autonomy to certain regions. However, the critical perspective of the traditional narrative indicates that the relationship during the Ottoman era did not have purely "innocent" characteristics because the empire participated in the Berlin Conference which was a meeting for the "scramble" of Africa.

With the establishment of the republic, the relationship has lost its previous importance with a few exceptions like the position of Turkey during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, in the Bandung Conference and in the Algerian independence process. The African Initiative program in 1998 was a turning point in the relations between Turkey and Africa. With the declaration of the year 2005 as the "Year of Africa", the state began to focus on Africa in political, economic and social aspects. In addition to the state institutions' efforts in the field, the relation with the African Union has also had a great impact on the position of Turkey in the continent by having a guest, observer and strategic partnership status in the union. In parallel with the changing focus of foreign policy, Turkey has increased its political presence in Africa by establishing new embassies and strong economic ties with the African states through international agreements.

Diyanet has played an important role in developing relations between Turkey and Africa. As mentioned in the fourth chapter, Diyanet was established on 3 March 1924 as a result of the complicated relationship between religion and the state during the early republican era. In parallel with the domestic political atmosphere, the position of Diyanet has changed gradually at the domestic and international levels. The Turkey Diyanet Foundation was established in 1975 in order to support the services of Diyanet both at home and abroad. Moreover, Diyanet's Religious Affairs Turkish-Islamic Union (DITIB) was established in 1984 to provide religious services for Turkish migrants in European countries.

The role of Diyanet has experienced the most radical change during the JDP era since its establishment. Religion has become a critical

element in the foreign policy understanding of Turkey during this era. In parallel with the increasing power of the JDP, the budget and administrative capacity of Diyanet have also dramatically increased. The position of religion and Diyanet in Turkish foreign policy has also been observed in the Syrian Civil War. While Diyanet implemented humanitarian aid programs at the beginning of the war, it also organized education programs for children and religious officials and the construction of religious buildings in Northern Syria.

In the African case, Diyanet has drilled water wells, organized urban programs and constructed and restored religious buildings in the field. On the other hand, Diyanet has focused on cultural activities and educational programs in Africa. For instance, over 10,000 students have graduated from the educational programs of Diyanet in 112 different countries by 2021. When it comes to the cultural activities of Diyanet, the Quran has been sent to 85 countries in Asia, Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, in different languages. In Africa, the Quran has been translated into local African languages such as Swahili, Hausa, Bambara, Chichewa and Samoan.

In the fifth chapter, I analyzed the different characteristics of faith-based diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy in the light of Diyanet and Turkish Islamic NGOs in Africa. Faith-based diplomacy is described as "*a form of non-official (Track II) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religion with the conduct of international peacemaking"* in the literature.[1] NGOs and non-official actors have an important role in the conflict resolution process and in promoting stability across different countries in the context of faith-based diplomacy. As mentioned in the fifth chapter, non-official institutions were used by different countries while conducting faith-based diplomacy in the examples of Mozambique and Nigeria.

1 Johnston & Cox, Faith-based diplomacy, 15.

When it comes to the Turkish case, the state has prioritized Diyanet in faith-based diplomacy in Africa. While some Islamic NGOs also have critical roles in humanitarian aid programs, medical aid projects and education programs, Diyanet has represented the official policy of the state. Diyanet organized three African Muslim Religious Leaders Summits in order to solve the problems of Muslims and establish a Muslim-based organization on the continent. Moreover, Diyanet has also dealt with the local people in Africa by organizing "sister-city" projects that aim to meet the religious, cultural and social needs of Muslims and to reinforce their sense of brotherhood and cooperation.

One of the most notable areas in which Turkish faith-based diplomacy can be clearly observed is Somalia. After the Somalian humanitarian crisis, Turkey has spent a lot of effort in Somalia to overcome the civil conflict, famine and disastrous drought. In addition to state institutions (TİKA, Kızılay and AFAD) and Islamic NGOs, Diyanet has also participated in the Somalia project of Turkey by providing education opportunities to Somalian children and humanitarian aid projects all around the country. In addition to the state institutions, non-official channels have also had a critical role in Turkish foreign policy. As I mentioned in the fifth chapter, an Islamic NGO, IHH, which has the largest capacity in the field has actively participated in Turkey's African policy. Like Diyanet, IHH has focused on humanitarian aid, medical projects, restoration of places of worship, drilling water wells, and education programs in Africa. Moreover, the state has cooperated with IHH in education and construction projects in Africa.

Coordination and cooperation between official and non-official channels provide a different characteristic of Turkish faith-based diplomacy, unlike other examples. The non-traditional characteristics of Turkish faith-based diplomacy is caused by two significant reasons: (I) the ruling elites seek to enhance the image of Turkey among foreign publics in African countries by using religious discourses and (II) the lack of a clear separation between the state and certain Islamic civil society

organizations in Turkey. Another important civil actor in Africa was the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) which lost its power after the military coup attempt on July 15, 2016. Some of the FETÖ-run schools were transferred to the newly emerged semi-official Turkish Maarif Foundation in Africa. The transfer of the schools to official channels has also become an aspect of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy.

Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in Africa has a non-traditional characteristic due to the activities of Diyanet, which differ from other examples of faith-based diplomacy in Africa. Islamic NGOs have also organized their activities in cooperation with official channels. However, despite the non-official nature of faith-based diplomacy, Turkey has prioritized official channels in the field. This thesis aims to explain the differences in the Turkish case by focusing on two factors. Firstly, Turkey has used Islamic discourse and instruments in its diplomatic relations with Africa, justifying them by referring to the "glorious history" of the Ottoman past and Turkey's innocent position during the colonial period. This narrative, which positions Turkey outside of colonial history, gives Turkey more opportunities in the social, economic, and political arena compared to Western domination in Africa. Secondly, the complex relationship between the state and civil society has also influenced the African diplomatic field, in which both sides have cooperated to solidify Turkey's political, social, and cultural influence in the field. This study hopes to provide inspiration for further examination of the role and position of Diyanet in Africa during the JDP era.

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