

Farther Neighbour: A Critical Estimation on Turkish Reception of Ukrainian Revolution and Crimean Crisis

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Introduction: Ukraine's and Crimea's Representation in Turkey

Ukraine, but mostly the peninsula of Crimea and Crimeans have been one of Turkey's most important sources in social, political, economic and cultural terms. To write briefly about the historical background; Crimea was conquered by Turks in 1475, remained as an autonomous region within the Ottoman Empire for centuries and was the abattoir and granary of Istanbul until 1774. That same commercial-economic flow continued indirectly until 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War after II. Yekaterina annexed the region in 1783. Within these centuries, Crimean Khanate served as a frontier Beylik against the 'increasing power' of Russia. Certainly, when one says Ukraine and Crimea, a big number of people and themes come to one's mind. One of them is Hürrem Sultan (originally; Roxelana, 1500-1558) who was Ottoman Sultan Suleiman The Magnificent's wife and originally an Orthodox native of Ruthenia. Not only her but tens of Ottoman Valide Sultans and odalisques had been brought from slave bazaars of Ukrainian and Crimean lands to Istanbul and reached the highest points in the protocol of Topkapı Imperial Palace. In addition, Ottoman cavalries consisted especially of Crimeans. Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Dynasty always preserved good relations through bonds of matrimony and in case one day the Ottoman Dynasty had not possessed a male heir, according to the agreement, the Khan of Crimea would have acceded to the throne.

Indeed, the power of Turco-Crimean relations is not limited to the facts mentioned above. If we come back to the present time, we come across to many famous names of Crimean origin having existed since the emergence of modern Turkey. Gaspıralı İsmail Bey [Ismail Gasprinsky, 1851-1914] a pioneer of Turkish nationalism who created the motto of Pan-Turkism having written the phrase "Unity in language, in thought, in work" ["Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik!"] continuously on the newspaper that he published, was Crimean. Cafer Seyidahmet Kırimer (1889-1960) and Yusuf Akçura [Yosif Aqcura, 1879-1935], two of the prominent intellectuals of Turkish-Tatar culture, have an important

place in the history of Turkish thought. Of the last Ottoman statesmen, Ahmet Tevfik Pasha (1845-1935), the last Ottoman Grand Vizier (prime minister), was a descendant of the ancestry of the Crimean Khanate.

Refik Halit Karay (1888-1965), one of the crucial writers of the modern Turkish literature, came from a family who migrated from Karaim/Karaites' region. Influential Aziz Nesin (1915-1995) and Çetin Altan (b.1927) were the other two Turkish men of letters of Crimean origin. Probably the most important Turkish actor Cüneyt Arkın (b.1937), famous football player İlhan Mansız (b.1975), NBA star basketballer Ersan İlyasova (b.1987) are the sportsmen of Crimean Tatar origin, the latter two having played for Turkish national teams. Famous conservative industrialist Sabri Ülker (1920-2012) is also one of the best-known faces of Crimean Tatars. In addition, there are three scientists of Crimean-Tatar origin who are greatly respected in today's Turkey. One of the greatest historians alive, Prof. Halil İnalçık (b.1916) teaching in Bilkent University, Prof. Kemal Karpat (b.1924) from department of History at Wisconsin University, and Galatasaray University's historian Professor İlber Ortaylı (b.1947) have Crimean-Tatarian origins. Especially İlber Ortaylı is probably the most famous and popular intellectual of our times in Turkey. Considering their images combined with the attention paid to Prof. Ahmed İhsan Kırımlı (1920-2011), Prof. Atilla Özkırımlı (1942-2005) and his son; international expert on nationalism studies Prof. Umut Özkırımlı (b.1970), and once again from Bilkent University, historian Prof. Hakan Kırımlı (b.1958) by academic world, the reputation of people of Crimean origin as human resource means very much to Turkey.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that the relations between Turkey and the Tatar-Turkish community living in Crimea are not as in a high level as they should be. For Turkey, Crimea is not more than the personal representation of Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu, The Head of Mejlis of The Crimean Tatar People (*Mustafa Abdülcemil oğlu Cemilev (Qırımoğlu)*, Russian: Мустафа Абдулджемиль Джемилев, Ukrainian: Мустафа Абдульджеміль Джемілев). Here the paradoxical situation reveals itself: For within Turkey's population consisting of 77 million people, according to the answers given to surveys, there are 600 thousand to 5 million people who consider themselves Tatar or of Tatar origin.¹ These people, who have been inhabited to cities such as Ankara, Eskişehir, Çanakkale, Konya, Bolu and Kastamonu which show similar characteristics

