

UKRAINIAN ANTI-AMERICANISM DURING FULL-SCALE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION THROUGH THE LENS OF THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: A DECONSTRUCTIVE ATTEMPT

Oleksandr Y. Vysotskyi

Oles Honchar Dnipro National University
ORCID: 0000-0003-0712-8499

DOI: 10.36169/2227-6068.2024.02.00006

Abstract. *The paper examines the complex phenomenon of Ukrainian anti-Americanism amidst the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Despite American support, anti-American sentiment persists in Ukraine, influenced by historical grievances, perceived inadequacies in American leadership, and the existential threat posed by Russia. This study explores the dynamic relationship between Ukraine and the United States, providing insights into the geopolitical and cultural factors shaping Ukrainian anti-Americanism during critical periods of full-scale war. The study finds that Ukrainian anti-Americanism is not static but oscillates between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism, influenced by historical context and current geopolitical realities. The disappointment in American support during critical moments has fostered a proactive form of anti-Americanism among Ukrainian leaders, particularly President Zelensky, who uses public diplomacy to pressure the US and other global actors to take a stronger stand against Russian aggression. The research proves that this anti-Americanism is a reaction to Ukraine's forced dependence on the US and the perceived inadequacy of its leadership in ensuring global security. At its core, Ukrainian anti-Americanism is an expression of frustration with the inadequacy of the American response to Russian aggression. It reflects a deeper desire for global leadership and solidarity in defending democratic values and national sovereignty. It is also shaped by a historical narrative of survival and resistance, where America's role is seen through the prism of Ukraine's existential struggle against Russian imperialism. The reconstruction of Ukrainian anti-Americanism has revealed that agents of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, while criticizing American policy, also seek to engage the United States and other global players in collective efforts to maintain international law and order. This ideology of Ukrainian anti-Americanism prompts Ukraine to call for greater global solidarity and leadership, advocating for a multipolar world where leadership is shared among countries, promoting a united front against aggression and tyranny.*

Keywords: *anti-Americanism, Russia-Ukraine war, geopolitics, public diplomacy, international communication, international relations, security, culture*

Submitted: 13 July 2024; **accepted:** 3 November 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Anti-Americanism can be broadly defined as a negative attitude toward the United States, its government, actors, values, institutions, culture, or its implementation of policies in the global world. This negative attitude has various degrees of irrational and rational expression, ranging from emotions, feelings, fears, and sentiments to well-thought-out criticism, ideology, and strategy. Anti-Americanism has historical roots dating back to the early 19th century. It is often the result of a combination of political, economic, and cultural grievances, where critics may see America as a hegemonic power that undermines local autonomy, imposes undesirable policies, or, conversely, does not do enough to protect democratic ideals. Anti-Americanism varies in different contexts and regions, shaped by local history and interaction with the United States. It can manifest in opposition to American interventionism, cultural imperialism, economic policies, or the inability to live up to proclaimed ideals such as democracy and freedom. Conversely, pro-Americanism represents a positive attitude toward the United States, where its influence and leadership are seen as beneficial or exemplary. This includes an admiration for American values such as democracy, individual freedom, and economic opportunity and a hope that these values will be effectively supported worldwide. Anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism often oscillate depending on current geopolitical or economic conditions, and both attitudes are present even in societies with strong American support.

Some scholars in the field of American studies tend to attribute its origins to the 1820s and 1930s (O'Connor 2020: XVI). Although the term “anti-Americanism” in the sense of being hostile or antagonistic to American values and interests appears as early as 1812, it was mainly applied to Americans themselves (Friedman 2012: 24–25). Ukrainian anti-Americanism dates back to 1919 and is associated with the position of the US administration, in particular, represented by US Secretary of State Robert Lansing, in preserving an indivisible Russia (Камінський 2012: 149). The exact position of the U.S. administration was expressed during George H.W. Bush's visit to Kyiv on 1 August 1991, but concerning the Soviet Union. “*Freedom is not the same as independence. Americans do not support those who seek independence...*”, (Камінський 2012: 309) George H.W. Bush said in his address to Ukrainian parliamentarians.

Despite the US support for Ukraine amidst Russian aggression, Ukrainian anti-Americanism continues to be a significant aspect of the political consciousness and culture of Ukrainians. It has its own unique characteristics, reality, and impact on political and international relations. Ukrainian anti-Americanism is a complex, historically conditioned form of anti-American sentiment that has particularly developed during the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. It serves as both a reaction to historical experiences and a response to the perceived inadequacy of American support during critical moments in Ukraine's struggle against Russian aggression.

According to a March 2024 survey by sociologists, the positive attitude of Ukrainians toward the United States has decreased from 89.2% to 80% compared to August 2023 (Разумков Центр 2024). While the percentage of explicit Ukrainian anti-Americanists stood at 12.9% as of March 2024, it is a phenomenon driven by objective circumstances and causes. In addition, Ukrainian anti-Americanism will likely significantly

impact the specifics of Ukrainian-American relations in the future. However, the relevance of this study is determined not only by this context but by the entire spectrum of relations in the global arena related to countering Russian aggression and restoring the rule of law in the world.

The study aims to reveal the essence and specificity of Ukrainian anti-Americanism in the context of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war through the lens of the public diplomacy of the President of Ukraine and using deconstructivist analysis.

