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Psychological and Sociological Effects of Learning German for Adolescent Migrants in Germany

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"When I Came to Germany, Everything Changed":

Adolescent Migrant Narratives on Shifting Identities, Societal Integration,

Language Learning, and Citizenship Pathways

An Honors Thesis presented by

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to the Department of Human Development

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study incorporated participant observation field notes and narrative interview analyses of migrant adolescent students (N = 12) from diverse national and culture backgrounds who arrived in Lübeck, Germany within 3 years. Situated within the current German migration context following the advent of the 'Refugee Crisis' in 2015, the study sought to understand how migrant students responded to shifting notions of 'Germanness' in relation to language learning to adapt to their new lives. A dynamic process-oriented acculturation model was employed to demonstrate how the participants altered their adaptive strategies in different contexts to achieve life goals and exhibit individual agency. The perpetuation of a monolingual paradigm of national identity (Yildiz, 2012) affected these orientations by lauding German language learning and discouraging students from speaking other languages, despite liberal politicians' calls to embrace diversity. Students from hybrid cultural and linguistic backgrounds felt pressured to suppress these histories in order to 'move forward' and adopt German norms. Key findings emphasize the particular challenges of migrants from non-Western backgrounds to fit a narrow image of 'Germanness', the potential efficacy of assimilating for migrants who *can* pass as 'German', the promises of an integration program to facilitate new lives and diverse migrant identities, and the importance of belonging for societal integration. Recommendations for future psychological identity-based research, responses to national discourses, and school policies are proposed to facilitate successful integration and identity development across backgrounds.

Keywords: Germany, Transnational Migration, Identity Development, Acculturation, Societal Integration, Language Politics, Monolingual Paradigm

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

1. Globalization and Transnational Migration

As technological advancements facilitated international trade, communication, and knowledge exchange in recent decades, the world is more interconnected and has changed as a result of this landscape. Captured under the term 'globalization', these phenomena have been traditionally assessed through their effects on national economies and trade (Giddens, 1999). Integral to this interconnection are exchanges between countries, and this model focuses on financial exchange, but these developments occur alongside the mobility of *people* in processes of international migration. As scholars examined these transitions, there was a recognition that these migrants brought aspects of their cultural origins to their new countries, affecting the host country's culture as well as that of the migrants themselves (Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995; Hermans, 2001b). These effects are not novel developments within the current context of globalization, but this new, dynamic and efficient period of exchange has led scholars to explore these contemporary circumstances with particular attention to localized changes in cultures as a result of globalizing forces (e.g., Tomlinson, 1999).

These research endeavors revealed the dynamic effects of mass migration on local environments, but only a subsection of these studies is focused on the effects of migration on the migrants themselves. As advances in exchange and mobility allow greater masses to travel across the world, nations simultaneously regulate their borders in efforts to regulate migration, worried about effects to the local economies and on their national cultures. In particular, the

developments in the Middle East in 2014 led to millions of refugees fleeing war-torn regions and trying to arrive to European shores to reach safety (Gogolin, McMonagle, & Salem, 2019). This had drastic effects on migration policies across Europe as countries responded differently to asylum-seekers, leading to the Dublin Regulations that required these forcibly displaced people to apply for refugee-status in the country the arrive in (Bock & Macdonald, 2019) which had drastic effects on the economies of countries along the southern European borders. In response, Germany opened its borders in a deliberate display of benevolence accompanied by a *Willkommenskultur* ('welcoming culture'; Patridge, 2019) to assist these displaced individuals, and over one million asylum-seekers that arrived in 2015 alone (Machtans, 2016).

The present study, situated only 5 years after the violence erupted that disrupted millions, is framed around two primary research questions: 1. How is the 'integration' of contemporary migrants in Germany actualized, and 2. How do border policies and national narratives differentially affect migrant adolescent identities in new political and cultural contexts? Although the 'Refugee Crisis' led to millions of displaced individuals from these regions, there are also many migrants from other areas arriving for different reasons, thus framing this context through a diversity of pre-migration backgrounds (Heckmann, 2019). This thesis intentionally employed idiographic migrant narratives to comprehensively understand the effects of these processes from their personal perspectives and experiences, rather than large-scale quantitative measures which would not be able emphasize these adolescent voices. Within a psychological paradigm, these methods are less central to traditional scholarship predicated on statistical objectivity and generalizability, necessitating a review of qualitative inquiry and its promises for expanding psychological scholarship.

2. Psychological Science and Qualitative Inquiry

This undergraduate Honor's Thesis incorporates ethnographic field notes alongside interpretive narrative analyses of semi-structured interviews within a qualitative inquiry epistemological paradigm. While Wertz (2014) emphasizes the qualitative nature of early psychological scholarship, especially within Freud's and James' 19th century theses, psychology has largely been dominated by a positivistic quantitative model of research predicated on the universal standard of 'objective, scientific measures' (Gergen, Josselson, & Freeman, 2015). Peshkin (1993) reviews the effects of this explicit epistemological and axiological paradigm on developing research, arguing that "research that is not theory driven, hypothesis testing, or generalization producing may be dismissed as deficient or worse" (p. 23). Focused on objective, experimental studies, psychology is dominated by studies performed in labs that are intentionally removed from the 'messiness' of reality in order to capture the 'truth' hidden under outside, cultural, subjective forces. This 'blessed trinity' is ingrained within psychology's origins and developments to such an extent that, in Bhatia's (2018) view, "until recently, psychology's preoccupation with quantification and experimentation required psychologists to think about their scientific activity as based on the 19th-century model of science" (p. 257) defined through this paradigm. Furthermore, the large-scale nature of these quantitative projects reinforced their academic legitimacy through objective, statistical measures and these qualitative projects often feature less than a dozen subjects. In order to establish itself as a validated psychological research paradigm, these critiques had to be addressed to

conceptualize qualitative inquiry as a supplemental set of methodologies operating through a

distinct epistemology.

As Gergen and colleagues (2015) outline, the student-led antiwar movements, civil

rights movement, and the feminist movements in the 1960s and '70s in America were

instrumental in reinvigorating pride and interest in innovation and challenging traditional

knowledge sources. Central to this development, according to Bhatia (2018), was the expansion

of psychological inquiry beyond the lab model due to "an increased awareness that the

production of knowledge is shaped by one's cultural social location" (p. 258), thus linking this

intellectual revolution to sociocultural considerations. The first edition of the *Sage Handbook of*

Qualitative Research by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) was vital in establishing qualitative inquiry as

a valid, rigorous research paradigm and its subsequent four new editions within 17 years is

emblematic of its centrality to contemporary psychological research. Gergen and colleagues

(2015) reflect that this intellectual "movement draws from different reservoirs of though, new

sensitivities, and expanded conceptions of what psychology might offer the world" (p. 1). Thus,

qualitative inquiry expands psychological efforts of understanding the individual in their larger

ecological contexts (Ward & Geeraert, 2016) with different methodologies and frameworks that

complement positivistic approaches, rather than seeking to usurp or replace them.

Qualitative inquiry is a broad term for a diverse array of methodologies with distinct

histories, epistemologies, and aims that are distinct from quantitative traditions, thus

emphasizing pluralism (Gergen, 2014). Now recognized as a core constituent of psychological

methods as its own division within the American Psychological Association (APA; Gergen et al.,

2015), researchers have tested the boundaries of scholarship through new formulations of

traditional formats that embrace creative renditions (e.g., Berbary, 2012; Kiesinger, 1998; Rodriquez, 2006). Along with these new experimentations, Cresswell (2012) outlines five of the major qualitative approaches, differentiating between narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies, though the possibilities and iterations have extended far beyond these few examples. This has led to surges of new knowledge bases and theories, linking variables in new ways and proposing novel findings. Many psychologists worried that these qualitative methods are not 'scientific enough' as "they are frequently faulted for the lack of interobserver reliability, the absence of standardized measurement, and their inability to accommodate inferential statistics" (Gergen et al., 2015, p. 1). Levitt, Bamberg, Cresswell, Frost, Josselson, and Suárez-Orozco (2018) addressed many of these concerns, outlining specific guidelines for inquiries across the qualitative realm in all aspects of reporting standards. These methods have retained their creative roots, placing them in an ambivalent position between 'scientific' approaches and something more akin to the 'humanities', that are nonetheless recognized as constituents of the larger categorization of 'psychological'.

