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** The surnames are listed in alphabetical order.*

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Turkish AK Parti's Posture towards the 2003 War in Iraq The Impact of Religion amid Security Concerns

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ABSTRACT

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This paper focuses on Turkey's foreign policymakers' attitudes in the context of the 2003 US decision to wage war against Iraq. The main goal is to assess and downplay the impact of religion in relation to security-related concerns. Drawing on official speeches, interviews, declarations by key figures in the foreign policy process, the paper argues that religion is nothing more than an intervening factor in the case of Turkey's approach to the 2003 war in Iraq. Therefore, notwithstanding the role of Islamist elites in the foreign policy decision-making of Turkey, Turkey's foreign affairs were rather inspired by realist behaviour, driven by pragmatic considerations, aimed at pursuing rationalist goals.

Introduction

At the time of the 2003 war in Iraq, Turkey was under the rule of brand-new Islamist elite which gained the upper hand in the November 3, 2002 elections. However, "Islamism" is a considerably broad category. The Turkish way to combine politics and religion must consequently receive a careful definition. According to Daniel Philpott's insights (2007), two concepts are worthy of note: "differentiation", which "describes how religious and political authority is related" and "political theology", which stands for how religious leaders view and interpret the foundations of legitimate political power (Philpott, 2007: 505). Differentiation may vary not only in degree (high-differentiated versus low-integrationist) but also in kind (consensual versus conflictual). Drawing from modern sociologists of religion (Berger, 1967; Martin, 1978), Philpott elaborates an all-encompassing framework to describe specific relationships between politics and religion within the most various states. Two examples are worthwhile for the present discussion, Iran and Turkey. According to Philpott's scheme, Iran is a typical case of "low-integrationist" and "consensual" state. Iranian political institutions and religious bodies not only exhibit a low level of mutual autonomy "in their foundational legal authority, that is, the extent of each entity's authority over the other's basic prerogatives to hold offices, choose its officials, set its distinctive policies, carry out its activities, in short, to govern itself" (Philpott, 2007: 505) but also show a high consensus, meaning that both parties are poised to preserve the status quo. In turn, Turkey (that of Kemal in Philpott's framework, but even that of 2003 can serve the same purpose) is best described as a "high-differentiated" and "conflictual" case. In this state, institutions and religious bodies have always engaged in fierce competition over the issue of legitimate authority.

To better manage such concepts and properly apply them to the Turkish case, it can be helpful to introduce a short comparison with another important Muslim state, which in turn shows totally different aspects in its state architecture. The clerical elite had governed Iran for almost two and half decades prior to the events this paper is focused on; it had been built up as a theocratic state where there is no room for effective political competition (in spite of some sort of democratic institutions, which will be outlined below). In contrast, Turkey has been a living example of a secular Western-style regime founded along a deep rift between a secular establishment holding the reins of government and a society where religious movements and parties have thrived to the extent that, at the dawn of the 21st century, a religiously-oriented party¹ ran for political power and finally won the elections. Therefore, according to Philpott, while Iran shows a low-integrationist and consensual system, Turkey has historically been based on a high-differentiated and conflictual one. If Philpott's scheme helps the reader have a clear painting of the current institutional situation in Iran and Turkey, the historical trend was quite different. Birol Baskan found that each country in question has elaborated its own specific pattern towards secularisation, while adopting its own different kind of relations between political authority and religious institutions, especially after the state-led industrialisation process in the Seventies (Baskan, 2011, 2014). While Iran has consistently presented a highly structured set of religious institutions, to the extent that state action has always encountered limitations, religious actors in Turkey have been much weaker, a feature that enabled the state to take over crucial functions historically managed by religious institutions directly. If Iran's path towards secularisation was limited by strongly resilient independent religious institutions that have continued to provide social services (education, health, legal services, wealth redistribution), Turkish secularisation was instead state-driven and augmented the power of state institutions vis-à-vis less autonomous religious actors, incorporating them into the state structure itself.

The Argument, the Research Design and the Methodology

This paper focuses on Turkey's foreign policy-makers attitudes in the context of the 2003 US decision to wage war against Iraq. The main goal is to assess and downplay the impact of religion in relation to security-related concerns. Notwithstanding the role of Islamist elites in the foreign policy decision-making of Turkey, the main argument here is that religion is nothing more than an intervening factor. By taking side with IR realist approaches in explaining Turkey's foreign policy, I argue that even in the case of the 2003 Iraq war, Ankara's ruling elite adopted realist behaviour to pursue rationalist goals which stem from rather pragmatic considerations. For Turkish foreign policymakers, what was at stake was the United States' request to gain logistical support to militarily invade Iraq from Turkey in order to topple the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein.

Nevertheless, within the main debates about the real nature of Turkey's foreign policy, some scholars are used to highlighting the role of ideological forces such as religion rather than pragmatic and material ones. For example, Ankara's foreign policy under the AK Parti has been depicted as follows:

guided by an Islamist worldview, it will become more and more impossible for Turkey to support Western foreign policy, even when doing so is in its national interest. Turkish-Israeli ties – long a model for how a Muslim country can pursue a rational, cooperative relationship with the Jewish state – will continue to unravel. [...] The AKP, however, viewed Turkey's interests through a different lens -- one coloured by a politicised take on religion, namely Islamism. [...] The AKP's foreign policy has not promoted sympathy toward all Muslim states. Instead, the party has promoted solidarity with Islamist, anti-Western regimes (Qatar and Sudan, for example) while dismissing secular, pro-Western Muslim governments (Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia). [...] Turkey's experience with the AKP proves that Islamism in the country's foreign policy may not be so compatible with the West, after all (Cagaptay, 2009).

Contrary to these interpretations and by taking the role of religion “seriously” (Hatzopoulos and Petito, 2003), this paper aims at restoring an image of Turkey as a rational actor pursuing pragmatic goals in foreign policy, focusing in particular on the 2003 war in Iraq. I, in fact, share some realist assumptions which see Ankara as rather driven by a nationalistic agenda (Taspinar, 2011) and a search for strategic autonomy (Kardas, 2011). Religion is just a tool of a more pragmatic agenda to pursue other goals. Hürsev Tabak has recently tried to overcome the weakness of a debate focusing on whether Turkey's foreign policy is Islamic or not, by arguing that “Islam has a constitutive role in both the formation and conduct of certain of Turkey's foreign policy practices”. According to him, to understand the role of religion in Turkey's foreign policy, Islam should not be treated as a “foreign-policy-determining ideology” anymore, but “as a vernacular

practise with confident, multiple, yet contradictory representations and manifestations in foreign policy” (2017: 87). His argument goes on to say that Turkey’s foreign policy swings between two main practices, “Islamic internationalism” which is meant to deepen relations with Muslim communities in the world, and “Turkish Islam” which represents a “synthesis between tradition and modernity”. In particular, “Turkish Islam” is intended to balance radicalism and extremism such as Wahhabi Islam to the extent that even the Kemalists interpret it as a “secular practice [...] thanks to Atatürk’s restructuring religious affairs” (2017: 94) by the institution of the Diyanet.

Many scholars argue that stressing the importance of religion does not entail it is the only independent variable to explain dynamics in international politics nor the only relevant one. In this regard, Jonathan Fox states: “There are few, if any, important political events that are purely motivated by religion. Most are motivated by complex factors” (Fox, 2001: 53-54). His insights are helpful for the work presented below. He investigates how religion could influence foreign policy. This can occur in three ways:

First, foreign policies are influenced by the religious views and beliefs of policymakers and their constituents. Second, religion is a source of legitimacy for both supporting and criticising government behaviour locally and internationally. Third, many local religious issues and phenomena, including religious conflicts, spread across borders or otherwise become international issues (Fox, 2001: 59).

Based on Fox’s insights into how religion and foreign policy are related to each other, this paper is based on a cognitive model designed within *foreign policy analysis* (FPA). More specifically, it draws on British scholar Michael Brecher’s study of Israel’s foreign policy in the late 1960s (Brecher et al., 1969). Brecher takes into account a group of ten variables belonging to what he calls the “operational environment”. Five of them belong to the domestic sphere, while the others to the external one (either regional or international). Nevertheless, Brecher’s model will not be applied in its entirety for a few reasons. First, the international structure has substantially changed from the time he built up this model to the present day. In fact, the international system is no longer divided into two opposing camps. After the “unipolar moment” (Huntington, 1999), the United States (US) has increasingly faced different challenges, while international politics has become more and more fluid. Secondly, not all the variables will appear in the subsequent analysis but some of them have been merged together due to a need for simplification.

In order to assess the role of religion in Turkey’s foreign policy-making, great emphasis will be put on the foreign policy-makers’ perspectives and belief systems. According to Brecher, such items are contained within what he calls the “psychological environment” that is formed by both the “images” and the “attitudinal prism” (Brecher et al., 1969: 86). While the latter refers to a set of psychological predispositions consisting of societal factors such as ideology, tradition and idiosyncratic factors, the former pertains to the pre-existing beliefs every policymaker holds about the external environment. In this regard, it is worth sharing Brecher’s claim: “decision-makers act in accordance with their perception of reality, not in response to reality itself” (Brecher, 1972: 12).

Hence, the variables considered herein will be the following. Regarding the external environment: 1) the *global system* (G), made up of organisations such as the United Nations (UN), and the *dominant bilateral relations* (DB), and they will be treated as one to simplify matters; 2) the *subordinate system* (S), that is the Middle East, and *other bilateral relations* (B) such as Iraq – and they will also be treated as one to simplify matters as well; 3) the *other subordinate system* (SO), which is the European Union (EU). With regard to the domestic environment, they are 4) *military capabilities* (M); 5) *economic capabilities* (E); 6) *political structure* (PS), and the role of *competing elites* (CE), which will be merged together; 7) *interest groups* (IG), among which a great importance is given to *public opinion* (PO) and the constituencies of the country in question. Such an emphasis on public opinion allows for making Brecher’s model match with Fox’s above-mentioned insights about the possible relations between religion and foreign policy and, in particular, regarding the influence of local constituencies on foreign policy-makers. Since Fox’s categorisation also considers religion as a “cross-border issue”, the same argument is equally valid for constituencies living in foreign countries. Therefore, in the case studied in this paper, Iraq’s population will be regarded as a powerful foreign constituency (considered in its major ethnoreligious segments: Kurds, Sunni and Shiites), capable of influencing the worldview and behaviour of Turkey’s foreign policy-makers.

In general, religion can be considered either as a foreign policy goal or as a foreign policy tool. In the former case, it is treated as the very aim of the decision taken by the policy-makers. However, under this light, and for the purposes of this paper, it is deemed irrelevant. According to Fox, social and human phenomena are indeed never motivated by only one factor. In the latter case, religion is seen as an instrument to pursue other goals. By conceiving it as such, we can try to assess to what extent it influences Turkey's foreign policy decision-making. In order to make these assessments, I will elaborate a scale of five degrees of influence which allows the creation of an index of relevance²: a) *not relevant at all*, i.e. when religion does not intervene in the foreign policymaking; b) *not so relevant*, when there is just some room for influencing foreign policy but not so much to pursue foreign policy goals: constraints prevail over opportunities; c) *quite relevant* or *facilitator*, when it helps or facilitates the pursuit of the main foreign policy goals, although it is not a necessary element and it coexists with other factors; d) *relevant*, when it is prominent in the attitudinal prism³ of foreign policymakers; e) *decisive* or *crucial*, when its presence is fundamental in the formation of any foreign policy decision, meaning that without it a specific foreign policy goal cannot otherwise be reached.

All the categories will be given a score ranging from 1 (not relevant at all) to 5 (crucial) in order to calculate an average rate to assess the weight of religion on the attitudinal prism of Turkey's foreign policymakers. Compared to Brecher's model, each score of such a scale of values will not directly correspond to each material variable. Instead, each score will refer to the weight of religion on each material variable.

As far as the elites are concerned, a restrictive definition of foreign policy will be taken into account, as it seems more suitable for the purposes of this study. According to scholars such as Walter Carlsnaes (1980) and Jonathan Wilkenfeld (1980), such a concept of "foreign policy" will mainly focus on statements, declarations and actions put in place by the main figures involved in the foreign policy process, namely Abdullah Gül and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In this sense, foreign policy is the activity of government officials or individuals who are officially legitimized to act directly on behalf of the state. This restrictive conceptualisation is far from the broader one established by Eugene Meehan, who defines "foreign policy" as any activity implemented by any individual, even beyond state jurisdiction and legitimacy (Meehan, 1971). Here the focus is not on legitimacy, rather on the action. Such an extensive definition is rejected in this paper. In other words, it means that this research will analyse declarations, statements, press releases and speeches made by Turkey's chief of government, the President of the Republic, the Foreign Minister and, when necessary, the heads of the military. All these have been collected on official websites, such as that of the Foreign Ministry, but also from newspapers, mostly from the Hürriyet Daily News and Today's Zaman (before it was shut down on May 2016). As just mentioned, Erdoğan and Gül are the figures whose speeches I mostly took into account, due to the fact that they were the two top political decision-makers involved at the time of the case considered. Thus, they represent the core unit of analysis. Beyond that, I also drew on several secondary sources such as monographs and journal articles in order to put my analysis into the right historical, political and international context.

It is worth making some further considerations on the methodology adopted in this paper. In fact, one can object that the task of issuing ratings lacks objectivity, being a personal one. That is an interesting critique. However, according to Brecher,

"reality" is a term which may be applied to the analyst's observations of the operational environment. It can be questioned whether the social scientist is capable of more accurate perceptions of that environment than the participating decision-maker is. This will vary in degree with the analyst and the decision-maker. Generally, the decision-maker has superior access to sources of information that can enhance his insight into reality. The social scientist is, however, normally less involved and therefore likely to be more objective. Moreover, he possesses skills which enhance his objectivity and accuracy (Brecher et al., 1969: 81, note 6).

These insights are equally suitable for the psychological environment. It must be acknowledged that this kind of analysis may entail unavoidable aspects of subjectivity – as recognised above – but the matter in question cannot be overcome that easily. Probably, the best way to soften such a methodological constraint might be that of subjecting all the cases at issue to as many scholars as possible, in order to obtain as many different views and approaches as possible. The results should then be put together to evaluate an average of all the scores given by each scholar in order to share the largest possible level of objectivity (Weberian *Werturteilsfreiheit*). It goes without saying that this is a very tough challenge. Therefore, a social scientist

should, by all means, be satisfied with his work, being fully aware of the limits related to the in-depth study of the influence of perceptions on decision-making⁴.

Before delving into the next part, it is worth recalling some of the above-mentioned ideas to provide the basic definition of religion used in this paper. Although not all scholars will agree on the same meaning of religion (Marty, 2000, quoted in Haynes, 2007: 11), this task is most. According to Anthony Gill (2001: 120), the most commonly assumed definition is summarised by Smith (1996: 5): “religion is a system of beliefs and practices oriented toward the sacred or supernatural, through which the life experiences of groups of people are given meaning and direction”. According to Jeffrey Haynes (2011: 13), “for purposes of social analysis, religion may be approached a) from the perspective of a body of ideas and outlooks (i.e. as theology and ethical code), b) as a type of formal organisation (e.g. the ecclesiastical Church) and c) as a social group (e.g. religious movements)”. Integrating Haynes’ first meaning with Jonathan Fox’s definitions, and exploiting Michael Brecher’s lexicon, religion will be operationalised herein as a set of ideas, perspectives, images and belief systems that concretely affects foreign policy decision-making.

Turkey’s Foreign Policymakers Approaching the War in Iraq: A Case Study

Shortly before the Third Gulf War, Turkey’s domestic politics had just experienced a government change. On November 3, 2002, the AKP won a landslide victory and set up the first single-party government in the previous 15 years. The AK Parti could rely upon a large majority of 363 out of 550 seats in the new Parliament (Yavuz, 2009: 79). Making a soft appeal to Islamic identity, the new government elite was already prepared to declare a staunch commitment to democracy and secular politics. As stated by the AKP leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “We included in our program that we are not a religious-oriented party [...] Our future practices will show it clearly. We are fed up with such questions and giving answers” (Hürriyet, November 6, 2002).

Moreover, both before and after the Election Day, AKP officials were prudent to swear publicly not to shift away from the Turkish historical pro-Western inclination. Erdoğan and his party elite knew that they also had to rely on US’ support in order to politically survive within the secular framework of Turkey. It is noteworthy that the country has been a staunch US ally for most of its modern history and benefited from its support against the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Celik, 1999; Hale, 2000; Robins, 2003).

Before the AKP came to power, Turkish and American officials held an important meeting in Ankara on July 14, 2002. They had preliminary discussions about the renovation of some airbases and harbours built in Turkey. They also talked about the possibility of an American invasion of Iraq to prevent Saddam Hussein from using the WMD he was suspected of holding, as well as to fight Al-Qaeda (Olson, 2004: 166). This entailed that Turkey would allow some 80,000 US troops to pass through its own state territory. After that, several other meetings took place in both the US and Turkey. Washington tried to ensure Ankara’s pledge to provide all the required assistance to ease any military operation against Baghdad’s regime. At the Washington meeting on December 10, 2002, Erdoğan committed to grant full support to the US (Robins, 2003: 561).

The Turkish officials adopted a prudent stance in approaching an imminent US-led military operation. They avoided making any binding pledge – as proved by several declarations released by the AKP deputy chairman Abdullah Gül, who was then Prime Minister till March 14, 2003 and Foreign Minister afterwards:

We have historical and cultural relations. Iraq and Turkish people have many common points. Moreover, Turkey and Iraq have economic, trade interests. The last Gulf Crisis cost Turkey more than \$40 billion for which we have not been compensated for despite all the pledges. Egypt and Syria have been compensated for their loss, but not Turkey (Hürriyet, September 2, 2002).

Some months later, Gül added what follows:

Developments concerning Iraq have reached a serious point. We have brotherhood and kinship with the people of Iraq. Not only Turkey but no country in the region can stay aloof from Iraq. We have to be prepared in the face of all possible scenarios and developments that would concern us. Our government's preparations should be considered in this respect. We are not preparing for war. Turkey is not to engage in a war or any armed conflict (Hürriyet, December 25, 2002).

A few days later, he added that:

We do not want war but if war breaks-out despite our efforts and we cannot prevent it then we will also play a role and we will not be sidelined. [...] there is no immediate threat of war. We are not an active part of a conflict but we are making preparations (Hürriyet, December 31, 2002).

The three reported excerpts from Abdullah Gül's speeches might sound contradictory. Such an ambiguity is a result of two conflicting efforts by the AK Parti's decision-makers. On one side, a serious concern for Turkey's security in terms of economic costs and social disorder was coming out of a military campaign. On the other side, a deep awareness to stay committed to the alliance with the US. During the months preceding the war, Turkey had been exploring alternatives and consulting neighbouring states such as Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. As for its geographical contiguity with Iraq, Turkey was frightened of the political, economic and security-related consequences of a military conflict. The Turkish officials' main concern regarded the possible disintegration of Iraq. Such an outcome would bring about economic losses, a flow of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees and would feed Kurdish aspirations for independence in Northern Iraq. As stated by Gül, "[a]ccepting disintegration of Iraq would destabilise the entire geography. It would lead to unforeseen risks emerging in the long run" (Kanli and Eksi, 2002).

As put by Gül's words reported above, Turkish officials' carefulness is best underlined not only by their continuous search for peaceful alternatives to the growing crisis but also by their open declaration to give the US full cooperation if the war became inevitable. Erdoğan had the chance to convey such a twofold yet apparently contradictory idea during his meeting with US President George W. Bush in early December 2002: "Naturally Turkey's preference is for war to be the last resort [...] However, if Saddam's administration continues to protect developments that threaten world peace, then Turkey will give the necessary support for the last UN resolution" (Hürriyet, December 11, 2002). Gül expressed a similar thought a few weeks later: "We do not act upon orders from anyone or a fait accompli. Our decision will aim at protecting the interests of our country and people. We will do our best for peace in our region" (Hürriyet, December 25, 2002). Such statements reveal that in the AKP officials' view, the awareness of dangerous risks related to any possible conflict in Iraq should be put into context within historical Ankara-Washington ties. This also mirrored Turkey's unavoidable need for US support. This was best underlined by Gül during his joint speech with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, early in April 2003:

I would like to state that Turkish-American relations are based on very strong foundations. They are deeply rooted and they are based on half a century of friendship. And our friendship with the United States has also been mentioned in our consecutive government programs. Our friendship has begun with the Korean war effort, and it has continued up to the situation in Afghanistan [...] The cooperation that has been conducted with the United States is within the framework of the Turkish constitution and undertaken upon the decisions of the government [...] the cooperation between Turkey and the United States will continue. The cooperation - the means for further cooperation -- with the United States have been discussed in today's talks, and foremost the issue of humanitarian assistance was taken up. Other means of cooperation were also looked into, and the cooperation in northern Iraq was also taken up. This cooperation between the United States and Turkey will continue with regards to the future of Iraq as well. And new doors will open for us in the future. The model nature of Turkey with its democracy, its free markets economy, is a model for all in the region. This reciprocal assistance will continue. Finally, I would like to express that the visit of Secretary Powell has strengthened our relations, and it has increased the opportunities for future cooperation between both nations. I would like to state that this visit has also helped to dispel all issues with regards to the relations between both countries (Joint Press Conference, April 2, 2003).

