

THE PROJECTIONS OF THE ENGLISH POLITICS IN THE CAUCASIA/CENTRAL ASIA AND THE BLACK SEA AGAINST THE RUSSIAN EXPANSIONISM IN THE 19TH CENTURY IN THE WORKS OF EDMUND SPENCER*

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ABSTRACT

Russia was born from a little Moscow principality whose name was only known as the town border in the 12th century completed her formation in 14th and 16th centuries. In the mid of the 16th century during the reign of IV. Ivan (Terrible Ivan) the Muslim khanet called Kazan in the region of Volga was taken by Russia in 1552. Then Russia invaded Astrahan in 1556 and made a great achievement in order to realize her objectives in the region. Since that date, she had continued to follow an expansionist policy in the direction of the east and the south. Especially during the reign of I. Petro, Russia set her own strategic objectives and considered descending the warmer seas as her main strategy. In addition, the Central Asia and Caucasia were determined as the major places of maintenance of Russia as well. In the mid of the 17th century, she was able to cross the Asia Continent in the eastern direction and she could reach the Pacific Ocean. During the 18th century when the wars between Ottoman State and Russia resulted against the Ottoman Empire. Russia also managed to settle in the Black Sea. Thus Russia turned into a big power and the threat in the north for the Ottoman State. Up on these developments, Russia became not only a threat for the Ottoman Empire but also it was considered as a big threat for England, who regarded her Indian route very essential for her political and economic interests. In this context, the purpose of this study aims to analyze and track the politics and the policy followed by England in order to understand the nature of the political relations and the political atmosphere in the region in the 19th century through the impressions and observations of the English traveler named as Edmund Spencer exploiting his three works thus making some contributions to the field of literature.

Keywords: Edmund Spencer, Caucasia, the Black Sea, English politics, Russian politics, Russian expansion.

EDMUND SPENCER'İN ESERLERİNDE KAFKASYA/ORTA ASYA VE KARADENİZ'DE RUS YAYILMACILIĞINA KARŞI İZLENEN İNGİLİZ POLİTİKASININ İZDÜŞÜMLERİ

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ÖZ

12. yüzyılda adı sadece bir sınırlı kasabası olan ve küçük Moskova prensliğinden doğan Rusya oluşumunu 14. ve 16. yüzyılda tamamlamıştır. 16. yüzyılın ortalarında Korkunç İvan döneminde Volga bölgesinde yer alan ve bir Müslüman Hanlığı olan Kazan, Ruslar tarafından 1552 yılında ele geçirilmiştir. Akabinde Ruslar 1556 yılında Astrahanı ele geçirerek bölgedeki amaçlarını gerçekleştirme yolunda büyük bir başarı kazanmışlardır. Bu tarihten itibaren, Rusya doğu batı yönünde yayılcı bir politika izlemeye devam etmiştir. Özellikle Rusya I. Petro döneminde stratejik hedeflerini belirleyerek sıcak denizlere ulaşmayı belli başlı bir politikası olarak görmüştür. Ayrıca Kafkasya ve Orta Asya da Rusya'nın kendi varlığını sürdürmesi için belli başlı yerler olarak belirlenmiştir. 17. yüzyılın ortasında ise Rusya doğu yönünde Asya kıtasını geçmeyi başardı ve Pasifik Okyanusuna ulaştı. 18. yüzyılda Rusya ile Osmanlı Devleti arasındaki savaşlar Osmanlı Devleti aleyhine sonuçlandığında, Ruslar Karadeniz'e yerleşmeyi de başardı. Böylece Rusya kuzeyde Osmanlı Devleti için büyük bir güce ve tehdiye dönüştü. Bu gelişmeler üzerine, Rusya sadece Osmanlı Devleti için değil aynı zamanda Hindistan yolunu siyasi ve ekonomik çıkarları açısından çok önemli olarak gören İngiltere için de bir tehdit oluşturmaya başladı. Bu bağlamda, çalışma, İngiliz seyyah Edmund Spencer'in üç eserinde yer alan ve onun bazı gözlem incelemelerinden yola çıkarak 19. yüzyılda bölgede yaşanan siyasi ilişkiler ile siyasi atmosferi daha iyi anlamak için İngiltere'nin bölgede izlediği politikanın izlerini sürmek ve analiz etmek ve böylece alan yazına kimi katkılar sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Edmund Spencer, Kafkasya, Karadeniz, İngiliz politikaları, Rus politikaları, Rus yayılcılığı.

1-Introduction

When the state of Golden Horde lost its political power and collapsed at the end of the 15th century under the reign of Timuroğulları, it was replaced by Russia, who emerged as a state from the principality¹ and she reached at a level which could change the political balance in the region. For instance, Tzar Ivan (Terrible Ivan) politically managed to benefit from the interior divisions of the Turkish khanets. He captured the town of Kazan and the Kazan Khanet on 2nd October 1552 and thus in the mid-region of the Volga river the Turkish existence ended that had lasted since the 6th century A.D. This victory not only enabled Russia to capture Astrakhan but also enabled her to extend her influence more to the southern parts.² Kurat also states that the progress and marching of Russia went towards the North Caucasia. Thus soon after this the influence of Russia felt itself among the Circassians, some Turks and the Georgians.³ At the end of the 16th century Russia emerged as an imperial power though the great efforts of reforms and westernization and specified her imperial targets and the policies in that century.⁴

¹ Halil Çetin, "1863-1873 Döneminde Orta Asya'da Rus-İngiliz Rekabeti", *Bilgi*, 15, 2000, s. 2.

² Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi (Başlangıçtan 1917'ye Kadar)*, TTK, Ankara 1993, s. 152-153.

³ Kurat, *a.g.e.*, s. 155.

⁴ Mithat Aydın, "İngiliz-Rus Rekabeti ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Asya Toprakları Sorunu (1877-1878)", *TAED*, S: 38, 2008, s. 254.

Especially during the reign of I. Petro (1689-1725) Russia specified her strategic targets such as the capture of the routes which would enable Russia to reach warm seas and considered it as one of the priorities to become a great state. Moreover, the Central Asia and Caucasia were regarded as strategic regions essential for the political and economic existence of Russia as well.⁵

At the beginning of the 18th century when the Ottoman State⁶ and Iran were fighting with one another in the southern Caucasia, Russia gained more power with the help of the reforms of Tzar I. Petro⁷ and interfered in the region. Tzar had the desire to reach India via Iran and Central Asia, to develop his trade by accessing to some raw materials such as silk, copper and cotton, etc. and colonize his lands which are sparsely populated, but more importantly she needed to use the strategic position of the passages of Transcaucasia. During the period when the Ottoman State stopped her development and Iran went into some internal turmoils, the shadow of Russia was rising over the Transcaucasia and soon after this Tzar Petro would find a reason to attack there.⁸ After the defeat of Prut, even though Petro avoided having any conflict with the Ottoman Empire, he continued the Russian conquests along the coasts of Caspian Sea and even Russia and the Ottoman Empire reached an agreement through the mediation of the French Ambassador in İstanbul.