¹ According to Prof. Karpat, the amount of Crimean Tatars who fled to Ottoman Empire from 1783 to 1922 is approximately 1.800.000 people. See at: Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1800-1922: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison-Wisconsin, 1985, p.66.

to Crimean climate,² are seen to preserve their tradition and culture through various non-governmental organisations and associations. The most important ones among these societies are Âlem-i Medeniyye (medeniye.org), Bizim Qirim Halgara Cemaat –Bizim Kırım International Organization (bizimqirim.org), Emel Kırım Vakfı (emelvakfi.org.tr), Motherland Crimea (vatankirim.net), Crimean Tatar Cultural and Mutual Aid Association (kirimdernegi.org.tr). The on-going publication tool of Emel Kırım Derneği (emekvakfi.org.tr), journal of *Emel Dergisi* reached at 241 issues, and Kırım Derneği's journal *Kırım Bülteni* reached at 76 numbers. A careful intellectual Turk can understand the writings published on the web sites of these organizations as much as he/she understands Azerbaijani language. It is possible to say that members of these organizations practice both Crimean Tatar nationalism and Turkish nationalism with a dualist sense of belonging, as it has been observed in many other emigrant societies. In brief, in spite of such close cultural-political-historical ties, Turkish society's overall indifference to Ukrainian Crisis and Crimean issue throughout 2014 has been remarkable. The fact that only over a hundred people attended two meetings entitled "Give Voice To Crimea!" held on 2 March 2014 in Ankara and on 8 March 2014, then 20 May 2014 in İstanbul's most crowded center, İstiklal Avenue is a clear example of this indifference. While only in Ankara and Istanbul thousands of Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian students study at the universities and thousands of Ukrainians live permanently in İstanbul, it is very surprising that almost none of these people participated in the meetings. In this sense, we need to remind that the political agenda of that time was full of the investigation on the alleged malpractices of Erdoğan Government, Syria and ISIS crises and two crucial (local and presidential) elections which were held in 30 March and 10 August.

Views of Ukrainian Revolution From Turkey

The protests that began on 21 November 2013 in Kiev's Euromaidan Square had the appearance of a peaceful protest against corruption, which had been continuing in Ukraine in acceleration for some time, bureaucrats' setting up their own cadres in public offices, pressure on media, essential human rights violations, moving away from the European Union membership perspective and Viktor Yanukovich's increasingly authoritarian traits. This scene would be exactly the same as the one in Turkey if we only changed the date to 30 May 2013, the place to Taksim Square in İstanbul and the leader to Tayyip Erdoğan. Artists like Ruslana became the representatives of the opponent youth on the

² Hakan Kırımlı, *Türkiye'deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay Yerleşimleri*, Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012.