Any eventual disintegration of Iraq would bring about the following consequences: a) the bid for independence by a large Kurdish population living within the socio-economically underdeveloped South-eastern Turkey; b) a dispute regarding the future status of the oil-rich region of Mosul and Kirkuk; c) a potential flow of Iraqi refugees, and d) economic suffering resulting from such devastation, as Turkey experienced after the 1991 NATO intervention in Iraq.

In fact, for decades, the Turkish political elite had been worrying about the Kurdish issue with regard to Turkey's national and political integrity. The aftermath of the Second World War and the subsequent Western-led development of new geography in the Middle East have been conditioning the perspective and

belief-system of Turkey's ruling elites up to this day. Such a view is best known as the "Sevres syndrome"⁵, which stands for a deep fear of partitioning and dividing the state territory due to Western political influence and domination. This helps explain why the Turkish political establishment has historically been distrustful and worried about Euro-American power projection beyond Western borders. It was often seen as an attempt not only to dominate the Middle East but also to shrink Turkish sovereignty. To date, the Sèvres syndrome is still at work in the Turkish people's psychology despite Turkey's engagement with Western powers – and especially with the US. Such an allegiance reflected the necessity to protect the country from other more intimidating threats like the Soviet Union (Hale 2000; Robins 2003; Walt 1987).

A Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) was indeed already established in 1992 under the leadership of Massoud Barzani, who led the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) until his resignation in October 2017. The KDP was one of the two prominent political players along with Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Since 1992, an ethnically based federation in Iraq has represented the main political goal that both the KDP and the PUK had been looking for. The main pillars of this political design were as follows: the KRG's power over its zone would be enforced, and Kirkuk would be the capital; the future Kurdish state would retain control of the Kurdish armed forces (known as *Peshmerga*); and, last but not least, the eventual right to secede from Iraq and declare independence. All these provisions had been taken into account under a draft of the constitution the two Kurdish parties sent in 2002 to the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), which in turn rejected it entirely (Park, 2004: 20).

Commenting on this issue, Abdullah Gül stated:

I reiterated it many times we are in favour of Iraq's territorial integrity, this is our state policy. Iraq's territorial integrity should be protected, to ensure stability and security in the region's economic relations in the region [...] but we also should take some measures to prevent a refugee crisis. We had 500,000 refugees in one night in the Gulf War (Hürriyet, January 8, 2003).

Even if US Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz admitted that "some degree of federalism or federation is probably going to be inevitable" (Park, 2004: 23), Ankara demanded clear guarantees from Washington that the Kurdish populated area of Kirkuk and Mosul would fall under strict control of a strong Iraqi state (Hale, 2007: 96).

The economic situation was another big issue the Turkish policymakers were concerned about in the upcoming crisis. They showed their disappointment over the aftermath of the 1991 intervention in Iraq. As Ferruh Demirmen (2002) reported,

Estimates of Turkey's cumulative economic loss in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War are between \$40-\$60 billion, including indirect costs. Higher estimates have been quoted. There is no knowing what Turkey's next loss would be, but a figure of \$38 billion has been mentioned by Government officials. Thus, the \$3.5 billion that the US has reportedly promised for aid is little cause for comfort for Turkey. Most of this amount would be destined for military purposes and the rest would be a low-interest credit. Turkey has asked for a \$20 billion aid package and the expunging of its military debt.

Turkey's officials were seriously worried that after the forthcoming conflict, their country would not be compensated for economic suffering in the same way as, they claimed, had occurred in the aftermath of the 1991 war. In this regard, Abdullah Gül argued:

Turkey and Iraq have economic, trade interests. The last Gulf Crisis cost Turkey more than \$40 billion, which we have not been compensated for despite all the pledges. Egypt and Syria have been compensated for their loss, but not Turkey. Besides other factors, the Gulf War losses of Turkey contributed as well to the current economic crisis in the country (quoted in Kanli and Eksi, 2002).

Another factor the AKP elite had to bear in mind was the increasing influence of the Turkish public opinion in domestic politics (Robins 2002: 323-325. See also: Hale 2016; Kennedy and Dickenson 2013). This gives, *inter alia*, the measure of progress Turkey had been making regarding political pluralism and democracy as of the introduction of the 1982 Constitution. Not only does a mature and informed public opinion increase government accountability by bestowing a public role upon intellectuals, journalists and civil society associations. But it also grants a government the power to exert influence on the foreign policy-making

process. Moreover, the case in question underscores a calculated strategy the AK Parti had been pursuing since winning the November 2002 elections to flatter their grassroots constituency and engage the EU to open formal access negotiations (Yavuz, 2009). Even before coming to power, Erdoğan had set off on a series of visits around Europe to promote the idea that Turkey's Western and European orientation would not change if the AK Parti won the elections. The pro-Islamist elite of the new party was in fact committed to pledging that Ankara would abide by the Copenhagen criteria established back in 1993, especially regarding politically relevant questions such as the abolition of the death penalty and the struggle against the PKK (Ozel, 2003; Robins, 2003).

However, the AKP officials seem to have paid close attention to the moods from their own constituency and the masses in general. According to a study published on MERIA in September 2005, the Turkish public opinion was broadly against the war (Uslu et al., 2005)⁶. It had largely expected the Turkish government to look for peaceful solutions and was concerned that a war against Saddam would bring about Iraq's disintegration. Abdullah Gül's efforts to search for an agreement among the neighbouring countries were therefore hailed with great favour. However, the Turkish people's mood had evolved throughout the period taken under consideration (from December 2002 to September 2003). For example, although they vastly opposed any military intervention, "[i]n March 2003, the majority (54.3 percent) were in favour of sending military forces to Northern Iraq, but the rate of those who did not approve the proposal was still considerably high (40.5 percent)" (Uslu et al., 2005: 80). This apparent contradiction is due to nuances related to the nature of the questions the research posed. If asked whether Turkey should attack Iraq, the Turkish public was thoroughly opposed; if asked what the country should do in case of an imminent (March 2003) military operation by the US, it generally reversed its position by declaring that Turkey should not permit the US to act unilaterally.

The Turkish public was seemingly somewhat confused. In fact, even though the people were largely against the war, they would not accept the US preventing Turkey from playing any active role in case of a military conflict. In other words, in the event the war was inevitable, the Turkish people would definitely be in favour of Turkish participation (Uslu et al., 2005: 80) because "over half (53.6 percent) believed that a US occupation of Northern Iraq would result in the establishment of a Kurdish state" (Uslu et al., 2005: 77). Such a position mirrors widespread feelings of being impotent vis-à-vis American power. Any military conflict unilaterally led by the US would be regarded as a disrespectful hegemonic policy vis-a-vis Turkey's internal affairs.

Contrary to all expectations and to the bitter disappointment of American officials, on March 1, 2003, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) voted against the deployment of 62,000 American troops on Turkish soil, keeping America away from opening a second front for military operations against Saddam. Something went wrong with both Erdoğan and the American officials' calculations. The AK Parti was split by a huge rift probably due to those MPs elected in the mostly Kurdish populated areas, who feared a backlash from their constituents. In particular,

Erdoğan's caution reflected serious opposition to the US plan by many members of his own party, including Deputy Premier Ertugrul Yalcinbayir, the speaker of parliament, Bulent Arinc, and all the members of the party's subcommittees on human rights and foreign relations (Hale, 2007: 103).

The result was "264 deputies supporting the motion, 250 opposing, 19 abstentions and thirteen absentees", with "some 68 AKP members who voted with the opposition, with another 31 casting abstentions or absenting themselves" (Hale, 2007: 113). A second vote occurred on March 20. Although it turned the tide of the former, it was substantially different in that it did not grant the US troops permission to open a second front against Iraq, but it allowed the US to use Turkish airspace and authorised Turkish troops to enter Iraq, a condition the US initially had staunchly excluded. It was clear that Erdoğan's concerns spurred him to juggle opposing imperatives of not damaging Turkey's historical relationship with the US but also having a say in the Iraqi post-invasion scenario.

The outcome of the March 2003 Parliament reflected the widespread conviction in Turkey that Iraq's future was solely Turkey's own business. This contrasted with the Western powers' decision not to recognize Turkey's deep historical ties with current Iraq when they decided to partition the Ottoman Empire and separated the Anatolian peninsula from territories between Mosul and Kirkuk. According to then Defence Minister Sabahattin Cakmakoglu, it was also clear that Turkey would not allow any foreign country's

interference. As he stated in October 2002, "Turkey considers northern Iraq to be under its direct care, and Ankara would not tolerate the region is being subjugated to the interest of others" (Olson, 2004: 176).

In the parliamentary debate, several MPs raised the potential economic sufferings once more. Antalya Deputy Osman Özcan, for example, spoke about the losses of Turkish tourism and the measures to be taken in the possible Iraq war to minimise damages (TGNA, February 27, 2003). The legal point of contention was the interpretation of Article 92 of the Constitution⁷ with President Gül, on the one hand, who relied upon his role as leader of the majority party in Parliament to ask the TGNA full permission to allow foreign military intervention. On the other hand, a bunch of MPs who took the floor, such as CHP members Önder Sav and Kemal Anadol, who claimed that the American-British request was in breach of international law (TGNA, March 1, 2003).

The relations between the AK Parti and the military were another issue at stake, especially because of the AK Parti's rumoured hidden religious agenda in the face of the military's self-assigned role as the guardians of Republican values. The Islamist-secular question has always been one of the deepest cleavages in modern Turkey. The decision to take part in the war in Iraq soon became the stage for a confrontation between the two competing forces. The AKP leaders were concerned about safeguarding their legitimacy in the eyes of the public and the US. Erdoğan's decision to postpone the Parliamentary vote on March 1, after an NSC (National Security Council) meeting on February 28, was aimed at shifting the responsibility to the military (Hale, 2007: 112). In turn the military staff was not willing to be considered responsible for such a decision, and so decided to pass the buck to the Parliament. Indeed the Turkish Chief of Staff Hilmi Özkök rejected the motion just a few days after the TGNA did it, publicly stating that the military was staunchly in favour of the deployment of US troops in Turkey (Olson, 2004: 190). In this way, Özkök blamed the AK Parti as a *fait accompli* for being solely responsible for such a botched parliamentary passage.

Analysis of the Relevant Factors. Assessment of the Impact of Religion in Relation to Security Concerns

Overall, this research shows that the main concerns for Turkey's foreign policymakers towards the 2003 Iraqi conflict were closely related to political-security issues. Let us focus on each factor affecting their perceptions in each respective approach.

As far as the global system (G) and the dominant bilateral relations (DB) are concerned, the Turkish government was alarmed that a negative vote by the TGNA could damage Turkey's historical relations with the US. The AKP elite tried to keep good relations with the US, as Turkey would enjoy great benefits from that friendship in political, economic and geostrategic terms. In this regard, religious views about the foundation of political institutions intervened to the extent that both Erdoğan and Gül knew that the US had taken Turkey as a model of compatibility between Islam and democracy in the Middle East – according to the December 2002 speech released by Wolfowitz (2002).

Instead, looking at both the subordinate system (S) and the other bilateral relations (B) – which Iraq could be considered an element of, for economic and/or geographic reasons – Turkey was primarily concerned about the role that various Iraqi ethnic and religious groups could play in the future of Iraq. However, it was ethnicity rather than religion that was a much more relevant factor, even crucial, in Ankara's evaluations. That can be explained considering the power of ethnic affinity linking the Kurds in the KRG with the large Kurdish population located in the South-eastern part of the country⁸. In turn, religious affinity facilitated Ankara's efforts to pursue the setting up of a negotiating table with other important Middle Eastern states in order to find alternative solutions to the conflict.

Regarding the other subordinate system (SO), the importance of the EU as a powerful foreign constraint in Ankara's foreign policy had been increasing in the years before the AK Parti came to power due to its direct involvement in the accession process. Generally speaking, the commitment to the EU criteria was a powerful constraint guiding the AK Parti's moves, as pointed out above. Erdoğan was eager to let his party emerge as a reliable political organisation. Nevertheless, this factor was not immediately relevant in Ankara's strategic evaluations in the imminence of the war.

As far as the internal arena is concerned, the AK Parti was prudent not to provoke the military (PS/CE) – probably its main competitor within the domestic sphere that had been acting as a watchdog of secularism versus groups making a direct appeal to religion⁹ – nor its constituency (IG/PO). Considering the AK Parti's domestic legitimacy and accountability, religious considerations played a crucial role for those MPs who decided to vote against the March 1 motion at the TGNA. That move clearly shows how the vote in Parliament depended on the mood of a specific slice of the AK Parti's constituency, precisely the one located in South-Eastern Turkey. However, religion was not the main factor, nor the only one, to affect that event – in contrast to what may appear at first glance. Indeed, both the Kurdish issue (an ethnic one) and the government's will to exert influence on institution building in post-invasion Iraq played a major role. Those factors are best explained by the favourable March 20 motion that overturned the March 1 vote and envisaged the undertaking of a military conflict. As a result, Turkey secured a prominent role in managing the upcoming situation and limiting any adverse impact stemming from inaction. Hence, as confirmed by the March 1 vote, religion played a very relevant role as regards the military dimension (M): indeed, on that occasion the religious kinship between two such Muslim countries as Turkey and Iraq functioned as a powerful constraint for a significant part of the ruling elite and the MPs elected in South-Eastern Turkey. What prevailed in the March 1 vote was the idea that a military conflict against a brother-country would de-legitimize the AKP before its Islamic-minded constituency. Finally, religion did not significantly affect the AKP's perceptions towards economy (E), which indeed was an extremely relevant factor in itself.

Table 1

Operational variables	G and DB	S and B	SO	M	E	PS and CE	IG / PO	Average
Rate (from 1 to 5)	Very relevant (4)	Facilitator (3)	Not so relevant (2)	Very relevant (4)	Not relevant at all (1)	Not so relevant (2)	Crucial (5)	FACILITATOR (3)

Table 1 illustrates the average influence of religion – according to the definition agreed on this paper – on Turkish foreign policy makers' visions with regard to the main factors taken into account in the paper. Giving the scores in question is a task reserved to the researcher. It may somehow appear a personal evaluation. However, in Brecher's model, such an evaluation activity comes out of a factual analysis of information, data, historical reconstruction, the committed scholar has made through time and by comparing different sources of research.

Upon having a look at the scores, it can be observed that religion played on average as a facilitator in the attitudinal prism of Turkey's ruling elite in their respective approaches towards the 2003 war in Iraq. By recalling the definition provided in the first section of this article, a variable can be considered a facilitator when it helps pursue the main foreign policy goals, although it is not a necessary element and it coexists with other factors. In fact, religious views were neither the only factor nor the crucial one. Security-related concerns played a more prominent role in the strategic evaluations of Ankara's foreign policymakers. On the other hand, religious images and beliefs emerge as nothing but a facilitating factor in the broader context of foreign policy determinants. As mentioned in the opening section of this paper, the main issue is to sketch out whether religious aspects of a decision constitute the goal of the same decision or they just intervene as a tool to pursue different crucial goals. This does not imply that religion is unworthy of attention. Indeed, it is clearly an important factor that could affect any foreign policy perspective in several aspects of foreign policy decision making, even if the case of the 2003 war in Iraq brings to light that it is only one among others.

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¹ For a typology of religiously oriented parties, see Ozzano 2013.

² On the basis of Michael Brecher's model.

³ As explained below, the concept of *attitudinal prism* used by Brecher refers to the set of beliefs held by policymakers that serves as a lens through which they see reality and which influences their perception of it.

⁴ I would like to thank Prof. Valter Coralluzzo (University of Turin) for his precious comments on this paper and for these important insights.

⁵ Sèvres is the name of the French city located a few kilometres far away from Paris where the first agreement between the remnants of the Ottoman Empire and the Western powers had taken place. See: Müge Göçek, 2011.

⁶ Olson (2004: 189) also reports that "plus 90 percent of Turks were against the war".

⁷ Article 92 of the Constitution establishes what follows: "The power to authorize the declaration of a state of war in cases deemed legitimate by international law and except where required by international treaties to which Turkey is a party or by the rules of international courtesy to send the Turkish Armed Forces to 40 foreign countries and to allow foreign armed forces to be stationed in Turkey, is vested in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. If the country is subjected to sudden armed aggression, while the Grand National Assembly of Turkey is adjourned or in recess, and it thus becomes imperative to decide immediately on the use of the armed forces, the President of the Republic can decide on the use of the Turkish Armed Forces".

⁸ It does not seem relevant for this analysis to take into account the rifts and reciprocal suspicions dividing the Kurdish people. Even if "Kurdistan" hosts around 30 million people of Kurdish nationality, they are indeed separated politically among at least four countries: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. In each country, local Kurds have established local movements and parties, some of them are even provided with a military branch, which have been fighting or still fight for a certain degree of autonomy or even independence. It is precisely that goal that is the main concern for the political elites settled in Ankara, Tehran, Baghdad and Damascus. On the Kurdish social structure, see: Van Bruinessen (1992). On the Kurds' political aspirations in the Middle East, see: Gunter (2008) and Manafy (2005). On the Kurdish identity and struggles in Turkey, see: Taspinar (2005), Natali (2005), Cagaptay (2006), Yavuz and Ozcan (2015), Larrabee (2016).

⁹ Indeed, as emerged in the Sledgehammer (*Balyoz*) process in 2010 – a trial which uncovered an alleged secularist coup against the winning Islamist faction and dating back to early 2003 – the Turkish armed forces had not hindered the AK Parti's moves so forcefully. On the contrary, they preferred to adopt a rather indulgent attitude in order to avoid a backlash from the EU institutions against the backdrop of Turkey's path towards democratization and commitment to the rule of law, in accordance with the 1993 Copenhagen criteria. See: Aydınlı (2011), Jenkins (2011), Karaosmanoglu (2011).

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Nigeria and the Great Powers: The Impacts of the Boko Haram Terrorism on Nigeria's Foreign Relations

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ABSTRACT

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This paper argues that two incidents in the terrorism of Boko Haram primarily attracted the attention of the international community. First, the mass abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls by the group and secondly, the pledge of allegiance by Islamist sect to the Islamic State group in the Middle East. It is against this background that this study examines the interventions of the United States, France and Russia in the counterterrorism operation in Nigeria. It contends that while their responses have only had a slight impact on the war against terrorism in the country, they have had ramifications for Nigerian foreign relations. The paper shows that the wavering attitude of the United States to the war based on human rights issues, strained US-Nigerian diplomatic relations, while France's participation further helped to improve Franco-Nigerian relations. The involvement of Russia, which primarily revolved around economic imperative, reignited the largely lukewarm Russo-Nigerian relations.

Introduction

After many years of a brutal campaign of terror in Nigeria by the jihadist Boko Haram group, the international community formally directly intervened to put an end to the atrocious activities in Nigeria as well as around the Lake Chad Basin region. Two momentous issues were significant in the attention Boko Haram group generated globally. In the first instance, the mass abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls in their hostel in northern Nigeria by the group generated international outrage and condemnation, especially after the #BringBackOurGirls social media campaign went viral. The abduction demonstrated the monstrosity of the jihadi gang in the country and helped to highlight the plight of the thousands of victims rendered homeless, kidnapped, maimed and bereaved. Despite the State of emergency already declared in the beleaguered region coupled with the military blockade imposed on Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, the successful attack on the Chibok became an eye-opener to the ineffective counterterrorism strategy mounted by the Nigerian military, and thus, in dire need of outside help to defeat the rag-tag soldiers of the caliphate.

Secondly, the pledge of allegiance by the Nigerian terror organisation to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), had implications for the global fight against Islamist extremism. The acceptance of the allegiance by Abubakr Abu Musab al Baghdadi, the slain caliph of the now virtual Raqqa-based Islamic caliphate, made Boko Haram a dangerous affiliate of ISIS in West Africa and a major stakeholder in the

global jihadi movement. Boko Haram's change of name to Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) reflecting its regional aims, and its subsequent trans-border attacks into the neighbouring francophone states in the Chad Basin area required the intervention of the international community. In spite of their decade-long engagements in Nigeria's counterterrorist struggle, they have not succeeded in weakening Boko Haram terrorist structures in the country and its transnational spread in the Lake Chad region. However, their interventions have nonetheless continued to have ramifications for Nigerian foreign relations. This study, therefore, reflects on the implications of the United States, Russia and France's involvement in the counter-Boko Haram terrorism for Nigerian diplomatic relations. The paper argues that the lack of commitment of the United States; a traditional Nigerian ally, to the counter-Boko Haram effort strained the US-Nigerian diplomatic relations, while France's (a former geopolitical rival) participation further helped to improve Franco-Nigerian relations. Along the way, the paper examines the involvement of Russia in the fight, contending that while economic consideration was pivotal to its intervention, Moscow's role has reignited the largely lukewarm Nigerian-Russian relations. The paper is divided into four segments, the first segment analyses the involvement of the US in the fight against the terror group and its refusal to supply Nigerian air force with aircraft based on human rights abuses of the Nigerian military. The second section focuses on the interrogation of the impacts of France's intervention on Franco-Nigerian diplomatic relations. The implication of the positive Russian intervention for Nigerian security relations is the focus of section three while section four concludes the paper.

