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Mosaic of Images of Europe and its Imaginary "Center of Gravity": results from the cross-national research program EuroSKYcompass.

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Summary

The interrelated dimensions of social, national and supra-national identity are closely connected to the consciousness of a social belonging, to the memory associated with this sense of belonging, and to the social representations of the groups and the physical and socio-political context in which they are and where they "inter-act". Because these dimensions influence expectations for the future and intervene in the construction of the social reality both in the group and in the context, they are also closely connected to their transformations.

This paper describes how the identity projections of subjects, anchored in a proximal/distal way to their own country and/or to the EU, and the geo-political tendencies of subjects, obtained by the polarity index in relation to North, South, East, West, organise the representations of Europe's territory into clusters and mosaic pieces of images of Europe. It discusses in a cross-cultural perspective some of the results we obtained from data collected on a sample of 2251 university students from 10 different cultural backgrounds, using some of the instruments employed in the questionnaire created for the EuroSkyCompass research program (de Rosa, 2002-2003). These included also an attitude scale towards European countries, the response to a semi-structured question about countries that are considered close to becoming EU members and the EuroSkyCompass (de Rosa, D'Ambrosio, 2005a, 2005b) and the representational system in which the EU is inserted (Nation, Europe, World) (de Rosa, A. S., d'Ambrosio, M. & Bocci, E. 2005).

The *EuroSkyCompass* is a projective tool of a graphical and associative nature, inspired by the Multi-dimensional Identity Model (de Rosa, 1996). It is designed to survey identity projections (the subjects "Self") in dynamic relation to their own country, the EU, and their favourite country in a graphic space characterized by the geo-political representations evoked by the stimuli North, South, East and West.

Several different kinds of analyses were carried out on the data collected. These included descriptive statistics, bi-varied and multi-varied statistics.

In addition in this paper we present some of the results obtained from a descriptive analysis of data collected by means of the *Silent Map of Europe*, another projective instrument of a graphic nature, which was integrated into the questionnaire used for the EuroSkyCompass research programme (de Rosa, 2002-2003).

This analysis is based on the frequency distribution of European countries in each one of the areas delimited by the intersection of the ideal North-South and East-West axes as drawn by the subjects, and on the identification of prototypic categories and recurring spatial configurations of clusters in European countries.

In analysing this data, we were able to make some observations on the geographical maps that depict cultural artefacts that are tied to social representations that are shared by certain subjects due to their specific social and geographic positions and which are anchored to their country of origin.

Inspired by the current debate around the issue of the process of enlargement, this paper discusses the SRs of young people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds as expressed in representational depictions of Europe and its geographic-cultural regions within the geographic parameters North, South, East, and West. It also describes the Countries identified as Europe's "center of gravity", revealing attitudes expressed about European countries and the subjects' dynamic identification with their own country, the EU and their favourite country.

The results of this study confirmed the relativity of geographical parameters and the prevalence of cultural and identity criteria at work in dividing Europe's territory into clusters and mosaic pieces of images of Europe based on the geopolitical representations anchored to North, South, East and West.

"Spatial" schemata and shared representation systems: the map between geographical and socio-psychological dimensions.

Social groups move in a space that is physical, and which individuals confront, cope with, and acquire through their cognitive abilities. However, it is at the same time a space that is socially constructed, understood, and used.

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Johnson (1987) states that spatial and temporal schemata are pervasive and constituent parts of daily physical experience and of language, as well, suggesting that the schemata on which the spatial image is based are central to spatial cognition and human perception and in categorization and representation of the natural and social world.

No social dimension exists without contextualization within an environmental, physical, or symbolic dimension. Just as there is no known environment that is not endowed with meaning socially attributed by the culture of the group that comes into contact with it.² Sack (1980) suggest "that geographic space is seen and evaluated in different ways at different times and in different cultures (p.3)", and that these modes carry different levels of objectivity and subjectivity in terms of the meaning and understanding of space.

The geographical map is one of the tools with which man is endowed to accumulate the knowledge constructed over generations concerning the space and environment that surrounds him. Via this cultural artifact, all members of a given community are able to use commonly shared instruments to have good command of a space that, in some cases, is decidedly exceeds what is learned/learnable by each subject's direct experience.

On the other hand, geographical maps are tools created on the basis of beliefs, linguistic codes and measuring systems in use within that specific community. On this subject, see A. Peter's polemic (1990) regarding the measurement and representational system of traditional geography, that "founded on conventions"

could establish distorted dominant representations of the reciprocal proportions of the five continents, consistent with the current balance of political power. As representational systems of known space, as well as of the history of a community's knowledge and the criteria that underpins this history, it seems clear that geographical maps can be considered graphic expressions of a system of socially shared representations.

As Baroni (1998) noted, the orientation of maps with North at the top should not be taken for granted, but is a custom that caught on thanks to 14th century nautical maps.

In Europe during the Middle Ages geographical maps were mainly oriented with the East on top, based on the religious belief that earthly paradise was located to the East. The Arabs, on the other hand, were likely to orient their maps with the South upward, because South was the simplest cardinal point to locate based on the position of the sun at its zenith every day of the year.

From another viewpoint, Deleuze (1968) wrote, "the primacy of identity, however it may be conceived, defines the world of the representation".

From our point of view, the representation system regarding the space of the community to which one belongs as expressed in geographical maps, is tied to the social identity of a group that is aware of its own belonging on the basis of attachment to its own territory and places (Proshansky, H.M. 1978, Proshansky, H.M., Fabian, A.K., Kaminoff, R., 1983). It is well known that identity (local, regional, national or supranational) is built from the relationship between the past, the present, and the projected future. We build day by day our identity about which it is possible to relate its history only by interpreting it while it is being made and therefore, offering another element for its modification. (V. Gregotti, 1999).

As G. Philogene (1999) believes concerning anticipatory representations,

² For example, Whorf's studies (1940) on language that emphasized how the Inuit used 16 terms, or rather, 16 conceptual categories, to refer to different kinds of snow characteristic of their territory. An Inuit would have recognized physical characteristics that differentiated the land and could constitute possible boundaries and landmarks. A European, given his limited linguistic and conceptual categories for snow, would have been unlikely to recognize any of those elements.

the temporal dimension is particularly important, as Social Representations (SR) anchored in the past in part can determine an anticipatory vision of the object of the representation. As she later (2002) pointed out, predicting the future is a fundamental human concern and anticipating the future is a social activity: "we project the future through the construction of collectively shared anticipations to cope with fear of change and deal with anxiety of uncertainty." (p. 113)

In that sense, *anticipatory representations* must bear a crucial weight on people's attitudes towards large-scale geopolitical processes that bring important changes

Within the meaningful web of representational dimensions of space, identity and time, geographical maps do not only express reified and dominant geographical representations concerning ones' own territory/space and others' territory/space (with important implications for inter-group relations). If on one hand, their power to reproduce such systems of representations across generations by providing certain criteria and parameters to represent spatial relations important for the group they belong to is emphasized; on the other, they could also be used to determine anticipatory projections for the future and the dynamic processes that define geopolitical relations between countries and peoples.

In brief, besides being attempts to reproduce reality, maps are social constructions. A map is not objectively "above" or "beyond" what it represents. Nor can one trace backwards from the representation to some final object, knowledge, or memory. According to Harley (1989: p. 11), we can interpret maps as rhetorical devices that refute the "arbitrary antagonism" of propaganda versus real maps, or scientific versus artistic maps.