2. METHODOLOGY

The basic methodology of this study is deconstruction. Deconstruction is a method that tries to reveal the true implicit meanings behind stereotypical ideas and superficial interpretations through distinction and inversion (Derrida 1981: 20; Derrida 1997: 161-162; Caputo 2021). For our study, distinction means equating the pro-Americanism-anti-Americanism opposition, analyzing the components of this opposition and their disputes, and analyzing their sources to understand how they work as a whole in the reality of the current full-scale aggressive war. The inversion assumes that anti-Americanism is a transformed form of pro-Americanism as a commitment to American culture through its negation. At the stage of inversion, we try to find traces of pro-Americanism in anti-Americanism. We assume that pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism are interconnected phenomena. So are deconstruction and reconstruction. Thus, consistent deconstruction invariably involves reconstruction, in this case, of Ukrainian anti-Americanism. The method of deconstruction allows us to identify the specifics, sources, and influence of Ukrainian anti-Americanism without repressing pro-Americanism. It is also important to emphasize that deconstruction allows us to interpret both pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism as replenishment, compensation for the lack of agency or leadership of Ukraine on the global stage. But this applies not only to Ukraine but to all countries around the world.

According to Derrida, meaning cannot be considered fixed or static; it is constantly evolving. It emerges from a constant process of negotiation between competing concepts (Derrida 1981: 41).

An additional, complementary methodological tool for the study of Ukrainian anti-Americanism is the metamodern approach, which primarily involves considering any phenomenon as a balancing of different polarities in the process of oscillation between them (Vermeulen, & van den Akker 2010; 2015, van den Akker et al. 2017; Rowson 2021; Pipere & Mārtinsonsone 2022; Ceriello 2022; Dember 2023). In this case, it is mainly about the oscillation between anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism. However, this approach also implies understanding the oscillations between other poles, such as optimism and pessimism, hope and despair, national interests and global concerns, realism and idealism. In the following, we will try to comprehend how these poles of oscillation are related to Ukrainian anti-Americanism. In general, the metamodern approach to the study of Ukrainian anti-Americanism allows for a more nuanced and multifaceted examination of its specifics.

3. RESULTS

The riddle of Ukrainian anti-Americanism

The riddle of Ukrainian anti-Americanism is that there is always a certain oscillation between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism. Moreover, Ukrainian anti-Americanism has always been different at each historical stage. For example, from Ukraine's independence until the Russian aggression, anti-American views in Ukraine have been closely related to pro-Russian ones, as noted by Maryna Bessonova (Бессонова 2012: 115–117; 2019: 26). Here, one can even note the pro-Americanism/anti-Americanism divide as a technology of polarizing Ukrainian society used by political forces. The then oscillation between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism was very well documented in the fundamental conceptual document “The Main Directions of Ukraine’s Foreign Policy”, which was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on 2 July 1993. It determined the strategic direction of Ukraine's foreign policy and stated that for the Ukrainian state, “relations with the United States of America as a country whose policy significantly affects the development of international events are of particular importance” (*Верховна Рада України* 1993) and, at the same time, Ukrainian-Russian relations were determined as “relations of special partnership”.

After the Russian aggression in 2014 and especially with the outbreak of the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war in February 2024, Ukrainian anti-Americanism was reborn. It was now rooted in disillusioned pro-Americanism. The people of Ukraine felt victimized by Russia's aggressive policy, which naturally implied hope for a savior, the world leader in the United States. The new pro-Americanism was forced and associated with the hope of salvation from the existential threat that Russia represented.

However, the US savior turned out to be strange in its behavior. It did not want to fulfill its role. It had to be forced to fulfill its role as a world leader by activating global public opinion. There was an interesting intense oscillation between pro-Americanism as hope for the United States and anti-Americanism as disappointment in its readiness and will to help Ukraine defend its sovereignty from Russian aggression. During this period, two types of anti-Americanism emerged as a disappointment: passive and proactive. Passive anti-Americanism was simply an irrational reaction reminiscent of the behavior of a “hurt child.” In contrast, proactive anti-Americanism was a response of responsible leadership hiding behind the mask of pro-Americanism and appealing to the US world leadership. We could only find out what Ukrainian proactive anti-Americanists thought in moments of extreme annoyance or despair when real anti-Americanism peeped through the cracks of formal pro-Americanism. This anti-Americanism was the embodiment of condemnation of American isolationism, indecision, caution, and the traditional orientation toward Russia as a respected international player. Whereas in most countries anti-Americanism is associated with the past, Ukrainian anti-Americanism is associated with the future, namely, with the possible defeat or outcome of a full-scale Russia-Ukraine war and its nature. If it is not a full but a half victory, and with great material and human losses, this will become the foundation of the future of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, which will most likely be seen as the result of a terrible betrayal by the United States.

Sources of Ukrainian anti-Americanism in the period of full-scale aggression

One of the main sources of Ukrainian anti-Americanism during the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war was the American establishment's disbelief in Ukraine's victory over the aggressor, even in the possibility of resisting it. It was manifested in the proposal to the President of Ukraine to evacuate (Harris et al. 2022). The categorical negative response of the Ukrainian leadership, represented by V. Zelensky, to this proposal, is key to understanding Ukrainian anti-Americanism, which will become characteristic of Ukraine's top leadership during a large-scale war.

Ukrainian anti-Americanism, as represented by V. Zelensky and his team, is a leadership or proactive anti-Americanism that is focused on criticizing American policy and the American establishment for its passivity or lack of activity and leadership concerning Russia's violations of international law. Already in his speech to the US Congress on 16 March 2022, V. Zelensky made a diplomatic criticism of the lack of leadership and efforts to counter Russian aggression. The Ukrainian president veiled his criticism of the Americans' slowness with words of gratitude.

