

Linear or Segmented Assimilation? Intergenerational Social Mobility by Migratory Origin in Buenos Aires, 1961-2016

¿Asimilación lineal o segmentada? Movilidad social intergeneracional según origen migratorio en Buenos Aires, 1961-2016

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ABSTRACT

This article examines intergenerational social mobility patterns by migratory family origins in the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA). The data is drawn from Germani's probabilistic survey created in 1961 and its replication by PI-Clases in 2016. The results show that, in 1961, the second generation of European immigrants exhibited upward mobility patterns similar to those of individuals with two generations of native ancestry in AMBA, thereby supporting the linear assimilation theory. In contrast, by 2016, subaltern ethnic groups, including descendants of internal *criollo* migrants and Latin American migrants, faced fewer opportunities for upward mobility due to "cumulative disadvantages" and "additional penalties" rooted in ethno-racial discrimination, thereby supporting the segmented assimilation framework. Overall, the Argentine case underscores the interplay between ethnicity, cultural assimilation, and shifting opportunity structures in shaping intergenerational social mobility across migratory streams.

Keywords: 1. ethnic inequality, 2. cultural assimilation, 3. migrant descendants, 4. Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area, 5. Argentina.

RESUMEN

En el artículo se analizan pautas de movilidad social intergeneracional según el origen migratorio familiar en el Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (AMBA). Los datos provienen de la encuesta probabilística creada en 1961 por Germani y una réplica realizada por PI-Clases en 2016. Los resultados muestran que en 1961 los hijos de inmigrantes europeos tenían pautas de movilidad ascendente similares a las de aquellos con dos generaciones de ascendencia nativa del AMBA, respaldando la teoría de la asimilación lineal. En cambio, en 2016 los grupos étnicos subalternos descendientes de migrantes internos (criollos) y migrantes latinoamericanos, tuvieron menores oportunidades de ascenso social por "desventajas acumulativas" y "penalizaciones extras" arraigadas en la discriminación étnico-racial, respaldando el enfoque de la asimilación segmentada. En definitiva, el caso argentino destaca la relación entre etnicidad, asimilación cultural y los cambios en la estructura de oportunidades en la movilidad social intergeneracional de distintas corrientes migratorias.

Palabras clave: 1. desigualdad étnica, 2. asimilación cultural, 3. descendientes de migrantes, 4. Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires, 5. Argentina.

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INTRODUCTION

Argentina, and particularly its economic hub, the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (AMBA), has a multicultural social structure shaped by successive waves of both external and internal migration. The initial massive influx of overseas migrants—mainly from Europe but also from Arab regions—was followed by internal migration and migration from neighboring countries, which included populations of mestizo or indigenous ancestry. More recently, migrants from Asia and Africa have further contributed to making Buenos Aires a culturally and ethnically diverse metropolis. However, this multicultural framework is characterized by differences that go beyond socio-cultural aspects, intersecting with long-standing structural inequalities that limit the upward mobility opportunities of groups with different migratory origins.

This multicultural profile of the social structure is also evident—though with specific features—in metropolises of developed countries such as New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, and Milan. In these cities, rising immigration from Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America has produced unprecedented levels of ethnic and racial diversity. In Latin America, São Paulo has likewise become ethnically diverse due to significant external and internal migrations, resembling the case of Buenos Aires (Baeninger et al., 2020).

The debate on assimilation and intergenerational social mobility for immigrants and their descendants (second generations)—to be addressed in more detail in the theoretical section—has intensified in the United States and Europe during the early decades of the 21st century. As the children of immigrants who arrived in the late 20th century entered the labor market, their educational outcomes and class attainment could be examined (Crul & Vreumelen, 2003; Thomson & Crul, 2007; Alba et al., 2011). This paper presents Buenos Aires (Argentina) as a relevant case for examining the long-term effects of family migratory origin on intergenerational social mobility, comparing European and non-European migrants and their descendants. This analysis shares certain similarities with research conducted in U.S. cities (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006), but with one significant difference: Argentina has not developed a strategy for sustained economic growth in recent decades and has instead faced recurrent crises and periods of stagnation.

The objective of this paper is to examine the patterns of intergenerational social mobility within the AMBA population, considering their family migratory origins in 1961 and 2016, across different stages of economic development. It seeks to reconstruct the constellation of factors that have shaped the social mobility pathways of the main migratory groups in the metropolis (European, internal, and Latin American migrants) and their descendants.

The main guiding questions of this research are: Did the first generation of migrants from different backgrounds face disadvantages in upward class mobility in 1961 and 2016? If such inequalities in opportunities existed, have they persisted among their descendants? Are current inequalities in class structure by migratory origin mainly linked to the period in which each group arrived in the region, or has migratory origin imposed additional disadvantages on certain groups? Which structural and cultural factors may have played a significant role in shaping the social stratification of groups with different migratory origins? In Argentina, this line of research,

initiated by Gino Germani (1962, 1963), has not been at the forefront of academic debate in recent decades.

Research on migration and social stratification both examine the influence of ascriptive factors on life chances, yet these two lines of inquiry have not converged in Argentina. On the one hand, numerous studies on immigration flows have focused on the labor market disadvantages faced by ethnic minorities but have not considered the role of class origin (Maguid, 2011). On the other hand, most empirical research on intergenerational social mobility in Argentina has pointed to a certain rigidity in the country's class structure in recent decades (Jorrat & Benza, 2016; Dalle, 2018); however, few empirical studies have explored the role of both external and internal migration in class attainment (Dalle, 2016).

This study aims to make original contributions to four areas of social stratification research: (i) incorporating migratory origins as a central ascriptive factor shaping inequality of opportunities; (ii) comparing long-term patterns of intergenerational social mobility by family migratory origin across two distinct economic and cultural contexts, using data from Germani's pioneering 1961 survey and a 2016 PI-Clases² survey based on its theoretical design; (iii) analyzing the effects of internal as well as external migration on intergenerational social mobility—an area less explored in the literature; and (iv) quantifying the effects of disadvantages or advantages linked to migratory origins on the probabilities of upward social mobility, while controlling for class origin and educational attainment.