For Harley (1989) maps are socially constructed texts that are interpreted in manifold ways, characterized by

contradictions and fragmentations and that cannot be traced back to an unequivocal meaning within a discipline. As bearers of memories, cultures and politico-economical elements, the importance that geographical maps hold in the representation of the continuously changing European space gave rise to the need to analyze how subjects use the map of Europe according to their geopolitical representations. Therefore the map of Europe was utilized as a representational vehicle and projective research tool in research programs conducted by de Rosa in 1993 and 2002, to be examined later in this article.

On the other hand, from a psychosocial point of view using the functional taxonomy found in literature on SR (Jodelet, 1989), we could even hypothesize a certain correspondence between the functions of geographical maps and those of SRs.

- **SRs have a familiarization function:** the geographical maps also can make concrete a series of abstract knowledge that would otherwise be difficult to imagine and familiarize users with places and spaces known to them. We are speaking about physical knowledge (distances, dimensions, proportions), geographical knowledge (presence of land or territorial characteristics) and historical knowledge. It is peoples' history that continuously redesigns political geography, which can be understood traces again continuously the political geography, that could be considered a vestige of ethnic and national groups' social memory.

- **SRs have role in "orientation within social reality":** geographical maps are an absolutely necessary tool for orientation within spatial reality but, given that this space is socially connotated, also within social reality. A geo-political map also provides

information concerning value systems and norms typical of the cultural context under consideration: i.e. an English citizen will know that outside the boundaries of his own country he is going to have to drive his car on the right hand side rather than on the left.

- **SRs do have a function as "guides for action":** beginning with the interpretative ability offered by geographical maps it is possible to plan and organize an action taking into account different levels of analysis (spatial behavior, political actions, culturally mediated interpersonal interactions);
- **SRs have a role in "facilitating communication" by offering a shared code:** sharing graphical representations connected to geo-political spaces does constitute more or less implicit and socially shared knowledge (between aspects of reified and consensual knowledge) that is specific to a given community and makes communication between its members easier;
- **SRs have a role connected to "identity":** geographical and geo-political maps also offer individuals the possibility to identify the physical and tangible boundaries between internal and external, the self and the 'other', the in-group and out-group. Identity does not depend only on individual or social categorization criteria, but also on spatial categorization criteria, starting from the concept of territory, of the self and 'us' defined with respect to the boundaries with the "other". Moreover, geo-political maps are a good opportunity to carry on social comparison and to structure and support the positive identity we need as a group. This kind of process

could explain the phenomenon identified by Peters concerning the over-estimation of the size of Europe and the USA in relation to Asia and Africa.

The transformation of European political geography in the age of the "global village".

In the contemporary world the processes of unification, assimilation and differentiating are taking place at an unprecedented speed. Among the causes are the cultural dynamics that have been triggered by the "globalization" and "localization" of the economy and the information society. In the past fifty years in Europe we have witnessed an unprecedented acceleration of political/institutional actions.

As the members of the Empire Parliamentary Associations stated in 1943 *"the old Europe has gone. The map is being rolled up and a new map is unrolling before us. We shall have to do a great deal of fundamental thinking and scrapping of old points of view before we find our way through the new continent which now opens before us."* (Fitz-Gerald, 1946).

The many political transformations that have taken place since these words were spoken have confirmed this prediction.

In the last fifty years, Europe has begun to assume a new form: divided into two realities that are at the same time distinct and interconnected: Europe and the European Union.

The political/institutional actions promoted by communitarian Europe is surely beginning to influence our way of life and how we perceive these two realities.

The founding of the EEC in 1951 and all the successive institutional steps that led to a European Union that in 2007 has 27 member states, with followed has led to the necessity to continuously redraw the map of Europe, marking off the new borders that delineate new geo-political

areas. This process of integration process was divided in several phases that, from time to time, redesigned European political geography and probably the social representation of the old continent. Figures 1- 8 show the different images of Europe during the various phases of EEC and later, EU enlargement. This process, based on common legislative and economic references dedicated to the goal of political/institutional integration, did not always move in step with socio-cultural integration because of the inevitable tension between the push for harmonization and safeguarding of differences.



Fig. 1 - 1952: EC-6 Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands

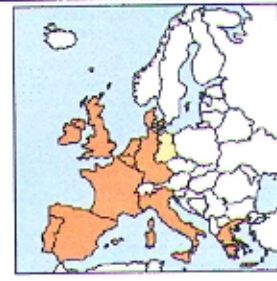


Fig. 5 - 1990: EC-12 German reunification



Fig. 2 - 1973: EC-9 entry of Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom

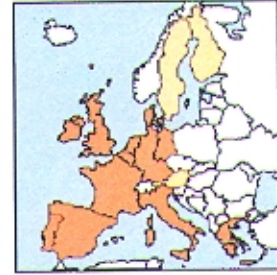


Fig. 6 - 1995: EC-15 entry of Austria, Finland, Sweden



Fig. 3 - 1981: EC-10 entry of Greece



Fig. 7 - 2004: EC-25 entry of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia



Fig. 4 - 1986: EC-12 entry of Spain and Portugal

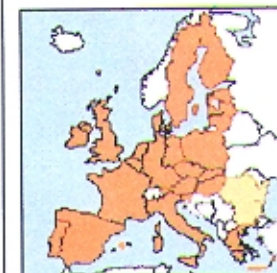


Fig. 8 - 2007: EC-27 entry of Bulgaria and Romania

According to P. Vujakovic (1993): "The transformation of the political geography of Europe has resulted in a plethora of new cartographic depictions. These maps of "new Europes" are a continuation of an historic sequence of cartographic definitions of Europe as a

continental and as a cultural-political entity". (Vujakovic, P., 1993).

From our point of view, the continuously redefined geopolitical maps of Europe and of the EU can provide concrete images on which to project other elements of the representation in comparison with which social groups can define themselves, according to their social positioning.

Indeed, the various images of Europe that emerged in course of the second half of the 20th century carry different meanings of that supra-national entity, object of identification. These images impose a continuous renegotiation of inclusion/exclusion processes because of the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of ever-new boundaries between "Us" and "Others". Changing boundaries means changing the definitions of "Us" and "Them" based on differentiated categorical criteria at the level of sense of belonging and historical, social and cultural memory.

This has brought us to reflect on the relationship between stability, consensuality and differentiation of the SRs of the European Union among citizens who participate in these negotiation processes from different national, geographical, cultural and socio-political angles.

Decisions that required European Union citizens to express their will in a more or less active form – such as the 2004 referendum on the European Constitution – highlighted the debate between "hegemonic" and "polemical" positions concerning official models of the European Union and its dynamic geo-political balances.

As concerns European Union enlargement, EuroBarometer results from December 2006 show what a dilemma this issue represents via the extremely heterogeneous positions reported in different countries. They vary from the extremely negative ones expressed by citizens who were for the most part from

the historical members of the EU (Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, France, UK) to positions that were much more favorable expressed by citizens of the for the most part newer member countries (Poland, Slovenia, Greece, Slovakia, Lithuania, Cyprus, Malta, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia and Estonia).