Ukraine is grateful to the United States for its overwhelming support. For all that your state and your people have already done for our freedom. For weapons and ammunition, for training and funding, for leadership in the free world, which helps put pressure on the aggressor economically. I am grateful to President Biden for his personal involvement, for his sincere commitment to the defense of Ukraine and democracy around the world. I am grateful to you for the resolution, which recognizes all those who commit crimes against the Ukrainian people as war criminals. However, now, in the darkest time for our country, for the whole of Europe, I urge you to do more!... Take the lead!... (*President of Ukraine 2022a*)

There are different ways to criticize. The art of criticism is not to offend the object of criticism but to make him correct his shortcomings, change his behavior, and overcome what causes it. And here, V. Zelensky shows the wonders of praise, which skillfully conceals anti-Americanism but does not eliminate it.

Today it takes to be the Leader of the world. Being the Leader of the world means to be the Leader of Peace. Peace in your country does not depend anymore only on you and your people. It depends on those next to you, on those who are strong. Strong does not mean big. Strong is brave and ready to fight for the life of his citizens and citizens of the world. For human rights, for freedom, for the right to live decently and to die when your time comes, not when it is wanted by someone else, by your neighbor... And as the Leader of my nation I am addressing President Biden. You are the Leader of the nation, of your great nation. I wish you to be the Leader of the world. Being the Leader of the world means to be the Leader of Peace. (*President of Ukraine 2022a*)

If we judge superficially, without diving deeper into the context, an outside observer will only see pro-Americanism. However, we must understand the depth of the Ukrainian president's despair behind such appeals to greater U.S. leadership, when insufficient support from Ukraine's main ally threatens to turn into defeat under the onslaught of the Russian aggressor at any moment.

Another source of Ukrainian anti-Americanism during the large-scale war was the distrust of the Ukrainian leadership in American leaders, namely J. Biden and D. Trump. Thus, on 28 May 2024, at a press conference in Brussels, Volodymyr Zelensky said:

I believe that the Peace Summit and the other leaders who are looking at the reaction of the United States of America need President Biden. His absence would only be applauded by Putin, personally applauded by Putin, and it would be a standing ovation. (Bondariva 2024)

The Ukrainian political leader's anti-Americanism is breaking through the thickness of diplomatic politeness in the form of a reproach for the weakness of American decisions in response to Russian aggression. Zelensky said:

I know that America supports the summit, but we do not know at what level. I believe that this is not a very strong decision, with all due respect to every person in the United States of America. (Bondariva 2024)

Indicative of Ukrainian anti-Americanism were the words of V. Zelensky at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 17 January 2024, in response to the statements of former US President Donald Trump, and the Republican candidate in the upcoming elections, about the possibility of quickly ending the war through territorial compromises. The Ukrainian president noted:

Let's imagine that we do not agree to give up our territories, then Trump will stop helping us... For some reason, Trump thinks that if we allow Putin to enter Ukraine completely, Russia will stop... My father always told me: think first, then speak. (Куніцький 2024)

This is nothing more than an accusation against one of the main contenders for the American presidency of ill-considered and hasty conclusions.

Already in an interview with *The Guardian* at the end of May 2024, V. Zelensky noted that D. Trump could become a loser president if he decides to end the war at the expense of Ukraine. Zelensky said:

Let's imagine that Trump became president and decided to end the war at the expense of Ukraine, for example, and somehow received confirmation from Putin that this is stopped, that's it. Ukrainians will not put up with this, but he can then say that he is not giving us support, weapons, or finances. Of course, Ukraine cannot fight a multi-million army without weapons. And imagine for a second that after that Putin will go further. Who will this US president be for the whole world then? He will be very weak. (*Президент України* 2024)

According to the Ukrainian leader, it will be not only about the American president as a person but also about the institutional capacity of the United States. Volodymyr Zelensky used such expressions: "they will become very weak", "will not be leaders in the world", their international influence "will be zero" (*Президент України* 2024).

The Ukrainian president criticized certain American politicians for their lack of understanding of what Ukraine is facing, in particular Republican Senator James David Vance. In February 2024, he stated that even if Ukraine received money, it would not change the outcome of the war. In response, V. Zelensky said he was not sure Vance

“understands what is going on here.” “Of course he doesn’t understand, God bless you don’t have the war on your territory” (Halasz & Kottasová 2024).

The lack of timely and adequate assistance from the US in the fight against the aggressor has contributed to a rise in Ukrainian anti-American sentiment. From August 2023 to March 2024, this sentiment's number of explicit supporters increased by 2.4 times, reaching a share of 12.9% (Разумков Центр 2024). It is worth reminding that the delay in the decision to allocate US aid to Ukraine was due to political games between Republicans and Democrats in connection with the presidential election campaign.

Even the adoption of the long-awaited decision to assist was met with distrust by the Ukrainian leadership, represented by V. Zelensky, which was disguised by words of gratitude.

It is very important to implement all of our agreements with President Biden one hundred percent. Thank you, America! (*President of Ukraine 2024*)

Here we see the traditional oscillation between anti-American distrust and pro-American gratitude.

Anti-Americanism, driven by irritation mixed with despair, has been repeatedly manifested in the Ukrainian president's speeches to the American establishment as a reaction to the slow disbursement of defense aid. Thus, in a speech to American governors, V. Zelensky said:

The main thing is not to waste time, not to lose the chance we have. To act now, and help now. The Ukrainians do it so that the Americans do not have to fight. Together, we are gaining new strength of our nations. And I am sure that we will always be successful. (*President of Ukraine 2023e*)

Here, the Ukrainian president moves from calling for a hurry up with aid, which is evidence of anti-Americanism, to predicting joint success between Ukraine and the United States, which in turn indicates clear pro-Americanism. Zelensky's pro-American statements emphasize common values:

It is with Ukraine that America has the opportunity to protect its values, which match ours. And also – our cooperation creates new growth for our security and yours... (*President of Ukraine 2023e*)

The oscillation between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism is clearly visible in Zelensky's speeches. Starting from anti-Americanism as a bitter disappointment in American allies and contrast to it, the Ukrainian president sought to demonstrate his extreme pro-Americanism to influence the American public. Thus, speaking to American students, he mentioned an offer to evacuate him personally but did not mention that the offer came from U.S. officials.