THEORETICAL APPROACH: THE ROLE OF MIGRATION IN INTERGENERATIONAL CLASS MOBILITY

First-Generation Migrants and Economic Hardships

Economic migrants are often among the most ambitious, motivated, and risk-taking individuals from their home countries (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Nevertheless, they frequently face labor market disadvantages in the host society, typically entering the lower segments of the working class regardless of their education and social background (Piccitto et al., 2024). Contemporary analyses of migration's impact on social mobility opportunities often draw on the "succession model." This model suggests that newcomers enter at the bottom of the class structure, generating a "pushing effect" on the native population—largely descendants of earlier migrants—which, in turn, raises upward mobility rates among natives (Yaish, 2002).

Second-Generation Migrants

While the first generation of migrants usually occupies lower social strata, they often pass on a strong drive for social advancement to their children. This study focuses on the structural

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dimension of second-generation migrant assimilation: their real opportunities to attain educational and occupational outcomes comparable to those of native-born children. The chances for upward mobility among the second generation remain a subject of debate, which can be framed within four perspectives: *(i)* classic linear assimilation, *(ii)* segmented assimilation, *(iii)* racism and exclusion, and *(iv)* neo-assimilation.

In the United States, the structural-functionalist school developed the theory of linear assimilation, which argues that sociocultural assimilation fosters upward social mobility: the further from the first generation of migrants, the higher the social status and economic position. The linear assimilation approach holds that immigrants and their descendants gradually integrate into mainstream society through a series of predictable stages: acculturation (adoption of the dominant language and cultural norms), structural integration (access to education and employment opportunities), and a decline in ethnic identity accompanied by the emergence of exogamous patterns. This study focuses exclusively on the structural dimension of this framework, which, in the context of linear assimilation, involves an intergenerational process of upward social mobility within a migrant group—moving into the middle and upper-middle classes and converging with the patterns of the native majority. Social mobility among migrant groups is viewed as a matter of time, with no class-based or ethno-racial barriers constraining their opportunities for advancement.

B. Duncan and O. Duncan (1968) compared different ethnic groups of migratory origin and found that the second generation of European migrants, when controlling for social origin and educational attainment, showed no significant inequalities in status attainment. These findings supported the melting pot theory and the concept of “linear assimilation” for northern Europeans, Irish, Italians, Jews, Poles, and others. However, the children of Mexican migrants and other Latin American groups did not achieve the same occupational advances despite equivalent schooling, underscoring the racialized nature of the “American Dream.” Moreover, the open social structure available to the white population in the United States was often built on the exclusion of the Afro-descendant population, who remained trapped in a cycle of poverty reproduction. Even those who attained higher levels of education were frequently relegated to occupations with low socioeconomic status, reflecting the persistence of racial discrimination (Blau & Duncan, 1967).

Contemporary studies on the second generation of subaltern ethnic groups challenge the linear assimilation thesis in the context of increased ethnic discrimination and limited middle-class employment opportunities. The segmented assimilation framework proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993) argues that the incorporation of first-generation migrants and their children may follow multiple trajectories, depending on the interaction of three main factors: *(i)* human capital—including education, work experience, and language skills; *(ii)* the social context of reception, encompassing the opportunity structure, public policies, host society attitudes, and the size and characteristics of the co-ethnic community that influence access to social networks; and *(iii)* the social and cultural capital embedded in family structure.

The theory of segmented assimilation outlines a typology of trajectories for ethnic minorities (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006):

a) Consonant Assimilation: High rates of upward mobility occur through the adoption of middle-class culture of European origin, while preserving ties to the community of origin.

b) Dissonant Assimilation: Some ethno-national groups experience discrimination from the host society and, abandoning their cultural roots, fail to build social ties within their ethnic community. Lacking the support of dense social networks that could provide resources and protection, discrimination becomes a barrier to upward mobility, resulting in persistent poverty within the working class.

c) Selective Acculturation: This process highlights the role of “ethnic capital” as a resource for short-distance upward mobility. Certain groups preserve their cultural identity through strong social networks, concentrate in specific economic activities, and sustain a positive view of their culture of origin, which acts as a resilience factor in the face of discrimination and limited opportunities. These elements foster processes of short-distance upward mobility.

From a structural perspective, the segmented assimilation approach emphasizes that the second generation may largely experience stagnation or class reproduction within the working class, or even downward mobility into a more precarious segment of it—particularly among racialized migrant groups. Within these groups, the mobilization of ethnic capital emerges as a key resource enabling short-range upward mobility.

Portes and Rumbaut (2006) show that the children of Latin American migrants—especially Mexicans, Central Americans, and non-white Caribbeans—exhibit lower rates of upward social mobility compared to other groups, such as the children of Asian or European immigrants. This pattern is linked to several factors: migration under conditions of low educational attainment and limited job skills; racialization within the host society; and settlement in lower socioeconomic, more segregated neighborhoods and attendance at lower-quality schools.

However, upward mobility trajectories do exist within these groups, supported by social capital, community-based support networks, access to differentiated educational opportunities (through affirmative action programs, admission to magnet schools, or relocation to more socioeconomically integrated neighborhoods), and cultural resilience.

Racialized Exclusion: Telles and Ortiz (2008), focusing on the Mexican-American experience, argue that racialized minorities tend to remain stagnant in the working class or experience downward mobility into a racial underclass. Among second-, third-, and even fourth-generation Mexican Americans, cultural assimilation does not yield equivalent occupational returns for educational attainment when compared to native-born whites or Asians, due to the persistence of structural racism. Moreover, the authors are skeptical about the potential role of ethnic capital as a resource for upward social mobility.

Neo-Assimilation: This perspective revives the optimistic view of classic assimilation theory, suggesting that integration into the host society’s culture and the erosion of ethno-racial differences

promote upward mobility into an inclusive mainstream. According to Alba et al. (2011), the second generation is “mostly alright.”

Migrants’ Grandchildren

Most studies on intergenerational social mobility examine two generations: parents and children. This limitation often stems from the fact that most surveys do not collect socio-demographic information on grandparents. However, a new line of research on the transmission of inequality across three generations has recently gained momentum (Pfeffer, 2014).

The current debate focuses on the effect of grandparents’ social class on their grandchildren’s likelihood of social mobility, controlling for the social class of the parents. The direct effect of grandparents’ social class is especially relevant at the extremes of the class structure and among subaltern groups, where cumulative disadvantages due to ethno-racial discrimination play a significant role, as seen among African Americans and Latinos in the United States, and Turks, Arabs, and Afro-descendants in Europe (Hertel & Groh-Samberg, 2014).

