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The Link between Context, Ethnicity and Diversity in the School Careers of Migrant Students and Descendants of Migrants

*Evelyne Barthou**

Abstract: The aim of this article is to shed light on the role of contextual effects, of the mix and the organization of secondary schools in the activation of ethnic categories, notably through the constitution of classes. The various surveys have allowed us to see that the organization of schools is a result of ethnic differentiation and that school actors often have an ethnic reading of school facts, but more or less marked depending on the context. They engage in very different forms of discrimination, whether direct, indirect, benevolent, involving lower ambitions for racialized students or the use of supposedly more appropriate supports. Therefore, the projections and school careers of students who are newcomers or immigrant descendants are often less ambitious and more oriented towards vocational courses than those of other students, but with differences according to their geographical origin. Furthermore, they are more likely to underestimate themselves and have lower self-esteem. These effects of context also play a key-role in school sociability and ethnic highlights. Ethnic diversity contexts clearly produce distance, differentiation and discrimination, when the school contexts in which young descendants of migrants are in the majority, are less marked by ethnicity-related conflicts, although this is indeed present. Segregation seems to partly protect from discrimination.

Keywords: school effects, ethnicity, school mix, school trajectories, migration

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Introduction

For a long time, schools were thought of as not capable of implementing their own logic of action. Most especially in a centralized French school system marked by the republican values of equality and universality. However, for the last forty years sociology has highlighted the importance of the very distinct differences between certain institutions in regards to results and social composition. It also shows that those differences generate specific consequences related to either the environment and recruitment sector, the collective working arrangements implemented in the institutions, the different management types, the portrayal of the school actors' professions', or the specific audience welcomed.

The result of educational resources, the specific types of teachers assigned and other choices made by the heads of institutions, which we can quickly qualify as school effect, underline the schools' capacity to build themselves as autonomous organizations. These institutional impacts imply that they can also have their own coherence, beyond their audiences' mere features. Olivier Cousin explains that within the academic effects there is a distinguishable diversity which is determined by the schools' true nature (Cousin, 1998). The class effect is partly at cause for the creation of institutional impacts. It finds its' main source in the class' social and academic composition and the interactions between the pupils and teachers. While institutional segregation is a more developed phenomenon in urban areas, Ly and Riegert explain that segregation among the classes within the same schools varies only slightly from one department to another (Ly and Riegert, 2015). This intraschool segregation, which is less analysed than the one existing between institutions, exposes a fascinating prism that helps understand the migrants' and descendants of migrants' school experiences. Ordinary ethnicisation can also originate from this (Jounin et al., 2008). A schools' organisation produces ethnicity, but, as Eric Debarbieux points out: the problem of ethnicity within schools is not one for foreigners or immigrants (Debarbieux, 2003). The problem is that of the progressive–or continuous–separation of French children that we lock up in an assumed and constructed strangeness (Ibid.).

We will mobilize in this article the concept of ethnicity as developed by Bastenier; more specifically, how it is analysed as a social process—that is to say, as a form of action—through which different human groups who are forced to coexist in the same space perceive one another, and maintain or transform their borders and their feelings of belonging (Bastenier, 1993). The important thing is to understand the distinction between an imposed ethnicity and a desired ethnicity (Ibid.).

Assuming as we have just done that ethnic groups are firstly categories of attribution and identification created by the actors (Barth, 1969). Ethnicity

is an essential concept when understanding social relations in educational institutions today, especially in the context of social and ethnic diversity. We have seen in our surveys on many occasions that the ethnicisation of student-to-student interactions is present within all educational establishments. The school, in particular, is one of the greatest public spaces where the paradigm of ethnicities' processes unfold (Lorcerie, 2003). In fact, in the schools that most obviously have ethnic segregation, ethnic-centered socialization is more likely to take place, and in such contexts, self-formation revolves around ethnicity and interethnic relations (Felouzis, Lit and Perroton, 2005).

However, our current ALTERECOLE survey allows us to confirm that the ethnicity created in self-perception and the interactions between pupils and teachers, can also be found in diverse contexts, including school contexts. In such findings, students and teachers of immigrant backgrounds are very poorly represented. It is specifically in these contexts that ethnic pronouncements are more accentuated and most striking. In all the establishments we visited for the study, we find that students often question their origins, most predominantly using negative qualifiers, sometimes even clearly racist: "*you the Malian*", "*he is Portuguese, he will finish mason like his father*", "*go ahead Mamadou* (said to a student of African origin whose name was not Mamadou)" etc... Although this is not necessarily a source of tension, "joking about the oppressed", as Françoise Lorcerie describes it, while liberating and tragic, it nonetheless reveals the amount of violence associated with the stigma and can sometimes turn into destructive sarcasm (Lorcerie, 2003). Similarly, students perceive themselves and observe the world around them through this grid of ethnic analysis, in a logic of comparison that can sometimes reinforce stereotypes "*well it's true that I want to work in buildings like my father does, actually, like all the Portuguese do*". The country or area of origin of the students is clearly identifiable by the peers; everyone knows each other's origin as well as what religion they are. These questions are very present in the speeches and can easily be seen once finished with classes with the students' personal effects: i.e. on the football shirt, pencil case, t-shirt, jewellery, fatma's hand, cross, veil... Swimming class and trips bring up another interesting point because many Muslims are exempt from going and everyone knows that it is because of religious reasons. It therefore seems difficult when one is a teacher to not perceive this cultural and religious diversity, which expresses itself continuously, in very diverging forms. Ultimately, it is partly because of lack of training taken into account in very different ways which are dependent on the actors and their sensibilities.

This article will therefore analyse and examine the effects of the educational context, the organization of schools, the modes of regulation and the ability to blend, partially or fully, the migrant students' and children of migrants' experiences; in terms of their integration within the school estab-

ishment, their interactions, but also their perception of otherness during the activation of ethnic categories. The schools' organisation is based on ethnic differentiation and school actors often have an ethnical comprehension of school factors, which can be more or less apparent depending on the context. They carry out very different forms of discrimination, whether direct, indirect or even benevolent, involving for racialized pupils lower ambitions or the use of supposedly more adapted supports.

