

Class Matters: A Study of Minority and Majority Social Mobility in Britain, 1982–2011¹

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This article asks whether standard accounts of class reproduction apply among migrants and their descendants as among the majority group, whether there is a process of assimilation across generations toward the overall (British) pattern of class reproduction, whether the trends over time in absolute and relative mobility among the majority population are mirrored among migrants and their descendants, and whether trends in class reproduction are mirrored in trends in ethnic stratification. Using national representative surveys covering four decades, the authors find a major generational shift, with the first generation experiencing a notable social decline but the second generation having a clear advancement. Relative mobility rates among migrants and their descendants are close to those of the majority group and exhibit similar trends over time. Ethnic stratification also appears to be slowly declining, although the persistence of unemployment among the second generation qualifies the optimistic story of ethnic socioeconomic assimilation.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article, which draws on recent British data, is to integrate social mobility research with that on migrants and their descendants. In many Western countries the growth over the last 50 years in the number of

¹ We are most grateful to the *AJS* reviewers and to John Goldthorpe at Nuffield College, Oxford University, for their very insightful suggestions and to the United Kingdom's Economic and Social Research Council for funding the projects for this research: Socio-

migrants, often from ethnically or racially distinct backgrounds, and the increasing number of descendants of migrants has been one of the most striking contemporary developments. For example, in the United States recent figures show that fully a quarter of the resident population consists of migrants or children of migrants (Duncan and Trejo 2015).

Social mobility research and ethnic studies are both concerned with issues of equality of opportunity and the influence of ascribed characteristics on life chances. However, the two areas of scholarly inquiry have largely been running on separate tracks. Mobility researchers have focused on the question whether social mobility has increased over time, as predicted by theories of modernization, or has started to decline as a result of the recent increases in inequality. In contrast, scholars working on migrants and their descendants have focused on the question whether inequalities decline across generations, as predicted by classical theories of assimilation, or whether specific minorities have experienced downward mobility into the underclass, as predicted by segmented assimilation theory. Scholars studying migrants and their descendants have tended to ignore stratification (family origin effects) within these groups, implicitly assuming that these minorities are relatively homogeneous. Instead, they have concentrated on inequalities between migrants (and their descendants) and the majority population. Mobility researchers have in parallel tended to ignore the growing diversity within the overall population and have implicitly assumed that patterns of social reproduction found in the majority population apply equally to migrants and their children.

The failure to integrate the two areas of research not only is somewhat surprising, given their common concern with ascribed characteristics, but may also lead to misleading conclusions. If patterns of social mobility are substantially different among migrants or their descendants from those among the established majority group, then conclusions about trends over time or cross-national differences could be called into question.² It has often been noted that some of the most fluid societies are those with un-

Economic Position of the Minority Ethnic Groups in Britain (RES-163-25-0003), Social Mobility and Social Capital in China and Britain (ES/I035168/1), and Understanding the Dynamics of Ethnic Identity and Inequality in the UK (ES/J020036/1). We alone are responsible for any errors in the article. Direct correspondence to Yaojun Li, Room 2.13f, Kantorovich Building, Department of Sociology, Manchester University, Manchester M13 9PL, United Kingdom. E-mail: Yaojun.Li@Manchester.ac.uk

² The majority group in this article refers to whites. While white British predominate (90.6% of the sample used in this study), there are also white Irish from the Republic of Ireland (1%) and other whites from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and continental Europe (2.3%). Existing research (Li and Heath 2008, p. 236) shows that white Irish men were disadvantaged as compared with white British men up to the late 1990s in access to professional-managerial (salarial) positions but were no different from the latter in the 2000s. Men in the “white other” group were no different from white British men from the early 1970s to the mid-2000s in access to the salariat. In terms of

usually large proportions of immigrants (Tyree, Semyonov, and Hodge 1979; Yaish and Andersen 2012). A similar argument could be made with respect to trends over time: the finding that in many Western societies social fluidity has been gradually increasing (Ganzeboom, Luijkx, and Treiman 1989; Breen 2004) might have something to do with their increasing proportions of migrants and their children.

Similarly, in the case of migration research, failure to take account of social class stratification within and between different groups of migrants may lead to misleading conclusions. Researchers frequently estimate “ethnic penalties,” namely, the extent to which minorities with a migration background are disadvantaged with respect to employment or occupational attainment in comparison with their equally qualified peers in the majority group. But social class background is rarely included as a control in these models, thus ignoring the possibility that class background could, in principle, account for some of the observed ethnic penalties (labor migrants, e.g., tending to come from disadvantaged social backgrounds).

Our central questions, then, are whether standard accounts of class reproduction apply among migrants and their descendants as among the majority group or among some minorities but not others; whether there is a process of generational assimilation toward the overall (British) pattern of class reproduction, with the second or later generations becoming more similar to British patterns than was the first, migrant, generation; whether the trends over time in rates of social mobility and openness among the majority population are mirrored among migrants and their descendants; and, finally, whether time trends in class reproduction are mirrored in the time trends in ethnic stratification. Following standard approaches in the sociological study of mobility, we explore both absolute and relative rates of mobility.

This article is structured as follows. In the next section, we give a brief review of theoretical accounts and research findings on the social mobility of migrants and their descendants. After that, we explain the data and methods to be used in the article. This is followed by the presentation of our findings on absolute and relative levels of mobility, both over generations and over time. In the final section, we summarize our findings and consider the wider implications.

SOCIAL MOBILITY RESEARCH ON MIGRANTS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

Like many other Western societies, Britain has become increasingly multi-ethnic as a result of postwar immigration from less developed countries.

relative mobility, n. 9 below shows similar fluidity patterns for men and women in the two groups to those of their white British counterparts.

As a result, the ethnic minority population has grown from 2.9% in the 1950s (Cheung and Heath 2007, p. 512) to around 14% in the 2011 Census of the Population (Office for National Statistics 2011, p. 10). In Britain, there are no long-standing or indigenous minorities in the way that there are in North America, so the study of race and ethnicity in Britain is essentially coterminous with the study of migrants and their descendants. The main established ethnic minorities in Britain today are descendants of postwar migrants from the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia (particularly from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), and China (largely from Hong Kong). All of these groups had strong previous ties with Britain and, as members of the British Empire (later Commonwealth), initially had free entry rights to Britain and direct access to citizenship. As in many other Western countries, migration began to increase in the 1950s and 1960s because of the labor shortages of the postwar years and fell back in the 1970s after the 1973–74 oil price shock, although there has been continuing replenishment of these main groups as a result of family reunion. Over the last two decades, there has been a rather different wave of immigration from a much wider range of countries, particularly from the European Union, alongside many asylum seekers from war-torn countries in the Middle East and Africa. Our focus in this article, however, is on the older, more established, groups since there are as yet few descendants of the most recent wave of migrants. (The European migrants also have quite high rates of return migration.) This means that we are focusing on groups that are racially or culturally distinct from the white majority group, groups that would be “visible” minorities in Canadian terminology.

These patterns of migration to Britain have some parallels with the waves of migration from developing countries to the United States after the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, which required that immigration procedures stop favoring migrants from northwestern Europe. Indeed there is considerable overlap in the source countries for the migrations to Britain and the United States, although there is no equivalent in Britain to the large-scale U.S. migrations from Central and South America or to the large number of undocumented migrants. Nor of course is there any parallel in Britain to the important African-American population and the Civil Rights movement. While there are many similarities, the context in Britain differs in many ways from that of the United States (and also from that of most European countries). We must therefore be cautious about generalizing from either country’s experience to the other’s.

Despite the increasing ethnic diversity of the population, sociological research in Britain on social mobility and that on the socioeconomic integration of migrants and their descendants have largely traveled on parallel tracks. The former has focused on the general population undifferentiated by ethnicity or migrant background (Heath 1981; Goldthorpe 1987;

Heath and Payne 2000; Goldthorpe and Mills 2004, 2008; Lambert, Prandy, and Bottero 2007; Li and Devine 2011; Bukodi et al. 2015), while the latter has focused on the labor market disadvantages of the “visible” migrant groups and their children, undifferentiated by social origins (Iganski and Payne 1999; Iganski, Payne, and Roberts 2001; Dustmann and Fabbri 2005; Berthoud and Blekesaune 2006; Cheung and Heath 2007; Heath and Li 2008; Li and Heath 2010). Although there have been some efforts at combining the two traditions (Heath and Ridge 1983; Heath and McMahon 2005; Platt 2005*a*, 2005*b*; see also Rex and Tomlinson 1979), these remain rather limited because of data shortages. In general, British mobility researchers have ignored ethnic differentiation, while British ethnicity researchers have ignored social class differentiation.

To be sure, there is a much stronger and longer tradition of American research integrating the study of social mobility with that of race, with the leading U.S. mobility scholars also tackling issues of black/white differences in rates of social mobility. Duncan’s (1968) classic paper set the intellectual agenda, arguing that, in the 1962 data, race effectively trumped class. He showed that blacks were poor not because they were born into poverty but because they were born black. There was a “perverse openness” (Hout 1984*b*, p. 1393) for American blacks, with class origins having less importance for their subsequent occupational attainment than they did for white Americans.

There has continued to be substantial American research on class and race (Featherman and Hauser 1976; Hout 1984*a*, 2005; Isaacs 2008; Yamaguchi 2009; Bhattacharya and Mazumder 2011; Bloome and Western 2011), although this has remained largely focused on African-Americans, with relatively little research on processes of class reproduction among migrants and the children of migrants—that is, among the increasing number of children of post-1960s immigrants to the United States, the so-called new second generation.

There are a number of reasons why processes of class reproduction might operate differently for migrants or their children from the way they operate among the white majority group. Consider first the migrants themselves. If we compare their occupational attainment in the country of destination with that of their parents in the country of origin, we might expect to find a weaker association than in standard mobility research on nonmigrant populations. First, there may be issues of comparability between foreign and Western occupational categories. Thus migrants from, say, farming backgrounds in a developing country may have fewer resources than their contemporaries in the West, where farms tend to be much larger and more mechanized. While social origins may be nominally comparable, they may not provide the same level of mobility-relevant resources in the two different settings.

