

Article

Turkey's Faith-based Diplomacy in the Balkans

Jahja Muhasilovic

PhD candidate at the Boğaziçi University-Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History

Abstract

Turkey's faith-diplomacy incorporates state and non-state actors in projecting Turkey's interests, particularly in the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans. The Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), is actively engaged in regions where Turkey has historical ties and its budget, as well as its human resources, are continuously increasing. As a result of the support from the AKP government, Diyanet has become an influential Islamic actor in the Balkans, which counters the Saudi and Iranian influences that introduce marginal interpretations of Islam. Furthermore, faith-based diplomacy allows Turkey to exert its influence in the Balkans and to secure its dominance over local religious institutions, while also being an actor in maintaining regional peace. This paper will provide a critical analysis of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in the Western Balkans region after the 1990's, with a special focus on the period after the AKP party came to power. This is done by offering a layout of Turkey's work on the ground in the Balkans and by analyzing annual reports and in-depth interviews of both the Turkey and the Balkans.

Keywords

Faith-based Diplomacy, Diyanet, Pious NGOs, Balkans, Secularism, Religious Dialogue

Introduction

Whether it is in the direction of approval or disapproval, the issue of religion lies at the very center of Turkish politics. Throughout its modern history, Turkey has had a unique experience regarding the issue of religion in politics and politics in religion (Gözaydın 2013). Founded as a republic with a strong *laïque* identity, the secular elite were very keen on limiting religion to private realms, and were strongly against instrumentalizing it within diplomacy (Kuru and Stepan 2012). Under the Islamist AKP government, the use of religion in Turkish political life took a new turn by being used as a powerful diplomatic tool. The AKP government increasingly uses Islamist rhetoric in international relations and does not

hide its ambition to position Turkey as a leader in the Muslim World. The operational area of Turkish faith-based initiatives stretches from the distant parts of Southeast Asia and Africa to neighboring regions such as the Balkans and the Middle East. In order to achieve this goal, Turkey actively participates in inter-faith reconciliation processes through its public diplomacy and NGO sector, provides humanitarian aid, delivers religious education and builds mosques across the globe. The praise Turkey received for representing an interpretation of Islam that is viewed as 'moderate' contrary to the interpretations in the Middle-East paved the way for Turkey to build-up a respectable faith-based infrastructure in regions like the Balkans. Especially in the Western parts of the peninsula which is where the majority of the region's Muslims live.

Since the 1990's, Turkey has been most active in its faith-based diplomacy within in the Western Balkan region. Especially now, after the rise of the Islamist AKP, Turkey's presence in religious life will be felt at a much higher level. Muslim communities in the region are recognized as leverage through which Ankara, and the AKP, use to try to create a stronger presence in this part of the world. Almost six centuries of Ottoman Islam had left a strong religious legacy on the local Muslims, which the Turkish government now tries to reintroduce through faith-based diplomacy.

In this regard, the activities of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) are of central importance. Diyanet is slowly positioning itself as the strongest Muslim institution in the region, by mediating disputes between Islamic institutions in Serbia, building grandiose mosques, educating a growing number of young theologians and sending its own imams to the region. However, Diyanet's expanding presence has raised some concerns and questions about the overall role it might play in the future. Governments in the region are watching any possible interference to matters of religion by an external factor with discontent. In the past, some Balkan states tried to prevent foreign influences on their Muslim population by directly interfering in the election of Islamic religious authorities. The 'Nationalisation of Islam', and thus further detachment from 'Turkish Islam' Islamic authorities in the region that are passing through, represents another challenge which hinders Diyanet's ambition to become a 'big brother' for the Muslims of the region. The Gulen movement's network (FETÖ) in the region is also seen as another problematic issue for Ankara. Turkish diplomacy actively uses public diplomacy channels, both official and unofficial, to counter the movement's influence. Dominance of the movement, once held in the 'Two track' diplomacy activities in the region, is slowly being taken over by the pious NGOs close to the Turkish government. Also, Turkey's religious-political rift at home is causing damage to the overall efficiency of their religious diplomacy abroad. Emanation of the friction between the AKP government and the Gulen move-

ment to the international arena, deficiencies in the rule of law, detachment from the European perspective and the 'big brother' attitude has Turkey failed to hide in the past are all making Diyanet's ambitions harder to reach.

Religious Diplomacy: Theoretical Debate

The reductionist attitude of modern thinkers regarding the role of religion in politics has created a tendency to interpret political science in the light of materialistic determinism. Positivist sociologist August Comte went far to suggest how religion will eventually disappear from social and political life. Yet, contrary to the prevailing belief of social theorists such as Max Weber, Karl Marx, and Emil Durkheim that cultural lines in international relations will gradually blur with the process of rationalization that comes along as modernization continues, in the last few decades, we have witnessed quite the opposite. The process of the "*religionization* of politics and the *politicization* of religion" is gaining ground around the globe (Robertson 1989). In some parts of the world, religion still remains a major inspiring force that shapes politics (Loskota B. and Flory R. 2013). For post-modernists, this fact proves the theory of 'multiple modernities' (Eisenstadt 2002, 1-29). According to Arif Dirlik (2003), the perseverance of the different cultural expressions across the globe does not indicate multiple modernities but a single modernity that he calls 'Global Modernity', which is a reconceptualized and purified form of the traditional Euro-centric interpretation of modernization.

Some political scientists suggest that taking religion into account when it comes to geopolitical analysis is not complementary with the spirit of *realpolitik*. According to Douglas Johnston, the 'secularizing reductionism' of Western diplomats prevented them from seeing the religious dimension of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Something similar can also be said for the Yugoslav wars, where religion has provided an important element for the eruption of ethnic conflicts (Ibid). Turkey's secular elite, which shares a similar reductionist narrative, was caught by surprise with the rise of the AKP in the early 2000's (Rubin and Çarkoğlu, 2006). The recent rise of the Islamophobic sentiment in the West reveals that even the most secular and modern countries are not immune to the trend. Even though religion still holds secondary importance in the West, in the Third World, it has preserved much of the vitality. In the 'peripheral' geographies, religion often serves as a shelter against Western-like modernization (Rubin 1994, 20-34). Contrary to the West's secularizing view, the religion of Islam has a different standpoint, where the two are accepted as complementary. Political Islam draws its principles directly from the religion probably represents the most dynamic political movement in the Muslim World. This is true for Turkey as well, where the political scene has been dominated by the Islamist government for sixteen years (Rabasa and Larrabee 2008).

Many critiques argue how the revival of cultural identities as a new dynamic in international relations have created unseen cultural filters and have distorted the message among its receivers. Here, public diplomacy has played a crucial role in preventing distortion and potentially eliminating the harmful outcomes that the 'cultural filters' cause among the foreign public. The successful implementation of public diplomacy holds the potential to reduce the inflammation that religious sentiment could cause within international relations. For R.S. Zaharna, it is the imperative of public diplomacy to work on crossing the cultural barriers and building networks of communication with the foreign public (Zaharna 2005, 2). Thus, the above-mentioned developments have created the necessity for the emergence of a more refined type of public diplomacy, 'faith-based' diplomacy.

