East of Eden?

A Visual Analysis of Videos Advertising EU Enlargement

Jakob Kroon

EUHA20

Bachelor's Degree Essay

Spring term 2013

European studies

Supervisor: Anamaria Dutceac Segesten

ABSTRACT

The essay performs a qualitative study on political advertising clips available online in the official multimedia library of DG Enlargement. The sample material consists of the three video clips that at the time of writing focus on South Eastern European candidate countries as well as recently joined EU member states. By using a visual semiotic method of analysis in conjunction with theories on Othering and Orientalism, the author has analyzed visual elements in the video clips in order to determine whether Eastern European countries are portrayed as equal to Western European countries or not. The results show that Eastern Europe is not portrayed as fully equal to Western Europe in these videos.

Keywords: EU, Enlargement, political advertising, visual analysis, semiotics

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In early March 2012 the EU Directorate-Generale for Enlargement (DG Enlargement) published a video clip on their official web site. The video clip, called "Growing together", was roughly a minute and a half in length and showed a white woman in a yellow leather get-up, all but identical to the one worn by Uma Thurman as *the Bride* in Tarantino's revenge saga *Kill Bill*. She is walking alone in an abandoned warehouse; there are ominous sounds in the background, heightening the tension. A gong sounds and a man with East-Asian-looking features leaps down from a window ledge, showing off his Kung-Fu skills when landed. Next, a bevy of doves disperses to reveal a man in traditional Indian dress, wielding a scimitar and levitating towards her. Lastly, the door is kicked down and a black man approaches the woman by way of several consecutive back flips before threatening her with moves belonging to Capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian school of martial arts. The woman raises her hands to her temples and multiplies, encircling the three men who relax their stances and then sit down on the floor, convinced by her display of power to resolve the conflict diplomatically.

The criticism directed towards the video was covered by heavy-weight media outlets such as *BBC*, US newspaper *the Atlantic*, *Time Magazine* and *the Guardian*, just to name a few. With a mounting number of critical voices being raised, the situation soon proved unsustainable and the advert was pulled from the website within a week of its release and an apology was issued by Stefano Sannino, General Director for DG Enlargement. The apology has subsequently been removed from the Commission's official website, but it is still available in *the Guardian*'s article on the subject. The following quote is an excerpt from the full statement:

> "It was a viral clip targeting, through social networks and new media, a young
> audience (16-24) who understand the plots and themes of martial arts films
> and video games. The reactions of these target audiences to the clip have in
> fact been positive, as had those of the focus groups on whom the concept had
> been tested. /.../ The genre was chosen to attract young people and to raise
> their curiosity on an important EU policy. The clip was absolutely not intended
> to be racist and we obviously regret that it has been perceived in this way." [1]

In June the same year, the Commission published a teaser video clip for its upcoming campaign called "Science, It's a Girl Thing" targeting girls aged 13-18 which was deemed sexist and like the other video clip quickly taken down from the official site. The messages communicated in these

---

1 Nicholas Watt, "European commission criticised for 'racist' ad," *The Guardian*, March 6, 2012.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/06/european-commission-criticised-racist-ad>

videos are by themselves hardly controversial and warranting the public outcry that they have inspired; the controversy lies exclusively in the *form* chosen to communicate these messages.

As Sannino stated in his apology, the "Growing Together"-video was targeting 16-24 year-olds and employed narrative techniques and stereotypes borrowed from video games and martial arts-movies. Although recent studies have shown that the gender gap in video gaming as such is closing, male gamers are still to a greater extent drawn to violent video games than their female peers.[2] Therefore, it is reasonable to suspect that even though it is not stated as such, the violent content that the audience is supposed to recognize indicates that the video clip's primary target group may actually be 16-24 year-old *males*. The other video, "Science, It's a Girl Thing", is targeting young females and it uses similarly stereotypical imagery traditionally considered appealing to this group. It is easy to imagine that these video clips were produced with the best of intentions – to engage young people in political matters and make them consider career choices they hadn't otherwise immediately considered - but these ads fail because of their form which is causing offense with their reliance on gender stereotyping which in essence is an issue of gender inequality.

The video clips chosen for study in this essay are on the subject of the enlargement of the EU. Official EU documents detail a strategy for uniting Europe politically, and the videos reflect this goal by painting a positive picture of the EU enlargement, including portraits of current and candidate member states. Whereas the enlargement resulting in Central and Eastern European states joining the EU took place recently, Europe has a long history of being politically divided; the East-West division for example can be traced back over the centuries, even as far back as the divided Roman Empire. Inspired by the much-criticized videos mentioned above, which through their visual design betray gender stereotyping , the purpose of this essay is to study whether the video clips concerning the Enlargement contain visual traces of Europe's historical division in their depiction of Central, Eastern and South Eastern European states in relation to Western Europe to which EU's core member states belong.

---

2 Tilo Hartmann and Cristoph Klimmt, "Gender and computer games: Exploring females' dislikes," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 11 (2006). <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol11/issue4/hartmann.html>

1.1 Purpose and research question

The purpose of this essay is to examine whether there is incongruence between the view on possible Eastern European candidate states presented officially by EU policy statements and the view that is communicated implicitly through the design of DG Enlargement's political advertising videos on the subject. Thus the research question can be formulated as such:

In relation to Western European countries, which image of the candidate countries from Eastern Europe emerges from the DG Enlargement videos?

My working hypothesis is that the official political advertising video clips on the subject of EU Enlargement do not show Eastern European states as fully equal to the Western European EU member states.

1.2 Relevance

Two main points differentiate political advertising from commercial advertising: Firstly, rather than marketing goods or services, what is promoted is a political cause, issue or philosophy; secondly, "political advertising carries a moral implication, because the results have potentially far-reaching effects on the population at large."[3] Especially with regard to the second point of difference, political advertising deserves to be taken as seriously as any other official communiqué produced by the EU; it is a form of communication valued for its relative accessibility as compared to for example press releases which generally do not reach the average citizen as readily. The need to study this form of political communication is evident when considering the examples given in the introduction: Political advertising relays a representation of reality, a world-view if you will, which the producer of the video clip chooses to communicate for a purpose chosen at their own discretion. Overtly problematic political advertising can certainly cause damage by reproducing stereotypes that do not resonate well with modern values of equality, perhaps altering the world-view of their audiences if they are viewed uncritically. Highlighting videos such as the ones in this essay can expose inconsistencies between the Western European attitudes towards Eastern Europeans that is communicated explicitly, on for example a voice-over track, and implicitly, by the way the video is designed.

---

3 AllBusiness, "Business Definition for: political advertising," *AllBusiness.com*, accessed August 14, 2013. <http://www.allbusiness.com/glossaries/political-advertising/4963733-1.html>

1.3 Previous research

The image of South Eastern Europe as constructed by Western European actors has been extensively researched: Among the most important researchers in this field is Maria Todorova whose "Imagining the Balkans" is considered one of the main texts on the subject. Orientalism as a post-colonial field of study has one of its most important texts in Edward Saïd's *Orientalism* from 1978.

