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Cris Beauchemin · Christelle Hamel
Patrick Simon *Editors*

Trajectories and Origins: Survey on the Diversity of the French Population

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The TeO survey was a major collective endeavour. We would like to thank all those who brought this venture to fruition, first and foremost François Héran, Director of INED when the survey was first conceived. He defended the project throughout the 4 years of survey preparation and implementation, offering scientific and political support at difficult times when the survey's legitimacy was brought into question. Chantal Cases, his successor, also provided her unstinting encouragement. She ensured optimal conditions for data analysis and followed the progress of our research with close attention.

A large-scale data collection operation of this kind would have been impossible without the close collaboration of our colleagues at INSEE, both for project governance and for survey design and implementation. Stéfan Lollivier, Head of Demographic and Social Statistics at the time, took the necessary steps to include the survey in the INSEE work programme. Guy Desplanques, Head of the Demography Department, followed by Pascale Breuil, Head of the Demographic and Social Studies unit, supervised its design and implementation. Our colleagues at the Statistics and Immigration Studies unit, Catherine Borrel, unit head, Elisabeth Algava, then Bertrand Lhommeau, and the survey leaders, Jacqueline Perrin-Hayes and Pascal Germé, played a central role in all the survey phases, from its initial design to the release of data just 1 year

after collection. Cécile Ménard, followed by Pascale Pietri-Bessy, coordinated the operations at INSEE and the data collection process. Data collection was organized by the INSEE teams, and we are very grateful to the regional managers and the interviewers who deployed the questionnaire in the field and who recorded the slices of life that respondents kindly made available to us.

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This book is an abridged translation of the book *Trajectoires et origines: enquête sur la diversité des populations en France* published by Éditions de l'Ined in 2015 (Grandes Enquêtes book series). For the original publication, we wish to thank Jean-Marc Rohrbasser, head of the editorial committee, the various anonymous reviewers and the INED editorial team: Martine Rousso-Rossmann, Nicole Berthoux, Dominique Paris and Agnès Belbezet. The book was translated into English by Harriet Coleman, Paul Reeve and Brian Stacy. We wish to thank them for their hard work and for the excellent quality of their translations. Our thanks also to Catriona Dutreuilh who did an amazing job of coordinating the translation work and editing the final version.

A survey of this kind would not have been possible without the financial support of numerous institutions interested in questions of integration and discrimination. Alongside INSEE and INED, they include ACSÉ,

AFPA, ANPE, ANR, DARES, DREES, HALDE, IAURIF-ÎdF and ONZUS. Working together with scientific experts in the steering committee, the funding institutions were present throughout the project.

This book is above all a tribute to the respondents who kindly agreed to share their experiences and trajectories, thereby illustrating the diversity of contemporary French society.

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Preface

Science by Exception, or How the TeO Survey Fulfilled Its Mission

Anyone in France who follows the news on political and social life with a minimum of attention will have heard of the Trajectories and Origins survey, subtitled “Survey on population diversity in France”. Carried out jointly by INED and INSEE in 2008 and 2009, the survey caused something of a stir on its launch (I will return to this below). Since then many articles, working papers, and dissertations have contributed to sustaining public interest in the survey and popularizing its acronym, TeO. But until 2015, no reference document had been published to bring together these publications, expand upon them and systematize their content. You are holding just such a document in your hands (or viewing it on your screen), thanks to the extensive team of collaborators led by Cris Beauchemin, Christelle Hamel, and Patrick Simon. Beyond INED and INSEE, the project leaders agreed from an early stage to provide open access to the survey datasets. They were thus able to include contributions from universities and research institutions, for whose participation I would like to express particular thanks.

It must be emphasized from the outset that the TeO survey is a lone star in the universe of research and public statistics in France. How many surveys have explored in depth the lives and experiences of immigrants and their descendants in France, their integration in French society, and the successes and obstacles that have marked their trajectory over two generations, including experience of discrimination? The only comparable precedent is the geographical mobility and social integration survey (*Mobilité géographique et insertion sociale*, MGIS) carried out by Michèle Tribalat, an INED researcher, in 1992. This pioneering survey, performed in collaboration with INSEE, focused on a set of seven migration streams dating back to different periods of recent French history. It resulted in a set of important publications, and remains a reference today for anyone seeking to understand the process of migrant integration in France in the second half of the twentieth century. Its questionnaire not only retraced migrants’ personal trajectories, it also looked

back at the previous generation. This was the very first time in France that the relevant supervisory bodies, the CNIS and the CNIL,¹ gave authorization to collect information on the countries of birth of individuals and their parents, paving the way for the comparative study of what are now known as the “first generation” (migrants who came from elsewhere to reside in France) and the “second generation” (their children born or raised in France). As the MGIS survey covered several decades retrospectively, regular updating was not necessary. The addition of a few further years of observations would have made little difference to the overall pattern of results. But this argument does not justify the fact that 16 years were allowed to pass between MGIS and TeO. Why such a long delay?

The first reason, and not the least among them, is the cost of such surveys, notably the cost of collecting data by means of a long and complex questionnaire. The objective was to record the trajectories of migrants and their descendants in their various dimensions: geographical, residential, familial, educational, occupational, religious, civic, not forgetting their social networks, cultural activities, and their own perceptions of their personal trajectory. Hence the need to ask hundreds of questions, through interpreters when needed, in face-to-face interviews that took over an hour to complete on average. The next factor was the cost of reaching the relevant minority populations. In France there is no population register providing a sampling frame that can be used to reach all descendants of migrants. The census includes questions on origins, including those of migrants who are naturalized French citizens, but they are limited to the respondents’ own generation, and do not cover their parents. To prepare for the TeO survey, the INSEE team thus had no choice but to trawl by hand through many thousands of birth certificates held by French municipalities, with authorization from judges, in order to identify the children of immigrants who might be eligible to enter the sample.

