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STRATEGIC PROSPECTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN UKRAINE AND TURKEY

This article is devoted to the development of the relations between Ukraine and Turkey in the post-Cold War period. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, unprecedented growth in the Black Sea region dramatically changed its “political landscape”. The Black Sea region has opened to international cooperation, and the strategic culture of the foreign policy of the newly independent states has also started changing. Throughout the existence and development of both peoples, Ukrainians and Turks had bilateral relations.

Thus, a common past, the first steps of Ukraine and Turkey in developing their bilateral relations in new historical conditions, demonstrated mutual interest and an intention to reach a new level of the interstate relations. The article analyses the relationships between Ukraine and Turkey on a wide range of topical issues whose decisions potentially played an important role in the economic, social and cultural life of both countries.

Keywords: Turkey, Ukraine, strategic partnership, Black Sea region, bilateral relations, development of political ties, Crimea.

The modern history of the bilateral relations between Ukraine and Republic of Turkey (RoT) is relatively brief. Except for a short period of the Ukrainian independency at the beginning of 1920s, both countries didn't have any diplomatic relations until the onset of the Soviet era. For most of the twentieth century, economic relations and foreign policy were generally coordinated from Moscow. Ukraine and Turkey were separated not only geographically, by the Black Sea, but also by their belonging to different political and military unions¹. The collapse of the Communist system in this region put an end to the status quo, which had been established during the “Cold War”.

Formation of the official bilateral relations. In spring of 1991, the President of the Republic of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, made an official visit to Ukraine. On March 13, 1991, he had a meeting with the Head of the Ukrainian Parliament. During said meeting, the Declaration on the Principles and Objectives of Relations between the two states was signed.

The dissolution of Soviet Union and creation of an independent Ukraine had set new challenges and perspectives for Turkey. From March 5-6, 1992, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Chetin, paid his official visit to Kyiv, during which the Protocol on Consultations on the Foreign Policy Issues was signed. In May of 1992, the Ukrainian President, Kravchuk, paid a formal call to Turkey for the first time in history. During this visit the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey was signed.

The parties have confirmed “their responsibilities within the framework of all existing and previously existing acts signed between them”, particularly, the Agreement on Friendship and Fellowship between Ukraine and Turkey since January 2, 1922. The Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey as of May 4, 1992, created the foundation for the cooperation between the two states in political, economic, cultural and other spheres. Special attention was paid to cooperation in the Black Sea Region, which was the subject to the “Declaration of Black Sea Economic Cooperation” signed in Istanbul as on June 25, 1992 by eleven states of the Black Sea Region².

Ukraine and Turkey, based on their international commitments, also agreed on cooperation within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as within the framework of the United Nations. The Turkish government's conceptual approach to building a common strategy in the region was

¹ Сергійчук, Б. (2009). Сучасна турецька історіографія про україно-турецькі зв'язки у XVII-XX сторіччі. *Сходознавство*, 48, 177.

² Черніков, І. (1994). З глибин століть. Про миротворчу тенденцію у взаєминах України і Туреччини в контексті історії. *Політика і час*, 7, 82.

that the policy of balancing between Russia and Ukraine could be rejected on the Ukrainian side if the Ukrainian side would make efforts in this direction. Russia, in the opinion of Turkish analysts, is a country whose policy is difficult to predict as a result of a range of geopolitical, national, and social reasons. Ukraine, in their opinion, has demonstrated its desire to maintain peace and security, not only in the country, but throughout the region; its policy is more predictable and in line with the national interests of the Republic of Turkey. One of the main tasks Turkey had faced at the beginning of 1990s, was to help the new independent states transition to a market economy.

One of the reasons was that all of those states were its neighbours. “The first reason – is our own interest, we want our neighbours ridden of problems, we want them to stand on their own feet and go through this transition. We want to help this process”, – said the President of Turkey, giving a speech in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on May 31, 1994. “Another reason for Turkey’s interest in its neighbours is “Turkic”, and with regard to Ukraine, the Tatar-Turkic factor”. Turkey believed not only its business, but also the affairs of other states to help the Crimean Tatars. “If thousands of Tatars returned to Crimea, today it is a problem not only for Ukraine, incapable of solving it on its own, but for all civilized countries”¹.