Semiotic theory has for decades been used extensively in research relating to the field of advertising. Judith Williams' *Decoding Advertising* published in 1978 is a notable example in which she used advertising for women's fragrance to illustrate how advertisers link intangible attributes to tangible objects, and coming to the conclusion that "[t]he form of advertisements is /…/ ideological in that they involve the false assumption which is at the root of all ideology that, because things are as they are, this is somehow natural", which echoes other branches of semiotics such as social semiotics which discusses the social impact of visual communication in relation to ideology and power. [4]

A rather large amount of research has been done on the visual elements of political advertising in general; for research dealing specifically with visual communication from EU institutions, see for example Giorgia Aiello's "All Tögethé® now: the recontextualization of branding and the stylization of diversity in EU public communication". The study critically examines the processes behind choosing the winning entry in a contest initiated by the EU in which the public was invited to submit their designs for the logo of EU's 50-year-jubilee.

2. THEORY

In this section Othering theory and Orientalism are discussed in the EU Enlargement context, providing the basis for the historical and present view of South Eastern European stereotypes as well as theories on how and why these have come to be. This section also covers territorial boundaries in relation to the European identity, and material differences which are part of the foundation of the current power relationship between EU countries and European non-member states.

---

4 John Desmond, "Judith Williamson," accessed April 30, 2013.
<http://omni.bus.ed.ac.uk/opsman/quality/SEM_black_run_26.htm>

2.1 Othering and Orientalism

Theories about Othering as such are not bound to a specific time or place and can be used on any level, ranging from the micro level of the dynamics of smaller groups, wherein individuals define themselves in relation to other individuals, to the macro perspective where for example differences adhering to nationality make the distinction between one group of people and another.

At its most basic level Othering can be said to be a social tool for dividing people into two categories: the *in-* and the *out-*group. This division is constructed by basing it on real or imagined differences between the two groups:

> Perceived dualities arise from the human conceptualization of the "One",
> which is taken to stand in contrast with that which is perceived as non-identical
> or different, and is called the "*Other*". The general process of '*Othering*'
> particularizes into creation of perceived binary distinctions such as those
> between the pairs identity/difference, us/them, subject/object, in/out,
> certain/uncertain, true/false, male/female, Self/Other.[5]

The quote highlights the non-absolute nature of Othering and representation: It is a created image of the Other as differentiating from a created image of the Self, regarding certain aspects. The dichotomies mentioned above are examples of such differences commonly emphasized, and these simple dualities are merely *perceived* since of course in reality no population of any society can in its entirety homogenously conform to such reductionist stereotypical character traits. It is therefore a given that constructed images rely on a simplified view of the Other and the Self that are essentialist in nature, and by defining the identity of the Other and what is different about that group as relating to the own group, the identity of the Self is also defined.

Stereotyping of the Other in this way was a prominent part in myths of the Orient created by the West, and they were likewise prevalent during the Cold War when the East-West division of Europe was especially noticeable, the continent divided by the 'Iron curtain' into a Soviet Eastern and an American-leaning Western part. During this period Soviet satirist Alexander Zinovyev created the stereotype called 'Homo Sovieticus' which not only stood in direct opposition to the western equivalent 'Homo Westernicus' but also differed radically from "the New Soviet Man" created by the Soviet communist party: "The New Soviet Man" was an attempt, conducted by the Soviet Communist Party to create a collective identity for all Soviet citizens. The "New Soviet Man" was typically

---

5 Patrick Jemmer, ed., *Engage Newcastle* Volume 1 (Newcastle: NewPhilSoc Publishing, 2010), 9.
<http://books.google.co.in/books?id=YlN_kz8th4cC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sv#v=onepage&q&f=false>

materialist by nature and worked selflessly for the common good.[6] Zinovyev turned these features around and attributed characteristics such as diffused individual responsibility, low productivity, lack of work ethic, apathy, waste of capital, criminal adaptation and dishonesty to "Homo Sovieticus". Of course "Homo Westernicus" in stark contrast typically showed individual responsibility, high productivity, high standards of work ethic, innovative adaptation, accumulation of capital, respect for the law and honesty.[7] This is a prime example of how attempts at creating collective identities have been made in recent times, pitting Eastern and Western Europeans against each other as directly opposed stereotypes belonging to different territories, the borders of which were strengthened by way of Othering.

The social process leading to the exclusionary mode, according to Ernest Burgess' 'classic' theory on the subject, is in essence described as follows: Previously unorganized individuals start working towards a common goal. As soon as there is sign of disorganization, "particularly among those who are least empowered and under the greatest burden from the demands of the existing organization", these individuals are stigmatized by those in power using methods of exclusionary Othering, for example by using stereotypes negatively: "Stereotypes are shared perspectives of the dominant majority that are produced and sustained through primarily dominant-controlled communication channels - verbal, visual, and technological. Through these communication processes, stereotypes become part of established norms and are perpetuated through group members' adherence to them."[8] The last step after the initial social organization and disorganization is either a re-organization or upholding of the society in question according to the views of the prevailing group.

The majority, the dominant, therefore usually attempts to "represent the world in forms that reflect their own interests, the interests of their power. But they also need to sustain the bonds of solidarity that are the condition of their dominance."[9] For example, a common view of the enlargement process with a united stance on European identity would entail that new member states are expected to "'internalize' the existing set of European norms and values, rather than extensively contribute to a modification or transformation of such a set", and thereby position the states poised

6 Sergei Khodorovic, "1917-1987: Unsuccesful and Tragic Attempt to Create a 'New Man'," accessed 20 April, 2013. <http://www.roca.org/OA/76-77/76f.htm>
7 Michal Buchowski, "The Specter of Orientalism in Europe: From Exotic Other to Stigmatized Brother," *Anthropological Quarterly* 79 (2006) : 472. <http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/antrosim/docs/BuchowskiMichal_The_Specter_Orientalism_In_Europe.pdf>
8 Mary K. Canales, "Othering: Toward an Understanding of Difference," *Advances in Nursing Science* 22 (2000). <http://journals.lww.com/advancesinnursingscience/Fulltext/2000/06000/Othering__Toward_an_Understanding_of_Difference.3.aspx>
9 Bob Hodge and Gunther R. Kress, *Social semiotics* (Ithaca,N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), 3.

for accession as subordinates subjected to Western European cultural hegemony, which in turn would grant the subordinates whatever benefits are associated with assimilating these values.[10]

2.2 The European identity, territory and Orientalism

Europe in Paasi's words is a socio-spatial experience shaped by economic and political relations influencing "such elements as national media, education systems and identity narratives".[11] As an example of how economic and political relations have influenced these elements, Paasi mentions the western social elites of the pre-industrial era who made up but a fraction of Europe's population, but due to the societal structure limiting the influence of lower classes, this elite was allowed to shape the notion of "European culture" which has played an important role for the general perception of what that is, up to this day.[12] Enlightenment thinkers, belonging to this elite, began constructing an image of Eastern Europe and its people as standing for "backwardness, poverty, disorder, sloth, lawlessness and debased manners" – an uncivilized Other in relation to its Western counterpart, the "cradle and leader" of social development, standing for "modernity, prosperity, order, work ethic, respect for the law and refined manners".[13] This image of the East as uncivilized has throughout history been perpetuated through its rehashing in a multitude of channels such as the aforementioned national media and education systems. These outlets are by no means the only ones perpetuating this image of Eastern Europe: To mention a few examples of typical representations distinctly belonging to the arts, it thoroughly saturates widely read literary works such as *King Ottokar's Sceptre* where Tintin finds himself in a war-ravaged, corrupted fictive "Syldavia" and Agatha Christie's equally fictive "Herzoslovakia" in *The Secret of Chimneys*.[14][15] Media outlets such as novels and newspapers along with more recently developed digital sources have, by way of representation, together with the collective institutions quoted above (legislation, administration and education systems) reproduced the constructed image of the East as significantly differing from the West, and thereby given legitimacy to the territorial boundaries of imagined communities