Many authors agree that the field of public diplomacy lacks a theoretical frame (Entman 2008, 87-102 and Gilboa 2008, 57). Although there is a consensus on the goals of public diplomacy, arguments about who 'controls' the communication of a country are vague. Initially, it was understood as a communication of the government-to-foreign public (Gilboa 2008, 57). Later, with the emergence of 'New Public Diplomacy', a combination of different models of communication, such as the groups-to-foreign audience and individual people-to-foreign audience, were identified (Cull 2009, 12-14). Similar obscurity has reflected itself in discussions on faith-based diplomacy. For Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, faith-based diplomacy is, "a form of Track II (unofficial) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religion with the conduct of international peacemaking" (Johnston 2003, 15). Analysis of the Turkish case shows that the prescribed position of the religion in public diplomacy has to be reconsidered. This paper will deviate slightly from the traditional interpretation and will evaluate the case of Turkish faith-based diplomacy as a combination of both 'government-centered' and 'track II' channels. After the detailed analysis of Turkish faith-based diplomacy, both channels of the same were identified as valid. Though in the case of Turkey, the primary channel belongs to 'track-one' diplomacy, in other words 'official public diplomacy' or as called by Guy Golan, 'government-based public diplomacy' which is implemented through Diyanet, a state institution in charge religious affairs (Golan, Yang and Kinsey 2015, 417-441). Through Diyanet, Ankara carries out what Phillip Seib defined as 'religion-related public diplomacy' (Seib 2013, 215-221). The second channel is 'track-two diplomacy' or unofficial faith-based diplomacy, which is closer, but still somewhat unique, to the Johnston-Cox interpretation. Turkish 'track-two diplomacy' is mainly run by Islamist NGO's close to the Turkish government and by various other heterodox Sufi groups. Turkish faith-based diplomacy in the Western Balkans will be analyzed through the prism of these two separate channels.

Besides mentioned flows, the focal point of this analysis will be on three different

aspects of Turkish faith-based diplomacy. Besides the accustomed emphasis on the ability to reconcile a conflict, faith-based diplomacy will be evaluated from the aspects of nation-branding, or in the case of the AKP government, 'nation-rebranding', and its potential to project influence through religious public diplomacy institutions.

Samuel P. Huntington suggested that humanity will inevitably end up in a 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington 1998). On the other hand, for Douglas Johnston, religion does not imply conflict necessarily, but quite the contrary, it possesses a great potential in reconciling the same (Johnston 2003). Especially with its moral and ethic dimensions, religion can be positively instrumentalized by the diplomacy in peacebuilding efforts. The most referred to example of peace-building through religious dialogue is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the eruption of the violence between Arabs and Jews, religion was at the very center of the conflict. As both Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat were pious, the religious sentiment was one of the common grounds used in helping to reach a dialogue at the Camp David peace negotiations. During the wars in former Yugoslavia, religious authorities, primarily the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, played the central role in discouraging any retaliation attempts by the Bosniaks who were passing through the horrors of ethnic cleansing by the hands of Serb forces. Also, Turkey tried through public diplomacy to mediate a religious reconciliation between the two Islamic Communities in Serbia from 2009 to 2013.

Religious sentiment, as one of the most intensive emotions found among human beings, carries a great potential to be turned into a powerful soft power tool through the efficient use of public diplomacy (Seib P. 2013). For example, as the Turkish government is increasingly following Islamist policies in international relations, the religion of Islam is turning into Ankara's most recognizable soft power brand abroad. Under the AKP, Ankara has managed to re-brand itself from NATO's gendarmerie in the Middle East to a defender of Sunni Muslims of the world. In a short period of time, Turkey has managed to improve its standing in the Muslim World by successfully delivering humanitarian aid through its public diplomacy institutions, like Diyanet or TİKA, and its vibrant track-two diplomacy which is carried out by the pious NGOs. (Keyman and Sazak 2014, Çevik 2015, 121-152, Çevik 2016, 35-53) Muslim solidarity and 'Ummah awareness' was the main driving force behind Turkey's quick response to the agony of Rohingya Muslims and their assistance to the Somali government in reinstating the country shaken by the internal conflict. As an act of appreciation to Turkish humanitarian help, the Somalia government allowed Ankara to open its first military base in the country. The case of Somali is clear evidence of successfully implemented religious diplomacy and soft power, which directly benefited Turkey's hard power in this part of the World. (Al Jazeera English 2017 and Nye 2004)

As the religiosity in the world is on the rise, religion itself is becoming a very powerful political tool. With the effective implementation of religious diplomacy, states are able to exert their influence and shape the preferences of foreign publics. For decades, Diyanet has been providing religious education for young theologians in the Balkans. As a consequence of its long-term educational policies, today some Islamic authorities in the Western Balkans, like Grand Mufti of Montenegro, are alumni of Turkish Islamic faculties, which in turn provide Ankara with a significant advantage in the region.

'Turkish Islam' and the Balkans: in Competition with Other Middle-Eastern Players

The Cold War was an interlude period in ties between Turkish and Balkan Muslims. As a NATO member since 1952, Turkey was perceived with suspicion by the Socialist regimes in the region. For ideological reasons, the Socialist regimes restrained from sending Muslim students to Turkey. Lacking the capacities to educate young theologians, regimes favored sending students to Arab-Socialist countries with whom they enjoyed good bilateral relations.¹ With the return after the graduation, some alumni would bring a distinct interpretation of Islam from the one traditionally practiced among the local Muslims. New practices found fertile ground, primarily among the *ulema*², rather than ordinary believers. As a result of the Socialist era, the official interpretation of the Islamic teaching among the ulema was slightly 'de-Turkified' and partly 'Arabized'. Another reason for mistrust was the inheritance of a strong anti-Ottoman sentiment by the Balkan political *milieu*. Isolation from Turkey helped the Socialist regimes to partly erase the remaining elements of 'Ottoman culture' among local Muslims. On the other hand, former Yugoslavia was more pragmatic and used its Muslim population to cultivate good relations with the Muslim-majority members of the Non-Aligned Movement. As a result, Yugoslav Muslims enjoyed some benefits from the country's non-aligned policies during the Cold War.

During the wars in former Yugoslavia, a few hundred volunteer fighters, primarily from the Arab World, flocked to fight alongside the Bosniaks and Albanians against the Serb forces. As the majority of the volunteers followed the neo-Salafist-Wahabbi³ interpretation of Islam, they brought this 'alien' creed to the region (al-Rasheed 2002, 16-23). With time, a small number of local Muslims embraced the teachings of the foreign fighters. Many volunteer fighters even stayed in the region after the war, setting-up communes in accordance with the Puritan life-

¹ For this purpose once existing Higher Sharia-Theology Schools was reopened as a Faculty of Theology in 1977 in Sarajevo.

