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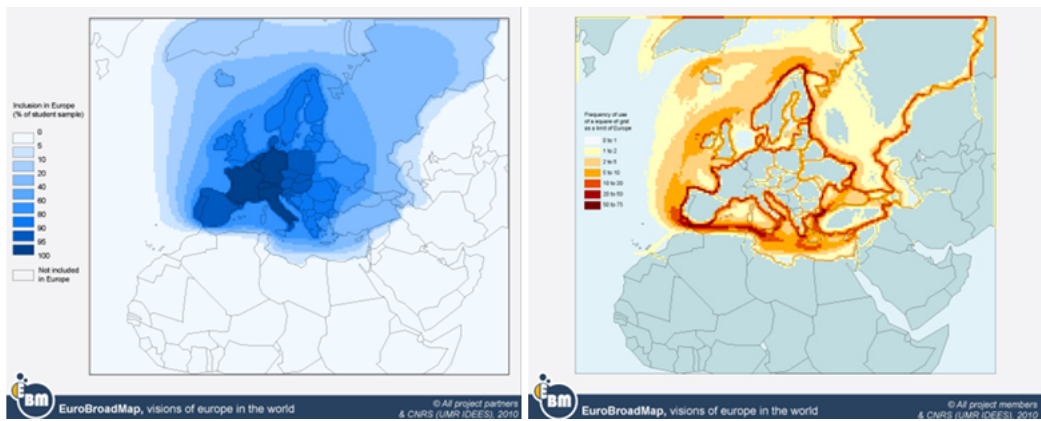
Socio-spatial frameworks of spatial representations

Clarisse DIDELON (CNRS, France)

Abstract

This EuroBroadMap working paper provides a coherent and synthetic vision of the analysis conducted in nearly all the work packages of the Euro-BroadMap project from the social variation in the representation of Europe perspective. It also tries to benefit an interdisciplinary approach by having recourse to both sociology and disciplinary fields and borrowing inputs from geopolitical science. The theoretical framework used is based on what can be called a paradox: the wish to analyse the mental representations of the world (or a piece of the world: Europe). In order to overcome this paradox, we will analyse deeply how representations are formed at the individual, community or different collective level (nation, world) and the time scales associated to each level.

Keywords: Europe, mental representation, social variation

Introduction

The central question of the EuroBroadMap project[1] was about the representation of Europe in the World. Throughout the project, the researchers from both European and non-European countries tried to adopt a non-Eurocentric perspective. One of the main solution chosen consisted of analysing how Europe is perceived without defining it to the people investigated: doing this, we did not imposed our own representation of what Europe is. The cross country synthesis report[2], the WP3 final report on migrants and borders[3]) and the WP6 cross country report[4] that are mainly used here provided a descriptive partial analysis of the results obtain thoughtout the project's work packages.

The first one provides analysis on a thematic perspective and the second one on a country perspective. Many materials have been gathered in the analysis of the different parts of the questionnaire and, like a famous cartoon character, we can state that, 'In these little bric-a-brac, a secret's waiting to be cracked'[5]. This report is the occasion to adopt a synthesis perspective and to go deeper into the analysis by cross-referencing the results and trying to explain them in the framework of a theoretical perspective in the representation field. This report provides a coherent and synthetic vision of the analysis conducted in nearly all the work packages of the EuroBroadMap project[6] from the social variation in the representation of Europe perspective. It also tries to benefit an interdisciplinary approach by having recourse to both sociology and disciplinary fields and borrowing inputs from geopolitical science.

In the first part of our presentation we will present the theoretical background and perspective we propose to use in order to analyse the results of the WP2 (mental maps of students) survey. This theoretical framework is based on what can be called a paradox: the wish to analyse the mental representations of the world (or a piece of the world: Europe). In order to overcome this paradox, we will analyse deeply how representations are formed at the individual, community or different collective level (nation, world) and the time scales associated to each level. In the following parts,

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[1] This paper benefited from the inputs of the following persons: J.-Y. Blum Le Coat, A. Brennetot, K. Ensellem, F. Guérin-Pace, and S. de Ruffray

[2] Mental maps of students, vol.1 to 5, EurobroadMap working papers, http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/EUROBROADMAP/

[3] Migrants and borders, EurobroadMap working papers, http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/EUROBROADMAP/.

[4] http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00654536/fr/

[5] *The nightmare before Christmas*, 1993, Tim Burton, Henry Selick, Walt Disney Pictures.

[6] I take the opportunity here to warmly thank all the partners involved in the project. It is impossible to add all their names on the report cover, but this synthesis would not have been possible without their efforts.

we propose to test how much the socio-spatial perspective is operational in the analysis of mental maps of Europe at each of the relevant level of the 'social' framework of representation identified: world level, national level and individual level.

1 Theoretical background and perspective: From collective to individual representations

1.1 Theoretical background

1.1.1 General theoretical background

In this report, our approach is mainly defined by the scientific background of representations and more precisely spatial representations and mental maps. Representations are usually defined as a set of knowledge and beliefs encoded in memory that can be mentally extracted and manipulated (Dortier, 2002). Representations of objects and concepts are used to 'read' and 'understand' the world around us, but they are also mobilised to make plans and take decisions. The objects on which we have representations are at the same time cognitive schemes and social representations varying in space and time. The representations, shared by a community (group of persons, but also national community), are one of the bases of the collective consciousness that transcend the inner social divisions that contribute to group consistency. These representations are durable and shared by many generations.

In this general framework, we will focus on the representation of spatial objects (the world, Europe) and then mobilise some concepts from the geography of representations that was born in the 1960s, from the encounter between spatial psychology and geography. The analyses of representations are based on the theory of 'man's shells' (Moles and Rohmer, 1978), a series of circles organised around individuals that define the level of knowledge of different places: closer spaces are the best known. Among geographers analysing representations, the precursor was Lynch (1960) who focused on the intra-urban scale before further works explored smaller scales. Gould and White (1997) established mental maps at the national level. In the 1970s and 1980s, Saarinen (1987, 1998) focused on mental maps at the world level and made many surveys at this scale. His analyses concentrated principally on the centring of mental maps. The research that followed aimed to demonstrate a great diversity of points of view about the world, but also stress the differences of the knowledge of the world space (Saarinen and MacCabe, 1995, Pinheiro, 1998).