The current study is demonstrative of narrative interpretative methods coupled with participant observation field notes, all within an ethnographic paradigm and constituting valid, rigorous modes of inquiry. Gergen et al. (2015) emphasize this as approach as "by far the most widely practiced form of qualitative inquiry… [which] assumes that one of the major ways in which we understand our lives and center our actions is through stories" (p. 3-4). Through this formulation, the 'data' and 'measured components' are not represented through numerical quantifications of independent variables. Instead, the narrative life stories, captured in interactive interview contexts between the researcher and the participant, represent the

analytical objects. While quantitative inquiry is largely concerned with objective reports and

larger-scaled generalizations, narrative methods are predominantly 'interpretive', where "the

role of the researcher, the person reading a textual passage, and the individuals from whom

qualitative data are collected play a more central role in the researchers' design decision"

(Cresswell, 2012, p. 3), making this knowledge co-constructed. In this ethnographic context, the

data collection process involves an interactive space between the researcher and participants

where relationships between individuals are fostered through active participation in the

subjects' daily life contexts (constituting 'participant observation') and in-depth interviews after

establishing these dynamics to capture their voices alongside researchers' field notes. This

necessitates an explicit consideration of sociohistorical contexts for qualitative paradigms:

> In contrast with traditional hypothesis-testing, the ethnographic researcher
> engages extensively with research participants and deliberately learns from
> them how to shape research methods. Utilizing not measurement but *thick
> description*, ethnography interprets participants' experiences within their own
> frame of reference (Wertz, 2011, p. 93, emphasis in original).

Through this paradigm, the particular life experiences of the participants must be examined

within the context of their personal identities and their places in society (especially in relation

to one another). This is especially important for studies focused on migrant individuals from

non-Western populations in new Euro-American national contexts who encounter drastically

different public perceptions that affect their personal sense of self (see Bhatia, 2007, 2018;

Bhattacharya, 2009). These studies benefit from a qualitative approach that embraces Levitt et

al.'s (2018) emphasis on a triple-layered research contextualization: "In addition to describing

the phenomena, data sources, and investigators in terms of their location, era, and time

periods, qualitative researchers seek to situate these factors in relation to relevant social

dynamics" (p. 29). This directly affects the research design process, where "respecting

individuals from different cultures means honoring their indigenous points of view, including

their own epistemological traditions, and allowing the full subjectivity of their experience to

influence the way psychology is practiced" (Wertz, 2011, p. 93). Thus, while narrative analysis is

conducted through the researcher's perception on this space, the data collection should aspire

towards an interactive co-construction to meaningfully represent migrant perspectives:

> Given the vulnerabilities of many immigrant populations, it is incumbent
> on researchers to conduct research in ways that are protective of participant
> identities and the authenticity of their experiences. Yet they must do so while
> simultaneously designing studies that incorporate the unique experiences of
> individuals from immigrant backgrounds into the narrative of normative
> development. To do so, we must make a paradigmatic shift toward more
> progressive approaches to research *with*, rather than research *about*, individuals
> from immigrant backgrounds (Hernández, Nguyen, Casanova, Suárez-Orozco, &
> Saetermoe, 2013, p. 47, emphasis in original).

This frames ethnographic and narrative research projects in a uniquely interactive space that

involves "the researcher mak[ing] emotional investments in his or her participant's stories and

their cultural worlds" (Bhatia, 2018, p. 278). Bhatia (2018) extends this consideration to the

interactive nature of field work and theoretical development, arguing that data collection and

analysis are directly affected by the researcher-participant relationships:

> In narrative research, "data" and "theory," stories and concepts, experience and
> systems are not separative variables but, rather, mutually inform and shape each
> other. The aim of using narrative interviews is to capture the dynamic and
> contradictory experiences of participants. The conversation produced through
> interviews is co-constructed, relational, and depends on how the interviewer and
> the interviewee position each other (p. 275).

This co-construction of knowledge necessitates a different, more self-reflexive engagement

with the research site and the study's participants that explores how each individual involved in

the research design are situated within power hierarchies that are contextually interdependent.

Bamberg (2020) extends this, discussing how analysis must engage in the narrative *space* to

frame the narrative itself within the interactive realm between the researcher and the

participant. This furthers Freeman's (2014) aspirations for a "*dialogical* or *relational*

perspective, one that acknowledges the rich subjectivity needed to truly *see* and *hear* the

people before us" (p. 122, emphasis in original) by considering how "power plays an important

role in structuring the relationships between those who write about culture and narrative and

those whose lives are 'lived in' culture" (Bhatia, 2018, p. 276; see also Bhatia, 2002a).

Conceptualizing these narratives within this interactive space, earlier dialogical considerations

of multiple *I*-positions and conflicting voices within migrant identities can be extended to

examine how researcher-participant power dynamics lead to particular narratives on top of the

internal hierarchy of dialogical selves (more on this later; see Goffman, 1959; Hermans, 1996).

Originally located within the humanities and anthropological studies, APA support of

qualitative inquiry alongside more explicit standards have allowed ethnographic methods to

flourish as an integrative approach between artistic and scientific styles within psychology. As

the researcher conducts field work, careful attention must be paid to both the local and

surrounding contexts, alongside an engagement with how the academic's own identity and

identifications could affect the research design, data collection, and interpretative analysis.

Especially in regards to transnational scholarship, this situates the researcher in an ambiguous

state where notions of 'home' and 'field' "become blurred boundaries where the personal

becomes closely intertwined with the research process and in fact becomes a site of

negotiation… the ethnographic research process involves one's body, culture, politics, thoughts

and emotions" (Bhatia, 2018, p. 278). To account for this dynamism, qualitative inquiry requires extensive self-reflexivity and positioning to understand how personal identities affect the scholarly process. Jacobson and Mustafa (2019) forwarded a "Social Identity Map" that tracks an individual along group categories (e.g., class, citizenship, race) and discusses how applying this consideration to the interactive fieldwork site "allows for an explicit awareness of and reflection on… social and power dynamics and enables reflexivity, especially in relation to participants" (p. 7). However, these identities must be carefully conceptualized *within* the site's national context, rather than being translated cross-nationally, as some aspects may be more important in a transnational context or may affect the researcher in different ways.

As an American undergraduate scholar engaging in a German migration context, these transnational considerations are integral frameworks for my positionality in this research site but will not be explored explicitly until Chapter IV when framing the research site. Chapter I discusses how adolescent identity development was framed within general and sociocultural psychology since its origins as a discipline up to the contemporary context to situate this study within these larger traditions. Chapter II examines the transnational aspect of this research context more explicitly by reviewing theories of 'acculturation' and proposing modifications to traditional models for this study. To fully contextualize this study in its national context, Chapter III discusses Germany's engagement with migrants in a historical context that considers how citizenship paradigms affect self-conceptions. Chapter IV then situates these larger national discourses in the research site's local space and serves to frame the study. Finally, Chapters V and VI examine student narratives of integration and identity formation through earlier theoretical developments to relate their personal experiences to larger developments.

Chapter I: Identity and Identity Development

1. Conceptual Framing and Research Direction

Traditional psychology has chiefly been concerned with the internal mental processes inherent in all humans - to understand how people make sense of their immediate world and establish their selfhood, unique and multidimensional, in society. Whether direct or oblique, the study of individuals and their place / function in society has proliferated in academic discourses. While these undertakings illuminated the vast array of life experiences across cultures and nations, there is a predominance to especially focus on European and American (Western) norms and practices which simultaneously establish these countries and their citizens as the standard towards which others should strive. Contemporary researchers have become attuned to these asymmetries and the ubiquity of these ideologies throughout psychology, leading to a rise in decolonial, anti-Orientalist, and self-reflexive paradigms.

This chapter is chiefly concerned with tracking the development of understandings of the individual self within psychological theory. Tracking the evolution of 'identity' as a concept through theoretical and methodological developments reveals not only its roots within these fields, but also how this concept has filtered into social imaginations. While academic conceptualizations do not mirror societal understandings, a thorough analysis of its scholarly proliferation does illuminate its preponderance in contemporary society (for a full review, see Baumeister, 1987). Furthermore, reflections on the most prominent (and most cited) conceptualizations of identity reveal how particular ideologies and paradigms are reified

through academic discourses. This importantly illuminates problematic presumptions that question their apparent objectivity and generalizability. These histories and axioms of individuality must be explored, critiqued, and disentangled to truly understand the diversity of human experience through personal identities.

This first chapter serves as a theoretical basis for analyzing the students' interviews and participant observation field notes regarding their identity development. Seminal theories are reviewed and critiqued for their efficacy in analyzing this particular context. These researchers' conceptualizations are appropriate in their research contexts, but, as this thesis incorporated the live experiences of some non-white, non-Western transnational youth, they can lead to potential biases that privilege particular experiences and establish others as deviant. In particular, I critically review the paradigms of general and cross-cultural psychology's pursuit of underlying mechanisms shared amongst all humans in the context of diverse life experiences and dialogical processes. This Thesis is predicated on idiographic hermeneutics, necessitating a different research paradigm that pursues investigations into the diversity of human experience. Thus, this chapter recognizes the limitation of applying early identity research to this context and discusses alternate theorizations. Finally, studying identity development through narrative analysis within cultural and decolonial psychological lenses is discussed as a method that allows for a thorough investigation into the diverse developmental processes amongst adolescents.

