

How do Family Territories inform us about Family Relationships?

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From the nuclear family to the family network

During the second half of the XXth century, following the influential work of Parsons (1955) research consistently approached the family as a self-sufficient entity consisting of a married couple and their children sharing a common residence. The nuclear family became the standard family which necessarily corresponds to a standard dwelling – a single housing unit, grounded in reality by statistical evidence. In effect, data available from censuses and household surveys globally focus on the group of individuals living under the same roof who form a key statistical category, independent of the kinship group, the study of extended families, joint family groups, and domestic arrangements being relegated to researches conducted in more traditional settings (historical or pre-industrial).

Yet, over the last 25 years, a broader family group has been re-emerging in the studies of intergenerational relationships in response to various factors: the growth in reconstituted families spread over several households, the rise in unemployment and the difficulties in obtaining and paying for a dwelling, families of migrants spread across borders, couples living together on a part-time basis because of work commitments or personal preference, older adults wishing to live independently, young people engaged in higher education and studying in several different locations, etc. The interest in family support in the context of ageing societies, the economic focus on cost/benefit debate around public *versus* private support, and a large corpus of dedicated surveys (Bonvalet and Ogg, 2007) also triggered this renewed interest in family configurations extending beyond the household.

Family network and space

The space in which kinship relationships get organized became one of the fertile perspectives to the study of the contemporary family. Focusing on local areas in which exchanges take place within the kinship, Michael Young and Willmott in Great-Britain, showed how resilient family ties are even to city life (1957). In France, demographers described as early as the middle of the 70s the residential proximity between family members and the variety of family exchanges beyond the conventional household (Gokalp, 1978). The way families organize their “territories” by concentrating in one area or spreading out, reveals a great deal about the relationships between its members. The studies

about how the space is involved in the dynamics of the exchanges have been very creative (Bonvalet et al., 2007). It led to the introduction of the concept of an individual's *entourage* to describe a functioning group beyond the household and beyond strictly familial ties (Lelièvre et al., 1998).

On the other hand, researchers specializing in migration studies have long shown the importance of taking into account multiple spatial references for individuals (Hägerstrand, 1957 ; Portes, 1996). The way ties and locations interlink shape migration strategies, circulation between households, remittances. It allows to understand the dynamics of kinship relationships constructing the perspective from spatial to social ties. The objective of our presentation is thus to understand the role played by space (proximities, distances) in the dynamics of kinship relationships; to study how the physical space is associated with the dynamics of affinities.

Building data on families beyond the household

The challenge for contemporary research on the family which, in demography and sociology, is often dominated by quantitative survey results is to devise research tools allowing to describe family life beyond the household so that the spatial dynamics of kinship relations can be captured (Widmer and Jallinoja, 2008 ; Bonvalet and Lelièvre, 2012). In that respect the LiLi team has contributed to introduce this possibility in the latest round of the French *Family* survey, a nationally representative survey (367,000 individuals aged 18 and over) associated to the 2011 census (<http://lili-efl2011.site.ined.fr/en/>). Its data, extensive on union formation, family constitution and detailed characteristics of all household members also provides information on the places of residence of all family members outside the household (parents and children of the respondents).

Our contribution will present the first results from this data, describing a range of the different "family territories" observed in 2011 with the *Famille et Logements* (family and housing) survey.

Taking advantage of this large-scale survey, our objective is to give an innovative overview of both the spatial configuration of families and the functioning of family spaces. We will address the diversity of family structures and detail the variation of family composition and spatial concentration/dispersion according to the relevant characteristics of both the families (size and age of the respondent) and the locations (proximity, urban/rural). We will then, following on previous work done (Lelièvre and Imbert, 2003 ; Lelièvre and Robette, 2010) describe the family networks and establish a typology of these 'family spaces'.

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