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at Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

*Conference proceedings*

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### 3 INTRODUCTION

The conference Kinship and Social Security in Europe was meant to ensure that the findings of the sixth framework research project “KASS”<sup>1</sup> are integrated into a wider academic context and in the European policy process. The meeting was intended to serve as a forum in which the results and their further implications can be discussed in depth by policy makers, the original research team, and other academic experts. About fifty participants, including international experts from different disciplines and with very different perspectives on the matter, were invited and the meeting was held from first to third November 2007 at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale.

The following summaries are meant to give an overview over the presentations and the main themes which dominated the conference debates. The conference proceedings are organised along the structure of the three days conference programme, starting with Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup>.

### 4 THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2007

#### 4.1 Opening session - Aims and rationale of the KASS project

**Chair and discussant: Theo Engelen**

*Günther Schlee: Official welcome, and practicalities*

The conference members were welcomed and the meeting was officially opened by Prof. Günther Schlee, managing director of the MPI SA. In his welcome note he gave a short introduction to the KASS project, mentioning one of its central ideas of the complementarity or possible substitutability of supportive kinship networks and welfare state. He also pointed out

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the innovative combination of methodological approaches which is special to the project. The ethnographic, quantitative-statistical and historical approaches were also represented by specific members of the KASS team. He briefly sketched the significance of the KASS project within and outside of the Max Planck Institute but confined himself to not yet giving policy recommendations since the findings of the research are only just emerging. Before reaching final conclusions, all the multiple findings need to be integrated into one consistent image.

*Patrick Heady: Kinship, care and context - theory, ethnography and quantification*

The first talk was given by Patrick Heady, scientific coordinator of the KASS project. He presented the KASS project to the conference members drawing first on its theoretical affiliations in evolutionary and rational choice theories, several sociological theories and theories about regional kinship cultures. He then pointed to the relevance of the theme to academics as well as European policy makers facing several challenges like the decline of the welfare state and enormous reductions of fertility. To handle these challenges it is essential to formulate and test theories about mutual assistance between kin and to develop a connected account of kinship relationships in contemporary Europe, with the focus on the functions they fulfil for their members, the reasons, and explanations, they work as they do. To reach this aim, the KASS project introduced the innovative combination of theoretical approaches as well as a combination of various research methods which Heady presented in a short overview. He also addressed the question of biology vs. identity, emphasizing that kinship ties have never been just about genetic relatedness, but about the identity and structural position as well. Taking into account that arguments on this topic have always been controversial, Heady formulated the question whether evolutionary theory has an explanation of the identity dimension of kinship.

*Hannes Grandits: The historical dimension - bringing family history up to date*

Hannes Grandits, coordinator of the historical research of KASS, started his presentation by specifying the title. Bringing family history up to date means two research foci: doing research about family during the establishment of welfare states in the 20th century, and reflecting upon consequences of the KASS research scheme for further historical family studies. He presented the three main approaches around which the historical research of the project was



build, the institutional approach, the structural approach and a cultural approach focusing on cultural backgrounds to explain transformations of family relations and values in the course of the 20th century. The latter, as Grandits indicated, being particularly important to explore the internal dynamics of the family. Grandits also addressed the general embedding of family and kinship in public social-security arrangements and moved to a comparative view in asking why family trends and respectively the actual fertility crisis diverge or converge between several countries. To answer these questions, he argued, it is important to understand the relations between the diversities of a further past and the general political-economic changes and demographic factors after 1945. To conclude, Grandits sketched the meaning of KASS results for family history: the orientation towards households must be revisited. It has been vividly shown through KASS findings that much care is not carried out within the household, but in the near proximity of the households. Furthermore, one could expect that involvement of both, welfare state and family imply similarities, but they rather show large differences.

The discussion focused on the “Golden Age” of marriage and welfare state which was addressed in Grandits paper. It was suggested that there is a connection between the two (i.e. welfare state and marriage) based on two main principles, full male employment and the stability of marriage. It was pointed out that a “Golden Age” was possible exactly for these reasons: the welfare state was based on a dominantly male breadwinner model and the state followed a social policy which was firmly linked to kinship through male labour in the sense that social rights were preserved to people who were non-workers (housewives, children).

### *Discussion*

*Theo Engelen, Professor of Historical Demography, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands* and chair of the session, stated that full male employment and stability of marriage were leading principles before WW II already, so what was new after WW II was the definite abolition in marriage restriction in the major parts of Europe. Engelen highlighted the importance of having in mind the welfare state while studying kin relationships. He emphasized the importance of its structural development which started earlier than the contemporary welfare state has been established. As a historian, he indicated, he preferred to see one process going on and changing, rather than seeing history as a compilation of rough cuts. What he thinks happened from approximately the 1960ies onwards, especially in the Northern and Western parts of Europe, was that the link between marriage and sexuality was cut.

It was suggested to KASS members that the huge amount of valuable data from the project should be integrated with other large international projects such as “SHARE” (carried out in eleven European countries). General feedback from the audience can be seen as very affirmative towards the KASS data as promising and comprehensive findings. Topics that have repeatedly been addressed with great interest are the impact and role of the welfare state, its relation to kinship, questions about aging and the dependency ratio linked to it, and gender relations and arrangements in relation to both kinship and welfare state policy.

Questions of data accessibility and further statistical and comparative analyses in a wider context were picked up several times during the conference

## **4.2 Session 2 - Theoretical approaches and research methods**

### **Chair and discussant: Martin Kohli**

*Carol and Melvin Ember: From ethnography to cross-cultural research and back: studying kinship*

The first paper was presented by Carol Ember, the executive director of the Human Relations Area Files at Yale. The paper discussed the mutual enhancement and the complementarity of ethnography and cross-cultural comparative research. On the one hand, cross-cultural research requires ethnographic data. But on the other hand, cross cultural research is able to test ethnographic explanations and theories. Once the statistical analyses have been done, one could go back to the field to investigate the resulting questions ethnographically. This was demonstrated through various examples, the question of the existence of extended families versus neo-local residence choices of young couples among others.

