

# Images of the Council of Europe

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## *Introduction*

*"The Council of Europe has been suffering from a bad image, the image of an inefficient, closed, bourgeois organisation which uses Human Rights to keep others out of the club. This must be changed, we must show that all countries are treated equally, that the standards are the same. The Council of Europe must not work against Eastern Europe."*

The Council of Europe as an institution is founded on the belief that there are universal values which should be recognised and respected by all. Consequently in its aim to become a more influential, more visible institution, it appeals to people's conscience and sense of justice using culturally and historically loaded symbols and metaphors throughout its written materials, its architecture, artistic representations and promotional films, as well as in its everyday discourse. The metaphors used in language and symbolic representations of the Council of Europe, legitimise the institution, create an identity for it and ultimately defines what is European. These images have political and social implications, especially with regard to the institution's new members.

Identity of a person is linked to the name, the physical features, the words spoken, the actions committed and the reputation given, the Council's identity is constructed and has to be viewed, and judged as such. The institution's lack of image is an institutional problem which is often discussed and on which various departments have spent a considerable amount of work. The "image" of the Council is not its "practice" and can even be a mask for it. The people working for the Council of Europe, through their talents, beliefs and cultural heritage, are creating the institution's identity day by day. The image of the Council of Europe is therefore a combination of history, Western European culture and institutional models, and the individuality of its members. The creators of the institution's image do not necessarily know all of the activities of the Council of Europe, all its areas of influence and how it functions. Their job is to present what the officials want the world to know about the Council of Europe and in the way they want; to tell the world, not all what it does but what it does that makes it important and influential.

## *1. The Formal Discourse: Methods and Language in Image Creation*

### **1.1. Language**

All publications coming from the Council of Europe must not transgress the "basic morals" of

the institution. All of them contain the Council's formal, diplomatic, standard discourse. The SEDOC, the department responsible for documentation of the Council of Europe, publishes most of the institution's documents, studies and books, which are distributed to people either through the mail, at the Council, at the various information points in various countries, through publicity campaigns and in book shops. They are not in charge of deciding the contents of the documents, the quantities and destinations. Many of these studies are very specific and useful for researchers and specialists, but not for a large amount of the population. Each study takes an average of two years to accomplish. The way in which they are decided upon is through a committee meeting composed of members of specific directorates. The decision must then be approved by the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General. As many of these studies are very specific, they are produced for a very minor section of the population and therefore have little influence on the image of the Council of Europe.

One of the most significant ways by which the Council of Europe creates its image and diffuses information about itself, its goals and achievements, is through numerous brochures which are distributed to the general public either at the Council of Europe itself (at the Information Point and at the Press Centre) through educational institutions, or through the mail upon request. People having access to internet can also access all the information (and much more, including photographs of buildings) through internet.

As an example of the kind of language and imagery used to promote the Council of Europe, I have chosen a statement by Mr. Tarschys, the Secretary General in 1998, in one of the most common brochures distributed to the general public at the Council of Europe. The second brochure refers to the Council's 50th anniversary. In the brochure, each of these texts is followed by a photograph of the Human Rights Building whose architecture is another symbolic means of attributing an identity to an institution. The words in bold are those which I find particularly meaningful and interesting to analyse.

*Expanding our common legal space*

*Since its foundation in 1949, the Council of Europe has adopted more than 150 conventions. This is a way of **building** Europe brick by brick, firmly expanding the common legal **space** in our continent.*

*The European Convention on Human Rights is the **jewel** in the crown. Everyone within the jurisdiction of the Contracting Parties can appeal to the Commission of Human Rights and their case may be examined by the Court of Human Rights. Interpreting the convention as a **living instrument**, the Commission and the court have given it a **dynamic** character, gradually extending the **sphere** of human rights.*

*The new Human Rights building will soon house the new single Court. The establishment of this new institution will allow for a **speedier** and hence more satisfactory judicial **procedure**.*

*With its growing membership, the Council of Europe is at long last able to respond to its **pan-European** vocation. It enters the next millennium as a bulwark for democracy and human rights, **welcoming all those freed from communist oppression** and ready to **embrace***

*these fundamental principles.*

*Daniel Tarschys*

*Secretary General of the Council of Europe*

The Council of Europe is a "jewel", a treasure, therefore implying a common wealth, patrimony to be worshipped and cherished. Although weighed down by its bureaucracy, and lacking agility, the Council of Europe portrays itself as an efficient institution. The Council of Europe is the "instrument" which will enable human rights to be respected, the means behind the noble aim of European countries. Equally important is the image of a welcoming, loving, open institution, which "welcomes" all, "frees", "embraces", and therefore loves justice and loves its children.