1.1.2   To analyse mental representations on the world scale: A paradox?

The approach of the global space though representations raises some theoretical questions. Today, are the notion of 'man's shell' and the proxemics law still relevant to analyse representations? Indeed, the contemporary accessibility of information through the media and even more through the Internet seems to disturb this scheme. As McLuhan (1967) stressed in the 1960s, these new tools of communication lead to profound transformations in human practices. This new accessibility to information and knowledge disrupts the approach to spatial cognition based on proxemics. First, no more space can stay unknown and on a planet covered by 'information highways' nothing that happens in one part of the world can stay, at least potentially, unknown (Bauman, 2007). If the knowledge of close spaces relies mainly on practice, the knowledge of far spaces is today easier because of the different sources on numeric information. Then, the hierarchy of the pieces of spatial or social information is relatively blurred and global news is mixed with local news (Bailly and Scariati, 1999). The traditional organisation of scale in the space knowledge is thereby disturbed. Finally, the emergence of Web 2.0 during recent years has to be taken into account. Each Internet user is now a full information producer who transmits its world representation and feeds the flow of information 'consumed' by other Internet users. The information produced by Internet users contributes to building a world image at shown by Crandall *et al.* (2009). Obviously, knowledge of the world is imperfect and, as we'll see that later, it is ruled by a factor of distance and of 'weight' of objects known. But we have to define both the type of distance and the type of weight (population, wealth, political influence, real or supposed nuisance capacity).

Beyond the analysis of world representation, one question is how to catch, analyse and represent those subjective visions of the world and their variations among individuals and groups of people? The issue is to go beyond the clear-cut and simple visions provided by classifications and try to map the representations of global spaces in all their shades but also to analyse the socio-spatial factors that explain variations in these representations.

1.2   Proposal of the theoretical perspective

1.2.1   Knowledge appreciation and dynamic

In the context of this project, the term 'representation' is understood as the collective or personal image (of our object 'Europe') developed by an individual at the crossroads of her/his knowledge of Europe and how much s/he appreciates it or not. Both knowledge and appreciation should not be considered as binary solutions but as two gradients at the crossroads of which all solutions are possible (Figure 1) at one moment (stars). A social repre-

Figure 1: Variation in knowledge and appreciation
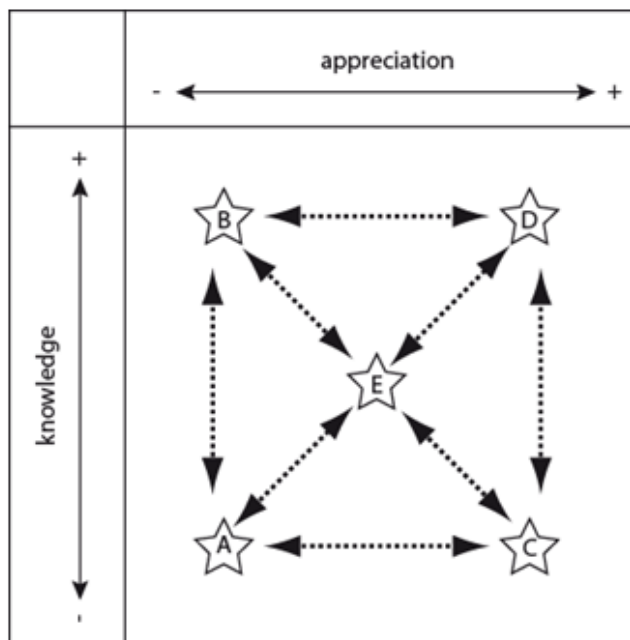
sentation is a dynamic structure that is always evolving. The maintaining
and evolution of the representation is because of the influence of society and
belonging groups (Bonardi and Roussiau, 1999). As a consequence, both
knowledge and appreciation, that can be specific to each individual, can the-
oretically vary over time (arrows) in many directions, and not necessarily
toward a better knowledge or a better appreciation. Moreover, the object
we analyse seems rather fuzzy. It can be considered to be uncertain or in-
complete as the level of knowledge on Europe can vary very much from one
individual to another. It can also be considered to be imprecise as each
individual can develop his or her own definition of Europe, through his or
her own experience and history. However, being imprecise does not mean
that it is impossible to catch or explain it or to find common significances.
Thus, throughout the project we tried to catch the representation of Europe,
describe it and explain it.

We propose using Figure 1 as the main tool to analyse and compare the
representation of Europe in the world. Indeed, whatever the method used
(qualitative or quantitative) or the sample observed (collective or individual),
this concept of knowledge and appreciation seems relevant and efficient in
order to analyse the social variation in the representation of Europe.

1.2.2 'Social scale perspective' and timescales

In this report, we also propose a specific interpretation of social variation. Indeed, 'social variation' should be understood as the variation in the representation of Europe according to social class, as it is quite true that social class explains a great part to individual representations (Bonardi and Roussiau, 1999). Moreover, as stated by Mérenne Schoumaker (2002), 'All human behavior is based on representations, i.e. on images of reality. The latter can never be known directly and it is always partially caught. The representation of reality varies then according to the perceived object and the individual that perceives it i.e. its own values (ideas and principles that are often shared by the group one belongs to)'[7].

However, one of the problems in the EuroBroadMap project is that we have no precise data on the social classes of the students surveyed. Some questions provide an idea of the material and symbolic capital of students (see the WP2 cross-country synthesis report). However, the students do not necessarily position themselves in the same way in all the sampled countries as the national socio-economic context can influence their perceptions. Moreover, analysing only social class variations would deny the influence of the other factors that contribute to building their representations of the world. One of these factors is the role of the national context, i.e. how the world is taught at school and what is the position of a specific country vis-à-vis other countries regarding global issues? Indeed, different factors contribute to shaping the world representation at different scales (individual, inter-individual, intra-group, intergroup, intra-national, international etc.) and the interactions between them (Doise, 1986).

To try to take into account the multiplicity of 'social' factors that contribute to explaining the variation in the representation of Europe in the world both in terms of knowledge and appreciation we developed a strong hypothesis: the variation in the representation of Europe can be explained by the different 'socio-spatial positions' of the individuals investigated. These 'socio-spatial positions' are not reduced to one's socio-economic status but understood here as the multiple interactions between the four levels of social reality: the world level, the country (collective) level, the family (or social group) level and the individual level (Figure 2). For each level, the timescales of phenomena that influence the representation are quite different but these should be considered both toward the past (heritage) and future (perspectives).

The world level timescale is many centuries. From the heritage perspective, it can be understood, for example, by the western domination of the world for centuries as well as how the western world 'shapes' world history. How the world-level perspective influences representation could be, for example, concerned with global warming.

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[7] Translation from French.

Figure 2: Four social frameworks for spatial representations
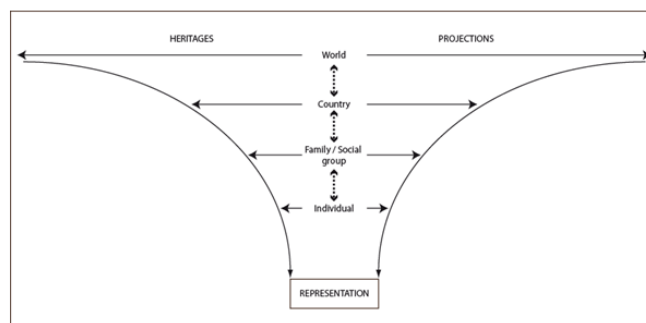
The country level timescale could between one and three centuries. From the heritage perspective, it concerns the 'country story' built by school textbooks in which major migrations, economical exchanges, wars, colonisation and rivalries between countries can have a strong role in representations. From the perspective side, it could be national fears about a possible decline (such as in France, for example) or on the contrary some optimistic vision of the country's future (such as in Brazil or India nowadays).

