

Vasiutynskyi V. To change the authorities or to stop the war: Which purpose is more important for Ukrainians today? / Vadym Vasiutynskyi // Political and Economic Self-Constitution: Citizenship Activity and Education. Proceedings of the VI international scientific and practical seminar, Olsztyn, Poland, June 5th, 2018 / ed. By Irina Bondarevskaya, Beata Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz. – Padova (Italy): TPM-Edizioni, 2018. – P. 50–55.

**To change the authorities or to stop the war:
Which purpose is more important for Ukrainians today?**

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Introduction. In the context of the so-called “hybrid” undeclared war that Russia is leading against Ukraine, the factors of information and psychological influence on the mass consciousness became especially important. A. Kolodii (2015) describes the category of “conscial war” as a war on defeat of consciousness and the destruction of identity. Its features include: long latency; diversity, flexibility and unpredictability of means of influence; forced distortion of information and communication space; erasing the distinction of “friend–enemy”; destruction of spiritual values, notions of good and evil; the destruction of a person's ability to self-identification and identification of fixed communities, which leads to a change in the forms of self-determination and to depersonalization.

One of the main areas of propaganda influence of Russian media on Ukrainians is the discreditation of Ukrainian state authorities. In general, the assessment of power is largely an internal psychological problem of citizens and is rarely the point of attention for foreign media. For example, based on the results of the comparative analysis of the contextual meanings of toponymic concepts of Ukraine, France and the United Kingdom in the media discourse

carried out by V. Biloshytska (2016), auto-stereotypes revealed a focus on internal problems and achievements of the country. In particular, in the “Ukrainian weekly” magazine 4 of the 12 most frequent contextual associations with the lexeme Ukraine related to the authorities and 2 of them are to the war with Russia. Instead, hetero-stereotypes of Ukraine in the British and French magazines do not have the image of Ukrainian authorities at all.

However, there is a lot of such images in the content of modern Russian, as well as in some Ukrainian media. Iu. Horban (2015) draws attention to the systemic anti-Ukrainian propaganda campaign of Russian media and using the latest technical capabilities and manipulative technologies by them. The main forms and directions of influence on the Ukrainians’ public opinion are the following: campaign against political course of the ruling elite of the state and its individual leaders; imposition of views on the inability of Ukrainian authorities to govern the state and make rational decisions; creating ideas that elections are more important for the Ukrainian elite than military events; formation of negative judgments about military-political leadership of Ukraine.

P. Burkovskyi (2017) notes that Russian media’s propaganda efforts in highlighting events in Ukraine are an important tool for legitimizing Russian plans to undermine the unity of Ukrainian society and destruction of Ukrainian state. In order to demonize Ukrainian authorities, they hyperbolize the importance of right-wing radical organizations in Ukraine, carry out personal information attacks against Ukrainian politicians, and update negative stereotypes of mass consciousness.

Objectives. Destructive influence of Russian and pro-Russian media on the Ukrainians’ mass consciousness requires to understand the citizens’ psychological readiness to perceive anti-governmental meanings in the context of military confrontation. An extremely important issue is a question of the proportion between anti-governmental and anti-war attitudes: what is the most

urgent in terms of directing mass consciousness – change of the authorities or peace achievement?

Method and procedure. The study was empirically based on monitoring status and trends of Ukrainian citizens' political consciousness that has been carried out in Institute for Social and Political Psychology, NAES of Ukraine, since 1994. Annually, from 1200 to 2000 respondents were interviewed in all regions of the country (from 2014 excepting the Crimea annexed by Russia and occupied areas of Donbas), taking into account age, gender, ethnicity, socio-professional structure of adult population.

Versions of psycho-semantic questionnaire have been used in the monitoring are modifications of methodology proposed by Russian psychologist V. Petrenko (1997). The questionnaires consist dozens of political content statements taken from mass-media of different ideological orientation. Respondents rated their agreement with the statements by three-point scale.

Every year some statements have been changed depending on new circumstances of social and political life. Significant changes were made in 2014 in connection with Russian military aggression. Since then, four surveys have been conducted: at the end of 2014 (1798 respondents) and 2015 (1204), and in the beginning of 2017 (1201) and 2018 (1208) years, that is, actually with a one-year interval.