This study incorporates the impact of grandparents’ social class and migratory origin on intergenerational social mobility.

MIGRATION, ETHNICITY, AND SOCIAL CLASSES IN ARGENTINA

Overseas migration to Argentina peaked between 1870 and 1930, with a brief but intense resurgence after World War II, driven by economic expansion during the agro-export phase and Import substitution industrialization (ISI). Approximately 7.6 million immigrants arrived in Argentina, with an estimated 56% residency rate. The largest migrant groups were Italians, Spaniards, Poles, Russians—among whom a considerable proportion were Jewish immigrants—and migrants from Arab countries. This influx had a profound demographic impact and, given the relatively small native population, produced a “replacement effect,” particularly in the Pampa region, where most migrants settled (Germani, 1962). At the same time, indigenous populations in the Pampa and Patagonia regions were decimated during military campaigns conducted before 1880, leading to the ethnocide of the surviving indigenous groups.

The arrival of overseas migrants significantly contributed to Argentina’s early economic development by providing labor, innovation, and human capital, all directed toward production. The resulting expansion of occupational opportunities fueled a dynamic process of structural upward mobility. European migrants—most of whom came from the working class—and their descendants were the primary beneficiaries of these opportunities (Germani, 1963). Structural mobility was especially intense in Argentina’s most dynamic regions, particularly the Pampa area, where the middle classes expanded at twice the national average. In contrast, peripheral areas remained stagnant, producing a closed and polarized social structure. During this period, Argentina’s current ethnic composition took shape, with distinct ethnic groups concentrated in different regions (Germani, 2010).

Between 1930 and 1970, the ISI phase prompted significant internal migration to urban centers, particularly the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA). From a sociocultural perspective, these internal migrations brought two distinct ethnic groups into contact: the mestizo population and the population of European origin. Unlike the 1860–1930 period, when European migration had contributed to the formation of the middle classes, internal migrants and the most recent wave of European migrants entered the working class, generating an upward “pushing effect” that moved urban residents of European immigrant origin into middle-class positions. Most of these migrants had been rural, semi-skilled, or unskilled manual workers in their places of origin and experienced intergenerational upward mobility through employment in industry as wage laborers or craftsmen (Germani, 1963).

The arrival of internal migrants from Argentina’s most stagnant regions, along with migrants from neighboring countries (Paraguay, Bolivia, and Chile), coincided with the second ISI phase (1960–1976). During this period, the manufacturing industry underwent a process of concentration, reducing its role as a pathway for these migrants to integrate into modern urban society. The main exceptions were the construction and service sectors, which continued to offer opportunities for semi-skilled and unskilled labor (Torrado, 2007).

During the economic liberalization period (1976–2001), which reinforced labor market segmentation, demand for semi-skilled and unskilled workers shifted to informal employment in activities marked by precarious conditions (Sautu, 2016). Upon arrival in the AMBA, the three main recent migrant groups—Paraguayans, Bolivians, and Peruvians—were primarily employed in low-wage manual jobs with poor working conditions, especially in construction, the textile industry, personal services, and small retail or street commerce (Cerrutti, 2018). These groups have also faced housing shortages and precarious living conditions in informal settlements (Mera, 2025). Similar circumstances were experienced by *criollo*³ internal migrants of working-class origin.

There is broad consensus on the ethnic character of Argentina’s class structure; however, interpretations of the underlying causal factors vary.

1. The first factor concerns the nature of opportunity structures. European migrants arrived in Argentina during a period of sustained economic growth, when the social structure was still taking shape, meaning that the educational and economic capital requirements for upward mobility were relatively low. Overseas migration did not involve assimilation into a pre-existing social structure; rather, it contributed to the creation of a new one (Germani, 1962). The features of this emerging society included direct relationships without traditional attitudes of respect and deference, confidence in personal progress and education, and a morality that combined birth control with conventional family authority. By contrast, internal *criollo* migrants and regional migrants had to assimilate into this already established social structure (Torre & Pastoriza, 2002). Compared with

³ This population was born in other provinces of Argentina and has several generations of Argentine ancestry. It is typically associated with the mestizo population, characterized by mixed European and Indigenous ancestry but without recent European migratory roots.

the earlier period, they arrived in the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area during a time of economic stagnation and recurrent crises, especially between 1976 and 2001 (See Table 1).

*Table 1. Argentina's GDP Per Capita Compared to Selected Countries
(In 2011 U.S. Dollars, PPP, and as a Percentage)*

	Selected years						
	1885	1913	1929	1946	1974	2001	2015
Argentina's GDP per capita	4196	6505	7481	7991	14250	13913	19316
GDP per capita as a % of...							
USA	84	80	71	55	54	30	37
Great Britain	98	102	101	87	85	40	50
France	140	126	131	159	73	42	50
Germany	132	116	165	255	76	40	42
Italy	237	238	273	327	95	47	61
Spain	117	147	124	183	127	51	58
Canada	122	93	84	69	64	38	45
Australia	68	78	72	65	69	38	44
New Zealand	85	91	103	81	83	53	58
Brazil	575	898	737	596	314	170	126
Mexico		430	409	339	178	123	123
Chile	220	180	176	180	220	129	91
Peru	883	710	442	449	380	293	172
Paraguay				534	662	361	231
Bolivia		647	571	512	673	455	324

Source: Own elaboration based on Maddison Project Database (Bolt et al., 2018).

2. A second key structural factor is immigration policy. The migration laws enacted by the generation of the 1880s explicitly favored “European migration” to “cultivate the land, improve industry, and promote science and the arts,” while imposing restrictions on regional immigrants (Adamovsky, 2009).

3. Germani (1962) adds a cultural factor to the explanation of the social advancement of European immigrants and their descendants, highlighting the role of values such as hard work, austerity, and an entrepreneurial spirit among the migrant generation—more oriented toward material accumulation and economic progress than the criollo population—as well as their strong aspirations for higher education for their children.

The positive impact of external migration on intergenerational upward mobility from working-class origins has also been observed in the aspirations for higher education among Latin American immigrant families, as well as in the higher university enrollment of Latin American migrants from lower educational backgrounds compared with native peers of similar social origin (Jimenez Zunino & Maggi, 2024). Zuccotti (2023) found that among individuals whose parents had low

educational attainment, young people of Latin American migrant origin (from Paraguay, Bolivia, and Peru) achieved better educational outcomes than native Argentinians. This positive effect diminishes among the children of middle- and upper-class migrants, which may be attributed to more intense discrimination at higher social classes.

