
**CONSTRUCTION AND REPRESENTATION OF THE “IMAGE” OF
EUROPE IN THE NEW EASTERN EUROPE COUNTRIES MASS MEDIA
(After the example of Armenian and Ukrainian print press)***

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In the era of globalization and the context of strategy planning of the foreign policy of post-Soviet countries, their opportunity to integrate effectively to European authoritative organizations actualize the problem of constructing the image of Europe and European institutions and organizations in the post-soviet societies.

Information about a particular region, country or territory is replicated by the media, both inside and the outside of society, form constructive or destructive image and create benevolent or malevolent relations toward it.

The nature and the context of treatment of the concept of Europe in the mass-media of the countries of New Eastern Europe, especially broadcast and construction image of Europe in the media of these countries is an up to date, little-studied research problem.

How do the media in NEE present the concept of Europe to their audiences? What is Europe in the eyes of the media? How is Europe characterized in the media? What is the nature of the representation of this concept? What myths, stereotypes, associations are circulating in the media in regard to Europe? Finally, what the context in which the knowledge about Europe is constructed (reconstructed)?

Therefore, the full understanding of the media’s role in the shaping of the knowledge of Europe requires more than comprehension of media content but rather a grasp of the discourse in which that knowledge evolves.

Within the studying the phenomenon of mass communication in the postmodern society we should take into account it’s truly comprehensiveness, penetrating in almost all areas of modern society and also role and implicit impact, that mass communication has on people and society as a whole. There are some main characteristics of postmodern mass media¹:

1. Because of its technical characteristics mass media becomes an ideal form of communication in a postmodern age. By the technical characteristics we mean performance and reproducibility of mass media resources. It concerns both print and electronic media in different degrees.

2. Mass media as a main form of experience for most people. Because of its ubiquity and availability (both in space-time and financial meanings) mass media

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¹Черных А. Мир современных медиа. М., 2007, сс. 180-194.1

are becoming the main fundamental form of experience for most people in post-modern age. As a result, the world around us starts to look in the way, in which mass media represent it, but it is not a real world, it is generated by media “construct”.

3. Interactive nature of modern mass media (or to be more precise – a tendency of their transformation into interactive) in this sense turns out to be a “trap” for the consumer, that becomes a participant of such language game and takes part in the creation of the world “image” created by modern mass media materials.

4. The world in mass media isn’t interpreted as something that is characterized by succession. The world in today’s newspaper is different from the one in yesterday’s. Reproducibility of the world image in media is synchronic – it occurs when a million of people at the same moment take a million of newspaper copies. Tomorrow’s newspaper issue will be different and, consequently, another World will be represented in it.

5. “Reversible” media. In the world of virtual media all events are reversible, because all events are accompanied with the proviso “according to the information received”. Mass communication media represent themselves as “mediators”, but not as a source of news.

6. Creating and spreading an “image” of the world that was previously created by media. Consumers of media products are involved in creating and spreading of images of different social events – they play journalists: try to find themselves in “the scene of the action”, pass information to editorial staff as soon as they can, try to outrun the competitors etc².

The aim of the research of the representation of the image of Europe was the interpretation, understanding, specification and synthesis of varied information about the object through a comparative analysis.

This research was conducted as part of RESET project (OSI-HESP, September 2009-June 2012) “**European Visions and Divisions: Comparative Studies and Advances in Teaching Sociology**” in May 2011.

By the help of applying the technique of content analysis were found the central categories that reflect both the essential elements of the image of Europe and the nature information. As a result, of their conceptualization and comparison were found differences in the image of Europe represented the Armenian and Ukrainian publications.

Core concepts of research. Phenomenon of the image became as subject of study in different fields of scientific knowledge. Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology gives two definitions:

1) Image defines as “external image that was created by means of the subject with aim to provide a certain impression, opinion, attitude of other”³;

2) Image – is “complex of characteristics of the object that has been imputed to it by means of advertising, propaganda, fashion, prejudices, traditions with aim to provoke certain reaction towards it”⁴.

² Ibid.

