

# The Position of the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in the Eyes of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

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## **Abstract**

*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels lived in an era when the Ottoman Empire was dissolving. They often dealt with the political, economic, and social matters in Europe. Even though Asia and Ottoman Empire was not a kind of focal point in their study, they had an idea about the orient. In order to figure out their perception to the Ottoman Empire, we should know concept of Asiatic Mode of Production, Orientalism, and the fundamental differences between West and East in the mind of Engels and Marx. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a confused age to Europe. Vienna Congress, 1830 and 1848 Revolutions, Crimean War, and Russo-Turkish War (1877-78) were the outstanding events and these events influenced Marx and Engels. Their writings on the Orient can be called journalistic since they essentially did not carry out a profound analysis on Turkey. Therefore, their approach to Ottoman Empire could be called inconsistent and coherent.*

**Keywords:** Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Ottoman Empire, Asiatic Mode of Production, Oriental Despotism.

## **Marx ve Engels'in Gözünde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun 19. Yy'daki Konumu**

### **Özet**

*Karl Marx ve Friedrich Engels Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun dağılmakta olduğu bir dönemde yaşadılar. Marx ile Engels çoğunlukla Avrupa'daki siyasal, iktisadi ve toplumsal meseleler ile ilgilendiler. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu onlar için bir tür odak noktası teşkil etmemesine rağmen Doğu'daki dünya ile ilgili bir fikrileri vardı. Onların bu fikrini idrak edebilmek için Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı'nı, Oryantalizmi ve onların zihinlerindeki Doğu ile Batı'yı bilmemiz gerekmektedir. 19. yy Avrupa için karışık bir dönemdi. Viyana Kongresi, 1830 ve 1848 İhtilalleri, Kırım Savaşı ve 93 Harbi bu dönemdeki başlıca olaylardı ve bu olaylar Marx'i ve Engels'i etkiledi. Marx ve Engels'in Doğu üzerine yazmış oldukları gazeteciliğe has bir üslup taşımaktadır; çünkü, Türkiye üzerine derin bir analiz yapmamışlardır. Bu sebepten dolayı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na yaklaşımları tutarsız ve değişkendi.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı, Oryantal Despotizm.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels left tremendous impact on the modern world. They lived in an era when the Ottoman Empire was dissolving. They had an idea about the Ottoman Empire. In fact, while examining European societies, they seldom mentioned Turkey. This paper is an attempt to understand the political position of the Ottoman Empire in the eyes of both Marx and Engels. Yet, in order to evaluate Ottoman state well, it is necessary to look at the fundamental differences between East and West in the perception of Marx and Engels, and the concepts of Asiatic mode of production and oriental despotism.

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### **The Fundamental Differences Between East and West In The Perception of Karl Marx And Friedrich Engels**

The East often became a center of curiosity in the West especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the beginning of colonial age, Western powers began to deal with the political, social, and economic aspects of Oriental people. Edward Said says

“Since the middle of the eighteenth century, there had been two principal elements in the relation between East and West. One was a growing systematic knowledge in Europe about the Orient, knowledge reinforced by the colonial encounter as well as by the widespread interest in the alien and unusual, exploited by the developing sciences of ethnology, comparative anatomy, philology... The other feature of Oriental- European relations was that Europe was always in a position of strength, not to say domination....The essential relationship, on political, cultural, even religious grounds, was seen- in the West, which is what we concern us here-to be one between a strong and a weak partner.” (Said 1979:39-40)

In 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte established Institute de L’Egypt, British Kingdom founded Royal Asiatic Society in 1823, and Germans founded Orientalische Gemeinschaft in Leipzig in 1845 (Boztemur 2003: 140). These foundations made great contribution to institutionalization of Orientalism in Europe. The aim of this interest of European states can be evaluated in different categories, but it is probable to say that one of the most important reasons was the political concerns. Once again, knowledge of subject races of the Orient is what makes their administration easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control (Said 1979: 36). Owing to the political, economic, and technological advance of the West, many people conceived the East as an inferior place. For Example, Lord Arthur Balfour<sup>1</sup> and Lord Cromer<sup>2</sup> mentioned that the Oriental is irrational, depraved, childish, and different; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, and normal (Said 1979: 40).