Thus, a common past, the first steps of Ukraine and Turkey in developing their bilateral relations in new historical conditions, demonstrated mutual interest and an intention to reach a new level of the interstate relations. They determined a high rate of rapprochement between Ukraine and Turkey on a wide range of topical issues whose decisions potentially played an important role in the economic, social and cultural life of both countries.

Strategic interests and geopolitical environment. In conducting a comparative analysis of the interests of Ukraine and Turkey during the 1990s, first of all, it should be noted that Ukraine and Turkey were, for the most part, two similar countries both in their internal state and in the geopolitical environment.

Ukraine and Turkey are both countries that are on the verge of two civilizations: European and Eurasian. Such a position significantly influenced their foreign policy orientation and internal situation. The strategic choice of Ukraine, like Turkey, however, in different years, has become a course towards European integration. The strategic interests of both countries in the civilization dimension of the West-East vector generally coincided. It was on this vector that bilateral relations between Ukraine and Turkey as geopolitical allies began to be built.

After independence, Ukraine became a democratic society. The Constitution of Ukraine laid out the basic principles of democracy, democratic institutions began to be established, and a mechanism for the distribution of functions of political power was introduced.

Political power in Turkey belonged to various democratic forces, the nucleus of which was the Party of the Fatherland, which expressed the interests of intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and industrialists. But, unlike in Turkey, democratic forces in Ukraine did not have such a significant impact on society and power.

Turkey was much more integrated into European structures, while Ukraine stood at the very beginning of this path. In the early 1990s, Turkey was already member of the Council of Europe, the Customs Union of the European countries, and in 1952 joined NATO, in which, if the primary South-Eastern outpost. With the end of the Cold War era and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the military and strategic importance of Turkey for NATO decreased.

Therefore, it gradually began to form the concept of independent foreign policy in the Black Sea region, and therefore to establish bilateral relations with the countries of the region playing a role in guiding them into Euro-Atlantic structures. In the mid-1990s, relations between Ukraine and NATO were built based on the formula of “distinctive partnership”, which was embodied in the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine. It was embodied, first of all, in the Black Sea Force Program, which Ukraine had implemented jointly with Turkey and other Black Sea region countries.

For both Ukraine and Turkey, the movement towards Europe was largely restrained by the diverse geopolitical orientation of the eastern and western regions. Thus, the Western and central regions of Ukraine, according to surveys, tended towards Europe (62% of these regions came from the EU, 50% – NATO). At the same time, in the eastern regions, adherents of NATO membership were only 7%².

However, naturally, the driving forces of pro-Asian or eastern geopolitical orientations in Turkey and Ukraine were different. In Turkey it was the Islamic fundamentalism of Eastern rural regions, and in

¹ Несюк, М. (2006). Україна в зовнішній політиці. *Українська державність у XX сторіччі*. 1996, 213.

² Парахонський, Б. (2000). *Інтереси України і Туреччини у Чорноморському регіоні: порівняльний аналіз, Україна та Туреччина: безпека і співробітництво в Чорноморському регіоні*. Київ, 57.

Ukraine – Pro-Russian sentiments and the Communist past which was never filed as history. So, at the parliamentary elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 1998, the communists again received passing percentage¹. In Turkey, on the contrary, fundamentalism retained its dominance in the eastern regions due to their economic marginalization. The economic development of the western regions was perceived as Westernization, that is, a challenge to the national culture.

Nevertheless, in the sphere of foreign policy, the European integration has never been abandoned completely. Throughout the 1990s, Turkey had been actively implementing European law in the domestic political and economic spheres of life. Ukraine came to this after the 2000s. It should be noted that the Turkish experience of European integration had a great influence on Ukraine².

Turning from the consideration of the global level of foreign policy priorities of both countries to the regional one, it is necessary to point out the commonality of *geopolitical interests* of Ukraine and Turkey in the Black Sea region. These interests overlap and intersect, but in no way, were incompatible.

