



TOLERANT AND INTOLERANT CONTENT OF ASSESSMENTS BY UKRAINIAN STUDENTS OF SUBJECTS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Vasiutytskyi Vadym

Abstract

Relevance. The study focuses on the problem of the attitude of Ukrainians to "good Russians" under the influence of the Russia-Ukraine war. The opinion of student youth is of particular importance. Depending on the holding of a certain personal position, young respondents largely evaluate modern military and political phenomena and processes.

Methodology. The task of the online survey of 2,202 students of 35 universities from different regions of Ukraine, conducted in the spring of 2022, was to assess the degree of guilt and effectiveness of the actions of agents of social, in particular, military and political processes. The questionnaire used 5-point scales of semantic differential and subjective scaling. According to the content of the evaluations of the crimes of the Russians and the Russian authorities before Ukrainians, four groups of respondents were distinguished. Their attitudes towards various social and ethno-political subjects are compared.

Results. It was found that anti-Russian attitudes significantly prevail in students' evaluations of Russians and the Russian government. A relatively small part of the sample consisted of anti-Ukrainian, neutral and tolerant views towards Russians. The anti-Russian majority most clearly accuses subjects to whom it attributes signs of attraction to the "Russian world". The anti-Ukrainian minority evaluates them positively, but tends to blame Ukrainian society and the Ukrainian authorities. However, the positions of the anti-Russian majority and the anti-Ukrainian minority turned out to be close in their high assessment of the effectiveness of the Ukrainian government and the command of the Armed Forces. Respondents who try to choose neutral assessments partly avoid a clear choice, and partly hide their pro-Russian sentiments. "Tolerant" respondents, who condemn the Russian authorities, but do not condemn Russians, tend to blame all those in power and to excuse "ordinary people" regardless of their nationality or citizenship.

Keywords: *subjects of public and political life, ethno-political agents, evaluations of guilt, evaluations of the effectiveness of actions, tolerant and intolerant evaluations.*

Relevance

The tragic events of the Russia-Ukraine war actualized the problem of the attitude of Ukrainians to Russian society. One of the main tendencies of this attitude was the attempt



to distinguish between "bad" Russian authorities and "good" Russian citizens (Shore, 2018; Vasyutynskiy, 2022; Kovalevskiy, 2015; Koliastruk & Koliastruk, 2021; Paniotto, 2020; Slyusarevskiy & Chorna, 2018). There is no doubt that there are "good Russians" in Russian society, but there are so few of them that their influence on internal Russian processes is negligible. However, from the point of view of the state and development of Ukrainian society, public opinion on this issue and the trends it generates are extremely important.

Methodology

In the spring of 2022, a survey of Ukrainian students' opinions was organized and conducted. Its main task was the students' assessment of various agents of public and political life in Ukraine from the point of view of their responsibility for the current state of society. Through an online survey, 2,202 students from 35 universities from all regions of Ukraine, with the exception of the territories occupied at the time, were interviewed. (However, some of the respondents were among those who lived there).

The questionnaire designed for the implementation of this task contained, firstly, questions that required respondents to quantify the guilt of various subjects of social life for certain processes and circumstances that occurred at the time of the survey. The respondent had to assess which of the two social subjects compared in 10 pairs was or is more to blame for the problems that arose in their interaction: the respondent's own social group or Ukrainian society in general; Ukrainian society or the Soviet government; Ukrainian society or oligarchs and mafia; Ukrainian society or the current government headed by Zelenskyy; Ukrainian-speaking or Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine, etc. A 5-point semantic differential scale was used for evaluation. In a similar way, 12 pairs of ethno-political agents were evaluated: Ukrainians and Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, etc. Then, at the time of the survey, the most relevant assessment of the effectiveness of the actions of 10 agents of the Ukrainian government was carried out: President Zelenskyy and his team, the command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, etc.

Results and discussion

In the context of this topic, the two most informative scales for assessing mutual guilt were determined: Ukrainian society and the current Russian government headed by Putin and Ukrainians and Russians). The indicators obtained according to these scales made it possible to distinguish the following four groups among the respondents.