2. Identity Research in Sociocultural Psychology

Conceptualizing identity amongst adolescents has been central to the development of psychological theory since G. Stanley Hall (who first coined the term "adolescent") and William James (1890), who emphasized the inherent individual cognition involved in developing a "consciousness of personal sameness" (p. 331; Hammack, 2008). James differentiated between the social, spiritual, and material selves and how they are established through a continuity of thought patterns related to and derived from personal experiences. It is this "resemblance among the parts of a continuum of feelings… [that] constitutes the real and verifiable 'personal identity' which we feel" (p. 336, emphasis removed). Reflecting on patients with amnesia and extreme psychopathology, James also emphasizes that once this resemblance and continuity of thoughts and feelings are *lost*, so is the individual's personal identity.

James' theorization remains seminal in defining a field of study, but it has also been critiqued for overlooking and ignoring vital influences, while simultaneously overemphasizing particular aspects of personal development. In his frequently cited reflection, "a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account" (p. 291, emphasis removed), reflecting his classic distinction between the *I* and *me* ("I" constituting the self-as-knower, the personal identity, and the "me" constituting the self-as-known, the social identity). Interestingly, James never investigates how these selves are constructed *socially*, rather emphasizing personal sameness and intimacy with different social, spiritual, and material identities. Furthermore, by highlighting self-sameness and continuity as the defining features of a personal identity, without which all sense of self is lost, James overlooks disruptions in lives

(i.e., forced migration) that forces individuals to adopt hyphenated identities (Sirin & Fine, 2007). This consideration did not remain central to his scholarship because he was concerned with larger theories of individual experiences detached from the interactions between self and society, testifying to the importance of extending this conceptualization to address other concerns and to examine interrelationships between individual actors and societal forces.

Following James' framework, future scholars examined how this period of 'sameness' could be extended to consider how societal contexts influence identity. G. Stanley Hall's (1904) seminal text, *Adolescence*, was the first to link this nebulous concept of 'identity' to a particular developmental period, arguing that youth around this age begin to mature and grow while they simultaneously begin to form a sense of self in relation to the surrounding environment. In contrast to James, Hall proposed that the path towards achieving inner sameness is part of a larger process of internal development that, often times, is not internally stable and that this exploration is a necessary part of adolescence. Importantly, this laid the foundation for a developmental psychological investigation into the particularities of this period by situating the largely abstract notion of 'identity' to particular internal processes.

Recognizing the importance of this period and linking the individual to larger societal contexts, the 1950s saw the arrival of a new theorist who would become centrally linked to adolescent identity: Erik Erikson. Recognizing the interactive nature of individuals and society, Erikson (1959) famously identified *identity formation* as the developmental crisis within adolescence that necessitates a congruent sense of self within societal boundaries. Drawing on Freud and James, he proposes the development of an 'ego identity': "a conscious *sense of individual identity*" and "a maintenance of an inner *solidarity* with the group's ideals and

identity" (p. 109). This ego identity begins as a child with differential 'identifications' that conglomerate life experiences into distinct categorizations of self that are largely focused on the relationship of the individual to his / her peers (e.g., "I am a fast runner" and "I am good at math") and the opportunities they endow. Emphasizing the developmental role of identity formation, Erikson furthers that childhood crisis failures will severely impact identity, likely leading to diffusion where the individual has lost a sense of self and adopts a delinquent identity. Therefore, ideal identifications feature "inner sameness and continuity" (p. 89) that are simultaneously recognized as such by peers, drawing on James' formulations.

These childhood identifications only serve as the foundation for the adolescent identity *crisis*, however, and "the adolescent process… is conclusively complete only when the individual has subordinated his childhood identifications to a new kind of identification" (Erikson, 1959, p. 110). This period allows for 'psychosocial moratorium', where individuals are free to explore different 'roles' that are located within established niches that appear to be uniquely made for them. Indeed, this personal exploration and adoption of a specified societal identity "bridge[s] what he *was* as a child and what he is *about to become* (p. 111, emphasis in original). This process relies on a large degree of choice and self-determination that incorporates past experiences with personal values and future aspirations. However, identity as a concept "suggests a social function of the ego" (p. 150), thus necessitating a confluence of society and peer-recognition with internal congruence. Through this interdisciplinary formulation, Erikson (1959) established a research paradigm for identity that drew on previous influential scholarship and promised a direction for future scholarship aligning with his vision of identity formation as a *crisis* for adolescents.

Erikson's theoretical interpretation of identity became extremely influential in the 20th century and his theories dominated identity research within psychology for decades (Schwartz, 2001). James Marcia (1966) operationalized Erikson's theory by adapting Erikson's theories into a typology of four identity statuses: diffusion, moratorium, achievement, and foreclosure. He envisioned identity development as a 'task' that would enable an individual to "establish a reciprocal relationship with his society and maintain a feeling of continuity within himself" (p. 551), thereby drawing directly from Erikson's framework. Marcia used interview analysis and a stress-induced Concept Attainment Task (CAT) to investigate identity achievement (related to exploration) and commitment that allowed for a mixed-methods investigation into identity formation that operationalized Erikson's theories. His empirical framework became heavily influential in identity research because of its ability to easily classify adolescents within different statuses, the correlative, predictable outcomes of these statuses, and its apparent universality. As Hammack (2008) reflects, "Marcia's [1966] adaptation of Erikson's theory… set the intellectual agenda for identity research for decades over and above Erikson" (p. 227).

Like the other scholars in early identity research, Marcia has been critiqued, leading to a refinement and reinvestigation into his methodologies and conceptualizations. Côté and Levine (1988) have even called for a complete re-examination of Erikson's work because of Marcia's misuse and "[in]appropriate conceptualization and operationalization of Erikson's work" (p. 147) by introducing identity statuses as a theoretical construct and misappropriated Erikson's terms to fit this conceptual framework. Though Marcia used semi-structured interviews with his participants to understand their social context to use as a reference, his focus remained on the individual and, in contrast to Erikson's theorization, the interactive role of people and their

environment was less intensely analyzed. Schwartz (2001) reflects on this methodology as an oversimplification of identity as being person-bounded that disregarded interdisciplinary nuances that Erikson incorporated into his research.

Most importantly, this established a privileging of individual actors over their environment and established pure individualism as the driving force and result of identity achievement. Erikson (1959) also emphasized this function of the identity crisis by reflecting that the "standardization of individuality" (p. 91) is a natural result of modernization. As Bhatia (2018) reflects, this privileges American and Western values of individuality and overlooks the salient role of culture in proscribing normative identity formations. As numerous scholars have explored (e.g. Arnett, 2008; Henrich et al., 2010), this paradigm remains prominent and cultural analysis is heavily underemphasized within general psychology (see also Cole, 1996; Valsiner, 2007). It is therefore important to investigate the underlying paradigms and assumptions within psychology that have influenced early prominent scholarship to understand why these theories need to be reinvestigated in order to accurately and dynamically capture contemporary nuances.

3. Orientalism, Anglo-Saxon Ideals, and Racism within Psychology

The early psychologists that attempted to capture and characterize identity development for adolescents sought universal truths and applicability in an attempt to capture "some common humanity" (Richards, 2012, p. 370). James and Erikson, both drawing on Freudian psychoanalytic theorizations like the ego, highlighted the natural subconscious human

functions that certainly interact with their cultures, but simultaneously applies to *all* people and cultures. Marcia extended this position and effectively removed society from the study of identity, and he received universal acclaim for his scholarship. However, all of these researchers, regardless of their different opinions on the function of culture and society, operated within an Orientalist framework that privileged White middle-class Anglo-Saxon ideals in their quests for universal truths.

Said (1979) conceptualizes Orientalism as a dominating analytic framework and academic discourse that has defined the social sciences through its Othering ideology. The Orient itself, referring to traditionally non-Western civilizations and regions (i.e., The Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America), was *created* through Orientalism and established a distinctly removed and inferior territory from the West, perfectly situated to *receive* Western scholarship. Due to Orientals' irrational, deceptive nature (as a result, of course, of their inferior culture and race), Orientalism dictates that these people are "'incapable of defining themselves,' thereby giving Western scholars full license to formulate a homogeneous description of the 'Other.'" (Bhatia, 2002b, p. 377). This homogenizing function simultaneously operates within an ahistorical framework, making it possible for acclaimed Middle-East scholars to describe "*an* Islamic society, *an* Arab mind, *an* Oriental psyche" (Said, 1979, p. 301, emphasis in original) exclusively through analyses of the Koran that are, as dictated by Orientalism, *more* accurate than studies that engage with Orientals' own thoughts. While 'Oriental' is rarely employed in contemporary research, Said reflects how Area Studies (such as specialists on Egypt, Syria, and Iran) is the new face of Orientalism, exemplifying how this discourse continues to permeate academic discourse, especially in the social sciences (see also Bhatia, 2002b,

2018). Importantly, this ideology is not merely a theory of social functioning, but rather the dominant paradigm of intercultural relations for centuries, directly influencing scientific theories, that was fostered especially through colonial projects.

