Construction of Identity of the Crimean Tatars in The Ukrainian media discourse

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Deportation in 1944 and return en masse since the 1980s
Research questions

- How is the Crimean Tatar identity being constructed by the Ukrainian media discourse?
- How do the Ukrainian media shape the self-identification of the Crimean Tatars?
- Which narratives of deportation communicated by the media discourse make up the features of the Crimean Tatar national identity?
Broader context of study

• This study represents a social-constructivist ontological paradigm
• Corresponds to the larger group of critical studies of racism, representation of migrants, ethnic, social minorities and unprivileged populations
• Focuses on power relations and the work of ideology and common sense in the discourse
Methodology

• Critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, Wodak, van Dijk)

• Narrative analysis (dominant and counter narratives of deportation 1944 in the media)

• Audience analysis (in-depth interviews and focus-groups)
Levels of text analysis

• National and regional (Crimean) media
• Crimean and national Crimean Tatar media (Rus lang only)
• Broad sample (2010-2012) – all related media texts
• Narrow sample (17-19 May 2007-2012 – deportation commemoration day related texts)
Critical discourse analysis

- Macro level - discursive practices, silencing, ideological frameworks, media formats/genres
- Textual level – voices, agency, – work of power relations and common sense
- Micro-level – word choice, naming, categorization
Collective memory of deportation

• History and memory in the media
  Patterns of media representation of the commemoration politics – deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other peoples of the Crimea
  Dominant (official) discourse of deportation VS Crimean Tatar national alternative
  Historical discussion around the reasons for deportation of 1944 – “narod-kolaboratsionist”
Audience analysis

- Interviews and focus groups with Crimean Tatars and Russians/Ukrainians of the Crimea:
  - dominant channels of information consumption
  - Inhabited and ascribed identities (Blommaert) – family (peer comm.) VS media as primary source of identity
  - Deportation as a central pillar for construction of Crimean Tatar collective identity?
Preliminary results of analysis

Key features of the media discourse about the Crimean Tatars:
- Not systematic
- Focused on scandals, conflicts
- Lack of analysis of reasons behind protests and possible solutions
- Crimean Tatars’ opinions under-represented, voices mostly silenced
- No interest to history and culture, everyday life, education of the Crimean Tatars
Agency

- Generalization in naming (Crimean Tatar, Crimean Tatar people, land self-seizers, nationalist-extremists, Muslim extremists)
- De-individualization (Crimean-tatar man, representative of the Crimean Tatar people)
- Exclusion of local political, civic and religious leaders as speakers
- Passive voice and victimization

("Police has swiped off another Crimean Tatars’ protest"

Korrespondent.net 21.03.2009

“The Crimean Parliament will decide the destiny of the Tatars’ mosque tomorrow”

UNIAN, 19.03.2011)
Discourse of threat and religious extremism

Headline: “The Tatars will take away Crimea and make new Kosovo”
*Vlasti.net, 9.01. 2008*

Headline: «Al-Qaida is going to help Akhmetov’s party?»:
“…under the label of “autonomous community” lurks the unregistered in Ukraine pseudo-Islamic party “Khizb-ut-Tahrir”,…..Included in the list of terrorist organizations in some countries, this organization is firmly connected with the infamous “Al-Qaida”…..”
*UA Today, 13.08.2007*

Headline: “The Crimean Tatars celebrated the building of the mosque with the killing of the lamb. Beware, cruel scenes!
The first stone of the Djuma-Djami Mosque has been laid in Simferopol.”
*Segodnia, 03.03.2011*
Exclusion\inclusion of the Crimean Tatars

Exclusion:
No more concessions to the self-seizers
“The Crimean population gets to the core of the land issues, as is reflected in the results of sociological survey. 51% of the Crimean population are irritated by the endless actions of protest of the Crimean Tatars, 22% - are anxious about these, 9% - feel fear. In general, 83% of the Crimean people have a negative attitude to the protest activities of the Crimean Tatars”

Krymskaya gazeta, November 27, 2007

Inclusion:
Matvienko on the mine-field of the Crimea
“the fact that Kyiv’s nominee met Crimean Tatars could be a wise decision, as they represent the most powerful political force in the Crimea…”

Gazeta po-kievski, №81, April 28, 2005
Othering: “Us-good” VS “them – bad”

“During 17 years of independence over 1 billion and two hundred million hryvnas have been spent from national and republican budgets on the settlement of the Crimean Tatars, over 40 thousand hectares of lands provided…

…But the Crimean Tatars do not value such generosity. As well as the concessions constantly made by the republican and local authorities”.

Krymskaya gazeta, November 2007
Conclusions

• The most common narratives of the Crimean Tatars in the media influence not only the popular attitudes of the “Slavic majority”, but define political consequences – political rehabilitation of deportees, legal securing of the rights of indigenous population to the Crimea, cultural autonomy of the Crimean Tatars etc.

• The work of implicit forms of racism and their ideological implications is more powerful than overt hate speech – this study focuses on the examination of the “new racism” (Van Dijk, 2001) on the structural level and level of normality and common sense.