Marx and Engels lived at a time when West had a disparaging approach to the Eastern societies. Therefore, it was impossible for them not to be influenced by the dominant ideas of their age. In fact, Zeitgeist, spirit of the age, forced them to scrutinize the Eastern Societies in an arrogant way. The interest of Marx and Engels to the East aroused in the early 1850s and their interest was stimulated by the colonial expansion and the subsequent revolt in Asia (Abrahamian 1974: 5). Then, they began to search oriental societies from whatever sources they could find. For example, Engels attempted to learn Persian and Arabic, and he learnt a bit Persian, but he abandoned to learn Arabic due to the difficulties of this language. For Marx and Engels, Asia was a continent of barbarians dominated mostly by so-called Asiatic mode of production (Kreutz 1983:156). The key concept to understand the East is the absence of the private ownership. This situation

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Arthur Balfour was a [British Conservative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Arthur_Balfour) politician and statesman, and the [Prime Minister](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Arthur_Balfour) from 1902 to 1905. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord\\_Arthur\\_Balfour](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Arthur_Balfour)).

<sup>2</sup> Lord Cromer was a high ranking military officer in Egypt when Egypt was a colony of British Kingdom ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord\\_Cromer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Cromer)).

constitutes the basic difference between East and West since Marx says “the absence of property in land is indeed the key to the whole of the East” (cited by Abrahamian 1974: 5). These words of Karl Marx give us very important clues to figure out his understanding of Asia. The exact possessor of lands is the state. Nevertheless, there is one point that he had difficulty in understating about the ownership of lands. That is, Marx tried to understand why any small land ownership did not take place in the East. He used two separate arguments to explain this condition. The first one is that the public works were the task of the central government. The second argument is that the whole empire, not counting the few larger towns, were divided into villages having separate organization and self-sufficiency (Abrahamian 1974: 6).

The economic basic system of Oriental states is based on the agriculture that the state monopolized. Marx says

“Climate and territorial conditions, especially the vast tracts of deserts, extending from the Sahara, through Arabia, Persia, India, and Tartary, to the most elevated Asiatic highlands, constituted artificial irrigation by canals and waterworks the basis of Oriental agriculture. This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which, in the Occident, drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated, in the Orient where civilization was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralizing power of government” (Marx 1853: 3)

Moreover, according to Marx, state is an organization that constitutes itself by extracting the surplus value from agriculture and by being shaped from the nature. As a result, there have been in Asia, generally from the time immemorial, three departments of government. These departments have been about finance, war, and public works (Marx 1853:3). Furthermore, it is possible for us to say that the irrigation is so arduous task that any small political and economic organization such as tribes or feudality can not carry out and afford. If we compare the distinctive climatic condition of Asia and Europe, we can grasp the exact meaning of Marx’s above statement. Let us consider the arid deserts of the Interior Asia and the Central Europe. Thanks to the closeness to the water resources such River Rhine and Rhone, private enterprises could easily drive the water to their agrarian lands in the Central Europe. However, in the Interior Asia, it was almost impossible for a private enterprise to drive water to the agrarian lands because of the remoteness to water resources and the rarity of water.

### **The Asiatic Mode of Production And Oriental Despotism**

The Asiatic mode of production and Oriental despotism are very important concepts that can be assumed as a key so as to figure out the political, economic and social structure of the East. Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, image of East came to be more apparent in terms of politics and economics. Therefore, it can be claimed that Marx was under the influence of the dominant approach to the East due to the fact that they got information about the Orient by using sources left by European travelers, merchants,

diplomats. Parry Anderson says “Marx and Engels reproduced the traditional European discourses with minimal modifications and previous knowledge, which was politically conditioned, seriously affects reliability for the explanation of Asian history “(cited by Bailey and Llobera 1981: 14). Now; it is a must to scrutinize how these concepts were formed in the minds of Europeans since without looking at the historical and intellectual background of these concepts, it is too much difficult for us to grasp the exact meanings of these concepts.

