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Cultural foundations of military diffusion

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This article examines cross-national variation in the diffusion and adoption of military technologies and ideas. The history of warfare has been marked by periods of innovation in which the institutions and practices of war-making adapted in response to technological opportunities, and social and political developments. As information about new practices spreads, through the demonstration effects of innovating states or transnational social networks, military innovations have diffused throughout the international system.[1] Diffusion can restructure power relations as states leverage new capabilities to increase their military power and enhance their international influence.

Diffusion is a process that involves the transmission of new information; the decision by elites to adopt new technologies, ideas, and practices; and ultimately the assimilation of those ideas into institutions and practices. Some states more readily adopt innovations than others. Three explanations have been advanced to account for this variation. Neorealism attributes variation to different external security requirements. States facing a more threatening security situation have a greater incentive to adopt new military methods, frequently by emulating the most successful states in the system. Domestic politics explanations focus on variation in the ability to mobilise domestic support for new ideas through social networks, transnational organisations and domestic advocacy groups,[2] or on differences in state structure that impact the ability of reformers to penetrate the state, construct winning coalitions for reform, and implement reforms.[3] A third type of explanation focuses on culture, and posits that diffusion is more likely to occur when international norms resonate with domestic norms and produce a cultural match.[4] Culture arguments are usually

* Theo Farrell, Jack Goldstone, Chaim Kaufman and Miko Nincic provided comments on various drafts of this article. Two anonymous reviewers provided valuable comments. Leo Blanken provided research assistance.

[1] Emily O. Goldman and Leslie C. Eliason (eds.), *The Diffusion of Military Technology and Ideas* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[2] Margret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink, 'The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction', in Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1–38; Theo Farrell, 'Transnational Norms and Military Development: Constructing Ireland's Professional Army', *European Journal of International Relations*, 7 (March 2001), pp. 63–102; Amy Gurowitz, 'Mobilizing International Norms: Domestic Actors, Immigrants, and the Japanese State', *World Politics*, 51 (1999), pp. 413–45.

[3] Thomas Risse-Kappen, 'Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures and the End of the Cold War', *International Organization*, 48 (Spring 1994), pp. 185–214; Farrell, 'Transnational Norms'; Deborah Avant, 'From Mercenary to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War', *International Organization*, 54 (Winter 2000), pp. 41–72.

[4] Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'Norms, Institutions and National Identity in Contemporary Europe', *International Studies Quarterly*, 43 (1999), pp. 83–114.

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coupled with domestic political explanations that account for the agency mechanism by which culture affects outcomes.

Culture arguments that have been advanced thus far are weak culture arguments. The extent of cultural match is treated as a condition enabling or inhibiting diffusion but the causal mechanism for change is domestic politics. Domestic political factors – structure and process – carry the weight for explaining variation in policy outcomes.

The analysis presented here proposes a strong culture argument in which the presence or absence of a cultural and ideological orthodoxy shapes the scope, pace and extent of diffusion. Realism is correct that security threats are an important stimulus for military reform. But adaptation to security challenges can involve mechanisms that realism excludes. When faced with a strategic setback, leaders have the choice of consolidating based on traditional practices or reforming and adopting new methods. The cases of Turkey and Japan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrate that responses to external shocks and political crises depended on whether or not there existed an official orthodoxy. Where an official orthodoxy was in place, crises were attributed to a failure to adhere to traditional principles rather than to a failure of the basic principles that underlay existing institutions and practices. Leaders pushed for greater conformity to traditional norms and were intolerant of deviations from strict orthodoxy, and this hindered diffusion and military reform. Only after elites acknowledged the failure of basic institutions to preserve the state, and abolished the existing orthodoxy, did diffusion and reform accelerate.

Elite attitudes are crucial to this explanation. When elites are committed to defending an official orthodoxy based on an ideological belief in the corrosive influence of foreign ideas, they respond to crises in ways that preserve orthodoxy and this limits diffusion. Regime change is neither necessary nor sufficient to produce acceptance of practices embedded in external cultural orders.[5] Diffusion and innovation require ideological and cultural tolerance, and the elimination of official orthodoxy that suppresses diversity.

The level of analysis is that of political culture – the values governing authority and status, promotion and recruitment, and citizenship and allegiance. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European societies were undergoing a transformation associated with the Enlightenment ideas of equality, professionalism, nationalism, secular education, merit, and bureaucratic rationality. European armed forces adopted new bases for recruiting, new approaches to training and command, and new norms of professionalism based on merit.[6] These changes produced a dramatic increase in the effectiveness of European military forces.

In the late Ottoman Empire and late Tokugawa Japan, elites were dismissive of outside scientific, technical and political knowledge. In the face of repeated threats to the internal stability and external security of the state, elites called for stricter adherence to official orthodoxy, rejecting Western scientific and political ideas. The scope and pace of diffusion accelerated only after the existing orthodoxy governing status and promotion within the military and society was officially rejected. So long

[5] Radical reform can be implemented by 'political incumbents'. Peter the Great and Gorbachev come to mind.

[6] Morris Janowitz, 'Some Observations on the Comparative Analysis of Middle Eastern Military Institutions', in V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

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as elites remained committed to defending a rigid orthodoxy, military changes that did occur were designed to shore up the existing social order rather than enhance external security.

The cases were selected because they display large variation on the key study variable, cultural tolerance of elites.[7] Level of cultural tolerance is assessed on the basis of several types of evidence: official government proscriptions governing relations with the outside world, treatment of foreigners, and the extent of enforcement of those decrees. This variation produces sharp variance on several dimensions of the dependent variable, diffusion – preferences for adoption; scope of diffusion and pace of diffusion – making it easier to rule out measurement error and omitted-variable explanations.[8]

This article reviews the literature on diffusion and examines predictions with data from four regimes: the late-Ottoman and Kemalist regimes in Turkey; and the late-Tokugawa and Meiji regimes in Japan. These cases present puzzles for neorealist and domestic political arguments about diffusion and policy change. Realist interpretations should be on the strongest ground since military security is an area highly constrained by task demands imposed by a self-help world,[9] yet the level of external threat does not account for the scope, pace and extent of military reform. Nor does the presence of norm entrepreneurs, domestic mobilisation for reform, and elimination of opponents of reform explain the extent of diffusion and military reform. In Turkey, for example, dissolution of the Janissary corps in 1826, strident opponents of Western military reform, did not open the way for full-scale adoption of superior Western military methods.

Leaders in Tokugawa Japan and Ottoman Turkey appreciated the need for some military reform and were in a position to implement it. It was not the absence of norm entrepreneurs or support for reform but rather how reform was conceived. Military reforms that were designed to preserve an official ideological orthodoxy and which sought a return to an idealised traditional society, whether based on the janissary spirit or independent feudal warrior,[10] produced selective and partial diffusion. Those reforms proved to be ineffective in improving the state's military capabilities and security. Military reforms, when accompanied by a commitment to overturn official orthodoxy, paved the way for broad and deep diffusion. In the case of Japan, a weak isolated state rapidly became a world-class power.[11]

[7] Scholars of comparative politics have already compared rates and patterns of change in these two countries. See Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964); Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978).

[8] Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 61–3.

[9] Martha Finnemore, 'Norms, Culture and World Culture: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism', *International Organization*, 50 (Spring 1996), p. 336.

[10] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 75.

[11] Other cases of cultural resistance, and then cultural acceptance, of Western military innovations include Maury Feld, 'Middle Class Society and the Rise of Military Professionalism: The Dutch Army, 1589–1609', *Armed Forces and Society* (1975); Richard Hellie, *Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1971); Adam Hirsh, 'The Collision of Military Cultures in 17th Century New England', *Journal of American History*, 74 (1988), pp. 1187–212; Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); and Andrew Vayda, 'Maoris and Muskets in New Zealand', *Political Science Quarterly*, 85 (1970), pp. 560–84.

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Theories of diffusion

Neorealism starts from the premise that a competitive logic governs the international system and creates a powerful incentive for states to adopt new military methods, particularly those of the most successful states in the system. Waltz argues:

> The possibility that conflict will be conducted by force leads to competition in the arts and instruments of force. . . . Contending states imitate the military innovations contrived by the country of greatest capability and ingenuity.[12]

Neorealism predicts preferences for adoption will be high given the constant pressure of competition in the international system. The strength of incentives to adopt should vary with perceived security. States that are unusually secure, for geographic or size reasons, should be least motivated to adopt new ways of war. Yet when external threats are high, the motivation to survive should produce broad and deep policy change.