² Scholars of Islamic doctrine and law.

³ A puritanical teaching founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) in central Arabian region of Najd during the 18th century.

style. Iran is another Muslim-majority country that played an important role during the war. Tehran is believed to have been the largest arms-supplier of the Bosnian army throughout the war. As the Bosniaks were barehanded against the superior Serb forces, even the US turned a blind eye to the Iranian help. Military camps for training the Bosnian Army by the Iranian military instructors remained active throughout the war (Bardos 2013).

The United States bolstered the shut-down of pro-Wahhabi and pro-Iranian organizations soon after the wars across the region were ended. The fact that the majority of the neo-Salafist-Wahabbi NGO's were financed by the allied Gulf-Arab states did not stop the US from forcing their closure (International Crisis Group 2001) (Domazeti 2017). Probably due to the Turkish factor, the Saudi and Iranian influence is almost non-existent among the Balkan Turks.⁴ However, it is important to remember that even prior to US-backed operations, both neo-Salafist-Wahabbi and Iranian influence remained limited amongst other Balkan Muslims (Bougarel 2000, 32-35).

On the other side, since the 1990's, there was a widespread expectation, especially by the US, for Turkey as a NATO ally to take initiative in the region which would serve as a suppressive factor against the 'negative' influences from the Middle East. As a secular Muslim-majority country, Turkey was perceived by the West as an ideal partner for the role. Possessing many comparative advantages that are lacked by the majority of Middle-Eastern countries has made Ankara a logical partner of the West in the region. Turkey actively participated in NATO's operations aiming to suppress Serb forces across the region (Uzgel 2002, 69-71) (Kut 1998). Unlike other countries, Turkey is not a new player in this region. Thanks to a common Ottoman past, Turkish Islam is more in tune with the cultural interpretation of Islam in the Balkans. The Ottoman era left a mutual Hanafi-Mathuridi creed and a strong Sufi tradition among the locals. Established religious institutions, such as Diyanet, a large Balkan diaspora in Turkey and a Turkish ethnic minority in the Balkans, a century-long experience with secularism and Ankara's membership in NATO and the EU shared with the region are only some among the many competitive advantages that constitute Turkey's attractiveness in the eyes of Balkan Muslims.

Despite the mentioned advantages, Diyanet's activities remained unnoticed throughout the 1990's and will have to wait for the AKP's pro-active policy to establish a recognizable presence in the region. Beside the AKP factor, the suppression of the other influences from the Middle East by the US and the general

⁴ In Bulgaria for instance, an interweaving of various influences from the Middle-East spawned some paradoxical situations. With the fall of the Socialist rule, Pomaks turned to be more receptive to influences from the Arab World, while Bulgarian Turks developed stronger attachment towards fellow Turks from Turkey

perception of Turkey as a 'moderate element' paved the way for Ankara to expand its presence after the short period of "Wahhabi intermezzo" (Öktem 2010). However, the perception of Turkey as a moderate force threatens to slowly diminish. A collapse of the democratization process, increasingly frequent tensions with the West and Ankara's further detachment from the Euro-Atlantic Alliance, except among the small circle of sympathizers, is creating anxiety among the Balkan Muslims. Development became even more alarming when Ankara's post-2016-coup and its romance with the Kremlin, a historical fear of the Balkans Muslims, was added to the equation. To cut it short, the image of Turkey as we know is passing through a re-branding process, which does not seem promising given the expectation from its main sympathizers in the region.

Turkey's Faith-based Diplomacy: Diyanet

Religious matters in Turkey are supervised by the state institution known as Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Directorate for Religious Affairs). Diyanet has been in charge of religious affairs since 1924. Directorate today is one of the most established Turkish state institutions and represents Ankara's voice in religious diplomacy (Özkan 2014, 223-237). The first steps in expanding the operations overseas came in the 1970's with the growing needs of the Turkish community in Western Europe. For that purpose, the sub-department of the General Directorate of Foreign Relations was launched in 1971. The end of the Cold War brought new opportunities to Turkish foreign policy (Korkut 2010, 117-139). As a part of the proactive foreign policy launched by the then President Turgut Özal (1989-1993) during the early 1990's, Ankara sought to restore severed ties with Turkic and Muslim communities across the former Eastern Bloc. The vacuum created by the fall of Socialist regimes provided an opportunity for Diyanet to build-up stronger relations with Islamic authorities in Central Asia and Balkan countries. With the backing of the AKP government, Diyanet's influence will become even more pronounced, thus turning the Directorate into an important international player.

The Religious Services Consultancies and Coordination Offices for Religious Services based in Turkish Embassies, and the Religious Services Attaché Office based in Turkish General Consulates serve as Diyanet's overseas offices. As of 2016, fifty-five Religious Services Consultancies, thirty-nine Attaché Offices for religious service and twelve Coordination Offices for Religious Services were active in more than one hundred countries. Around two-thousand employees serve in the above-mentioned offices (Diyanet 2017, 26) (Anadolu Agency 2017). The duties of the Attachés and Consultancies include, "*preparing special programmes for "Turkish citizens" and "kinfolk" in order to preserve their commitment to the religion and the "national culture"*" (Diyanet 2017, 25).

Diyanet has Religious Services Consultancies in every Balkan country except

Slovenia. Attaché Offices are active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Romania while Coordination Offices exist in Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia (Diyanet-Dış İlişkiler 2018).

The General Directorate of Foreign Relations is in charge of coordinating the relations with regional Islamic Institutions. It has five sub-departments that are responsible for coordinating Diyanet's foreign affairs. These include the Department for Turks Abroad, the Department for Eurasian Countries, the Foreign Education and Guidance Department, the Department of Muslim Countries and Communities, and the Department for Relations between Religions and Cultures (Diyanet 2017, 11). The Department for Eurasian Countries is the most relevant when considering the relations with the Islamic institutions in the Balkans.

Every few years, the Department for Eurasian Countries organizes the Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting in order to bring together Islamic institutions from Central Asia to the Balkans (Korkut 2010, 124-131). The Council is presided over by the head of Diyanet, who serves as a permanent chairman. The first gathering of the Eurasian Islamic Council was held in 1995. Up until 2018, nine meetings were organized in different cities and the first and only meeting outside of Turkey was held in Sarajevo in 2000.⁵ The Islamic leaders from the Balkans are regular participants at this meeting and the regional religious authority, Mustafa ef. Cerić, the former Bosnian Grand Mufti, has served as an Assistant President of the Eurasian Islamic Council since 2000. He was second in the hierarchy only to Diyanet's president. The Eurasian Islamic Council, in a way, rivals the Islamic Council for Eastern Europe which is supported by Saudi Arabia.

