

Social networks connected pilgrims of Santiago de Compostela. A heresy?



Context

Although the first pilgrimages to the tomb of St James, in the 9th century, were entirely within the Iberian Peninsula, by the 10th century pilgrims came from much further afield. Today, the Ways of Saint James, as the Camino de Santiago is also known, cross the whole of Europe, covering several thousand kilometres as they converge upon Santiago de Compostela, the capital of the autonomous province of Galicia.



The pilgrimage is changing (Lorey, Dosquet et al., 2019)

Today, the Camino de Santiago is no longer as exclusively a religious affair as it once was. In fact, the pilgrimage constitutes a unique cultural, religious and commercial continuum within Europe, whose importance in terms of cultural heritage and tourism has been recognised through the award of two international heritage labels (Council of Europe and Unesco)



Table N° 1: Numbers of pilgrims (1970-2019)

| Date | Numbers of pilgrims arriving at Santiago |
|------|--|
| 1970 | 68 |
| 1990 | 55000 |
| 2019 | 347000 |

Oficina des perigrino (2019)

Research question

The goal of our research is to know if « To be connected to social networks during the pilgrimage» is it inside or outside the social representations of the pilgrims?



- 2 implications:
 - If it's inside, the shareholders (hostel, tourism administration...) should integrate them in their offers;
 - If it's outside the shareholders should respect the pilgrims not to be contaminated by them.

Conceptual Framework

Social representations (Moliner, 1989; Abric, 2005)
Abric (2005) : « A social representation is a organised set of informations, attitudes and beleives about a social object shared by a group. »

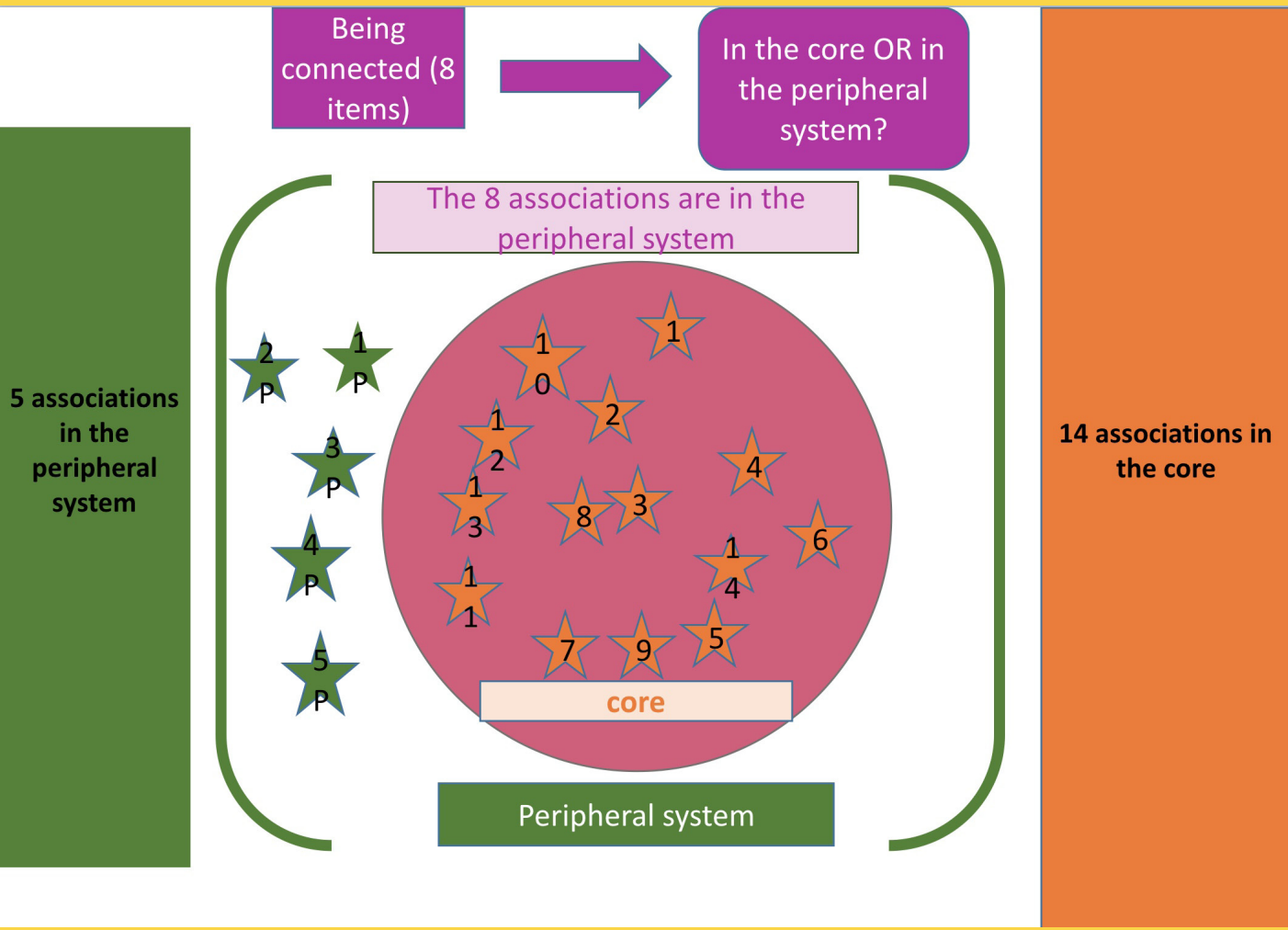
- 2 components: meaning and structure (core and peripheral) :
- Core: elements which are COMPLETELY associated or inside the social representations
 - Peripheral system: elements which ARE NOT COMPLETELY associated or inside the social representation.