³ Социологический энциклопедический словарь. М., 2000, с. 97.

⁴ Ibid.; **Важенина И. С.** Теоретико-методологические основы определения сущности репутации территории. Екатеринбург, 2006; **Гуревич П. С.** Имидж России в процессе глобализации // “Век глобализации”, 2009, № 2 (4).

Image comprises a lot of other concepts, such as image of region, stereotype, myth etc.

Image of the region is relatively stable and reproducing in the mass and/or personal consciousness complex of people's emotional and rational ideas, beliefs and feelings, which arise regarding the characteristics of the region and are formed on the basis of all available information about the region from various sources, as well as personal experience and impressions. Region image – is not only result of some factors of regional development (political, economical, socio-cultural and so on), but also an active instrument of government management directed to change, raise the status and prestige of the territory, it's investment attractiveness.

Also region image is the combination of emotional and rational presentations based on own experience and people's observations, rumor, information received from media. From the above it is clear how important is the construction of a positive region image. The construction of region image is mostly created precisely by the efforts of mass media (governmental, oppositional, independent, local, federal, and foreign).

Europe consists of nation states, which are distanced from each other, compete and argue. But in response to the destructive force of nationalism, the pattern of orientation was emerged, which imparts modern Europe, with its unique cultural diversity, even in the eyes of non-Europeans, a proper face in the world today. Political component of European image is a total, emotionally tinged systematic picture of the region, formed on the basis of politically significant events that occur in this region. In the context of political component of the European regional image a central role is occupied by the Organizations of a united Europe, such as the EEC, the European Union, the European Parliament, the OSCE, Financial Institutions, etc. Economic and industrial characteristics have a very significant role in the European regional image. This component of the image is maintained not only by the reputation of economically sustainable producer, but also by bright commodity brands introduced into use and strongly supported by the region.

In the context of our study, under the image of Europe we mean as an image of the region - a set of stable evaluative-semantic features, which are formed as a result of targeted media information activities (on the coverage of this subject). As parameters that underlie of image formation of the region are: the level of news refer to region, the number of semantic features and the intensity of the estimation characteristics.

The main goal of research is to study of characteristics that compose an "image" of Europe in mass media of different countries of NEE, compare them and find the common features.

Object of research – pro-governmental and oppositional print mass media of NEE countries (after the example of Armenian and Ukrainian print press).

Subject of research – main characteristics and content of notion of Europe, essential image-constitutional factors: myths, stereotypes, associations, which relate to Europe and covered in mass media.

Tasks:

1. To reveal the range of characteristics of the Europe's concept in mass media of NEE countries:

- the elements of characteristics used to construct the image of Europe in the media of NEE countries;
 - dynamics of changes in the characteristics with which Europe is described during the chosen period;
2. To define the rational/emotional aspects of the content of the publications covering Europe:
- the context, in which Europe is more frequently touched upon, as well as its changes;
 - the character of reporting, including the tone, use of comparisons, associations, in the articles on NEE countries relations with European structures, countries, etc.;
 - the myths and the stereotypes used to describe Europe while covering it, and the dynamics of their changes.
3. To reconstruct the current general image of Europe circulating in the media:
- the place of the concept of Europe within the binary opposition of “our own” vs “the alien”;
 - the place of the concept of Europe in the overall perception of the world in the NEE societies.

The expediency of using this method is due to the fact that it combines two components: quantitative (frequency of a mention of the country, the determination of its place in a stream of messages) and qualitative (saturation of information, subjects, tonality of messages).

There are two levels of analysis:

Macrostructure (quantitative)

1. *Description of a message* (rubric, heading, author)
2. *Structure of a message*: (a) Subjects of message (about Europe, about Relationship with Europe). (b) Genre of message (analytical, informative, ironic, interview).
3. *Main event in a message*: (a) Sphere of event (policy, economy, culture, leisure). (b) Authors estimate of event (positive, negative, neutral)
4. *Argumentation of a message* (own authors experience, reference to experts, authoritative person; reference to statistic, sociological studies; reference to widely known facts, events)

Microstructure (qualitative)

In microstructure / semantic elements of text (that means sense of words and sentences, their interconnection) we concentrate on: Local semantic analysis studies strategy of formation of meanings in discourse and their interconnection; Study of implicated meanings, use of quotation, style of text presentation, etc.

