



**Tuesday, 24 May 2016**

**Beyond the Ethnic Lens? Comparing Immigrant Trajectories by  
Country of Origin, Social Class, and Migration Path.**

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**Prof. Andreas Wimmer**

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University, New York**

10.00 – 12.00 h

University of Neuchatel, Faculty of Arts, 2000 Neuchatel, Place-Louis-Agassiz 1, Room RN.08

This Lecture is co-organized by the Maison d'analyse des processus sociaux (MAPS) and the nccr – on the move.

**Abstract**

This lecture critically explores one aspect of mainstream migration research: to aggregate individual level data into country-of-origin groups to interpret results (as when second generation “Italians” are compared with “former Yugoslavians”). This combines with the usual practice in survey research to oversample smaller country-of-origin groups in order to be able to later generalize across origin groups. We show that other modes of aggregating individual data, by parents occupation (e.g.



peasant versus banker) or by migration path (e.g. refugee versus family reunification), capture differences in integration trajectories of the second generation equally well. This is shown using data from a large scale survey from Southern California. Much of the standard interpretation of migration trajectories therefore rests on the unreflected power of common sense and politico-ethnic categories, of assuming that “Italians” must differ from “Yugoslavians”.

### Curriculum Vitae

Andreas Wimmer’s research focuses on a long-term and globally comparative perspective to nation building and formation, on how individuals and groups draw ethnic and racial boundaries, and on political conflicts and wars resulting from these processes. Using new methods and data, he continues the old search for historical patterns of nationalism, ethnic and racial boundary-making and political conflicts that repeat across contexts and times. He has pursued this agenda across the disciplinary fields of sociology, political science, and social anthropology and through various styles of inquiry: field research in Oaxaca (Mexico) and Iraq, comparative historical analysis, quantitative cross-national research, network studies, formal modeling, the analysis of large-scale survey data, as well as policy-oriented research. Since 2015, Wimmer has been the Lieber Professor of Sociology and Political Philosophy at Columbia University in the city of New York. He previously taught at Princeton, UCLA, Bonn, Neuchâtel, and Zurich.

### Selected Publications

- Wimmer, Andreas (2015): “Race centrism. A critique and a research agenda”, in: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38(13): 2186–2205.
- Wimmer, Andreas, and Thomas Soehl (2014): “Blocked acculturation. Cultural heterodoxy among Europe’s immigrants”, in: *American Journal of Sociology* 120(1):146–186.
- Wimmer, Andreas (2013): *Waves of war: nationalism, state formation, and ethnic exclusion in the modern world*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wimmer, Andreas (2013): *Ethnic boundary making: institutions, power, networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wimmer, Andreas (2011): “A Swiss anomaly? A relational account of national boundary making”, in: *Nations and Nationalism* 17(4): 718–737.
- Wimmer, Andreas (2009): *Nationalist exclusion and ethnic conflict: shadows of modernity*. Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press (2nd Edition).
- Wimmer, Andreas (2005): *Kultur als Prozess: zur Dynamik des Aushandelns von Bedeutungen*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften
- Wimmer, Andreas (2002): “Multikulturalität oder Ethnisierung? Kategorienbildung und Netzwerkstrukturen in drei schweizerischen Immigrantenvierteln”, in: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 31(1): 4–26.
- Wimmer, Andreas, and Nina Glick Schiller (2002): “Methodological nationalism and beyond. Nation state formation, migration and the social sciences”, in: *Global Networks. A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 2(4):301–334.