*The Meeting of Religious Leaders of Balkan Countries*⁶, which was organized by the Department for Eurasian Countries, had more of a regional character. Diyanet brought together Muslim leaders from the Balkans to discuss regional issues, cooperation between the religious institutions in the region, problems of the *Vaqf* foundations, Islamophobia, religious dialogue and terrorism among many other subjects. Since their first meeting, which was held in Bulgaria in 2007, seven meetings have been organized up through 2015.⁸

The 'Sister Cities Programme' was launched in 2006 under the supervision of the General Directorate of Foreign Relations. It is an extension of the previous program, which was called the 'Kardeşlik Hukuku' (Brotherly Law), that was

⁵ Fourth Eurasian Islamic Council meeting was held in Sarajevo in 2000. The next, Fifth Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting, was organized in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. TRNC is recognized only by Ankara. Turkish Language, "as the common language in Eurasian Islamic Council Organization Meetings." was adopted at the 4th Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting in Sarajevo.

⁶ *Balkan Ülkeleri Diyanet İşleri Başkanları Toplantısı* in Turkish.

⁷ Islamic pious foundations.

⁸ The last meeting was organized in Edirne.

launched in 1990's together with the Muslim majority countries of the former Soviet Union. The main idea of the 'Sister Cities Programme' was to develop the relations between the Turkish and foreign *muftis*⁹ by matching the cities they serve in. The operational logic of the program resembles 'local diplomacy'.¹⁰ Sister city relations between two cities serves as a platform through which muftis cooperate and conduct joint projects. As it is stated on the official website of Turkey's Diyanet Foundation, "...in order to establish *Ummah brotherhood, one town from Turkey and one town from another Muslim country become sister cities, and after that, religious, educational, cultural and social needs are met*" (TDV). As of 2015, two hundred and fifteen cities in Turkey were responsible for the construction of over one hundred mosques, Qur'an courses, and madrasahs in two hundred and three sister cities in ninety-five different countries. Distribution of the sister cities according to these regions is dominated by the Balkans. Out of a total of two hundred and fifteen sister city relations around the world, sixty-six are from the Balkans, which represents almost a third of all matchings. This illustrates how Balkan cities are much more represented than their Central Asian or Caucasian counterparts, indicating the importance of the region for Diyanet (Diyanet-Dış ilişkiler).

Every year during the Holy Month of Ramadan, Diyanet sends Turkish imams to the region to perform religious duties. In 2010, a total one hundred and fifty imams were sent, ninety-nine of which went to Eurasian countries (Diyanet-Dış ilişkiler). A religious training program for local the imams, organized in cooperation with *TIKA*¹¹, was held in Albania and Bulgaria in 2015 (Diyanet 2016). Turkish imams were also sent to the Balkans for training programs (Diyanet 2014).

Diyanet actively participates in the restoration of Ottoman-era mosques throughout the region. Some restoration projects are conducted through the cooperation with other Turkish public diplomacy institutions such as *TIKA* and the *Directorate General of Foundations*¹² (Diyanet 2014). Besides restoration, new mosques have also been built (Özkan 2014, 232). Diyanet is responsible for the construction of numerous 'central mosques' in the capital cities around the world, including the *Namazgah Mosque*¹³ in the Albanian capital, which is expected to be the largest in the region upon its completion (TDV).

Diyanet also finances publishing activities in the region. In 2016, two-thousand copies of the Holy Qur'an were published in the Bosnian language. The twenty-

⁹ Islamic authority in charge of religious affairs in certain geographical area.

¹⁰ Type of diplomacy run by local governments (municipalities, cities, etc.).

¹¹ Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon İdaresi Başkanlığı).

¹² *Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü* in Turkish.

¹³ Also known as *Great Mosque of Tirana*.

thousand editions of 'Basic Islamic Knowledge Series' in Bulgarian and the ten-thousand copies of 'I am learning about my Prophet' in the Albanian Language are only a few among many publishing projects (Diyanet 2017, Diyanet 2015).

Some overseas activities are also conducted through Diyanet's *Turkey Diyanet Foundation*¹⁴ (TDV). TDV was founded in 1975 by Diyanet's former president Dr. Lütfi Doğan and few other high positioned officials. The initial plan was to create a foundation that would be of assistance to the Directorate. Today, TDV operates with a wide range of activities in Turkey and in one hundred and thirty-five countries around the world. It is responsible for the construction of more than three thousand mosques in Turkey and over a hundred more in twenty-five foreign countries. Despite building a large number of mosques, TDV's emphasis is on education. The primary goal is to train *hafiz*¹⁵ and provide the necessary support to theology students. For that purpose, the foundation provides scholarships to nationals from one hundred and eight different countries.

Turkey was one of the first Muslim-majority countries to recognize the importance of multilateral interfaith-dialogue initiatives. At the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in 2005, the Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero (2004-2011), proposed an initiative called The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was Prime Minister of Turkey at the time (2003-2014), decided to co-sponsor the initiative. Thus, Spain and Turkey together launched an initiative for inter-cultural, inter-faith, and inter-civilizational dialogue. With this initiative, Turkey spearheaded the role of the Muslim World's voice of inter-faith dialogue in the multilateral arena amid a flaming global political climate caused by the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which were further straining the relations between the West and the Muslim World (Ehteshami 2006, 104-121).

The Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı), the Turkish state institution in charge of religious affairs, incorporated the department for inter-faith dialogue known as the Department for Interreligious and Intercultural Relations (Diyanet). Religious movements and non-governmental organizations from Turkey, such as the Gulen Movement, have run self-initiated faith-based dialogues in the past as well.

Turkish Track-two Diplomacy in the Balkans

Turkey has a vibrant 'Track-two diplomacy' in the Balkans led by a large number of pious NGO organizations. Except the organizations linked to Gulen movement, almost all Islamist NGOs enjoy the strong backing of the Turkish govern-

¹⁴ Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı (TDV) in Turkish.

¹⁵ *Hafiz*, meaning "guardian" or "memorizer" in Arabic, is a person who memorized the whole Qur'an.

ment. Hence, pious NGOs more or less share the same vision with the AKP, however, this then raises the question of their non-governmental nature (Çevik 2016, 35-53). The first Turkish NGOs that settled in the region were close to the Islamist *National Outlook Movement*.¹⁶ *IHH*¹⁷, the largest pious NGO from Turkey, was founded during the Bosnian War in order to provide humanitarian help to civilians. One of the organizations that are active in the post-war period is *Hasene*.¹⁸ It operates student dormitories, provides humanitarian help for those in need, runs soup kitchens for the poor, and organizes iftar meals during the Holy Month of Ramadan. Naqshbandi Sufi groups like the *Süleymanci*¹⁹ group and the *Menzil Cemaati*²⁰ are also active in this region (Yavuz 2003, 133-151). Süleymancis run a few dormitories, while the Menzil group has followers among the local Sufi Muslims and is active among the regional Sufi lodges. The Menzil group also publishes the family magazine *Semer kand*. It is important to remind that number of the followers of these two groups remains limited among the local Muslims.