These various components illustrate the basic dogmas of Orientalism (Said, 1979) and epitomize the trajectory and efficacy of scientific racism (Richards, 2012), but these ideologies represent more historical accounts of primitives that proliferated through colonialist and imperialist discourses. In contrast, the researchers who furthered the development of identity research operated through a different conception of Others: cultural deficit (as outlined by Cole, 1996). This particular manifestation of Orientalism draws on Weber's (1972 / 1921) thesis on the nature of modernity and tangibly premodern cultures. According to Weber's formulation, modern nations and cultures are methodically structured and stratified into separate and interdependent organizations, bureaus, and departments through the process of "rationalization" (p. 238). This theory furthers that these modern states have only developed such a high degree of stratification due to highly rational thinking and a desire to maximize efficiency. In contrast, premodern nations are plagued by irrational thinking, illogical thought, and an incompetence to evolve to modern civilization. It is precisely this contrast that inspired Cole's (1996) critique on the deficit model of cultural variation: premodern nations (which are inferior due to their highly illogical and irrational organizational structures) plague their citizens who have the potential to approximate the cognition of citizens from modern cultures, but are hindered by their cultural deficits. This promotes essentialized notions of culture (Grillo, 2003) that locate culture within people and as a trait or disposition, rather than considering a spatial differentiation that allows for dynamism and hybridity (more on this in Chapter II). However,

because rationalization is a process, it is perfectly conceivable that premodern cultures *can* become modern, leading to attacks on cultures for not evolving properly and a valorization of particular cultures for their apparent superiority. As Bhatia (2002b) explores, this variant of Orientalism has dominated 20th century general and cross-cultural psychology and the theorists that furthered identity research relied on this construct of modernity, necessitating a review of these ideologies within their scholarship.

James (1890) drew heavily on Freudian concepts to explore how identity develops as a result of congruency between inner sameness and a continuity of a sense of self across contexts. This continuity is vital because without any resemblance of one's thoughts with their conception of self, the individual would lose any form of identity. This privileges stable lives that are not subject to change, which is largely uncharacteristic of populations around the world that are displaced, exist within diasporas, or establish transnational relationships (Appadurai, 1991; Tomlinson, 1999). Even James' holistic concept of identity had undertones of patriarchal, white, middle-class ideals with phrases like "*his wife and children*" and "*his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account*" (p. 291, emphasis in original). While his theories may not have differentiated between civilized Whites and irrational, savage Orientals, his scholarship did not account for diverse life-experiences outside of Western countries.

In contrast to James, G. Stanley Hall's reflections on adolescence across cultures and races explicitly distinguished between 'civilized' and 'savage' populations, epitomizing the dogmas of early Orientalism. Writing that "the customs, institutions, and beliefs of primitive peoples are related to ours somewhat as instinct is related to reason" (p. 726), Hall (1904) effectively aligns inferior races ('primitive peoples') with premodernity and contrasts these

cultures with civilized, modern societies capable of 'reason', appropriating Weber's (1972 /

1921) notion of rationality and modernity. Though it may appear somewhat ambiguous as to

which nations are civilized by Hall's account, he quickly resolves this equivocalness: "The

primitive men and women of the world are coaxed or constrained to take up the burden of the

white man's civilization" (p. 649), thereby linking cultural development to white racial

superiority (see also Richards, 2012). Interestingly, Hall retains an emphasis on the universality

of adolescence, writing that "most savages in most respects are children, or, because of sexual

maturity, more properly, adolescents of adult size" (p. 649; see also Bhatia, 2002b). Instead of

differentiating the developmental stages of civilized races and savages, he posits that human

growth is innate and that primitive cultures merely constrain its full potential. Therefore, Hall

operates within a nomothetic scholarly paradigm and furthers Orientalist understandings of

non-white, non-European cultures through the guise of objective psychology.

Although Erikson's theorizations of ego identity and identity crisis championed

nomothetic goals by envisioning a universal development model, beliefs of superior white

American culture permeated throughout his analyses that reflect Orientalist and racist

orientations which question the theories' universality. He subtly lays a foundation for the

supremacy of American culture by equating "civilization" with "stratification and specialization"

(p. 22), echoing themes of modernity through rational divisions of labor and society that stem

from Weber's (1921 / 1972) original theories. This rational, stratified exemplar of modernity

(and by extension civilization) is linked with American ideals, where

> The dynamic quality of the tempestuous adolescences lived through in
> patriarchal and agrarian countries... explains the fact that their young people find
> convincing and satisfactory identities in the simple totalitarian doctrines of race,
> class, or nation. Even though we may be forced to win wars against their leaders,

> we still are faced with the job of winning the peace with these grim youths by convincingly demonstrating to them… a democratic identity which can be strong and yet tolerant (Erikson, 1959, p. 92-93).

Through this argument, Erikson seamlessly links democratic, American values to identity development by hailing the opportunities afforded to adolescents in these countries, while simultaneously establishing youth and identity as a basis for international involvement. By highlighting the efficacy of the modern, American system, Erikson's writing differentiates this (American) ideal culture from other, premodern Other cultures. This demonstrably echoes Said's (1979) notion of Orientalism that fears Others, subtly urges Westerners to control it, and marks them as culturally inferior. Identity formation then becomes a task of national defense for Americans and justifies Americanization through Erikson's formulations.

These ideas are extended further by specifically praising white Anglo-Saxon ideals within American democracy as the source of perfect identity formation through individuality. As noted previously, early Orientalist discourse operates through Richard's notion of scientific racism, where biology is likened with culture, such that "cultural traits, good and bad, were interpreted as direct expressions of innate racial character" (p. 10). Furthermore, deviations from these essential qualities of cultures (Grillo, 2003) were perceived as "unnatural" (Said, 1979) and "quasi-pathological" (Richards, 2012). Erikson subscribes to this primordial perspective of race and culture, writing that

> Minority groups of a lesser degree of Americanization (Negroes, Indians [Native Americans], Mexicans, and certain European groups) often are privileged in the enjoyment of a more sensual early childhood. Their crises come when their parents and teachers, losing trust in themselves and using sudden correctives in order to approach the vague but pervasive Anglo-Saxon ideal, create violent discontinuities… the children themselves learn to disavow their sensual and

> overprotective mothers as temptations and a hindrance to the formation of a more American personality (Erikson, 1959, p. 90).

By differentiating between these 'minority groups' and an 'American personality', he effectively establishes *white Anglo-Saxon* American culture as the ideal and the norm. Erikson explores this further by casually commenting how psychoanalysts are often idealized by their patients, "especially if he [the therapist] is European-born" and not one of "our colored countrymen" (p. 37). Continuing this racist reflection on the ideals of white culture, Erikson (1959) reflects on the detrimental effects of Southern slavery on the identities of contemporary black adolescents by limiting their identity formation possibilities:

> Three identities are formed: (1) mammy's oral-sensual "honey child": tender, expressive, rhythmical; (2) the clean anal-compulsive, restrained, friendly, but always sad "white man's Negro"; and (3) the evil identity of the dirty, anal-sadistic, phallic-rapist "nigger" (p. 38).

This example of racist ideology within psychological research is certainly not unique (Richards, 2012; Said, 1979), however it poses particular epistemological questions for identity research: whose culture is perceived to be "ideal" and whose is problematized? How is culture essentialized to establish particular identity formations as invalid and restrictive? How can non-white subjects be appropriately studied without extreme biases (like racism) through Erikson's theories with this axiological and ontological foundation? These questions are particularly salient within Erikson's theories, especially considering that his conceptualization was predicted on an analysis of cultural contexts and believed America to be least restrictive environment for proper development. Marcia's (1966) operationalization of Erikson's concepts of identity crisis and formation stemmed directly from his work, thus also embodying this ideology, but they are

located in different arenas, specifically within his research design and conceptual framing, leading to different effects from his work.

Marcia repurposed Erikson's theories into an empirical framework that established four identity 'states' and emphasized exploration and commitment as factors for ideal identity achievement. Like Arnett (2000), Marcia's concept of exploration implied collegiate studies as the ideal space for identity formation, where individuals could embody diverse roles until they found their niche. However, this presupposes the financial backing necessary for undergraduate studies, as well as a cultural grounding that prioritizes this form of education. Marcia (1966) also envisioned an American context as the ideal location, as his study was conducted at a small, liberal arts American college and all his theories derive from these spaces. Furthermore, his participants were "86 males enrolled in psychology, religion, and history courses" (p. 553) which is limited not only in institutional setting and context (Henrich et al., 2010), but also in gender and academic interests. Marcia did not envision these problems to manifest themselves in his study, as he chiefly investigated individual identity states and development and largely ignored the interactive nature of people and their cultures (see Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). This example provides ample evidence of the dangers of indiscriminately adopting prominent theories without critically assessing their origins and functions – as a result of Marcia's appropriation of Erikson's theory, both of these researchers are staples in current psychology textbooks and these Orientalist ideologies continue to influence and dictate research.