10 Paul Blokker, "Europe 'United in Diversity' : From a Central European Identity to Post-Nationality?," *European Journal of Social Theory* (2008): 259. doi: 10.1177/1368431007087477
11 Anssi Paasi, "Europe as a Social Process and Discourse: Considerations of Place, Boundaries and Identity," *European Urban and Regional Studies* (2001) 8: 9. doi: 10.1177/096977640100800102.
12 Ibid.
13 Törnquist Plewa, Barbara, "East goes West or West goes East? : reflections on the EU enlargement to Eastern Europe," in *Unity in diversity: Europe and the European Union : enlargement and constitutional treaty,* ed. Herslund, Michael and Ramona Samson (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 2005), 41.
14 Törnquist Plewa, "East goes West", 41.
15 K.E. Fleming, "Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography," *The American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 1219. < http://www.jstor.org/stable/2651410>

belonging to those of specific collective identities. Merje Kuus gives this recent example, of how Eastern Europe is portrayed in Western media:

> In the transition or 'return to Europe' accounts of EU enlargement, the feeble Eastern Europe is making a transition to the West while being coached by the West. For example, The Economist (2001: 1) opens a survey of EU enlargement with a scene of a muddy football field in Bulgaria, where hundreds of locals have gathered to witness the arrival of Gunter Verhuegen, the EU's enlargement commissioner. After Verhuegen, 'soft spoken and cashmere-coated', descends from the helicopter, locals relay their grim story of economic decline and plead with him that the EU 'is the last hope for us'.[16]

The *Economist* writer's choice of words and emphasis of certain details are efficiently painting a picture of the "backwards, poor, uncivilized" East as opposed to the "refined, affluent, civilized" West: The stage is a muddy football field which Verhuegen reaches by helicopter, hinting at bad infrastructure and accessibility (and although it is tempting to discuss the symbolism inherent in the EU official descending from heaven we will leave this particular aspect hanging). The faceless crowd of locals plea for help in contrast to Verhuegen who is both soft-spoken and clothed in soft cashmere – not needing to raise his voice because he is in the position of power and is listened to, and the cashmere coat is of course a typical item of luxury clothing, indicating "refined manners".

The perceived divide between Eastern and Western Europe can be traced much further back in history than to the Enlightenment - at least to the days of the divided Roman empire: While East Rome declined, after a few centuries of initial economic success, West Rome grew stronger leading to "Charlemagne's Western empire - France, the German lands, the Netherlands and Northern Italy – [becoming] Europe's economic and cultural centre".[17] The representation of the relation between Eastern and Western Europe has in some ways not departed entirely from the relation established already during the middle ages:

---

16 Merje Kuus, "Europe's eastern expansion and the inscription of otherness in East-Central Europe," *Progress in Human Geography* (2004) 28: 474. doi: 10.1191/0309132504ph498oa
17 Törnquist Plewa, "East goes West", 39.

"The territories behind the borders of [the Western Christian Empire of Charlemagne] ('the limes') east of the river Elbe were perceived as half barbarian periphery. Much of this perception of Eastern Europe is still alive in some form and the new Eastern European members of the EU are conscious of their peripheral status."[18]

When considering the peripheral status of Eastern Europe in an EU context and that the Eastern parts were under Ottoman rule for a period of time, it is opportune to introduce Edward Saïd's *Orientalism*. The term *Orientalism* was not coined by Edward Saïd, but it was popularized in the sense that it is used here with the publication of his theory in 1978. To very briefly summarize one of the main points of interest as relating to this essay, "Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, West, "us") and the strange (the Orient, the East, "them")."[19] The mechanisms of Othering are thus at the very heart of Orientalism, again by defining the strangeness of the other, the self is defined.

The validity of Saïd's theories have been much debated since the release of *Orientalism* and the merits of using this theoretical framework in any of its incarnations to deconstruct the western image of East Europe have been debated as well. The orientalist discourse was, according to Saïd, giving legitimacy to cultural imperialism and colonization of the other by over the course of centuries transforming the myth of a stereotypically uncivilized Orient into "a kind of *systematic knowledge* about the East" that came to be generally accepted as truth.[20] Despite criticism being directed at Saïd's work and the way it is at times still applied to the Balkans despite incompatibilities, the notion of Western Europe as a civilizing force on its "other within" is still alive in a more or less explicit way.[21][22] Eastern Europe as "not fully European", uncivilized, and in need of Western European tutelage is, as previously stated, by no means a new idea but it is still remarkably vital today, as when Jacques Chirac called the accession countries "not well brought up" when their opinion on foreign policy differed from that of the French.[23] His choice of words betrays an obvious view of Western Europe as dominant to the subordinate East and when "[t]he West is conceived as a model that the EU accession countries - framed as a blank sheet with no (proper) institutions and laws - ought to

---

18 Törnquist Plewa, "East goes West", 40.
19 Amardeep Singh, "An Introduction to Edward Said, Orientalism, and Postcolonial Literary Studies,"   last modified September 24, 2004. <http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2004/09/introduction-to-edward-said.html>
20 Ibid.
21 Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 17.
22 Ibid., 188.
23 Kuus, "Europes eastern expansion", 474.

follow"[24] it is easy to make the connection to theories on Orientalism with their detailing of West's image-constructing of the other as needing the guiding hand of 'civilized' societies, clearly positioning Eastern Europe as the dominated part.

Paasi's second image of European identity is linked to the institutional Europe, which in essence largely corresponds to the European Union.[25] In this view of Europe, integration and unity are intrinsically linked with economic integration, which during the Cold War meant that the Eastern European Soviet satellite states with their planned economy systems were largely ignored since 'Europe' was equated with the capitalist West, which in turn meant that the East was relegated to the periphery of Europe.[26] Even though the previously mentioned view of Eastern Europe as essentially backwards could be seen as equally well pertaining to some of the southern parts of Western Europe at the time and that conversely parts of Eastern Europe certainly could be deemed 'Western', this "diversity within the West or the East was not perceived, because /…/ [the stereotypes] confirmed the older divisions and deeply rooted images", which furthermore influenced political decisions during the second World War, especially regarding forming an alliance with the Soviet Union by sacrificing parts of Eastern Europe since "in the eyes of many Western European politicians it had never totally belonged to Europe".[27]

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in a large part of Europe urgently needing to re-organize the economy in order to match the Western counterpart. The undeniable economic differences within Europe forms part of the foundation for the Western European view of the East – as we have seen, at the time of the collapse of communism in Europe the Soviet satellite states were no longer seen as European partly because of their not being economically integrated; in fact not even belonging to the same fundamental economic system as Western Europe and the difficult transformation into market economies modeled on the West necessarily positioned them as dominated. The promise of material wealth and education are recurring themes in the context of the accession countries' path towards joining the EU and are a feature of the ideological complex briefly discussed in the section on Othering: The dominant presents their ideology as mutually benefiting for them and the dominated, in this case the dominant would presumably enhance trade and thus reap economic rewards while the dominated in their turn would gain in welfare.

24 Kuus, "Europes eastern expansion", 475.
25 Paasi, "Europe as a Social Process", 11.
26 Ibid., 11.
27 Törnquist Plewa, "East goes West", 41.