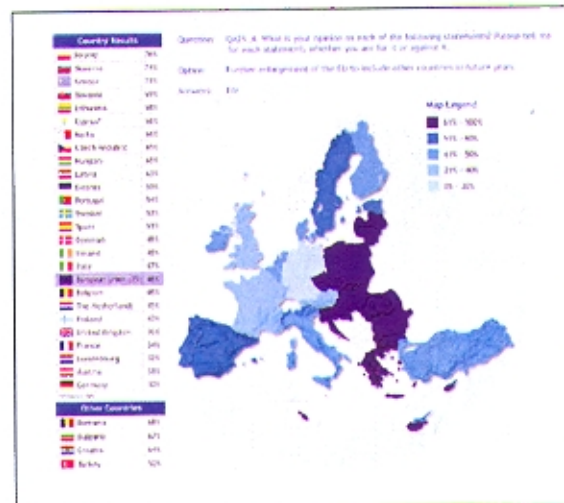


Fig. 9: Attitudes towards (source EuroBarometer December 2006).

The mosaic of images of Europe and of the European Union that emerges this composite scenario of the divergent points of view of "institutions" and those shared by average people, calls for further in-depth psycho-social studies.

The cross-national research project "EuroSKYCompass" (de Rosa, 2002): follow-up and further developments.

"EuroSKYCompass", a cross-national research project conducted on a population sample of 2251 young people from ten different nationalities, was launched by A. S. de Rosa in 2002 as a follow-up and expansion of an earlier major study (de Rosa, 1996) conducted on a population sample of 3454² young people between 18

² Composition of the EuroSKYCompass population sample: Austrians (f=142), English (f=168), Finns (f=200), French (f=359), Germans (f=162), Italians (f=90), Portuguese (f=342), Spanish (3 subsamples: San Sebastian – Basques, San Sebastian – Spanish, Valencia, in total f=413). North African immigrants in France (f=302) + Tunisian (f=50),

and 25 years from ten different nationalities. Anchored to theoretical constructs such as the Social Representations Theory, as well as the theories of Social Memory Social Identity, in 1993 and 2002 de Rosa conducted two large multi-step, cross-national research programs designed to explore the multiple levels of supra-national, national, regional and local identities in relation to the social representations of the "European Union", its "member States", the concept of "Nation", "Borders" and "North, South, East and West" (de Rosa, 1996). In the follow-up (2002) the elements in the process of change in representations of the EU and of the representational system in which the EU is inserted (Nation, Europe, World) were explored (de Rosa, A. S., d'Ambrosio, M. & Bocci, E. 2005).

Along with *verbal* instruments of projective (associative networks) and structural (questionnaires and attitude scales) natures, within the scope of the main research project some *non-verbal* instruments were introduced: a geographical map depicting the outline of Europe as a geographical continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. Dots on this "Silent Map" were used to indicate the location of the capitals of the main European states but without any labels and with no indicators to delimiting the boundaries of individual countries. Each subject was asked:

- 1) to identify of the political-geographical borders of the European

Community and the single member countries of the EC (or EU);

- 2) the names of the EC (EU) member states;
- 3) to identify areas they perceived to be sources of ethnic or social conflict.

This tool was conceived not only as a simple graphic translation of data indexes, but also with the intent to detect the projective uses of the space in relation to the specific hypotheses formulated.

In a later research program called *EuroSkyCompass*, intended to delve more deeply into the relationship that exists between projections and construction of Europe's geo-political divisions in relation to geographical parameters: N/S/W/E and other evaluation, iconic and symbolic dimensions concerning representations of Europe and European countries.

To this end, several research tools of a structural and projective nature coming from various theoretical and methodological frameworks were either adapted or constructed ad hoc. The projective tools were used first in order to avoid influencing the spontaneous process of responses with the data inputs contained in the questions used in the structured tools.

a) *Structured tools*

1. *Inclusive questionnaire* with questions regarding the identification of population variables considered important for this study, such as:

- travel frequency within Europe;
- Countries visited;
- Studies abroad;
- Self-perception of knowledge of history, geography and politics;
- Languages spoken;
- Sources of information about Europe;
- Participation in organizations;
- Political orientation;

students from Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (f=23). We thank very much our colleague Dorra Ben Alaya (University of Tunis) for her cooperation in data collection on Tunisian sample.

Composition of the earlier major study (de Rosa, 1996) population sample: Austrians (f=381), English (f=407), Finns (f=180), French (f=598), Germans (f=121), Greeks (f=189), Italians (f=383), Portuguese (f=292), Spanish (San Sebastian - Basques f=96, San Sebastian - Spanish f=253, Barcelona f=161) (f=510), Swiss (f=393).

2. *Attitudes scale toward European countries.*

b) *Projective tools:*

1. *Associative networks*, a projective instrument of a non-verbal nature (de Rosa, 2002) using the stimulus words: Nation, Europe, World.
2. The *EuroSKYCompass*, which provided the title for the entire research project, is a verbal projective-graphic tool that took its name from the "Cardinal Star" (Sky Compass). Placed at the center of the page, this image organizes the projective and verbal dimensions via identification of the four cardinal points and the request that subjects associate three words (assigning their relative value) to each cardinal point. Basically, the subject is asked to mark down a series of points in this space that indicate the location of "Me", "My country", the "European Union", "my favorite country" and "Italy". As no kind of limitation is imposed, the subject is free to do as he wishes within the Cartesian axes of this 'Cardinal Star'. Using the space as an indicator of the relationships between the subject's different "belongings", this tool allows us to analyze both the spatial relationships between "Me" and "My country" and those that these psycho-social and geo-political entities have with the geographical parameters of "North", "South", "West" and "East". In regard to each of these geographical parameters, the subject is asked to elicit three words and to indicate their positive, negative, or neutral valence.

3. The "*Silent Map of Europe*". This projective instrument consisted of a geographical map of Europe. Unlike the "Silent Map" that was used in the original research project, this map included the national borders of countries, however, without indicating their names. Each subject was asked to draw two lines, not necessarily straight, across the whole map to divide the space into four sectors to create an ideal geographic-cultural quadrant North-East, North-West, South-East and South-West. Departing from the hypothesis that as a resource for investigating projective representations of geo-political Europe, this tool would allow for identification how a subject defines the boundaries of European territory. If a country is found in all four quadrants, it will, without doubt, have a particular importance for the subject compared with other countries and acquires the role of "center of gravity" in "his" Europe.

Results obtained via the "*Silent Map of Europe*": an instrument for the cross-cultural comparison between geopolitical representations of Europe.

Because of space limitations, in this article we will concentrate on presenting the results obtained from the "*Silent Map*" consistent with the theoretical premises discussed in the introduction. The demarcations of areas and borders obtained are taken as an expression of shared definitions of the regions of Europe which, on one hand, are anchored to geographic parameters and, on the other, reveal social processes of inclusion and exclusion of countries and ethnic groups, with attributions of different meanings for subjects belonging to different cultural and national contexts.

Beginning with the two lines drawn to separate East from West and North from South on the Silent Map of Europe we calculated the frequency with which each country was positioned in each of the four quadrants: North-West, North-East, South-West, South-East.

To facilitate a preliminary examination of the data obtained and to compare the responses of the participants in the study according to their cultural "belonging", we transferred the data concerning each European country onto 11 maps (one for each sub-sample group)⁴. This was done on the criteria of prevalence in terms of distribution of frequencies. We displayed the data using four different graphic patterns to indicate the countries that were predominantly located in each of the four quadrants (N/E, N/W, S/E, S/W) and a fifth pattern for those countries that had two jointly assigned positions two different quadrants.