It was no easy matter to obtain funding for the TeO survey. In the lively debate that surrounded its launch, one commentator – not particularly well-informed on the funding of public surveys, but convinced that self-interest runs the world – became convinced that the primary motivation of the project’s leaders was to grab all the available grant money, supposedly showered so generously upon studies of “diversity” in France. But nothing could be further from the truth. Neither INSEE nor INED had the means to cover the full costs of data collection. Heaven and earth had to be moved before adequate funds could be obtained from various ministries, supplemented by the decisive contributions of a number of agencies and authorities – to whom we are most grateful.² Unable to supervise the content of the questionnaire, the Direction des populations et des migrations (Department for populations and

¹Respectively, the Conseil national de l’information statistique and the Commission nationale de l’informatique et des libertés (national bodies charged with personal data protection in France).

²Direction de l’animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques (DARES), Direction de la recherche, des études, de l’évaluation et des statistiques (DREES), l’Agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l’égalité des chances (ACSÉ), Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes (AFPA) la Haute Autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l’égalité (HALDE), Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR), l’Institut d’aménagement et d’urbanisme (IAU-ÎdF), Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles (ONZUS).

migrations) which at the time was being absorbed by the Ministry of Immigration, abstained from contributing to survey funding, leaving this to the DREES, the shared research and statistics unit of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs. The hunt for the funds needed for the TeO survey involved exhausting efforts on the part of the project leaders, illustrating the chronic deficit of large-scale infrastructure that afflicts social science research in France. I would like to pay particular tribute to these young researchers, who spared no effort in initiating this venture against all odds, despite the risk that their publications would be delayed by several years.

This brings us to one further factor behind the difficulty in launching a new survey on the integration of immigrants and their descendants. Fifteen years after the MGIS survey, a new generation of researchers was needed at INED, along with a new generation of statisticians at INSEE. And yet the initial number of personnel fell far short of what was required. As the director of INED since the late 1990s, I had the backing of the board of administration and the scientific council on this point. In 2002 they supported the creation of a research unit on international migration and minorities, and agreed to staff it through recruitment at the highest level, while in parallel INSEE increased the staff resources devoted to the question of migration. These renewed and rejuvenated teams valiantly led the TeO survey project. But the emergence of a new generation of researchers was evidently a lengthy process.

Finally, the concern, and even hostility, aroused by the very idea of the TeO survey must also be mentioned. Its designers had constructed a questionnaire that explored migrants' integration over time in the various facets of social life, but they also wanted to obtain as much detailed information as possible on experience of discrimination. How can different forms of discrimination be studied without taking into account the categories used by its perpetrators? Given the impossibility of questioning those perpetrators, the survey had to rely on the victims' capacity to perceive discrimination and describe the experience. In France, it was out of the question for the TeO survey to apply the kind of "ethno-racial" framework used in censuses in the United States or the United Kingdom – a list of "races", potentially subdivided into cultural affinities, with the respondent invited to tick one or more boxes.

A first solution consisted in posing questions on various experiences of discrimination or unfair treatment, followed by a long list of possible grounds, including country of origin, surname, neighbourhood of residence, skin colour, accent, etc. These were maintained in the final version of the questionnaire, and detailed studies based on these data can be found in this volume. It is thus possible, based on the TeO survey data, to determine what proportion of persons who experienced discrimination attributed it to one or other factor, including physical appearance and skin colour. The reverse, however, is not possible. What is the probability that individuals will experience discrimination if they are unlucky enough to be perceived as black, Asian, North African, but also white, etc.? The data do not say. This is comparable to a scenario where the proportion of tourists among visitors to the Louvre is known (it is very high), without knowing the probability for a randomly selected

tourist of visiting the Louvre (which is much lower), nor indeed even having an approximation of the number of tourists in a year.

Louis Schweitzer, who at the time was the head of the national authority in charge of combating discrimination (Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité, Halde), took a lively interest in the TeO survey, to the point of co-financing it. He spoke out in favour of a second solution, so-called hetero-perception. This begins with a question such as "Do you feel that you are perceived as black?", followed by a second question such as "If yes, have you been discriminated against for this reason?" This general question would doubtless then have to be broken down by context: family, work, public space, dealings with the administration, etc. Several options of this kind were studied, but they met resolute opposition from the association SOS-Racisme: they saw the "Schweitzer solution", as it came to be known, as nothing other than a "racial census". In their view, under the cover of studying racial discrimination, the TeO researchers were in fact planning to practise discrimination themselves.

The first chapter of the present volume recounts the special treatment to which the TeO survey was subjected in its preparatory phase of examination by the competent authorities: a double examination by the control bodies of the CNIS; an unauthorized leak of the questionnaire to the general public; an online petition launched by SOS-Racisme; and scathing opinion pieces in several daily newspapers either defending or condemning the famous "ethnic statistics" that TeO had come to symbolize. Some were even signed by INED researchers from outside the research unit on migrations. Not to mention the considerable reluctance of the Haut conseil à l'intégration, a body that has since ceased to exist, whose erstwhile president affirmed in an official letter that the TeO project was decidedly too focused on studying discrimination and not enough on integration. No previous INED or INSEE survey had ever kindled such fierce debate.

A coincidence of timing fanned the flames. After the questionnaire had been approved by the CNIS and was about to enter its final test phase, an initiative taken in 2007 by parliamentarians who were also members of the CNIL began to make headlines. It consisted in introducing an amendment to article 63 of a proposed immigration law (known as the "loi Hortefeux", after the Minister of Immigration at the time) aiming to facilitate CNIL scrutiny of "operations needed to conduct studies that measure the diversity of the origins, discrimination, and integration", and specifying that such operations were to remain strictly anonymous and be subjected to a full examination procedure. This amendment was immediately interpreted by the media as a green light for "ethnic statistics", of which the TeO survey was taken as the illustration *par excellence*. On the legal level, the amendment took the form of an exception that was to be added to the ten exceptions already set out in article 8 of the Data Protection Act (*loi Informatique et libertés*) of 6 January 1978, modified in August 2004.