Sampling

(a) subject to content-analysis is newspapers issues (as political and as widespread) (the press and/or Internet versions), which are oriented on mass auditoria;

(b) newspapers are selected based on the political orientation (pro-governmental, moderate) to observe the discourse of the concept of Europe on a larger scale;

(c) time frames of the research are limited to the Europe Day celebrated every year in May.

Table 1

Characteristics of the sample of content analysis

Name of the issue	Country	Status	Language	Main headings	Periodicity, circulation, number of chosen articles
“Golos Ukraini”	Ukraine	Pro-governmental	Ukrainian, Russian.	Politics, economics, culture, social issues, news, the list of laws of Ukraine, which accepted a month.	5 times a week; 172.500 copies; 18 articles.
“Golos Armenii”	Armenia	Pro-governmental	Russian	Politics, economics, society, culture, sports.	3 times a week; 3425 copies; 13 articles.
“Den”	Ukraine	Oppositional	Ukrainian, Russian.	Politics, economics, news of city life, social issues, culture and sports news, society column.	4 times a week; 65400 copies; 19 articles.
“Aravot”	Armenia	Oppositional	Armenian	Politics, society, education, culture, sports, economics.	Daily; 5000 copies; 10 articles.

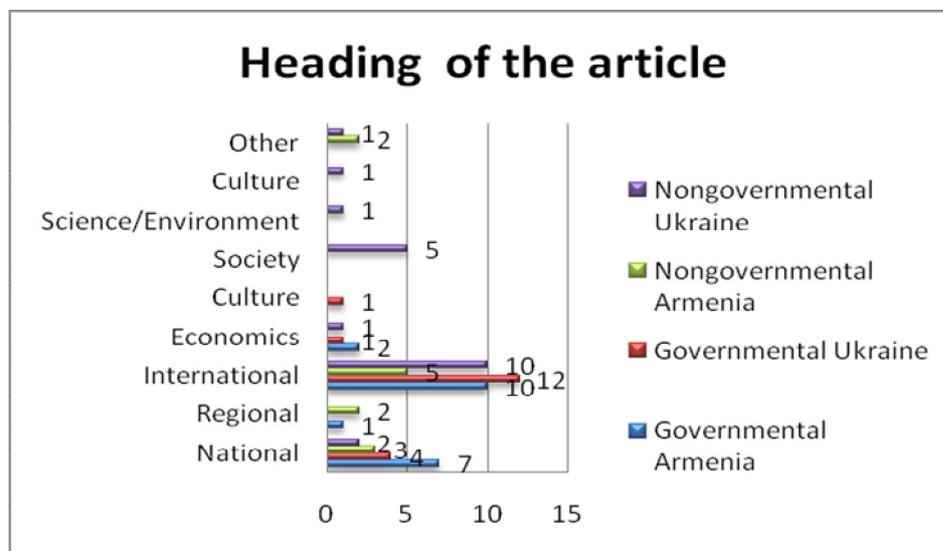
Units of Analysis:

- any article related to Europe or a certain European country, NEE country’s relations with it, which includes:
 - any verbal text with a single composition and design, including the characteristics of its genre, the title, the subtitle, the lead of the article, as well as any graphical image referring to it;
 - any separate graphical image, not illustrating or accompanying any verbal text.

Results of comparative analysis of the image of Europe in print media of Ukraine and Armenia in 2011 year. Headlines of articles in all newspapers in both countries were connected with national and international sphere, but in the oppositional newspapers except national and International, there were also headlines of regional topics.