⁵ Elşan İzzetgil, “Kafkasya’nın Jeopolitiği ve Rusya’nın Bölgeye Yönelik Stratejisi”, *Bölgesel Çalışmalar*, C: 1, S: 1, s. 52. 2016. In addition, this policy followed by Russia has never changed neither during the reign of Russian Empire, the Soviet Russian and also during the reign of the Russian Federation and during the course of time these strategic targets have become milestones of the foreign policy of Russia see İzzetgil, *a.g.m.* s. 52.

⁶ Even though the year of 1492 is given related to the historical start of Turkish and Russian relations; in fact, the co-existence of those two tribes dates back to the ancient times. The start of the northern wing of Turkish migrations from the east to the west in the years of B.C. made the Slavs and the Turks live together in the steppes of Ukraine, which is especially the sub-forest area. That is why, in his work “Eski Türkler” Lev Nikolayeviç Gumilev writes about the similarities of those tribes having lived together, especially in the Ukraine region see. İlyas Topsakal, “Tarihsel Süreçte, Türk-Rus İlişkileri”, *Marmara Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, C: III, S: 2, 2016, s. 34; Halil İnalçık, “Osmanlı-Rus Münasebetlerinin Menşei ve Don-Volga Kanalı Teşebbüsü (1569)” TTK, Ankara 1948, ss. 379-381; Ayrıca Astrahan seferiyle alakalı detaylı bilgi için bk. İlyas Kamalov, *Rus Elçi Raporlarında Astrahan Seferi*, TTK, Ankara 2011; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve İdil Boyu*, TTK, Ankara 2011; Haluk F. Gürsel, *Tarih Boyunca Türk-Rus İlişkileri*, Ak Yayınları, İstanbul 1968; İlber Ortaylı, “XVIII. Yüzyıl Türk-Rus İlişkileri”, *Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde 500 Yıl 1491–1992*, TTK, Ankara 1992.

⁷ For the the personality and the foreign policy followed by Tzar Petro see. Goeorge Vernadsky, *Rusya Tarihi*, (çev.) Doğukan Mızrak-Egemen Ç. Mızrak, Selenge Yayınları, İstanbul 2015, s. 193-194 and also see. Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi*, s. 262-273; for more detailed information about I. Petro see. Saliha Afra Ünal, *I. Petro’dan 20. Yüzyıla Rusya’da Modernleşme Hareketleri*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Basılmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul 2017.

⁸ Abdullah Saydam, “Rusya’nın Kafkasya’yı İşgali”, *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1990, s. 243.

In other words in the 18th century Russia invaded the steppes of Kazakhia and Caucasia and established her domination in the region.⁹

The competition between Russia and the Great Britain can be said to go back to the reign of Tzar Petro (Peter the Great).¹⁰ In those times on the basis of that competition did result from the desire of Russia to invade India, which was under the control of England. At the very beginning of the 19th century, due to the danger of Napeolon Bonaparte in the west Russia had to turn her attention from the east to the west.¹¹ For England Caucasia¹² was playing an important role in securing the Indian trade route. As is aforementioned the policy of Russia to go down the warmer seas was clashing with the activities of the English in the Mediterranean. Therefore, Cuacasia became a conflict between the two countries. For this reason, it was very crucial for England to know the region and the people inhabiting there and it formed the first step for the activities carried out towards Caucasia. This step was taken through some travellers and scientists. Thus England began to send some travellers such as Cook to the region in the first half of the 18th century to collect and obtain some information regarding the region and its inhabitants in order to determine some strategies to put a barrier against the aggressive expansionist policies followed by Russia.¹³ Accordingly, one of these English travellers who had visited the region a few times in the 19th century is Captain Edmund Spencer.¹⁴ The purpose of this study is to deal with and analyze the projections of the English policy specifically in the three works of Spencer and thus it is aimed not only to be able to understand the nature of the rivalry experienced between the two countries in the 19th century but also to understand the policy followed by the two countries towards the region and to make some contributions to the literature of the field so as

⁹ Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi*, s. 262. Kurat also adds that in accordance with the peace talks held in St. Petersburg, Iran government had to leave the Geylan, Mazenderan and Astrabad regions in the southern parts of the Caspian Sea to Russia along with Derbend and Bakû. Thus Russia went down the south of Caucasia, s. 262.

¹⁰ Mehmet Saray, "Türkistan'da Rus-İngiliz Rekabeti", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, 34, 1983-4, s.400; D. Charles Boulger, *England and Russia in Central Asia*, II, W. H. Allen & Co., London 1879, s. 338.

¹¹ Çetin, *a.g.m.*, s. 2.

¹² It took the Russian Tsars more than two hundred years to conquer the Caucasus. Their attempts started at the end of the 16th century, but they did not complete it until the 1860s. Russia's expansion into the Caucasus was classic imperialism, like the British conquest of India and the French expansion into North and Sub-Saharan Africa bkz. Paul Henze, "Russia and the Cuacasia", *PERCEPTION*, (June-August)1996, s.53.

¹³ İbrahim Telliöğlü, "İngilizlerin Kafkasya İle ilgili İlk Gözlemleri", *Turkish Studies*, 10/9, 2015, s. 448.

¹⁴ Captain Edmund Spencer is one of the famous travellers of the 19th century He wrote three works in which there has been a great deal of information regarding the Caucausus under such titles. "Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia, London: George Routledge, 1855, "Travels in the Western Caucausus, Including a Tour through Imeretia, Mingrelia, Turkey, Moldavia, Galicia, Silesia, and Moravia", Vol. I-II, London: Henry Colburn,1838", "Travels in Circassia and the Kırım Tartary, Vol: I-II", Henry Colburn, London 1837.

to understand even for today how important the geo-strategic position of the region is to become a great power in the world.

2. Some of the General Observations of Edmund Spencer relating to Russia

In his work published in 1837 titled as “Travels in Circassia and Kırım-Tartary, Spencer narrates his own observations related to state of Russia in the first half of the 19th century to help us to understand how England feels uneasy and disturbed by the rapid encroachment and expansionism of Russia in the region. First of all, he focuses on the increasing power of Russia not only in Persia and Turkey but also its influence is felt in every government of Europe thus marching her one foot in Europe and the other in Asia, which signifies that she would reach her main objective to possess the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and if it were possible in the words of Spencer, she would be able to rule the destinies of the hemisphere.¹⁵ In fact, the objective of Russia to go down the warm seas dates back to I. Petro. After he had got the Azak Castle from the Ottomans in 1696, he followed a policy to capture the Black Sea and go down the Egean and Mediterranean by capturing İstanbul. In order to reach this objective, she used every sort of opportunity such as forming a fleet on the Black Sea, manipulating the Slavic Christians in the Balkans through provocation and thus planned to capture İstanbul and go down the warm seas to establish her political domination all over the world.¹⁶ In addition, Spencer warns against the fact that if no barrier were put for the further encroachments of Russia, it would be inevitable to see “the eagle of Muscovy” up on the ruins of the “crescent” and he strikingly describes the ambitious designs of Russia as follows:

... every step made in advance from their barren steps is a change for the better. The grandees of the Empire look forward to great acquisitions of lands and greater power and the officers and soldiers not only four times the usual pay in time of peace, but replenish their empty coffers by rapine. Was not this thirst for gain the guiding-star of all the great military nations that ever existed down to the French under Napoleon?¹⁷

In the following lines he further analyses the aggrandisement of Russia saying that she does not owe it to military enterprise of her own people but mostly to his own geographical position and on one side her neighbours sacrificing every possibility for the sake of peace and on the other great numbers of the ignorant barbarians with no discipline. He states that through the help of these no one can wonder at the extension of her territories or successful victories. To him, fortunately

¹⁵ Edmund Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, Vol: II, Henry Colburn, London 1837.