From the very first level of cross-cultural comparison you can see how on the four quadrants the frequencies do not always mirror "an objective geographic sub-division", in contrast with a widespread opinion that such orientation elements in both individual and social life would follow physical parameters based on scientific knowledge.

On the other hand, what does emerge at a first glance is really the conventional and prescriptive nature of the social representations concerning the geographical environment, empirically confirming observations made by the cartographer Arno Peters (1990) on the anchoring of scientific knowledge to socio-cultural parameters that influence our image of the world.

It seems particularly evident across the various sub-samples that the position subjects give to European countries is heavily influenced by the representation they have of the cultural objects Eastern

and Western Europe³. East and West are, in fact, separated by a rather stable axis that conceptually reproduces the boundary of the Berlin Wall, moving it slightly to the East without, however, profoundly denting the meaning of the block behind the "iron curtain".

Despite the fact that at the time of data collection the enlargement of the EU to 25 member states was imminent (2004), in all 11 maps that display the data collected from the various national sub-samples:

- located to the East are many of those countries that after the Yalta Agreement (1945) were located on the other side of the "iron curtain";
- located to the West are countries that, although on the same latitude as the countries mentioned above, historically were considered part of the block of western countries.

This result is consistent with other data discussed in previous publications on the EuroSkyCompass research project (de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, 2005a and 2005b) concerning other research tools included in the questionnaire used to collect the data.

In a multi-methodological optic, it is particularly interesting to highlight that this result pretty much seems to overlap what emerged from the Attitudes Scale concerning various European countries: namely a pattern showing Europe as a puzzle of clusters of countries that are objects of different attitudes. Via an Analysis of Principal Components (ACP) a prime factor consisting of the countries of ex-Eastern Europe was identified as well as a lowest factor that included only Russia. As shown in the variance analysis of the factors, this first factor extracted by

³ For data concerning these kind of social representations, see the papers by d'Ambrosio, M., de Rosa, A.S., Bordini, I., Urgeghe, M., (2006); Urgeghe, M., de Rosa, A.S., d'Ambrosio M.L., Bordini, I. (2006), presented in the Thematic Session "Cultural Processes, Integration and Exclusion in Europe" during the 8th International Conference on Social Representations (Rome, 28 August-1 September) as well as previous publications (de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, 2005a e b).

the ACP was centered on a rather negative attitude, consistent, in fact, with what had been found in the de Rosa's original study in 1996 concerning a representation of the cardinal point East which was the object of a rather negative connotation both in the attitudes and the contents of the representational system expressed by the subjects from various sub-samples.

This element should surely be kept in mind when interpreting results from the *"Silent Map of Europe"*.

An exception that we feel it is important to highlight is the map that reproduces the location of European countries from the point of view of students from Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Different from the responses from the other sub-samples, this group proposed moving the axis dividing East from West significantly towards the East, identifying their own country as one of the most frequent intersecting points on the axes.

There seems to be, however, less of a consensus among all the sub-samples resident in countries historically considered to be the West concerning the placement of the North-South axis. It varies from:

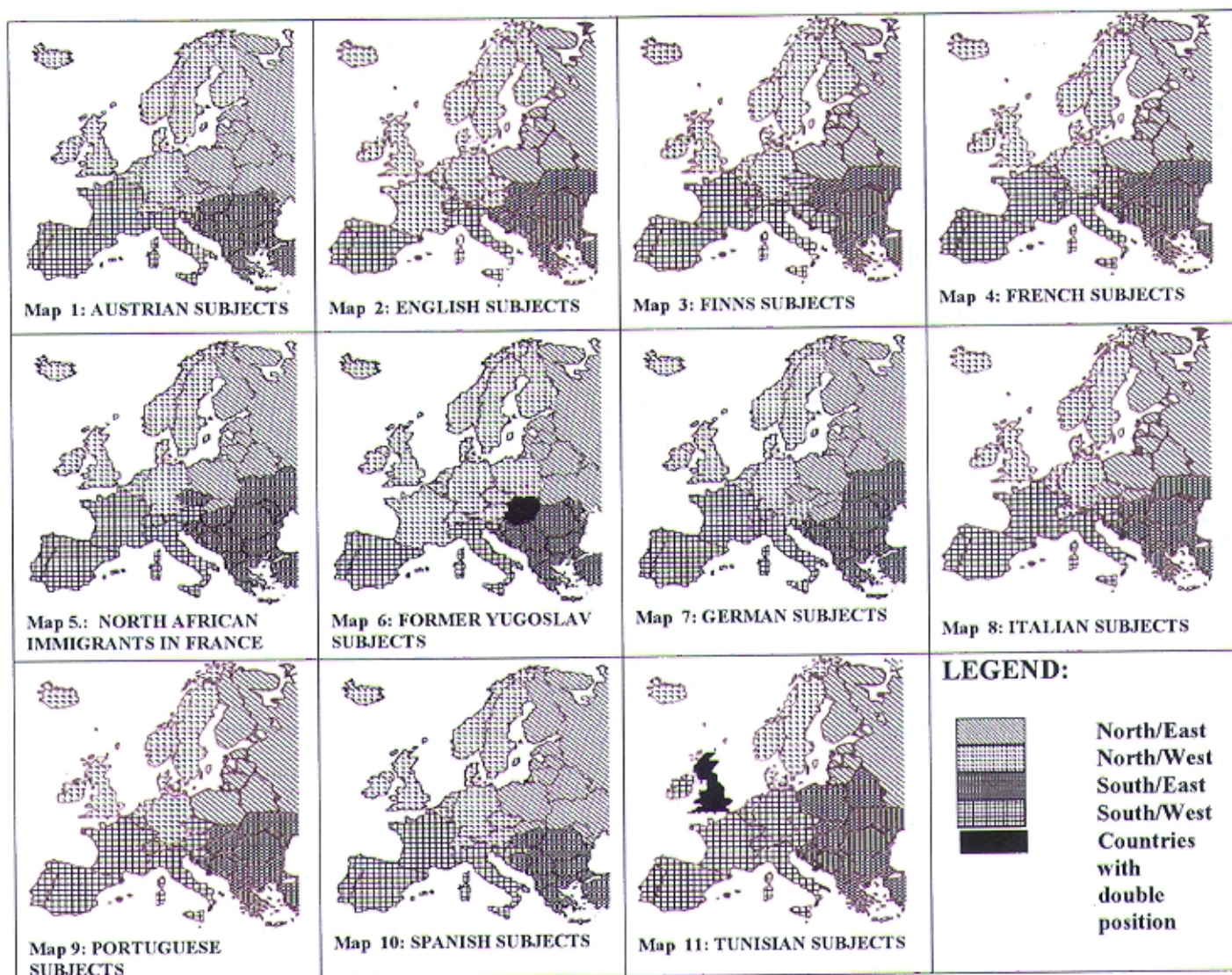
- on one side, on the part of a majority of the subjects interviewed, identifying a Latin-Mediterranean area, that includes countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Italy and, with the exception of English subjects, France as well;

- on the other, the representation proposed by Tunisian subjects that included countries like Germany and Ireland in Southern, using the North-South axis in a way that seems to identify only the Scandinavian countries as Northern

Europe with the Baltic Sea as the dividing element between North and South.

Taking into account the specificities of the two sub-samples geographically located in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in Tunisia who belong to different continents and with different relationships with Europe and the European Union for historical, geographical and cultural reasons, the key for understanding these differences is the social categorization processes based respectively on comparison and social "recognition". (Moscovici and Paicheler, 1973).

