



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF  
MODERN TRENDS IN  
SOCIAL SCIENCES  
(IJMTSS)  
[www.ijmtss.com](http://www.ijmtss.com)



## TURKEY AND JAPAN: THE QUEST OF MODERNISM IN THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Mohamad Firdaus<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of History and Civilization, International University of Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia  
Email: [firdausmansor@ium.edu.my](mailto:firdausmansor@ium.edu.my)

\* Corresponding Author

### Article Info:

#### Article history:

Received date: 05.07.2020

Revised date: 02.09.2020

Accepted date: 07.09.2020

Published date: 10.09.2020

#### To cite this document:

Firdaus, M. (2020). Turkey and Japan: The Quest of Modernism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. *International Journal of Modern Trends in Social Sciences*, 3 (13), 09-23.

DOI: 10.35631/IJMTSS. 313002

### Abstract:

This paper will deal with the process of modernization of two emerging Asian powers, namely Japan and Turkey, with particular reference to important elements of Japanese and Turkish pursuits of modernization at the expense of growing Western penetration into their countries. This will specifically deal with the Meiji Restoration and Tanzimat Reforms where process of modernization has taken place. Furthermore, there will be a discussion on the efforts of Turkish statesmen and Japanese statesmen in their attempts to modernize several aspects of vital institutions in Turkey and Japan as well as issues concerning the modernization encountered by the Japanese statesmen and Turkish counterparts in their countries. Sources for this analysis will be taken from studies of both Western writers and inside writers on modernization in Japan and Turkey. The ability of Japanese and Turkish statesmen to adopt and adapt foreign practices which infused with local circumstances suggest that they are capable of modernizing their respective countries by their own rights.

### Keywords:

Modernization, Meiji Restoration, Tanzimat Reforms, Statesmen, Emperor

### Introduction

The quest for modernization in Asian countries is seemed a matter of grave importance for their survival in world politics. In this respect, two great Asian powers namely Japan and Turkey respectively had experimented modernization into their countries. This was come about when the Japanese leaders and Turkish counterparts realized that there was a need to revitalize their countries at the expense of steady Western encroachments into their countries. In Japan, Japanese leaders felt the need for modernization as the Western powers kept requesting to Japan to open their country for trading and commercial through gunboat diplomacy. This had

compelled the Japanese leaders to succumb to foreign requests for instance opening Japanese ports for trading with the West. Likewise, the Turkish leaders felt the need to modernize their state looking at the steady decline of their possessions (due to military inferiority) transferred to Western powers and noticeable weakness in the state apparatus. Both Japanese leaders and Turkish counterparts realized the urgency to remedy this increasing decline in almost all aspect of their life which paved the way for Meiji Restoration and Tanzimat Reforms in Japan and Turkey respectively. In the next discussions, we shall look at the ways how the Japanese leaders and their Turkish counterparts deal with their quest for modernity as an attempt to resist further western encroachments in their respective countries.

As far the Japanese' effort for modernization was concerned, there had been at least two contrasting views; the first party like Mutsu Mumemitsu (1884-97), who later served as an Ambassador to the United States as well as Japanese Foreign Minister, pointed out during his speech in Wakayama in 1886 that

“Customs and usages differ from one European country to another...but throughout Europe there is a single culture and a common element. The adoption of this element as a means of reforming the life of the people, to make it those same as that of the people of Europe, is the most important consideration for the survival of the Japanese people. For that purpose, we must reform everything, from such intangibles as educations and morals to the concrete things of everyday life such as clothing, food, and houses”. (Donald H. Shively, 2005).

While on the contrary, the other party like Motoda Eifu (1818-91), who was the Confucian tutor to the Meiji Emperor, had criticized the replacement of old school system with a new school system which was inspired by Western-style ethics, opined that it would produce students who would exhibit deficiency “in the spirit and soul of our country and shallow in their foundation in morals and in courage for righteous causes...” Instead, he clearly emphasized on the need to maintain the old school system which promoted Confucian moral values like those of loyalty, filial piety and patriotism (Donald H. Shively, 2005).

With respect to responses to a series of modernization programme carried out in Japan, we could observe here that there had been a different sort of attitudes, as briefly discussed above. The newly created Meiji leadership was heavily criticized for their plans for modernization due to many reasons (some because of traditions and values, while others because of political and economic interests). Nonetheless, interestingly, some of this criticism were not so much because of total emulation of the West, but they had to do with a sort of political-economic gains in the inner circle of the government. The classic example would be that of Saigo faction from Satsuma who decided to withdraw from the government because he failed to exert his influence within the government (over the issue of Korea). He protested against the modernization measures by the government which according to him done without much deliberation and consultation. This dissatisfaction culminated into an armed revolt in 1877. Retrospectively, one scholar said, however, the underlying reason behind such a bold move against the government due to loss of privilege and influence enjoyed by him (and his fellow samurai) and Satsuma domain at large.