This exact type of ideological complex can be found in the Enlargement strategy for 2012-2013 issued by the European Commission: "Within a framework of strict but fair conditionality, the prospect of accession drives political and economic reforms, transforming societies and creating new opportunities for citizens and business. At the same time, enlargement reinforces the Union's political and economic strengths."[28] Societies joining the EU must adjust their governance to fit within the EU framework in order to gain access to the single market, meaning that they must adopt the economic model of Western European states. Greater economic integration by way of Enlargement is presented as an absolute necessity in order for the EU to remain competitive on a global scale and also in order to improve resilience in times of financial crisis for existing members as well as candidate countries: Enlargement is thus portrayed as mutually beneficial to accession countries and existing member states.

Strengthening the rule of law and societal institutions along with fighting corruption, organized crime and maintaining regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe is also highly prioritized in the current Enlargement strategy – the obvious benefit of this for accession countries is a safer society with democratic processes strengthened and greatly reducing the risk for relapse into armed conflict; meanwhile, the entire EU benefits from greater security thanks to well-functioning border controls.[29] These same points were summarized in a 2009 press release where it was stated that "[e]conomically, enlargement has led to increased living standards in the new Member States, while creating export and investment opportunities for the old ones. It has also helped consolidate democracy, stability and security on our continent. An enlarged EU carries more weight when addressing issues of global importance be it climate change or the world economy and its governance."[30] The reoccurrence of these arguments for the Enlargement suggests that they are at the very core of the Enlargement policy.

Regarding the division of Europe throughout history, the European Commission's official view on it is that the continent's 'natural' state is to be united since they state that Eastern and Western Europe was finally reunited with the latest Enlargement "after decades of artificial separation" and that the Enlargement process really is the EU's response to "the legitimate aspiration of the peoples of our continent to be united in a common European endeavor".[31] The Commission does not take into account the fact that Europe has been divided in an Eastern and a Western part for centuries, for

28 European Commission, "COM(2012) 600 final," (2012): 2.
<http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf>
29 Ibid., 6
30 European Commission, "Five years of an enlarged EU has brought lasting benefits and left Europe better placed to tackle the current crisis," (2009) <http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-09-300_en.htm>
31 European Commission, "COM(2012) 600 final," 2

example as previously mentioned during the later period of the Roman Empire. Even though this view of Europe as naturally united is not rooted in historical facts, it clearly shows that the EU's ambition is indeed for the continent to be united under the EU flag. Likewise, although economic integration requires Enlargement countries to adapt to Western European societies, the end goal of economic integration across the board is to achieve greater welfare for all of Europe.

3. METHOD AND SOURCES

The sample material has been selected to include all presently available videos produced by the DG Enlargement on the subject of South Eastern Europe and their prospective EU memberships. At the time of writing, there are three videos in this category: "EU-Enlargement – What can it offer you?", "The EU: What would it mean to me?" and "South East Europe - On the path towards the EU". The first two videos are of roughly equal length, 6 minutes 39 seconds and 6 minutes 9 seconds respectively, and they were also both published in 2012. The third video, "South East Europe – On the path towards the EU", is significantly longer with a running time of 10 minutes and 1 second and is also older as it was published in 2009.

These videos are available under the title "Videos galleries" [sic] in DG Enlargement's multimedia library but are not featured on all country-specific sites: All three are published on the sites of Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Turkey. The sites for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia do not feature "EU-Enlargement – What can it offer you?" DG Enlargement does not seem to strictly follow logic when choosing where to publish the videos, for example "South East Europe – On the path towards the EU" features on the site for Iceland, wherefore whether these videos appear on all sites or not has not been given any further consideration.

The only prospect candidate state on the site that is not situated in Eastern or South Eastern Europe is Iceland, which has videos specifically targeting issues connected to fishing. Other videos tailor-made for different countries include a video on gender equality for Turkey, a video on agriculture and animal health for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a video on education for Croatia, and so on. Although conducting a study including these videos would be interesting as well, they have not been included in the sample material since they are not presented by DG Enlargement as generally relevant to all prospect candidate countries. There is also a section called "Other videos" which contains miscellaneous videos not adhering to a particular theme – there are videos on music festivals and football tournaments as well as a video on the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.

Given their diverse nature and the fact that they are not relevant to the essay's research question these videos have not been included in the sample.

When deciding whether to use a quantitative or qualitative method the latter was deemed more suitable for use in this case. Firstly, quantitative methods usually work better for analyzing larger masses of text; even though the net could be cast wider to include all 37 videos available in DG Enlargement's media library, far from all of these are relevant to the study and the number of texts in the sample size would probably still not be large enough while keeping with the current research question.[32] Secondly, coding and searching a large number of texts is effective, and easily done when these are literary texts; when texts, as in this case, are in fact video clips the process becomes quite cumbersome since every clip has to be manually scanned and coded for relevant symbols.[33] Thirdly, although the three videos share the same theme, their formats differ: One largely show landscapes, construction sites, etc. while others are more focused on interviews, meaning that scanning for mosques as symbols signifying Othering might work in one video, but does not necessarily do so in the next one, and given that the sample consists of only three videos developing a well-functioning standardized coding system would be difficult.

On the other hand, a qualitative approach fits well with my chosen research questions and the available sources since the aim of the essay is not to produce broad, generalizable findings, but rather to explore possible connections between historical events and attitudes and if these appear in the form of patterns, features and themes or not, in the particular objects of study.

3.1 Semiotics

Given that the study objects are video clips, semiotic visual analysis has been used to interpret the material: It is used to study communication systems and has been widely applied to commercial advertising since it is well suited to deciphering messages communicated with visual elements.

Semiotics is the study of communication through signs and representation of meaning and "the question of the 'hidden meanings' of images".[34] It is in no way limited to the study of visual material – in fact the semioticians of the 1950's and 1960's were mainly linguists and promoted the view that any system of communication could be seen as a language, which in turn opened up the possibility for seriously studying the language of visual material such as advertising and films - two of the most-

---

32 "Qualitative versus Quantitative Research," last modified December 10, 2012.
<http://www.xavier.edu/library/help/qualitative_quantitative.pdf>
33 Texts are in the context of this essay defined as recorded information.
34 Theo van Leuwen and Carey Jewitt, *Handbook of visual analysis* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), 92.

covered areas of research in this respect.[35] In order to consolidate semiotic theory and defend its place among other research theories more positivist in nature, a standardized way of interpreting the design of visual material took form. Roland Barthes played an important role in developing and championing the Paris structuralist school of semiotics which is mainly concerned with studying the image or video in question and less so with the social aspects of visual representation – therefore a limited measure of *social semiotic* theory will additionally be introduced in this section in order to more effectively address questions of ideology, power and hegemonial representation which are relevant when considering visual material in relation to political power.[36]

In semiotics every sign consists of a *signifier* and a *signified* which are inseparable. The signifier is the object of the sign itself, the physical manifestation, and the signified is *what* this physical manifestation represents. In Barthian semiotics, there are two layers of meaning: the *denotative* and the *connotative.*

The first layer, the denotative, is describing what is depicted in the picture. The connotative layer is concerned with "'what ideas and values are expressed through what is represented, and through the way in which it is represented".[37] Categorization, or the representation of for example a type of person, belongs to the denotative layer of meaning: "Typification comes about through the use of visual stereotypes, which may either be cultural attributes (objects, dress, hairstyle, etc.) or physiognomic attributes. The more these stereotypes overshadow a person's individual features (or the individual features of an object or a landscape), the more that person (or object, or landscape) is represented as a type".[38] Using actors and casting them as a certain type is one of the most effective ways of conveying a message since linking the product to other humans provides the viewers with an opportunity to identify themselves with, or in other ways relate to, the model or models in the ad, who become associated with the product or service marketed:

---

35 James Monaco, *How to read a film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 157.
36 Leuwen and Jewitt, *Visual handbook*, 92.
37 Ibid., 94.
38 Ibid., 95.