I was offered help with transport instead of help with weapons! (*President of Ukraine 2022b*)

At the same time, V. Zelensky extremely exalted the role of the United States in the world, seeking to arouse the sympathy and favor of Americans:

...There are states that contribute as much as possible to protect freedom. To stop the aggression. To guarantee the force of international law. It is this role that the United States has chosen, and I am very grateful to your people, to your leaders for that choice. (*President of Ukraine 2022b*)

While praising America, the Ukrainian president simultaneously appeals to the identity of Americans, to their sense of pride in the role of their country:

How do you respond to challenges? What do you do when you see injustice? And I really want you to choose this path for yourself. The path of clear awareness of who you are. The path of agency. Because if it is your choice, it will always be the choice of your country. (*President of Ukraine 2022b*)

An important source of Ukrainian anti-Americanism during the large-scale war was the preservation of American relations with Russia, in particular at the level of city twinning. The Ukrainian leadership perceived this as helping the Russians justify their aggression against Ukraine. Thus, V. Zelensky noted in his speech to the mayors of American cities:

You know that dozens of American cities maintain the so-called "brotherhood" with the cities of the Russian Federation. Chicago and Moscow. Jacksonville and Murmansk. San Diego - Vladivostok. Albany and Tula. What do these connections give you? Probably nothing. But they give Russia the opportunity to say that it is not isolated, even after beginning such a war. Each of you sees how the Russian army wages war and what it is doing to the peaceful cities of Ukraine. Its cruelty is no different from the tyrannies of earlier times. (*President of Ukraine 2022d*)

Here, Zelensky compares Russia's practice of destroying Ukrainian cities to the tyranny of past eras, contrasting it with the free world of American values. Immediately, he moves from anti-Americanism, condemning the brotherhood of cities to glorifying US leadership and expressing gratitude for supporting Ukraine:

Thanks to the leadership of the United States and the support of all our partners, Ukraine's bravery receives the necessary weapons to fight for freedom. (*President of Ukraine 2022d*)

Addressing his American audience, he connects American leadership in the defense of freedom to each listener personally:

You can also become the people who choose to defend freedom and thus put an end to the history of tyranny. (*President of Ukraine 2022d*)

The Ukrainian president goes further, actually calling on Americans to become the voice of pressure on Russia and to cut all ties with the Russians as murderers of civilians and enemies of the free world:

Therefore, call for even more pressure on Russia. Don't help it justify itself. Don't maintain ties with it. And please do not allow those who have become murderers to call you their brothers and sisters. (*President of Ukraine 2022d*)

Here, too, as before, we see an oscillation between anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism. V. Zelensky's anti-Americanism points to a negative feature of American political reality and proposes to get rid of it, while his pro-Americanism demonstrates

boundless faith in American leadership and the ability of Americans to defend freedom from tyranny.

Various US restrictions, including on the supply of certain types of weapons and their use on Russian territory, have also become one of the sources of Ukrainian anti-Americanism at the presidential level. On 22 December 2022, in front of the US Congress, Zelensky said:

I believe there should be no taboos between us in our alliance. (*President of Ukraine 2022i*)

From pessimism, from disbelief in the U.S. Congress's ability to make the necessary decisions, from carefully hidden anti-Americanism, V. Zelensky moved on to optimism of a future joint victory with America, to solidarity with it, to unrestrained pan-Americanism, which was symbolized by the flag from the defenders of Bakhmut handed over to U.S. congressmen:

So, let these decisions be taken!... This flag is a symbol of our victory in this war! We stand, we fight and we will win. Because we are united. Ukraine, America and the entire free world. (*President of Ukraine 2022i*)

Reconstructing Ukrainian anti-Americanism

Deconstruction ultimately implies a way out of the binary of anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism. We need to find another meaning based on which to reconstruct Ukrainian anti-Americanism. It is symptomatic that V. Zelensky keeps returning to the idea of leadership as a sufficient influence to ensure security and the rule of law. He calls for leadership from every nation he addresses to guarantee a just international order. It is these calls for leadership that reveal a lack or absence of it.

This is the fissure that makes pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism possible, as it holds the hope for or disillusionment with true U.S. global leadership. Without America as a world leader, there would be no pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism. In one of his speeches to the American public, V. Zelensky said:

Our unbreakable stance, our principled nature, and the help from our friends, above all – the United States of America, which is a global leader in the defense of freedom, are the guarantee that evil will not win this battle. Evil should not go any further. (*President of Ukraine 2023a*)

One of the very visible cracks that exposes the despair, pessimism, and disillusionment with US global leadership is the concept of betrayal. V. Zelensky said:

Thank you to all Americans who dream with us that evil has no chance! I met with representatives of both parties of Congress, both houses, with President Biden, his team – I met in Washington, in Kyiv. And I am sure that America will not betray freedom. (*President of Ukraine 2023a*)

Here, we see despair, not confidence, and the prospect that Ukraine could become the next Afghanistan for the United States.