*Ruth Mace: Evolutionary approaches to cooperation and demography, and how they can be researched*

Ruth Mace, Professor of Anthropology at the University College London, presented the second paper, investigating the question whether or not humans are cooperative breeders. Following an evolutionary perspective, it was shown that maternal kin members, especially mother and maternal grandmother, have a major impact on children’s welfare whereas paternal kin members and especially paternal grandmothers seem to have a significant impact on

the fertility of young women. The current reductions in fertility were discussed to be the result of the necessity of parental investment in children, and if there is no extended family network to share these costs, fewer children mean less competition for parental (paternal) resources.

### *Discussion*

Referring to Prof. Ember's presentation, the discussion started with a terminological matter, when the chair asked the participants to keep in mind that family size can not be defined only in terms of households. It was confirmed that families are often closer than looking at households suggests and that family and household is not the same. But statistical analyses require observable entities and clear definitions which could rather be given for households while the definitions of extended families vary between societies.

The discussion then centred on the matter of grand parenting, where it was suggested that the age distance between women i.e. between a mother and her mother or her husband's mother differ greatly and therefore the age distance could play an important role in explaining maternal grand parenting. But there was also some interest taken in whether maternal or paternal grand parenting was more existent and whether this depended on the distance between the family homes. The common conclusion was that maternal grandparents seemed to fulfil their roles much better and more wholeheartedly and were more likely to meet their moral obligations. It was acknowledged that several theories exist to explain this phenomenon. Furthermore the question of emotional links was touched, with regard to grandmothers who have grandchildren from their daughters as well as from their sons. It was asked whether the preference of a grandmother to her daughter's children may be based on genes or rather on a cultural norm. From the evolutionary perspective it was mentioned that the genetic explanation is implemented to test, whether the phenomenon occurs across populations.

The topic of the increased proportion of single women who can not rely on an extended kin network and who do not dispose of large paternal resources but do still raise children was raised and it was asked how this apparently novel evolutionary phenomenon could be interpreted: whether this meant a rise above our evolutionary characters? And if it was due to new technologies or to social welfare states which provide childcare centres and other resources? The argument went on referring to these questions by drawing other than only family networks into the picture.

Concerning the average number of children that are born to a woman, it was made clear, that from an evolutionary perspective there is nothing magic about the number two. Since looking at individual strategies as evolutionary theory does means that people make their own choices and decide to have as many children as they think they can successfully raise. In theory this number could even fall below one.

The trade-off between quantity and quality concerning the number of children was also addressed and it was expressed that what one actually does when making a cost and benefit calculation is balance costs against risks. The question was whether there is a means to even out the risk, and cooperation with others (not necessarily kin) seems to do so.

### **4.3 Session 3 - The quantitative aspect of KASS methodology**

**Chair and discussant: Andrew Cherlin**

*Gordon Milligan: The Kinship Network Questionnaire (KNQ)*

In his presentation, Gordon Milligan explained the purpose and function of the Kinship Network Questionnaire which he and a colleague developed. He outlined the facilitation of data collection by the KNQ and explained how the interviews were organised in different layers by the KNQ program. A KNQ interview begins with collecting as many relatives as ego can possibly name. These are arranged in a genealogical diagram by the program. The diagram is the basis for data collection referring to each relative named. Moving on to the next stage, information is sought about relations between the relatives named and ego. The amount of data collected includes: the persons and genealogical connections, key facts about each member of the kin network, economic and health circumstances, frequency and type of social contacts among the member of the network, information about helping relations, comparable information about friends and neighbours, etc. Milligan indicated the large number of collected interviews and data: 575 interviews, with a total of 50,000 network members. He concluded with the expression of his wish and conviction that such a computer program will find its further use in the scientific research, after having proven its worth in KASS.

*Hans Marks: What the KNQ left out*

After the technical introduction to the KNQ program by Milligan, Hans Marks addressed the limitations and controversies of this very methodology. Recognizing the importance of the KNQ data and the various ways of analysis it opens, Marks still pointed out some disputable questions arisen from the use of the KNQ. There is first the difference between the way the software dictated the building of kin network (starting with ego and answering the questions for every individual separately) and the respondent's perspective of what a kin network as a social association is. Further, Marks explained that an ego centred perspective could be a narrow perspective, and is open to criticism in a way that it triggers questions of lack of gender and generational differences. Many people, as H. Marks has explained, do not think of family in genealogical structures but rather consider the quality of relationships. He also indicated the extensive problematic of reconstruction from memory. It is memory what has come into the survey and little can be said about the process of memories during the interviews led in different cultural settings. Marks pointed at the importance of local knowledge in general and specifically with respect to topics or details possibly left out in the interview.

*Patrick Heady: Data quality and representativeness of the KNQ samples*

Patrick Heady's presentation served as a first introduction to the dataset that was put together as a result of the KNQ interviews. He first addressed matters of sampling and response rates explaining the two-stage randomized sampling strategy resulting in about 30 interviews per field site. He then mentioned that there are statistically representative samples of informants for each locality, but that the sample of localities is non-representative, since localities were chosen to be "not untypical" in their countries ("purposive sampling"). That means that the data can be analyzed in terms of characteristics of the areas but cannot be generalized as representative for the whole country. Recognizing some further problems of the data collection, Heady indicated the exceptionally long duration of interviews (median length around 6 hours) resulting in two or more sessions per interview, often separated by days or weeks. Also the difficulties of biases and false correlations were addressed, some of which do not affect comparative analysis, others being controlled for. But the still remaining weaknesses of the data veto a claim for validity based on sampling theory. A way to check for representativeness is therefore to correlate data measured within the survey with data measured outside the survey. And this confrontation of KNQ data with official local and national data showed, as Heady

explained, that the scope of the gathered data is still very good. Heady also emphasized the division of tasks between the KNQ and the ethnography, the former covering structures and the latter investigating meanings and intentions.