Diagram 1

Heading of the article

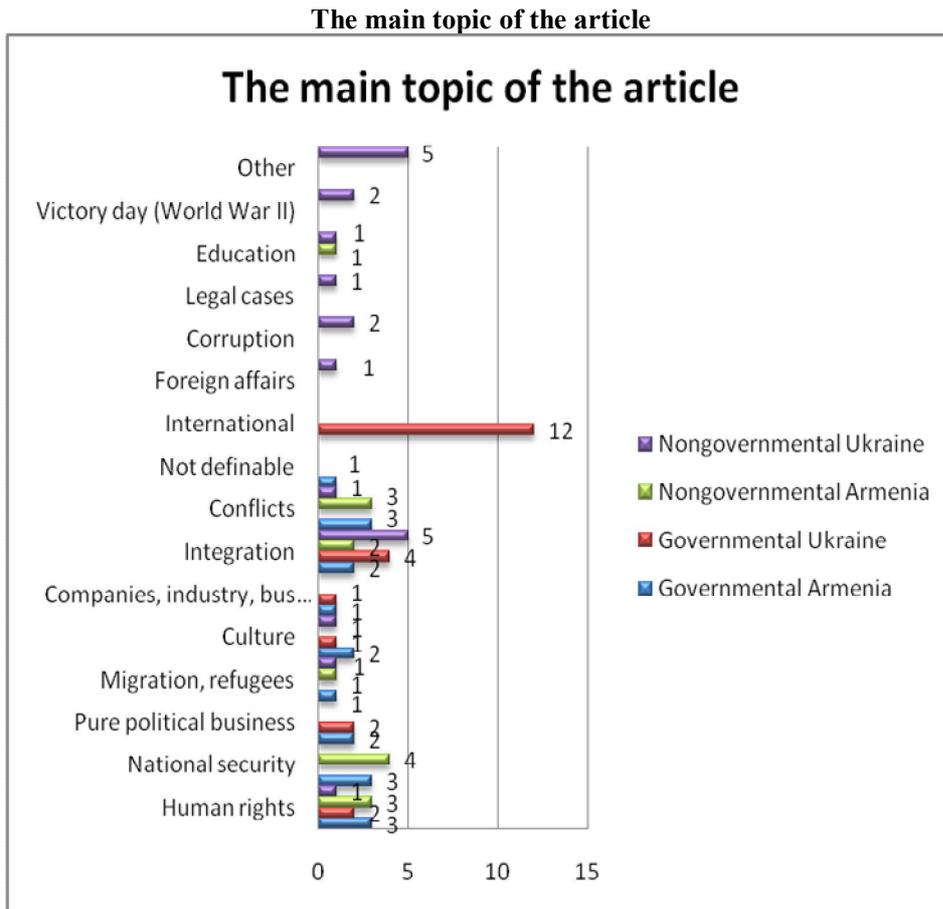


Ukrainian newspapers talked about Europe mainly in context of International cases and Integration (both newspapers). Significant that Ukrainian oppositional paper turned to the themes of Victory day and Corruption.

Generally the themes of Armenian newspapers concerned to human rights, national security, and regional conflicts. Both of these newspapers in articles related to Europe rebound mainly to the Karabakh conflict, where Europe had come to as a mediator.

Progovernmental Armenian newspaper, talking about Europe, has rebound almost all references, unlike Aravot, which has largely mentioned, OSCE, not forgetting about the Council of Europe.

Progovernmental Ukrainian newspaper talking about Europe, has highlighted the European Union (14 mentions), NEE, Eastern and Western Europe, European Parliament and Council of Europe. Unlike the opposition newspaper has talked mainly about OSCE (12 mentions), then about separate European country (6), Eastern Europe and some Economic (4) or other European structures (4). So the oppositional newspaper which has articles about the relationships between Europe and Ukraine mainly mentions the structures that are involved in various cooperative projects.



Most articles in Armenian newspapers were written in a neutral way, that is, there was no negative, or exclusive position to Europe. Ukrainian governmental newspapers coverage makes in mostly in a positive way (5+6) or in some cases in neutral way (6), while opposition paper in some cases (5) chooses the latently negative context.

Mostly in articles “Golos Ukraini” mentions that Ukraine is not a Europe yet (10). In tree articles has been marked two opposite opinions – “we” are “the Europe”, “Europe is “US” and complete separation of "us" and "Europe". It has mostly associated with the subject and the political aspect, which were covered in these articles.

