REPRESENTATION OF THE EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES IN THE WESTERN PRESS IN 1989-1990 AND 2009-2010 AND EU INTEGRATION

By

Neli Hrydziushka

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Supervisor: Professor Lea Sgier

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Abstract

This thesis unfolds the problem of the representation of Eastern Bloc countries in the Western Press during transition of 1989-1990 and in 2009-2010 and its impact on these countries' ultimate EU integration. In particular, this research reports on how Eastern Bloc countries were represented in Western, i.e., British press, and whether they became fully integrated in Western European minds. In order to carry out this research quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. The results of the quantitative study demonstrate the change in mostly thematized countries and topics over the twenty years – some of them were no longer discussed as non-existent or irrelevant for the 21st century. The results of the qualitative analysis reveal the existence of a clear boundary between the East and the West in 1989-1990 and show how the perception of who belongs to the East and who to the West changed in 2009-2010. The analysis of the geopolitical mapping suggests that while the West is fully aware of the political alliances between the former Soviet Bloc countries, their geographical details seem to be unimportant, which points to the stereotype of this area as "something out there" as a whole. The research also indicates active negative stereotyping of the ex Eastern Bloc countries; but at the same time, there is a potential for a change of the Eastern Bloc countries´ image. Finally, the thesis unveils the Western attempts towards hegemony over the former Eastern Bloc countries on their disintegration from the Soviet system.

Introduction

A central issue in nationalism studies is the way various nations distinguish themselves from the others - the so-called "us" vs "them" question. Inventing the other culture, the way of thinking and acting was and is closely related to better understanding oneself, and is a stepping stone on the way to self-identification. Moreover, at some point it became a tool used by the states to draw ideological boundaries between nations, which was resorted to to mobilize people to fight for "their" land, "their" people against the intervention of "the others". The differences between nations became a way to manipulate and mobilize people in territorial, religious, cultural and ultimately political games of countries' authorities and alliances to gain more influence, power and economic advantage. One of the most salient divisions into ¨us¨ and ¨them¨ is that between East and West.

These differences have been generally acknowledged for centuries, perhaps, from the first encounters of people living in these parts of the world. The more contacts they had, the more vivid became the discrepancies in the way they see the reality and each other, consider, for instance, the Silk Road connections, numerous territorial disputes, conquests in the Middle Ages. The epoch of Enlightenment and its spirit of discovery (mainly conducted by the more developed, even at that time, western countries) also contributed some knowledge about the mysterious far-off eastern lands. The wars of the 20th century and their outcomes, on the one hand, brought people coming from both eastern and western backgrounds closer together in their attempt to combat the enemy; on the other hand, they only sharpened the cultural, political and economic divide. This division was further sustained during the Cold War period and existed until the Iron Curtain was finally lifted during transition in 1989 – 1990 (Wolff 1994). This period is of an immense interest in the way that it was the time of not only political and economic changes but also changes in the perception of the Eastern Bloc

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countries by the West and deserves an in-depth study. The topic of this research is representation of the Eastern Bloc countries in the Western press during the transition of 1989-1990 and in 2009-2010 and its impact on these countries´ ultimate EU integration.

This topic is important because during transition the representations became crystallized, that is the West became rather explicit in expressing their attitude towards one of the representatives of the East - the members of the Soviet Bloc - and their future. It acquires particular relevance now twenty years after the fall of the Soviet empire that so many former Eastern Bloc countries became integrated in a purely Western institution European Union to protect and preserve the security of the collective European identity by using political, economic, cultural etc. means. The question is, however - given their background, are these newly admitted members, such as Poland, Hungary, the Baltic States, the Czech Republic, Slovakia etc. have become integrated in the European community discursively – fully - or are they only formally there? This is what this analysis reveals.

A lot of research has been conducted on the media coverage and portrayal of certain countries in general and the mechanisms of othering, in particular, in the field of nationalism. For example, Michael Billig (1995) concentrated on the special ways of creating boundaries between "us" (representatives of one country/nation) and "them" (representatives of other countries/nations) in the British press, although his study was not country specific, that is he was looking at how various countries were othered in the British press (Billig 1995). Edward W. Said (1978, 1981) devoted a number of works to the ways Asian and Middle East countries are perceived in the Western culture due to the media. According to the author, the "Islam" depicted in the Western media is totally different from reality due to the initial absence of the knowledge of the language, cultural and religious context and, as a result, shallow oversimplified coverage of the most striking, to an unprepared observer, features and events. This led to numerous misunderstandings of the Oriental society by the average Westerner,

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hence feelings of detestation of the rich and varied culture and tradition and blaming the Middle East for everything that goes wrong in the world (Said 1978).

Even though Said's works were really insightful, their practical analyses were limited to the study of the representation of Oriental societies in the West. Not much has been written in connection with the relation of the West to the East European countries, and in particular those belonging to the former Eastern Bloc. One of the most prominent works in this area seems to be "Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment" by Larry Wolff (1994). The message of this work is that Eastern Europe as the westerners know it had been subject to a long process of imagining what it was like, starting from the Enlightenment. He also provides a few observations about how it was perceived after the Cold War. According to the author, the ideas that people had about Eastern Europe followed a certain pattern, and those that did not fit into the pattern were discarded. The Cold War added to the stereotype since it was very difficult to discover what it was really like, or at least get a little closer to the truth. In connection with this Wolff writes: "The veil of illusion became an iron curtain, but Eastern Europe could only be surrendered because it had long ago been imagined, discovered, claimed and set apart" (Wolff 1994, 143). While the latter sounds quite plausible, this work has been restricted to the perception of Eastern Europe in the past.

Among more contemporary research are findings of Heidi Armbruster, Craig Rollo and Ulrike H. Meinhof (2003) which unfold the parts East and West play in shaping the new Europe and how each of them views it and its development. These and many other authors, for example, Piotr Sztompka (2004), Michal Buchowski (2006), Ruth Wodak (2007), William Uricchio (2003) and Richard Mole (2007) tackle the issue from the perspective of European integration and self-identification. All of them argue that European identity is changing along with the changes in geopolitical, economic, cultural and other spheres of life in New and Old

European countries.

It is also important how various countries and news are represented in the media. For instance, Neil T. Gavin (2000) writes about the image of Europe on British television, while Doris A. Graber (1997) provides a very good insight into the creation of political news for American audience and presents the results of the content analysis of topics discussed in newspaper editorials and news conferences dedicated to the USSR during a period from January 1945 to January 1991. However, Gavin focuses only on the economic news coverage, which seems to be inadequate to make any substantive conclusions about the overall representation of the former Eastern bloc countries in British mass media. Graber concentrates on the media per se and the way events are presented and interpreted in general; the content analysis gives a powerful insight into the topics that were of interest to the American audience during the Soviet time, it remains unclear, though, what role the press plays in shaping Westerner's attitudes towards the East and what topics were thematized during and after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The above shows that the knowledge about the image of the East at different time periods formed by various means is rather scattered, and further investigation is needed to fully unfold the problem of the representation of the former Soviet bloc countries in the Western press, especially, the overall image of the East that was presented to the target audience in the relatively recent years and how it influenced the way former Eastern Bloc countries, and principally those that are members of the EU, are perceived now.

The research question that the present paper is trying to answer is: how were the countries of the former Eastern or Soviet Bloc, i.e. members of the Warsaw Pact, depicted in the Western press during transition; and did they become fully integrated in the 21st century European community? The study is carried out on the example of British newspaper editorials published in 1989 – 1990 and 2009 – 2010, which allows me to compare whether and how the

perception of the most frequently thematized countries has changed.

The primary focus of this study is not a geographical area, but countries belonging to a political alliance, since there seems to be confusion about the geographical boundaries within Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Europe and the West. For instance, some do not consider Russia, Ukraine and some other countries Europe; such countries as Poland and the Czech Republic tend to think of themselves as part of Western Europe, yet, this is unacceptable for ¨true¨ Western Europeans etc. (Lederer 1992). For this reason, it is much easier to refer to the countries forming a political unit rather than a geographical area[1].

Historically, these countries have always been considered by the West as something unknown, incomprehensible, fearful, barbaric, uncivilized, undeveloped, "the other" (e.g., Wolff 1994, Buchowski 2006 etc.) The tensions between the Eastern bloc and the West were paramount during the Soviet rule and the Cold War, which only added to this latter image; and even though those times are long gone, the stereotype and the feeling of caution it instilled in the Westerners, for example, the British, remained. As I have already mentioned, the issue of depiction and othering acquires a particular interest and significance now twenty years after the ultimate collapse of the Soviet empire, when a large number of former Eastern Bloc countries have become members of the EU. However, whether they are members only formally, or have actually become an integral part of the European community remains unclear. Thus, the thesis presents a deep analysis of the way the aforementioned countries were depicted immediately at the end of the Soviet regime and provides a brief comparison with their current representation in order to understand the possibility and the degree of a complete, i.e., mental, integration in the Western community[2].

The main purpose of the research also invites a number of auxiliary questions which I

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[1] Also, it is important to note that Albania and the Balkans were excluded.

[2] By complete, full or mental integration I mean being perceived as Westerners.

tried to answer during this study: What countries were most often thematized during transition? What themes, concepts and attitudes were associated with the Eastern Bloc and how they changed in twenty years' time? What was the image of a typical Eastern or Central European country, for instance, Poland in 1989 – 1990 and how has it changed? In other words, the study reports on how Eastern Bloc countries were represented in Western. i.e., British press and whether they became mentally integrated in Western European minds. By ¨represented¨ I, following Said, mean the general attitude that is taken with regard to the Eastern Bloc countries, ¨the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in the text¨ all of which create a certain way in which this part of the world should be perceived by the reader. As Said puts it, ¨there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a re-presence, or a representation¨ (Said 1978, 20-21).

This research is very important for the overall understanding of the change in the relationship between the East and the West between 1989 and now - the time of new political and economic interests and alliances. The topic is especially noteworthy for the studies of nationalism. As shown above, a lot of research has been carried out on the mechanisms of othering in general and in a number of particular countries and geographical areas. The relationship between Britain and Eastern and Central Europe, the latter being relatively new to the political arena on their own, without Soviet backup, has not been paid enough attention to yet. Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand the role of their media representation during transition and twenty years after due to the more and more active role the former states start playing in the world's politics. At last but not least, the research on the representation of the aforementioned countries in the press also contributes to the studies of the media as a political tool. It shows how the media is used to cover certain issues considered to be important by the UK at different time periods; how the image of "the other" is constructed; and on the whole, how much the press contributes to the process of distancing the western "self" from the

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eastern "other".

To carry out this research I employed content and qualitative analyses of the Eastern Bloc countries' representation in 1989 and 1990 (a more detailed description of how I used these methods follow in the second chapter). I also carry out a comparison with 2009-2010 and see whether and how the image instilled in the audience during transition changed. The data body for the content analysis consists of 240 editorials published in The Times in 1989-1990 and 2009-2010. The number of editorials analyzed qualitatively amounts to N=77 − 70 published in 1989-1990 and 7 in 2009-2010.

The paper has the following structure. In the first chapter I discuss the general idea of identities construction, "othering" and its assumptions, the reasons for its practice and implications. I also provide a brief overview of the historical perception of Eastern Europe by the West. I then touch upon the role of media in the process of creating and sustaining stereotypes. I specifically center on the question of EU integration of former Soviet Bloc countries. Chapter two presents the methodological background and justification of the current research. In chapter three I present the results of the practical data analysis and report what countries were mostly thematized in the British press immediately after the fall of the Soviet regime and try to identify the main themes, concepts and attitudes towards the Soviet Bloc. I also compare these results with these countries' representation in 2009-2010 and try to identify how they changed and the level of these countries' integration in the European community.