Through this critical analysis of the most influential identity researchers' theories and conceptual frameworks, it becomes evident that Orientalist and racist ideologies permeated early scholarship and persist in contemporary research. This presents epistemological dilemmas

for identity research: can and should these theories and researchers be furthered if they operated through such a depreciating lens? How efficacious are these theories in understanding, categorizing, and relaying the life experiences of non-white, non-Western subjects? Due to the implied deficits of Other cultures that proliferated in these earlier identity development models operating within and promoting essentialized notions of cultures (Grillo, 2003), this chapter explores alternative conceptions of culture that appreciate the diversity of experience without prioritizing particular manifestations. Aligning with this ideal, this next section explores the efficacy of a cultural psychological approach within a decolonizing framework for studying the identity formation of non-Western subjects.

4. Cultural Psychology within a Decolonizing Framework: A New Direction

A conceptualization of psychology that accounts for latent cultural influences and investigates how identity shifts in meaning, form, and importance across cultures is necessary to combat essentialized notions of race and culture (Weber, 1921 / 1972). Epitomizing the integration of sociological and psychological interpretations, Vygotsky (1978) proposed a sociocultural understanding of identity that reflects how individuals always form within their cultural contexts and thus develop in relation to others. This allows for an analysis into the "dialogical self" (Hermans, 2001b) within their immediate (and imaginary [Norton & Toohey, 2011]) context. Adams and Marshall (1996) expanded upon this theory by distinguishing between individuals employing differentiation (autonomy and uniqueness) and integration (group involvement and connection with others) to establish unique positions within their

immediate surroundings. While this is an important step in recognizing the interdependency of society and the individual, an explicit recognition of the role of cultural influences is necessary to combat hegemonic conceptualizations of idealized identity formation.

Cultural psychology embraces this perspective by recognizing "the possibility of multiplicity in social categories of meaning" (Hammack, 2008, p. 228) by locating the individual within a particular culture. This paradigm extends Vygotsky's seminal scholarship that highlighted how "cultural products, like language and other symbolic systems, mediate thought and place their stamp on our representations of reality" (Bruner, 1991, p. 3). Schachter (2005) applies to identity research by recognizing that cultural contexts are integral in proscribing certain "identity configurations", such that the structure of identity could also be variable within different, non-Western cultures. McAdams (2001) aptly reflects that "the person and the person's social world coauthor identity" (p. 116), thus embracing an understanding of identity that highlights the interconnectivity of psychological and sociological influences. This integrative, interdisciplinary perspective thus investigates the reciprocal relationship between the psyche and culture, in that both depend on and inform the other (Shweder, 1990).

This paradigm is distinct from cross-cultural psychology in its critical engagement with heterogeneity within cultures, thereby disrupting oversimplifications such as individualistic vs. collectivist cultures. The perceived insignificance of axiological influences from sociocultural sources homogenizes non-Western lives and nations. Cultural psychology situates the individual *within* their cultural context, thereby disrupting the "analytic primary" (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995) emblematic of early theorists' conceptualizations that highlights either psychological or sociological analyses. By embracing this transdisciplinary perspective, cultural psychology

importantly bridges these fields, as "perspectives on identity have grown particularly insulated along disciplinary lines, rendering communication across fields and studies at times challenging and, at worst, incomprehensible" (Hammack, 2008, p. 239). Additionally, this framework acknowledges the role of Western culture and its values in furthering psychological theory by seeking objective, empirical truths imbedded throughout humanity. This paradigm can operate to presume and privilege particular cultural manifestations as normal, marking others as deviant or inferior. Said (1979) reflects that "liberal humanism, of which Orientalism has historically been on department, *retards* the process of enlarged and enlarging meaning through which true understanding can be attained" (p. 254, emphasis in original). Cultural psychology then disrupts the latency of Orientalism by *not* seeking to understanding humanity through a color-blind ideology (Rodriquez, 2006).

Analogous to cross-cultural psychology, cultural psychology can be conceptualized in ways that frame culture as a static entity through primordialism, such as in Huntington's (1993) *Clash of Civilizations*. In his paradigm, cultures are natural beings that exist in specific regions of the world, can be located within people, and have developed in relative isolation as to embrace contrasting values that will inherently lead to conflict. Tomlinson (1999) rejects this thesis and instead emphasizes the role of globalization and transnationalism in hybridizing people and cultures (that are inherently dynamic). Huntington's interpretation of culture reflects an Orientalist perspective that reifies distinctions between rational, modern Western cultures and the dangerous, primitive Orient (Said, 1979) and this study instead embraces a dynamic conceptualization of culture that is sociohistorically situated (Hammack, 2008).

In addition to disrupting the discourse of Orientalism (Said, 1979), cultural psychology also recognizes that the theories derived from Western countries may not be best suited to studying populations in different cultural and national contexts. Henrich et al. (2010) challenge the generalizability of American and European psychological theories, as their societal origins (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic [WEIRD] countries) are actually quite *un*representative of humans around the world. Indeed, Arnett (2008) found that within the top psychological journals, 95% of subjects come from WEIRD countries. This is a glaring epistemological self-contradiction. Baumeister and Muraven (1996) recognize this gap and propose that psychologists must also analyze the sociohistorical contexts of their subjects because "history, culture, and the proximate structure of social relations create a context in which the individual identity must exist…. Individuals actively choose, alter, and modify their identities based on what will enable them to get along best in that context" (p. 405). Importantly, this approach necessitates an idiographic interpretation of psychology that diverts from general psychology's pursuit of universality (Hammack, 2008; Shweder, 1990). This approach obtains its efficacy from its critical engagement into the role of culture for situating lives in context, but this context is primarily an Orientalist and colonial one, necessitating an intensive decolonial emphasis that combats paradigms of inferiority.

When engaging in cultural psychological research, Bhatia and Priya (2018) urge scholars to recognize the undeniable links between essentialist notions of culture and scientific racism. As Tuhwai-Smith (2012) explores, cultural essentialism has allowed psychological science to undermine knowledge from non-Western populations. To combat this history, Bhatia (2019) encourages critical engagements with indigenous psychology and argues that this will allow for

critically engaged 'decolonial projects'. Theorical developments within psychology produced by non-American scholars like Valsiner (2007), Bhatia (2018), Mahalingam (2006), and Kessi (2017) have led to important reconsiderations and new projects driven by an impetus to appropriately account for the lives of diverse humans and reconcile the field with its colonial and Orientalist histories (see Bhatia, 2019 and Bhatia & Priya, 2018 for a full review). As Adams, Dobles, Gómez, Kurtiş, and Molina (2015) advise, these histories must be examined in order to study non-Western populations within the context of dynamic cultural influences and processes.

Mignolo's (2007) theory of 'coloniality', exploring how colonialism was governed by "a whole system of thought" (Bhatia, 2018), functions as a foundational understanding of how colonial narratives persist in contemporary globalized contexts. Drawing on the ontological reflections from Fanon (1968), Maldonado-Torres (2007) discusses the 'coloniality of Being', where these deficit ideologies proliferate not only the academic forum, but also affect the daily realities of 'post'-colonial subjects. This necessitates a 'decolonial turn' which emphasizes that "coloniality poses one of the central challenges for a vast majority of the people in the world who are living in the age of unequal globalization and neoliberalization" (Bhatia, 2018, p. 7). Due to these inequities that remain paramount in these postcolonial landscapes, the lives of these peoples are quite distinct and different from people who live in WEIRD contexts. Decolonizing psychology does not fully reject Eurocentric or Americentric theory, but rather recognizes their limited applicability in non-Western nations and cultures that have distinct colonial and postcolonial histories (Chakrabarty, 2000).

This framework seeks to disrupt the salient differentiation between the modern, civilized West and the exotic, primitive, dangerous Orient (Said, 1979) by also drawing on

Tomlinson's (1999) analysis into deterritorialized cultures that are increasingly hybridized due to mass migration (Bhatia, 2002b, 2018). Acknowledging and countering Orientalism and coloniality as a foundation for the development of psychological theory is vital for decolonizing psychological paradigms so that contemporary studies prioritize non-Western perspectives and heuristics. However, as Tuck and Yang (2012) emphasize, this paradigm is not merely a metaphor, but an active project of disentangling colonial projects in order to improve the lives of non-Western people. Ellis and Bhatia (2019) reflect that this scholarship is especially pertinent in the contemporary era of neoliberalism and citizenship politics, directly affecting the lives of millions (see also Bhatia, 2019). To actualize these decolonial projects, this final section discusses how narrative analysis can be employed as a decolonizing methodology that privileges non-Western voices and knowledge.

