Alter-Natives for Non-Natives. Ethnophaulisms and / or Exclusion (An analysis of articles on Romanian immigrants, *The Sun*, October 2006 – January 2007)

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Résumé: La dynamique de l'exclusion reflétée dans les articles du journal *The Sun* et le langage de l'intégration européenne constituent les sujets principaux de cet article. On s'engage dans un périple périlleux dans le discours politique et celui médiatique, en risquant quelques remarques en marge de la «political correctness of inclusivity».

"Conform to British values or don't come here!" was the message Tony Blair conveyed, on behalf of the British, to the East-Europeans, the very day EU(rope) opened its doors to welcome the ex-communist duo: Romania and Bulgaria. Such vehement slogans have been constant in the English press in the last few years, their role being that of warning the British society and institutions against the 'peril' represented by the recent masses of immigrants coming from East-European countries, and possibly by the accession of these countries to the European Union.

The present paper deals with such written-press articles about Romanian immigrants and Romania versus EU. The corpus is made up of 12 articles published in the British tabloid *The Sun* (three of which dating from January 2007, the post-integration period, and the rest dating back to October – December 2006),

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that we considered highly illustrative of the dynamics of social inclusion and particularly EX-clusion.

It is neccesary to outline from the very beginning the larger context in which this 'conflict' or 'tension' (between the press authority and the reality it depicts) occurs.

First of all, mention must be made of c o h e s i o n as the *sine qua non* of the European model of society, which the British officially and overtly support, but which they sometimes seem to contradict bluntly. Traditionally, there are two groups of inter-related metaphors used to describe the 'new Europe': one of them indulges in depicting EU as a region without a centre, but as a series of networks, ultimately a "surface of mobile and unstable linkages" (Rumford, 2000: 165), and the other envisages Europe as either all circumference and no centre, or all centre and no periphery. This view of EU(rope) as diffuse and decentred, ubiquitous and yet hard-to-reach, has been all the more enhanced lately by the successive stages of EU enlargement, which is frequently phrased in terms of a two- or three-tier Europe (members/ non-members; members embracing monetary union, members outside Euroland and aspiring members – Rumford, 2000: 167) or, more geometrically represented as a series of concentric circles (the original 6 EU members forming the geographical and political core, the members joining in subsequent enlargements in the 1970s and 1980s – mainly northern and Mediterranean countries – forming the second circle, and the third timidly drawn by the aspirant eastern countries). The configuration of the hydra-like association changes with every race toward membership, each claimant to full European integration attempting to draw the boundaries of Europe behind it in a perpetual flight from (the) periphery.

It has been noted that the language of European c o h e s i o n is founded upon an idea of c o h e r e n c e (utterly visible in the togetherness speeches of both members and aspiring members); however, what should also be pointed out is the fact that this idea of c o h e r e n c e is not to be separated from that of s e c u r i t y, as European cohesion is more often than not embedded in "the

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language of *closure* and *exclusivity*" (Rumford, 2000: 168, emphasis added). Ultimately, the greater the need for integration, the more intense the anxiety not to become disintegrated; as Chris Rumford most pertinently observed, the discourse of the European integration is achieved through the "language of division and conflict" rather than that of "inclusion and diversity" (2000: 168).

One explanation for this is quite at hand. EU enlargement also involves (for the older member states) accepting, among other things, huge numbers of people coming from the new states in search of a better life. Thus, immigration is currently perceived as a thorny issue, especially by Great Britain, which has become a multiracial country over the past 50 years (the 2001 census recorded that 79% of the population of the UK – 4.6 million people – described themselves as from an ethnic minority). As a result, the British have become Eurosceptic and rather defensive when it comes to readily accepting foreigners; and if at first they seemed to be quite fond of the so-called 'assimilation policies' (based on the US 'melting pot' notion), little by little, they ended in differential exclusion (sometimes taking the form of xenophobic attitude).