The family (or social) level timescale is two to three generations backwards and forwards (grandparents and grandchildren). The socio-economic situation of the family and family events such as migrations can influence representation both as a heritage and as a projection.

The individual level timescale is the life scale. Some categorical characteristics of the individual can influence the representation (for example, gender) but of course also the heritages and the memories (school trajectory, space practice in travels, cultural practice. . .) and the perspective (choice of study, wish to migrate or to travel, and capacity for adaptationĚ), as well as all the experiences.

It is important to stress that all these levels are linked and thus they determine each other. In this report, we will try to analyse the variation in the representation of Europe according to this 'socio-spatial positions' grid, and check how much it is relevant.

2 A world-level vision of Europe, shaped by Europe

2.1 Representations at the world level

The existence of a common pattern of world representations (and most, of Europe) on a global scale is maybe one of the most difficult to justify. It seems difficult to justify that all the people in the world share some common representation because of the extreme dispersion of humanity on the Earth's

surface and the variety of languages, religions and cultures that contribute to such representations. However, at stake here is the representation of a spatial object, the world that encloses the entire humanity. Some discussions exist about the existence of a 'society world' that could be for us a useful framework to analyse the representations of the world. However, we can also hypothesise that the long historical interactions between Earth's people has led to the emergence of some common pattern in world representation. This hypothesis is even more credible when we consider that dominating powers have long imposed their own visions of the world on the countries they colonised. Nowadays, the existence of global media and instant and constant world information availability through the Internet can also lead us to consider that some common representations of the world exist and that it is worth analysing them. Indeed, in the mental maps analysis in WP2 some striking analysis was carried out that demonstrates how much the vision of the world and, to a certain extent, of Europe are consensual and present a common pattern in the different countries surveyed. The analysis conducted in this part tries to make a first synthesis of the perception of the world and the perception of Europe at the global level.

2.2 Europe in the world representation: one of the world's continents

The questionnaire in WP2 had two in parts, which allows us to analyse different perspectives about the image of Europe. Questions B and C were focused on the world level and this allows us to assess the existence of Europe in world representations. Part D of the questionnaire was explicitly focused on 'Europe' in order to explore the spatial and semantic consistence of this concept for the students surveyed.

In question C, students were asked to divide the world in a maximum of 15 world regions. Although 7.79% of them chose to use the maximum number that was possible, the majority (38.54%) made between five and seven regions that fit with the classical vision of the world in continents (Figure 3). Students were totally free to choose the kind of division they wanted to draw; the names they gave to the regions confirmed that the main vision of the world corresponds to the continental vision (Figure 4). The word 'Europe' alone is used 3633 times.

In the world visions of students, Europe has then a rather classical place as a continent. This result is coherent with the classical analysis of social representations but applied at the world level. As stated by Moscovisi (1961), representations are built on a central core (a knowledge scheme or central system of perception). Here, we can understand the continents as the 'central core of the perception' of the world. Moreover, as explained by Piaget (2003), these representations are based on a small number of characters that are quite stable over time because they are deeply rooted by perception schemes

Figure 3: Repartition of students according to the number of world regions made
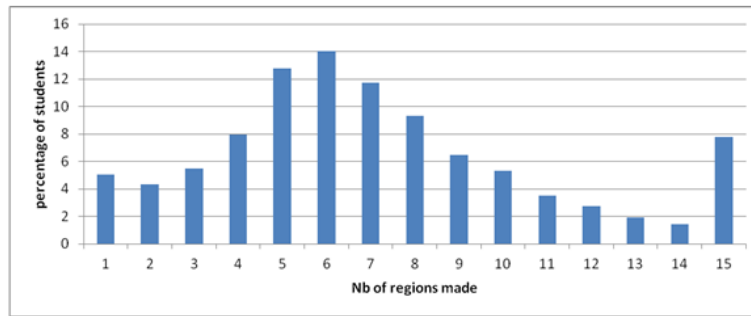
Source: Cross country synthesis, EuroBroadMap working papers

Figure 4: Main words used to name the world regions

Source of data: EuroBroadMap, Mental maps of students survey, 2009

acquired early in childhood. This theory can be transposed to the world space, which is considered to be an object of representation. The vision of the world is, therefore, based on a 'continental grid' taught in school since generations have used this to see and know the world. This vision of the world in continents 'refers to the idea of a world ordered by the existence of physical and regional realities that scientific work would tend to identify, describe and explain (WP4, working papers on textbooks) and then it is often used as a 'politically correct' division of the world. However, this representation of the world is not so 'politically correct' when one knows that this vision is inherited from the geopolitical visions of Europeans about themselves and their place in the world. The continental vision of the world was built during the Middle Ages and transmitted as one of the constant schemes of European identity (Grataloup, 2007, 2010).

Question B also provides an interesting glimpse of how 'Europe' is perceived at the world level. Despite the relatively small size of the Euro-BroadMap sample (18 countries) and its lack of representativeness of the world level (WP2 cross-country synthesis report, part 2), the question about the attractiveness of countries and cities shows an interesting representation of Europe. The cartogram representation (Figure 5) proposed in the WP2 cross-country synthesis report shows that Northern and Western Europe appear as very attractive to the sample, even with some minor variations. Eastern Europe is less quoted and mostly in a negative way. At the sample level, then a clear opposition can be observed between the western 'free world' and the former communist part of the world, embodied by the Iron Curtain that is still quite visible on mental maps, both in terms of location and appreciation. If the vision of the world and the position of Europe in it can vary according to regions, countries and personal parameters, the cartograms tend to show the same trend of a double vision of Europe on a west/east basis.

2.3 Consensual but fuzzy representation of Europe

The last part of the WP2 questionnaire directly asked two questions on 'Europe'. However, the word 'Europe' was not defined in order to check its spatial and semantic definitions, from students' points of view. What is first striking in the analysis is how much its image is, to a certain extent, consensual. This aspect can be first analysed on the 'Europe interpretative maps' produced by the students surveyed in WP2, but also in the lexical fields used by both the migrants (WP3) and the students (WP4). It can be analysed as a classical perception scheme of the world both from a spatial and from a semantic perspective.