This point merits further explanation. Article 8 of the Data Protection Act, which sets out a general principle inspired by Article 1 of the French Constitution, is of key importance for statisticians and social science and health researchers: "The collection and processing of personal data that reveals, directly or indirectly, the racial and

ethnic origins, the political, philosophical, religious opinions or trade union affiliation of persons, or which concern their health or sexual life, is prohibited.” Such data are labelled as “sensitive” by law (note in passing that income and assets are not included in this list...). This list is a singular one for those interested in research. Are there not countless surveys that draw on individual data in these areas? Does the press not regularly report on opinion polls and surveys that measure political, trade union, and religious affiliations? And what of surveys on health, disabilities, and sexual behaviour? If the 1978 law applies in the same way to private polling institutes and public institutions (INSEE, INED, INSERM, etc.), what, then, is the legal basis for the studies that regularly appear under the “Science” and “Society” headings of print and audiovisual media?

The answer can be given in a single word: exceptions (*dérogations* in French legal language). The same article of law that forbids the collection and use of sensitive personal data then immediately lists no less than ten exceptions, themselves subject to variable conditions. The collection and use of such data is authorized if the protection of persons is guaranteed (written consent is obtained, data are anonymized, statistics compiled by INSEE under the control of the CNIS), if it serves certain ends (favouring the assertion of rights or progress in health research, an association studying its own members...), if it is authorized by a decree from the Conseil d’État, or if it is judged to be in the “public interest”. But the CNIL must always examine which of these exceptions applies, if any, on a case-by-case basis. Anonymity at source, for example, eliminates personally identifiable information from data and takes them out of the scope of the Data Protection Act, but it is again up to the CNIL to determine the technical conditions under which the data collected can be “depersonalized” (as for example in the case of INSERM and INED telephone surveys on sexual behaviours). The law thus responds in the affirmative to the crucial question of whether collecting and using “sensitive data” is permitted. But instead of saying: “It is allowed, as long as...”, it states that “It is prohibited, unless...” The general principle of prohibition remains, although it is made more flexible through a range of duly controlled exceptions.

The CNIL amendment to article 63 of the Hortefeux immigration law thus proposed an additional exception in favour of studies on the diversity of origins and the extent of discrimination. But the Conseil constitutionnel, in a decision issued on 15 November 2007, declared the amendment unconstitutional, on the grounds that it was a “legislative rider” that was out of place in a law on immigration controls. Would it have been found acceptable in another, more relevant law? Looking back in hindsight some years later (and this type of analysis cannot be rushed), I strongly doubt it. The amendment’s sin was not the desire to introduce an eleventh exception to the general prohibition, but the fact that this exception was a thematic one: it was supposed to cover all studies on the diversity of origins, instead of being restricted to an exception of a technical or procedural nature (bearing on privacy protection guarantees). It is in this respect that, rider or not, the amendment proved to be contrary to Article 1 of the Constitution, as the Conseil constitutionnel mentioned in a commentary on the same decision (*obiter dictum*, in legal terms). An exception cannot suspend a general principle; it must remain an exception. The amendment

sought by the CNIL gave the impression that any and all surveys on “the diversity of origins” could thus automatically be classified as in the public interest, whereas the spirit of the law implied that the fulfilment of this condition should be examined on a case-by-case basis. Needless to say, neither INED nor INSEE had called for such an exception, nor had the designers of the TeO survey. The application of the standard procedures of the CNIL was largely sufficient.

Here I must draw the reader’s attention to a fundamental point that, to my knowledge, has never before been raised. Most of our socio-demographic knowledge on changes in French society and questions of public health has been obtained by way of derogation. This is true of studies on the evolution of social mores and family structures, and it is equally true of studies on migrants’ origins and the impact of these origins on their interactions with the host society. As INED researchers gain knowledge of social mores, in the old sense of “moral and political sciences”, they refine their questions, explore individual biographies in greater detail, and trace back histories over several generations. In doing so they are constantly navigating the boundaries between the public, the private, and the intimate.³ The list of sensitive – sometimes extremely sensitive – topics that INED has explored in its surveys over the last 15 years is long: non-marital cohabitation, children born outside marriage, medically assisted procreation, abortion, sexual behaviour, genital mutilation, sexual dysfunction, family violence, disability, adoption, homelessness, end-of-life medical decisions, etc. How have such surveys been possible? Only by exception. In this respect, there is nothing unusual about the study of immigrant populations.

Of course, the sensitive or intrusive character of an issue can change over time. Questions on non-marital cohabitation were still sensitive in 1980, but became commonplace over the following years. In the first years of the PACS civil partnership, compiling statistics on the sex of the partners in civil unions was prohibited by law, until homosexual organizations themselves requested that this secrecy be lifted. I could give many more examples. In the eyes of young researchers today, the questionnaires of the 1980s seem timid, as those of the 1950s were for my generation. Will the same not be true a decade from now, in 2025, to those rereading the passionate debates of the late 2000s on the TeO survey? Will the suspicion that certain questions on origins and appearances seek to “undermine the foundations of the Republic” still be understood, when their modest aim was to better capture the mechanisms underlying the various forms of discrimination that undermine the principle of equality?

