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"Forms of ageing, dependency and responsibility: from public policies to the informal sector. Configurations of care and intrafamilial solidarity in France, Great Britain and Greece" 

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Conceptuel context

The limits of the research concerned with dependency:

- The notion of “help” from professional and technocratic conceptions to family or profane conceptions of the assistance and care, which are nearly less marked by the practicality (Clement, 2003).

- The notion of the “principal helper”,
  - emphasis of one actor that can hide the complexity of the relations played between the weakened aged person and his/her close relations
  - lack of intermediation on the “main” one.

Axes of analysis and first results

(1) From demographic projections to government policies

Level of births:
- France: 1.97
- Greece: 1.28
- United Kingdom: 1.80

By 2020, Greece will be the “oldest” of the 27 countries in the EU (Dress, 2008, N°74).

European health systems: diversities and common denominators
- Borenstein systems > United Kingdom
- Mixed systems: between social help and social security > Greece
- "Bismarckian" systems > France

(II) Formal sector: devices of help et institutional logics

France: when worry about the inflation of health expenses due to ageing becomes a major political concern, a managerial logic of dependence takes over, consolidated by measures like the French PMA.

United Kingdom: the efforts made by the State to avoid involving itself too far in the care of the aged people – and even to disengage itself in certain cases and make families take on most of the responsibility.

Greece: the situation between disability and the need for help that the social dimension in which people undergoing a loss of autonomy find themselves situated.

(III) The interface between the formal sector and the informal sector of help

France: a context marred by the compartmentalization and parceling of the professional sector.

Caring for elementary devices.

The professionals cannot intervene without taking into account the role and tasks of the ones who were involved firstly into the assistance. (Brubaker et Brubaker, 1989; Paquet, 1990a et b; 1997). The case of Greece.

The nature of the negotiations between professionals and informal helpers: if in France they are concerned with the division of tasks between the sanitary and the social (Crecdet, 1997) but also on the management work; in Greece they are mostly focused in the first sphere.

(IV) Trajectories of the aged persons in loss of autonomy and accompaniment process

- "Configurations of help": collections of information which aim is to go beyond the model of a face-to-face relationship, helper-helped, and to make out inventories that would draw up the balance sheet of the exchanges between the old person considered as dependent and his/her family circle.

- How a particular family organization appoints (or refuses to do it) such kind of service according to its own interests and the proposed devices?

- In questioning the family models, we can thus say the types of favoured interpersonal relationships that make family in Greece are different to the types that we registered in France and England, as much the less favoured (than before maybe) types, at the point that we tend to delegate them, in part at least.

(V) Dependency... a dynamic of accomodation

- The discursive construction developed around the experience of dependency: a dynamics of accomodation to the progressive appearance of signs of the loss of autonomy.

- In the three countries under consideration, the logics of dependency depend on an interactional process as well as on some biological predispositions and it is in this way that they are irreducible to the avoidance of the health problems solely.

- The dependency and the process of taking that goes with it sends us back to the anticipation of unwanted effects of many common activities that concern as much health as the body, as the relationship objects, to space, to time and mainly to the others.

(VI) Between the at-home and the collective housing: participations to social life

- This focalization on the private sphere and the risk to confine there one’s own space of life.

- « To inhabit » is also to exist in the public space.

- Spatiotemporal cartography of the use of the street and of the open-air and free of access public places.

- The « visibility » of ageing persons in loss of autonomy conceived as marker of a mode of participation to social life.

- If political and spatial device participate in this definition of the modalities of access to a public (re)presentation of the self, it essentially the cultural, social and gendered distinctions which participate in the definition of swung « city rights ».