Chapter 1. Theoretical background

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature connected with identity construction, othering and its assumptions; give the historical overview of the East perception by the West; consider the role of mass media in creating and sustaining stereotypes and introduce the problem of Ex-Soviet Bloc countries´ mental EU integration.

Section 1.1. Construction of Identities, Othering and its Assumptions

National identity is as important in terms of national interests as a country's sovereignty and territorial borders. In fact, according to Richard Mole (2007, 157), ¨identity is … a means of enhancing security¨. Moreover, a country's role on the international political arena is determined by its national identity and standing in relation to other states, e.g., by whether it is perceived as an ally or a foe.

The reason why national identity is so essential is the fact that it accentuates similarities between groups, which is important in terms of the same frames of mind and hence support they provide to each other. Richard Jenkins (2008, 34) posits that in psychology and nationalism the term is commonly understood as ¨a core aspect of (individual or collective) self-hood or as a fundamental condition of social being, which is invoked to point to something allegedly deep, basic, abiding, or foundational¨. At the same time, however, in numerous post-modernist and post-structuralist studies identity is changing, evolving and is constructed by the discourses in which it functions. In the words of Jenkins ¨one's identity... for who we are is always singular and plural... [it] is never final or settled matter¨ (Jenkins 2008, 5). The latter idea can be illustrated by the example of the currently shifting European identity, which I will discuss in more detail in the section to

follow. In any case, national identity defines people and their place among other groups (Mole 2007).

However, it acquires its meaning only in connection with other nations, just like any other concept becomes meaningful when it is compared to other concepts; for example, the concept ¨son¨ is perceived as such only in relation to such concepts as ¨mother¨, ¨father¨ and ¨daughter¨. In identity discourse, this concept identification process is closely related to identifying the ¨Other¨, which is one way of determining who ¨we¨ are. In this research, by the ¨Other¨ I will refer to a group or groups of people who are different in terms of their culture, traditions, language and the general mode of life. Furthermore, there is a link with the issue of determining borders - who is included and who in not. As Ruth Wodak puts it, ¨The general concept of insiders and outsiders is salient in all societies and between societies, in all public spaces, in cyberspaces, in everyday conversations and in organizational discourses¨ (Wodak 2007, 91).

Mole makes a distinction between different ¨Selves¨: the core Self – the identity of a certain country per se, and the extended Self[3] – the one that can be transferred on nations having similar history, culture, religion, language, beliefs, incentives, general perception of the world, have trust and loyalty towards each other etc. Besides, it is necessary to remember that countries do not function one hundred percent independently - they form relationships with the others, enter into alliances. That is why ¨if a state (the core Self) can convince the world – and particularly its perceived enemy – that it belongs to a particular camp (the extended Self), it will feel included and protected and out of reach of its potential enemy (the Other)¨ (Mole 2007, 158). In connection with this, Mole quotes Estonian Foreign Minister Toomas Hendrik Ilves who said that ¨Where a country lies is a subjective decision and only in part a product of its own desire. Much, if not most, is determined by what others believe

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[3]   It seems that this can be compared with Sztompka´s collective identity and McCrone´s ´plural identity´, for example that of a Scot or a Brit, a Catalan or a Spanish and a European (Sztompka 2004; McCrone 1998)

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about it¨ (Mole 2007, 158). The author illustrates it with a very good example, suggested by Milan Kundera, who pointed out that Prague, regardless of being 300 kilometers West of Vienna, was considered to be in the East (Mole 2007).

In other words, identities are constructed so as to determine the nation´s place in the world. These representations are later sustained by ¨flagging¨ them for instance in the media on the daily basis. By extension, not only ¨flagging¨ of who ¨we¨ are is important, but also, of what does not belong to ¨us¨. That is everyday, people living in a certain nation encounter references to their national identity in various ways, e.g., flags, celebrations, monuments and newspaper/magazine articles. The latter is particularly interesting in terms of the word choice that the journalists use in order to allude to their own nation as opposed to the others. (Billig 1995). In this way, national identities are formed and fostered, which allows peoples to make a clear distinction between friends and enemies.

Section 1.2. A Brief Overview of the Historical Perception of Eastern Europe by the West

Perception of the East by the West has been quite peculiar throughout history. For instance, Voltaire in his "Voltaire's history of Charles XII, king of Sweden" distinguished between two Europes – one known and knowledgeable and the other, which was yet to be discovered. The latter referred to Eastern Europe, which, in effect, was for a long time narrowed down to being uncivilized (Voltaire 2010 [1807]). Following Voltaire, Wolff also describes Eastern Europe as "Europe unknown to Europe" and "pays perdus", a lost land "emerging from darkness" (Wolff 1994, 92-93, 149). On the whole, these authors provide an overall description of Eastern Europe as something inverted, arrested in time and space; people who populated this part of the world were similar to each other and different from everybody else, which was not necessarily true. Yet, the people who traveled or just read other

sources about Eastern Europe at the time of Voltaire, for instance, used his book as a guide, and their impressions were in many ways primed by the information received in this seminal work (Wolff 1994). Voltaire also provided a curious geographical perception of Eastern Europe. For example, Ukraine was considered to be a typical representative of Eastern Europe for the only reason that it was neither the North nor Asia. At the same time, both Tatars and the Poles belonged to Eastern Europe, although clearly they cannot be equated in any sense. This confusion can be accounted for, however, by the fact that while Western Europe was very well mapped at that time, Eastern Europe was only being shaped and discovered (Voltaire 2010). Wolff provides the example of the Polish Commonwealth and its three partitions because of which it was quite difficult to draw definite boundaries – that is why the map of the Commonwealth was left as it was. It was also rather difficult to map Ukraine for the single reason that it was not the most popular travel destination, which is justified given the stereotypes that existed at that time (Wolff 1994).

Similar negative descriptions of Eastern Europe were given in another piece of fiction "The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen" by Rudolf Erich and in the accounts of the journeys of Lady Elizabeth Craven in the late 18th century. In the first book Eastern Europe is portrayed as the land of "savage beasts" that Munchausen had to fight (Wolff 1994). In the second work, it was pointed out that before starting her journey to Eastern Europe, Lady Elizabeth had been warned that on her way through that area she would "find heads stuck up on poles at every mile those countries being much more infested with robbers and murderers than the others" (Craven 1970, 361 [1789]). Such descriptions again suggest barbarism and extreme danger.

Let us now jump to another significant and more recent period in the relationship between the East and the West – the Cold War. Everette E. Dennis, for instance, studied the image of the Soviet Union in American mass media and came to the conclusion that, firstly, it

is varied and slightly ambiguous, and secondly, it has changed over time. The author analyzed the American perception of the USSR from the following standpoints: competition between the US and the USSR, the state's leaders, which in many ways determine the overall picture of the country, history, confrontation connected with the foreign policy, scientific and cultural achievements, freedom issues, sports, women and general ups and downs in the relationship between the two countries. The author indicates that on the whole, the USSR was portrayed as a ¨red scare¨ trying to spread communism all over the world; that the country's leaders, ergo countries themselves, were cold and unresponsive, except for Gorbachev who had quite a favorable image and popularity; that the history of Russia was depicted in a positive light; in terms of foreign policy the USSR was considered to be ¨up to no good¨; that Soviet scientists and cultural workers were on the one hand appreciated and respected and on the other treated as people ¨stealing U.S. Secrets¨ (Dennis 1991, 50-51). In terms of people's freedom of speech, expression and the general independence from the state, the author emphasized its absence; Soviet sportsmen were taken as incredibly talented, however, there were also thought of as ¨cheaters, the ¨ones to beat¨, the ¨bad guys¨, while Soviet Olympics judges were known as quite subjective (Dennis 1991, 52). Also, the States seemed to be fascinated by Soviet women performing a variety of roles, such as scientists, cosmonauts, doctors, truck drivers etc. The author concludes by saying that that the depiction was so diverse due to the development of the state and the changes in US-Soviet relationship. Besides, it was different depending on the source of information, e.g., an editorial or a comic strip. Nevertheless, it directly influenced not only people's opinion, but also US policy towards the country (Dennis 1991).

John Jenks and Won Ho Chang also researched the way the Soviet Union was represented in British and American media in 1941-1948 and 1988-1989 respectively. Jenks observed that the latter viewed the Soviet Union as ¨an ideologically driven expansionist

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power¨ (Jenks 2006, 34). The author also reported that Eastern Europe in general was under the ¨reign of terror and oppression¨ (Jenks 2006, 36). According to the author, *News of the World* referred to Hungary as a country with a ¨Chicago gangster-like atmosphere¨ of murder, rape and robbery¨ (Jenks 2006, 30). This account does not really differ from those made during the Enlightenment. Chang also concluded that the image has changed from ¨the ¨evil empire ¨ of the Stalin and Brezhnev eras to ¨a more trustworthy and less threatening country¨ mainly due to new leadership, however, the US was still suspicious about Gorbachev and by extension the country (Won Ho Chang 1991, 82).

Another very important source of imagining other countries including Eastern Europe is jokes. According to Howard J. Wiarda, Westerners view Eastern Europeans as, for example, not very clever, engaging in silly activities, idle, but willing to benefit from the Western countries' welfare system, unable to perform politically and economically, fraudulent, ruled by mafia, full of women of easy virtues and men that a decent Westerner would not want his daughter to marry and participating in weird rituals (Wiarda 2002).

Thus, I believe that even though the ideas about the East have slightly altered as the time went by and more information was available, the general feeling of negativity and hence, caution remained, dividing the world and Europe, in particular into East and West. Czeslaw Milosz, a Polish poet from Lithuania, wrote: ¨Undoubtedly I could call Europe my home, but it was a home that refused to acknowledge itself as a whole; instead, as if on the strength of some imposed taboo, it classified its population into two categories: members of the family (quarrelsome but respectable) and poor relations" (Milosz 1968, 2). This seems to make a lot of sense given the division into Eastern and Western Europe that has existed for centuries and the perception of the former by the latter as alien and regressive.

Section 1.3. Media and their Role in Creating and Sustaining Stereotypes

Nowadays, one of the easiest ways for people to learn about other countries and peoples is via mass media, which creates certain generalized images of social groups, our beliefs and perceptions of these communities – stereotypes, or, as Walter Lippmann put it, ¨pictures in our heads¨ - and determines the way we think about them (Seiter 1986; Gorham 1999; Lippmann 1922). Gorham posits that ¨the stereotypes that we come to hold are the products of social interactions, and therefore are likely to represent the biases of those interactions¨ (Gorham 1999, 231). That is why the credibility of media's account of events, which became the main supplier of these images at present, can be questioned. For instance, Neil Gavin indicates that since people are unable to access information about what is actually going on in a certain country, they have to rely on and trust the media. This leads to the fact that, since they can never verify the credibility of the information they are exposed to, they form an opinion about what is going on in other European countries in accordance with the light in which the information was introduced to them by the media (Gavin 2000). The latter idea is in line with Said's contention that the Westerners´ perception of the West is determined by the way it is represented in the media and other sources of information. Stereotypes are important because in the words of Ellen Seiter, they ¨contain an evaluation that justifies social differences¨ (Seiter 1986, 16). However, when these generalizations are too broad and do not reflect variations that exist within groups, they persist even when a certain quality can no longer be considered an attribute of a certain community, or lead to the ambiguity between cause and effect; also they may have harmful consequences, for which media is, in effect, responsible (Seiter 1986; Gorham 1999).