While other party like those of factions from Tosa and elsewhere, were disappointed with the policy of government which practically excluded them from participating in the main state's apparatus, thus they demanded a representative assembly. They frequently used Western liberal

political ideology to criticize the government. This conflict then witnessed a departure of Okuma from the current leadership, which urged the government to honour its promise to establish a national constitution in 1890. As far as the type of constitution was concerned, there were two opposing views; one was in favour of the British-style parliamentary system (represented by Okuma) which cabinet responsible to the assembly, creation of political party and press freedom; while the second party was favour of Prussian style of constitution (represented by Ito and his inner cliques within the government), no political part and restricted press freedom. In this respect, the second group gained much favour and influence. As a result, the government decided to abolish the party system, banned political campaigning, and imposed suppressive monitoring over publications so that the government could proceed without harassment with its proposed plans (Donald H. Shively, 2005).

### **Method**

This article is a discussion on the existing literature which discusses the modernization process in Japan and Turkey which came into being, if not entirely responsible for such plan, following the Western attempts to establish their foothold in Japan and Turkey. The Japanese and Turkish leaders realized that it was just a matter of time before their very own countries would fall under the control of Western powers which while at the same time they need to face a growing number of domestic issues in the countries. Thus, in order to address such increasing Western pressure in their respective countries, a number of efforts had been carried out by the Japanese leaders and Turkish statesmen alike in Japan and Turkey as to show to the Western powers that they were capable of modernizing their countries and could stand on par with the former. In this respect, sources for this analysis will be taken from studies on a wide range of scholarly works which are written by the Western and Japanese scholars. This article uses method of content analysis which can be defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use”.

That said, the researcher uses analytical constructs or inferences, making sense of texts found into contexts where the current study is conducted. In this respect, two domains, the texts and the contexts, are logically independent, and the researcher makes conclusions by looking at these two domains (White & Marsh, 2006). Moreover, this content analysis uses one particular technique which is coding system which simply means labelling. According to Boeje (2010), as what normally used in the grounded research approach, coding is normally performed at three levels: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. For the first level (open coding) it is done by taking out texts and rearranging them into its own different themes and concepts found in the data. Afterwards, this set of different information is then reorganized based on their content into a number of categories which is termed as axial coding. Moreover, the third level, known as selective coding, was carried out by making rational links between the core categories so as to make sense of understanding what has been really happening in the observed practices and or events (Dina Wahyuni, 2012). This research method allows the researcher “to understand social reality in a subjective yet in scientific manner; explore the meanings underlying physical messages; and is inductive, grounding the examination of topics and themes, as well as inferences drawn from them, in data” ( Kaid, 1989; Patton, 2002; Zhang & Wildenmuth, 2009)

### **Analysis**

There seems a little doubt about the Meiji Restoration of 1868 which considered by many scholars as the turning point for Japan to embark on its path to modernization, as this period

witnessed the end of seclusion policy (*sakoku*) of the previous Japanese government under the Shogunate administration. This Meiji Restoration saw the restoration of power to the Japanese Emperor which previously held by the Shogun (de facto ruler of Japan) who ruled Japan on behalf of the Emperor. It was engineered by leaders from Satsuma-Choshu domains, notably Saigo Takamori and Kido Takayoshi. Following the death of his father (Emperor Komei), in February 1867, Prince Mutsuhito became the 122<sup>nd</sup> Japanese Emperor who then ruled Japan until July 1912. The Emperor was styled as Emperor Meiji (Enlightened Ruler). In short, this period marked the beginning of a new democratic state of Japan modeled based on Western lines.

There have been a number of reasons which scholars tend to associate with the fall of Shogunate system in Japan and the emergence of Meiji Restoration. In this respect, Peter Duus and Yayori Takano, rightly observed that the steady increase of foreign warships and vessels came near to the Japanese shores signified that this will sooner or later pose threats to Japan's sovereignty and independence. At the turn of 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed an advanced state of imperialism activity across the globe where the Great Western Powers had steadily subjugated non-Western societies into their colonies. These Powers claiming to bring a much needed 'light' to this uncivilized societies. The same scenario could be said of East Asian region. Great Powers like Britain, United States, Germany, French and Russia to name a few were gaining more concessions from the Chinese government, and Japan, as a small state, situated very close to these political games. Of course, viewing from the standards of Western world, Japan's economy and military was weak. Thus, it was incumbent for the Shogunate administration to address this alarming situation which they did to remedy the existing situation, nonetheless, without much success. Soon, Japan was officially opened to the West following the gunboat diplomacy exercised by Great Western powers which resulted in the signing of an unequal treaty between both parties. This had allowed the opening of a few Japanese ports for Western trading and commerce with little benefits to the Japanese trade and commerce. Realizing a need for Japan to address this chaotic situation, a group of lower ranking samurai from four domains, decided to overthrow the Shogunate administration and eventually to restore the right of rule to the Japanese Emperor in 1868. This then marked the beginning of Japan's march into a modern country.

