The Image of a Country
created by International Media:
The Case of Bulgaria

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CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS
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INTRODUCTION

Motivation

Covering debates at the EU Parliament, the anchor of the BBC programme The Record Europe, Shirin Wheeler heard one of her interviewees say that Bulgaria and Romania meet the criteria to join the Schengen zone. With a sour face, she retorted "Yes, but some people have misgivings about these countries" and cut short the turn. The attempt to see more about the incident brought me to a BBC page whose content was "unavailable for your region (Bulgaria – E.T.)". The fact that those implicated with the discourse may not have access to it is an indication that the discourse is not based on reason and not oriented to understanding (Habermas 1965). Not only is Bulgaria the object of "misgivings" but Bulgarians are also banned from taking part in discussions about this. Cases like this are not infrequent, so I decided to study the image of Bulgaria in international media. What could have been said about my country to make it so distasteful to the world?

Bulgaria became a member of the European Union (EU) in 2007. Since then its citizens have been hoping to obtain full access to the labour markets in the EU countries – as stipulated in the constitutional documents of the Union - and to join the visa-free Schengen zone, like their European fellow citizens. However, several restrictions are in place and even more are being enforced. Each year several sanctions are imposed on the country by EU organs for failure to comply with different criteria. France, Germany, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Belgium have announced that they will delay Bulgaria's admission to the Schengen area, although Bulgaria fulfils the technical criteria to join. The attitudes to Bulgarian workers - and Bulgarians in general, do not appear positive. All the old members of the EU, except for Sweden maintain special regimes for Bulgarian workers in their countries. Moreover, websites are launched inviting people to complain about Bulgarians taking their jobs etc. A deluge of articles about the threat of Bulgarian immigrants to the UK flooded the British press in view of the lifting of the restrictions for Bulgarians in the UK in 2014. Several unpleasant observations about Bulgarian people were made, such as Farage's words: "Bulgaria is going through serious problems, endemic corruption, an economy that has flat-

lined, and I suspect their youngest and brightest will try to find work." The rhetoric against Bulgarians and their admission to the UK is said to have won the UK Independence Party a victory in a local by-election.

Another issue is that Bulgaria seems to be thought of in tandem with its northern neighbour, Romania. In the preparatory process before the accession to the EU, Romania was reported to lag behind for several criteria and Bulgarians feared the association might draw the country backwards. After the accession, the projected figure of the feared potential immigrants to the UK - 27 million - was dominated by the Romanian contribution, as the entire Bulgarian population is about 7 million. The scaremongering reports about the influx feature "a wave of Romanian crime", quoting that a large percentage of the pick pockets in London are Romanians. No such figures are given about Bulgarians; however, the country is stuck to its bigger and allegedly dangerous neighbour.

But where does this dislike for Bulgaria stem from? How do people create an image of a country without being in direct contact with it? International media have such a role to play. The BBC purports to 'bring the world to the UK'. However, several researchers, Weaver and Wilhoit (1984), among many others, argue that western media use their hegemonic power to construct negative images and media representations of underprivileged others: usually the less-developed countries. Their project – the New World Information Order – was rejected as trying to put boundaries to the freedom of speech. However, evidence resurfaces that Eastern Europeans are negatively represented and a study is in order to determine what images come across from the materials published by the respective media. Are they really negative, can the outcome of media coverage be monitored to weed out deliberate defaming of nations?

The research project

This book presents an attempt at developing an analytical mechanism for establishing the image of a country through media publications. The actual research lasted 7 years and explored material representative of the image BBC created for Bulgaria because it includes all the publications on the website for a period of 5 years – from 2007 to 2012. Three research methodologies are applied on the corpora: Content Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Methods. The methodology is evolved in the course of the research, feeding on a critical evaluation of its previous applications.

The research question is:

What image is created for Bulgaria on the website of the BBC?

The answer requires collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. To reach an answer, the following objectives are set:

1. To explore the quantity of material published about Bulgaria. Is it equal to that about other countries, does it follow the same agenda as that for other countries, are topics hidden from the audience and are others imposed by the medium?

2. What language is used to speak about Bulgaria – is it construed as an active participant in the discourses, or is it relegated to a circumstantial role? Are there nominative practices – idioms, titles, adjectives – which derogate the country? Are strategies of otherisation employed to the country?

3. What data emerge from extended collections of media texts? What topics or themes are suggested concerning the aboutness of the texts by Key Word lists? What collocational associations are made with the term BULGARIA in the corpus?

The BBC was selected for this in-depth study as a medium which specialises in the coverage of world news. It is a public broadcaster committed to public service rather than commercial gain, according to its charter (Royal Charter 2006). One of the aims proclaimed there is: "(4f) Bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK". Among the projected goals are "to build a global understanding of international issues by providing international news broadcasting of the highest quality and by enabling individuals to participate in the global debate on significant international issues". With a view of these aims and goals, the coverage of a country would have to project an image that reflects the reality so that the audience would be left with perceptions of the region that are not skewed in one direction or another.***

Unlike other agencies, like Reuters, BBC has no focus on one specific field, such as economics. Therefore, the coverage would be expected to bring a full-flooded picture of reality from all spheres of life.

A preliminary analysis established that other international media - CNN and Euronews - provide too little material for analysis. The CNN site offers 3 stories between 2007 and 2008, and they are all sports stories. It may be that Bulgaria is too distant and small for American broadcasters, in effect – a minute country on a different continent. At the same time, the website of Euronews does not provide a search engine allowing targeted searches. Nevertheless, for the first year of the study - 2007, no more than

6 materials were found. Therefore, going for the BBC was, indeed, the only option when looking for international coverage by a news medium.