Doris Graber elaborated the importance of media in shaping people's opinions on the example of the US. She is convinced that ¨In the process of image creation, the media indicate which views and behaviors are acceptable and even praiseworthy in a given society and which

are unacceptable or outside the mainstream¨ (Graber 1997, 33). Among other functions of the media, the author distinguishes ¨events surveillance¨, which presupposes putting emphasis on or shifting attention away from certain affairs, interpretation and ¨deliberate manipulation of politics¨ (Graber 1997, 34). In connection with the first function, the author says that while some incidents, people and organizations acquire paramount importance, even if they are not that significant, others are discarded as unworthy of the public´s attention and thus escape public´s judgment. Concerning the function of interpretation, Graber, similarly to Gavin, points out that most events can be subject to various interpretations, which mainly depend on the interpreter. Thus, framing and influence of what is going on in the world depends on the journalists. Graber admits that it is especially effective in cases when addressees do not have expertise or direct personal experience in a certain area.

Another issue that is brought up by Graber is the idea that media is always controlled by the state's authorities to a higher or lesser degree depending on the society. For example, the state's regulation is more stringent in authoritarian societies, whereas in more liberal systems journalists have much more freedom. Nevertheless, Graber states that what is being reported must be in line with the overall policy of the country – in this case, the US – and coincide with the people's expectations: ¨Besides reflecting the American value structure, stories must also conform to established American stereotypes¨ (Graber 1997, 348). The latter can be transferred on any other country's media. What she fails to point out, however, is how these stereotypes had been formed in the first place. It seems that there is a kind of vicious circle of journalists trying to cater to certain interests and sustain specific images which were created by the media and other means of information dissemination in the first place.

When discussing foreign news Graber points out that news are selected in accordance with the principle that they should be interesting for the American audience. She also posits that foreign events should either correspond to or drastically challenge the already existent

stereotype that the people have about a certain country. The former is more common and has several implications. First, it makes it difficult to change people's perception of geographically and culturally far-off countries. Second, it over-simplifies reality. Third, the coverage from a certain perspective, framing the news in a particular way, may produce certain, more often than not negative feelings of the public.

The latter was excellently illustrated by Edward Said: "In no really significant way is there a direct correspondence between the "Islam" in common Western usage and the enormously varied life that goes on within the world of Islam, with its more than 800,000,000 people, its millions of square miles of territory principally in Africa and Asia, its dozens of societies, states, histories, geographies, cultures" (Said 1981, 10).

One of the explanations for the discrepancy of what the Westerners think about Orient and what it is like in effect suggested by the author is not knowing the language, the lack of knowledge about a country, its traditions, heritage etc. and being unable to grasp it all in a short period of time leads to covering events and trying to justify what is going on in a simplified manner consistent with the superficial basics a journalist working in a certain country is aware of. Because of this, a lot of important things that may actually prove the stereotype wrong are left unnoticed and the former is only being sustained further with the help of mass media, films and books, including travel books and guide books, whose consumers, after actually traveling to a certain destination, are surprised that the place has not lived up to their expectations. Thus, the author concedes that it is difficult to say if there is such a thing as an absolute truth, but because of all of the above factors, the truth is dependent on its producers (Said 1978; 1981).

The same idea can be applied to the portrayal of other countries as well. It seems that it is more a matter of simplified stereotypes that persist due to the absence of expertise in the reality and culture of a certain country, which may occur for various reasons, such as

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superficial knowledge and stereotypes based on books, mass media coverage, films, in short, a number of indirect experiences, but ultimately, the fact that it is much easier to perceive the others in accordance with a number of ideas that have existed for centuries and have been taken for granted rather then seek the truth which may or may not be convenient for various reasons.

Interestingly, the image of Islam that is produced by the West tells much more about the West than Orient (Said 1978; 1981). By portraying countries and regions in a certain way, the producer of the stereotype makes a distinction between "us" and "them" and not only reveals his idea of what "they" are like, but also indirectly suggests what "we" are, which is different from ¨them¨ in terms of geographical boundaries and mentality (Said 1978). The underlying idea behind it is that "the West is modern, greater than the sum of its parts, full of enriching contradictions and yet always "Western" in its cultural identity; the world of Islam, on the other hand, is no more than "Islam", reducible to a small number of unchanging characteristics despite the appearance of contradictions and experiences of variety that seem on the surface to be as plentiful as those of the West" (Said 1981). The description of one country, nation, state, culture or tradition as, for instance, religious, suggests that its depicter is circular; the idea that the people of one country are uneducated may point to the contention that those who make such a claim are highly cultured, enlightened and wise.

Following Said I would also argue that any country's representation is largely based on "the acts of will and interpretation" meaning that people, or as Said phrases it, "communities of interpretation" consciously make choices about how to understand reality in and outside of a certain country (Said 1981, 41). As long as these communities come from different backgrounds, have their own interests and ideas about what the outside world is and should be like, it is impossible to speak about the ultimate truth and objective reality (Said 1981). Interpretation is the process of creation, which, at large, depends on the creator; and it

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is impossible to speak about unbiased knowledge of a certain phenomenon, be it a thing, a person, or a country, because the individual who acquires this knowledge comes from a particular background, which determines the way in which the process of interpretation will be carried out and the results that will be yielded.

It must be emphasized, however, that when we speak about individuals, it would be more correct to refer not to the ideas that they form themselves, but to the ideas that they acquire in the process of living in a certain society, in the process of exposure to the media, for example. Since societies differ in many respects, they form and impose opinions about the others that are quite divergent from one another depending on the values and the historic and cultural background of a certain person or a community in which they have been generated (Said 1978, 1981). For example, in connection with his oriental studies Said speaks about a Freudian Orient, a Spenglerian Orient, a Darwinian Orient, a racist Orient etc., but there has never been such a thing as a true Orient unconnected to an individual who brings this topic about, a community, or a culture (Said 1978).

Therefore, my point is that regardless of which country or culture we are considering in particular, its perception will vary depending on the cultural, geopolitical and economic context in which this outlook has been generated (Said 1981). It seems that covering Islam in a developed Western country would differ from that of an Eastern European insight: Eastern Europe would be imagined differently in the Arab and the Western world for ideological reasons and interests that these communities have towards one another. In any case, the divisions between the East and the West and their mutual perceptions are inevitable (Said 1978). I would add that a lot of these distinctions are imagined and the researchers' task is to try and find out how, why and by whom. As Anthony Pagden pointed out ¨If the nation state is an "imagined community", grounded in an idealized notion of "national character" and the modal national self, it would be wise to ask whose imagination it is that we are discussing¨

(Pagden 2002, 140). It seems that in many respects we are talking about the imagination of the media.

Section 1.4. The Problem of Ex-Soviet Countries´ EU ¨Mental¨ Integration

After the fall of the USSR, geopolitical boundaries were being actively reconsidered, which in turn led to the problem of self-identification and being and not being European, especially when it came to accepting states in various Western European organizations. Armbruster et al (2003) admit that the Soviet Union and Communism repressed the very idea of ¨Europe¨ and imposed thinking in other categories. This process of slowly eliminating the concept of ¨Europe¨ started in 1945 and was reinforced during the Cold War period. After the latter was over, the East and the West were and, perhaps, are still being redefined. Moreover, the idea of belonging to Central Europe is widely explored and used, for instance, to justify joining the EU (Armbruster et al 2003).

At the same time, even when a certain ex Soviet Bloc country does join the EU, does it simultaneously imply that it was accepted as an equal partner, or is it still deemed a poor relation with all the post-communist baggage? In connection with this, Buchowski points out that after transition the post communist countries were grouped into ¨winners and losers of transformation¨ or ¨those wise and able to adapt and those half-witted and unable to adapt, apt and inapt¨(Buchowski 2006, 469). During the Cold War it was the Iron Curtain that divided ¨us¨ from ¨them¨, yet, this could no longer be so after the collapse of the USSR and new aforementioned criteria according to which this demarcation could be preserved or changed were to be developed. To be more specific, one and most important of those was adherence to market economy and liberal democracy. From this standpoint, the aim of the Visegrad Group countries was to move the Eastern boundary to the Balkans and the former USSR. However, it is not easy, because, according to Wiarda a new ¨Golden curtain¨, separating the rich from

the poor, the former Eastern Bloc from the West was put up instead. Even though this new boundary is not so fixed, it still exists (Wiarda 2002). As Seller has put it, the process of imagining ¨New Europe¨ - incorporating Eastern and Central European countries in political, economic and cultural life of the EU - is under way, but is not finished (Seller et al. 2009). The most plausible explanation, in my opinion, is given by polish sociologist Piotr Sztompka.

Sztompka refers to a special ¨breed¨ of people coming from post-communist background as ¨homo sovieticus¨ (Sztompka 2004a, b). Buchowski, following Sztompka´s idea, seems to condemn such attitude towards post-communist countries as those promoting ¨cynicism, nepotism, collectivism, egalitarianism and a diffused individual responsibility¨ and capitalism as the epitomization of ¨individualism, realism, efficiency, freedom of creativity, human subjectivity and responsibility¨ (Buchowski 2006, 470). The list of opposing concepts seemingly inherent in either the East or the West can be continued and further elaborated, but both authors disagree with such a blunt dichotomous division, which distorts actual reality of both past and present (Buchowski 2006).

In fact, Sztompka emphasizes the idea that until the so-called ¨crippled¨ identity of East Europeans does not develop into a ¨proud¨ European collective identity, it will be impossible to speak about a complete integration of the newly accepted members of the EU, such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia etc. (Sztompka 2004a, 2). Sztompka´s collective identity is characterized by the tendency of people to establish bonds and boundaries between ¨us¨ and ¨them¨. Notably, the boundaries can be both on the mental level - which means that we just perceive others (in Sztompka´s terminology) as enemies, aliens or strangers - and on the physical level - for example, the Berlin Wall.

Europeans have always possessed a sense of strong collective identity. Antony Pagden wrote that ¨Europeans are … unusual in sharing in this way a sense that it might be possible to belong to something larger than the family, the tribe, or the nation yet smaller and more

culturally specific than ¨humanity¨ (Pagden 2002, 53). However, the countries of Eastern and Central Europe have been excluded from this community for a long time. In the course of history, they developed a special ¨East European identity¨ as Sztompka puts it, due to being on the periphery of Europe, lagging behind economically and being domineered by their Western counterparts politically. The author distinguishes ten borders dividing Eastern and Western Europe. Among them are geographical, military, political, economic, cultural and religious boundaries. The most effective one, however, is the ¨Wall in the heads¨ which is built in the process of being perceived as and hence considering oneself as unworthy ¨incomplete Europeans¨ or ¨lesser Europeans¨, even though ¨at least for the time being, we [Eastern Europeans] have become more capitalist than capitalists, and more Western than the West¨ in a way that capitalism is failing the West, for example, and the people adopt other modes of political and economic life. (Sztompka 2004a, 29, 31; 2004b, 493). In connection with this, the author points out that ¨Stereotypes also enter cycles of dialectic reciprocity: the more we are disliked the more we dislike, and vice versa – the more we are liked, the more we like¨ (Sztompka 2004b, 484). Thus, it is possible to speak about a vicious circle of mutual suspicion, which must be bridged in the first place, if a truly common identity is to be achieved. Sztompka acknowledges that the process of abolishing these boundaries has already started, mainly due to globalization, loosening controls within ex-communist states during transition and European integration; however, it is not yet finalized because the most dividing border, that in the minds of both Eastern and West Europeans, did not disappear completely and Eastern Europeans are yet to earn their status of neighbors instead of enemies (Sztompka 2004a).

Chapter 2. Data and Methodological Justification of the Research

The data body consists of 240 editorials published in printed editions of *The Times* in two time periods from 1 January 1989 to 31 December 1990 and from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2010, which I consulted in the newspaper archive of the Parliament Library in Budapest, Hungary. The average editorial generally numbered 680 to 720 words.