In the second segment, we will see that students who are descendants of migrants often have aspirations, goals and school careers which are less ambitious and more oriented towards vocational courses than those of other students. Nevertheless, there are differences depending on the students' geographical origin. In addition, they are more likely to underestimate themselves and have lower self-esteem. These distinctions are also related to the schools and classes attended.

Finally, the before mentioned effects of context play a key role in school sociability. The ethnic diversity contexts clearly produce voluntary withdrawal, differentiation and discrimination. Even so, often times, it is what can ease and influence in the making of connections between students of migrant backgrounds with different origins or between descendants of migrants and newcomers. On the other hand, the school contexts in which young descendants of migrants are in the majority seem to be less marked by conflicts related to ethnicity. Even if ethnicity is indeed very present, segregation somehow mostly protects from discrimination.

Material, Methodology and Contextualization

We will support our arguments with the results of a research and evaluation on the orientation of 9th grade students. It is a three-year program financed by the Youth Experiment Fund; and the first results of the ALTER-ECOLE, a regional research which aims to bring to light the dynamics of school segregation and the construction of otherness in and by the school system. The research and evaluations' main exploration topic focused on understanding the factors that have an impact on student trajectories in competitive jurisdictions and in contexts of relative diversity. It allowed us to grasp the importance of articulating different variables and to explore intersectionality.

In this first research study, we administered a questionnaire with more than 2000 students and parents, followed by dozens of observation days during class times and extra-curricular times. We also oversaw around a hundred interviews with students and school actors in about fifteen institutions. In regards to ALTERCECOLE and their regional research, the aim is to grasp territorial and educational dynamics in the construction of otherness,

in relation to migrants, homeless or other “outsider” students in school within the specific segmented social spaces.

The research is particularly focused on children and adolescents families that are foreigners; the role and place that the educational system imposes on them (Cossée, Lada & Rigoni, 2004) and how newcomers position themselves in a school universe which is often found in tension (Schiff, 2001). To date, the material used while in the field that will be mentioned in the following sections includes dozens of class observation days, a dozen focus groups conducted with students and about twenty interviews conducted with different school actors.

Context

We will focus here on a specific type of institution, the college (Secondary school), and more specifically located in a medium-sized city in the South of France. The survey which is particularly thorough, will be conducted in two middle schools. One of the schools being a college labelled as being a Priority Education Network and hosting an over-representation of migrant students and descendants of migrants. The other college, located in the city center, includes a minority of this type of students and has been given a good reputation locally.

The school context in which both surveys were partly conducted is a mid-sized city with four public secondary schools and three private ones. One of the three private colleges has a very favorable school population and enjoys a very good reputation throughout the territory. In regards to the local school market it happens to be a real investment and for upper classes and graduated parents it is a significant variable that leads to frequent adjustments. The other two private colleges are schools with a much more diverse social, ethnic, and educational background.

The four secondary schools in the public sector happen to be very different. One of them is an innovative college with 240 students, the second is a relatively mixed school on the social, ethnic and academic level, the third has recently been classified as a priority school and the last a college in the down-town area. It should be noted that the innovative college opened its doors on the site of a former college that could be described as “ghetto” in the sense that it was voluntarily and strongly avoided. In fact, it welcomed a very disadvantageous public, having low cultural capital and populations that were troubled. Located in a neighbourhood classified as high-risk, its student population was, for the vast majority, from immigration. Once that school shut down, the students were sent unanimously to the other schools in the town. A majority of those diverse and troubled students were unfortunately sent to the one specific establishment which is how it became

classified as a priority school. Because of that, the educational context in that school has experienced a significant change.

The two secondary schools that will be the focus of our analysis are the priority school and the downtown school. The priority school has a particular configuration because it is located in the most favorable district of the city but it recruits on a very broad sector, which partly include the two politically labelled high-risk neighborhoods of the city in question. As such, 35% of students of this city come from a politically high-risk neighbourhood; 16% of students have parents who are either managers, executives, experts, or other similar well respected positions (against 22.5% at the departmental level); and 60% are employees and workers. Meanwhile, the downtown college welcomes only 9% of students coming from politically high-risk neighborhoods; more than 30% which have parents in higher work positions; and 40% whose parents are employees and workers.

These two secondary schools have differing profiles. The inner-city school, at the local level, is part of an establishment which is called the “royal road”, as it includes a high school which also possesses a good reputation. The priority school, even if this act was paradoxically expected, was the victim of an obvious downgrade following it being labelled such. The shutting down of the ghetto school also had an impact on their school population as the priority establishment received four times more students from this institution than the downtown college, which clearly had an impact on the educational context. If we take a look at the public attending the school and their characteristic, we see that the educational context is essential for analysing the students’ educational trajectories. These characteristics, qualified by Anglo-Saxon school diversity researchers, consist mainly of academic diversity: i.e. the average school level of the pupils attending the school as well as the disparity of their skills, and the social diversity, namely their sociological profile (Monseur & Crahay, 2008).

Finally, the relationship between the two colleges is quite strained and minimal. They are in constant competition because there is an obvious avoidance of the priority school by successful students and there is a high transfer rate from students of that school to the downtown establishment. Within the bounds of the territory on which the games of reputation are well implemented by a majority of the parents of upper and middle classes, we are faced with a notable occurrence of attraction/repulsion. There evidently exist multiple interdependent links, each having a competitive nature, intensified by the status and reputation of the private sector (Delvaux & Agnès Van Zanten, 2006). This implies, in the institutions, an implementation of action logic and very different modes of regulation. Agnès Van Zanten and Bernard Belvaud also speak of effective hybrid regulations, which is a combination of different modes of regulation, blending the official regulation de-

vices that are transformed as they take shape in local contexts. These are the modes of regulation and the organizational choices that will interest us here.