First of all, accounts of travelers, records of diplomats, and thoughts of merchants played leading role in the making of the Asiatic mode of production and Oriental despotism. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Marco Polo presented very valuable reports about the population and wealth of the societies. Marco Polo’s influence had great prominence in Europe since he was the first person that reached to the China and his book, which is known as *The Millions* or *The Travels of Marco Polo*, left great impact on the making of image of the Orient in the minds of Western people. The interest of European in the Oriental people went on during the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, with the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, writings about the Oriental societies in the European languages increased remarkably (Krader 1975:19). For example, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier who reached to even Java in Indonesia gave extraordinary information about the places where he visited. What is prominent to notice here is that in the accounts of the European travelers to Asia in the seventeenth century, the Oriental peoples were represented as living in either utter want or luxury and the government of the Orient as despotic the power of the ruling the various countries of Asia being arbitrary, absolute, and unbounded ( Krader 1975: 19). In 17<sup>th</sup> century and the Enlightenment period of Europe, the focal point in the writings about the Oriental societies shifted. It can be claimed that the European intellectuals in the 18<sup>th</sup> century evaluated the political, economic, and social occurrences or structures in a wider vision. In other words, their object was not only the oriental societies or civilizations but also the comparative studies of polities and their histories. The object of their comparative study was the form of rulership, law, and the political or moral judgment of the origins and effects of this (Krader 1975:21) .This condition can be considered as one of the most important result of enrichment of information sources. In fact, until the Enlightenment period, the number of the materials about the Oriental studies increased gradually.

From the early period of modern contact with the empires of Asia, two judgments were soon formed in Europe: the government of Asia was personal and despotic (Krader 1975:23). The basic stereotypes about the Orient people came to be more apparent in the minds of Europeans. Jean Chardin<sup>3</sup> says

“At the present time, the government of Persia is monarchic, despotic, and absolute, being entirely in the hands of one man, who is the sovereign chief, spiritual as well as temporal, full master of the life and goods of his subjects. What I have just said, that

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<sup>3</sup> Jean Chardin was a French traveler and jeweler who wrote ten volume books, *The Travels of Sir John Chardin*. This volume is one of the most important sources of early Western scholarship on Persia and Near East.

the king of Persia can take away the goods and the life of his subjects on the least caprice should be extended only to the great people of his court, and more particularly to his favorites; because just as much as men of this rank meets cruel and bloody adventures, just as little do the common people, for the caprice of the sovereign does not extend as far as that”

Moreover, English philosopher Francis Bacon stated that the lack of nobility in Turkey made for the pure and absolute tyranny there.

When Western men acquired the political, economic, and military superiority over the rest of the world, they had a disparaging approach to the oriental societies. Among the members of Encyclopedia, Turgot and Condorcet considered empire of Asia and China, in particular, notably low on their evolutionary scheme of the progress of human reason. While noting of the technological achievements of Chinese and Egyptians these people lost their initial advantage (Bailey and Llobera 1981: 20).

Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many European people had an idea about the East due to the fact that Europeans obtained adequate information from the sources such as diplomat’s reports and accounts of the travelers. As mentioned in the former pages, Marx and Engels were the children of their own time. As a result of this, they were influenced by the predominant thoughts and values of their time.