Figure 5: Vision of undergraduate student's vision of world states
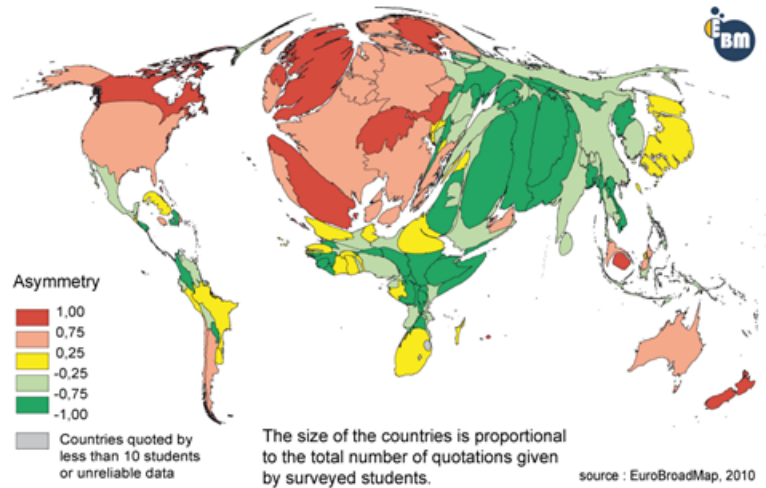
Source: Cross country synthesis, EuroBroadMap working papers

2.3.1 Convergence on Europe spatial shape

On the maps of Europe, there is great consensus on the 'heart' of Europe but also on some of the limits drawn by the students. The heart of Europe is concentrated on what can be considered now to be the six founder's states of the current EU plus Switzerland, plus a large part of the Iberian Peninsula (Portugal and Spain). This is coherent with the vision of western countries that dominated the world to a certain extent from the 17th century to the beginning of the 20th century in a colonial way. It is the place of origin of the Renaissance, humanism, political liberalism and socialism. This space is also to a certain extent the place of birth of the Industrial Revolution that spread all over the world. Finally, this spatial definition corresponds to a certain extent to the vision of the European part of the 'free world' facing the communist bloc for a large part of the 20th century. This spatial definition of Europe thus seems to correspond to a long-term construction of the image of Europe, probably transmitted by schoolbooks (see Work Package Politics and Ideology) and by the media and general knowledge on Europe and its relations to the world.

Again, what it is striking is the relation between the definition of Europe by Europeans and the definition of Europe outside Europe. For example, the limits of Europe are very much consensual on the southern part of the map: the Mediterranean Sea, and particularly the Gibraltar Straight, is perceived as a limit from Brazil to China and from Sweden to Cameroon. Mainly all students from the 18 countries of our sample draw the southern

Figure 6: Extension and limits of Europe
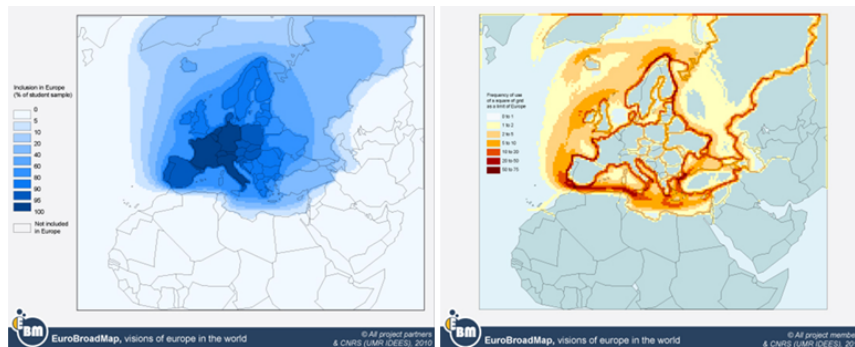
Source: WP2 cross country & synthesis report

border of Europe as the Gibraltar Straight. There is little doubt that this definition of Europe is largely inherited from attempts to define European identity since the Middle Ages and reactivated by colonisation during the 19th century. To a large extent, European identity has been built on a common background of Christianity in a process of grouping people sharing this faith and separating them from people sharing another faith (Islam), forgetting in the process Muslims from the northern Mediterranean shore. This process can be described using the terms of 'mêmeté' (Ricoeur, 1990) on one hand and 'ipséité' on the other. This crystallisation of European identity around religion is to a large extent inherited from the Middle Ages and the battles to stop the Arab conquest in southern France (eighth century), the crusades of the European kings conducted in order to restore Christian control on the Holy Land (Middle East and particularly Jerusalem) and to conquest again (Reconquista) the Iberian Peninsula (15th century). Even if the geopolitical position of the Ottoman Empire (the 'sick man of Europe') in modern and recent times often perturbed this definition, this largely shared spatial definition of Europe is thus inherited from a long-term heritage of the definition of Europe. Moreover, the fact that it is a perceived geographical border strengthens this delimitation in the memories.

2.3.2 Convergence in the semantic field used to describe 'Europe'

Some strong common semantic fields of this definition of Europe can be observed both in students' vocabulary used to describe Europe (WP2) and in the discourse on Europe of migrants (WP3). The analysis of this common pattern is made in the previous part of this report and will not be repeated here. In a few words, we would like to underline some facts. The 'developmentalist' and 'imperialist' themes used in defining Europe can be also

underlined as reminiscences of the historical position of Europe in the world. Some references to 'freedom' in the vocabulary used can also be analysed both as a reference to the current situation of the European people and as a reference to the philosophical and political past of some European countries (British *habeas corpus*; Enlightenment Age, French Revolution etc.). However, the 'institutional' vision of Europe is dual and the emergence of Europe as an institution is a recent fact. Moreover, students express it differently according to the places in which they live: students from Belgium and France clearly refer to the EU institution (Schengen area, Euro, etc.), whereas non-European students and migrants refer mainly to the migratory policy of the EU. This leads us to explore one other component to the vision of Europe, the national one that is generally build over a medium-term time span.

3 The role of the local/national context

3.1 The national level in representations

In this part, we aim to show how the national level can explain the vision of the world in general and of Europe in the world in particular. What was very striking in WP2 was that when analysis was carried out at the survey level (43 different cities disseminated in our 18 countries), most places were grouped together. This was the case for the drawing of Europe (Figure 7) but also for the belonging analysis (idem). These two figures illustrate how much the national context influences the vision of the world, but also the personal feeling of belonging to a space. In this part, we propose then analysing the role of the national context in terms of the formation of the collective representations of Europe and to try to provide some explanation.