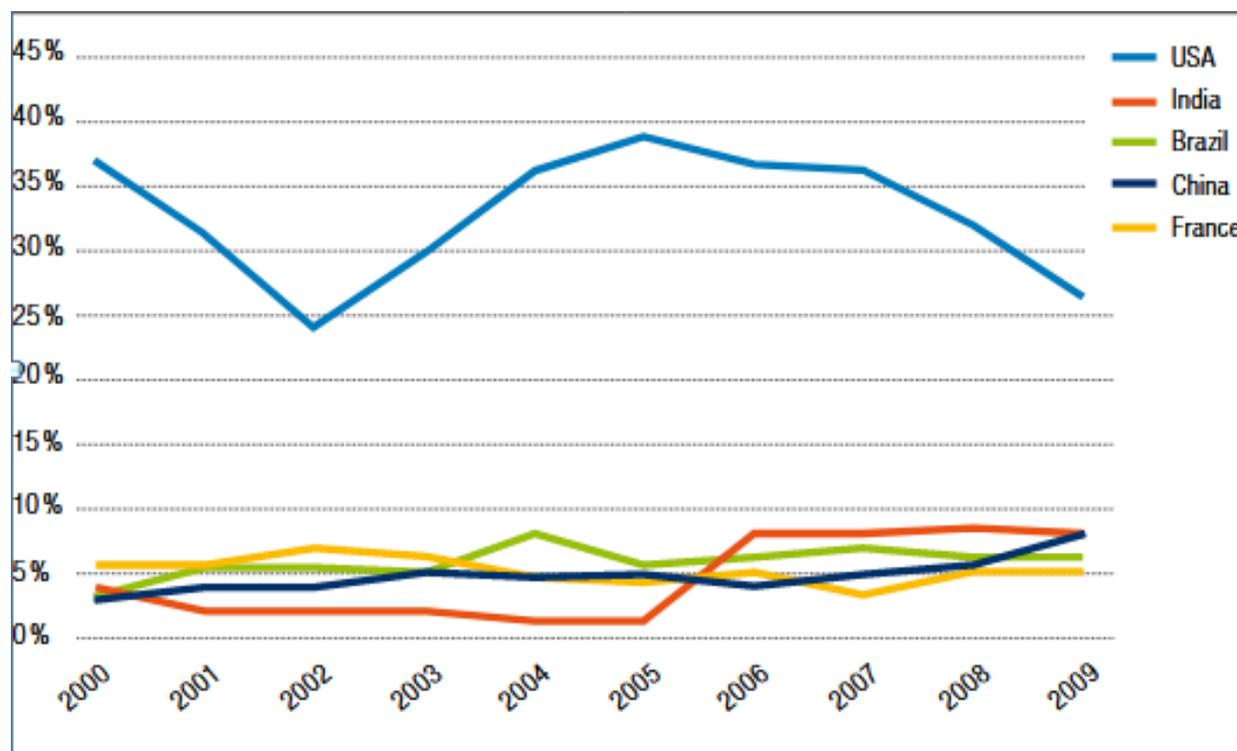
United States-Nigerian Relations in the Context of Counter-Terrorism in Nigeria

Shortly after Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, despite the non-aligned posture of its foreign policy, Nigeria was openly pro-West and showed abhorrence to the Communist East to Washington's admiration (Anglin, 1964; Philip, 1964; Fawole, 2003). In fact, in the immediate years after independence, Nigeria developed very cordial relations with the US across all sectors. It abandoned the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy of the British, its colonial master, in favour of American presidential democracy. The United State has, over the years, been supportive of Nigeria reform agendas, including anti-corruption and anti-narcotic struggles, economic and electoral reforms and development in restive Nigeria's delta region among others (Blanchard and Husted, 2016). Since experiencing an oil boom in the 70s, until recently, Nigeria ranked as the US's largest trading partner and biggest ally in tropical Africa after the United Kingdom (Ogunbadejo, 1976).

Indeed, the commercial relations between the two states were quite strong as Nigeria became a major player in the international oil politics due in part to the volatility in the Middle East. Nigeria was able to provide the US with an increasing proportion of its much-needed oil requirements, making Abuja attained a new status in the American foreign relations (*Daily Times*, 1972).

As indicated above, Nigeria maintained strong economic relations with the United States above other countries. The bilateral relations were so strong that Nigeria was one of the first few countries to express solidarity with the US following September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Abuja publicly voiced its support for Washington's declaration of a global war on terrorism (US Department of Defense, 2002).

Certainly, there were occasional frictions between the two states on many Nigerian national issues such as the US's refusal to supply weapons to Nigeria during its 30-month Civil War (1967-1970). However, their burgeoning trade relations always render such frictions insignificant in their diplomatic relations. Before the crisis of Boko Haram, the US was one of the largest suppliers of military equipment to the Nigerian Armed forces (Omotuyi, 2018a). Ogunbadejo (1976: 18) maintains that the UK and US 'remain Nigeria's first choice for the purchases of arms for many reasons'. It was certainly expected that America would be eager to offer both military and diplomatic supports to Nigeria in the war against terrorism being a Nigerian ally and a self-appointed leader in the war against terrorism globally.

Figure 1: Nigeria's major trading partners before the terrorism of Boko Haram (2000-2009)

Source: UN Comtrade, <http://un.comtrade.org>

Based on the prevailing cordial diplomatic relations between the two states, Nigeria decided to purchase lethal weapons from the US. The decision to buy weapons became urgent, given several reports blaming the government for inadequate weapons for the Nigerian soldiers in the war fronts (Udo, 2014; Bappah, 2016). Certainly, inadequate sophisticated arms and government ineptitude among other factors were critical to the failed military counterterrorist operation. In his statement to the military tribunal, a soldier, whose unit could not dislodge the terrorist from their hideout in the Borno state's section of the dreaded Sambisa forest, provides insight into the decadence within the Nigerian Armed forces. The dismissed soldier stated that the troops were only armed with five bullets each and expired bombs made in 1964, whereas the Boko Haram enemies were armed with sophisticated arms such as anti-aircraft with a range of over 1,000 meters (Vanguard, 2015). Convinced therefore that acquisition of more offensive arms was pivotal to defeating the sect; the Nigerian government opted to buy weapons from the US. Specifically, Nigeria wanted to buy Cobra Attack Helicopters and other sophisticated military hardware (McGregor, 2015). Even though US had pledged its readiness to help Nigeria decimate the sect and had since 2013 declared the group a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO), it nonetheless refused Nigeria's request for weapons, citing human rights record of the Nigerian soldiers fighting the terrorists (Obaji, 2015; Goldsmith, 2014). It only supplied defensive weapons such as landmine-resistant vehicles to the Nigerian military (Arseneault, 2015; Ezeamalu, 2016), but declined to supply offensive weapons to the country. Of a truth, the military operation against Boko Haram under the umbrella of the Joint Task Force had grave consequences for the human rights of the people in the region. The security outfit has been variously accused of extra-judicial and summary executions of the suspected terrorists, detention of innocent citizens for years without trial, arbitrary arrest of individuals suspected of being members of the outlawed sect, intimidation and harassment of the residents of the place (Amnesty International, 2014; Amnesty International, 2015; Bappah, 2016).

Washington hinged its refusal to sell the weapons based on the implementation of the Leahy Law against Nigeria. The Law was specially enacted within the US external relations to deny the US military assistance to foreign military units involved in the violations of human right (Foreign Affairs, 2017). Commenting on the outrageous human rights profile of the Nigerian fighting force, Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos (2014)

maintains that human rights abuses of the military especially its summary and extra-judicial executions played a major role in the radicalisation of many members of the sect who were known to be pacifists. Accordingly, the Leahy Law states that: 'No assistance shall be furnished under this Act... to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights' (Legal Information Institute, n.d). Over the years, Leahy Law has been implemented to block military assistance to some countries whose military units involved in the abuses of human rights of the civilians. Such countries include Turkey, Columbia, Bolivia, and Mexico (Tate, 2011). Also, the Pakistani military has equally come under the hammer of the Law for its extra-judicial killings and other forms of gross human rights abuses (Schmitt and Senger, 2010).

While justifying the US's refusal to sell deadly arms to Nigeria, American ambassador to Nigeria, Ambassador James Entwistle stated that Washington would not sell arms to Nigeria because 'the US government is against human rights abuses by any country in the world'. He maintains that the 'Nigerian military had been massively involved in human rights violations in its war against the terrorists (*The Guardian*, 2014: 1&2). Israel and Brazil also declined to supply offensive weapons to Nigeria due to the US's pressure. Elaborating on the 'No Objection' request from these two countries to sell arms to Nigeria, Entwistle declares that:

The US Department of State and Defense review all potential arms transfers for their consistency with US policy and interests, as detailed in the US Conventional Arms Transfer policy. This includes any requests from a country that we have sold or donated weapons to resell or donate those same weapons to another country, such as Nigeria. We examine whether an arms transfer makes sense for the needs of the prospective country. Part of our review considers whether equipment may be used in a way that could adversely affect human rights. The United States believes that we bear a certain responsibility for how equipment is ultimately used. We take this responsibility very seriously, and our laws require strict accountability for all sales (Entwistle, 2014: 53).

Expectedly, the US's global arms embargo imposed on Nigeria was largely interpreted by Nigerians as a betrayal by a friend that failed to help Nigeria in its moment of crisis (Siollum, 2018). The President Barak Obama's Nigerian policy during the administration of the President Goodluck Jonathan especially the regime's refusal to supply the Nigerian air force with Cobra attack aircraft, all helped to wreak serious damage to the US-Nigerian relations. The diplomatic furore generated by the US's action made Jonathan's government to sever Nigeria's security partnership with Washington (Tukur, 2014) to protest the US's 'betrayal'. Also, President Muhammadu Buhari, who succeeded Jonathan, heaped the blame of lingering Boko Haram crisis on the US decision, pointing out that the arms denial amounts to 'aiding and abetting Boko Haram terrorists in the country' (*BBC*, 2015). In its desperation, Nigeria was forced to turn to the South African black market to procure weapons. However, the weapons sales were blocked by the South African government who described the botched deal as illegal (Ibekwe, 2014). Reprieve only came the way of Nigeria when Russia was approached for the much-needed arms. Moscow's prompt response (Campbell, 2017) in the delivery of the weapons to Nigeria severely shattered the aura of invincibility with which Boko Haram had been carrying out its attacks. The deployment of the Russian weapons as well as the regional military alliance; the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) degraded the terrorists and dislodged them from their Gworza caliphate and other dreaded camps in the northeast. The weakening of the sect prompted President Buhari to publicly proclaim that the Boko Haram terrorist group has been technically defeated (Onapajo, 2017). However, the group has since recovered from the battlefield losses.

Despite the military supports Nigeria got from Russia, the Nigerian military planners were not unaware of the importance of the US's military support in totally defeating the terrorists. Therefore, immediately Alhaji Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in as Nigerian President in 2015, efforts were made to normalise the fractured US-Nigerian relations. Likewise, the newly elected Donald Trump government's body language was suggestive of the policy change from the Obama administration's arms denial to the one that favours arms sales to Nigerian government (Campbell, 2017). Even though the President had targeted Africa and Nigeria in particular for cruel mockery, by calling the continent a 'shithole' (Dawsey, 2018) and Nigeria, a 'hut' (Ogundipe, 2017), the President still invited Nigerian President to White House in what is largely perceived in the country as a move to patch up the ruptured US-Nigerian diplomatic relations and put their bilateral relations on a more secure basis. However, the State Visit failed to achieve anything significant in

reviving the goodwill both sides have enjoyed over the years. It only helped to deepen distrust between the two powers as Trump reportedly insulted the Nigerian President, describing him as 'lifeless' (Inyang, 2018).

The US's visa ban imposed on individuals alleged to have compromised the integrity of the 2019 General elections in Nigeria (*Leadership*, 2019) has further complicated efforts at normalising the ruptured diplomatic relations. President Buhari, who was declared the winner of the 'rigged' poll, has not reacted formerly to the visa ban. While the US declined to reveal the identity of the affected persons, it is believed that the list contains the names of the President's 'big boys' and members of the ruling All Progressive Party (APC) (*Leadership*, 2019). The policy to stonewall arms delivery to Nigeria underscores the growing irrelevance of Nigeria in the US's geo-economic and strategic calculations. The upsurge in Shale oil production, making the US the largest oil-producing states in the world (Kelly, 2019) means that Nigeria is no longer crucial in the American energy sector. Ditching Abuja's efforts to get arms, therefore, brings no consequence to Washington. Although President Buhari has declared that Nigeria had paid for the delivery of lethal arms from the US (Ibrahim, 2018), however, as of writing, the weapons are still being awaited in the country.

Counter-terrorism and Franco-Nigerian Relations

Since the emergence of Nigeria as the most powerful state in sub-Saharan Africa with an ambitious foreign policy of projecting power in West Africa, it has had to contend primarily with France for sub-regional leadership. Paris has left no one in doubt in respect of its readiness to intervene in the affairs of its ex-colonies in West and Central Africa. Within the Lake Chad region comprising Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad, Nigeria's regional leadership aspiration was primarily perceived as posing a credible threat to France's interest in the region (Azikiwe, 1961; Ogunbadejo, 1976; Nwokedi, 1989). The Nigerian Afrocentric external relations anchored on its 'historic mission' for 'totally political, economic, social and cultural liberation of African' (1979 Nigerian Constitution, section 19) did not bode well for France's design in the region. Therefore, Abuja and Paris have, for a long time, locked horns on the leadership of West Africa because of each country's perception that the other is infringing upon its rightful sphere of influence (Buzan and Weaver 2003, 250). Therefore, diplomatic relations between the two powers had always been punctuated with animosity and mistrust.

The simmering distrust between the two came to a head in 1961 when Nigeria severed diplomatic relations with France to protest Paris' atomic tests in the Sahara desert. Expectedly, this shabby treatment was unacceptable to the European Great Power, whose international pride had been subjected to ridicule (Omole, 2010; Griffin, 2014). Consequently, France's policy towards Nigeria was aimed at retaliating against Lagos and neutralising the threat posed by Nigeria to Paris in the contested region. The French President, General Charles De Gaulle, had only one unwavering ambition: to keep France solidly within the ranks of the Great Powers (Nwokedi, 1989). Therefore, he could not accept the humiliation and embarrassment of the severance of diplomatic relations by an African country brought on France (Nwokedi, 1989). The Nigeria-Biafran war fortuitously provided a unique opportunity for France to actualise its design against Nigeria as it seized upon the secessionist bid to dismember the country (Aluko, 1981). Its unwavering support for the rebel through arm shipment and diplomatic support was meant to cut Nigeria to size (Nwokedi, 1989).

The post-Civil War Nigerian sub-regional policy was primarily meant to integrate the economies of the 15 countries in the West African through the framework of ECOWAS as part of its good neighbourliness agenda. However, the undeclared intention of the sub-regional economic mechanism was to limit France's meddlesomeness in West Africa and deter the francophone states from further courting Paris' intervention in the sub-regional affairs (Adebajo, 2002). In other words, the sub-regional economic mechanism was not just a tool by Nigeria to pursue a leadership role but to also reduce the dependence of its Francophone Neighbours on France. Certainly, France was not unaware of the Nigerian agenda, and was prepared to frustrate Nigeria's sub-regional design. France's antagonism to ECOWAS was to ensure that these French-speaking states remain forever under France's grip. Consequently, Enor and Chime (2015) observe that the ECOWAS' lacklustre performance was as a result of France's opposition to the economic bloc among other factors.

However, Nigeria's persistent positive engagements with other African countries whether Francophone or Anglophone, as well as the current myriad political and economic woes battling Nigeria, has shown that Nigeria poses no credible threat to France's interests in the sub-region. Indeed, its evolving regional agenda,

in contrast to its grandiose regional aspirations of the independent years, appears to be in tandem with that of the policy pursued by France in the region in recent times. It was Abuja's awareness of Paris' role as a stabilising factor and indeed, as a counter-weight to the terrorism and political debacles in the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel that encouraged it to agree with France's positive interventions in West and Central Africa under the umbrella of the UN. This evolving collaboration was displayed during the Ivorian Presidential election crisis of 2010.

Their coordinated responses to the crisis ultimately culminated in the joint sponsorship of UN Resolution calling on the defeated president; Laurent Gbagbo to hand over power to the winner of the election; Alassane Ouattara (World Peace Foundation, 2017). The enforcement of the Resolution by France through the deployment of French troops to oust Gbagbo from office received the support of Nigerian authorities (World Peace Foundation, 2017). France's growing involvement in the efforts at resolving security challenge in the perennially volatile Sahel and Lake Chad regions had ramifications for improved security and political relations between Nigeria and France.

Since Nigeria returned to democratic governance in 1999, all the successive French Presidents have had to pay a state visit to Nigeria. The incumbent President, Emmanuel Macron's state visit to Nigeria in 2018 highlighted the importance the French leader attaches to anti-Boko Haram efforts in the region. Speaking about the visit, Nigerian Foreign Affairs Minister, Ambassador Geoffrey Onyeama says that the visit further helped to reinforce the French support to Nigeria in the area of security. Apart from working together through the MNJTF and intelligence sharing, France has been helpful, especially on the issue of funding for the fight against terrorism (*Vanguard*, 2018).

Certainly, Boko Haram's trans-border terrorism in the Chad basin region set this Jihadi group in opposition to Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad and by extension, France. The incursion of Boko Haram into the French-speaking countries constitutes an unacceptable threat to French interests in West and Central Africa. This is more so given the several attacks by Boko Haram against France's interests in the region. The Boko Haram attack in Waza Park, in northern Cameroon where the terrorists abducted seven French tourists on February 19, 2013, was one of the classic examples of the sect's direct threat to France's core national interest. Commenting about the abduction, former French foreign affairs Minister noted that: 'it (abduction) shows that the fight against terrorist groups is a necessity...' (Musa and Felix, 2013). Therefore, both France's and Nigeria's interests converge on the Boko Haram crisis. France's active participation in the counter-terrorist effort 'was informed by the fear that the escalation of terrorism in Nigeria poses a threat to French geostrategic interests in its former colonies' (Ogbonnaya, 2016: 193). The burden of fighting the group's terrorism ultimately falls on all the regional countries in the Basin, including France. This is more so given the French policy of dealing with the threat posed by many Islamic terrorist gangs that seek to further destabilise the already structurally weak states in the unstable region. France's regional agenda is succinctly captured by the assertion of the country's ex-law makers; Andre Dulait, saying, 'The African continent is our neighbours and when it is shaken by conflicts, we are shaken as well' (cited in Hansen, 2007). The crisis triggered by Boko Haram had shaken the African continent particularly when it was rated the deadliest terrorist group in 2014 (GTI, 2014).

The regionalisation of the Boko Haram violence has ensured that France works closely with its African partners through the provision of right arms and specialised training on effective counterterrorism. More importantly, Boko Haram's allegiance to ISIS in 2014 and the subsequent change of name to Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) suggests that the group can only be tamed by superior firepower similar to what was unleashed on ISIS in the Middle East. Commenting on the allegiance, Francois Hollande, French President maintains that the pledge of allegiance by the Nigerian terror organisation to Islamic State group poses a major threat to West Africa security and must be taken at face value (Siobhan, 2015). He further emphasises that: "We know Boko Haram is linked to Daesh (ISIS) and so receives help (and) support from this group... The fight against Boko Haram is the fight against Daesh.... Boko Haram is largely seen as IS' Caliphate in West Africa province" (Siobhan, 2015).

Essentially, the seemingly intractable security challenge induced by terrorism in the Sahel and Lake Chad region has continued to have profound positive implications for Franco/Nigerian diplomatic relations. With the ceaseless threat posed by Boko Haram, France has taken a more direct role in the conflict in the region by mobilising troops and war equipment to the Nigeria-Niger border town of Diffa in support of forces fighting the insurgents (Griffin, 2015). France's deepening involvement in the struggle against Boko Haram terrorism

certainly serves Nigeria's national security. France has, in recent times, strengthened its commitment with those Francophone Lake Chad Commission member states and improved the capacity of their field forces in the war against the nihilistic group; this has proved helpful in the battlefield with the terrorists (Ogbonnaya et al., 2014).