4. The Eurocentric social imaginary has also contributed to limiting the upward mobility of internal and regional migrants and their descendants. The founding myth of Argentine national identity was that of a racial “melting pot” uniting European immigrants, mestizos, indigenous peoples, and Afro-descendants, resulting in the creation of a new ethnicity as the basis of a unified nation. However, this myth concealed a “hidden racial hierarchy,” as Adamovsky (2009, p. 63) argues, because it implied that the outcome of this fusion was a “white” European society. The condition for integrating indigenous people, Afro-descendants, and mestizos—whether native or from neighboring countries—was a process of “whitening.”

The melting pot myth has been replaced by the notion of “cultural pluralism,” which stresses the peaceful coexistence of distinct ethnic groups without merging. However, these differences are not equally valued. Ethno-racial discrimination produces a “racialization of class relations,” which assigns lower positions in the class hierarchy to Indigenous, mestizo, or mulatto populations—many with internal or Latin American migratory origins—based on their skin color, physical features, and cultural traits (Margulis, 1998, pp. 37–38). In this sense, discrimination operates as an “auxiliary mechanism of poverty: it discourages, discredits, and undermines the willingness to pursue channels of economic and social advancement” (p. 38), for example, by negatively affecting educational performance in primary and secondary schools (Binstock & Cerrutti, 2016).

There are multiple forms of both explicit and subtle rejection that delineate territories, shape patterns of spatial mobility within the city (Caggiano, 2014), promote or restrict access to certain occupations, and establish nuanced forms of permissiveness or exclusion—all of which affect the social stratification processes of discriminated groups.

5. However, other studies focusing on the cultural dimension argue that the formation of dense social networks can serve as “ethnic capital,” counteracting discriminatory practices by strengthening positive identification with the culture of origin and fostering participation in economic enclaves. Two major ethnic enclaves in the AMBA today are the Bolivian community, engaged in horticulture (Benencia, 2012), and the Paraguayan community, concentrated in construction (Del Águila, 2016). Ethnic capital is a strategic resource for the second generation: Bolivian and Paraguayan descendants often preserve cultural ties and maintain a positive self-identification with their heritage, which helps counteract discrimination and supports socioeconomic integration (Gavazzo, 2018).

Instead of attributing the effects of migration on intergenerational social mobility to a single cause, this study proposes a theoretical framework that examines the interaction of economic and cultural factors.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study draws on a statistical analysis of two probabilistic surveys conducted in the AMBA. The first, directed by Gino Germani in 1961, examined social stratification and mobility. The second, carried out in 2016 by the Research Program on Social Classes (PI-Classes) at the Gino Germani Institute, sought to continue Germani's work and enable a comparative study of intergenerational social mobility (Sautu et al., 2020).

The 1961 survey targeted household heads (primarily men) over 18 years of age, while the 2016 survey included men and women aged 25–65 residing in the AMBA. After excluding inactive respondents and those who did not provide information on their parents' occupations, the final sample sizes were 1 785 and 1 041 respondents, respectively.

The PI-Classes survey builds on Gino Germani's design with the aim of conducting a comparative study of intergenerational social mobility that includes educational and occupational indicators for three generations (respondent, father, and grandfather). In addition, the PI-Classes survey broadened this scope to include respondents' mothers and grandparents on both sides of the family.

Regarding migratory origin, the 1961 survey gathered detailed information on respondents' birthplaces (country, province, and city), their parents' national origins, and the period of migration to Argentina and the AMBA. The PI-Classes survey expanded on this by collecting birthplace information at a more disaggregated level and recording the period of arrival of migrants for three generations (respondents, parents, and grandparents), enabling a deeper analysis of the effects of internal migration origins.

To analyze the probabilities of upward social mobility by migratory origin in 1961 and 2016, a multivariate ordinal logistic regression model was applied. The coefficients estimated by this model indicate the likelihood (odds) of attaining a higher or equal class position to *J* versus a lower-class position than *J*, providing a measure of the propensity for upward mobility. Independent variables were introduced as dummy variables to capture non-linear effects. This model made it possible to estimate relative mobility, which measures the inequality of upward mobility opportunities between groups while controlling for structural changes.

The class scheme used to measure social mobility is based on a hierarchical aggregation of the EGP class schema, which allowed to adapt Germani's seven-level occupational classification. The petty bourgeoisie was divided into two strata: small sellers (IVb1), categorized as lower middle class, and craftsmen (IVb2), classified as skilled working class (Table 2).

Table 2. Variables, Categories, and Descriptive Statistics

	Year of The Survey			
	1961	%	2016	%
Dependent variable				
Class Destination	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	18	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	25.4
	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	33.1	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	31.1
	IVb2, V & VI Skilled working class	35.5	IVb2, V & VI Skilled working class	20.6
	VIIab Unskilled working class	13.5	VIIab Unskilled working class	23
Independent variable				
Class Origin (Father's class position in 1961 survey; parents' higher class position in 2016 survey)	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	20.2	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	17.8
	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	31.4	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	20.8
	IVb2, V & VI. Skilled working class	27.6	IVb2, V & VI. Skilled working class	31.4
	VIIab Unskilled working class	20.8	VIIab Unskilled working class	29.9
Class Origin (Grandparents' class position)	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	11.8	I, II & IVa Service Class and Proprietors	9.8
	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	17.9	IIIab & IVb1 Routine employees and small sellers	19.3
	IVb2, V & VI Skilled working class	7.5	IVb2, V & VI Skilled working class	19.7
	VIIab Unskilled working class	19.1	VIIab Unskilled working class	51.3
	Without information*	43.7		
Family Migratory Origin (Birthplace of respondents and national origin of parents)	Born in AMBA, Argentine parents	10.4	(Birthplace of respondents, parents and grandparents) Three generations born in AMBA (1)	7.8
	Born in AMBA, European parents	28.2	Two generations born in AMBA, European migrating grandparents (2)	15.7
	Internal Migrants, European parents	12.4	Born in AMBA, Internal migrant parents and European migrant grandparents (2)	6.8
	European migrants	33.1	Born in AMBA, European migrant parents (2)	7.8
	Internal migrants, Argentine parents	14.5	European migrants (2)	0.9
			Internal Migrants (European migrant Parents or grandparents) (2)	3.9
			Two generations born in AMBA, Internal migrant grandparents (3)	7.7

