

Economics, sociology and statistics in policy assessment a 40 years perspective

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A line of research on cognitive forms and the formation of commonality

between sociology (University, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en
Sciences Sociales)...

Durkheim Mauss: 'De quelques formes primitives de classification' 1903

Durkheim: *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, les catégorisations
'instruments laborieusement forgés' en 'capital' 1912

Bourdieu et Boltanski: 'Le titre et le poste', luttes de classes et luttes de
classement 1974 (Centre de Sociologie de l'Éducation et de la Culture)

Boltanski et Thévenot: *Les économies de la grandeur*, fondant critiques et
justifications 1987 (Groupe de Sociologie Politique et Morale)

Thévenot: *Sociologie des régimes d'engagement* 2006 (GSPM)

...and statistics (Institut National de la Statistique et des
Études Economiques)

Desrosières: Histoire des nomenclatures socioprofessionnelles 1977, *The
Politics of Large Numbers. A History of Statistical Reasoning* 1998 [1993] *Pour
une sociologie historique de la quantification & Gouverner par les nombres*
2008

Thévenot: codage social, *Investments in forms* 1979, 1984, *Politique des
statistiques* 1990, mesures statistiques et mesures politiques 2009, *Three
constructions of commonality in the plural* 2010

The *Politics of statistics* research program: linking political constructions, statistical tools, economical social or political theories, through *conventions* of representation

- a) **Political** representation: making commonality in action
the **qualification** for taking part to the **community** depends on the construction of *commonality in the plural* which is either based on:
 - the plurality of specifications of the common good (*orders of worth*)
 - the plurality of choices (*opinions, interests*) by *individuals-in-the-liberal-public*
 - the plurality of personal *affinities to common places*
- b) **Statistical** representation: getting the measure of actors:
the **classification** for **common measurement** is based on:
 - categorization (nomenclature, codification)
 - correspondence (principal components analysis)
 - correlation (regression and purification of causal variables)
- c) **Epistemic** representation: comprehending actions:
the **apprehension** for **scientific communication** is based on:
 - scientific conceptualization (social milieu, cultural capital, human capital..)
 - explanatory theory (social reproduction, labor market, culture..)

A survey on life trajectories providing overviews of society and feeding debate over policies

Training and Occupational Skills

6 successive surveys, from the sixties, on life trajectories:

- parents' and grandparents' occupations, nationality and birthplace
- childhood (siblings, parents' divorce or death)
- education (year by year)
- marriage, births, divorce
- first occupation
- occupational mobility during the last five years

Our survey on the survey: a *corpus* on individuals' measurement aiming at the assessment of political measures:

- changes of the questionnaire
- publications based on the survey data
- interviews with the survey managers and users

Thévenot, L. et Monso, O., 2009, "Statistique et évaluation des politiques : quarante ans d'enquêtes 'Formation et Qualification Professionnelle', *Courrier des Statistiques*, 127:13-19, <http://www.insee.fr/fr/publications-et-services/sommaire.asp?codesage=COU127>

Monso O. et Thévenot, L., 2010, "Les questionnements sur la société française pendant quarante ans d'enquêtes Formation et Qualification Professionnelle", *Economie et Statistique*, 431-432: 13-36.

Breaking up 'problematics' into component parts

the pivotal role of the characterization of the individual's main quality:

social milieu, occupational skill, competence stemming from human capital, cultural or ethnic identification

a) which political questioning and political measures are intended to correct injustices and inefficiencies ?

social inequalities reduction, educational needs, individual training efficiency, immigrants' integration or struggle against discriminations