3.2 Role of historical links between nations in the Europe representation

One of the most evident factors to explain the convergence of the national visions of Europe is the spatial position of the country regarding what we have identified previously as the rich, industrialised, free, western countries and, to a certain extent their positions and relations regarding the EU. For example, what it is striking in the French and Belgian students' representations of the region of the world they belong to on the world map (question C2) is that the region drawn fits nearly perfectly with the EU. More recent and peripheral member states such as Portugal and Sweden are more likely to draw the Iberian and Scandinavian regions of the world. It seems clear that France and Belgium's long historical involvement in the EU and the communication on this now familiar subject in the media and at school lead to those visions. It can also be observed in the vocabulary used by Belgian

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Figure 7: Grouping of places of survey in countries in the analysis of drawings of Europe

Source: WP2 cross country synthesis report

and French students to describe Europe (question D2) that this is far more 'institutional' and economic than it is for students from other countries.

The historical relation of countries vis-à-vis Europe also has an influence on the representation of Europe in the country and this representation is collective. One more time, this can be illustrated by the vocabulary used by students to describe Europe, but also in the discourse of the migrants interviewed in WP3. The most striking example is that of the African countries analysed in both work packages. The historical colonial link between European and African countries leads to the formulation of a specific discourse in describing Europe. The African students in Mali (WP3) and in Senegal or Cameroon (WP2) express a feeling that African people have been exploited in the past (and to certain extent nowadays too) and that European countries have a 'war debt': some family members of the students interviewed in WP3 died in a French battle field during WW1 or WW2. This kind of discourse can also be found in some African media and political discourse as well as from the diplomatic perspective as pointed out the national political vision of Cameroon (Box 1).

To this extent, the situation of India is quite different. India has also been a European colony and the exploitation of resources was at least equal to that in African countries. In addition, South Asian soldiers were present in European battlefields during the World Wars. However, the discourses of Indian students and migrants are quite different. Students have globally a kind of idealistic and romantic vision of Europe, whereas migrants (WP3) perceive Europe as a land of opportunity when they formulate their migration

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Table 1: National Politic Vision of Cameroon

'In some aspects, and for Cameroonian diplomats, the power politics perceivably played by the EU, be it normative, soft or civilian, are considered as nothing else but the continuation on a different level and in different forms of domination relations that prevailed in former bilateral relations (especially with Germany, France and the UK). The imbalance in a number of areas (the level of economic development and financial resources being some of the most prominent ones) and the self-interested strategies of the European in their relations with ACP countries motivate the rather defensive attitude of the Cameroonian authorities when negotiating on trade and development programmes.'

Source: National political vision (WP4)

projects. This can be explained by some differences in colonisation (many more Indian civil servants have been trained and employed compared with African colonies). But the national position of India as a nation in the world is also different. India is a demographic power and a growing economic power and it has the wish to be recognised as a world power in the future. This has a great influence on the representation of India in the world. As shown in WP4, in India: 'the teaching of geography remains strongly marked by the national perspective'. Moreover, Indian people perceive that their country has a very ancient and long history. They do not feel that their historicity has been built by European colonisation, which appears to them a now closed chapter. If some African countries have the same ambitions of being emerging powers, unlike in India, there is a feeling that it will be difficult to be successful and that Europe has some responsibility in that situation. Thus, depending on the historical nature and strength of countries with Europe, but also of their positions vis-à-vis Europe in the national perspective (embedment, reimbursement of debt, rivalry, neutral position etc.), this has an influence on the national representation of Europe, transmitted by the political discourses, by the media and, of course, by schools. Here, the role of school curricula in the formation of the vision of Europe is well illustrated by the very specific spatial vision of the African students of our sample in the spatial vision of Europe (Figure 7). Cameroonian and Senegalese students are almost the only ones to draw a large Europe including the entire Russia Federation. As shown in the Cameroonian country report, this corresponds to a classical school definition of Europe 'from Brest to Vladivostok'.

Figure 8: Difference between all students and students from Cameroon
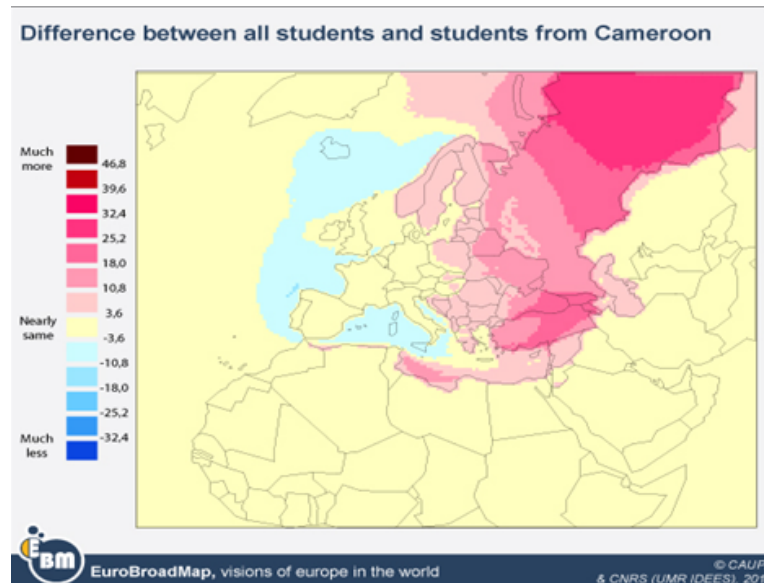
Source: Cameroonian country report

3.3 Because of the disparities

Another point that seems consistent in the building to the national vision of Europe is the existence of socio-economic disparities that influence the vocabulary used to describe Europe or the image of Europe of migrants. Indeed, in 'developing' and less rich countries, the terms rich, developed and industrialised are often used to describe Europe. But what is the most striking example is the image of Europe of the Somali women analysed in WP3. For them, Europe is seen as a place of security and freedom above all, because that is what they miss most in their county. This example will not be developed further because the previous part of this report analyses in detail the crossings between the vocabulary of students and the representation of migrants. However, this illustrates one more time very well the role of 'otherness' ('ipséité') in the building of representations.

3.4 National representation: reflects national visions of the world

In addition to the knowledge grid inherited mainly from childhood, the representations of the world are also rooted in social norms influenced by the national level. These representations are quite stable but can vary over time, because the timescale of the heritage is shorter (maybe around 200 years)

and because the perspectives could have a great influence. The perspectives are very much linked to the political context at the national level. These representations at the national level have an operational role in the construction of identity, in the position of the group in the world and in the way the group perceives the world. These representations are produced and transmitted by institutional groups (the media, political groups or, as shown in WP3, NGOs). As a consequence, it seems highly possible that the country level could explain some convergence in the pattern of the representations of people from the same countries.

We can thus try to analyse the positions of the countries surveyed in regard to their knowledge and appreciation of Europe, using the knowledge/appreciation dynamic graph set up in part one of this report (Figure 9). In our sample, the role of the spatial distance to EU / Western Europe (historical dominant core) is quite clear. This confirms one of the main hypotheses of the entire project (see answer to the tender) and the choice of the countries to be surveyed: we chose countries in regard to their positions vis-à-vis the area of influence of Europe established using various criteria in the ESPON 3.4.1. 'Europe in the world' project (Didelon and Grasland, 2006). What we may have underestimated in this previous project is the role of historical links between non-European with European countries, even though some historical variables were used. The figure is an attempt to analyse the positions of the countries surveyed in WP2 in order to assess the 'knowledge and appreciation' of Europe. Countries have been grouped into four main categories:

- The Western European core category gathers western European countries that had a role in the historical emergence of Europe as a world power thanks to colonisation and industrialisation.