Map of the Book

The research is presented in five stages, each set as a chapter. The first chapter outlines a review of image studies conducted by various disciplines and an account of theoretical concepts useful in such a venture. The second chapter presents content analysis as a tool for image studies. Several techniques are exploited to study the media material and the results are discussed with a view of their aptitude for the task of establishing the image of a country. The third chapter presents studies which apply Critical Discourse Analysis to media texts. The techniques are based on Systemic Functional Grammar Analysis. The Fourth Chapter shows corpus analysis and the contribution it gives to image studies. The Fifth Chapter draws the line summarising the contribution each of the proposed methods gives to establishing images and evaluates the methodology.

Theoretically, the research is situated on the interface between Media Studies and Discourse Analysis. The concept of a country's image created through media is very much within that theoretical domain. The object of the investigation is a medium and the tools are discourse analytical with reference to its critical dimension, inasmuch as the topic applies to a country which has been construed as a pariah on the international scene and issues of inequality and domination are expected.

CHAPTER ONE

IMAGE STUDIES

Terminological Disambiguation

A query in Google Scholar with search term IMAGE returns about 3,180,000 hits. Most often the term refers to "body image" – mainly associated with adolescents, girls, boys, dieting, masculinity etc. Secondly, IMAGE is associated with tourist destinations. References to "image" in the sense: "a mental representation due to any of the senses (not only sight) or to organic sensations" (Oxford English Dictionary 5a) are used in reference to the stature of mentally disturbed people, of various professions and only rarely – to the image of ethnic groups or countries. Whenever the image of a place is researched, more often than not the place is Africa and its inhabitants.

The term REPRESENTATION, for its part, returns fewer hits - 1,460,000. Most of them relate to cultural identity and the most quoted author is Stuart Hall. Not surprisingly, the identity under scrutiny is mainly that of people of colour.

Quite a few authors from sociology, cultural studies and discourse analysis take up Baudrillard's (1994:11) claim that the dramatic changes in the technology of reproduction have led to the implosion of representation and reality. Increasingly representation becomes dominant as "simulacra" are substituted for a reality that has little or no foundation in experience. He draws a contrast between simulation and representation. Whereas representation attempts to absorb reality by interpreting it as a false image, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as a simulacrum. Thus media bombard people with images thereby subconsciously sowing attitudes, while the audience is manipulated to believe these are their own impressions of the real thing.

At the recipient end – decoding the media message, Hall (1982) claims that people are not "cultural dopes", passively reading texts as the producers intended them to be read. However, educational initiatives (The Media Literacy Online Project, Centre for Media Literacy, to mention but a few) exist to teach members of the public to analyse the concept of

representation, to achieve a critical distance from what is shown on TV and what is printed in the media. Therefore, establishing that what people see in the media is, in fact, an image deliberately created for them and not the real thing requires an effort and does not take place automatically.

The process of representing people involves a specific type of re-contextualisation (van Leeuwen, 2009:148): a social reality is transposed into a discourse constrained by the specific angle of vision of the medium with its political views, economic entanglements etc. These images comply with the policies projected by the broadcaster/publisher and have often been shown to apply semiotic tools of power and domination.

In this study I employ the second meaning of image – a mental picture of a country created through media publications. I consider the term "image" synonymous to "representation", although the case can be made that an image is the result of representations. While "representation" harks to cultures and national identity, my agenda here bears a closer connection with what impressions about a country audiences are left with from exposure to media discourses.

A Nation's Image

The oldest line of discourses about public images belongs to Public Relations and Political Science. According to Kunczik (1990:44) "an image of a nation constitutes the totality of attributes that a person recognises (or imagines) when he contemplates that nation." He goes on to explain that such an image consists of three analytically distinguishable components - a cognitive component relating to what we know, an affective component relating to how we feel about the nation; and an action component that relates to actual behaviour towards the nation.

According to Scott (1965:72) the cognitive component is a person's subjective knowledge about a nation; the affective component is his or her like or dislike, approval or disapproval, or level of hostility toward a nation; and the behavioural component consists of a person's action tendencies towards a nation.

National image, then, is defined as the cognitive representation that a person holds of a given country and its people, what a person believes to be true about a nation. Of special importance to political action is the benevolence or malevolence imputed to other nations in the images, as well as the historical component of the image. Feelings about a country's future are also important (Kunczik 1990:10).

The important question for this research is how images are produced and broadcast to the world. Kunczik (ibid) further says that neither folk

learning nor science can shape adequate images of a nation, in his opinion – because of the complexity of the workings of the international system. By "adequate" scientists mean, he claims, a realistic image of the nation.

Dutta-Bergman (2006:104) suggests that images result from a deliberate effort on the part of governmental agencies:

> Public diplomacy involves the communication of a government to the people of another nation with the goal of influencing their image of the sender nation. To the extent that public diplomacy attempts to influence the perceptions and opinions of the members of the target state with respect to the image of the source (nation), it embodies a form of public relations.