Ukraine's weakness in the face of Russian aggression is another crack that is camouflaged by its role as a defender of Europe and the entire civilized world against Russian tyranny:

Every Ukrainian life sacrificed for freedom is a saved life of our neighbors: Poles, Lithuanians, Moldovans and other free European nations. We have to talk about it frankly. The Kremlin never, never wanted to stop by conquering only Ukraine. Never! Other European states – your allies in Europe, the peoples in Asia – they are as much targets for Russia as Ukraine. Russia does not recognize any borders, and there is no such tyranny that does not claim the global destruction of freedom. (*President of Ukraine 2023a*)

Another crack hidden by narratives about shared values and a common security future is the divergence of interests between Ukraine and the United States in confronting Russia, particularly regarding the nature and pace of hostilities. Thus, V. Zelensky said:

We, Ukrainians and Americans, equally understand the dangers of tyranny. (*President of Ukraine 2022d*)

All these semantic gaps and cracks in the pro-American and anti-American statements of the Ukrainian president allow us to clarify the reconstructed essence of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, first, as Ukraine's forced existential dependence on the United States and second, as a consequence of one hand, unjustified hopes for America as a world leader, disappointment in its role as a guarantor of the rule of international law, and, on the other hand, active coercion of the United States to fulfill its obligations to the civilized world as a global leader through pressure on public opinion both in America and around the world. The instrument of such pressure is mainly the public diplomacy of the Ukrainian president, the starting point of which is Ukrainian anti-Americanism as a reaction to the weakness and inadequacy of American policy to the Russian threat to peace and security. In this regard, V. Zelensky's words are indicative:

I am grateful to President Biden for uniting the free world when the Russian threat arose... However, Russia's war against Ukraine is still ongoing. And right now, as you are listening to my address, the Ukrainian military are dying on the battlefield. The Russian army is shelling our cities with artillery and aircraft... Maybe we are missing something in our true strength? Maybe we are not using all the capacity of our influence and our leadership? And this is my question to the United States, both to the parties and to society; to both Democrats and Republicans; to the Congress and to the President. It is time to be one hundred percent influential. We can defeat tyranny. Indeed, every one of us – every one – is the leader of our time. We can reliably defend freedom. We can stop blackmail by a person who has no place on our list at all. If we are up to it, then we must do it. Because influence obliges us to do so. (*President of Ukraine 2022h*)

In the context of the above, V. Zelensky, who offers leadership or its strengthening before parliaments and audiences of influential citizens of European and Asian countries, is implementing Ukrainian anti-Americanism. This is especially true and striking concerning the United Kingdom, which could become the main center of power in Europe if American isolationism prevails. Thus, addressing the British, V. Zelensky stated:

If everyone in the world – or at least the vast majority – were steadfast and courageous leaders as Ukraine, as Britain, I am sure we would have already ended this war and restored peace throughout our liberated territory for all our people. (*President of Ukraine 2022c*)

At the same time, Ukrainian anti-Americanism, although proactive in Zelensky's public diplomacy practice, hinders the building of productive relations with America as an ally. Its inversion in pro-American statements only camouflages it. The real way out of the binary of anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism is found when Zelensky comes to solidarity based on a desired future or shared values:

I'm sure that after this war, something will change in the relationship between you – the American people – and us. It is already changing. We became much closer in our feelings. We know for sure that we mean the same thing when we say the word 'freedom'. (*President of Ukraine 2022g*)

Speaking to the American public, the Ukrainian president went further, trying to achieve global solidarity:

Just recall: when else was the European Union as united and capable of acting together as it is now, when else did we together with our partners - in particular with the United States of America, with President Biden - manage to unite Europe and the entire free world around the struggle for freedom, for our values, the values of freedom? We did an unprecedented thing. And this is not just a temporary thing, this is a fundamental factor. The struggle for our independence is a struggle for the right to stability, the right to security for all of us... (*President of Ukraine 2022e*)

It should be noted that global solidarity is, first and foremost, a joint commitment and joint action by international actors – states, organizations, and individuals – to support nations or groups in crises, based on common ethical, legal, and humanitarian principles. This kind of solidarity implies active participation in the maintenance of global peace, security, and human rights, going beyond individual national interests in favor of collective well-being and justice. In addition, this solidarity is expressed through diplomatic support, humanitarian aid, economic sanctions against aggressors, legal accountability measures, and advocacy for the protection of fundamental human freedoms and the integrity of international law. Global solidarity is not just a reaction or support but active and principled international cooperation. Above all, it is a united approach that goes beyond mere sympathy and includes concrete actions that strengthen international norms and protect human dignity.

In another speech to the American public, V. Zelensky goes beyond the binary of anti-Americanism and pro-Americanism, universalizing leadership, placing it above the division of the planet into nations and regions, while linking it to the global solidarity of the world. The Ukrainian president said:

Leadership and peace are two things that are directly related. The fact is that we have become leaders in the war. We were all forced to become leaders in the war – in the fight against the evil that started this war. We have achieved an unprecedented unification of the free world. And by the way, I want to thank the

United States of America and President Biden, all our American friends for their contribution to this unification. (*President of Ukraine 2022f*)

In fact, the leadership of each nation and their global solidarity is the quintessence of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, as it cancels the exclusive claim of the United States to global leadership. At the same time, it does not deny American leadership but only balances it with the leadership of other nations where American leadership is insufficient. In essence, this is the concept of a new world order: leadership by each nation and their solidarity for global peace, security, and human rights, going beyond individual national interests in favor of collective welfare and justice. This is nothing more than a new rethinking of the world order in favor of multipolarity.

If we try to rethink any narratives through the prism of this newly understood, reconstructed ideology of proactive Ukrainian anti-Americanism, we will understand the logic of V. Zelensky's foreign policy and public diplomacy. In this regard, it is significant that in his speeches he tries to emphasize the leadership of each nation and reach as many audiences from different countries as possible (*Vysotskyi et al. 2023*).

As a platform for the practical implementation of the leadership of each nation and global solidarity, V. Zelensky proposed a *10-point Ukrainian Peace Formula* (*President of Ukraine 2023f*), based on the norms of the UN Charter and resolutions.