### *Discussion*

During the discussion, the KNQ was recognized as a very useful methodological tool, not just for comparative anthropological research, but for a survey researcher as well, with the high potential to revolutionize and improve the collection of data, with its graphical interface. Concerning its limitations, it was recognised that the collected data is an ego centred network, rather than a genealogical diagram. Several comments were added to address the KNQ data collection process, which was, primarily because of its length, recognized as extremely demanding both for respondents and interviewers.

Chiara Saraceno raised the question about the ambiguity of logic followed and input in the program: first the interviewee is asked to talk about kin, following whichever track he chooses. But afterwards, he is brought back to the KNQ systematic of kin. The consequence may be that in the end one does not know who is considered to be kin by ego and who is not. This question was link to another point: Did the interview include everybody the people could remember, or only the people who are considered as kin?

A further question pointed out the importance of gender relations, e.g. the difference between man and women; how many man and how many women were interviewed, where are the differences, and are there any? Patrick Heady answered that the intention was to measure what people can remember when prompted. He explained that the meaning of the term “kin” for ego was not used and followed because kin, as critics often put forward, is a culture specific concept. So we would be trying to measure rather different things. Heady explained that for KASS social security is about cooperation, and the goal was to compare characteristics by people who cooperate by providing care, and those who do not. Gender differences, according to Heady weren't too high: 59% of respondents were women, 41% were men. Concerning the matter of meanings it was again made clear that the two methods of KASS were meant to cover two dimensions of human behaviour; one (KNQ) is rather based on people's acts, the other (ethnography) wants to find out about meanings people put into their actions.

Many questions were raised about the program's ability to capture, recognize, and meaningfully demark different “types” of relations inside kin; for example step child or parents,

foster child or parents, artificially inseminated children (when the father is not present or it is unknown), etc. G. Milligan explained that all of these questions can be covered in the frame of such computer program which is flexible enough for putting in additional concepts, tasks or questions.

Lastly the effect of cross-cutting networks, i.e. possible overlapping was touched, and the question how it was handled, if one person is appears in several different networks and does separate identification for every individual. It was pointed out that no such identification exists between the diagrams, and P. Heady added that for confidentiality reasons, this was not done, although the research teams do have this information and it could be reconstructed.

#### **4.4 Session 4 - The development of family policy**

**Chair and discussant: Andrew Cherlin**

*Francesco Zanutelli: Welfare as moral obligation: change and continuity in Italian and mediterranean patterns of family support*

At the beginning of the session Francesco Zanutelli from the University of Siena gave a lecture on “Welfare as moral obligation: change and continuity in Italian and Mediterranean patterns of family support”. He pointed out that the enduring differences in the strength of family and kinship ties which exist between northern and southern Europe are influenced by the provision of welfare. In Mediterranean Europe the family is essential for social care, especially the care of the elderly fell almost exclusively on the family. Furthermore the social policies of Italy have tended to reinforce the dependence of women on men and of children on parents.

The structural change to the nuclear family leads to a replacement of the old patterns of coresidence to the new patterns of proximity. The increasingly low levels of coresidence are mirrored by a simultaneous and contrary convergence towards the high levels of proximity. This emphasises the importance of close kin as sources of social security. On the one hand the parents “help downwards” by supporting their children; on the other hand the adult children “help upwards” by taking care of their elderly parents. This approach helps to identify the main categories of “care-givers” and “care-receivers”. Especially middle-aged women act as givers and they are reproducing the “culture of family care”. So it is necessary to discuss the definition of vulnerables, which should not only consider children and elderly but also families without kinship networks.

*Chiara Saraceno: Family policy regimes in 21st century Europe and the problems they face*

The second speaker, Chiara Saraceno from University of Turin gave an overview of the current family policy regimes in Europe. First it was shown that the European countries devote quite different quotas of their budget to family policies. The different models of family policy regimes have deep cultural and institutional roots but in some countries unexpected “paradigm shifts” have occurred, particularly with regard to mothers’ proper role and to children’s welfare.

There are four issues at the core of present and future family policies. The first issue in present policies mentioned by Saraceno is the children’s welfare and equal opportunities among children. It was stated that there are large differences between parental leave and offer service however the child poverty in many countries has increased. But the concern for cultural and educational poverty also rose. Further issues of present family policies are eliminating the constraints on fertility choices as well as balancing the public and private responsibilities for the frail elderly. In many countries services for the elderly are scarce and the right to receive care of the frail elderly seems weaker than that of children. The fourth issue of family policies contemplated by Saraceno are equal opportunities between men and women and work/family conciliation over the entire life course. Although in most European countries mothers are encouraged to become paid workers, they still remain the main responsible parent for childcare and fore care for dependents. So it was suggested to support time to care. This should also be incorporated by the labour markets policies. Moreover the state should offer more services (particularly for children under three and the frail elderly) and invest in early child education. Another measure is incentivizing the autonomy of the young. Moreover the elimination of all incentives in taxation and income transfer to the male breadwinner model is required.

*Discussion*

Subsequent to the lectures the conference participants compared the family policies of Europe with the one of the USA and they concluded that there is no correlation between security and poverty. They also discussed the role of religion in Mediterranean Europe and its influence on families. The church was considered an institution which supports strong family ties. But the conflict between state and church has never been solved, so that a competition between the two actors in Italy, Spain and Greece is still going on. Furthermore the participants debated



the relevance of the public discourse. Especially well educated women seemed incompatible with having a child. With the support of the public discourse young families should be encouraged to have more than one child.