Studies of Images

Over the years, several researchers have sought to study the image of countries, communities or issues, exploiting a vast array of methodologies lodged in different research paradigms. Among this rich variety, three strands can be discerned, classified here according to the theoretical frameworks that inform them. Firstly, Media Studies develop elaborate mechanisms which explore several aspects of media coverage: the intentions of the creators; the means they employ to highlight issues; audience response to media coverage of issues, such as ecological problems, negatively represented social groups like immigrants etc. The analytical tools they employ include "frame analysis", "priming" and "agenda setting", which draw attention to the fact that the media use – more or less effectively – techniques to highlight issues and set public agendas in favour of problems they see as important. Media theorists associate images with the power of the media to set the public agenda and throw into the limelight issues for discussion. Predictably, some are connected with electoral campaigns, while others highlight ecological problems, the status of science on the public arena etc. With the enhanced trend of migrations, various migrant groups come under scrutiny for the image they cut in the host society or the image of the host society in relation to their attitudes to the migrants. Yet other researchers seek to contribute to a public policy of creating an image for a community, a professional or ethnic group.

Secondly, Cultural Studies tackle issues of images in relation with what Stuart Hall (1997) calls representations. They are defined as "the way people make sense of reality". This means that representations are subjective and proceed from identities. Thus, boundaries are drawn in relation to a significant Other, where the representation stands in a meaningful relation to both subject and object of representation. It is

important to recognise the power of representations: the ways in which people are represented have real consequences as far as their lives, rights and positions in society are concerned.

Finally, Critical Discourse Analysis construes images from texts, exploiting an array of techniques to collect and analyse data, and to triangulate the findings. In the basis is the complex concept of Discourse and its specific relation to language and social realities. Emphasis is given to qualitative research which analyses phenomena deeply engraved in language but which bear impact on social structures. The researchers focus on media representations of ethnic or professional groups where bias is expected to exist, thus giving the analysis a partisan slant.

Following is a review of each of the three research approaches and the multitude of methods employed by the practitioners.

Media Studies

Weaver (2007:3) describes frame studies as an area of substantial growth after the year 2000, when researches using this methodology have more than doubled compared to the previous year. Frame analysis is a method borrowed from sociology and psychology to explicate the way we look at reality. This method stems from the work of the social psychologist Goffman (1974:11), who defines frames as "principles of organisation which govern the subjective meaning we assign to social events".

McQuail (2000) identifies two main meanings attributed to the term "frame". One refers to the way in which news content is typically shaped and contextualised by journalists within some familiar frame of reference and according to some latent structure of meaning. The second sense concerns the effect of framing on the public. The audience is thought to adopt the frames of reference offered by journalists and see the world in a similar way. This process affects agenda setting.

Goffman (ibid. 83) describes frames as comprising three parts:

- Primary frameworks – natural or social: guided doings – subject to social appraisal.
- Keys and keying – a key transforms one type of meaning into another, e.g. an expression of feeling into sarcasm.
- Designs and fabrications – induce a false sense of reality. "Intentional effort of one or more individuals to manage activity so that a party of one or more others will be induced to have a false belief about what it is that is going on."

Frames are obviously seen as formative factors which shape people's perception of reality. The way they affect media coverage is demonstrated, for instance, in Gamson and Lasch (1983). The authors describe five framing devices: (1) metaphors, (2) exemplars (i.e., historical examples from which lessons are drawn), (3) catchphrases, (4) depictions, and (5) visual images (e.g., icons). They are complemented with three reasoning devices: (1) roots (i.e., a causal analysis), (2) consequences (i.e., a particular type of effect), and (3) appeals to principle (i.e., a set of moral claims). In addition to those basically linguistic and argumentative features, the authors also study media practices, such as accepting or rejecting comments, using illustration etc., actions by sponsors and the reaction of the audience. Gamson (1989) reviews discourses on nuclear energy by looking at what he calls "media packages", which again include metaphors, catch-phrases and other symbolic devices employed in the discourse about the nuclear energy.

It appears that attitudes to objects are deciphered mainly through the language used to write about them. Avraham and First (2010) suggest that media analysis contributes factors that are mainly quantitative. They collate frame analysis and cultural studies, which they consider complementary. "...One of the theories relies on the discussion of representation (Hall, 1997), while using the ideological and semiotic analysis of the text; the other uses quantitative indicators to measure the representation.... The analysis was undertaken with an understanding of the existence of a dialectical relationship between media frames and mode of representation." Avraham and First conduct quantitative analysis of various types of TV coverage, of the voices that the TV channels select to broadcast and a qualitative analysis of identity formation issues and motifs which occur in the coverage. The authors conclude with the methods used for the symbolic extinction of the Other, such as suppressing coverage, including them in roles of Patient to the verbal action, lesser exposure etc.

Fair Representation of Nations

Within media studies, but with a close relation to International Relations, stands the UNESCO initiative for the New World Information Order (NWICO). It starts with studies of the image of Africa and poses the question about the correlation between wealth and access to public image. Researchers – mainly of African origin - track the image of Africa (Okigbo 1995, Ojo 2002, Salawi 2006). Not surprisingly, they reveal that mostly topics of wars, famine and various other disasters prevail in the coverage of the continent, metaphorically referred to as the Dark

Continent. The studies are largely partisan, proceeding from the assumption that Africa tends to be misrepresented, according to the respective researchers.

The initiative New World Information Order (NWICO) (MacBride, Sean et al. 1980) was purportedly aimed at a fairer representation of the developing nations in the media, but evolved into a multifaceted theoretical and political movement with serious repercussions on the world at large, such as Britain and the USA leaving the UNESCO. The NWICO debate was in full swing throughout the 1970s and 1980s of the twentieth century and reflected activities of the United Nations, and particularly - within UNESCO. One of its basic assumptions was a link between economic progress and the availability of information. Brown-Syed (1993) writes:

> ...liberal theorists maintained that national cultures and sovereignty were not threatened by information concentration, while structuralist and socialist analysts argued that they were. In particular, the NWICO proponents, mostly drawn from the ranks of non-aligned nations, claimed that Western ownership and control of both the news media and their distribution channels constituted a form of cultural dominance whose covert goal was capitalist economic expansion. This argument, played out in fora such as the Non-Aligned Movement and Unesco conferences drew support from the Soviet Union, and hostility from Western administrations. It was partly due to fears of the growing "politicization" of UNESCO that the United States and Great Britain withdrew from that organisation in the mid-1980s... The NWICO movement began as a protest over the concentration of print and broadcast media ownership among de facto cartels, and developed into an argument about the cultural dominance of poor nations by wealthy ones.