Most neorealists posit few barriers to diffusion, short of the need for adequate resources and information. While there are limits on the usability of national power,[13] the pressure to maximise military effectiveness in a highly competitive environment should be strong enough to cause substantial efforts to overcome institutional barriers. Diffusion should be rapid and extensive.

A growing body of scholarship focuses on the domestic political and structural determinants of diffusion. A large part of this scholarship builds upon institutionalist approaches that emphasise the social conditions that structure military change.[14] Since the mid-1970s, sociologists have studied why specific structures and practices diffuse through organisational fields.[15] New institutionalist theory argues that convergence in organisational forms occurs as members are socialised in professional networks and come to share norms of appropriate behaviour and identity.[16] Several scholars have argued this process accounts for the global spread of advanced conventional weapon systems and information-based military technologies and models.[17] World polity versions of institutional analysis document the homogenising effects of Western culture, but never clarify the mechanisms by which global norms become internalised into domestic practices.[18]

[12] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 127.
[13] Stephen Krasner, *Defending the National Interest* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).
[14] New institutionalists also have a concept of competitive isomorphism. Because it is so similar to neorealism, I concentrate on their concept of normative isomorphism.
[15] For an overview, see Richard W. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations* (London: Sage, 1995).
[16] Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, 'The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields', *American Sociological Review*, 48 (April 1983).
[17] Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman, 'Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach', in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Cultural Norms and National Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 79–113, Chris Demchak, 'Creating the Enemy: Global Diffusion of the IT-Based Military Model', in Goldman and Eliason (eds.), *The Diffusion of Military Technology and Ideas*, pp. 307–47.
[18] John W. Meyer and Michael T. Hannan (eds.), *National Development and the World System: Education, Economic, and Political Change, 1950–1970* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Richard W. Scott, John W. Meyer et al., *Institutional Environments and Organizations: Structural Complexity and Individualism* (London: Sage, 1994); John W. Meyer, John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, 'World Society and the Nation State', *American Journal of Sociology*, 193 (1997), pp. 144–81.

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Domestic politics explanations strive to fill this void. A study of the spread of human rights norms attributes internalisation to the role of transnational advocacy networks that socialise states into prevailing norms of international society.[19] Sikkink, Keck, and Gurowitz attribute variation to the ability to mobilise domestic support for new ideas through social networks, transnational organisations and domestic advocacy groups.[20] Gurowitz examines the extent to which international ideas further the goals of domestic groups. If transnational networks are active, if domestic interest groups are mobilised, preferences for adoption should be high. Farrell emphasises the role of norm entrepreneurs and personnel changes.[21] Avant attributes reform to dominant political coalitions that comprise divergent interests.[22]

Variation in diffusion has also been attributed to differences in domestic structures, which affect access to policymakers and the ease of building winning coalitions for reform.[23] Centralised state-dominated structures provide reformers with few access points into the political system while decentralised society-dominated domestic structures provide access but make coalition building more difficult.[24] Domestic structure arguments make no predictions about preferences for adoption. They also presume that state-dominated structures are more likely to inhibit innovation. Yet as Castells points out, the state can be a leading force for technological innovation, as it was in Meiji Japan, as well as a hindrance to innovation, as it was in China under the Ming and Qing dynasties and in the Soviet Union.[25] Whether the state stalls, unleashes or leads technological innovation cannot be accounted for by state structure arguments alone. State structure arguments do make predictions about the scope and speed of adoption although those predictions are indeterminate. Centralisation inhibits access to the power apparatus but facilitates implementation of reforms, while decentralisation eases access yet inhibits implementation.

Culture approaches emerged in response to the early spatial diffusion theories of Torsten Hägerstrand that formed the foundation of much diffusion analysis. Hägerstrand privileged the communication of information in accounting for diffusion.[26] Critics challenged Hägerstrand and argued that 'technological innovations tend to be rejected, not through ignorance, but through incompatibility with the existing cultural system as a whole'.[27]

Checkel refined the idea of cultural obstacles to diffusion by examining the extent to which international norms resonate with domestic norms to produce a 'cultural

[19] Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights*.
[20] Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*; Risse and Sikkink, 'The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms'; Gurowitz, 'Mobilizing International Norms'.
[21] Farrell, 'Transnational Norms and Military Development'.
[22] Avant, 'From Mercenary to Citizen Armies'.
[23] Thomas Risse and Stephen C. Roppe, 'International Human Rights Norms and Domestic Change: Conclusions', in Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights*, pp. 262–4.
[24] Risse-Kappen, 'Ideas Do Not Float Freely'. Matthew Evangelista makes a similar argument in his book, *Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[25] Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, vol. 1: *The Rise of the Network Society* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 9–13.
[26] Torsten Hägerstrand, *Innovation Diffusion as a Spatial Process* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1967). Translated by Allan Pred (originally published in 1953); James M. Blaut, 'Two Views of Diffusion', in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 67:3 (September 1977), p. 343.
[27] Blaut, 'Two Views of Diffusion', p. 346; David Brian Robertson, 'Political Conflict and Lesson-Drawing', *Journal of Public Policy*, 11 (January–March, 1991), p. 68.

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match'.[28] Checkel's approach corrects a deficiency in neorealist and neo-institutionalist theories, namely the neglect of local cultural models, which may pose barriers to diffusion.[29] According to Checkel, 'diffusion is more rapid when a cultural match exists between a systemic norm and a target country, in other words, where it resonates with historically constructed domestic norms'.[30]

Cultural accounts predict that diffusion will be easier and more extensive if the cultural match is high, although it is not clear whether this is due to a greater preference for adoption or fewer internal barriers. When the cultural match is low, cultural theorists turn to domestic political explanations to account for diffusion. Presumably, domestic political factors set in motion a process that increases cultural match.

There are several problems with this cultural approach. First, it requires extensive data to establish the extent of cultural match. Second, resonance may be high in some issue areas yet low in others, making it difficult to determine the true extent of cultural match. Third, accounting for change is problematic if culture is relatively static. Culture is typically defined as 'worldviews and principled ideas – values and norms – that are stable over long periods of time and are taken for granted by the vast majority of the population'.[31] How can culture explain change if by definition it is stable? Fourth, it is difficult to measure cultural resonance a priori, and easy to fall into the trap of assuming fit based on outcome. Finally, the same culture has been shown to induce very different technological trajectories.[32]

Goldstone's work on political crisis, culture and innovation suggests an alternative cultural theory of diffusion that does not depend on the extent of cultural match or clash. It is less concerned with culture's content (which is central to the cultural match argument) than it is with the level of cultural diversity tolerated in society. It only requires one to establish whether or not elites defend and enforce a particular interpretation of culture. Goldstone examines periods of reconstruction after major political crises. He argues that 'how various cultural elements are selected, emphasised, and conformity to them enforced by states' are key to how states respond to particular historical crises. If the response sustains and tolerates ideological diversity, innovation is enhanced. 'But insofar as that response leads to suppression of alternatives and emphasis on internal cultural orthodoxy, the intolerance of innovation, and the cultural and economic stagnation familiar from late Rome, Byzantium, Qing China, and late Ottoman Turkey, are likely'.[33]

Goldstone's account does not fall victim to the argument that change cannot be explained by cultural variables if culture is static. The argument assumes that culture

[28] Checkel, 'Norms, Institutions, and National Identity'.

[29] Theo Farrell, 'Culture and Military Power', *Review of International Studies*, 24 (1998), pp. 407–16; Craig M. Cameron, *American Samurai: Myth, Imagination, and the Conduct of Battle in the First Marine Division, 1941–1951* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jeffrey W. Legro, *Cooperation Under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint During World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Doctrine Between the Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[30] Checkel, 'Norms, Institutions and National Identity', p. 87.

[31] Risse-Kappen, 'Ideas Do Not Float Freely', p. 209.

