T.C
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

TURKISH CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA: THE CASE OF BENIN REPUBLIC

MASTER'S THESIS

Mouhamed Awali AKINTOLA

Department: Cultural Studies

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Ekmel GEÇER

JULY – 2019

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"This thesis has been approved unanimously on 30/07/2019 by the folowing jury."

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAA   **:** French Agency for Artistic Action

AKP   **:** Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi)

AU   **:** African Union

BAD   **:** African Development Bank (Banque Africaine de Developpement)

BRT   **:** Association of Beninese living in Turkey (Béninois Resident en Turquie)

CV   **:** Curriculum Vitae

EU   **:** European Union

INSAE   **:** National Institute of Statistics and Economics Analysis (Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique)

MFA   **:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NGO   **:** Non-Governmental Organisation

OIC   **:** Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

ONU   **:** United Nations (Organisation des Nations Unies)

SDN   **:** League of Nations (Société de Nations)

TDV   **:** Religious Foundation of Turkey (Türkiye Diynet Vakfi)

TIKA   **:** Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı)

UK   **:** United Kingdom

UN   **:** United Nations

USAID   **:** United States Agency for International Development

USIA   **:** United States Information Agency

USSR   **:** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

YTB   **:** The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Yurt Dışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı)

LIST OF TABLES

The world has witnessed a significant shift in the international relations after the Cold war. The soft power has risen along with the hard power in diplomacy and international relations fields. Globalisation and the spreading of the technologies of information and communication have also facilitated and accentuated the phenomenon. Cultural Diplomacy is the fact that countries use their soft power potential (education, culture, science, art, sport etc.) instead of army forces, weapons and others to impress, and get closed to each other (Snow, 2009, 3). Besides, Africa has always been for several reasons of great interest for developed countries including Turkey. Falling into Cultural Studies main field, this study aims to look for the cultural elements used to influence people's mind, perception and actions in the framework of cultural diplomacy by bringing light on education and scholarship programs, intercultural communication, humanitarian aids, their actors and their purposes. As a result, a closer look at Turkish cultural diplomacy in Benin Republic, compared to pioneer countries like France and the USA is based on a liberal model by delegation approach. The study reveals that Turkish cultural diplomacy's main purposes are political and economic. And the mechanism used is composed of: the Turkish embassy, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), YTB scholarships and Non-profit organisations. In this study, documentary analysis and semi structured interviews with 25 participants with relevant profiles were used to collect data. Content analysis technics and NVivo qualitative analysis software were used to process collected data.

Keywords: Cultural Diplomacy, Soft power, Elements, Turkey, Benin

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Yüksek Lisans	■	**Doktora**	

Tezin Başlığı: Sahraaltı Afrikası'nda Türk Kültürel Diplomasisi: Benin Cumhuriyeti Örnek Olay İncelemesi

Yazar: Mouhamed Awali AKINTOLA   **Danışman:** Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ekmel GEÇER

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Anabilim Dalı: Kültürel Çalışmalar

Dünya, Soğuk Savaş sonrasında uluslararası ilişkilerde önemli bir değişime şahit olmuştur. Diplomasi ve uluslararası ilişkilerde yumuşak güç, sert gücün beraberinde bir artış göstermiştir. Küreselleşme, bilgi teknolojilerinin yaygınlaşması ve iletişim olanaklarının artması bu durumu etkilemiş ve kolaylaştırmıştır. "Kültürel Diplomasi" olarak da adlandırılan olgu; ülkelerin birbirlerine ordu, silah ve diğer etkenleri kullanarak etki etmesi yerine, yumuşak güçleriyle (bilim, sanat, kültür, spor, eğitim vb.) birbirlerini etkilemesi ve birbirleriyle yakınlaşması olarak da tanımlanabilir (Snow, 2009, 3). Ayrıca Afrika, Türkiye gibi gelişmiş ülkelerin, çeşitli sebeplerle ilgisini çekmiştir. Kültürel Çalışmalar ana alanında olarak, bu çalışmanın amacı, kültürel unsurların, insanların algı ve davranışlarını etkilemek için nasıl kullanıldığını, bulmaktır. Sonuç olarak, Sahra altı Afrika'daki Türk kültürel diplomasisine neredeyse yirmi yıldan beri ve özellikle Benin Cumhuriyeti'nde daha yakından bakmak, Fransa ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile karşılaştırıldığında, delegasyon yaklaşımıyla liberal bir modele dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Türk kültürel diplomasisinin temel amaçlarının politik ve ekonomik olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ve kullanılan mekanizma şunlardan oluşur: Benin'deki Türk elçiliği, Türkiye İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı (TİKA), YTB bursları ve Benin'de insani faaliyetlerde bulunan Türk STK'ları. Çalışmada literatür taramasının arından 25 katılımcı ile yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Toplanan verileri işlemek için içerik analizi teknikleri ve NVivo nitel analiz yazılımı kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürel Diplomasi, Yumuşak güç, Unsurlar, Türkiye, Benin

INTRODUCTION

The world has witnessed a significant shift in the international relations after the Cold war. The soft power has risen along with the hard power in diplomacy and international relation fields. Globalisation and the spreading of the technologies of information and communication have also facilitated and accentuated the phenomenon (Gerbault Loïc, 2007). From there on branding of one's culture and country started been given an important place in foreign policies and public diplomacy of states. Aware of that reality and new tendency, governments began to develop targeted strategies in order to sustain their political weight all over the world using what we call cultural diplomacy (Busson, 2012: 1).

Therefore, cultural elements became the core materials in the elaboration of strategies and countries public diplomacy. In that regard, culture was recognized in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, alongside economy, ecology and social as the fourth pillar of development and cannot be interpreted in the 21st century, other than in a global perspective (Busson, 2012: 1). Thus, the power of a state on the international scene is no longer measured solely by the strength of its economy, its political, military and strategic power or based on its place in the institutes of global governance, but also relies on its seductive power and the influence of its ideas, knowledge and culture on other societies (Lane & Darcos, 2011).

Many countries emerged earlier in the practice and use of cultural diplomacy all around the world and especially in Sub Saharan Africa. And among the most famous nowadays are the USA, France and the Popular Republic of China and lately the Republic of Turkey. Within this context, this study is meant to put light on Turkish cultural diplomacy's system in Sub Saharan Africa with a special focus on the Republic of Benin

Statement of the Problem

Since the political party AKP (Party for Justice and Development) gained power in 2002, the Republic of Turkey seems to be paying particular attention to Africa. However, in studying the history of the foreign policies of Turkey in the post-war period , it appears that Sub Saharan Africa was not among Turkey's priority interests (Athie, 2014: 1). The relations developed with the Maghreb, because of cultural, historical and religious similarities, some even referred to "*relations of privilege*" between Turkey and the Maghreb countries (Ozkan, 2010).

In 1998, efforts by the Turkish authorities could begin to be noticed with the publication of an official document by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, entitled "*Opening Up to Africa Policy*" (Özkan & Akgün, 2010: 531). This document aimed at developing future economic, political and cultural ties with Africa's nations. This policy line encouraged the Turkish authorities to improve cooperation with African countries, particularly in the diplomatic field. Thus, it was decided the opening of three new Turkish embassies in Accra (Ghana), Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire), and Harare (Zimbabwe) (Özkan & Akgün, 2010: 531). At the political level, it was planned to develop relations with Africa by increasing the official visits of Turkish authorities to Africa. However, an unfavourable economic environment in the early 2000s and a period of political reshuffles will make this document no longer a foreign policy priority (Athie, 2014: 4).

In 2005, Turkey declared the year as "The year of Africa". Three years later, in Istanbul, was held the first Turkey- Africa Cooperation Summit at which forty-nine African most of sub-Saharan Africa participated (Ozkan, 2010: 83). These events highlight the willingness of the Turkish authorities to direct the country's foreign policy to Sub Saharan African countries. This is hardly surprising, however, given that Turkey has expanded its geopolitical influence over the last two decades by participating in various multilateral entities, like the United Nation Security Council in addition to its clear desire to integrate the European Union. Turkey has therefore decided to assert itself better by choosing to create and disseminate among the sub-Saharan African population a positive and fraternal image so as to gain their support. (Athie, 2014)

As mentioned above, Turkey has always maintained historical and strong relations with North African countries including the Maghreb countries. These links go back to 15th and 16th centuries, at the time of the Ottoman Empire. It is known that the North African countries were part of this empire, and in Turkish society these countries are considered part of the Middle East, a space to which the Turks identify and feel close (Ozkan, 2010: 95). Another element that brings these countries closer to Turkey is their religious identity; the countries of North Africa are predominantly Muslim, as is Turkey, of which 99% of the population is Muslim. There is therefore a similar cultural and religious identity that brings these countries together and explains their strong links. For example, in September 2013, Turkey (through its Agency for Cooperation and Coordination and its Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning) expressed its willingness to participate in the rehabilitation of the Ketchaoua Mosque, located in Algiers in Algeria (Info Alger,

2013). This participation would be without compensation according to the Turkish delegation present in Algeria, but only to consolidate the good relations between both countries (Athie, 2014). The fact that the cultural property in question is a mosque may also explain the involvement of Turkey for religious reasons. The rapprochements between Turkey and the countries of North Africa are therefore not recent and are based on a common history, as well as similar religious values (Athie, 2014).

On the contrary, Turkey's relations with Sub Saharan Africa have only recently flourished in recent years. Indeed, the image of this area of Africa was not positive in Turkey. This area was represented as a land of famine, poverty, and incessant civil wars. Sub-Saharan Africa was not an interesting economic partner and no country had any interesting potential for economic development. At the political level, the early twentieth century is marked by colonialism and the great European powers who have their hands on their colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, relations with Turkey will be almost non-existent in this part of Africa. Moreover, this part of Africa is seen as a distant land, unlike North Africa (Ozkan, 2010).

Conversely, Turkey was very little known among these sub-Saharan African populations. She was wrongly and for many completely assimilated to the Middle East and her people taken for Arabs. Political relations between Turkey and Sub-Saharan Africa will nonetheless develop during the period of decolonization. During this period, Turkey will recognize all newly independent States and establish first diplomatic relations with them. Thus, the first Turkish consulate was opened in the former capital of Nigeria, Lagos in 1956 (Özkan & Akgün, 2010).

Despite these state recognitions by Turkey during that period of African countries decolonization, its relations with Sub Saharan Africa will not be further developed. Although it was the perfect opportunity to establish political, economic and trade relations with these new states, it will be necessary to wait for the political party AKP to come to power to really attend the opening of Turkey to Africa, through in particular the implication of the development agencies, the NGOs as well as the elaboration and the implementation of educational, cultural and humanitarian programs with the aim of bringing the two people closer together and serving interests presented as common (Athie, 2014).

The stated goal of the AKP from the year 2005 will then be to bring a new vision of the African continent, but also to compensate for the years of neglect that preceded. In 2008, for example, 49 African countries participated in the first Turkey- Africa Cooperation Summit in Istanbul. The summit entitled "*Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future*" demonstrates the ambition of the Turkish authorities, in particular the expression "*common future*" (Athie, 2014)

In the same year, Ali Babacan, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs said Africa was an important part of Turkey's new line of foreign policy. Thus, he announced the opening of new Turkish embassies in fifteen African countries (Ozkan, 2010). Today, the number of Turkish diplomatic representations in the Back continent has more than tripled. From twelve (12) in 2002 up to forty-one of 54 African countries, including more than 30 in Sub-Saharan Africa.