In the case of students from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia one sees a process of "comparison" both with countries that are historic members of the EU and those from the traditional East block that is expressed in the representation of their own country as belonging to the area of Southeast Europe along with countries that are already members of the EU such as Greece and other Balkan countries, like Romania and Bulgaria whose EU accession was being discussed at the time the data was being collected. It is interesting to note the role of "cushion" between South/East and North/West assigned to Slovakia and the Czech Republic by a double placement on the quadrants. This role as buffer state demarcates the border between their own (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) and other countries (like Poland and Hungary) that traditionally belong to the East block countries, associated with the rich and developed countries of the North/West, along with countries that are the EU political and economic (France, UK, Germany).



Map 1-11: Maps of Europe by North/South/East/West blocks produced by the eleven sub-samples.

SUB-SAMPLES	Austrian	English	Finnish	French	North African immigrants in France	Former Yugoslav	German	Italian	Portuguese	Spanish	Tunisian	Tot
COUNTRY												
Austria	6	2	0	3	3	0	12	2	8	4	1	41
Hungary	3	3	1	2	1	5	3	1	3	6	2	30
Russia	2	1	1	3	0	8	2	0	4	0	5	26
Germany	2	0	0	5	4	0	2	0	3	5	4	25
Czech Republic	2	2	1	3	4	2	2	2	3	1	1	23
Italy	1	1	0	3	6	3	0	4	1	2	1	22
Poland	2	0	3	2	4	1	5	1	4	0	1	22
Romania	2	1	1	0	3	9	1	0	3	0	1	21
Turkey	2	0	0	0	2	14	0	0	2	0	0	20
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	0	1	2	1	3	10	0	0	0	0	0	17
Slovakia	4	0	0	1	3	5	0	0	4	0	0	17
Croatia	1	1	0	1	1	7	0	1	1	2	1	16
Albania	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	0	1	0	1	15
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	0	2	0	0	15
Ukraine	2	0	1	2	0	6	0	1	3	0	0	15
Bosnia-Herzegovina	0	1	1	0	1	8	0	0	0	1	1	13
Macedonia	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	1	0	0	13
Belarus	2	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	4	0	1	12
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	1	0	0	12

Tab. 1: Countries identified as Europe's "center of gravity" via intersection of the North/South and East/West axes. (Frequency threshold of 10 on the total of the sample population interviewed).

In the Tunisian students representation, however, one observes a "recognition" process that going beyond continental borders and brings about an assimilation based on contact and cultural contamination between their own people and a large part of Europe. It also aims to indicate what the border is between "Us" (as the "non North") and "Them" (i.e. those Nordic Scandinavian peoples who are culturally extraneous for this sub-sample).

In general, each quadrant has a stable configuration for countries that - on the basis of a highly consensual standardization phenomenon - are positioned in a particular quadrant by virtually all the subjects. These quadrants are identified as follows:

- ◆ North-West: Denmark, Iceland, UK, Norway, Sweden⁴;
- ◆ North-East: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia;
- ◆ South-East: Bulgaria, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Greece, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Albania, Turkey, Ukraine;
- ◆ South-West: Italy, Portugal, and Spain.

One could therefore say that the Pyrenees and the Balkans constitute two geographical reference points that permanently isolate the two extremities of Southern Europe.

Also emblematic is Italy's unambiguous positioning in the South-West quadrant. In any case, the unstable position of countries like Austria, that despite being on the same latitude as Italy, are sometimes located in the West and sometimes in the East, highlights the cultural nature of this categorization.

Besides these strongly characterized countries, the map that would result from superimposing those of the various samples would ideally contain large areas of *buffer states*, of which some could be a

potential European "center of gravity" (see table 1).

Austria, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic in particular are often in different positions in relation to both the North-South and East-West axes. However, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Croatia sometimes positioned in the South-East and sometimes in the South-West quadrant of Europe.

Concerning the positioning of these "*middle lands*", it should be noted that Switzerland especially tends to be included in the quadrant that subjects position their own (with the exception of the Spanish, English, Finns, Italians, Germans and those from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

It should also be pointed out that young Germans' ⁵ perception of Eastern Europe is located much more to the West, including in Eastern Europe buffer states like Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia and the Czech Republic, as if the process of enlargement to the East had been stopped with the reunification of the two old Germanies.

Influenced by a sentiment of cultural belonging, one notes that the subjects interviewed categorized and classified the internal borders of Europe by positioning North-South and East-West axes differently in accordance with their cultural "belonging".

Geo-political outlook, cultural "belonging" and anchoring to the regional identity.

⁴ For the Tunisian sample, only the UK was an exception.

⁵ Along with France and the UK, Germany is part of a cluster of powerful countries called the "*Big Bosses*" in the original study (de Rosa, 1996).



Map 12: MADRID
SUB-SAMPLE



Map 13: SAN SEBASTIAN
SUB-SAMPLE



Map 14: VALENCIA
SUB-SAMPLE

According to one of the principles that inspired both the original study (de Rosa, 1996) and the follow-up, personal, social, local, regional, national and supranational identities should not be seen as parallel and unconnected entities, nor as needs defined by a linearly inclusive relationship by virtue of a spatial criterion of size. It is, rather, about inter-related, associated and multiple "belonging" levels of identity that contribute in a concurrent way to defining individuals' identity in function of the stimuli in the context that each time determines the salience.

Therefore, it is particularly interesting to explore in-depth the relationships between local, regional, national and supranational identities in regions of Europe that have various levels of tension with the nations in which they are geographically located. It is well known that regional identity and belonging to regional and cultural communities that are profoundly different is particularly salient in the Spanish context, where regional

autonomy was regained only in 1975 after decades of dictatorship and where Basque independence remains a burning question while the Catalan community had its autonomy recognized by a referendum in 2006.

For this reason, data was collected both in the capital, Madrid, and in two cities of the autonomous communities, San Sebastian and Valencia.

We also investigated how regional "belonging" contributes to determining the perception of the socio-political and geo-cultural borders of Europe and how regional identity works together with national identity in defining the image of the supranational entity Europe and ones' own location within it.

The data displayed graphically in maps 12-14 eloquently shows what was discussed above and presents two different kinds of categorizations that were more strongly mediated by socio-cultural components than by a geographic criterion.

The most obvious difference is in the placing of France among Mediterranean countries (South-West) by the two sample groups who identify themselves as culturally Mediterranean, i.e. the sub-samples from Madrid and Valencia. Students from San Sebastian in the Basque territory include France in the North-West quadrant, as if to demarcate more clearly the boundary of their own region.

Coinciding with the representation, a cultural peculiarity needs to be highlighted: the Basque provinces in French territory, which are a particularly important element in Basque claims to regional identity, in Euskera are called *Lapurdi* which means *North province*.

It is also interesting to note how France is placed in a position different from that on the South-West quadrant it was given by all the study's sub-samples only by students resident in Basque territory, the English and students from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who placed France on the North-West quadrant.

One further confirmation of the relativity of geographic parameters is the position that Switzerland was assigned by the three Spanish sub-samples.