¹⁶ M. Hüdai Şentürk, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bulgar Meselesi (1850-1875)*, TTK, Ankara 1992, s.74; for more information about this subject see. Süleyman Kocabaş, *Kuzey'den Gelen Tehdit Tarihte Türk-Rus Mücadelesi*, Vatan Yayınları, İstanbul 1989, s.25.

¹⁷ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s. 58.

for the peace of Europe, like Peter I. neither not one of his successors nor her generals for the exception Suvarow has manifested similar endowments.¹⁸ As is seen from his narrations, he specifically puts greater emphasis on the strong policies of I. Petro than the policies of the following Tzars who ascended to the throne. In addition to this, in order to persuade the reader for his objectivity about his narrations and remarks related to the policy of Russia and the ambitious intentions of the Russian government, he claims that he does not have any prejudice against her but he only feels it duty as a traveller to reveal the truth.¹⁹ However, it should be borne in mind that though he claims that he is not biased against Russia and he was received with hospitality and kindness during his travels in the region, it is possible to say that more probably he is not an adventurous traveler to discover new places and get to know the new people and the cultures and he seems to have travelled in Caucasia and Kırım-Tartary with the financial support of his country to collect intelligence about Russia to watch his steps more closely; because his detailed narrations and the strong political remarks as to Russia and her policy make us consider it; because his opinions given below exemplify it clearly:

Still, even assuming that the peaceable disposition of the Russian government, if regarding the position she now occupies and remember her propensity for aggrandisement, the political state of our country imposes upon us the necessity of watching her movements with jealous attention in order to preserve the equilibrium of European power. Do we not see the Russian diplomatists on their part with her numerous clever agents everywhere undermining our interests, commercial and political as if we were the only obstacle that opposed their unhallowed purpose of subjugating the nations?²⁰

He further goes on to warn the English public opinion about how the Russian press threatens England quoting from the Moscow Gazette “ Go on! Go on! Debt-burdened Albion, thy hour is not yet come! But be assured we shall soon teach a lesson at Calcutta!!!”.²¹ As is pointed out by Spencer, to carry out a campaign for India had been discussed in Russia for several years. Though it was not discussed in details, if it were realized it was considered as inevitable that it would lead to a serious war between Russia and England. England had been always been aware of this fact and it had been one of the major policies of England towards the region. In line with this policy, England carried out two campaigns in Afghanistan, the first one in 1838-1839 and the second in 1841-1842 so as to open the new trade routes and secure India from a possible Russian attack that might come from the north. Moreover, she also wanted to control the North route (Balkans, Black Sea, Georgia,

¹⁸ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s. 58-59.

¹⁹ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s. 65.

²⁰ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s.66.

²¹ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s.66.

Afghanistan) between the Europe and the India.²² Spencer also makes some further explanation to refer to the possible war pointing out that there are some signs of the times, the clashing of interests and the silly and indifferent attitudes of other countries that indicate the fact that “it was not too distant to curb the steed that would rideover them.”²³ In addition, Spencer uses a metaphor; for example, the word “steed” for Russia in order to refer to the great threat and the danger of her to convince his readers as to the fact that the danger is imminent for England. As is pointed out by Spencer, One of the greatest powers that threaten the routes of the English that lead to India in the 19th was Russia. The geographic closeness of Russia to India and the possibility of going down the Mediterranean over the weak Ottoman Empire created a serious danger for the interests of England.²⁴ Moreover, the open of the Suez Channel in 1869 made the English more anxious. Therefore, in order to hinder the Russian expansionism that might ruin the economic and political interests of England in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Near East and the Middle East by cutting off the Indian connection, the protection of the Ottoman Empire as a barrier became the fundemantal principle of the traditional English foreign policy.²⁵

3. The Threat of Russian Aggression to English Interests in the Region

In his other work titled “Travels in the Western Caucaus”, Spencer mainly focuses on explaining why India is essential for the economic and political interests of England and some different opinions in the English public opinion respecting the Russian policy. First of all, he argues that his ideas, related to the ambitious views of Russia, her extension of her dominions in Asia and the possibility of an attack in the near future on what England posseses in India may be considered as something imaginary or something as the indication of Russo-phobia by some opponents, but he underlines the fact that at some close future his predictions would come true if some measures were not taken immediately to control and check the progress of Russia in the region.²⁶ The traveller also makes some remarks on how some different ideas related to the power of Russia seem to be deceptive in the following lines as follows:

In the present day, few unfortunately even of our most intelligent writers, are conversant with the real state of Central Asia; while other grounding their conclusions upon the extensive line Russian frontier, her thinly scattered population, their poverty and clashing interests, upon the inadequacy of the

²² Kadriye Topal, *19. Yüzyılda İngiltere'nin Türkistan Siyaseti*, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara 2104, s. 52.

²³ Spencer, *Travels in Circassia and the Kırım-Tartary*, s. 66.

²⁴ Ziya Nasim, *Kıbrıs'ın İngiltere'ye Geçışı ve Adada Kurulan İngiliz İdaresi*, Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, Yayın No.44, Ankara 1975, s. 9.

²⁵ Mithat Aydın, “İngiliz-Rus Rekabeti ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Asya Toprakları Sorunu (1877-1878)”, *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, S: 38, 2008, s. 255.

²⁶ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, Vol: I, Henry Colburn, London 1838, s.62-63.

resources of the empire to its wants and the selfish speculation of the civil and military employees tell us that she is hastening to her fall.²⁷

To Spencer, all these opinions aim to deceive the English nation concealing the real face of the policy adopted by Russia. He also advises not being deceived by such arguments and making some necessary preparations for the nearing threat and the danger such as strengthening the English navy. Then he suggests sending a marine force into the Black Sea rather than marching in the Mediterranean and the Tagus (in Portugal), deciding the question immediately, breaking the band between Turkey and Persia and tell the whole world that the Black Sea should be open for all the countries. In line with these suggestions, Spencer points out that only in that way India would be far away from the Russian threat and the danger and also in his words “the mist that hovers round the Caucasus and Central Asia removed”²⁸ and a new channel could be opened for the English trade, which would bring a great deal of wealth for the future generations.²⁹ In accordance with this, the traveller criticizes the attitude of some who do not consider Russia as a great danger and deem India or any other colonies as a cause of loss for the mother country rather than a source of richness for England and point out that their opinions are completely erroneous and he is opposed to such ideas in that the colonies constitute the real source of wealth and because of this they consider them as the potential wealth to protect them from any invasion. Moreover, Spencer explains why India or any other colonies of England are vital referring to the fact that as in the case of America, which was founded by some groups of the English, England should do her best to “sow the seeds of concord and kindness” and eliminate the negative feelings of people and gain the prosperity and the friendship of the people in the colonies which will bring too many benefits for England. He further gives some recommendations about how it might be achieved. To him, first of all, under the light of the example of the errors of their ancestors, instead of using some coercive measures England should establish a milder ruling system and exercise a parental authority, which can deeply connect them to England to which they owe everything. Secondly, he suggests that England should play a vital role in civilising the world and extending the British influence and making English spreading to the most parts of the world.³⁰

Under the light of these recommendations or the narrations of Spencer, it seems possible to follow the imperialist policies followed by England in the 19th century to benefit from the great economic wealth of India or the other colonies retained by her and it seems clear that so as to realize her objectives she must be very instrumental and watch everything very closely that might pose a threat to her such as Russia. Moreover, the policies followed by England in the region seems to

²⁷ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 63.