The vocabulary used is often vague. Phrases such as "pan-European vocation", "fundamental principles," aim at giving the impression of an all englobing entity, but are rarely clearly defined. Such is the case when referring to "values", "responsibility", "spirit," and "obligations." Morality and values are at the centre of all religions and represent what people believe to be good. The Council of Europe depicts itself as the "spirit" and therefore the essence of goodness. It is the deliverer from suffering and cruelty and the restorer of peace and tranquillity.

The metaphor of space is used over and over again, in reference to the building which houses this "jewel," and embodies this spirit whose global aim is to build a better world. In the above text, law, human rights considered to be equal for all, are associated with "space"; this specific Council of Europe space which enforces this universal law. Human rights also given a shape: that of a sphere, like the sphere of the earth with which everyone of us can identify and which is a perfect shape. Since the founding of the Council of Europe and until the fall of the Berlin wall, the Council of Europe did not need to deal with crisis situations, but concentrated on conventions and on research. It came to be known as a highly structured, slow moving entity. The current documentation about the Council of Europe tries to portray the institution as more dynamic hence affective and "speedy," which "welcomes," "frees" and "embraces" justice and principles.

The following text is an extract from the Council of Europe Website (<http://www.CoE.fr>); one of the means of informing the public about the institution. This website contains not only information about the institution's setup, but also a description of its programs and activities, its history, members, its official texts and the most recent news . The following text is significant, because it manifests the kind of imagery and metaphors used to create an image for the institution.

*Point of view: The Council of Europe's role in the post-war era*

*by Daniel Riot, European Editor, FR3*

*Robert Schuman once called the Council of Europe an "ideas laboratory". The label was a*

*good one then, and is still a good one now - but present emergencies and future challenges have turned the Council into something more than that. It has always been a **seed-bed of democracy and human rights**. By building an area of "democratic security", it has created a genuine form of European citizenship. So its job is finished? In fact, the "quiet revolutions" which it started fifty years ago are not over yet. It must now consolidate its achievements and develop that "**Europe of the spirit**" which it has helped to bring into being..... As the **progenitor of European citizenship**, it now faces some particularly tough challenges. Peace, once secured, can never be taken for granted. It is utterly, totally fragile B and indeed does not exist in every part of Europe. [.....] The part the Council plays in promoting peace often goes unrecognised. Its membership and the pluridisciplinary nature of its work make it Europe's best **geopolitical observer**. As such, it is a **seismograph** with a potentially key role in the defence of peace, including civic peace. [.....] In the "Council of Europe zone", in that greater European area with its 800 million citizens, nothing is perfect. That goes without saying. The earth is just the earth, and man is not God. [.....] The Council's great strength lies in having a coherent system. [.....] Its great **strength also lies in its method**, already spelt out in its Statute in terms both idealistic and pragmatic B a very human alchemy. The idealism is in its aims and values B in its virtues. The pragmatism is in its way of pursuing its aims. [.....] The process is rarely spectacular, and often frustrating B but it works. The **weaver's** trade requires patience. What counts is the endproduct (tapestry or carpet) not the weaver himself [.....] and those who show the most impatience are not always the best champions of the cause they claim to serve. (full text on request).*

This text, written for the general public, constitutes the formal discourse of the Council of Europe, and therefore manifests the image of itself it wants to create. The Council of Europe is compared to a laboratory, an experimental place for new ideas to flourish. A laboratory in our scientifically oriented Western society represents proof of what we consider to be reality. The Council of Europe therefore legitimises "ideas" and values. They decide what is a universal value and what should be done in order for it to be respected.

Not only is the Council a "laboratory", legitimising what should be the world's conscience, it is also a "seed-bed" of democracy and human rights. It is therefore the place where democracy and human rights are planted, (invented or materialised,) and are consequently nourished and grow. Once grown, these will "nourish" the world. In the Bible, the seeds sowed in the earth (the seed-bed,) grow and flourish, while those sown on the road are blown away and die.

The religious connotations are taken even further with the image of a prophet, a saviour which incarnates the "spirit of Europe". It "defends" peace and defines citizenship. A reference to the "weaver" implies that it has a perfect picture in mind of what the world should look like and slowly, patiently, but surely, works day by day, to actively create this picture. All of these metaphors are very powerful and extremely deep-rooted. They empower and impersonate the Council of Europe.