There may also be substantive reasons for expecting differences in class reproduction. Thus, migrants may lack fluency in the language of the destination country, making it difficult for them to access higher-level professional or managerial occupations; their social capital may be specific to their country of origin; and even if they have high-level foreign qualifications, they may still lack the specific credentials that many elite occupations employ to achieve social closure (Weeden 2002). In other words, their origin-country resources (human and social capital) may have less labor market value in the destination country than in the origin country. They may also experience racial discrimination, as has been shown by a succession of field experiments in Britain, as in the United States (e.g., Daniel 1968; Jowell and Prescott-Clarke 1970; McIntosh and Smith 1974; Brown and Gay 1985; Wood et al. 2009).

These factors may affect both the absolute and the relative mobility of migrants. With respect to absolute mobility, racial discrimination and lack of language fluency could both lead to net downward mobility, with migrants ending up in lower-level jobs, or with no jobs at all, than they might have expected given their origin-country human and social capital. With respect to relative mobility, lack of recognition given to migrants' qualifications may lead to lower returns on their educational investments. Since educational investments are one of the major mechanisms whereby high-status families pass on their advantages to their children, migrants from high-status backgrounds may therefore find it difficult to achieve high status in the country of destination. This could lead to "perverse openness," with migrants from high-status backgrounds disproportionately experiencing downward mobility.

Extending Duncan and Trejo (2015), we can formally express these arguments as

$$Y^R = a + b_1 M^R + b_2 Y^P + b_3 Y^P \times M^R + e, \quad (1)$$

where Y^R represents the respondent's occupational status, M^R represents the respondent's migration status (migrant vs. nonmigrant), Y^P represents parent's occupational status, and $Y^P \times M^R$ represents an interaction between migrant status and parental occupation. Coefficient b_1 is expected to be negative, capturing the lower average occupational attainment of migrants compared with nonmigrants in the country of destination. This would correspond to the situation of a less favorable net rate of "absolute" mobility for migrants than for the majority-group nonmigrants. (Note that, if a is positive, migrants could nevertheless exhibit net upward mobility even if b_1 is negative.) Reflecting the usual association between parents' and children's occupational status, b_2 is expected to be positive, while coefficient b_3 for the interaction term between parental occupation and

migration status is expected to be negative, reflecting the lower returns that migrants obtain on their human and social capital. This corresponds to higher fluidity or weaker class reproduction for migrants.

Turning to the descendants of migrants, a rethought account of socioeconomic assimilation (Alba and Nee 2003) would expect b_1 and b_3 to be closer to unity for the second generation than for the first, migrant, generation and to eventually become nonsignificant in later generations. In other words, processes of class reproduction among the children of migrants would come to resemble more closely those of the majority population in the country of destination. In effect, this would mean that the occupational attainment of descendants of migrants could be explained in terms of their social class origins, in the same way as for the majority group, without the need to introduce terms for migration status or ethnic background. As Alba and Nee (2003, p. 142) succinctly ask: "To what extent has an ethnic distinction lost its relevance for processes of socioeconomic attainment, except for initial conditions?"

However, there could theoretically be processes at work that might lead to deviations from this pattern of socioeconomic assimilation across generations. Mirroring U.S. concerns that the new second generation might not experience the same progress that earlier waves of migrants and their descendants did, we might expect b_1 to remain negative in later generations. This would be the case if discrimination (and related forms of exclusion and social closure against visible ethnic minorities) were a major factor in the initial disadvantage of the migrants and remained so for their descendants. Working in the opposite direction might be "positive selection." Feliciano (2006), for example, has shown that Indian and Chinese migrants to the United States are highly positively selected (in terms of their educational level), and similar results have been found for Britain with regard to the educational attainment of Indians and Chinese (Li 2010, p. 287; see also Berthoff 1953; Erikson 1972; Van Vugt 1999, for earlier accounts of migrant positive selection). On the (plausible) assumption that this positive educational selection is associated with other positive traits such as ambition and aspiration for one's own and one's children's careers, positive selection of migrants might thus lead to higher aspirations and educational success for migrants' children (Feliciano 2006; Heath and Brinbaum 2014; Ichou 2014). Hence, we might find that b_1 actually becomes positive in the second generation, at least for positively selected migrant groups, although this might not be sustained in third or later generations.

There are also possibilities that b_3 might remain significant among the descendants of migrants. One line of argument, drawing on the notion of ethnic capital and implied by the U.S. literature on segmented assimilation, is that high within-group solidarity might mitigate internal class differ-

entiation and might thus weaken the impact of class backgrounds. This might lead to b_3 remaining negative in later generations. In effect, a sharing of resources between members of cohesive communities might lead their individual families to be less reliant on their own social class resources, although this may, as Portes (1998, p. 15) notes, have some negative effects such as “excess claims on group members” and “downward leveling norms.” (Somewhat similar arguments drawing on the concept of ethnic capital have been advanced by Borjas [1992, 1995].)

Another possibility, which might lead to a higher observed degree of social fluidity among the children of immigrants than among the majority population, might be unobserved heterogeneity in families’ class-based resources. For example, migrants who have gained access to professional or managerial positions might be disproportionately concentrated in the lower rungs of such occupations (Mason 2003), and they might as a result have accumulated lesser family wealth. They would thus have less in the way of economic resources to help their children obtain advantaged occupations in their turn. Accounts of qualitative differences in educational institutions have also come to the fore with Lucas’s influential thesis of effectively maintained inequality (Lucas 2001). While Lucas’s account was designed to apply to class inequalities in education, it could clearly apply to racial and ethnic inequalities too. Thus, the children of migrants might disproportionately access lower-prestige universities (Waters et al. [2013] provide evidence for this), with correspondingly lower returns in the labor market, while members of the majority group might have greater access to high-prestige institutions.

There has been rather little empirical research on these issues in Britain, and the research that has been conducted tends to have contradictory results. For example, Heath and Ridge (1983) using the 1972 Social Mobility Inquiry survey found evidence both of greater downward mobility and of greater social fluidity among first-generation white Irish and “visible” (nonwhite) ethnic minorities than among the white British.

Somewhat similar results were found by Platt (2005a, 2005b), who used the Longitudinal Study from the linked Censuses of the Population (1971–91) for England and Wales to compare the social mobility of 1.5-generation or second-generation Indians and Caribbeans with that of age-peers from the white British population. She found that patterns of mobility differed between the two groups as well as between the majority and the ethnic minority groups. She found less favorable mobility opportunities for the black Caribbean group and greater fluidity among both Caribbean and Indian groups than among the majority, with particularly high levels of fluidity in the Caribbean group. It appeared that advantaged social origins did not protect minorities, especially black Caribbeans, against downward mobility in the same way as they did among the majority.

Very different results, however, were obtained by a third British study. Using the combined General Household Surveys (GHS) for 1985–92, Heath and McMahon (2005) compared first- and second-generation Irish, black Caribbean, and Indian minorities. They found that, in both first and second generations, ethnic minorities experienced net upward mobility (not the downward mobility found in the 1972 data), and, among the second generation, upward mobility rates were higher than those of the white British from similar backgrounds. Moreover, they found no evidence of differences between minorities and the majority in their rates of relative mobility: “There was no sign from these data that migration disrupted processes of intergenerational social reproduction” (Heath and McMahon 2005, p. 411).

We cannot be sure whether these differences relate to different time periods, different data sources, different class schemas (Platt added a separate category for the unemployed in the respondent’s but not the parent’s class, whereas the other studies excluded the unemployed), or different methods of analysis. In order to obtain a clearer picture of differences across time periods, generations, and minorities, we use pooled data from nationally representative British surveys conducted from 1982 to 2011. We restrict ourselves to surveys containing the key measures of ethnicity, generational status, parental and respondent’s class, and other sociodemographic covariates. Using this large and harmonized data set, we can simultaneously disaggregate social mobility profiles by ethnicity, generation, and period. We are therefore in a position to test whether processes of social reproduction operate differently for the majority and for the ethnic minority groups and whether such processes have changed over time or across generations.

All the main “visible” ethnic minority groups are included, allowing a more fine-grained analysis than previous scholars could attempt: we include white, black Caribbean, black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Chinese, and other groups. We compare mobility experiences of the first (migrant) and second generations (the number of third- and fourth-generation minorities in our sample is too small for separate analysis, and they are combined with the second generation).³ We also distinguish throughout between the experiences of men and women, given the complex interplay between ethnicity and gender. As Iganski and Payne (1996) emphasized, “It would make no sense to explore ethnicity without taking into account its interaction with gender” (p. 129). And we differentiate four periods: 1980s,

³ It is not possible to differentiate third or fourth generations in the GHS/BHPS (British Household Panel Survey) data sets. But using the Understanding Society survey, we find no significant differences in relative mobility between whites and the third-, or the fourth-, generation ethnic minorities, defined as both the respondent and at least one parent (for the third) or, additionally, at least one grandparent (for the fourth) being born in the United Kingdom ($N = 256$ and 391 , b -values in the UNIDIFF model = -0.048 and -0.002 , and $P = .138$ and $.956$, respectively).

1990s, 2000s, and 2010s (which thus cover the period of increasing inequality in British society). We use a modified version of the Erikson/Goldthorpe measure of social class positions that has become the standard for cross-national mobility research: we add an additional category consisting of the unemployed to this standard schema since higher risk of unemployment may be one of the main barriers facing migrants and their descendants (Platt 2005*a*, 2005*b*; Cheung and Heath 2007). If exclusion from work is a major disadvantage for migrants and their children in British society, a focus simply on those in work may lead to an overly optimistic picture of class reproduction among migrants and their children.

DATA AND METHODS

In this study we use the GHS from 1982 to 2005, the BHPS for 2005, and the first two waves of the UK Longitudinal Household Study (also called Understanding Society, USoc) for 2009–10 and 2010–11. The most important reason for using these data sources is that they permit father's and respondent's class to be coded in a consistent way. They also have information on ethnicity and generational status and a range of other socio-demographic attributes that can be coded in a consistent manner. The pooled data set thus brings us much more up-to-date than the previous studies cited above and also provides much larger sample sizes. Furthermore, the balance between the first and second generation is much less skewed in our data set (because of the growth of the second-generation population over time), thus providing a much more powerful test of the theories of generational change.