(continues)

(continuation)

		Year of The Survey			
		1961	%	2016	%
				Born in AMBA, Internal migrant parents and Argentine grandparents (3)	21.3
				Internal Migrants, Argentine parents and grandparents (3)	16.4
				Born in AMBA, Latin American migrant parents (4)	5
				Latin Americans migrants (4)	6.8
Birth Cohort	Until 1900	16.6	1950–1960	24.4	
	1901–1911	25.2	1961–1970	23.3	
	1912–1921	25.7	1971–1980	27.1	
	1922–1931	23.5	1981–1990	25.2	
	1932–1943	9			
Arrival to AMBA Period	AMBA Natives	39	AMBA Natives	72.3	
	1880–1918	9.7	1955–1975	8.7	
	1919–1930	15.6	1976–1989	7.4	
	1931–1944	13.6	1990–2014	11.6	
	1945–1961	22.2			
Level of Education	Incomplete Primary School	33	Incomplete Primary School	5.4	
	Complete primary school	51.1	Complete primary school	30.8	
	Complete high school	11.3	Complete high school	37.8	
	Complete higher education	4.7	Complete higher education	26	

* The respondents in this category have characteristics more similar to those of the two strata of the working class.

Source: Own elaboration based on the Survey directed by Germani (1961) and the PI-Clases survey (2016).

To construct the family migratory origin variable, following previous studies by Featherman and Hauser (1978) and Germani (1963), two criteria were applied when the parents' generation had different migratory origins: (i) priority was given to migratory origins over native origins, and (ii) in cases of unions between external and internal migrants, external migration was prioritized. The same criteria were applied to the grandparents' generation.

The analytical strategy begins with the construction of bivariate tables to display the class structure by family migratory origin. Then an ordinal logistic regression was applied within a multivariate stepwise analysis to identify the effect of each variable while controlling for the other independent variables. A nested regression model is employed, with hypothesis tests conducted for each group of variables added at each step. The LR test is used to determine whether introducing new variables or groups of variables that are theoretically relevant to the study of

social mobility processes adds any statistically significant effects, thereby enhancing the model's parsimony (Long & Freese, 2006).

Finally, a path analysis model was applied (Blau & Duncan, 1967) to the PI-Clases survey to examine differences in the stratification process by migratory origin within the contemporary social structure. In these regressions, International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI-08) (Ganzeboom & Treiman, 2010) and years of education in both origins and destinations were used.

RESULTS

A Multicultural Integration in an Open Society?

In 1961, the native population of the AMBA with Argentine parents—mostly descendants of earlier European immigrants or the *criollo* upper class—held the greatest relative weight in the privileged middle classes (See Table 3).

Table 3. Class Position by Birthplace and Parents' National Origin.
 Household Heads over 18 Years Old. AMBA, 1961 (%)

Class position	Birthplace and national origin of parents					Total
	Born in AMBA, Argentine parents	Born in AMBA, European parents	Internal migrants, European Parents	Internal migrants, Argentine Parents'	External migrants * (mainly Europeans)	
Service Class and Proprietors	34.4	24.9	17.1	13.2	9.7	18
Routine employees and small sellers	34.5	37.8	33.3	22.1	33.3	33.1
Skilled working class	24.1	29.2	35.1	45.7	39.9	35.5
Unskilled working class	7	8.1	14.4	19	17.1	13.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	186	503	222	258	616	1,785

* This category includes 4.1% Latin Americans (25% of whom are children of Europeans) and 3.8% Syrians, Lebanese, and Turks. In the distribution of parental national origins, Latin Americans account for only 3.7%.

Source: Own elaboration based on the Survey directed by Germani (1961).

In 1961, the native population of the AMBA consisted of the Argentine-born children and grandchildren of European immigrants, who held the greatest relative weight in the privileged middle classes. They were followed closely by AMBA natives with European parents and, shortly after, by internal migrants of European origin. Migrants from the most recent European wave and internal migrants with Argentine parents had a stronger presence in the working-class strata. The new migrants entered at the bottom of a more structured class system than in the 1880–1930 period, generating an upward push of the native population.

Table 4 presents the results of the multivariate analysis based on an ordinal logistic regression. The first column of Table 3 shows the results of the logistic models for each independent variable before adjusting the multivariate models (“gross effects”). The results for the variable “Birthplace and parents’ national origin” are consistent mainly with two hypotheses: the positive influence of parents’ European migratory origin and the linear assimilation thesis. To what extent did parents’ European origin favor the upward social mobility of their offspring?

Table 4. Ordinal Logistic Regression of the Probability of Upward Social Mobility. Household Heads over 18 Years Old. AMBA, 1961 (Exp. Beta)

Independent variables J3:O25	Gross effects	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Grandfather’s class <i>(Ref. Unskilled working class)</i>	(0.0123)				
Service class and proprietors	2.9***	1.3	1.4+	1.4*	0.9
Routine employees and small sellers	1.5*	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0
Skilled working class	1.5*	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1
Without information	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9
Father’s class <i>(Ref. Unskilled working class)</i>	(0.0519)				
Service Class & Proprietors	8.5***	7.7***	6.9***	7.0***	3.4**
Routine employees and small sellers	3.3***	3.2***	2.8***	2.8***	1.9***
Skilled working class	2.1***	2.0***	1.7***	1.8***	1.5**
Birth place and parents’ national origin <i>(Ref. Born in the AMBA, Argentine parents)</i>	(0.0255)				
Born in the AMBA, overseas migrant parents	0.67*		0.83	0.85	0.97
Internal migrants, overseas migrant parents	0.42***		0.47***	0.51	0.66
Overseas migrants	0.29***		0.34***	0.38*	0.49
Internal migrants, Argentine parents	0.25***		0.32***	0.36*	0.48
Birth cohort <i>(Ref. Until 1900)</i>	(0.003)				
Born 1901 – 1911	1.2			1.16	1.11
Born 1912–1921	1.5**			1.54**	1.42*
Born 1922–1931	1.4*			1.76**	1.31
Born 1932–1943	1.1			1.12	0.72
Arrival to AMBA period <i>(Ref. AMBA natives)</i>	(0.0251)				
1880–1918	0.50***			1.46	1.77
1919–1930	0.45***			1.11	1.23
1931–1944	0.47***			0.98	1.14
1945–1961	0.30***			0.67	0.81
Educational level <i>(Ref. Incomplete primary school)</i>	(0.1448)				
Primary school	4.7***				3.7***
High school	27.9***				18.4***
Higher education	201.3***				120.0***

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Independent variables J3:O25	Gross effects	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Pseudo R2		0.054	0.076	0.083	0.175
LR test		LR: 103.1***		LR: 29.1**	
				LR: 432.1***	
N		1 785	1 785	1 785	1 785

Note: Significance markers: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the survey directed by Germani (1961).