The Asiatic mode of production is one of the hotly-debated concepts in the history of Marxism and this concept was created by Marx to account for a type society outside the mainline of Western development (Bailey and Llobera 1981:1). Nevertheless, there is one point that should be kept in mind about the Asiatic mode of Production. That is, Marx never achieved a systematic exposition of his theory of the AMP (Bailey and Llobera 1981: 23). According to Sencer Divitçioğlu, Marx mentioned the Asiatic mode of production:

- 1) In the articles of New York Daily Tribune and the correspondences between Marx and Engels.
- 2) Working notes (Formen) prepared by Marx in order to write *Das Kapital*
- 3) In the several chapters of *the Critique*
- 4) *In Das Kapital* which analyses the capitalist societies, but sometimes mentioned the Asiatic mode of production. He made scattered references to this theory
- 5) In the criticisms of Marx to a Russian sociologist M. M. Kovalevski
- 6) In the letters which were written by Marx towards to the end of his life (Divitçioğlu 2003: 104)

First, Karl Marx used the comprehensive term in the writings about the Orient and then in the latter parts of 1850s, he developed the means of moving the comprehensive term, the Oriental despotism, but he still had not brought out the characterizing term which he found only in 1859: the Asiatic mode of production (Krader 1975: 119). In other words, Marx gave various kind of information about the political, economic, and social condition of the Asia, but he had not evaluated the Orient in the concept of a specific social totality until the end of 1850s. In other words, He brought out the theory of the Asiatic mode of production in several stages. Before developing this theory, young Marx made references to the oriental despotism. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, he addressed himself to the concept of the

Oriental society as a whole. He mentioned economic factors, but paid attention to the political and social characterization of the society. In the subsequent stage, he developed the theory of the Asiatic mode of production in a specific way. This theory was further developed in the 1860s, in the writings culminating in the first volume of *Das Kapital* (cited by Bailey and Llobera 1981: 37).

Here, it is beneficial to give the systematic outline of the Asiatic Mode of Production. There are lots of peculiarities of the AMP which are fundamentally different from other mode of productions such as capitalist mode of production and feudal mode of production.

1) The Asian countries providing various kinds of data for the theory of the AMP were India, China and Persia. What is important to stress here is that Karl Marx did not evaluate the Ottoman Empire in the context of the AMP.

2) The populations of these Asiatic societies were large, but their archaic agricultural practices left only a small surplus after the immediate wants of the agricultural families were met.

3) The societies of the Asiatic mode of production were divided from the earliest known times into a ruling class and a class of the agricultural producers.

4) The institutional network between the villages was weak and the exchange of the goods existed in a low degree. The power of sovereignty was absolute within some limitation, but since the communication with villages was at low level, the absolute despotic rulership had little contact with villages and little effect upon them.

5) Production within the villages was conducted primarily for the satisfaction of the immediate wants of agricultural families. Therefore, each village had tendency to be a self-sustaining unity which had little contact with outside world. Also, there were no great social and economic differences between the villages.

6) The circulation of money was at a low level. Exchange of goods was carried out through barter. The capital was formed sporadically and in a non-systematic way in the villages and societies of Asia.

7) The agriculture in the Asiatic Mode of Production was dependent on the storage and conducting, retention, damming, coffering or deflection of the water courses, generally of their management and control. The centralization of the management of water control is by no means a feature common.

8) The labor of the villages was not free; the laborers were bound to the soil, in the first place by the positive constraint of custom: the form of unfreedom in this case was collective, traditional. In the second place, the labor of the village communities was not free by virtue of the obligation to provide levies of compulsory labor and produce to the State.

9) Although the social classes make their appearance in the Asiatic mode of production, their express opposition to each other is not developed. The entire society exists within its traditional forms and relations.