5 FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 2007

### **5.1 Session 1: European kinship in time and space**

**Chair and discussant: David Sabean**

*Patrick Heady: Household, network and community - some findings from the KNQ*

The session started with Patrick Heady – coordinator of the KASS-project – and his paper to “Household, network and community – some findings from the KNQ”. The data from the KNQs, national and European statistics identified some relationships. There is a strong relationship between either the national or the KASS urban localities household size and the male labour force in agriculture that suggest that agriculture is associated with large households. Second large households are associated with a low valuation of friendship ties and vice versa. The result of this could be that there is a fundamental contrast between household size and friendship or does it mean that household size functioning as an indicator of involvement in wider kinship ties?

Another point Patrick Heady talked about was the urban-rural contrast. Large households are a rural adaptation and there also exist a contrast between urban and rural according to participation in wedding – the rural participation is higher. Is this association between household size and wider kinship measures due to differential fertility influencing both, or is it to do with differential involvement with the relatives you have?

*Carolin Leutloff-Grandits: Kinship and community - the rural urban contrast in Croatia*

Carolin Leutloff-Grandits presented the second paper: “Kinship, Community and Care: The Rural Urban Contrast in Croatia”. After a short introduction to both field sites she spoke about the difference between the Croatian rural and urban settings concerning direction of helping

relations, care of grandchildren and elderly, the situation of single elderly, the meaning of children, marriage and weddings.

At the end she summarized that in the rural area the village communities are made up of dense, overlapping networks of relatives, neighbours, friends, all of whom form a relatively homogenous value community and have developed helping relations. In the rural field site also the number and meaning of relatives and life circle festivals are higher than in town and costs are less calculated.

At the urban field site people have relations to neighbours and friends whereas the wider circle of relatives are highly individualized, even when partly regarded as crucial to certain caring tasks.

#### *Paolo Viazzo: Macro-regional differences in European kinship culture*

The last paper was from Pier Paolo Viazzo from the University of Turin. The first aim of his paper was to trace the main stages through which research and debates about the existence of “macro-regional differences in European family culture” have gone over the past three decades or so in the fields of historical demography, family history, and the socio-economic study of European welfare regimes. Then he focused on what seems to have happened in the past few years, in order to take stock of the main results achieved by several research projects (including KASS) as well as the issues raised by these results and the debates that have surrounded them. Finally he made a few remarks where he touched some questions concerning both substance and method.

#### *Discussion*

The first question was concerning the influence of the new forms of communication (internet, SMS, cell phone) to the people and their relations and kin. Another question was about latent and fleeting relations. One participant wonders about the genealogical issues before the researchers arrive. Concerning Croatia one remark made the point that for young people friends are more important than kin and for older people kin are more important. Furthermore there was a discussion about regional variations and the fact that you have a few kilometres away different cultural structure and different research results. Also, Catholicism was discussed and it's effects on family relations.

## 5.2 Session 2 - Kinship and community: ethnographic accounts

### Chair and discussant: Georg Fertig

*Elisabeth Strasser: Community lost? Family, neighbourhood and social networks in an Austrian urban setting*

The first theme “Community lost? Family, neighbourhood and social networks in an Austrian urban setting” was presented by Elisabeth Strasser from Vienna University. In her presentation she introduced the Austrian urban field site of the KASS project: the municipal housing complex Karl Marx Hof in Vienna. It was erected during the so-called “Red Vienna Era” between 1918 and 1934 with the aim to ensure solidarity, create a cooperative feeling and a lived community among the inhabitants. Current figures state that in 2001 approximately 2500 inhabitants lived in 1234 households, whereas 78% of those are 1-&2-person units. The housing complex disposes of various community facilities like two public kindergartens, a youth centre and laundry-rooms. In Karl Marx Hof (KMH) there is a relatively high share of persons under 15 years and over 60 years. In comparison to the entirety of the population in Vienna, KMH has a high percentage of single mothers and the social stratification with regard to education and employment status is remarkably different from municipal average. By addressing the topics of help and assistance among kin, especially within the domains of child care and care of the elderly it was said that mutual help is underrepresented under inhabitants but perceived by outsiders. The reality of daily life differs from the original idea of solidarity and a lived community upon which the erection of the housing complex was based. It is now primarily a facility for cheap housing. Although the family structures in Karl Marx Hof are mostly non-traditional (divorce, single mothers and patchwork families), traditional family values in terms of gender, family and reproduction are bequeathed. Furthermore Strasser stressed the point of diversification within the housing community through the moving in of naturalized immigrants during the last 15 years. A process of “othering” among the inhabitants can be recorded and clichés about family size and family ties are reproduced on both sides.

*Andres Barrera Gonzales: Combining historical and ethnographic perspectives- kin assistance and mutuality in stem and nuclear family systems in Spain*

The second presentation, given by Andrès Barrera-González, refers to two co-existing types of succession, inheritance and family systems in Spain: the stem family system and the egalitarian nuclear /conjugal system. While the first is characterized by the crystallization of a genealogical line or stem under the priority of ensuring the provision of continuity of the family (synonymic to the “house”), the later is defined through a rather bilateral or undifferentiated succession and egalitarian inheritance which are based on the legal customary traditions at the local and regional level. Barrera-González emphasized the variability of the content of both egalitarian and stem family systems and recalled the fact that such models are used to more apprehensively observe social constructs and their correlation but can also become traps very easily. He concluded that at present in Spain the traditional models are dissolving, but even despite fundamental changes in the Spanish economy and welfare system remain in the background and underline family ideologies.