There is therefore a very strong diplomatic representation that allows Turkey to ensure political links, which will then enable commercial and then cultural links to be established. Similarly, the official visits of the Turkish government will be strengthened in these African countries, with visits to Sudan in 2005, South Africa in 2011 and Senegal in 2013 (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.-b) not to mention the recent tour of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in February 2018 covering Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal and Mali. In return, visits by African heads of state to Turkey will also be favoured. In September 2018 during the visit of the current Beninese President Patrice Guillaume Athanase Talon in Turkey, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan affirmed: *"Africa was always a continent of great importance for us. We have increased the number of our embassies in Africa from twelve (12) to forty-one (41), with the goal of having embassies in the fifty four (54) African Countries. Thus, we will improve relations between Turkey and African people"* (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, n.d.).

Turkey's policy towards Africa requires implementation on the ground, and this will include development assistance. Concretely, Turkey will put this policy in place with the help of its diplomatic representations, its Agency for Cooperation and Development , the TIKA (Özkan & Akgün, 2010); Non-Governmental Organizations such as Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi and many others, as well as with the support of the Turkish Scholarships

Program implemented by "YTB" (The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Eksi, 2016).

This historical overview allows us to highlight the nature and evolution over time of the relations between Africa and Turkey in general and specifically with the Republic of Benin. The result is the use of non-coercive but rather soft elements such as culture, humanitarian actions and communication to achieve political, economic and diplomatic objectives of influence: cultural diplomacy or soft power (H. E. Ambassador of Turkey in Benin Republic, 2019).

Among the above cited components of cultural diplomacy, many are brought together and present in the definition given by Milton Cummings. Cummings (2003) says that cultural diplomacy is:

> "the exchanges of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding which can also be more of a one-way street than a two way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its effort on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or telling its story to the rest of the world"

In short, it means that branding one's culture to the outside helps to better secure, do business and have greater influence in the world. The use and the instrumentalization of one's culture in the foreign policies of countries has taken place in the classical settlement of international affairs, which was formerly often done by military means. At this stage of our development, the simplest definition that encompasses the different components of our study is from Snow (2009) when he asserts that Cultural Diplomacy, can be defined by the fact that the soft power potential of countries comprising science, sport, music, culture, education, literature, art and etc. are used instead of their hard power (army and weapons for example) to impress, and get closed to each other's. Consequently, other actors rather than States like the people and NGO make their entry in the game.

As "gateway to any relationship" and important pillar of state diplomacy alongside politics and economics, cultural diplomacy is gradually positioning itself as a powerful instrument in the quest for influence of the Turkey in Africa. At this point, one can wonder why a study in Cultural Studies is directed at the topic of "*cultural diplomacy*". In fact, our interest in this topic as student in Cultural Studies is more related to the cultural elements and the ways they are used as tools to influence people than its political or

international relations aspect. Indeed, of British origin, Cultural Studies were born with the founding in 1964 of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of Nottingham by Richard Hoggart. Defining itself as an "*anti-discipline*", this tendency will experience an international boom with Stuart Hall and the "Birmingham School". The Cultural Studies postulate that "most of the world contemporary issues benefit from being questioned through the lens of the cultural" because of the "critical capacity of consumers (Laure, 2017). By its transdisciplinary dimension, this discipline questions the political issues of culture. As a result, it relies on the methods of political science, the media, history, anthropology and economics. Our study's main purpose is to expose the different cultural tools used by Turkey in implementing his soft power in Benin. It will specifically bring light on education and scholarship programs, humanitarian aids, their actors and their purposes

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research work is to investigate the cultural components and the mechanism, Turkey is making use of to expand his influence and relations with African countries in general and Benin Republic in particular as well as the different actors involved in the process.

Specifically, the study's goals are:

- Understand the concepts of Cultural Diplomacy and Soft power and their various components;
- State the purposes of Turkish cultural diplomacy in sub-Saharan Africa in general and particularly in Republic of Benin;
- Point out some components of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Africa and Benin and determine its type;
- Cite the different actors of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Africa and Benin and describe some of their actions such as: humanitarian actions, scholarship and educational programs;
- Point out the limits of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Africa and Benin and suggest ways to improve it for the benefits of both countries.

Significance of the Study

The usefulness and the justification of a research project are measured in relation to its importance, its originality and especially its positioning in the midst of similar researches.

Concerning this thesis project on "The Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa: The Case of Benin Republic", several factors justify its importance.

Firstly, during our documentary research as well as on the field work, we noticed that no scientific work has explicitly addressed the subject in any of the angles that interest us. While some articles relate to the foreign policy and cultural diplomacy of Turkey, they focus mainly on North Africa and exclusively some of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa that are: South Africa and Somalia; and also on Middle East countries like Syria. In addition, the latter only affect trade and humanitarian aids as the main object of their investigation.

So, this lack of data first caught our attention. But what has also fuelled our interest in the subject is much more based on personal observation, including:

- A greater, albeit disparate, activity of Turkish humanitarian NGOs in Benin;
- The increased interest of young Beninese students for Turkish scholarships since 2012;
- The official establishment of a Turkish embassy in Benin;
- An increasing commercial flow since 2013 between the two countries.

All these factors combined have led to the formulation of this research topic with the hope that its results will be useful for advancing knowledge in the field. Specifically, we hope that this study will be useful in many ways:

- The findings will help to evaluate the real extent of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Benin.
- The study can provide policy decisions makers with helpful data in designing policies to improve the level of things.
- It will provide a basis for Benin Republic and help its government and institutions in being more proactive in their relations with Turkey so as to benefit also from it.
- The information and data presented in this research work can be of a use to future studies by providing an empirical and literature basis to conduct further and deeper researches on the cultural components of international relations and their efficiency

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The field of International Relations between countries and its link with Culture is a broad one. In terms of scientific research, a wide variety of subjects in several fields can be conducted. It encompasses both diplomatic and cultural dimensions. For this reason, any research related to it has to be specified and precise enough.

As far as this thesis is concerned, it will focus on the last mentioned one by bringing to light some cultural elements that Turkish Republic is implementing in order to strengthen its relations with Benin Republic and how they are implemented. More specifically, the light will be brought upon elements such as: education and students scholarship programs, humanitarian aids, their actors and their purposes.

But above all, it is important to specify the spatiotemporal framework in which our research work has been conducted. Firstly, the Republic of Turkey we are talking about in this study is the one considered as modern and Africa the Sub-Saharan one. The contemporary Turkish Republic in its current borders, and on its secular and republican foundations, was shaped by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who founded in a few years, after the fall of Ottoman Empire, a modern state to the Western. It goes from Eastern Europe to Asia Minor. On the cultural side, Turkey is related to the ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Persian and Ottoman empires. Istanbul, a cosmopolitan city on the Bosporus Strait, is the showcase while Ankara is its political capital. Modern Turkey is surrounded on land by eight neighbouring countries: Iraq, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iraq, Greece, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Syria (François Georgeon, 1997).

Secondly, we have chosen as field of analysis in general Sub-Saharan Africa. Also called Black Africa, Sub Saharan is the part of Africa located south of the Sahara and separated from North Africa by the latter. It brings together forty-eight countries, twenty-three of which constitute what is called French-speaking Black Africa and of which Benin is a member. Former French and English colonies for the most part, the States of sub-Saharan Africa are rich in their diversities raising both interest and curiosity. However, the socio-economic, cultural and security constraints hinder the attractiveness of this sub-Saharan African geographical block. Moreover, the states that constitute it have either French or English as the official or standard language ('l'Afrique Sub Saharienne', n.d.).

The Republic of Benin that is our study case is a West African country. It got independence on 1st August 1960. The country is circled in the north by Burkina Faso and

Niger, in the east by Nigeria, in the west by Togo and a coastal area in the south where the majority of the population resides due to urbanisation and development level of the southern cities. Benin's political capital is Porto Novo though the largest city Cotonou is the government seat. The current population is estimated by UN on Friday, April 26, 2109 up to 11,740,984 while its surface area is 11,000 kw sq. (42,000 sq. mi) (United Nations, n.d.).

Benin is ranked among world's developing countries due to historical factors such as slavery, colonization and neo-colonialism that undermine its progress. In addition, can also be cited in the democratic period (since 1990) the mismanagement of governments, corruption and embezzlement (Ibrahim & Cheri, 2014).

Benin population depends mainly on agriculture (cotton, cashew) because of its tropical climate. Therefore, the substantial employment and revenue come from framing activities. Moreover, due to his seaport, the country's economy also depends a lot on taxes from import and exports activities. French is Benin's official language but indigenous languages such as Fon, Yoruba, Dendi and Bariba are commonly spoken by the people. From INSAE (The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Analysis, 20) data in 2013, Islam is practised by 27.7% of the population followed by Roman Catholicism practised by 25.5 % ('RGPH 2013 Benin', n.d.). Benin is a member of many regional and international organisations such as: the African Union, South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, La Francophonie, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, the African Petroleum association, the Niger basin Authority, and the United Nations (David, 1998).

It is noteworthy to state that relations between Turkey and Benin officially go back to years 60's after independence and it lately intensified through the visit in turkey of the ancient president Thomas Boni Yayi in December 2013. During that visit, not less than 3 cooperation agreements were signed in the field of health care, economics and investment (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d. -a). One year later in November 2014, as a result of the Beninese head of state visit to Ankara, Turguf Rauf Kural was appointed as the first Turkish Ambassador in Benin Republic ('Bénin', n.d.-a).

On the temporal level, our study will focus on the subject from the year 1998 (relative to the publication of the official document *"Opening Up to Africa Policy"*) with a particular emphasis on the period covering 2005 to the present day coinciding with an intensity of

Turkey's actions towards Africa with the announcement of 2005 as *"The year of Africa"* declaration of the year 2005 as *"The Year of Africa"* ('From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs', n.d. –a).

Finally, unlike many works related to this issue, some aspects are not going to be developed in this study those they may be relevant. The main reason is that related to our own field of study which does not include it, and the severe lack of information and actions in those domains. There are: economic relations, cinema production, distribution and television broadcasting.

This being the case, studying Turkish cultural diplomacy in this part of the world makes it possible to approach the so called South-South cooperation. However, in order to put into perspective the cultural policy of the Turkish Government in Black Africa, it will be essential to extend the space of our study and to make comparisons with that of so called "traditional" partners of Africa (mainly France and the USA).

Methodology

This study is an analytic and descriptive one. Thus, to find out and answer the fore mentioned problem statement and reach our study objectives, a qualitative content analysis of data collected from semi structured interviews with 25 participants, observation and documentary researches from books, articles and e-resources will be done. Bryman (2004), assumes that the most prevalent approach to a qualitative analysis of documents is 'qualitative content analysis'. Then, NVivo qualitative analysis software has been used to process the data. Finally, state interventionism and liberalism theories have been used as theoretical framework to evaluate the model and typology of Turkish cultural diplomacy in Republic of Benin.

Organization of the Study

In this study, we have apprehended Turkey's cultural diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa and more particularly in Benin Republic by studying its institutional frameworks and instruments, but also by presenting the interests and ambitions of Turkey in Africa. This study will also briefly describe the limitations of the described system.

As a result, our thesis is made of five (05) chapters:

The introduction as the first chapter gives general information on the topic of the study. It contextualizes the research topic, sets up the problem, establishes the objectives, and states the significance of the investigation. In this part, the scope and also the delimitations of the study are detailed along with the justification of the interest of our study field in this area.

The second chapter deals with the literature review; it is a critical discussion of some researches which have been previously done in the same or related areas. This part has particularly been dedicated to the conceptual and terminological clarification of the themes addressed in the study. It provides a scientific overview of the research question and apprehends the different aspects under which other pioneers have treated it. It covers cultural diplomacy in general, but also Turkish diplomacy in particular. However, cases of other countries will be cited to serve as a benchmark for our own analysis of the situation.