More than a decade has passed since the polemics stirred by the TeO survey, and already the lava has cooled on at least one theme: questions about religion. Who remembers the fiery accusations spurred by these questions, on the same grounds as (and perhaps to an even greater extent than) ethnic origins and physical appearance? In an official letter to the CNIS on the TeO survey, SOS-Racisme issued this absolute accusation: “Apparently, INED and INSEE wish once again to verify that

³This line of thought was already broached in the preface to the INED volume on the Family history survey associated with the 1999 census (*Histoires de familles, histoires familiales. Les résultats de l'enquête Famille de 1999*, Paris, Éditions de l'Ined, coll. « Les Cahiers », 156).

anti-Semitic adage, ‘Jews are rich.’” And further down, this definitive statement: “Presuming to understand the contribution of religious influence to the behaviour of individuals is totally unacceptable.” This casts opprobrium on the very principle of a sociology of religion, already present in 1897 in Émile Durkheim’s universal classic *Suicide*, and practised in countless research centres around the world. Who can deny the influence of the religious factor on behaviours as varied as non-marital cohabitation, fertility, abortion, divorce, and end-of-life care? There is no major stage in the life cycle that is not deeply affected by individuals’ relationship to religion. What demographer or sociologist would dare to forbid research of this type, risking exclusion from the entire scientific community? Before the data had been examined, how could anyone dictate that religion has no effect on the integration of migrants and their descendants in different spheres of social life in France?

While Article 1 of the constitution may sweepingly condemn legal distinctions by “origin, race, or religion”, not a single supervisory body, be it the CNIS, the CNIL, or even the Conseil constitutionnel in its decision of November 2007, casts doubt on the legitimacy of questions about religion in public statistical surveys. It is abundantly clear that scientific analysis of the religious factor in an anonymous survey cannot be construed as a form of unequal treatment granting rights to certain individuals or withdrawing them from others on the basis of their religion; and neither can it be seen as an attempt to label individuals on the basis of their religious affiliation. The antiracist group’s demand that questions on religion in the TeO survey be prohibited found no support. The present volume thus presents invaluable in-depth analyses of discrimination by religion, changes in religious references from one generation to the next, and levels of religious endogamy among practitioners of different religions, be they Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, or Muslim.

The classical argument holding that the relationship to religion is a shifting reality that resists all measurement also does not hold water: all the realities of this earthly existence are shifting ones, beginning with social realities. The response to this ancient problem does not consist in prohibiting statistics, but in diversifying them to better capture behaviours in all their complexity. This is why the TeO survey distinguishes between questions that reflect a simple sense of affiliation, those that speak of levels of practice, and those that establish a strong attachment to religion. It bears repeating, although it contradicts a widespread belief: public statistics and public research have the right to include direct questions on the religion of respondents, their spouses, and their parents, on the condition that the scientific purpose of the survey justifies this inclusion and is formally recognized. From 1980 to 2008, INSEE and INED had to content themselves with a question on respondents’ religious affiliation that did not specify the religion in question (the distinction drawn was simply: “neither sense of affiliation nor practice”, “sense of affiliation only”, “both”, “do not know or prefer not to respond”). Since then, at least three public statistical surveys have included direct questions on the religion of respondents and their families. Besides the TeO survey, there have also been the successive waves of the ERFI survey (the French version of the International Generations and Gender Survey, carried out in 2005, 2008, and 2011 in 15 European countries), as well as the MFV survey (Migration, families

and ageing in the overseas *départements*, 2009–2010). These surveys were all carried out jointly by INSEE and INED, with the approval of supervisory bodies. They gave rise to publications that are accessible online. None of them has ever led to the slightest stigmatization of populations who believe in or practise the religions concerned.

As the years go by and the dust begins to settle, there is no doubt that the TeO project stands out for its novelty and for its exceptional results. To critiques of principle, it responded with a demonstration in practice. Its leaders decided to show that the proof of the pudding was in the eating. It is now clearly established that social science research can expand our knowledge of discrimination and its mechanisms without the slightest threat to individual freedoms, and without any damage to minorities. More precisely, TeO demonstrates – if a demonstration were needed – that the technique of “proxies” or substitutes, whereby a problem is approached by talking about something else, has severe limitations. Country of origin cannot be equated with religion, any more than religion with physical appearance, or language with country of origin. These factors can act cumulatively or interact, but they only partly overlap. To take just one example, religious discrimination does indeed exist, but quite separately from discrimination by origin.

It has now been demonstrated, through the systematic use of logistic regression as a tool for modelling and differentiation, that for a given duration of residence, generation, age and level of education, migrants and their descendants still encounter difficulties of highly unequal scale in their integration into French society, depending on their origin and on the relationship of the native-born population to that origin group. Taking the redundancy of these different variables as axiomatic and excluding one or another of them *ex-ante* is not a scientific approach. In good science, the only valid criterion for introducing a variable into a model, or excluding it, is its added explanatory value, empirically attested. Opponents of a model are free to refute it, but it is up to them to demonstrate that the observed differences can be better explained with other variables.

In the same line, the designers of the TeO survey understood the importance of creating control samples for purposes of comparison, i.e. French citizens born in France to parents also born in France, but also persons born French in the overseas *départements*, or born in metropolitan France to parents born overseas. Complementary questions were used to carefully distinguish between repatriates and migrants (as well as their respective descendants). Here again, these methodological distinctions, far from dismembering our one and indivisible Republic, have treated it with total respect, working to measure the gap that separates the reality from the ideal. TeO is the first survey to compare the experiences of discrimination faced by members of different populations who, in the eyes of those practising discrimination, share a common visible trait: the colour of their skin; some because they descend from African populations reduced to slavery in the Antilles and long since legally included in the French nation, others because they came to France from sub-Saharan Africa. The results confirm that while a family and community history of several generations of French citizenship may guarantee access to jobs in the civil service, it does not protect individuals from racial discrimination.