Even though Turkey occupied an extremely favorable geopolitical position, at the beginning of the 1990s, it was in a hostile environment. On the west, it faced problems in the Mediterranean (Cyprus) and the Aegean Seas (confrontation with Greece to demilitarize the surrounding islands). Friendship with Bulgaria was hampered by a complex historical past. Due to its conflict prone nature, the Balkans made it impossible for Turkey to create mutually beneficial multilateral relations. In the east, the Republic of Turkey faced the Kurdish issue and the spread of radical Islamic fundamentalism from Iran and Iraq. In the north-east, Armenia gradually posed another dangerous geopolitical problem.

One of the priority vectors of the foreign policy for the Republic of Turkey after the collapse of the Soviet Union was the concept of filling the security vacuum. After changing the regional order and reducing the pace of its European integration, Ankara could take advantage of the new geopolitical order and establish a friendly relationship with the former Soviet republics. This can explain the active policy of Turkey in the Black Sea region and Central Asia.

As for Russia, it generally viewed Turkey as its main enemy in the Black Sea region. Thereupon there were almost no geopolitical allies in Turkey. Ukraine in this context had some attractive features of a strategic regional partner. Given the balance of power in the region, both the economic and geopolitical interests of our countries were very close. For example, in the sphere of fulfilling Ukraine's transport interests was the transportation corridor – North-South. Ukraine had the opportunity to use the Black Sea straits of Turkey for international trade communications. Ukraine, in turn, would provide its transportation routes to link Turkey with Europe.

The issue of the Crimea, which was brought up from time to time in the consideration of Ukrainian-Turkish relations in the 1990s, has never been the subject of confrontation between the two countries. Rather, it was the subject of a potential confrontation in Ukrainian-Russian relations, which became real in 2014, when Russia occupied the Crimean Peninsula.

An important reason for talking about the absence of confrontational motives in relations between Ukraine and Turkey is that the main geopolitical interests of the latter in the 1990s were related not so much to the Black Sea region itself, but to Central Asia. This region proved to be the safest for Turkey. The affinity of the cultures and languages of the Turkic people, vast raw materials, and demographic potential allowed Turkey to easily win take key positions in the economy and banking sector of the countries in the region.

The conceptual component of the foreign policy trajectories of Ukraine and Turkey. In the mid-2000s, relations between Ukraine and Turkey had still not reached a strategic level, despite the on-going rapprochement between the two countries. Objective causes for this were mainly the improvement of relations between Russia and Turkey, the focus of Turkey on its European direction, and the loss of Ukraine's international credibility in the period before the Orange Revolution. In fact, Turkey declined to become an observer in GUAM and CDC (Community of Democratic Choice), at the forum of the countries of Baltic and Black Sea region. The anti-Russian, from the Ankara's point of view, tenor of these projects would make any presence of Turkey in these regional cooperation schemes absolutely impossible.

In analysing the success of both countries in the first decade of the 2000s, we consider it necessary to give some assessment to domestic political processes in Turkey and Ukraine.

¹ Жангожа, Р. (2000). *Турецький вектор геополітичної орієнтації України, Україна та Туреччина: безпека і співробітництво в Чорноморському регіоні*. Київ, 33.

² Матос, Дж. (2000). *Україна і Туреччина: безпека та співробітництво у Чорноморському регіоні, Україна і Туреччина: безпека та співробітництво у Чорноморському регіоні*. Київ, 43.

Ukraine, before and after the Orange Revolution, was focused on domestic political struggle and resolving energy issues. Diplomatic relations were maintained with all neighboring countries, but the main direction of foreign policy is Western, namely relations with the USA, NATO, and the EU. Economic and trade relations with Turkey were sustained at the declared level, but couldn't reach the point of strategic development. After the victory of the Party of Justice and Development at the parliamentary elections in Turkey in 2002, a new foreign policy course was taken, which is called by some researchers as "Neo-Ottoman". It was believed that Turkey should use its Ottoman Empire experience, its geopolitical advantages, and turn from a peripheral member of NATO into a major power center. Internal transformation led the country to a state model that seamlessly combines Islam and liberal democratic values. It is precisely because over the years, the national interests of Turkey prevailed over the block, Turkey, in spite of NATO membership and strategic partnership with the United States, actively cooperated with Moscow and distanced itself from Washington. Ukrainian-Turkish relations in those years were inactive.

A few years later the concept of "zero problems with neighbours" foreign policy was added to Neo-Ottoman concept. The new regional strategy of the country was explained by the complex geopolitical situation of the country.