As the Ukrainian president noted,

The Ukrainian Peace Formula is addressed primarily to the world – and this is its strength. It is addressed to everyone who can participate in the implementation of specific points of the Formula and become a co-creator of the victory over evil – a co-creator of peace. (*President of Ukraine 2023d*)

V. Zelensky suggested that each nation to whose audience he was addressing should choose the point of the peace formula that would allow it to demonstrate its leadership (*President of Ukraine 2023d*). The Ukrainian president said:

Everyone who joins our formula actually makes it their own. And I am sure that the Ukrainian formula for peace can become a German formula for peace, a European formula for peace, a formula for peace for the world. (*President of Ukraine 2023b*)

It is worth noting that V. Zelensky not only proposes the Ukrainian formula for peace as a platform for leadership of each nation and global solidarity but also specifies the values and principles of such solidarity in the process of public diplomacy:

Until now, the world has not had a Formula that could stop aggressors. Ukraine offers it. Ukraine offers the world salvation from war. To do this, we need to unite and make Russia the last aggressor. So that only peace reigns after the defeat of its invasion of Ukraine. We, people, have different cultures, different views, different national flags. But we equally want security for ourselves, our children and grandchildren. And our lives are equally burned to ashes if, God forbid, war comes. Everyone in the world must do everything possible to ensure that wars leave only shadows on the stones of history and that this can only be seen in museums. Everyone in the world must respect other nations. Everyone in the world must recognize state borders. Everyone in the world must defend justice. Everyone

in the world must care about life. Everyone in the world must take peace as their duty. (*President of Ukraine 2023c*)

Based on the ideology of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, which implies leadership of each nation and global solidarity for peace, any Ukrainian pro-American or anti-American narratives, especially in the context of V. Zelensky's public diplomacy, can only be seen as having secondary, instrumental significance, in particular as communication technologies of pressure or encouragement. Because, as we have seen, proactive Ukrainian anti-Americanism is much more far-reaching and comprehensive in its ambitions.

Passive Ukrainian anti-Americanism differs significantly from proactive anti-Americanism. We have previously mentioned that passive anti-Americanism can be seen as an irrational response, reminiscent of the behavior of a "hurt child". In this view, passive anti-Americanism is considered a sign of immaturity or a society that is not fully developed. It is so irrational that instead of making an objective assessment of reality and taking responsible and constructive actions, it seeks to shift the blame for a possible defeat in Ukraine's war with Russia onto the United States. This blame is placed on its cautious or isolationist policy, as well as on American presidents and politicians from both parties who are guided by their domestic political interests. This viewpoint was articulated most clearly by one of the Ukrainian political analysts, Yuriy Bohdanov:

Trump, his son (who has the most direct access to him), his closest associates like Musk, and the couch potato Vance are essentially saying the following: "We want you to die because it's convenient for us". There is no language and no hints about "strengthening Ukraine's negotiating position" or even a discussion about expanding our defense capabilities. Like the Democrats have. We are literally being told, "You will die because it is more convenient for us". Even if we don't like Democrats (and we have every reason to), we shouldn't forget that the choice is between a controlled escalation with limited assistance on the one hand and a complete cessation on the other. (Богданов 2024)

Thus, passive Ukrainian anti-Americanists do not like Democrats because of the limited aid and Republicans because they want Ukrainians to die for their domestic political interests.

Another Ukrainian analyst, Oleksandr Kochetkov, echoes Yuriy Bogdanov's sentiment by stating that

presidential candidate D. Trump unequivocally supported 'the Kremlin's plan', publicly stating his intention to '*get the US out of the war in Ukraine*' as soon as possible... This can only be done if Ukraine's 'soft capitulation' is achieved. However, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that our so-called main ally, Democrat J. Biden, continues to demonstrate lethargy and uncertainty about authorizing the use of long-range missiles. In chess, this is called a zugzwang: Democrats are indecisive about the necessary support for Ukraine, and Republicans are ready to stop this support decisively. (Кочетков 2024)

As we can see, passive Ukrainian anti-Americanism is evident in the form of feelings and fears in response to certain aspects of American policy, as well as to the

statements and actions of American leaders. It is not driven by ideology, strategy, or technology and aims not to push nations toward global leadership and unity for peace. It also does not rely on communication technologies for pressure or persuasion, remaining at the level of emotions and attitudes.

4. CONCLUSION

By its very nature, Ukrainian anti-Americanism is multifaceted and deeply rooted in historical, cultural, and political contexts. Ukrainian anti-American sentiment has evolved under the influence of various external and internal factors and is characterized by a unique oscillation between pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism. Ukrainian anti-Americanism is not a monolithic or static phenomenon. It changes at different historical stages and is characterized by a dynamic interaction of opposing sentiments. The metamodern approach highlights these fluctuations, emphasizing the balancing act between hope and disappointment, nationalism and globalism, realism and idealism. The specificity of Ukrainian anti-Americanism lies in its dual nature: it is both a reaction to Ukraine's geopolitical position and experience as well as a consequence of this position. Ukrainian anti-Americanism is closely intertwined with the country's desire for sovereignty and the perception of inconsistent American support.

Historically, Ukrainian anti-Americanism dates back to the early twentieth century, influenced by U.S. policy toward Russia and the Soviet Union. Its modern sources are rooted in Ukrainians' perception of the inadequacy of American support at critical moments of full-scale Russian aggression. Ukrainian anti-Americanism during the current war stems from a sense of betrayal and unmet expectations. Ukrainians hoped for strong American leadership and support in the fight against Russian aggression, but the reality often fell short of these expectations, leading to growing frustration.

The method of deconstruction reveals the ambivalence of Ukrainians toward the United States. Pro-Americanism and anti-Americanism are interconnected, with disillusionment with American politics fueling anti-American sentiment, while basic pro-American values remain.