## **1.2. Speeches and Audio Tapes**

*"This is the most venerable organisation. We work for greater European unity through the cooperation with member states, in all fields except defence."*

An example of a Council of Europe formal speech is in the above text by Daniel Tarschys. It concentrates on the role of the Council, its moral obligations and values, its responsibility, generosity and uniqueness. During my experience at the Council of Europe, I had the occasion of hearing various speeches such as this one, including on the very first day, as an introduction to the Council of Europe. Formal speeches use vague, loaded terms, metaphor, historic references, and moral discourses. They sound like sermons, like phrases from a book. The people making these speeches are so accustomed to hearing them, that they have assimilated the vocabulary and the phrasing, and when questioned about the institution, automatically answer in this formal discourse. They iterate "information for the public" about the institution, while "internal information" is much more down to earth, with problems similar to the organisational management problems of any other institutions. "We don't always think about values, although we know that we are working for a good cause. It is just like any other job, where we must find solutions to practical problems, and promote values and democracy like any other product." The formal discourse is not questioned, (my informants claimed to accept and agree with it) it is learned and assimilated, but is mostly reproduced for outsiders' ears.

The tapes which people listen to when they come to visit the Council of Europe basically contain the same information as would a formal presentation by an official of the Council. They explain the three decision making bodies of the institution, the court of human rights and the basic structure of the organisation. They talk about the Council's history and of its particularities in a less metaphorical, moving manner than the speeches, but with the same formality.

## ***2. Visual Imagery***

### **2.1. Symbolism and Architecture**

When walking into both the Council of Europe Building and the Human Rights Building, one soon realises that the structures are loaded with symbols. Most of these are the historic , cultural symbols of the Council of Europe, and are meant to personify its principles. A few of these symbols are the ship, the spiral, the sphere and the flag. How were these chosen, when and by whom? It would be interesting to study the history of the Council of Europe symbols and trace back to those who conceived them, and the reasoning behind the choices made. It is certain that these symbols are deeply ingrown into Western European minds and spirits, and are effective in what they try to convey. I have chosen to describe a few of these and the way in which the Council of Europe creates its identity through them.

**Ship:** Once inside the Council of Europe building, the main element one notices is wood. Upon entering the Hemicyle, meeting place of the Parliamentary Assembly, one cannot help noticing its resemblance to a Ship. Composed of wooden beams, the room is round and convex. 12 wooden beams stand in front of the parliamentarians, and behind the presidency.

Like on the flag, the number 12 was chosen to symbolise perfection.

Why did they choose a ship? For Western Europeans it is loaded with historic and religious meaning. It symbolises: voyage, adventure, freedom, wealth, Noah's arc and therefore, saving the world from the flood, the catastrophe, saving all species of animals without discrimination. Also, commerce and therefore contact between peoples, sharing information, culture, influencing language etc. The parliamentarians from all member countries are in it together and one can't just get up and walk away from a ship. Therefore obliged to find a consensus on decisions and work together if everyone is to survive and be happy. On a ship, food, water is limited and you must accept the people you are with in the restricted space whether you like it or not.)

**Sphere:** This is another form which appears in the architecture and symbolism of the Council of Europe. The rotating motion is everywhere, on the flag, the publications, in the entrance hall.

The circle symbolises perfection and continuation/eternity. It is the shape of planets, of our earth. It implies repetition, starting again, novelty. Contrary to hierarchy, it has no beginning and end, no top or bottom. There is no better or worse place to be on the globe (human rights are the same for all, everyone should have a say in what goes on, no discrimination, etc.)

**Flag:** (12 stars in a circle on a blue background) because 12 is the symbol of perfection and so is the circle. It symbolises harmony, the stars will therefore always remain 12." Stars are located in the sky and therefore connected with God, with the unknown, with light shining in the dark, therefore permitting us to see clearly and guiding us. A star is a religious symbol for Christians, as it guided the three Wise Men to the birth of Jesus.

Because of its common history, development and its religion, Western European countries share numerous concepts and symbols. The Council of Europe has chosen and appropriated several of these in an attempt to define a "European", "common" culture as opposed to a French, German or Italian one.

## **2.2. Pictures, Posters and Publicity**

*"We want to change the image of the Council, make it more modern, away from traditional pictures and more towards abstract colours which are subject to interpretation and chosen for aesthetic affinity."*

For the creation of the artistic designs to be used in different forms on promotional media, the Council of Europe employs two graphic designers. Although employed by the SEDOC, they are different from the rest of the staff since they are not recruited through a competitive examination, but as a result of experience. They work essentially with computers and modern software. They create posters, brochures, book covers, advertisements, etc. for any directorate of the Council of Europe requesting their services. For very large campaigns, the Council of Europe may also choose to sub-contract outside designers, but most jobs are done by these two young artists.