The Sun has been throwing light upon this immigration issue on a regular basis during the last three years, their favourite targets being the Romanians and the Bulgarians. Romanians do choose Great Britain as "a land of all possibilities" (along with Italy, Spain, Greece, Canada and the USA), and the British are not exactly thrilled to see more of them at their 'door', especially when they come as undocumented aliens and hunt for / on the black market. Of the four 'ideal' immigrant types identified by Castles (q. in Luchtenberg, 2004: 16), only two seem to characterise the Romanians after 1989: they describe themselves as the 'return' type, but the host-countries perceive them as the 'transmigrant' type:

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Table 1
(apud Castles, in Luchtenberg, 2004: 16)

	Relationship to region of origin	**Relationship to region of destination**	**Main implulse for moving**	**Timeline for migration**
Emigrant/ immigrant	roots / ancestry / permanent departure	integration / new homeland	economic / socio-cultural	long-term / unlimited
Return migrant	continuous point of reference	maintenace of difference / "host country"	economic / political	short-term / limited
Diaspora migrant	(at least symbolic) reference to the "homeland"	maintenance of difference / space of suffering or of mission	religious / political / organisational	medium term / limited
Trans-migrant	ambiguous mixture	ambiguous mixture	economic / organisational	indeterminate / sequential

The issue of immigration, while revolving around the dialectics of (non)-belonging, rests upon a paradoxical, vicious circle; although it stems from an integrating model of self-expansion, it relies upon an inherent form of ban. Thus, the basic ideological tenet starts from [± inclusion] and ends in [± exclusion]. In their book on *The Social Psychology of Inclusion and Exclusion* (2005), Dominic Abrams and Michael A. Hogg integrate this kind of social demeanour into the sphere of normality. "Relationships necessarily *include* people, but they also have *boundaries* that by definition *exclude* people (...). At a macro-social level, countries may attract and repel individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, occupation, or their statuses." (pp.1-2, emphasis added). Apart from a long series of common psychological effects of exclusion, the two editors also enumerate a few motives usually invoked by the exclusive authority, such as the need to evolve, the need for optimal distinctiveness, avoidance of threat or discomfort. Judging by the plethora of articles on Romanian migrants published by *The Sun*, the fear of being

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'attacked', 'invaded', 'overwhelmed' by East-Europeans does bring about a certain discomfort to the British. As a result, they, too, have 'sent in their troops' and put forward a three-layered counterattack: a relatively abstract form of exclusion (based on broad social ideology), a less formal type of exclusion (based on social and cognitive representations), and, finally, a third type of exclusion, more specific (based on social categorisation – apud Abrams, p. 18). The actual representations of these abstract forms of exclusion are, first, i m m i g r a t i o n q u o t a s ("Come with work-permits or don't come at all!"-type of slogans and other types of 'funnels' to sift the masses of immigrants through), and then, the outright n a t u r a l i s a t i o n ("When in Rome, do as the Romans do", or "Go west, go native!"), which brings with it most of the advantages of native-born citizenship. The media usually records these instantiations quite faithfully; they appear as e t h n o p h a u l i s m s (Greek roots meaning 'national group' and 'to disparage'), used routinely by the dominant culture (in this case, the British) when depicting the minority group (here, the Romanians and the Bulgarians). The implications of these ethnic slurs are of extreme importance for the cognitive representation of the minority groups, as they are usually immortalised in oversimplified imagery. Thus, *poor* and *muddy* seem to be the key-words in the 'blason populaire' the British attribute to the Romanians as a menacing group. "Ethnophaulisms reveal how members of the receiving society think about members of ethnic immigrant groups" (Rice and Mullen, in Abrams, p. 294); with *The Sun*, having local correspondents in Bucharest, who do their best to send home a stereotypical collage of relatively low complexity but extremely negative valence, one might argue there is *no* receiving society, rather a saturated society striving not to 'receive' any(-)more.