²⁸ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 64.

²⁹ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 63-64.

³⁰ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 66-68.

have changed parallel to the some political and economic changes in the world. Namely, the concept imperialism acquired a new meaning for the West. As is aforementioned by Spencer, when the states which carry out imperialist activities desire to capture a place succeeded in not only through some military forces but also using some mild methods.³¹ Some researchers argue that the things that lead to imperialism are some economic reasons, the increase in population and the desire to be very influential, the security concern, and the statesmen who are strongly in favour of the idea to protect the colonies retained as in the example of Spencer here and to believe in the necessity to expand the colonies.³² In addition, as Spencer states, Thornton claims that the desire to civilise the world, the desire of power, the political prestige etc. instigates the imperialism as well.³³ In accordance with this, to Said, imperialism “has been a process of overseas conquests, tyranny and the scientific studies having been lasting for hundreds of years.”³⁴

However, contrary to what Spencer thinks about the possible invasion of India by Russia, it seems that some do not agree with him on that subject. For instance, Norman, who made four visits to Russia states that during his visits to Russia and as a result of his several conversations with several Russians, regarding the intentions of Russia to India, he had come to the conclusion that the colossal and perilous undertaking of an armed invasion of India to conquer is not the part of the plan of a responsible Russian statesman or the soldier. Moreover, he puts his finger on the different opinions about the intention relating to the conquest of India saying that most of the Russians and nearly all the Russian newspapers and a great number of the officers think that not only Russia intends to do it but also she will. However, Norman adds that every Russian soldier up to the rank of colonel firmly believes in the fact that the conquest of India is possible and intended, but on the other hand the soldiers above the rank of the colonel know the fact that in terms of the military operation it is not probable and practical and that as a political move, it would be extremely foolish to do it.³⁵

Then the Spencer tries to draw the attention of the reader to the question of the possible invasion of India by Russia. Strikingly enough, he calls for all the powerful western countries whose ambitions are to conquer and to have unlimited dominions in the east because in the case of a general war it would be the prize for which a terrible game would be played. However, he presumes that such war is not possible at some near future because any unfriendly attack by Russia on the side of Europe can be easily prevented as long as Persia and Turkey are independent and

³¹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *19. Yüzyıl Siyasal Tarihi* (1789-1914), TTK, Ankara 2003, s.634.

³² A. Faruk Ülman, *I. Dünya Savaşı'na Giden Yol ve Savaş*, İmge Yayınları, Ankara 2002, s. 184-186.

³³ Lütfü Sunar, “XIX. Yüzyıl Avrupasında Emperyalizm Algısı”, *Sosyoloji Dergisi*, S: 14, 2007, s. 65.

³⁴ Edward W. Said, *Kültür ve Emperyalizm: Kapsamlı Bir Düşünce ve Siyasal Sorgulama Çalışması*, Hil Yayınları, İstanbul 1998, s. 110.

³⁵ Henry Norman, *All the Russias*, Charles Scribners Sons, New York 1904, s. 417.

khans of warlike tribes such as Afghans, Turkomans, Usbecks, Khelgees, etc. go on to remain connected to the interests of England. Yet he questions how long England can trust the integrity of Persia or how long Persia can maintain her present state of independence due to Russia threatening her territories and because of this reason it is a must for England to do her best to find a way to overcome it; for her neighbouring countries feel anxious and concerned in the field of Asiatic warfare because of the great size and resources Russia possesses. However, the poverty of her barren steps make her several tribes excited to invade the places richer and wealthier.³⁶ As is seen from these narrations, Spencer seems very concerned about the encroachments of Russia in the region and her great threat she poses to England even though it has not currently been realized by some political groups or intellectuals in England or by some western countries, for she is not considered as a danger or threat to harm their own political and economic interests in the region. Actually the traveller seems to be right about his concerns and his anxiety, for the attempt of Persia to invade Merv and Herat in 1833 through the motivation of Russia resulted in England's transferring her base to Afghanistan so as to defend India because every campaign to Herat is also considered as a campaign to India and England, which indicates that England loses its influence over Persia. Moreover, England endeavoured to create a chain of an ally against a probable Russian progress.³⁷ In line with this, Spencer also says that the young Shah of Persia with no experience is encouraged by Russia to invade Herat in Afghanistan because Russia wants him to waste his resources and it is obvious that Russia will move to destroy her victim (Persia) in the same way as Catherine has overthrown the last Khan of Krim-Tartary.³⁸ Namely, Spencer puts his finger on the increasing influence that Russia exercises over Persia and he assumes that if it might happen, a new passage will be opened for Russia to invade India through Persia.

The next subject that Spencer gives information about is some signs that indicate the Russian policy to reach India. First of all, he emphasizes the fact that since Russia possesses the provinces in the north of Araxas with the Euxine and the Caspian Seas, her lately established settlements and the forts, and the agents despatched with expensive presents to the Khans of Bokhara, Khiva and Khojend all indicate all of her plans of the aggression and they refer to the fact that she will be able to get the real fruits of such a costly preparation.³⁹ In the following lines, Spencer gives some advice to the authorities and asks them to pay attention to his warnings. First of all, he draws the attention to some problems in the Central Asia

³⁶ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 69-70.

³⁷ Çetin, *a.g.m.*, s. 3.

³⁸ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 71. Furthermore, Spencer argues that if a short time passes away the Russian army will rush to the help of its protégée, which means transferring the Russian frontier from Aras to Herat and to him another episode of a Russian policy in which she first opens her arms and then kills her confiding victim will be witnessed see. Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 71.

³⁹ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s. 70.

such as the disorganised situation of the whole Central Asia⁴⁰, the tribes making terrible warfare with each other and he adds that though some people think that such problems lead to very serious problems between India and an invading army from Europe, Spencer recommends that if some English military officers should enter the service of some of the most powerful among the khans and work for them to organize and modernise their troops in line with the modern European armies, it can be very beneficial on the side of the interest of England. In the following years England sent some envoys to Bokhara (Buhara), Khive (Hive) and Khojend (Hokand), the khanates of Turkistan and Afghanistan in order to seek for the possibilities to form a basis. However, the attempt of England to invade Afghanistan in 1842 resulted in failure and it gave courage to Russia to follow a more active policy in Turkistan. Yet the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War led to a ten-year delay for the progress of Russia in the region.⁴¹ However, in the year of 1863 the Russian progress speeded up again and it brought forth a diplomatic crisis in the history of the Central Asia, which would deeply affect England as well. At that turning point where the rivalry of Russian and English got hotter, it seemed inevitable that the two sides would get in touch with each other in a friendly or unfriendly way. That's to say, in the words of Byamirza Hayit "the row was just beginning".⁴²

Then he gives some further information about extending the English interest and influence in the region. For instance, to Spencer in accordance with this a great deal of things have been achieved especially through the efforts of the agents of the East Indian Company.⁴³ He gives the example of Imaum Muscat, who is the most powerful among the Arab chiefs and he stated that that person carries out an extensive commercial relationship with Bengal and Calcutta.⁴⁴ In addition, he

⁴⁰ For the historical background concerning Russia and the Central Asia see. İlyas Kamalov, *Rusya'nın Orta Asya Politikaları*, Ankara 2011, s.14-17.