5. Narrative Analysis as a Method for Identity Research

This study employs ethnographic methods of narrative analysis and participant observation to capture the realities of migrant experiences through a decolonizing framework. Through this approach, migrants are able to evaluate and reflect on how their lived experiences shape their conceptualization of their identity by telling their own story, thus fostering self-pride and agency (Bhatia, 2018). Bhatia (2018) reflects that through narratives, "the 'individual as a subject' is able to reassert him- or herself in his or her cultural context" (p. 79). Shweder (1990) extends this by highlighting "intentional people" interacting with "intentional worlds", where people are constantly creating and are created through their environments. This

construction of reality is mediated by narrative life stories, both "within and outside of formal interviews" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009, p. 2). When individuals construct these realities, they follow a narrative discourse that "describe[s] its orientation… and its destiny… and to comprehend its current status… as part of a longer story of strivings, achievements, obstacles, growth, adaptations, failures, dormancy, or never-ending cyclical return" (Shweder, 1990, p. 4). The emphasis on cyclical sociocultural influences and realities highlights narrative analysis as a vital methodology in addressing and countering colonial histories for non-Western peoples whose lived experiences have largely been ignored in Western psychology.

Collecting and reflecting on non-Western narratives as a valid source of knowledge is an important step in decolonizing psychology by acknowledging and countering Orientalist academic discourse. According to Said (1979), one of the primary axioms of Orientalism states that Orientals cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Gubrium and Holstein's (2009) concept of an "own story" directly counters this ideology: by reflecting on self-experiences and representing oneself, an individual is able to construct their own reality and place within it. The agency afforded to the individual through narrative life-stories disrupts Orientalist discourses that actively overlook and ignore indigenous self-knowledge and provide insight into the continuing effects of coloniality in postcolonial contexts, thus providing a strong impetus for embracing this methodology.

More generally, narrative discourse provides a gateway to understanding larger realities that surround individuals' lives that are increasingly shaped by globalizing and transnational forces. Hammack (2008) reflects on these "master narratives" that contextualize people's lives within specific cultural, historical, and political states that dynamically shape individuals'

"narratives of identity". This approach was largely dismissed throughout the 20ᵗʰ century within

psychological theory development due to the subjective nature of narrative analysis that

undermined ambitious efforts to discover universal cognitive processes through empirical, lab-

based studies (Bhatia, 2018). However, this emphasis cemented dissonance between

researchers and subjects by not considering how people experience and perceive reality within

cultural worlds (Freeman, 1997). Erikson's seminal interpretation of identity construction

actually featured narratives by integrating an hour-long interview into his empirical studies,

demonstrating his understanding of self-reports and life-stories. However, Marcia's

operationalization largely ignored this aspect in his quest for a typology of identity formation

(Archer, 1992). This study thus acknowledges Erikson's original focus on narrative meanings and

expands upon it by engaging diverse individuals within a decolonial project.

Beyond merely contextualizing lives within a larger framework of sociopolitical

influences, narrative discourse is key in constructing an adolescent identity that integrates

personal and group histories and future goals. Identity is largely considered to constitute an

individual's place in society, but it importantly differentiates the self within a larger group

context from other groups in order to construct "a cohesive structure" that "link[s] an

individual life story to a particular cultural and historical narrative" of the larger collective

(Hammack, 2008, p. 232-233). Extending Erikson's and Vygotsky's scholarship, Penuel and

Wertch (1995) emphasize that sociohistorical environments are the foundational sources for

"inner and social speech" (Hammack, 2008, p. 233) that integrate larger realities into the

personal narrative. As a method for studying identity formation, narrative discourse is integral

in identifying defining personal characteristics and experiences that enable diverse individuals

to coexist within a larger heterogeneous collective.

Within social psychological theory, the preponderant empirically developed and

employed methodology for studying personality lacks a critical cultural analysis while

simultaneously overestimating its ability to capture human diversity across individuals. The Big

5 taxonomy of personality "traits" (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness,

and Neuroticism) only captures Level I personality descriptions, as McAdams (1996, 2001)

reflects. More encompassing investigations into personality (and by extension, identity, as

personality is a large constituent of and factor in identity formation) must incorporate Level II

(personal concerns) and Level III (narrative life-stories) analyses to capture the wide diversity of

individual's identity configurations. Indeed, "we do not have direct access to experience, but

rather our sense of who and what we are, as well as the character of our social worlds, is

constructed by formulating these into stories" (Riessman, 1993, p. 19). Thus, seemingly

"random and scattered" experiences and aspects of people's lives are integrated into a

cohesive, evolving life-story that "incorporates the reconstructed past, perceived present, and

anticipated future" (McAdams, 1996, p. 307-309). These life-stories vital in exploring the

uniqueness of individuals and contextualizing their life experiences while also indicating "how

he or she partakes [in] a common set of narrative resources unique to a particular group or type

to which he or she belong" (McAdams, 1996, p. 313).

Narrative analysis is particular applicable to studies of migrant youth when seeking to

understand the process of identity development alongside differential power dynamics and

disruptions in lives. As Hermans and Gieser (2012) explore, the developmental process is

dialogical where multiple *I*-positions (drawing on Freud and James) are in constant dialogue to define the self. Accordingly, these voices are "involved in relationships of relative dominance and social power" (Hermans & Gieser, 2012, p. 2) and these power dynamics "structure and constrain, overtly or covertly, both the process and the content of dialogical relationships" (p. 11). Bhatia (2012) reflects that this dialogical-self model is particularly applicable to migrant contexts, as migrants have national and cultural ties that are multiple and at times contradictory. This analysis also illuminates the latent roles of race, gender, and sexuality within national power hierarchies, "allow[ing] us to analyse how the 'voices' of the larger majority play an important role in shaping the identity of migrants" (Bhatia, 2012, p. 120). This particular analytical framework is vital to understanding change in migrant lives, a core component of this thesis, and this paradigm will be further explored in the next chapter when applying identity formation to the particularities of migrant circumstances.

Contextualized within the larger master narrative, individuals understand themselves in relation to their own group and in contrast to other groups. These differentiating tactics for self-definition occur simultaneously at multiple levels: between own group and other groups, and between other members in the collective and the self. Through this conceptualization, individuals and groups are heterogeneous and diverse, thus necessitating a transdisciplinary, decolonial paradigm that privileges the individual's lived experiences and self-concept over the pursuit of universality that obscures heterogeneity. By situating life-stories as the primary analytical subject within a larger ethnographic project, this study seeks to understand the effects of evolving cultures and their master narratives in shaping adolescent migrant lives and their identity formation. This framework operates well within particular contexts, but an

investigation into migrant realities must also incorporate analyses of the differential effects of contemporary globalizing forces on nations, cultures, and communities.

6. Conclusion: Identity in a Globalizing World

As identity formation research has developed from James' original theses to Marcia's operationalization of Erikson's own work, some contemporary scholars have argued that the theories derived in Western contexts may not aptly capture the nuances of other cultures, necessitating an approach attuned to cultural differences and variations (see Henrich et al., 2010). This acknowledgement lacks initiative, however, and must also integrate decolonial paradigms in order to reject Orientalist theses and accurately represent diverse populations. To meaningfully capture the realities of non-Western populations, narrative approaches coupled with participant observations within an ethnographic framework support the efficacy of decolonial projects and development of cultural psychological theory.

While cultural psychology is important to understand these realities, the field must also critically engage with the influences of globalization and neoliberalism to account for new identity configurations (Arnett, 2002). This thesis was conducted during the ongoing 'Refugee Crisis' in the Middle East, involving many 'post'-colonial individuals subjected to Orientalist judgements and necessitating a consideration of how these discourses interact with theories of nationalism and culture on a global scale. By investigating migrant lives, this study incorporates dynamic approaches to culture and identity scholarship that consider the effects of diasporic communities and their interactions with their host countries (Bhatia, 2018). Questions of

citizenship surround debates between these groups (Ellis & Bhatia, 2019) by discussing the

migrant group's compatibility with the host country's culture. This skepticism permeates

throughout the larger community and country, necessitating a conceptualization of identity

formation that addresses migrant lives in contact with the dynamic culture of their host country

and their own diasporic community. Adolescents within these populations necessarily develop

identities in mixed worlds between their homeland and receiving countries, arguably

delocalizing their sense of self (Appadurai, 1991). This particular transnational context

necessitates a specialized theorization of identity formation that presumes changes in cultural

and national landscapes. To appropriately investigate and characterize identity development in

this context, the next chapter will discuss the efficacy of acculturation theory in this context.