Traditionally, especially since the end of World War II, France, unlike the US, abhors a unilateralist approach to international issues, especially those on security, preferring multilateral arrangements such as UN, EU and other regional and sub-regional frameworks (Belkin, 2018). Its responses to the Ivorian election crisis in 2010 and the Malian political debacle of 2012 were jointly coordinated with other states (Wyss, 2017). The rejuvenation of the largely moribund LCBC's security coalition; MNJTF owes so much to France's intervention. Formed in 1994 by Nigeria to address the perennial insecurity in the Basin and went truly 'multinational' in 1998 when the francophone riparian states of Lake Chad joined the security outfit, it has nonetheless remained mostly a toothless bulldog since its formation. Obamamoye (2017) argues that it was Nigeria that demanded the intervention of France to convince other members of LCBC states before the first regional counter-terrorism meeting could be convoked in France. The Paris security Summit, as the security meeting was later called, had positive implications for the re-invigoration of the regional security outfit. The Summit which held in May 2014 demonstrated Paris' proactive support for a joint military operation against Boko Haram as the Summit officially endorsed the mandate of the revived security framework (Onuoha, 2014). Speaking on the same issue, former French Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr Denys Gauer corroborated Obamamoye's argument, asserting that France did encourage African countries affected by the insurgency to cooperate with Nigeria in the fight against the scourge (*The Guardian*, 2017). The Summit, which brought together the presidents of Benin, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria and representatives from EU, UN and US discussed strategies to combat the Boko Haram. The eventual rejuvenation of the coalition with an expanded mandate to counter the insurgents and resolve the humanitarian crisis induced by the rebellious group has been pivotal to the military success against the Sunni Islamist group in 2015. The joint effort of the affected states with international backing resulted in the dismantling of the Boko Haram's caliphate, prompting President Buhari's declaration of 'technical defeat' over the vicious group (Onapajo, 2017).

Definitely, without France's intervention, reinventing the regional security alliance would have been very problematic. The MNJTF has become a diplomatic platform under which France and Nigeria deepened their relations. The two countries further concretised their burgeoning military cooperation in the Lake Chad Security Summit which took place on May 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria. In the Abuja Summit, French and Nigerian Presidents agreed to expand military cooperation and work with West African countries to crush the terrorist and other criminalities in the sub-region. Having already deployed 3000 troops to Niger and Chad to do battle with Boko Haram, the then French President remarked that: '...when there is a threat to a country in Africa, there is a threat to France' (*Bloomberg*, 2016). France's willingness to work with Nigeria to meaningfully address the security crisis found its best indication in the supply of war equipment and counter-insurgency training for the Nigerian military.

France's support for the Nigerian fight against the Islamist group, especially in the area of intelligence coordination facilitated the capability of Nigerian soldiers in dislodging the terrorists from their caliphate in Gworza. Undoubtedly, the defence agreement was an indication of the deepening cooperation between Abuja and Paris. In his assessment of the growing Franco-Nigerian relations, Ambassador Denys Gauer argues that:

...the fight against insurgents has brought the two countries together than ever before.... Apart from encouraging African countries to cooperate with Nigeria, we have also developed a strong bilateral relationship with the Nigerian Armed Forces....We are organising training activities for Nigerian Armed Forces both in France, Senegal and here in Nigeria, I can confirm to you that we are now very close allies to the Nigerian Armed Forces in the fight against Boko Haram (Denys Gauer Interview with The Guardian, 2017).

In furtherance of the security partnership between the two states, Mr Gauer, also disclosed that France is prepared to supply Nigerian Armed forces with critical military assets, declaring that 'we have no restriction on that; we can sell any kind of equipment to the Nigerian government without any restrictions' (*The Guardian*, 2017). This disclosure was not unconnected to the arms embargo imposed on Nigeria by the US over the allegations of human rights abuses committed by the Nigerian military. France has taken a more

direct role in the anti-Boko Haram campaign. Its fighter jets positioned in Chad conducted reconnaissance and surveillance operations not only over the conflict zones in francophone states but north-eastern Nigeria has also equally come under the French surveillance activities. French intelligent officers had shared more than 2000 surveillance images and videos with their Nigerian counterparts and were trained on how to interpret those images and videos (Bloomberg, 2016).

The prevailing bilateral relations between the two powers are now marked by pragmatic cooperation in both the economic and security sectors. Usman-Janguza (2015) notes that France's former tendency for stymieing Nigeria on the sub-regional stage has appreciably reduced, if not disappeared altogether. According to him:

The past few years have witnessed a remarkable rapprochement and unprecedented alignment of views on regional security. In many cases, France has actively encouraged Nigeria, either bilaterally or through ECOWAS, to take a greater leadership role in crisis management even in Francophone West Africa (Usman-Janguza, 2015).

The coordination of military forces among the coalition partners with increased France's involvement has not only facilitated the operations of MNJTF especially between 2014 and 2016, but it has also rendered insignificance the geopolitical rivalry previously prevailing in the Franco-Nigerian relations. This is more so given the myriad economic, political and security challenges battling Nigeria at present. The country is today more concerned and preoccupied with solving domestic problems rather than exercising any form of 'Historic Mission' or regional leadership in Africa. Entangling in grandiose rivalry with France for sub-region regional leadership is doubtful even in the foreseeable future given its national leadership crisis, multiple sources of internal insecurity challenges and receding hegemonic clout.

Russia and the War against Boko Haram

Moscow has always been a political messiah of sort for Nigeria. The defeat of the Biafran secessionist movement during the Nigeria Civil War (1967-1970) owed so much to the effort of the Soviets (Ogunbadejo, 1976). Nigeria only approached Moscow for the much-needed weapons to prosecute the war of national unity when the US and Britain – Nigerian traditionally allies refused to sell weapons to Nigeria to fight a war they widely perceived as genocide against the Igbo ethnic group (Aluko, 1981). The same scenario has been re-enacted in Nigeria's war against the Boko Haram insurgent group.

As the American-engineered arm embargo imposed on Nigeria took effect, it increasingly became difficult for Nigeria to procure arms from other countries. Brazil and Israel also played along under a sustained US pressure, refusing to sell arms to Nigeria after agreements on the sales had already been concluded (Wilner, 2015; Soriwei, 2016). In desperation, Nigeria opted for the controversial discreet arms purchases from a fellow African country; South Africa. Unfortunately, the much-needed arms from the country were not delivered either were the seized funds meant for the purchases returned to Nigeria (Reuters, 2014). Left without any option, Nigeria had to approach Russia for the equipment as a last resort. Russia's swift and favourable response to Nigeria's request for arms contrasted sharply with the response from the American government (Daily Trust, 2014; Omotuyi, 2018b). Russian response marked another milestone in the Russo-Nigerian relations after long years of lukewarm diplomatic relations. During the Nigerian-Biafran war, the defunct Soviet Union's decision to arm Nigeria against the secessionist Igbo Biafran group was occasioned by geopolitics in the context of the Cold War ideological contest (Aluko, 1981). Approaching Kremlin for weapons was a welcome development for the Soviets who had desired to establish a foothold in the African most populous country. As Ogunbadejo (1976: 24) has pointed out that 'the Soviets welcomed the change (a reversal of the pre-war Nigerian government's anti-Soviet's bias) for the simple reason that it offered them the opportunity of securing influence – political, economic and diplomatic – in a country that they had long coveted'. The political and economic gains the Soviets might think they reaped from its involvement in the Nigerian Civil War, soon dwindled into insignificant as the Nigerian government normalised relations with its Western allies shortly after the war.

Today, resurgent Russia touts itself as anti-Islamist Czar. Speaking at the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, President Vladimir Putin portrayed himself as an anti-terrorist champion, saying:

Russia has consistently opposed terrorism in all its forms. Today, we provide military-technical assistance to Syria, Iraq and other ...countries fighting terrorist groups. We think it is a big mistake to refuse to cooperate with the government forces who are valiantly fighting terrorists on the ground (President Putin Text of address at 70th Session of the UN GA, 2015).

While it can be argued that Russian involvements in the so-called 'fight against terrorism' in Syria and Iraq were largely dictated by the prevailing geopolitical struggle between Russia and United States (Omotuyi, 2018b), the economic issue appears to explain Russian interest in Nigeria. Putin had bemoaned the loss of Russian superpower status and international prestige occasioned by the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The former KGB agent calls the event 'a geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th Century' (*Washington Times*, 2005). Since his emergence as a revered leader, the fourth-term President of Russia has charted a new course for Russian foreign policy. In contrast to the former President Boris Yeltsin's policy of accommodation with the West (Freeman 2001), the centrepiece of Putin's foreign policy is the reassertion of Russian power and prestige as a counterweight to American power, influence, and unilateralism in international affairs (Omotuyi, 2018b). This foreign policy agenda finds its expression in the Syrian civil war and Venezuelan political upheaval where Russia had intervened to counterbalance what appears to be American excesses in these countries. 'It is not about Russia's ambitions', Putin had once remarked on his interventions in Syria, '...but about the recognition of the fact that we (Russians) can no longer tolerate the current state of affairs in the world' (President Putin Text of address at 70th Session of the UN GA 2015). Russian current activities in the Middle East are tailored to mainly shield Bashar al Assad's regime from the United States in cahoots with the rebel groups seeking to end his dynasty. It is not primarily meant to fight terrorism.

In contrast to the rationale behind Russian intervention in Syria, the growing Russian economic problem appears to provide a rationale for Russia's decision to let the Nigerian military have the weapons. While geopolitical calculations were important in the Soviet Union's readiness to supply arms to Nigeria for the prosecution of the Civil War, the recent purchases from Russia have been strictly for cash on a commercial basis. By 2014, when the Boko Haram crisis peaked, and the group successfully established a state within the Nigerian state, the Russian economy was crumbling. Its oil-dependent economy experienced major shock, plunging it into recession with a growth rate of 0.6 per cent (*BBC*, 2014). The economic crunch was precipitated by two main factors; the first was the falling oil prices caused by the surge in the production of Shale oil by the US. The Russian economy was severely affected exposing its over-reliance on petroleum. Between 2011-2013, oil prices hovered between \$125 to \$135 per barrel, by 2014; however, it ended up at less than \$60 per barrel (Focus Economics 2014). The second factor was provoked by the series of Western economic sanctions imposed on Russia for violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine through its unprovoked attack on the sovereign nation. The annexation of Crimea, one of the most strategic regions in the country as well as Russia's continued support for the secessionist movement in the eastern part of the country generated global outrage especially in the Western capitals against Russia. The multiple of sanctions imposed on Kremlin for its aggression on Kyiv and to frustrate what appears to be a *Resovietisation* agenda adversely affected the investors' desire for Russian investments resulting in capital flights and high inflation which compounded Russia's economic woes (*BBC*, 2014). The two major factors had devastating impacts on Moscow's financial system as well.

The Russian national currency, Rouble, lost 46 per cent of its value against the US Dollar in the same year (Bowler, 2015). Given the Russian economic challenges; Moscow was more than willing to agree to Nigeria's request for sophisticated arms. Apart from the other military equipment, Nigeria successfully got the delivery of twelve Su-30 fighter jets from Russia. Each of the jets cost \$ 30 million (Campbell, 2017). Expectedly, Russia's arms transfer to Nigeria has continued to have implications for Nigeria's external relations. It has, for instance, reignited the largely lukewarm diplomatic relations between the two states. Moscow has since resumed the training of the Nigerian security personnel as a battalion of the military was dispatched to Moscow for training on counter-terrorism operations (Campbell, 2014). Besides the security partnership, the renewed Russo/Nigerian relations have been expanded to cover diverse areas of Nigeria's national life (Olowolagbe, 2019: 1 and 3).

Conclusion

In this study, we argue that the Great powers' involvement in the Nigerian counterterrorism operation was largely provoked by the amalgam of factors. Chiefs among them were the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls

and allegiance to ISIS leadership which makes the group a major stakeholder in the global jihadi movement. Certainly, the interventions of the United States, Russia, and France only played a marginal role in the fight against the destructive group, as the sect, though factionalised and dislodged from its caliphate, remains a potent security threat to Nigeria and other riparian states of Lake Chad. Some of the kidnapped Chibok girls are yet to be rescued. More persons have even been successfully kidnapped by the terror group. The jihadist organisation has, in recent times, successfully attacked military formations and barracks, killing a large number of soldiers in spite of the government's claim of the technical defeat over the violent group. The paper points out that while negligible success was recorded by the interventions of these powerful countries, their involvement has had significant implications for Nigeria's external relations.

Although it black-listed the terror group as FTO and pledged to help Nigeria defeat the violent sect, the US's wavering disposition to the counter-terrorism in Nigeria generated discontent in their relations. Besides supplying non-lethal arms to Nigeria such as anti-landmine vehicles with which Boko Haram was dislodged from the dreaded Sambisa forest, Washington's refusal to sell lethal weapons to Nigeria based on abuses of human rights caused diplomatic fissure between the two allies. Certainly, the Boko Haram crisis has had unintended consequences for Nigerian external relations. The arms denial policy made Nigeria to unilaterally break the US-Nigerian security partnership. President Buhari also expressed his displeasure by pointedly accusing Washington of aiding and abetting the terrorists on account of the implementation of the Leahy Law against Nigerian Armed forces. The arms denial speaks volumes of the irrelevance Nigeria has become in the US's geostrategic calculations, especially in the international oil politics. The upsurge in the Shale oil production means that Nigerian oil is no longer strategic to the American industrial economy and hence, ditching Nigeria's efforts to acquire weapons brings no consequence to the US.

In spite of the mistrust that had strongly characterised the Franco-Nigerian diplomatic relations in the past, the Boko Haram crisis is further improving the growing cordial relations between France and Nigeria. France has proved beyond a reasonable doubt that it is an indispensable partner with Nigeria in the war against the jihadist groups in West Africa. Nigeria's increasing diplomatic engagements with France especially on the counter-terrorist agenda in Lake Chad region in particular and West Africa, in general, has strengthened relations among Lake Chad riparian states. Ultimately, the Boko Haram crisis is rendering insignificant the geopolitical rivalry that previously prevailed in the Franco-Nigerian relations. Though resurgent Russia's Putin prides itself as an anti-terrorist Czar, however, its involvement in Nigeria's counter-terrorism speaks volumes of Moscow's economic challenge. Its prompt delivery of sophisticated military hardware to Nigeria is mainly for cash on a commercial basis rather than an effort to defeat the Boko Haram terrorists. This becomes compelling given the economic impacts of Western sanctions as well as the plummeting oil prices. Therefore, selling weapons to Nigeria makes economic sense. Nigeria has since prioritised security partnership with Moscow as a division of Nigerian soldiers is dispatched to Russia for specialised training on counter-terrorism.

Today, Boko Haram remains solidly entrenched in northeastern Nigeria posing credible to human security in the region. Degrading the vicious sect requires the military and diplomatic supports of the Great Powers similar to the international coalition against ISIS in the Middle East. Nigeria, therefore, needs to engage and strengthen its relations with relevant nations to tame the monster of terrorism in the country. The prevailing diplomatic relations with France and Russia should, therefore, not be allowed to suffer setback even after the total defeat of the Islamist group. More importantly, it would be in the best interest of Nigeria to normalise relations with the United States in all areas regardless of President Trump's tantrums against the country. This is very important given the seemingly intractable terrorism of the Boko Haram crisis in the country. At this critical stage, Nigeria needs all the international supports to end the brutal attacks of Boko Haram and all the jihadist elements operating in Nigeria in particular and the Lake Chad region in general.

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Rethinking Key Drivers of Turkey's Immigration Policies in the Wake of the 2016 Turkey -European Union Immigration Deal

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ABSTRACT

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Turkey's immigration policies have experienced several changes over the last century. The 2016 agreement between Turkey and the European Union has not only had a significant impact on how Turkey and the European Union deal with asylum seekers, but also revived the debate on the EU's externalisation of immigration issues. This study aims to examine the impact of the agreement on Turkey's immigration policymaking process. It identifies that while the European Union may seek to externalise immigration by entering into agreements with third-party states, Turkey's immigration policies are largely influenced by a complex balance of domestic, regional, and political interest.

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Introduction

The spring of 2015 marked an important turning point in the EU's approach to migration as the number of migrants heading to Europe increased significantly (Banulescu-Bogdan and Fratzke, 2015; Collet, 2016). The continent was not only facing a massive influx of migrants from Africa, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, but the Syrian civil war also had a devastating impact on the people forcing millions to flee the country. With over 11 million people displaced, making it one of the highest cases in recent history, the majority of the externally displaced persons have settled in Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan, and a sizable number have set their eye on Europe (Holmes and Castañeda, 2016; Şimşek, 2017: 161).

However, Turkey continues to host the largest proportion of Syrians migrants. By May of 2018, Turkey was hosting 3,589,384 Syrians under temporary protection (Üstübcü, 2019), a number higher than the population of several European countries including Slovenia and Lithuania. This huge population of Syrians brought Turkey into the spotlight as a key regional and global actor regarding international migration. Importantly, the geographical position of Turkey at the crossroads between Europe, the Middle East, Asia and parts of Africa increases its significance in the migration context (İçduygu, 2003: 7).

It is partly due to this geographical significance that on March 18, 2016, the EU signed a deal with Turkey to help the Union address the problem of irregular migrants who were making their way to the continent through the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes. Brussels was confident that the deal was a significant step towards helping Europe regain control of its sovereign territories by controlling who can and cannot enter its

member states. Indeed, the overwhelming support to this deal can be traced to a speech made by Donald Tusk, who mentioned that the days of 'irregular migrations to Europe are over' (Haferlach and Kurban, 2017: 85). Further, proponents of this deal argue that the involvement of Turkey to help the EU with the migration issue was a response to an imminent refugee crisis particularly in Greece which had become a big target destination of migrants from Africa, and Middle East Others have also argued that growing discomfort among the EU member states regarding the burden of hosting migrants in their countries was not only sparking nationalistic feeling and rise of populist parties, but the very unity of EU was being tested with treats to abolish the Schengen zone becoming more visible. For the supporters of the deal, this meant that urgent measures needed to be taken and the agreement with Turkey was worth it.

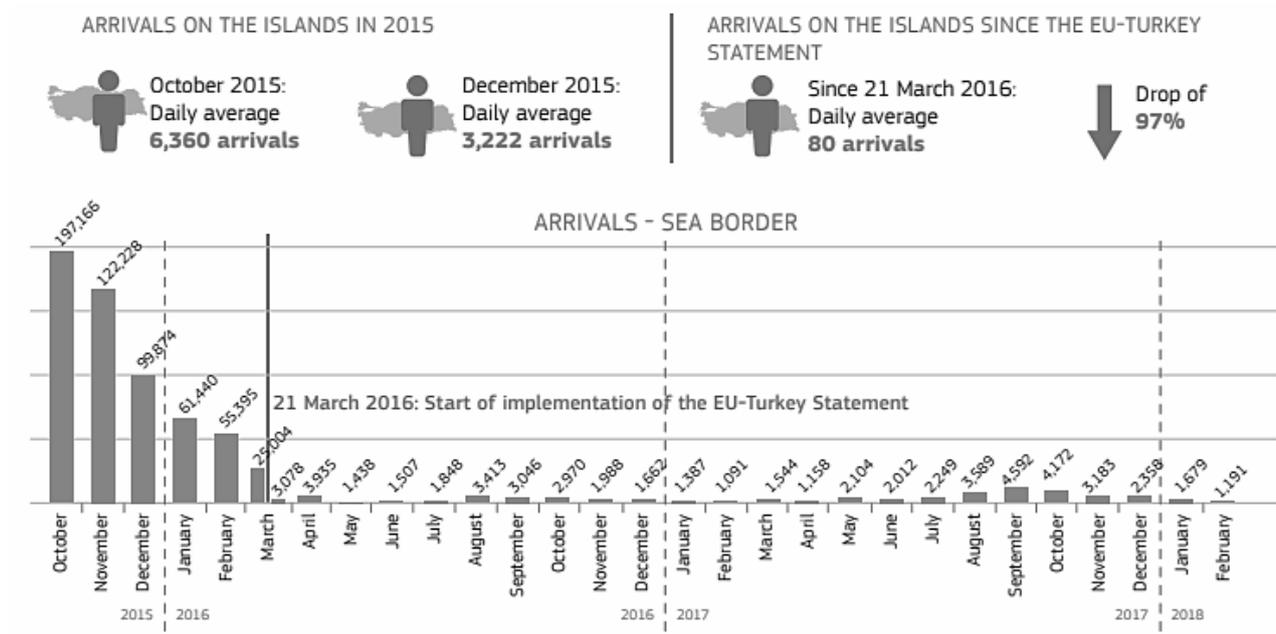
On the other hand, some were sceptical about the deal. Aurélie Ponthieu in an interview with Doctors without Borders (2016), asserted that the deal was a clear indication that EU leaders had lost touch with reality. He particularly expresses the concern that the humanitarian aspect of migration would be lost if the policymakers continue to look at the migrants as numbers and allow one migrant to head to Europe in place of another who has been returned (Ponthieu, personal communication, 18 March 2016). Gogou (2017) a critic of the deal, describes 2016, the year EU and Turkey signed the agreement, as 'Europe's year of shame.' He mentions that the deal had not only left many migrants, the majority of whom are children and women stranded in Greece under inhumane conditions but also the number of refugees who had made their way to Europe under the deal was a paltry 12,476 while over 3 million migrants remained in Turkey by 2018. In other words, it would be simplistic for the EU to consider the deal success as a result of reduced numbers of migrants entering Europe while neglecting the challenges that Turkey and the burgeoning migrants were facing.