[32] Castells, *The Information Age*, p. 10; Jack A. Goldstone, 'Political Crisis and Cultural Orthodoxy: Attitudes toward Risk and Innovation in the Divergence of East and West in the 17th Century', draft manuscript.

[33] Goldstone, 'Political Crisis and Cultural Orthodoxy', p. 389.

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is not static or monolithic but a diverse amalgam of values and beliefs developed and accreted over time. Goldstone writes:

> Any society may be thought of as having not a single culture, but a variety of cultural 'themes', various interpretations and heterodoxies of the core culture, plus whatever borrowings and incursions have grown up around it. . . . At any one time, political and cultural leaders may adopt a laissez-faire attitude to such cultural diversity, with its inevitable internal contradictions, tension, and turmoil, or rulers may seek to repress variation in favour of an official orthodoxy. Cultural diversity and ferment seems likely to favour innovation, and tolerance of pluralism to enhance openness to taking risks, while enforcement of a state orthodoxy seems likely to result in repetition and elaboration of old models, and hostility to innovation and risk. Thus the degree of innovation in a society may well be affected not by the content or potential of the national culture as such, but rather by the attitudes of rulers toward that culture, and be contingent on which strains of culture rulers choose to enforce as official orthodoxy.[34]

When elites enforce an ideological orthodoxy in order to restore or consolidate existing traditions, diffusion will be partial at best. Broad, deep diffusion occurs only after official orthodoxies are overturned, paving the way for greater tolerance of new ideas and practices.[35]

It is reasonable to ask why some elites enforce an official orthodoxy while others tolerate more diversity, and whether the operative factor is not in fact personal power. Trimberger argues that Ottoman leaders were only interested in reforms that would revitalise the state and enhance their own personal power.[36] But in some cases limited reform enhanced central state and personal power – such as Mahmud II's destruction of the Janissaries and creation of his own army – while in other cases radical reform was more effective in centralising state power and enhancing personal power – such as the Meiji leaders' adoption of universal conscription. The desire to enhance personal or state power alone cannot tell us ex ante how extensive reform and diffusion will be.

Table 1 summarises the major theories of diffusion, presents the causal chain of each argument and key predictions about diffusion and military reform. The case studies that follow assess the importance of five key variables derived from these theories on diffusion and military reform: level of external security threat; information about external practices and interaction with Europe; presence of norm entrepreneurs and domestic mobilisation for reform; state structure; and the cultural tolerance of Turkish and Japanese leaders.

The Ottoman Empire and Kemalist Turkey

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the external security threat from Europe to Ottoman Turkey was very high. European nations were leveraging political unity

[34] Ibid., p. 378.

[35] This argument resonates with the claim by Risse and Ropp, 'International Human Rights Norms and Domestic Change', pp. 262–3, that the internalisation of external norms works well in 'open' domestic societies, meaning 'societies that for a variety of historical reasons have developed cultures and institutions that are responsive to and can accommodate some meaningful degree of internal debate and external influence'. Similarly, Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 30, associates the absence of a cultural and ideological orthodoxy with the 'freedom to inquire, to dispute, to experiment, a belief in the possibilities of improvement, a concern for the practical rather than the abstract, a rationalism which defied mandarin codes, religious dogma, and traditional folklore'.

[36] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, pp. 66–7.

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Table 1: *Theories of diffusion.*

Theory	Driver of policy change	Causal chain	Predictions
Neorealism (Waltz)	Competition	Security threat > demonstration effects > policy change	Diffusion will be broad, deep and rapid if the security threat is high.
Neo-institutionalism (Demchak; Eyre and Suchman)	International norms	Transnational networks > socialisation > policy change	Diffusion will be broad and rapid as states interact with, and are socialised into, the world cultural order.
Domestic politics I (Sikkink, Keck, Gurowitz, Farrell, Avant)	International norms	Transnational networks > domestic mobilisation/norm entrepreneurs > policy change	Diffusion will occur after advocacy groups or norm entrepreneurs mobilise domestic interests.
Domestic politics II (Risse)	International norms	Transnational alliances > domestic structures > policy change	Diffusion will be slower in decentralised state structures. Diffusion will either be rapid or absent in centralised state structures.
Spatial diffusion (Hägerstrand)	Information	Information > policy change	Diffusion will increase as the flow of information rises.
Culture I (Checkel)	International norms	Norm resonance > norm empowerment > policy change	Diffusion will be more rapid where a cultural match exists.
Culture II (Goldstone)	Competition	Strategic setback > cultural tolerance or cultural transformation > policy change	Diffusion will be broader, deeper and more rapid when tolerance for cultural diversity is high.

and developments in science and technology to amass armies and build weapons that left the Ottomans drastically inferior. The Austrians and Russians levelled decisive defeats on Ottoman forces. Between 1683 and 1739, wars with Austria, Venice and Russia pushed the empire back to its sixteenth-century boundaries. Defeats by Russia in 1768–74 and by a Russian-Austrian coalition in 1787–92 led to staggering territorial losses and the near complete destruction of the Ottoman navy. The Napoleonic wars ignited Serbian rebellion and another war with Russia that lasted until 1812. The Ottomans again faced defeat at the hands of the Greeks in 1823 and

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the Russians in 1828. In 1832, Muhammad Ali of Egypt marched against the Sultan and nearly reached Istanbul.

Defeat prompted military reform as neorealism would predict. From 1729 to 1742, the French Count Alexander de Bonneval established a European-style bombardier corps and the first engineering school.[37] The French artillery officer Baron de Tott formed a new corps of rapid-fire artillery and engineers, modernised the mathematics school, and established an army engineering school in 1773.[38] In 1774, the French Lieutenant Aubert recruited and trained a new unit of field artillery. Yet these reforms affected only the smaller technical branches of the military – navy, artillery corps, and cannon corps – and had a negligible impact on the infantry (Janissaries) and cavalry (Sipahi). The technical contributions of Europeans who converted to Islam were limited to their years in service and the individuals with whom they came into contact. The small units they created were destroyed upon their departure.

After defeats by Russia and Austria in the late eighteenth century, Selim III launched more far-reaching reforms to eradicate nepotism, corruption, incompetence, and inefficiency in the older corps.[39] He regularised drill, opened army and naval engineering schools, and acquired and began manufacturing modern arms. Selim's greatest achievement was his new army, the *Nizam-i Cedid*, which numbered 25,000, was armed with modern weapons and trained by European officers.[40] But the new army coexisted side by side with the traditional military structure.

The next phase of reform followed military defeats in the 1820s and 1830s. In 1826, Selim's nephew, Mahmud II, began to dismantle the Janissaries,[41] eventually replacing them with his new army, the *Mansure* (Victorious). The military's ties to the Janissary tradition and religious institutions were severed,[42] but favouritism still governed appointments and promotions. After Mahmud's death, the army's defeat by Syria in 1839 stimulated a series of reforms in economic, political, legal, educational and military institutions known as the *Tanzimat* or renovation era.[43] The army was patterned after Prussia's, with three reserve categories to provide a force of over 700,000.[44] By the close of the *Tanzimat* period in 1876, the Ottoman army was equipped with modern rifles and guns. Its reserves performed well and its officers were beginning to emerge as a separate professional class.[45] Naval reforms also followed in the wake of military defeat.[46] Personnel reforms lagged behind those in

[37] Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III 1789–1807* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 8.
[38] Ibid, p. 121.
[39] See Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Origins of Ottoman Military Reform: The Nizam-I Cedid Army of Sultan Selim III', *The Journal of Modern History*, 37:3 (September 1965), pp. 291–306; Shaw, *Between Old and New*, especially pp. 86–166 for a discussion of Selim's reforms.
[40] Shaw, 'Origins of Ottoman Military Reform', p. 302.
[41] Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968; reprinted 1969), pp. 78–9.
[42] Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (McGill University Press, 1964), p. 111.
[43] For an overview, see ibid., pp. 137–222.
[44] David B. Ralston, *Importing the European Army: The Introduction of European Military Techniques and Institutions into the Extra-European World, 1600–1914* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 61; M. E. Yapp, 'The Modernization of Middle Eastern Armies in the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative View', in V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp, *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 348; Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856–1876* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 264–6.
[45] Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 265–6.
[46] For an overview of reform in the navy, see Shaw, *Between Old and New*, pp. 150–66.