⁴¹ Çetin, *a.g.m.*, s. 3. The progress of Russia into the interior parts of Asia had begun in the latter of the 16th century and she had reached the Pacific over Sibiria, but the real progress of her took place in the 19th century. Yet after the Crimean War when Russia realized the fact that she would not be able to reach the warmer seas through the straits and would not be able to extend her territories in the direction of the south and the west due to the interventions of England and France, she changed her direction towards the Asia. First she attempted to invade Turkistan see. Rifat Uçorol, *Siyasi Tarih (1789-1914)*, Filiz Kitapevi, İstanbul 1995, s. 266.

⁴² Baymirza Hayit, *Türkistan Devletlerinin Millî Mücadeleleri Tarihi*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1995, s. 118-119.

⁴³ The East Indian Company acted in accordance with three major principles. These principles are as follows: to protect the right of the privileges and the monopoly it received; to eliminate the other commercial organisations and to secure the privileges they received from the eastern officials see. Yücel Bulut, "Hindistan'da Sömürgecilik, Oryantalizm ve William Jones", *Sosyoloji Dergisi*, 3. Dizi, S: 6, 2003, s. 85.

⁴⁴ All the great actors in the 19th century showed interest in Arabian Peninsula and the coasts of the Red Sea overtly or covertly militarily, politically, culturally and diplomatically. However, England differs from the others via the foxy and the active policy she followed in the favour of her own interests. For instance, she got in direct touch with the chieftains (as is pointed above),

deems him as the most loyal ally because since he is very ambitious, he will be able descend upon the southern provinces of Persia, where a strong and well-defended boundary could be established. Besides the efforts of the East Indian Company, he also mentions some accredited residents inhabiting in Bushire and Bassorah referring to their extensive influence they exercise in those countries very close to the Persian Gulph.⁴⁵ Moreover, he recommends not giving up the efforts to extend that influence.⁴⁶ It is understood from these explanations that England should never stop extending her political and economic interests and should maintain her influence in the east because only in that way she could show resistance and can hinder the aggressive encroachments of Russia that might pose a great threat to her interests in India.

Finally, he recommends that the Russian frontier should be fixed because when Russia progresses towards India, it leads to an alarm and causes England to spend a great deal of money to despatch agents to avoid her bad intentions or maintain a large army ready to push her back. He also says that even if no actual danger exists on the side of Russia, her advances should be checked; for England has sufficient experience as to know that she could be dangerous and talented in all the seductive methods of “sowing discord” and “spreading dissatisfaction” such as leading to revolts or rebellions and persuade the people to believe that she is a protector to provide a shelter for them.⁴⁷ As is suggested above, the neutral zone, the zone of influence and the border line refer to the diplomatic solutions aimed to be achieved in the rivalry between England and Russia.⁴⁸ As is seen, Spencer makes a detailed political analysis regarding the state of Russia in the first half of the 19th century, her advances in the region day by day and how she might be so sinister to cause difficulties for England not only for India. When the explanations of Spencer are evaluated, it is seen that he seems to be deeply interested in the aggressive advances of Russia in the region and he makes a detailed political analysis about how such a sinister growing state might cause difficulties not only for India and the other colonies but also for the political and the economic interests and the influence

despatched several agents to the region, to bribe the chieftains, to provoke the chieftains in the regions and spent a great deal of money on arming them see. Şennur Şenel, “19. Yüzyılda İngiltere'nin Basra Bölgesindeki Faaliyetleri”, *Akademik Bakış*, C: 9, S.18, 2016, s. 192.

⁴⁵ From the 1830's onwards it is possible to say that England started to carry out some projects regarding the Middle-East unlike the previous years or she developed some projects in line with the changing conditions in the region. One of the first projects is the Suez canal, but this project was not approved by the English government of that period. To the foreign minister Palmerston, a canal to be opened between The Mediterranean and the Red Sea would be the second strait along with the whole problems. Therefore, the government agreed with the project to go to India over the East Mediterranean- Euphrates- Bassorah. Though it led to a conflict between the Ottoman State and England, due to the issue of Mehmet Ali Paşa, the Ottoman State allowed the English to carry out commerce over Euphrates in the East and besides these, the Ottoman State signed a Trade Treaty on 16 August 1838 with her see. Şenel, *a.g.m.*, s. 193.

⁴⁶ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s.75-76.

⁴⁷ Spencer, *Travels in Western Caucasus*, s.76.

⁴⁸ Çetin, *a.g.m.*, s. 4.

of England in the east. In addition to it, it is evident that he tries to draw the attention of the English politicians and the intellectuals and the other powerful western countries to be alert about the nearing danger waiting at the door.

4. The Impressions of Spencer about the Geo-strategic Importance of the Black Sea and the Circassia.

In his other work titled as “ Turkey, Russia, The Black Sea and the Circassia” published in 1855 the English traveller turns to other two important places, the Black Sea and the Circassia, which are so geo-strategically important and he provides detailed information about them discussing the increasing influence of Russia in those places in relation with the political and the economic interests of England in the region. Even though Russia was able to take the Azov Sea considered as the key to the Black Sea from the Ottoman State with the Treaty of İstanbul in 1700, she could not reach the Black Sea at the beginning of the 18th century, but reached at a level that threatened the Black Sea. Besides these, at first Tzar I. Petro did not struggle with the Ottoman State and the khanet of the Crimea. On the contrary, he found it reasonable for Russia to carry out activities towards the Black Sea after the necessary preparations had been made.⁴⁹ At the beginning of the years of 1750, owing to Prussia Russia had to adopt a friendly attitude towards the Ottoman State. However, Russia carried on strengthening her border lines in the south with the khanet of Crimea and the Ottoman State on the basis of her strategic targets towards the Black Sea.⁵⁰ In addition, during the 19th century Russia sought ways to strengthen her domination over the Black Sea and tried to find a way to get the privilege of a military passing through the straits to put an end to its being closed.⁵¹

With the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca Russia achieved to be the Black Sea State and it also caused the Black Sea to lose its feature of being “ the Lake of the Ottoman”. In accordance with that Treaty the Russian ships were allowed to carry out commerce freely in the Ottoman waters. Thus, Russia was able to despatch her commercial goods from the Black Sea to the Ottoman and the European markets through using some important rivers flowing into the Black Sea. This was also vital for the Russian commerce and the economy to develop.⁵² Moreover, the annexation

⁴⁹ Sinan Yüksel, “Kuzey Savaşları Sırasında Rusya’nın Karadeniz’e Yönelik Faaliyetleri”, *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, C: 31, S: 52, Ankara 2012, s. 172. For more information regarding the Russian activities in the region in the previous centuries see. Sinan Yüksel, “Rusların Karadeniz Yönünde Yapmış Oldukları İlk Yayılma Faaliyetleri (18. Yüzyılın Başlarına Kadar)”, *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, S: 28, 2013, s.101-116.