The third chapter exposes the research design and the methodology of the study. It states all the procedures and techniques that have been used to collect and analyse the data. Specifically, it clarifies the research questions as well as the main assumptions that guides the research process. Explanation of the theoretical framework and justification of the qualitative approach that have been adopted for this work are also discussed there. And finally, details about the source of data, the methods of their analysis and relevant background information on participants to the semi-structured interview are given.

The fourth chapter discloses the findings of all the data that have been collected from the primary and secondary sources and presents the discussions around them. It unveils topics such as: Turkey's interest and ambitions in Sub-Saharan Africa, Turkish Embassy and cultural diplomacy in Republic of Benin, Turkish government's scholarships for African and Beninese students, Turkish NGO's and Cooperation agencies activities in Africa and Benin, and the limits of Turkish cultural diplomacy in Benin.

The final chapter represents the conclusion and leads to recommendations. It summarises the key findings and points out some directions and openings for the future researches dealing with the Turkish cultural diplomacy in Africa and Republic of Benin.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

"*Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed* " ('Antoine Lavoisier Quote', n.d.) . This saying from Lavoisier also applies for academic studies in the sense that every scholar in his journey must always consider what has been done said and found in relation with his topic and then move from there to open other horizons. Numerous questions could be asked while coming across this project of research: Why do we decide to orientate our research into the direction of cultural relations between Turkey and Benin? What have been done in this regard by other scholars and what do we intend to reveal or light on as new elements?

Indeed, Cultural diplomacy is one the latest concept in diplomacy and international relations areas. Therefore, a field that has not yet got enough interest and which has not been yet investigated enough in all its multiple aspects (Diana Stelowska, n.d.).

This chapter entitled literature review will help us through a general survey of existing researches to put the light on sections of our study such as: the terminological definition of concepts of Cultural diplomacy and related ones, its instruments, objectives and actors as seen by others. And it will also expose some study cases that will be used as benchmark to access our own.

1.1. Understanding Cultural Diplomacy and Related Concepts

An important confusion exists around the very definition of the expression cultural diplomacy. We observe a variety of meanings, the use of different terms and concepts interchangeably. Therefore, there is no consensus among authors and researchers on what are cultural diplomacy's purposes, activities and actors or whether the practice is reciprocal or not. Some of them see cultural diplomacy as a synonym for public diplomacy, or soft power, others reduce it to states' foreign cultural missions, while others consider all these as quietly different practices (Mark, 2008).

1.1.1. Cultural Diplomacy

First of all, we need to say that Cultural diplomacy is for many authors an important element in the arsenal of soft power (Mark, 2008), while others considered both concepts are almost synonyms and names the same things. They just differ on their origins because soft power is an American conception while "*la diplomatie culturelle*" (Cultural

Diplomacy) is from France scholars. Anyway, in this study, the later assumption will be considered and both expressions used interchangeably.

Cultural diplomacy is a component of countries public diplomacy dealing with the building of long term relationships ('Recent Trends in Department of State Support for Cultural Diplomacy: 1993-2002 Americans for the Arts', n.d.). Some scholars point out an important characteristic of cultural diplomacy that is its implementation abroad. For example, the New Zealand's Ministry for Culture and Heritage, defines cultural diplomacy as 'the international representation of cultural activities by a state in order to improve the understanding of its cultural life and to create a favourable image to facilitate diplomatic and trade relationships' (Mark, 2008).

Milton Cummings definition provides a global and useful painting of some issues raised by a lot of various conceptions by authors. He defines it as 'the exchanges of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding which can also be more of a one-way street than a two way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its effort on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or telling its story to the rest of the world' (Mark, 2008). Several points raised by it need to be looked at more closely. They are the contents, the main actors and the goals.

Firstly, his definition cites as components and objects of cultural diplomacy, *"ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture"*. Indeed, culture in its different aspects is the basic material of cultural diplomacy. These materials are used by the different practitioners and actors and put together in a harmonious way, depending on the countries policy to achieve several goals. The so called 'cultural' part of cultural diplomacy has formerly meant 'high culture': visual art, theatre, literature, dance (contemporary and ballet), music and also other cultural expressions by intellectual elites. But lately, this considerations have shifted and nowadays, 'popular culture' (meaning cultural activity that has a mass audience) is included into cultural diplomacy. However, some scholars make a slight precision and assume that the practice is defined by the type of cultural activity. So, for them cultural diplomacy can also be called art diplomacy when activities such as arts are involved and educational diplomacy when education programs are used (Mark, 2008).

Secondly, as far as the actors of cultural diplomacy are concerned, Cummings talks of "*exchange……among nations and their peoples*". Though this is not explicit enough, one

considers that not only governments and its official's structures are acting but also individuals and independent groups of people. Mark (2008) makes an interesting dialectical reflection on this issue and he raised a lot of questions. He affirms that the term 'nations and their people used by Cummings is a vague one and lacks precision when it comes to know which political institutions undertake or not cultural diplomacy activities. He is trying to understand if by such phrase, Cummings means that nations without a state may also practice cultural diplomacy? Or if by the term 'nation', he means nation-states in a whole?

After that, he thinks that the definition fails in including parts of nation-states. He assumes that in case the practice takes into account people to people exchanges, and does not involve the government of either people, the question that should be asked is: " what part of the exchanges stand for diplomacy, and how?". And in case all the cultural interactions between peoples and nations constitute diplomatic practice, then the term 'diplomacy' will be given a width of meaning that makes it meaningless (Mark, 2008).

And finally, the goals actors set themselves while implementing cultural diplomacy. On that spot, Cummings evokes the "mutual understanding" aspect. But this has not been the only one purpose of cultural diplomacy. It is just one of them and of course the most cited, but other objectives include national promotion to the outside world, as well as seeking to achieve domestic objectives (Cummings, 2003). Besides, Cumming (2003) in that definition points at the issue of 'mutuality'. Shall we then suppose that the absence of mutuality in the process change cultural diplomacy into something else? How important is the mutuality for cultural diplomacy? Simon (2008) affirms that all cultural diplomacy activities are aimed at someone, which means it has an aspect of mutuality. A message is sent and another is received. One-way messages, going from a producer to the receiver can be considered for him as mutual because it already implies both parties. So, mutuality is a very broad concept that may involve depending from the angle of analysis reciprocity or not.

1.1.2. The concept of Soft Power

The English expression soft power, means the capacity of influence and persuasion of a nation, a (multinational) company, a Non-Governmental Organisation or a minor group towards other actors in order to make the them think the same way they do or change their behaviour and attitude, in an indirect and, gently manner, without constraining them. The

concept was developed in by an American professor of international relations called Joseph Nye (born in1937) in his book "Bound to Lead". He did so in response to those who announced the US's decline in geopolitics just after the cold war. Joseph Nye considers that seduction and persuasion of the United States, paves the way for a new trend of international politics which a new form of international politics that rests neither on force nor on constraint, and that must allow it to efficiently stay up with the geopolitical evolutions of the end of the 20th century (Diana Stelowska, n.d.). From the scientific father of the concept of soft power, 'power' can be defined in the international field as the capacity to influence the behaviour of others societies and to act freely (Joseph S. Nye, 2004). Then, in international relations during the cold war era, soft power replaced hard power. Countries manage to use their soft power elements to become more attractive. In addition, foreign companies could easily adopt the policies of these countries. Cooperation, persuasion, mutual communication and interaction have become the basis and pillars of this process. Soft power is opposed to hard power that corresponds to the traditional coercive power: army, diplomacy, economic pressures. It loses its effectiveness if public opinions perceive it as propaganda or manipulation.

Soft power concept has then been used by many politicians to name a new way of exercising power and to analyse the way a State's power is expressed. The soft power of a state that results in its power of persuasion can be based on:

➢ its image and reputation,

➢ its prestige, and attractiveness to migrants, graduates, students…,

➢ its economic performance,

➢ its communication and branding (advertising, language),

➢ the attractiveness of its culture (literature, cinema, television, Internet)

➢ the way of life of its citizens and residents ("American way of life")

➢ the influence of its ideas, its ideology (media, essayists, lobbying, think tank)

➢ the diffusion of its technology,

➢ Its place inside international organizations, etc.

➢ The bilateral and international aids provided by its government, NGO's foundations…

1.1.3. The Concept of Nation Branding

A major goal of governments' trough cultural diplomacy and soft power is presenting abroad a national image. Thus, Governments are more and more convinced that a national image can influence the behaviour of citizens and elites in other countries. That means, people who know and like another country are supposed to be more inclined to consume products from that country (or invest in it or do tourism there) than if they do not like it, or do not know much about it. And the same is assumed of the behaviour and attitude of politicians and elites, who are considered to be more likely to support a state's efforts to advance national political interests if they like and know the country (Mark, 2008). Most frequently, this articulation of a version of national identity is called Nation branding. Van Ham (2001) affirms that a brand is 'a 'customer's idea about a product', and the '"brand state" comprises the outside world's ideas about a particular country'. For him, globalization and the media revolution have made States more conscious of the power of a brand. From there, Strong brands are now seen as important in order to advance national economic objectives, as well as other foreign policy and diplomatic objectives, and a state's culture is now seen as an important way of making a state more appealing to those it wishes to attract in order to aid economic development and progress (immigrants, tourists, and students, for instance) and helping attract foreign direct investment (Van Ham Peter, 2001). However, Anholt's argues that governments 'are simply not in control of all of the forces that shape their country's image, and neither is any other single body within the nation (Anholt Simon, 2006).

The use by a state of cultural diplomacy to present abroad a national image or a national brand tackle issues concerning the political and economic effects of, and interests served by, such marketing, and the purpose and role of culture. Cultural diplomacy provides opportunities for actors to build up, and present abroad, a single, inclusive version of national identity which gives the impression of a united, if diverse, well-functioning, even contented, political entity (Mark, 2008). As Mitchell states, it is part of cultural diplomacy to appeal, and attract would-be investors, immigrants, tourists and students, by presenting a version of national identity (Mitchell, J. M., 1986).

1.2. Cultural Diplomacy in Practice

This part of the literature review will present an overview of former researches of cultural diplomacy's goals, mechanism and actors.

1.2.1. Objectives of Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy targets a variety of purposes. It aims mainly at putting forward national interests. It contributes governments' diplomacy and enhances mutual understanding between peoples and their countries. It also serves to raise up a state's profile, counter negative effects of contentious issues and is nowadays more used in governments' efforts of nation branding. (Mark, 2008).

In general, governments state that they take up cultural diplomacy activities for idealistic goals like developing mutual understanding, fighting against stereotypes and ethnocentrism (Mulcahy, 1999) and preventing wars and conflicts. And Mark (2008) to add that those idealistic objectives usually involve the idea of a two-way relationship and exchange, even if in practice cultural diplomacy seems not to be as reciprocal as intended. Besides, cultural diplomacy purposes also embrace economic (including cultural industries), political and diplomatic interests.

1.2.2. Mechanism and Actors of Cultural Diplomacy

Administrative mechanisms are cited as main elements of cultural diplomacy. They are governments, ministries and departments, embassies. We also have independent agencies, privates, as well as not-for profit foundations and organizations. Diplomats working for governments' foreign affairs ministries and institutions, and official of stand-alone entities with different levels of governance and funding ways related or not to the central governments are the main human actors of cultural diplomacy. For example, the UK's cultural diplomacy is under the management of the British Council, an organization that proudly protects its independence but that support at the same time the objectives of the UK government. The British Council is funded annually up to two hundred million pounds by the central government and has one member of the board of trustees nominated by the foreign secretary. Similarly, India's cultural diplomacy is managed by the India Council for Cultural Relations. Despite the fact that it is claiming its independence that Council is the main arm of India's foreign Ministry. (Mark, 2008).