stage, as it had been the case also in Turkey. Ukrainian people's principal demands such as social peace, justice and democracy in compliance with Western standards have also been the same as the demands expressed during Gezi protests. However, the difference was that the Yanukovich government acted more patiently than Erdoğan administration; until the crisis began to cause people's death... Developments were reported in the same way by different flanks of the Turkish media during the very first days. Nevertheless, in the following days, mainstream newspapers and TV channels, which have become completely loyal to Erdoğan government for the last couple of years and which have constituted nearly 75 per cent of the media in Turkey, began to report news giving countenance to Yanukovich with a view to not proving the Gezi protests right. The discourse was aligned with their views during June-July 2013's Turkey: The phrases such as "Ukrainian marginal groups", "attempted coup by illegal organisations", "a provocation by Western media", "Soros effect", "the possibility of a CIA-led operation" were expressed several times by Pro-AKP (Erdoğan's Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/Justice and Development Party) commentators on the subject of Ukraine. In fact, after German pianist Davide Martello, who had played songs of peace to the protesters in Taksim Square for two days non-stop, played piano in Euromaidan as well, *Yeni Şafak* and *Sabah* newspapers – one is owned by Erdoğan's son-in-law and the other by Erdoğan's daughter-in-law's family – wrote "Pro-Gezi Pianist Showed Up In Kiev" and "Kiev's Gezi". The newspaper *Star*, which is completely in Erdoğan's control too, wrote "Look Where They Have Made The Copy of Gezi" while *Haber Vakti*, which makes militant publications, wrote "Dark Hands Have Brought Gezi to Kiev."³ Journalist İbrahim Karagül, who has many readers in conservatist milieus, wrote in one of his articles in *Yeni Şafak*: "(In Tahrir as well as in Taksim) masses' anger was mobilized in favour of Others' interests. This mobilization proved unsuccessful in Turkey. Now, Ukraine is going through a similar process. Slogans, organization styles, powers behind those people, colors and voices are totally same in two countries."⁴ Karagül, who had first praised the challenge by Tahrir protests to a dictator, then saw them as a doomed Western-led operation just because he considered the ones in Taksim as a coup attempt. In fact, this view was shared by many people within Pro-Erdoğan milieus. Tahrir became a bad thing after Gezi and was replaced by the protesters in Rabia Place and the willingness to show solidarity with Ikhwan-ı

³ <http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/dunya/kiev-gezisi-588906> (online), 02.12.2013. "Kiev Gezi'si", *Akşam*, 10.12.2013. "Gezi'ci Piyanist Kiev'de Ortaya Çıktı", *Sabah*, 23.12.2013, <http://www.haberinvakti.com/dunya/karanlik-eller-geziyi-ukraynaya-tasidi-h35360.html>, (online), 09.12.2013. *Star*, 24.12.2013.

⁴ İbrahim Karagül, *Tahrir, Taksim, Kiev... Ya Dershane Krizimiz?*, *Yeni Şafak*, 04.12.2013.

Muslimin (Muslim Brothers in Egypt). And now, Kiev was the third station. The scenario was completely the same, but the actors were little bit poorer in Ukraine under the circumstances of tough winter climate, so maybe some fragtions among Gezi's 'illegal' groups would be in help for Kiev's angry pro-West bourgeois youth?

However, the shift of the wind changed after Kiev police's fierce reaction following a long wait and the violence in Ukraine Parliament strenghtened the opinion that Yanukovych would lose his seat. Pro-government mainstream media in Turkey began to prepare special news declaring that little progress had been made really in Ukraine on the subjects of democratization and transparency since The Orange Revolution in 2004 and to broadcast some discussion programs, short documentaries and special analyses-news directed at understanding the roots of the crisis. As a matter of fact, Turkish public opinion got a shock after Yanukovych secretly left his mansion for escaping to(ward) Russia. His escape, taking away his bathroom equipments made of gold, collections of classical cars and other details, was a typical behavior of dictators (or at least of authoritarian leaders), and it is possible to say that this situation set Yanukovych's image to zero in the eyes of all Turkish people, socialists and conservatists alike.⁵ At the same time, Turkish politics was tense and fist-fights were occurring in Turkish Parliament as in Ukraine. After an opponent leader from CHP was punched, comments took place in social media telling that Yanukovych's members of parliament (MP) had the mentality as Erdoğan's MPs and that Turkey needed a couple of people like Vitali Klitschko who has been a leader of the Euromaidan protesters and a professional heavy-weight of 2.03 meters height boxer. Similar reactions were expressed after another view which reminded of Turkish police, who used excessive violence, caused 11 people's death, over 8 thousand people's injuries and sexual harassment against woman protesters. When the police humiliated a detained person by making him take all of his clothes while the weather was -10 Celcius degrees, Turkish TV-watchers and social media users showed a transient sensitivity towards what happened in Ukraine. But, as I have noted earlier, the approach to the subject was generally not more than 'a look from a far distance.'