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Europe,[47] but by 1876 the Ottoman navy was the third most powerful in Europe in number and armament of ships.

A survey of military reforms in the late-Ottoman era shows that in the wake of military defeat, the Ottomans were willing to adopt European military hardware and some practices, like drill, but were reluctant to tamper with the military's institutional structure, or the traditional Islamic values that underlay it.[48] Diffusion was selective in terms of units affected and types of reforms adopted. Newer technical corps adopted modern weapons while the older corps did not. New technologies were more readily adopted than reforms in organisation, administration, and training. Regularised drill was instituted, while reforms in appointments, promotions, and secular education proved fleeting, particularly in the army. In the time-honoured tradition of the Sultans, new Western-style military units were created alongside traditional Ottoman units, producing a bifurcated model of reform.[49] Even during the *Tanzimat* period, secular institutions coexisted side by side with traditional institutions. The military posture of the Ottoman state continued to decline, experiencing military disasters up until the Empire's dissolution in World War I.[50] Neorealism may explain the timing of reform but not the scope and extent of reform.

The Ottomans did not lack information about Western military practices and institutions. Ottoman Turkey engaged in near-permanent warfare with its European neighbours for nearly 500 years, and between wars there were extensive commercial contacts. Envoys were sent to European capitals to bring back information about political and military affairs, while European technical experts served as administrators and soldiers, bringing with them weapons and knowledge of the West.

Following military defeats, military missions were sent to Europe to acquire foreign expertise, European officers were invited to train units of the Ottoman military, and European military treatises were translated into Turkish.[51] While early eighteenth century reforms were isolated affairs confined to the efforts of individual Europeans who converted to Islam, by the late eighteenth century, the numbers of Europeans dramatically rose. A French mission of 300 was enlisted in 1783 to perform a range of duties.[52]

Selim III relied heavily on European military officers and technical advisors to train and educate his new army.[53] Typically Westerners were isolated from the mass of society, but the 600 foreign technicians hired by Selim were not required to convert to Islam and were allowed extensive social contacts with locals.[54] They were the 'first western social group ever thrust into the midst of Ottoman society without special

[47] Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 266.
[48] Avigdor Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization in the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 18 (July 1982), pp. 229–30.
[49] Shaw, *Between Old and New*, p. 405 notes that simply introducing new corps to make use of new weapons was not enough. The older corps had to be destroyed. The idea of creating new corps to make use of new techniques dated back to the creation of the Janissary corps in the fifteenth century to make use of rifles, cannons, and gunpowder.
[50] Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, p. 75.
[51] Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization', pp. 231–9; Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, pp. 45–9.0
[52] Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization', p. 236.
[53] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 59.
[54] Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization', p. 238.

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arrangements designed to prevent their contact with the Ottomans'.[55] Selim also established permanent embassies in European capitals to relay information back to the Porte.[56]

During the reign of Mahmud II, Helmuth von Moltke, future chief of the Prussian and Imperial German General Staffs, reorganised the Ottoman Army.[57] In the *Tanzimat* period, young men regularly went to Europe for military education and European works were widely translated into Turkish. The Hamidian period that followed, despite its reactionary backlash against Western reforms, coincided with the largest influx of European capital into the empire to sponsor public works projects. Infiltration of foreign ideas was greater than at any prior time, with railroad construction breaking down traditional barriers.[58] Yet despite extensive information about and interaction with Europeans, diffusion and reform were partial and selective.

Ottoman military reforms were top-down with the impetus coming from governing elites. Selim's reforms failed in part because they were viewed as too radical by the Janissaries and conservative religious elements. But Mahmud effectively mobilised a broad base of support. The religious hierarchy supported his reforms to abolish the Janissaries because heterodox Islamic sects allied to the Janissaries were threatening religious orthodoxy.[59] Mahmud also mobilised popular support but he never intended to overturn the existing social and political order. He sought to centralise power in his hands. His goals were initially moderate, but he was forced to eliminate the Janissaries when they opposed him.[60]

The Young Ottoman movement of 1867–1878 and the Young Turk movement of 1889, both had a diverse social base of upwardly mobile bureaucrats and downwardly mobile members of the traditional aristocracy and commoners.[61] Both movements were led by Western-oriented intellectuals and united by fears of Western encroachment. Military officers, disaffected by a promotion system based on connections and not merit, and by unfulfilled promises of military modernisation, played a decisive role. Yet both movements sought reforms that would revitalise traditional Islamic values and integrate them with limited Western innovations in technology and organisation. Namik Kemal, the most prominent leader and ideologue of the Young Ottoman movement whose ideas were adopted by the Young Turks, refused to separate the religious and political features of the state as they were in the West. He never advocated a break with the sultan caliph. His vision of nationalism was based on secular patriotism for minority groups and Islamic patriotism for Muslims.[62] Even moderate reformers like Kemal were forced into exile in 1867.

State structure arguments make no predictions about preferences for reform or the content of reform, only about the ease of launching and implementing policy change.

[55] Shaw, *Between Old and New*, pp. 181–3.
[56] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, pp. 60–1; Shaw, *Between Old and New*, pp. 189–90.
[57] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 82.
[58] Berkes, *Secularism in Turkey*, p. 272.
[59] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 67; Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, p. 52.
[60] Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, p. 58.
[61] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 76.
[62] Ibid., pp. 74, 79, 86. For an extended discussion of the ideas of Kemal and the Young Ottomans, see Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

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The Ottoman state was a decentralised multi-ethnic empire with pluralistic centres of authority. The sultan never gained complete control over the armed forces. Religious elites were sufficiently powerful in the traditional medieval hierarchy to obstruct reforms that did not serve their interests. Local notables equated reform with centralisation and opposed it.[63] Nonetheless, Mahmud, the *Tanzimat* statesmen, and the Young Turks did increasingly centralise power. To the extent that their reforms failed to transform the military and society, it was not due to problems of access and implementation but to the intent of the reforms. To understand the scope and extent of reform, we must look beyond domestic political and structural arguments.

Although Ottoman leaders looked to the West for military technology, training and advice, the positions foreign officers were permitted to hold were tightly circumscribed. Western advisors were traditionally required to convert to Islam and were isolated from the rest of society. Foreign advisors and Turkish graduates of newly established schools were prohibited from serving with the Janissaries. Foreign officers were relegated to technical projects and inferior status.

The Ottomans retained a strong sense of pride in their traditions. They were convinced of the superiority of their martial genius, and that with the adoption of some European military methods, that genius could be revived. Infidels could serve as advisors or instructors but not in command positions. This policy was codified in an official directive: 'In order to make certain that foreign officers will not gain influence and independence, they shall have authority only in matters of training, and in all other matters of command, discipline, and the like they shall operate only through . . . Ottoman officers.'[64]

In the late Ottoman Empire, prevailing interpretations of Islam imposed stringent constraints on reformers. The Empire had been Islamic from its onset. As it expanded and became increasingly multinational, the Islam of the rulers, which expressed itself through the adoption of Islamic law and the imposition of formal Islamic ritual, became increasingly orthodox.[65] The Ottoman Empire, however, was tolerant of religious practices within its territories. The rules of Islam guaranteed protection of property and lives to non-Muslim subjects on the condition of obedience and payment of taxes. The Ottoman Empire allowed Christians to practice their religion and live according to their customs, as long as they did not conflict with Islamic prescriptions.[66] Clearly, the idea that non-Muslims were infidels could be down-played, in order to secure order and the peaceful coexistence of Muslims and Christians within Ottoman borders, and assure stable income from tax-paying non-Muslims.

Political order in the Empire, however, rested on a division of labour between Muslims and non-Muslims. The structure of political and social power reflected the realities of the Ottoman conquest over four centuries. Selection for government service required a commitment to 'serve the state, faith, and be in the Ottoman way'. This meant accepting the Islamic faith, living within Ottoman culture, and sharing a

[63] Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization', p. 240.
[64] Avigdor Levy, 'The Officer Corps in Sultan Mahmud II's New Ottoman Army, 1826–39', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2 (1971), p. 23.
[65] Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650: The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
[66] Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600* (Phoenix, 1995).