Chapter II: Acculturation

1. Globalization and Contemporary Migration Contexts

By focusing on diverse migrant populations arriving in a particular national context, this study is situated in the context of globalizing forces and their influences on international relations, national boundaries, and cultural change. While migration is not unique to the 21st century, the contemporary era of globalization and neoliberalism have changed this landscape by allowing for transnational ties, leading to diasporic communities that maintain close ties to their country of origin, if they can (not always possible for refugee; Bhatia & Priya, 2018; Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Pedraza, 2006). Simultaneously, these international bonds that transcend geographic boundaries have led to serious governmental concerns over national borders, prompting political debates that polarize and problematize individuals' and groups' national allegiance (e.g., Brettfeld & Wetzels, 2007). With these shifting conceptualizations of 'citizens', migrant youth in the contemporary era are often compelled to choose between their home and host countries (though refugees are forced into this position without a choice), affecting their identity development (see Berry, 2006b) and reducing potentials for hybridity (see p. 31). Thus, Arnett (2002) emphasizes that these effects must be operationalized and understood for studies on transnational effects, while simultaneously differentiating between the different ecological contexts of individuals (i.e., personal, familial, educational, structural and national).

Globalizing forces affect nations, communities, and individuals beyond facilitating transnational ties, leading to changes in local cultures and class dynamics. Importantly, these

effects are highly localized and communities resist homogenizing forces, leading to selective

adaptations and repurposing of American and European values (Giddens, 1999; Watson, 1997).

Contrary to common anxieties and theories on the effects of globalization, these effects *are*

bidirectional and non-Western cultures have significant influences on America and Western

Europe (see Taylor, 1997). Furthermore, transnational flows have disrupted classic notions of

class differences by reorganizing power dynamics (e.g., Filipina domestic workers replacing local

women [Parrenas, 2000] and women from America migrating to the Caribbean and becoming

involved in their tourist industry [Vandegrift, 2008]). This international restructuring of power

dynamics resulting from globalization necessitates an intensive investigation into the cultural

and relational changes that contemporary transnational migrants enact and experience, both

on community and individual levels, within their national contexts (Arnett, 2002).

While globalization is particularly relevant to this study, basic tenets of migration

research still apply and must simply be repurposed within this new context to engage with

current circumstances. Migrant groups arriving to their new 'host countries' are situated in a

novel context that, compounded with the effects of globalization, restructure them societally

into a new system of power and within different national, cultural, and ethnic contexts.

Concurrently, the larger national population engages with these groups in a process of

"intercultural contact, producing a potential for conflict, and the need for negotiation" (Berry,

2005, p. 697) of cultural and national values. This negotiation leads to both communal and

individual development and evolution for both groups, especially regarding cultural

identification / attitudes and identity. However, as a result of asymmetrical power dynamics,

migrants themselves more often undergo significant changes, as national and local pressures to

'integrate' into society lead to larger reconfigurations of self in relation to their affiliative diasporic community and the 'native' population.

This study therefore engages critically in how migrant individuals negotiate themselves in relation to the larger society and their own migrant community. With most participants recently arriving to the Germany (within one year), this thesis engages in intermediate stages of long-term adaptation, necessitating a theoretical outline to understand how youth are experiencing and reacting to these influences *during* their adaptive process. In Chapter I, theories of identity within psychology were reviewed and cultural psychology within a decolonizing framework were emphasized for its efficacy in addressing the postcolonial struggles that non-Western individuals experience as a result of persisting Othering discourses (see also Bhatia, 2007a, 2018). However, as Mahalingam (2006) writes, cultural psychology traditionally does not engage in questions of immigration and typically studies cultural groups that are geographically static, but culturally dynamic. Therefore, different models of identity formation that presume this migratory context must also be thoroughly examined to align with cultural psychological development in order to understand the complexities of non-Western migrant adolescent experiences in the contemporary era of globalization. Acculturation engages critically in these questions of intercultural context and has been developed to describe the experiences of different migrant groups in diverse national contexts, thereby allowing for an application of these lessons to this study's particular circumstances.

2. Acculturation's Origins and Berry's Model

2.1 Anthropological and Psychological Roots

Migration and the development of communities have been features of human existence

for millennia and considerations of the effects of inter-group contact have been considered

since Plato (Sam, 2006). Originating in anthropological works within academia, the concept of

acculturation has since developed within sociological and psychological domains by repurposing

the objects of study from cultural groups, to structural approaches, and finally to an emphasis

on the individual. Recognizing the need to establish a concrete definition, Redfield, Linton, and

Herskovits (1936) wrote that "acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when

groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand context, with

subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (p. 149). This

definition importantly emphasizes group-level analyses (emblematic of anthropological and

sociological investigations) but is somewhat vague on what 'those phenomena' actually entail.

While helpful in providing a setting for study, the ubiquity and imprecision of this oft-cited

statement has led to numerous reformulations and confounding definitions. As a result, aspects

of acculturation (e.g., assimilation) have been theorized by some scholars as a *step* (Gordon,

1964), by others as *one of four* results in the process (Berry, 1980, 1997; see also Sam, 2006).

Thus, it remains necessary to outline the development of acculturation to understand the

particularities of current formulations.

While Redfield et al.'s (1936) conceptualization is extremely influential in modern

psychological acculturation theory, Sam (2006) emphasizes that this concept has its roots in late

19th century anthropology. Scholars argued that individuals from 'primitive' societies, as a result

of extended contact with 'civilized' cultures, would eventually assimilate as a natural result of

contact with more 'enlightened' groups. Clearly, this formulation epitomizes the dangers of

Orientalism (Said, 1979) by essentializing individuals through their (perceived) static, inferior

cultures and their aspirations to come enlightened through contact with Occidental culture.

Sociologists in the late 19th / early 20th century then appropriated 'assimilation' to describe the

experiences of immigrants conforming to the 'host culture'. Operating through definitions of

culture that were closely tied with race (and one's superiority over another [Richards, 2012]),

early 20th century sociologists like Park (1913/1950) and Gordon (1964) emphasized that

"assimilation was… a one-way process that would also be natural and evolutionary" (Pedraza,

2006). These anthropological and sociological formulations largely emphasized the

unidirectional nature of acculturation (leading towards assimilation) and its uni-dimensionality,

as migrants should strive towards the 'host culture' without trying to maintain aspects of their

'inferior' cultures.

Psychologists similarly appropriated this concept, with Rudmin (2003) citing G. Stanley

Hall (1904) as one of the first to write about topics within acculturation, whose theories of

development were closely tied to these early anthropological cultural theories (see Chapter I).

Early conceptualizations focused on this as a "group-level phenomenon" (Sam, 2006), despite

the field's emphasis on the individual psyche. Nonetheless, the hermeneutics of psychology

posit that changes as a result of intercultural encounters lead to both cultural and psychological

changes at both the group and individual level, a sharp delineation from sociology's and

anthropology's macro-level perspectives. Rudmin (2003) tracks the development of these

theories where, due to inconsistent citations and a constant shifting in operational definitions,

68 distinct typologies were developed between 1918 and 1984 (see also Rudmin, 2006).

Interestingly, these theorizations did not all implicitly presume that heritage cultures and host-country's cultures are inherently incompatible; indeed, early theories suggested that cultural components can be additive and not necessarily mutually exclusive (e.g., Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918 / 1958). However, arguably the most prolific acculturation researcher within psychology (or, more precisely, cross-cultural psychology) is John Berry (Ward, 2008) whose four-fold typology inspired the majority of current acculturation scholarship (Rudmin, 2006).