*Carlo Capello and Nevill Colclough: a moral familism? Family clusters, neighbourhood and social welfare in a south Italian community*

The final contribution to this session was given by Nevill Colclough and Carlo Capello who were focusing on the subject of family clusters, neighbourhood and social security in the south Italian community of Tramonti. The population of Tramonti is inclined to describe their own society as a rural arcadia and see itself as the heirs of a longstanding peasant tradition. Agriculture plays an important role in the economic life of Tramonti and a long-term emphasis is put on patrilineal ideology. Using the example of Tramonti, Carlo Capello refuted the traditional position of Edward C. Banfield that declares *amoral familism* as the cause of political and economic underdevelopment in south Italian communities. In fact through strong ties between relatives and across the generations, a constant flow of goods, resources and reciprocities is created. Familism is that's why part of a crucial mode of resource distribution. Moreover familism is not the cause of unbalanced development of Southern Italy, but a consequence of its' economic and political situation.

*Discussion*

The question starting the discussion addressed the potential impact of the state structure on form and shape of households in the Austrian field site, Karl Marx Hof Vienna. It was said that from the initial intention of planning the household complex in the 1930s until now there is a certain determination of the state structure towards the formation and social composition of Karl Marx Hof. The integration of naturalized immigrants thereby plays a special role since the site, just like all social housing projects, was up to 15 years ago only accessible for Austrian citizens. Even though immigrants are now allowed there is the strong feeling of them not belonging there expressed by both Austrian and migrant tenants.

Furthermore Prof. Dr. Schlee raised an issue on the consequences of inheritance for patterns of migration. In comparison to Germany, where inheritance with subdivision of property repeatedly caused a crisis through emigration of deprived offspring, in the Spanish case the impact on migration seems to play a subordinated role. Barrera-González rather stressed above all the release of human power and release of capital as main consequences of stem family systems in Spain. Responding to a question raised by Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Nevill Colclough catered to the relation between types of family and law. In terms of the shaping of the transmission of property and economic inheritance by legal regulations it was pointed out that it is important to look how people deal effectively with property under the conditions of multiple normative value regimes and that there is, because of this, no clear cut relation between human systems and legal rules.

There was a great common interest in the question how applicable the conceptions of the presented inheritance systems are regarding the decreasing birth rate, especially if there is just one child in the family. The question remained open although Carlo Capello explained that family vision and a low birth rate are not just contradictory. The intention to secure a child's situation and opportunities rather elucidates the low fertility rate.

### 5.3 Session 3 - Network ties: maintaining and breaking connections

#### Chair and discussant: Keebet von Benda-Beckmann

*Georg Fertig: A peasant way to economic growth: The land market, family transfers, and the life circle in 19<sup>th</sup> century Westphalia*

The first speaker of this session was Georg Fertig from the University of Münster. He presented his paper “A peasant way to economic growth: The land market, family transfers, and the life circle in 19<sup>th</sup> century Westphalia.” He started with a historical introduction and a presentation of his three examined parishes: Löhne, Borgeln and Oberkirchen. The research team has created a database combining the family reconstitutions back to about 1700, and information on individual land and credit transactions from around 1820 to 1866. Two things are worth mentioning: first they used existing family reconstitutions made by genealogists and second all linkages between individual entries have been made by hand, that is the informed case-to-case judgement of student assistants who know the material. The main theses were that the allocation of land within this growing rural economy was dominated neither by the market nor by reciprocity. First, in terms of land circulation the dominant system in these parishes was redistribution within the family, in other words: inheritance, parental support, and other transactions interlocked with inheritance. Secondly there was a market for land but it was unimportant. Third in terms of agrarian growth the movement of land was unimportant. Agrarian modernisation was possible without an overarching process of commercialization.

*Sophie Chevalier: Mandatory and elective kin ties - the French experience*

The second paper was given by Sophie Chevalier – working at the Université of Franche-Comté. The French KASS research team explored kin networks, mutual aid and family solidarity. They showed some patterns of kin relations and distinguished between inter-generational and same-generational kin in analysing them. In the village of Aurignac the traditional pattern of kinship and inheritance still prevails. There also exists a strong relation between neighbours. In Dole the kinship ties are still strong – kinsfolk exchange services, money and emotional support, childcare is the most common task for grandparents. In contrast to this, mutual aid between kin of the same generation is less frequent and more fragile. In Nanterre we have fairly large kinship networks; vertical kin ties were sometimes even

stronger than elsewhere. Child care here is normally provided through the social services with childminders and child care centres. All three field sites share one characteristic: the importance of the family house, whether it be part of the inheritance system, a residue of a recent agricultural past, or some recently bought dwelling.

*Alexander Nikulin and Constantin Poleshuk: Networks in rural Russia - the case of Kalikino*

The last presentation came from the Russian KASS team, Alexander Nikulin and Constantin Poleshuk. They gave a very pictographic presentation of their field site. Poleshuk started with a description of Kalikino: the location, number of inhabitants and the structure of Kalikino. He chose one of the polled families and told nearly everything about family structure and problems. So it is very hard to find a job. Central problems are incorporate and participate in the market and that they live autonomic in autonomic production.

*Discussion*

One point in the discussion was who decided to take care? How many help do parents get from middle aged woman? Concerning the problem of place names and family names Georg Fertig said that there is a long tradition of places but no long tradition of families.

Another interesting question was about the survey period, specific things and the role of the church in Russia. The answer of the Russian team explained that in a situation of transition family power is more concentrated in women's hands. It's a typical example that the head of the family is a woman. Russia was multicouple and multigenerational. Men were burdened by the transition, they lost work, drank alcohol. For women there was no big change. About the role of the church they said that mostly the people don't know the symbolic of church. There also exists a cultural and a political symbiosis. For example Putin is very good informed about church things, the question is: is he only good informed or really believing.

