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978-1-107-00481-8 - Ethnic Minority Migrants in Britain and France: Integration Trade-Offs

Rahsaan Maxwell

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Ethnic Minority Migrants in Britain and France

This book addresses why some ethnic minority migrant groups have better economic and political integration outcomes than others. The central claim is that social integration leads to trade-offs with economic and political integration. The logic behind this claim is that socially segregated groups may have difficulties interacting with mainstream society but will have more capacity for group mobilization. That mobilization can improve economic and political integration. In comparison, socially integrated groups may have greater capacity to interact with mainstream society but also less likelihood of developing significant group mobilization resources. As a result, this can limit their economic and political integration outcomes. Rahsaan Maxwell develops this argument with evidence from Britain and France, claiming that similar group-level dynamics exist despite numerous national-level contextual differences, and provides a brief extension of the argument to the Netherlands and the United States.

Rahsaan Maxwell is assistant professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His work has previously appeared in *Political Behavior*, *International Migration Review*, *West European Politics*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and the *Dubois Review*. He has edited volumes and written commission reports for think tanks and foundations in the United States and Europe. He has received fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Transatlantic Academy, the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), and the French Embassy in the United States.

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Acknowledgments

This book grew out of my doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley, but it engages questions about diversity that have shaped my entire life. I grew up in a New York City environment where diversity was normal. I am African American and I attended schools with Jewish classmates; lived in neighborhoods with Latin American-, Irish-, and East European-origin neighbors; and worshipped in black churches. There were no overt racial or ethnic conflicts, but from an early age I knew that it was necessary for my survival to figure out when, where, why, and how my racial and ethnic origins would be salient. As I grew older, I became interested in general patterns of racial and ethnic relations, from intellectual curiosity and as a way of placing my experiences in a broader context. This book is my attempt to grapple with those issues. The results have not always been comfortable. As a socially integrated minority individual in the United States, it is not easy for me to deal with the finding that socially integrated groups face trade-offs that may impede their economic and political progress. I do not analyze the case of African Americans in this book, but digesting the personal implications of this research is something that will continue for years to come.

None of this would have gotten off the ground without an incredibly supportive environment during my graduate studies at Berkeley. Jonah Levy was a stellar dissertation chair who shepherded me through the long process and watched this project take many twists and turns. Jack Citrin, Michel Laguerre, Margaret Weir, and John Zysman were valuable members of the committee who offered unique insights and made it all come together. That said, and without taking anything away from my formation in Barrows Hall, the person who probably had the most influence over my graduate years was not even affiliated with UC Berkeley. Barbara Phillips was already a Professor Emerita of Sociology and Urban Studies at San Francisco State when we met and I began renting a room in her house. Over the years, she shared her home, her contacts around the world, her intellectual insights, and most importantly her heart. She is one of the main reasons that I enjoyed living in Berkeley literally every day I was there and was able to dedicate myself to this research.

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