In Model 1, the results show that although the grandfather's social class had a direct effect on the upward mobility of his grandchildren in 1961, this effect was primarily indirect, mediated by the father's social class. Model 2 shows that, after controlling for class origins, both recent European migrants and internal migrants had lower probabilities of upward mobility compared to AMBA natives. However, the children of European migrants born in the AMBA displayed upward mobility similar to that of natives with two generations born in the area, whether from traditional families or of European migratory origin.

Model 3 indicates that, when controlling for class origins and migratory origins, the intermediate cohorts (born 1912–1931) had the highest probabilities of upward mobility. These cohorts correspond to age groups (39–49 years old) approaching the peak of their careers. The variable for the period of arrival in the AMBA also showed a general decline in upward mobility probabilities for more recent migrants, but this effect was not statistically significant, likely due to overlap with migratory origin (as shown in Model 2).

Model 4 introduces educational attainment into the analysis. The results show that educational achievement is a crucial factor for upward mobility, especially university degrees, which are key to accessing the privileged middle classes. Class origins shape disparities in educational attainment, which, in turn, influence class destinations. A significant share of the effect of social class origins is mediated by educational achievement. However, social class origins continue to exert a lasting direct effect on class destinations.

Hypothesis testing with the LR test provides some support for Model 4, which underscores the significant role of educational attainment in intergenerational social mobility. Moreover, the results of this model refine earlier findings about the influence of migratory origin. When controlling for class origins (traced back two generations) and educational attainment, the effect of birthplace and parents' national origin is no longer significant, although the overall pattern remains. This suggests that the lower upward mobility rates observed for the most recent European and internal migrants are largely explained by disadvantages linked to social class origins and lower levels of educational attainment. In addition, the second generation of European immigrants born in the AMBA achieved class positions similar to those of families with two generations of Buenos Aires natives.

A More Closed Society?

What is the current insertion of families into the class structure according to their migratory origin? Table 5 provides a descriptive overview of this pattern in 2016.

Table 5. Class Position by Migratory Family Origin. Population of Both Sexes, 25–65 Years Old. AMBA, 2016 (%)

Class position	Migration family origin II				Total
	Three generations born in AMBA (European ancestry)	European migratory origin	Internal migratory origin, Argentine parents and grandparents	Latin American migratory origin	
Service class and proprietors	45.8	34.9	16.8	15.8	25.4
Routine employees and small sellers	32.5	36.8	28.2	24.2	31.1
Skilled working class	7.2	18.0	22.9	28.3	20.6
Unskilled working class	14.5	10.4	32.1	31.7	22.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100
N	83	367	471	120	1 041

Source: Own elaboration based on the PI-Classes Survey (2016).

Families with three generations born in the AMBA, primarily residing in Buenos Aires City and largely of European descent, are overrepresented in the privileged middle classes. Families of European origin who arrived more recently in the region also show a similar distribution, being concentrated in both the privileged middle and lower middle classes. By contrast, families of internal migratory origin without European ancestry—at least up to the grandparents’ generation—and families of Latin American origin are overrepresented in the working class. Latin American migrants, however, are more integrated into the skilled segments of the working class, and their descendants experience greater short-distance upward mobility through technical and lower professional credentials (See Table 6).

Table 6. Class destination from working-class origins of *criollo* internal migrants and Latin American migrants and their offspring, AMBA, 2016 (%)

Class Position	Migratory family origin and generation that migrated				Total
	Internal migrants, Argentine parents and grandparents	Born in AMBA, internal migrant parents and Argentine grandparents	Latin American migrants	Born in AMBA, Latin American migrating parents	
Lower professionals and technicians	12	15.9	9.5	21.2	15.9
Routine employees	7.7	12.1	14.3	12.1	11.3
Small sellers and craftsmen	13.7	15.3	14.3	12.2	14.2
Skilled manual workers	16.2	23.6	19	24.2	20.2
Unskilled manual workers	50.4	33.1	42.9	30.3	38.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Own elaboration based on the PI-Clases Survey (2016).

Table 7 illustrates the current influence of ascriptive and achieved factors on the probabilities of upward social mobility. The first notable finding is that the independent variables used for the 2016 analysis show gross effects similar to those found in the 1961 survey. This is particularly evident in the impact of parents' class, which indicates the persistence of inequality over time.

Table 7. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Upward Social Mobility Probabilities. Population of Both Sexes, 25–65 Years Old. AMBA, 2016 (Exp. Beta)

Independent Variables	Gross Effects	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Grandparents' class (<i>Ref. Unskilled working class</i>)					
Service class and proprietors	5.5***	2.5***	2.3***	2.3***	1.6+
Routine employees and small sellers	2.7***	1.5*	1.3	1.3	0.9
Skilled working class	1.6***	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8
No information	1	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6*
Parents' class (<i>Ref. Unskilled working class</i>)					
Service Class & Proprietors	8.4***	6.3***	4.9***	4.9***	2.3***
Routine employees & small sellers	4.0***	3.4***	2.7***	2.7***	1.9**
Skilled working class	1.5***	1.4*	1.3	1.3	1
Migratory family origin (<i>Ref, three generations born in the AMBA</i>)					