#### 5.4 Session 4 - Strategy, identity and care

##### Chair and discussant: Hannes Grandits

###### *Hans Marks: Kinship as a framework for personal identity*

The set of presentations in this session was started by Hans Marks who addressed the subject “Kinship as a framework for personal identity: About Houses, Homes and Kin-Identification”. Based on the perception of kinship as an alternative relatedness that can emerge or demerge depending on social, economic, political and historical factors, he explained that there is a connection between this occurrence of fluidity and the decreasing importance and visibility of kinship in Europe. After looking at the social figurations that people have at their disposal to secure their own dwelling (i.e. by means of help, advice, capital etc. from relatives, friends or collective arrangements like public housing funds) and the various aspects linked to communal and state interest in public and private housing, he concluded that kinship is rather a resource to housing in its instrumental and symbolical function. Kin identification is so to speak created by the support kin gives in the housing market and through housing welfare regimes in regard of kin rights, obligations and duties.

###### *Peter Schweitzer: Material motives and kinship ties*

Subsequently Peter Schweitzer from the University of Vienna raised the issue of material motives in correlation with personal identity and kinship ties. A distinction between “inclusive” and “exclusive” kinship systems and practices was made, whereas the differentiation towards each other is set along the lines of how many relatives one has, one remembers and one interacts with, alternatively how much support is exchanged between ego and the relatives. While in the non-inclusive cases mutual help becomes a monetarised service, inclusive kin networks show extensive mutual help patterns. The analysis of the case studies of Austria (Vienna), Sweden and France (Nanterre) lead to the assumption that there is an irreversible trend toward “liberating” kinship from material motives and the final questions after the historical fate of large and inclusive kin networks.



*Patrick Heady: Reciprocity, biology and belonging - KNQ micro-analysis of the propensity to help*

The contribution was followed by a presentation of Patrick Heady who, on the basis of the example of reciprocity among kin in the agricultural context, gave an insight in the KNQ micro-analysis. Analyzing the collected data it can be confirmed that kinship is associated with altruism while non-kinship is connected with reciprocity. On the question if in this case rather the biological (genealogical) or social (functional) kinship is the determining factor, Heady refers to the evolutionary perspective, whereas altruism diminishes with increasing genealogical distance, and the social kinship view, where the genealogical distance is not likely to matter much as long as help between kin is involved.

During the next few months the analysis will be extended to other forms of support by kin and to factors associated with the propensity to give such as physical and kinship distance, economic disparities and the cultural and geographic context.

*Discussion*

In the beginning of the discussion Prof. Dr. Schlee expressed that he sees it as a tautology to measure a more extended kin on the amount of people that ego knows which was mentioned in the last contribution. In fact it seems more sensible to say that the more kin one knows the higher is the risk of marrying within that kin.

It was furthermore emphasized that inclusion and exclusion as they were discussed in the presentation of Peter Schweizer are not just structures but strategies. Inclusion is therefore not just structural but useful whereas the impact of inclusion of kin and exclusion of non-kin on social security was brought up later in the discussion.

The application of reciprocity in the context of kin was repeatedly addressed since there was a terminological confusion between reciprocity perceived as barter, service of labour or not rewarded help. Other aspects like a consideration of social classes, that seemed to be suppressed in the discussion so far, and the impact of the family size on the stability of the (inclusive) kinship system were raised and the definition of “network” was again highlighted. Hans Marks pointed out that over-focusing at these many subjects draws away the attention from the major core of the research of the KASS project: the kin and its’ positive and negative aspects in daily life. Addressing the issues of social distribution and social security, the final question after the necessity of kinship remained to be discussed on the next conference day.

6 SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER 2007

### **6.1 Session 1 - Reciprocity, fertility and social support**

**Chair and discussant: Johan Surkyn**

*Martin Kohli: Intergenerational transfers - sociological theories and comparative survey research (European Aging Survey)*

Martin Kohli from the European University of Florence spoke about the meaning of intergenerational transfers and presented various results from the European Ageing Survey. He stressed the different theoretical perspectives on family transfers in general and the changing relevance of the elderly to this process. With the results from the survey it is possible to recognize different transfer motives (altruism, exchange, reciprocity) which can be categorized in different ways, e.g. pure versus mixed motives. One major result of Kohli's analysis of the survey data are the consistent welfare-regime effects on family transfer, which appear when micro-level variables, including resources, needs and relationships, are controlled. This correlation allows the distinction between three types of regime: a northern, a continental and a southern one. The northern regime is characterized by an individualized transfer system and a low co-residence rate. This finding can be led back to high public support rates for young and old people. In contrast to the northern regime, the southern regime supports a strong family system through low support for younger people. In these countries transfer appears as prolonged intergenerational co-residence together with high family solidarity. Lower kinship ties in the northern regime and problematic fertility rates in the south were argued as consequences of the welfare systems and need to be researched in a more detailed way.

*Sophie Chevalier: Gender, kinship and the market for social care*

The second paper was introduced by Sophie Chevalier from the Université de Franche-Comté Besançon. Her topic was the development of the market for social care in France and its conditions and consequences. She emphasized the changing role of the French state in social care. The state loses his active role to an expanding (black) market. The remarkable majority of the workers are women from East-Europe and Africa who work as cheap, since mostly illegal, housekeepers (child and elderly caring, cleaning, and so on). The state tries to inter-

vene through tax reduction for social support but with doubtful success. Chevalier pointed out different consequences of this development, e.g. the reproduction of social inequality and the production of different status between women as employee and employer, while the domestic tasks in general stay female (in executing and controlling the domestic tasks).

*Laura Bernardi: Kinship, fertility and social support - relating ethnographic and KNQ findings*

Laura Bernardi from the Max Planck Institute for demographic research in Rostock spoke about the correlation of kinship, social support and fertility and different findings from the KNQ survey. If one takes a look on the relationship of fertility and social support, one can identify different perspectives: various developments in fertility behaviour influence social support, like postponed fertility creating a larger generational distance or the fertility decline which reduced the kin pool.