Activities implemented in the scope of cultural diplomacy show some aspects of the national culture of a state and depending on the type involves various actors such as singers, artists, athletes and so on. Some also appeal to manifestation of artistry, promotion of language and culture, exchange of students and academicians, and are target either the wider population (in majority of cases) or elites (Mark, 2008). Cultural diplomacy activities undertaken by countries comprise the production and broadcasting of movies, series, documentaries, scholarship grants, visits of scholars and academicians, seminars and conferences, publication and dissemination of journals and also aid to development, humanitarian aids and help to poor populations (Mark, 2008).

1.3. Some Study Cases

Though our interest in this research is the mechanism of the Republic of Turkey's Cultural Diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa, it would be wise to review some aspects of the pioneering countries such as France and USA as benchmarks.

1.3.1. The Case of France: Favoured by Colonialism and a Strong Implication of the Central Government.

The concept of cultural diplomacy has long been associated with France. Indeed, from the end of the 19th century France was very concerned with its external cultural influence, and managed by systematically integrating cultural actions in its foreign policies (Gérôme, 2010). A survey conducted by Joseph Nye (2004) revealed that France ranked among the first in per capita spending on international cultural relations. It is noteworthy to mention three things about France case:

- ➢ the foundation of its cultural diplomacy is nothing but the promotion of knowledge and the teaching of French language
- ➢ It has been favoured by its colonial past with African countries
- ➢ The Central Government is highly involved in the process through its cultural Institutes, Embassies and personalities.

The French cultural representation abroad is one of the most developed and extensive in the world. This is explained by its history which is now quite old, colonialism and its influence on African countries and the diversity of functions that have been granted to its network over time (Gerbault Loïc, 2007: 20).

Indeed, Loïc (2007) thinks that the French model is a particular one because compared to other countries, its cultural network is the only one of this magnitude to be directly managed by Foreign Affairs. The United States, Great Britain and Germany, which have networks of equivalent size, prefer to use the formula of non-governmental organizations with very strong autonomy such as United States International Agency, British Council and Goethe Institute (Gerbault Loïc, 2007: 18).

Culture is part and parcel of the competence granted to representative institutions of France abroad. As proof, the promotion and dissemination of French culture often said to be the object of centralizing organisations like the former AFAA (French Agency for Artistic Action), is in fact under the main authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) through its field branches. They are the French Cultural Centres, French Cultural Institutes, French secondary schools and, to a lesser extent, the network of "Alliances Françaises" which constitute its organs for the promotion and teaching of French culture all over the world (Gerbault Loïc, 2007).

The following Table shows France cultural diplomacy can be summarised up with key numbers.

Table 1:

Cultural Diplomacy of France: The key figures

Cultural Diplomacy of France The key figures (2011)

• 161 services of cooperation and cultural action and 101 French institutes

• 445 French alliances and 50,000 cultural events per year

• 8,000 artists, writers and cultural professionals in more than 150 countries

• 9,000 books translated each year from French to a foreign language

• 215 million homes worldwide have access to TV5Monde

• 284 600 foreign students in France

• 15,380 foreign scholarship holders from the French government (2010-2011)

• 26 French social science research institutes abroad and 52 bilateral research programs

Source: France, 2011. http://www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/la-diplomatie-culturelle-un-atout-pour-la-france

It appears that France's cultural diplomacy abroad is strongly influenced by the government as far as the policies, the actors and the whole mechanism are concerned. One can qualify it as a Sovereign interventionist model of cultural diplomacy (Roche, 2006).

1.3.2. The Case of United States of America: A Liberal and Cultural Ideology Promoting Model

Beyond Europe, we can also think of the United States of America's cultural diplomacy system which is clearly more liberal and refuses any state intervention in cultural exchanges. It considers that what pertains to art must remain in the realm of people and patronage (Busson, 2012). Therefore, in addition to the overwhelming and globalizing impact of industry and American production of all kinds, it owns the United States Information Agency (USIA). This American cultural entity was an independent agency

within the US government set up by the USIA Authorization Act (96 Stat.291), in August 24, 1982 ('Records of the United States Information Agency [USIA]', 2016).

The USIA's mission was to explain and promotes the US foreign policies and carry out US national interests by the use of an impressive multimedia and information system. The latter advocates a mutual understanding and cooperation between the United States of America and others nations by giving educational and cultural activities. Up until its dissolution on October 1, 1999, USIA has established in 190 offices in 142 countries with a budget of $ 1.109 billion in fiscal year 1999. In terms of human resources, the USIA represented 6,352 employees, of whom 904 are part of the personnel of the Foreign Services and 2521 are local detachments of foreign affairs services ('Records of the United States Information Agency [USIA]', 2016).

USIA promoted cultural and educational activities and exchanges, and the fullbright exchange program that is spread over 160 countries around the world is the most famous ('Fulbright | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs', n.d.). In addition, each year more than 2,400 professionals and business leaders join the United States and the USIA as "international visitors" and two thousands (2,000) volunteer visitors come for private and personal interests for more than thirty (30) days of professional meetings organized by the USIA ('USIA', n.d.).

Nowadays, the Unites States organization that fits the most in promoting USA's cultural diplomacy all over the world and in particular Sub Saharan Africa is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that was created on the 3rd of November 1961 by the late US President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. And even though it is an independent agency, it operates under the supervision of the President, the State Department and the National Security Council and is in charge of the economic development and humanitarian assistance all over the world. The Agency is entitled with the mission of helping to reduce poverty, promoting democracy and economic growth, relieve the victims of natural disasters and prevent conflict. For the 2016 fiscal year, President Barack Obama has asked for $ 10.7 billion for the main budget. USAID also manages 12 programs outside the United States that count for a total amount of $ 22.3 billion ('USAID official web site : https://www.usaid.goc/result-and-data/budget-spending- Recherche Google', n.d.).

While the Obama administration's new public diplomacy was aimed at "conquering hearts and minds" and relying more on smart power (Hallams, 2011), the role of cultural agencies in the United States took a different way. Having benefited greatly from globalization to spread their cultural productions and their language, the Americans alone control three-quarters of the global image market (Paquin, 2008). As a result, they are naturally turning to private financing for the promotion of their cultural activities (Gerbault, 2008), and support for the creative industries is more dependent on the global defence of the principles of free trade; hence the whole question of tariff barriers and cultural exception brought before the WTO. As a result, the export of American cultural production remains only marginally subsidized by the state (Busson, 2012).

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study is an analytic and descriptive one. Thus, to find out and answer the fore mentioned problem statement and reach our study objectives, a qualitative content analysis of data collected from semi structured interviews and observation and documentary researches from books, articles and e-resources will be done. Bryman (2004), assumes that the most prevalent approach to a qualitative analysis of documents is 'qualitative content analysis'. It involves that underlying themes in the materials under analysis should be searched out.

In the same regards, and emphasising on how important is the data analysis in a research work, Speziale and Carpenter claim that:

> Regardless of the methodological approach used, the goal of data analysis is to illuminate the experiences of those who lived them by sharing the richness of lived experiences and culture. The researcher has the responsibility of describing and analysing what is present in the raw data to bring to life particular phenomena (2007: 48).

It should be noted that the texture of our research problem itself already predisposes to a rather qualitative than quantitative study. In the sense that it is much more a data crossover and analysis. Two main sources have been considered: documentary research (as primary source) and semi structured interviews (as secondary source).

In this chapter, the methodological approach used for this study is explained. Specific details about the research questions, the theoretical framework and the techniques and different methods that have been used to gather and process the data are given.

To be practical, our research design has been structured in three main phases:

- ➢ Phase 1: Documentary exploration
- ➢ Phase 2 Advanced Research
- ➢ Phase 3: Data Analysis

2.1. Documentary Exploration

Prior to the choice of this research topic, we were interested by the theme of Turkish culture and cultural diplomacy as a whole and its implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa and Benin. It therefore appeared to us in our readings that no previous research or study has been done on the subject. This has led us to do a former documentary research that

we have described as exploratory. This preliminary research made it possible to validate the interest of this subject, to formulate clear and concise research questions and to make appropriate assumptions. This first phase has also and above all enabled us to delimit the theoretical framework of the study and, on the other hand, to determine more adequately the second phase of the methodology that we describe as advanced and deep which are mainly the semi structured interviews we made.

2.1.1. Research Questions

From the documentary exploration, the following questions has been formulated in order to tackle the study's topic.

> **General Question:**

What are the components, actors and goals of Turkish cultural diplomacy in sub Saharan African countries in general and Benin Republic in particular?

> **Specific Questions:**

a) What is soft power/ cultural diplomacy?
b) What are the purposes of Turkish cultural Relations with Benin Republic?
c) What is the type of Cultural Diplomacy Turkish implementing in Benin Republic?
d) Who are the actors of the Turkish Cultural Relations with Benin Republic?
e) What are the limits of Turkish Cultural Relations in Benin and the ways to improve it for the benefits of both countries?

2.1.2. Theoretical Framework

As a multidisciplinary field, cultural studies are at the crossroads of many social sciences ranking from international relations, to political sciences, history, media/communication sciences and so on.

Therefore, theories from the above cited fields of research are used to understand, describe, explain and evaluated data and facts. Concerning this study, we have been particularly interested by theories related to the model of cultural diplomacy implemented by countries in general and Turkey particularly. And we tried to determine if Turkish cultural diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa and particularly in Republic of Benin is Interventionist or Liberal?

Theories of State interventionism and Liberalism

For Francois Roche (2006) countries public policy in cultural diplomacy field can be classified according to many typologies. He argues that France cultural diplomacy is an interventionist one because the State openly controls and directs the country's foreign cultural policy while the United States of America has a more liberal way of leading its own called by the author as a liberal model by delegation.

> ➢ **Liberalism Theory**

Liberalism is a set of ideas, doctrines and theories that are sometimes very different, applying to aspects of human life in society - such as ethics, politics, economics – and which are based on the first affirmation of the principle of freedom. The theory developed in England and France in the 17th and 18th centuries as part of Enlightenment philosophy with authors like John Locke, Montesquieu and Adam Smith. This theory affirms the fundamental character of individual freedom in the political and economic domains and seeks to limit the action and influence of the state ('Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ?', 2017).

There is a distinction between political liberalism and the economic one. Economic liberalism, also called capitalism by others assumes that the pursuit of one's self-interest and profit is the driving force of any kind of progress. That has to be followed by fundamental freedoms such as; freedom to buy and sell properties, freedom of enterprise and ownership. On the economic level, the theory of liberalism is hostile to the intervention of the state in the economic and social life. It advocates free competition, free trade while involving regulation to prevent the formation of a monopoly and limiting the intervention of the State to the bare minimum (Binoche, 2004)

 Whereas political liberalism refers to a political system that is based on a plurality of political parties, the freedom of citizens to choose their leaders, and the design of a state capable of arbitration and consensus building. The general interest is expressed mainly in the vote in free elections because individuals or groups of individuals are able to make choices and compete with each other (depending on their interests). And this is the best engine for the development of a society according to this concept which advocates that the role of the state should be limited.

As for the view of the theory of liberalism in the field of international relations, liberals admit that international society is made up of independent states competing for the

defence of their own interests, as individuals within each state satisfaction of their interests and needs. However, international relations can be civilized and pacified as well as interpersonal relations if they are based on capitalism, law and democracy (*Théories en relations internationales.pdf*, n.d.).