Nonetheless, on paper, the deal has been praised for its theoretical prospects, with some leaders from the EU arguing that it is worth emulating in other parts of the world. Although the agreement was more of a political gesture than a legal process, making it a non-binding agreement, it is worth mentioning that at the time, it was seen as an important step towards putting a stop to the unregulated entry of migrants to Europe. In the deal, "*For every Syrian refugee being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU taking into account the UN Vulnerability Criteria,*" (European Commission, November 2015; Staromiejski, 2018: 2). Three billion Euros were to be given to Turkey in the short run, while another three billion would be added at a later stage (Kristin, 2016: 1). Similarly, Turkey was granted a '*safe third country for refugees*' status meaning the principle of refoulement would not apply to those sent back to Turkey (European Commission, November 2015; Roman, 2016: 7). The EU also pledged to re-energize the accession process of Turkey to the Union by putting in place a structured and more frequent dialogue and facilitating the lifting of visa requirements for Turkish citizens within the Schengen region by October of 2016 (Koenig and Walter, 2017). The general experience of how migrants were supposed to move to Europe was expected to improve under this deal. This article will begin by re-examining the status of the immigration deal between Turkey and Europe then using the concept of externalisation to examine whether Turkey -EU agreement is a top-down approach where the EU influences Turkey's immigration policies. The paper will then discuss some of the main drivers of Turkey's immigration policies.

Status of the Deal between 2016 and 2019

According to the European Commission, the deal has had a tremendous impact on migration in the region. In a report produced in April 2018, irregular migration from Turkey to Europe had declined by 97% compared to 2015 (see figure 1). The number of people who died while attempting the dangerous journey through the sea to Europe has also declined according to the report (European Commission, April 2018). By the end of 2017, the European Commission states that it had paid the three billion Euros mentioned in the deal to Turkey to facilitate the hosting of the refugees. Of the three billion, two billion was contributed by member states, while one billion was derived from the Union's budget. The money was directed to projects that improved the conditions of the refugees such as municipal infrastructure, education, socio-economic support and health (European Commission, April 2018). The second batch of the contribution is also being mobilised to improve the conditions of Syrian refugees in Turkey further.

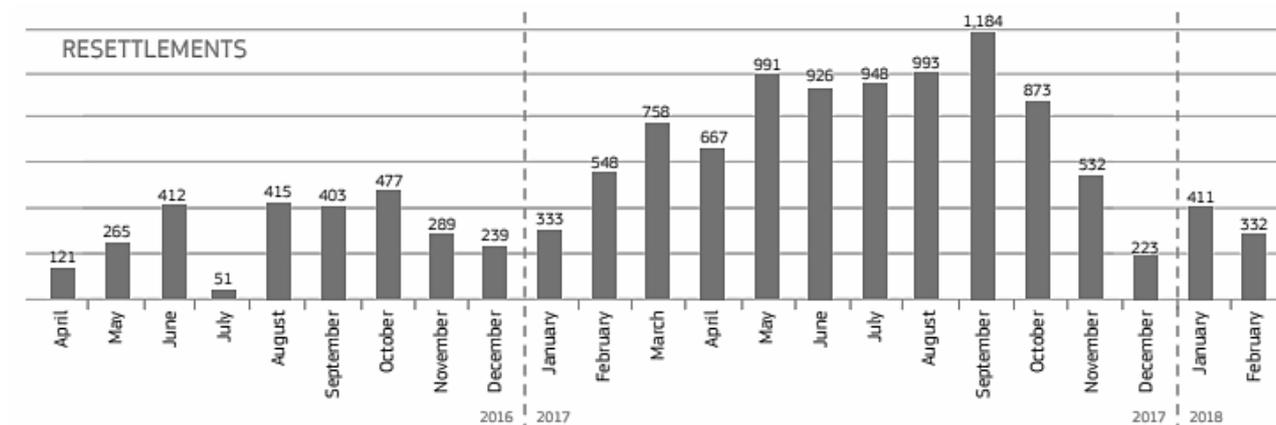
Figure 1: Showing the number of migrants crossing from Turkey to Europe between 2015 and 2018



Source: The European Commission Report, April 2018

As a result of the deal, the daily average of irregular crossings from Turkey to the Greek Aegean Islands declined from 1794 in 2016 to 80 in 2017 (European Commission, 2018: 46). However, Frohlich (2017) regards this decline as an “illusion” since deal insignificantly contributed to the decline of unregistered, irregular migration as more than 600,000 people reached Europe through clandestine means but whether these numbers constituted Syrian migrants is not spelt out. According to data from the EU Commission Report, by the end of 2018, roughly 12, 476 migrants had been successfully resettled in Europe (see figure 2)

Figure 2: Showing the number of refugees resettled in Europe between 2016 and 2018



Source: The European Commission Report, April 2018

Turkey, on the other hand, is providing the necessary support to curb the movement of refugees to Europe (European Commission, 2016). Turkish authorities in cooperation with others have dealt a blow to the business-like activities of human smugglers who were responsible for facilitating the crossing of over 10,000 migrants a day from Turkey. As of 2018, the number had reduced to about 85 migrants per day crossing to Europe, and the number of deaths had decreased to 1 out of 55 people trying to cross the sea in 2016 (Priyanka Jan. 23, 2018). Also, host communities and the government of Turkey have continued to offer support to the refugees in different capacities. Indeed, with the unforeseen prospect of the situation in Syria, the Turkish government has changed its strategy from handling the refugees as 'guests' to making efforts towards integration (Şimşek, 2017: 166).

The Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) was responsible for registering and relocating refugees from the border to one of the 26 refugee camps in Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Osmaniye, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Kilis, Mardin, Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Adana (AFAD, 2017). Thanks to the efforts by both the EU and Turkey, over 600,000 Syrian children are getting an education from either public or private schools in Turkey. Among them, 45,000 are taking catch up classes to fill the gap created by the years they spent out of school. Projects to construct one hundred seventy-five schools to meet the infrastructure needs of the migrant students are ongoing, while 220,000 young Syrians have been vaccinated and 720,000 adults received free medical care. Monthly cash transfers continue to be sent to approximately 1,200,000 Syrians to subsidise their daily needs (around 120 TL) (European Commission, 2018).

According to the European Commission, 12,469 asylum seekers have voluntarily agreed to return to Turkey from the mainland and the island of Greece. Although this reflects a good number, between 2016 and 2018, only 2164 migrants have been returned to Turkey from Greece. This slow progress has been blamed on the insufficient pre-return detention and processing process in Greece and the high number of applications pending. Apart from the concerns raised about the efficiency of the deal. The agreement between the EU and Turkey has also been challenged in court. A petition filed by Afghanistan and Pakistani asylum seekers to have the General court declare the agreement null and void proceeded to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) for appeal as the petitioners did not get a favourable ruling at the General court thus setting the stage for a prolonged legal battle. According to the petitioners, the agreement was in contravention of the principle against collective expulsion and non-refoulement (Carrera, den Hertog, and Stefan, 2017: 1).

Although the court ruled that it lacked the jurisdiction to decide on the matter, it did observe that the deal did not live up to the legal processes and expectations of international treaties. The defendants in the case claimed that the agreement with Turkey was concluded by individual member states and not as a union; this argument was perhaps the most substantial reason why the CJEU concluded that it lacked jurisdiction on the matter. However, critics of this argument further question the legality of EU member states to act individually on such an important issue. The EU's procedures to conduct and instruments of policy and law-making within the Union are spelt in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Art. 2(2) of the TFEU states that when matters of shared competence such as justice, freedom and security arise, the EU has more prominence to exercise its jurisdiction on the subject, and member states can only respond if the Union has not intervened (Art. 4(2)(j) TFEU).

Turkey has also, during the three years of the deal, raised its concerns over the level of honesty by the EU member states on their commitment to the deal. The slow disbursement of resources by the EU led to concerns and even threats to walk out of the agreement by the Turks. Also, the utterances such as the ones by French President Emmanuel Macron over a possible 'partnership/cooperation' with Turkey instead of granting full membership have been criticised by EU Minister Ömer Çelik. Speaking to Reuters in an interview, Mr Çelik emphasised that Turkey had no obligation to hold on to the refugee deal if anything less than a discussion of Turkey's full membership into the Union was granted (Karadeniz and Coskun, January 3, 2018). While the financial aspect of the deal had been fulfilled, other parts of the deal have not materialised. For example, Turkey's EU minister states that "*no new chapters had been opened in Turkey's EU accession efforts and there had been no development on expanding a Turkish-EU customs deal*" (Karadeniz and Coskun, January 3, 2018). The short-term visa waiver for Turkish citizens intending to travel to Europe has equally not been fulfilled yet it was a critical part of the deal. The EU claims they have not met the visa pledge due to what they term as 'controversial' anti-terrorism laws being enforced by Ankara. Such an explanation was given that Turkey is already shouldering its burden of the deal only confirms President

Erdogan's concerns over the honesty of the EU member states (Mortimer, July 26, 2016). While Turkey's migration laws may be pegged on the EU deal, it is important to mention that Ankara's approach goes beyond the EU deal and is significantly influenced by among other issues international, regional and domestic factors. Below I will examine the concept of externalisation of EU immigration policies and the extent to which it affects Turkey's foreign policy.

Externalisation of EU Immigration Policy

The Arab Spring revolts since 2011 have led to significant changes in the immigration policies and practice of the EU. One approach that has become predominant is the attempt to deal with migrants attempting to reach Europe using third countries as a cushion. This pushed the EU to renew the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) policy that was adopted in 2005 and also the adoption of the 'EU Action on Migratory Pressures- A Strategic Response' to provide guidelines on how the Union will cooperate with the countries where migrants originate from, settle or transit through to Europe (European Commission, 2011; Council of the EU, 8714/1/12 REV 1, 2012). While this strategy is not new and can be traced back to the fall of the Berlin wall that saw EU member states begin to harmonise migration policies and later in 1999 when the Amsterdam Treaty was implemented (Uğur, 2011, 965-6; Memişoğlu, 2014), it is, however, the intense nature of the EU's commitment to work with third parties after the year 2000 that continue to raise eyebrows over impact EU's actions as 'externalisation of immigration policies' on the third country (Boswell, 2003; Lavenex, 2006; Ress, 2008; Bennett, (2018).

Such cooperation has social, political, and economic ramifications that cannot be overlooked. For example, the success of these externalisation efforts is pegged on the willingness and commitment of the third countries to work closely with the Union. This creates a new level of integration between the EU and third countries at least to the extent that they are working towards curbing the flow of irregular migrants to Europe. Indeed, the signing of readmission agreements in the 1990s with third countries in Eastern and Central Europe can be seen not only as an externalisation policy but as an instrument the Union was using to get the support of third countries in dealing with migration (Lavenex, 2006: 330). From this dimension, however, there are some integration theorists interpret this as an EU effort to enforce policies on other states (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2014: 26-29). Such analysis ignores the interest of the third countries particularly those that push them to work with the EU.

Relative to the externalisation efforts of the EU with other countries such as Libya and Niger, the case of Turkey is somewhat unique due to the proximity of Turkey to Europe and the complexities involved in asylum and migration-related bargaining, with the expectation of arriving at reciprocally rewarding solutions. Nevertheless, the majority of the existing literature appears to look at how Turkey handles immigration from an external perspective. In other words, the dominant narrative in most of the existing literature is the position of Turkey in the deal (Hess and Karakayali 2007; Kirisci 2007; Hess 2010; Wissink, Düvell and van Eerdewijk, 2013; İçduygu 2007, 2011, 2014). Worth noting, March 18, 2016, EU -Turkey Deal (Statement) was not the first time these two actors were looking at how they can cooperate to manage the refugee crisis in the region. It was merely a reopening of Turkey's significant role in maintaining international migration that began earlier in the 1990s when it has been continuously cooperating with the EU (İçduygu and Kirisci 2009; Heck, and Hess, 2017: 38; Özcürümez and Senses 2011). The EU -Turkey Deal can be interpreted based on the externalisation framework as a case of an EU-driven top-down process.

The importance of Turkey in regulating the flow of migrants to Europe has not escaped the attention of EU member states. For example, as the EU faced huge migration in the early 2000s, Turkey was seen as an important transit route that could also help reduce the flow of migrants. During the Seville Summit in 2002, the need to regulate the number of migrants coming to Europe through Turkey was raised and the UK even proposed that the Union should consider putting sanctions on Turkey if Ankara failed to adopt stricter immigration rules (Hess and Karakayali 2007: 36). Whether such threats or incentives provided in the EU - Turkey Deal could have shaped Turkey's immigration policies is open to debate. Kirişçi (2007: 8) opines that in most cases, Ankara has enjoyed greater autonomy in formulating its immigration policies as such one can argue that Turkey's border policies are a hybrid product of its national interest, regional factors, and its international obligations.

Drivers of Turkey's Immigration Policies

To better understand this complex border regime formulation, one needs to revisit Turkey's previous practices on the same matter. It is important to note that immigration has been an essential aspect of Turkey's socio-economic, political, and cultural goals since the Ottoman Empire. There are four significant milestones in Turkey's immigration policies since the early 20th Century. These can be discussed under four broad periods namely between 1923 to 1950s, 1950s to 1980s, 1980s to early 2000s and post-2000s. These periods experienced an adoption of crucial immigration laws and policies that help to shed light on some of the drivers of Turkey's immigration policies.

Of relevance to this paper is the period after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic in 1923. Starting from these early years, policymakers were concerned with the construction of Turkish identity, and this ambitious project found its way into its immigration policies. Some would argue that this could be a continuation of efforts that begun in the early 1900s to homogenise the population where Muslim -Turks were migrating to Anatolia from the Balkans while non-Muslim Greeks and Armenians were leaving (İçduygu and Aksel, 2013: 170 -171). The two-way state-led immigration that began in the late 1800s (with the establishment of the *Muhacirin Komisyon Alisi* in 1872 (later was changed to *Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyet-i Umumiyesi*)) and the early years of the new republican era perhaps symbolise the first efforts of cooperation between Turkey and other countries on immigration issues since there were reciprocal agreements with Greece (1923) and Bulgaria (1913).

Between 1923 and 1950, fundamental institution and laws such as Law 2510/1934 Settlement Act (1934) of the Ministry of Population Exchange, Turkish Citizenship Law (1928), the Constitution (1924), the and the Development and Settlement (1923) were adopted to meet the immigration needs (İçduygu and Aksel, 2013: 173). Apart from the construction of Turkish identity, these immigration laws targeted the post-World War I economic reconstruction of Turkey. The impact of immigration policies between 1923 and 1950s had a positive result on the modernisation efforts but also led to a massive decline in the number of non-Muslims living in Turkey. In 1927, non-Muslims were around 19%, dropping to 3% by 1928 and 1% in the following years (İçduygu, Toktas and Ali, 2008: 362; İçduygu and Sert, 2015).

Issues such as unemployment, rapid industrialisation, and labour shortages in other parts of the world saw massive emigration of Turks to other countries thus transforming the previous status as a destination country to a country of origin and later transit for migrants (İçduygu, 2004: 89). More important, it is in this period that Turkey entered to global immigration sphere with the ratification of the UN Convention on Refugees in 1951 and the protocol and asylum seekers and refugees in 1967. In 1961 the adoption of Turkish Employment Service, an agreement between Turkey and European countries reflecting classical core-periphery theory, ended up with the migration of over 800,000 Turks to Europe (Castles, 2008; Ottaviano and Thisse, 2002). 81 % of them migrated to Germany, (649, 000), 7 % went to France (56,000), 5 % migrated to Austria (37,000) and Netherlands received 3 % around 25,000. These migrants remitted over US \$1.9 billion annually to Turkey making the economic interest of migration policy a reality (İçduygu, 2005; Sirkeci, Cohen and Yazgan, 2012; Straubhaar, 1986).

The migration patterns witnessed from the beginning of 1980 are of significant relevance in Turkey's migration framework. For the first time over a century, migrants who were neither Muslims nor Turks begun coming from neighbouring and distant countries of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East (İçduygu and Aksel, 2013: 174) Turkey started to be seen as an essential bridge to migrate to Europe on the one hand. On the other hand, Turkey's domestic interests, particularly integration into the liberal global economy, became an important driver in adopting a seemingly open-door policy. That was reflected in her foreign policies. For example, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Turgut Özal, trying to promote local trade and investment, liberalised the visa policies towards many countries, particularly to the former Soviet Union states, the Middle East and the Balkans (Genç, 2015: 535; Kirisci, 2002, 2005: 351).

Regional factors also played a crucial role in shaping the migration patterns and policies in the 1980s and 1990s. The Gulf crisis, draconian laws against minorities in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran, as well as the spill-over effects of the Iran -Iraq war, displaced hundreds if not thousands of people who sought safe territories to settle. Turkey's geostrategic location made it a passage point for migrants. Critically, despite the increased mobility of foreigners to and through Turkey, the law remained ridged on persons who were non-Muslims and non-Turkish. It was until the adoption of the 1994 Asylum Regulation that such migrants were

considered as regular (Kirisci, 1996; Soykan, 2010: 3-12; Suter, 2013). With regard to Turkish citizens who had migrated to Europe, the government made several reforms in its immigration laws to facilitate further participation of Turks living abroad in their domestic issues. Key among them was the adoption of the Blue card in 2009 for the Turks abroad replacing the pink card (Mencutek, and Baser, 2018: 88 -92).

The government of Turkey had to adopt further changes to its immigration laws after the year 2000 as more regular and irregular migrants come to and through Turkey making the issue of migration an important theme in Turkey's accession to the EU (Özçürümez and Yetkin, 2014; Kirişçi 2005). Concerns have been raised over the declining effectiveness of past migration laws and policies which were keen on maintaining Turkey as a homogeneous society. International developments such as globalisation and the end of the Cold War have shaped migration and Turkey's experience. However, even more importantly, it is how the government is responding to these new developments. For example, these factors have influenced how Ankara relates not only to the EU but also with other countries on matters of immigration. Indeed, these relations predate the 2016 deal and will continue even after the deal is over (Heck and Hess, 2017: 39-40).

On the part of its interest to join the EU, Turkey has made significant immigration reforms and enacted a series of laws to be compatible with the Schengen acquis requirements (Kirişçi 2007: 8; Tolay 2012: 40). These reforms have brought fundamental changes in how Turkey handles naturalisation and issuing of work permits to migrants. As early as 2004, the Interior Ministry established the migration regime of Turkey similarly got a boost with the adoption of the Palermo Protocol, which further empowered government agencies' involvement into the deportation and countering human trafficking with the necessary facilities and equipment (Heck and Hess, 2017: 41). The government also adopted the Integrated Border Management (IBM) Strategy which is a more efficient approach of managing borders through an integrated border system (Haase and Obergfell, 2013: 35). This new framework is important in supporting the activities of the newly established institutions such as Directorate of Project Implementation on Integrated Border Management which later transformed to be the Bureau for Border Management in 2012 (Sert, 2013: 177).

As mentioned above, beyond the relations and cooperation with the EU, other factors have similarly shaped Turkey's migration to a large extent. Turkey's restrictive visa policies were reviewed in 2005 to enable more applicants from Africa and the Middle East to move to Turkey. This was explicitly influenced by Ankara's desire to boost investment and trade as well as increase relations with non-western states as it revamped its foreign policy (Börzel and Soyaltin, 2012: 14; Genç, 2015: 536; Açıkgöz, 2015: 102; Aksel and Danış, 2014). By 2005 Turkey had made its desire to play a more significant role in international and regional affairs and mobility. Strengthening relations with countries in the south was an important component of the strategy. Turkey's proactive foreign policy after 2002 can, therefore, be a good impetus in understanding its immigration policies.

When it comes to the question of Syrian migrants, which is perhaps the primary driver for the Turkey-EU deal, then one needs to look at the previous immigration relations between Ankara and Damascus. In 2009, the two countries agreed to allow their citizens to visit each other without the requirement of a visa. This agreement, also referred to as the Şamgen, was supposed to be expanded to include Iraq and Iran in an initiative similar to the European Schengen zone (Özler, 2013: 52; Aras and Zeynep, 2015: 199). While the inclusion of Iran and Iraq in the Şamgen project would have significant benefits for Turkey in terms of increased tourism, the same would have serious implications to Turkey -EU immigration agreements since the bloc had placed Iran and Iraq on its immigration watchlist (Haase and Obergfell, 2013: 6).