In fact, Switzerland was positioned differently by the three samples. The Madrid sub-sample positioned it in the North-West ($f=30$), probably adopting the cultural stereotype of the rich and developed North-West (de Rosa, 1996). The Valencia sub-sample, with equal frequencies, positioned Switzerland jointly in the South-East and the North-West. The San Sebastian sub-sample, however, positioned it among the countries of the South-West ($f=65$), probably using a social identification mechanism that leads to considering the other for identification in terms of similarity in geomorphic and economic patterns, since the Spanish call the Basque provinces "*the Spanish Switzerland*".

Typology and patterns of responses

Among subjects' responses to the "*Silent map of Europe*", we found various ways of responding that were not in conformity with the instructions. Many subjects turned in maps on which the two lines to divide East from West and North from South were absent. Instead, there were single lines that divided the territory in two, closed curves that identified specific regions or lines that followed national borders, etc.

The number of such cases and the recurrence of specific patterns (26,71%) suggest that this kind of response was not the fruit of a banal misinterpretation of the instructions but, instead, were an expression of subjects' specific opinions concerning the system of social relationships currently founded on the North-South/East-West distinction.

It is not by chance that highest percentage of "alternative" responses came from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia sample, followed by the Tunisians.

In order to investigate the meaning of these responses and verify the hypothesis

we advanced, it was necessary to deal separately with these "atypical responses" and reorganize them into the following pattern categories:

CONVENTIONAL (73.29%)

- **Two lines:** 40.84% of subjects responded in accordance with the instructions drawing two straight intersecting lines on land without following national borders.
- **Following Borders** 19.29% divided Europe by drawing two intersecting lines on land but scrupulously following national borders, as if to highlight the political, geographical and cultural unity of each nation within one of the four quadrants. This kind of response showed various types of patterns. In some both lines identifying the four quadrants followed national boundaries (*four quadrants following borders* 10.99%) or that only one of the lines followed national boundaries (*one of two lines following borders* 8.30%).
- **Intersection on the sea** 13.16% divided Europe with the North-South and East-West axes intersecting in the seas surrounding Europe (for the most part the North Sea and the Mediterranean), as if to assert a "*center of gravity*" identified with a shared space for communication and exchange among the various civilizations that inhabit these regions rather than a separation between the various regions of Europe.

ALTERNATIVE (26.71%)

- **Puzzle:** 11.03% of the subjects divided Europe by drawing closed curved lines, irregular and contiguous, to delineate the various European regions. All the countries were inside these loops, like a jigsaw puzzle with the pieces formed

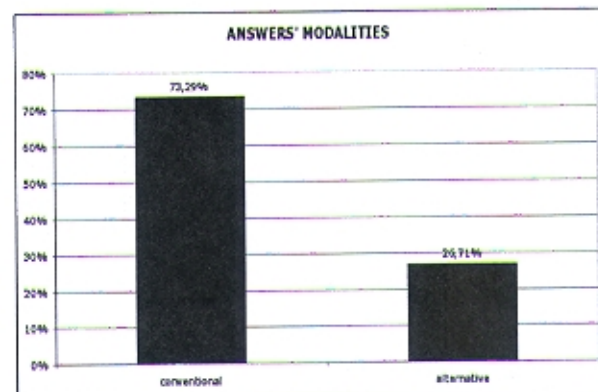
by geo-cultural regions, independent of the intersection of the North-South and East-West axes.

- **Intersection creating three areas:** 4.30% divided Europe into three parts. This category contained two sub-categories: *three areas crossing borders* (0.52%) with lines that did not follow national borders and *three areas following borders* (3.78%) with lines drawn that follow national borders. The axes intersect on land. In this case two of the axes are "fused" into one geographic and cultural reality.
- **Lines off the map:** 3.22% responded to the instructions by drawing two lines that intersect off the *Silent Map*, in effect, refusing to divide Europe into quadrants and regions.
- **Broken lines:** 2.69% drew a series of broken lines that never intersect.
- **One line:** 2.58% drew one single line that divided Europe diagonally, vertically, or horizontally. In these cases the dividing line creates two sections that follow countries' national borders.
- **Bubble:** 0.86% divided Europe by drawing closed curves that delineate regions without following national borders.
- **Incomplete lines:** 0.79% drew lines that do not divide all of Europe.
- **Parallel lines:** 0.56% divided Europe with two parallel lines that never intersect.
- **Grids:** 0.41% drew a grid of ambiguous meaning on a part of the map (to highlight or cancel out a part of Europe?).
- **Concentric lines:** 0.22% drew concentric circular lines to divide Europe, as if to indicate the prevalence of the centrality of European countries (political, economic, geographical, cultural)

over a differentiation based on the North-South and East-West axes.

- **Unclassifiable:** 0.05% responded to the instructions in a way that was not classifiable.

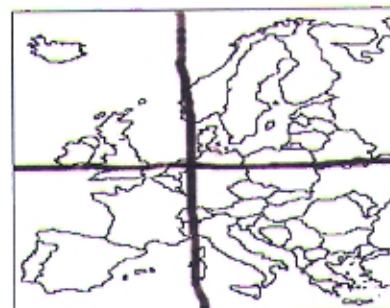
Taking into consideration all of the data collected, except the majority "two lines" response, the responses with the highest frequencies expressed in percentages were: *puzzles* (11.03%), *intersection creating three areas* (4.30%), *lines off the map* (3.22%) and *broken lines* (2.69%)



Graph 1: Distribution of frequencies of conventional and alternative responses in percentages.

We will here analyze the most significant patterns that emerged from the responses described above in a descending order of relevance based on frequency percentages.

Two lines:

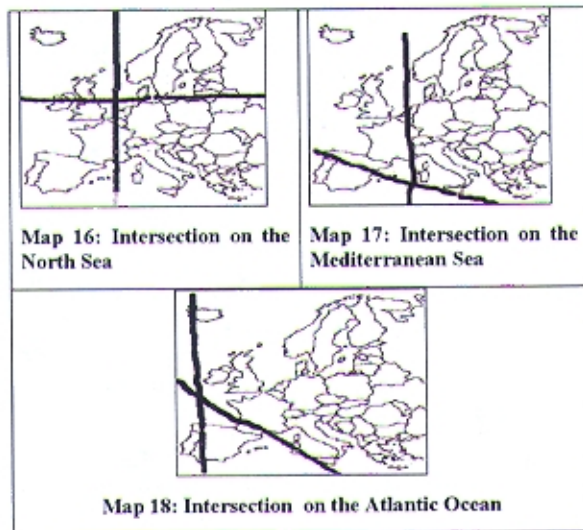


Map 15: Two lines

As seen in 40.84% of the subjects interviewed, the *two lines* response indicates that they followed the instructions, dividing Europe into four

quadrants with two lines that did not follow national borders. These responses allowed us to identify the *imaginary "center of gravity"* of Europe where the axes crossed as well as the four areas North-East, North-West, South-East and South-West. Portuguese (9.99%) and French (7.55%) subjects especially responded in this manner.

Intersection on the sea:



In dividing up Europe 13.17% of the subjects identified Europe's *"center of gravity"* not on land but on the sea, historically a place for meeting and exchange between different cultures. Given that Europe can be seen, geographically speaking, as a peninsula, the choice of one of the three seas that surrounds it also reflects cultural specificities.