The US presidents Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) are often regarded as representatives of classical liberalism because they have been ardent defenders of the creation of international organizations dedicated to peacekeeping in the world at the outcome of the two world wars - the League of Nations and the United Nations (UN); and that they have supported the thesis of a cause-and-effect relationship between improving prosperity through the development of trade and maintaining peace (Gilbert, 1951)

According to Colard (1996), it is among jurists that we find the main defenders of classical liberalism in the twentieth century (Hassan-Yari, 1997). For positivists, international society is presented as a juxtaposition of sovereign and equal states, public international law being conceived as an "interstate law" which rests on the contractual relations freely negotiated by the legal persons that are the States. The objectivist jurists, on the other hand, are opposed to the sovereignty of the States and maintain that the international society is a society of individuals and groups of individuals. Thus, Georges Scelle (1932), starts from the idea that international relations are only established between people who are linked to each other by bonds of solidarity. Interpersonal relationships must replace interstate relations. Law is a product of social life. There is no difference of nature between the international society and the national society. In both cases, the individual occupies the first place (Georges Scelle, 1932).

For the Liberals, therefore, it should be noted that international relations are relationships of all kinds that States, governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals maintain among themselves in a bilateral or multilateral framework, formal or informal. These relationships are characterized by competition. However, these can be peaceful and co-operative if they are regulated by a system of international law based on the primacy of individual interests.

- ➢ **State Interventionism Theory**

This theory is opposed to liberalism theory in the way that it advocates for a political or economic system in which the government has a lot of control. It is also defined as the practice or policy of a government taking action to become involved, either in the problems of another country, or in the economy of its own country.

On the economic level, interventionism also called sometimes dirigisme is a political system in which the State intervenes in a systematic and authoritarian way in the economy. Through the government, it exercises a power of orientation or decision, without leaving the framework of the capitalist economy. The State uses the economy as a means to achieve some of its goals. Some examples of action of the State are: credit control, monetary policy, fiscal policy, foreign trade policy, investment policy, wage policy. In terms of international relations, an example of interventionism is the case of a State that interferes in the affairs of another sovereign State in the form of military or humanitarian actions. In the international field, interventionism is the theory according to which third States or international organizations (Ex: UN) must intervene militarily in conflicts between two States or within the same State ('Définition : Interventionnisme', n.d.).

Applied to cultural diplomacy, this theory focuses on the actors involved in the implementation, the conception and the conduct of the foreign cultural policy of the country and it advocates a strong intervention, in some cases an exclusive implication of the State through its public services such as the government, the ministries, diplomatic and consular representations. Thus, for François Roche (2006) an interventionist cultural diplomacy is a diplomacy in which non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations, autonomous government agencies as well as individuals are excluded or relegated to the lowest rank. With a very strong hand and control of the State as the main actor and regulator.

2.2. Method of Data Collection and Sampling

This section deals with the semi structured interviews and the participants' background.

2.2.1. Semi Structured Interview

Data from documentary sources (books, articles, thesis…) have helped us to provide a literature review on the topic and allow us to narrow our investigation area in order to avoid repetition and find out useful information and new to the field. In addition, it facilitated the selection of the appropriate theoretical framework for the analysis of the findings and helped to shape accurately the research questions. But as more relevant and specific information were needed to enlighten our study case, we resorted in the use of semi structured interview qualitative method of research.

In fact, the semi-structured interview is an open process that provides the flexibility to gain insights, a better understanding of the topic, and the personal experience of those interviewed. It provides information in a more relaxed way than through questionnaires. In addition, unplanned topics can arise and be very interesting. So, the purpose of this type of interview is to develop a strategy while exploring useful information from the opportunities that arose during the interview ('Les types d'entretien', 2018).

On that, Savoie-Zajc (1997) asserts that it is a technique of data collection which contribute to the development of knowledge favouring qualitative and interpretative approaches. In other words, with it we can apprehend globally the purpose of the study, explore the phenomenon in order to contribute to its understanding rather than justifying or explaining its causes.

The semi structured interview offers the following advantages ('Entretien semi-directif', n.d.):

➢ It is rich and brings a very great precision and allows to deepen and to clarify certain points.

➢ It is differentiated by a greater freedom of expression of individuals on their feelings and their habits with regard to this or that subject.

➢ It differs from non-structured interviews, which are done very freely, from a few broad questions

➢ Contrarily to closed questionnaires, it does not rigidly dictate the formulation and order of the questions.

- ➤ While being centred on the questioned subject, it makes it possible to guarantee the study of all the questions which interest the investigator.

- ➤ And finally, it also ensures comparability of results.

The process we followed to implement our semi structured interviews during the period of data collection is made of the following steps ('Entretien semi-directif', n.d.):

1. Prepare a list of people considered to answer the interview.

2. Make a list of short, open questions containing terms that are easy to understand in order to foster open discussion.

3. Present in advance (at least 2 or 3 days before the interview) the list of questions to the person interviewed.

4. Start the interview with a simple question and continue with more and more complex questions.

5. Be on the lookout for unexpected answers and feel free to ask for explanations or to guide the interview on these unforeseen topics.

6. After the interview, listen to the recordings and transcript them in the most faithful way.

7. Evaluate after every interview, what worked well, what worked less and improvements to be made for the following meeting

2.2.2. Interview Guide Layout and Participants' Selection

The more relevant the participants sample to the discussed topic is, the more accurate are the results and the more importance and scientific consideration it is given by scholars. Our research topic is related to different fields such as diplomacy and international relations, geostrategic and political sciences, cultural studies, social educational and humanitarian activities. Therefore, our interview guide layout and our participants' background have not been selected at random. As the former is concerned, the following subtopics and questions have been used as guidelines for the questions to be asked and to conduct the discussion during interviews:

Table 2:

Semi Structured Interview Guide Layout

	Topics	Subtopics /Questions
1	Knowledge of Soft power/ Cultural Diplomacy	- What does cultural diplomacy or soft power refers to for you? - What do you know about Turkish cultural diplomacy in Africa and Benin?
2	Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Africa / Benin: Objectives, Goals, Actions, Actors and Beneficiaries	- What are the objectives of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Africa / Benin - What are its strategies and actions? - Who are its actors and beneficiaries?
3	Effectiveness of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy and Impacts	- In your opinion, is Turkish Cultural Diplomacy effective on the ground? - Does it bring people closer? - What are its positive impacts?
4	Limits of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy and Suggestions for Improvement	- What are its negative effects? - How would you qualify its model? -What are its limits? - How can it be improved for the benefit of both peoples?

As far as the participants are concerned, twenty-five (25) participants both from Benin Republic and Turkey that are knowledgeable in the subject have been approached. Their backgrounds vary but are related to the sub-topics. They are scholars, education and scholarship officials, diplomats, businessmen, Non-Governmental Organizations actors, Beninese students who graduated from Turkish schools and those who are still studying in Turkey.

These participants have been selected based on some criteria such as:

- Life experience in Turkey and Benin Republic through studies, business or professional duties

- Academic proficiency in International relations and social sciences fields

- Professional or life experience in diplomacy and cultural and educational affairs between Turkey and Benin

- Experience in humanitarian actions between Turkey and Benin

The participants' selection and categorisation is presented in the following table:

Table 3:

Participants Sampling

Categories	Sub-categories	Number	
Diplomats and Scholars	Beninese Diplomats and Scholars	5	8
	Turkish Diplomats and Scholars	3	
NGO Staffs	Beninese NGO staffs	4	8
	Turkish NGO staffs	4	
Scholarship Students	Current Students	3	7
	Graduated Students	4	
Turkish Scholarship Officials (YTB)	-	2	2
Total		**25**	**25**

2.3. Method of Data Analysis

As a qualitative research, the qualitative content analysis method will be used to assess the collected data. And theories related to Cultural diplomacy and cultural studies will be used to analyse and evaluate our findings. Technically speaking, NVivo qualitative analysis software will be used to process the data.

2.3.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

The qualitative data analysis can be described as a process that involves an effort to find out themes, to build hypotheses emerging from the data, and then to clarify the relation

between themes, data and consequent assumptions (Tech, 1990). The process therefore comprises complementary but distinct phases: the organization of data involving a "segmentation" and leading to a "decontextualizing", on the one hand, and, their interpretation, or categorization, leading to a "recontextualizing", of the other (Savoie-Zajc, 2000). And one of the most frequently used methods to succeed is the content analysis.

Content analysis is one of the qualitative methodologies used in the social sciences and humanities. For example, one finds approaches of content analysis in sociology, communication, linguistics, psychology ('Analyse de contenu — Wikipédia', n.d.). For Bardin (1977), content analysis is a set of increasingly refined and constantly improving methodological tools for extremely diverse "discourses" based on deduction and inference. It is an effort of interpretation that balances between two poles, on the one hand, the rigor of objectivity, and, on the other hand, the fruitfulness of subjectivity.

In this study, the model of content analysis we have used is organised around three steps which are: the pre-analysis, the exploitation of the material and finally the treatment of the results and their interpretation.

- **The Pre-analysis**

It represents the prior step of intuition and organization to operationalize and systematize the initial ideas in order to come up with a diagram or an analysis plan. This phase has three missions: the choice of documents to be analysed, the formulation of assumptions and objectives, and the development of the indicators on which the final interpretation will be based.

- **The Exploitation of the Materials**

The aim pursued during this central phase of a content analysis consists in applying, to the corpus of data, treatments allowing access to a different meaning answering the problematic but not distorting the initial content (Robert & Bouillaguet, 1997). It appeals for coding, counting or enumeration operations according to the previously formulated instructions.

- **The Treatment of the Results, and the Interpretation**

In this phase, the raw data is processed to be meaningful and valid. The interpretation of the results consists of "drawing on the elements uncovered by the categorization in order to find a reading that is both original and objective of the studied corpus" (Robert & Bouillaguet, 1997). This phase of the content analysis is certainly the most interesting since it allows, on the one hand, to evaluate the fertility of the device, and, on the other hand, the value of the hypotheses.

2.3.2. NVivo: A Qualitative Data Analysis Software

There are mainly two qualitative data analysis instruments: the so-called manual or 'paper and pen' system and the one assisted by computer software. The choice of the most appropriate instrument varies according to the habit, the research objectives and also the available material. As part of this study, we opted for the choice of NVivo qualitative data analysis software.

NVivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software created by QSR International. It has been designed for qualitative researchers operating with a lot of text-based and/or multimedia data that require deep levels of analysis on small or massive volumes of information (McNiff, 2016). NVivo is conceived to help users organize and analyse non-numerical or unstructured data. The package permits to classify, type and prepare information; examine relationships within the data; and mix analysis with linking, shaping, looking out and modelling. Besides, it accommodates many research methods like network and structure analysis, discourse and oral communication analysis, anthropology, literature reviews, etc. In addition to that and unlike many other similar software, NVivo supports various types of data formats such as audio files, videos, digital photos, Word, PDF, spreadsheets, rich text, plain text and web and social media data.

Indeed, software is only a tool that can be used in one or more stages of the research process, but no software can interpret the data, this task remains a must for the researcher (Van der Maren, 1997, Bourdon, 2000). We have found that basically the analysis procedures for both systems were the same: the data organization tasks are identical, and the analysis tasks keep the same characteristics (Savoie Zajc, 2000). However, software has the advantage, in all cases, to increase the speed of work of the researcher, but no software improves the validity of the studies. Comparing the manual data analysis method

to the software assisted one, Wanli (2007) finds that the latter makes the mechanical tasks related to coding less arduous as well as the automation of the most complex analysis and also the speed in obtaining the summary elements (tables, maps) and analysis results.