These young artists have in the last few years been able to influence significantly the aesthetic decisions made by the members of the Council of Europe on various levels. They are in contact with all the directorates and know most of the people working for the Council of Europe. Each directorate has a budget devoted to the production of documents for different purposes.

One difficult aspect of their job is that they are dealing with values and not with concrete things, which can be seen and touched and consequently easily recognised. "We are working with emptiness." What they try to do is to work with symbols that people know and can recognise. They try to attract attention of people on certain topics through aesthetic affinity. Although the members of the Council of Europe believe that there exists a set of fundamental values that are shared by everyone, these are perhaps conceived differently, and therefore recognised with different symbols in different cultures. For example, for some a colour may represent love while for others war. "We must be very careful of symbolic connected to colours as well as language." They must be very careful not to offend anyone and to appeal to people's aesthetic tastes (which apparently is impossible when dealing with many different nationalities).

*"The Germans usually like sober colours such as dark green. They like concrete images, a bit heavy. The Italians like more diverse colours, they like movement, lighter images. The Dutch have a completely different approach. They like anything that is innovative, not what is beautiful, ideal, realistic, but new. Then there are the "cases", they are the people that continuously change their minds and drive us crazy. People rarely accept a job because it is beautiful. There must be more to it, they must read meaning into it."*

All of the editions of the Council of Europe have a logo on them which was picked long ago and cannot be changed. There are many images which they cannot touch. For example, the stars which appear on the flag and on most of the logos, have a particular configuration which always stays the same. Also, the colour blue is always the same type of blue (PMS 67). All the other colours don't matter but that blue is part of Council of Europe history. Font is another particularity which very seldom changes.

In order to make the covers, brochures, layouts, posters, etc, the designers don't need to read the documents. The person requesting the product usually knows the general idea which must come through. Many a time, the pictures don't really represent anything, they are abstract pictures with colours, which are subject to interpretation. They don't always have to be symbolic or value loaded, as long as they are attractive. The designers wish to move closer and closer to this concept.

### **2.3. Audio Visual**

The people producing films to promote the Council of Europe and create its image also find it a challenge because of the confusion with the EU. Confusion is made when showing

buildings, the flag, playing the hymn. They believe the best way of distinguishing the two is by showing the member states : 15 versus 40, as well as the Court of Human Rights which is famous all over the world.

When they produce a tape, no matter which directorate has requested it, the producers work very closely with the people requesting the tape. The acceptability of the work mainly concerns the requesting directorate and do not need to be approved by a committee at large. Not all productions of the Council of Europe are highly monitored and analysed. What is included is left up to the common sense, knowledge and sensitivity of the directorate in charge, and mainly just needs to be in line with Council of Europe ethics. Products are developed by talking, listening to each other's opinions and make the relevant changes. The functioning is very much as would happen in a small/medium size firm trying to promote its product.

The strategy they use is to try to find images which are relevant in all people's lives, such as suffering, death, health, environment, youth and crime; to find concrete examples which people can refer to and which make a difference to them. These scenes attribute human qualities to the Council of Europe and thus solicit feelings, sympathy towards, and identification with the Council of Europe.

The audio visual department claims that the Council of Europe receives terrible coverage in Western European countries, but much better coverage in new member states such as Russia. The reason being, that their presence at the Council of Europe enhances their political credibility. Each national television chooses what to include on their programs. However, the Council of Europe tries to help journalists by distributing readily prepared tapes called Video Kit. This is a one hour video cassette with clippings of Council of Europe history since 1949, its buildings, leading figures and different themes and topics which the Council of Europe deals with. Journalists can use segments of the Kit in any emission they may do on the Council of Europe. They also provide help to journalist for producing and duplicating, all free of charge.

Any journalist wishing to transmit television production on the Council of Europe is entitled to a copy of the Videokit. Journalists are invited from different countries to come to the Council of Europe as a marketing strategy. All travel expenses are paid for, and they are given "training" on the Council of Europe in the hope that they will go back to their countries with a better understanding and greater sensitivity towards the Council of Europe.

