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ON
MIGRATIONS

Migration research at a crossroads

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Migration and ethnoracial recategorization

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ICM

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SciencesPo

- 1 Migration and the paradigm of assimilation
- 2 Migration and ethnoracial reconfigurations
- 3 Empirical examples

Migration and assimilation

- Assimilation: the success story of a sociological concept
- Assimilation as cultural convergence
- Assimilation as social mobility
- Assimilation as ethnoracial boundary change
- On both sides of the Atlantic

Migration and ethnoracial dynamics

- Migration, the great diversifier?
 - Migration does not necessarily generate cultural diversity (norms, values, beliefs . . .)
 - Mixing and unmixing through migration
- From immigrants to racial minorities
 - Racial connotations in the term "*immigrant*"
 - Ambivalent relations with native racial minorities

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Migration and ethnoracial reconfigurations

- Migration relates to three forms of categorization processes: division of labor, formal membership and symbolic membership
- With possible consequences on social inequalities



Migration and ethnoracial reconfigurations

- Ethnoracial formation : meaning-making processes drawing on human differentiation markers
- Population movements trigger the circulation of a variety of markers : body-related markers, language, religion, family structures, norms, lifestyles, etc.
- "New situations" of social encounters, where existing social categorization used in interactions may prove to be fallible \implies situations of re-categorization
- These situations do not necessarily derive from the "types" of people that migration brings to a social setting \implies may also arise when migrants detain markers that are already salient and meaningful in the destination societies
- Migration potentially introduces variations in the interpretations of these markers, opening the way to a series of cultural negotiations and symbolic classifications.

Local and global dynamics

- Migration affects ethnoracial (re)categorization in diverse local settings: cities, neighborhood, firms, schools, countries, etc.
- Migration has the specificity of disseminating nationality-based markers \implies Global recategorization?
- Migration highlights the value of an integrated approach of ethnicity, race and nation
 - Migrants make the categories themselves circulate: the portability of ethnoracial categories
 - Migration creates new global (transnational) boundaries: diaspora and cross-border activities, multi-geographical identification
 - Effects on nationality-based categorization

Migration and ethnoracial reconfiguration

	Within-nation ethnoracial formation	Global ethnoracial formation
Solidification	Fitting in, fitting up, fitting down, boundary shifting, boundary crossing	Nation-building Nationalistic backlash, (re)defining the national as anti-migrant
Destabilization	Introducing new categories “Complex ethnicity” Weakening the association between ethnoracial categories and the allocation of resources	Transnational transfer of categorizations Reconfiguration of ethnoracial categories investing transnational markers

Migration and fitting into ethnoracial categorization

- Migrants mobilize a wide range of socioeconomic, cultural, legal, and sometimes phenotypical resources while working out the ways in which they “fit into” existing ethnoracial categorization systems
- Resistance to fitting down, working toward whiteness, acting white, etc.
- Mobilization of work ethics, efforts, high aspiration, cultural, religious, phenotypic characteristics, etc.
- Insights from historical research, ethnographic research, self-identification or assigned ethnic/racial questions, experimental designs, etc.

Examples: The US

- How the Irish became white? \implies solidification of the black/white color line?
- Hispanic migrants to the US \implies Tripartition or fitting down?
- Asian migration in the US \implies Tripartition or fitting up?
- African migration in the US \implies attenuation of the potency of skin color stratification??

Examples

- Eastern European migration and effect on the rigidification of a European/Non European distinction
- Roma migrants within the EU context
- In France French Overseas migration, return colonial migration
- North-South migrants : example of "Western" migrants to the UAE and the reconfiguration of "global whiteness"

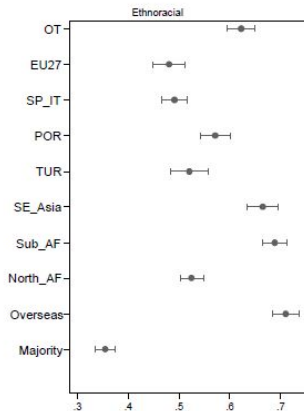
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Ethnoracial identification of immigrants and their descendants in France

Personal identity in TeO (2008)

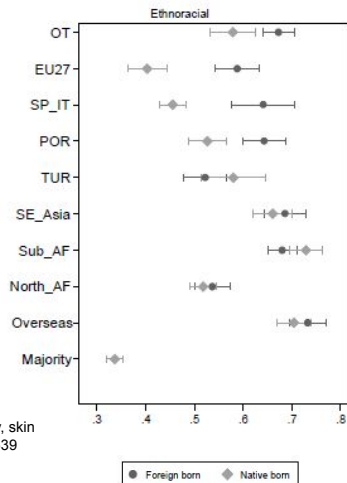
- The question: " What are the characteristics that define you the best" (15 possible items)
- Ethnoracial: Nationality, Origin, Skin Color, Religion

Ethnoracial identification of immigrants and their descendants in France, (McAvey & Safi, work in progress)



TeO, 2008
Ethnoracial
items=nationality,
skin color, religion,
origin, N=15,539

Inter-generational persistence/decline in ethnoracial identification



TeO, 2008
Ethnoracial items=nationality, skin color, religion, origin, N=15,539

The Symbolic Dimension of Citizenship Categories in France (McAvay, Caron & Safi, work in progress)

- French-by-birth category:
 - Administrative/legal category
 - Supposedly objective, neutral, and time-invariant
 - Not a nationality, not an origin, not an ethnoracial category... yet underlying connotations
- An empirical discovery studying immigration with French longitudinal data (EDP):
 - Self-reported citizenship changes over time
 - People become French by birth (“reclassification”)
- Similarities with recent literature on racial fluidity ?