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set of attitudes and values that made this exclusive upper class deserving of the name Ottoman and, hence, fit to govern.[67] An important turning point was Selim I's conquest of Syria and Egypt in 1516. With these conquests, the Holy Islamic Cities of Mecca and Medina recognised Selim's authority. Inalcik describes the importance of Mecca and Medina: 'The addition of the Arab lands, and especially of Mecca and Medina, to the Ottoman Empire, marks the beginning of a new era. The empire was no longer a frontier state but an Islamic caliphate, and the Ottoman sultans now considered themselves protectors not only of the frontiers but of the entire Muslim world. . . . One result of the new consciousness of the Ottoman rulers was to raise the religious law of Islam to a position of prime importance in the administration of the state.'[68]

By the eighteenth century, the basic social, economic, and political changes that produced Western military reforms were perceived as a threat to Ottoman society. European Enlightenment values conflicted with the regime's political and social orthodoxy. The Ottoman approach to political authority was theocratic, while the French doctrine of *laicism* promoted separation of church and state.

The Ottomans viewed the world in terms of believers and non-believers, which prevented non-Muslims from governing or serving in the military. The consequences for military performance and state security were significant, as manpower problems demonstrate. Between 1840 and 1869, the Ottomans could raise an army of 300,000, a size commensurate with many European contemporaries. From 1869 to 1914, the Europeans mobilised an ever-larger number of men, while the size of the Ottoman army remained steady or fell. In the Ottoman Empire, the Muslim population of 16 million bore the full burden for military service, and one quarter of that number lived in areas exempt from conscription.[69] Since the Christian population did not serve, an undue burden was born by the empire's Muslim population, reducing the size of forces that could be fielded.

Ottoman Sultans had used Christian auxiliaries in the past to replace depleted armies[70] but non-Muslim recruitment was seen as increasingly problematic by late-Ottoman leaders. Toleration of non-Muslims in the empire was predicated on the assumption that these communities were separate and inferior. Non-Muslim recruitment also risked compromising the empire since religious devotion was seen as the source of political reliability in the military.[71] The *ulema* claimed a monopoly on interpreting Islam, and the medieval variant of Islam that held sway stipulated that religion was the source of all normative values. Reformers refused to tamper with the fundamental tenet of the Islamic state – unity of state and religion – and this reserved the privilege of military service for the rulers of the empire. In their desire to preserve

[67] Walter F. Weiker, 'The Ottoman Bureaucracy: Modernization and Reform', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 13:3 (December 1968), pp. 458–9.

[68] Inalcik, *Ottoman Empire: Classical Age*, p. 34.

[69] These areas included Istanbul, Crete, part of Albania, Kurdistan, most of eastern Asia Minor, Bosnia, Syria, and Iraq. Efforts were made to conscript from these areas, and they did supply volunteers. But the major burden was born by the Muslims of Asia Minor. Yapp, 'Modernization of Middle Eastern Armies', p. 351.

[70] See Halil Inalcik, 'The Socio-Political Effects of the Diffusion of Fire-Arms in the Middle East', in Parry and Yapp, *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East.* The importance of Islam varied throughout history and so did the rhetoric that Christian Europe was the infidel. Imber, *Ottoman Empire*; Martin Sicker, *The Islamic World in Decline: From the Treaty of Karlowitz to the Disintegration of the Ottoman Empire* (Praeger, 2001).

[71] Yapp, 'Modernization of Middle Eastern Armies', p. 338.

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the Islamic state, Ottoman reformers selectively adopted Western technology but not Western ideas. Even the most liberal of reformers attributed decay to the failure to obey traditional laws and customs. The solution lay in eliminating abuses and restoring the old corps, not replacing them with new corps.[72]

Tanzimat reformers did challenge the distinction between worldly and religious affairs and the view that there was no source of legislation but God, but for public affairs only. Religious precepts still governed personal life, creating a fundamental dilemma for social order. When the *Tanzimat* regime collapsed, it produced a conservative backlash. The Hamidian reaction elevated traditionalism, religiosity, and anti-Westernism to an even higher plane. Hamidianism was followed by the Meşrutiyet, or New Constitutional Era in 1908, during which religious authority in political, educational, legal, judicial, and financial affairs began to contract.[73] But the Ottoman Empire collapsed in October 1918 and the question of religion and the state remained unresolved.

There were different ways to conceive of the relationship between Islam and the West as debates during the Meşrutiyet demonstrated. 'Westernists' called for radical transformation to adopt Western values.[74] 'Islamists', or religious nationalists, argued the Ottomans needed to Islamicise further to preserve their superior civilisation.[75] 'Turkists' were bent neither on imitating the West nor reviving ancient Islam. They argued that nations rather than religious communities were the only cultural realities, and that joining modern civilisation meant appropriating international culture, but not necessarily Western national culture. A Turkish, or pre-Islamic, culture should be the basis for Turkish nationhood and the Empire's survival.

Turkist views ascended during the last years of Meşrutiyet and were appropriated by General Mustafa Kemal (known after 1934 as Atatürk), who became leader of the Turkish nation after World War I.[76] Kemal rejected the equation of morality with religion, believing that Turkish society must be freed from religion to borrow from the West. The Kemalist strategy was one of unification based on a political identity.[77] It rejected Islam's medieval variant, which stipulated the state should uphold religious doctrine, and that religion was the source of all normative values, public and private. In 1922, Kemal abolished the Sultanate. In 1924, he abolished the Caliphate, ending any connection between the state and religion. Islamic religious orders were suppressed and religious schools were closed. Public education was secularised and the Şeriat was revoked. In 1926, he ended the millet system and adopted new civil,

[72] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p. 58.
[73] Berkes, *Secularism in Turkey*, pp. 412–19.
[74] Westernists attributed Ottoman decline to the mental barrier created by Islam, subservience to the Şeriat, and the superstitious clerics who interpreted it.
[75] Islamists attributed Ottoman decline to religious laxity. They believed that Western science and techniques could be borrowed without adopting the cultural, social and religious ways of Christian Europe. Berkes, *Secularism in Turkey*, pp. 342, 359, 361.
[76] Ibid., pp. 412–19. Turkists attributed Ottoman decline to a failure to adapt and interpret Islam in light of new conditions. Religion had become incongruent with modern society and had lost its living significance. The problem was the Şeriat, an amalgam of religious, legal and ethical values that had come to be seen as identical to religion and viewed as immutable law. This was a function of how Islam had developed, and not inherent in Islam itself. In reality, sacred texts gave few injunctions. Most emerged from social practices, which should in turn guide the interpretation of the Şeriat. The problem was that contemporary Muslim society had become incompatible with the Şeriat as interpreted by the Ulema.
[77] Ibid., 483–500.

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commercial and penal codes based on European models. In 1928, the constitutional provision establishing Islam as the official religion was revoked. The exclusion of Islam from any official role was the most shocking of Kemal's reforms, altering the entire social framework of the nation. Finally, Atatürk substituted Latin for Arabic script. 'Language reform in Turkey was intimately connected with a renunciation of the cultural heritage of the educated class'.[78]

Diffusion and reform under Atatürk was broad and deep. Modern Turkey was not saddled with the multi-ethnic Empire of the Ottomans, and the Empire's collapse after World War I undoubtedly produced a shock of such magnitude that society had to adapt. But the problem of managing the relationship between religion and the state persisted. Kemal was able to assimilate Western ideas and practices more fully because political reform was accompanied by a cultural transformation that distinguished medieval religious expression from Islam itself in order to launch reforms in the name of the Turkish nation. In contrast to the incremental reforms of the late Ottoman Empire, 'the Kemalist reforms went to the cultural roots of Anatolia's population by abolishing the religious foundations of the state and eradicating most of the cultural symbols by which these foundations were expressed in everyday life'.[79] Critical to the Kemalist revolution was a cultural transformation in which Muslim subjects of the sultan became citizens of the Turkish state.

Tokugawa and Meiji Japan

When Commodore Perry's navy flotilla arrived on Japanese shores in 1853, the country had no standing army or navy, only the large number of samurai units that performed guard duties and police functions, and that lacked the unified command, organisation, and professional leadership of a modern army.[80] In 1894–5, the Japanese Army won its first modern war against China.[81] In 1904–5, Japan destroyed the Russian Far East Fleet at Port Arthur and defeated Russia in a war for control of Manchuria. For the first time, a non-European power defeated a great power, a victory that stunned the world.