With reference to the current state of the world, Brown-Syed maintains that the problem of uneven world development has not disappeared with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In his opinion, "indeed, we in the West are provided daily with ample evidence that a whole segment of the globe - Eastern Europe - is almost as badly off as the so-called "developing" nations." Although he does not take the step to say that this translates into a new asymmetry in the spread of information, several arguments in his text lead us to believe so.

The methodologies of those researchers whose interest is Africa are based on frame studies. In one of the recent samples of this strand, Ogunyemi (2011) explores the representation of Africa on a specialised BBC website. He contrasts two paradigms according to the attitude: largely negative and mostly positive. By exploring the frames of reference of the users and moderators of the website, the sources of the information

and the editorial policies for allowing and rejecting comments, Ogunyemi concludes that the website repeats the frame of reference of "mainstream media". He suggests that if the website develops an improved understanding for Africa and its culture, it would be better able to shake off the tendencies suggested by the "mainstream media".

The researchers in this vein seem to split the media into two large groups: "mainstream" – American or European - opposed to "local", African. Semantically, the antonym of "mainstream" should be "peripheral". But then the concept clashes with the fact that if the object of representation is Africa, then African media would be central, not peripheral. Such discourse, in effect, grants focal status to European and American media, and tacitly endorses the fact of their wider influence over world audiences, creating the "mainstream picture" of the world. Brown-Sayed (1992) actually articulates it that being in control of the major international media, the West broadcasts an image of the East – be it the Orient, or Eastern Europe - which reflects its own semiosis of what the East represents. How that fits in with the self-evaluation of the East and what significance it has for the self-definition and progress is the issue at stake for this research. Whether this type of representing others is in the basis of discrimination and social inequality is a question to answer.

The argument for a much more balanced – and less biased - representation of poor nations was dismissed at the end of last century as an infringement on the freedom of speech of the rich nations. However, my research appears to raise the question again: is it true that a bad image befits a poor country and are richer nations in their right to broadcast negative images of those less affluent than themselves?

Cultural Studies

The second strand of image studies is informed by Cultural Studies and the concept of "representation". The researches present what images come across as a result of media publications about countries, professional and ethnic groups or issues in public life. For example, the Swedish research project on "Media and European Identity: National or Regional Media Perceptions of the USA?" (Hammarlund and Riegert 2011) traces the discursive image of the USA in the elite media of five European countries: France, Finland, Sweden, Germany and Russia. It studies media publications through the period of the Cold War under President Reagan until six months after the installation of President Obama. The purported aim of the project is to establish a European identity evolving in comparison to a significant Other (America) and as a conscious effort of

media organisations. The media are presented as "fodder for identity processes", which plays a key role in the production and circulation of ideas, nurturing local, national and transnational communities' sense of themselves, often through identifying those who they are not. The method is qualitative content analysis, where the textual analysis is based on a schema categorising various aspects of the journalistic discourse.

The researchers look at metaphors used to describe America, such as "the Space Cowboy", "the gum chewing American soldier", "the benign benefactor" etc. Recurring themes are also analysed, such as the cold war, disarmament etc. Additionally, an assessment is offered of how active or passive the USA appears in various contexts. Predictions and consequences of events America is involved in are also explored. In addition to these – in effect, analyses of mostly linguistic phenomena, argumentation schemes are subjected to analysis as well. Lines of argument for and against political doctrines, such as multilateralism, multiculturalism are traced in the publications. Public figures such as presidents are analysed, and roles attributed to their actions through different journalistic genres are discussed. The research mechanisms make it possible to discern the explicit or implicit use of symbols and narratives adopted by writers and political actors to characterise the USA and its presidents.

The co-ordinators conclude that "although few clear signs of a common European public sphere are observed and some countries' media are "more European" than others (Risse 2010; Wessler et al., 2008), taken together, the broad similarities in the paradigms and characteristics used to depict the USA seem to affirm a European identity, but also an image of America which is multifaceted and informed by different beholding eyes".

An interesting feature worth mentioning in view of the subject of the current research is the fact that the research on all the countries for the study is conducted by scholars native to the country under scrutiny with the exception of Russia, which is studied by Swedish investigators.

The impression, then, is that the research explores similar – if not identical – language units to frame analysis. Images are seen as projected by the language of the publication, including metaphors and rhetoric. It also seems that the validity of studies of this kind depends on the selection and sampling of the material and on the judgement of the researchers. The closest Cultural Studies research gets to verification is that opinions from two or more raters are compared to get an objective evaluation of a piece of material.

Discourse Analysis

Firstly, I discuss semantic threads in the definitions of discourse, all of which feed into a framework of discussing images. One strand (Schiffrin 1994:41) claims that discourse is a layer in the hierarchic organisation of language activity, with small units like lexemes at the bottom and big and complex formations such as discourse – at the top. Another semantic thread in the definitions places this basically linguistic phenomenon within several socio-linguistic concepts such as genres, situational contexts, participants and their roles. Thereby discourses present the interplay between linguistic and social features.