This newly created Japanese government, famously known as Meiji oligarchy faced difficult tasks at hand to push Japan into a modern and strong country at the expense of growing Western activities in the country. One such problems was the prevalent of anti-Foreign sentiments which the Meiji government tried to cool down the sentiment as best as it could. At one side, in spite of this growing anti-foreign sentiments, the new Meiji government envisioned of transforming Japan into a "civilized country" like other countries in the West. Many Japanese individuals had travelled to Western countries where they witnessed with their own eyes the advancement that the West had in economy and military realms. Thus, to survive in this ever competitive world, the Japanese had to push their ways into a modern world. This was manifested in a diplomatic mission, consisting of far-sighted Japanese leaders which better known as Iwakura Mission. This mission was joined by several Japanese intelligentsia who later contributed towards the modernization of Japan in almost all walks of life. To elaborate, this mission was carried out in 1871 consisted of men of power and influence including among others Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), Ito Hirobumi (1841-1909) and Kido Takayoshi (1833-1877). It was said the main purpose of this mission, apart from renegotiating unequal terms of the previous signed treaties with the major Western powers, it sought to learn the Western 'tools' which thought to

be implanted and refined them in Japan. One of pivotal observation of Western civilization was done by specific studies of the West by Kido Takayoshi as well as Tanaka Fujimaro on matters concerning the West's political-administrative institutions, economy and industry as well as its military advancement (Eugene Soviak, 2005).

Eugene Soviak also observed that these individuals realized the bitter truth that Japan could not compete with the wealth and power of the West at that point of time. He has rightly observed that since significant number of its members were to play a greater political control through the next following years, thus it was largely depended on their hands to which direction Japan would have to undertake the process of modernization into the country. Retrospectively, Iwakura Mission was seemed to be a significant move made by the new government leadership in order to prepare Japan in its undertakings for modernization process in the country as this mission provide first-hand observations and studies on the Western world throughout their visits to different countries in the West. According to Eugene, the mission official report, known as *Jikki*, highlighted, among others, that there was not an easy feat to alter long-established political and social patterns in Japan in order to make a way for the creation of a modern and strong Japan. Therefore, this would require a great deal of caution, adaption and selectivity for Japan in its efforts to modernize the country.

In their pursuit of modernity, the Japanese leaders had also introduced a number of changes in the administrative and socio-political structures in the country. For this regard, it deems necessary to have a look at the Iwakura Mission which served as a golden platform for the Japanese leaders to learn from the West and eventually translate those initiatives into their own country. Retrospectively, this was in fact in line with the famous national slogan of the late Edo period and early the Meiji rule, namely *fukoku kyohei* ("enrich the country, strengthen the military"). One of the significant aspects through which this 'seed' of modernization could be actualized was via education reforms. In this respect, one of the foremost Japanese scholars, Michio Nagai had touched this aspect of modernization in Japan which later gave birth to a certain process which he termed as 'Japanization'. In simple words, this process of 'Japanization' meant adoption of western 'tools' into the country which was then refined and implemented in matters concerning Japanese education, administration, economy and military affairs to name a few based on Japanese values and traditions. It was known that, for instance, in the case of introducing changes in the Japanese education system, the Meiji government had carried out this reform with different kinds of Western model (from the French type to the American and then to the Prussian) (Michio Nagai, 2005).

Thus, to speak of educational reform, the efforts towards reorganization Japanese's education system was without doubt steadily took place following the return of Iwakura Mission from abroad in early 1870s. The gesture towards a new compulsory system was officially authorized through the Education Ordinance of 1872 that called for, "the establishment of eight universities, 256 middle schools, and 53, 760 elementary schools. All in all, the compulsory education was set at four years. To elaborate, the Meiji leadership thus had decided to impose a compulsory education system, modelled after Western type of schooling systems. That said, there was no single model adopted for this reorganization given the fact that it was first modelled after French, later shifted to American and followed by the Prussian systems. Nonetheless, one should bear in mind that, in the midst of this reorganization, there had been feelings of uneasiness especially among the Japanese notable individuals (the classic example was Motoda Chifu) that the basis and tradition of Japanese schooling system (which heavily

rooted in the Confucian's teachings) would be faded away, thus giving a way to Western values and traditions. At last, after a series of disagreements, compromises and modifications, the Japanese traditions and values were fused into Western models. In short, as what Michio Sagai has observed, in view of this modernization effort, the process of Meiji transformation of education system is not fully mean adoption of Western models in its entirety (Shunsuke Sumikawa, 1999).

In addition, in matters concerning the reforms in Japan's administrative and political landscapes, it seemed also little doubt that Prussia became one of the most influential countries through which Japan looked it as model. (Augustus Flottman, 2012). In this respect, Ito Hirobumi together with his fellow Japanese embarked on another observation mission in Europe. This mission was purposely meant to study and to investigate the Western political systems as means to prepare for the creation of a much-awaited Japanese constitution. Interestingly, Ito found his ways in Germany and Austria. In Germany, he came into contact with Rudolf von Gneist and later he went to the University of Vienna (Austria) through which he studied arts of monarchical government under Lorenz von Stein. Von Stein emphasized that supreme legislative and administrative power resided in the monarch and that the monarch and the state were synonymous. It seemed that Ito was fascinated by ideas of this Austrian thinker where the former came into conclusion those who followed the models of liberal countries like England, America and France had led Japan towards the wrong direction.