The then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Davutoglu, explained the expediency of foreign policy activity as follows: "We can't afford long-term tensions with our neighbors. We must not only have positive relations with our neighbors, but also pursue an active policy in the regions that surround us. We have to be everywhere"¹. In the framework of this new foreign policy of "zero" problems and creating a "security belt" in the region, there was a gradual de-securitization of its foreign policy – solving problems using "soft power", without excessive politicization. An example of the transformation in the foreign policy field was the plan for creating a "Caucasus Stability Platform" after the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008. The platform represented Ankara's ambitious plans to become the basis for the future regional formation, whose founder would be Ankara. This example is also of interest to us because Turkey has ceased to perceive Russia as a permanent threat since 2008, and it feels, according to a Turkish researcher, more self-sufficient and less dependent on the western community².

Events of a later period in the unstable region, where Ukraine and Turkey are located, have shown us that such a thaw in relations with Russia, a feeling of safety and attempts to change the status quo in relations with the West were premature. The said processes also influenced Ukrainian-Turkish relations. Relations, declared as "strategic" in 1993, were not reflected as such according to the opinion of experts³.

The intensification of the economic and energy cooperation. In the first decade of the 2000s, Turkish-Russian relations have improved significantly due to active and positive economic and energy cooperation. The strategic partnership, on the verge of a regional rivalry, involved the active cooperation of the countries in areas where their positions coincided. Such relations essentially differed from the format of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Turkey; moreover, they were dependent on Turkey's balancing between Ukraine and Russia. The tendency of Turkey to focus on Ukraine for the sake of pressure on Russia has become a hallmark of bilateral relations and reflects a historical example of strategic culture of the relations between the two countries. But this does not mean that cooperation between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey, which started in the 1990s, was only to provide Turkey with the opportunity to have an additional counter measure in the game with Russia, and Ukraine – to have a chance to get out of Russia's sphere of influence. Obviously, such a close, though not strategic, interaction at that time is due to the existence of commonalities between Ukraine and Turkey and the desire of both parties to develop these relations.

By 2004, relations between Ukraine and Turkey could be characterized as "strategic in certain sectors", according to Turkish and Ukrainian diplomats⁴.

This evaluation of extended economic, trade, military and technical relations between the two countries was more consistent with reality. At the end of the first decade of the 2000s, Kyiv and Ankara were trying to enhance their dialogue. Proceeding from the fact that there were no problematic issues in the

¹ Волович, О. (2011). *Туреччина у сучасному світі: пошук нової ідентичності: збірник статей та аналітичних матеріалів*. Одеса, 34.

² Волович, О. (2011). *Туреччина у сучасному світі: пошук нової ідентичності: збірник статей та аналітичних матеріалів*. Одеса, 26

³ Верне, Д. (2017). *Турція, Україна: об'єднана битва?* <<http://www.inosmi.ru/translation/215749.html>>.

⁴ Ердоган, І. (2017). *Взаємне скасування віз – наша мета*. <<http://www.turkishnews.com.ua/haberler-mainmenu-2/6051-2009-09-04-09-48-16>>.

political sphere of Ukraine-Turkey relations, the Ukrainian side expressed the intent to intensify the development of strategic partnerships.

On May 5th – 6th, 2010, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RoT, Ahmet Davutoglu, visited Kyiv, where he had a meeting with Yanukovich, Azarov, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine – Gryshchenko. The key issue was the signing of the Action Plan for 2010-2011 and reaching agreements in the transportation sector (on the organization of ferry crossings). During the visit, Davutoglu stated that Turkey was interested in maintaining peace and stability in the Black Sea Basin. Also, the Minister commented on the decision of Ukraine to extend the term of stay for the Black Sea fleet of Russia in the Crimea as carrying no threats from the Turkey's point¹. This caution of Ankara towards Ukraine and the leveling of conflicts in order to deepen cooperation in non-political spheres is explained specifically by the Russian factor. Ukraine, in turn, accepted this kind of controlled competition between Russia and Turkey, without demanding any more decisive actions and statements.