However, the sudden outbreak of the Crimean crisis and the mergence of several death news caused the content of the news to cover Russian expansionism. Discussions about whether the situation would initiate a 'New

⁵ <http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/dunya/yanukovic-kacamiyor-620961> (online), 23.02.2014.

www.taraf.com.tr/haber-yanukovicin-kalesine-girdiler-149062 (online), 23.02.2014.

<http://haber.stargazete.com/dunya/flas-sirra-kadem-basmisti-izi-bulundu/haber-847316> (online), 23.02.2014.

Cold War' were generally held with a reference to the Ossetia and Chechnya experiences and reviews almost uniformly began to express that Russia, having tested its military power, had given a message to both the ex-Soviet countries and global actors. At this very point, Crimea's cultural, historical and political importance to Turkey was remembered for the first time. The referendum process generated organisations held by Crimean emigrant associations centered in İstanbul and Ankara, round table meetings of think-tanks, conferences on Crimea organized by universities. But this, as Dr. Vugar Imanov from the International Relations department of İstanbul Şehir Universitesi told during a personal meeting on 6 May 2014, also shed light to how superficial the perception of Crimea and Ukraine was. Newspapers, think-tanks, universities were caught unprepared and Imanov, who is of Azerbaijani origin and who wrote a doctoral thesis on Eurasianist thought, said that many TV channels, universities and associations in İstanbul invited him because they had not found another person with a knowledge on the subject. He was right. The truth is, there was not one expert focusing completely on the study of Ukraine in Turkey...

Analysis of the Turkish Mainstream Media's Discourse

Then, in the post-Yanukovych period, what are the prominent reviews on Ukraine? When we look at the titles which have been read most and got the biggest attention in various newspapers and news portals, we can say that two different tendencies have become subjects to two separate and superficial analyses. For instance, it is possible to see, among the news that have been seen most in pro-Erdoğan media, a news entitled "Ukrainian crisis served Turkey" (30.07.2014) by the newspaper *Sabah* mentioning the rise of the Turkish air transport and an analysis by Gönül Tol on the newspaper *Akşam* (17.03.2014) speculating that the crisis could be "an opportunity for Turkey" Turkish among the news that have been seen most in pro-Erdoğan media. In fact, the same approach –not surprisingly- is seen on the newspaper *Yeni Şafak* in this way: "Ukraine crisis will energize Turkey" (16.03.2014). While *Russia's Voice* (*Rusya'nın Sesi* in Turkish), a portal broadcasting from both Russia and Turkey, has made propagandist broadcasts like "Crises in Syria and Ukraine Are Bringing Russia And Turkey Closer" (21.05.2014), the portal *America's Voice* (*Amerika'nın Sesi* in Turkish) put forward an analysis entitled "Ukraine Crisis Is Affecting Turkish Economy" (26.04.2014). Dutch analyst Joost Lagendijk, who is a former GreenLeft Member of the European Parliament and served as the joint chairman of the Turkey-EU Parliamentarians delegation, wrote "There is no exit for Turkey in Ukraine crisis" in his article published in the newspaper *Zaman* (14.05.2014) while senior writer

Sami Kohen (18.04.2014) from the newspaper *Milliyet* and political scientist and leading commentateur Fuat Keyman from the newspaper *Radikal* (05.03.2014) argued that Turkey has not had the luxury of starting a power struggle over the crisis. All of these recent three writers underlined that one needed to watch future military-political developments more carefully instead of focusing on Yushchenko or Yanukovych, Ukraine or Russia, Europe or Eurasia equations. In fact, new assessments made during Minsk Talks at the end of August 2014 seem to have begun to confirm the rightness of these three writers.