At its core, Ukrainian anti-Americanism is an expression of frustration with the inadequacy of the American response to Russian aggression. It reflects a deeper desire for global leadership and solidarity in the defense of democratic values and national sovereignty. It is also shaped by a historical narrative of survival and resistance, where America's role is seen through the prism of Ukraine's existential struggle against Russian imperialism. Ukrainian anti-Americanism affects international relations, especially in the context of the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war. In particular, it determines the dynamics of Ukrainian-American relations in a certain way, specifying diplomatic strategies and public diplomacy.

The reconstruction of Ukrainian anti-Americanism has revealed that agents of Ukrainian anti-Americanism, while criticizing American policy, also seek to engage the United States and other global players in collective efforts to maintain international law and order. This ideology of Ukrainian anti-Americanism prompts Ukraine to call for

greater global solidarity and leadership, advocating for a multipolar world where leadership is shared among countries, promoting a united front against aggression and tyranny.

Thus, Ukrainian anti-Americanism is a complex and evolving phenomenon. It reflects the interaction of historical grievances, contemporary geopolitical challenges, and a deep desire for international solidarity and effective global leadership. The current full-scale Russia-Ukraine war has strengthened the potential of Ukrainian anti-Americanism as an important factor in international relations against the backdrop of Ukraine's urgent need for consistent and decisive support from world powers, especially the United States.

Bibliography:

- Bondarieva, Khrystyna. (2024). Zelensky says Putin will give a standing ovation if Biden ignores Peace Summit. *European Pravda*, 28 May, <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2024/05/28/7186898/> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- Caputo, John D. (Ed.). (2021). *Deconstruction in a nutshell: a conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Ceriello, Linda C. (2022). The Metamodern Bend: Theorizations for Religious Studies and a Review of Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect, and Depth After Postmodernism. *Religious Studies Review* 48, 489–496. DOI: 10.1111/rsr.16195.
- Dember, Greg. (2023). Metamodernism: Oscillation Revisited. *Medium*, 26 February, <https://medium.com/what-is-metamodern/metamodernism-oscillation-revisited-b1ae011abf3c> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- Derrida, Jacques. (1981). *Positions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore; London John Hopkins Press.
- Friedman, Max P. (2012). *Rethinking anti-Americanism : the history of an exceptional concept in American foreign relations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Halasz, Stephanie, & Kottasová, Ivana. (2024). Zelensky warns 'millions will be killed' without US aid to Kyiv, as Ukrainian troop deaths reach at least 31,000, *CNN World*. 25 February, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/25/europe/ukraine-troop-casualties-intl/index.html> (accessed on 12 June 2024).
- Harris, Shane, Francis, Ellen, & Robyn Dixon. (2022). U.S. stands ready to evacuate Zelensky, Russia's 'target No. 1'. *The Washington Post*, 25 February. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/25/russia-ukraine-president-zelensky-family-target/> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- O'Connor, Brendon. (2020). *Anti-Americanism and American exceptionalism: prejudice and pride about the USA*. NY: Routledge.
- Pipere, Anita, Mārtinsons, Kristīne. (2022). Metamodernism and Social Sciences: Scoping the Future. *Social Sciences Sciences* 11(10), 457. DOI: 10.3390/socsci11100457.
- President of Ukraine. (2022a). Address by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky to the US Congress. *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 16 March, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/promova-prezidenta-ukrayini-volodimira-zelenskogo-pered-kong-73609> (accessed 12 June 2024).

- President of Ukraine. (2022b). Address by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky to American students during online communication with the US university community, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 16 May, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/zvernennya-prezidenta-ukrayini-volodimira-zelenskogo-do-amer-75085> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022c). Address by President Volodymyr Zelensky to the participants of the Brave Ukraine Charity Event, the people of Great Britain and the people of Ukraine, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 5 May, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/zvernennya-prezidenta-volodimira-zelenskogo-do-uchasnikiv-bl-74821> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022d). Don't help Russia justify itself and don't let the murderers call you their brothers and sisters – address by the President of Ukraine to the participants of the 90th annual meeting of the US Conference of Mayors, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 4 June, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/ne-dopomagajte-rosiyi-vipravdovuvati-sebe-j-ne-do-zvolvajte-v-75589> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022e). It is on Ukrainian land that the new center of economic growth in Europe will be – President's speech at the meeting with the heads of big businesses in the framework of the opening of the New York Stock Exchange, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 6 September, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/same-na-ukrayinskij-zemli-budenovij-centr-ekonomichnogo-zro-77549> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022f). To act preventively means to prevent catastrophic damage from further actions of Russia – address by the President of Ukraine to students and lecturers of Harvard University, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 28 September, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/diyati-preventivno-oznachaye-ne-dopuskati-katastrofichnoyi-s-78049> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022g). Ukrainians and Americans have become much closer: we equally understand the word "freedom" – address by the President of Ukraine to the Stanford University community, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 27 May, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/ukrayinci-j-amerikanci-stali-znachno-blizhchimi-mi-odnakovo-75421> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022h). We must use all our influence and leadership to protect freedom and ensure the defeat of tyranny – President of Ukraine during the TIME100 Gala, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 9 June, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/mayemovikoristati-ves-nash-vpliv-i-liderstvo-shob-zahistiti-75693> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2022i). We stand, we fight and we will win. Because we are united. Ukraine, America and the entire free world – address by Volodymyr Zelensky in a joint meeting of the US Congress, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 22 December, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/mi-stoyimo-boremos-i-vigrayemo-bo-mi-razom-ukrayina-amerika-80017> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2023a). Aid to Ukraine now is an investment in global peace, real architecture of security – President's address to American Enterprise Institute World Forum participants, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 10 March, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/dopomoga-ukrayini-zaraz-ce-investiciya-u-globalnij-mir-u-rea-81565> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2023b). Europe and other parts of the world should not be a place where the ambitions of tyrants destroy the lives of nations – speech by President of Ukraine at the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen award ceremony. *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 14 May, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/yevropa-ta-inshi-chastini-zemli-ne-mayut-buti-miscem-de-ambi-82901> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- President of Ukraine. (2023c). Everyone in the world must do everything possible to ensure that wars leave only shadows on the stones of history – address by the President of Ukraine to the people of Japan,

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website, 21 May, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/kozhen-u-sviti-maye-robiti-vse-sho-mozhlivo-shob-vid-voyen-z-83085> (accessed 12 June 2024).