The corpus we selected for analysis deals with four topics: Romanian immigrants as 'white elephants', and as a major source of AIDS; the Romanians as fleshmongers and the 'picturesque Romania' as presented in the latest film of the comic Sacha Baron

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Cohen[1]. No matter the topic, the macro-functions of the texts under debate are mostly referential and regulating, rather than expressive or playful; sometimes the articles are partly interactive, launching challenges for debates and thus involving the potential readers, but more often than not, language is used in order to influence people and generate an attitude.

From a lexical point of view, the articles are characterised by an overuse of words (mostly adjectives) with strong negative connotations, with reference to the Romanian people and their country. Thus, in an article dating from November, 2006, Romanians are described in terms of their "*unwelcoming, Stalinist*, *stone-faced* expressions" (Michael Dooley, emphasis added); toothless, smirking faces seem to be everywhere. The cradle of this 'civilisation' is hyperbolised until it acquires the tonality of a gypsy epos: *mud-shacks, muddy dwellings, poverty-rich village* (a strident oxymoron), *horses and carts, ramshackle hovels without toilets or running water, fetid streets clogged with mangy dogs and loose pigs* (December 14, 2006, Oliver Harvey, *We're Leaving Borat's Village*). The semantic and synonymic sphere of POOR (*the poorest, poor-stricken, poverty, grinding poverty, dire poverty, poverty-rich, hard-up, needy, not wealthy*) is exploited to exasperation. Romanians are portrayed as a pathetic crowd of miserable people, and although every now and then there is a quotation from some individual or other, for the sake of authenticity (ex.: "Taxi driver Nicolae Blanaru, 43: ..."; "Married Stan:..."; "Local Dan Nelu, 38: ..."), the protagonist of the permanently re-iterated news remains the collective character: "*hordes* of Romanians", "*masses* of Romanians", "a *flood* of Romanian migrants", "*hundreds* of Romanians", "*thousands* of Romanians", "The Romanian *siege*", "Romanian *invaders*", "Romanian *invasion*", "an *army* of invaders" etc., thoroughly using up war (!!!) metaphors. Otherwise, even the interventions of the local people, meant to authenticate the news, the discourse, and

[1] The Romanian village Glod served as location for a film about Borat, a Kazakh journalist (played by Sacha Baron Cohen).

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the imagery, are monochromatic, sensational, sometimes even grotesque, and aiming at one goal and one only (suggesting that Great Britain is the Romanians' dreamland): "Local Dan Nelu, 38: 'It's my *dream* to work in Britain.'"; "Married Stan: 'I have four Romanian friends who are already out in London and they say that it's *a wonderful place* to live and work'" (December 14, 2006, Oliver Harvey, *We're Leaving Borat's Village*, emphasis added). What the tabloid suggests is that Romanians see Great Britain as a major source of cash: "Nicolae Blanaru, 43: 'People want to go to England for one simple reason – *money*'"; "Local Dan Nelu, 38: 'I've seen how *rich* your country is on the TV; who wouldn't want to live *here*?'" (we wonder if HERE instead of THERE is a simple spelling mistake!): "Unsurpri-singly, many who live in the part of the village called **GLOD** (Romanian for MUD) want to escape the grinding poverty, and Britain is in their sight" (December 14, 2006, Oliver Harvey, *We're Leaving Borat's Village*).

According to *The Sun*, Romanians are not only dirty, poor, and heavy drinkers (sometimes even of horse urine), they are also primitively aggressive, and indulge in all sorts of backstreet trade(s). In the article *We're Leaving Borat's Village*, (December, 14, 2006), the author, Oliver Harvey, overemphasises the Romanians' threatening gestures and words: "they threatened to **CASTRATE** Baron Cohen if they set eyes on him again" (the Romanians were indignant at the way they had been portrayed in Baron's new film as urine-drinking prostitutes and rapists). But this is only a distant echo of another article, bearing the following identification tags: date – November 27, 2006; location – Glod, Romania; title: *We'll Put a Stake up to Borat's A**e*; lead: "Gipsies in Transylvania want to **IMPALE** Borat Star Sacha Baron Cohen on a stake and **CASTRATE** him for lampooning them in his hit film". The sensational touch inculcated to the article is preserved up to the end: "This is Transylvania, home of Dracula [Vlad the Impaler]"; the locals make "throat-cutting gestures" with their fingers. Another article, signed by the same Oliver Harvey, and dating back to November 2, 2006, features