The authors do not evade any of the difficulties that the second generation faces on the labour market, which are often greater than those of their parents when they arrived in France in a different economic context. Reinforcing the findings of Sciences Po's 2005 CEVIPOF survey by Sylvain Brouard and Vincent Tiberj, they confirm that the children of immigrants from the Maghreb and Turkey have tended to turn to Islam, and that this religious revival is not unrelated to frustrations arising from experience of discrimination. On a question as crucial as the unequal school outcomes of girls and boys, as measured notably by the probability of leaving school with no qualifications, they reveal that even after controlling for a series of socio-economic and sociolinguistic factors, large differences by country of origin remain. All other things being equal, school failure is less common among girls from families with origins in the Maghreb or sub-Saharan Africa than among boys from these families, whereas the opposite is the case among families of Turkish origin, who sometimes appear to deliberately curtail girls' education. Here again, these differences highlight a need for further research, both qualitative and quantitative. Many more examples could be given.

Generally speaking, the TeO survey reminds us that discrimination is not merely a postulate – it can be empirically demonstrated. Its mechanisms need not merely be guessed at – they can be measured. Nor can it be reduced to vague representations. Much to the contrary, it is crucial to study the relationships between subjectively perceived discrimination and the objective experience reflected in life trajectories, with their histories of success and failure, progress and marginalization. The TeO survey makes this possible. No doubt the first results presented here point to the need for further, more detailed studies, but we have already learnt a major lesson: the subjective and objective dimensions of discrimination are closely linked.

At this stage, one last clarification is needed. Indeed, perhaps I should have begun here. In collecting sensitive data on origins, four levels of knowledge and practice can be distinguished. In the nominative databases of administrations and businesses, recording data on origins and religion is prohibited: no exception is possible under current jurisprudence. The second level is currently that of the population census, which since the nineteenth century has included a question on respondents' country of birth and previous nationality, even if they have since acquired French citizenship. The third level goes back one generation, asking about country of birth and the previous nationality of the respondent's parents. This is the case, for example, of the family history survey (EHF), associated to the 1999 census and, since the years 2003–2004, of INSEE's major surveys (labour force, family and housing, living conditions, etc.). At last we are able to measure access to employment, housing, and social and career mobility among the descendants of immigrants.

The fourth and final level is reserved for specialized research surveys on sensitive topics. This includes the study of discrimination by origin, which calls for the description of characteristics linked to discrimination, including physical appearance, provided that strict technical and legal guarantees are set in place. Surveys in this category, which includes TeO, are extremely rare, but in my view they should be carried out every decade, or even every 5 years. Such surveys must address a

strong social demand: in the case of TeO, the need for international knowledge and comparisons on the dynamics of integration and the scale of discrimination. I do not consider, however, that it should fall upon the researchers themselves – be it with the best possible intentions – to demonstrate that their work will necessarily have a “positive impact” on the fight against discrimination or, for example, on the success of integration programmes. No one expects a survey on incomes to demonstrate that it will improve their distribution. Conversely, it is impossible to prevent statistical studies from being occasionally misused by the ignorant or the ill-intentioned. The work of refutation in these cases must take place in the public arena. The researcher’s role is not to reform society but to methodically inform social actors through new knowledge, as objectively as possible. The designers of the TeO survey and the researchers who have explored the resulting data have fulfilled this mission perfectly. Now is the time for other social actors to take hold of the results, for competing researchers to do better, and for the responsible authorities to ensure that the means are made available for future surveys on the same topic.

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Chapter 1

Introduction



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1.1 Genesis of a Survey

Even before it was a project, the Trajectories and Origins (TeO) survey was a clear necessity. France, a country of immigration throughout the twentieth century, has become a multicultural society, and the diversity of origins represented in its population is unprecedented. And yet little was known about the situation of populations with an immigrant background. In public debate, they are portrayed through false representations and stereotypes. With industrial restructuring, immigrants, initially seen as useful when the French economy needed low-skilled labour, came to be treated as undesirables. Economic crisis and endemic mass unemployment undermine the legitimacy of their presence in the country. Although born and raised in France, their children too are sometimes seen as separate from the national community. Between the Marches for Equality of the years 1983 and 1984 and the riots of November 2005, the “second generation” question became a running theme in the mass media (Lapeyronnie 1987; Hajjat 2013; Beaud and Masolet 2006). The list of anxieties and fears is long; living in segregated neighbourhoods, failing at school, and lacking national identity, the children of immigrants, it was argued, would be tempted by *communautarisme*.¹ Political leaders have diagnosed a crisis of the French “model of integration”, while the descendants of immigrants demand equal rights and denounce the discrimination that they face. And indeed, research on

¹ The meaning of *communautarisme* does not translate easily in English since it is a mix of sociological and political terms. It refers to a propensity of the members of a group (be it ethnic, racial, sexual, social class, etc) to favor their membership of the group over other identities and participation, leading to a cluster of social interactions within the in-group and reducing any interactions with the out-group.

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discrimination has demonstrated that citizenship does not protect French nationals of immigrant background from unequal treatment based on their origins (Simon 2007). What should we think about this? Does the problem ultimately lie in the behaviours and strategies of individuals with an immigrant background, or in the way that French society responds to its growing population diversity?

It is easy to imagine that the alternatives are not limited to this Manichean dichotomy, and that the realities of the trajectories, positions, and practices of immigrants and their descendants are much more complex (Guénif, 2006). Although the difficulties are real and should not be minimized, high achievers exist alongside school dropouts; immigrants' levels of qualification have increased considerably in the last three decades; spatial concentration is not necessarily a sign of geographical exclusion; and representations of community isolation are at odds with the evidence that the social worlds of immigrants and their descendants are increasingly mixed (Santelli 2007; Safi 2006; Pan Ké Shon and Verdugo 2014).