From the multitude of definitions, Fairclough's is the one embraced by Discourse Analyists (2009:164): "Discourses are semiotic ways of construing aspects of the world (physical, social or mental) which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors".

From a practical point of view Foucault's (1972: 109) definition – or narrative description – suggests that discourse compounds all the documents in society about a certain topic. This observation highlights the fact that to detect attitudes, the researcher needs to collate data from various sources and documents as one instance may be misleading. Reisigl and Wodak (2009:93) also make the point that different materials need to be analysed in order to shed light on an aspect of social life. Additionally, Wodak places the requirement for different analytical methods to be employed in order to achieve maximal reliability. In this way, the data can be used to reinforce or reject the conclusions.

Fiske (1996:3) points out that discourse analysis differs from linguistic analysis in focusing on what statements are made rather than how they are made. Discursive analyses, therefore, do not trace the regularities and conventions of discourse as a signifying system, but engage with "analysing what statements were made and therefore what were not, who made them and who did not, and with studying the role of the technological media by which they were circulated." He suggests that discourse should never be abstracted from the conditions of its production and circulation.

Thus, the various levels of language, combined with the specific context of producing them add up to create a picture of the world encoded in discourses. Discourse analysis then needs to delve into the layers and discover what lies hidden. Wodak (1995:204) claims that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) takes up the task of unravelling "opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language". This is the reason why the

specific type of discourse analysis dealing with such relationships is part of Critical Science. Social injustice is in the focus of Critical Social Science. It presents social reality as "conceptually mediated" (Marsden 1999), where the mediation of those less lucky is less favourable than they can expect. Fairclough (2009) specifies that CDA targets social ills such as inequality, manipulation and discrimination. Van Dijk (2006:362) claims that symbolic elites such as politicians, journalists, scholars, teachers and writers are in control of most influential public discourses, that is, play a special role in the reproduction of dominant knowledge and ideologies in society. Prejudice is socially acquired and the symbolic elites promote its acquisition through public discourses, where the source of shared ethnic prejudice and ideologies lies (Van Dijk, 1993). Therefore, CDA is characterised with a specific partisan position – taking the side of those discriminated against, those oppressed and dominated.

Another addition to the amalgam of multidisciplinary methods is Historical Discourse Analysis, where media coverage is compared to historical evidence (Reisigl and Wodak 2009). The trustworthiness of the researches is based on the fact that data from several different sources are analysed, using an eclectic mix of analytical procedures – the discourse in brochures, interviews with participants and witnesses of the processes etc. This approach was first developed in order to trace the constitution of an anti-Semitic stereotyped image, or "Feindbild" as it emerged in public discourse (particularly press reporting) in the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim.

The historical dimension of discursive acts in historical and political topics and texts is addressed in two ways: first, the discourse-historical approach attempts to integrate all available information on the historical background and the original sources in which discursive "events" are embedded. Second, it explores the ways in which particular types and genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change, as has been shown in a number of previous studies.

In another study Wodak and Meyer (2001:72) conclude that four types of discursive strategies are associated with nations and national identities: constructive, helping create or consolidate national images; preservative or justificatory strategies, transformative strategies, aiming at changing an existing image, and destructive strategies. Analytically, three interrelated dimensions are explored: (1) contents/topics; (2) strategies; (3) linguistic means and forms of realisation.

Particularly useful is the concept of *topoi*. Thus Classical Greek Rhetoric enriches the array of techniques wielded by Discourse Analysts. *Topos* is a term introduced by Aristotle in his Rhetoric (Roberts 1994). Its

translation and definition is a contentious issue because Aristotle never defined it properly. For the purposes of CDA, Wodak and Meyer (2001:82) define *topoi* as the rules for deriving conclusions from their premises, quoting Kienpointner (1997). They claim that the *topos* of burdening, for instance, can be reduced to a conditional of the type "if a person is burdened by a specific problem, then they should be relieved of them". They use Aristotle's list of *topoi* to illustrate the image of foreigners in the Austrian press.

Frame analysis was mentioned above as a typical approach applied by Media Studies. In fact, Discourse Analysis also employs frames to deal with political discourse. Van Dijk (1998) commends Gamson's (1992) approach, because the media play a central role in framing public issues. Media frames are "largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organise the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports". In effect, frames appear to be analysed via forms that are either linguistic – metaphors, catchphrases etc, or rhetorical – premises and conclusions. That is why the amalgam of media frame analysis and discourse studies is particularly beneficial and practised by a number of researchers and research teams.

Image Studies of Immigrants and Eastern Europeans

Scott (2009:535) points out that "as globalization and migration continue to encourage the interaction of different peoples and cultures, so the media portrayal of different parts of the world plays an increasingly important role in either discouraging or promoting respect for other cultures".

No studies of the image of Bulgaria have been conducted as such. That is why for the literature review I expand the object of investigation into a larger focus – Eastern Europe and immigration. Recently Eastern Europeans have split from the former communist bloc and are trying to integrate into the community of European nations, be it by adopting "Western values", abandoning Russian dictate or by virtually immigrating to the West. The latter process has caused many problems and raised panicky reactions from the West. The policies of looking at this situation have given rise to new nationalisms, elevating Western national identities and blaming the Easterners for invading the West and plundering its social systems of welfare. The discourses of this are becoming more and more dominant and Easterners see their image in the West more and more vilified.