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"red-head Maria [...] being sold to an undercover *Sun* reporter *like an animal at a market* by *mobsters* in Romania" (emphasis added), and, further on, "sex-trafficking innocent women is big business in Romania" (from *Mafias Ganging up on Us in UK*). The article, dated November 2006, is the latest in a long series of articles dealing with organised crime, corruption and food-safety problems that Romania seems to be (from *The Sun* correspondents' point of view) rife with.

Another very important issue that was temporarily associated with the Romanians and caused much controversy is AIDS. In her article Migrants' AIDS Epidemic Threat (November 16, 2006), Emma Morton warns that "Britain is facing an Aids epidemic after the revelation that **TWO THIRDS** of all new cases are in immigrants." Futhermore, she adds that "almost none of these foreigners seeks treatment and could be infecting the rest of the population". As implacable and statistical a sentence could not have remained without some kind of echo. For days on end, a span-long headings pleaded for immediate exclusion (WE MUST SHUT OUT IMMIGRANTS!) only to be followed by refutation; on the 27th of December, *The Sun* condescended to publish: "We reported on November 16th fears that immigrants from Eastern Europe made up a large proportion of new UK HIV cases. We have been asked to make clear that Eastern Europe is not a significant source of new HIV diagnoses and Romania and Bulgaria do not have HIV rates. They rank 39 and 44 respectively in the European league table of 52 countries".

Romanian immigrants are considered a major threat by the British tabloid not only from a medical point of view (although the Aids epidemic outcry is definitely not haphazard and it does remind of the gruesome plague metaphor), but also (and perhaps, most of all) from a financial point of view. After careful financial consideration, the British came to the disquieting conclusion that East-European immigrants are nothing but useless white elephants received as a gift from the EU, a burden thay could very well do without.

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On January 3rd, 2007, *The Sun* publishes an article entitled *No Wealth from Immigration*, signed by Michael Lea, in which it nurtures other sources of worry for the British, triggering, this time, a financial-security conflict. The article makes good use of numbers and figures, which it circulates, overuses and flaunts in front of the reader's eye / I:

"Immigration does not generate wealth for the UK – earning just **FOUR PENCE** a week for each Briton" (white elephants are, by definition, a very poor source of income); "foreigners working here send home some £ 70 million a week" (instead, the huge animals live on the backs of the new, puzzled, unwitting owners).

And it goes on: "The economic benefits are effectively **NOTHING**"; "the influx puts an extra burden on public services, jobs, wages, and community harmony".

To enhance the gravity of the situation, the voice of authority chimes in: "Chairman Sir Andrew Green said: 'Many immigrants make a useful contribution to the economy. But taken in total, the economic benefit is at best marginal. The main beneficiaries are the immigrants themselves, who send home about £ 10 million a day.'"

Statistics are, once again, very much at hand, for the necessary dose of news sensation:

"The foreign workers are worth £ 2.4 million a week to the British economy – but send home **29 TIMES** that amount."

"The yearly figure sent overseas is between £ 3 billion and £ billion."

Gary O'Shea (*We'll See EU Soon, Mr. Blair*, January, 2007) grieves for the funds and potential the EU is going to invest in Romania and Bulgaria, seen as two younger, reckless squanderers:

"The EU will *pump* £ 20 billion into Romania over the next 7 years in a bid to revamp the country's *dire* infrastructure. *Huge chunks* of it is expected to be lost in *Romania's culture of bribes and corruption*." (emphasis added)

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Obviously the 'prospects' of having to take into account Romania and Bulgaria, "two of Europe's *poorest* nations" (Gary o'Shea, emphasis added), are not exactly desirable for the English.