The most numerous (1,780 people) was the anti-Russian group - these are respondents who persistently blamed both the Russian government and Russians.

Representatives of the anti-Ukrainian group (110 people), blamed Ukrainian society and Ukrainians.

A group of neutral respondents (85 people) mostly chose an average score of 3 for evaluating both scales of the questionnaire. This compromising tendency was also preserved in their assessments of other ethno-political subjects – Poles, Romanians, Bulgarians, etc. Obviously, in recent cases, this is a completely adequate assessment: today

it is not very reasonable to blame Poles or Romanians more than Ukrainians. As for the Russians, such a position of equal distribution of blame between them and the Ukrainians can be interpreted as masking and evasion.

Finally, the assessments of the fourth – tolerant towards Russians – group of interviewees (162 people) turned out to be the most contradictory: they blamed the Russian authorities, but not Russians.

We conducted a comparative analysis of the ratings received from respondents from these four groups, according to the rest of the content parameters of the questionnaire. As the results showed, the accusations of Russians by the respondents are very closely related to the accusations of Belarusians. The reason here is obvious - the position of the Belarusian authorities and their "leader" in the Russia-Ukraine war. Therefore, those who blame Russians and the Russian government also make Belarusians responsible. Those who do not blame Russians do not want to blame Belarusians either. Those who try to be "neutral" or "tolerant" and in this case occupy the same intermediate position (Fig. 1).

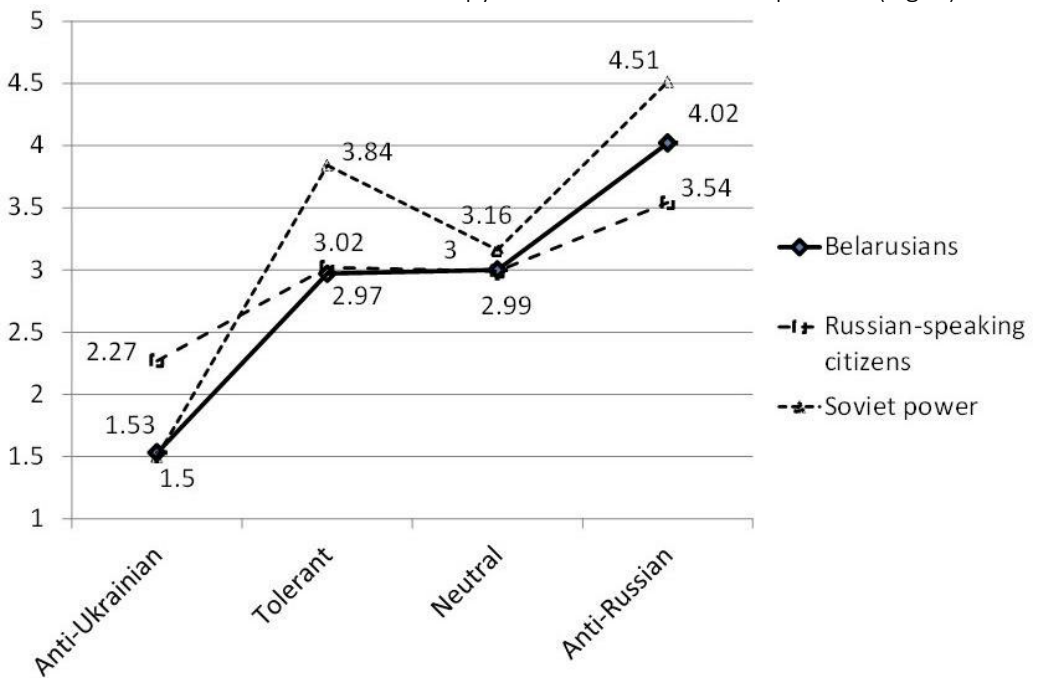


Fig. 1. Assessment of the faults of Belarusians against Ukrainians, Russian-speaking citizens against Ukrainian-speakers, and Soviet authorities against Ukrainian society

Against the background of a clear demonstration of the attitude towards the already presented ethno-political subjects, the students' assessments of the mutual faults of Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking citizens of Ukraine look softer. There is a tendency here: those who blame Russians tend to blame Russian-speaking citizens, and vice versa (see Fig. 1).