> By using characters and scenes which can be stereotypically identified, the
> spectator is drawn into the ad and invited to identify or emphasize with what is
> said and done /…/ In ads, because they need to communicate swiftly,
> unambiguously and economically, you will find that devices like facial
> expressions, poses and movement tend toward stylization or and
> generalization /…/ - tendencies which contribute towards the stereotyping of
> people (particularly with regard to their gender), activities and situations.[39]

Two other techniques reinforcing "the 'they're all the same-effect' that constitutes generalization" is showing actors in groups, in order to take focus away from the individual, as well as the distance of the viewer position in relation to the actors: If the actors are shown in a long shot, i.e. from a long distance, it is harder for the viewer to distinguish their individual, unique, features.[40]

Gillian Dyer lists several devices like these in *Advertising as communication*, and among those categorized as physical attributes *age*, *size* and *looks* are most useful to consider in the context of this essay: The *age* of models in commercial advertising tends to emphasize youth, especially when the model is female.[41] Youth as an attribute carries for example messages like innocence and purity on the connotative level of meaning, and may in many contexts symbolize 'the future' as a concept, the same goes for children. *Size* refers to the physical size of an object or person in relation to other objects or persons: Often, the greater the size, the greater the importance or emphasis is put on the object or actor. When actors are of different *size* in a shot, this device can be used to convey a difference in social status and power.[42] *Looks*, finally, are "related to the overall class, age, style and impression created by a character".[43]

Belonging to the category of actors' *manners* are: Facial expression conveying culturally coded emotion, whether the actor establishes eye contact with the viewer or not, looks at a product (drawing attention to the particular object of his or her gaze) or looks into the distance (indicating detachment or seemingly looking towards 'the future') and assigned poses which can convey activity and passivity.[44]

The third and last category in relation to actors is *activity.* Having an actor touching an object would put emphasize on it, body movement such as an actor using an object (like the typically female actor cleaning a floor) and positional communication meaning that an actor or object's position within the

---

39 Gillian Dyer, *Advertising as communication* (London: Methuen, 1982), 96-97.
40 Leuwen and Jewitt, *Visual handbook*, 96.
41 Dyer, *Advertising*, 97.
42 Ibid., 98.
43 Ibid., 98.
44 Ibid., 99.

frame can be used to signify "[s]uperiority, inferiority, equality, intimacy and rank".[45] Another important term often in use when analyzing visual material is that of *subject position*. Both actors and viewers can be said to inhabit subject positions, with the former being closely tied to the actor's role in the scene: "In an image of a woman with a child, the subject position of mother is probably central to interpreting the role at work in the image".[46]

The actor's position in the frame in relation to the viewer often holds a great deal of information about the social relations between viewer and actor that the producer of the material has sought to portray. The camera position on the horizontal axis can be used to express certain attitudes toward actors: the horizontal angle is either frontal or oblique, meaning that the camera is to some degree positioned to the side of the actors. The main difference between these angles is that the frontal angle signals involvement whereas the oblique does not:

> The frontal angle says: 'what you see here is part of our world, something we
> are involved with.' The oblique angle says: 'what you see here is *not* part of our
> world; it is *their* world, something *we* are not involved with.'[47]

When the actor is positioned in such a way that he or she looks directly into the viewers' eyes, the producer wishes the viewer to form a social bond with the actor: "The participant's gaze (and the gesture, if present) demands something from the viewer".[48] This kind of position is therefore said to form a *demand*, exactly what is demanded of the viewer then depends on other factors such as facial expression, body language, etc. When the actor is not looking directly at the viewer, but rather looking away, the image is said to form an *offer*: The viewer is not asked to form a social bond as in the former position, but becomes an onlooker, for whom the actors are on display as "items of information, objects of contemplation" – which makes this position ideal for portraying an Other.[49]

Whereas the horizontal angle of the camera is mostly concerned with the perceived degree of involvement on behalf of the viewer, the vertical angle is closely connected to the representation of power relations between viewer and actor: Whoever is situated at the higher point on the vertical axis is portrayed as having power over the other; if actor and viewer are both on eye-level, the angle, or lack of thereof, signals equality.[50] That is, the position of the camera can be used to determine

---

45 Dyer, *Advertising*, 101.
46 Emmison, Michael, and Philip Smith, *Researching the visual* (London: SAGE Publications, 2012), 76.
47 Kress, Gunther R., and Theo Leeuwen, *Reading images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (London: Routledge, 2006), 143
48 Kress and Leeuwen, *Reading images*, 122
49 ibid., 124-125
50 ibid., 146

who the producer prefers the viewer to think of as dominant and who is to be thought of as subordinate in the given context.

Yet another use of viewer position to convey meaning is how the actor is framed within the shot, and at what distance. The distance between actor and viewer position in a shot is, when analyzed, often using measures based on the distance between people in social situations. The basic idea is that the closer the actor is to the viewer position, the more intimate a relation they are portrayed as having. However, like in real-life social situations, having a stranger invading the immediate space around you is experienced as threatening rather than friendly and therefore when actors are meant to seem relatable, they are kept at what is called a "social" distance from the viewer.

To paraphrase Dyer, in order to understand the image of non-Western Europe in the ads, we need to recognize how the setting, the actors and the props are signified and positioned in relation to its "economic, political and ideological position" in Europe as such and in relation to other European states.

The nature of the study, because of the use of semiotic theory, falls squarely into the hermeneutic school of interpretive science which warrants a brief reflection on the issue of reflexivity: The author has been socialized into the Western European cultural sphere, meaning that the perspective is inherently that of a Western European; a different cultural background could yield a different interpretation of the sample material.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Each video clip is discussed separately and then compared at the end. In the case of "EU-Enlargement – What can it offer you?" and "The EU: What would it mean to me?" which are both based around interviews, each interview comprises a segment whereas "South East Europe – On the path towards the EU" has been given another format and is not as readily divided into segments.

4.1 EU-Enlargement – What can it offer you?

The video is divided into three segments, each following an individual that has moved to another European country for work. The main subject in every part is providing the voice-over while being filmed in different settings and involved in different activities interspersed by clips of the interview itself. This format is used in the second video, "The EU: What would it mean to me?" as well. The appearances of the actors correspond to the type they are portraying: In business settings they wear business clothing, the farmer wears clothing appropriate to his line of work, etc. Lastly, the third video is available in a lower resolution than the other two and the video is also of lower quality, possibly due to the fact that it was produced in 2009 unlike the other two produced in 2012.