Prior to the rift with the AKP government, the most well-established Turkish non-governmental network was the Gülen Movement. Despite the reduction in capacities after the failed coup attempt, the movement still operates a sizeable network of educational facilities. During the zenith of its power, it was operating with more than forty schools and universities across the region. (Anadolu Agency 2018) For instance, in Albania, six out of seven Islamic seminaries is managed by the movement (The Economist 2016). All in all, the Turkish government's efforts to eliminate the activities of the movement in the region have caused serious damages to their overall capacities.

Turkish NGO's are not as transparent as they ought to be, which makes it difficult to find more information about the cooperation and coordination between the NGO's and Diyanet. Some examples from the past have indicated that Turkish public diplomacy has failed to evolve to the principles of 'New Public Diplomacy', but that the track one and track two public diplomacy channels frequently work as separate entities (Melissen, 2005). In 2014, the conservative NGO Istanbul Educational-Cultural Center based in Sarajevo, working in cooperation with Yunus Emre and the Municipality of Eskişehir, organized a controversial 'mass circumcision' for poor male children. (Klix 2018) This event created public outrage as mass and public circumcision is not practiced among Bosniaks. The event was even visited by Turkey's Minister of Education Nabi Avcı (2013-2016). Despite the criticism, the harmful practices continued in the coming years. This same

¹⁶ *Milli Görüş* in Turkish. Movement established by Necmetin Erbakan (1926-2011). The ruling AKP emerged from the National Outlook Movement.

¹⁷ IHH İnsani Yardım Vakfı (IHH Foundations for Humanitarian Help) was created during the Bosnian War for helping with humanitarian aid the victims of the war.

¹⁸ Hasene is linked to National Outlook's Cologne branch.

¹⁹ Followers of Naqshibandi Shaikh Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888-1959).

²⁰ Naqshibandi group based near Turkish town of Adiyaman.

model was also followed among the Bosniaks in Serbia, where mass circumcisions have been organized every year since 2010.²¹ The two dimensions of Turkish public diplomacy desperately needed to synchronize their activities. The heedlessness that some Turkish NGO's demonstrated regarding the political sensitivities in foreign countries represent the problematic issue from the aspect of efficient public diplomacy and the uncontained actions of unofficial channels threatened to damage the overall image of the country. (Keyman and Sazak 2014, 11,12) In order to improve the quality of the message that public diplomacy was aiming to deliver, R.S. Zaharna suggested applying for surveys and opinion polls. (Zaharna 2005, 3) Applying this method would be of great help to Turkey when working to prevent the repetition of past mistakes.

Another potential problem for Turkish diplomacy in the region is the rising social media activism led by uncontrolled and individual Turkophile trolls that are free of any realpolitik sensitivity. These social media trolls bombard the public in the region with overemotional and often harmful Erdoganist and anti-Western sentiment. Tactics and discourse used by the 'pro-Turkish' social media trolls resemble pro-Russian social media activism. (Muhasilovic, 2018) In order to counter the potential harms of internet and social media propaganda, Ankara has worked to develop a specific type of public diplomacy that the Amelia Arsenault calls public diplomacy 2.0., which actively uses new channels of communication such as social media and other web platforms to deliver the desired message. (Arsenault 2009, 135-155) The question is whether Ankara is willing to fight the trend vis a vis recent undemocratic shifts in Turkey and the rapprochement with Kremlin.

Diyanet as a Mediator Between the Regional Islamic Communities: The Case of Serbia

Reconciliation through faith-based initiatives does not apply to dialogue between the members of different faiths only, but between co-religionists as well. Turkey has worked to affirm its status as a 'big brother' by brokering in the schism that occurred among Muslims in Serbia. In 2009, the Serbian government of Boris Tadić (2004-2012) invited Turkey to help solve the division between the two Islamic Communities in Serbia²² that had been dividing the Muslims since 2007. (E.J.Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam 1993, 246-248) (Kuburić and Namliđji 2007, 43-51) The Bosniak minority living in the Sandžak region²³ was at the

²¹ Event is organized by Turkish non-state organization Platform of Friends of Sandžak (Sancak Dostları Platformu)

²² Islamic Communities are the highest religious bodies of the Muslim communities in the countries of the Former Yugoslavia., With the exception of Croatia and Slovenia whose Muftiates are linked to Bosnian Grand Mufti, every country has its own national Islamic Community. Unlike Diyanet in Turkey, Islamic Communities in the Balkans have autonomy from the government.

²³ Sandžak is a cross-border region between Serbia and Montenegro where Bosniaks constitute relative majority.

epicenter of the division issue. (International Crisis Group 2005) The mediation process in the region was popularly known as the `Turkish initiative`.

The main development that sparked the schism was the announcement of the Law on Churches and Religious Communities by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Serbia in 2007. With this new law, only a single authority for every religious community was allowed to exist in Serbian territory. The law caused further divisions among the already institutionally divided Muslims. Since the disbandment of the Yugoslav Islamic Community in the early 1990's, the two parallel Muftiates existed in Serbia side by side. The Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia with headquarters in Novi Pazar was led by charismatic Mufti of Sandzak, Muamer ef. Zukorlić (1993-2016) who remained loyal to the Bosnian Grand Mufti²⁴, thus preserving the cross-border religious unity of the Bosniaks, while the Mufti of Belgrade²⁵ Hamdija ef. Jusufspahić never accepted Sarajevo's authority but remained loyal to various Serbian governments.²⁶ (Karcic 1997, 114-118.) The announcement of the Law on Churches and Religious Communities encouraged the Mufti of Belgrade to proclaim himself Grand Mufti of all Muslims in Serbia in February of 2007.

In March of the same year, a group of imams from Sandžak, who previously were employees of the Meshihat, decided to pledge their allegiance to Jusufspahic and pointed out their dissatisfaction with the policies of Mufti Zukorlic as the motivation for the decision.²⁷ (Morisson 2008, 8-13) In order to strengthen the position of the newly formed Islamic Community among the Bosniaks in Sandzak, Adem ef. Zilkic (2007-2016), an imam from the region was named Grand Mufti of Serbia by Jusufspahic. After unsuccessful attempts by Zukorlic to reunify the divided Islamic Community at the Unification Congress held on March 2007, street clashes between the supporters of the two Communities and a decade-long struggle over who would control religious infrastructure was unleashed.²⁸

The talks for the unification of the Islamic Community were launched in July

²⁴ Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the first Islamic institution in the Balkans to receive the right to lead local Muslims by the Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam.

²⁵ In Bosnian language the institution led by Jusufspahić is known as *Mesihhat Islamske Zajednice u Srbiji* (Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia).

²⁶ Majority of the Bosniaks in Serbia recognize Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina as their spiritual center. Meshihat of Sandžak was founded in 1993. Alongside Bosniaks, Albanian and Romani Muslim communities exist in Serbia.