Bernardi mentioned three mayor factors that affect fertility decisions. The intergenerational transmission of fertility behaviour and preferences reproduces the manner of social support. Social capital is a complex factor since it can be a resource for having children or counter wise offspring can be seen as investment in social capital. Strong family ties depress fertility although they offer social capital. The cause is slowed down youth emancipation which comes along with transmission and high control.

The different findings from the KNQ showed that effects on fertility behaviour also differ from rural to urban areas.

*Discussion*

The discussion started with some general remarks on the major role of the relation of sustainable social security, fertility and demography. It was emphasized that the growing number of elderly people cannot be compensated by fertility and that migration also plays a problematic role since the population will still grow by ageing. Other comments on migration referred to the unpredictability of the process which cannot be planned, only coped with and the production of increasing inequality between and within states through immigration of the youth and emigration of the elderly people. Some further questions on this topic were raised, e.g. how is

the immigrant care integrated in kinship networks and what happens to immigrants' kinship networks after migration in general?

Referring to Kohli's Paper it was mentioned that grandparenting and financial resources for housing from parents can facilitate fertility decisions in unsure labour market situations.

The last statement which referred to Chevalier's Paper supported the arguments since the development is not only French and emphasized the role of a fourth actor in the social care sector which is non-profit social care encouraged by the state.

## **6.2 Session 2 - Ethnographies of fertility and social support**

### **Chair and discussant: Caroline Bledsoe**

#### *Gertraud Seiser: Schönau - reproducing the community in upper Austria*

Gertraud Seiser held a presentation on the reproduction of community based on her field research for the KASS project. Schönau, a community in Upper Austria was introduced in its historical and regional context as well as on the basis of some economic and demographic key numbers. The traditional village is facing several problems like a constant population decrease, a substantial brain drain, rare or no (qualified) job opportunities for women in general and mothers in particular and as a result high costs for social security. The interesting fact about Schönau is the importance that is connected with the house as a central principle of community organization and cohesion. Particularly the role of women in the house is problematic since many young women refuse the traditional role and leave the house as well as the community. The rareness of women and the central role of the house lead to a strong regional endogamy and that in turn makes reproducing the community even harder.

#### *Heidi Colleran: Researching a high fertility enclave in Poland*

The second paper was given by Heidi Colleran, who presented the results of her study in a high fertility enclave in Poland. The village was introduced as a rural locality characterized through high agricultural workload and especially very high fertility: 5.3 Children per woman. The central question of the study was whether kin influence fertility. Examining several variables it was found out that maternal and paternal grandparents differ substantially in their influence on fertility of young women: whereas coresidence with the former led in average to

one less child, the immediate presence of the latter led in average to one more child. This was interpreted as maternal kin maximizing the welfare and “quality” of children and paternal kin maximizing the size of the family. Following an evolutionary perspective, the assumption was made that conflicts over reproductive decisions may have an evolutionary basis.

*Simone Ghezzi and Claudio Lorenzini: Parenthood and the structuring of time*

The third paper on the theme of parenthood and the structuring of time was presented by Simone Ghezzi and Claudio Lorenzini. The talk was based on their individual fieldworks, which took place in Manzano, a small town in north-east Italy, and in Porta Genova-Navigli, a neighbourhood of Milano. Both places carry similar characteristics concerning the transition to adulthood like prolonged co-residence with parents, prolonged engagement, late marriage and low fertility. Time in both places needs to be structured very well since several obligations need to be satisfied at the same time. In Manzano, domestic time is organized parallel to the firm, the latter being the domain of men the former that of women. In the case of Porta Genova it was shown, that time is always completely booked out so that engaging in additional activities (like raising children) requires a reallocation of time and the readiness of actors to negotiate between different time categories. It was pointed out that grandparents and particularly grandmothers becoming caregivers may also be a matter of time, since they are the ones with potentially more free time. Also, living close to kin, which was an often observed phenomenon, was suggested to be a strategy of managing time.

*Discussion*

The chair person opened the discussion summarizing that the image of rural environments that was created by these three papers is indeed a very new one and it is an image of movement and shifting. But the questions that remained after hearing the presentation was basically the question of what is missing. For the Italian case that was clearly time, but for the others: is it women or educated people or men?

Suggestions from the audience turned first to the case of the polish village and it was asked whether the remarkable maternal or paternal grandparents’ effects were controlled for or combined with other factors such as size of the farm, economic production or need of labour. It was also mentioned that this particular polish village seems to be untouched by any

historical event. This led to a debate about the generalizations concerning post collective countries. Poland is often regarded such but taking the history into account it is indeed not. But instead there is a very strong continuity in Poland.

The discussion then focused on a potential relation between the fertility rate and the age of grandparents (i.e. grandmothers). There may potentially be pressure from older grandmothers to their daughters in law if the grandmother is quite old and wants to live to see her grandchildren. Another possible relation would be that young potential parents postpone their decision for children and wait until the grandparents have retired and are available as caregivers. This seems to be a reasonable assumption especially for the case of Italy. The speaker confirmed that most times the grandparents have already retired when the first child is born, or the grandmother never worked. The latter case raises important questions concerning future fertility and the organization of care for the future grandchildren of today's young parents with fulltime jobs.

Looking at the bigger picture, it was concluded that “Gemeinschaft” is stronger in the south than in the north and that it is interesting how much ethnography can actually tell one about numbers.

The discussion then came back to the Austrian example and circled around the two sided lifestyle of Schönau. On the one hand there are the middle aged and elderly women who foster traditions very much, and on the other hand there is a growing part of young women who marry back after having lived in the city. They have no or one child and bring a modern lifestyle to the village. The hidden third category of women is those who are lonesome when the husband and children have left the house, which is why hidden alcoholism is another big problem in the region. It was therefore made clear that it is useful to differentiate for the case of Schönau: there is not a complex of shared values, but there rather is the knowledge of shared values.