The selection of the newspaper article type was conditioned by the fact that editorials belong to the genre of opinion discourse. Moreover, the positions expressed in editorials present the voice of the newspaper and hence, a particular point of view circulating in a given society - mainly among the elite - which is further imposed on the reader. As Teun A. Van Dijk has put it in his paper ¨Opinions and Ideologies in Editorials¨ presented at the 4th International Symposium of Critical Discourse Analysis, Language, Social Life and Critical Thought in Athens in December, 1995, and published on the website discourses.org, ¨editorial opinion is generally institutional, and not personal. Even when written by a single editor (editorials are seldom signed), editorials count as the opinion of 'the' newspaper. This means that they will generally be shared among several editors, or between editors and management, or between editors and other social groups they belong to. Important, therefore, is the realization that whatever specific (model based) opinions about specific events are being formulated, they will tend to be derived from social representations, rather than from the personal experiences or opinions of an editor¨ (Teun A. Van Dijk). In *The Times*, the point of view represented is mainly liberal. I would like to emphasize the word "mainly" due to the fact that *The Times* started out as the mouthpiece of the Conservatives and switched sides several times, the last being in 2010, when it declared its allegiance to the Tories, who formed a coalition with the Liberal Democrats in order to create a government (BBC news 2009).

As pointed out by Hasan Ansary and Esmat Babail, a typical editorial has the

following structure: general information about the topic; singling out one issue that deserves further discussion; a string of arguments either supporting or refuting a certain position; directly expressing the author's (newspaper's) opinion. The last two points center on the point of view that the newspaper is trying to convey to its readership (Ansary and Babail 2005).

In other words, editorials are not merely dry factual objective news reports devoid of feeling. Being event-driven in their essence, editorials project an attitude of a certain group of people, aim at convincing the reader in this or that point of view, changing their way of thinking about people, things, events, countries etc.

The choice of a British newspaper as a representative of the Western point of view was primarily justified by language limitations. It might be worth-while to consider German or French attitudes towards the Soviet Bloc as well, however, only a good knowledge of these languages would allow me to undertake this kind of qualitative analysis. Secondly, Britain has traditionally been considered to be a Western superpower on the political scene on the Eastern side of the Atlantic, so its attitude is representative.

The decision about the time periods was dictated by the importance of the final Soviet regime collapse for the world's political arena, the period where representations became clear, and the proximity to its anniversary, which allows comparing the change of attitude between them. Have they managed to be perceived as more "European" and integrated in the Western community or are they still deemed post-Soviet states due to the extensive coverage from a particular angle they received in 1989-1990?

In order to carry out this research the following methods were used. To measure the frequency with which countries and topics were thematized I used quantitative content analysis set out by Alan Bryman (Bryman 2008). Overall, I selected the overall number of 240 editorials dedicated to the countries of the former Eastern Bloc – 98 published in 1989, 91 written in 1990, 23 – in 2009 and 28 – in 2010.

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In order to decide whether a certain editorial is suitable for my analysis I first looked at the title, then paid attention to the lead (which were only available in the texts of 2009 and 2010) and skimmed through the articles, focusing on the key words, which, in this case, were the names of Warsaw Pact countries, Central/Eastern Europe, Warsaw Pact and Soviet/Eastern bloc. I also looked at the presence or absence of abbreviations, e.g., USSR, CIS and Comecon, as well as names, e.g., Gorbachev, Ceauscescu, Putin, Kaczynski and Komorowski, because acting politicians represent the whole country; then I considered general vocabulary related to Eastern Bloc countries, such as East, Cold War, Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall, glasnost and perestroika. Since I worked with the paper editions, I went through all the issues and if skimming through an editorial I found these words, I selected it for further analysis; if not, the editorial was discarded.

After that I counted the frequency with which Eastern Bloc countries were mentioned each year and during two time periods as the protagonists of the editorials that is when a certain article was fully dedicated to a particular country. That is if an article discussed one particular country, I counted that as one occurrence. I also counted the number of times different topics were mentioned in relation to the countries that received the most attention in each of the four years analyzed, and in each time period. Similarly, I tried to identify the topic of the article and counted it as one occurrence. I organized the results in tables comparing the two time periods and demonstrating the difference in frequency.

Then, I focused on the most thematized countries during transition period, i.e., Poland, Hungary, Romania and Lithuania, and resorted to qualitative analysis to see how the idea of the "other" was constructed, what exactly this "other" represented as opposed to "us", Westerners, and ultimately, how the western media framed eastern reality and how that framing changed over the years in connection with the issue of EU accession of many former Eastern Bloc countries.

In order to do this, after familiarizing myself with the data and carrying out the quantitative part, I attempted to identify the themes that unite all the editorials from 1989-1990 and if and how they were developed in 2009-2010. After that, I once again went through all the articles sorted by theme and

considered the word choice and the way the editor refers to these countries: 1. I looked at whether the editor refers to these by the name, by labeling them as CEE, Soviet, Communist, ex-Communist or simply ¨they¨ and the way the author refers to Britain and various Western representatives, e.g., by the name, the West or by mentioning ¨we¨ and ¨us¨; 2. following Jan Ifversen (2007), I tried to identify the concepts in terms of which the countries were discussed and whether they were overall positive, negative, neutral or not forming any particular pattern, which would allow me to speak about stereotype formation; 3. I also considered the attitude of the editor, which is the overall tone with which the themes were developed. The criterion for defining it was the abundance of words (nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs) with either positive or negative meanings. If the negative vocabulary prevailed, I considered the article to have a negative tone; if the words with positive connotation were used more often, I classified the article as having the positive tone. It is important to note that since not so many articles were dedicated to Eastern Bloc in the second time period, it is difficult to make an overarching inference about the level of their integration in the EU. Nevertheless, it was interesting to observe how the situation played out for the most highly thematized country in this time period – Poland – and establish the general trend and look at how the image (again, in terms of themes, concepts and the overall attitude of the author) has changed over time, which would allow us to speak about full/partial integration and at least sketch the change (or its absence) of attitude towards other countries.

Following James Paul Gee's approach to discourse analysis (1999), I also determined how the texts under analysis were linked with reality - "inter-Discursivity" - and other texts -

"intertextuality" (Gee 1999). Thus, when I carried out my analysis, not only did I consider the texts per se, but also the context (geographical, political, cultural, past and present) in which they were written, the events that were happening at that time and the interest Britain had in the development of particular events. In relation to intertextuality, I considered a string of articles dedicated to one topic and looked at how a certain theme was developed. The relevance of this methodology is justified by the constructivist character of the media, which is also discussed in this paper, specifically in chapter one. Comparative framework allowed me to look at the change of image of the ex Eastern Bloc countries in Britain at different time periods and make conclusions about the possibility of these countries´ full integration in the EU.

The paper also has a number of limitations. In fact, in order to answer the research question I considered two possibilities, however, only the one presented above seems to be the most feasible. The initial idea was to carry out a cross time and cross country comparative analysis and build a data body consisting of a number of editorials published in printed and on-line editions of The Times and The New York Times (which appear to be near equivalents in terms of prominence and readership) in two three-year time periods between 1989 – 1991 and 2008-2010. However, due to the abundance of material and time constraints, this option was discarded.

Chapter 3. The Results of Quantitative and Qualitative Representation of the Soviet Bloc Countries in 1989 – 1990 and 2009-2010

Section 3.1. The Results of the Quantitative Analysis of Soviet Bloc countries in 1889-1990 and 2009-2010

The actual findings of the research suggest a change in geopolitical perception of the Eastern Bloc countries in a twenty-year time period from transition to 2009-2010.

For example, the analysis shows that from 1 January 1989 to 31 December 1990, the most thematized country was the Soviet Union, being a political superpower and the glue that held the whole regime together for a very long time; it is followed by the discussion of Warsaw Pact countries in general and the stirrings occurring there more and more often. The next highly thematized area was East Germany[4], and the events leading to its ultimate unification with West Germany in 1989; among the other countries frequently referred to were Poland, Romania, Lithuania[5] and Hungary. Meanwhile, in 2009-2010 new countries entering the CEE arena (Russia, Poland, Ukraine) were discussed separately and most frequently. Also, a number of articles were dedicated to such countries and areas as Bulgaria, Latvia, Moldova and New Europe. It should be pointed out that the Soviet Union was replaced by Russia, which is understandable, because the main driving force of this political entity was Russia in any case. New Europe became the substitute for the Eastern Bloc. The change of name was brought about by the change in the political alienation of the former Eastern Bloc countries – excluding those that belonged to the USSR and are currently not included in the idea of New

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[4] Due to the fact that East Germany was no longer a part of the Soviet Bloc in 1990, I counted its frequency only in 1989.

[5] This country was only discussed in 1990 and only briefly mentioned in 1989 as part of the Baltic region in general.

Europe. As for specific countries, Poland, for example, retained its place at the top of the editor´s picks; at the same

Table 1 *The frequency with which countries/regions were thematized in the editorials of The Times dated 1989-1990 and 2009-2010 (in percent)*

Country/Region	1989-1990	2009-2010
Soviet Union	51	0
Eastern Bloc	12	0
Eastern Germany	11	0
Poland	9	10
Romania	6	4
Lithuania	5	0
Hungary	4	0
Russia	0	56
Ukraine	0	8
Bulgaria	0	4
Latvia	0	4
Moldova	0	4
New Europe	0	4
Kyrgyzstan	0	2
Miscellaneous	2	4
	100% (N = 189)	100% (N = 51)

Note 1: Miscellaneous countries include countries that received not more than one mentioning, e.g., Estonia, the Baltics in general, Czechoslovakia, Tadzhikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and the Caucuses area in general
Note 2: The results for East Germany are relevant only for 1989. I did not consider East Germany in 1990 as it was not a part of the Eastern Bloc anymore.
Note 3: The results for Lithuania are relevant only for 1990, because it was not thematized separately from the Baltics in 1989

time, there was a shift to discussing newly accepted EU members, such as Bulgaria (along with Romania who preserved its place of the relatively highly thematized countries) and Latvia. Moldova and Ukraine were seen separately from the USSR. In other words, there was a shift from the Soviet Union to Russia and from the Soviet Bloc to New Europe. Moreover, other independent countries appeared on the map of CEE. Table 1 presents the results of the comparative frequency analysis of the Eastern Bloc countries and areas discussed in the editorials of *The Times* in the time period from January 1, 1989 to December 31, 1990 and from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2010.

Table 2 demonstrates the comparative frequency analysis with which the topics related to the countries of Eastern Bloc were discussed in 1989-1990 and 2009-2010.

As seen from the table, some of the most important topics were covered by the newspaper in both time periods, e.g., international relations, military affairs, general political and economic issues, while others, such as regime crisis which was relevant for 1989-1990 were substituted by a more topical issue of EU integration. To be more exact, in 1989-1990 the category of East-West relations covered a range of topics, including politics, democracy as opposed to its absence, the ongoing military debate, East-West cooperation and existing contentions. Also, the idea of the necessity and a high probability of regime change was discussed quite frequently. In 1990, in some of these articles the East was explicitly portrayed as the enemy of the West. Consider, for instance, the following passage from the article "A Battle Shirked" from 1990: "The 45-year-old enemy, the Warsaw Pact, has been beaten in one of history's great victories, great because so little blood was spilled to achieve it. But the defeat has not been sealed by any ceasefire or treaty or settlement. The enemy has simply rolled over exhausted…" (*The Times*, 26 July 1990). Thus, Warsaw Pact countries had been deemed antagonistic to the West for a period of 45 years, and as the Union was undergoing a rapid disintegration, the West could finally breathe with relief.

International relations were discussed in connection with CEE´s relations with their western and eastern counterparts, e.g., Britain, the US, Germany, Iraq and North and South Korea. The military issue mainly covered the debate about nuclear weapons and the military budget of the Soviet Union.

