

# French Urban Fieldsite

Martine Segalen, Vanessa Manceron

## Location of the fieldsite

In the Liberté, a large building located in Nanterre, close to the business headquarters of La Défense, the majority of our informants present a fairly large kindred, even though less numerous than in Monhiolas and Atignac or in Dole.

## Vertical and horizontal ties

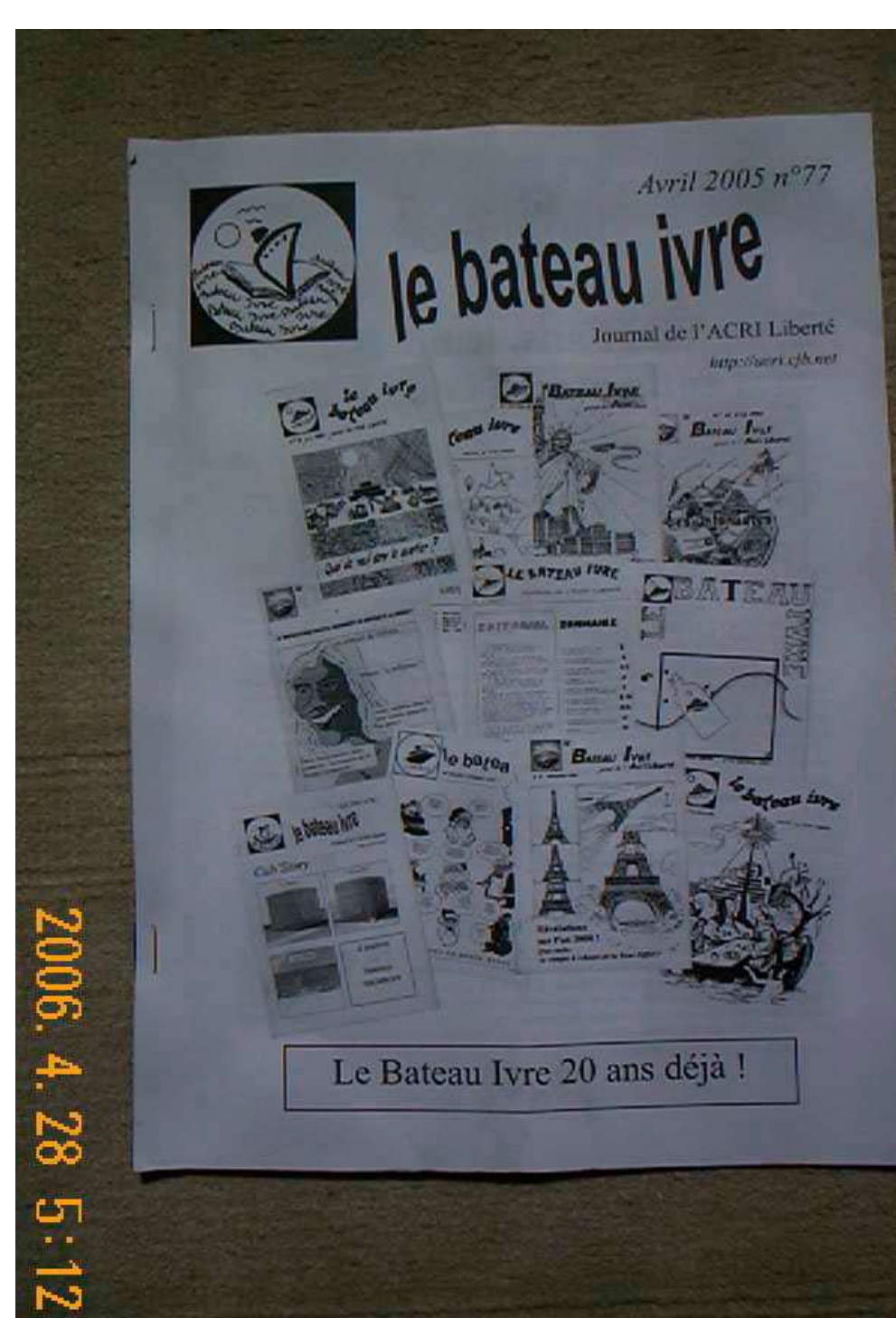
Vertical ties appear very binding, and we have observed residential strategies of families who manage to keep their adult children in the building. Generally those relations appear enjoyable, which is not the case when it comes to help the elderly which is more often a question of duty than affection. On the horizontal side, relationships are elective, some being very strong, some absolutely absent.