Military reform in Japan occurred in two stages. From 1853 to 1868, Japan underwent a process of defensive Westernisation with the most powerful domains, or *han* (Tosa, Choshu, and Satsuma), adopting Western technology and recruitment practices, but with the goal of expelling the corrosive influence of Western culture[82] and defeating the Shogun who had opened Japan to the West.[83] A modernised Choshu army defeated the Shogun in 1866, demonstrating the superiority of Western methods and equipment. In 1867, the Shogunate was overthrown and in 1868, the Emperor was nominally restored – the conventional date for the Meiji Restoration.

From this point forward, Japan launched a series of dramatic military reforms that were accompanied by an equally dramatic political and social transformation. In

[78] Uriel Heyd, *Language Reform in Modern Turkey* (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society, 1954).
[79] Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 3.
[80] D. Eleanor Westney, 'The Military', in Marius B. Jansen and Gilbert Rozman (eds.), *Japan in Transition From Tokugawa to Meiji* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 169.
[81] Ernst L. Presseisen, *Before Aggression: Europeans Prepare the Japanese Army* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1965), pp. 140–3.
[82] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, pp. 72–3.
[83] Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, pp. 153–5.

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1870, the central government decreed that all domains adopt the British model for their naval forces and the French model for their land forces.[84] In April 1871, an Imperial Guard of 10,000 was established from modern infantry and artillery units of Choshu, Satsuma and Tosa, directly controlled by the central government.[85] In 1872, a code of military conduct was issued that emphasised loyalty to the Emperor. In 1873, Meiji leaders dissolved the Imperial Guard and adopted universal conscription.

In 1877, the Meiji government defeated the largest feudal uprising, the Satsuma rebellion, but had to commit its entire peacetime force of 32,000 and nearly the entire reserve of 10,000. The Army's inadequacies were starkly revealed.[86] It lacked mobilisation plans, transportation, supply depots, logistics, maintenance, and the command organisation to provide these services.[87] In response, the Japanese established an independent General Staff Office on the German model and separated the Army's administrative and operational commands along Prussian lines.[88] An Army Staff College was established in 1882, and by 1886 the Army had been transformed from a garrison-based defensive organisation into a flexible, mobile, offensive force comprised of seven divisions that could operate as independent units. Through regular staff exercises and large-scale manoeuvres, the Japanese learned how to mobilise, prepare for, and execute large-scale war.

Navy reform also proceeded rapidly. In 1869, a naval training school was established and staffed with British officers and the Navy Ministry was organised along British lines. The Japanese launched their first warship, the 900-ton *Seiki*, in 1875 and by the 1890s a formally organised fleet began to emerge. By 1894, the Navy possessed twenty-eight ships totalling 57,000 tons and twenty-four torpedo boats. By 1903, the Navy stood at seventy-six warships totalling 250,000 tons plus seventy-six torpedo boats.[89]

Any explanation of military diffusion must be able to account for the timing and extent of reform across these two phases. The rising perception of external threat partly explains the timing of early reforms but not the rapidly cascading set of reforms after 1868. Like the Ottomans, the Japanese experienced external shocks. Treaties imposed by the West threatened Japanese sovereignty while Britain's defeat of China in the First Opium War of 1839–42 heightened Japanese fears about a similar fate. When the Japanese were forced to make trade concessions to the West in 1854, the Shogunate recognised Japan's vulnerability to superior Western military power.

Japan, however, had suffered no decisive military defeat at the hands of the West. Japan was far smaller than China and a less compelling centre of attraction for European capitalism.[90] European expansion slowed down in East Asia, with the British and French bogged down with China's Taiping Rebellion (1850–64) and the Crimean War in Europe. The goals of the Americans were to secure 'port facilities,

[84] Westney, 'The Military', p. 176.
[85] Roger F. Hackett, 'The Meiji Leaders and Modernization: The Case of Yamagata Aritomo', in Marius Jansen (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 333.
[86] Hyman Kublin, 'The Modern Army of ''Early'' Japan', *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, 9 (1949), p. 39.
[87] Presseisen, *Before Aggression*, pp. 55–6.
[88] Ibid., p. 63.
[89] Chitoshi Yanaga, *Japan Since Perry* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966), pp. 116–17.
[90] H. Suganami, 'Japan's Entry into International Society', in Peter Kornicki (ed.), *Meiji Japan: Political, Economic and Social History 1868–1912*, vol. 1 (Routledge, 1998), p. 14.

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vital for their trade with China, and for their whaling industry in the North Pacific', not to colonise Japan.[91] Japan would have sufficient time to develop a large enough and fairly modern competent army to oppose any European expeditionary force.

Looking closely at the timing of reforms, Japanese officials made no serious effort to upgrade Japan's defence posture after Britain's victory over China. Neither Perry's visit, nor Western reprisals against Choshu and Satsuma forces in 1863, led to vigorous measures by the Shogun.[92] It was not until the arrival of a French military mission in 1867 that systematic efforts were undertaken by the Shogun to organise and train Japan's military in modern European methods.[93] The impetus was not external, but internal. The panic created by Perry's arrival had receded by the late 1850s, while internal conflicts between the Tokugawa Shogunate and rival domains escalated. The four great domains of the Southwest resented the Bakufu's weakness and vacillation in opening Japan as the best way to deal with the foreign threat. They were determined to overthrow the Shogun.[94]

Adoption of Western models by Choshu, the 'Meiji Restoration in miniature',[95] was partly driven by a desire to expel the barbarians and reinstate the policy of seclusion.[96] It also represented an internal bid for power by lower-level samurai who had become dissatisfied with the aristocratic oppression and outmoded social policies of Tokugawa Japan.[97] The arrival of Perry's ships was an additional impetus to a process of change already underway, and cannot account for the cascading set of reforms after 1868. Moreover, given that any threat from the West to Japan had to come by sea, and that Japan was particularly vulnerable in this respect, one would expect the Japanese Navy to be the focus of military modernisation. Yet Japan's Navy remained a coast defence force until the 1890s.

Nor does access to or lack of information explain military reform. Even during the late Tokugawa period, a vibrant community of scholars of Western learning flourished, despite official edicts of 'closed country'. Japan had a long history of contact with and assimilation of foreign cultures, having adopted ideas and practices from the Korean peninsula and China.[98] Cross-fertilisation was halted in 1639 when the Shogunate adopted an official policy of 'closed country'.[99] Japanese were prohibited from travelling abroad and contact with the West was minimised. The period of national seclusion lasted until 1854 with foreign trade brought to a virtual standstill. Yet at a Dutch trading post at Deshima in the port of Nagasaki, Western learning, or Dutch learning since the Dutch were the only Westerners with whom the Japanese had relations, flourished. Dutch learning produced a group of scholars immersed in the study of Western science, who published works disseminating

[91] Ibid.
[92] Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, p. 149.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Thomas M. Huber, *The Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1981), p. 49; Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 74.
[95] W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 234.
[96] Ralston, *Importing the European Army*, p. 151.
[97] Huber, *Revolution Origins*, p. 211.
[98] Jintarō Fujii, *Outline of Japanese History in the Meiji Era*, translated and adapted by Hattie K. Colt and Kenneth E. Colton (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1969), pp. 2–3.
[99] See Noel Perrin, *Giving Up the Gun: Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543–1879* (Boston, MA: David R. Godine, 1979) for a concise analysis of why and how the Japanese abandoned the gun, which had been introduced into Japan by the Europeans in 1543.

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Western knowledge and ideas.[100] The issue was not one of access to information but rather enforcement of an ideological orthodoxy that defined Western values as corrosive of Japanese culture. During the late-Tokugawa period, those who called for opening Japan to the West were imprisoned or assassinated.