Upon his return to Japan from his visits to Austria and Germany, Ito took the reins of the government's efforts to fulfil a series of promises and commitments towards modernization, where the creation of the Japanese Constitution assumed among the foremost agenda of the government. Among the measures he implemented was firstly to lift the very position of the Emperor where the Imperial Household was to put under a separate administration. A specific law governing the Imperial Household was also enacted. Moreover, the ancient court title *Naidaijin* (Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal) was revitalized in 1885. Other important creation was the institution of a peerage system in 1884. It comprised of a number of conservative leaders a nucleus which would convene in 1890. In 1888 he instituted the creation of Privy Council (Sumitsu-in) as he gave up the Council of State (Dajokan) which was previously in practice in the early years of Meiji administration. In addition, he led the way for creation of a strong executive cabinet based on the German model. In terms of the state's administration, a civil service examination was introduced in 1887 so as to select and appoint qualified government officers in the country. On top of that, the day to day state's administration was put under a close tight executive control (Eugene Soviak, 2005).

In terms of military restructuring, which according to Meiji leadership, constituted one of the critical areas that would determine the sovereignty of Japanese state at the expense of growing Western encroachments in the East Asian region. To illustrate this, the Meiji government had introduced a compulsory military conscription in the country (promulgated in January 1873); Japanese military was later modelled after the Prussian model, while its navy followed closely that of British navy. One certain scholar opined that by introducing the Japanese youths of all classes to the arts of military life, this had thus created a sense of nationalistic spirit within themselves (Ernst L. Presseisen, 1965). Moreover, the government had also founded an autonomous General Staff in 1878 and created an Army War College in 1883. Following the introduction of The Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors of 1882, this then characterized a direct relationship of Japanese Emperor had upon the military which later had been formalized

through the 1890 of Japanese Constitution. The constitution designated the Japanese Emperor as the Commander in-chief. Moreover, the ministers of army and navy only can be filled in by officers on active duty as spelled out in two Imperial Ordinances in 1900 (Leonard A. Humphreys, 1995).

In terms of military's strength, at least before 1886, Japan could only have eight modern warships. Nonetheless, in the late 1880s, with the presence of one able Japanese farsighted military leader, none other than Yamagata Aritomo (1838-1922) had started the programme of transforming the small-scale Japanese troops into that of large-scale, mobile, self-sufficient operational units combining infantry, cavalry, artillery engineers, and supply troops (the division). In addition, there had been a number of military experts invited from abroad to come over to Japan to help the Japanese government to modernize its army. Such names include Klemens Wilhelm Jacob Meckel (1842-1905), who had been appointed as a professor at Army College and concurrently the advisor to the Imperial Japanese Army General Staff in 1885 (James B. Crowley, 1966).

In terms of political transformations, it seemed vital for the Japanese leadership to restructure the country's institutions according to standards of Western countries, of course, some of Japanese leaders differed in their views and preferences on how much they could emulate the West. As a matter of fact, among the first thing that the Meiji government did following the takeover of Shogun-led administration was the grant of Charter of Oath in April 6, 1868 by the Emperor Meiji. This outlined the commitment of the Meiji government to provide justice and equality to all the Japanese society through a number of reforms programmes that they were about set up and implement in the country. For instance, the new leadership promised that a sort of national assembly would be established to deal with all public and state matters through public discussion at one hand. Moreover, all that non-civilized customs and acts of the past would be put to an end. To elaborate on this Charter, specifically, it was said, according to Suzuki (2002) that the underlying intention of this Charter was "to reject to reject despotism in politics and expand political participation, to build a society in which individuals could exercise their talents, and to acquire knowledge by joining the ranks of the international community, especially developed countries, without adhering to old customs".

In this respect, there had been a series of early attempts to implement the government's commitments towards creation of "assemblies and public discussions" mentioned in the Charter Oath, nevertheless, it took some time before the Meiji government could actualize those promises. Then came a momentous event in 1889 when Japan introduced its first constitution which was modelled along the Western lines. A parliament, called the Diet was established and the emperor was placed as the sovereign figure head (Shunsuke Sumikawa, 1999).

With the return of Imperial court to the state's affairs (though it may lack of direct power), the two opposing sides, the pro-Bakufu and the newly created Meiji leadership parties however seemed to agree that the Imperial Court should refrain itself from a direct intervention in the political affairs of the state, yet still there was a need for the participation of former feudal lords in the running of the state's affairs through '*kogi*' or assembly. Another similar move seen in June 1870 when the government released one certain document called the 'Document of the Form of Government'. This then led to the creation of one certain political body, called the Grand Council of State. With this document, elements of fundamental governmental

mechanism such as the separation of Powers, the authority and jurisdiction of main state's institutions and appointment of officials came into existence.

In this respect, in July 1873, Kido Takayoshi, who returned back to Japan earlier than the rest of the Iwakura Mission to Europe and United States, submitted a memorandum to the emperor, proposing that it was imperative to expand the Charter Oath and to create a Japanese Constitution. He saw the significant roles of the Emperor could play (for instance in mobilizing the support from masses) in securing the independence, wealth, and power of the country. Thus, it was not surprising to observe his preference of creating a strong government under active roles of Emperor. This, according to Kido, shall be realized through the establishment of constitution. In the midst of preparing the modernization plans into the state's administration, other fellow Japanese statesmen were preoccupied with Korea's issue, known as '*seikanron*'. In this regard, Kido rejected the need to deal with the Korea's issue at that moment of time, primarily on the basis that there was more an urgent need to push through internal reforms (for instance constitutional reform) than the latter. Kido's ideal proposal was a constitutional monarchy accompanied with a growth in national consciousness. Moreover, Kido's fellow statesmen, Okubo Shigenobu had also expressed his views in matters concerning the types of government which possible for Japan to adopt; he said that in a memorandum (1873), there were three possible systems of government which would allow for the centralization of power in the country, namely first, an autocracy with a constitution, secondly constitutional popular "co-governance" (democracy), and thirdly "co-governance" by the monarch and the people (which refers to constitutional monarchy). He went on to argue that out of these three systems of government, the third option was seemed the most suitable for Japan to stimulate the people's political participation (Takii Kazuhiro, 2014).