10) The opposition between city and countryside, and that between agricultural and manufacture production were developed but in modest degree. The low degree of opposition between city and countryside, and the low degree of opposition between

agricultural and handicraft production was each determinant of the other (Krader 1975: 286-287-288)

In spite of the elaborated principles of the AMP, this theory is vulnerable to the serious criticism on account of a number of reasons. To begin with, the sources of the theory are few in a number (Krader 1975: 304). As a theory that is one of the parts of the social evolution of humankind, it requires much more sources to corroborate the main peculiarities of the theory. Furthermore, this theory is accused of having Eurocentric view of the orient. Karl Marx conceived Asia in an inferior stage since there was no capitalist mode of production in the Asia, which prevents the coming of the final destination of human beings. This final destination is the socialism. As a result, there might be an external intervention to put Asian societies into the historical stages. At this point, he considered that the Western intervention was both positive and unavoidable, a necessary precondition for any future progress. In 1853, Marx wrote

“England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying the foundations of Western society in Asia..... The British were the first conqueror superior, and therefore, inaccessible to Hindoo civilization. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by leveling all that was great and elevated in the native. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction.” (Marx 1853: 1-4)

This approach of Karl Marx to the British invasion in India became a hotly-debated discussion later. However, as time went on, Marx’s thoughts on the British existence on India changed drastically. He gave up praising the British Imperialism. After great consideration and emotional struggle, he wrote as concerning East India... the suppression of communal ownership of land only an act of English vandalism, which has brought not an advance, but a setback to the native peoples (cited by Kreutz 1983: 158).

### **The Political Position of The Ottoman Empire**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is one of the confused centuries of the European history. In that century, Vienna Congress (1815), 1830 and 1848 Revolutions, Crimean War (1853- 56), and Russo-Turkish War (1877-78) took place in Europe. Karl Marx was the journalist of New York Daily Tribune newspaper between 1852 and 1861 and with his close friend Friedrich Engels, he wrote about what was going on in Europe. Therefore, they had chance to figure out the political occurrences or matters in Europe closely. The interest of Marx and Engels began with the Crimean War. Before this war, they had dealt with other issues in Europe. One of the hotly-debated topics of Europe was the Oriental Question. Marx and Engels dealt with the Oriental Question after 1853 because there was a big tension between Russia and Ottoman Empire which culminated war after ever-shifting, ever-cowardly, ever-resultless movements in diplomacy (Engels 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1853:1). Their interest in the

Oriental Question resulted from the possible outcomes of Ottoman-Russian relations on the European political equilibrium and European social revolution (Kula 2005:67). What is important to say here is that Marx and Engels often called Ottoman Empire as Turkey in their writings. The writings of Marx and Engels can be called journalistic because they essentially did not carry out a profound analysis on Turkey. Their main interest was not Turkey even though they mentioned Turkey in their works apart from articles in journals. As a result, their approach to the Ottoman stated could change gradually and their idea about Turkey could be called inconsistent and incoherent.

According to Marx, Turkey is made up of three entirely distinctive portions, namely, Africa, Asiatic Turkey, and European Turkey. Asiatic Turkey is the real seat of whatever strength there is in the empire. Asia Minor and Armenia form the reserved grounds from which the Turkish armies were drawn. Turkey in Asia is consisted of too compact a mass of Muslim fanaticism and Turkish nationality to invite at present any attempts at conquest. The principal power of the Turkish population lies in the capital and a few large cities. We can hardly describe the Turks as the ruling class of Turkey since the relations of the different classes, there are as much mixed up as those of the various races (Marx, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1853:4).

The real point at the Oriental Question is the great peninsula to the south of the Save and Danube in Balkan. This territory is full of different races such as Slavonians and Greeks. Turks are not competent to hold supremacy in such a mixed population. The Turkish authority is weakening year after year by insurrections in the Christian provinces. Marx claims that it should be acceptable that the presence of the Turks in Europe is a kind of real obstacle to the development of the resources of the Thraco-Illyrian Peninsula (Marx, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1853:4). After the French Revolution, Turkey aimed at keeping status quo. The exact goal of Ottoman Empire is to retain the present situation due to the fact that Turkey is under the danger of Russian expansionist policy. Ottoman Empire is a like a carcass of a dead horse. Turkey is decaying day by day. For example, Russian Prince Menchikoff demands exceptional privilege into the general protectorate of Greek Church in Turkey and the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. In order to force Turkey to accept these demands, Russia gave an ultimatum to the Ottoman Empire. The sultan of Ottoman Empire was afraid of this aggression of Russia and rejected its ultimatum (Marx, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1854:3). Yet, Friedrich Engels was suspicious of the decay of Turkey because it is possible to detect progresses in many areas like commerce. For example, Greek and Slavonian middle class were rising in wealth and influence, and Turks were driven into the background. Therefore, the decay of the Ottoman Empire can be evaluated as a doubtful judgment.