The first video's first segment follows a man from the United Kingdom working in the Croatian capital Zagreb where he and his Croatian wife have set up a property business "primarily aiming at European investors looking to expand into new markets". His wife is notably entirely absent in the ad, but the man is given two main subject positions in the video: that of a businessman, and that of a father. Props and activities denoting his subject position as businessman, and simultaneously signaling modernity on the connotative level, include him talking in a mobile phone, a Bluetooth headset and him using a computer displaying what is assumed to be his company's website. During the interview parts he is casually seated at a table in his home, talking to the interviewer who is outside of the shot. The viewer is positioned beside the interviewer, at a social distance and at less than a 45 degree angle to his right. Although he doesn't establish eye-contact with the viewer, uncommon in interview situations, he does so at the end of the video, thus forming a social bond with the viewer. Decidedly Croatian actors are limited to two brief scenes shot at eye-level showing from afar crowds of people going about their business in the city, thereby representing them not as individuals but as a 'faceless' group of people or part of the setting. The audience is only invited to form a social bond with the Western European man – Croatian actors are objectified through the placement of the camera and thus depicted as Other or belonging to the out-group.

Strengthening the man's subject position as a business man is a scene of him inspecting modern buildings shot from a low angle in order to emphasize the impressive size of the structures. The man is consistently shot from either eye-level or a low angle, alternatingly positioning him as someone relatable and as an authority figure. The pen-ultimate sequence has him standing on a roof top, high above the city and the citizens of Zagreb. He puts on his sun glasses before the camera cuts to a view of a specific part of the city; the object of his gaze. His sudden positioning on top of a high building, possibly one of the buildings which towered over him in a previous scene, suggests his conquering of them.

The very last shot is with him in his home, facing the camera at eye-level and making direct eye-contact with the viewer while resting his arms on his two children flanking him, all three of them smiling. Again, the viewer is invited to form a social bond with the Western European. The man is positioned as an authoritative individual in his roles as a father and as a business man. It is not wholly uncalled for to interpret him as a modern day conqueror of sorts: The motif is activated by the shot of him on the roof top where he spots a part of the city apparently desirable to him in his role as a business man. Capitalism as a theme is not especially evident in any of the videos, but the man selling parts of South Eastern Europe to Western European investors is certainly a product of it. The opportunity to invest and / or consume lies with Western Europeans, never the other way around.

The inclusion of the next generation of Europeans in the video, the man's children, evokes thoughts of the future and in this video possibly innocence: Since his wife is Croatian they can be interpreted as symbolizing the union of the formerly divided Europe, indeed 'Growing together', while simultaneously symbolizing innocence in the sense that they are too young to have experienced this divide during their lifetime. This segment emphasizes Western European influence – in the form of real estate investors and other Western European businesses coming to Enlargement to invest, and Western European culture spreading Eastwards through migration.

The next segment in the video follows a Croatian man working as a scientist in Leuven, Belgium. The choice of angles on the horizontal axis follows the formula established during the first segment of the video and can therefore not be used as a foundation for interpreting differences vis-á-vis the other segments of the clip. Unlike the other two interviews, his seems to have been conducted at his work place, and his subject position, that of a working scientist, all but completely overshadows the other subject positions he inhabits in the video: In one scene he is seen cycling on what is revealed to be his way to work, the subject position thus not being that of someone enjoying cycling as a leisure activity, but that of an environmentally friendly commuter.

The very first scene of the segment shows him sitting outside at a table reading, and he tells us that his degree in Engineered Physics attained in Zagreb was followed by studies in Italy before coming to work in Brussels and that he plans to return to Croatia and set up a lab to continue working using the experience gained in Western Europe: He does not plan on staying in Belgium but return to South Eastern Europe with his acquired expertise. During most of the video segment he is shown interacting with colleagues or working by himself, operating high-tech equipment.

The only subject positions he inhabits, that are not related to work, are that of a flaneur and café customer: From a low angle, he is seen traversing Brussels' Grand Place, dwarfed by the grandiose buildings in the background, followed by a brief scene at a café where he sits alone drinking a cup of coffee while in a contemplative state of mind. Notably, he is not seen interacting with anyone outside of his work place: This is starkly contrasted by the other two segments where family life plays an important role, those two main actors being in roughly equal measures positioned as parents and business people. Excepting the scene at the café, he is not depicted as *living* in Western Europe; rather he is depicted as *working*, especially since the actors in the other two segments show signs of having settled in the country where they work.

The third segment follows a German woman working as a tourism expert for the German Development Cooperation, focusing on "promoting economy and tourism in the Danube area." The Danube is, considering the field in which she is working, naturally salient in many scenes: The woman is filmed on boats in two scenes and cycling by the river in another. The beautiful scenery is represented as the main drawing point for tourists – even though culture is mentioned as well, no visual representation of objects symbolizing this is evident in the segment. Two scenes showing her walking in Belgrade seems to show the city as interchangeable with any European city while coupled with the subtitled voice-over telling us that it is indeed very similar to her own country. One of these scenes sees her walking towards us on a street. Excepting the fact that she is known to us and saliently placed in the middle of the frame she would blend in perfectly with the rest of the crowd: Rather than emphasizing differences these scenes emphasize the *likeness* between her, as a stand-in for all Western Europeans, and the people of Belgrade. A brief scene in her home is coupled with her stating that she was overwhelmed by the hospitality shown to her and her three daughters by local families.

The woman's workplace is a modern, light and minimalistic environment, whether her colleagues are Croatian or not is not evident. In one scene she is discussing with a man in front of a hotel, presumably the owner, whereby the theme of Serbia accommodating Western Europeans through tourism and even migration is further strengthened in a concrete fashion. One sequence depicts

young Croatians working in an office or classroom: They are portrayed as individuals rather than as an anonymous group since the camera zooms in, letting a few of them fill the entire frame in different shots. The woman tells us that these young Croatians hold great potential and that Western European multi-national corporations have started to recognize this, investing in the country.

South Eastern Europe is represented as a territory ready to receive Western Europeans, indeed in the case of the first segment, even to be conquered by Western Europeans. In the second segment the perception of Western Europe as 'tutoring' Eastern Europe is represented by the scientist schooled in Italy and working in Belgium before bringing his expertise back. The first and the last segment of the video are concerned with property and tourism – both closely connected to the geographical and spatial reality of the territory which in the case of an Enlargement would be 'up for grabs' for Western European investors. Additionally, even though 'culture' is mentioned, it is not given any real attention in the videos: The viewer is left with scenes of nature and anonymous city life through which we learn nothing about the history of the countries, and we learn very little about the identity of the citizens. The video portrays these countries as near-vacant in these aspects as if ready to be subjected to Western European cultural hegemony. The over-arching theme seems to be that of Western influence on the South Eastern part of Europe – the South East however, is not depicted as more than temporarily influencing Western Europe.

4.2 The EU: What would it mean to me?

The second video is divided into four segments, showing "four people – four stories", all with different themes relating to EU membership: education, movement across borders, health and material welfare. The actors belong to member states that already joined the EU, and they are telling the viewer of how it has changed their lives. The presentation of the actors is uniform across the segments: They are seen in work- and family-related situations, they are mostly shot at a close distance, sometimes the close-up verging on the extreme. Family and / or children are present in every segment of the video.

The first segment opens with the text "I want my children to have a good life". In it we follow a Polish farmer who thanks to grants from the EU has been able to invest in equipment to manufacture organic oil for cooking. He is seen producing the oil by himself in the farm, then driving his van to the store where he interacts with customers, smiling and laughing. The next sequence takes place in his home with his family seated around the dinner table eating. Purely visual cues such as camera position on the horizontal and vertical axes do not position him as subordinate or dominant in

relation to the viewer – the close ups and his positive facial expressions makes him relatable and affable to the viewer. The music can be described as generic pop-rock and piano music verging on 'elevator music'. The sound is uplifting and upbeat, and does not function as an Othering mechanism in this context.