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Independent Variables	Gross Effects	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Two generations born in the AMBA, European migrant grandparents	0.98		0.87	0.85	0.75
AMBA, Internal migrant parents and European migrant grandparents	0.50*		0.62	0.6	0.66
AMBA, European migrant parents	0.62		0.76	0.74	0.67
European migrants	0.76		0.54	0.33	0.41
Internal migrants, European migrant parents or grandparents	0.42*		0.54	0.35	0.81
Two generations born in AMBA, Internal migrant grandparents	0.36**		0.52*	0.52*	0.40**
AMBA, Internal migrant parents and Argentine grandparents	0.24***		0.35***	0.34***	0.43**
Internal migrants, Argentine parents and grandparents	0.17***		0.25***	0.17	0.36**
AMBA, Latin American migrant parents	0.28***		0.36***	0.35**	0.41*
Latin American migrants	0.16***		0.21***	0.13	0.33**
Birth cohort					
<i>(Ref. 1950-1960)</i>					
Born 1961–1970	1.06			0.98	
Born 1971–1980	1.21			1.13	
Born 1981–1990	0.99			0.88	
Arrival to the AMBA period					
<i>(Ref. AMBA natives)</i>					
1955–1975	0.34***			1.34	
1976–1989	0.50**			1.65	
1990–2014	0.51***			1.62	
Educational level					
<i>(Ref. Incomplete primary school)</i>					
Primary school	2.3**				2.1**
High school	11.1***				7.6***
Higher education	65.7***				35.1***
Pseudo R2		0.0712	0.0944	0.095	0.18
LR test		LR: 61.9***		LR: 2.9	LR: 228.6***
N	1 065	972	972	972	972

Note: Significance markers (*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001).

Source: Own elaboration based on the PI-Classes Survey (2016).

Model 1 results show that parents' class is significantly associated with the probability of experiencing upward social mobility. Unlike Model 1 in the 1961 data, grandparents' class has a significant direct effect on the probabilities of upward social mobility. Controlling for the father's class, the findings indicate that having grandparents in either the privileged middle class or the lower middle class increases the probability that grandchildren will attain a higher-class position.

Model 2 shows that family migratory origin also has a significant influence. Internal and Latin American migrants and their descendants have reduced probabilities of upward social mobility,

even when controlling for grandparents' and parents' class. In contrast to the pattern observed in 1961, two significant differences stand out. In 1961, internal and European migrants had lower chances of upward mobility. Today, not only does the first generation of migrants have fewer opportunities for upward social mobility, but this disadvantage also carries over to their sons and daughters. This drawback is particularly evident among the offspring of more recent migratory flows: *criollo* internal migrants and those from Latin American countries.

Model 3 shows that incorporating birth cohorts and the period of arrival in the AMBA does not significantly change the long-term probabilities of upward mobility. Consistent with 1961, Model 4 highlights that educational attainment—especially a university degree—remains a crucial pathway for upward social mobility. However, parents' class continues to exert a lasting direct influence on their children's social class destination, even when controlling for education. One notable difference from 1961 is that, after accounting for all selected variables, grandparents' class now has a more pronounced direct effect on the social mobility probabilities of grandchildren. This effect is particularly evident between the upper echelons of the middle class and the lower working-class strata, potentially pointing to longer-term dynamics in the social stratification process (Pfeffer, 2014).

Model 4 also shows that, after controlling for all selected variables, *criollo* internal migrants and Latin American migrants, along with their descendants, have lower chances of upward mobility compared to those of European migratory origin. Overall, these results support the thesis of a more closed society for subordinate ethnic groups.

Finally, to further examine the process of social stratification in the AMBA by migratory origin, the path analysis model developed by Blau and Duncan (1967) was applied. This model incorporates two variables: the highest occupational status among the respondent's grandparents and the family's migratory origin, which combines the place of origin with the generation that migrated to the AMBA (grandparents, parents, and respondents) (See Table 8). Path analysis models are useful because they display variables on scales, thereby capturing the sequential effects of ascriptive factors (grandparents' occupational status, parents' education and occupational status, and migratory family origin) and achieved factors (years of education and first occupation) on occupational status attainment (See Table 8).

Table 8. Status Attainment Model Including Family Migratory Origin and Grandparents' Occupational Status, Standardized Partial Correlation Coefficients

	Grandparents' occupation	Parents' years of education	Parents' occupation	Respondents' years of education	Respondents' first occupation	Respondents' current occupation
Ascriptive variables						
Social origins						
Grandparents' occupation		0.516***	0.166***	0.101**		0.055*
Parents' occupation				0.273***	0.127***	0.091**
Parents' years of education			0.632***	0.187***	0.035	0.034
Migratory family origin						
<i>Three generations born in the AMBA (Reference category)</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
Two generations born in the AMBA, European migrant grandparents	0.036	0.071	0.030	0.106		-0.213*
AMBA, Internal migrant parents and European migrant grandparents	-0.308*	-0.310*	0.108	-0.050		-0.177
AMBA, European migrant parents	-0.397**	-0.128	0.038	0.148		-0.191
Internal migrants, European migrant parents or grandparents	-0.590***	-0.165	-0.035	-0.277		-0.194
Two generations born in AMBA, Internal migrant grandparents	-0.123	-0.107	-0.227*	-0.109		-0.371**
AMBA, Internal migrant parents and Argentine grandparents	-0.620***	-0.422***	-0.174*	-0.257*		-0.298**
Internal migrants, Argentine parents and grandparents	-0.811***	-0.578***	-0.092	-0.431***		-0.195*
AMBA, Latin American migrant parents	-0.543***	-0.220	-0.321**	-0.193		-0.390**
Latin American migrants	-0.590***	-0.367**	-0.035	-0.466**		-0.406**

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	Grandparents' occupation	Parents' years of education	Parents' occupation	Respondents' years of education	Respondents' first occupation	Respondents' current occupation
Achieved variables						
Respondents' years of education					0.457***	0.535***
Respondents' first occupation						0.173***

Note: This category includes only a few cases of European migrants (7).

Significance markers: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the PI-Clases survey (2016).

Path analysis makes it possible to evaluate how advantages and disadvantages are transmitted across generations according to migratory origins. The findings reveal a “cycle” of social reproduction of disadvantage among migrants from subordinate ethnic groups and their descendants. Internal migrants (*criollos*), their children born in the AMBA, and migrants from Latin American countries experience “cumulative disadvantages”: starting from lower initial occupational and educational status, they attain lower levels of education, which in turn leads to lower occupational status. Even after controlling for antecedent variables—social origins and educational attainment—these groups continue to reach lower occupational status.