Educational and organizational choices of institutions

Managing a facility means administering it by conducting certain standards and procedures, as well as making other official non-regulatory decisions. A margin of autonomy and appreciation for the heads of schools is given to them through management (Boissinot, 2003 in Chapon, 2008). It is up to them, for example, *“to take advantage of the creative potential of the teaching teams to implement innovative projects and to promote a real educational policy to serve the success of all students.”* (Forestier, 2001 in Chapon, 2008). The way in which chiefs of schools compose their classes is very important in this regard. While it is officially prohibited in France, management can represent a form of constitution of classes by levels. However, the constitution of classes hierarchized academically and at the same time socially has implications on the progress of secondary school students, as it has an influence on their initial level (Duru-Bellat & Mingat, 1997). The effects of context, and especially the extent of segregation, reinforce social inequalities because the most advantageous students systematically benefit from the most effective contexts, and, furthermore, contribute to making them more effective because of their aggregation and adaptive feedback from teachers; the effects being the opposite for students from working-class families (Duru-Bellat, 2009). Data collected since the mid-1990s tend to show that in some countries class effects tend to equal or even outweigh the effects of institutions (Lafontaine, 2008). These class effects are mainly the result of the social and school composition of the class, and of the interactions with teachers, more specifically their practices and positioning, which is often-times criticized by the teacher-effects.

In these “level” classes, teachers will adapt their teaching practices according to their students’ level of representation and thus give them more or less a chance to improve and sometimes redefine the objectives of the programs (Baudelot & Leclercq, 2005). This teacher effect already measured in the works of IREDU, was also explained regarding the high school level, by the study of G. Felouzis (1997), which tends to show that the effectiveness of teachers depends substantially in their attitudes and expectations towards students. The nature of the public, the offers of training provided by the institutions, and the position on the school markets therefore outline a framework that strongly structures the nature of students’ educational backgrounds, their performances and also their school experiences. And it is only within this framework that one can think of the effects of establishment or the effects class.

We will return here to the case of two exceptionally idiosyncratic institutions in our sample, the priority and the downtown school.

The constitution of classes

With regard to the constitution of classes, the priority school favors the composition of relatively mixed classes, especially in regards to social origins, ethnic and geographical aspect with the intentions of promoting diversity and coexistence. There are, however, one or two classes with students who happen to be more favored than the average, such as the CHAM classes (classes with arranged music schedules) or the class that groups the students who have chosen the Latin and Greek options. A survey conducted 7 years ago in this institution reported there being obvious classes for certain levels, neighborhoods and ethnicities, which was totally redefined and challenged by the main principal even with significant reluctance from parents and teachers. This choice of diversity has also led to numerous by-passes of the school charter map and the departure of some teachers.

In the middle school, the principal assistant made many efforts to propose equivocal classes last year but the principal chose to privilege “classes by levels” because the pressure from the parents seemed too strong. The constitution of classes by level, strictly prohibited in France, is unofficially recorded in this establishment, such as an implicit compromise between school actors and some parents. Parents are indeed mobilized very regularly in this college. After the reform of the previous government, which caused the suppression of the European classes and was perceived as the end of alliance and unity for some parents, the principal observed an impressive increase of the inscriptions in the option “Latin” but also the making of petitions by these parents, the demand for many appointments with the principal as well as the threat of putting their children in the private sector. It is clear to see here that, within the school organization, the consequence of diversity seems to be, as François Dubet says, the selection of inequality (Dubet, 2014).

The pedagogical tools, networks and projects from the scale of the two institutions are also very different

In the downtown location there are several devices to attract students that have a good academic level. This is the case of the two-language classes, “abibac”, offering dual certification, notably a French baccalaureate and a German abitur. In addition, the college offers the opportunity to join two socially reputed sports teams: kayaking and climbing. Specialized classes for another type of audience are two ULIS classes (localized units for inclusive education), including one for students with autistic Asperger and a UPS class (specific pedagogical units) which is a support system for schooling itiner-

ants' and travelers' children. These students are not at all integrated in the school and favour closed sociability amongst themselves.

In the priority school, a Spanish-speaking Euro-English section has been opened, but the specialized programs are the majority at the school scale, which makes the establishment accept and enrol numerous migrant pupils. These programs are ULIS, UPE2A (pedagogical units for incoming allophone pupils), NSA (not previously enrolled) and SEGPA (section of general and adapted vocational education). The sports divisions include rugby and handball programs which benefit from a less appreciative and known reputation among the most favorable and most educated families. These choices of devices have a very clear impact on the color and the reputation of the establishment. For the vast majority of migrants, therefore, the territory's migrants are schooled in the priority school, which stigmatizes them in a very clear way and especially brings them closer to the descendants of migrants who often live in the same neighborhoods as them. Thus, togetherness is again more prominent because of organizational choices at the local and institutional levels.

The difference in the management and reception of migrant students also plays a role

The reception and support systems for migrant students is also significant. There is no, for example, UPE2A class at the downtown school. The vice-principal therefore makes real alterations to schedules so as to include a few hours of personalised classes of French as a foreign language to allophone students with the help of someone who offers educational support, which is not their original purpose. She also regrets having such limited scope of action. In addition, there is no link with the UPE2A of the priority school, which she also regrets, and constitutes remarkable barrier for non-French speaking students. This is not without consequences for migrant pupils, as two Chechen pupils, for example, who could no longer be educated in the UPE2A of the priority school, found themselves totally left to their own devices in the middle school.