The second segment is called "I want to find a good job" and features a man from Bulgaria gone to work on Cyprus with the help of the European Job Mobility Programme. After the initial interview where he presents himself to the viewer, he is standing only slightly turned away from the viewer position, which is at eye-level, while establishing eye-contact and smiling; he is positioned as someone relatable and affable to the viewer. His subject positions are that of an office worker and that of a father. He is shown in an office, working at a computer and interacting with a colleague. In the latter scene, both are seated at the table as equals and there is no evidence to suggest him being cast as subordinate. The last scene sees the man on a beach with his child and spouse, playing with a kite. Although this sequence bears resemblance to the second segment of the first video, with the Croatian scientist, there is an important difference in that the office worker clearly has settled down and probably counts on staying at least for a while where he is: In this case, the expertise and influence is coming from the South Eastern parts of Europe thereby not positioning him as a subordinate under Western tutelage but rather, he is a valuable resource.

The next segment is called "I want to get a good education" and features a young woman who during the final year of her education has taken part in the EdTWIN programme, a programme initiated by Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria facilitating among other things studies abroad. Her sole subject position in the segment is that of a teacher. The vertical angle varies between sitting at eye-level and sitting at a lower angle: the viewer is at times seated at the level of the schoolchildren with the camera filming her from a low angle positioning her as a person of authority in the context. In another scene, she plays a game with the children involving them 'freezing' their movements at her command – overall she is represented as in control, but due to the camera often being positioned at eye-level she is equally often represented as someone relatable to the viewer.

The fourth and last segment features a Slovenian nurse, who thanks to "knowledge transfer between Slovenia and other EU countries" received an early diagnosis for breast cancer and had it treated. She is positioned both as a receiver of care in her role as patient and a caregiver in her role as a nurse. The hospital, or possibly hospitals in plural, in which she takes these two roles look modern. This segment is also devoid of clear evidence of the producer positioning her as subordinate in relation to the viewer.

Before concluding with the message "EU membership brings many opportunities" there is another segment called "We all share their hopes" containing four short scenes in which the actors tell us about what their hopes for the future are. In all these, children are important in different ways: The farmer hopes that his children will take over his business one day, the teacher hopes that her education enables her to be a better teacher for the children and the nurse and cancer survivor hopes to get to see her grand-children grow up.

This second video clip does not provide much, if any, evidence that the producer is representing the actors as subordinate – on the contrary it seems to be designed to make them as relatable as possible to the viewer. The lack of clear Othering mechanisms at work means that the power relationship between the viewer and the actors seems to be balanced throughout the video. Camera positioning along the vertical axis is not used to convey an unbalanced power relationship, and on the horizontal axis the angle is often in the frontal position in order to let the viewer form a social bond with the actors. Features of Orientalism are absent - on the contrary the environments seem almost exceedingly devoid of specific cultural marks, perhaps to de-emphasize the imagined differences between the viewer and people from other countries.

The types portrayed however are different as compared to those in the first video – there's a nurse, a farmer, a teacher and an office worker: None of them are clearly depicted as 'business people' unlike the Western Europeans in the first video. This video shows the opportunity for citizens of Enlargement countries to migrate, in the case of the office worker, and work as an equal with Western Europeans, but there is no mention of capitalizing on the new Western European market once the country has joined. Although the point of view in this video is different compared to the first one, Enlargement countries are still not 'allowed' to influence Western Europe culturally and economically to the same extent that they are influenced by Western Europe. It might be too much to say that the video shows an unbalanced power relationship between East and West, but it is at least not clearly level in this regard.

4.3 South East Europe - On the path towards the EU

The format of this video differs from the two clips discussed so far. No direct contact is established through eye-contact, or even a frontal angle at eye-level at a social distance, between viewer and actors. The actors are often depicted in large groups at long distances when not assigned roles clearly adhering to a profession; portraying people as individuals is not given a high priority here. Workers are shown alone or in groups performing specific tasks, but always at an oblique angle, meaning that

the viewer is not encouraged by the producer to relate to them or form social bonds. In the part of the video directly addressing work and how citizens in existing member states will be given new opportunities, only laborers engaged in construction work or other manual labor are shown: Like in all videos in the sample material, only Western Europeans are shown as investors. Actors are mostly portrayed as types: policemen are shown in training when the voice-over mentions border control and stopping crime at border points and lab assistants are shown when talking about analyzing sample of food to ensure they meet EU-standards: The message is that these countries are getting ready to meet EU standards in various regards and this is communicated by connecting functions with types, resulting in the actors almost being used as props.

The music plays an important role in that it serves as an Othering mechanism with overtones of Orientalism: It is unlike the music in the other two videos studied, very distinct and meant to sound exotic and different to the Western European viewer. Also, no interviews are performed in this video, in fact, no actors are heard at all – the only voice audible belongs to the British-sounding man providing the voice-over. This further signals disinvolvement with the actors in the video.

When touching upon the subject of modernizing agriculture, a scene featuring a shepherd walking on cobblestones through a town with his flock of sheep is shown. A modern type of agriculture work is shown moments later: The former scene marks the region as exotically quaint, backwards and poor - in other words, as Other in relation to Western Europe's perception of itself. This brings to mind Orientalism and the West's constructed image of other parts of the world – rather than nuancing or altogether altering it, the scene with the shepherd only strengthens an already existing negative stereotype of these parts of Europe, which again firmly positions Western Europe as the dominant.

Several other elements serve to construct South-Eastern Europe as the Other in relation to the Western European Self: When touching upon the rich culture of the region the culturally-coded signs shown are restricted to ancient bridges, ruins, churches, orthodox monasteries and mosques. As universal as bridges and non-specified ruins are, orthodox monasteries and mosques are not historically associated with Western Europe. Additionally, common for all of these signs is that none of them point to a modern, living culture that can potentially influence that of Western Europe – all of these are instead historic and museatic; not art galleries or modern museums that would convey a vibrant, forward-thinking art scene bringing forth new ideas which could possibly influence Western European societies.

In all three video clips, modern culture is all but invisible – this brings to mind that the dominant expects the dominated to internalize their culture and its norms and values while not wanting the

minority to exert any influence.[51] One can also further relate this to the Enlightenment during which the Western European elite was instrumental in forming the notion of what European culture was, and during this period Eastern parts of Europe were not held in high regard. These videos seem to carry on this tradition in that no real 'threatening', potentially influencing, cultural symbols are depicted in the videos, indicating that these prospect member states are not to be joining as equals on a cultural level.

Another scene implicitly, and hopefully unwittingly, refers back to the Western European enlightenment thinkers' view of Eastern Europe as barbaric and uncivilized: While mentioning the wars ravaging the region during the 20th century, rather than showing actual footage or a monument, a piece of medieval art is shown depicting scenes of strife, suffering and death. The object chosen to illustrate the Balkan wars invites the viewer to form a curious connection between the people in the painting and the people suffering in the Balkan wars, seemingly almost equating them. To a Western European viewer, the strangeness of this juxtaposition is easily illuminated by imagining for example the invasion of Normandy being narrated by a voice-over coupled with a similar medieval painting.