- The 'former rival empire / other cores' category group Turkey and Russia, which are former powerful rival empires of European countries, and China, which has long been technologically and socially advanced. Those empires have been, to a large extent, independent of European colonisation most of the time, and they have been themselves colonisers, or, at least places having a strong influence on neighbouring countries.

- The areas of influence between cores stress the places that have shared 'core' influences. The Mediterranean Sea has been a place of struggles between European countries and the Ottoman Empire[8], as the Maltese history reminds us. Eastern Europe and the Balkan areas, both in recent times, but also in the past, have been influenced by Europe

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[8] One main ambiguity here lies in the fact that the Ottoman Empire has been perceived as ' European ' in the Modern Age by the European power implied in the European geopolitical game.

and Russia, while some Turkish influence can also be noted in this region. The Central Asian, embodied here by Azerbaijan, and the Turkish (linguistic and cultural) and Russian (political and historical) influences have also been strong.

- The last category, 'former European colonies' is a simplified grid of the colonial influence of Europe. In South America, the influence is high because large parts of the national population have a European origin, and the states were built on the European model by colonisers. But in those spaces independences occurred early: at the beginning of the 19th century for Brazil. In South Asia, the mainly English colonisation had first commercial purposes. If the English intensively exploited Indian resources, they also built some efficient infrastructures (railways, telecommunications) and employed many locals in the administration. Independence occurred in 1947. In Africa, the exploitation of resources has been high too and in the early times of colonisation lots of indigenous peoples were exported as slaves to the Americas. Colonisers in Africa, (France, the UK, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal) did not involve the local population as much as the English did in South Asia and independence has sometimes occurred very late: 1960 for both Cameroon and Senegal, the two countries in our sample.

The countries surveyed are represented by a star coloured according to their spatial and historical situations toward the European core. They have been then positioned on the 'knowledge and appreciation' graph using the main results of the WP2 analysis on the vocabulary used to describe Europe (WP2 working papers). In the figure, we can observe more clearly what was stressed in the various analyses, and more precisely how the relative positions of countries are influenced by the spatial and historical positions of countries. The spatial and historical position of China as regards to Europe implies a relatively low level of knowledge together with a relatively high level of appreciation. As far as former European colonies are concerned, the graphic is even more explicit. African countries are closer to Europe in spatial and historical terms, and in this space the influence of Europe is still strong but not very well perceived. The knowledge level is roughly equivalent to the Indian and Brazilian one but the appreciation level is quite different: Cameroonian and Senegalese students have some negative representations of Europe that occur more rarely in India and Brazil. What is also striking, which should be analysed more in detail, is that the countries identified as 'areas of influence between cores' are grouped around the non-European core. For example, Eastern European countries are in a median position between Russia and Belgium and France, and Mediterranean countries are more or less grouped around Turkey. The use of this graph seems relevant in the analysis of the representation of Europe in different countries, and will be later used in the analysis of other part of the questionnaire, question B.

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Figure 9: Position of countries toward Europe and position in knowledge appreciation
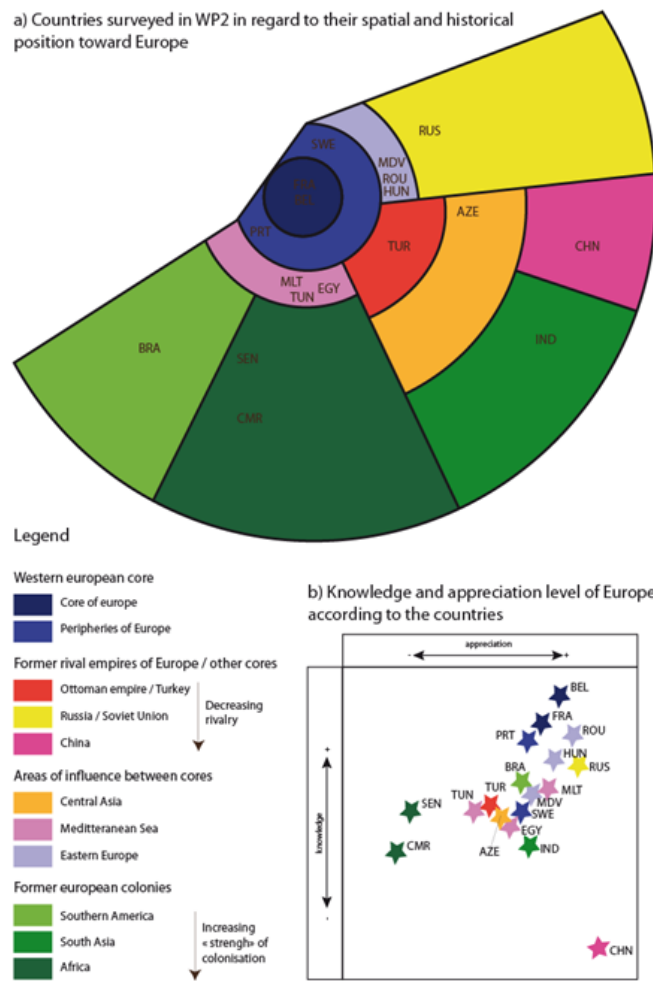
Table 2: National Politic Vision of People's Republic of China (WP4)

Speech at Informal dialogue with the European Parliament on China by H.E. Ambassador Song Zhe, Head of the Mission of the P. R. China to the EU (February 2010): '...in China, many people are angry that the EU criticizes and attacks China on the issues of democracy and human rights despite the great progress China has made. Some are frustrated that the EU should take advantage of its unique mechanism to maximize benefits at the bilateral level while playing bad guy at EU level. Some are disappointed by the EU's indecision and procrastination in lifting the arms embargo and granting full market economy status to China. Such gaps in mutual-perception, together with the negative moves on the EU side, have affected, to certain extent, the efforts in building greater mutual trust and impeded China-EU relations from moving towards a deeper and higher level.' (http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zwjg/zwbd/t656007.htm)
Source: National political vision (WP4)

4 The role of the socio-economic situation and individual characteristics

4.1 Individual perspective in representations

Some of the results from the WP4 'national political vision', which provides a synthesis of countries' official diplomatic positions toward Europe, have great differences, if not contradictions. For example, one extract from the Chinese national political vision (Box 2) pointed out that in China people are not happy with Europe's position vis-à-vis human rights in China, when the students' words used to describe Europe (Box 3) do not evoke this problem at all.