Generally, the leitmotif of the articles *The Sun* 'dedicated' to Romania is the m e n a c e represented by this people. The Romanians are portrayed as aggressive, invasive and unstoppable: "Builder Mihai Ionescu, 35, smirked: 'The British government cannot stop me going to London. Then I will disappear.'"; "Ioana Dumitrescu, 25, said: 'I will go to London as a **TOURIST**, but I won't come back'" (Gary O'Shea, December 3, 2006, *4 Pound Flights to Bring EU Invasion*).

The choice of vocabulary is always significant. The Romanians are identified in highly pejorative terms and the subtext is clearly visible through the surface. From a critical viewpoint, the assumption that all texts are inherently ideological in nature needs no further demonstration; the function of the articles being coercive, language is essentially coopted for ideological purposes. Thus, the morphological and syntactical patterns are simple and clear; the alternate use of the active and passive voice and of transitive verbs provides a fairly easy grasp at the agency of events. The macro-script is organised according to the following parameters: from general (EU invasion) to particular (Romanian migrants), but from included to the including: "An army of invaders from Romania and Bulgaria is heading our way"; "Hundreds of Romanians are poised to jet into Britain for as little as £ 4 after their country joins the EU on January 1st" (Gary O'Shea, December 4th, 2006, *4 Pound Flights to Bring EU Invasion*) ; "Hordes of Romanians queued for passports yesterday after the country got the go-ahead to join the EU in January" (Michael Lea, September, 2006). Traces of modality, along with the imperatives, are noticeable especially in the slogans that represent the local feedback and handle the internal patterning: "Ethnic minorities **SHOULD** be excluded from Britain if they have no intention of integration"; "Ethnic groups who fail to promote integration **SHOULD** be denied public funds"; "Immigrants **MUST** go home!"; "Don't come to Britain without a work permit!";

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"**BOLT THE DOOR**!"; "**STOP** a **FLOOD** of 140,000 immigrants from Bulgaria and Romania!".

The British newspaper also casts new light on future events; playfully, but at the same time gruesomely assuming the role of a popular fortune-teller, it ventures to make assumptions and predictions about the impact of immigrants to come: "Migration UK predicts 300,000 arrivals from Romania and Bulgaria over 20 months unless access to labour market is restricted" (November, 2006); future "migrants' siege for UK visas" (November, 2006); "Britain braces itself for a flood of workers from Bulgaria and Romania" (January 3rd, 2007, Michael Lea, *No Wealth from Immigration*). From time to time, there is a less venturesome remark which counterbalances the whole attempt to create panic among the British: "The truth is that no one really knows how many will come." (December 14, 2006, Oliver Harvey, *We're Leaving Borat's Village*).

Titles, subtitles, headings and leads are usually served as appetisers, as incentives to read on; *The Sun* makes them thirst-quenching, attitudinal, performative, perlocutionary, imperative. They make use of puns (*We'll See **EU** Soon, Mr. Blair; 4 Pound Flights to Bring **EU** Invasion*) but hardly avoid euphemisms (*We'll Put a Stake up to Borat's A**e*), and, quite unexpectedly, prefer present tense continuous instead of the traditional written-press present simple (*We're Leaving Borat's Village*). Mention must also be made of the fact that almost half of the articles on Romania (September 2006 – January 2007) bear the personal pronoun *WE* (/ *us* / *our*) in the title or subtitle.

Other British newspapers deeply worried about the Romanian 'invasion', such as *The Mirror*, reflect this situation in a slightly different way: even if they rest their discourse upon the same basic isotopes (Romanians and Bulgarians are "politically and economically backward", "poor", "poorest"), but preserve the necessary dose of self-irony: "So much for the flood! Romanian migrants just 4 fly in to work!"; "The first wave of a feared flood of Romanian migrants arrived in the UK yesterday – all **FOUR** of them!" (January 2nd, 2007, Tom Perry); Mirror journalist Bob

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Roberts also makes a note of 64-year old Ana-Maria Zarnescu's words: "Europe is adopting us like poor relatives or orphans, but I hope they will become fond of us because we are hardworking and inventive. Not all of us trick and steal". Generally speaking, the language is much less vehement and less pejorative than that used by *The Sun*.