In contrast to what you would expect given the history of the Mediterranean, cradle of ancient civilizations, the percentage of subjects that divided Europe with North-South and East-West axes on the Mediterranean (3.37%) is inferior to those who drew those axes on the North Sea (8.94%). A possible explanation for this result is probably being rigorous in following instructions to pinpoint the division on European territory as well as identifying Europe with the rich and developed North-West (de Rosa, 1996; d'Ambrosio, M., de Rosa, A.S., Bordini, I.,

Urgeghe, M. 2006.; Urgeghe, de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, Bordini, 2006). This had the consequence of sliding the *"center of gravity"* of the continent to the North.

In addition, a division emerged between subjects from Mediterranean countries that allowed us to filter out a not insignificant part of the subjects for whom *"Europe is elsewhere"*.

Among the 8.94% of the subjects that drew the North-South and East-West axes on the North Sea we find mostly Portuguese (12.25%), Spanish from San Sebastian (10.44%) and Italians (15.96%).

By locating Europe's *"center of gravity"* on the North Sea, these subjects show their perception of their own position as the extreme South-West of Europe. This therefore could denote a perception of being on the periphery of the European system, related to identity and/or political/economic issues.

However, other subjects belonging to the same sub-samples also had the highest percentages in the *Intersection on the Mediterranean Sea* response. More specifically, they were the Italians (10.64%), and the Spanish (9.83%) (Valencia 6.06%, San Sebastian 2.75%, Madrid 1.02%). In this case we find a strong identification with the geo-political entity Europe, perceived as unified from the Mediterranean to Scandinavia and with its *"center of gravity"* located in the middle of the Mediterranean.

Puzzle:

The *puzzle* response suggests that the subjects divided the *"Silent Map of Europe"* by drawing the borders of different regions and producing a pattern analogous to a mosaic of regional clusters.

All the countries were inserted like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle in order to delineate the various zones of Europe that are characterized by various social factors of a political, historical, cultural and identity nature.



Map 19: Puzzle

Using these "portraits" of Europe, we were able to identify recurring clusters of countries: *Scandinavian* (24.97%), *Mediterranean* (16.38%), *Eastern* (27.11%), *Western* (20.22%), *English-speakers* (11.31%).

The most recurrent regions are Scandinavia and the area identified as Western Europe, which are particularly salient areas and well-defined in terms of type of countries that are included in them.

Among the sub-samples that held that representation of Europe with high frequencies we find the French (34.49%).

Four quadrants following borders



Map 20: Four quadrants following borders

Among the subjects that used that way of dividing Europe with a significant frequency we find Finnish students (26.00%), North African immigrants in France (17.53%), the English (10.71%) and the Spanish, particularly students from Madrid (10.20%).

This specific distribution of frequencies leads us to believe that in dividing Europe in this manner, these subjects are expressing their Social Memory (Halbwachs, 1925; Bartlett, 1932)

tied to the struggle for unity and a national identity. By scrupulously respecting national borders and political and possibly, cultural integrity of European countries, they are rigidly safeguarding the results of difficult processes of recognition as *Nation States*. Considering the United Kingdom's profoundly multi-ethnic reality, the centuries-old issue of Finland, claimed by Sweden and Russia, then by the West and the Soviet Union, the bloody question of the Spanish autonomous communities and the very real identity conflicts that characterize the immigrant experience, it seems evident that the political and cultural identity of Nation-States organized in meaningful regional clusters could represent a value expressed by subjects who choose to delineate European territory in "four quadrants following borders".

One of two lines following borders

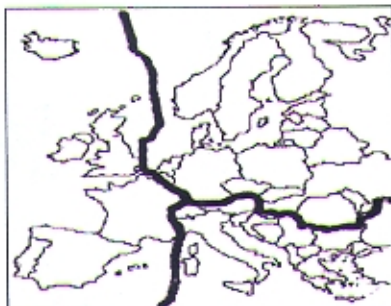


Map 21: One of two lines following borders

It is interesting to note how in some cases the criterion of drawing along national borders is found on only one of the geographic axe. It is almost as if the straight axis did not strongly differentiate between cultural models and identity realities. Most of these subjects (6.13%) drew the imaginary line dividing Eastern and Western Europe along the borders of individual countries while drawing the North-South line in a very imprecise way. This response is particularly evident for the Berlin sample (*One of two lines following borders W-E* 13.55%) for whom this task almost seemed to be an opportunity to

rewrite the story of their country, and for the Austrian sample (*One of two lines following borders W-E 11.76%*).

Three areas crossing borders:



Map 22: Three areas crossing borders

The response *three areas crossing borders* (map 22) is a division of Europe into three areas rather than the four quadrants in the instructions. In this case two quadrants are merged into one area.

Among the subjects of which a significant number divided Europe into three areas we find students from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, (14.29%) who mostly merged the South-East and South-West (7.94%). One could say, therefore, that the representation of Europe held by subjects from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia appears to be centered on the division between North and South. The North includes countries from Ireland to the Scandinavian countries bordering on Russia. The South is divided into a western part conceived as a single large region in a process of assimilation on a cultural basis of countries such as Spain, Portugal, France and Italy and an eastern part that includes all the traditional countries of the Eastern Block from the Balkans to the Urals.

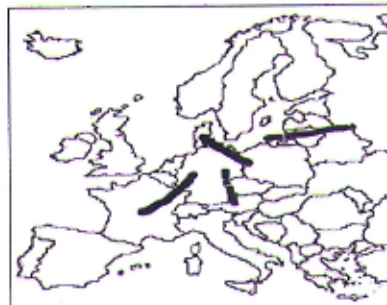
Lines off the map:



Map 23: Lines off the map

It was the subjects from Tunisia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that responded with significant percentages in this manner, respectively, 22.92% and 15.87%. One can hypothesize that the subjects from these two countries that responded in this way are stressing a historic-cultural concept of Europe as a supranational entity that includes all countries from the Atlantic to the Urals.

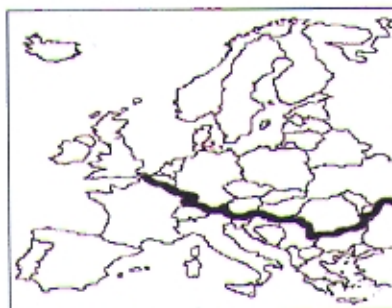
Broken lines



Map 24: Broken lines

In these responses, the subjects did not clearly divide Europe and did not identify clearly defined areas. The response was not in conformity with the instructions and almost would seem to be a rejection of the categorization process based on geographical borders and of dividing the European territory into quadrants. Those with the highest percentages in responding in this way were the Portuguese (0,86%) and the Austrians (0,75%).

One line

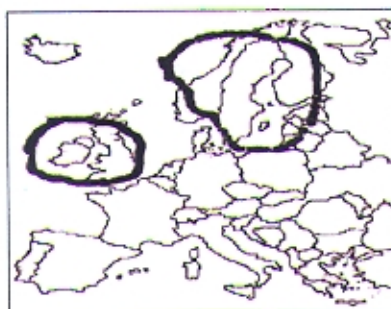


Map 25: One line

In the *one-line* responses, subjects divided Europe into two areas, drawing a single line that followed national borders. This pattern also seems to express a representation evidently based more on cultural than geographical criteria.

The Tunisian sample had the highest percentage of frequency with 10.42%. They divided European territory into two parts, emphasizing the demarcation line between North and South, with a percentage equal to 6.25%.

Bubble:



Map 26: Bubble

Although only used by 0.86% of the subjects, it was interesting to analyze data concerning the *bubble* response. (Map 26). We interpreted it as highlighting cultural, political, or economic areas disconnected from the rest of Europe via a single closed curve. For the subjects, those areas could have been identified with Europe itself

We noticed that, once again, it was primarily subjects from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that divided Europe in this atypical way (3.17%) and those from Tunisia (2.08%).