In this sense, it seems possible to draw some conclusions from our collection of news and columns taken from the websites of Turkey's most popular newspapers *Zaman*, *Posta*, *Sabah*, *Milliyet*, *Star*, *Akşam* and *Hürriyet*. Accordingly, based on the columns which have been read and shared on Twitter most, we can say that Turkish media has covered Ukrainian Revolution and Crimean Crisis from the following perspectives:

- 1) Energy Crisis and energy security
- 2) Protests, Protestors and linkages to Gezi Park protests.
- 3) Writings reminding of the need to preserve Turco-Russian relations
- 4) Effects of the crisis on the tourism in Turkey
- 5) The position and security of Crimean Tatar-Turkic community

Issues such as analyses on the subject of Ukraine's territorial and national integrity, the situation of the tradespeople exporting goods and services to Ukraine, Turkish students studying in Ukraine remained in the back-ground almost as if they were merely details. On the other hand, reviews on the flow of natural gas have been the primary theme or among the primary topics on the agenda within the 84 columns out of 140 (published during the period between 1 December 2013-10 September 2014) that we have examined and that have different contexts. As for the number of written and mainly oral declarations made by the government which were broadcast on the evening news of the most popular TV channels, it was 87 between 21 November 2013-1 September 2014. It means that every single review was made per every four days, picturing on its own Turkey's level of interest towards the region.⁶

As to the humanitarian dimension of the events, it is perhaps the most neglected part. Within Turkish media, which is proud of trying to take lead in aiding to the humanitarian crises in Syria, Palestine, Somalia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Libya and even Haiti, there has not even been a proposal, throughout the process, to organize an aid campaign for either Orthodox and Catholic Ukrainians or Muslem Crimean Tatars.

⁶ I thank ajanspress.com for these statistical data.

Turkish Government's Approach To The Crisis

From the second half of 2013 onwards, Gezi Park protests, the bribery and corruption operation against certain ministers and Erdoğan's family, the scandal created by arms sent from Turkey for using in Syrian Civil War, the hostile competition between Fethullah Gülen Movement and pro-Erdoğan milieus, local elections at the end of March, and finally the process of presidential elections in 10 August occupied Turkish Government's –actually not only the government's) agenda.

Within this time period, Ukraine crisis has always been considered less than the subjects mentioned above as and also less than ISIS issue, Israel's attack on Palestine, the disaster in a mining enterprise in Soma, where more than 300 workers died, and a number of social explosions connected with nearly 2 million Syrians living in Turkey. In addition, it should be kept in mind that Erdoğan Government's relations with Gulf (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and United Emirates) capital and Russia has become more close as it has distanced itself from European Union. Today, Turkey has a foreign trade relation worth more than 50 billion dollars with Russia; there are lots of structuring projects in Russia which are made by Turkish companies, also Russia is the basic arrival for Turkish clothing products, beer, chocolate and so on.⁷ For the last couple of years, nearly 4 million Russian tourists have visited Turkey annually and Russia still continues to be Turkey's predominant natural gas supplier. It should also be noted that a "Putin fear" has been present within Turkish public opinion who has been watching authoritarianized Putin's uncompromising attitudes for nearly 15 years. It should be kept in mind that Erdoğan, who has been criticized by many people over "resembling Putin" since 2010, has been willing to have good relations with the Russian President and appointed Yiğit Bulut (b.1972), a Russophile journalist, as his principal advisor. Within the context of these conditions, one would not expect Turkish government to engage in Ukraine after all, with which it does not possess very powerful political-economic ties, compared to its relations with Russia. Thus, from the beginning of the crisis onwards, Russia's steps towards Ukraine have not been considered as a crisis in which Turkey can get involved due to its primarily and directly affected position, as it has been the case in Syria. Aside from having maritime boundaries on the Black Sea, Turkey would be affected secondarily and indirectly from the tension between Russia and Ukraine -for instance when Russia's revisionist attitude would be considered together with its reflections on the Caucasus. If we look at it from a broader context, the issue has been taking shape within the general balance between the West and Russia. For this

⁷ "Rusya-Türkiye Toplam Ticaret Hacmi 50 milyar Dolar", Zaman, 10.06.2013.

reason, The Western World and its institutions stepped forward as the leading actor in the political efforts directed at solving the issue. Turkey will continue in the future to try to harmonize its NATO led Trans-Atlantic security policy and its own regional approach. At this point, it is worth mentioning that Turkey has traditionally followed a policy that has shunned remaining in between during a crisis between The West and Russia.