*Images in the Council of Europe Videokit and their implications:*

- a) History and historic figures: Common European past which is well known by all generations and which legitimises the existence of the Council of Europe.
- b) Leaders: Well known, famous people recognised by the general public can stimulate interest in the Council of Europe and assure its power to make changes.
- c) Buildings/the flag/Strasbourg: Modern buildings symbolise technology, efficiency, wealth, the future. The flag is recognised by everyone, and is an immediate sign of recognition.



Strasbourg is a symbolic city in European history; it is a mediaeval, beautiful city, adding to the prestige and mystique of the Council of Europe.

d) Human Rights: To represent this, the cassette shows scenes of crime, violence war, famine, imprisonment, legal courts, social deprivation and the death penalty. These scenes evoke pity, rage and cry out to our morals. Similarly, violent scenes of the mafia, the atrocities done by the police, shootings, injustice, terror. To mention their concern with Bioethics the tape shows Dolly, the cloned sheep, famous all over the world, and which has created fear of human cloning. In connection with the environment, the scenes include pictures of pollution and destruction of beautiful natural areas, leaving the viewer outraged about the world which will remain for our children.

e) Speeches by Gorbachev and other famous people are important because viewers and identify with the Council of Europe through the leaders.

f) Different versions of the European Hymn is one way of including another European cultural feature which is classical music, and a tune which can be easily remembered and recognised, as well as used to accompany any (emission) about the Council of Europe.

g) Meetings: The films also show the Council of Europe at work during the Parliamentary sessions, the meetings of the Ministers, various seminars and handshakes. These scenes evoke seriousness, devotion, hard work, importance. Images of the courts evoke a sense of justice.

All these images are very dynamic: People fighting against the mafia, against poverty and terrorists, towards a better world. The actors in the film are not people from the Council of Europe, but the viewer feels as if they were. In fact, the viewer himself could be any one of these actors.

#### **2.4. Council of Europe Promotional Films**

The audio visual department has produced two promotional films about the Council of Europe, which are shown to tourists when they come for visits. The first, made various years ago, was replaced by a newer version this summer. These films are testimonies of the identity which the Institution wishes to appropriate, and how it is evolving. The two very different versions of Council of Europe films are testimonies of the fact that the Council wishes to change its image in the world.

The differences between the two films are striking. While the older version shows the Council of Europe building filled with personalities, a full assembly, an active Committee of Ministers and the visits of important leading figures, the new version shows the same building completely empty most of the time. The protagonist is one woman, first in her childhood, then in her youth, in her mature and old age. She is of no specific European nationality and she walks through the empty building as if into her future. The viewer feels a sense of anxiety, especially as the film evolves through scenes of war, crime, hunger, poverty, which seem to influence directly this anonymous European, and which the Council of Europe is actively, dynamically protecting through its activities. The Council of Europe comes out as being essential for the well being of Europe, the saviour from the terrible problems affecting

the continent. A strong emphasis is put on youth, on action, protection, universality and justice.

The older film, on the other hand, is much softer. It plays on the theme of music, harmony, working together and building a better Europe. Both contain images of the end of communism, implying that the Council has been the "liberator" from the "oppressor", as is mentioned in the literature above. While in the newer film, the Council cannot be identified with any specific individual, in the older one, either the Parliamentary "assembly, the Committee of Ministers or the Secretary General seem to incarnate the institution. Just as the artists at the Council are trying to shift the images used on published materials from traditional, concrete images to more abstract ones, subject to interpretation, the film makers are moving from an objective identity of the Council to a subjective one.

In order to for people not only to recognise the Council of Europe, but also to be able to identify with, support and be interested in it, the Council attributes human qualities to itself. It does so by expressing its aims, be it in speech, books, films, etc. through human qualities.

The Council of Europe concentrates on youth to show that it is an institution which is renewing itself and which is important for our future. As the future lies in the new generations, it is the Council's duty to educate and help young people to confront their future and that of the world. It is a teacher, a guide, for the new generation. A very good example of this concept is evident when comparing the old and new promotional films of the Council of Europe. While the first concentrates on the institution itself, the second concentrates on a little girl whose future lies in the hands of the Council of Europe. The Council is not only a teacher, but a protector for this little girl. It takes upon itself the huge responsibility of solving world problems, conflicts, afflictions, and suffering. It is portrayed as a loving, generous, active and just.

### ***3. The effect of the Enlargement on the visibility of the Council of Europe***

The enlargement of the Council of Europe also poses problems with regard to image creation. Information is presented mainly in one of the two official languages and is a direct translation. Should the information not be presented differently with respect to the country by focusing on its own problems and using its language? How can the new members bring their culture into the structure of the Council of Europe since most of them have either gone to university in Europe and the U.S., or previously worked for an international or governmental organisation.