The survey also revealed the relevance of the assessments of the Soviet government and its crimes against the Ukrainian society for the consciousness of the students. It turned out that students who blame the Russian government, but not Russian citizens, tend to blame the Soviet government as well. In our opinion, the effect of the responsibility of the authorities as such (Russian authorities, Soviet authorities) and not of Russian society was manifested in such assessments. At the same time, respondents with anti-Ukrainian attitudes also do not blame the Soviet government, which has a more ideological color (see Fig. 1).

Similar coincidences were found in the evaluation of the faults of the oligarchs and the mafia. Ukrainian students mostly tend to equate the responsibility of the oligarchs with the government. Many of the young citizens (as well as the elderly) do not distinguish between these subjects (sometimes this is correct, sometimes not at all). But what is interesting is that the "anti-Ukrainian" respondents do not want to blame the oligarchs and the mafia for the crisis processes that Ukrainian society is currently experiencing - obviously, not because they "love" them, but because, in comparison, the oligarchs, the mafia and Ukrainian society it is important for them to blame the Ukrainian society itself (Fig. 2).

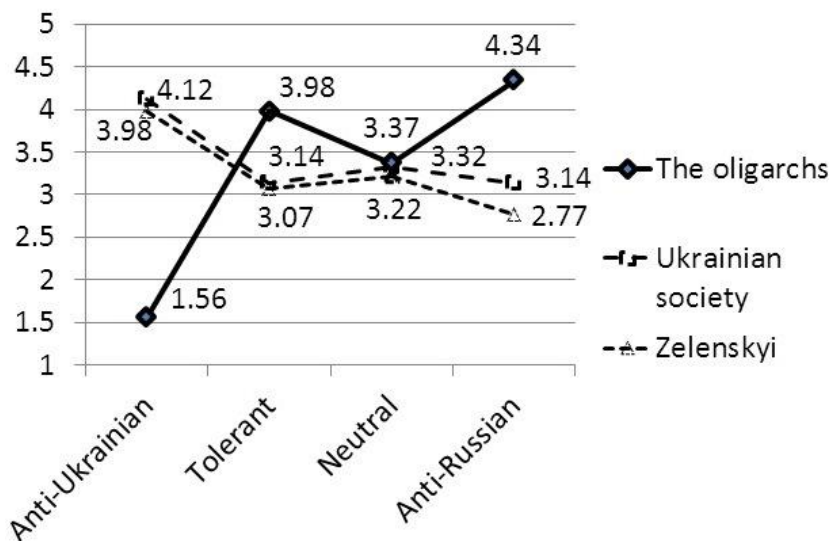


Fig. 2. Assessment of the faults of the oligarchs and the mafia towards Ukrainian society, Ukrainian society towards the respondent's own social group, and the current Ukrainian government headed by Zelenskyi towards Ukrainian society

From the point of view of "anti-Ukrainian" respondents, Ukrainian society is also to blame for the troubles of their own social group. Similar attitudes can be traced in the evaluations of representatives of the "neutral" and "tolerant" groups, but they tend more

toward the average level (see Fig. 2).

When it comes to the accusations of the Ukrainian authorities led by Zelenskyy, a different trend is evident. For the "anti-Ukrainian" group of respondents, the Ukrainian government is more to blame than Ukrainian society, while for the "anti-Russian" group, the opposite is true (see Fig. 2).

In the conditions of political polarization under the influence of war events, for the bearers of pro-Russian views, it was the Ukrainian government that became the main factor of political resistance to the enemy invasion. For the patriotic majority of the population of Ukraine, the Ukrainian government, despite different attitudes towards its representatives, performs the function of symbolic unity of society in the face of Russian aggression.

In the assessment of the effectiveness of the actions of President Zelenskyy and his team and the command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, an interesting phenomenon attracts attention: not only "anti-Russian" respondents highly rated the activity of the Ukrainian government and the Armed Forces (which is quite understandable), but also "anti-Ukrainian" respondents recognized its high effectiveness (Fig. 3).