In discussing about models of constitution which suitable for Japan to adopt in the state, it seemed Japanese statesmen like Ito Hirobumi and his close circles were looking at Prussian-style of constitution as a right model for Japanese Constitution. Others like Okubo favoured British-based constitution. Takii Kazuhiro mentioned that it seems vital for the Japanese leaders to establish an executive branch which could exert its influence vis-a-vis the parliament. In this respect, such a prominent leader like Ito Hirobumi came into scene. He had been working the country's constitution since his return from second and third visits to Europe in the 1880s. He had at first worked on putting aside the Emperor and its Imperial Household outside the perimeter of cabinet's control. Moreover, upon assuming a prime minister post in 1885, Ito had created a strong cabinet system as well as a clear-cut separation between the imperial house and the executive branches (Takii Kazuhiro, 2014; Kenichi Ohno, 2017).

Furthermore, in terms of economic transformation, Alexander David Brown (2005) for instance contended that economic changes in Japan were characterized by a considerable increase in technological capabilities of state's industry which allowed the country's economy to rapidly industrialized. He commented that the Meiji government had initiated a policy of replacement which called *kokusanka* that literally denotes 'converting to domestic production'. Without doubt, this aspiration was to be achieved through borrowing of Western 'tools' and know-how into the country's industry. By doing this, as a result, it would lead to 'technological diversification' in industry which then increased the competitiveness of export industries. This of course required a state's direction and or intervention and close cooperation with the private sectors. Interestingly, in the early years of Meiji administration, the strategic aim of Meiji economic policies (which primarily focused on the build-up of military capacity of the country)



led to the development of heavy industry along the way though it was not intended for industrialization per se (Alexander David Brown, 2005).

On the same note, Mijamoto et al. (1965) commented that the borrowing of Western technology and know-how into Japanese industries did not simply mean its total adoption but rather it showed an adjustment and modification of the Western technology into local circumstances. As mentioned earlier, the Meiji economic policy, in the earlier years of post-Restoration era, characterized by its emphasis over military production had made this Western technology gained its much appeal in the Japanese factories and firms. Interestingly, the traditional industries such as silk reeling had also benefited from this borrowing. As Japan later embarked on its expansionist policy overseas, it had created steady demands for instance the establishment of military arsenals and shipyards which as a result, became a springboard for the continuation of technological diversification and innovation (Alexander David Brown, 2005). Other economic historian like Kenichi Ohno mentioned that Okubo Toshimichi, whom formed part of Iwakura Mission to abroad, showed keen interests in the Western technology. Upon witnessing splendid conditions in the West, it was said that Okubo was very enthusiastic in promoting an industrialization plan into Japan economies. This was possible when he assumed the post of Minister of Finance and later as a Minister of Interior during the early Meiji administration.

Among his known policies were hiring foreign experts, reorganization public infrastructures including construction of roads, railroads, and creation of specific research centres. In order to facilitate this borrowing of Western technology, the government had created state-owned industries which catered mainly for military production, shipbuilding, and silk reeling to name a few. In addition to that, new reorganized systems of weights and measures, monetary system, banking system, and joint stock companies were later introduced as to support the intended pro-Western economic environments in the country. Nevertheless, Okubo was later assassinated in 1878 yet his keen followers like those of Kuroda Kiyotaka and Okuma Shigenobu, continued his policies. Interestingly, with the government's assistance, a list of conglomerates started to form; this gave birth to what was known as *zaibatsu* (such conglomerates include Mitsubishi and Furukawa) which usually controlled by businessmen who had connections to the government (Kenichi Ohno, 2006).

Like their Japanese counterparts, the Turkish leaders also faced almost similar, if not identical, within the Ottoman State and its territories. For instance, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Caliphate had lost its authority over vast territories under its control due to its weaknesses in military and administrative aspects. Realizing this fact, several numbers of Ottoman Sultans had initiated several reforms in order to halt these alarming conditions. Sultan Abdul Hamid I (r. 1773-1789) for instance realized this worsening condition and had attempted to improve the conditions, but it was short-lived. For example, in 1774, Abdul Hamid I requested for European experts to reorganize the military and pave the way for the great transformation programme which was later undertaken by Sultan Selim III. The attempts to improve the conditions of the Caliphate entered a new phase when Sultan Selim III ascended the throne in 1789. His reform order was known as '*Nizam-I Cedid*'. Selim III had also reorganized the military, instituted newly established military institution and founded a newly created army model called *Nizam-I Cedid* (Nurullah Ardic, 2012).