RAS and RASIM

Baker et al (2008), working on a project funded by the UK government, compile corpora from articles in the British media on the issue of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants (RASIM). Employing methodology from CDA and Corpus Linguistics (CL), they study the co-text in which these words and phrases occur. They establish the collocates of all the four terms and elicit conclusions about attitudes to these people sown by the press with the articles in the corpus. The fact that most of the collocates belong to the category Entry/Residence/ Provenance/Transit/Destination suggests that in the British press there is a preoccupation with immigrants entering and staying in the UK. The most frequent verb used for these people – *flee* – leads to the conclusion that these activities have been planned and are not a spontaneous reaction. The abundance of quantifiers suggests that the number of these people causes serious concerns to British society. The extensive use of water metaphors, for its part, "tends to dehumanise RAS (Refugees and Asylum Seekers – E.T.), constructing them as out of control, agentless, unwanted natural disaster" (ibid:287). The discourses of immigrants leave the impression that a narrow scope of topics is discussed and the tone is generally negative.

Racism and Xenophobia

Ter Wal (2002) in a large-scale study of European media, commissioned by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia in Vienna, claims that for the 80s of last century the press has been accused of racist attitudes, even with the potential of inciting xenophobia among the reading public. The report on media and cultural diversity in the British media is done by Paul Statham and includes three sections: coverage, topics and sources; themes, framing and labelling; and media initiatives for promoting cultural diversity. Overall, Statham finds that there has been "an improvement in standards of journalism regarding the representation of minorities relative to previous decades."

With an adverse opinion, the eminent journalist Yasmin Alabai Brown is quoted saying:

> Many features of the earlier period remain stubbornly in place. Immigration is still discussed in terms of numbers and problems, 'black' families are still pathologised and 'Asians' in general only considered worthy of media interest if they can be shown to be 'culturally backward', if they are victims of racism or, less frequently, if they have made good as

hard working immigrants…. But even in the 1990s only the most pessimistic would argue that nothing has changed. Most obviously it has, and in the direction that was sought by those who were campaigning back in the 1970s and 1980s.

Statham's report highlights the following assessments of racism in the British press:

- an overall "not guilty" verdict from a study that aimed to judge the contents of media reporting on "race" in the 1997 British election against the charges of reproducing racial stereotypes and marginalising minority and anti-racist voices;
- British migrants and minorities receiving significant news space to make their own political claims in the press;
- a greater level of representation of minorities on British television programmes compared to earlier times;
- difficulties in producing ethnic minority programming and limitations in employing minorities at senior levels within the broadcasting industry;
- in part due to the increasing market-driven commercial pressures facing public and independent broadcasting.

Among the observations is that "public broadcasting (BBC) in general gives more coverage to ethnic relations and immigration issues than independent broadcasting." In effect an official obligation exists under the Race Relations Acts to promote equal opportunities. Addmittedly, space for "race issues" is provided in specialised news programmes, rather than in those aimed at general audiences. "Populist formats of broadcasting" are observed to contain fewer topics treating race problems. Newspapers, for their part, are not shown to have specialist reporters who cover "race". Issues relating to immigration and ethnic relations are covered by Home Affairs, Crime and Law correspondents.

The conclusions elicit that a major frame for the British press has been "Racism is wrong". Almost 40% of the news items researched for the report "actively exposed racism and racial discrimination". This high percentage holds across broadcasting and print media. The popular press contains a higher proportion of coverage that exposed racism - nearly 45%, which presents a reversal in populist tendencies in those media. Still, racist news items were established in the tabloid press (around 33%, compared to 24% in the broadsheets). However, these attitudes are demonstrated towards the native minorities.

There is a strongly negative attitude to immigrants and asylum seekers: 16% anti-immigrant themes versus 2.8% pro-immigrant themes). Recurrent anti-immigrant themes have been: demanding the reduction of migrant rights; immigrants as a burden on the welfare state; and a general topic of migrants as dishonest people (e.g. using false passports) and "bogus". Stereotypes include the qualifications "cheats", "bogus", ungrateful, and as "scroungers". The researchers find that such attitudes help improve racial relations in Britain by including local minorities in the "in-group" – or "us", leaving immigrants in the "out-group" – "they". The situation in the broadsheets is different – pro-immigration themes dominate.

The report also reveals measures taken to increase the coverage of racial topics, as well as making sure that staffing policies "reflect the diversity of British society", that is – more people from the minorities are employed in the media. In the year 2000, a charity called Presswise (http://www.presswise.org.uk) set up a special website that issues guidelines to journalists for covering sensitive topics relating to asylum and produces an e-mail bulletin monitoring recent incidents of reporting under the Refugees, Asylum-seekers and the Mass Media (RAM) programme.

Philosophical Premises

In a study of the philosophical premises of immigrant attitudes, Balabanova and Balch (2012) claim that a considerable body of work focuses on media framing of immigrants and minorities. There immigrants are associated with disease and insecurity, crime, rioting, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, welfare sponging, religious fanaticism and terrorism – topics far from pleasant or flattering for the people who have chosen to seek work elsewhere. Balabanova and Balch argue that "instead of criticizing how media frame certain groups such as immigrants themselves (for example, with racist stereotyping), attention needs to be paid to the deeper, ontological, framing which operates to inform or legitimise the ways in which 'the other' is subsequently portrayed." In their study, the researchers identify two approaches to immigration – communitarian and cosmopolitan: the former conceives society as a closed system where closed borders are a precondition for justice, while the latter favours open borders and questions the right of governments to put checks on the right of individuals to cross national borders (references in Balabanova and Balch 2012:384). In articles from Bulgarian and British newspapers the two authors look for expressions of either viewpoint. The research framework posits Bulgaria as a mainly "sending" country, while the UK – as a "receiving" one.