The GHS is the longest-standing national survey of people living in private households in Great Britain and has been conducted on an annual basis by the Office for National Statistics since 1972 (with exceptions of 1997–98 and 1999–2000). In this article, we use the GHS data for 1982, 1985–92, and 2005.⁴ From 1993 to 2004, no data were collected on father's

⁴The GHS data used in the article have information on father's class for respondents ages 16–49 from 1982 to 1988, 16–59 from 1989 to 1992, and 25–65 in 2005. Because there is very little difference between the cutoff points of 49 and 59 as Goldthorpe and Mills (2004) show, we use ages 16–64 for men and 16–60 for women throughout the analysis. This age range is larger than that used in Goldthorpe and Mills (2008), but we think it is important to include people ages 16–24, as those in the age group who are not in education tend to come from more disadvantaged backgrounds. It would be ideal to include more data points for this analysis, but the data before 1982 had father's class in managerial and employer positions collapsed, making it impossible to differentiate between higher and lower managers and small and large employers. Furthermore, as we are interested in ethnogenational differences in mobility, no other data sources are appropriate. For example, the sample sizes for ethnic minority groups in the British General Election Survey (1997 and 2001) are too small. The Fourth National Survey of

class. To increase sample size and bring the sample up to date, we also use the BHPS (2005) combined with the GHS (2005) and the USoc data. The response rates of the surveys used here were generally high, although somewhat lower in the most recent surveys.⁵

These surveys (especially the government-sponsored ones), although having high response rates, are likely to miss irregular (undocumented) migrants. Information on the number of irregular migrants (i.e., illegal migrants plus those who have overstayed their permitted residence, failed asylum seekers, and the children of irregular migrants) is very sparse.⁶ The most recent estimate, for 2007, suggests that the total figure was in the range of 417,000–863,000, with a central estimate of 618,000 (perhaps therefore as much as 8% of the regular ethnic minority population). However, the evidence suggests that a large proportion of these will be failed asylum seekers who have avoided deportation (Gordon et al. 2009). Since asylum seekers tend to come from countries other than the main origin countries that we are able to cover (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the various British Commonwealth countries of Africa and the Caribbean), the bias with respect to the groups on which this article focuses is likely to be relatively small. It will also be relevant that many of the migrants from these Commonwealth countries will have arrived at a time when immigration and naturalization rules were more generous, thus further reducing the likely proportion of irregular migrants in these groups.

The first task was to code ethnogenerational status, father's and respondent's class, and other demographic covariates consistently over time. We differentiate between the first (G1) and the second (G2) generations for all "visible" minorities, with the former referring to people born outside the

Ethnic Minorities (1993–94) contains no information on father's job. The Family and Working Life Survey (1996–97) has father's class coded in social grades A–E, which is incompatible with those used in this article. The Taking Part survey (2005–6) has a large sample size but contains no information on country of birth or age of arrival for the immigrants, making it impossible to differentiate between first and second generation, and it has no data on Scotland.

⁵ In the GHS, the response rates ranged from 81% to 85% in 1982–92, although the rate dropped to 72% in 2005 (Office for National Statistics 2006, p. 11). Of individuals with full interviews in BHPS 2004, 93% were reinterviewed in 2005, but the small number of proxy and telephone interviews had lower response rates (Taylor 2010). The individual response rates at wave 2 of the USoc were 64.4% (McFall 2013). The user guides (Taylor 2010; McFall 2013) are available, along with the data sets themselves, at <http://ukdata.service.ac.uk/get-data/key-data.aspx#/tab-uk-surveys>.

⁶ It is noted here that while the data sources used in this study are the best currently available in Britain for the analysis of ethnogenerational differences in social mobility, there is no information in them on illegal immigration, emigration, or class-related morbidity. The deficiency in this regard could potentially affect our findings, but the biases would not be to any marked degree given the very small fraction of people involved.

United Kingdom and arriving in Britain at age 13 or over, and the latter to those born in the United Kingdom or arriving by age 12 (Rumbaut 2004), on the grounds that, unlike the former, the latter would have received most (or all) of their education in Britain.⁷ We also include the small number of third or later generations with the second generation.

We code seven ethnic groups. Following standard practice, we distinguish the main “visible” minority groups, typically migrants or descendants of migrants from less developed non-European countries, from the white British and other white groups of European origin. We thus distinguish white, black Caribbean, black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Chinese, and others. We combine the Bangladeshis with the Pakistanis, as both groups are predominantly Muslim, tend to face similar levels of disadvantage in the British labor market, and also experience similar levels of social fluidity.⁸ Migrants and their children of white European origins from Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand (white other) and from the Republic of Ireland (white Irish) are included in the white category.⁹

We code both father’s and respondent’s class into an eight-category schema based on the Erikson/Goldthorpe classification that has become widely used in mobility research (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992): (1) higher salariat (higher-grade professionals, managers in large establishments and large employers), (2) lower salariat (lower-grade professionals, managers in small establishments plus nonmanual supervisors), (3) routine white-collar employees (clerical and other routine nonmanual workers of higher grades), (4) small proprietors (employers with fewer than 25 employees), (5) skilled blue-collar workers (including manual supervisors, lower-grade technicians, skilled manual workers), (6) self-employed workers and farmers (excluding self-employed professionals), (7) semi- and unskilled blue-collar workers (including lower-grade routine nonmanual workers, semi- and unskilled manual workers, and agricultural laborers), and (8) nonemployment (fathers who were “not working” and respondents who were unemployed).¹⁰ Class 8

⁷ Although there is no consensus on the most critical age of arrival for achieving native-like language proficiency, most researchers would agree that early adolescence is a very important turning point. Our analysis shows that people arriving in Britain at ages 6–12 are not significantly different from those who were born in the United Kingdom or who arrived before age 5 but are significantly different from those who arrived at older ages (13–18) in terms of economic activity and access to professional and managerial positions. Details of analysis on this are available from the authors.

⁸ Further analysis shows that the two groups have no significant differences in relative mobility ($b = -0.009$, $SE = 0.017$, $P = .608$).

⁹ Prior analysis shows that neither white other nor white Irish were significantly different from white British in their relative mobility for men or women (P -values range from .40 to .57 in the uniform difference [UNIDIFF] models).

¹⁰ For father’s class, the GHS provides the full 19-category social-economic group for 1982 and 1985–92. We coded father’s and respondent’s class using the conversion

is added to the Erikson/Goldthorpe schema because of the role unemployment plays for ethnic minorities. We would have liked to have been able to use information on both mother's and father's occupations, given Beller's (2009) evidence that "mothers matter."¹¹ Unfortunately, the GHS data (1982–92) did not contain information on mother's class. We have, however, carried out checks with the GHS/BHPS (2005) and USoc (2009–11) data in which both parents' class variables are available and found the same underlying patterns in the relationships between father's and mother's class and respondents' class.¹²

Omitting cases with missing values on the ethnogenerational and class variables used in the article, we have a sample size of 132,327. We confine our analysis to the working-age population, namely, to respondents age 16–64 for men and 16–60 for women. Father's class was asked of respondents age 16–49 in GHS 1982–88, 16–59 in GHS 1989–92, 25–65 in GHS 2005, and 16 and over in the other data sets. Previous research shows that using age bands 20–49 or 20–59 in GHS 1989–92 yields similar patterns (Goldthorpe and Mills 2004). As people of ethnic minority backgrounds in general, and those in the second generation in particular, tend to be younger than the majority group, we use age-adjusted probability weights throughout the analysis.¹³ To see the changes over time, we divide the data into four de-

program developed by Heath and McDonald (1987). For 2005 the GHS adopts the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC), and we used the four-digit codes of the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System for respondents (soc2000) and their fathers (soc2kf). We first converted the SOC codes into the 35-category-long version of NS-SeC (Rose and Pevalin 2003, pp. 8–10) and then coded the 35-category schema into the same class schema as for 1982–92. As there is no information on father's employment status in GHS (2005), we had to use the "occupation-only" method following Goldthorpe and Mills (2008). Similar procedures were followed for the USoc data. Cases in which fathers were deceased at respondent's age 14 or respondents were economically inactive at the time of the survey were omitted from the analysis. We are grateful to one of the reviewers for this suggestion.

¹¹ Research in Britain also shows a growing proportion of households where mothers have a higher class position than fathers (see Paterson and Iannelli 2007; Li and Devine 2011).

¹² Using data from the GHS/BHPS (2005) and the USoc (2009–11) in which both parents' class variables are available ($N = 23,646$), we find little difference in the association between father's and mother's classes with respondent's class (full details available on request).

¹³ We created a new weight variable to take into account whites' greater age dispersion, by using the following Stata syntax: `gen wtage=weight*ln(age), su wtage, gen awt=(_N/r(sum))*wtage`, where "weight" was provided in the source files. The means of awt as compared with those of weight for white and Pakistani/Bangladeshi respondents were reduced by 1.18 and 0.14, respectively, thus shrinking the age dispersion of the former to a greater extent than of the latter. The sample mean of this awt is 1. We used the awt in descriptive analyses and modeling exercises throughout the article. We are grateful to Stata's technical help team for advice.

cadecades: 1980s (GHS 1982, 1985–89), 1990s (GHS 1990, 1991, 1992), 2000s (GHS 2005; BHPS 2005) and 2010s (USoc 2009–10, 2010–11). This is less than ideal because of the unevenness in data availability but is the most reasonable arrangement given our research interests.

Following standard approaches in the literature, we address both absolute and relative rates of mobility. To address the former, we use Lieberman's net difference index (NDI), which compares the class distributions of parents and children, thus giving us a measure of the extent of net mobility, with a positive value indicating net upward mobility and a negative value indicating net downward mobility. To address the latter, we use log-linear and log-multiplicative (in particular the UNIDIFF) models. We supplement the analysis of net rates of upward and downward mobility with logit models on respondents' labor market outcomes controlling for ethnogenerational status, father's class, and a range of demographic attributes such as age, marital and health status, and period.¹⁴ This is needed because rates of upward and downward mobility will be conditional on the distributions of father's class, which vary considerably between ethnogenerational groups, as well as on age and marital and health status, which are potentially important confounding variables in any analysis of generational differences. Further details on methods will be given in the analysis that follows where the respective techniques are applied.