Table 2 *The frequency with which topics were mentioned in connection with CEE in The Times editorials in 1989-1990 and in 2009-2010 (in percent)*

Topic	1989-1990	2009-2010
East-West relationship	4	0
International relations	19	15
Military affairs	15	16
Regime crisis/change	20	0
General economic and political issues	21	30
Nationalist stirrings	6	2
Immigration	2	4
EU integration	0	20
Miscellaneous	13	13
	100% (N =180)	100% (N = 51)

Note: Miscellaneous issues include human rights, sport, media, terrorism and environment

A special emphasis was put on the Soviet-American military discussion, i.e., Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (which in the second time period was replaced by the New Strategic Arms Reduction Talks), the production of chemical weapons by the US in response to the same activity carried out by the USSR; a number of articles were dedicated to Vienna talks aimed at negotiating the possibility of short-range nuclear weapons elimination from Europe; also, a range of articles discussed the withdrawal of Soviet troops from other Soviet Bloc countries, for instance Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

During this time period the journalists also kept reporting about the overall political climate and the preconditions of the regime's ultimate collapse and change. Editorials

dedicated to the general economic and political issues were mainly concerned with the restructuring of Eastern Bloc countries´ economy and politics. In particular, they gave a detailed account of a grave unstable economic situation of Eastern Bloc countries and various changes that were introduced to improve the state of affairs. Strictly political articles were dedicated to the new governments´ and presidents´ elections which presented a real threat to the Soviet regime's sustainability in the country.

The topic under the title ¨national stirrings¨ problematized the various countries´ struggle for independence, while in the articles connected with migration the editor talked about large waves of migrants fleeing from Eastern Bloc countries as soon as the Iron Curtain was lifted.

In the second time period of 2009-2010 we can also observe a shift in topics discussed in the newspaper. As mentioned before, the most important issues, such as international relations[6], general political and economic problems, such as elections and the economic crisis, and military debates continued to attract the editor's attention. At the same time, some of them were replaced by more relevant questions – for example, the problem of East-West relationships and that of the regime change were substituted by EU integration. For example, there was an idea that some of these countries – Romania and Bulgaria - are only technically EU members at the moment because their economic conditions still do not match the requirements, ergo a boundary was drawn between these newly accepted EU members coming from the communist background and EU´s long-livers. Other articles were dedicated to the general idea of new Europe and the possibility and testing the feasibility of Eastern and Central European countries' ascendancy to the EU.

The next sub-chapter presents the results of the comparative discourse analysis of the

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[6] This time it included encounters not only between Eastern and Western countries but also relationships within the former Soviet Bloc

most frequently thematized CEE countries in order to get deeper insights into the change of these countries´ representation for the Western audience.

Section 3.2. Results of the Comparative Qualitative Analysis of the Former Eastern Bloc Countries in 1989-1990 and 2009-2010.

The comparative qualitative analysis of the editorials dated 1989 -1990 and 2009-2010 allowed me to identify the main themes uniting all the articles under analysis: 1). boundary drawing between the East and the West and its change over time; 2). ambiguity of the geographical mapping within the Eastern Bloc and its development in 2009-2010; 3). the change of concepts with the help of which the idea of the East was constructed; 4). imposition of the Western hegemony on the Eastern Bloc in 1989-1990 and how it played out twenty years after.

1. Division of the World into East and West

In connection with the first theme, I try to show that there was a strict division of the world into East and West in 1989-1990, the main representatives of the West being Britain and the US (at least these two countries were mentioned as such in the articles), and all countries of the Soviet Bloc discussed in the editorials analyzed - the East. During the second time-period this distinction remained, although it was not so pervasive. In fact, 2009-2010 can be characterized by a shift in the perception of former Eastern Bloc countries and the acknowledgement of at least some of them as legitimate representatives of the West.

In 1989-1990 this theme was quite salient in all editorials due to references to such concepts as, for example, ¨East-West politics¨, ¨Western nations¨ as opposed to ¨Eastern bloc¨ or ¨Eastern European countries¨, ¨East-West relations¨, ¨East-West accords¨, ¨East-West coalitions¨, ¨Eastern side¨, ¨Western initiative¨, ¨East-West negotiations¨, ¨interests of the West¨ contrasted to ¨interests of the East European people¨, ¨East-West tensions¨, ¨the other

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half of the world¨ (*The Times,* 1989 - 1990). The latter concept was used several times with reference to the Eastern Bloc countries, for example, in the editorial ¨Year of Revolution¨ from 1989 summarizing the events of the year: ¨How different the world looks as it moves into the 1990s. At the close of 1989, that other half of Europe stands on the threshold of freedom¨ (*The Times*, 30 December 1989).

In 2009-2010, only two articles from the sample refer to East and West per se but the theme was nevertheless present. Consider, for instance, a quote from the article of November 9, 2009 ¨Over the Wall¨, dedicated to the anniversary of the fall of Berlin Wall: ¨But just as the wall had become the overused symbol of a corrupt system that denied opportunity, liberty and justice, so its destruction was hailed as the precursor of prosperity across the continent. That is not what happened. The end of communism brought also a collapse of stability, the unleashing of ancient hatreds, the unrealizable hopes of peoples unprepared for the 20th century and an explosion of crime and corruption.... there still remains a gulf between East and West... They [European leaders] must commit themselves to real political liberty, to compassionate capitalism and to social tolerance compatible with European ideals¨ (*The Times*, 9 November 2009). In this statement the author points to the still existing perception of the ex Soviet Bloc countries as the East, regardless of the fact that the physical wall dividing these two parts of the world was broken many years ago and some of the ¨Eastern¨ countries were, in fact, more Western geographically[7], while those behind the now symbolic Berlin Wall as West. A distinctive feature of this time period is that more and more countries were discussed as separate entities with their own political, economic and cultural realities and not as representatives of Eastern or Western camp. For instance, in ¨Fringe Politics¨ of 24 September 2010 about the difficult economic situation in many former Eastern Bloc countries the editor refers to Moldova and Kosovo as ¨small … yet too ethnically distinct, with a sense

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[7] Take, for instance, the example of Prague and Vienna mentioned in the previous chapter.

of their own identity to be melded easily into another¨ (*The Times*, 24 September 2010).

Moreover, the 2009-2010 editorials suggest that Poland bridged the gap between Eastern and Western modes of life and became fully westernized. For instance, in ¨From our special correspondent¨ of May 28, 2010 about the way foreign correspondents worked in Poland during the Cold War, the editor makes the following claim: ¨Since then [the Cold War] Poland has come in from the cold¨. Thus, the newspaper suggests that Poland has managed to overcome its Soviet (Eastern) past. The same idea is repeated in the article ¨Poland´s Pain¨ written after president Kaczynsky´s death in the airplane crash on the way to the Katyn memorial events and dedicated to the Russian-Polish relationship in general. ¨Today Poland is not merely an integral part of a free and liberal European Union and a vital NATO ally. It also remains in the front line of the relationship between a free West, and Russia that more than occasionally shows signs of teetering on the brink¨. The editorial indicates that Poland is completely integrated in the EU, the latter embodying the West (*The Times*, April 12, 2010). Integration issue with the EU is further elaborated in ¨Poll of Poles¨ of July 6, 2010 devoted to the election of new President following the tragic events in April. In connection with the idea that the candidature of Bronislaw Komorowski would be better for the country, the editor writes ¨This is better outcome for Poland. There was a danger that Mr. Kaczynski would turn Poland inward as he did when Prime Minister, and pull it out of the mainstream of the European Union¨ (*The Times*, July 6, 2010). This implies that in 2010 Poland was already in the *mainstream* of the Western European community. Moreover, the author also points to the possibility of Poland becoming one of the main EU's representatives: ¨...he [Prime Minister] and the new president have the chance, after a year of success and shocking sadness, to consolidate Poland's claim to be one of the cornerstones of Europe¨. The phrase *cornerstones of Europe* signifies the potential Poland to embody the image of EU, hence the West.

The above demonstrates that while there was a clear division into East and West in

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1989-1990, which is manifested in the extensive use of labels, such as East and West when referring to various aspects of political, economic and social life in the respective parts of Europe. The same trend continues to be observed in 2009-2010, but it is no longer so robust. What is more, the example of Poland indicates that some countries of the former Soviet Bloc were able to integrate in the Western society.

2. Geographical and Political Mapping of Eastern Bloc

In this part of the analysis I am aiming at elucidating that there was a confusion in the geographical mapping of Eastern Bloc countries by apparently intentional use of terminology when categorizing CEE countries as representatives of Eastern, Central Europe, the Baltics or the Balkans. It was unimportant where exactly these countries were located, but crucial that they were somewhere ¨in that part of Europe¨. In terms of political geography – political alliances that the countries under consideration formed with each other – the editor was much more precise as it really mattered in terms of international relations and policy making towards the newly emerged independent states. In 2009-2010 the tendency could still be observed, and despite the emergence of New Europe and EU accession, most of the former Eastern Bloc countries were not yet perceived as an inherent part of the West.

The most important concepts used to allude to Eastern Bloc countries are *Eastern Europe*, *Central Europe* and *the Balkans*. However, this geographical demarcation of the region's boundaries is not so clear. For instance, Hungary was sometimes referred to as a country located in Central Europe, and sometimes in Eastern Europe. In ¨Old Dogs, New Tricks¨ of November 25, 1989 devoted to the coming referendum about Presidential and government election, Hungary is alluded to as a Central European country: ¨Currently, however, circumstances in *Central Europe* are far from normal. To have the first democratically elected government in the Warsaw Pact could make a substantial – possibly crucial – difference to the country's fortunes¨ (*The Times,* 25 November, 1989). Meanwhile, in

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¨1956 and All That¨ of February 10, 1989 about the meeting of the Central Committee of Hungary's Socialist Workers´ Party to discuss, among other issues, a report about reconsideration of 1956 events, we read: ¨Between the uprising and this year, the leaders of one of the most democratically-minded countries of *Eastern Europe* were unable to face the truth and political life was moribund¨ (*The Times*, 10 February 1989). In all cases, however, it is contrasted with the West. In the same way, on several occasions Romania is referred to as a part of the Balkans as well as that of Eastern Europe. Compare these two quotes from editorial ¨Farce Becomes Tragedy¨ of June 15, 1989 dedicated to suppressing a students' demonstration against the ruling National Salvation Front: "Mr. Iliescu's ghoulish triumph is unlikely to be the last setback on the road to liberty in the Balkans" and ¨In classic revolutionary style, students were the true heroes of the East European upheavals of last year. There is thus a grim symbolism about the nocturnal butchery, followed by mass arrests, of Romanian students and other opposition supporters in the streets of Bucharest over the past two days¨ (*The Times*, 15 June 1989). In one and the same article Romania is presented as part of the Balkans and of Eastern Europe. Interestingly, it is never depicted as a Central European country, for example.

Thus, it can be inferred that the exact geographical location of these countries was not really important. What really mattered was that they were ¨somewhere there¨, i.e., in the East. This echoes the idea brought up by Wolff (and discussed in detail in chapter 1 of this thesis) that Eastern and Central Europe were unmapped during the Enlightenment which entailed a lot of confusion about where certain countries really were (Wolff 1994). The fact that in several centuries´ time after so many explorations and exact mappings the ambiguity still existed only suggests that it was not really important for the representatives of the West where CEE countries were located geographically.

In 2009-2010 there still was a certain degree of geographical ambiguity with regard to where certain former Eastern Bloc and now EU members actually were. For instance, in ¨Poll

for Poles¨ Poland is referred to as ¨the star of Central and Eastern Europe¨ (*The Times*, 6 July 2010). One way to think about it is to consider Poland as the representative of Eastern Bloc; in this case, it could be described in the aforementioned way. Strictly geographically speaking, however, it could not belong to Central and Eastern Europe at the same time so it could not represent both. As for the other countries, such as Bulgaria and Romania, they were alluded to as CEE representatives coming from a communist background, but it was not stated exactly where they belonged, which may also imply that it was simply insignificant. In ¨Once more, with Riga¨ of March 4, 2010, Latvia was categorized as an Eastern European representative, not that of the Baltics, which Latvia considers itself to be. The logical question that arises - was it really that crucial for the editor or not?