He also endeavoured to reorganize the state administration, including the system of education, initiated an effort to decentralize the central powers to the regional authority and established new schools of higher education i.e. engineering and medical schools. In this respect, Secil Akgun (1991) has also asserted that Selim III realized the fact there was a sort of new initiatives needed to be done vis-à-vis to its foreign policy which prompted him to initiate the establishment of permanent consulates in major European capitals in order to pursue relations with the Western powers and started a balance policy in the world politics. This, however, had stirred oppositions within the Empire (Secil Karal Akgun, 1991). As a result, those measures aroused annoyance amongst the *Janissaries* (Ottoman elite corps) whom then overthrew and later executed him. On the same note, Kevin (2006) has also observed in later years, this move had invited oppositions both from the *ulama* who saw that the changes implemented by Selim III was considered as something unacceptable within the realm of Islamic law, and unsurprisingly the *Janissaries* who were susceptible by the creation of the new army. Eventually this led to an open opposition to Selim III's policy of westernization which had forced him to abdicate in favour of his cousin, Mustafa IV. Under the reign of Mustafa IV, Kevin asserted that all these changes had been reversed which included the abolition of the newly created army and newly founded educational institutions which supported the reforms of Sultan Selim III. Nevertheless, Mustafa IV's reign was short-lived when Selim III's supporters staged a revolt with the help of a powerful governor, Mustafa Bayrakdar (Kevin Goodwin, 2006).

This counter revolution then placed Sultan Mahmud II, his nephew as a new Sultan. On the same note, Bernard Lewis (1968) also asserted that the Sultans of the Ottoman Caliphate, apparently by the turn of 18<sup>th</sup> century, began to give serious attention to the necessity of reforming the Caliphate, prompted by the incapability of the Ottoman armies to contain their Christian counterparts in a number of wars and battles. In doing so, the role of French instructors and specialists was evidently getting significant in modernizing the Ottoman armies (Bernard Lewis, 1961). Sultan Mahmud II, in his serious attempts for reformation in the Caliphate, was later regarded as the 'Peter the Great of Ottoman Empire'. He had reformed the socio-economic and political landscapes of the Caliphate. For instance, in 1826, he dissolved the *Janissaries* (elite corps of the Ottoman Empire) and instituted a new army called *Asakir-I Mansuriye Muhammediye* (Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad) which was purely a European-oriented model. He then implemented the policy of centralization of bureaucracy. His realm was becoming more dominant by upsetting and dissolving the office of the all-powerful *Sadrizam* (Grand Vezir). His office was a western-style-cabinet, employing a *basvekil* (chief minister) and *vekils* (ministers) to offices of departments. However, this effort was short-lived as the higher-level bureaucracy soon regained its lost power. He also initiated an effort for mass primary education, instituted military and civil schools and requested foreigners especially the French to be employed as instructors in these schools.

He also reorganized the Turkish dress code, by using Fez and Greek headdresses, Western style pants and shirts, and other clothing accessories. He was considered also as the first Sultan who adorned Western clothing, whom the public then called the 'infidel Sultan'. He also instituted changes in the legal system to provide equality for non-Muslims and established a new council to deal with judicial issues which fell outside the Sharia (Nurullah Ardic, 2012). Kevin (2006) noted that by doing this, Mahmud II had started the process of crafting a new system of government and political authority based on Western lines rather than the Islamic ones. The reforms carried out by Mahmud II paved the way for other substantial reforms in the Caliphate

which culminated in the pronouncement of imperial decree known as *Hatt-i-Shariff Gulhane* on November 3, 1839.

The document was issued in the name of Abdul Mejid I, the sixteen-year old Sultan who had ascended to the throne just four months earlier after the death of his father, Mahmud II, of tuberculosis (Zakub Mazanec, 2016; Kevin Goodwin, 2006). This document signifies an attempt to modernize the Empire according to Western political and social ideologies. This decree was primarily initiated by Mustafa Resid Pasa who was at that time the Minister of Foreign Affairs and thus, this period was later called the Tanzimat Era. Mustafa Resid Pasa was the most prominent Ottoman reformer was found to be one of the few Ottoman officials who had been introduced to western education. In context of Tanzimat, he had dominated the early years of the Tanzimat era, specifically from 1839 until 1854. In terms of his service, he used to be an Ambassador to Paris and London in the 1830s and in later years, he had assumed the most powerful office in the Ottoman Empire, namely the Grand Vizier for six times (September 1846-April 1848; August 1848-January 1852; March 1852-August 1852; November 1854-May 1855; November 1856-August 1857; and October 1857-January 1858).

By the time this decree was planned and announced, the Ottoman Empire was already militarily weak and economically decayed though it still ruled considerably vast territories. Though so, the Ottoman sovereignty over the Balkans region was diminishing steadily due to the rise of the separatist movement, geared by the Ottoman's arch-rival, none other than Russia (Kevin Goodwin, 2006). Moreover, Kevin had illustrated several factors behind the decline of the Empire through his analysis of this decree; one of the main reasons why was due to the lack of commitment to the Islamic law by the Ottoman government and there was also no effective administration of the Ottoman government in the centre and its provinces. This era also witnessed the steady expansion of Western powers in their technology, economy and military at the expense of the worsening conditions of the Empire. Thus, this *Hatt-i-Shariff* proposed three radical clauses in order to curb that condition, namely "security of life, honour and property to all people' irrespective of their religion and ethnicities; secondly an introduction of a regular taxation system; and thirdly a regular conscription of army".