However, these findings are patchy, often published in monographs or community studies at neighbourhood or city level. Statistical data collected on a large scale and providing detailed knowledge of different origin groups are often lacking. While knowledge gaps on immigrant populations have been filled since the early 1990s, the situation of the descendants of immigrants in French society has not been captured in census data or in most public statistical surveys. There has been progress in the last decade, notably with the addition of questions on parents' country of birth and nationality in the Labour Force survey (*Enquête emploi*), but that survey does not cover many areas of social life. What are the family, residential, and employment trajectories of migrants after arriving in France? To what degree are the milestones in their trajectories dictated by choice or by constraint? How strongly are their trajectories still influenced by the cultural and material assets they possessed – or did not possess – before arriving in France? Once length of stay and socioeconomic characteristics have been taken into account, do we still find significant differences in the processes of integration of migrants from different origins? These questions regarding “immigrants' outcomes” take different forms for their descendants, who were born and socialized in France. What role do the origins of the second generation play in their trajectories, and how do these differ from the trajectories of the descendants of French families with a comparable social background? Are familial and marital behaviours and social practices reproduced across generations, or are substantial changes observed? Does intergenerational transmission vary widely across origin groups?

In launching the TeO survey in late 2004, the aim of INED and INSEE was to answer these and many other questions. Funded by various ministries and public institutions (DARES, DREES, ACSÉ, AFPA, HALDE, ANR, IAU-ÎdF and ONZUS), the survey was led by a joint INED-INSEE team, along with a multidisciplinary group of 15 researchers and academics from diverse institutions and research centres. The list of contributors to this volume reflects that diversity, as most worked first on the survey design and then on analysis of the data. As we mark the close of the adventure that began in 2006 with the development of the

questionnaire, followed by the field survey between autumn 2008 and February 2009, it is important stress the collective nature of this undertaking.

The TeO survey was a necessity: society at large, the scientific community and the public authorities were voicing an urgent need for reference data on the situation of immigrants and their descendants. Our aim was to respond to these demands while developing an independent research programme. In short, it was up to us to define the ambitions and content of a survey that would simultaneously serve the public interest and contribute to the advancement of scientific research. There are many ways to tackle questions of integration and discrimination in surveys, and they are widely debated, not only in the political arena, but also among social scientists (Lorcerie 1994; Blum 1998; Fassin and Simon 2008; Rea and Tripiier 2010). Let us recall the main research question to be addressed by the survey, as described at its inception: “The survey will investigate to what extent origin, as such, is a factor of inequality, or simply of specificity in access to the various resources of social life (housing, language and education, employment, leisure, public services and social benefits, contraception, healthcare, nationality, social networks, marriage market, etc.). It will investigate the link between origin and other status categories in French society (gender, class, phenotype, age, neighbourhood...) in order to analyse processes of integration, discrimination, and identity construction in French society as a whole”. Stemming from the political and social debates of the 1990s and 2000s, the issue of integration became a central concern in both research and politics. This was highlighted by the previous survey of immigrants and their descendants carried out by INED and INSEE in 1992 – the geographical mobility and social integration survey (Mobilité géographique et intégration sociale, MGIS) – which examined immigrants’ assimilation and concluded that the French republican model of integration was working well (Tribalat 1995). However, integration has become a cliché, and the contribution of this concept, in terms of knowledge, has been devalued as its political charge has increased. The rising awareness of discrimination and its recognition on the political agenda has fostered a re-orientation of scientific and social interest towards society and its institutions (Fassin 2002; De Rudder et al. 2000).

It was in this context that the TeO survey was launched, marking a new step in quantitative research on populations of immigrants and their descendants. The project explicitly called for a reformulation of research questions around issues of discrimination. The survey, and the analyses built upon it, examine integration over time by studying trajectories and comparing successive generations in terms of living conditions and access to resources, but steer away from a normative approach to integration, wherein the practices and behaviours of immigrants and their descendants are expected to converge toward a reference represented by the mainstream population, itself understood as uniform.

The project included two strands of research: first, a resource-based approach; second, an examination of different forms of discrimination and their consequences for identity construction and practices. The objective was to describe and analyse levels and modes of access to the various resources of social life (language and education, employment, housing and place of residence, public services and social

benefits, nationality, healthcare services, contraception, etc.). In studying levels of access to resources, we sought to identify obstacles and inequalities arising over the life course, and to determine the respective roles of individual or collective strategies and of structural constraints (family and social background, type of housing, spatial segregation, income, etc.). The trajectories and practices of immigrants and their descendants follow two types of processes across French society: differentiation and singularization, on the one hand, and convergence and cohesion, on the other. This approach served as a guiding thread, first for questionnaire design, and then for data analysis. Below, in brief, are some of the main features of our research strategy, as set out over the course of this volume.

- Although the principal goal was to obtain information on immigrants and their descendants, the survey covered the whole population. Individuals with no immigrant parentage in the last two generations responded to most questions, including those on migration trajectories, transnational practices, experience of discrimination, and forms of national belonging. We were thus able to compare differences by origin in the practices, experiences and trajectories of immigrants and their descendants, and of the mainstream population. This was truly a survey on the diversity of all populations in French society.
- Questions about transmission and reproduction from one generation to the next were central to the project. By comparing the positions of immigrants and the trajectories of their descendants, born and socialized in France, we could document the “unchaining of the generations” (Attias-Donfut and Wolff 2009) and its variations across ethnic backgrounds. Analysing the trajectories of descendants of immigrants provides a crucial means to assess French society’s ability to ensure equality of opportunity and reach cohesion with diversity of origins. We are thus able to observe the invisible boundaries within society, revealed by the filtering and selection of individuals based on their origin.
- The survey had two complementary ambitions, sometimes difficult to reconcile: to collect information on wide-ranging areas of social life on small targeted groups, while at the same time focusing on more specialized research themes. The compromise consisted in remaining superficial on certain topics, while going into detail on others. We gave particular priority to the study of migration trajectories, union formation, and the description of educational trajectories and current employment. Experience of discrimination was also a central component of the survey. The questionnaire included questions on discrimination in every area of social life where it can occur (in education, during job recruitment and in the workplace, in healthcare, housing, access to services), and a specific dedicated module that also explores the experience of racism.