²⁷ It is widely believed that SDA Sandzak, the largest Bosniak party in Serbia, that was on bad terms with Mufti Zukorlic was deeply involved in the coup. Imams that left Meshihat are known to be affiliated with the party.

²⁸ Unification Congress was held on March 27, 2007 in Novi Pazar. Leaders of all the regional Islamic Communities were invited to the meeting. The Unification Congress ordered the creation of a new Islamic Community for the whole Muslim community in Serbia, that would remain loyal to Sarajevo. Even Jusufspahic was invited to the Congress. He rejected to participate.

of 2009 in Novi Pazar during the official two-day visit of the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu to Serbia. Diyanet was authorized to run the negotiation process and to prepare a draft agreement for the unification. After two years of talks, the involved sides came close to finding a solution during the winter of 2011. Diyanet's draft agreement suggested a merging of the two Islamic Communities in which Zilkic and Zukorlic would step down and Novi Pazar was proposed to be the new center for the unified Islamic Community. The Serbian state and its protégé Islamic Community rejected the agreement saying that it favored Zukorlic and Meshihat. The initiative then entered into a second phase that lasted until mid-2013, after which negotiations would be completely suspended.

It was after Diyanet financially decided to support a group of dissident imams who separated their ways with both Novi Pazar and Belgrade, that in 2013, a minor crisis erupted between the Diyanet on one side and the Islamic Community of BiH and the Meshihat on the other. Diyanet was accused by Mufti Zukorlic for trying to create a 'third Islamic Community'²⁹ that would be loyal neither to Sarajevo nor Belgrade, but to Ankara and Diyanet's action angered both Sarajevo and Novi Pazar. After the mentioned crisis, Diyanet and rest of the Turkish diplomacy slowly shifted its support towards Belgrade. Despite the financial support for the third group in the schism, Turkish diplomacy today recognizes the Islamic Community based in Belgrade as the official representative of Muslims in Serbia. In his 2017 visit to Serbia, the Turkish president even recited the Holy Qur'an in the Belgrade mosque controlled by the same. Zukorlic believes that the reason for Diyanet's support of the community in Belgrade is the conflict of interests between Ankara-Sarajevo that was smoldering for some time, as both the Diyanet and Bosnian Islamic Community cultivate regional ambitions. (Zukorlic 2018) (Bougarel 2005, 24-28) On the other hand, Turkey financed the reconstruction of an Ottoman-era public bath in Novi Pazar that belonged to the Meshihat of Sandžak, indicating that Ankara is not interested in severing the ties with Novi Pazar. All in all, Diyanet failed to unite the two Islamic Communities. Turkey's shifting support during the initiative showed that Turkey was not up to the task, as it ignored the fundamental component of the honest broker, and that is neutrality.

Paradox of Turkish Faith-based Diplomacy: Cases of Albania and Montenegro

Diyanet's relation with the Grand Muftis of Albania and Montenegro represented another example of the tendentiousness of Turkish religious diplomacy. Through its alumni, Diyanet has created a network of close affiliates across the region. Yet

²⁹ Group of imams from both Islamic Communities separated their ways and formed a 'fund for unification' which was financially supported by the Diyanet. Muamer ef. Zukorlic blamed Diyanet that it is after forming a third Islamic Community that would be loyal to Ankara.

the two alumni, Rifat ef. Fejzic, Grand Mufti of Montenegro, and Skender Bruçaj, Grand Mufti of Albania, stand out from the rest as they represent opposing narratives in Turkey's faith-based diplomacy. The previous is known for having close ties to the AKP government and Diyanet, while the later is closely affiliated with the Gülen movement. The movement was used in the 2000's in order to suppress Arab-Salafist influence over the country's religious institutions (Raxhimi 2010), but, after the political split between the AKP and Gülen, Turkey started pressuring Albania to extradite movement members. (Mejdini F 2017) Even the Grand Mufti's affiliation created minor tensions in the relations with Ankara. He was not included in the protocol during Erdogan's visit to Tirana in May 2015, when foundations for the Diyanet-sponsored Namazgah Mosque were laid. Further disregard towards Bruçaj was Erdogan's call to shut-down the schools run by the movement during the ceremony. Bruçaj publicly criticized the extradition of Turkish citizens from neighboring Kosovo in March 2018 whom Ankara accused of membership with the outlawed 'FETÖ' network³⁰. After the 2016 failed coup attempt, Diyanet directed its strategy towards fighting the movement in Albania by using Turkey's diplomatic weight. In 2016, Diyanet distributed five-thousand free copies of the "Movement of Religious Abuse: FETÖ-PDY" report translated into the Albanian language. It is even reported that Diyanet's imams actively spied on Gülenists and sent reports about movement activities abroad to Ankara. (Hurriyet Daily News 2016)

Rifat Fejzic, the Grand Mufti of Montenegro, represented an opposite example from Bruçaj. He enjoys a very close relationship with the Turkish political and religious leadership and is a frequent participant of Diyanet's events. He is even occasionally invited to ceremonies organized by Erdoğan himself. Fejzic was pretty quick to reveal his support for the AKP after the failed coup attempt in July 2016. In support of his stance, Fejzic warned Montenegrin media about the 'strong presence' of the movement in the Balkans, whose supporters have to be 'under surveillance'. (Fejzic 2016) The cases of the two Grand Muftis demonstrates the division Turkey's internal problems have caused in the region. Some religious figures in the region urged local Muslims to restrain from taking sides in the divisions that are shaking Turkey and the Middle East. The fact that every relevant religious authority in the region has a stance regarding Ankara, whether it is affirmative or reserved, demonstrates the importance Turkey holds among Balkan Muslims.

Conclusion

Turkey's economic boom came amid a historic momentum in which Ankara's strong engagement in the Western Balkans was praised as a counterweight against

³⁰ Few countries in the Balkans, Kosovo and Moldova so far, have responded positively to Turkey's call on the extradition of Gulen movement members.

the Neo-Salafist and Iranian influences. Deep historical and cultural ties with the region and Turkey's membership in the Western-bloc made Turkey attractive in the eyes of the Balkan Muslims. Yet, internal deficiencies regarding the rule of law and emanation of recent political divisions in Turkey has been damaging Turkey's standing in the region. Ankara's distancing from the European perspective and their rapprochement with Russia signifies another problematic development that threatens to re-brand Turkey as a 'disruptive' country. As the entire region aspires to join the EU, Ankara's further geopolitical reshiftings threaten to distance Turkey from the Balkan Muslims and the region as a whole.