Similarly, “In the last couple of years, Turkey has compartmentalized its relations with Russia, as it has done with Syria and has been careful to not to be affected by regional crises. Therefore it needs to oversee delicate balances throughout this crisis in which Russia is directly involved.”⁸

Within the context of the conditions that we have written thus far, let us take a look at how Ankara is approaching to the subject although Turkey has not been able to show an active presence during this crisis. A written declaration made by Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 6 March and with the number 77, on the subject of the referendum decision of The Parliament of Crimea Autonomous Republic related to Crimea’s status, was giving important clues concerning our point. A language as well-balanced as possible was used in the statement and it was declared that referendum would not contribute to the resolution of the crisis, but that it could result in dangerous outcomes which could cause serious splits among different groups in Crimea. Following matters were put forward in the declaration: 1) We are against all kinds of fait accompli in the region. 2) The referendum can cause new fractures and negative results in the region. 3) Turkey is very sensitive about Crimean Tatars with whom we share similar ancestries. 4) A solution which will be “based on the political unity and the territorial integrity of the country, within the context of democratic principles, in accordance with international law and agreements” should be found. 5) For this, an environment of “reconciliation” and “dialogue” should be provided between related parties.⁹ Turkey, with this declaration, was putting forward in a sense its principal sensitivities connected with the crisis as well as a solution to the crisis. Nevertheless, developments so far have shown that Turkey has not been effective even as a “passive mediator.”

When we look at the general picture, conditions seem to be different this time for Turkey, from those during Russo-Georgia War in 2008 when Turkey’s

⁸ Şaban Kardaş, *Türkiye ve Ukrayna Krizi: Suriye Krizinin İzdüşümleri*, Ortadoğu Analiz, Sayı: 62, (May-June 2014), s.6. Kardaş is an associate professor from the department of International Relations at TOBB Ekonomi Üniversitesi and the chair of ORSAM, a pro-Erdoğan think-tank in Ankara.

⁹ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr>). http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_77_6-mart-2014_kirim_daki-son-gelismeler-hk.tr.mfa (online), 06.03.2014. Also see M. Seyrettin Erol, “‘Ukrayna-Kırım’ Krizi ve ‘İkinci Yalta Süreci’”, *Karadeniz Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Sayı: 41, (Spring 2014), p.10.

stance was close to Russia, and developments are pointing out an inevitable choice similar to that in The First Crimean War (1853-1856). But under present conditions, the ongoing confidence crisis in Turkey's relations with the West and the relationship of dependency within Russo-Turkish relations show that a choice of this kind will not be easy either. What's more, Turkey's ongoing internal crisis constitutes a leading factor which makes this kind of choice more difficult. Turkey is almost being attempted to be left out of this new big game through certain internal, artificial and controlled crises, whereas Turkey needs to have an active role in this crisis which directly interests it. At least, as it was mentioned above, Crimean Turks dimension and the security of Black Sea region necessitates it. And also "2023 Vision" which has been referred many times by Erdoğan...¹⁰ Let's not forget that a passive Turkey which is left out of The Mediterranean and Black Sea will not be able to, a large extent, to develop a medium-long term policy! Thus, the "strategic depth" perspective expressed very often by Erdoğan-Davutoğlu duo and their claim about producing proactive foreign policy seem to lead Turkey to take on revisionist Russia which is for a status quo in Black Sea.