Decisions to adopt dramatic reforms in 1868 preceded the rapid and large-scale influx of information into Japan. The dramatic rise in information flows was the result of imperial decree, not the cause of the decree. On 6 April 1868, the Emperor issued the Charter Oath, which enshrined the practice of 'scouring the world for learning'.[101] 'Base customs of former times' should be abandoned, and in pursuit of national strength 'knowledge shall be sought throughout the world'.[102] In 1870, the Meiji government established 'Regulations for Dispatching Students Abroad', prescribing that students of both high and low status should study abroad.[103]

Thereafter, Western military advisors were actively recruited and continuously involved in the transformation of Japan's armed forces. A British naval mission was enlisted between 1873 and 1879 to advise on organisation, tactics and education.[104] The French trained the Japanese army between 1872 and 1877, and established several military schools, including a Military Academy patterned after St. Cyr.[105] The Prussian officer Major Jakob Meckel came to teach at the new Army Staff College in 1884.[106] Meckel's lectures and advice on command, logistics, transportation, strategic planning, recruitment, mobilisation, and campaign planning were instrumental in transforming the Japanese army into a force capable of executing large-scale modern war.

Domestic mobilisation arguments are premised on the idea that policy reforms will succeed if they serve the interests of certain segments of society and if those segments are effectively mobilised by norm entrepreneurs to press for reform. Those who agitated for reform and led the Meiji restoration were lower rank samurai suffering financial hardship, denied higher incomes and access to higher offices despite superior qualifications. Huber's analysis of the social origins and class interests of those who rebelled against the aristocratic oppression of the feudal hierarchy shows that part of the motivation for the Meiji Restoration was the elevation of lower samurai.[107]

While this explains dissatisfaction with the existing order, it cannot explain the new order to which the restorationists aspired. Trimberger argues, 'While the personal ambition of lower-level bureaucrats was blocked by status restrictions on high office, these dissidents were still completely dependent on the state apparatus for

[100] Fujii, *Outline of Japanese History*, pp. 39–40. Robert N. Bellah, *Imagining Japan: The Japanese Tradition and its Modern Interpretation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003) argues that although Japan rejected Western firearms until the end of the Tokugawa period, they did not reject other Western technological advances. He argues further that the official policy of isolation dates to the Expulsion Edict of 1825. Previous decrees only restricted contact with the Spanish and Portuguese because of their connection with unwanted missionaries. Isolation from foreign trade was due to Dutch control of East Asian waters, not to any actions by the Japanese.

[101] Richard J. Samuels, *Rich Nation, Strong Army: National Security and Japan's Technological Transformation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 88.

[102] W. G. Beasley, *The Rise of Modern Japan* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1990), p. 56.

[103] Fujii, *Outline of Japanese History*, pp. 43–4.

[104] David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887–1941* (Naval Institute Press, 1997), pp. 8, 12–13.

[105] Presseisen, *Before Aggression*, pp. 46–7.

[106] See Ibid., pp. 106–37 for a detailed discussion of Meckel's contributions to the Japanese Army.

[107] Huber, *Revolutionary Origins*, pp. 32–3, 211–20.

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any possibility of personal success'.[108] The adoption of universal conscription in 1873, which threatened the samurai by opening the officer corps to all men of talent, and the gradual elimination of samurai stipends by 1878, produced four armed samurai uprisings between 1873 and 1878 against the 'revolutionary bureaucrats who had sacrificed their own feudal class to the demands of economic development and national strength'.[109] In fact, the leaders of the largest uprising, the Satsuma rebellion, were samurai who had held high office in the Meiji government yet who had never intended to displace the feudal sense of obligation with imperial loyalism. Leaders of the rebellion became disenchanted with reform if it meant termination of samurai functions and privileges, and recruitment of commoners into the officer class.[110]

Meiji reformers drew on domestic discontent and the energy of marginal elites. But much of their programme consisted of cultural borrowings. They sought regime-strengthening through adoption of Western technology and institutions. These lower-rank samurai, who were distinctly from the southern and western provinces, had in mind reform programmes based on Western models. They had instituted such programmes at the level of their provincial governments. Personal and class-based interests alone cannot account for the policies to transform Japan's social and political system based on Western ideas and institutions, particularly since many of those who became disillusioned with the Shogun called for selective military reform in order to defeat and expel the Western barbarians, reinstate the policy of seclusion, and return to a more traditional order.[111]

The scope and extent of Japan's adoption of Western models is also remarkable given the institutional constraints on the early Meiji regime. With defeat of the Shogunate, organs of central administration collapsed. The new Meiji regime had no officials outside the capital, no military force, no regular sources of income, nor any centralised financial institutions to collect revenue. The process of state centralisation began in 1868 when Meiji leaders convinced the four largest domains to surrender their lands to the emperor, but it was military reforms after 1868, like universal conscription, which consolidated and centralised Meiji power, not the other way around.

One cannot account for the dramatic reforms of the post-1868 period without understanding the intellectual arguments adopted by the Meiji restorationists, their 'ideological reconstruction' designed to overturn the 'historical particularism' that was the dominant ideological pillar of the Tokugawa status quo.[112] According to that ideology, social order required that society be organised in terms of strong bonds of particular personal loyalties. 'These bonds extended vertically in gradually converging chains, from samurai, to daimyo, to shogun, to emperor . . . a man served the whole not by worrying about the whole but by minding his immediate superior.'[113]

[108] Trimberger, *Revolution from Above*, p. 79.
[109] Ibid., p, 27.
[110] Ibid., pp. 30–1; Herschel Webb, *The Japanese Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 262–3.
[111] Webb, *Japanese Imperial Institution*, p. 235 provides an excellent discussion of the dynamics of the *jōi*, or repel the barbarians, faction. The debate with the Shogun was not over whether to repel the barbarians, which was taken for granted, but how to do so.
[112] Huber, *Revolutionary Origins*, pp. 61–2.
[113] Ibid., p. 62.

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Yoshida Shōin educated many of the future Meiji leaders in the 1850s. His challenges to official orthodoxy laid the intellectual foundations of the Meiji restoration.[114] Shōin championed two principles: recruitment based on merit, and curbing aristocratic consumption. Both downgraded the privileges accorded by birth.[115] Shōin also called for military reform, adopting Western equipment and discipline, building Western-type ships and experimenting with large-scale Western style cavalry formations. In the 1850s, Shōin pushed these reforms at the han level. Steps taken to reorganise the Choshu army and administration in 1865 'represented an unequivocal abandonment of the traditional social order' which the Bakufu was determined to suppress.[116] By the late-1850s, Shōin was calling for similar changes at the national level: a centralised government and an egalitarian, Western-style army.

The purpose of Shōin's reforms was to strengthen the state to stand up to Western intimidation. Critical of the Bakufu's policy of passively opening Japan and of early anti-Tokugawa activists who wanted to expel Westerners by force, Shōin urged a policy of 'actively opening [Japan] as the best way to deal with the foreign threat', enrich the country and strengthen the Army.[117] Rather than viewing Dutch learning as a means by which the West would subdue Japan, he called for dispatching talented students abroad who could bring back and disseminate information about the West. Learning must encompass all knowledge to defend Japan against the West.[118]

The ideas of Shōin's teacher, Sakuma Shōzan, also influenced Meiji reformers. He argued that foreign learning is rational, and to avoid the shame of China's fate, Japan must study Western military arts to become a great power. Shōzan called for 'moving away from the concept of defending a culture towards that of defending a country'.[119] Shōzan, Shōin, and others like them, were assassinated or imprisoned for their heretical views. But after 1868, Meiji leaders meted out prompt and drastic punishment to those guilty of attacks on foreigners. Meiji leaders launched a process of cultural transformation in which the West displaced China as the repository of values and influence. Practices of the feudal past, which were associated with China, were redefined as barbaric and shameful, and those of the West as civilised.[120]

Meiji leaders engaged in broad and deep emulation of Western practices and institutions to revise the unequal treaties that undermined Japanese sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to gain acceptance as a full and equal member of international society.[121] Acceptance into the Western international community was an end in itself and a means to solve the problem of national defence. Once seen as a modern nation, equal to the West and civilised by its standards, Japanese sovereignty would be restored. For Meiji leaders, Western ideas and practices were not cultural threats to be shunned but a means to defend their nation and bring Japan into the community of modern great powers.