Methodology

- Qualitative stage (focus group or individual interviews): to propose associated image with the social object: 35 pilgrims;
- Quantitative stage (survey on targets: 676 pilgrims in France and Spain)



Findings



To be connected is not in the core but for 4 items/8 are close to 40%.

So we can imagine that these 4 items will come into the core soon and then:

To be connected for a pilgrim is not completly a heresy and could be COMPLETELY associated in the pilgrim's mind

Managerial implications

- Dedicated spaces inside the Youth hostels for connected pilgrims
- No generalization of the Wifi inside the Youth hostels to respect the pilgrimage spirit.
- Advices to respect the Santiago spirit.



Selected References

• ABRIC, J.-C. (2005), (sous la direction de), *Méthodes d'étude des représentations sociales*, Erès, 2ème édition.

• DECROP, A. (2008), « les paradoxes du consommateur postmoderne », *Reflets et perspectives de la vie économiques*, tome XLVII, p. 85-93.

• DOSQUET, F. LOREY, Th. (2017), « Chapitre 2 : La nouvelle gouvernance des Chemins de St Jacques de Compostelle peut-elle construire à terme un contrat de destination touristique ? » in BEDE, S. et SPINDLER, J. (2017), *Les contrats de destinations*, l'Harmattan, p.183-210.

• DOSQUET, F. LOREY, Th. (2019), « Chapitre 11 : The elusive goal of sustainable tourism, a case study of the Camino de Santiago in France and in Spain », in Séraphin, H. and Nolan, E. (2019), *Green events and green tourism, an international guide to good practice*, Routledge Taylor and Francis Books, p.117-124.

• DOSQUET, F., LOREY, Th., CHARLET, N. (2020), "Label UNESCO paradox? The case of the Ways of St James in France" in SERAPHIN, H. and al. (2020), *Overtourism, Causes, Implications and Solutions*, PALGRAVE MACMILAN, p. 267-284.

• LOREY, Th., DOSQUET, F., ERRAMI, Y., CHANTELOT, S. (2019), « Dynamiques de co-création des politiques publiques dans des contextes institutionnels complexes : le cas des Chemins de Compostelle en France et en l'Espagne », *Management International*, p.89-105.

• MOLINER, P. (1989), « Validation expérimentale de l'hypothèse du noyau central des représentations sociales », *Bulletin de Psychologie*, 387, 1989, p.759-762.

Contact information

Dr Frédéric DOSQUET, EscPau BS
frederic.dosquet@esc-pau.fr
Dr Thierry LOREY, Kedge
Dr Hugues SERAPHIN, Winchester University
Dr Nicolas CHARLET, EscPau BS