RESULTS

Overall Distributions and Absolute Mobility Rates by Generation

We begin by looking at the overall class distributions of fathers and respondents, distinguishing men and women and white and first- and second-generation "visible" minorities, pooling all four time periods (table 1). We also show in this table the dissimilarity index (DI) and Lieberman's (1975) NDI. The DI indicates the percentage of cases that would have to be reallocated to make the two distributions identical and thus is a measure of the overall difference between any two distributions. As the DI is insensitive to ordering and does not provide any directional statement about the differences between father's and respondent's classes, we also use the NDI as an indication of net class decline or advancement.¹⁵

¹⁴ While, strictly speaking, the Erikson and Goldthorpe class schema is not fully hierarchical, inspection of the ordered logit coefficients suggests that violations of the assumptions are not too serious, and supplementary analyses with multinomial logit models lead to very similar conclusions.

¹⁵ The NDI is defined as $ND_{xy} = \Pr(X > Y) - \Pr(Y > X)$ and further defined as $\sum_{i=2}^n X_i \left(\sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} \gamma_j \right) - \sum_{i=2}^n \gamma_i \left(\sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} X_j \right)$, where, in our case, X indicates the class

TABLE 1
CLASS DISTRIBUTION BY ETHNOGENERATIONAL STATUS

	ETHNIC MINORITY								
	WHITE			First Generation			Second Generation		
	F	M	W	F	M	W	F	M	W
Upper salariat	9.5	17.2	7.0	13.7	17.1	8.2	10.3	14.6	8.3
Lower salariat	14.8	17.5	25.3	16.1	14.7	24.9	8.9	15.7	25.6
Routine white collar	5.6	6.9	26.7	8.0	5.5	16.3	4.6	8.6	25.5
Small proprietor	4.7	3.0	1.5	9.8	5.3	2.2	6.2	3.9	2.0
Skilled blue collar	32.5	23.0	6.2	13.1	18.1	9.2	25.9	17.8	6.1
Own-account worker/farmer	8.4	9.4	4.1	19.7	9.2	3.8	10.3	7.9	2.7
Unskilled blue collar	19.5	13.8	22.3	11.8	17.1	23.5	23.3	14.8	16.2
Not working	4.9	9.3	7.0	7.9	13.0	12.0	10.6	16.6	13.6
Dissimilarity index		17.3	36.9		18.4	31.2		21.5	38.7
Net difference index		7.3	11.3		-6.5	-8.1		7.9	20.1

NOTE.—Two indexes compare men’s (M) and women’s (W) classes with those of fathers (F), respectively. Net difference index (NDI) is usually taken as ranging from -1 to 1 , but the values are reversed and multiplied by 100 for ease of comparison with the dissimilarity index. Positive values in the NDI indicate an advancement for the respondent’s relative to the father’s class. $N = 132,327$: $65,875$ and $55,756$ for white men and women, $3,305$ and $2,264$ for first-generation ethnic minority men and women, and $2,821$ and $2,306$ for second-generation ethnic minority men and women, respectively. Data are from the General Household Survey, 1982–2005; the British Household Panel Survey, 2005; the Understanding Society survey, 2010–12.

Looking first at the white respondents (the first three columns of table 1), we find that a larger proportion of male respondents (sons) than their fathers were in the salariat class (34.7% and 24.3% , respectively), especially in the higher salariat (17.2% and 9.5% , respectively), reflecting the changing occupational structure and increasing “room at the top” in the postwar period. Women were slightly less likely to be found in the salariat than men, but those women who did manage to gain access to this class disproportionately found themselves in the lower salariat (class 2). Furthermore, women were more concentrated than men into the routine white-collar and the lower blue-collar positions.

The distributions in the three middle columns of table 1, pertaining to the first-generation ethnic minorities (i.e., to the migrants), are rather different. Overall, we find that the fathers of the first generation were disproportionately concentrated in self-employed/farmer positions (19.7% as compared with 8.4% for white fathers). However, they were also more likely to be in the salariat (29.8%) and less likely to be in the lower blue-

position of fathers and Y that of respondents. It is noted here that we reversed the class order in calculating the NDI, with 1 referring to the nonworking and 8 to the higher salariat.

collar positions (11.8%) than white fathers. This partly reflects the occupational structures of the source countries, although it also reflects the degree of positive selection of some migrant groups. Thus, the black African group has been shown to be highly positively selected (Daley [1996] shows that many were “students who stayed”) and is the group most likely to have come from salariat (professional or managerial) home backgrounds. In contrast, the black Caribbean group is more neutrally selected, with larger proportions from blue-collar and own-account or farm backgrounds.¹⁶ The sons and daughters (the migrants themselves) have fairly high proportions in the salariat, similar to the proportions among the white sons and daughters, but they also have higher proportions in the unskilled blue-collar class and in nonemployment. They are thus rather more polarized than the white population.

The last three columns of table 1 show that, in the case of the second generation, the distributions for fathers, sons, and daughters are more similar to those of the white population, with the notable exception of the very high levels of unemployment of second-generation men and women. At 16.6% and 13.6%, respectively, they are nearly twice as high as those for white men and women (9.3% and 7.0%, respectively). More detailed analysis reveals that unemployment levels were particularly high for second-generation men of black Caribbean, black African, and Pakistani/Bangladeshi origins, at 24.9%, 21.7%, and 24.0%.¹⁷

Turning to the indexes of dissimilarity at the bottom of the table, we see that overall scores for the DI are reasonably comparable for white respondents, the first generation, and the second generation, with women in all three cases showing much higher scores than men (reflecting the fact that women tend to occupy rather different occupations from their fathers or brothers). However, the NDI shows that the picture for the first generation is very different both from that for white respondents and from that of the second generation. The negative values for the first generation (−6.5 for sons and −8.1 for daughters) show that they experienced marked net downward mobility, unlike the upward mobility experienced both by the white respondents and by the second generation.

¹⁶ Further analysis shows that black Africans are highly positively selected, with 40% of the first and 44% of the second generation coming from salariat backgrounds, while the black Caribbeans are more neutrally selected, with only 11% and 9% of the first and the second generation from salariat families. More strikingly, 26% of the first-generation Pakistanis/Bangladeshis were from salariat families, as compared with only 9% of the second generation. There is thus very considerable variation both between and within ethnic groups in terms of family origins. (Full details by ethnogenerational groupings parallel to table 1 are available on request.)

¹⁷ It is noted here that in the analysis in this article, the “not working” category for respondents refers to those who were economically active but unemployed.

As would be expected, these conclusions based on comparisons of fathers' and sons'/daughters' class distributions are mirrored when we compute absolute mobility rates for the ethnogenerational groupings, which are shown in figure 1. Figure 1 shows the cross-tabulation of fathers' by respondents' class positions (men and women and white, first, and second generations combined). The cells on the main diagonal (the black cells) correspond to intergenerational stability; those above the diagonal (the dark gray cells) correspond to downward mobility, and those below the diagonal (the light gray cells) correspond to upward mobility. Summing the percentages in the diagonal, we can see, as can be worked out in table 2, that overall 21.4% of the sample respondents were stable, occupying the same class positions as their fathers had done. Downward mobility was experienced by 34.3% of the full sample, while a rather larger proportion, 44.3%, was upwardly mobile.

In table 2 we then disaggregate by gender and generation and provide summary statistics for intergenerational stability and upward and downward mobility for the different generations. As we had expected from the results for table 1, rates of upward mobility exceed those of downward mobility both for the white respondents and for the second generation. In the case of the first generation, however, the rate of upward mobility is significantly smaller (for both men and women) and that of downward mobility significantly greater. For first-generation women, the rate of downward mobility is particularly pronounced. In contrast, in the case of second-generation women, the rate of upward mobility is significantly higher than for the white women.

These comparisons of absolute rates of upward and downward mobility have to be treated with considerable caution since they will be conditional on the origin distributions. Thus, a group whose fathers were concentrated in low-skilled positions can scarcely show much downward mobility,

Class of origin	Class of destination							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Upper salariat	25.2	29.6	15.4	2.0	8.1	5.0	8.3	6.4
2 Lower salariat	20.6	30.0	16.6	2.0	9.7	5.6	9.9	5.6
3 Routine white-collar	15.0	26.2	18.1	1.7	12.9	6.1	13.3	6.6
4 Small proprietor	14.3	23.2	15.6	7.0	11.6	8.7	12.7	7.0
5 Skilled blue-collar	9.5	17.5	16.3	2.1	19.5	5.9	20.1	9.2
6 Own acc/farmer	9.1	18.2	13.9	3.3	13.3	15.6	17.9	8.7
7 Unskilled blue-collar	7.0	15.2	14.2	2.0	19.2	6.6	25.4	10.5
8 No work	9.0	17.4	14.3	2.4	14.6	6.9	21.6	13.8

■ Immobility

■ Downward mobility

■ Upward mobility

FIG. 1.—Class distribution by class of origin (%)

TABLE 2
SUMMARY STATISTICS ON MOBILITY RATES

	Total	Upward	Downward
All	78.6	44.3	34.3
White men (ref)	75.4	42.4	33.0
First-generation men	80.9***	40.1*	40.8***
Second-generation men	78.4***	44.0	34.4
White women (ref)	82.1	46.9	35.3
First-generation women	81.8	36.1***	45.7***
Second-generation women	84.5**	52.4***	32.1**

NOTE.—Significance tests are conducted with white men and women as reference groups.

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

whereas a positively selected group such as the black Africans, whose fathers were predominantly in advantaged class positions, are at greater risk of downward mobility. While absolute rates do tell us something about the experience of the groups concerned, it is important to supplement them by modeling the data employing regression techniques to control for father's occupation and thus to take account of the differing "initial conditions," in Alba and Nee's terminology.

Our modeling strategy is in essence an extension of equation (1). Our predictors are father's class and a detailed set of ethnogenerational categories (i.e., ethnic groups disaggregated into first and second generations respectively), together with additional control variables (age, age squared, marital and health statuses, and period). We run the models separately for men and women, given the considerable gender differences to which we have already alluded in employment and occupational position. We assume at this stage that class origins have the same effects among the different ethnogenerational groups as they do for the white reference group. We explore this assumption in detail in the next section of the article, but, to anticipate, it turns out that this assumption of "common social fluidity" is not too far off the mark.