While some informants were very careful about specifying that the Council of Europe did not want to impose its manner of working on the new member states, others had the contrary opinion.

*"The new members have not changed the Council of Europe, since they were not used to such a system, they are the ones that have to learn. Especially since membership is not a right, but a privilege"*

The problem of "opening up" to the public, letting people know more about the Council of Europe and its activities, is closely linked to the problematic of image creation and public relations: whether to open up to the public, and in that case limit activities, send condensed information, but to a large amount of people, or whether to carry on developing a significant amount of specific activities and studies, which will be used by and known about by a very limited part of the population. All of the people I spoke to seemed to be in favour of the first option, although the question did create a certain amount of malaise as nobody wanted to have to give up their current job. One major problem is once again money. "Each Directorate functions like a small company, with a limited budget of about 40 million francs." Another problem is image, identity; it is easier for an organisation to be well known if people have a clear idea about what it does.

.With the enlargement of the Council of Europe, and the opening of various new information centres throughout Europe, the documentation produced by the Council of Europe must be translated into many new languages if the Council of Europe wants to reach a large part of the population. The manner in which information is distributed (through schools, special offices, in magazines, papers, books or publicity campaigns) as well as whether it is in French/English or translated, significantly affects its image in the member states as a whole. People are interested in their own country and in problems they can relate to. In order to stimulate interest in the member countries, information must be presented focusing on how the Council of Europe's activities and aims relate to that country and those people in particular. If people cannot identify with the information, they will neither be interested in it nor will they retain it.

One of the concerns is that the Council of Europe needs a new publication about its activities, which will not only be a source of information to spread knowledge on the Council, but also will enhance a dynamic view on its values. They believe that this needs to be a publication which appeals to the public at large. Some believe it should include a description of the reflections which are taking place at the Council. Others say it should reflect the council's activities and realisations. This would determine whether the Council of Europe is seen as a reflective or active organisation.

Whatever the kind of magazine decided upon, the debate remains as to how far the Council should go in disclosing information. If it is to be read by the general public, should it mention meetings and decisions taken at those meetings? If so, which to include and which not to include? How does one define "general interest"? Also, the idea is to publish a magazine which will be the same for all Council members and will be distributed in all centres. But what interests one population does not necessarily interest another, and certain countries may feel discriminated. In addition, if the information is too general, it may end up being a useless effort since publications on general Council of Europe activities and values already exist. All of these questions which the Council of Europe is asking itself are centred around the new identity of the institution, around its image and consequently its importance and extent of

influence in the future Europe.

## ***Conclusion***

*"The ultimate focus of all these joint efforts is the freedom and dignity of Europeans everywhere. This (50th) anniversary marks a turning point, and both it and the Council's work concerns us all."* Daniel Tarschys, Secretary General

The last three words of this quote by Daniel Tarschys resume the main strategy used by the Council of Europe to promote the institution and create an image for it, be it in language, written materials, art, film or architecture. In all of the above methods used by the Council of Europe, the imagery, metaphors and connotations used, all aim at making the absorbing the viewer/reader, etc. and making him/her identify with what is represented and consequently feel concerned.

With the enlargement of the Council of Europe after 1989, the question of imagery and identity has become much more complex. The institution acquired a new aim, a new identity, therefore needing to change the older, somewhat negative one. Imagery, be it visual, spoken or representative, must now be recognised by 40 different countries. The question is now whether all member states share concepts and what these concepts are. Through the various methods I described, the Council of Europe attempts to create its identity, to shape the ideas and images which the world has of it. It does so by using cultural references and images (mostly Western) as well as tacit historic and religious memory.

The Council of Europe is in the process of self reflection with regard to its organisation and visibility. People such as the graphic designers, the audio visual producers and the public relations directors work daily to find new strategies to make the Council more visible and give it a newer, more modern image. Through their work, they make explicit what the institution considers to be "European". They develop ideas, elaborate concepts and thus create an image and an identity. I discovered that the enlargement has not greatly changed the images and symbols through which the Council of Europe identifies and promotes itself. On the contrary, the methods it uses are completely Western and the newcomers must accept and adopt these models as "universal". What has changed is the amount of people they need to reach, as well as the need to stress the Council of Europe's new role in Europe as the guardian of Universal Values. It will be interesting to discover how this image will evolve as the new members gradually become more influential.