Marx claims that Russia pretends to occupy several territories such as Walachia and Moldavia in the Ottoman Empire. Since 1815, the great powers of Europe have feared nothing so much as an infraction of status quo. Russia has played the magnanimity of devouring Turkey piece after piece, instead of swallowing it at a mouthful. Russia advances step by step but irresistibly towards Istanbul in spite of the diplomatic tactics of the European statesmen (Engels, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853:1). In several points, Russia acts with the British Kingdom. The great powers of Europe squeeze the Ottoman Empire on account of the religious oppression or intolerance on the Christians. European statesmen demanded



the continuity of status quo in Europe. Nevertheless, there was a worrying question about the future of the Ottoman Empire. The Question was what has to be done in the event of any unforeseen circumstances causing a final catastrophe in Turkey. In fact, European statesmen were afraid of a sudden downfall of the Ottoman Empire. Friedrich Engels discusses the possible outcomes of political change in Balkan Peninsula because according to him, Russia never omitted an opportunity of obtaining favorable conditions for Moldavia and Walachia. Russia increased its influence in Balkan gradually. For example, during the Serbian Revolt in 1804, Russia took some of the rebellious people at once under her protection and then supported the internal independence of Serbia. While Russia fearlessly set about the dismemberment of Turkey, Western diplomats continued to assure and to hold as sacred status quo and inviolability of the Ottoman Empire. The great motive power speeding Russia on towards Constantinople is the never enforced theory of the status quo (Engels, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853:1). Moreover, Engels guesses that because of Russian desire of territorial aggrandizement, there might be a total war and the solution of Turkish problem is reserved to the European revolution. The partition of Turkish territory will take place and the ultimate solution for Oriental Question is the erection of a free and independent Christian state on the ruins of the Moslem Empire (Engels, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853:3). From this judgment of Engels, it can be doubtlessly acceptable that the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire is a kind of necessity for Europe. However, he was afraid of the imperialist aims of Russia and annoyed of the timidity of Western diplomats. In a possible conflict between European democracy and Russian absolutism, England can never allow Russia to capture Constantinople. England must take sides with enemies of the Czar and favor the construction of an independent Slavonian government in Balkan (Engels, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853:3). If Russia gets the possession Turkey, its strength increases nearly half and it becomes superior to all the rest of Europe. Furthermore, Russian Tsar claims himself the right of conquering Turkish territory while he defies both France and England to occupy neutral waters without their special permission (Marx, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1853). Yet, England can not afford to allow Russia to become the possessor of Dardanelles and Bosphorus. Such an event would undermine the political and commercial interest of the United Kingdom seriously. Russia's possible conquest of Turkey might follow another conquest such as annexation Galicia and Hungary (Engels 12<sup>th</sup> April 1853:3).

Engels claims one of the big powers of Europe is the Revolution. Long, silent and it is now again called action by the commercial crisis and scarcity of food. From Manchester to Rome, from Paris to Warsaw, it is highly probable for a European war to begin a range of revolution. In other words, the impending European war would accelerate the making of the revolution. However, Pan-Slavism was the biggest enemy of the social revolution in Europe. If Russians captured, Serbian and Bulgarian independent would end. Serbs and Bulgarians would understand that their condition under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire was better than their present condition (cited by Kula 2005:88). According to Friedrich Engels, small nations such as Serb and Bulgarians must not be determinative agents on European war or peace. The biggest dangers to the European peace are the movements and structures which were supported by Russia. In order to figure out how