Turkey's Movement Capability

Despite all, "Eurasian Union" -which appears to us in the way of protecting the process of cooperation in Turco-Russian relations, which has not broken down in spite of 2008 Georgia and 2011 Syria crises and which has been identified by Erdoğan government with Shanghai Five after 2010- bears a central importance for this government together with "Turkey's Sunni backyard."¹¹ What's in question here is an effort to form a new balance against the West and to use the common geography as a source of power through cooperation instead of an area of competition-conflict.¹² This pursuit of unity, attempted to be brought into being after 11 September 2001 around the axis that joins Russia and Turkey, is now about to sink into the deep waters of the Black Sea because of differences of approach that started to conflict not in Ukraine but in Crimea.¹³ In this context, Foreign Minister of the period -now Prime

¹⁰ Erol, p.12-13

¹¹ Kadri Gürsel, *Erdogan Serious in Turkey's Bid for Shanghai 5 Membership*, Al Monitor, 5 January 2013. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/01/shanghai-cooperation-organization-erdogan-turkey.html> (online), 1 September 2014.

¹² Ahmet Davutoğlu had mentioned this critical balance in his famous book entitled *Stratejik Derinlik* in 2001. See more at Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 75th edition, 2011, pp.119-182.

¹³ Deniz Berktaş, a Turkish journalist with *Cumhuriyet* from Kiev, reminds us of the historical perspective. Online correspondence with Berktaş, 09.09.2014. Also see, Erol, p.13.

Minister- Ahmet Davutoğlu's statement that Turkey will make any efforts to keep Crimea as a part of Ukraine is very important.¹⁴ Here appears a clear differentiation from Russia. Now, what will happen in this situation? How will Turkey answer the questions starting with "which" and "how" that appear in the context of the phrase "any efforts" underlined by Davutoğlu's statement "We will make any efforts to guarantee Crimea's future"? This is a question which is bound to remain unanswered for the time being... But it seems possible by the way of "a dual flexibility." In fact, as Prof. Selçuk Çolakoğlu pointed out, state-owned Turkish Airlines' (THY) decision of restarting flights to Crimea on 14 April 2014, contain certain political messages beyond being an economic decision. Likewise, "Turkey's lack of participation even in weaker EU sanctions against Russia can be interpreted as a reflection of the policy of protecting relations with Russia."¹⁵

In conclusion, although Turco-Russian relations move on the way of cooperation through Putin-Erdoğan relations, Russia's historical demands on the Caucasus, the Black Sea and the Straits still continues to exist and Turkey's statement, which was expressed at the highest level, on the subject of Crimea's remaining in Ukraine is being tested in Crimea just as Russia's imperial power, which is being examined also in Crimea.

Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' written reaction numbered 279 related to the conflicts on August shows that in a potential crisis between the West and Russia, Turkey will have to play the role of being "a part of the Free World" and will understand through experience that it will not be able to make a long-running alliance with Russia due to historical and political realities.

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¹⁴ http://turkish.ruvr.ru/news/2014_03_02/Turkiye-Kirimin-Ukraynada-kalması-ichin-her-shey-yapacak/, (online), 02.03.2014.

¹⁵ See more in Selçuk Çolakoğlu, "Türkiye'nin Ukrayna-Rusya Krizinde Tavrı", USAK Analiz, http://www.usak.org.tr/kose_yazilari_det.php?id=2288&cat=344#sthash.mz1deFSS.dpuf (online), 20.04.2014.

Dalsze sąsiedztwo: krytyczna ocena sto- sunku Turcji do ukraińskiej rewolucji i kryzysu krymskiego

Hasan Aksakal

W artykule autor podejmuje próbę przedstawienia szerokiego spectrum reakcji Turcji na ostatnie wydarzenia na Ukrainie – rewolucję na Majdanie oraz aneksję Krymu przez Rosję. Z przyczyn historycznych i bliskich relacji Krymu z państwem otomańskim w przeszłości, turecki dziennikarz poprzedza artykuł krótkim szkicem na temat związków Krymu z Turcją. Hasan Aksakal poddaje analizie zarówno reakcje tureckich mediów na wydarzenia na Ukrainie, jak i czynników oficjalnych – polityków i instytucji. Konstatuje, że wiedza o Ukrainie wśród tureckich ekspertów, dziennikarzy i polityków była powierzchowna, a poziom debaty na temat kryzysu ukraińskiego niski.

