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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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#### Objectives of the study and principal interrogation

##### The concern of this study:

- macrosocial level: study the structuring role of the State, by looking at policies and social/health structures (Finch, 1989) in three European countries: Great Britain, France and Greece.
- microsocal level: understand the rationalities and strategies, negotiations and confrontations between actors in both the formal and informal sectors.

##### Principal interrogation:

how is care, arbitrated by the State, constructed around the elderly person, their entourage and professional workers? How does the distribution of responsibility amongst these different protagonists operate?

#### Methodological level...

1. *Microsociological, comprehensive and contextual approach*  
90 monographs. The sample, based on thirty or so households situated in each of the three countries under consideration.
2. *Biomedical point of view*  
Elaboration of epidemiological data gathered since 2002 amongst an ageing population of 1 500 patients experiencing loss of autonomy – suffering from Alzheimer's disease and cared for by hospital structures in the three countries taken into consideration.
3. *Microsociological approach*  
Macrosociological analysis of policies in the three sociocultural and economic contexts, in order to shed light on the three systems of social protection.

## 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 neatly less marked by the practicality (Clément, 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 interrogation on the "main" one.

## Axes of analysis and first results

### ( I ) From demographic projections to government policies

#### Level of birth:

- France: 1,92,
- 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: divergences and common denominators

- Beveridgian 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 PAA.

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

*Greece:* it is in the passage 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 contexte marqué by the compartmentalization and parcelling of the professional sector. "  
Greece: elementary devices.

*The professionals cannot intervene without taking into account the role and the tasks of the ones who were involved firstly into the assistance.* (Brubaker et Brubaker, 1989 ; Paquet, 1996a 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 (Crochet, 1992) 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 he types that we registered in France and England, as much as 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 contries under consideration:* the logics of dependency depend on an interactional process as well as on some biological predestinations and it is in this way that they are irreducible to the avoidance of the health problems solely.
- The dependency and the process of untaking 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 to 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 marked of a mode of participation to social life.*
- If political and spatial devices participate in this definition of the modalities of access to a public (re)presentation of the self, is essentially the cultural, social and gendered distinctions which participate in the definition of swing wing « city rights ».