[114] Masaaki Kōsaka, *Japanese Thought in the Meiji Era*, translated and adapted by David Abosch (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1969), pp. 36–48.
[115] Huber, *Revolutionary Origins*, pp. 46–51.
[116] Ibid., pp. 200–1.
[117] Ibid., p. 49.
[118] Beasley, *Rise of Modern Japan*, pp. 22–5.
[119] Ibid., p. 25; Kosaka, *Japanese Thought*, pp. 20–7.
[120] Donald H. Shively, 'Nishimura Shigeki: A Confucian View of Modernization', in Marius Jansen (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 196.
[121] Suganami, 'Japan's Entry', p. 9.

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The years between the opening of the treaty ports in Japan in 1853 and the end of the Meiji period in 1912 span 'one of the most remarkable social transformations in modern history'.[122] In virtually every sector of society, the Japanese adopted and assimilated European institutions, with military institutions at the forefront of the transformation. The scope and pace of diffusion was broad and deep because political reform was accompanied by cultural transformation. Meiji leaders opted for reform and regime strengthening through an official policy of Westernisation.

Conclusion

Analysing the spread of Western military ideas, practices, and institutions to Turkey and Japan shows that the scope and pace of military diffusion and reform varied with levels of enforcement of official orthodoxy. Both Ottoman Turkey and Tokugawa Japan faced serious military threats from the West. Recognising their military inferiority, both governments identified with upholding a particular cultural tradition, which interfered with their ability to adapt. Although both regimes were fairly decentralised after 1650, there was a consensus that the path toward stability in the empire was through closure to outside influences they deemed corrosive. In Ottoman Turkey, there was reasonable unanimity that greater fidelity to Koranic laws and exclusion of innovation would be stabilising. Similarly for the Shogun and most Daimyo in Japan, limiting contact with outsiders was viewed as stabilising. Tokugawa Japan and Ottoman Turkey closed their countries to external influences, most dramatically in Japan by closing off all contact except through Nagasaki. The Turkish response was more cultural than physical, dismissing foreign cultures and knowledge.

In the mid-seventeenth century, these decisions were not irrational, since the West possessed few products or techniques of great value that Turkey and Japan could not themselves produce. With the advent of Newtonian science and steam power in the late seventeenth and early–eighteenth centuries, this began to change. By the late nineteenth century, Western European societies had pulled far ahead of Turkey and Japan in technology, and military and political organisation. Yet Turkish and Japanese elites remained hostile to Western scientific, technical and political theories. Both regimes experienced episodes of defensive modernisation – from 1839–1876 during the *Tanzimat* period in Turkey and from 1853–1868 in Japan. But in both cases, elites drew back from full-scale adoption of Western institutions and practices. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Young Turks in Ottoman Turkey and southwestern Daimyo and lower-level samurai in Japan sought reform and regime strengthening through adoption of Western technology and ideas. Meiji reformers and Kemal Attaturk succeeded in transforming their militaries and societies because they were committed to cultural reform, and political rebellion was accompanied by cultural transformation.

Table 2 summarises the scores for these four regimes on the variables hypothesised to account for military diffusion.

[122] D. Eleanor Westney, *Imitation and Innovation: The Transfer of Western Organizational Patterns to Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 1.

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Table 2: *Conditions for diffusion.*

Case	External threat	Information	Domestic mobilisation	State structure	Cultural tolerance	Extent of diffusion
Late-Ottoman Empire	Very high	High	Moderate for Mahmud II, Tanzimat and Young Turks	Decentralised	Low	Limited
Kemalist Turkey	High	High	Moderate and concentrated in urban areas; broader opposition to abolition of caliphate	Centralised	High	Full scale
Late-Tokugawa Japan	Moderate	Limited	Moderate; confined to southwestern han	Decentralised	Low	Limited
Meiji Japan	Moderate	High	High among lower samurai	Centralised	High	Full scale

External threat can account for the timing of diffusion but not its extent. The relationship between information and diffusion is also weak. Access to information may be necessary for diffusion and reform based on external practices but it is not sufficient. Moreover, rising information flows are as likely to be the result of policy changes as the cause of those policy changes. While some minimal level of domestic support is necessary for new policies to succeed, this variable does not predict how extensive diffusion will be. It begs the question what the goals of reformers are. In the cases examined here, elites were able to mobilise support for both limited and full-scale diffusion. Similarly, while there appears to be an association between centralised state structures and full-scale diffusion, the association is spurious. Diffusion often enhanced centralisation, rather than the reverse. Moreover, state-structure arguments can tell us nothing about the goals of reformers. Diffusion may be limited because of an inability to implement more extensive policy changes, or because elites intended diffusion to be limited.

Cultural tolerance does have a high association with the scope, pace and extent of diffusion and the cases clarify this relationship. The presence or absence of an officially endorsed orthodoxy is an important indicator of the level of cultural tolerance, of how open or closed elites are to outside scientific, technical and political knowledge. Cultural tolerance facilitates transmission of information and cross-fertilisation between the carriers of new ideas and domestic actors, increases openness to foreign ideas and practices, and increases opportunities for diffusion. Where tolerance is low, diffusion is slow, selective or absent despite strategic setbacks. Where tolerance is high, diffusion is more rapid, extensive, and responsive to strategic setbacks.

The focus of this analysis has been on explaining diffusion. It demonstrates how internal cultural orthodoxy and tolerance for cultural diversity influence the scope,

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pace and extent of diffusion. It is reasonable to ask why the attitudes of elites toward cultural tolerance changes. Checkel's work points to the importance of social learning by elites.[123] Gurowitz suggests it depends upon the view that the government holds about its relationship to international society and its place in the international system.[124] A realist analysis would focus on crisis or a serious policy failure. The cases suggest that each of these factors can play a role. A change in elite attitudes can result from serious policy failure, which forces leaders to reassess their attitudes about the outside world, and about what the state needs to do to survive and thrive in it. Foreign ideas can pose internal threats to social stability. So long as the internal threat is perceived to be greater than the external threat to the security of the state, cultural orthodoxy can be sustained and diffusion resisted. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Tokugawa Japan and Ottoman Turkey, elites saw Western technology as a threat to the existing social order because it brought with it what were seen as corrosive Western values. Despite strategic setbacks, elites enforced a cultural orthodoxy that stifled innovation and military reform. When external security threats and challenges came to be seen as greater than the internal threat to social order posed by foreign technology and ideas, as they were by Meiji reformers, elite attitudes toward the external world changed. Cultural tolerance rose and diffusion was embraced in order to strengthen the state to resist military conquest and economic imperialism. The key issue was the perceived balance between the negative impact of foreign ideas on the existing social order and their positive impact on external security and state power, and the point at which it became impossible to defend the existing cultural order.

Many arguments about military diffusion minimise the role played by culture and privilege domestic politics. This may be an artifact of case selection where the focus is on mature military organisations in the developed world, chiefly Britain, France, Prussia/Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union.[125] The theories advanced in these studies may not apply to non-Western and non-European societies.[126] From a contemporary policy standpoint, the global diffusion of military knowledge and practice, and the processes by which new military techniques are exploited well, poorly, or not at all, are topics of inherent importance. They require a better understanding of the potential for adoption of advanced military capabilities, practices, and institutions by non-Western societies, and the clearer specification of how culture impacts this process.

[123] Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change', *International Organization*, 55 (Summer 2001), pp. 553–88.

[124] Gurowitz, 'Mobilizing International Norms', Westney, *Imitation and Innovation*, p. 19, similarly argues in her study of Meiji Japan that there was a strong desire to make Japan a modern, internationally respected nation. What better way to achieve this than by emulating Western models? See also Emily O. Goldman, 'The Spread of Western Military Models to Ottoman Turkey and Meiji Japan', in Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff (eds.), *The Sources of Military Change* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), pp. 41–67.

[125] Several studies examine military change and reform only within Western European societies (Avant, 'From Mercenary to Citizen Armies'; Farrell, 'Transnational Norms and Military Development'), reducing the extent of culture clash and leading to the privileging of domestic political arguments. Farrell does look at culture clash but the culture he focuses on is military culture. There was no clash of social culture between the British and Irish cases.

[126] Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett, 'Dependent State Formation and Third World Militarization', *Review of International Studies*, 19 (1993), pp. 321–47.

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