In the priority school, on the other hand, allophone students are thoroughly followed. They have the possibility of being educated in UPE2A or NSA classes, if they have not been educated previously. In addition, the establishment makes it a point of honor to encourage and implement as often as possible the inclusion of these students in the classic classes and they work on a lot of projects. Some of the teachers, as is often the case in priority education networks, are actively and truly invested in assisting and guiding students. Collective work is clearly very favored in this establishment than in the downtown one. Anne Barrère has shown that teachers in ZEP-REP schools invest more in the collective dimension of teaching (45% compared

to 28% for school teachers outside ZEP-REP) (Barrère, 2000). Migrant students and descendants of migrants are really thought of as migrants and descendants of migrants and can be the object of specific attention from several teachers, which is what Felouzis calls “educational pragmatism” (Felouzis, 1997). In the other school, the stigmatization and separation of those who do not follow is much more present, thus falling under academic ritualism (Ibid.). The power of institutions cannot be understood, as Butler emphasizes, without thinking of the social normativity that it contributes to produce and organize (Butler, 2005). It is therefore essential to think about the conditions of production of normativity, which are in our case caused by the educational teams’ arbitrage and which will obviously play a very important role on the pupils’ school positions but also on their interactions and their feeling of belonging.

Finally, the focus on migrants and descendants of migrants, particularly of Maghreb origin, at the local level and in French society, also brings them together. All experienced, at one point, in their journey a situation of alteration (Cossée, Lada & Rigoni, 2004), discriminatory practices or racism, all in very different forms. Most of them are identified as belonging to a Maghreb or Muslim community, even though it does not exist (Roy & Truong, 2015) and without necessarily thinking of themselves as Maghreb or Muslim. Moreover, when they are Maghreb and/or Muslim, it is not always this dimension of their identity that they wish to put forward.

Positions in the face of cultural diversity and discriminating practices

We have noted on our various sites that the management of ethnic diversity is not easy for school actors. Trained only a little, if at all, on these issues, they are unaware of the discriminatory mechanisms at work in their practices and representation. The numerous research which is based on this communication have all brought to light, in the school field, the tension between the principles of universality and that of the recognition of difference. This ambiguity creates real gray areas in which educational teams, untrained on these issues, are often left alone to fend for themselves. As Olivier Meunier points out, curricular content remains poor in cognitive references in terms of the construction of the French community and its plurality (Meunier, 2008), particularly in terms of colonial and religious history and migration.

However, the segregating mechanisms are very real in our various fields and in very different forms, be it direct, indirect, systemic or even benevolent discrimination. We will start here with definitions produced by the Manouchian Collective in the Dictionary of Dominations (Manouchian Collective, Cormont, Bouamama & Fotia, 2012).

Discrimination in this dictionary is described as direct when it consists of a voluntary, intentionally discriminatory act of an individual or a group of individuals. Discrimination is the result of a concrete act. It assumes a discriminant and a discriminated and, in fact, that the discriminant possesses the power to discriminate. Most often it can be considered to be motivated by a racist-ideology or a racist-prejudice, a known intention to produce unequal treatment (Ibid.).

In our field of enquiry, some school actors carry out different forms of direct discrimination, especially discursive ones, which often result in an essentialness of the differences. These actors adopt an ethnic reading of school activities, in a totally discriminating and reductive way. Sometimes they are even clearly racist and frontal in their interactions with students, in teachers' rooms or in interactions between school actors. For example, a physics science teacher explains that "Indian and Pakistani students" learn by heart and recite afterwards without really thinking: "That's how it is, they reason that way, it's in their head". A physical education and sport teacher challenged a student in front of the class and in my presence, saying, "You Zaireans only think of having fun and fucking". According to him it is a joke, he explains that he likes to tease the students but at the bottom of this "joke is clearly racist. Another teacher finally calls the students using descriptors related to their real or supposed origin "Chinese, Malian etc."

Indirect discrimination does not mean intentionally racist, but means an objective unequal treatment that negatively handicaps one or more individuals belonging to the minority group. Most often we speak of treatments that are oriented by a seemingly neutral criterion from the point of view of the relationship at the origin of the discriminated group, but which in fact produces an inequality between the groups (Ibid.). It can involve positive forms of discrimination, which can translate into the fact that some school actors consider the promotion of difference and diversity as a resource for managing students' difficulties. For example, they will work on Rap texts addressing the issue of uprooting or even the difficulties encountered by immigrants or descendants of immigrants in France or projects relating to the countries of origin of students. The latter do not always appreciate this type of initiative that they find reductive and sometimes stupid because they do not associate with it as they feel French. One student explained that he too wanted to study Victor Hugo. We can then see the link with benevolent discrimination because it is the feeling that these supports would be more adapted to the type of students who motivate the educational choices of the school actors. Benevolent discrimination is the form of discrimination that occurs when the subject is thought to be naturally disadvantaged and it seems important to compensate for this inferiority. This often leads to positive forms of discrimination, but also lower demands and lower ambitions

(Barthou, 2014). This benevolent discrimination also involves a pessimistic and very normative speech. This is the case, for example, when it comes to cultural constraints for students of Maghreb origin or young Muslim women who are often thought to be dominated and inferior because of their religion. This form of discrimination is insidious because it always starts with a good feeling and the desire to help those students perceived as more vulnerable.

In certain contexts, the school is therefore a place of activation of differentiation, of which some teachers and certain pedagogical practices are the tools. It is obvious that the weakness of regulation, supervision and institutional support of the question of cultural diversity is the main explanatory factor for these different discriminating practices. Lack of awareness, lack of knowledge, lack of training and lack of inclusion in the institutions' agenda thus raise the consequences of institutional difficulties to manage diversity and coeducation. These central and eminently political themes remain only slightly discussed in a distant way and largely unapproached in the field, because there is no time or space for address them collectively.