While the "Den" its articles raise a clear distinction between “we” and "Europe" or notes that “We are not Europe”.

As for the "Golos Armenii", there was a contradiction - in five articles declared following opinion, "we" and separate "Europe", or do not express any opinion at all about this relationship. The oppositional newspaper also forms the opinion that «Europe is us, we are Europe» (4) and defines borders: separately «We» and «Europe».

Diagram 3

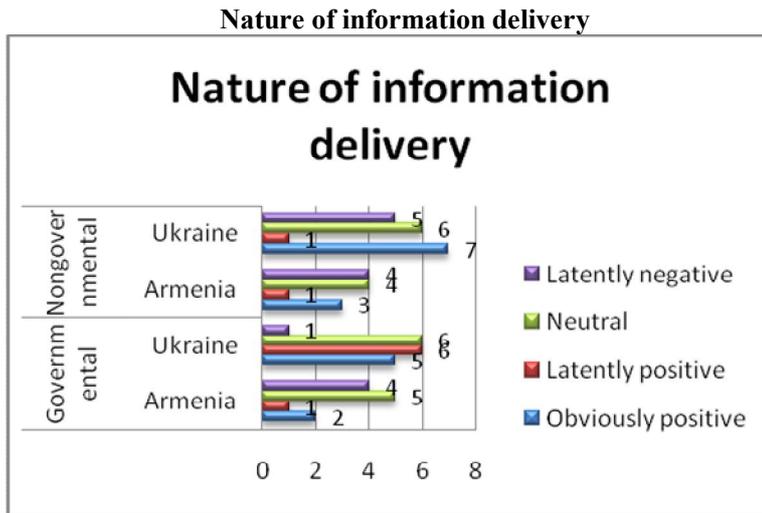


Table 2

The place of the concept of Europe within the binary opposition of “our own” vs. “the alien”

The place of the concept of Europe	Pro-governmental		Oppositional	
	Armenia	Ukraine	Armenia	Ukraine
Coincidence, «Europe is us, we are Europe»	2	3	4	1
Significant non-coincidence, separately «We» and «Europe»	5	3	3	7
Noncoincidence - «We are not Europe»	1	10	2	4
No opinions	5	1	2	4
Partial coincidence, «we are almost Europe» or «we are not Europe yet»			1	3

It's interesting to know what kind of an image of Europe constructs by these newspapers. Generally Europe is shown as a teacher, partner and something respectable.

Regarding the "Golos Ukraini", Europe is perceived as a trading partner, as a guide, as a leader, as a priority in public policy and as a standard for Ukraine.

Also, the emphasis is on the model of Ukraine development – their choice is “European development”. Europe is declared as "our common home" and emphasized that the Ukrainian values coincide with the European values, which are conducive for cooperation.

One example from the newspapers:

Ukraine and Europe have common ideals and goals. Europe means progress and future. Europe for many people is: great opportunities and in particular good education and high salary opportunities (Den', №87, 24 May, 2011).

Table 3

Image assessment. What kind of image for Europe is formed in the article?

Image assessment.	Pro-governmental		Oppositional	
	Armenia	Ukraine	Armenia	Ukraine
Europe as teacher, as authority, as authoritative organization, as companion, as employee, as strong force in this process	1			
Eurovision	2			
Europe as Europe	2			
Europe as partner, as leader, as standard, as landmark		1		
Europe as priority of governmental policy, as zone of free trade,		1		
Europe as our common home		1		
European values is our values		1		1
Europe solves conflicts, Europe teaches us, Kind Europe, wise Europe, Europe as helper, as Europe, as tutor, Europe offers			1	1
Europe as peacemaker			2	
Europe is big possibilities, future, democracy, respect of individuals, low level of corruption, tolerance attitude to minority				1

Conclusions

The topics of articles about Europe in the context of European integration are more urgent/relevant for Ukraine. The Ukrainian media often address to the topic of international relationships as well. For the Armenian press the problem of national security and interethnic conflicts is one of the most relevant topics concerning Europe.