As far as NVivo is concerned, it helps the user to replicate all the abilities of the 'paper and pen' system into the software, and much more. After importing them, data can easily be coded both in vivo and through an accumulated tree structure. The editing asset is dynamic, while it allows an easy and progressive reflection and conceptualisation (Richards 2002). As Tom Richards (2002) states: "A project need no longer be separated into the bits you do on the computer (e.g. coding the interviews) and the rest (your notes, results, reports, and conclusions)".

CHAPTER THREE: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter of our study will look at exposing the results and findings of our research. We will then engage in a theoretical discussion around these results in order to weigh them on the balance of our theoretical framework previously elaborated in Chapter one. Specifically, this will be about presenting the interests and the mechanism and instruments of Turkish cultural diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa and Benin. Then, finding out which model it fits best. And finally, bringing up to light its shortcomings and limits for an improvement of the system.

3.1. Findings

This section comprises the purposes, goals of Turkish diplomacy in Sub Saharan African in general and Republic of Benin in Particular and also exposes in detail its mechanism and instruments used to implement and achieve them. The goals and the purposes are mainly political and economics. While the Turkish cultural diplomacy's apparatus is comprised of: the Turkish embassy in Benin, TIKA (the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency), Turkish Scholarships Program (YTB), NGO's and their humanitarian activities.

3.1.1. Goals and Purposes of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa and Benin Republic

This section will explore the reasons that may explain Turkey's interest in sub-Saharan Africa and particular attention will be paid to the case of the Republic of Benin.

With the arrival of the AKP, things start changing and the year 2005 will mark a turning point in relations between Turkey and Africa. The goal of the AKP will be to bring a new vision of the African continent, but also to compensate for the years of neglect that preceded. In 2008, the first Turkish-African cooperation summit in Istanbul was held and 49 African countries participated. The summit got the participation of 49 African countries and was entitled "Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future" (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.-b), which demonstrates the ambition of the Turkish authorities, in particular the expression "common future".

Our research shows that the reasons for Turkey's increased interest in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Benin, can be classified into two distinct categories: political interests and economic interests.

- **Political purposes**

Turkey manifests its political interests quite clearly. Indeed, Turkey seeks to establish diplomatic ties, and this is done through the opening of new embassies in different countries. It has even been mentioned by the Turkish authorities to put in place a procedure to facilitate the existing visa regime for Turkey from African countries (Athie, 2014: 6).

Many authors mention the "soft power" of Turkey in sub-Saharan Africa in recent years, which is deployed through the increase in the amount of development aid. It is indisputable that any financial aid for development requires some consideration and reciprocal actions (Ozkan, 2010). Thus, Turkey exercises its "soft power" in order to acquire new allies. In 2008, Turkey is a candidate for the position of non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (Ozkan, 2010). The Turkish authorities were able to play their new relations with Africa in their favour, since Turkey was elected to this post with 151 votes in favour ('United Nations General Assembly 63nd session', n.d.), including many favourable votes from representatives of Sub Saharan African countries at the UN General Assembly. Turkey also achieved observer status in the African Union in 2005, allowing it to attend all meetings ('From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs', n.d.-b). It can thus be said that Turkey is seeking to extend its geopolitical influence. Both the current and the former Beninese governments paid official visits to Turkey to strengthen ties between the two countries. The establishment in Benin of a consulate of Turkey and then of the Turkish Embassy in November 2014 allowed to assert a more important presence.

Our interview with the head of the Turkish diplomatic mission in Benin and his collaborators shows that among the missions assigned to it lies first and foremost the consolidation and strengthening of diplomatic ties between the two countries (H. E. Ambassador of Turkey in Benin Republic, 2019). He would reaffirm that these objectives have not changed as stated since the establishment of the embassy and the staff in place is moving forwards for an even more successful implementation. It is in this context that visa formalities are increasingly facilitated for citizens of both countries and especially in the context of economic exchanges. Benin is a secular country and although a developing country, it represents a good model of governance, democracy and especially political stability in Africa. Thus, it is not to be neglected on the sub-Saharan political scene in general and West Africa especially with regard to the interests of Turkey in this region of

the world as well as within its institutions. These reasons would probably have played in favour of Benin in the decision of the location of the new embassy and this to the detriment of the neighbouring Republic of Togo. Not only would Turkey extend its diplomatic relations with these countries of sub-Saharan Africa for a political purpose, but also its economic relations in order to position itself as an economic power.

➢ **Economic purposes**

The first accredited Ambassador of turkey in Republic of Benin, in 2014, H.E.Turguf Rauf Kural said "*We will work to strengthen this cooperation. After President Boni Yayi's travels to Turkey, we promised to open a diplomatic mission in Cotonou. Turkey has just fulfilled its commitments. With this embassy in Cotonou, Turkey will now have more opportunities to strengthen cooperation with Benin, particularly in economic terms*" ('Bénin', n.d.-b). It is crystal clear from this statement that one of the most important objectives of Turkish rapprochement to Republic of Benin is economics. One should not forget the geostrategic position of Benin near the Republic of Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso and others. The country with its 12 million of population is not the only one target of Industrial countries. Nigeria is the most populated country of Africa with 200,649,974 of inhabitants representing a really big market for consumption. Niger with his 23,118,508 people and Burkina Faso (20,285,806) ('Worldometers - real time world statistics', n.d.), as hinterland countries have no seaports and are connected to import export business through the Republic of Benin. So, Benin represents a kind of storage and re-export country for companies from all over the world and also from Turkey that target the West African market.

It is then noteworthy to mention that Turkey is a newly industrialized country with prosperous sectors such as agriculture, the textile industry and the tourism sector. With a record growth rate of 7.4% in 2017 despite the crisis it is experiencing Turkey was ranked by the World Bank as 13th world economic power ('Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de la République de Turquie', n.d.). It is therefore in the category of countries with a booming growth that is trying to find a place at the political level on the international scene.

This emergence is also noticeable in terms of trade: in 2003, the volume of Turkish trade with Africa amounted to $ 5.4 billion while in 2008 this volume exceeded $ 16 billion dollars (Ozkan, 2010) and between 2009 and 2018, the bilateral trade volume between

Turkey Africa increased up to $179 billion ('Turkey-Africa trade volume totals $179 billion in last decade', n.d.). According to the Turkish ministry of Foreign Affairs, the bilateral trade between the Republic of Benin and Turkey in 2018 has reached a volume of 140 million of Dollars. More specifically, Turkey's exports to the Republic of Benin in 2018 was evaluated to $ 113.5 million of Dollars, and in the same year, imports from Benin to Turkey amounted to USD 26.7 million. The main products Turkish companies export to Benin include pasta, flour, iron and steel wire rod, sugary products, paper products, while cotton is the main products, they import from Benin ('From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs', n.d.-c). In addition, between 2005 and 2010, Turkey paid more than $ 7.5 million to some African countries in an economic context characterized by a decline in development assistance to developing countries from developed countries because of the economic crisis of 2007. All these figures provide economic justification for Turkey's infatuation with Africa (Athie, 2014).

Indeed, the Turkish authorities regularly emphasize the importance of increasing economic exchanges with Africa, and of satisfying these new economic partners (Özkan & Akgün, 2010). This is an evidence of the economic nature of Turkish interest in Africa. In 2008, at the first Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, two documents were adopted. The first, entitled Turkey-Africa partnership framework document, presents the framework of actions of this cooperation. Trade and investment between partners are strongly encouraged. Thus, the States present at the summit commit themselves to creating an economic environment conducive to the Africa Turkey partnership, and to promoting cooperation between the various institutions in Africa and Turkey. To this end, Turkey has been admitted as a non-regional member of the African Development Bank ('Second Africa - Turkey Partnership Summit', n.d.).

What is interesting is the fact that the actors recognize the need to diversify the exports of African countries, a priority is also made of this objective of diversification. Also, in this document, investments by Turkish entrepreneurs in Africa are welcomed and encouraged. The Turkish authorities stress this point particularly. Thus, Turkish companies are encouraged to seize investment opportunities in Africa. This summit also resulted in the Turkish Union of Chambers of Commerce and Commodity Exchanges and the Union of African Chambers of Commerce agreeing to set up a joint Turkish-African Chamber of Commerce to facilitate future trade (Ozkan, 2010).

Another evidence of Turkey's commercial interest in Africa is the fact that the national airline, Turkish Airlines, flies now to 56 African destinations compared to 13 in 2010. And this out of its 311 destinations in 124 countries all over the world ('Turkish Airlines prioritizes expansion in Africa', n.d.). Up to date, there are four Turkish Airlines' flights per week in winter and every day in summer between Istanbul and Cotonou (Republic of Benin) via Abidjan (Republic of Cote d'Ivoire) ('T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı'ndan', n.d.-a). Some authors explain Turkey's economic interest in Africa as a result of the global economic crisis of 2007 and the consequences it has had (Ozkan, 2010). Indeed, depending on the economies of rich countries such as the United States, has the effect that an economic crisis in these countries will have a significant impact on the Turkish economy. That is why Turkey is searching for new markets to invest in order not to depend entirely on the economy of rich countries. Besides, our investigations suggest that the political vision of the Turkish government includes that rapprochement to those developing countries such as Benin Republic in order to gain their sympathy and position Turkey as a non-imperialistic but rather a proud, friendly, and non-opportunistic nation. And this is part of Turkey's nation branding (Benin Diplomat, 2019).

3.1.2. Turkish Cultural Diplomacy Instruments in Sub Saharan Africa and Benin Republic

This part of the study exposes the Turkish cultural diplomacy mechanism through its instruments and actors. They range from the Turkish embassies to Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) passing by Turkish Higher Education Scholarships coordinated by The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities "YTB" and also Humanitarians and Non-profit Organisations such as Diyanet, IHH.

Turkish Embassy in Benin: A Cultural Diplomacy Agent in Building

Turkish Embassies in African Countries have a global mission of establishing and strengthening relations between Turkey and those African countries. In the case of Turkish embassy in Benin Republic, this mission can be divided into three submissions:

Carrying on diplomatic relations with Beninese government and official institutions, helping to establish or facilitate economics relations between Turkish and Beninese traders and business companies and finally creating and advancing cultural ties between the countries and their citizens (Scholarship student, 2019).

In that regard, and specifically on the last sub mission, it is noticed that the recent establishment of the embassy do not facilitate a control. In fact, except some really few occasions in which the embassy is invited in Benin no active participation in cultural events to show and brand Turkish culture in all its components has not been registered so far (H. E. Ambassador of Turkey in Benin Republic, 2019). All the same, one case that worth mentioning is the amazing gift of sport equipment made by the Turkish Embassy in Benin through the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) on October 3, 2016.The gift addressed to the Beninese Ministry of Sport was made of 1000 balls, 1500 jerseys, 1500 pairs of crampons and 1500 pairs of nets and many other sports equipment (MATINAL, n.d.).

To perpetuate and diversify such actions, the diplomatic mission confided to Turkish Embassy in Benin, is trying step by step to organize meetings and conferences with Benin youth, students and others corporation of the society in order to exchanges ideas and make them discover Turkish Culture, history, society, beliefs and opportunities. Among those projects in a long term is the possibility of establishing Yunus Emre Institute in Benin in order to make available to Beninese citizens trainings in Turkish language and others (H. E. Ambassador of Turkey in Benin Republic, 2019). However, the task is not going to be easy as they acknowledged it themselves regarding their newness.