The personal visions of students can be explicitly found in the regionalisation of the world (C2 question in the WP2 survey). If the large majority of students seem to perceive the world in continents, a small proportion of them develop personal views. The most original visions of the world are maybe the 'One world' maps, where students decided to make only one world region (2.3% of the sample) and the 'Ego world' maps, where students used mainly the personal pronoun 'I' to describe the world region (1.3%). The students creating these maps do not seem to be influenced by global world visions but rather by their personal perspectives. The influence of the students' socio-economic backgrounds and family histories should thus be analysed more in detail in order to check how much the personal parameters influence the vision of the world and the vision of Europe.

Table 3: Chinese country report on survey part 1 (WP2)

Europe gives Chinese students a strong impression of its powerful economy: 'developed'(31.0%) 'rich' (21.4%) 'advanced'(8.4%). Chinese students appreciate the culture of Europe a lot: 'romantic' (17.9%) 'civilized' 'classical' 'elegant' 'civilization' etc. , which indicate that the diversity of the culture of Europe. Europe is mentioned many times by Chinese students as an 'open' space or a place where people live with much 'freedom'. It can be inferred Europe is considered to be a good place to live by Chinese students because of the good 'environment', the 'clean' circumstance and the social 'welfare'. In Chinese students' eyes, Europe is a group of 'small' 'countries' but not a union.

Source: Chinese country report

As we have seen before, the representation of the world depends on the belonging of the individual. The global level provides a 'general scheme' of perception, whereas the national level refines the representations by introducing elements shared by people at the national level that are different from one country to another. Other levels of the belonging of people can also have an influence and the personal and familial perspective should not be forgotten. Individual spatial representations are strongly influenced by the distance of the spatial object as explained by Moles and Rohmer (1978). However, one main factor in the shaping of representations (spatial or not) is the intentions (Merleau Ponty, 1945) of the subject vis-à-vis the object considered. The representation of Europe as a spatial object is therefore 'final'. That means that an intention exists in the framework of representations and that representations are oriented by our projects (Dortier, 2002).

4.2   Gender perspective

As far as individual perspectives are concerned, it seems clear that the gender of an individual can have an influence on his/her representation of the world. This is of course expressed in the project of students, and for example in the field of study chosen. As shown in the Maltese country synthesis, there exist 'ingrained gender schemas that influence the choice of both men and women's life paths' influencing the choice of field of study (Figure 10) and, as far as we can imagine, the vision of the world. In at least two cases in our previous analysis, the role of gender in the vision of Europe has been stressed. The first is the one of Somali migrant women in Maltese camps. They perceive Europe as a haven of security because their lives are threatened in Somalia because they are women. They hardly know anything about Europe, except the fact that, as women, they will be safe there. Here, the role of difference pointed

Figure 10: Gender repartition by field of study
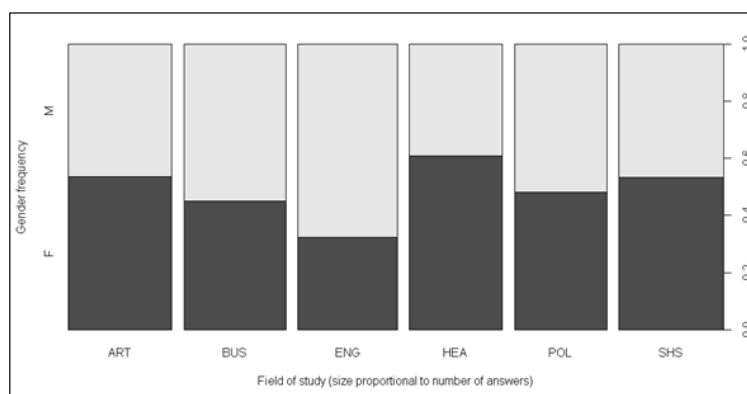
out before plays a role in the perception and gender seems to accentuate this difference in perceptions.

The second example of the role of gender in the representation of Europe is the analysis of the words used to describe Europe as stressed in the final report of the WP2: 'Overall, the feminine vision of Europe is more positive and enjoyable, oriented on aesthetic issues and leisure, and sensitive to social inclusion goals. In opposition, the vision of men is imbued with a certain severity, as if Europe would be the result of a culture based on political domination and struggle for life'.

4.3 Material and symbolic capital and the representation of Europe

The first part of the WP2 cross-country synthesis concluded that social and economic inequalities in the EuroBroadMap sample could have an influence on the world representation. A factorial analysis was carried out, which shows clearly how much material (family income level) and symbolic (education level of both parents) capital are correlated with world experience, proxied by the number of languages spoken (Figure 11).

The analysis of the vocabulary used to describe Europe shows clearly the existence of a significant relation between material and symbolic capital and the representation of Europe[9].

Students declaring a 'low' income level have a quite Manichean representation of Europe traducing the feeling of the students. Europe is perceived either as an attractive place of opportunities or as a land of imperialism

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[9]The results presented here should be analysed with caution. The country of survey variable was not controlled for and some of the vocabulary variation seems to be influenced by national context.

Figure 11: Material and symbolic capital variation in the EBM survey sample
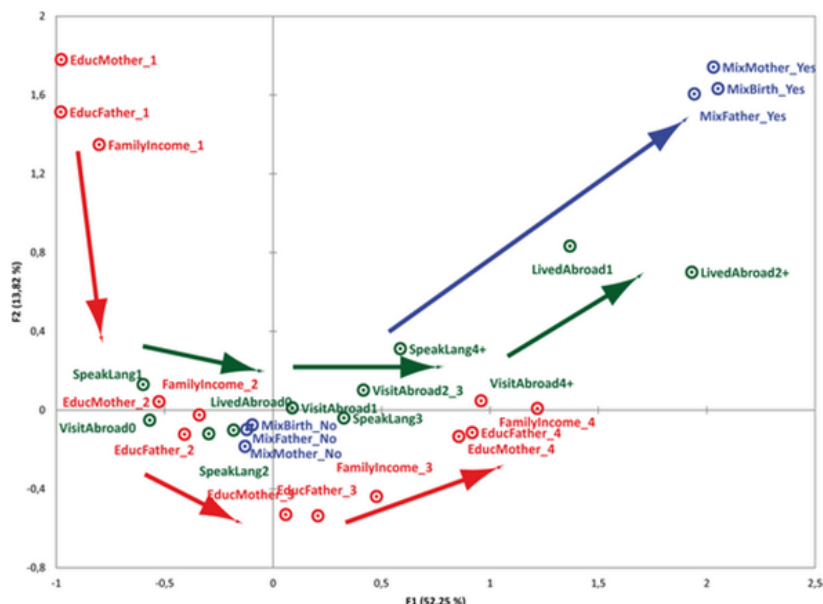
and exploitation. The words used are mostly general and not very precise in terms of places, and they do not use political, historical or institutional vocabulary.