Apart from the Şamgen project that has raised concerns among the EU member states, Turkey has maintained geographical limitations on its asylum and refugee policies despite the signatory state to the 1967 Protocol and UN's 1951 Geneva Convention. This limitation has affected non-European asylum and refugee status seekers since the government considers European applicants as potential convention refugees (Brewer and Yüksek, 2009: 650). This has left the process of becoming a refugee for non-European citizens in Turkey a responsibility of the UNHCR, which is a significant cause of concern for the EU which has used this issue as a bargaining chip in Turkey's EU process (Council of Ministers of the EU 2001, 21-22).

Adopting geographical limitation on the UN convention and the protocol is primarily based on Turkey's domestic interests. Clearly, despite the pressure from the EU to repeal this clause, Ankara appears to be unshaken. The argument fronted by policymakers in Turkey is equally legitimate from a domestic point of view. The emphasis that without such limitations, Turkey can be overwhelmed with the burden of refugees

given that its geographical location, relative peace, and rapid economic growth can make it a good choice as a 'country of first reception' for many migrants whose refugee applications have been rejected in Europe. Kirişci (2012: 75) opines that this is equally a good strategy for Turkey as it continues to hold its line until it is officially accepted as a full EU member state. This explains why it took more than ten years since the reopening of Turkey's EU accession for the readmission agreement to be signed in 2013 and reopening discussions for visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens (Kirişci, 2014).

Nonetheless, the Syrian civil war that broke out in 2011 came at a time when Turkey was making changes to its immigration policies, partly to make it in conformity with its EU membership goals and with its domestic and foreign policy ambitions. More specifically, the Syrian civil war had a greater impact on the immigration reforms in Turkey. This has to do with the proximity of Turkey to Syria and the cross-border relations between the Syrian people and the Turks. This, therefore, emphasises the argument that Turkey's foreign policy is driven by different internal and external considerations and events.

Findings and Analysis

The deal between Turkey and the EU has had a critical impact on the three actors involved (Turkey, the EU, and migrants). While for some, it is a tale of success; for the others, it has been a story of disappointment and shattered dreams. The theme of betrayal and unfulfilled promises are equally prominent in the whole process. As the EU finalise the payment of the second batch of the 3 billion Euros to Turkey in March 2018, the embattled EU leaders expressed confidence in the deal, stating that it had succeeded in reducing the number of illegal immigrants to manageable levels. However, there were complaints about how the two billion Euros supposed to be contributed by the member states were supposed to be obtained. Although this challenge was overcome, it had devastating consequences as the delayed payments placed more pressure on Turkey to handle the refugees without much support from outside. When the payments were made, refugees were able to get more social and economic facilities which improved their standard of living in Turkey. Such support has not only physical impact but also a substantial psychological impact on the recipients.

For those caught in the middle of their journey to Europe have perhaps paid the heaviest price. The cost of human suffering, particularly in Greece, where refugees were stuck awaiting processing. Inadequate facilities and personnel hampered the process leaving thousands of people to live in difficult conditions. The perceived cracks in the system did little to reduce the pressure on leaders in Europe who had to deal with growing discontent over their failure to solve the migration issue effectively. Indeed, this allowed far-right populist parties to capitalise on the emotions of the citizens and some won the elections in their respective countries. The Brexit referendum is one of the processes in which migration played a crucial role in shaping voter opinion. Major political parties in Germany and Italy faced shocking defeats partly due to immigration policies that opponents managed to capitalise on while immigration dominated election campaigns in Hungary.

Apart from the inhumane nature of the practices brought forth by the deal as well as the rise of far-right parties in Europe, critics of the deal argue that it was a short-term alternative that could hardly be sustained financially and technically in the long run. They point out that the deal is counterproductive and does not offer a permanent solution to immigration problems, yet it did cost much money. The argument here is that immigrants to have alternative means to reach Europe and therefore, the Union may be forced to dig deeper into its pockets in the long run. Others have cited that such a deal threatens to commercialise immigration and may affect states' responsibility to international norms and obligations in helping people facing persecution and other dangerous vices.

For Turkey, the continued success in integrating the refugees in different cities discount allegations made by critics that Turkey could not be a safe third country as the country's international reputation and respect have increased. That said, the capacity to continue taking in refugees can only go to a certain extent. Already, Turkey is home to over 3.5 million refugees, and adding more will stretch Ankara's ability to sustain these efforts. According to reports by the Turkish government, approximately 30 billion Euros have been contributed by its exchequer towards the refugees. The impact of spending 30 billion Euros on refugees at a time when the Turkish economy is facing uncertainty with the decline of the rapid decline of the Turkish Lira between 2018 and 2019 has had political consequences too. The ruling party has suffered surprising defeats in local government elections losing control of the capital Ankara and Istanbul, which has been attributed to growing anti-immigration sentiments among the locals. Noteworthy, many Syrians have illegally made their

way to cities and towns across Turkey and are living in rented apartments and competing with the locals for jobs raising concerns over the declining wage limits as the refugees are willing to work for much less. Besides, the situation also denies migrants the right to claim their social benefits. Some concerns have been that most of the highly skilled refugees already found their way out of Turkey leaving those with low -skills. This means that in the long -run, government expenditure on social welfare will have to increase.

Even though Turkey has gained renewed attention as an important actor with regards to international migration, the country has incurred substantial financial costs with little support from the international actors. This situation, coupled with the domestic challenges like the declining Lira and shifting public opinions towards Syrian migrants, has prompted Ankara to opt for the establishment of Safe Zone in northern Syria. If implemented, the Safe Zone would stretch for 30 kilometres into Syria and another 480 kilometres along the Turkish-Syrian border, where between 1-2 million Syrians will be relocated.

Interestingly, the concept of the safe zone has received massive criticism from international actors citing infringements of territorial integrity as well as infringement of migrants' rights resulting in a temporary halt of the operation. However, Ankara holds a contrary opinion with regard to its objective. According to President Erdoğan, in a presentation to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2019, the region is predominantly occupied by People Protection Unit (YPG), a group supported by the United States, with strong links to PKK, a group that the EU, the United States and Ankara consider to be a terrorist group. Therefore, creating the zone would push YPG further from Turkish borders thus eliminating potential security threats along the border and securing a haven for the Syrian migrants.

The critics have, however, questioned the unilateral approach adopted by Ankara and more questions had been raised with regards to Ankara's ability to unilaterally finance such an ambitious project that would include 140 villages, schools, mosques and hospitals following its domestic economic challenges. Perhaps Turkey is expressing its frustrations with the deal, and its move is a clarion call for more responsibility and burden-sharing in relation to the management of international migration that would secure the future of Syrians in Turkey.

Conclusion

Revisiting the Turkey-EU immigration deal has only opened up more questions than answers. Is it time for the two actors to review the terms of the agreement? Should there be efforts to find long term solutions now that the pressure has significantly declined? Should the EU live up to its promises of giving Turkish citizens short-term visa liberalisation and open talks on the customs union? These are some issues of significant importance that need to be addressed if the deal is to benefit both parties. Questions need to be asked whether it is prudent to involve a third country to help with hosting some of the refugees if the numbers in Turkey will become unsustainable. Questions have already been raised on whether the deal is worsening or strengthening EU-Turkey relations following Ankara's ambition of establishing a safe zone in northern Syria, an idea that is strongly opposed by the EU and the United States.

Consequently, the dilemma lies in how to re-establish a more peaceful Syria to ensure the voluntary repatriation of Syrian migrants since it is evident that the people of Syria are not merely migrating because they wish to, but circumstances have led them to this situation. Otherwise, even when there was free visa entry with Turkey, the majority of them stayed in Syria. So perhaps a peaceful Syria will be a better long-term objective, but efforts need to begin now.

It has been established that Turkey has had to adjust its migration policies and laws in response to domestic and international events. This flexibility is crucial in understanding why Ankara, irrespective of the shortcoming with the EU deal, has continued to fulfil its obligations. As a country, the Syrian crisis that began in 2011 is not the only event that policymakers have had to deal with the massive migration of people to, from, and through Turkey. Incidences such as the Istanbul Riots on 6-7 September 1955 (Güven, 2011), the establishment of the state of Israel and consequent movement of Jews from Anatolia to Israel (Neyzi, 2005), the 1963-1964 crisis that led to the exodus of people of Rum origin from Istanbul (Tansuğ, 2018), 1974 Cyprus events, the arrival of Turks from Europe, and the exist of Armenians and Greeks as some of the significant migration incidences that Turkey has had to deal with over the years. There are some important observations to be made on the EU -Turkey deal.

Europe appears to be the biggest beneficiary of the deal and not Turkey, as many may argue. Europe's goal was to keep refugees away from the continent which they are succeeding while Turkey has not only failed to get the visa liberalised; it has had to spend ten times more money on the refugees by itself. While the money given to the refugees (\$31/€25) has had a decent impact on their lives, the current inflation in the country is making their lives more difficult. Where Turkey has not gained from, it has benefited elsewhere. The state has received tremendous praise and recognition for its efforts to help the Syrian people when in need. My emphasis on this paper is that on the one hand, the deal has had an impact in the region, but not so much so to affect Turkey's immigration policies and approach as these are highly influenced by other regional, domestic and international factors.

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Intellectual Capital in Islamic Banking Sector: Evidence from Turkey

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ABSTRACT

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The Islamic banking sector has experienced a rapid development both in Muslim and non-Muslim geographies. In this study, using a panel dataset spanning the time period 2005-2018 and several econometric estimations, how intellectual capital affects the financial performance of the participation banks, as Islamic banks are called in Turkey is analysed. The Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient model (VAIC), a well-known methodology, is utilised as a measure for intellectual capital performances and return on assets (ROA) and return on shareholders' equity (ROE), in general, financial performances of the banks. The results of the analyses provide evidence for a positive and statistically significant impact of intellectual capital on financial performances of Islamic banks operating in Turkey. The results also suggest that employed capital efficiency and structural capital efficiency in the operations of Islamic banks are the two crucial factors for their profitability, while human capital efficiency has no statistical relationship with their financial performances. The current study contributes to the relevant literature since there is no study on Islamic banks of Turkey in the aspect of intellectual capital and helps Islamic bankers, such as executives, investors and shareholders, or policymakers in understanding and determining their positions regarding intellectual capital.

Introduction

Over the last two decades, the history of the world economy has witnessed a series of local and global economic crises. In developing countries such as Turkey, these adverse economic environments have slowed down economic growth, declined asset prices and volume of trade, increased public debt stock and shrank the balance sheet of banking and real sectors. Although the banking sector of Turkey is one of the sectors that is most affected by these adverse economic conditions, the sector has overcome these crises due to its solid historical background and a number of supportive interventions by the national government (Balaban and Okutan, 2009; Afsar, 2011). Today, the banking sector of Turkey is among the top 15 largest banking sectors in Europe, and it is one of the largest sectors in the country with a total asset size of 732 billion US dollars and 80 billion US dollars shareholders' equity, over 200,000 employees and approximately 12,000 branches (TBA). As of April 2019, a total of 53 banks operating in the Turkish banking system. 34 of these banks are deposit banks, 13 of them are development and investment banks and 6 of them are participation banks. In this study, how intellectual capital affects the financial performance of the participation banks, the leading representative of the Islamic finance system in Turkey, is analysed.

Participation banks represent Islamic banks in the Turkish banking system, while deposit banks and development-investment banks are the representatives of the conventional banking system. The participation banks have operations under the concept of interest-free finance which is generally defined as the system in which all kinds of financial activities and transactions are applied within the framework of Islamic rules (Arslan and Ergec, 2010). The basic characteristics of Islamic banking are its asset-based nature and the financial products containing excessive uncertainty are not allowed in the Islamic banking system. Besides, the financing of the real economy without interest and the sharing of profit or loss equally by the actors in financial operations are the other critical characteristics of the Islamic banking system. Such features led Islamic banks to perform successfully in the global crises and attracted the attention of the international community to the interest-free Islamic banking system. The high growth performance of Islamic banking in the world and the weakness of the conventional financial system that emerged after the 2008 financial crisis, and the fact that Islamic banking institutions are more resilient to adverse economic environments, took attention of the Western economies to examine this system more closely (Khan and Bhatti, 2008; Cihak and Hesse, 2010). Today, Islamic banks manage an asset of \$ 2.3 trillion and provide banking services in 92 countries with more than 350 organisations (World Bank Islamic Finance Bulletin, 2019), implemented in a wide geography from Southeast Asia to the United States.

In Turkey, companies in the Islamic finance sector, e.g., participation banks have been in operations since 1983, and the banks had a market share of 6 per cent in 2019. According to participation banks association of Turkey, the market share of the sector is expected to be increased to 15 per cent until 2025 because, for the first time in the world Islamic finance sector, a state itself entered into Islamic finance industry as investors and entrepreneurs. There are six participation banks in Turkey, three of them are established with one hundred per cent state capital (Emlak Katılım Bankası, Vakıf Katılım Bankası and Ziraat Katılım Bankası) and the other three participation banks are privately owned (Albaraka Turk, Kuveyt Turk and Türkiye Finans Katılım Bankası). Participation banks held approximately \$45 billion in assets in September 2019 (\$ 7.4 billion in 2005) and employed 16,000 personnel in 1154 branches (TPBA).

Participation banks, as well as conventional banks, employ physical, financial and intellectual capitals on their daily operations. Since the early 1990s, the operations in financial sectors have experienced a dramatic shift from traditional physical work to emerging knowledge-based production. As a result of the explosion in the knowledge-based economy, banks have realised that knowledge is vital to surviving in the market since it is considered as a new production factor and a new way of expansion and growth. Therefore, banks shifted their strategic efforts from the management of tangible assets to the management of abstract intellectual assets e.g. intellectual capital (IC).

The concept of IC has been defined by numerous studies in several ways. IC can be simply defined as an asset which transforms raw materials into something more valuable. IC is defined as information, experience and intellectual property in the way of value creation by Stewart (1997). According to IC definition of Marr and Moustaghfir (2005), IC takes account of employer's as well as workers' skills, competencies and abilities of individuals and groups. They also suggest the value of relationships with suppliers, allies and customers constitutes intellectual capital for a company. Pulic (1998) has defined IC as an indicator to measure business efficiency and to represent the intellectual abilities of a company in the value creation process in a knowledge-based economy. Klein and Prusak (1994) define IC as intellectual property of a company, which is shaped, acquired and strengthened to produce higher-value assets. They are also noted that it is not enough to define IC as abstract assets, such as patents, copyrights, licenses, trademarks, methodologies, processes, networks, administrative systems, intellectual property rights and so forth. In a knowledge-based banking sector, traditional methods of measuring corporate success, based on conventional accounting principles for determining profit, such as return on investments, contribution margin, net profit and so forth, are not enough for measuring a bank's financial performances (Edvinsson, 1997; Firer and Williams, 2003; Pulic, 1998, 2000). Therefore, IC is an important and powerful tool to measure the financial performance of the banks. Previous studies mainly used IC to measure the financial performance of the conventional banking sector (deposit and development-investment banks) while the Islamic banking sector (participation banks) got inadequate attention from these studies. Financial operations in Islamic and conventional banking sectors may differ since they have different theoretical conceptualisation and operational differences. Therefore, in this study, by using a well-known methodology in the related literature known as VAIC model (Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient), IC performance of the participation banks is measured and the relationship between IC and the financial performances of the participation banks in Turkey over the time period 2005-2018 is empirically analysed. To the best of the author's knowledge, there is no empirical study

available in the context of examining the role of intellectual capital in the Islamic banking sector of Turkey. Given the rapid development that the Islamic banking sector has experienced in Turkey, the current study concerning the development of Islamic banking in the aspect of IC contributes to the literature.

The rest of the study is organized as follows: the following section reviews the related literature on intellectual capital and financial performance of the banks; the third and the fourth sections provide data and methodology, respectively. In the fourth and fifth sections, empirical results and conclusion are followed subsequently.

Literature Review

The relevant literature on the relationship between intellectual capital and corporate financial performance has many examples. Most of the studies in this literature utilise Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAIC) model since it is a standardised and integrated measurement of intellectual capital and allows researchers to empirically compare firms and countries to understand how intellectual capital impacts the financial performance of firms operating in the banking and finance sectors (Pulic and Bornemann, 1999; Mavridis, 2004; Goh, 2005; Nazari and Herremans, 2007; Yildiz, 2011; Gigante, 2013; Mohammadi and Taherkhani, 2017; Ozkan *et al.*, 2017; Tran and Vo, 2018). While some of these studies have shown that IC has positive and significant influence on the financial performance of the corporates in the banking sector (Bassi and Buren, 1999; Chen Goh, 2005; Pew Tan *et al.*, 2007; Zeghal and Maaloul, 2010; Ozkan *et al.*, 2017), some studies have confirmed no or limited relations (Firer and Williams, 2003; Bharathi, 2008), and some others have found a negative relationship between IC and financial performances of the corporates (Williams, 2001; Maria, 2014; Pitelli *et al.*, 2014).

In the case of the Islamic banking sector, the relevant literature does not have a comprehensive and sufficient number of studies that have particular attention to the importance of IC in a rapidly growing Islamic banking industry. A recent study concerning intellectual capital in the Islamic banking sector has been published by Nawaz and Haniffa (2017). Using VAIC methodology and Bankscope database for the period 2007-2011, they empirically analyse the impact of intellectual capital on the financial performance of 64 Islamic financial institutions operating in 18 different countries. Their empirical results provide evidence for the value creation of Islamic financial institutions is highly influenced by human capital efficiency and employed capital efficiency. Musibah and Alfa (2013) empirically examine 53 Islamic banks operating in the countries comprising the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman). Their results suggest that intellectual capital has a negative relation with the corporate social responsibility of Islamic banks in the study region. Specifically, while capital employed efficiency has a positive impact on banks' corporate responsibility, human capital efficiency has a negative relationship with it. Nawaz (2017) also focuses on the Islamic banking sector in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and examines 47 Islamic banks in pre- and post-financial crisis period. He suggests that intellectual capital is a key factor for Islamic banks to improve their odds of survival at the crisis and that higher intellectual capital efficiency helps Islamic banks to maintain their profitability.

Since countries with Muslim population, such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan etc., have experienced rapid development in the Islamic finance sector in the last 30 years, several studies have been recently employed on the development of Islamic banks in the aspect of intellectual capital. For example, Husnin and his colleagues (2014) analyse the financial and intellectual capital performances of 15 Islamic banks in Malaysia for the time period 2008-2012. Using VAIC methodology and a panel dataset, their empirical results suggest a direct relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance of Islamic banks in Malaysia. Khalique *et al.* (2013) conducted a similar study on Islamic banking sector operating in Malaysia to examine the influence of intellectual capital on the organisational performance of Islamic banking sector. They obtain data from 120 individuals participated in their study and utilise Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Their empirical results suggest intellectual capital has a significant influence on the organisational performance of Islamic banking sector in Malaysia.

Similarly, Ousama and Fatima (2015) measure IC for corporate efficiency performance of the Islamic banking sector in Malaysia and examine the relationship between IC efficiency and financial performance. They use data from the annual reports of the study banks for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 and their results provide an empirical evidence that human capital efficiency, a component of VAIC, has an important impact on the profitability of Islamic banks and that the optimal utilisation of IC and resources lead to higher bank

profitability. Setianto and Sukmana (2016) empirically analyse and compare IC and financial performance of Islamic banks in Malaysia and Indonesia for the period from 2010 to 2014. They find that Islamic banks in Malaysia have exhibited better intellectual efficiency scores as compared to that of Islamic banks in Indonesia. Their results also suggest that banks with better human capital efficiency and employed capital efficiency tend to exhibit higher profitability levels while structural capital efficiency is not related to Islamic banks' financial performance both in Indonesia and Malaysia. Setyawati *et al.* (2019) analyse the relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance of 11 Islamic banks in Indonesia over the period 2013-2016. They find that intangible assets including the standard operating procedures, storage of all data, structural procedures, etc., significantly affect the return on assets and the growth of assets in the Islamic banking sector of Indonesia. Rehman *et al.* (2011), Rehman *et al.* (2012) and Khan *et al.* (2015) focus on intellectual capital in Islamic banking sector of Pakistan and find the results similar to the studies applied on Islamic banking sector in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The relevant literature has no empirical study available in the context of looking at the role of IC in the Islamic banking sector of Turkey. It may be the reason Islamic banking is relatively a new concept in the country compared to the conventional banking system which has been in existence since the 1800s (Ziraat Bankasi established in 1888)¹. On the other hand, some studies provide information about the development of the Islamic banking sector in Turkey or compare them with the conventional banking system. Yılmaz and Güneş (2015), for example, empirically examine and compare the efficiencies of participation and conventional banks in Turkey. Using data envelopment analysis with a sample of 4 Islamic banks and 28 conventional banks, they compare technical efficiency, pure technical efficiency and scale efficiencies of these banks. Their results confirm that conventional banks are more efficient in the creation of the same amount of output compared to Islamic banks in Turkey. There are also studies in the literature that focus on the overall banking sector of Turkey and empirically examine the relationship between intellectual capital (VAIC) and financial performance of the banks. In a few words, results of these studies generally suggest intellectual capital has a positive impact on financial performance of the banks operating in Turkey (Yalama and Coşkun, 2007; Karacan and Ergin, 2011; Yıldız, 2011; Çalışkan, 2015; Avcı and Nassar, 2017; Ozkan *et al.*, 2017; Arslan and Kızıl, 2019).

