

Slogans Appeared During the Crimean Spring in the Political Discourse of Modern Russia

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Abstract

The political discourse of the second decade of the XXI century has reflected the essential changes in the slogan arsenal of Russia. The changes were the result of the “color-coded” revolutions happened on the Eurasian continent. The Maidan protests in Kiev, ended by the coup and the civil war in Ukraine, provoked a public response in the communicative space of the Russian Federation. The linguistic studying of slogans, briefly expressing the aims and ideas of warring parties in Ukraine and judging the decisions of Kiev authorities against Russian speaking people, is in its infancy. The staff members of the Magnitogorsk Research Lexical Laboratory devoted one of the sections in their monograph “The publicistic arsenal of social movements in Russia and Germany” (2015) to this problem. In dictionary “Give Peace a Chance” (2016) such kinds of slogans also can be found. This article deals with slogans, used during the period called as “The Crimean Spring” and appeared in Russian mass media. They showed the Crimea events and the reaction of Russian audience to the Crimea annexation. The authors used the synchronous and system-related approach while choosing the material and studying slogan units in the context of their meaning, structure and origin. This approach needed the complex use of descriptive and comparative methods with the help of componential and contextual analysis. The authors monitored real situations, in which the slogans were used. They revealed 69 slogan units, appeared or actualized during “The Crimean Spring” and defined the factors of their success. It is stated that only 18% of analyzed slogans “got back” from the passive vocabulary, the others were created according to old models or were the result of the collective creativity of modern times. The main ideas of “The Crimean Spring” slogans are disapproval of Bandera nationalism; solidarity with multi-ethnic Crimea, supporting Russian annexation; desire to protect the Crimeans; memory of Crimea history and Russian roots; confidence in Crimea future as a part of jRussia. The results of the work can be a reliable source for political discourse studying and can be used in creation of dictionary of Russian slogans of the first quarter of the XXI century.

Key words: Slogan, Russia, Ukraine, unitarity, Crimea, Annexation

INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the 10s of the 21st century, Russia has endured the real slogan boom. The three events of 2014 has become the reason for creativity awakening in the political sphere among people of the Russian Federation: the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, the color-coded revolution in Ukraine, developed into the civil war, and “The Crimean Spring”, Crimea and Sevastopol returning

to Russia. Slogans, connected to these events got approval from the Russians regardless of their political and party proclivities [1-4]. Slogans and appeals used at meetings and demonstrations of that time have reflected the coming-back pride of the Russians for the fatherland; respect for Russian history; the feeling of Russia involvement into global policy; solidarity with the Russian-speaking people, fighting for the rights and readiness to help fraternal peoples.

The linguistic studying of slogans appeared during “The Crimean Spring” is in its infancy [5-7]. There are some reasons for this. Firstly, slogans described by most linguists as short political writing works, have not received conventional definition yet. Secondly, there is no state definition for term “slogan” or classification of slogan units. Thirdly, and the most important, there is no

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branch for fixing and describing slogan material in native linguistics.

For the analysis, we chose slogan units, which showed the reaction of Russian people for “The Crimean Spring”. Our choice is conditioned by not only geopolitical and humanitarian importance of the Crimea annexation for Russia, but also by the original character of language “maintenance” of this process in which the very important traits of Russian civil society were shown.

METHODOLOGY

The authors set a goal to study the semantic scope, origin and typical models of slogans, appeared during The Crimean Spring. They used synchronous-system related approach to pick up the material. The approach required the multiple use of descriptive and comparative historical methods, which were combined with the methods of componential and contextual analysis. The authors took into consideration the real situations, in which the slogans were used. The language is considered by the authors as a socio-historic phenomenon reflecting social events and the structure of the society [8: p.221].

RESULTS

We analyzed of about 70 the most common political slogans, which were used between 2014 and 2017.

The Crimean Spring was a phrase, created on the analogy of *The Arab Spring* – the name of evolutionary events, antigovernmental meetings and strikes, started in Arab countries in the middle of December of 2010.

The Arab Spring overtook 14 countries and all this led to civil wars, bloody strikes and the death of 650 000 people.

The main slogan of the Arab people was *The People Want the Fall of the Regime!* Arab political strategists, called the antigovernmental movements on the Middle East “*The Arab Spring*”. They took this word from European revolution leaders of 1848–1849 years, who fought under the slogan *Spring of Nations* and filled the word *spring* with revolutionary meaning. The word *spring* symbolized the wakening of nature and changes.

On the one hand, appeared in 2014, set phrase *Crimean Spring* got with the key component of the meaning revolutionary component of changes and regime fall. On the other hand, the phrase became the symbol of peaceful, bloodless victory of rebellious people. That was the main difference between set phrases *Crimean Spring* and *Arab Spring*. The difference was

also reflected in Russian political discourse and defined the main idea and ideologemes of slogans, used by the Crimeans, who refused to obey Kiev authorities, headed Ukraine in a coup and followed Nazi Bandera ideology.