⁵⁰ Sinan Yüksel. *Rusya’nın Karadeniz Devleti Olma Süreci ve Bu Süreçte Rus-Osmanlı İlişkileri*, Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Ankara 2011, s. 67-68.

⁵¹ Hayri Çapraz, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı Öncesi Rusya’nın Boğazlar Politikası”, *Belgi*, S: 9, 2015, s. 1179.

⁵² Yüksel, *a.g.t.*, s. 75.

of the Crimea eased the exit of Russia to the Black Sea substantially and enabled her to turn into the Black Sea State. This also led to formations of the new balance in the Black Sea. For Russia realized the policy of being the Black Sea State she had been following for ages and thus avoided the great difficulty threatening her southern regions. Soon after the annexation of Crimea, Russia started to carry out some activities to strengthen her new position. The changing balances in the Black Sea also led to the changes in the policies of the European countries such as England and France towards Russia, the Ottoman State and the Black Sea.⁵³

First of all, he commences his narrations with Crimea and Bessarabia, whose population is made up of Tatars, German colonists, Bulgarians, Wallachians, French and Swiss not pleased with the iron rule of Russia. In addition, he points out that a large number of the inhabitants of Georgia, Immeritia, Mingrelia, Gourial and Russian Armenia are in the same state of feeling as well. To him, for instance, Tatars who bind themselves to the Osmanli by race and creed, would fight against Russia if they saw any little hope of emancipation. As to the Circassians, the mere presence of an English vessel would be sufficient enough to make those people rise from their chairs from the Black Sea and the Caspian and fight against her. Spencer also states that these are based on the information he had obtained during his travels in the region.⁵⁴ As is seen, the traveler points to the dependable allies such as Tatars and Circassians with whom England could act together against the threatening activities of Russia in the region. Then he argues that until the recent changes in the region no country in the west showed interest in what was going in the Black sea or the countries bordering in the Black Sea because it was of no importance to them and they were not interested in the subjugation or destruction of those half-barbarians on whose shore the people inhabited. On the contrary, Russia was aware of the fact that the geo-strategic importance of the Black Sea would enable her to carry on her conquests in Asia. Moreover, she also knew that the Caucasus was the key to all planned encroachments up on Turkey, Persia and India and that is why to possess it constituted a very stern political necessity for her future plans.⁵⁵ As is pointed out by Spencer. Caucasia remained a buffer zone - among the powerful states especially the Ottoman State and Persia until the invasion of the Russian. Though the Ottoman State and Persia partially got the control of that region at different times, they did not need to invade it totally. In addition, Russia considered the invasion of the region as very essential from many aspects. For instance, as is aforementioned, Caucasia has been on the route to the warmer seas which was the great ambition of tsar I. Petro and the big rivers formed by the icebergs covering the chain of mountains over 5.000 metres whose peaks are covered with the icebergs after the Russian steppes created a natural border for the security of Russia. Besides, as is pointed out by Henze, Caucasia has a strategic location that controls

⁵³ Yüksel, *a.g.t.*, s. 97.

⁵⁴ Edmund Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, George Routledge, London 1855, s. 213.

⁵⁵ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 214. E.

the Basra Bay; therefore, any power that is the possessor of the North Caucasia⁵⁶ will also have a great advantage to establish domination over the South Caucasia.⁵⁷

In relation to the Russian expansionism in the region, strikingly he makes some political evaluations related to the policy followed against Russia as follows:

Our exertions, unfortunately, were unavailing; the excitement caused by the war in Circassia passed away; and the heroes who were actually fighting the battles of Europe and civilisation were left to perish, uncared for by those very nations who benefited by the sacrifice. They either did not, or would not acknowledge the fact that so long as the Caucasus remained unsubdued, a barrier existed impossible to Russian ambition. Nay, our representations of the grasping policy pursued by that aggressive power in those countries and our apprehensions of fall of Turkey and Persia followed by the invasion India were deemed by some exaggerated and by others chimerical and that by men whose recognised abilities and intelligence gave weight and authority to their opinions.⁵⁸

Here it is evident that Spencer blames some groups in England who do not really pay attention to what is happening in the region and criticizes such groups for being indifferent to the subject and not being able to comprehend the situation. Moreover he puts his finger on the necessity for the struggle of the people against the subjugation of Russia for the interests and the influence of England. To prove that he is right about his warnings he asserts that as he had pointed out in his previous works, if the marine force were sent to Euxine- the measure that was also the desire of the Ottoman government- to open the Black Sea and the Danube as highways for the commerce of all the countries, Circassia would now enjoy its independence and Turkey and Persia would get rid of their hereditary foe and industry, commerce and civilization would have developed among the people of those countries on the Black Sea under the authority of power (Russia) which benefit from those people by collecting taxes and conscripts and rather than to help them develop their welfare and education.⁵⁹ In other words, the traveler puts an emphasis on the fact that the policy obtained by England against the expansionist policy of Russia in the region was not reasonable if some political developments experienced are taken into consideration.

Following the 1768-1774 Ottoman War the plan made by a group influential on the government which includes the annexation of the Crimea and then establish mandatory systems in the North Caucasia and eliminate the Ottoman State from the

⁵⁶ For more information concerning Circassians, Russia and the Circassians, Turkey and the Circassians, Russian tactics in 1830s and 1840s in the region, Britain and the Circassians, etc. see. Paul B. Henze, *The North Caucasus: Russia's Long Struggle to Subdue the Circassians*, Rand Corporation, 1996, ss.1-53.

⁵⁷ Paul Henze, "Kafkasya'da Çatışma: Geçmiş, Sorunlar ve Gelecek İçin Öngörüler", *Avrasya Etiüleri*, I, 1994, s. 66; İzzetgil, *a.g.m.*, s. 55.

⁵⁸ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 214.