Overall review of the related literature suggests that intellectual capital is an essential element for the competitiveness and the profitability of Islamic banking sector. On the other hand, this crucial element has not attained adequate attention from the researchers for the Islamic banks operating in Turkey. In this aspect, findings of the current study are likely to contribute to the relevant field as the first research on this subject.

Data

The Turkish banking sector is one of the largest sectors in the country with 11,576 domestic branches, 206,000 employees and an asset size of 732 billion dollars. In 2019, there are 34 deposit banks, 13 development and investment banks and 6 participation banks in the Turkish banking system. Three of the six participation banks, Albaraka Türk, Kuveyt Türk and Türkiye Finans banks, have foreign-private owners as main shareholders and they have been in operations in Turkey since the mid-1980s. Albaraka Türk bank is the oldest participation bank in the country and a part of The Albaraka Banking Group (ABG), one of the strongest capital groups in the Middle East. The bank was established in 1984 under the leadership of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and a local industrial group and had been serving to the Turkish economy for more than half a century. The bank's share of foreign ownership is approximately %66 and it has 230 domestic branches and 3,884 employees in 2019. Kuveyt Türk bank is another participation bank established in 1989 and has been operating in the Islamic banking sector since then. The bank is a subsidiary of Kuwait Finance House and approximately 80% of its shares are owned by foreign parties. The bank continued to operate with 5,871 employees 417 branches in 2019. Türkiye Finans bank was established in 2005 with a merger between Anadolu Finans and Family Finans which are two interest-free corporates operating in the Islamic finance sector of Turkey. The bank's main shareholder is the National Commercial Bank of Saudi Arabia. Türkiye Finans bank operates in the Islamic banking sector of Turkey with 487 domestic branches and 3,487 employees in 2019.

¹ <https://www.tbb.org.tr/tr/bankacilik/banka-ve-sektor-bilgileri/banka-bilgileri/tarihsel-bilgiler/68>

The rest of the participation banks in Turkey are entirely owned by the government. For the first time in the world Islamic finance sector, a state itself entered into Islamic finance industry as investors and entrepreneurs, and the government opened Ziraat Katılım bank in 2015, Vakıf Katılım bank in 2016 with a hundred per cent state capital. In 2019, to expand the sector, the government converted state-owned Emlak bank into Emlak Katılım bank which specialises in the construction and real estate sector as an Islamic participation bank.

In this study, using a panel dataset, a sample of 3 privately owned participation banks in the Islamic banking sector over the 2005-2018 fourteen-year periods is analysed. 3 state-owned participation banks are excluded from the study due to the lack of data for the study time period. The total number of observations included in the analyses is 42. The dataset for the empirical analyses is produced using the statistical reports of the banks that are available in websites of the Participation Banks Association of Turkey². The analyses of this study have been completed using STATA 14.0 statistical software. Table 2 provides detailed information about the banks used in the current study. The variables are summarised on the summary statistics in Table 4.

Methodology

Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAIC) Model

Many techniques have been developed in the related literature to measure intellectual capital (IC) performances of the corporates. Organizational Intellectual Capital, introduced by Edvinsson (1997), is a well-known technique for measuring IC performance of companies. It provides pieces of evidence for how efficiently an investment has been used in a specific time period. This technique is composed of earnings obtained from new business activities and investments in markets, education and training, patents and so forth. Using several indexes including satisfied customer index, research and development index, leadership index, motivation index and so on, this technique calculates an intellectual capital coefficient of efficiency for a firm. Sveiby (1997) develops another IC measurement technique known as Profit per Professional which is calculated by the proportion of profit created by the number of professionals in a company. This technique utilises sales and personnel efficiency indicators to measure a company's IC performances. VAICTM (Value Added Intellectual Coefficient) technique, proposed by Ante Pulic and his colleagues at the Austrian IC Research Centre (Pulic, 1998, 2000; Pulic and Bornemann, 1999), is the most common and effective method for measuring IC performances of companies. VAIC model is a well-accepted method in the literature and has been increasingly used in business and academic practices to understand the efficiency of business operations and how much value-added has been created with a given amount of physical and financial capital in a company.

VAIC model has three components that are human capital efficiency (HCE), structural capital efficiency (SCE) and employed capital efficiency (CEE). Following equations algebraically formalise VAIC model and its components.

$$(Eq. 1) \quad VAIC = HCE + SCE + CEE$$

$$(Eq. 2) \quad VA = OP + EC + D + A$$

$$(Eq. 3) \quad HCE = VA / HC$$

$$(Eq. 4) \quad SCE = SC / VA$$

$$(Eq. 5) \quad SC = VA - HC$$

$$(Eq. 6) \quad CEE = VA / CE$$

² <http://www.tkbb.org.tr/statistical-reports>

In Equation (1), *HCE* represents human capital efficiency coefficient which shows how much a bank creates one monetary unit invested in its human resources. *SCE* stands for structural capital efficiency, which demonstrates a firm's structure type consisting of some indicators like technical know-how, customer and supplier relations, information technology and firm reputation. *CEE* shows capital employed efficiency coefficients indicating how much value a bank creates in one monetary unit invested in their financial or physical capital. Equation (2) exhibits *VA* which has to be determined first to be able to calculate the components of *VAIC*. *VA* stands for the measure of the sum of value added which reports the ability of a bank to create value. *VA* has four components comprising *OP* refers to operational profits; *EC* shows employee costs and *D* and *A* show depreciation and amortisations, respectively. Equation (3) shows the calculation of *HCE* and *HC* refers to total salaries and wages distributed to personnel in a bank. Equation (4) and (5) are for the calculation of structural capital efficiency coefficient and for the structural capital, *SC*, of a bank which is calculated as the difference between *VA* and *HC*. Equation (6) calculates capital employed efficiency coefficients and displays *CE* which is for the book value of net assets for a bank.

VAIC model is more appropriate for the present study and has some advantages in empirical analyses compared to other IC measurement techniques. First, VAIC model utilises simple equations and is based on publicly available simple data while alternative techniques are based on complex equations, models and principles which can be understood only by executives or accountants in a company. VAIC model can be easily computable and understandable by everyone inside and outside of a company. Second, for empirical and comparative analyses, VAIC model encompasses a standardised and consistent basis for measurement of IC. Alternative techniques are limited to measure IC consistently to employ a comparative analysis between two sectors. Third, the alternative techniques have been exposed to harsh criticisms regarding their calculation methods and subjectivity. The calculation method of VAIC is based entirely on accounting and financial reports which makes it wholly objective and verifiable (Gigante, 2013).

Empirical Model

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of intellectual capital on the financial performance of participation banks in Turkey. In order to measure the financial performances of participation banks, return on assets (ROA) and return on equity (ROE), two of the most common method of financial performance measures, are utilised in the current study. The Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAIC) method is used to represent the IC performances of the banks.

Essential statistical tests are conducted on the panel dataset before estimating the association between IC and financial performance of the banks. First, the Hausman test is used to determine whether a fixed effect or a random effect model is appropriate for the estimation models. Hausman test is a statistical hypothesis test which evaluates a more efficient model against the less efficient by checking the significance of an estimator versus an alternative estimator (Hausman, 1978). The random effect model is used in the estimations as the Hausman test results strongly suggest that the random effects models are more appropriate for the dataset. Second, since the group-wise heteroskedasticity is a big problem in panel data models which causes to have biased estimators, the LBF test (Levene-Brown-Forsythe) is also conducted to check this problem. The test results indicate no heteroskedasticity problem in the estimation models. Lastly, Pesaran test is conducted on the dataset to check cross-sectional correlation in the models. As the test results indicate sectional dependence in the models, the models are employed with robust standard errors.

The impact of intellectual capital on the financial performances of the banks is estimated based on the following models:

$$\text{Model (1)} \quad FP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VAIC_{i,t} + \beta_2 X_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

$$\text{Model (2)} \quad FP_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HCE_{i,t} + \beta_2 SCE_{i,t} + \beta_3 CEE_{i,t} + \beta_4 X_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

Where $FP_{i,t}$ is the main dependent variable of both models and represents financial performance measures for bank i in year t . $FP_{i,t}$ includes two financial performance measures which are $ROA_{i,t}$ (return of assets) and

$ROE_{i,t}$ (return on equity), two different dependent variables symbolised as $FP_{i,t}$. Calculation of $ROA_{i,t}$ and $ROE_{i,t}$ for a certain bank i and a year t is presented in the following equations;

$$(7) \quad ROA_{i,t} = \text{Net Income} / \text{Total Assets}$$

$$(8) \quad ROE_{i,t} = \text{Net Income} / \text{Shareholders' Equity}$$

Return on assets and return on shareholders' equity are two strategic measures of corporate profitability and have been widely used in numerous studies on the financial performance of the banks. ROA is a popular method for smaller banks to compare banks to each other and monitors banks' own performance or overall size in a specific time period. ROE indicates how effectively banks handle shareholders' equity and it is preferred by larger banks since it is not an asset dependent measure of financial performance. Asset independency feature of ROE provides some advantages to the banks, such as comparing different asset structures to each other, comparing themselves to other types of business, comparing internal product line performance to each other and looking at the comparative profitability of lines of business. Since ROA and ROE address different purposes for financial performance measurement, both measures are included in the models as dependent variables to see if IC has different impacts on these financial performance measures.

In Model (1), $VAIC_{i,t}$ stands for the main independent variable of the model and represents a measure of IC performances of bank i in year t , as detailed above section. An increase in $VAIC_{i,t}$ is related to a rise in IC performances of the banks in the models. Model (2) consists of the components of $VAIC_{i,t}$, that are Human Capital Efficiency ($HCE_{i,t}$), Structural Capital Efficiency ($SCE_{i,t}$) and Capital Employed Efficiency ($CEE_{i,t}$) for bank i and year t . The model estimates the impact of these components of VAIC on the financial performances of the banks. Model (1) and (2) include some control variables symbolised as $X_{i,t}$. Bank size is one of these control variables and calculated as the natural log of total assets. The other control variable is leverage, the ratio of long term debt to total assets. $\beta_0 - \beta_4$, in Model (1) and (2), are the parameters to be estimated and $\varepsilon_{i,t}$ represents idiosyncratic heteroskedasticity consistent robust error terms. Lastly, Model (1) and (2) are estimated without the control variables and other specifications ($X_{i,t} + \alpha_i + \tau_t + \varepsilon_{i,t}$) to see the direct relationship between $VAIC_{i,t}$ and $FP_{i,t}$, then these control variables are added to the models to analyse their impact on $FP_{i,t}$.

Empirical Results

Pearson correlation analysis results which display the correlation coefficients among the study variables are presented in Table 1. According to the results, VAIC has a pretty strong and statistically significant positive correlation with both dependent variables, ROA and ROE ($r=0.6515^*$ for ROA and $r=0.6173^*$ for ROE). The components of VAIC also have positive and statistically significant correlations with ROA and ROE. CEE is the variable with the highest correlation with ROA ($r=0.6763^*$) and ROE ($r=0.8614^*$) and SCE is the second highest correlation with both ROA and ROE. HCE is the variable with the lowest correlation with both ROA and ROE. This confirms that the financial performances of the banks (measured with ROA and ROE) are more dependent on capital employed efficiency and structural capital efficiency comparing to human capital efficiency. The results also provide evidence for statistically significant correlations among independent variables, but these correlations are not strong which prevent multicollinearity problem within the independent variables.

Table 2 provides results of comparative analysis on the variables of the three banks used in the analyses, such as establishment years, asset size, ROA, ROE, VAIC and its components. The Table reports both the 14 year average values (2005-2018) and 2018 values of intellectual capital and financial performance scores of the study banks. In the year 2018, Kuveyt Türk is the bank with the largest asset size of approximately 14 billion US dollars among the participation banks. In the same year, Kuveyt Türk also has the highest intellectual capital scores ($VAIC=4,764$) and financial performance scores ($ROA= 0.0117$, $ROE=0.1599$). This implies that a bank with higher (lower) intellectual capital scores has also higher (lower) financial performances. Average values of financial performance and intellectual capital scores for the period 2005-2018, Türkiye Finans bank is the bank with the highest scores. Among other banks, Türkiye Finans bank's highest average

VAIC (3.410), HCE (2.475) and SCE (0.588) scores can be related to the bank's highest average ROA (0.0169) score. Similar to the facts in the year 2018, banks with higher (lower) financial performance has also higher (lower) intellectual capital scores during the period 2005-2018. The overall results of the comparison analysis displayed in Table 2 suggest a strong relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance of the participation banks operating in Turkey.

The results obtained from the econometric analyses for the relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance of the banks are reported in Table 3. The Table consists of two panels with respect to the dependent variables in the models. Panel A provides the estimation results based on ROA as the dependent variable, while panel B includes ROE as the dependent variable and the results are provided accordingly. In panel A, Model (1) shows a direct impact of VAIC on ROA and Model (3) estimates the direct impact of the components of VAIC on ROA, respectively. Model (2) and (4) incorporate the control variables to the estimation models. Most of the estimation results reported in Panel A are statistically significant and have expected signs. For example, the results of Model (1) and (2) suggest a positive and statistically significant relationship between VAIC and ROA. Specifically, one unit change in VAIC is related to 0.008 unit change in ROA (return on assets) in Model (1) and 0.006 unit change in Model (2). This finding implies that VAIC has a positive impact on the financial performance of the participation banks of Turkey. Most of the components of VAIC (except HCE) have also positive and statistically significant relations with ROA. These results suggest that an increase in SCE and CEE causes a rise in ROA. However, the impact of HCE on ROA is unexpectedly negative, but this impact is not strong and statistically significant. Among the components of VAIC, CEE has a greater impact on ROA in Model (3) and SCE is the component with the highest impact on ROA in Model (4). These results provide a clear indication that the financial performances of the participation banks in Turkey is mostly affected by CEE and SCE and if the banks want to achieve higher financial profitability, they should concentrate more on CEE (capital employed efficiency) and SCE (structural capital efficiency) rather than HCE (human capital efficiency). In other words, if the participation banks of Turkey use their structural capital efficiently, this means improving technical know-how, information technology, bank's reputation and customer-supplier relationship, that increases the banks' profitability. The results also imply that satisfied customers, especially the external stakeholders of the business, are crucial for the financial success of the banks.

ROE (return on shareholders' equity) is substituted for ROA as the dependent variable in Panel B of Table 3. In Panel B, similar to Panel A, VAIC and its components have positive and statistically significant effect on ROE. However, the magnitude of the effect of VAIC on ROE is much greater in Panel B. For example, while the impact of VAIC on ROA is 0.008 in Panel A, the impact of VAIC on ROE is approximately 0.06 in Model (5) and (6) of Panel B. Similarly, impact of CEE and SCE on ROE is much larger than their impact on ROA in Panel A. This finding implies effective usage of intellectual capital in the banking sector has more positive effect on ROE compare to its positive impact on ROA. The estimation results report that HCE has an unexpected negative relationship with both ROA and ROE. However, this unexpected result is not statistically significant except Model (7). This provides evidence for recruiting and preserving talented personnel and training them continuously do not significantly influence the profitability level of the participation banks in Turkey.

Conclusion

In this study, the impact of intellectual capital on financial performances of the Islamic banking sector of Turkey is analysed. Specifically, three participation banks, as Islamic banks are called in Turkey, (Albaraka Türk, Kuveyt Türk and Türkiye Finans banks) are studied over the time period between 2005 and 2018. Return on Assets (ROA) and Return on Shareholders' Equity (ROE) are used as the measures for the financial performance of these banks. Value-Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAIC) method is used to measure intellectual capital performances of the banks. The current study utilises multiple econometric estimation models, comparison and correlation analyses to investigate the relationship between VAIC and financial performances of the participating banks.

In general, it can be concluded that the estimated models have provided evidence to support the notion that intellectual capital creates positive and significant impacts on the financial performance of Islamic banks of Turkey. This implies that the Islamic banks operating in Turkey should definitely concentrate on improving their intellectual capital level to boost their financial success. With regard to the components of VAIC, results indicate that capital employed efficiency and structural capital efficiency are the most important component

of intellectual capital for the profitability of these banks. This provides a clear indication that in order to increase the profitability, the Islamic banking sector of Turkey should use their structural capital efficiently, which means improving technical know-how, information technology, bank's reputation and customer-supplier relationship. In addition, satisfied customers, especially the external stakeholders of the business, are crucial for the financial success of the Islamic banks in Turkey. The empirical results show no evidence for the relations between human capital efficiency and the financial performance of Islamic banks. This may show that expenses on training employees and having talented personnel do not significantly impact the financial performances of Islamic banks in Turkey. According to the empirical results, intellectual capital has more statistical relations with return on shareholders' equity compared to its relations with return on assets. This finding may imply that effective usage of intellectual capital in the Islamic banking sector has a more positive financial impact on return on shareholders' equity rather than return on assets.

Finally, the Pearson correlation analysis and the comparison analysis support the econometric estimation results suggesting a strong positive link between Intellectual capital and the financial performance measures, ROA and ROE. The results of the correlation analysis also suggest strong interrelations among the components of VAIC. This evidence implies that when banks improve their human capital, their structural capital or employed capital will be positively affected.

The study contributes to the relevant field since it can be considered as the first comprehensive study on testing the effect of intellectual capital on the financial performance of corporates in the Islamic banking sector of Turkey. Since the understanding and development of the intellectual capital concept is still a debatable issue in emerging economies, the findings of the present study may shed light upon the discussion. The findings may serve as a useful input for Islamic bankers, such as executives or shareholders in understanding and determining their positions regarding intellectual capital. The results may assist them to develop strategic plans and establish priorities for knowledge-based management. The findings also help politicians for planning intellectual capital development in the Islamic banking sector in Turkey. Finally, the findings can also be utilised from the investors of the Islamic banking sector to modify their future investment strategies.

The present study concentrates only on a small part of the financial sector. Intellectual capital is an important factor not only for the Islamic banking sector but also for other types of financial institutions. Therefore, future research should incorporate other types of banks and businesses into the analyses, such as deposit banks, insurance companies, investment funds, real estate firms and other companies in the financial sectors of Turkey. In addition, the present study utilises the VAIC methodology to measure the intellectual capital performance of the banks. Although VAIC method is a well-known and well-accepted method in the literature, future studies may use other methods of intellectual capital measures, such as Tobin's Q ratio, Profit per Professional, Organizational Intellectual Capital or Market-to-Book ratio etc.