Marx and Engels perceived Pan-Slavism, it is essential to scrutinize their approach to nationalism. Actually, Marx and Engels left an incomplete and contradictory legacy on the nationalism and they did not have a theoretical analysis since class issue took priority within the explanatory framework of historical materialism (Munck 1986:2-9). In other words, nationalism was not main interest to both Marx and Engels. According to Eric Hobsbawm, Marx and Engels may be criticized for underestimating the political force of nationality in their century, and for failing provide adequate analysis of this phenomenon, but not for political and theoretical inconsistency (cited by Munck 1986: 21). However, it can be said that Engels and Marx evaluated nationalism in favor proletariat. Engels says that the existence of nations is a prerequisite for both internationalism and socialism because it is historically impossible for a larger people to discuss seriously any internal questions as long as its national independence is lacking and an international movement of proletariat is in general possible between nations (cited by Davis 1967:17). National strife could be acceptable but, nationalism itself could be hazardous. They evaluated national movements pragmatically in many senses. Marx and Engels approved the national struggle of workers in a certain sense, but disapproved of the nationality (Davis 1967:24). Therefore, Pans-Slavism was perceived as a hindrance for the possible social revolutions which Marx and Engels expected.

Since the French Revolution, Europe had faced profound changes or transformations. The impact of the French Revolution on Europe continued and Engels anticipated that both St. Petersburg and Constantinople would experience the revolution in spite of the fact that they were placed in Asia (Engels, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853:2). However, one point is prominent to mention here. Engels often speaks of a range of revolution which possible would influence each other like domino influence. When we look at the writings of Engels in the New York Daily Tribune, ideology and politics of these predicted revolutions are not well-elaborated. Also, during the Crimean War, Europeans powers actually did not support the war which was carried out against Russia. For example, the English army did not defend Kars well enough and it overlooked the Russian capture (cited by Kula 2005:67). Friedrich Engels criticized the hypocrisy of the British Kingdom.

Friedrich Engels accuses the European statesmen of lack of having adequate information to apply a reasonable policy for the Eastern Question. Interestingly, he says that up to the Greek Insurrection, Turkey is like terra incognita and common notions floating about among the public were based on Arabian Nights' Entertainment (Engels, 19th April 1853:1).

“The Serbian Revolt of 1804 and the Greek uprising of 1821 were directly encouraged by Russia. Due to the understanding of Western diplomats who knew no more about the real subject than about the man in the moon, Russian armies marched toward the Balkan, and partition of the Ottoman Empire was dismemberment. While England, France, and Austria were looking for a defined Eastern policy, Russia found men enough who could comprehend the real state and character of Turkey” (Engels, 19<sup>th</sup> April 1853:1)

The big tension between Russia and Ottoman Empire ended with the defeat of Russia by a European coalition and in 1856, Paris Peace Conference gathered.

After Crimean War (1853-56), Marx and Engels intermitted the examination of the Oriental Question. As time went on, some changes about the European states and the

Ottoman Empire took place in their mind. The reason of these changes in their mind might be that their main interest was not Turkey and both Marx and Engels did not have systematic analysis on Turkey in their writings.

In the correspondences written by Engels to Marx in 1866, it was stressed that Russia had three aims in Europe, namely, making Habsburg Empire ineffective in the central Europe, occupying Galicia, and wiping out Turkey by dividing it into small Slavic states (cited by Kula 2005:70). Therefore, Russia incited the Slavic people of Balkan in order to separate Turkey and Tsar became opportunist to benefit from any political occurrence. For example, in 1876, Bulgarians revolted against the Ottoman. When the sultan suppressed the Bulgarian Revolt, this suppression was called Turkish atrocities despite the fact that this suppression was not brutal one. This condition prepared a suitable conjecture for the intervention of Russian Tsar in Balkan (cited by Kula 2005:72).