As for political geography, the change in the relationships within Eastern Bloc states in the past and twenty years after seems to be of interest. The Romania of 1989-1990 was contrasted not only with the Western European countries, but also with its Warsaw pact counterparts. For example, while describing events in Romania in 1989 as a logical continuation of what was happening in the other of the communist bloc countries, the editor wrote: "The deaths in Timisoara over the weekend are the clearest evidence of the grisly distinction which has to be drawn between Romania and the rest [Eastern Bloc countries]" (*The Times*, December 19, 1989). This can be accounted for, however, by the fact that Romania was objectively in the worst position of all Warsaw Pact countries in all respects.

Poland was also opposed to its Soviet counterparts; moreover, it was portrayed as a potential Western ally against the USSR. For example, in one of the articles ¨Poles and Polls¨, the editor wrote: ¨The first round of Poland's elections tomorrow takes progress towards democracy in the Soviet bloc which is an important step forward. It will establish a parliamentary opposition in the Communist world¨ (*The Times*, 3 June 1989). In this way, the author makes a contrast between a still deeply communist part of the Soviet Bloc and

countries, such as Poland, and, as will be seen from the next example, Lithuania that were seeking changes and were seen as potential ¨friends¨ of the West. According to *The Times*, Lithuania was actually setting an example for perestroika in the Soviet Union, and by describing this country in such a way, the editor explicitly showed his respect, if not a kind of awe for this country, most likely due to the fact that the Union's integrity was dependent on it a lot. For instance, the article ¨Journey to Vilnius¨ of January 8, 1990 reads: ¨Mr. Gorbachev´s political future – and with it that of the Soviet Union – could lie in Lithuanian hands¨ (*The Times*, 8 January 1990). Since Lithuania posed a substantial threat to the very existence of the West's major enemy, the Soviet Union, it gained the former's respect and acknowledgement. Lithuania was also depicted as a country that had never truly belonged to the communist regime, which puts it in the opposition to the USSR: ¨The Lithuanians say that they were never exactly a part of the Soviet Union¨ (Feb 26, 1990). The last quote also reveals the nationalistic spirit of the nation, which the Soviet authorities tried to repress and build a spirit of patriotism towards the USSR instead. Unlike a lot of the countries of the Soviet Union which quietly accepted their position as part of, in effect, Russian ¨empire¨, Lithuania never fully submitted. In this respect, Lithuania was also contrasted not only with the rest of the Soviet Union, but also with its immediate neighbor Estonia, which also never fully excepted the Soviet rule, but at the same time was more cautious: ¨The Estonians might have been wiser as well as more cautious than their neighbor, but they see the Lithuanian struggle as their own¨ (*The Times*, 28 April 1990).

In the sample of 2009-2010 there was a vivid shift in political mapping of the countries and their alliances. In this time period, we were presented with a new notion – New Europe, composed of some of the former Eastern Bloc countries; however, the degree of their belonging to this new political union was different. Poland, for instance, has become fully accepted in the Western community. At the same time, it was perceived as a link between ¨a

free West and Russia¨ (*The Times*, 12 April 2010). In other words, even though it has become a legitimate Western ally, it was seen as a nexus between still alien East, embodied by Russia, and West. Constant references to the fact that other countries, such as Romania, Bulgaria and Latvia are technically EU members, but are far from reaching the necessary benchmark required to attain a truly European standard (which is of course true and natural considering the state they were in on the collapse of the USSR), produce an impression that the editor wanted to point out that they were only partially integrated and thus created a boundary between a more developed long-term EU members (Old Europe) and their newly accepted neighbors. Therefore, these countries were neither here nor there.

These examples demonstrate that while Western population did not have any difficulty discerning between East and West in general (theme 1 above) and was well aware of the political alliance between the countries in question, it did not distinguish between the numerous regional geographical boundaries of the Eastern, Central and Southeastern Europe and was confused - or never really cared - about the actual division between these countries. Also, the material analyzed shows that the West was well-informed about the internal political and nationalist stirrings in order to be able to build a strong opposition towards the ultimate enemy – the USSR (theme 2). Even though in 2009-2010 a lot of CEE countries were integrated in the EU, it seems that the accession was only formal. Such countries as Romania, Bulgaria and Latvia were only in the process of being fully accepted as part of the Western camp.

3. Conceptualizing the Former Eastern Bloc as the Underdeveloped ¨Other¨

In this third part of the analysis I am attempting to demonstrate that Eastern Bloc countries were othered in both time periods by emphasizing only the negative aspects of transition and post transition periods and by the use of the negative tone when addressing various issues connected with the Eastern Bloc. However, the overly positive description of

the CEE population in both 1989-1990 and 2009-2010 indicates the possible change of attitude towards the countries these people come from.

The image of the Eastern Bloc as ¨the other¨ was constructed with the help of the explicit and implicit use of such concepts as *communism*, *dictatorship*, *underdevelopment*, *lack of democracy*, *backwardness*, *barbarism*, *inferiority* and *ignorance* and opposed to the general image of the West as more developed, progressive and civilized (the latter meaning democratic) which persisted throughout all texts under analysis. Some of these words were used directly to refer to various aspects of life in the Soviet Bloc from the way politics was conducted to brutal treatment of street protesters. Consider, for instance, how the East is portrayed as an uneducated undeveloped and undemocratic society on the example of numerous comments made about the state of political affairs in Poland. When talking about the coming parliamentary election in Poland, the editor writes: "The Prime Minister Mr Mieczyslaw Rakowski, will have to learn the arts of parliamentary management… The opposition, for its part, will have to learn that there is no stigma in co-operating with the "authorities" and "Poland is still a long way from parliamentary democracy" (*The Times*, 3 June 1989). Such a description is clearly justified because it is only natural that after living in communism for more than half a century the countries and their leaders had to learn the ropes of democracy; my point here, however, is that this very characteristic of these countries was being stressed all throughout the sample for two years and became ingrained in the perception of the East by the Western mind.

Another similar example of how Poland was opposed to the West in terms of politics is the quote from the article of March 11, 1989 ¨Senate for Solidarity¨ about restructuring Polish political environment and the overall system towards a more democratic one: ¨But there should be no illusion that Poland is heading for a parliamentary democracy in the Western mode¨ (*The Times*, 11 March 1989). Now compare these quotations with the way the

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editor refers to the West in the editorial entitled ¨Dividers and Leaders¨ of March 20, 1989 about the general questions of communism vs emerging political pluralism, glasnost and a slow and difficult process of democratization in Eastern Bloc countries: ¨It would be gratifying to believe that observation of Western democracies in action has persuaded the communist dictatorship to change their spots. The vitality of the West, in economic life as in ideas, should have transmitted the incontrovertible message that democracy works and dictatorship does not¨ (*The Times*, 20 March 1989). Here it is important to note the contrast between such concepts as *vitality* and *democracy* of the West vs *dictatorship* that has proved wrong and ineffective of the East. Again, it should be stressed that such reference to Poland and other Eastern Bloc countries is absolutely legitimate. What is important is that this image became deeply-rooted in the readers´ minds and it was very difficult to change it (even though the situation in these countries changed), as will be seen from the comparison with the later years.

The article under the title ¨Unfinished Business¨ of August 29, 1990 dedicated to the suppression of further stirrings after the Romanian revolution of 1989 reads: ¨There is much talk… about making Romania an enlightened, high technology outpost in the Balkans. This melts into insignificant chatter as soon as clubs are used against demonstrators" (*The Times*, 29 August 1990). The mere usage of the word ¨clubs¨ indicates that law-enforcement bodies in this country are uncivil and undemocratic. Moreover, "the talk… about making Romania enlightened" presupposes already that it is not yet so, hence dark and ignorant.

As seen from the examples belonging to the second time period already discussed in connection with other issues, only the attitude towards Poland has really changed, while other countries continued to be deemed inferior regardless of numerous positive changes that took

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place, which after all allowed them to be at least formally accepted in the EU[8]. For example, Poland started to be associated with such concepts as *the West*, *the Continent*, *civilization[9]*, whereas Romania and Bulgaria were discussed in connection with *corruption*, including in the sphere of justice, and *crime*; Latvia in terms of a large number of people immigrating to Britain and the financial crisis that hit this (and many other countries for that matter) country. I would like to emphasize that, of course all these issues existed, which contributed to the negative construction of the overall image, but also there were many positive things that somehow were overlooked, for example, the developments in science and technology, industry, education etc., hence stereotyping.

It is also important to consider the overall tone used by the editor to talk about Eastern Bloc, which is rather negative. This can be demonstrated by the abundant use of words with a negative connotation, such as *chaos*, *bankrupt*, *uncertainty*, *despair*, *repression*, *puppets* (of communist regime), *crisis*, *economic difficulties*, *foreign debt*, *shortages of food*, *troubles*, *unrest*, *ills* etc (*The Times*, 1989-1990). Such word choice can be explained by the objective reasons, i.e., the fact that the countries of the Eastern Bloc were actually undergoing a combination of political and economic crises which resulted in the change of the whole system and hence, the way of thinking about and perceiving reality not only by the people in the countries concerned but by the international community, in general. At the same time, such frequent use of negative words reflects the overall attitude of the author and intensifies the effect on the addressee, facilitating to make a distinction between the prosperous and all-knowing ¨us¨ and poor awkward ¨them¨ and drawing boundaries. Consider, for instance, the range of adjectives and nouns used to describe Romania and its people: *isolated*, *downtrodden*, *pitiable*, *inward-looking*, *secret*, *unhappy*, *devastated*, *corrupt*, weakened by

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[8] It seems that mainly for the reason of the presence or absence of such positive changes some countries were admitted in the EU, while others, such as Belarus, Ukraine or Russia are out of the question.
[9] This observation is in line with Sztompka´s comment about a gradual erosion of borders that divided Eastern European countries, including Poland from their Western counterparts (Sztompka 2004).

continuous *ethnic tensions*, *a muddle*, *on the rack*, *starving*, a country *physically sealed off from the world*, *a police state* (*The Times*, 1989-1990).

Hungary was described in a very similar manner, e.g., the author talks about living ¨on the brink of financial crisis¨ and ¨below subsistence level¨ (*The Times*, 18 December 1989). The author also often talked about ¨Poland's ills¨, ¨Poland's troubles¨, ¨the shadow of despair¨, ¨many uncertainties¨ (Aug 16, 1989). Even though this description was quite objective, the use of such language merely created a barrier in people's minds and persuaded them that regardless of numerous internal problems their nation was superior in many ways.

However, there were instances of a different tone and attitude towards Poland, Hungary and Lithuania, for example. The former's government, for instance, was described as ¨imaginative¨ and ¨intriguing¨ (*The Times*, 10 February 1989). Life in Hungary, according to the article of March 17, 1989 was ¨hard but tolerable¨. The descriptions of Lithuanian's struggle for freedom also instill hope and belief for the nation´s promising bright future. From this it can be inferred that these countries, once free of their communist ¨slavery¨ could be potentially considered as future allies. These latter examples also suggest the possibility of change of the image that was formed during transition, which as has been pointed out by Graber, happens only in extreme situations. However, transition may be considered as time during which on the one hand representations became more evident; on the other hand, the existing ideas of what these countries and their people were like were challenged due to a radical change in the system that had prevailed for decades.