The comparative approach adopted for the analysis examines similarities and differences across generations and between the various population groups that form “French diversity”. Alongside immigrants and their descendants, we also identified individuals from the overseas *départements* (DOMs) and their children born in metropolitan France as a group of interest. In their relationship to migration and discrimination, the situation of these French citizens is distinct from that of others with

several generations of French parentage, i.e. persons born as French citizens to French parents. This last group formed by persons with no immigrant parentage in the last two generations remains difficult to name, as it is constructed by contrast with minority groups. We were not satisfied with the terms “control group” or “reference group”. We ultimately chose the term “mainstream population” to refer to its position both from a demographic viewpoint and in relation to French social stratification.²

The knowledge obtained through the survey has been disseminated not only via the publications of the survey analysis team, but also by making the data available to the scientific community. We adopted a very proactive strategy on this point, making the survey datasets available via the Quetelet web platform a year after the end of data collection, in February 2010, enabling the research community to work on the data in parallel with the survey analysis team. This strategy proved effective: many of the publications based on TeO data have been authored by researchers external to the project.

1.2 An Innovative Survey

The first challenge for the survey was to find a methodology that would enable us to reach populations that are difficult to identify in the usual sources of household surveys. It was important to cover all groups making up the population residing in metropolitan France, to capture all trajectories and experiences, both their singularities and their similarities, in relation to processes of integration and discrimination. This included immigrants, descendants of immigrants who were born in France, persons from the overseas *départements*, their children born in metropolitan France, and French native-borns with native-born French parents – the “mainstream population”. In total, nearly 22,000 questionnaires were administered to cover these various sub-samples, with substantial over-representation of several statistically rare ethnic groups (for example, immigrants from Southeast Asia, Turkey or sub-Saharan Africa and their descendants) to ensure a statistically reliable sample size. Moreover, in the absence of any ready-to-use sampling frame to select individuals born in France to immigrant parents, the constitution of a sample of descendants of immigrants was a considerable feat. The sampling method is described in a note at the end of this volume.

The questionnaire was administered by INSEE and its network of interviewers (566 interviewers in 18 Regional Divisions) from September 2008 to February 2009. Despite the respondents’ high levels of mobility, which called for ingenious address recovery strategies, the response rate was 61%, which is high for this type of individual survey. Direct refusals were relatively rare, as the survey was well received by the persons contacted by the interviewers. In addition to residential mobility, linguistic issues of non-native French speaking immigrants and the

²See the lexicon in Chap. 2 of this book.

concentration of respondents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, where data collection is generally more challenging, were also problems specific to this survey. At the end of data collection process, 21,800 interviews had been conducted, broken down as follows:

- 8300 immigrants, 86% of the initial target (9600);
- 8200 descendants of immigrants, 85% of the initial target (9600);
- 700 DOM native-borns, 88% of the initial target (800);
- 700 descendants of DOM native-borns, 88% of the initial target (800);
- 3900 persons from the “mainstream population”.

Two other operations connected to the main survey were also implemented in parallel, to flesh out the data available from the TeO project:

- A postal survey of young people, comprising an 8-page self-administered questionnaire on family transmission and parent-child relations to be completed by all offspring aged 18–24 in the target household. Out of the 6163 questionnaires sent out, 3353 were returned to INSEE (a return rate of 54%) and data capture was performed by an external service provider. Analyses based on this distinct database are not presented in this volume, and have been published elsewhere (Mogu  rou and Santelli 2013; Mogu  rou et al. 2013).
- Qualitative post-surveys conducted with a subset of 1000 respondents by 19 teams selected by competitive tender, on a varied set of themes, for more in-depth examination of the survey questionnaire results. Some projects have been presented in separate publications.³ These post-survey interviews are not covered in this volume.

Finally, communication has been a central concern from the outset. A survey such as this one cannot be carried out without explaining its ins and outs, offering reassurance about its objectives, and involving civil society organizations, wherever possible, with its preparation. A website was created to post the survey documents online (<http://teo.site.ined.fr/>); a short English version is also available. The questionnaire was also posted online and translated into English. A forum of associations was created, and the survey was presented at a one-day event focused on gauging reactions to the project as a whole. These constant contacts with civil society and the research community were also useful in defusing the various controversies that arose during survey implementation.

1.3 A Survey Under Close Scrutiny

Given the sensitive topics addressed in the questionnaire, and the sampling by ethnic origin of the populations surveyed, the survey was a delicate operation. Moreover, although TeO was a scientific survey, the fact that it was co-headed by

³ See the list of publications on the TeO survey website: teo.site.ined.fr

INSEE and that the sample was derived from the census gave it a special status. Its design and implementation were subject to close – and, in many respects, exceptional – scrutiny, on the part of both the institutions supporting the project and the bodies charged with verifying and certifying scientific quality and compliance with the ethical principles governing statistical surveys. Its status as a public statistical survey conferred many advantages, but limited the development of methodological innovations on sensitive questions. For a survey on populations with an immigrant background, and with a focus on themes of integration and discrimination, the balance is sometimes difficult to achieve. As aptly noted by the Constitutional Council in the comment relative to its decision of 15 November 2007⁴ on the conduct of studies measuring diversity of origins, discrimination, and integration: “In the realm of statistics, not everything is possible”. Given its objectives, the TeO survey found itself at the centre of a wider societal debate that accompanied its implementation and that had a non-negligible impact on its content. Here we will briefly review these episodes.