Since, as we will see, the processes involved in gaining employment are rather different from those involved in occupational attainment, we employ a two-stage Heckman selection model. In the first stage we model risks of unemployment, using binary logistic regression (and including limiting long-term illness as the identifying variable). In the second stage we model class positions, conditional on employment. As class is an ordered categorical variable, we used the Heckman ordered probit models. To ease interpretation, we show average marginal effects that are expressed in terms of percentage-point differences. The average marginal effects on access to the salariat are obtained by selecting the appropriate outcome

TABLE 3
AVERAGE MARGINAL EFFECTS

	AVOIDANCE OF UNEMPLOYMENT		ACCESS TO THE SALARIAT CONDITIONAL ON EMPLOYMENT	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Ethnogenerational (white = ref):				
G1: Black Caribbean	-.07***	-.02	-.10***	.05
G1: Black African	-.08***	-.07***	-.01	-.05
G1: Indian	-.03**	-.05***	-.05***	-.09***
G1: Pakistan/Bangladesh	-.09***	-.10***	-.15***	-.01
G1: Chinese	-.02	-.02	.05	.05
G2: Black Caribbean	-.06***	-.04***	-.01	.13***
G2: Black African	-.07**	-.00	.07	.04
G2: Indian . . . . .	.00	-.02	.10***	.06**
G2: Pakistan/Bangladesh	-.08***	-.06***	.03	.06*
G2: Chinese . . . . .	.05	.03	.00	-.02
Father's class (upper salariat = ref):				
Lower salariat . . . . .	.00	.00	-.06***	-.04***
Routine white collar	-.01	-.01	-.14***	-.11***
Small proprietor	-.01	-.01	-.17***	-.11***
Skilled blue collar	-.04***	-.02***	-.25***	-.21***
Own-account worker/farmer	-.03***	-.01*	-.29***	-.19***
Unskilled blue collar	-.06***	-.02***	-.32***	-.26***
Not working	-.07***	-.04***	-.24***	-.21***

NOTE.—Effects of the “other” group and of the covariates (education, age, marital status, health, and period) are not shown.

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

(salarial) category from the probit models. In the case of the first stage, for example, the coefficients can be interpreted as the percentage-point difference that each predictor makes to the probability of being employed. In table 3 we report the differences associated with ethnogenerational status and with parental class. (The full tables giving the results for the control variables are not shown but are available on request.)

Beginning with employment (or avoidance of unemployment as shown in the first two columns of table 3), we see significant class origin effects, larger for men than for women. Particularly striking is the “inheritance of worklessness” among men: sons whose fathers had been out of work were more likely themselves to be workless. This echoes recent findings by Blanden, Gregg, and Macmillan (2013, p. 558) who find notable “scarring” effects of parental worklessness. We also see that the first-generation men, with the sole exception of Chinese, were significantly more likely to be unemployed than white respondents, with the two black groups and those from Pakistani/Bangladeshi origins having unemployment rates around

7–9 percentage points higher than for white men from similar social class origins. These first-generation ethnic differences in employment are of similar magnitude to the class origin differences. The pattern for migrant women is similar to that for men, although some of the ethnic differences are smaller.

In the second generation we see rather modest improvements. With respect to male unemployment, the marginal effects fall by 1–2 percentage points and in the case of Indian men become nonsignificant (i.e., no greater than for their white contemporaries). For women the generational progress is somewhat greater with respect to risks of unemployment, with around a 3–4-point reduction in the risk of unemployment. (Black Caribbean women are an exception, probably because the first-generation women from the Caribbean were particularly recruited for work as nurses in the newly created National Health Service and thus avoided the usual risk of unemployment.)

Turning next to the results on access to the salariat conditional on employment, we find that father's class plays a very important role, indeed a much greater role than in finding a job: people from each of the lower classes are significantly less likely than those from higher salariat origins to find themselves in professional-managerial (salariat) positions. For instance, the chances for men from unskilled blue-collar families to access the salariat are 32 percentage points lower than those for men from higher salariat families. Compare this with the corresponding difference for unemployment, which was only 6 points. Class background certainly matters for class destinations.

Do ethnicity and generation also matter for class destinations? The answer is that, among the first generation, there are once again significant negative estimates for Caribbean, Indian, and Pakistani/Bangladeshi men. For these migrant groups, although not for the Chinese, we find a pattern of cumulative disadvantage—disadvantage with respect to finding work and, even if they do find work, additional disadvantage in accessing higher-status occupations. However, we should observe that even the largest of these first-generation ethnic estimates (the 15-point disadvantage faced by first-generation Bangladeshi and Pakistani men) is dwarfed by the social class origin effects.

Moving on to the second generation, we find much clearer evidence of assimilation with respect to occupational attainment than we did with employment. For every group, apart from the Chinese, we find that the second-generation coefficient is more favorable (in the sense of being less negative or more positive) than in the first generation. The improvement is 15 percentage points for the second-generation Indian men and around 18 points for the second-generation men from Pakistani or Bangladeshi origins (note that their coefficient of .03 is not statistically significant) who

now equal their white contemporaries. The gains are somewhat less for the two black groups: 8 points for the black African men and 9 points for the black Caribbean men. The story of generational assimilation, at least for those fortunate enough to have gained employment, is also clear for women. Indeed, among second-generation women we do not find a negative coefficient, with the sole exception of Chinese women who are not significantly different from their white peers.

To sum up, the results in table 3 largely reinforce, albeit with some important nuances on interethnic differences, the story told by tables 1 and 2: we see compelling evidence of disadvantage in comparison with whites from comparable class origins among the first, migrant, generation. But we see substantial evidence of generational assimilation, particularly with respect to occupational attainment. In both the domains of paid employment and of class advancement, ethnic minority men face greater difficulties than their female counterparts, however.

These analyses, as we noted earlier, assume that social class background operates in the same way for migrants and their children as it does for the white population. As we discussed, we should not take this for granted: there are several theoretical reasons why social fluidity might differ, particularly among the first generation, from the normal pattern found among the majority group. We turn therefore in the next section to testing this assumption of common social fluidity, exploring the issue of whether processes of class reproduction operate in the same way and with the same strength among migrants, the second generation, and the majority group (in effect testing whether there are significant estimates for the interaction term [b_3] in eq. [1]). This is equivalent to an examination of relative mobility rates in standard sociological research on social mobility.

Relative Social Mobility by Generation and Ethnicity

We turn to a different way of looking at class reproduction, namely, relative mobility. Our research questions can be expressed as follows: Do we find a weaker association between class origins and destinations among the first generation than among the majority group? Do we find a “perverse openness” in which migration status or ethnicity tends to “trump” class, and visible minorities experience a similar level of disadvantage irrespective of their fathers’ class situation?

The standard approach to these issues in sociology is to look not at absolute rates of mobility but at relative rates. Relative mobility (often termed “fluidity” or “openness”) refers to the competition between people from different origins in obtaining advantaged and avoiding disadvantaged destinations and is expressed in odds ratios. The closer the odds ratio is to 1, the weaker is class reproduction (and the greater is fluidity or openness).

Our interest, then, is whether the odds ratios for the migrant groups are closer to unity than they are for the majority group. This is equivalent to asking whether there is an interaction between migrant status and class origins on occupational attainment.

To test this, using standard techniques in social mobility research, we fit three models: first, the conditional independence model that serves as the baseline. Second, we fit the common social fluidity model (CmSF), which allows for an association between origin and destination but not the three-way interactions; in other words, this is a model that postulates that the origin/destination odds ratios are the same for whites, for the first generation, and for the second generation and hence that patterns of relative social mobility are the same among the three sets of respondents. Third, we fit the log-multiplicative layer effects (also called uniform difference, or UNIDIFF) model that we can use to provide an assessment of the extent to which the first and second generations differ from whites in the magnitude of the class origin/destination odds ratios.¹⁸ This third model provides us with a general test of differences in fluidity, testing whether there is a uniform pattern for the odds ratios to be closer to (or farther away from) 1 in a particular layer of the table. We run the models separately for men and women using the eight-class schema described in the methods section above (in other words including the unemployed).

In table 4 we show the results of fitting the three models by generation (whites, first-, and second-generation ethnic minorities) and by ethnicity (the seven groups described earlier) for men and women.¹⁹ With regard to generation, we find that the UNIDIFF model does not provide any significant improvement in fit over the CmSF for men or women. Although neither the CmSF nor UNIDIFF model fits the data adequately for men or women according to classical criteria, only a very small proportion of the cases (0.7%) is misclassified in each model. This suggests that the assumption of the model fitted in table 3, namely, that father's class operates

¹⁸ The models can be written as follows: (1) baseline model (conditional independence) $\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG}$, (2) common (constant) social fluidity model (CmSF/CnSF) $\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG} + \lambda_{ij}^{DD}$, and (3) log-multiplicative or UNIDIFF model $\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i^O + \lambda_j^D + \lambda_k^G + \lambda_{ik}^{OG} + \lambda_{jk}^{DG} + \beta_k X_{ij}$, where O stands for class origin, D for class destination, and G for ethnogenerational status (white = 1, first generation = 2, and second generation = 3) or for different ethnic groups for the CmSF or the four periods for the CnSF models; X_{ij} represents the general pattern of the origins-destinations association, and β_k the relative strength of this association relative to a particular generation. For a lucid account of similar models, see Breen (2004).