Among 51 statements included in the questionnaire in 2018, 21 were selected in relation to respondents' attitudes towards the authorities and the war. Four factors were outlined due to factor analysis. Then, the estimates of the most loaded in each factor statements, received during 2014 – 2018, were compared.

Results. Assessing the relationship between attitudes towards the authorities and the war in general context of the polls, one should say that authorities' ratings were among the strongest factors in a stable manner, while the attitudes towards the war were scattered on various factors. This and other circumstances give reason to believe that in Ukrainians' consciousness a holistic

vision of the war as a permanent phenomenon of their existence has not been formed.

The assessments of the government and the war given by the respondents in the 2018 survey were united into 4 factors. The first factor reflected attitudes, mostly negative, towards the current government. These attitudes were primarily concentrated on the person of President Petro Poroshenko. The statement “Since the day when Petro Poroshenko became the president, the people’s confidence in the government began to be restored” was the most loaded. In 2018, 7,1 % of respondents agreed with it, 22,9 % were not identified, and 69,9 % did not agree. During the four surveys, the evaluation of this judgment on the 3-point scale varied as follows: 2014 – 1.75; 2015 – 1.52; 2017 – 1.34; 2018 – 1.37 (differences between the indicators for 2014 and 2018 here and in the following three cases were $p \leq 0.01$). So, as we see, the level of trust to the authorities was generally low and steadily declined until 2017. It is still unclear whether a slight increase ($p \leq 0,05$) in 2018 indicates a significant reverse tendency.

In the second factor, the respondents’ attitudes towards the idea of changing the current government became apparent. Most clearly, the relevant assessments focused on the statement “Unfortunately, neither the first Maidan nor the second has achieved their goals – the third Maidan is necessary, which will eventually ruin the corrupted system of government”. This year there were 26.2 % of those who agreed, 34.1 % were not identified, and 39.5 % disagreed. The dynamics of the respective ratings were as follows: 2014 – 2.06; 2015 – 2.02; 2017 – 1.95; 2018 – 1.87. It turned out that at the same time as the dissatisfaction with the government increased, the proportion of those who were advocating for its overthrow decreased.

The third factor perceived the attitudes towards the war as a fact of social and political life. The statement “No matter how hard for us it is to survive, the main thing is to bring peace and tranquility to Ukraine” was the most revealing. 73.7 % of the respondents agreed with it, 15.1 % were not identified, and 11 %

disagreed. After 2014, the level of agreement with this opinion has declined significantly: 2014 – 2.8; 2015 – 2.64; 2017 – 2.66; 2018 – 2.63. In general, the preferences for peaceful life prevailed, but the very existence of the war prompted some citizens to accept it as a necessary or inevitable phenomenon.

The fourth factor combined statements with assessments of the war in Donbas nature and search for its perpetrators. The statement “If Putin brought the forces into Ukraine, they would be met with flowers” dominated. It was supported by 8.1 % of respondents, 25 % were not identified, and 66.8 % did not agree with it. The average score of the respective ratings varied as follows: 2014 – 1.35; 2015 – 1.41; 2017 – 1.34; 2018 – 1.41. These fluctuations had a relatively small but statistically significant amplitude.

Assessments of the authorities and the war were purposely combined in a content of one of the statement “President Poroshenko’s peaceful plan is a solid basis for ending the war in the Donbas, preserving the territorial integrity of the state”. The obtained data clearly indicated that respondents expressed in the estimations their attitudes towards the authorities more actively. This indicator entered the first of the above-mentioned factors having a higher level of correlation with the most loaded indicator of the first factor (statement about the President; $r = .33$, $p \leq 0.01$). At the same time, its correlations with the most significant statements of other 3 factors turned out to be insignificant (-.02, .08, -.02, accordingly).

Conclusions. Generalizations of described features of the Ukrainians’ political consciousness give reason to suppose that two tendencies are dominant in attitudes towards the government: strengthening of negative assessments of the authorities’ activity, on the one hand, and decrease in readiness to change the current government, on the other hand.

The attitudes towards the war in Donbas are equally controversial. There is still a high desire for peace by all means, but then there are rational and pessimistic assessments of the possibilities and feasible ways of stopping the

war. In the context of combination of attitudes towards the government and the war, a significant emotional predominance of the former should be notified. It makes mass attitudes critical and biased and discourages the citizens to make well-balanced and logically structured decision.