Students declaring a 'medium low' income level have a roughly similar ambivalent perception of Europe. They point out both the development level and the feeling of exclusion. However, the vocabulary used is more abstract and they use more geographical terms.

Students declaring a 'medium high' income level have a consumerist vision of Europe. They quote famous tourist places and European luxury brands. Their knowledge of Europe seems more precise because of their experience of travelling in Europe. They also evoke some cultural and institutional aspects of Europe but do not use very negative or very positive vocabulary to describe Europe.

Students declaring a 'high' income level have a neutral image of Europe characterised by the use of a territorial and institutional vocabulary.

Indeed, it seems that the lower is the material and symbolic capital of students, the lower is the level of knowledge and more Manichean it is (Figure 12). On the other side, the higher is the material and symbolic capital of students, the higher and more neutral is their knowledge of Europe. The relation between the material and symbolic capital level and the representation of Europe seems relatively easy to explain. On one hand, students from highest income/educational level families have better access to information

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Figure 12: Knowledge and appreciation of Europe variation according to social variation
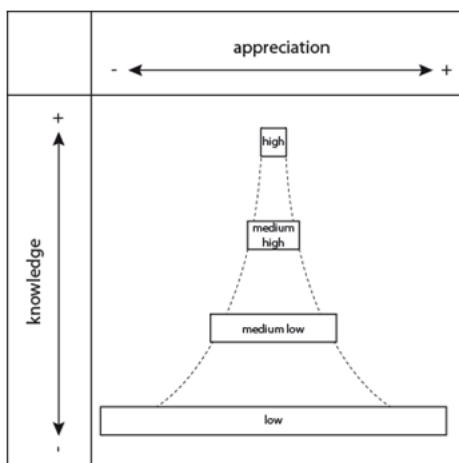
and European experience thanks to travel. They build their representations of Europe mainly through 'book' knowledge. On the other hand, students from low income/educational level families have access to the knowledge of the world through more basic sources (stereotypes) and rarely experience travel. They have thus developed a 'cliché' knowledge of Europe fed by their individual perspectives.

Moreover, material and symbolic capital also has an influence on how the individual perceives him/herself in the world: the analysis of the declaration of students on their scale of belonging (local, infra-national, national, supranational and global) shows a great influence of parent education and family income. In all countries, low material and symbolic capital is associated with a low level of belonging (local, infra-national), whereas high material and symbolic capital is associated with a high level of belonging (supranational, global). Of course, the way an individual perceives him/herself in the world will influence his/her world representation. This point should be deepened in the analysis of world maps. However, some analysis conducted in WP2 already showed that 'global' students were more eager to make a low number of world regions on the world map, or even refused to divide the world into regions.

4.4   Role of 'Europe' individual experience

As far as the individual perspective is considered, special focus has been placed on the evolving vision of Europe of people through European experience. Indeed, the time span for changing the presentation of Europe can be

quite short from the individual perspective. The variation in the representation of Europe of students according to the number of places visited should be analysed in order to check how much the experience of Europe shapes its representation. Unfortunately, this has not been done yet. Anyway, some material can be found in the WP3 report. The analysis of Indian migrants in Italy shows clearly how much the perception of Europe varies in the migration path. During the formulation of the migration project, Europe is perceived by Indians as a rich, clean, prosperous and modern place of opportunities: the level of knowledge seems rather low and more expressed in an idealistic perspective. After migration, the Indians surveyed in Italy stress the difficulties finding jobs and the legal problems. They developed a more faded vision of Europe - still perceived as a place of opportunities, but with difficulties.

It seems important to stress that the socio-economic positions of individuals play an important role in the evolution of the representations of migrants because their material and symbolic capital has an influence on their capabilities to fulfil their projects of mobility toward Europe. When people have a high social position, they have possibilities to go to Europe legally (travel or study). When they have a low social position, European borders are closed, which leads them to develop bad feelings together with a growing wish to defy.

Indeed, the vision trajectory in the 'knowledge/appreciation graph' of an individual in particular and a social group considered at the national level can be different depending both on the national and personal history and on perspectives. For example, the general knowledge of Europe in a country can theoretically decrease and become more positive (if the level of influence decreases and Europe is only perceived as a nice place for tourism instead of a rival economic power for example), when the general knowledge of one individual from that country can increase. However, it becomes negative through the different stages of the experience of migration (as stressed by some of the results of the WP3) (Figure 13). However, it is difficult to make such an analysis in this project because the majority of the surveys and analyses were carried out once.

Conclusion

This attempt to analyse the representation of Europe confirmed that spatial representation can be considered largely as normal social representations. It is possible that they may be less stable over time and that the influence of the position of the subject surveyed in space has a greater influence. Anyway, the world scale perspective produces a kind of 'average vision' of Europe (as a free medium declining world economic power made of 'attractive' countries in the west and 'non-attractive' countries in the east) that is

Figure 13: Theoretical co-evolution of national and individual perceptions of Europe
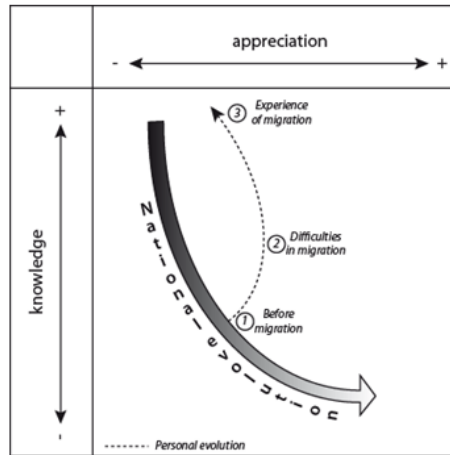
quite well defined in the south and with fuzzy borders in the west. This is a long-term perspective of Europe, built by the history of Europe and its own identity construction. The national visions of Europe are determined by the national historical relations with Europe but also by the place of Europe in the national perspective (rival power, helpful associate, selfish and unfair exploiter etc.). One should be aware that at this level, representations are quite linked with propaganda and that this propaganda orientation can evolve rather quickly. At the individual level, the representation of Europe is shaped by the cognitive capabilities that are partly determined by material and symbolic capital. However, the issues at the individual level are not only cognitive as the individual level implies the intentionality of the subject vis-à-vis Europe and its probability of succeeding. These representations are then mobilised in the individual project in order to justify it as in the dialectic couple rich/poor, endangered/secured, lack of hope/opportunity.

To conclude, the representation of Europe is organised at different levels of the social frameworks of spatial representations and, depending on the level considered, it is easy (or not) and rapid (or not) to act to modify them. The EU, in its communication strategy, must be careful because it is difficult to modify the representation at some levels and sympathy capital can erode quite quickly at others.

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