This specific reform programme did not stop at this point. In later years, the Empire witnessed the birth of a new edict, namely *Hatt-i-Humayun* on February 18, 1856. This had come about following the roles of two prominent *Tanzimat* reformers, namely Ali Pasa and Fuad Pasa, who together with Sultan Abdul Mejid promulgated this new edict. This new edict reaffirmed and guaranteed the previous clauses contained in the *Hatt-i-Shariff* especially on matters concerning the protection of the rights of the people who resided in the Ottoman Empire. Last but not least, this document also put an end to the tax farming system and the practices of bribery amongst the government officials. The *Tanzimat* reforms then ensued in the periods of 1829-1879 which left impactful changes on the Caliphate.

Abdul Mejid I launched the Royal Decree of *Gulhane* which provided equality for Muslims and non-Muslims. This period was characterized by a direct political and economic presence of the West (Kevin Goodwin, 2006). Moreover, Bernard Lewis (1968) had also commented that the reforms programmed in the Caliphate had taken root in the State owing to notable Ottoman reforms. The most prominent amongst the reformists was Mustafa Resid Pasa (1800-1858) as discussed earlier. He had initiated reforms in the military and socio-political spheres of the Caliphate. It was highly believed, according to the author that the very reasons why

Mustafa Resid Pasa had carried out his reforms programme was primarily to secure the cordial relationship and support from the European powers and counter the more successful reform programme carried out by Muhammad Ali in Egypt.

In the field of education, new non-religious primary (*ibtidai*) and secondary schools were founded. For higher learning (*idadi*), new humanities-based schools which used French *grandes ecoles* were also established, including schools of geography, mathematics, school of political science (1859), the lycee of Galatasaray (1868) and school of law (1880). All these schools used the French language as its main language of instruction. The first Western-style University *Darul Funun* was later founded in 1900. A new western style of taxation system was also created. The state's economic and political system in its entirety was reorganized to suit the needs and environment of the world trade system which was predominantly determined by the European powers. The capitalist system was now encroaching into the Ottoman lands. In short, the *Tanzimat* and its imperial decrees were marked by the presence of foreign individuals, newly added privileges to non-Muslims, the creation of modern citizenship elements in the state, and the rise of a new group of intellectuals who were educated in Western style (Nurullah Ardic, 2012). Then, came to the throne of the Caliphate one of its credible Sultans, namely Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1876. The Sultan, like his predecessors, still proceeded with other reform programmes such as reorganizing the Ministry of Justice so that it could take over all non-religious matters.

Moreover, it seemed that Sultan Abdul Hamid II had also carried a series of modernization policies in the fields of socio-political spheres which seemed to reach a larger community than his predecessors. According to Rashed Chowdhury (2011), one of the main areas which Sultan Abdul Hamid II dedicated his reform was in the field of education. It was believed that the Ottoman government started to pay attention on matters concerning the development of education in the Empire when the *Tanzimat* era began. In this respect, Sultan Abdul Mejid I (r. 1839-1861) was found to have formed a committee to study on matters concerning public education. This committee later evolved into a permanent body which was responsible in overseeing the writing of textbooks for the future State's schools. This body later transformed into a full ministry, which was called the Ministry of Education. By this time, the State controlled and supervised the public schools. In this regard, Rashed Chowdhury (2011) another development which had taken place before the ascendance of Sultan Abdul Hamid II to the throne was the promulgation of the Education Law in 1869, which was based on French models. This led to the creation of State-run schools which comprised of five stages of education levels, namely primary schools (*Ibtidai*), middle schools (*rusdiye*), secondary schools (*idadi*), lyceums (*sultani*), and a university (*darul funun*).

The author further observed that by the time Sultan Abdul Hamid II ruled the Empire, the above-mentioned educational programme was at minimal level because though *Galatasary Lyceum* was established in Istanbul besides a number of middle schools, there was no single public primary school which remained intact. On the contrary, foreign-based educational institutions found their way in many parts of the Empire rapidly (for instance in Beirut, there were five French schools and four British schools besides a few other foreign-sponsored institutions).

These schools were normally operated by Christian missionaries. Surprisingly the majority of students in those foreign schools were Ottomans. In view of this development, following his

enthronement, Sultan Abdul Hamid II decided to expand the network of educational system in many parts of the Empire and thus created opportunities for Muslims who previously had no access to modern schooling system, where the Muslims were largely concentrated within *medreses* precinct. Consequently, the number of secondary schools (*dadi* schools) opened rose from six in 1876 to 55 in 1893 and 98 by 1908 respectively. This educational expansion thus not only put the Ottoman's provinces within the orbit of the Ottoman central government, but also it offered opportunities to any individuals in those provinces closer to the capital. Moreover, Sultan Abdul Hamid II had also founded a number of specialized institutions which also catered for higher level studies in Ottoman territories. He had also founded teacher-training colleges using revenue collected from the new tax which he had introduced in 1883. He also re-opened a university in Istanbul in 1900 because the previous one which was founded in the time of Tanzimat had been closed.