Finally, it is often the personal trajectories of school actors and their different sensitivities that lead them to consider or not diversity, not their training or particular pedagogical frameworks. For Olivier Meunier, there is still no training in intercultural education as such and it is often on the job, in the face of fruitless pedagogical situations or the arrival of newcomers or children called "nomad", that the teachers try to mobilize the cultural backgrounds of the students to promote their integration and their learning (Meunier, 2014). The school field, however, does not have the feeling of being at times discriminating. The actors often hide behind the banner of universalism. It remains that central value, or as Sayad says, "the guard against the essentialist discrimination", meanwhile this universalism, still according to Sayad, can oftentimes originate from chauvinism and imperialism: "the chauvinism and imperialism of the universal, to use Pierre Bourdieu's expression" (Sayad, 1994). However, this universalism which the school actors claim themselves to be a part of is only slightly assumed in the facts. Oftentimes, schools with a varied social and ethnic population tend to reconstitute in the school space differentiations and hierarchies. These last concepts will obviously play a role in the representations of the pupils, their school projections but also their sociability and their self-esteem.

Student School Projections

The sociology of Anglo-Saxon education has indeed explained quite well the significant role played by the effects of the social composition of the school public (school mix), but also the "effects of peers" in the school career

of students; effects that have a greater impact on students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Thrupp, 1999).

In the quantitative part of our survey, we crossed the variables of geographical origin (going back to the place of birth of the grandparents) to the different variables at hand. The results were very revealing at many levels, including statistically. This geographical origin is outstandingly correlated with the students' academic backgrounds and their choice of orientation (the significance being at its maximum and the Cramer's V of 0.168).

First of all, it is important to point out that the immigrant students in our sample, who represent around 50% of the total number of pupils, have on average a higher rate of years repeated than those who did not come from school (34.8% of these students have been held back). This is particularly the case of students of North African origin (46.6%), of Spanish and Portuguese origin (43.9%) and of sub-Saharan African origin (38.5%).

Table 1: Choice of orientation for the following year in %.

| | Non-immigrant | Maghreb | Africa | Spain Portugal | Other countries | Average |
|---|---------------|---------|--------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Missing | 2,0 | 4,8 | 6,8 | 6,3 | 6,9 | 5,4 |
| General study | 24,7 | 25,7 | 22,7 | 15,7 | 22,2 | 22,2 |
| General literary study | 3,3 | 2,7 | 6,8 | 3,8 | 9,7 | 5,3 |
| General scientific study | 23,3 | 13,4 | 11,4 | 15,1 | 20,8 | 16,8 |
| General study of economic and social sciences | 4,3 | 6,4 | 6,8 | 4,4 | 0,7 | 4,5 |
| General technological study | 4,6 | 4,3 | 2,3 | 2,5 | 1,4 | 3,0 |
| Professional Bachelor | 16,1 | 19,3 | 22,7 | 18,9 | 16,7 | 18,7 |
| Certificate of professional aptitude vocational high school | 7,9 | 12,3 | 13,6 | 10,7 | 5,6 | 10,0 |
| Certificate of vocational aptitude in apprenticeship | 9,3 | 7,5 | 4,5 | 14,5 | 4,2 | 8,0 |
| Did not say anything | 2,5 | 1,6 | 0,0 | 1,3 | 1,4 | 1,4 |
| Not interested | 0,2 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,6 | 0 | 0,2 |
| Other | 1,8 | 2,1 | 2,3 | 6,3 | 1,4 | 2,8 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

As we can see in Table 1, all students first choose the general course orientation, but with significant differences. Non-immigrant students as opposed to students from Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa, Portugal and Spain are twice as likely to be in the scientific field. As far as the vocational sector is concerned (all types of diploma cumulated), the majority to choose this sector are those originating from Maghreb immigration (41.5%), closely followed by those coming from Spanish immigration and Portuguese (41.4%), followed by immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa (37.5%) and non-immigrants (33.4%).

After the Baccalaureate and the CAP (certificate of professional competence), it is in majority the students of North African origin and the students of other origins who wish to go to the University (respectively 23.5% and 23.6%), whereas the non-immigrant pupils are only 16.9% to make this choice and those of Spanish or Portuguese origin 15%. On the other hand, non-immigrant pupils are more likely to opt for private schools than the others, those of Spanish and Portuguese origin being the least likely to make this choice. In addition, almost half of non-immigrant students do not know what they will do after graduation compared to only 15% of young people of North African, Portuguese and Spanish origin and 6,5% of those of sub-Saharan African origin. We have noted here, as did before us Yael Brinbaum and Annick Kieffer, that even if parents of North African origin, unlike parents of Portuguese and Spanish origin, more often rely on long and general studies, their children, especially boys, opt more for shorter and vocational educations (Brinbaum & Kieffer, 2005). We can also note in table 1 that students from Portuguese and Spanish immigrants are more likely to opt for CAP in apprenticeships than others, as students of Maghreb origin are less likely than non-immigrants to make this choice. Meanwhile, no student of sub-Saharan African origin opts for this type of education. The origin of the students thus has a significant influence over their choices, which are often reproductive choices, however with, in our sample, higher ambitions for students with a Sub-Saharan African migrant background.

With regards to self-esteem, the results offered are also particularly significant and fascinating. The analysis of some items of academic self-esteem is compelling. In fact, pupils with an immigrant background are less often proud of their school results, which is particularly the case for students of North African origin and sub-Saharan Africa, whereas they are the same amount as the others whom declare to do their school work as best as possible. In addition, students who are descendants of migrants are less likely than others to report being able to succeed in school. On the other hand, they are a bigger portion that often declare to amuse the others and who dare to say things when they have something to say, the majority here being the students of Maghreb and of Africa sub-Saharan origin. In terms of

self-evaluation, they consistently report lower mathematical achievement than non-immigrant students. Twice as many pupils of North African origin and three times as many students from sub-Saharan African countries claim to be bad at this subject. It's pretty much the same thing for non-immigrant. In languages, on the other hand, the answers of pupils who are descendants of migrants are similar to others.

The difficulty lies in the lack of knowledge about the consequences of these factors by the educational teams. When they are discussed in interviews, the reasons given for differentiated orientations and, in particular, the reason for over-representation of students from immigrant backgrounds in the vocational streams are, most of the time, outsourced and attributed to families and their cultures. The causal explanation is often linked to the alleged cultural burdens, family norms and socio-economic difficulties of immigrant families.