The idea about the population of the Eastern Bloc countries in both time periods was constructed in terms of such concepts as *courage*, *determination*, *persistence*, *resistance*, *boldness*, *resistance*, *strength*, *nationalism* etc. (*The Times*, 1989-1990; 2009-2010), which suggests a positive attitude of the editor towards these countries' representatives and as a

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result, the potential for the change towards the countries in general[10]. For instance, with regard to Romanians the author kept stressing their courage because regardless of the numerous dangers, they decided to take matters in their own hands and change the existing situation. They were described as "people hungry for change" (*The Times*, 17 January 1990), "people who could bear no more" (*The Times*, 23 December 1989), people "with extraordinary courage" (*The Times*, 21 December 1989), "a nation that has been known more for its stoic forbearance than for its defiance" (*The Times*, 23 December 1989).

The Polish were portrayed as a resilient nation determined to change the existing state of events: ¨The popular, if passive, resistance to communism has probably been greatest and more consistent in Poland than in any other part of Eastern Europe¨ (*The Times*, 19 August 1989). Then again, in the article ¨Poland's Big Bang¨ devoted to the grievous economic situation, the author expressed respect to these people by saying that ¨Poles, whose already low incomes are expected to fall by a fifth before recovery sets in, are taking the medicine quietly, even proudly. They have made the connection between freedom and the free market¨ (*The Times*, 9 February 1990). He also admired the unprecedented ¨speed¨ and the ¨boldness¨ of the reforms taking place in the country at that time, saying that ¨Poland is doing what no country has tried to do¨ (*The Times*, 9 February 1990), that it ¨blazed a free market economic trail more radical than any other of its neighbors¨, that its has always been ¨in the vanguard of resistance¨ and showing ¨no sign of slackening¨ (*The Times*, 1 May 1990) and finally, that it was ¨a pioneer of liberation¨ (*The Times*, 27 November 1990). From this it can be inferred that the representatives of the nation were deemed extremely intelligent, courageous, enterprising, patient but most importantly, adamant to change the current situation: ¨The determination to face down the risks and criticisms attending its bold economic experiment is the country's most notable message to its neighbors¨ (*The Times*, 1 May 1990). In this way, the editor also

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[10]   This somehow contradicts Wiarda´s claim that all Eastern Europeans are viewed by the Westerners as strange and unintelligent (Wiarda 2002).

contrasted Poland with its more passive and cautious neighbors (theme 2).

This positive image of Eastern Bloc's population is further sustained in the articles dedicated to Hungary, where the editor resorted to a quote by Solzhenitsyn to sketch Eastern Europeans as a whole and Hungarians in particular. He wrote that ¨societies which have been benumbed for half a century by lies they have been forced to swallow, find themselves a certain lucidity of heart and soul which enables them to see things in their true perspective and to perceive the real meaning of events¨ (*The Times*, 6 October 1989). This suggests a certain admiration for the people and the acknowledgement of their character, intelligence and shrewdness, which is in line with the description of the Romanians and the Poles as people full of potential struggling for a better way of life regardless. Lithuania was also represented as, on the one hand, vulnerable but, on the other hand, rebellious, resolute, willing to take risks, brave in its struggle for independence and the right to self-determination and full of ¨able people, committed to their cause and ready – nay, eager – to endure hardship¨ (*The Times*, 20 April 1990). Therefore, the overall impression of the people populating the Soviet Bloc in 1989-1990 was quite positive. Occasional negative remarks were inevitable, given the overall climate in which the people had to live for so many years. However, the main thing is that the people had had enough and were able and ready to fight for their rights to living in a free democratic society.

In 2009-2010, there were very few references to the CEE population in the articles so it is difficult to monitor the change in the construction of the idea of what post Soviet Bloc population is like according to the editor now. However, the few instances of reference to the people that were there are in line with the fairly positive descriptions that persisted in the first time period. For example, in the editorial ¨The Poll of Poles¨ from 2010 the Polish immigrants were referred to as ¨educated and ambitious, determined to work, save and send money home¨ (*The Times*, 6 July 2010). In another article, ¨Once more, with Riga¨ about numerous Latvians

fleeing to the UK in search of better salaries, the editor provided examples of famous Latvians who had an important impact on the world's culture and science: ¨We should welcome Latvians warmly for all that they have contributed to the world; and for what they might, therefore, contribute to Britain. The philosopher Sir Isaiah Berlin? A Latvian (though Churchill did, in error, once invite the composer Irving Berlin to discuss world affairs over lunch instead). The painter Mark Rothko? Born in Latvia. As was Sergei Eisenstein, the director of *Battleship Potemkin*. Nicolai Poliakoff, the creator of Coco the Clown, was Latvian. Mikhail Baryshnikov, the ballet dancer, was born in Riga¨ (*The Times*, 4 March 2010).

All of the above shows that the construction of former Eastern Bloc countries´ reality and its development during the twenty years period from the collapse of the Soviet system until recently went along two parallel paths. On the one hand, the countries received a rather negative portrayal which was quite objective considering these countries´ past and the hardships they had to endure in the course of transition. At the same time, it seems that the same events could be discussed in a slightly different light as well. Instead of drawing the readers´ attention to negative aspects of transition, the editor could have pointed out the promising future that the collapse of the Soviet system brought about. This allows me to speak about the creation of a negative stereotype created by the newspaper. This stereotype remained in 2009-2010, when mostly negative sides of the New Europe members were emphasized, with the exception of Poland. At the same time, the editor created a positive image of the people which was sustained throughout the whole period. This may suggest the possibility of the change of stereotype. The portrayal of the people as capable and ready to effectuate changes creates a more positive image of the countries they come from in general.

4. Attempts at Western Ideological Hegemony towards the Eastern Bloc.

In this part of the analysis I am trying to provide evidence that the West wanted to

impose their will and mode of development over Eastern Bloc politics, which did not yield the most optimal results in 2009-2010.

On the whole, the editor suggested that Britain, on behalf of the West, should adopt a kind of paternalistic attitude towards Eastern European countries and employed such concepts as *help*, *assistance*, *foreign [Eastern European] policy* (*The Times*, 1989-1990). The numerous suggestions made by the editor on behalf of the Western nations were linguistically framed so as to show the superiority and the all-knowing authority of the latter. Such a position is of course justified by the fact that historically the West has always been associated with freedom and democracy and has been more advanced in the political and economic issues. However, the idea behind the examples that are analyzed further in this research is that it was necessary, according to the editor, for the Soviet Bloc countries to adopt the Western liberal and neo-liberal mode of conducting politics and dealing with numerous economic problems. These examples taken from the editorials dealing with the Solidarity movement in Poland clearly demonstrate this: ¨Solidarity **must be allowed** to initiate legislation¨, ¨the president **must not** abuse his powers¨, ¨Solidarity and other political and social organizations **should be allowed** to raise funds¨, ¨Solidarity **must find** its identity quickly¨, ¨Solidarity **must think** through its future, old economic monopolies… **should be challenged** politically¨, ¨Poland **does not need** this form of negative democracy, democratic forms **have to** be learnt¨, ¨Poland **needs** ideas even more than cash¨, ¨Solidarity then **will have to develop** alternative means of putting pressure on the government¨, ¨it **will have to reach** across the generations¨ etc. (*The Times* 1989-1990). Not only does the writer use the modal verbs of advice and necessity, such as *should* and *need*, but also *must* and *have to*, which imply strong obligation and duty. The editor seemed to be convinced that with Western guidance (and in this way the all knowledgeable West was again opposed to the incompetent East) it will be possible to bring about change for the better. Consider how the editor stressed the importance of the

Western aid in this way emphasizing its superiority in ¨Poland on the Brink¨ of August 12, 1989 about the new Solidarity government and its goals: ¨Helping Poland to march towards the market is now a matter of political urgency. Without Western support, the Solidarity government could well fail, and failure in turn would destroy East European hopes for reform based on power sharing¨ (*The Times*, 12 August 1989). This quote implies several things. First, the idea that the East is helpless and incapable of solving its problems on its own. Second, the West possesses power, competence and expertise to spare the countries of the Eastern Bloc of all their problems[11]. Nevertheless, the overall favorable attitude of the West towards Poland even allowed speaking about the acceptance of Poland into the European Community. Consider, for instance, how this idea was introduced in the article ¨The Polish question¨ about the Polish-German border and a large number of Poles immigrating to Germany after its unification: ¨Many Germans fear a further huge influx of Polish immigrants after reunification. The long-term answer is, of course, to make Poland a member of the European Community, so that migrant Poles are evenly spread throughout Western Europe¨ (*The Times*, 18 July 1990).

Thus, the editor explicitly proposed a certain way of action that he considered to be justified in the current circumstances and used the specific language to intensify the effect. It is important to remember, however, that since the target audience of the newspaper is British, the aforementioned means were used to convince the local population in the idea that Britain was a progressive knowledgeable superpower that was able to devise an appropriate way of action in any difficult situation. This latter implicit claim is in line with Said's contention that the description of the ¨Other¨ in one, generally negative, way implies that ¨we¨ are completely

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[11] Naturally, there was a lot of truth to it. However, it seems problematic that namely Western way of development would be good for the countries in question. A possibility of an alternative course of action more suitable for these countries, taking into account their history and specificities, was out of question, which casts a shadow on the whole benevolent attitude of the West to merely provide a helpful hand rather than nudge them towards imply switching camps.

the opposite (Said 1981).

This issue persisted in the articles devoted to Romania. It again showed in the active use of modal verbs of obligation and strong advice (see above). Moreover, in the article ¨An End of Tyranny¨ dedicated to Romanian revolution of 1989 which put an end to Ceauscescu's rule, the editor explicitly puts forward an idea that "If the West had been more attentive to them [the Romanians] sooner, their suffering might have been shorter. In formulating a new policy for a new Europe in the East, it is a lesson for the West to remember" (*The Times*, 23 December 1989). The last sentence also indicates that the West was going to take active part in shaping the New Europe. The incentives for doing that, as I have already mentioned, are rather dubious. This former idea can also be backed by the quote taken from ¨Unfinished Business¨ of August 29, 1989: "The West can ease Romania's way to the modern world in the same way as it is assisting the rest of Eastern Europe." (August 29, 1990). The latter statement refers to the countries in the former Soviet Bloc in general and sums up the way the author felt about the role the West could play in the development of the East and its progression towards the developed world.

The natural outcome of such a situation was many countries´ accession in the EU in the 2000s. Yet, as suggested by the editor, these countries´ economies – with the exception of Poland - and the overall political climate did not exactly match the standard. Formally, these countries are integrated, but in effect, they are not, which challenges the efficiency and, most importantly, the motives of the West to take an active part in ¨helping¨ the East to solve their numerous problems in various aspects of their political economic and social life.

To conclude this theme, the above examples indicate the general policy of the West to ¨convert¨ the countries with the Soviet background into staunch western followers in all respects. Yet, the results that this course of action brought about twenty years after suggest that it was not the best way out for CEE and that, perhaps, the West did not really have the

interests of the former Eastern Bloc countries at heart. Instead, it wanted to create a stringent opposition towards other important opponents, for example, Russia.

Therefore, the analysis of the main themes, concepts and the editor's attitude suggests that *The Times* tried to sustain the image of the East as an alien, stranger, if not an enemy (as shown on the example of a couple of articles). This is especially revealed in the uncovering of the East-West demarcation theme, the construction of the nations as underdeveloped and incompetent and the general negative tone that prevails in the majority of the articles. At the same time, from the overall creation of the image of the people as able fighters for their rights, overly intelligent, hardworking and talented, and the construction of the image of Poland as a country that has managed to overcome all the difficulties and become fully integrated in the Western society we can deduce that these twenty years have overall been critical in changing stereotypes and this process in still happening now.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the main aim of this research was to answer the question how the countries of the former Eastern Bloc were depicted in the Western press during transition in 1989-1990 and how it changed over time – whether these countries became fully integrated in the EU. In order to achieve the aim I also set a number of objectives, such as to carry out a content analysis and compare which countries and topics were mostly thematized in two time periods in 1989-1990 and 2009-2010 and trace how this evolved as the countries adjusted to the new post Soviet reality; and to conduct qualitative analysis and reveal how the image of the Eastern Bloc was constructed and how it changed in twenty years´ time. In order to accomplish this I identified which themes, concepts and attitudes contributed to the Eastern image creation and whether and how they developed over time, which either would allow us to speak about these countries complete EU integration or not.