⁵⁹ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 214-215.

northern Black Sea turning the Transcaucasia into a Russian colony became one of the most important targets of the subsequent Russian governments. At some times, even if the plan to invade the Caucasia was interrupted depending on some developments in the region, it never lost its appeal and importance. In that context, after the death of II. Catherine, (Catherine II.) her son Paul came to the throne and that plan was put aside because he withdrew Russian troops from Georgia. However, when I. Alexander (Alexander I.) became the czar of Russia in 1801, he decided to annex Georgia and the Caucasia despite the recommendations of his reformist advisors asking him that Russia has got sufficient lands for her to rule and she should give up the ambition and the dream of the Caucasia.⁶⁰ The emergence of Russia as a political, economic and the military power at the beginning of the 18th century is closely related to the thing that she was able to follow the developments in the Western world. As is aforementioned, especially after I. Petro (Petro I.), she attempted to extend her territories in the direction of the Baltic Sea, the Balkans, the Black Sea and Caucasia and in order to be able to extend her influence in the Balkans, the Black Sea and Caucasia, she had to confront with the Ottoman State, who reigned those regions.⁶¹

Then Spencer gives account of the resistance of the very brave mountaineers in the Caucasia against the subjugation of Russia. To him, though he recommended the British authorities to support those people and create a feeling in favour of them, he states that their efforts were in vain and the excitement led by the war seems to have passed away and they could not get the attention they really deserved in the European countries. Spencer also thinks that the authorities both in England and other countries did not recognize the fact that the Caucasia⁶² should remain

⁶⁰ M. Murat Yeşil, “19. Yüzyılda Kuzey Kafkasya'nın Bağımsızlık ve Özgürlük Mücadelesi ve Kabileler Arasındaki İletşimsizlik Sorunu”, *Turkish Studies*, 12/19, 2017, s. 209. For further information about the subject see. G. Hamburg, *War of worlds -A commentary on the two texts in their historical context. Russian-Muslim confrontation in the Caucasus: Alternative visions of the conflict between Imam Shamil and the Russians, 1830-1859*, 1. Bs. içinde (153-223). New York Routledge, 2004.

⁶¹ Osman Köse, “Balkanlarda Rus Konsoloslukların Kurulması ve Faaliyetleri”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol: 12/2, 2006, s. 142. (ss. 142-155)

⁶² For instance, when the Ottoman Empire was defeated in the war of 1828-1829, the Adrionaple agreement was signed on the date of 14th September 1829 and Ottoman government gave up all her rights in the Caucasia. Even more the Russians attempted to invade Circassia before the the agreement was signed and that led to the reaction of the Circassians. However, the new condition disturbed the English more than the Ottomans because formerly England the other western countries dealt with the “Eastern question within the framework of the upheavels of the Greeks and the Balkan communities and up on the new conditions they started to extend the limits of this issue and the Eastern territories of the Ottoman Empire were also included in it. The English, who take into account the geo-strategic importance of the Caucasia, were aware of the importance of the Russian progress in the region for them. Moreover with this progress the “Big Game”, which would be played between England and Russia had already started. The objective of Russia was the trade routes lying till India and the beyond and for this objective to be realize Russia made great achievements and reached the the Aras river see. Wassan-Giray Cabağı, *Kafkas-Rus Mücadelesi*, Baha Matbaası, İstanbul 1967, s.53-55; Paul Henze,

independent; otherwise a barrier that exists against Russia would collapse. He also asserts that their evaluations on the side of the aggressive tendencies of Russia and their anxiety about the fall of Turkey and Persia that might result in the invasion of India were regarded as exaggerated and very fantastic.⁶³ Actually it took Russia over two hundred years to conquer the Caucasus. It began at the end of the 16th century and lasted until the 1860's and Russian expansion into the Caucasus was a sort of classic imperialism, like the British conquest of India and the French expansion into North and Sub-Saharan Africa.⁶⁴ In addition, he also puts emphasis on the fact that if any one looks at the map of Russian Empire it would seem clear that the Caucasus with its inhabitants should remain independent because only in that way the Indian route would be secure for England. However, if Russia could manage to take the possession of the region there would be no barrier in her way to advance and she would easily march forward first for the invasion of Turkish Armenia and then the whole coast of Black Sea, which would soon be followed by the attacks on the capitals of Persia and Turkey. That's why Spencer points out that the isthmus of the Caucasia is the bridge which must be crossed by Russia for her future invasions in Asia.⁶⁵ It is possible to say that the developments in the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Caucasia played an important role in the policy of Russia to start following an active role in Turkistan in the 19th century. As is known, towards the mid of the 19th century Russia considerably managed to take the control of the Caucasia, which is the major issue of the south politics of Russia. She completed the military invasions in the south of Russia and established military-administrative structures under her own control. Yet Russia, who established her own domination in the Caucasia, did not succeed in her objectives related to the Ottoman Empire due to her defeat of the Crimean War (1853-1856), for the present conditions indicated that it is not possible for her to advance in the regions of the Balkans and the Black Sea-Straits.⁶⁶

Spencer also makes some further warnings about the possible results of the complete conquest of the Caucasus and asserts that if the brave inhabitants of the Caucasus were subdued or exterminated by Russia and their homeland were to become the part of the Russian Empire and Turkey and Persia were chained "to the chariot wheels of the conquerer on her march to India" (he thinks that it is highly probable) their children will be upset about the passive tendencies of their ancestors).⁶⁷ In addition, since Spencer made his visit in the year of 1851, his opinions and evaluations related to the aggressive expansion of Russia in the region

Kafkaslarda Ateş ve Kılıç: 19. Yüzyılda Kuzey Kafkasya Dağ Köylülerinin Direniş, Çev. Akın Kösetorunu, ODTÜ Yayınları, Ankara 1985, s. 6-7.

⁶³ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 214.

⁶⁴ Paul Henze, "Russia and the Caucasus", s. 53.

⁶⁵ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 217- 218.

⁶⁶ Hayri Çapraz, "Çarlık Rusyası'nın Türkistan'da Hâkimiyet Kurması", *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, S: 24, 2011, s. 56. ss. 51-78.

⁶⁷ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 230.

cast some important lights up on the Crimean War that broke out in 1853 as well. For instance, he states that in terms of both moral and physical aspect, the strength of England has never been greater than the present moment and he acknowledges that the security of England necessitates taking measures to prevent Russia from interrupting the peace in the world. More importantly, Spencer says that only a war with such a power can finally decide the question and England should think about the probable results of such a war with Russia; because when it is too late England will be in the hands of an enemy who will take advantage of any false move on the part of England. He also underlines how the danger is so serious as follows:

Each days' news shows that it (danger) increases rather than diminishes, and to arrive at anything like a just conclusion as to the wisest method of settling this embarrassing question, requires not only the high intellect of the accomplished politician, but the bold daring of the warrior. If we succeed in causing the Russians to retire within their frontiers, new difficulties will arise, for however much we may desire to support the authority of Turk in Europe, we fear it will be impossible.⁶⁸

As is understood from the these explanations, Spencer refers to the increase of the political tension due to the aggressive tendencies of Russia in the region and gives the sign of a war that might break out. In the other words he thinks that a war between the two Powers in Europe and Russia seems to be inevitable and he assumes that the existing problems could be solved only through such a war, for it might be too late to prevent Russia from extending her territories threatening political and economic interests of England. In fact, following the Treaty of London Straits in 1841 the issue of the Black Sea and the Straits did not come to the agenda for nearly ten years, but the conflict between Russia and France over getting the privilege of maintenance and repairs of the holy places that had been lasting for a long time revived in 1850. That conflict between the two states led to outbreak of the Crimea War (1853-1856) in which both England and Ottoman State were involved.⁶⁹ In addition to this, he assumes that even though England may consider the support of Turks in Europe it will not be possible and even if England decides on the peace on the basis of status quo, it will just give Russia more time to complete the preparations for a possible fighting which is bound to come. In the

⁶⁸ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 231.