Yet our times spent in observation have also shown stereotypical and sometimes racist views of teachers, who attribute different social skills to students according to their ethnic origin, boys of North African origin are often perceived as macho, girls as dominated, not ambitious.. Be that as it may, the standard of indifference to difference remains and the question of the ethnic origin of the pupils is still absent from educational projects and meetings, whereas it is very present within the teaching practices and in the face to face interactions between pupils and teachers.

Interactions between students in a mixed context

In our school contexts, it is important to analyse the role of diversity or uniformity in regards to its consequences on school work but also in interactional terms and in regards to self-construction. We will think here of diversity as coexistence on the same space of social groups with different characteristics. Numerous surveys have shown the weakness of the social mix between schools in the French education system, especially in urban areas, as well as the increase in inequalities between students (Van Zanten 1996, Felouzis, Liot & Perroton 2005; Merle, 2009). The spatial, social, ethnic and school segregations are intimately linked, even more dramatically noticeable in the school markets context and placement logic. Effects of contexts and initial social inequalities are self-feeding and will therefore come to mark the academic trajectories of students. In the contexts of mixed, social, geographical and ethnicity we have observed a form of controlled diversity", that is to say, a very real variety but framed by the establishment and the balance of power between parents, leaders of establishment and teachers, especially through the constitution of classes. This segmentation and hierarchy of

classes represents an institutional and systemic violence, but also seems to be a condition of diversity at the level of certain institutions.

The issue of diversity raises other issues, including the tension between minority and majority. This position in a context of diversity is essential to understanding the experiences of students, in particular migrants and descendants of migrants. Like Brun and Galonnier in the article by Chassain et al. (2016), we think that the minority is not a state but a relational process and it is therefore more correct to speak of minorization rather than minority. In addition, we follow Chassain et al. (2016), regarding the perception of visibility and invisibility as the main developers of social and symbolic exclusions, as well as own resources. These constraints and mobilizations of resources are therefore constitutive of the experiences of migrant students and descendants of migrants.

Context and otherness

It is also interesting to note in our field that in the priority school, at the scale of the French company, the majority can be in found placed in the place of the minority. On the other hand, in other institutions society-wide minorities also find themselves in a position of minorization in the school space. For migrants and migrant descendants, this status of minority seems to reveal ethnic salience and to promote ethnic inter-ethnicity. Let's now take into consideration concrete examples to enlighten our subject.

We decided to target in this section two very different classes of the downtown school. The first is one of the few diverse classes in the school, be it academic, geographic, social or ethnic, articulating different social relationships. The case of the two Chechen pupils, Magomed and Arsen, quoted above is particularly revealing. These two students, isolated in the class, do not actually follow the teachings but are tolerated as non-disruptive. They sleep in class, are sometimes put in the back of the room but are not solicited most of the time, except during physical education and sport and Russian. Russian being because they speak the language and sport because they are more comfortable in this subject; but also, because it is the one subject during which the teacher pays attention to them, tries to integrate them voluntarily by mixing them with the others and by soliciting them regularly. A teacher explains that they do not disturb the class, they are not insulting and are there for family allowances which would, according to her, easily convince teachers to tolerate them. These two students do not speak French well but are out of the UPE2A program of the priority school due to lack of places. While tolerated by other students, they, a majority of the time, avoid having to communicate or interact with them. A student in academic achievement and not from immigration explains: "They are weird but if we do not do anything to them they pay no attention to us". The vice principal

tells me that these students and students of North African origin scare other students. During the class breaks they find other Russian-speaking boys in a very specific and visible place, forming a circle in which other students do not venture, including girls of the same origin.

On the other hand, three more Chechen pupils, two girls and a boy, who arrived more recently seem to be truly integrated in the majority group. They hardly interact with Magomed and Arsen and only stay with non-immigrant students. They seem to avoid contacts with young people of the same origin as they or other migrants, during class and during recess. Ibrajin, a student with great academic success, is idolized by the teachers for his positive example of resilience and will. His example also allows teachers to show that, despite the cases of the other two students, they integrate migrant students who seek to be integrated, in a purely meritocratic logic.

As such, even in Russian class (for which the pupils were 6) the teacher solicits Ibrajin a lot (15 times), as opposed to only twice for Magomed and 3 times one of the Chechen girls.

In this same class, three girls and the boy of North African origin living in the politically high-risk district of the city, are strongly stigmatized and put aside. Many teachers describe this group as “infernal trio”, “the celebrities” and explain that they are students who disrupt classes and are disrespectful. During the class follow-up, they were systematically talked back at and the subject of multiple remarks. For their part, these students avoid as much as possible staying in school and find themselves amongst young people of North African descent and their same neighborhood while in the playground. Two girls in this group overact the neighborhood girls, talking loudly and insulting each other. The question regarding the place of each individual seems very straightforward in the class but at the same time certain behaviors bring up many doubts. These sound interferences and regular verbal addresses are consecutive and borderline territorial offenses as perfectly described by Erving Goffman. These students came to see me several times to ask me exactly what I was doing and tell me that they had plans to go to high school and continue their studies. There is a real gap between the image they give in class and in small groups. They explain that they do not feel comfortable in the school and even less in the class because they do not feel in their place: “They really show off, some of them, in the classroom. I am not good here me”. It seems to be a defence mechanism or even resistance in this specific alteration and minorization context.

Another interesting point in terms of interactions is that the three pupils of North African origin are the only students in the class to have contact with the two Chechen pupils. During physical education, they interact, laugh and “pick on each other”. Selma tells me that they are “friends” and that they are very nice. We can therefore note, in this context of diversity, a

closeness between young descendants of migrants and newcomers, which is much less the case in the priority school. The underdogs would here be both Chechens but also young people of North African origin, recomposing the traditional boundaries, and this, in response to a situation of stigma and minorization. As Erving Goffman points out, a category can induce those who compose it to form groups and to form relationships with one another, even though not all of its members constitute a group (Goffman, 1973).