Pisząc o ukraińskim Majdanie, jako o pokojowym proteście przeciwko działaniom władz, autor przywołuje protesty Turków na placu Taksim kilka miesięcy wcześniej. W opinii autora, władze tureckie poprzez kontrolowane media usiło-

Дальшее соседство: критическая оценка отношений Турции к украинской революции и крымскому кризису

Хасан Аксакал

В этой статье автор пытается представить широкий спектр последних событий и реакции Турции на события в Украине - революции на Майдане и присоединение Крыма к России. По историческим причинам и близким отношениям Крыма с Османским государством в прошлом, турецкий журналист начинает статью кратким очерком о взаимосвязи Крыма и Турции. Хасан Аксакал анализирует реакцию турецких СМИ на события на Украине и официальных представителей власти - политиков и институций. Автор делает вывод, что знания об Украине среди турецких экспертов, журналистов и политиков были поверхностными, и уровень дискуссии об украинском кризисе очень низок.

Описывая украинский Майдан, как мирный протест против действий властей, автор напоминает о протестах турков на площади Таксим несколько месяцев назад. По мнению автора, турецкие власти через контролируемые СМИ пытались создать образ Май-

wały kreować przekaz o Majdanie jako o nielegalnych akcjach protestu, operacji CIA i zamachu stanu, patrząc na wydarzenia w Kijowie przez pryzmat sytuacji w Turcji jako na zagrożenie dla własnej pozycji. Z kolei aneksja Krymu przez Rosję była rozpatrywana przez tureckie media i czynniki oficjalne głównie z punktu widzenia praw tatarów krymskich, których spora liczba mieszka w Turcji, oraz interesów gospodarczych tego kraju, w szczególności z Rosją, która jest ważnym partnerem handlowym Ankary.

Aksakal udowadnia, iż pomimo deklaracji tureckich władz o wsparciu dla integralności terytorialnej Ukrainy, interesy gospodarcze okazały się w praktyce ważniejsze niż wartości, a wznowienie lotów tureckiego przewoźnika na Krym już w połowie kwietnia - dowodem na *Russia's first policy*. Jednocześnie, w opinii autora, wydarzenia na Ukrainie nie były tematami dominującymi, ustępując miejsca wyborom samorządowym w Turcji oraz kolejnym starciom izraelsko-palestyńskim. W rezultacie w swoim artykule Hasan Aksakal pokazał nie tylko reakcje Turcji i Turków na ukraińską rewolucję, ale również sytuację w samej Turcji, nie kryjąc swojego negatywnego stosunku do rządzącej partii AKP.

dana jako niezakonnych akcji protestu, operacji ЦРУ и переворота, глядя на события в Киеве с точки зрения на ситуацию в Турции как угрозу их собственной позиции. В свою очередь, аннексия Крыма Россией рассматривалась турецкими СМИ и официальными представителями власти, в основном, с точки зрения прав крымских татар, большое количество которых живет в Турции, и экономических интересов страны, в частности связанных с Россией, которая является важным торговым партнером Анкары.

Аксакал доказывает, что, несмотря на заявление турецких властей о поддержке территориальной целостности Украины, экономические интересы на практике оказались важнее ценностей, и возобновление рейсов турецких авиакомпаний в Крым уже в середине апреля – это доказательство приоритета пророссийской политики. В то же время, по мнению автора, события в Украине не были главной темой и уступили место информации о выборах местных властей в Турции и израильско-палестинских столкновениях. В результате, в своей статье Хасан Аксакал показал не только реакцию Турции на украинскую революцию, но и на ситуацию в самой Турции, не скрывая своего негативного отношения к правящей партии.