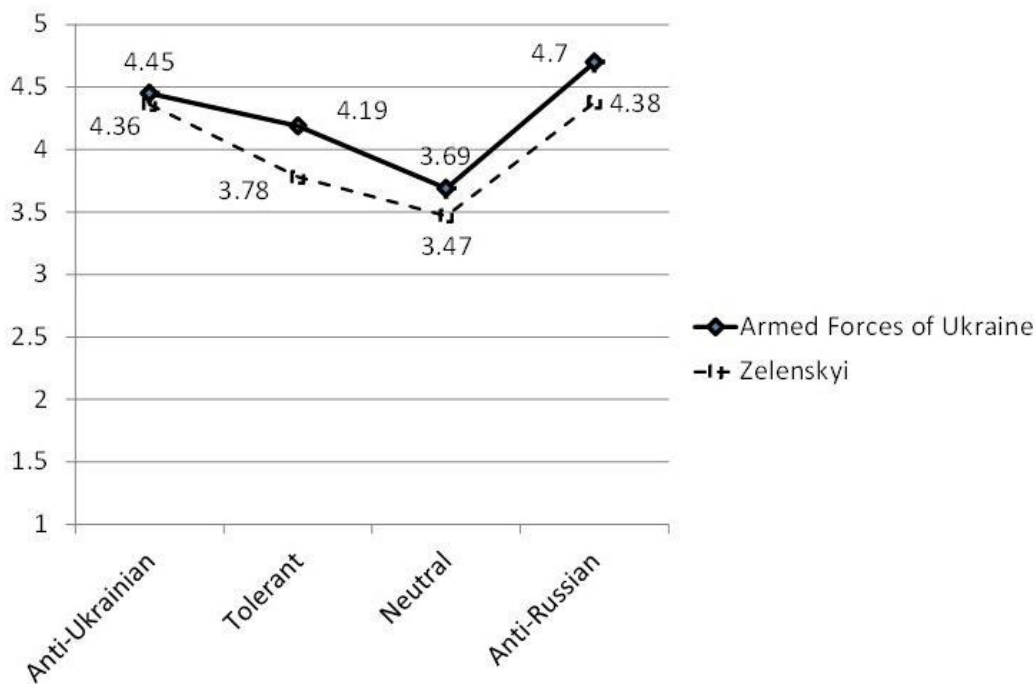


Fig. 3. Evaluation of the effectiveness of President Zelenskyy and his team and the command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

That is, in the spring of 2022, an unexpected synchronization of evaluative ideas (obviously not attitudes!) of representatives of completely opposite, even hostile social groups manifested itself. The Ukrainian side of the military confrontation turned out to be



so effective that even the political and ideological opponents of Ukraine recognized it.

Conclusions

The following generalized conclusions were made on the basis of the given materials.

1. Distribution of students' evaluations of the faults and the effectiveness of communities political subjects of modern Ukraine reflects the processes of political polarization. Agents to whom the anti-Russian majority attributes signs of attraction to the "Russian world" receive the most expressive accusatory evaluations. The anti-Ukrainian minority positively evaluates these same agents.

2. The anti-Ukrainian minority tends to blame Ukrainian society even in comparison with such unattractive subjects as oligarchs and the mafia. Even more, the anti-Ukrainian minority blames the Ukrainian authorities. However, in the high evaluation of the effectiveness of the Ukrainian government and the command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the positions of the anti-Russian majority and the anti-Ukrainian minority turned out to be close.

3. Respondents who try to choose neutral assessments sometimes avoid a clear choice, and sometimes hide their pro-Russian sentiments.

4. Respondents who condemn the Russian government, but do not condemn Russians, avoid condemnation towards other citizens, but blame all kinds of powerful people, thereby as if uniting with other "ordinary people" who suffer because of the government.

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AUTHORS INFORMATION

Vasiutynskiy Vadym

D.S. of Psychology, professor, chief researcher of the laboratory of mass and community psychology Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

ORCID 0000-0002-9808-4550 e-mail: vadymvas55@gmail.com

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