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Vladim Mojeiko

Vadim.mojeiko@gmail.com

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Belarusian-Ukrainian expert dialogue: public opinion about each other

Vadim Mojeiko 1

Ph.D. Editor and compiler of the «Belarusian Yearbook»; Coordinator of the Belarusian Expert Network «Our Opinion»; Ambassador of the Press Club Belarus.

Vadim.mojeiko@gmail.com

Abstract: Ukrainians are disappointed in Belarusians; they do not understand why the Belarusian opposition could not decide on its position on the annexation of Crimea for so long; they don't understand why Belarusians didn't take to the streets as decisively during their revolution as Ukrainians did in 2013-2014, and why Belarusians don't protest if they are against the war.

War in the mass consciousness of Belarusians is a great anti-value, and this explains why and how Belarusians feel about Russia's current war against Ukraine and the events of 2013-2014. Belarusians assessed negatively not the Maidan itself, but its context and consequences: street clashes in Kyiv, annexation of Crimea, and military operations in eastern Ukraine. That is, from the point of view of Belarusians, the events in Ukraine in 2013-2014 and everything that followed are perceived as a tragedy, but for Ukrainians, it was a war for independence, albeit with a negative trail.

Belarusians and Ukrainians do not know each other well due to the trap of obviousness: they seem to live nearby, see each other, and have a common Soviet background. Sociocultural stereotypes come from secondary education and reproduce ideological constructs.

Another reason is the dominance of the Russian information product, the interpretation of events through the Russian narrative, not only via news but also via fiction. As a result, Belarusians and Ukrainians don't know each other, although they think that they are all the same.

Keywords: Ukrainians, Belarusians, Crimea, Soviet