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Tables

Table 1: Pearson correlation analysis

	ROA	ROE	VAIC	HCE	SCE	CEE	Leverage	Banksiz
ROA	1							
ROE	0.8929*	1						
VAIC	0.6515*	0.6173*	1					
HCE	0.5821*	0.5156*	0.9898*	1				
SCE	0.6242*	0.5479*	0.9622*	0.9652*	1			
CEE	0.6763*	0.8614*	0.5520*	0.4322*	0.3981*	1		
Leverage	-0.5931*	-0.1825	-0.3429	-0.3664	-0.4347*	0.0428	1	
Banksiz	-0.7746*	-0.6923*	-0.2202	-0.1364	-0.1688	-0.5701*	0.4793*	1

Table 2: Financial Performance and Intellectual Capital in Participation Banks

Banks:	Albaraka Türk	Kuveyt Türk	Türkiye Finans	Sector Average
Established Year	1985	1989	1991	
Total Assets (2018, Million US \$)	7,997	14,059	8,911	10,322
Return on Assets (ROA) (2018)	0.0032	0.0117	0.0094	0.008
Return on Assets (ROA) average (2005-2018)	0.0155	0.0136	0.0169	0.015
Return on Equity (ROE) (2018)	0.0411	0.1599	0.1029	0.101
Return on Equity (ROE) average (2005-2018)	0.1578	0.1445	0.1566	0.153
VAIC (2018)	2.182	4.764	4.282	3.743
VAIC average (2005-2018)	3.281	3.25	3.41	3.314
HCE (2018)	1.564	3.535	3.251	2.783
HCE average (2005-2018)	2.363	2.319	2.475	2.386
SCE (2018)	0.361	0.717	0.692	0.591
SCE average (2005-2018)	0.56	0.558	0.588	0.569
CEE (2018)	0.257	0.512	0.339	0.369
CEE average (2005-2018)	0.359	0.373	0.347	0.362

Table 3: Estimation Results

Panel A					Panel B			
Variables: ROA	ROA	ROA	ROA	ROA	ROE	ROE	ROE	ROE
Models:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
VAIC	0.008** (0.004)	0.006*** (0.000)			0.068*** (0.025)	0.064*** (0.001)		
CEE			0.045*** (0.007)	0.032*** (0.008)			0.570*** (0.052)	0.348*** (0.080)
HCE			-0.011 (0.014)	-0.003 (0.007)			-0.107** (0.053)	-0.073 (0.053)
SCE			0.095 (0.059)	0.041** (0.043)			0.733*** (0.225)	0.656** (0.311)
Leverage		-0.048* (0.025)		-0.104*** (0.013)		1.064*** (0.281)		0.525*** (0.150)
Banksiz		-0.004*** (0.001)		-0.002*** (0.000)		-0.042*** (0.012)		-0.024*** (0.003)
Constant	-0.012 (0.012)	0.103*** (0.018)	-0.028*** (0.004)	0.119*** (0.018)	-0.072 (0.080)	-0.332 (0.221)	-0.213*** (0.007)	-0.252* (0.150)
Observ.	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses and ***, **, and * indicate *P-values*, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Models:

(1) $ROA_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VAIC_{i,t}$	(5) $ROE_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VAIC_{i,t}$
(2) $ROA_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VAIC_{i,t} + \beta_2 X_{i,t} + \alpha_i + \tau_t + \varepsilon_i$	(6) $ROE_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VAIC_{i,t} + \beta_2 X_{i,t} + \alpha_i + \tau_t + \varepsilon_i$
(3) $ROA_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HCE_{i,t} + \beta_2 SCE_{i,t} + \beta_3 CEE_{i,t}$	(7) $ROE_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HCE_{i,t} + \beta_2 SCE_{i,t} + \beta_3 CEE_{i,t}$
(4) $ROA_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HCE_{i,t} + \beta_2 SCE_{i,t} + \beta_3 CEE_{i,t} + \beta_4 X_{i,t} + \alpha_i + \tau_t + \varepsilon_i$	(8) $ROE_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HCE_{i,t} + \beta_2 SCE_{i,t} + \beta_3 CEE_{i,t} + \beta_4 X_{i,t} + \alpha_i + \tau_t + \varepsilon_i$

Table 4: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
ROA	42	0.015	0.007	0.003	0.034
ROE	42	0.153	0.058	0.041	0.322
VAIC	42	3.314	0.523	2.182	4.764
HCE	42	2.386	0.409	1.564	3.535
SCE	42	0.569	0.075	0.361	0.717
CEE	42	0.360	0.082	0.223	0.609
Leverage	42	0.901	0.020	0.855	0.932
Banksize	42	16.409	1.024	14.493	18.123

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BOOK REVIEW

Joel Mokyr (ed.)

A Culture of Growth: The Origins of the Modern Economy

(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-691-18096-0, 417 pp., \$22.95)

This book's primary aim is to discover the reasons why early modern Europe, as it was at that period, became very receptive to novel ideas, theories and concepts that were springing up in the era of Columbus and Newton (1500-1700). It goes further to explain why this growth trend did not happen in other places in the world. This book is an acknowledgement that culture has become a very vital concept when discussions of economic growth are raised. By so doing, this book has achieved quite a milestone. Mokyr also makes his points clear in the book. Culture, which is the sum total of people's ideas, customs and social behaviour, was a determining attribute to the changes witnessed in society. This he does by leaning on views from Economics, Science & Technology and cultural development. Unlike his predecessors, Mokyr is careful of stirring the hornet's nest with his arguments, so he draws a rather thin line in relating culture and Institutions.

The book is categorised into five distinct subthemes: Evolution, Culture and Economic History; Cultural Entrepreneurs and Economic Change, 1500-1700; Innovation, Competition and Pluralism in Europe, 1500-1700; Prelude to the Enlightenment; and Cultural Change in the East and West. The sections spin around different subjects and fields such as Economics, Cultural Studies, History and Science.

Mokyr begins his argument with a startling revelation of our sparse knowledge of institutions that spurred the Industrial Revolution. While we may know about how these institutions came to be, through various battles fought and won, power struggles and alliances amongst Europe's powerful dynasties, there is little we know about how useful knowledge played its part in the

evolution of the Industrial Revolution. Knowledge in this regard appears in both its formal and informal structure.

He goes ahead to explore the relationship between these journeys of discovery and the initial stages of experimental science, whereby there was a growing need to ascertain certain grey areas in the knowledge gap. Mokyr moves on further to draw inspiration from the notion of culture as outlined by noted anthropologists like Lynn White, to grapple with those "beliefs, values and preferences capable of affecting behaviour... and that are shared by some subset of society" (p.8). He claims that culture serves not only as of the foundation of a society's institutions but also gives credence to these institutions. Many scholars have posited on how the Enlightenment was a key factor to Europe's rise. This, he totally agrees with, claiming that it further rises to continual incitements in the pursuit of useful knowledge. However, he has come to view the rise of the Enlightenment in the late period of the 17th century, as being more of a protracted and cumulative change that took place in the thought process of Europe's literary elites.

Europe, as it were, was neither better structured nor more progressive than various Asian societies. Europe's major breakthrough came only in the middle 1600s when it basically adopted originative means of acquiring and validating useful knowledge. The republic of letters served as this originative means, and it describes a community of scholars, whether in Philosophy or in the literary world, who had such a socially cosmopolitan spread and were also disseminated geographically. These scholars often lit out debatable ideas, which were really not

revolutionary in the sense of the word, while adopting a collaborative stance with each other.

This republic of letters fundamentally created two interconnected markets. One was a market for ideas. In this case, Mathematics and Experimentation were given prominent places in the scheme of things. The other market was for ambitious scholars who sought fame, fortune and clout across Europe. In this sense, a scientist such as Galileo, who had achieved a considerable amount of influence, would tower over any two obscure scientists of that period.

That is to say, in essence, a system was adopted to diffuse useful knowledge. This occurred over a period of time spanning generations and was not just a one-off achievement. Consequently, for Mokyr, science and technology in Europe did not grow the way it did as a result of previous cultures, but as a renunciation of these cultures. At the centre of this renunciation was the republic of letters, which in doing away with the clammed up traditional approach to knowledge circulation prevalent in Europe at that time, allowed knowledge to be shared, criticised and corrected. Its system of feedback mechanism, Mokyr says, allowed the republic of letters to contribute majorly to the spread of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment, in turn, gave rise to the economic growth that occurred around Europe.

This means that over a span of several centuries, two paradigm shifts occurred in the ideology of the average European. First, the pursuit of knowledge, especially in the area of getting to know deeply about nature, came to be viewed as an instrument for improving mankind's lot. Secondly, the adoption of novel ideas and new ways of doing things was no longer seen as the exclusive preserve of the elite, beneficial only to them. Instead, advance in technology and organisational change became increasingly accepted as being an indispensable tool in taking the populace out of poverty.

The critical institutional differences between Europe and China in the periods leading up to the 19th century is well laid out by Mokyr. Coming to most distinct economic factors such as transport networks, protection of intellectual property rights and a free hand for the market to run, these differences were either conspicuous or insignificant within Europe when compared between Europe and China.

Seen purely from a political economy point of view, the China of Qing's dynasty was quite

different from early modern Europe. To this end, a **Culture Of Growth** is an important body of work. It contains ideas, propositions, historical facts, biographies of influential scholars, writers and scientists, and it is a confirmation of the author's expertise of a broad range of topics in the economics of culture and comparative economic history of an emerging Europe and China.

Hopefully, this book should rouse future well-researched body of work, taking from the plethora of ideas and insights it contains in, which are in need of further development by expert economic historians. It lays the framework on how scholars should theories the different interactions among institutions, cultures, politics and modernisation, by both pushing aside focus on the Industrial Revolution to the backburner while laying more emphasis on the earlier centuries, and by conducting comparative studies of scientific advancements, institutions and modernisation.

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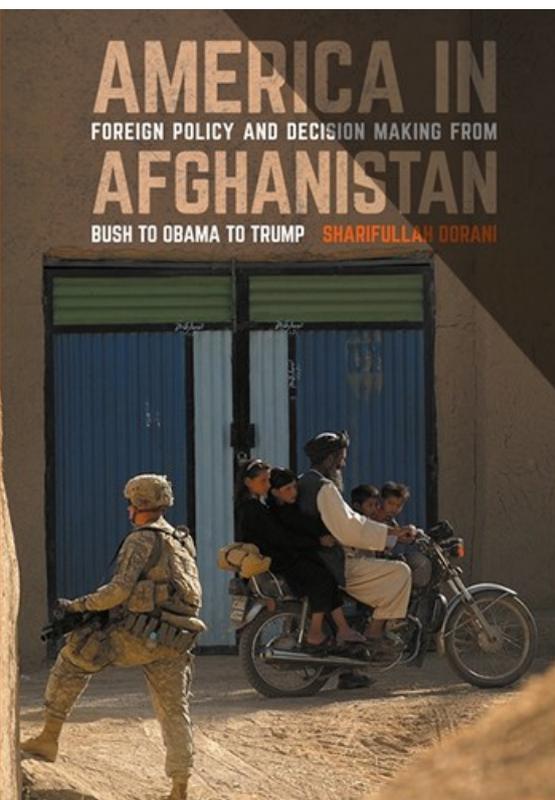
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BOOK DISCUSSION PANEL:

“America in Afghanistan:
Foreign Policy and Decision Making
From Bush to Obama to Trump”
by Dr. Sharifullah Dorani

BOOK REVIEW

Eli Berman, Joseph H. Felter, and Jacob N. Shapiro

Small Wars, Big Data

(Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-691-17707-6, 386 pp., \$ 29.95)

In the intentions of the authors, *Small Wars, Big Data*, is aimed to address the complex issue of civil or intrastate wars and their impact on civilians. This is certainly a topical issue, and it will be a key topic in the coming years, given the spreading of unconventional conflicts. Ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan, addressed in the chapters of this book, show how the boundary between international and non-international conflicts became blurred after the Second World War.

The impact of conflicts on the civil population is the authors' greatest concern. Civilians have always been the innocent victims of every war, but, although protected by the Geneva Conventions, they have become the subject of indiscriminate attacks since 1945 (e.g. the allied bombing of Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

At the core of this work, there is a change in the *type* of warfare. It is a thorny issue, which would require a discussion of what is meant by terrorism and whether and when guerrilla warfare is to be considered a legitimate tactic by insurgents – guerrilla was categorised as "terrorism" from a certain point in time. Today everything from political opponents to hybrid conflicts and even organised crime is "terrorism". Initially, terrorism was an offshoot guerrilla military tactic employed by resistance groups. Early examples of insurgencies and guerrilla warfare can be traced back to the Túpac Amaru indigenous uprising in highland Peru against Spanish control in the 1780s and the Caste War in the Yucatán peninsula of Mexico in the 1840s and 1850s (Castro, 1999).

From the fifties onwards, in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, the insurgency in Latin America was grounded on Marxist-Leninist

ideology, and characterised by the use of a variety of violent and nonviolent tactics, including terror, to overthrow governments with guerrilla warfare (Debray, 1967). This phenomenon, previously classified as "insurgency" and/or "guerrilla", was then rebranded "terrorism". The meaning of terrorism has changed over time. Since the early sixties, the term has often been used in a political sense to label national liberation movements in Africa and later in Latin America. It took hold as an instrument in political struggles against governments in the U.S. and Europe categorised and finally has been identified with the Islamic world.

Any violence can be terrorism or anti-terrorism. Legitimate defence or aggressive attacks are semantics that depend on the arbitrary judgment of the involved parties. This, by definition, defeats the concept of justice and legality. Terrorism is an effective method of conflict because it is limited in scope, targeted against civilians, and almost impossible to eradicate. This isolates it from the traditional military applications, and by extension, from the same legal and judicial argumentation. However, there are cases where terrorists were those who defended their land from invaders, and the invaders were the ones who marked them as terrorists. There needs to be a clear division between what is and what is not terrorism, and only then will it be possible to clearly define the terms and the scope of conflict against those who are terrorists.

The words "terrorist" and "terrorism" became fluid terms, easy to be manipulated. Today everything, from political opponents to hybrid conflicts and even organised crime, can be construed as terrorism. The very concept of terrorism has changed since the word has a

political meaning. Thus, it becomes difficult to distinguish 'true' terrorists from those who are political opponents or just common criminals. Terrorism has become an umbrella term encompassing criminals and political opponents. It seems that the problem in labelling acts as terrorism is not what is done, but who does it. Klabbers (2003: 300-1) argues that "today's terrorist is tomorrow's freedom fighter", due to the "state-centric nature of international law" and to the "sheer supremacy of politics over law".

The authors correctly frame the international, transnational and hybrid nature of terrorism, as well as its various purposes, whether purely criminal, or political. The limitation of this approach is that the hypothesis that terrorism can also have a state matrix, as demonstrated by several parts, is not taken into consideration at all – this is especially true regarding the recent conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, undertaken in the name of the "War on Terror".

There are hundreds of definitions of terrorism; none of them tackles the problem of state terrorism. Currently, the term 'terrorism' is commonly used to describe acts committed by non-state or subnational entities, thereby excluding acts committed by lawful governments – it allows those who determine the merit of including the ultimate decision-making power, and there is no accountability and no oversight of these decisions. Those who pursue these tactics are not persecuted, nor are their methods questioned thoroughly. It would be appropriate to develop a definition of terrorism that would encompass the possibility of a pseudo-state led by terrorists, and the appropriate response in case of a conflict with such a state (e.g. ISIS).

Bockstette (2008: 8) wrote that terrorism is "political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear (sometimes indiscriminate) through the violent victimisation and destruction of noncombatant targets (sometimes iconic symbols)". Deeming that terror acts are performed by "an illicit clandestine organisation", he excludes their being carried out by a government or its agents. In his definition, we perceive Bockstette's typically military vision, which makes a distinction between tactics ("short-and midterm political goals") and strategy ("desired long-term end states").

Through the ten chapters of this book, are analysed conflicts that occurred in the last twenty years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria and the Philippines, establishing a relationship between

rebels, governments and civilians. The authors conclude that 'conventional military methods' might succeed but undermine lasting peace.

In my opinion, the difference between conventional/unconventional – both legally undefined terms – seems to be outdated. A knife, a broken bottleneck (if it cuts your jugular), even a fork, a hammer, a baseball bat, or a stone – according to the biblical story David kills Goliath by hurling a stone from his sling and hitting him in the centre of forehead – are all unconventional and potentially lethal weapons. Nevertheless, distinguishing between weapons, their effect and consequence, is necessary in order to avoid a cascade effect and undesirable outcomes (i.e., civil casualties).

Practitioners and researchers will find this publication useful, as it provides a comprehensive case study of the main conflicts that have occurred in the last twenty years. *Small Wars, Big Data*, does not come to general conclusions, but it is instead a compilation of stories and lessons learned, that could be useful to policymakers and military leaders to 'open up political space to get deals done'; this is the strong point of the book.

Dr. Marco Marsili

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BOOK REVIEW

Sharifullah Dorani

**America in Afghanistan:
Foreign Policy and Decision Making from Bush to Obama to Trump**

(London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2019, ISBN: 978-7845-3998-6, 317 pp., £85)

As mostly compared to the Vietnam War, America's Afghanistan War has been profound both regarding the foreign policy of America in general and the Global War on Terror in particular. In this sense, the book's focus on America's foreign policy-making towards Afghanistan and the fight against terrorism are both timely and instructive, as the number of US ground forces in Syria decreases and their presence in Afghanistan and Iraq continues.

The author classifies America's foreign policy on Afghanistan in accordance with the three recent US Presidents. The classification makes it easy to follow *America in Afghanistan* in chronological order. Consequently, the book consists of three parts, focusing on the Bush, the Obama and the Trump presidential terms. It contains 13 chapters, apart from the Introduction and the Conclusion. Chapters 1 to 5 focus on the Bush administration, Chapters 6 to 11 study the Obama administration and Chapters 12 and 13 are dedicated to the Trump administration.

The introduction shines a light on the current situation in Afghanistan, which shows how Afghanistan is amidst a vicious war. In addition, given the past decades of war/foreign invasions and hardship, it claims how the Afghan people are excessively thirsty for peace and order. In both the introduction and the conclusion, it is interesting to see how the author's Afghan background sometimes forces him to become emotional, but he is quick to distance himself. The book has been especially enriched by the author's frequent visits to Afghanistan to conduct interviews and obtain documented statements and official papers.

In the first part, the author suggests that Bush's pre-emptive doctrine and the Global War on

Terror were based on excessive self-confidence, which aimed at eradicating the roots of terrorism. The arrogance prevented the administration from preparing an exit plan for the countries they invaded. One of the striking arguments the book makes is that from the beginning of the Afghan War, the decision-making process turned into a division of ideas on how the US should respond to international terrorism. As the author suggests, there were always two camps. One argued for a full military operation, which required a massive ground force engagement, while the other believed political, diplomatic and economic policies were the answers to raise Afghanistan on its own feet. As the Afghanistan War prolonged and cost a tremendous amount of money and thousands of American lives, core ideas of the war were discussed over and over again, especially whether the Afghanistan War served US national interests. The discussion went on during the second term of the Bush's presidency and continued into the Obama and the Trump administrations.

Three reasons are listed for why such a debate has been commenced. Firstly, the US in Afghanistan is stuck between international and regional dynamics, and the success of the Global War on Terror is not guaranteed because of rivalries among Iran and Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and India, as well as Russia/China and the US/NATO. Secondly, loose borders between Afghanistan and Pakistan and the tribal structure in the area provide sanctuaries for the terrorist organisations, which are out of reach. Thirdly, terrorism networks transcending Afghanistan border to Pakistan and from there to the world reduce the importance of military success against Al Qaida and the Taliban in Afghanistan but increases the importance of forming a stable state authority that

can provide security for its people. To crystallise his argument, the author reminds us of the fact that the terrains from which terrorism and terror activities are conceived are mostly under the sovereignty of rogue or unstable states like Somalia, Libya, Nigeria, Syria and Iraq.

The Obama administration realised the importance of a state being able to provide security and order as then terrorist organisations could not be sprouted. That is why his administration militarily and economically supported the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF). It has indeed been the main goal of the US/NATO. As the ANSF reached the level of self-sustainability, the responsibility for security of the areas freed from the Taliban and Al Qaida was transferred to them. As the author strongly indicates, handing over the responsibility for security of the cities freed from the terrorist organisations to the ANSF has been another important aim since the intervention. This ultimate objective seemed to have changed in the Obama administration, however, when the President promised Americans to withdraw US forces from Afghanistan regardless of the situation on the ground. However, the American military focused on a counterinsurgency policy covering economy, security and diplomacy.

Both Americans and Afghans waited nervously to see what changes President Trump would make to the Afghanistan strategy. His policy of Afghanistan was confusing, however. As the author states in *America in Afghanistan*, decision making during the Trump administration turned to be more complicated than those of the previous presidents. Trump's tweets on the Afghanistan War were asking for the international community to take on more responsibility but was also emphasising the Afghanistan War as a waste of money and lives. The President managed to get NATO to increase its military power and get more funding for the Afghanistan War. Yet, the Afghanistan War remains a stalemate. Expectations from the National Unity Government and the US/NATO forces to complete the mission by the end of 2024 and bring an end to the Afghanistan War is a central issue today in the South Asian politics.

An interesting thing about the author's attitude is that, on the one hand, he writes that mistakes made by the US, especially during the Bush and the Obama terms, were a major cause of the war going bad in Afghanistan; on the other hand, he sharply criticises full military withdrawal of US forces, albeit an irresponsible pullout. This

contradictory stance seems to originate from the author's concerns for the ordinary Afghans who have been through harsh conditions for nearly four decades. An irresponsible pullout may indeed plunge Afghanistan into yet another civil war.

The book is extremely valuable in terms of understanding decision making towards Afghanistan during the three US presidents mentioned. It further explains very well how US foreign policy changes in accordance with US presidents' 'belief systems'. The book can, therefore, be crucial to courses relating to Foreign Policy Analysis, especially those on the Foreign Decision Making Models.

Contributing to the literature of the Afghanistan War, the book also presents a detailed map of the Afghanistan War, from which the reader can follow the evolution of the war from the beginning up until now. I believe the book will also be beneficial for students taking courses on the politics of South Asia, as well as modules on US foreign policy. Academics and practitioners can equally gain an accurate and deep understanding of America's longest war.

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