¹⁹ Even though we have a very large sample size, fitting models to the detailed class and ethnogenerational groupings by sex still meets with difficulties as some of the cells are empty, hence the degrees of freedom for men and women are not exactly the same in the two parts of the table. We follow Goldthorpe and Mills (2008, pp. 92–93) in reporting the results even though the degrees of freedom are not exactly the same for men and women.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF FITTING MODELS TO MOBILITY TABLES

Model	G^2	df	p	rG^2	BIC	Δ
By generation:						
Men:						
Cond. ind.	8,776.4	146	.00	.0	7,139.2	14.4
CmSF	157.6	97	.00	98.2	-930.1	.7
UNIDIFF	156.9	95	.00	98.2	-908.4	.7
CmSF - UNIDIFF . . .	.7	2	.70			
Women:						
Cond. ind.	4,592.2	146	.00	.0	2,986.4	10.6
CmSF	143.7	97	.00	96.9	-923.2	.7
UNIDIFF	139.3	95	.00	97.0	-905.7	.7
CmSF - UNIDIFF . . .	4.4	2	.11			
By ethnicity:						
Men:						
Cond. ind.	8,862.5	330	.00	-0.0	5,162.0	14.4
CmSF	351.8	281	.00	96.0	-2,799.2	1.0
UNIDIFF	332.5	275	.01	96.2	-2,751.4	1.0
CmSF - UNIDIFF . . .	19.3	6	.00			
Women:						
Cond. ind.	4,703.3	301	.00	.0	1,392.6	10.7
CmSF	302.0	253	.02	93.6	-2,480.8	1.0
UNIDIFF	295.1	247	.02	93.7	-2,421.7	1.0
CmSF - UNIDIFF . . .	6.9	6	.33			

NOTE.—Conditional independence (Cond. ind.), common social fluidity (CmSF), and uniform difference (UNIDIFF) models; $N = 72,001$ and $60,326$ for men and women, respectively; rG^2 = percentage reduction in G^2 ; Δ = percentage of cases misclassified; BIC = Bayesian information criterion.

in much the same way on the class destinations of migrants and the children of migrants as it does for whites, is not entirely unreasonable. It also suggests that, if there are differences in fluidity, they are not of a general character but rather apply to certain specific movements between class origin and destination. We look at this further below.

The top panels of figure 2 show the UNIDIFF parameters associated with first- and second-generation men and women. The values pertain to the β coefficients in UNIDIFF models, expressed in terms of log odds with whites set as the reference category (0). Positive values (higher than the 0 for whites) indicate a stronger overall association between origins and destinations for the generation in question than that for whites (equivalent to greater rigidity) and vice versa with the negative values. In all four cases, the 95% confidence intervals include the X-axis, so we should not draw any strong conclusions from the differences between the parameters. It is clear, however, that our expectation of greater fluidity among the first, migrant, generation is not confirmed.

We next turn from generational to ethnic differences, since it is quite possible that there are enduring differences between particular minorities,

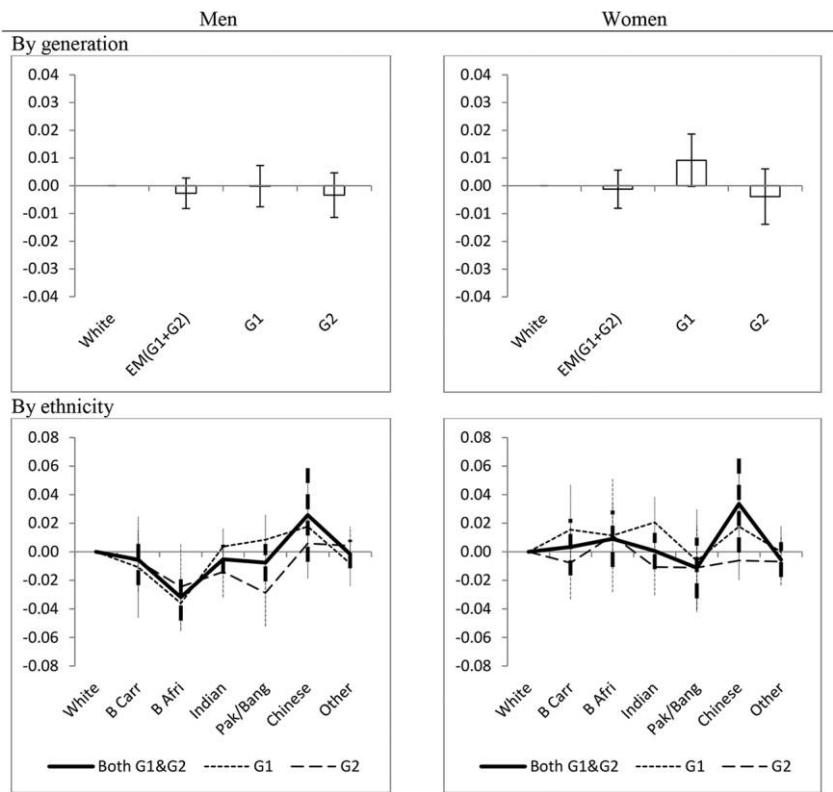


FIG. 2.—UNIDIFF parameter estimates and confidence intervals of the origins-destinations associations by ethnogenerational status and sex. The 95% confidence intervals for second-generation Chinese men and women are not shown (available on request) because of small sample sizes ($N = 62$ and 51 , respectively).

such as black or Muslim groups, in their patterns of social fluidity. Because of small sample sizes we combine the first and second generations for this analysis. The lower part of table 4 shows that, in the case of ethnic differences, the UNIDIFF model does provide a significant improvement in fit over the CmSF model for men, although not for women. The Bayesian information criterion, however, favors the CmSF model, so we need to be cautious in our interpretation.

The lower panels of figure 2 show the UNIDIFF parameters associated with the main ethnic groups. Most noticeably, black African men seem to have experienced rather greater fluidity than their white peers. There are also hints that Chinese men and women may have experienced greater rigidity than whites. The confidence intervals for the Chinese are very large, however, reflecting the small number in the sample, but the result for black African men is statistically significant. This may well indicate “perverse

openness": the sons of black African fathers from high-status backgrounds find it particularly difficult to achieve comparable positions for themselves in Britain.

As we noted above, the UNIDIFF models reported in table 4 provide a general test of whether fluidity, as measured by odds ratios, is greater among migrants and their children than among the white population. However, the upper half of table 4 also showed that neither the CmSF nor the UNIDIFF model gives a good fit to the data. This suggests that there are some respects in which the odds ratios differ between whites, the first generation, and the second generation, albeit ones of a specific rather than a general kind. We can explore this by inspecting the odds ratios themselves. The symmetrical odds ratios are shown in table 5.²⁰ For each transition we show the odds ratios for the whites, the first generation, and the second generation respectively. Thus, in the top left-hand cell of the table we show the odds ratios for movement between classes 1 and 2. These three odds ratios are all quite close to 1, indicating a high degree of fluidity between these two classes. Moreover, there are no significant differences between the odds ratios for the whites, the first generation, and the second generation (which are 1.23, 1.21, and 1.35, respectively). In other words, the high level of fluidity found between classes 1 and 2 among whites is mirrored in similar high levels of fluidity both among the first and among the second generation.

As we move along the top row of the table, we find that the odds ratios tend to increase. This indicates that the greater the distance between classes, the less the fluidity between them. Again, we find that the patterns for the first generation and the second generation generally mirror those for whites, with just one exception: the odds ratio for movements between class 1 (higher salariat) and class 6 (the own-account worker/farmer class). In this particular case, fluidity is significantly lower among the first generation.

As we can see, only 12 out of the total of 56 possible comparisons indicate significant differences between whites and the first or second generation. Of these 12, half involve class 6. This class, as we noted earlier, is one for which there may be greater doubts about its comparability in the developing countries from which many of the migrants came with that of the nominally equivalent class in Britain. Farms in South Asia or Africa tend to be much smaller than in Britain, while the informal economy to which many of the own-account workers will have belonged is much larger and poorer. We suspect that class 6 might therefore have lower social standing in developing countries, hence reducing the likelihood of move-

²⁰We also conducted analyses for the symmetrical odds ratios for men and women separately without differentiating generational status (results available on request). Although we have a fairly large sample, differentiating both gender and generational statuses would lead to unstable patterns in the 8×8 matrices for the subgroupings.

TABLE 5
SYMMETRICAL ODDS RATIOS FOR MOBILITY TABLES

CLASS	CLASS						
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Upper salariat	1.23	1.94	6.04	6.45	8.40	11.14	5.85
	1.21	2.36	6.29	5.85	15.34*	10.55	6.44
	1.35	2.37	8.19	7.09	9.02	12.37	7.09
2. Lower salariat		1.24	4.45	3.48	4.60	5.25	4.26
		1.30	4.31	2.64	4.60	4.23	2.78
		1.54	4.69	3.85	4.75	2.32***	3.74
3. Routine white collar			4.35	1.71	3.34	2.46	2.62
			9.39	1.99	2.61	3.11	3.22
			12.05***	1.12	4.38	2.51	2.22
4. Small proprietor				5.45	4.07	7.60	6.16
				4.42	1.65**	2.15***	2.29**
				14.31*	6.98	4.25	7.39
5. Skilled blue collar					4.05	1.28	1.95
					2.59*	1.30	1.71
					2.69*	1.32	1.59
6. Own-account worker/farmer . . .						3.65	3.92
						1.01***	1.89*
						2.91	1.95*
7. Unskilled blue collar							1.55
							1.18
							1.35

NOTE.—Top figure for white, middle figure for first-, and bottom figure for second-generation ethnic minority in each class group. Significance tests are conducted for differences between white and first and second generation, respectively, and between first and second generations, with significant differences (at the 0.05 level or above) shown in italics on the odds ratios for the second generation.

* $P < .05$.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

ment between this class and higher-status classes and increasing the likelihood of movement with lower-status classes.

Several of the other significant differences involve class 4, the small proprietor class. Again this may be a class for which there could be doubts about comparability. Small proprietors in developing countries may have fewer mobility-relevant resources than small proprietors in Britain. The data at hand do not allow us to check on these interpretations, but the pattern of the odds ratios does suggest that these specific deviations from common social fluidity may well reflect issues of comparability of the class categories rather than substantive differences in mobility chances.

Viewing the table from another angle, of the 30 potential comparisons involving the other classes, namely, classes 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 8, and not involving either classes 4 or 6, only one is significant. In other words, levels of fluidity between the main white-collar and blue-collar classes of em-

ployees are very similar among the majority group, the first generation, and the second generation. It is only in the own-account and farm sectors that statistically deviant patterns emerge. Overall, as the results of the formal modeling suggested, patterns of relative mobility do not differ greatly between the different generations and the majority population.

Trends over Time

A major focus of social mobility research has been the trends over time. In this section we ask the following questions: What changes can we observe over the four decades covered? And do we find that the same trends apply to visible minorities as to the white population in Britain?