Rightfully, Turkey is concerned about the condition of Muslims in the region, especially in countries such as Bulgaria and Greece. Yet, it is unjustified to expect improvement in the afore-mentioned countries while the status of religious minorities in Turkey is questionable.³¹ Some examples in the past show that Ankara did not pay enough attention to national and religious sensitivities in the region as it allegedly meddled with the 2017 Bulgarian parliamentary elections.³² (Leviev-Sawyer C. 2017) The recently increased use of Diyanet's infrastructure by the AKP for spreading propaganda abroad has created a counter-reaction in some countries. In the wider region, countries such as Austria are suspicious of Diyanet's imams for acting as emissaries and spies for the Turkish government and decided to contain Ankara's influence on its Muslim community by ordering the revision of the visa status of some forty imams from Turkey and the closure of a mosque linked to Turkish nationalists. The continued use of these practices could cause similar scenarios in other countries as well. On the other hand, Ankara's meddling in internal issues of the Balkan nation-states threatens to jeopardize the Balkan Muslims. Posing for revisionist policies proved to be an unnecessary luxury for Turkey. The fact that Diyanet was invited by the non-Muslim government of Serbia to mediate in the division among domestic Islamic Communities demonstrates that the presidency is already identified as an important regional 'spiritual player', and thus possesses one of the basic components, that according to Johnston, is necessary for a serious religious conciliator. (Johnston 2003, 16)

³¹ Despite some improvement under the AKP government, modern Turkey had a troubling past with its non-Muslim minorities, particularly Greeks and Armenians. Communities that have represented sizable minority at the eve of the Republic today are reduced to the minimal figures. Turkey faced many challenges regarding the non-Muslim minorities like Istanbul Pogrom of 1955, the status of Heybeliada theological seminary, Zirve Publishing House murders, the assassination of Hrant Dink, and some others. But on the other hand, it would be unfair to claim that there is no any improvement regarding the rights of non-Muslims under the AKP, the improvement is significant. For instance, the Turkish government allowed Christians to broadcast a channel on the Türkstat satellite operator and property rights of non-Muslims have significantly improved.

³² Mustafa Müezzinoğlu, Turkish Minister of Labour at the time, was accused in the report by the Bulgarian news agency BTA for openly supporting the leader of DOST Party Lutfi Mestan who was one of the candidates of the Turkish minority in the elections. In his speech from March 6, 2017 Müezzinoğlu called Bulgarian Turks living in Turkey to massively participate in the elections describing DOST's rival MRF (Movement for Rights and Freedoms) as a 'part of the Bulgarian deep state'.

Because of the wars in Middle-Eastern countries such as Egypt and Syria are no longer favored destinations for theology students from the Western Balkans. Turkey has remained the only significant foreign destination for the students of Islamic theology. The growing alumni network will probably position Diyanet as the region's strongest Islamic institution in the long run. As Diyanet's prestige is growing, it might feel the need to bypass other national Islamic institutions in order to expand its influence in order to create a network of 'loyalists' within its alumni network. In the past, Diyanet's 'big brother' attitude has created minor problems, but if it continues to threaten to ruin the relations with other Islamic institutions, it would seriously damage the effectiveness of Turkish faith-based diplomacy in the region. As it is already seen, the various miscalculations during the 'Turkish initiative' are responsible for damaging Diyanet's overall image in Sandzak which in turn closed many doors to Ankara in that region. As Brie Loskota and Richard Flory pointed out, "*established religious leadership should always have a priority place in any strategy and it would be unwise to use engagement as a way to undermine traditional religious leadership in any community*". (Loskota and Flory 2013, 21)

One of the greatest challenges that remain for Turkish public diplomacy institutions is the lack of coordination between official public diplomacy institutions and the NGO sector. In other words, the evolution toward the principles of 'New Public Diplomacy' remains incomplete in the Turkish case. Sometimes, the disolute actions of pious NGO's annulled much of the positive work that public diplomacy institutions such as Diyanet have conducted in the region.

Bio

Jahja Muhasilovic is a Ph.D. candidate at The Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History based at Boğaziçi University. The Institute has a multidiscipline approach to the modern history of Turkey and the neighboring region. The subject of the Ph.D. thesis is 'Turkey's Soft Power and Public Diplomacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandzak Region'. He defended a Master Thesis on the subject of the 'Image of the Ottomans and Turks in Bosnian History Textbooks' and a BA Thesis on 'The Formation of Turkish Nation-State'. His area of expertise is Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans from historical, cultural, economic, political, diplomatic, sociological, as well as other aspects, about which he has numerous publications.

References

- 2013 Diyanet Faaliyet Raporu, 2014, T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Ankara, 61.
2014 Faaliyet Raporu, 2015, T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Ankara, p.58.

- 2015 Diyanet Faaliyet Raporu, 2016, T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Ankara, 97.
- 2016 Diyanet Faaliyet Raporu, 2017, T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Ankara
- 2017 Diyanet Faaliyet Raporu, 2017, T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Ankara, p. 11.
- Al-Rasheedi, M. 2002, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p.16-23.
- Anadolu Ajansı 2017, Diyanet 102 ülkede hizmet veriyor, Retrieved on January 3, 2019, doi: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/diyanet-102-ulkede-hizmet-veriyor-/735322>
- Anadolu Ajansı 2016, Fethullah Gulen's broad Western Balkans network, Retrieved on July 26, 2018, doi: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/education/fetullah-gulens-broad-western-balkans-network/617524>
- Arsenault, A. 2009, 'Public Diplomacy 2.0' in Seib P. (ed.), *Toward a New Public Diplomacy: Redirecting U.S. Foreign Policy*, Palgrave Macmillan, 135-155.
- BIRN 2017, Turkey Presses Albania To Extradite Key 'Gülenist' Suspect, Retrieved on October 31, 2018, doi:<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albania-to-face-turkish-request-to-extradite-gulen-supporter-10-13-2017>
- Bougarel, X. 2005, "The Role of Balkan Muslims in Building a European Islam", No. 43, 24-28
- Bardos, G. N. 2013, 'Iran in the Balkans: A History and a Forecast', *World Affairs*, January/February, Retrieved on August 4, 2018. doi: <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/iran-balkans-history-and-forecast>
- Cull, N.J. 2009, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, University of Southern California-Figueroa Press, Los Angeles, p. 12-14.
- Çevik B. S. 2016, 'Turkey's Development Aid: An Ecosystem of Conservative Grassroots and Progressive Foreign Policy', in James Pamment (ed.), *Intersections Between Public Diplomacy & International Development: Case Studies in Converging Fields*, Paper No. 2, Figueroa Press, Los Angeles
- Domazeti, R. 2017, 'Suudi Arabistan'ın Balkan Politikaları', *ORDAF-Ortadoğu ve Afrika Araştırmacıları Derneği* 17, doi: <http://ordaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/suudiarabistanvebalkarlarrapor.pdf>
- Dirlik A. 2003, "Global Modernity? Modernity in an Age of Global Capitalism", *European Journal of Social Theory* 6(3), 275-292.
- Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2018, Retrieved January 3, 2019, doi: <http://disiliskiler.diyanet.gov.tr/detay/222/din-hizmetleri-koordinat%C3%B6r%C3%BC%C4%9F%C3%BC>
- Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2018, Retrieved on January 3, 2019, doi: www2.diyanet.gov.tr