President of Ukraine. (2023d). Peace must become irreplaceable, that is why evil must lose – speech by the President of Ukraine at the General Congress of the United Mexican States. *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 21 April, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/mir-maye-stati-bezalternativnim-same-tomu-zlo-maye-prograti-82401> (accessed 12 June 2024).

President of Ukraine. (2023e). The enemy of freedom must lose, that is why we ask the USA for support – speech by the President of Ukraine at an online meeting with members of the U.S. National Association of Governors, *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 4 April, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/vorog-svobodi-maye-prograti-os-chomu-mi-zvertayemosya-po-pid-82085> (accessed 12 June 2024).

President of Ukraine. (2023f). Ukraine's Peace Formula Philosophy. *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 8 August, https://www.president.gov.ua/storage/j-files-storage/01/19/53/32af8d644e6cae41791548fc82ae2d8e_1691483767.pdf (accessed 12 June 2024).

President of Ukraine. (2024). It Is Very Important to Implement All of Our Agreements with President Biden One Hundred Percent – Address by President Volodymyr Zelensky. *President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky Official Website*, 24 April, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/duzhe-vazhlivo-shob-usi-nashi-domovlenosti-z-prezidentom-baj-90533> (accessed 12 June 2024).

Rowson, Jonathan. (2021). Metamodernism and the Perception of Context: The Cultural Between, the Political After and the Mystic Beyond. *Systems, Souls, Society*, 26 May, <https://systems-souls-society.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Metamodernism-and-the-Perception-of-Context-The-Cultural-Between-the-Political-After-and-the-Mystic-Beyond.pdf> (accessed 12 June 2024).

van den Akker, Robin, Gibbons, Alison, & Vermeulen, Timotheus (Eds.). (2017). *Metamodernism: Historicity, affect, and depth after postmodernism*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield International.

Vermeulen, Timotheus, & van den Akker, Robin. (2010). Notes on metamodernism. *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* 2(1), E14. DOI: 10.3402/jac.v2i0.5677.

Vermeulen, Timotheus, & van den Akker, Robin. (2015). Misunderstandings and clarifications. *Notes on Metamodernism*. 3 June, <http://www.metamodernism.com/2015/06/03/misunderstandingsandclarifications/> (accessed 12 June 2024).

Vysotskyi, Oleksandr, Prudnykova, Olena, & Trynyak, Maya. (2023). The geography of public diplomacy of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky during the full-scale Russia-Ukraine war. *Journal of Geology, Geography and Geoecology*, 32(3), 644–659. <https://doi.org/10.15421/112357>.

Бессонова, Марина. (2012). Антиамериканські гасла під час виборчих кампаній у незалежній Україні. *Гілея: науковий вісник* 63, 113–117, <http://gileya.org/download.php?id=82> (accessed 12 June 2024).

Бессонова, Марина. (2019). Основні риси сучасного антиамериканізму: регіональний вимір. *Міжнародні відносини: теоретико-практичні аспекти* 4, 16–29. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2616-745x.4.2019.177615>.

Богданов, Юрій. (2024). Про Трампа і тонку дипломатію з ним. *Главред*, 26 вересня, <https://opinions.glavred.net/o-trampe-i-tonkoy-diplomatii-s-nim-10600013.html> (accessed 16 October 2024).

Верховна Рада України.(1993). Основні напрями зовнішньої політики України. *Законодавство України*. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3360-12#Text> (accessed 12 June 2024).

Камінський, Євген. (2012). *Україна. США. Світ. Вибране*. К.: Центр вільної преси.

- Кочетков, Олександр. (2024). Цугцванг України у США. *Главком*, 26 вересня, <https://glavcom.ua/columns/olexkochetkov/tsuhtsvanh-ukrajini-u-ssha-1022595.html> (accessed 16 October 2024).
- Куницький, Олександр. (2024). Зеленський – Трампу: Спочатку подумай, тоді кажи. 17 січня, *Deutsche Welle*, <https://www.dw.com/uk/zelenskij-trampu-spocatku-podumaj-todi-kazi/a-68015554> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- Президент України. (2024). Володимир Зеленський дав Інтерв'ю для The Guardian. *Офіс Президента України*. 1 червня. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OA7OzJHPY0> (accessed 12 June 2024).
- Разумков Центр. (2024). Оцінка впливу зовнішньополітичних чинників на Україну. Ставлення до іноземних держав та окремих ініціатив їх лідерів. Оцінка громадянами України легітимності правління Путіна (березень 2024 р.). *Разумков Центр*. 18 квітня, <https://razumkov.org.ua/napriamky/sotsiologichni-doslidzhennia/otsinka-vplyvu-zovnishnopolitychnykh-chynnykiv-na-ukrainu-stavlennia-do-inozemnykh-derzhav-ta-okremykh-initsiatyv-ikh-lideriv-otsinka-gromadianamy-ukrainy-legitymnosti-pravlinnia-putina-berezen-2024r> (accessed 12 June 2024).