This third video is made from a robustly Western European perspective: It does not in any way interact with the actors present in the video - as viewers we are invited to watch the work being carried out from the sidelines. All actors are either shown together in crowds, rendering the distinguishing of individual features difficult, or represented as types performing functions related to the joining of the EU. This coupled with the fact that these preparations serve to model these countries on Western European countries, positions them as subordinate in relation to the viewer and Western Europe. Furthermore, the design contains Orientalist features such as 'exotic' music and a shepherd herding his sheep through a small town with cobbled streets. Business people and expressions of modern culture, both potential 'threats' to the Western European dominant, are entirely absent from the video.

---

51 Blokker, 'United in Diversity', 259.

5. CONCLUSION

The essay applies a semiotic visual analysis paired with theories on Othering and Orientalism in order to answer the research question "Which image of the candidate countries from Eastern Europe emerges from the DG Enlargement videos?" The sample material consists of three political advertising video clips produced by DG Enlargement and published in their official multimedia library. The videos were analyzed in the following order: "EU-Enlargement – What can it offer you?", "The EU: What would it mean to me?", "South East Europe – On the path towards the EU".

The three videos differ in terms of displaying Othering mechanisms and overt positioning of Western Europe as the dominant to the non-Western European subordinate. Between camera positions on the vertical and the horizontal axes, studying the use of the former has proven to be more fruitful than the latter in these videos meaning that the representation of power relationships has been easier to spot than degrees of involvement by use of camera position: Only in the third video clip is the camera consistently positioned at oblique angles presenting the actors as Other in relation to the viewer.

The first video uses the vertical axis in a way that conveys an unequal power relationship and further suggests that the prospect accession countries and their citizens are subject to Western European influence, rather than the other way around, and even 'tutelage' it may be argued in the case of the second segment. The inclusion of family, and more specifically children, in the case of Western Europeans having migrated to do business in South Eastern Europe suggests the spreading of Western European values and cultural hegemony.

The second video does not contain Othering mechanisms and does not clearly depict the power relationship between Eastern and Western Europe as unbalanced. Additionally, there are no clear signs of Orientalism. However, none of the actors are portrayed as investors or 'business people', in the sample material only Western Europeans are shown capitalizing on the Enlargement, which indicates an imbalanced aspect of the economic integration.

The third video shows the most obvious signs of Othering, Orientalism and an unbalanced power relationship between the Western European EU member states and the candidate countries. One example is the music chosen for the soundtrack which bears an 'Oriental' influence, constantly reminding us of the Otherness of these countries. People shown in the video are not interacted with in any way, nor are their voices heard, meaning that there is a lack of involvement regarding the representation of the countries and their citizens. The camera positioning on the horizontal axis is more important in this video than the other two since no actor is filmed straight from the front or

establishing eye-contact with the viewer. One problematic scene forms a connection between medieval barbary and the Balkan wars which echoes Western European enlightenment thinkers and their view of Eastern Europe as 'uncivilized' and 'barbaric'. Another scene shows a shepherd walking through a town with his sheep - the inclusion of this scene depicts the area as decidedly Other, poor and undeveloped in relation to Western Europe.

The third video is by far showing the most Othering mechanisms and is also the only one to contain Orientalist elements. The second video on the other hand seems more balanced and the first one shows a moderate amount of Othering mechanisms. Although the sample videos show a varying degree of Othering mechanisms, they are nonetheless present in most segments and South Eastern Europe is quite consistently portrayed as having little potential to influence Western Europe economically and culturally. Since the official EU Enlargement strategy ultimately aims for economic integration and a Europe truly united under the flag of the European Union, DG Enlargement would perhaps do well to consider the incongruence between the official strategy presented and these video clips' portrayal of South Eastern Europe as subordinate to the dominant Western Europe in order for this not to be an issue in future publications.

REFERENCES

AllBusiness. "Business Definition for: political advertising." *AllBusiness.com*. Accessed August 14,
2013. <http://www.allbusiness.com/glossaries/political-advertising/4963733-1.html>

Blokker, Paul. "Europe 'United in Diversity': From a Central European Identity to Post-Nationality?"
European Journal of Social Theory 11 (2008): 257-274. doi:
10.1177/1368431007087477

Buchowski, Michal. "The Specter of Orientalism in Europe: From Exotic Other to Stigmatized
Brother." *Anthropological Quarterly* 79 (2006).
<http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/antrosim/docs/BuchowskiMichal_The_Sp
ecter_Orientalism_In_Europe.pdf>

Canales, Mary K. "Othering: Toward an Understanding of Difference." *Advances in Nursing Science 22*
(2000).
<http://journals.lww.com/advancesinnursingscience/Fulltext/2000/06000/Othering__
Toward_an_Understanding_of_Difference.3.aspx>

Desmond, John. "Judith Williamson." Accessed April 30, 2013.
<http://omni.bus.ed.ac.uk/opsman/quality/SEM_black_run_26.htm>

Dyer, Gillian. *Advertising as communication.* London: Methuen, 1982.

Emmison, Michael and Philip Smith. *Researching the visual.* London: SAGE Publications, 2012.

European Commission. "COM(2012) 600 final." Accessed 15 August, 2013.
<http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_pape
r_2012_en.pdf>

European Commission. "Five years of an enlarged EU has brought lasting benefits and left Europe
better placed to tackle the current crisis." Accessed 15 August, 2013.
<http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-09-300_en.htm>

Hartmann, Tilo and Cristoph Klimmt. "Gender and computer games: Exploring females' dislikes."

Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 11 (2006).

<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol11/issue4/hartmann.html>

Fleming, K.E. "*Orientalism*, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography." *The American Historical Review*

105 (2000): 1219.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2651410>

Hodge, Bob and Gunther R. Kress. *Social semiotics*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Jemmer, Patrick, ed. *Engage Newcastle Volume 1.* Newcastle: NewPhilSoc Publishing, 2010.

<http://books.google.co.in/books?id=YlN_kz8th4cC&printsec=frontcover&hl=sv#v=on

epage&q&f=false>

Khodorovic, Sergei. "1917-1987: Unsuccessful and Tragic Attempt to Create a 'New Man'." Accessed

20 April, 2013. <http://www.roca.org/OA/76-77/76f.htm>

Kress, Gunther R. and Theo van Leeuwen. *Reading images: The Grammar of Visual Design.* London:

Routledge, 2006.

Kuus, Merje. "Europe's eastern expansion and the inscription of otherness in East-Central Europe."

Progress in Human Geography 28 (2004): 472-479. doi: 10.1191/0309132504ph498oa

Leuwen, Theo van and Carey Jewitt. *Handbook of visual analysis.* London: SAGE Publications, 2001.

Monaco, James. *How to read a film.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Paasi, Anssi. "Europe as a Social Process and Discourse: Considerations of Place, Boundaries and

Identity." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 8 (2001). doi:

10.1177/096977640100800102

Singh, Amardeep. "An Introduction to Edward Said, Orientalism, and Postcolonial Literary Studies."

Accessed 4 May, 2013. <http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2004/09/introduction-to-

edward-said.html>

Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Törnquist Plewa, Barbara. "East goes West or West goes East? : reflections on the EU enlargement to
Eastern Europe." In *Unity in diversity: Europe and the European Union : enlargement
and constitutional treaty*, ed. Herslund, Michael and Ramona Samson, 39-60.
Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 2005.

Watt, Nicholas. "European commission criticised for 'racist' ad." *The Guardian.* March 6, 2012.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/06/european-commission-criticised-
racist-ad>

Xavier University Library. "Qualitative versus Quantitative Research." Accessed August 16, 2013.
<http://www.xavier.edu/library/help/qualitative_quantitative.pdf>