Mention must be made of the fact that Romanian newspapers, too, deal with this issue of emigration and they, too, estimate that thousands of Romanians will continue to leave the country in search of welfare out there in the EU, and they seem to rejoice over this Cinderella look of Romanian immigrants, especially since 'Cinderella' sends home millions of euro every day.

Another aspect that should not be overlooked in this approach of the press text is the text-image interplay. Two out of three times, the articles The Sun reserves for Romania are accompanied by one or two large photos, thus sanctioning what could be called "the journalist marriage between the visual and the verbal" (E. Graur, 2004: 469). Far from aspiring to "usurp the culturally privileged position of print" (ibidem), the image strategically disrupts the "monotony of the white space" (ibidem), by serving as a 'peg' (Scott, in Graur, 2004: 470) for the related event/trend. Thus, pictures of drunken toothless gypsies revelling in their first day as citizens of the EU, muddy shackles, dirty children in rags, grinning cross-eyed, only come to enhance the information conveyed by the written text; they are also more striking and more expressive than any possible combination of words. In this, image and text do collaborate, maximising the intended effect; as E. Graur pointed out, this kind of photos need not be considered "mere records of reality, but repositories of journalistic decisions" (p. 470), not merely depicters, but authenticators and amplifiers. The pictures lament as much as the words do, and then some. They seem not to capture the instantaneous, but the most derisory, incriminating instantaneous possible. The famous statement attributed to Baudrillard, according to which the coeficient of reality is proportional to the reserve of fancy that counterbalances it, becomes now questionable; the pictures seem

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to set imagination loose, and overcompensate the void that needs to be filled in the general graphics of the text. The continuity, complementarity and mutual influence of the verbal and the visual engenders an almost unbearable tension, a structural and functional antagonism between the two registers of the images in the context of the icon-text alliance. The reader is thus faced with the obligation to accept simultaneously the image as both duplication and deviation from the written text.

A quantificational approach of the (feature or news) articles about Romania that appeared in *The Sun* between October 2006 and January 2007 brings out an entire series of almost obsessive *what-ifs* prefiguring apocalyptic dénouements in a hypothetical Great Britain overrun by immigrants. Never does *The Sun* miss the opportunity to signal a potential danger, much less to trigger a whole chain of reactions and concerns about the lack of a firm grip on corruption and organised crime. Apart from the topics already mentioned (Aids, poverty, crime) that keep popping out in relation to the Romanians, other contiguous, but accidental topics always find room between the pages of *The Sun*, such as Romanians fiddling with the system (using false passports to get to Britain and stay there), the Home Office having to spend thousands of punds for the 8000 posters and 40,000 leaflets warning Romanians to keep out Britain, unless well-endowed with work-permits, and ideally, great workforce and intelligence (otherwise, "food processing and agriculture will be the only sectors initially opened to the 'less skilled' and, if without permits, they have £ 1000 fines").

In a simple, monochrome, homogenised style, the journalists from *The Sun* frequently change masks, appearing before the reading public either as biased muckrakers or as responsible citizens and dedicated definers of social reality, holding a huge mirror to society, wherever it might be. The main function of their discourse is outright propaganda; their language is mostly denotational, but the rare connotations are forceful and charged with latent ideological bias. As for the figures of speech, they prefer the hyperbole, especially in attention-grabbing titles, leads

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or conclusions, and dead / inactive metaphors (ex. "the first wave of a feared flood") as opposed to the central, subjective metaphor of INVASION, which has clear ideological purposes, and which is somewhat asymmetrical, because we do not know whether the reader shares this ideological view put forward by the columnist.