Strangely enough, in both countries the communitarian outlook vastly outweighs the cosmopolitan. The subdivision of arguments reveals a predominance of the arguments in favour of social justice, followed by concerns about the welfare and economic arguments. The UK press is established to broadcast the concern that "[immigration] has increased unemployment among Britons, as well as keeping wages low for less skilled jobs. Schools, hospitals and GPs also come under pressure". The diametrically opposite view that immigration benefits economic growth is also significantly presented in the corpus. The liberal press – Guardian and Independent - are established as proponents of cosmopolitan theses, claiming that immigration "changes attitudes, broadens outlooks and boosts the global economy".

The Bulgarian subcorpus, for its part, appears to have adopted the UK view that free labour movement should be restricted because of the high education, housing, welfare etc. costs. Such theses are countered with data that very few Bulgarians actually migrate to the UK. Bulgaria is also presented as raising its own level of control over the process. The costs to Bulgaria as a sending country are a dominant theme. The argument that Bulgaria exports criminality to the UK is vehemently refuted.

As a whole, Balabanova and Balch establish that most of the immigration themes are imported into the Bulgarian corpus, including patriotic prioritisation and cultural protectionism. In the cosmopolitan vein, some articles "pointed out the hypocrisy that many reluctant "receiving" countries (mainly the UK) were also a source of emigration. An article in Sega (8 November 2006), for example, complained that "Brits" expect other people to be happy about their presence and at the same time to beg them for reciprocal hospitality". Significantly, this section of the researched papers quotes mainly foreign leaders, e.g. Tony Blair refusing to live in a closed society.

In general, it transpires that the British press does present immigrants as an isolated group, often accused of victimising public social funds and the life and identity of locals. Even Bulgarian media adopt the "closed community" attitude, admitting that a society has the right to impose restrictions on outsiders suspected of infringing on its liberties.

Content Analysis as an Essential Part of Media analysis

The research question what image is created for Bulgaria with publications in British media can only be answered if quantitative and qualitative methods are combined. While qualitative methodologies dive below the surface to find what lies hidden in the linguistic forms, quantitative analysis shows the prevalence of topics in the coverage of a country in a numeric relation. Bryman (2004:183) defines Content Analysis (CA) as "an approach to the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of pre-determined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner." Thus, an earlier definition (Markoff, Shapiro and Weitman 1975:5) claims that CA performs "systematic reduction of a flow of text to a standard set of statistically manipulable symbols representing the presence, the intensity, or the frequency of some characteristics relevant to social science".

Admittedly, CA is not among the most sophisticated instruments for analysis. Counting is considered mechanical and easily bypassing significant facts hidden beneath the surface of numbers. Moreover, its origins are believed to be rooted in "the work of propaganda analysts and journalists" (Markoff et al 1975:8). Quite often, CA tends to be associated with the Marxist attitude to media where the focus is on ownership, control and content (Edgley 2000:158). Liberal theorists, for their part, emphasise audience reaction and effect. When Gilbert (1993:197) considers CA subtle enough "to measure the relative salience of a theme by the frequency of its occurrence", he does so only when working with "simple documents", such as newspapers. How "simple" a document a newspaper can be considered is a debatable issue, but the fact remains that CA is assigned to simple objects of investigation.

The pervasiveness of CA in media studies is beyond doubt. The study of immigration issues in the British press (Cottle 2000) uses numeric measures of the percentage of stories dedicated to themes related with immigration. It elicits them as a percentage of everything published about

immigration. Thus it reveals which aspects of immigrant topics dominate in the researched sample of newspapers. Studying the image of communities, some researchers relate the amount of coverage as a percentage of all the material in the media. Pietikäinen' (2003) compares the number of stories about the Sami to stories about other ethnic groups to establish a significantly smaller number of news items about the Sami, where the indigenous people are rarely quoted and often named with derogatory terms. At the same time actor roles are more often attributed to Finns than to Samis, suggesting that the active role in social life is not always attributed to the Sami. Others compare favourable to unfavourable articles and thus weigh the attitude of the media towards the investigated issue. Kovaèiè and Erjavec (2011), for their part, study of the image of doctors in Slovenia but rather than simply count articles, Kovaèiè and Erjavec split them into three groups: positive, negative and neutral and discuss the prevalence of each type. Balabanova and Balch (2010) evolve political statements about immigration and count the number of articles in the British and Bulgarian press which adhere to each stance. When Avraham and First (2010) combine Cultural Studies with Content Analysis to study representations of nationalities on television, their claim is that CA is about counting, while Cultural Studies adds a qualitative touch to their research. A safe generalisation would be that most – if not all - studies BEGIN with some sort of content analysis which forms part of the general description of the material. Indeed, Markoff et al (1975:18) argue against the conception of content analysis as a stand-alone method of discovery. They urge its application as a measurement technique whose value depends upon the total research design in which it is embedded.

Conducting CA depends crucially on the choice of categories which form part of the coding schedule applied to the researched material. A popular method for Content Analysis is the so-called qualitative or ethnographic content analysis (ECA). Bryman (2004:392) quotes Altheide (1996) claiming that the attitude to the coding categories is more flexible with ECA: "categories and variables initially guide the study, but others are allowed and expected to emerge during the study, including an orientation to constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings and nuances."