The standard pathway of public statistical surveys on demographic questions begins at the CNIS (National council for statistical information), where the committee on demography and living conditions issues an opinion on its appropriateness (*avis d’opportunité*). This opinion, formed on the basis of a grounded presentation of the survey objectives, must ensure that it corresponds to the public interest, without duplicating the work of previous surveys. Once this opinion has been issued, surveys are evaluated by the *Comité du label*, another CNIS body, which examines the questionnaire methodology and content in detail, before ultimately issuing the “label of statistical quality”. In parallel, a file is submitted to the French data protection agency, CNIL, which rules on respect for privacy and the conditions for collecting sensitive information (ethnic or racial origins, religion, health status, political convictions, sexual orientation, etc.).

The TeO project took a significantly different path. The CNIS issued an initial favourable opinion on 15 May 2006. But, breaking with the usual procedure, other sessions of the CNIS were scheduled to further discuss the survey project. An extraordinary supplementary session was held on 24 May 2007 to examine the sensitive questions contained in the questionnaire (foreigners’ residence permits, questions on religion, ethnic origin, and skin colour). At the end of this session, as the questions on respondents’ skin colour and religion had generated debate, another session was scheduled with the stated objective of “obtaining a consensus” on these questions. In the meantime, on 31 May 2007, the *Comité du label* validated the survey protocol and questionnaire, issuing an opinion confirming the general interest and statistical quality of the survey. However, this opinion was subject to the “condition that the CNIS subsequently issue a favourable opinion on the sensitive questions in the questionnaire”. The CNIS session of 12 October 2007 was thus entirely devoted to examining the TeO survey. At the end of a lively debate, the questions on religion and identity – including those on skin colour – were validated, accompanied by restrictive conditions on dissemination of the corresponding data.

⁴Decision no. 2007–557 DC.

Access to certain variables on religion and political orientation would thus be subject to a specific procedure managed by the CNIS's committee on statistical confidentiality.

The first pilot survey, scheduled for late November 2007, thus included two questions on skin colour. They began with the way the respondent was seen by others: "When someone meets you, what colour(s) do you think they see you as?" The response was open, with no predefined categories. It was followed by a self-identification: "And what colour(s) would you say that you are?" – again with an open response. But while the survey questionnaire had ultimately been approved after multiple examinations by the CNIS, the questions on the respondents' skin colour was considered incompatible with Constitutional Council decision of 15 November 2007, recalling that the "the processing required to conduct studies measuring diversity of origins, discrimination, and integration [...] may bear on objective data but may not, in light of the principle set out in article of 1 of the Constitution, be based on ethnic origin or race." In the wake of this decision, INSEE and INED removed these two questions from the final questionnaire.⁵

The removal of the questions on skin colour may retrospectively be seen as an episode with no substantial impact on the survey data analysis. Nevertheless, the fact that we were unable to confront this aspect of identity and discrimination in a scientific survey – albeit one carried out under the aegis of the French public statistical service – raises questions about freedom of research on these themes, and about the persistent confusion between an ethno-racial frame of reference that might be used by administrations, on the one hand, and, on the other, categories constructed by researchers for purely statistical purposes in order to advance knowledge on these topics. Beyond these specific questions, the procedure itself – which was exceptional in various respects – and the debates surrounding the conduct of the survey demonstrate the extreme sensitivity of the topics that it covers. On several levels, the TeO survey took place under close scrutiny.

1.4 The Contents of this Book

This volume is a translation of selected chapters from the French book presenting the TeO findings.⁶ Compared to the French version with its 19 chapters, this English volume contains 13 chapters and a shorter version of the methodological note. We have merged two chapters on education into one, and have done the same with two chapters on employment. The chapters on migration trajectories, fertility histories, residential decohabitation, and the measurement of discrimination in the survey were not included. We wanted to cover the main themes of the questionnaire in this

⁵For a discussion on the consequences of the decision of the Constitutional Council and the associated comments, see the COMEDD report (Héran et al. 2010).

⁶Beauchemin Cris, Hamel Christelle, Simon Patrick (2015) *Trajectoires et origines. Enquête sur la diversité des populations en France*, Paris, INED, 607 p. (Grandes Enquêtes)

volume, in order to offer a complete overview of the situation of immigrants and their descendants in contemporary French society. The authors of the various chapters worked together for several years and developed a shared analytical framework that was applied to the data. The definition of population groups, age groups, and family characteristics are standardized across chapters; the variables describing the phenomena under study, such as transnationalism, employment, education, migration, and discrimination are present in multiple chapters, and for the most part are constructed in the same way throughout. This standardization of conceptual tools ensures the overall consistency of this volume despite the large number of contributors.

We presented descriptive analyses of the initial results in a previous publication (Beauchemin et al. 2010). The objective of the present volume is thus to deepen our analyses in the light of existing knowledge on the questions examined in the survey. Chapter 2 looks at the sociodemographic profile and social characteristics of the population groups studied in this volume. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 focus on the resources of migrants and their descendants: education, work, health and housing. The accumulation of human capital may open pathways to mobility for migrants, while social capital that descendants inherit from their families is transformed through access to the resources available in French society. However, the benefits of these resources are modulated by differential access to education, the labour market, and housing. Chapter 7 addresses the dynamics of family formation of immigrants and their descendants, their reproduction or transformation. After identifying the obstacles linked to origins in different areas of social life, the last chapters look at experiences of discrimination and racism from the point of view of the respondents, and address topics that are central to the experiences of minorities, looking at identities, citizenship, civic and political participation, and relationships to religion in a society that is already highly secularized. These combined approaches offer many lessons, which we summarize in the concluding chapter.

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