We concentrate on trends in relative mobility rates here, since these have been the main focus of debate among mobility researchers. Figure 3 shows the generational and figure 4 the interethnic trends in the UNIDIFF parameters over the four decades. In figure 3*a*, we also show the overall trends for men and women. We see a significant increase in social fluidity for both men and women for the period covered, which lends support to the thesis of rising overall fluidity in British society (Heath and Payne 2000; Lambert et al. 2007; Li and Devine 2011; cf. Goldthorpe and Mills 2004, 2008; Paterson and Iannelli 2007; Bukodi et al. 2015).²¹

In figures 3*b* and 3*c*, we compare the trends for the first- and second-generation visible minorities with those for the white population, for men and women respectively. As whites still constitute the great majority of the population, we would naturally expect, given what is shown in figure 3*a*, that they have experienced significantly growing social fluidity over the period covered, among both men and women, with the latter showing even greater increases in fluidity. The key finding, however, is that the visible minority trends over time in class fluidity broadly mirror those for the white population.

With regard to trends in social fluidity of the different ethnic groups, as shown in figure 4, our sample size does not permit differentiation by generation, but we can still see an overall trend of increasing fluidity for both men and women of most ethnic minority origins. There is, to be sure, considerable variation among the minority groups, particularly in the case of women. For most groups, however, it is difficult to reject the null hypothesis that the increasing fluidity over time found among whites overall is

²¹As a further check, we ran an analysis for men age 35 and above, who are generally regarded as having reached "occupational maturity." The period effects (in log odds, with those of period 1 as reference) are -0.002 , -0.015 , and -0.016 ($P = .526$, $.000$, $.000$), respectively, for periods 2–4, confirming the pattern of rising fluidity as shown in fig. 3. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that the lower response rates in the later surveys may have contributed to the higher observed fluidity.

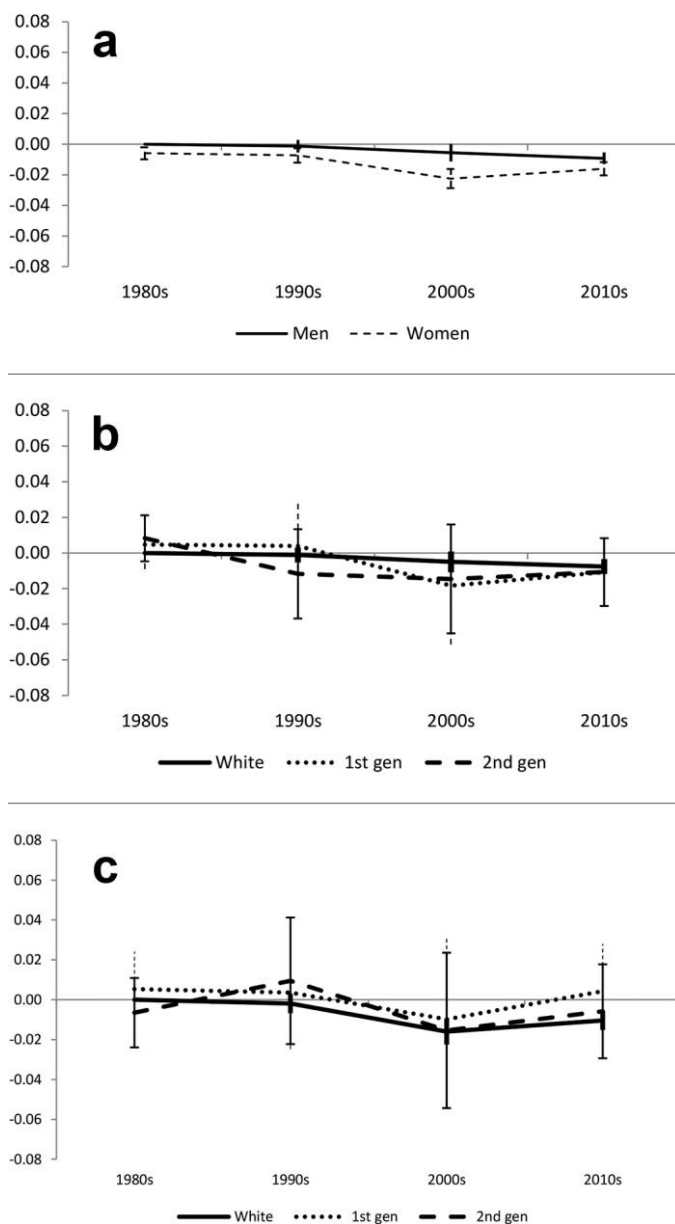


FIG. 3.—UNIDIFF parameter estimates and confidence intervals of the origins-destinations associations by ethnogenerational status and sex; *a*, men and women; *b*, first- and second-generation ethnic minority men compared with white men; *c*, first- and second-generation ethnic minority women compared with white women.

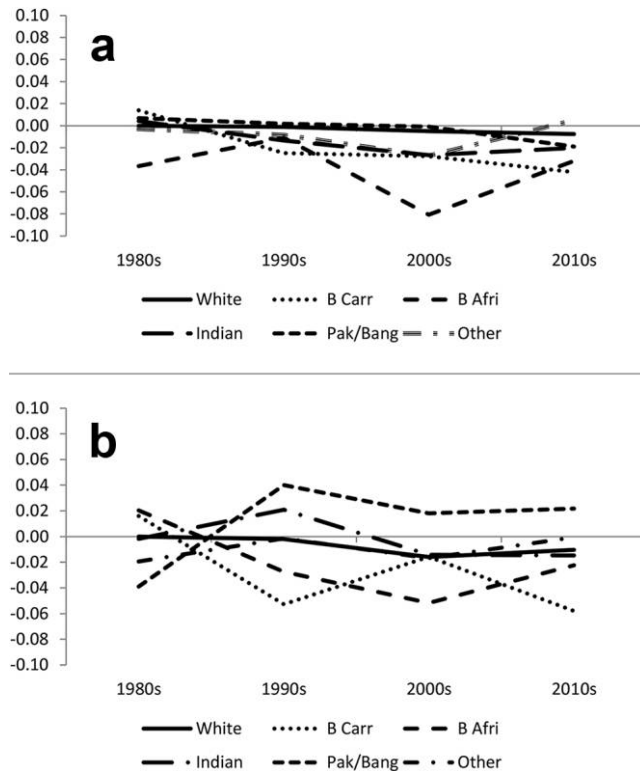


FIG. 4.—UNIDIFF parameter estimates of the origins-destinations associations by ethnic groups and sex; *a*, men; *b*, women. Estimates from the UNIDIFF models for Chinese men and women are not shown because of small sample sizes ($N = 74, 43, 13, 91$ for men and 50, 40, 11, 104 for women over the four periods, respectively) but are available on request.

mirrored among the different ethnic groups. The main exception affects the women from Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins. It is possible that the situation for this group is complicated by changing patterns of economic activity. Rates of economic activity in the past were particularly low for Muslim women, and there could thus be important selection processes at work.²² Overall, however, class rigidity shows fairly clear signs of weakening among whites and visible minorities alike.

²² Further analysis shows that Pakistani/Bangladeshi women's fluidity levels are not significantly different from those of white women in any of the four decades covered (the UNIDIFF coefficients = $-0.038, 0.002, -0.037$, and -0.017 , $P = .187, .945, .569$, and $.245$, respectively), nor is "other" men's fluidity relative to that of white men in fig. 4*a* ($P = .719, .386, .329$, and $.674$).

Our final question is about trends over time in ethnic stratification. In other words, we shift attention from class background to ethnic background and ask whether we find the same decline over time in the association between ethnicity and class destination as we found in the association between class origin and class destination. In short, is there a general decline in the importance of ascribed characteristics, or is this limited to class origin? To test this, we employ UNIDIFF models as in the previous section but replace class origins with ethnicity. We adopt a six-category ethnic variable: white, black Caribbean, black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, and Chinese, excluding the heterogeneous “other” category. The results are shown in figure 5 where, following figure 3, we first compare men and women (fig. 5*a*), and then, within each gender (figs. 5*b* and 5*c*), we compare whites with the first- and second-generation visible minorities combined (“all”) and with the first and second generations separately (“W + G1,” “W + G2”).

The UNIDIFF parameters in figure 5 show fairly clear signs of decreasing ethnic stratification. The reductions in the ethnicity-class destination association are statistically significant for men in the last two decades and for women in the last decade. A notable generational difference is visible for men. While the strength of the association stayed at a fairly similar level in the first three decades with regard to first-generation ethnic minority men’s competition with white men in gaining access to advantaged, and in avoiding disadvantaged, class positions, there are clear and significant declines in the strength of association between ethnicity and class destination in the case of the second-generation men. Change over generations for women is not obvious, as they were not as heavily penalized even in the first generation as men (table 3). Overall, ethnic stratification for both men and women exhibits a slow but fairly steady decline, just as in the case of class fluidity.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Using the most authoritative data sources available in Britain—and with ethnic origins, generation, father’s and respondent’s class, and other sociodemographic variables coded in a consistent way—we have in this article sought to integrate traditions of research on social mobility and on migrants and their descendants and in this way to contribute to long-standing debates about patterns and trends of social reproduction in the separate domains of class mobility and ethnic stratification. We asked the following four core questions: First, do patterns of class reproduction apply to ethnic minorities with a migration background in the same way as to the white majority group? Or do patterns work differently for specific groups such as blacks or Muslims where race or religious affiliation may