It seemed that Sultan Abdul Hamid II, through his efforts of modernizing Ottoman's schools, did not only want to produce well-equipped Ottoman army and officials, but he also wanted to train the youth in the field of engineering and agriculture. This modernization policy was not only intended to strengthen the state, but also to reform the socio-economic life of the Empire. This could be seen through the creation of business and commercial-oriented schools in the 1870s and 1880s which went hand in hand with the schools intended to train young officers to take up posts in governmental departments (such as police and customs departments) (Rashed Chowdhury, 2012). Steady deterioration of the Ottoman's military power compelled the Ottoman Sultan to look for a workable policy to maintain its integrity and strength at the expense of growing Western imperialism.

### **Conclusion**

It is important to reiterate here that in the height of high imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a notable number of 'conscious' non-European societies felt alarmed with steady Western encroachments into their shores, which in this respect, the Japanese leaders and their Turkish counterparts felt there was a dire need to remedy their existing situations. The Western Powers, on their part, citing that they were tasked to bring the most commonly used expressions none other than civilization and enlightenment into these non-Western societies. Of course, viewing from the standards of Western world of the time, both Japan and Turkey were left behind in many aspects (military, economic and administrative structures to name a few). In this respect, both Japanese and Turkish leadership, had mobilized their men of influence and intellect to reorganize their society soonest possible in order to avoid from being turned into their colonies. The leaders of both countries aware of the fact that, militarily and economically speaking, they were far left behind and it just a matter of time before the Western powers stepped into their lands and exploited their lands for the latter's benefits. Thus, the only way possible for them, at least to halt further Western penetration into their lands, was to demonstrate to the Western world that their country was capable of modernizing their economy and military sectors.

Upon embarkation of this modernization agenda (inevitably Western models became their points of reference), both Japanese and Turkish leaders faced a series of problems, especially to convince their fellow countrymen on the need to reform their country, though the magnitude of problems might vary from country to another yet they faced mounting pressure to push through this modernization plans in their respective countries. Interestingly, both countries could not exactly find any single Western models which could work perfectly with their own

needs and requirements, therefore, the best they could was to refine and adopt them according to their domestic circumstances. Thus, it is safe to note that the borrowing of Western knowledge and expertise into their countries, strictly speaking, was not adopted in its entirety, but it passed through the process of ‘compatibility’ with the local needs and circumstances before its final absorption and application.

## References

- Akgun, Secil. K. “The Emergence of Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire, The Center for Ottoman Studies, Ankara University, 1991.” Last modified January 20, 2019. [dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/834/10541.pdf](http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/834/10541.pdf).
- Ardic, Nurullah. *Islam and the Politics of Secularism: The Caliphate and Middle Eastern Modernization in the Early 20th Century*. Routledge: London, 2012.
- Brown, Alexander D. “Meiji Japan: A Unique Technological Experience.” *Student Economic Review* 19 (2005): 71-83.
- Crowley, James B. “From Closed Door to Empire: The Formation of the Meiji Military Establishment.” In *Modern Japanese Leadership. Transition and Change*, edited by Bernard S. Silberman and Harry Harootunian, 276-277. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1966, 276-7.
- Goodwin, K. “The Tanzimat and The Problem of Political Authority in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1876.” Last modified April 20, 2018. [https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/honors\\_projects/5](https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/honors_projects/5).
- Chowdhury, R. “Pan-Islamism and Modernisation during the Reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, 1876-1909.” PhD dissertation, McGill University, 2011.
- Dina Wahyuni. (2012). The research design maze: Understanding paradigms, cases, methods and methodologies. *Journal of Applied Management Accounting Research*, 10, (1), 69-78.
- Donald H. Shively. “The japanization of the Middle Meiji.” In *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, edited by Donald H. Shively, 92-138. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Eugene Sowiak. “On the Nature of Western Progress: The Journal of the Iwakura Embassy.” In *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, edited by Donald H. Shively, 25-52. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Flottman, Augustus. “The Meiji Education System: Developing the Emperor’s Ideal Subject.” Undergraduate honours thesis, University of Colorado, 2012.
- Humphreys, Leonard A. *The Way of the Heavenly Sword. The Japanese Army in the 1920’s*. California: Stanford University Press, 1995.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. London: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Mazanec, Zakub. “The Ottoman Empire at The Beginning of Reform.” *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations* 2 (2016): 21-45. <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-afee3c94-f854-44a4-a156-2f0c3e0aabdc>.
- Michio Nagai. “Westernization and Japanization: The Early Meiji Transformation of Education.” In *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, edited by Donald H. Shively, 53-94. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Ohno, Kenichi. *The History of Japanese Economic Development: Origins of Private Dynamism and Policy Competence*. Britain: Routledge, 2017.
- Presseisen, Ernst. *Before Aggression. Europeans Train the Japanese Army*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965.

- Ramseyer, J. Mark and Rosenbluth, Frances M. *The Politics of Oligarchy: Institutional Choice in Imperial Japan*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Sumikawa, S. 1999. "The Meiji Restoration: Roots of Modern Japan." <https://www.lehigh.edu/~rflw1/courses/1999/spring/ir163/Papers/pdf/shs3.pdf>
- Takafusa, Nakamura. *Economic Growth in Prewar Japan*. Translated by Robert A. Feldman. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.
- White, Marilyn Domas & Marsh, Emily E. (2006). *Content analysis: A flexible methodology*. <http://hdl.handle.net/2142/3670>