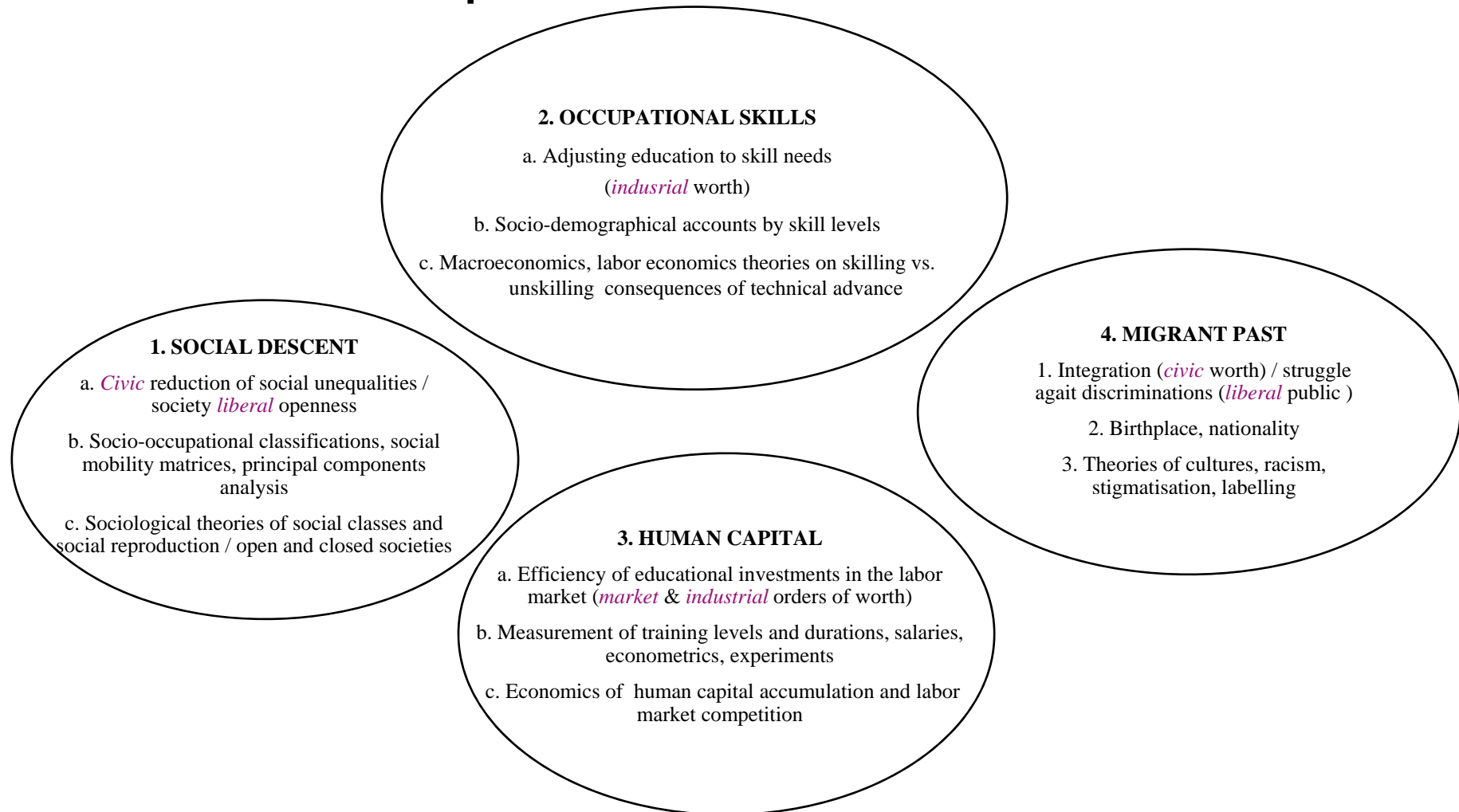
b) which statistical tools ?

socio-occupational categories, mobility matrices, principal component analysis, socio-demographical accounts, econometrical regressions

c) which explanatory theories?

social reproduction, open society, labor deskilling, human capital and labor market, culturalism, theories of racism, stigmatization and labeling

Four problematics linking policy assessment, statistical tools and economical, social or political theories



1. Social descent: reducing social unequalities / securing equal opportunities

a) political questioning and political measures:

struggling against social inequalities might have 2 orientations:

- a1. a solidarity objective to compensate social handicaps (*civic* worth)
- a2. an equal opportunity objective (*liberal* construction)

b) statistical tools :

socio-occupational categorization...