What stories are published about Bulgaria depends on the specifics of the processes the media employ to select, present and publish materials. Extensive literature has been written about this. Below is an outline of arguments relevant to the research question of this study. This theory helped evolve the categories for the Content Analysis applies here.

Media Bias

Ideally, the media are expected to cover stories as they occur in life. However, it has long been proven that they do not place a neutral mirror to reality. Their main sphere of operations is "the production and transformation of ideologies" Hall (1981:396). As the Glasgow University Media Group (1976: 1) put it, "the news is not a neutral product; … it is a sequence of socially manufactured messages, which carry many of the culturally dominant assumptions of our society". Fowler (1991:10) attributes the lack of neutrality to institutional bindings - "because the institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated, all news is always reported from some particular angle". Factors known to affect the selection of news are: the ownership of the medium, advertising concerns, the readership targeted by the medium and the ideologies embraced by the editorial board.

The leftist view is that "bias is endemic because of the ties between media production and industrial-speculative capitalism (Fowler 1991:11)" and therefore the whole process of financing and producing news should be strictly regulated to provide alternative sources. Chomsky (1998:2) goes on to specify that because news is a commodity, selling it depends on the choices of the big corporations which control the processes of collection and distribution of news. News is determined by élite newsmakers: the élite media set a framework within which others operate. His example is that a small country newspaper cannot claim that what they say is newsworthy if it differs from the choices of big media tycoons. Chomsky's theory is that the media and intellectuals exist to manufacture consent – purportedly, sidelining "the general public".

Liberal thinkers, for their part, justify the existence of media bias with the thought that in a free and democratic society each member of the press and each news organisation can put forward their views. So much so, Fowler argues, that education is called upon to train readers to distinguish the bias behind media representations. Without being personally biased, or deliberately deceitful, the media tend to reproduce a dominant political outlook into the way they present their news stories.

Except for natural disasters and wars involving elite nations, few events can be considered "natural news", unless promoted to this status by the news organisation. "News is the end product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories (Hall 1978:53, Conboy 2007:11). At the same time, the selection and presentation of news at certain periods of time has had powerful effects on society. The

Media Monitoring Unit (1990) established that the selection of topics helped television develop ideological lines which were against the Conservative Government in 1988. The Glasgow media group also detected that "the skilful news management" employed by the Coal Board and the Government helped undermine the miners' solidarity during their strike (O'Sullivan et al. 1994:123). Therefore the responsibility of the media – also known as the fourth estate – for the attitudes they sow in society: if they present a social group as dangerous for the other members, then the group faces grave difficulties in its integration.

The views of the institutional and social hierarchy are "well and truly embedded in the news values" (Conboy 2007:12) and the exploration of what is given news status can tell us a great deal about the positioning of the news media. The news values, for their part, as projected with the topics chosen for coverage by the media are part of the moral expectations of contemporary society. Thus the choices of news topics to be covered about a country should reveal the scaffolding of an image created for a country.

News Values

The principles according to which the media sift material for coverage are known as news values. Brighton (2007:40) believes that they are researched with two types of agenda in mind. Firstly, some observers classify news values according to journalistic practices, i.e. the newsroom procedure what to accept or reject for publication. Secondly, a different strand of classifications imposes culturalist/sociological taxonomies on the editorial selection of topics. The landmark research which revealed how the media select what to publish is empirical. Galtung and Ruge's (1965) established that media coverage is governed by criteria such as:

Frequency: Events which occur suddenly and fit well with the news organization's schedule are more likely to be reported than those which occur gradually or at inconvenient times of day or night. Long-term trends are not likely to receive much coverage.
Negativity: Bad news is more newsworthy than good news.
Unexpectedness: If an event is out of the ordinary it will have a greater effect than something which is an everyday occurrence.
Unambiguity: Events whose implications are clear make for better copy than those which are open to more than one interpretation, or where any understanding of the implications depends on first understanding the complex background in which the events take place.

Personalization: Events which can be portrayed as the actions of individuals will be more attractive than one in which there is no such "human interest."

Meaningfulness: This relates to the sense of identification the audience has with the topic. "Cultural proximity" is a factor here - stories concerned with people who speak the same language, look the same, and share the same preoccupations as the audience receive more coverage than those concerned with people who speak different languages, look different and have different preoccupations.

Reference to elite nations: Stories concerned with global powers receive more attention than those concerned with less influential nations.

Reference to elite persons: Stories concerned with the rich, powerful, famous and infamous get more coverage.

Conflict: Opposition of people or forces resulting in a dramatic effect. Stories with conflict are often quite newsworthy.

Consonance: Stories which fit with the media's expectations receive more coverage than those which defy them (and for which they are thus unprepared). Notably this appears to conflict with unexpectedness above. However, consonance really refers to the media's readiness to report an item.

Continuity: A story which is already in the news gathers a kind of inertia. This is partly because the media organizations are already in place to report the story, and partly because previous reportage may have made the story more accessible to the public (making it less ambiguous).

Composition: Stories must compete with one another for space in the media. For instance, editors may seek to provide a balance of different types of coverage, so that if there is an excess of foreign news, for instance, the least important foreign story may have to make way for an item concerned with the domestic news. In this way the prominence given to a story depends not only on its own news values but also on those of competing stories

With relevance to smaller nations, Galtung and Ruge (1965:83) point out that the expectation is of negativity. The news circulated of such nations tends to conform to a model reinforcing the reasons for these countries' "backwardness" – crises, criminality and corruption. The typical example of news from such countries would be "news that emphasizes the difficulties low-rank nations have: signs of "immaturity" in terms of payment crises, political instability, murder at the top of society, etc."