In fact, one has to say that even if in many cases, the main, official and first actor of a country's cultural diplomacy abroad is its embassy, Turkish one in Benin is not yet totally able to fulfill this mission because really long before it, other informal actors were already on the ground. They are mainly non-governmental organizations acting in the field of humanitarian aid and supporting the poor population in their basic need (Beninese NGO Official, 2019). The challenge is a big one though the goal for the embassy is to be able one day to coordinate all these actions, help and facilitate things for their actors in order to have a bigger impact and create more visibility. Nonetheless, what can already be considered as won is the embassy awareness and implication in economic relations and mainly aid to development and education diplomacy through agencies and organizations such as the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB).

TIKA: The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency

It is the official development and humanitarian aid agency of Turkey abroad. Established in 1992, in the context of the implosion of the USSR, the TIKA agency was initially intended to help the states of Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans in their democratic transition (Özkan & Akgün, 2010: 535). However, from 2003, this agency takes a global aspect and extends its geographical field. In 2005, TIKA opens its first coordinating agency in sub-Saharan Africa in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), a second agency will open in Khartoum (Sudan) in 2006, and another in Dakar (Senegal) in 2007 (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.-b).

Among their objectives are:

- Developing the financial, commercial, technical, social, cultural and educational relations with countries and communities targeted to establish cooperation with the aim of contributing to a mutual development based on projects and activities, preparing or making the countries or communities prepare some cooperation programs and projects in accordance with the development objectives and needs of the mentioned countries and communities.
- Ensuring humanitarian aids and technical assistances to be offered to foreign communities and countries.
- Implementing cultural cooperation programmes abroad and cooperating with centres engaging with Turkish culture where necessary ('About Us - TİKA', n.d.).

In general, Turkey through TIKA builds schools and hospitals, provided scholarships to university students, fresh water, drugs and medical supplies, treatment of patients, education, infrastructure, water-sanitation and production sector. In that line, 61 offices of TIKA were opened in 59 countries from 2002 to 2018 among which not less than 20 in Africa. TİKA, creates and carry out projects in many fields such as education, economic development, health, infrastructure, renovation, agriculture and animal husbandry, cultural cooperation and vocational education. Until 2017, thousands of projects in more than 160 countries have been implemented with the aim of making the world a better place ('TİKA - Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency - TİKA', n.d.).

In November 2017 Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim stated in his speech at the Conference of Ministers of Education of Turkey and African Countries, at the Ciragan Palace in Istanbul: *"The amount of social responsibility projects implemented by Turkey with the help of the Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Coordination (TIKA) in Africa,*

reached 730 million dollars. According to 2015 data, TIKA's projects in Africa were $ 101 million, and $ 396 million in sub-Saharan Africa. In total, Turkey provided $ 6 billion in humanitarian assistance worldwide in 2016."

In Benin, the general notice is that TIKA is not yet really active as in many other neighbouring countries such as Niger, Burkina Faso and others. However, we can cite the few that is done. In 2015, TIKA came out with the donation of an ambulance and medical equipment to Benin Republic. In the same year, 09 women from the town of Sè (South of Benin Republic) were given one-month pottery training in Menemen (Izmir, Turkey). They were also given technical materials and items made from the project are available for sale at the Ankara African Cultural House ('TİKA - Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency - TİKA', n.d.) .

The more recent and biggest project up to now is the building and equipment of a Health Centre in the region of Adjohoun (South-East of Benin Republic). The Health Centre with full equipment was handed over to the Beninese Health Ministry in in 2018 ('T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı'ndan', n.d.-b).

YTB "Türkiye Scholarships" Program: A Powerful Tool for Turkish Education Diplomacy

The Prime Ministry Office of Turkish Citizens and Relative Communities Abroad (named "YTB" in Turkish) was opened in March 2010. However, compared to the other public diplomacy institutions it can be considered a little bit late, YTB aims at operating in the field of "Overseas Turks". Hence, the objectives and duty areas of YTB has been determined in its law of establishment according to External Turks and Diaspora. That very first article of YTB's law of establishment defines the duty area and objectives of the organisation as "*to carry out works with respect to citizens that live abroad and to find solutions to their problems; to carry out activities for these communities in order to develop social, cultural and economic relations with the cognate and relative communities*" (Eksi, 2016) . That has been inspired by the content of the 62nd Article of the Republic of Turkey's Constitution which specifies : "*The State shall take the necessary measures to ensure family unity, the education of the children, the cultural needs, and the social security of Turkish citizens working abroad, and to safeguard their ties with the home country and to help them on their return home*" ('TÜRKİYE BÜYÜK MİLLET MECLİSİ', n.d.).

The vision of the organization is summarized in their motto "*we are there wherever there is a Turk*" and ranges on the directives of the foreign policy understanding of Davutoglu, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which asserts that Turkey would be present in every international areas. YTB's internal organization structure lies on five working areas which are like Overseas Turks Citizens, Cognate and Relative Communities, NGOs, Law and International Students in order to reinforce its historic, social ,cultural and economic ties with the Turkish communities of Turkey living abroad ('Teşkilat Şeması', n.d.).

The organization undertakes many actions and activities in various areas and is present especially in the fields of education diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and civil society. Between 2013 and 2014, apart from supporting around 320 projects in nearly 75 countries it provided a financial help of almost 33 million TL to the overseas NGOs wishing to position itself as a global lobby and diaspora under its NGO capacity development program (YTB, 2013: 41). Moreover in 2010, and that is one of the biggest achievements, it started a similar concept to Fulbright scholarship of USA: the Turkey Scholarships program.

Türkiye Scholarships aims at building a network of future leaders responsible for reinforcing cooperation and mutual understanding between societies and countries. It is a government-funded, scholarship program awarded to students of different nationalities from all around the world to study in full or/and short-time programs at universities in Turkey. It intended to raise generations who are friends to Turkey. And the program quickly gained a great and still growing up interest mainly from Africans. The number of applications to the Turkey Scholarships increases every year reaching to more than 150 thousand applications from 176 countries in 2015 while scholarships were granted to only 50 thousands of them. Because of this big and increasing demand, YTB also augmented the number of its foreign representations to 219 in 2013 and 230 in 2015 ('TÜRKİYE BURSLARI', n.d.).

The former Prime Minister Binali Yildirim in a speech asserts "*In addition, we have already signed forty education agreements with 26 African countries. Negotiations are continuing with twenty other countries and currently, 3 891 African students benefit from Turkish scholarships*" ('YEE will carry out new projects to set an example for Africa', 2017)

As far as Benin republic is concerned by YTB scholarships, according to statistics held by the BRT (Beninese Resident in Turkey's Association), the total number of students

that won the scholarships since the beginning is not less than ninety eight (98). In fact in 2010, only two (02) students from Benin came for graduate studies, followed in 2011 by seven others (07). Lately in 2018 the number of students awarded the scholarship that year was up to nineteen (19). In addition, some are in Turkey here for high school studies under TDV scholarships or by their own means (Chairperson of BRT, 2019).

NGO's Partnerships and Humanitarians Actions

In addition to TIKA, the Turkish government official development agency, Turkish NGOs are among Turkey's main instruments of development assistance to African countries. In last years, Turkish volunteer doctors and health staffs have participated in numerous medical examinations and free surgery campaigns organized by Turkish NGOs in more than twenty countries across Africa. A great number of Africans have undergone health checks and many have got free cataract and hernia surgeries. Turkish NGOs have also opened many water wells where water scarcity has not only affected the livelihoods of the population, but also caused intra-community clashes. These wells also contribute to the local economy and general security on the ground. One of the most famous of these organisations is Diyanet Vakfi, a non-profit and foundation which is mainly funded by the Turkish government through the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs('Institutionnel', n.d.).

But the majority of the Turkish NGO's and foundations undertaking humanitarian and religious activities in Benin are not controlled by the central government. Among their activities are: the building of mosques, schools and orphanages, donation of food stuffs during Ramadan month and thousands of cows during Eid celebration every year.

The average estimation we came out with from our researches and that is just the tip of the iceberg can be summarised as followed:

- Not less than ten (10) Turkish Non-Governmental and humanitarian Organizations operates in Benin Republic every year through local Beninese NGO's

- More than 1000 000 US Dollars of investments every year in humanitarian aids (Food stuffs, social, education and religious buildings, orphan care, medical care)(Official RAI (Network of Islamic NGO's and Foundations in Benin), 2018).

3.2. Discussions

This section has to do with appreciating the Turkish cultural diplomacy model in Sub Saharan Africa and particularly in Benin Republic through the prism of the theories set out in Chapter 1 and in comparison, to the most known models. Then some of the limits of the Turkish model will be exposed as found out through ours researches and interviews.

3.2.1. Typology and Models of Cultural Diplomacy

For a better understanding of the application of the theories of interventionism and liberalism to the field of international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy, Francois Roche (2006) suggests the following table:

Table 4:

Typology of Cultural Diplomacy

Voluntarism (Public Diplomacy Policies)	Interventionism (State action and intervention)	Model of Cultural diplomacy	Observations
Absence of policy Or weak voluntarism	No intervention	Absolute liberal model	This is a theoretical model
	Intervention at minima	Model at minima	Case of developing countries
	Indirect intervention	Opportunistic model	Case of Salazarist Portugal
Moderate or selective Policy	Direct intervention	Sovereign non-interventionist model	Case of Italy and Russia
	Mixed System	Partnership model	Countries of Northern Europe
	Indirect Intervention	Liberal model by delegation	USA
Active policy or Voluntarism	Direct intervention	Sovereign interventionist model	France

	Mixed intervention	Cooperative voluntary model	United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Japan, Canada
	Indirect intervention	Voluntary model by delegation	

Source: Francois Roche (2006), La diplomatie culturelle dans les relations bilatérales : Un essai d'approche typologique

By "voluntarism" criteria, it is meant how planned and clearly expressed the State's public diplomacy policy is. In other words, whether or not the parliament or diplomatic institutions have enacted Policies in that domain; if public funds are allocated to implement the policies or not and if the Embassies or consular representations of the country are efficiently active in the fields of culture, education, scientific activities…The different levels can be marked as weak or absence of voluntarism, moderate or selective voluntarism and strong or active voluntarism.

Whereas "Interventionism" criteria refer to the State's level of action or intervention in the process on the public diplomacy's implementation. Here, direct intervention qualifies the situation where the State conducts itself, with its own administrative instruments (ministerial services, embassies or consular missions, public institutions) its cultural relations. Indirect intervention qualifies the situation in which the State delegates or entrusts these cultural relations to independent bodies (including foundations), or even lets them act by helping them more or less. The mixed system sees State delegating to autonomous, if not independent structures its international cultural action. Without giving them precise indications or dictating his artistic choices, it is represented in its governing bodies, indicates the main orientations that she wishes to follow and brings them the majority of their income in the form of grants. So, the voluntarism criteria have to do with the state implication in planning its cultural diplomacy by enacting and theorising policies in that sense; while the "state interventionism" concerns the level of implication in the implementation of the policies.