Before the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78), according to Marx, the political equilibrium of Europe had been based on the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, any attempt of Russia to undermine this territorial integrity would leave profound and detrimental impact on not only Europe but also Russia. The passive and self-interested foreign policy of England about the Turkish-Russian relation exacerbated the condition in the east. Due to the tension between Russia and Turkey, in 1876, Engels predicted that a war would take place between these two states. After approximately one year, Russo-Turkish War broke out.

Up to 1870's, the approach of Marx toward the Ottoman Empire shifted in favor of Turkey. He said "due to two factors, we had to be on the side of Turks. First, we had scrutinized and we decided that they were the most talented and ethical representation of the European rusticity. Second, the possible defeat of Russia in the Russo-Turkish War would accelerate a possible social revolution in Russia." (Cited by Kula 2005:79). Also, Friedrich Engels, on 27 September 1877, claimed that a revolution was about to take place in Russia in consequence of the fact that all spheres of Russia were in economic, moral, and ideational disunity. If the war ended with the failure of the Russian army, Tsar would be overthrown possibly. This condition would create profound change of Europe and political physiognomy (cited by Kula 2005: 78).

Nevertheless, Engels did not trust the power of Ottoman army. He criticizes the incompetence of Turkish army, which resulted in Russian acquisition of advantageous position during the Russo-Turkish War. On account of oriental method of problem solution, Turkish army was not able to develop creative methods to defeat Russian army. The oriental army is not workable to big military operations. Because Turks are in a condition of barbarism or semi-barbarism, they are lack of ability and talent that require a kind of creative mind. According to Friedrich Engels, Turks could cope with Russians military assaults. Yet, the only danger that the Ottoman Empire could face was the English intervention in the internal affairs of Turkey (Kula 2005:74). Then, Engels added that you would be much more surprised of secret talents of Turks. I wished we had had parliament like Parliament in Istanbul. As long as Turkish people, especially Turkish peasants and even Turkish land lords of moderate means, were salubrious, such kind of Oriental

society's public order could endure much more unbelievable strokes. Except for Turks, every people would collapse due to the bribery which was peculiar to 400-year capital and inherited by Byzantines. In order to cope with Russians, Turks should get rid of the senior class. Every kind of corruption such as betrayal, bribable commanders of fortified castles and of the army, wasteful spending of money allocated to the army which had capable of extirpating every country was agitating Turkey, but was not agitating powerfully enough. The only hazard to Turks was the European, especially British, intervention in the internal affairs. England was keeping Turks from free using of warfare sources and Britain was expecting Turkey to endure unheard provocations. In this context, for example, when Romanians allowed Russians to get into to their country, Turkey should conceive this condition as an impartial act and should not fortify the castles in Walachia according to England ( cited by Kula 2005: 74).

The Russo-Turkish War ended with embarrassing defeat of Turkey and Marx said that this war indicated the how much Europe decayed (cited by Kula 2005: 81). The revolution that they expected in Russia took place in 1905 and 1917.

Up to here, we can make a number of inferences from the writings of Marx and Engels. First, at the beginnings of 1850s, both of them were influenced by the biases and misunderstanding about Islam and Turks. Second, especially after 1870s when Ottoman Empire was not a serious danger to Europe and the harbingers of social revolutions emerged, they began to get rid of biases and misunderstanding about Turkey due to the fact that they perceived Russian's expansionist policy as a kind of danger against the European peace and prospective revolutions. Finally, in the last quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century, they seriously criticized the ruling stratum and high ranked military officers of Ottoman Empire because of their inability to carry out their duties. Yet, Marx and Engels had sympathy to Turkish people. This sympathy indicates how Marx changed his idea in favor of Turks. Furthermore; they criticized England, France, and Germany who were determinative on the political equilibrium of Europe on account of their passive policy and hypocrisy. It can be said that their opinion about Turkey was not static. As time went on, they changed their approach Turkey especially after the Crimean War.

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