⁶⁹ Erdoğan Keleş, "Kırım Savaşı'nda (1853-1856) Karadeniz ve Boğazlar Meselesi", (2008). "Kırım Savaşı'nda (1853-1856) Karadeniz ve Boğazlar Meselesi". *OTAM*, 23, 2008, s. 160. Since Spencer made his visit in the year of 1851 just before the Crimea war broke out, his narrations and explanations related to the subject are very important so as to understand the English politics or the European politics towards Russia. In other words. These explanations can also be considered as essential to be able to understand the political atmosphere in the region. In addition, for more information about the reasons of the Crimea War (the relations of the Ottoman Empire with the European countries before the war and the the issue of holy places), the attempts to prevent the war, the outbreak of the war and the involvement of the European countries in the war, the treaty of Paris (1856), the results of the war and the Paris Treaty see. Uçarol, *a.g.e.*, s.192-205.

following lines Spencer stkingly focuses on the consequences of some fatal errors that England might make in the policy followed towards Russia: First of all, it is stressed that in case of a fatal error that might be made by England, the destinies of the Christian subjects of the Sultan (Ottoman Empire) will be given to Russia and then it emphasized that the real home of the Turks is Asia and there the State has got many members of her own creed, which provide an equality of interest and freedom to all who believe in it. Spencer also claims that there is no reason for the Ottoman State not to become highly civilized and not to get in touch with the humanizing principles of the Christianity; because to Spencer the Ottoman State is the most efficient ally for England to make a progress in the field of civil and religious freedom.⁷⁰ As is pointed out by Spencer, England did not consider Russia as a threat for her. However, after the Hünkâr İskelesi signed in 1833, in line with her political and economic interests England started to change her policy towards the “securing the land integrity of the Ottoman State” and tried to invalidate the things Russia had gained.⁷¹ As can be seen, Spencer carefully analyzes the possible consequences and he recommends the support of the Ottoman State and she will certainly be an important ally for England, for she has the potential to make some reforms and to make a progress. Moreover, he thinks that the authority of the Ottoman Empire can be maintained on the condition that the Ottomans could follow the humanizing principles of Christianity that will enable them to make some reforms related to the civil and the religious freedom. Otherwise, the Christian subjects will turn their faces to Russian and she will decide about their fates. Spencer considers this as a great threat for England because such a thing will cause Russia to expand her territories in the Caucasia and Asia against the political and economic interests of the Great Britain.

In the 19th century the territories of the Ottoman Empire extended from the Balkans to Yemen and Ethiopia, from the Caucasia to Algeria and the whole Eastern Mediterranean, the Islands of the Sea and the Straits were under the reign of the Ottoman State. Thus the Ottoman State was both the strategic and the economic center of the world. Namely, for England, she was not only situated at the crossroads that lead to India but also she set a main barrier against Russia not to go down the south.⁷² In parallel to what Spencer points out, England was in the favour of the maintenance of the Ottoman State and also to some extent she was in the favour of the idea that she should strengthen. However, it does not stem from her sympathy towards the Turks but it results from those reasons as follows: first of all, England was a great empire and India constituted the most part of that empire. For this reason it was essential to organize and to exploit and secure India. On the route

⁷⁰ Spencer, *Turkey, Russia and Black Sea and Circassia*, s. 31-232.

⁷¹ Özgür Yılmaz (tercüme ve notlar), *Kırım Savaşı Öncesinde Osmanlı Ordusu*, Kronik, İstanbul 2018, s.17-18.

⁷² Mustafa Öztürk, “Batılı Devletlerin Osmanlı Üzerindeki Politikaları ve Bunun Osmanlı Dış Politikasına Etkisi (19. Yüzyıl)”, *Türk Dış Politikası (Osmanlı Dönemi)*, (ed.) Mustafa Bıyıklı, C: II, Gökkuşbu Yayınları, İstanbul, s. 358.

to India, the country that might threaten the interest of England was Russia, because she also had the policy of the Central Asia and the Far-East. However, Russia was the enemy of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, It was the threat of Russia that made England and the Ottoman Empire come closer to one another. On the other hand, in order to secure both the routes of the eastern commerce and gain some commercial and economic interests, England followed a Mediterranean policy as well. As the Ottoman State had been into the state of decline, it did not have the power to threaten this policy of England. Moreover, the countries such as Russia, France, Austria, etc., who were developing economically, aimed to settle in the Mediterranean and expand there as well.⁷³

Conclusion

Russia became a great power in the beginning of the 18th century especially during the reign of I. Petro (Petro I.) and turned into a serious threat for England and the other Western Powers, which were following a policy in order to gain some political and economic interests in the Caucasia, the Black Sea and the Central Asia. In this context, especially England, who had several colonies in the east and deemed India very important started to closely watch the encroachments of Russia in the region against the political and economic interests of her. Therefore, she sent many travellers and researchers to the region in order to get to know the people living there very closely and to collect information that might be beneficial to develop some policies to ruin the aggressive plans of Russia. One of these is Edmund Spencer, who made an extensive travel throughout the region and made detailed observations regarding the aggressiveness and encroachments of Russia in the region. In fist three books written by him, it is seen that he mainly focuses his attention on the increasing influence of Russia and her expansionist policies. In his explanations narrations relating to the region, it should be stated that he is not in favour of the policies followed by Russia contrary to the liberals in England who tend to be pro-Russian unlike Spencer.

In addition, the other interesting point that he puts his finger on is the essential importance of the Indian colony for England. In this context, he makes some strong warnings to some groups in English public opinion not aware of the closing danger and urges the English authorities to take some strict measures as soon as possible referring to the fact that otherwise it would be too late for the Western Powers to do something. Especially in his latest visit to the region in 1851

⁷³ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, VI, 2. Baskı, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara 1976, s. 16. As to Russia, since Russia started to play an important role in the European politics, she had accepted to terminate the Ottoman State as her own major principle. In order to realize her aim, she followed three ways. One of these is to include the land of the Ottoman to the Russian Empire. The second one is to share the same lamds with the related European countries. The third one is to establish some vassal countires on the lands of the Ootooman State and take them under her protégé one day see. Karal, *a.g.e.*, s. 15. For more information about the relations of Ottoman Empire with Russia, see. Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınlan, Ankara 1990, s. 3, Uçarol, *a.g.e.*, 57-60.

he gives the strong signals of a war that would break out in 1853. Therefore, his narrations and explanations seem very important to understand the political atmosphere in the region just before the Crimean War. Moreover, he asserts that no problem could be solved without a war against Russia and also thinks that only through such a war she could be taken under control and the whole world could take a breath. The other striking point which he mentions in his travelogues is that England seems to be in search for finding some partners such as Circassians in the region to collaborate with against Russia; but to Spencer England and the other European countries did not give the support they needed in their independence struggle and fighting in the years of 1830 and in his own words their hopes waded because of the fact that they were not understood well in the European public opinion and their brave resistance and fighting against Russia remained something very romantic. In addition he claims that if those brave tribes were supported sufficiently, the result would be different. Namely, he refers to the indifferent attitude or insufficient support of the Western world to the events that take place in the region.

As a consequence, the travelogues of Edmund Spencer regarding the policies obtained by England against the aggressive Russian encroachments and her increasing political and economic influence especially in the Caucasus and the Central Asia provide comprehensive details and valuable information so as to understand the rivalry experienced between England and Russia having gained a substantial political, military and economic influence, especially against the political and economic interests of England.

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