Intensive dialogue between Ukraine and Turkey at the highest level continued in June of 2010, when President Yanukovich paid a formal call to the RoT. A series of meetings between the President of Turkey, Abdullah Gul, and the Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, resulted in the Parties agreeing to develop relations at the level of strategic partnership Turkey is gradually becoming one of the main trade partners of Ukraine.

From January to September 2010, Turkey was rated the second (after Russia) among the countries with the largest export deliveries of Ukrainian products (6% from the total exports of Ukraine as compared to 5.4% for the same period in 2009). According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, the trade turnover amounted to about \$ 3 billion, which is 41.75% more than in the same period of 2009. While the exports amounted to \$ 2.2 billion (increased by 46.5%) and imports – 841.3 thousand USD (increased by 30.9%); therefore, for Ukraine positive balance amounted to \$ 1.3 billion².

According to the official statistics, in 2010 the value of Turkish investments in Ukraine amounted to \$ 143 million. If one includes the Turkish investments coming to the Ukrainian market via European channels, the amount raises to \$2 billion. Thus, at this stage, for Ukraine the development of economic relations with Turkey was the ultimate solution to the problem of strategic choice, as believed by the experts³.

However, rapprochement with one of the partners often leads to a deterioration of dialogue with others. Ukraine, for example, tried to balance between Moscow and Brussels; Turkey is between the Muslim countries and the Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this context, the situation in Ukraine and Turkey looked similar: the problem of “existential” choice in foreign policy and the consolidation of society in the domestic one is the essence of development of modern Ukraine and Turkey. Taking into account the peculiarities of the development of the two countries after the end of the Cold War, the dynamics of regional processes, the passivity of Ukraine regarding the further implementation of proclaimed initiatives, the inconsistency of the actions of the branches of power within the country, the periodic change of proclaimed vectors of foreign policy orientation, economic decline, and the impact of global players, Ukraine and Turkey failed to realize the potential of a “strategic partnership” in the first two decades of bilateral relations. The parties were forced to develop and make traditional relations in the field of economy, tourism and culture.

The political component of bilateral relations. The situation is somewhat politicized since 2014, after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, the beginning of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, and the occupation of Crimea. The domestic political situation in Ukraine changed, new presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The country proclaimed a course the Euro-Atlantic integration. Due to the military interference of Russia in the political situation of Ukraine, Russia ceases to be the subject of the “East – West” discourse in the foreign policy trajectory of Ukraine.

The internal tension and the problem of uniting the people under the slogan of one national idea remain the cornerstones of Ukrainian society. Turkey provides strong political support to Ukraine in the matter of returning Crimea to Ukraine. However, the Republic of Turkey did not join the sanctions applied against Russia by the Western countries. The level of economic and energy interdependence of these key actors

¹ Волович, О. (2011). *Туреччина у сучасному світі: пошук нової ідентичності: збірник статей та аналітичних матеріалів*. Одеса, 398.

² Мхитарян, Н. (2017). Стан та перспективи українсько-турецьких відносин. *Національний інститут стратегічних досліджень*. <<http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/472/>>.

³ Кравченко, В. (2017). Слово Ердогана. *Дзеркало тижня*. <http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/slovo_erdogana.html>.

in the Black Sea Region did not allow Turkey to take a radical stance. Only tensions in relations with Russia after the downfall of the Russian aircraft by the Turkish side in November 2015 and the bilateral imposition of sanctions by mid-2016 stimulated the dynamic development of relations between Ukraine and Turkey.

Turkey, as a possible counteraction to Russian aggression, aroused some interest in political circles. Let's consider in more detail the new conceptual and doctrinal basis of Ukraine in the context of the Turkish foreign policy direction. The Republic of Turkey is not mentioned independently in the strategic documents of Ukraine and the issue of cooperation is outlined in general terms. The National Security Concept of Ukraine emphasizes the use of Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a priority in the regional format of the Organization of the Black Sea and security in the Black Sea. The Military doctrine of Ukraine separately emphasizes military and technical cooperation with NATO member-states. The strategy of sustainable development "Ukraine-2020" considers the reform of the national security and defence systems to be the most important one. In an analytical report of the President's address to Parliament, Turkey was mentioned as "an important regional partner"¹.