From the theoretical standpoint, this interdisciplinary research systematized the scattered knowledge about the construction of the image of the Eastern Bloc area in the West via, perhaps, the most powerful tool – the press. It also generalized the existing works concerning the problem of CEE´s EU integration. The practical part provided a powerful insight into the ways the boundaries were drawn between the East and the West and within the Eastern Bloc throughout the history and now. It also revealed the numerous inconsistencies in the Western perception of the CEE's internal geographical mapping, uncovered the image of the former Eastern Bloc from the perspective of its development from 1989-1990 to 2009-2010 and disclosed the Western attempt at ideological hegemony over the East.

In particular, the quantitative study demonstrated the change in mostly thematized countries and topics over the twenty years – while some of them were no longer discussed as non-existent or irrelevant for the 21st century - that of East Germany, Warsaw Pact and its the

regime crisis - new ones, more in line with the current EU integration processes appeared, e.g., the idea of New Europe and specific countries which are now considered separately from the political alliances they were in or larger geographical areas, e.g., Ukraine and Latvia.

The qualitative analysis unearthed the existence of a clear boundary between the East and the West in 1989-1990 and showed how the perception of who belongs to the East and who to the West changed in twenty years time. Apparently, Poland became fully accepted in the Western European community, while some countries, such as Romania, Bulgaria and Latvia remained EU´s poor Eastern relations. The analysis of the theme of the geopolitical mapping unfolded that while the West was fully aware of the political alliances between the former Soviet Bloc countries, their geographical details seem to be unimportant, which point to the stereotype of this area as something out there as a whole. The research also indicated two things: 1. active stereotyping of the ex Eastern Bloc countries; 2. a potential for a change of the Eastern Bloc countries´ image. In connection with the first idea, most of these countries received an overall negative portrayal in terms of their political and economic state in both time periods, which points to a deliberate creation of a negative stereotype of these countries. Transition, regardless of the fact that it was a difficult time for all Ex-Soviet countries, seems to be a positive development which allowed the countries in question to overcome their communist dictatorship-dominated past. With regard to the second issue, the description of the people as intelligent, talented, seeking, working towards change and bringing it about albeit numerous difficulties hints towards the idea that there is a good chance this overall perception of the area will change as the stereotype has been challenged namely due to the people.

Finally, the thesis unveils the Western attempts towards hegemony over the former Eastern Bloc countries on their disintegration from the Soviet system. The editor of *The Times* being the voice of one of Britain's political branches explicitly suggested a certain course of

action the newly emerged independent but somewhat lost countries should adopt. However, it seems that this advice was not so benevolent since the Western course of development was not the only way and it was important to take into account the specificity of each particular country and region in terms of their particular background, problems and aims. On the whole, the consideration of the significance of the attitude towards eastern reality instilled in the typical western media consumer provides a powerful insight into the general western policy towards the East at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century.

Unfortunately, due to the scope of this paper and a relatively short period of time for analysis, it seemed feasible to consider the point of view represented in only one newspaper, liberal in its political orientation. In the future, however, it might be more insightful to investigate editorials of the left and right mouthpieces, and in different Western countries. Moreover, for the same reasons, I focused on only the above two - year time periods, instead of one longer interval, for example, from 1989 to 2010, which seemed to be the most representative re the construction of images and their development. Also, an English-language newspaper was considered, which strictly does not allow us to speak about the Western press on the whole, but rather of an example of the Western press. In the future, however, it might be worth-while to analyze a range of newspapers from different countries to be actually able to speak about the Western representation and acceptance of the Eastern Bloc countries now in the 21st century as legitimate members of the European community.

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Appendix 1. Qualitative Analysis Data Body

The German Danger, 20 January 1989;
Dark Side of the Moon, 30 January 1989;
1956 and All That, 10 February 1989;
The New Solidarity, 10 February 1989;
Dividers and Leaders, 1 Match 1989;
Senate for Solidarity, 11 March, 1989;
Semi-detached Hungarians, 17 March 1989;
Poland´s Historic Compromise, 16 April 1989;
Freedoms at Issue, 19 April, 1989;
Quiet on the Eastern Front, 3 May 1989;
Ad Hoc Blocs, 13 May 1989;
Poles and Polls, 3 June 1989;
Bad Month for Marxists; 7 June 1989;
Arrival of the General; 10 June 1989;
Proper Parsimony, 12 July 1989;
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Number Engaged, 24 August 1989;
Hungary´s Economic Ills, 2 September 1989;
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Hobson´s Choice in Budapest, 18 December 1989;
Balkan Caligula, 19 December 1989;
Weeds Bearing Flowers, 21 December 1989;
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THE BALTIC AND THE WEST

The West has watched with admiration and alarm the *sang froid* of the people and Government of Lithuania in the face of President Gorbachov's unsubtle attempts to intimidate them. Yet the European Community and the United States have formulated no strategy for deterring what appears to be a crudely signalled Soviet *putsch* in Vilnius. The Kremlin might be forgiven for interpreting hesitation as the result of the same self-interest which led democracies to appease undemocratic opponents half a century ago.

It is nevertheless difficult to suggest concrete measures which a medium-sized power like Britain might take, without prejudicing its wider interests, to deter Soviet military intervention on the Baltic seaboard. Military action, even of a demonstrative kind, must be ruled out as hopelessly counter-productive.

Indeed, the official news agency, Tass, is already claiming that Nato warships have arrived in the Baltic. The Soviet propaganda offensive which would certainly accompany the overthrow of President Landsbergis would obviously make the most of Western subversion, in order to render more plausible Lithuania's alleged threat to Soviet security.

Economic sanctions would be equally counter-productive. The objections are familiar: inefficiency of enforcement, the improbability of a united front, the imperviousness of national politics to external economic aggression. West Germany, which has so much at stake in détente with the Soviet Union, would be unlikely to agree even to consider sanctions, despite ties with the Baltic states going back to the Teutonic Knights.

The Government cannot credibly threaten Moscow with anything more daunting than the traditional contempt of the British for the bully. Yet the Soviet President's credibility with the West is now on the line in Lithuania. Words, carefully chosen, may weigh no less on the scales of international politics than guns or butter, as Mr Gorbachov knows better than most. His first friend and foremost defender in the West, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, is the person best qualified to administer the warning that if the Soviet Union tramples on the Lithuanians' right to self-determination for the second time this century, he will cease to be "a man one can

do business with". There is no shortage of advice urging the Prime Minister to go easy on Moscow in this dispute. Apart from pro-Soviet voices on the left, who until recently used similarly spurious arguments to justify Soviet hegemony over central Europe, the most impressive argument for leaving Mr Gorbachov to his own devices in the Baltic states has come from Lord Home. He argues that it is in our interest to deal with a single, strong Soviet leadership. A weakened, let alone a toppled, Gorbachov would be a greater threat to Britain in the long term than a crushed Lithuania.

Yet even the most robust view of British interests must be inseparable from the values for which this country made such sacrifices half a century ago. The Baltic states were among the victims of the Nazi-Soviet alliance, which made Hitler's conquest of the European mainland possible: a conquest that obliged Britain first to fight alone, then to accept Stalin as an ally even while aware of his hideous crimes.

The Lithuanians have at last begun to heal their wounds. This they can only do if the Soviet authorities admit the illegality of its annexation and all that flowed from it.

Under the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, Lithuania — unlike Latvia and Estonia — was assigned to the German sphere of influence. Only after the German invasion of Poland was Lithuania reassigned to the Soviet sphere in exchange for a partition of Poland more favourable to Germany. Is it conceivable that Britain, which has never recognized Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic states, would fail to excoriate such bullying of Lithuania from the Germans? If not, present Soviet conduct should be treated as equally unacceptable.

British mandarins tried long and hard to make excuses for Stalin. Behind Mikhail Gorbachov, the ghost of Uncle Joe can still be seen stalking the Kremlin — and haunting some corridors in Whitehall. The Prime Minister, who last week used President Havel's visit to exorcise the spirit of Munich, can dispose of this demon too. She should leave Mr Gorbachov in no doubt that his claim to moral superiority over his predecessors depends on his treatment of Lithuania.

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From The Times

November 9, 2009

Over the Wall

The fall of the Berlin Wall was hailed as the dawn of a new freedom. Twenty years on, plenty still remains to do to realise those hopes in half of Europe

The German question would remain open as long as the Brandenburg Gate was closed, West Germans used to say. And then suddenly, twenty years ago, that gate was unexpectedly forced open — and the division that since the end of the Third Reich had cut Berlin, Germany and Europe in two collapsed. The Wall itself did not collapse: it was hacked to tiny pieces by thousands of incredulous Berliners. They chipped off the graffiti, opened huge holes in the reinforced concrete barrier and mocked the bemused East German police who stood around, unsure whether to shoot, flee or rejoice.

No one who was there will ever forget the extraordinary weekend that followed the rush to the Wall, the jostling of the Stasi guards, and the lifting of the barriers at the crossing-points. As the tottering East German regime imploded in demonstrations, bankruptcy and farce, its frustrated citizens streamed across in search of bananas, relatives and freedom. Nothing could rival the amazing television pictures. All who watched knew that this was history, spontaneous, chaotic and irreversible, in the making.

Today European leaders gather in a peaceful, united Berlin to commemorate the event, and to remind their continent that this was one of the few great convulsions of European history that happened almost bloodlessly. Tomorrow some of its architects, including Mikhail Gorbachev and Lech Walesa, the Soviet President and Polish opposition leader, will describe their roles in the chain of events that earned them Nobel peace prizes. By good fortune almost nothing went wrong. Moscow did not send in troops. The enfeebled communist leaders of eastern Europe did not — apart from the despicable Ceausescu — turn their guns on their people. Demonstrations did not turn into riots. German unification was negotiated between the wartime allies and their former enemy carefully and successfully, despite the doubts of Margaret Thatcher and President Mitterrand.

Unification has come at a price, however. Few in Bonn realised how costly would be the ruinous decision to exchange the East German mark at parity. No one in the West knew the scale of the country's foreign debt and industrial ruin, how hollow were its boasts and how polluted its landscape. It has taken two decades, the flight of three million people from the East and untold investment to try to repair 40 years of communist misrule. Even now eastern Germany is significantly poorer, with higher unemployment, than the west. But it has freedom. And who would have imagined then that the Chancellor of a confident and stable Western democracy celebrating this moment would be the daughter of an East German pastor?

But just as the Wall had become the overused symbol of a corrupt system that denied opportunity, liberty and justice, so its destruction was hailed as the precursor of prosperity across half a continent. That is not what happened. The end of communism brought also the collapse of stability, the unleashing of ancient hatreds, the unrealisable hopes of peoples unprepared for the 20th century and an explosion of crime and corruption. In much of the Balkans, politics reverted to the nationalisms before the First World War. Integrating the East into Nato and the European Union was a noble ideal. But it has been a hard and expensive task. There still remains a gulf between East and West.

European leaders in Berlin must look today at what has not yet been achieved. They must commit themselves to real political liberty, to compassionate capitalism and to a social tolerance compatible with European ideals. It is easy to see why the Wall had to go. It is not so easy to see the contours of the new freedoms.

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