View from the 17th floor, overlooking La Défense on a stormy evening



General view of the building



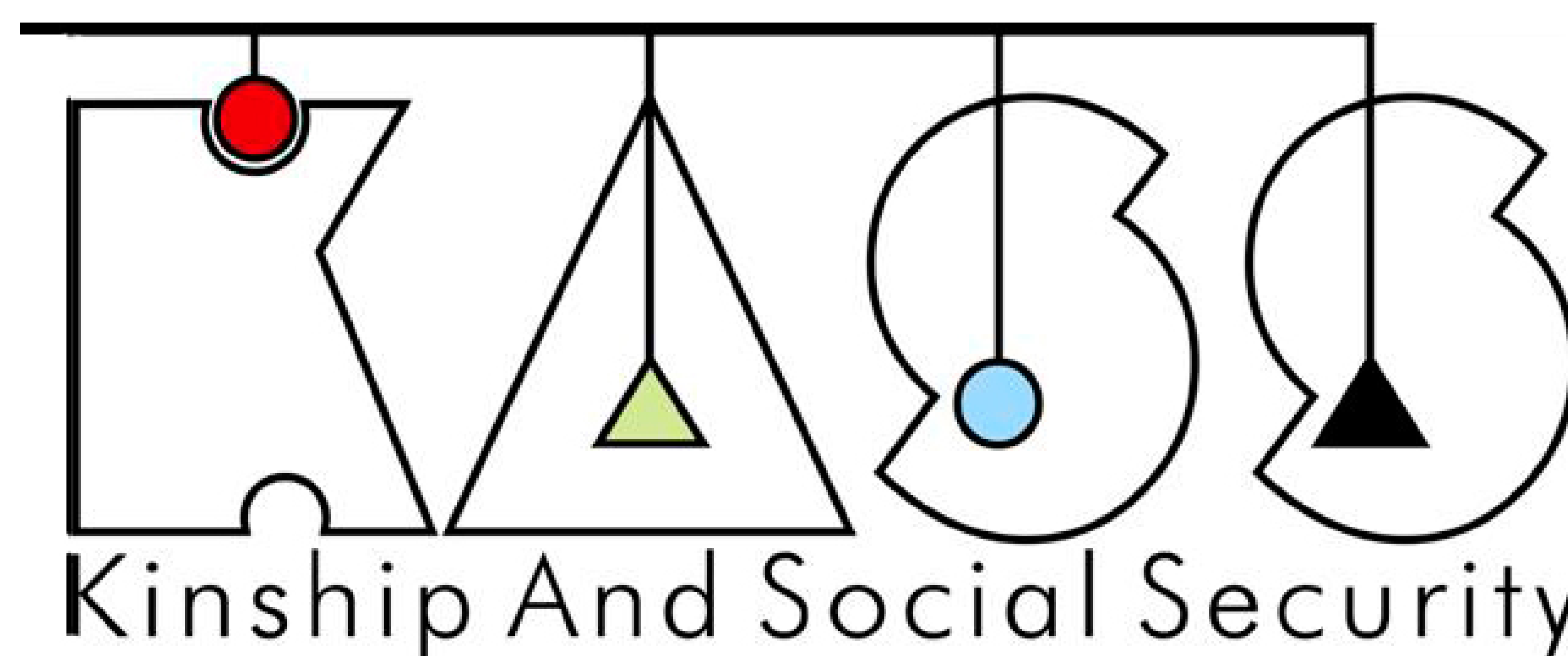
The journal of le Liberté : an issue of Le bateau Ivre

## Hypothesis and parameters

No clear-cut pattern of kin relationship have emerged ; besides, the hypothesis of State provisions crowding out family has not been proved. Rather, two parameters seem relevant, one is residential propinquity-which cannot be frequent in the context of jobs and housing in the wider Parisian market ; the other is the psychological relation between parents, siblings, cousins which seem to explain the importance or the rupture of kin relationships.

## The Importance of the neighbourhood

The specificity of the building, with its strong neighbouring groups, ready to provide help and information among the same age-group (60 year old women, or young working mothers) offer an additional dimension to the analysis and if it contributes to blur the model, it helps enrich it also.



An interdisciplinary project with an anthropological agenda funded by the European Union's Sixth Framework Programme.

### Further information:

Heiko Kastner  
KASS Coordination  
Phone: +49 (0)345 - 2927 211  
E-mail: kastner@eth.mpg.de

Layout: Kristin Magnucki, Oliver Weihmann  
Copyright: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology 2006