Both Armenian and Ukrainian media wholly or partially refer their state/country to the Europe equally rare. Most revealing in this aspect is that Ukrainian pro-governmental media does a great emphasis on the fact that Ukraine is not Europe. They also indicate a big gap between them in various legal, economic and cultural aspects.

Despite some differences in the presentation of the image of Europe in Armenian and Ukrainian press, generally the image of Europe in all publications is positively constructed in the context of which Europe is presented as a trading partner, as a guideline, as an authority and as a priority in national politics. The emphasis is also done on the fact that the model of development of these republics is the future in the European Community. Europe is proclaimed as “our common home” and special emphasis is done on the fact that the social values of these countries coincide with European values.

ՆՎԱՐԴ ՄԵԼԲՈՆՅԱՆ, ՕԼԵՆԱ ՄՐԱՄՈՐՆՈՎԱ, ՏԱՏՅԱՆԱ ՊՐՈՑ – Եվրոպայի իմիջի կառուցակցման և ներկայացման առանձնահատկությունները Նոր Արևելյան Եվրոպայի երկրներում (Հայաստանի և Ուկրաինայի տպագիր մամուլի օրինակով) – Հոդվածը նվիրված է Նոր Արևելյան Եվրոպայի երկրների տպագիր մամուլում Եվրոպայի իմիջի կառուցակցման և ներկայացման հիմնախնդրին: Հետխորհրդային երկրների արտաքին քաղաքականության պլանավորման ռազմավարության համատեքստում Եվրոպական պաշտոնական կառույցներին արդյունավետ ինտեգրման հնարավորությունների բացահայտումը առավել հնչեղ և արդիական է դարձնում Եվրոպայի, Եվրոպական ինստիտուտների և կազմակերպությունների իմիջների կառուցակցման հիմնախնդիրը այդ հասարակություններում:

ՁԼՄ-ներում այս կամ այն երկրի, տարածաշրջանի կամ տարածքի վերաբերյալ կրկնվող տեղեկատվությունը նպաստում է կառուցողական կամ ապակառուցողական իմիջի ձևավորմանը՝ պայմանավորելով այդ երկրի հանդեպ դրական կամ բացասական վերաբերմունքը ինչպես հասարակության ներսում, այնպես էլ դրանից դուրս:

Հոդվածում ներկայացված են Հայաստանի և Ուկրաինայի տպագիր մամուլի կոնտենտ (բովանդակային) վերլուծության արդյունքները, որի նպատակն է «Եվրոպա» հասկացության մեկնաբանման առանձնահատկությունների և համատեքստի ուսումնասիրությունը. այդ հասկացության ներկայացման բնույթը, Եվրոպայի վերաբերյալ տեղեկատվության լուսաբանման բովանդակությունը, Եվրոպայի վերաբերյալ ինչպիսի միջեր, կարծրատիպեր և զուգորդություններ են տարածվում ՁԼՄ-ներում, ինչ համատեքստում է կառուցակցվում կամ վերակառուցակցվում Եվրոպայի վերաբերյալ գիտելիքը:

НВАРД МЕЛКОНЯН, ОЛЕНА МРАМОРНОВА, ТАТЬЯНА ПРОЦЬ – Конструирование и представление имиджа Европы в средствах массовой информации стран Новой Восточной Европы (на примере печатной прессы Армении и Украины). –В эпоху глобализации стремление стран Новой Восточной Европы (НВЕ) интегрироваться в официальные европейские структуры актуализирует для них необходимость создать определённый имидж Европы, европейских институтов и организаций. Информация о той или иной стране, появляющаяся в средствах массовой информации, формирует конструктивный или деструктивный её имидж и обуславливает соответствующее отношение к ней.

В статье представлены результаты контент-анализа печатных СМИ Украины и Армении, раскрывающие интерпретацию в них концепции Европы, её особенности и контекст. Исследование выявило характер этой концепции, обратило внимание на рациональные и эмоциональные черты в освещении Европы, а также на то, какие мифы и стереотипы распространяют СМИ НВЕ в этой связи.