3.2.2. Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa and Benin Republic: A Liberal Model by Delegation Approach

In 2010, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs went through a big restructuration in order to better adapt it to the globalization and information age of the 21st century. New

departments were created to implement public diplomacy and soft power policies. Therefore, ten (10) new departments were established inside the organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Eksi, 2016). They are:

1. General Directorate for Global and Humane Issues
2. General Directorate for Economic Relations with Neighbouring Countries
3. General Directorate for Confliction Prevention and Crisis Management
4. General Directorate for Agreements
5. Department of Translation
6. General Directorate for International Law
7. General Directorate for Information
8. Department of Information Technologies
9. General Directorate for Foreign Promotion and Cultural Relations
10. Department of Diplomacy Academy

Among these new sections, the ones directly concerned by the implementation of Turkish cultural diplomacy and soft power policies are the Department of Public Diplomacy Communication, the General Directorate for Foreign Promotion and Cultural Relations and the Deputy General Directorate of Cultural Diplomacy. According to Muharrem Eksi (2016), these institutions first started to act in the field of social media and after tried to undertake activities for informing media and press within the shell of public diplomacy. None the less, on the ground, these units of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are more entitled to sustain and back up the newly opened institutions which are the Office of Public Diplomacy, The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities and Yunus Emre Institute and to carry out their works in the international area. Eksi (2016) states that The Prime Ministry Public Diplomacy Coordination Office (KDK) was created with the aim of providing a coordination to the state institutions and agencies that come with soft power activities such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, TIKA and YTB.

Regarding the "voluntarism" criteria, one can notice that with the various official documents like "Opening up to Africa" and also international summits of Turkey and African Countries including Benin Republic, Turkey has decided not to leave the leading of it Cultural diplomacy at random. It was planned, analysed, evaluated and properly elaborated with visions, mission and activities with appropriate financial estimation

necessary for its implementation. Besides, official and government agencies where established to undertake actions for that.

But it is noteworthy to remark that the non-state run organisation and NGO's that are also acting as cultural diplomats in Sub-Saharan Africa and Benin Republic in particular do not receive instructions from the ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other public institutions and they are not financed by the later but rather by private companies and individuals (Official of Turkish NGO, 2019). So, the government does not directly administrate its own cultural diplomacy and soft power institutions but external actors such as NGO's also have their own policies, funds and independence.

Appreciating this mechanism leads us to affirm that the Turkish cultural diplomacy is based on a liberal model by delegation because:

- The Cultural diplomacy and soft power policies are directed by the state to its own agencies (TIKA, YTB, TDV) but NGO's and independent actors draft their owns. So, on the light of the state voluntarism theory, the public policies can be said to be moderate and selective.

- Actors are both from and outside the state's control and those initiated and established by the government are not all directly run by it. But rather, many of them are independent in their management and exist as non-government and non-profit organisation even though their funding is mainly from the government. So, concerning the state interventionism theory, the Turkish one can be considered as indirect.

Although well elaborated and normally functioning, Turkish cultural diplomacy mechanism in Republic of Benin still has some imperfections compared to France and USA's ones and improvements must be done.

3.2.3. Limits of Turkish Cultural Diplomacy in Benin Republic

The first shortcoming we noticed concerning Turkish cultural diplomacy in Benin is the lack of a very powerful tool for the dissemination of cultural elements and values: a cultural centre. Indeed, an analysis of the French model as well as that of the USA reinforces this view. France makes use of the French Institute in different countries including Benin Republic since 1963 ('Institut français du Bénin — Wikipédia', n.d.). The United States uses the American Cultural Centre and most recently China has been installing the Confucius Institutes. Unfortunately, Turkey has not opened any Yunus Emre

Cultural Centre in Benin or even in any country in West Africa. As a result, up to date, no festivals, no cultural exhibitions, no artistic or linguistic events bring these two countries together specifically in Benin or Turkey.

In addition, Turkey hardly uses the media to make its nation branding in Benin. Indeed, soap operas, television series or films disseminating the historical and cultural realities of Turkey to the general public are almost non-existent on the Beninese television channels. Thus, the Beninese mass populace still ignores enormously if not almost everything of the reality, the languages, values and arts of Turkey.

Finally, a last point that is important even if it may not be part of the objectives of Turkish cultural diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa and Benin is the non-reciprocity of an essential element: the education diplomacy. Indeed, only Beninese students come to Turkey, learn the Turkish language, immerse themselves in Turkish society and get used to its values, and by that becoming potential cultural ambassadors of their host country to their families on their return, and this all along their life. But unfortunately, Turkish students or academicians are not going to stay in Benin to better absorb the realities of this brother and friend country while conveying through during their stay the cultural messages of their own country of origin.

CONCLUSION

The last part of this study is divided into two main points. Firstly, the whole work as well as the key findings will be summarised and secondly, some recommendations will be given to improve the Turkish Cultural diplomacy mechanism in Sub Saharan Africa and particularly in Republic of Benin.

Summary of the Key Findings

The primary goal of the present study was to put light on Turkish cultural diplomacy's system in Sub-Saharan Africa with a main focus on the Republic of Benin. In other words, it is aimed at investigating the cultural components and the mechanism , Turkey is making use of to expand his influence and relations with African countries in general and Benin Republic in particular as well as the different actors involved in the process. Since 2002, Turkish interest for African countries has considerably increased. This sudden attention and will to develop bilateral and multilateral relations caught our attention and justifies our interest in this topic. Moreover, the desire of finding out more on how cultural elements are being used by States in order to implement their Cultural diplomacy and Soft power has facilitated the choice of this topic.

Furthermore, this research is important because no other study has really and specifically been done since on the same subject. So, it has not yet gained a big interest though since 2010 (with the coming to Turkey of the first Beninese students that were awarded YTB scholarships) and more seriously in 2014 (with the establishment of Turkish Embassy in Benin Republic), the relations between both countries has been going forward and inducing a lot of exchanges both economically and culturally speaking.

Qualitative approach and content analysis were used to assess this study. Data were collected from documentary research as primary source and semi structured interview as secondary source. The interview was directed toward twenty-five (25) individuals chosen according to the relevance of their status and their experience in relation with the topic. This scientific process helped to clarify the research questions, built up the literature review and decide the theoretical framework that will serve for the analysis.

As a result, two main theories have been selected in order to process the findings and understand more deeply the mechanism actors and activities of Turkish soft power in Benin republic. They are mainly the liberalism theory and the state interventionism theory. They serve to find out the level of implication of the central government in

planning and implementing the cultural diplomacy and to identify the model of Turkish cultural diplomacy in Benin

The literature review has displayed a critical discussion of some researches which have been previously done in the same or related areas. The terminological clarification of phrases, concepts of Cultural diplomacy, Soft power and nation branding have been addressed. And pioneer cases such as France and USA models of cultural diplomacy have been exposed so that they can serve as a benchmark for our own analysis of the Turkish case.

This study shows that the purposes of Turkey's cultural diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa in general Benin Republic in particular are first and foremost political and economics. In fact all these activities in order to brand Turkey as a friend and philanthropist country to Sub Saharan Africa and Benin Republic is meant to elaborate and strengthen economic and political ties between countries in order to facilitate to Turkey a better positioning on the international political scene and also to rank it as an economic power and open African market to it as an alternative. Part of the mechanism implementation are : the multiplication of Turkish Embassies in Sub Saharan African during the last decade, the award of Turkish government's scholarships to African and Beninese students by YTB, the presence of Turkish NGO's and cooperation agencies activities in Africa and Benin. Based on Francois Roche (2006) typology of cultural diplomacy and under the light of our stated theories, it has been concluded that Turkish cultural diplomacy in Sub-Saharan Africa and particularly in Benin Republic is not a purely interventionist one but rather a liberal and partly supervised by the state which is also but not the only one actor of the system. So, it is a liberal model by delegation. At the top of the system is the Turkish Embassy in African countries with a quite clear and well assigned mission of coordination as the main cultural diplomacy agent.

Turkish government actively participates in the process by elaborating public diplomacy policies, creating public agencies and funding them. However, many of these agencies and organisations are ruled as independent or non-profit organisations though theirs actions are based on the elaborated plan. Some examples are TIKA, YTB, and DIYANET VAKFI. In addition to these official actors, many other independent actors exist and were even conducting Turkish cultural diplomacy in Africa and Benin for a while. They are NGO's that have their own vision and mission (most of the time religious and humanitarian). They are funded by privates sectors and Turkish citizens (Official of

Turkish NGO, 2019). As a result, Sub Saharan African countries have benefited of a lot of projects coming from Turkey. Especially in Benin, both the government and directly the population gained from many actions such as free medical care and surgery campaign, building of mosques, wells diggings, schools, and orphanages, distribution of food stuffs and full funded scholarships for outstanding and poor students, training, and gift of sport equipment and lately the building of a health centre (Official of RAI (Network of Islamic NGO's and Foundations in Benin), 2018).

However, some shortcomings are still visible in the mechanism and following recommendations need to be given in order to improve the system for mutual benefits.

Recommendations

It would be good for Turkish government cultural diplomacy to activate and invest more in establishing Yunus Emre Institute in Sub-Saharan African Countries and especially in Benin Republic. That would enlarge the vision and understanding Beninese have of Turkey and correct many false stereotypes already existing. Cultural events at national level can also be very great opportunities to bring people of this countries closer. Because they would impact more and in a softer way. In addition to all these broadcasting Turkish series in Beninese television channels will be cheaper while the impact would be enormous because till today one of the first and most influential cultural diplomacy tools of big countries such as France USA and lately China is TV broadcasting because nobody in the targeted society is saved. One can also add translation in languages of both countries of literary works such as novel and cartoons.

Finally, for the mutual benefit, YTB should also try in collaboration with African countries to make up an exchange program may it be just for some months in order for Turkish students and academicians to experience life in these countries. Something similar to the American Peace Corps program would be the most welcome. This study cannot conclude without pointing at some elements that worth attention and may serve for future researches on Turkish cultural diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa and Benin Republic in particular.

Direction for Future Researches

Two main axis can be recommended for further studies on the topic as they could not be taken into account in the present study; they are:

- Turkish religious diplomacy in Sub Saharan Africa
- Developing a set of cultural studies theories to understand the role of cultural products in cultural diplomacy

In fact, the effectiveness of cultural diplomacy depends not only on the doer but also and mainly on the perception the target people or country have of it. The sub-Saharan African states for many of them are in majority populated by Muslims (with 27, 7 % for Benin Republic making Islam the first religion in the country) ('INSAE - Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Économique', n.d.). So, the people feel quite closer to Turkish who are also Muslims in a great majority. As a consequence, they do not see in it a colonizer or a cultural imperialist but much more a brother and friend because of the religious rapprochement and also due to the anti-Western and revolutionary image inspired by the Turkish government and its current president H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkey's cultural diplomacy in Africa and Benin is not yet perceived by local population and elites as imperialist, but rather tolerant, respectful of the local traditional and religious values of the people. Turkey only watches over its economic interests and, above all, works for a better branding of its nation looking by the way for allies and friends rather than submitted countries.

It is understandable that Turkey on the religious level wants to carry a Sunni Islamic message of open-mindedness (Eksi, 2016). Contrary to the Wahhabi trend of Saudi Arabia and other first religious partners of Muslims in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Turkish dogmatic tendency better integrates the endogenous and cultural realities of peoples even though many critics question the "Islam made in Turkey" (Benin Scholar, 2018). Moreover, within the Sub-Saharan and African and particularly Beninese Muslim intellectual elite, the current Turkish political class is a model to follow in the sense that it does not exclude religion from the political sphere but fully integrates it by drawing on in its moral and ethical resources and by inspiring itself to assert his legitimacy. (Benin Diplomat, 2019).

Among the big difficulties faced while doing this research is the lack of various theories specific to cultural studies that can be used to evaluated cultural elements in the implementation of cultural diplomacy. Actually, on this topic the majority of existing theories are taken from related fields such as international relations, communication and others. Cultural studies is a field of study interested in questions of production, reception and the interaction of audiences with cultural products they are exposed to. And

considering components of the cultural diplomacy process as cultural productions and products, it would be a great progress to bring together scholars in Cultural Studies with specialist in International Relations in order to develop theories and methodologies and build up a theoretical underpinning for further studies on the topic by cultural studies researchers.

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