Judging by the articles in *The Sun*, the British seem to be Eurosceptic and definitely not at ease when faced with a boundless Euroland, a sort of global village, which supposes breaking barriers and offering a welcoming *carte blanche* to peoples such as the Romanians; once the boundaries have been effaced, the need for boundaries became more acute. It's now more than ever a matter of the *we's* and the *they's*. Romanians, Bulgarians and other a-prototypically central members must be taught not to 'toe the line', not to jump, uninvited, on the 'bandwagon', but obediently follow the rules and submit to authority. Therefore, the entire campaign initiated by *The Sun* aims at preventing immigrants from taking full advantage of the 'bandwagon' (in this case, the EU, an already successful venture and a genuine goldmine for the famished). The articles are, thus, clearly, task-oriented. There is no 'blanket refusal' from the British, but their aversion to the Romanians is justified by the fear that they might lose the sense of security. By being restrictive and excluding others from the ingroup, they try to enhance their own feelings of ingroup inclusion. Distrustful of the myth of integration, they keep 'as cool as cucumbers' and remain prohibitive and prudent. Their fight against the 'black sheep' ranges from 'turning noses up' to 'time-out' disciplinary procedures and then to more blatant forms of exclusion, such as marginalisation and ostracism, as a last resort. The language they use is that of exclusion, of stigmatisation, of a 'saturated self', and the more the 'outsiders' / 'intruders' try to behave in an ingratiating behaviour, acting in a conciliatory manner in order to increase their inclusionary status, the more thesist the British articles. The British seem to fight for c o n t r o l l e d i m m i g r a t i o n, which means that their hospitality is in great danger of being stretched to breaking point. This turn-of-the-screw case does justice to the Latin word

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HOSTIS, which means at the same time 'guest / host' and 'enemy'. The articles in *The Sun* are built on two kinds of coordinates: the illicit geography of proximity (by retracing boundaries) and the thin line between HOSPITALITY and HOSTILITY (or, to put it in Derrida's words, the question of HOSTIPITALITY – 1999: 47). The notion of *hospitality* involves a dyadic relationship, or polarity, and an entire intrinsic set of connections betwen the host and the guest; but Benveniste defines the term *xenos* (Greek for 'stranger', and, by extrapolation, (un)invited *guest*) starting from the related *xenia*, circumscribing *xenos* to *xenia* ('pact', 'contract', 'collective alliance' – this is perhaps the kind of *hospitality* envisaged by the EU; pacts should turn strangers into non-strangers). Instead, immigrants are now perceived not as the sacred Guest, but as the absolute Other, the barbarian, the parasite, the abusive, illegitimate, clandestine guest liable for expulsion, the heterogeneous, for ever excluded savage.

Guests of any kind are a menace to any home; the hosts feel that their individual space is violated and therefore become *host-ile*. The guest / stranger is a menace to both the home and the traditional conditions of hospitality. As Derrida points out (1999: 57) in speaking about XENOTRANSPLANTATION, people can become xenophobic the moment they start protecting or pretending to protect their own hospitality and their home which made hospitality possible. Tresspassing not only somebody else's (home-)country, but also their ipseity, their potential hospitality, immigrants turn into *host-ile* objects liable to take *host-ages* among the very *hosts*. Derrida warns against the perversity of the social law which links together *hospitality* and *power*, and by 'power' he understands the host's necessity to sort out, choose, filter out, select the guests; ultimately there is no hospitality without home-sovereignty.

We read between the lines of the British articles a kind of perpetually procrastinated or conditional hospitality ("Come with work permits or don't come at all!"), whereas Derrida thinks that genuine hospitality is the *here-and-now hospitality*; otherwise, we would probably speak of *hostipitality* – once the invitation has

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been accepted, an enclave is created, and the consequences are undreamt of. Basically, if you invite someone over, you give your sovereignty up.

The use of extremely vehement language and of highly idiomatic expressions suggestive of a rather aggressive attitude towards the Romanians presents *The Sun* (Great Britain) as a rather hostile host, offering other nations an ALTER-NATIVE: "either you comply with our demands or you go back home!". An alternative which may well turn out to be a kind of *Hobson's choice*[2].

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[2] *Hobson's choice* – false alternative; a situation with unique solution.

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