Finally, in the classroom, cohabitation is more or less pacific and takes place in the indifference and ignorance of the Other. I was able to chat with some of the most preferred and academically successful girls around Magomed and Arsen. As an example, they have never thought about what they had experienced in their home country and during their migratory journey, and obviously do not know Chechnya. During the discussion one of them pointed out Magomed and Arsen would certainly not behave the same way if they spoke French well.

Nevertheless, the distance is very strong and clearly racist remarks are very present. An interesting situation in this respect was that of pupil exchanges. A non-immigrant student said in a big group that he was longing for Marrakesh. Her friends and her then multiplied the jokes: "ouh my gazelle", imitating the Arabic accent while the student of Moroccan origin was right next to them. Their intention was obviously not to attack or mock him, but their behavior was out of place, especially since they were students who made racist speeches in a collective interview.

The other class gathers all of those who are considered the top students of the school. Educational homogeneity is integral; they are all successful, the social homogeneity being strong and this class is almost composed of only non-immigrant students. They are students pushed by their parents (sometimes too much, as said to me by the sports teacher) and who are in a strong acquaintanceship, because they are frequently put in the same class since the 6th grade. Two teachers explained that this is the ideal class, with students whom have an excellent academic level but, contrary to popular belief, the students are not arrogant compared to other years, "This class is all happiness".

The closed group sociability and relationships are therefore very strong and is accompanied by an almost total ignorance of the pupils from other classes. They seem to know only those who take Latin and Greek with them. They are well acquainted with private schools and the reputations of institutions and class trips, stays abroad and preparatory classes to the big-league schools are more feasible and realizable, which is not the case for the other class mentioned beforehand.

They make jokes with teachers and develop more friendly relationships with them. The very layout of the rooms bears witness to this greater and

favorable proximity, since in several courtyards the tables are arranged in a circle and the teacher sits in the middle of the pupils. Another particularly enlightening point is that students' discussions and laughter are more tolerated while, in other classes, they can be perceived as disrespect and ruckus. Noise tolerance is more loose, although at times this class can be noisier than the one considered the most difficult. This is interpreted as the fact that they exchange and work in groups even if they also chatter and are sometimes teasing one another. This class is therefore subject to considerable tolerance because the students are considered to be of "excellent level" and their school conformism is very unambiguous in regards to work.

In the priority school now, the diversity within classes is very visible although it must be said that it welcomes significantly less preferred students. The school climate is less in line with school norms; norms that are transformed in this context with adjustments, on the part of school actors, of expectations and of behaviour.

In the class that we followed, the differences in school abilities are very distinguishable between non-immigrants, descendants of migrants and newcomers. It brings together allophone students, students from a high-risk neighborhood, but also a few students whom are children of engineers and university professors. However, there is a peaceful atmosphere, this class seems to be calm and attentive. The atmosphere is good even if the exchanges between students of different categories are weak. Migrants and descendants of migrants have no privileged contacts and seem to interact with each other as much as with others. For their principal teacher, the class communicated very little initially, "at the beginning of the year, there was no atmosphere in this class, they were borderline lethargic, turned-off", but the team worked a lot around cohesion and the configuration has changed a lot.

It should be noted, however, that during Latin, the best students in the class, all of whom are not of immigrant background, end up with students from other classes who have the same socio-economic profile as themselves and who were in elementary school with them. Their behavior is very different, they seem more at ease, they make jokes, they talk a lot more about the classes and teachers and sometimes even make fun of them. Be that as it may, it seems in this class configuration that social and ethnic diversity enables migrant students and descendants of migrants to work in more favorable conditions and allows them to obtain more satisfactory results.

Territories marked differently by ethnicity

Beyond the strictly academic dimensions, the situations of diversity which are more or less manifested are the main reasons for bringing together, closeness, and distancing in the other territories of the establishments.

We will keep in mind here the definition of the geographer Alexandre Moine for whom the territory is more than an appropriated space, it is acted upon and kept alive (Moine, 2006). Apprehended in a dynamic perspective, it corresponds in fact to a delimited space that is attributed to itself but which also reveals itself as a place of experiences and interactions. This is exactly the case of school spaces, they are places of learning but also of experimentations, interactions and individualizations. School spaces contribute to the process of the students' construction of identity and bring into play the image of oneself.

The downtown school has a strong segmentation within its spaces, which often represents a decal of classes or school and social hierarchies. The playground, for example, consists of very defined objective and symbolic boundaries. As for the interactions between the pupils of the two general classes mentioned above, they are non-existent. In the playground and at the cafeteria (which pupils of North African and Chechen origin attend much less, partly for religious reasons), the pupils of the "good" and "bad" classes do not associate with each other. They do not frequent the same spaces. The most successful class has its entitled area, near the best seats of the yard; while students of North African and Chechen descent of the class stay in spaces near the exit and toilets, with their own entitled benches.

On account of a game of cross representations based on the ignorance of the Other, the two categories of students therefore have their own spaces, which act as reserved areas and in which others do not enter. They will develop spatial uses and use physical markers of territory, including the use of personal effects (Goffman, 1973), such as their jackets, bags ... Indeed, we were able to conclude that the students mostly marked their territory by putting their belongings on the ground, delimiting the spaces as if they were their own apartments. Such is the case for some of the students from the "bad" class who have taken up an area under a flight of outdoor stairs in which they systematically place their belongings. To our knowledge, intrusions, or "territorial offenses" (Goffman, 1973) are non-existent. Everyone respects the implicit rules prevailing against these reserved places. There are only few interactions that do take place on the mode of "ethnic conflicts or neighborhoods conflicts" in the school space, but they maintain more of a peaceful coexistence, in indifference, without really much contact, what which crystalizes the identities. The legitimacy of spaces being on the side of the most favoured; the most feared being those of the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, like representations and social relations in a more general way. Some students may have exchanges, but this is extremely rare and does not lead to true sociability. In this respect, the issue of couples is interesting because, according to the school actors and the students themselves, there is none formed between the two categories mentioned. They seem to reconsti-

tute within the school the spatial and social distance that characterizes them outside the college.