In 2015-2016 meetings of the President of Ukraine, Poroshenko, and the President of Turkey, Erdogan, were held. The first meeting, in March 2015, was held in the framework of the 4th meeting of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine. The Turkish party underlined its support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and "significant potential in promoting stabilization of the situation in Ukraine"².

The Crimean issue became a marker of significant progress in the development of political relations between Kiev and Ankara. Financial assistance and investment in Crimea were traditional indicators of Turkish activity on the Peninsula, even before the Russian occupation. After 2014, the Crimean issue, namely the situation of the Tatars and other Turkic peoples, has become a peculiar bridge in the relations between the parties.

As noted above, Turkey has not recognized the annexation of Crimea by Russia, supported the Ukrainian position in the UN, and sent its representatives to the Special Monitoring Commission of the OSCE. At the same time, non-alignment with the sanctions against Russia has showed the inability and unwillingness of the Turkish party to cross a certain red line in relations with Russia. As for humanitarian assistance, a group of experts and scholars visited Crimea to examine the situation on the Peninsula. In August of 2015, under the support of the Turkish government, 2 meetings of the World Congress of the Crimean Tatars were held, and they were officially supported by Ukraine.

Turkey has also provided financial and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and to the building of a military field hospital. The annexation of the Crimea also led to a dramatic decrease of bilateral trade to 5 billion USD per year. This fact additionally stimulated the desire of the Turkish partners to sign the FTA agreement between the two countries in 2016. The warming in Russia-Turkey relations in the summer of 2016 has once again halted the process.

The partnership of Ukraine and Turkey in the energy sector is also incomplete and unambiguous. First, Turkey has its own interests in the matter of energy transit in the Black Sea-Caspian Region. Also, Erdogan supports the idea of building a Turkish Stream, proposed by Putin, which is mutually beneficial for both countries, but eliminates the transit potential of Ukraine.

In the author's opinion, under the current situation Ukraine's interests with regard to Turkey can be defined as follows. In the security sphere: ensuring security in the Black Sea Region and potential participation in the establishment of de-occupation mechanism for the Crimea; in the field of economy: strengthening trade relations and grant of loans to Ukraine; in the energy sector: allowing for the passage of tankers with liquefied natural gas through the Bosphorus (in fact, instances of the passage of tankers through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles do not yet exist); in the humanitarian sphere: extending the cooperation in the field of education, providing assistance to the Crimean Tatars and establishment of links between Crimean Tatar minority in Ukraine and the Crimean Tatar Diaspora; in the field of integration: exchange of experience in the process of reforms and EU integration.

Conclusions. The relations between Ukraine and Turkey are currently developing. The regulatory framework for bilateral relations is sufficient to deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries. According to the author, an important factor is the need for Ukraine to formulate a clear foreign policy

¹ Українська призма: Зовнішня політика України у 2015 році. <<http://prizmua.org/scorecards>>.

² Політичні відносини між Україною та Туреччиною. Міністерство закордонних справ України. <<http://mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/newswire>>.

concept, a national security strategy not in the West-East plane, but taking into account all key partners and southern neighbours. As in the past, and at the end of the Cold War, Ukrainian multi-trajectory policy, based on its political culture, is strategically unjustified and in many cases ineffective. The potential of the Republic of Turkey as a strategic external partner is underestimated by the Ukrainian authorities. In relations with the Republic of Turkey, Ukraine often appears to be not the generator of new projects and concepts but rather acts in response to the options and the rules of the game suggested by Turkey. Turkey, in turn, except for the periods of aggravation in relations with Russia, in relations with Ukraine is guided by its “Russia oriented” model of the Black Sea Region.

In different periods since independence, Ukraine declared its strategic partners in more than twenty different countries, which in no way corresponds to the potential of our state. In implementation of its foreign policy, Ukraine should have been more realistic and should have dropped the excessive rhetoric. In the light of relations with Turkey throughout the broader historic period (the Cossack epoch, the First World War), it is possible to trace the main stages and features of political and strategic culture of Ukraine.

The main characteristic is the lack of a clear understanding of their own national interests, the problem of existential choice, passivity, and controllability by more influential regional and global players. However, relations with the Turkish Republic have, theoretically, a chance to evolve from situational to strategic, but only on condition of further evolution of the political culture of our country.

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