- yanet.gov.tr/DisIliskilerGenelMudurlugu/Documents/KardesSehir.docx
- Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2018, Retrieved on January 3, 2019, doi: <http://www2.diyamet.gov.tr/DisIliskilerGenelMudurlugu/Sayfalar/DinHizmetleri.aspx>
- E.J.Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam (1913-1936), vol. 5 of reprint edition (1993), s.v. "Manshur," 246-248.
- Ehteshami, A. 2006, 'The Middle East: between ideology and geo-politics', in Buckley M. and Singh R. (eds), *The Bush Doctrine and the War on Terrorism: Global responses, global consequences*, Routledge, London & New York, 104-121.
- Eisenstadt, S. N. 2002, 'Multiple Modernities', in S. N. Eisenstadt (ed), *Multiple Modernities*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1-29.
- Fejzic, R. 2016, 'Reis Islamske zajednice Crne Gore: Gulen ima jak utjecaj na Balkanu', *Blic*, 26. 07. 2016. Retrieved on August 9, 2018, doi: <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/svet/reis-islamske-zajednice-crne-gore-gulen-ima-jak-uticaj-na-balkanu/z8fpwg1>
- Gilboa, E. 2008, "Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (1), p. 57.
- Golan, G. J. 2015, 'An Integrated Approach to Public Diplomacy', Golan G. J., Yang S. and Kinsey D. F. (ed.), *International Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: Communication and Engagement*, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, p. 417-441.
- Gözaydın, I. 2013, 'Religion, Politics and the Politics of Religion in Turkey' *Liberal Institute Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit*, doi: http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2015/5694/pdf/Religion_Politics.pdf
- Huntington, S. P. 1998, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone books, New York
- Hürriyet Daily News 2016, *Diyanet gathers intelligence on suspected Gülenists via imams in 38 countries* Retrieved on September 3, 2018. doi: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/diyamet-gathers-intelligence-on-suspected-gulenists-via-imams-in-38-countries-107028>
- Johnston, D. 2003, 'Introduction: Realpolitik Expanded', in Johnston D. (ed), *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik*, Oxford University Press, New York
- Keyman, E. F. & Sazak, O. 2014, "Turkey as a "Humanitarian State"", *Pomeas Policy Paper*, No. 2, p.11,12.
- Karcic, F. 1997, 'The Office of Rais al-Ulama among the Bosniaks', *Intellectual Discourse* Vol. 2, p.114-118.
- Klix 2014, *U subotu kolektivno sunecenje 150 djece u Sarajevu*, Retrieved on July

- 26, 2018, doi: <https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/bih/u-subotu-kolektivno-sunecenje-150-djece-u-sarajevu/140417078>
- Korkut, Ş. 2010 'The Diyanet of Turkey and Its Activities in Eurasia after the Cold War', *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 28
- Kuburić, Z. & Namlidji, R. 2007, 'Islamic Community in Serbia' in Đorđević D. B., Todorović D. and Mitrović Lj. (eds), *Islam at the Balkans in the Past, Today and in the Future*, Yugoslav Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Niš, p.43-51.
- Kuru, A. T. & Stepan, A. 2012, *Democracy, Islam and Secularism in Turkey*, Columbia University Press, New York
- Kut, Ş. 1998, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990-1993", in Sönmezoğlu F. (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası'nın Analizi*, Der Yayınları, İstanbul
- Loskota, B. and Flory R. 2013, 'Why Religion Still Matters in the World' in Seib P. (ed), *Religion and Public Diplomacy*, Palgrave Macmillan US, New York
- Melissen, J. 2005, 'The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice' in Melissen J. (ed) *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York
- Morrison, K. 2008, 'Political and Religious Conflict in the Sandžak', *Advanced Research and Assessment Group, Balkan Series*, 8-13.
- Muhasilovic, J. 2018, 'Trolling for Russia in the Balkans', *Daily Sabah*, 04.03.2018, Retrieved on September 1, 2018, <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2018/03/05/trolling-for-russia-in-the-balkans>
- Nye, J. 2004, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Affairs, New York
- Öktem, K. 2010, 'New Islamic Factor after the Wahhabi Intermezzo: Turkey's Return to the Muslim Balkans', *European Studies Center-University of Oxford*
- Özkan, M. 2014, 'Turkey's Religious Diplomacy', *The Arab World Geographer*, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 223-237.
- Rabasa, A. & Larrabee, S. F. 2008, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, RAND Santa Monica, CA
- Raxhimi, A. 2010 'Albanian Muslims Grapple with Religious Identity', *Balkan Insight*, 10 December, Retrieved on August 2018, doi: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albanian-muslims-grapple-with-religious-identity>
- Robertson, R 1989, 'Globalization, Politics and Religion' in Beckford, J. and Luckmann, T. (eds) *The Changing Face of Religion*, Sage, London

- Rubin, B. & Çarkoğlu, A. 2006, *Religion and Politics in Turkey*, Routledge London; New York
- Rubin, B. 1994, 'Religion and International Affairs', in Johnston, D. and Sampson, C. (eds), *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, Oxford University Press, New York, 20-34.
- Seib P. 2013, 'Conclusion: The Future of Religion and Public Diplomacy', in Seib P. (ed), *Religion and Public Diplomacy*, Palgrave Macmillan US, New York, p. 215-221.
- Seib P. 2013, 'Introduction', in Seib P. (ed), *Religion and Public Diplomacy*, Palgrave Macmillan US, New York, 1-7.
- 'Serbia's Sandzak: Still Forgotten', International Crisis Group: Europe Report 2005, No. 162.
- The Economist 2016, Turkey's religious diplomacy: Mosque Objectives, Retrieved on July 31, 2018, doi: <https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/01/21/mosqued-objectives>
- 'The New Balkan Islam', 2000, ISIM Newslater No. 6, 32-35.
- The Sofia Globe 2017 Controversy over claims of Turkish role in Bulgaria's March 2017 elections, Retrieved on October 31, 2018, doi: <https://sofiaglobe.com/2017/03/06/controversy-over-claims-of-turkish-role-in-bulgarias-march-2017-elections/>
- Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Retrieved on January 3, 2019, doi: <https://tdv.org/tr-TR/site/projelerimiz/kardes-sehir-programi-1059>
- Uzgel, I. 2002, "The Balkans: Turkey's Stabilizing Role", in Rubin B. and Kirişçi K. (eds.), *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Boğaziçi University Press, Istanbul, p. 69-71
- Yavuz, M. H. 2003, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, Oxford University Press, New York, p.133-151.
- Zaharna, R.S. 2005, 'The New Paradigm of Strategic Public Diplomacy', *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Vol. 10, No. 1 doi: <https://www.american.edu/soc/faculty/upload/Network-Paradigm.pdf>
- Zukorlic, M. 2018, , Interview with Muamer Zukorlic, former Mufti of Sandzak and Present MP in Serbian Parliament, Interviewed conducted by Jahja Muhasilovic on January 26, 2018.