### **6.3 Session 3 - Kinship, state and community**

**Chair and discussant: Chris Hann**

*Hannes Grandits: When the state stops caring: the eastern European experience*

The first paper was presented by Hannes Grandits from the University of Graz, who spoke about the Eastern European experience of a declining social care of the state after the disinte-

gration of the Soviet Union. He introduced some findings from his research in Poland, Croatia and Russia. He recognized common trends in all three countries with regard to the reformulated aims of the state referring to family. Although in social reality family ties are liberated and female income plays an important role there is a revival of the patriotic discourse imagining an ideology of the male breadwinner and women as dependent housewives.

Another problem which affects family and fertility decisions is the retreat of social support which is caused by a high rate of unemployment together with a high rate of retirements. To provide the required financial capacities the budget for pre-school childcare was cut down and the institutional infrastructure declined. This dramatic change for women connected with the low quality of private institutions led to decreasing fertility.

The third finding was about the intensification of kinship as means of social integration after 1989. In Croatia old age care in specialised old-age institutions is hardly developed. Therefore family and kin must have the main function in care. This goes along with a high value of care and corresponding social expectations which leave abandoned elders as burden. In Poland the low fertility rate meets with a high value of children but the (already mentioned) circumstances of living, the missing support by the state and the fear of loosing one's job appear as huge hindrance.

*Peter Schweitzer: Kinship ties and community survival*

Peter Schweitzer from the University of Fairbanks spoke about the relation between kinship ties and the survival of communities. He started with some general remarks about care, culture and tradition. He argued that care is characterized by a gender aspect as far as it is naturalized as female both by informants and scientists. Such cultural expectations are no longer attainable in times of social change. Another aspect is the gendered transfer of knowledge in (western) societies from mother to daughter and father to son. Talking about traditions Schweitzer reminded the listeners that they are an invention to explain present situations and that re-traditionalisation by the state can create new traditions.

He identified three contemporary solutions for sustainable communities: The immigration from below and above social status; the (usually unsuccessful) prevention from out-migration; and the rural-urban support relations. The latter play a very important role in community reservation. Other conditions for sustainable communities are local leadership and self-

organization. One inconvenient question that should be asked is if all communities must survive.

*Richard Wall: Relationships between household composition and wider kinship ties: how far can historical and present-day data illuminate each other?*

The third contribution came from Richard Wall from the University of Essex who spoke about relationships between household composition and wider kinship ties and the possibility of productive comparison of historical and present-day data. For that useable standard definitions of household and kinship have to be found. This is difficult as far as the meaning, the size and the tasks of household and kinship differ in history and population. For example the household has played and still does play an important role in socialization of children, but internal work and external links have changed. Another characteristic which Wall recognizes as important for any standard definition is the unequal distribution of resources and the redistribution of income in households.

When it comes to kinship the number of kin is used as definitional characteristic while the number of available close kin is declining due to low fertility. The proximity and the often conflicting economic and affectional relationships of kin should also be included in the discourse about kinship data in present and history.

### *Discussion*

Stephen Gudeman from Minnesota University gave a short introduction to a systematization of relationships. He divided between activities done for the sake of someone else which lead to relationship and activities that are done for ones own sake. He also mentioned the distinction between conjoined persons within relations and disjoined, individualistic persons.

The discussion went on with a remark on the dialectics of social care relationships and the question what happens to a state when kin should stop caring.

A comment on Wall emphasized the aspect of divorce and step relations on household situations which cause more complicated ties and increase the potential number of kin.

Referring to Grandits it was said that redistribution of housework and material goods (not only income) also takes place in the household. Another comment turned out the difficulties



in measuring the importance of kin relations and that changes might have been longitudinal and did not suddenly appear at 1990.

Other general remarks mentioned the missing historical data and the difficulties in linking the micro (family-) and the macro (country-) level. Also the local studies were of different character which can influence their comparability. It was recognized that individual decisions make cultural changes but that sustainability needs bigger changes especially to improve the compatibility of children and work for women. Therefore the demand for governmental decisions and a responsible attitude of companies was formulated.

## 7 CONCLUSION

During the conference, much respect was given to KASS as a wide-ranging and innovative project bringing to light a wealth of data and some very interesting new perspectives on the phenomena of family and kinship in Europe. Despite several criticism and some weaknesses that still need to be solved, there was a particularly great interest in KASS methodology. The innovative combination of quantitative, computerized data collection with qualitative ethnographic interviewing was regarded to provide a richness of information that has rarely been produced by a single study. Especially the KNQ technology counts as very innovative and new approach to the traditional research areas of anthropology. The Questionnaire program was considered very promising for further use in various academic disciplines and for several purposes, particularly since it is flexible enough to be transformed and supplemented in various ways. In its unique combination with the additional ethnographic evaluation, it was asserted that the methodology of KASS could also be suitable and useful in non-European settings.

As regards contents, many valuable perspectives, explanations and avenues of thought have been opened up by KASS research. Even if some of them still need to be integrated in the bigger picture of the overall results of the study and the European context – as is being done at the moment in preparing the third volume of the original KASS project results – many relevant themes have been identified by the conference members and KASS team. There is for example the amount of data which allows characterization and support of macro-regional differences in Europe, there is information about very different understandings of the functions of family and kin and there is much data about dimensions that are often underestimated or

even left out in social policy debates, such as the amount and structuring of time available to potential parents and its impact on fertility and child rearing.

Since the last findings of the KASS project are only just emerging and some results are still being integrated and considered it is not yet time to make explicit policy recommendations. **B**ut the feedback at the conference convincingly confirmed that the KASS project will be very relevant and contribute vividly to an ongoing policy debate as well as to the academic and wider public discourse.