Currently newspaper has become an important way of delivering information [9: p.181]. Newspaper articles about “The Crimean Spring” are always followed by the notes about so-called “polite people” (little green men), Russian soldiers, provided the peaceful outcome to protest movement on the peninsula: *The Crimea Annexation: How “little green men” became “polite people”*: On Monday in Russia, we congratulated representatives of the Special Forces. Among the other things, they ensured safety during the Crimea referendum, where they got nickname “polite people”. Lots of people gathered On Special Operations Forces Day, celebrated in Russia on February 27, at the monument to “polite people” in Simferopol – Duma members, elected from Crimea, representatives of the Republic State Council and city authorities. Makarova Y., Abramov K. *The man and the cat. How “polite people” became the symbol of patriotism and bane to the West*//Lenta.ru, 5. 5. 2017.

Slogans of 2014, along with the above-mentioned neologisms, served as the convincing proof of bloodless, free-will character of the Crimea Annexation.

According to the article authors, slogan is a brief, expressive phrase, giving precise assessment to events, expressing ideas or current demands of different social groups and aimed to cause the necessary reaction of the masses [10: p.3].

As a hyperonym the term slogan serves as the general name for appeals, mottoes, protest formulas, tough characteristics, angry statements, damnations, cautions, banes, toasts, calls, spells, vital credos, greetings and other similar sayings. For example: *For Russia!, For Novorossiya!, Hands off Crimea!, Prosperity in unity!, There is no place for Bandera in our home! No fascism!, Hurrah! Russia!, we won't forget – we won't forgive!, People of Crimea! We have common land – we have common destiny!, We stand up for the Russians!, Russia and Crimea – forever together!, Hail to the solidarity of the Slavs! and etc.*

DISCUSSION

According to the topic, slogans of The Crimean Spring can be divided into several groups. In the article the authors stop only on the most numerous.

The first slogan group has appeared as the reaction to nationalistic slogans of Euromaidan, supported by Kiev authorities, who aggrieved Russian-speaking people in Ukraine. They considered Stepan Bandera, who fought

for Hitler, a national hero and used Bandera slogan *Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes!* as state one.

Extremist threats, nationalistic slogans and offensive chants of the Right Sector (Bandera will come and bring the order!; Who not jumping – the Moskals!; Knife the Moskals!; Hang Moskals!; Ukraine is for Ukrainians!; Ukraine is above all!; Hail Ukraine – death to enemies!) caused protest slogans in Crimea and Russia: Banderists, hands off Ukraine!; Hands off Crimea!; No Maidan!; Nazism won't pass! Wake up, Ukraine! and so forth. For example: On February 28 on one of the crowded squares of Lipetsk, at the building of the municipal administration there was a meeting dedicated to events in Ukraine. Lipetsk communists were with red banners and slogans: “There is an aggression directed to Ukraine take-over!”, the USA, NATO, The European Union hands off Ukraine!”, “No fascism in Ukraine!”, “Events in Ukraine – war on a threshold of our house!” and etc. Corruption generates fascism//The Truth, 04-05.03.2014.

The second group includes slogans in which the Russians express solidarity with Russian-speaking people of Ukraine and Crimea: Russian unity – adherence to ideas!; The Crimeans, we are together!; Russia is with Crimea!; Our strength lies in our unity!; For the future of Crimea together with Russia!; Ukraine, we are together!; Russia (LDPR) is for Crimea (Donbass)!; We support unity!; While we are together, we are strong!; Crimea – the area of Russian opposition!; We are brothers! We are together! and etc: On anniversary of the Crimea annexation, there were a lot of meetings in the Crimeans` support all around Russia. On website “For the people protection” near the photo, taken by S. Baranov and A. Zatonkiy during the meeting in March of 2015, there was a text, titled “The Crimeans, we are together!”: On March 18, there was a concert meeting on Kuibyshev square in Samara <...> Thirty thousand people from Samara region came to the square. They held banners: “Keep the faith, Crimea. Samara is with Crimea!”, “We don't betray our own!” <...> “The Crimeans, we are together!” Access mode: <http://www.zasn.ru/event/703> (date of the address: 06.05.2017).

Slogans appeared during “The Crimean Spring” form the third group. These slogans are phrases, which express readiness of the Russians to help and protect fraternal people (very often such slogans are the responses to the request of defence – Russia, save us from genocide!): We will protect the Russians!; We will protect Novorossia!; Let's help our brothers!; The Russians don't betray!; We don't betray our own!; Let's protect fraternal people! and others. Political parties such as KPRF and LDPR took an active part in the process of slogan promotion: In the plea of Stavropol division of KPRF to Ukrainian president P.A. Poroshenko, it is said: We know the price of fascist

turncoats, who are ready to lead the people to disaster. We <...> stand up for fraternal people <...> Mr Poroshenko! The country, defeated fascism gave You everything. You were born and grew up under the peaceful sky. You were reliably protected by the Soviet Army <...> Why now, when you are the President, Your country welcomes fascist aggression?//KPRF Website. Access mode: <http://kprf26.ru/787> (date of the address: 26.09.2016).