Citizenship in t

French by birth

Became French

Foreigner

Citizenship in $t+i$ $i=(1,2)$

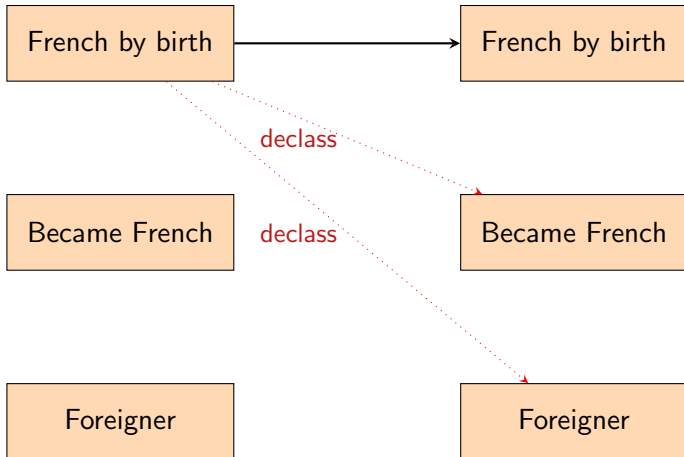
French by birth

Became French

Foreigner

Citizenship in t

Citizenship in $t+i$ $i=(1,2)$



Citizenship in t

Citizenship in $t+i$ $i=(1,2)$

French by birth

French by birth

reclass

Became French

Became French

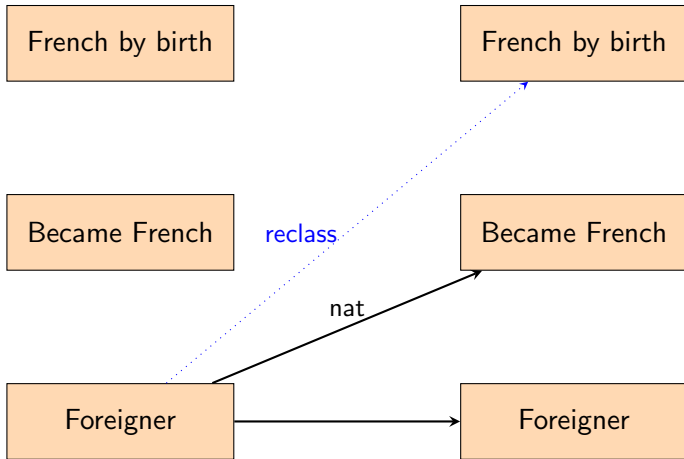
declass

Foreigner

Foreigner

Citizenship in t

Citizenship in $t+i$ $i=(1,2)$



	Reclassification		Declassification	
	N	%	N	%
Between t/t+1				
<i>No</i>	87,307	90	1,151,811	99
<i>Yes</i>	10,228	10	7,952	1
Total	97,535	100	1,159,763	100
Between t/t+2				
<i>No</i>	46,965	88	711,487	99
<i>Yes</i>	6,488	12	5,388	1
Total	53,453	100	716,875	100

Research questions

- Are changes in citizenship over time:
 - Just statistical noise? A misunderstanding of legal categories?
 - Driven by assimilation trajectories?
 - Capturing ethnoracial recategorization dynamics?

Reclassification as Assimilation?

- Reclassification is stronger among those who are born in France, naturalize, or marry French
- The importance of nativity may reflect (restricted) birthright citizenship in France
- Naturalization and intermarriage effects are consistently significant in longitudinal specification with fixed-effects
- Becoming French, marrying French triggers people to feel more French over time or more legitimate to claim the identity

Life cycle events	Reclassif in t+1 Yes	Reclassif in t+2 Yes
Intermarriage between t and t+1		
No	10%	12%
Yes	18%	19%
Naturalization between t and t+1		
No		3%
Yes		7%

Reclassification as ethnoracial recategorization?

- Reclassification is strongest among those born in (or with parents from) Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Vietnam
- Evidence of an ex-colonial effect
- People from former colonies who at first identify as foreign/naturalized but who later claim native status?
- Does it reflect a stronger sense of belonging among these origins?
- Is it linked to their experience of discrimination in French society?

	Reclassification in t+1 (Model 1a)	Reclassification in t+2 (Model 1b)
<i>Origin/Ref: Western Europe</i>		
Eastern Europe	-0.036*** (0.005)	-0.035*** (0.006)
Spain	-0.034*** (0.004)	-0.031*** (0.006)
Portugal	-0.041*** (0.004)	-0.041*** (0.007)
Italy	-0.028*** (0.004)	-0.025*** (0.005)
Algeria	0.115*** (0.006)	0.159*** (0.008)
Morocco	0.028*** (0.007)	0.054*** (0.012)
Tunisia	0.046*** (0.006)	0.068*** (0.009)
Southeast Asia	0.021** (0.007)	0.031** (0.011)
Turkey	-0.043*** (0.008)	-0.042** (0.013)
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.068*** (0.008)	0.100*** (0.014)
Other	-0.002 (0.004)	0.007 (0.007)
Observations	55,699	27,471

Source: EDP, 1975-2008.

Table shows marginal effects. Standard errors in parentheses.

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.10

Conclusion and implications

- From assimilation to ethnoracial reconfiguration
- The importance of dynamic perspectives
- Connections and implications on social inequality and discrimination