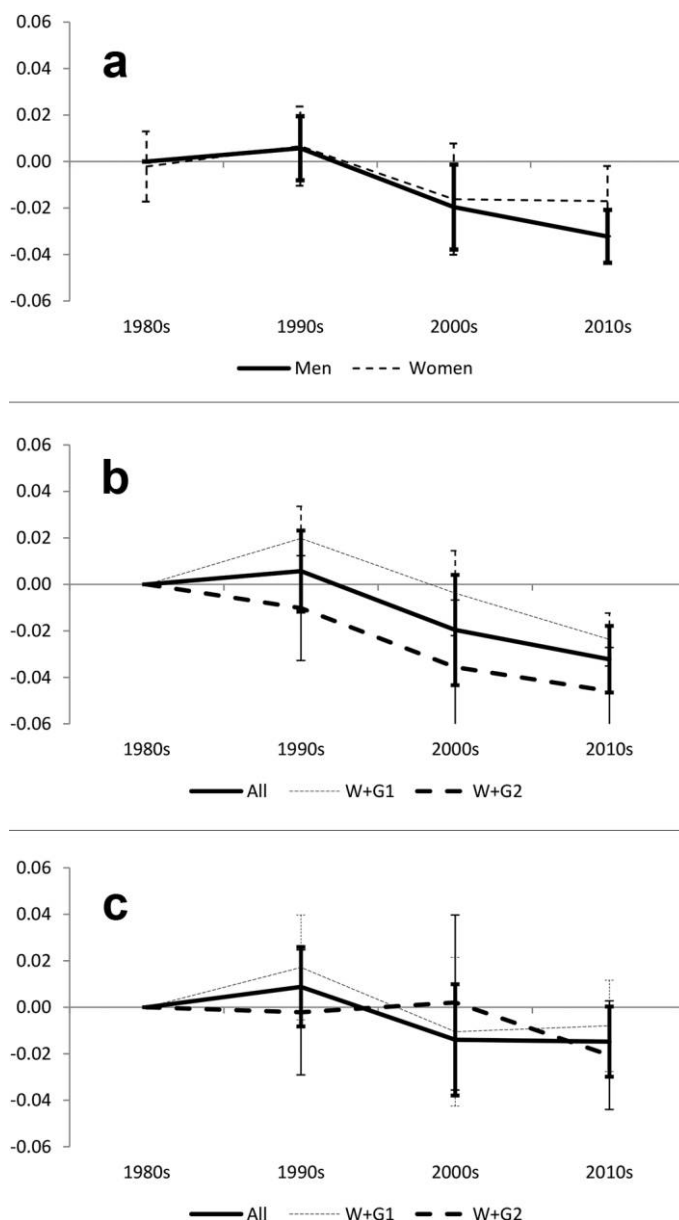


FIG. 5.—UNIDIFF parameter estimates and confidence intervals of the ethnicity-class associations by ethnogenerational status and sex; *a*, men and women; *b*, men; *c*, women.

trump class? Second, is there minority “assimilation” across generations toward majority-group patterns? Specifically, do we find that migration breaks the link between origin and destination for the first generation whereas in the second generation patterns of class reproduction converge with those of the majority group? Third, are the trends over time in rates of social mobility and openness among the majority population mirrored among migrants and their descendants, or do the trends differ in ways that might require revisions to the standard accounts that ignore increasing ethnic diversity? And, finally, are time trends in class reproduction mirrored in the time trends in ethnic stratification?

Our main findings can be summarized as follows: first, we did find some respects in which patterns of class reproduction were different between minorities and the majority. Most strikingly, we found higher absolute rates of downward mobility for the first-generation minority men and women than for white men and women (table 1). This applied to most of the migrant groups that we were able to identify. We also found that the two black groups, together with the largely Muslim Bangladeshi/Pakistani group, had higher risks of unemployment than did white men and women from similar social class backgrounds.

In contrast with absolute rates of mobility, there was little overall difference between minorities and white men and women with respect to relative mobility rates (as measured by odds ratios; table 5). There was no strong evidence that “perverse openness” generally applied to either migrants or their children, except in the case of black African men. Black African migrants were, on average, positively selected, and their initial conditions were relatively advantageous. However, they were not able to maintain these privileged positions in Britain, and they exhibited higher rates of both downward mobility and fluidity, indicative of perverse openness.

While the overall level of fluidity among migrants and their descendants was very similar to that found among the white population, there were some specific transitions that were statistically deviant among minorities. These cases appeared to involve the farm and self-employed classes. Our suggestion is that these anomalies may well reflect issues of comparability between these occupational categories in developed and less developed societies. In the case of the regular blue- and white-collar classes, however, mobility processes seemed to operate in very similar fashions among minority and majority populations alike.

Turning to our second question, we found that there was a convergence across generations toward the majority pattern in absolute rates of class mobility (table 1) and a decline across generations in the size of the net ethnic disadvantages after controlling for social class origins (table 3). Or, to put it slightly differently, the second-generation visible minorities were

not as disadvantaged in the competition with members of the majority group from similar class origins as the first generation had been. However, even in the second generation several groups of ethnic minority men experienced significantly higher levels of unemployment than did their white peers. Hence, a focus on the mobility chances of those actually in work might give a misleadingly optimistic view of generational progress.

Next, and reassuringly for standard accounts of trends in class mobility, we find that the trends toward increased openness or fluidity (as measured by odds ratios) over the time span covered by our study are broadly similar whether we look at the white and ethnic minority populations separately or together, although if anything the trend was slightly faster among the second-generation minority population. This suggests that the growing diversity of the British population does not account for increasing overall fluidity.

We saw no sign of a decline in fluidity in the most recent period, despite the increasing inequality that Britain like the United States has experienced. Rather, we find an increase in what might be termed ethnic as well as class fluidity, for men and women alike. That is to say, we see a decline in the importance of the ascribed characteristic of ethnicity in much the same way as with the ascribed characteristic of class origin. This trend over time toward increasing ethnic openness appears stronger among the second-generation men, whereas among the first-generation migrants the disadvantages persist over time.

Overall, our analysis suggests that standard processes of class reproduction do apply more or less to second-generation visible minorities as to the white population. There is little sign that ethnicity trumps class or that the “perverse openness” as found in some earlier studies in both Britain and America has persisted, except among black African men.

The big story then is that there are higher absolute rates of downward mobility among the migrants than among the majority population or the second generation. In other words, there is a “migration penalty” rather than a general “ethnic penalty.” It is beyond the scope of this article to explain in detail the nature of this migration penalty, but plausible explanations are the lack of fluency in English, which almost entirely disappears in the second generation (Parameshwaran 2014). There is also evidence that human capital is not always transferable from origin to destination country (Friedberg 2000): foreign qualifications, for example, do not seem to provide the same returns in the labor market as do destination-country qualifications. The same may well apply to social capital. Furthermore, within some specific class categories, such as the self-employed/farm class, it is possible that fathers in developing countries had less access to economic and other mobility-relevant resources than did British fathers in nominally similar class positions.

Overall this is a rather optimistic story, at least for the children of immigrants in Britain. Britain may not be a “land of opportunity” for the migrants themselves, but it does seem to approach quite closely to being a land of equal opportunity for their children. The continuing problems for the children of migrants from the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, Pakistan, and Bangladesh with respect to unemployment are an important qualification to this optimistic story. But for those lucky enough to gain employment, the opportunities seem to be closely in line with those experienced by their peers from the majority group.

This does then appear to be a story of partial socioeconomic assimilation. In Alba and Nee’s terminology, the initial conditions are different with some migrant groups such as the black Caribbeans, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis starting from relatively disadvantaged socioeconomic positions. For the descendants of these groups it appears that the major influence on occupational attainment is their social class origins, not their ethnic origins. In other words, the occupational attainment of descendants of migrants, although not of the migrants themselves, can be largely explained in terms of their social class origins, in the same way as for the majority group, without the need to introduce terms for ethnic background. Ethnic distinctions do seem to be losing their relevance for processes of socioeconomic attainment, both across generations and over time.

This account is closely in line with that told by Cheung and Heath (2007). Their study controlled for educational level although it did not take account of social class origins, but their conclusion was very similar: “The ethnic penalties experienced by visible minorities have declined markedly in the second generation, but all the major visible minorities still find it more difficult to obtain jobs commensurate with their qualifications than do the various white groups, even in the second generation. However, when they do obtain jobs, they tend to be of similar standing and with similar rates of pay to those gained by the indigenous white British” (p. 507). Interestingly, this pattern was found to obtain in the United States, Canada, and Sweden as well, although not in several other continental European countries such as Germany or Austria. In the United States, for example, Model (2005) found that many second-generation groups experienced ethnic penalties with respect to employment but not with respect to occupational attainment, provided that they had been able to find employment. This contrasted with the situation experienced by African-Americans in the United States, who suffered cumulative disadvantages, and by Turkish minorities in several European countries, who also experienced cumulative disadvantages.

How can we explain this rather optimistic scenario? Two possible explanations for these patterns are institutional differences on the one hand and degree of selectivity on the other. One common institutional feature that

Britain, the United States, Canada, and Sweden share is their comprehensive, nonselective systems of education. The former three countries also share relatively flexible labor markets without the strong employment protection legislation that characterizes many European countries (which also tends to be associated with strong insider/outsider distinctions). These commonalities suggest that a plausible explanation for our optimistic findings in this article might be due to the opportunity structures facing migrants and their children, especially within the educational system, albeit alongside continuing racial discrimination in the labor market. Educational institutions are the primary avenues for social advancement in Britain as in other Western countries. Recent research suggests that, if anything, minorities are more likely to be found in higher education than are their white peers from similar social backgrounds, albeit often in lower status institutions (Waters et al. 2013). The British educational system thus appears to be relatively open to minority advancement, and minorities have energetically taken advantage of these opportunities (Heath and Brinbaum 2014; Li 2015), with several groups such as the Indians and Chinese outperforming their white peers.

However, a somewhat less optimistic interpretation might follow from a deeper consideration of migrant selectivity. The educational and occupational successes of the second generation might reflect the high degree of positive selection characteristic of their parents. In effect, positive selection of the parents means that there will potentially be a number of unmeasured positive characteristics of the parents, such as high aspirations for their children, which may tend to differentiate them from their peers with similar class origins among the majority group. These unmeasured positive characteristics may in part explain the success of the groups with Indian or Chinese backgrounds, and they may serve to compensate for the barriers, due to prejudice and discrimination, which continue to affect minorities in Britain. More important, they suggest that the apparent parity between second-generation Indians or Chinese and members of the majority group may in fact dissipate in later generations, if their aspirations converge with those of their white peers, while prejudice and discrimination persist.

The role of positive selection of migrants, and unmeasured positive characteristics, may also go some way to accounting for Model's finding that black migrants do not suffer the same disadvantages as African-Americans in the United States and why the children of migrants appear to be more successful in countries such as Canada and Australia with more selective immigration regimes than their continental European counterparts. Our optimism therefore needs to be tempered. Class certainly matters, but it is premature to conclude that ethnic distinctions have entirely lost their relevance for processes of socioeconomic attainment.

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