The fourth group consists of slogans, which approve the Crimea annexation, toasts and greetings in honor of Crimea and Sevastopol return into “home harbor”: Sevastopol – Crimea – Russia!; Kerch and Sevastopol are our holy!; Crimea is Russia!; Crimea and Russia - common history, common destiny!; Welcome home, Crimea (to Russia)!; Sevastopol is Russian city!; Crimea and Sevastopol, welcome home!; Welcome Sevastopol!; Welcome Crimea! and etc. We give only some examples here: Some Crimea slogans will be heard on the square: Crimea and Russia – united people, united country!; Kerch and Sevastopol are our holy!; There is no place for Bandera in our home! <...> However, the Crimean meeting is supported not only by communists. Among the protesters there will be members of the United Russia and LDPR. Berdsk administration also agitates people to come to the meeting. The City Council believes that it is going to be a good chance to unify the people. The Crimea annexation will be the main topic of the May Day meeting in Berdsk//The Courier. Wednesday. Berdsk, 29.04.2014; We support their right to selector. We approve the actions of the Supreme Council of Crimea, legitimate authorities of Sevastopol and other cities with mostly Russian people. Sane President – reasonable defence measures! Sevastopol, Crimea, Russia! O.S. Adamov. Performance on Perm meeting//OD Website “Union Chernobyl of Russia”, 12.03.2014. Access mode: <http://souzchernobyl.ru/index.php/2/2833.html> (date of the address: 19.10.2016); People, who came to support the results of the referendum in Crimea and the return of Crimea and Sevastopol into Russia held banners “Crimea! Russia!”. “Welcome home, Crimea!”, “We are together with Crimea” and Russian flags and party banners. Dagestan “Patriots” supported reunion of Crimea and Sevastopol with Russia//Press service of the Dagestan regional office of political party “Patriots of Russia”, 3.20.2014. Website of Patriots of Russia party. Access mode: <http://-patriot-rus.ru/news/glavnyie-novosti/dagestanskie-patrioty> (date of the address: 9.29.2016).

Russian mass media use different slogan phrases when describe events in Crimea and Ukraine. These slogans are a kind of oaths and they appeal to save the memory about evil deeds of fringe groups. The slogans remind of active members of anti-maidan movement, who were burnt in Odessa inside the Trade Unions Building, about people who died on Maidan Nezalezhnosti in Kiev and

civilians, died during bombing attacks in Lugansk and Donbass (We remember Odessa!; We remember Maidan!): We remember Odessa! <...> Our banners show that we criticize Odessa events and grieve with the families of the dead. We urge all the members of the Ivanovo Committee to lay flowers in memory of those difficult days. Maslyonkin A., the first secretary of the Ivanovo Committee of KPRF// Word of the truth, 5. 28. 2014;... protesters gathered near Embassy of Ukraine in Moscow, “Russia-24 reminds”. The peaceful meeting was organized by “The people’s liberation movement”. The participants went down Leontyevsky Lane in a column and then stopped opposite the building of Embassy, chanting “Hands off Russian diplomats”!, “We remember Odessa, we remember Maidan!” and “Fascism won’t pass!”//Vesti.ru, 3.7. 2016. Access mode: <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id> (date of the address: 5.7.2017).

CONCLUSIONS

Studying the slogans of “The Crimean Spring”, the authors also pay the attention to units, which cannot be named new. They are in a passive publicistic arsenal of Russia and become active only in the face of tragic events. For example, the expression *We don’t forget, we don’t forgive!* appeared at the time of the Great Patriotic War in 1941. It was in the heading of the military correspondence of P. Pavlenko about fascist atrocities in prison camps for soviet soldiers. The correspondence was published on October 14 in newspaper “The Red Star” and gained recognition as the appeal to remember about these bloody events [10: p.148-149]. Optimistic phrase *Our cause is just!*, based on the idea of fair fight for something very important (protection of the fatherland, fight for high ideas) – was created on June 22 in 1941. It is the part of slogan *Our cause is just! The enemy will be defeated. We got the victory!* [10: 142-144]. Danger of the neo-Nazism, supported by Kiev authorities after the Maidan victory in 2014 awoke anti-fascist slogans *No pasarán!*, *They won’t pass!*, *No fascism!*

Success of slogans of “The Crimean Spring” was provided not only the ideas put in them, which were conformable to thoughts and feelings of Russian people, but also linguocultural factors.

Spontaneously appeared slogans went through collective usage and only brief, laconic and expressive units entered into the publicistic arsenal. They are slogans included simple words and organized according to old slogan models. For

example, models such as “No + noun in Dative Case” with the general sense of rejection of the phenomenon which is a noun called (*No fascism!*, *No war!*, *No Nazism!*, *No Bander!*, *No terror!*, *No Maidan!*); slogan series, based on model “Hands off + noun in Genitive Case” with the general theme, which expresses disapproval of attempt to take something (somebody) named by the noun (*Hands off Ukraine!*, *Hands off Crimea!*, *Hands off Novorossia!*, *Hands off Donetsk!*).

Slogans of “The Crimean Spring” show the peaceful character of the Russians and their hatred of war. They show the desire of the people to protect the fraternal ethnic groups and resolve conflicts peacefully.

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