...at the intersection of several behaviors

relations measured by

- correlation (Galton), intergenerational mobility tables
- principal components analysis

c) explanatory theories :

c1. social classes, social reproduction

c2. open / closed societies

2. Occupational skill: planning educational qualifications to adjust to productive needs

- a) political questioning and political measures:
 - forecasting occupational structures by level of skills...
 - ...to plan educational needs (*industrial* worth)
- b) statistical tools :
 - correspondence tables between educational qualifications and occupational skills
 - socio-demographic accounts based on integration of young people matrices and 5 years occupational mobility
- c) explanatory theories :
 - macroeconomics, aggregated production function
 - labor economics theories on the deskilling consequences of technical advance

3. Human capital : rising the efficiency of educational investments in the labor market

a) political questioning and political measures:

rising the efficiency of individual investments in education and lifelong training (*industrial* worth)

making the labor market more flexible (*market* worth)

b) statistical tools :

measurement of educational level and duration (investment)...

...and salary (return)

econometrical regression isolating pure causal variables

experiments

c) explanatory theories :

human capital :

costly individual investment in education and training

cost-effective in a competitive labor market

4. **Migrant** past : favoring integration / struggling against discriminations

a) political questioning and political measures:

2 possible orientations

a1) favoring integration (*civic* worth) /

a2) struggling against discriminations (*liberal* public)

b) statistical tools :

controversies on the opportunity of 'ethnic' or 'cultural' variable

econometrics of human capital : discrimination is the unexplained part

c) explanatory theories :

of the valorized ethnic or cultural identity: culturalism, identity politics,
indirect discrimination

of racism, stigmatization, labeling

Conclusion I: changes of political constructions, government scales and places

civic worth:

engaged in anonymous solidarity, against 'paternalistic' dependencies and *domestic* worth from 'French Republicanism' to the recent reform of US health system
national scale of solidarity with possible international extensions
government places non restricted to states: associations, NGO

industrial worth :

engaged in investments supporting the future
scales and places: individual (project), firm (Taylorism), State (national planning),
transnational standardizing and certificating bodies (*governing by standards*)

market worth

engaged in market competition through prices and common knowledge market goods
capital (financial or human) as a compromise between *industrial* and *market* worth
scales and places: non state, global, individual

liberal public :

engaged in the public through individual choice of options (opinion, project, stake)
communicable to all other individuals-in-public, making negotiation possible
scales and places: from individual to global project, from the self to independent bodies

governing by the objective

reducing the political common good agenda to the fulfillment of elementary plans
reducing the plan to a measurable objective

Conclusion II: differing about policies within various constructions of commonality

differing in a **commonality** composed of a **plurality** of *orders of worth*:

opposing views in a **public debate**

claiming different legitimate conceptions of the **common good** (*worth*)

involving different *information formats* in the critical test

good example (*domestic*), mean (*industrial*), price (*market*), etc.

confronted in **severe criticism** / reaching a **compromise** between orders of worth

differing in a *liberal* **commonality** composed of a **plurality** of *individuals opting in public*

:

opposing views in a **public debate**

asserting a difference of individual *opinion* (or *interest*) with another individual in the same format of a *feasible optional plan*

agreeing to differ / **negotiating** to reach an **agreement**

differing in a **commonality** composed of **plural** *affinities to common-places*

communicating **personal attachment** by way of *affinity* to a *common-place*

expressing differences by means of multiply associated common-places

brought **together** with **irony** / in **communion with others** via a **comprehensive commonplace**

questioning the unquestionable *government by the objective* ?

the **reduction** of commonality to the **objectives** of elementary **plans**

the **ready-made evidence-based** test and its **objective** measurement

the **exclusion** of other formats of information and relevant inquiry