As for the *puzzle* responses, *bubbles* identified recurrent clusters of countries: *Scandinavian* (17.07%), *Mediterranean* (19.51%), *Western* (48.78%), *English-speakers* (14.63%). The Portuguese (3.23%) and Tunisian (10%) samples in particular used the *bubble* response all cases to indicate the cluster of *western countries*. Included in this cluster were Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.

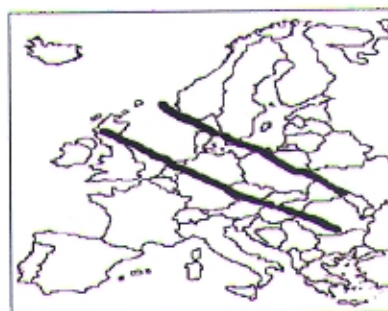
Incomplete lines



Map 27: Incomplete lines

In the above responses, subjects did not bother to divide all of the European territory. As we see on Map 27, the lines marking the four European quadrants do not divide all of Europe but are limited to specific portion of the territory that are identified with very specific nations. This representation excludes large areas of Europe and emphasizes a "*center of gravity*" that in this particular example is clearly moved towards the North/East.

Parallel lines

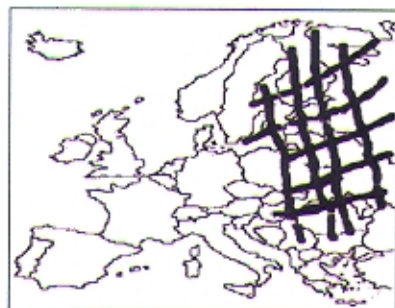


Map 28: Parallel lines

This type of response divided Europe into two or more parallel areas without

intersecting axes and therefore without an "ideal center of gravity" for Europe. It produced several sections located around two parallel dividing axes rather than "chessboard" quadrants.

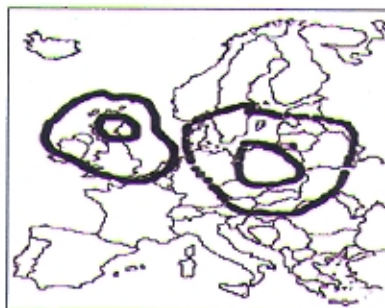
Grids



Map 29: Grids

As seen in Map 29, in these responses subjects drew a grid on an area of Europe. It is not at all clear if the subjects in drawing this meant to highlight or cancel out a part of Europe. This refusal to respond following the instructions suggests a resistance to accept a representation based on geographical areas delineated by clear borders. It was principally the Portuguese sample that responded in this way..

Concentric lines



Map 30: Concentric lines

As can be seen on Map 30, the subjects who responded in this manner did not divide Europe in quadrants but rather in circular zones. These included within them "sub zones" that highlighted representational clusters sharing in belonging to the same cultural, political or economic area. The responses could also

highlight certain geographical poles considered sore spots in Europe. Once again, it was principally the Portuguese sample that responded in this way.

Conclusions

The results of this study confirmed the relativity of geographical parameters and the prevalence of cultural and identity criteria at work in dividing European territory into clusters and mosaic pieces of images of Europe, based on the geopolitical representations anchored to North, South, East and West. This relativity is shown in representations of Europe that express, beyond their "geographical criteria", processes of comparison and social categorization.

Our results also offer empirical evidence of what Gerard Duveen postulated in a purely heuristic and illustrative form in his introduction "*The Power of Ideas*" written for the collection of essays by Serge Moscovici (2000) on the social representations more than ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and a few years ahead of the process of Europe enlargement that would bring its member states from 15 to 27:

"Imagine you are looking at an outline map of Europe, with no features marked on it except for the city of Vienna near the centre, and to the north of it the city of Berlin. Where would you then locate the cities of Prague and Budapest? For most people who have grown up since the end of the Second World War both these cities belong to the eastern division of Europe, while Vienna belongs to the West, and consequently both Prague and Budapest should be to the east of Vienna. But now look at a map of Europe and see the actual locations of these cities. Budapest, to be sure, lies further east, downstream along the Danube from Vienna. But Prague lies in fact to the west of Vienna.

This small example illustrates something of the phenomena of social representations. Our image of the geography of Europe has

been reconstructed in terms of the political division of the Cold War, in which the ideological definitions of East and West have come to be substituted for the geographical ones. We can also observe in this example how patterns of communication in the post-war years have influenced this process and stabilized a particular image of Europe. Of course, in the West there has been a fear and anxiety about the East which antedated the Second World War, and which persists even today, a decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. But where this representation of a divided Europe in the post-war years had its most powerful influence was in the eclipse of the old image of *Mitteleuropa*, of a Central Europe embracing the heartlands of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and stretching northwards towards Berlin. It was this Central Europe which was dismembered by the Cold War which also ideologically repositioned Prague to the east of "Western" Vienna. Today the idea of *Mitteleuropa* is again being discussed, but perhaps the sense of the eastern "otherness" has marked the image of Prague so clearly that it may take a long time before these new patterns of communication reposition the city back to the west of Vienna.

As well as illustrating the role of communication and influence in the process of social representation, this example also illustrates the way in which representations become common sense." (Duveen, 2000, 1-2)

As can be deduced from cross-national comparisons, the data concerning the Spanish autonomous communities subsamples and consistent with the Multi-dimensional Identity Model (de Rosa, 1996), these are inclusion, assimilation, recognition and exclusion phenomena that take shape on the basis of the salience, and from time to time, of the level of national, regional or cultural identity in the subjects' identity system.

In respect to the data gathered in the original study, analyzing the data gathered by "EuroSKYcompass" in 2004 shows that the axis dividing the East from the West appears to be more stable and consensual than the axis that divides North from South.

The East/West cultural border, which bears witness to the recent history of division and conflict between countries of the old continent, has been moved slightly further East than the Berlin Wall. In any case it remains profoundly imbued with meanings to which are associated polarized attitudes with negative connotations attributed to the East and positive to the West.

The border of the cluster of countries placed in the West has been significantly moved towards the East, including the countries recently admitted into the European Union. However, as already discussed in other papers (de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, 2005), a cross-comparison of the results obtained via triangulation of the graphic projective research tools (EuroSKYcompass, the *Silent map* of Europe and verbal tools (*associative networks*)) with those obtained from the Attitudes Scale give this movement of borders a meaning more of annexation than real integration.

Despite the persistence of a representation of Europe as a puzzle of areas to which there are associated strongly polarized attitudes, (see de Rosa and d'Ambrosio, 2005, and d'Ambrosio, M., de Rosa, A.S., Bordini, I., Urgeghe, M. 2006), many of the young people interviewed for the study refused to divide Europe into cultural areas, as they were instructed to do, and provided non conventional responses. We interpreted this attitude as a verification of the system of social relations centered on the North-South and East-West division.

In any case, they tend to identify cultural macro-areas independent of purely geographical parameters, sometimes highlighting the particular centrality and salience of certain regions, sometimes

elements of contact and cultural exchange such as the seas.

The particular attention paid to the North-West regions and the North Sea appear to stress, even at the distance of 10 years, the persistence of representations of a rich and developed North-West already seen in the research conducted by de Rosa in 1994-1996.

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