Representations of otherness, ethnicity and diversity

In these different contexts, students' representations of others are multiple, sometimes ambivalent, and especially marked by strong attraction and repulsion phenomena, closely linked to the public and to the organization of schools. In the downtown location, the representations, most of the time, stem from the lack of knowledge and the barriers put in place. The students with immigrant background really finding themselves in a foreign position, what is near finding itself far away in this school (Simmel, 1905). The prejudices utilized by students express at the same time social, ethnic, geographical and educational backgrounds, which are much more diminished in the priority school.

In a focus group conducted with students from the diversity class in the downtown middle school, students openly and overly made racist and discriminatory comments about migrant students and descendants. It should be noted, however, that two students regularly repeated that we should not generalize, one of them even mobilized the category of Arabs as well. A student explained to me:

"In 6th grade, they were all ... Arabs," another then added, "You can say it, social cases". She explained that it is related to the level of education. "Those from Ousse des bois they were raised differently. It is in their behavior they are violent, disrespectful". Another boy retorts, "You definitely can't hint, even slightly, that could be interpreted as racist with them, otherwise you're dead on the spot". Another student, more discreet adds: "that's why the Arabs most usually hang out with each other. They understand each other better. Perhaps because they live among themselves, they live together ... ". The first boy tempered all the same by saying that it was not necessary to generalize: "Ayoub and Sliman, they are Muslims and Arabs but they are very nice (two brothers in academic success) they are well educated". Another student says: "But the others (Arabs) do not have the same way of functioning as us. The group of Inès, they are not nice, must not bother them otherwise they will persecute you. Between them, they are the same as with us but they understand each other, us, we are different".

We are now completely in the construction of ethnic boundaries between "them" and "us"; constituting a particular social organization (Barth, 1969) and underlying the bias of the relative homogeneity of the outgroup (Lorcerie, 2003).

This same group of students also tells me that two girls, who were present, were accused of harassment.

“Between us we laughed we made jokes to Irina, I told her your father he drinks vodka because she is Polish. With Anaéva we understood our humor but she ... We did not know that it touched her. Her parents went to the counsellor and said that we were persecuting her and they summoned me with my mother. It’s not our fault but she was laughing with us so we did not understand and we ended up at the counsellors (...) Another one we made jokes, clichés on the Chinese, the rice. Jannie she really loves fish she said it’s a sign of sushi, she put everything on her religion, well her origin. She told us nothing, she was laughing her too, she should have told us to stop. “

We see it well here, it is critical to think of the articulation of different social relations (school, social, gender, territorial and ethnic). Jounin, Palomares and Rabaud emphasize this need to connect, to articulate, to combine, to engage, to “intersect” social relations in sociological analysis today (Jounin, Palomares, Rabaud, 2008). It is also important, as the authors also think, to reject the primacy of one social relationship over another.

Conclusion

We can therefore conclude here that the self-identity is much more defined and a source of tension when migrant students and descendants of migrants are in situations of minorization, to which are added differences in school statues. When migrant students and descendants of migrants make up the majority at the school level and are better distributed in classrooms, we can observe that this is only beneficial in terms of school results and behavior. Marie Duru-Bellat shows that the negative effects of segregation have certainly been proven, at least for students of modest origin, but also, and this may seem paradoxical, that the beneficial consequences of policies promoting social and ethnic diversity remain limited and are not systematic. She takes an example on students from disadvantaged backgrounds who feel their social situation as all the more negative when their high school is a favoured one (Duru-Bellat, 2007).

Ultimately, forms of school segregation seem to, and to some extent, protect students from the mechanisms of direct discrimination. Visibility and invisibility are likely to produce social and symbolic exclusions, as well as solidarities and resources (Chassain et al., 2016).

The exacerbation of otherness is thus much more marked in the contexts of the minorization of students with an immigrant background, who are additionally in academic and social difficulties. Diversity thus highlights ethnicity, otherness, distance and closeness. In the ethnic diversity contexts, which are more prevalent in the mid-town areas, these processes of alteration and ethnicization are not carried out in the manner of “ethnic con-

flicts” in the school space, but on that of a pacific coexistence, of a specific ignorance and a voluntary distancing from others that crystallizes identities.

In establishments that welcome students from high-risk neighborhoods, ethnicity is less of a problem for migrants and descendents of migrants; the borders sometimes shift onto neighborhood or religion levels. The origins are not constructed in borders and the interethnicity would, in some ways, the closing principle of the citys’ sociability (Lorcerie, 2003). Young people seem to feel less about ethnicity in school establishments than in their neighborhoods. The school protects them, in some ways, from differentiation, despite a strongly ethnicized context.

In a sense, school identity is like another facet of their identity, inseparable, all the while participating in the plurality of the identity references. In the image of how Tarik says it: “I feel French when I’m at school, in the neighborhood I feel African because I hang out with Tunisians, Algerians and Senegalese, Malians, I have to tell it like it is, and at home I feel Algerian”.

We must therefore underline the plurality of school trajectories because some students, more compliant with educational norms and with more academic success, will develop different strategies in minorization contexts. These include, in particular, the avoidance of the ethnic convergence, much alike family avoidance strategies and distancing from the “undesirables” (Van Zanten, 2009). Moreover, even if the ethnicization of social relations is difficult to contest, one must also think about its plurality, its actualization and its transformation. The institutions and the various actors can, indeed, as we have seen, by their internal organisation and their logics of action, can either steer it, or, intensify it.

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