This pattern of inequality also extends to the grandchildren of internal migrants born in the AMBA with multiple generations of Argentine (*criollo*) ancestry. The second generation of Latin American migrants faces “additional penalties”: although they may attain educational levels slightly lower but still comparable to those of groups of European migratory origin (despite coming from less advantaged social backgrounds), this education does not translate into equivalent occupational status. These results suggest the presence of exclusionary social closure mechanisms based on ethno-racial discrimination and segregation, which are structural in nature (Blau & Duncan, 1967, pp. 204–205), and affect ethno-national minorities more acutely.

Moreover, the analysis shows that grandparents' occupational status exerts a long-term influence on occupational attainment, even when controlling for other ascriptive factors and educational achievements. The disadvantages in occupational attainment observed among the grandchildren of European migrants disappear when grandparents' occupational status is not taken into account. This pattern suggests a positive influence of European migrant grandparents on intergenerational upward mobility for subsequent generations. Such influence may stem from their earlier upward mobility into the middle classes or skilled working class, which provided not only better material conditions and greater opportunities but also the transmission of values and aspirations for social advancement to later generations.

To sum up, considering both trends, this analysis suggests that external migration can potentially favor upward social mobility. However, migrants of Latin American origin and their descendants face stronger sociocultural barriers that restrict their upward mobility trajectories.

CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

This paper addresses the debate on the relationship between migratory origin, ethnicity, and the key factors influencing intergenerational social mobility in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires in 1961 and 2016. The main patterns identified were summarized and these findings were interpreted through the theoretical frameworks previously discussed.

The findings show that, both in 1961 and 2016, the first generation of migrants to the AMBA had fewer opportunities for upward social mobility. In 1961, those with the lowest probability of upward mobility included internal migrants and European migrants from the post–World War II wave. Today, internal migrants with several generations of Argentine (*criollo*) ancestry, along with regional migrants from neighboring countries, face the greatest disadvantages. In 2016, the pattern reveals marked disadvantages for the first generation of migrants, with their integration into the informal labor market serving as a major barrier to upward social mobility.

Regarding the descendants of migrants, the analysis shows that in 1961 inequalities had largely disappeared for the second generation of European origin. These results support the linear assimilation perspective for the descendants of European migrants, as demonstrated by studies such as B. Duncan and O. Duncan (1968) and Featherman and Hauser (1978) in the United States during the same period.

However, today the descendants of *criollo* internal migrants and migrants from neighboring countries show lower probabilities of upward social mobility, even after controlling for other variables. Moreover, this pattern of inequality extends to the grandchildren of *criollo* internal migrants. Overall, these findings point to a trend toward the closure of the class structure from 1961 to 2016 for *criollo* internal and regional migrants and their descendants. This raises the question: What structural and cultural factors may be shaping these patterns?

First, the results support theoretical perspectives that highlight the importance of the “opportunity structure.” The first waves of European migrants arrived in the AMBA between 1870 and 1930, a period when the class structure was still taking shape and Argentina’s rapid economic growth created opportunities for upward mobility. The last wave of European migrants arrived during the import substitution industrialization (ISI) model. Although the class structure was more consolidated and upward mobility more restricted by capital ownership compared to earlier periods, the dynamism of the industrial sector opened avenues of upward mobility into the skilled working class and lower middle class. From these positions, these migrants were able to offer their descendants a broader range of opportunities.

Moreover, as the socio-cultural ethos of the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA) had been shaped by earlier overseas immigration and infused with European middle-class values, this likely

facilitated their assimilation. The extensive networks of associations and organizations previously established by their compatriots provided crucial support in securing housing and employment, thereby easing their integration into the host society. They settled in consolidated working-class and lower middle-class neighborhoods of the Buenos Aires metropolitan periphery, with better access to school infrastructure, and they instilled in their children a cultural repertoire oriented toward educational aspirations.

In contrast, *criollo* internal migrants—particularly the more recent waves—and migrants from Latin American countries arrived in a more segmented and less dynamic society. Shortly after their arrival in the AMBA, they were affected by deindustrialization and recurring economic crises. These structural processes led to a massive contraction of industrial employment, which had been their main means of integration into urban life and the first step toward potential upward mobility. As a result, these groups became overrepresented in low-skilled services and construction work, often within the informal labor sector, which is closely associated with poverty. Moreover, they are more concentrated in segregated neighborhoods of the Buenos Aires metropolitan periphery—characterized by precarious employment, high unemployment, limited infrastructure, and material scarcity—which fosters a culture oriented toward short-term goals.

Second, from a cultural perspective, the high social prestige attributed to European migrants in the socio-cultural imagination may have contributed to the exclusion of internal and Latin American migrants and their descendants—particularly those of mestizo and indigenous ancestry—through ethno-racial discrimination. This exclusionary social closure likely played a significant role in limiting opportunities for these groups.

Regarding the theoretical perspectives discussed, the patterns of intergenerational social mobility observed among the descendants of *criollo* internal migrants and regional migrants align more closely with the segmented assimilation perspective (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Unlike the class assimilation and neo-assimilation perspectives, these groups have experienced limited long-range mobility into the middle and upper middle classes, and this limitation is not the result of a temporary factor.

Many descendants of internal and regional migrants continue to occupy working-class positions, with a considerable number in unskilled and informal sectors. However, contrary to the hypothesis of racialized exclusion, the analysis also shows that despite adverse circumstances—including lower levels of economic development and greater cultural barriers—the offspring of internal and Latin American migrants have achieved short-range upward mobility through skilled manual work, technical positions, and lower professional occupations. This trend is especially notable among the second generation of Latin American migrants, possibly due to the positive effects of ethnic capital discussed in the literature.

The analysis of social stratification by migratory origin reveals “cumulative disadvantages” for both subaltern ethnic groups: *criollo* internal migrants and their descendants, as well as Latin American migrants. In addition, “current penalties” are especially evident among the offspring of Latin American migrants. Despite attaining higher levels of education relative to their lower social

origins, these groups have not reached occupational parity with those of European migratory origin. This penalty may be explained by more rigid closure mechanisms based on ethno-racial discrimination, particularly affecting migrants and their descendants from Bolivia, Peru, and Paraguay. These findings underscore the need for further research on the cultural dimensions of intergenerational social mobility, including ethno-racial discrimination rooted in Eurocentric imaginaries, as well as the potential of ethnic capital and strong social networks to function as mechanisms for upward mobility.

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