2.2 Berry's Four-fold Typology of Acculturation Strategies

Berry's perspective on acculturation integrates significant components of earlier scholarship but adds layers of complexity that, in his view, allows for empirically sound and highly nuanced analyses of diverse contexts through a universal model. Berry (1997) frames the necessity of these studies, asking "what happens to individuals, who have developed in one cultural context, when they attempt to live in a new cultural context?" (p. 6) which implicitly presumes that individuals' behavior, cognition, and attitudes are influenced by their cultural context. This draws on more culturally integrative theories of psychology that examine the interactive nature of human experience and one's cultural milieu. Importantly, these domains are interrogated separately by considering *psychological acculturation* at the individual level and *sociocultural acculturation* at the group level. This framework effectively establishes culture as an influential factor *outside* of the individual, rather than a necessary component of cognition, because "cross-cultural psychology views individual human behavior as interacting
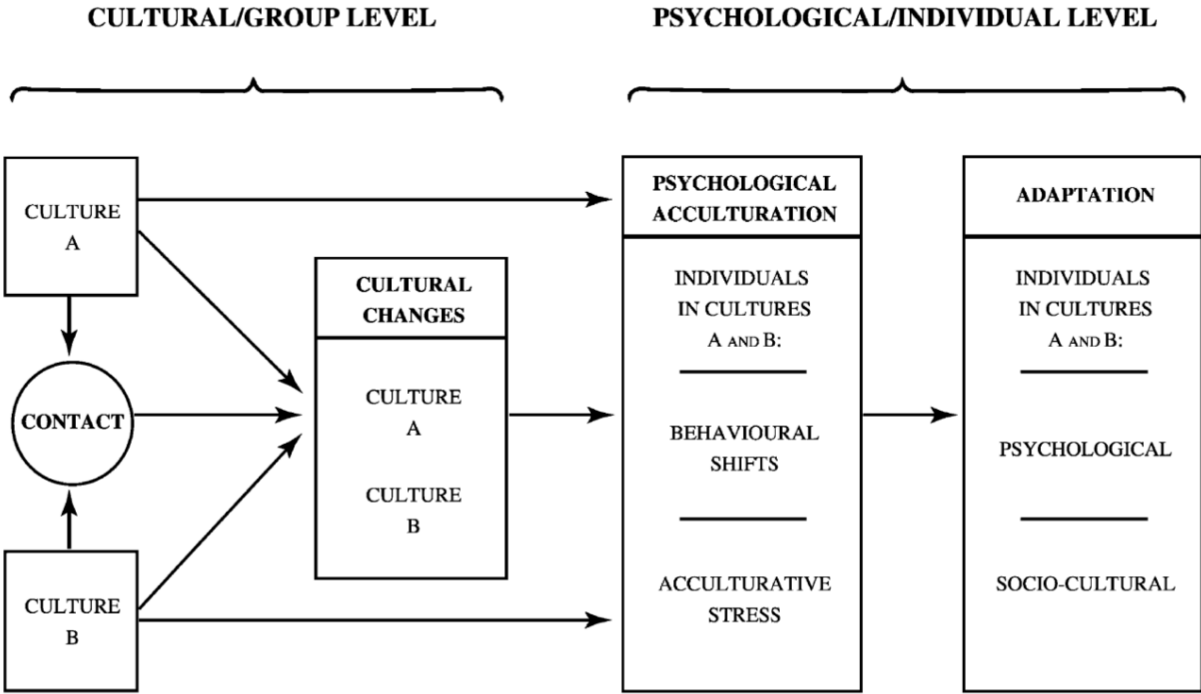
Figure 1: Berry's general framework for understanding acculturation. Reprinted from Sam (2006).

with the cultural context within which it occurs" (Berry, 2005, p. 701). Berry (2005) also

distinguishes between group and individual acculturation because "there are vast individual

differences in psychological acculturation, even among individuals who live in the same

acculturative arena" (p. 702). Through this framing, changes in these two ecological levels

remain separate, but interrelated processes (see Fig. 1).

Berry's model of acculturation contexts describes how first-hand contact between two

distinct cultural groups leads to initial changes and eventually to long-term adaptation.

However, Berry (1980) also emphasizes the potential for conflict at the group and individual

levels, where, as a result of this new cultural context, migrants may experience "acculturative

stress" (Berry, 2006b). This stress, as a result of 'cultural clashes' (group-level) or psychological

conflict (individual-level), highlights the difficulties involved in cultural transitions and Berry

(2006b) reflects that people and communities utilize *coping strategies* to mediate these psychological and sociocultural conflicts. These strategies reflect shifts across affective, behavioral, and cognitive domains (dubbed the ABCs of acculturation [Masgoret & Ward, 2006; Ward, 2001]), and they can mitigate or exacerbate these problems (see also Rudmin, 2009). Eventually, as a result of significant long-term negotiation and mediation, groups and individuals adapt to their new cultural contexts, marking the end-state of the acculturation process (*adaptation*). However, while this model is effective in *outlining* the overall acculturation process, it does little to explain *how* individuals and groups enact these affective, behavioral, and cognitive strategies within their larger national context.

To that end, Berry (1980, 1997, 2005, 2006a) and colleagues (Sam & Berry, 2010; Ward, 2008) developed a four-fold, bidirectional and bidimensional model of acculturation strategies enacted by individuals from migrant groups to categorize their adaptive process (see Fig. 2).
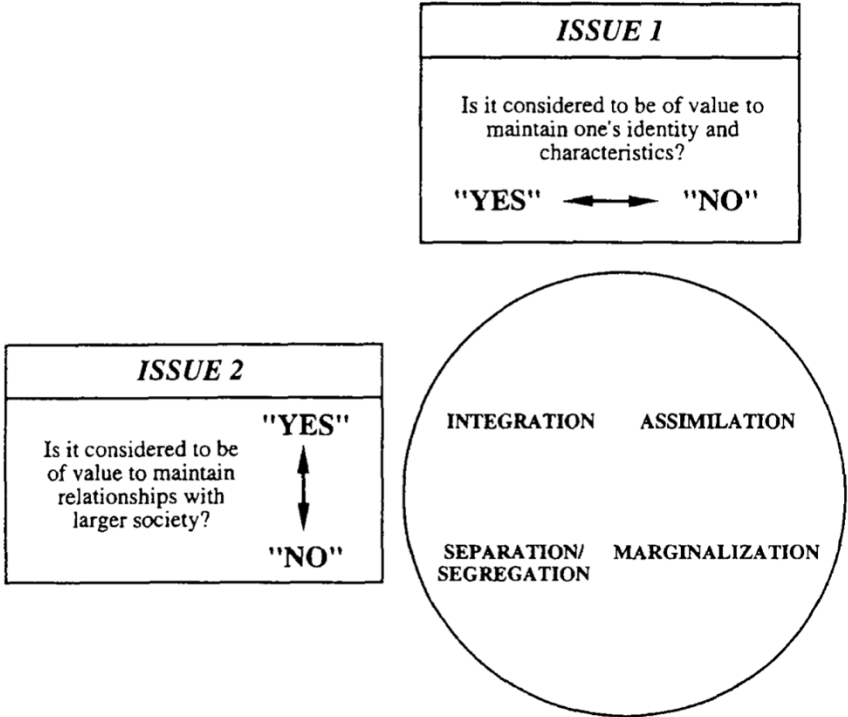
Figure 2: Berry's model of acculturation strategies pursued by migrant individuals. Reprinted from Berry (1997).

This conceptualization posits that the ethnocultural migrant group changes as a result of acculturation, and the larger society is affected and evolves from this intercultural exchange too, though at a lesser degree (bidirectionality). Furthermore, Berry emphasizes that individuals acculturating to their new contexts can embrace different aspects of both cultures, thereby implicitly embracing possibilities for hybrid identities. Therefore, Berry organizes his taxonomy around two basic questions: does the individual want to maintain connections to their heritage culture, and do they want to have relations with the larger culture. If the person answers 'yes' to both questions, then they are pursuing an *integration* strategy. If they wish to maintain connections to their heritage culture but not to the larger society, then they are pursuing *separation*. In contrast, individuals that want to have strong connections to the larger society but not to their heritage culture pursue an *assimilation* strategy. Finally, individuals that do not want to maintain connections to either their heritage culture or the larger society pursue *marginalization*. This taxonomy, in Berry's view, effectively captures the extent of possibilities between which the migrants can choose across national and cultural contexts, for while there are "substantial variations in the life circumstances of the cultural groups that experience acculturation, the psychological processes that operate during acculturation are essentially the same for all the groups" (Berry & Sam, 1997, p. 296) and "these processes are shaped by cultural factors during the course of development" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 473). Thus, while there are substantial variations in the particularities of migrant cultural groups and their national situations, the underlying adaptive strategies are perceived to apply *universally* to all acculturation contexts while external cultural forces mediate their efficacy and development.

One of Berry's core theses predicts that "those who integrate… are better adapted than those who acculturate by orienting themselves to one or the other culture… or to neither culture" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 472). However, Berry admits, "this presentation was based on the assumption that non-dominant groups and their individual members have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate. This, of course, is not always the case" (Berry, 1997, p. 9-10). Asymmetrical power differences constrain the agency of individuals by encouraging or enforcing particular acculturation strategies, such that "in the case of marginalisation, people rarely choose such an option; rather they usually become marginalized as a result of attempts at forced assimilation… combined with forced exclusion" (Berry, 1997, p. 10). Therefore, while integration may afford better long-term adaptation, this strategy "can only be 'freely' chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity" (Berry, 1997, p. 10). This consideration of societal dominance and power hierarchies thus place acculturation 'strategies' in a state of ambivalence between agency and coercion. Congruence between integration orientations from migrants and multicultural immigration policies from the state predicts, in Berry's view, successful adaptation and countries should encourage these policies to best accommodate migrants (see Berry, 2005, 2006a; Sam & Berry, 2010).

When measuring these acculturation strategies / orientations, Berry embraces both qualitative and quantitative approaches that "allow for comparative work… and for work that focuses on the individual within the nexus of a single culture" (Berry, 2009, p. 362). Scholars following this model have developed large-scale cross-cultural studies to assess the most common and adaptive acculturation strategies across national contexts (e.g., Berry, Phinney,

Sam & Vedder, 2006; Erentaitė et al., 2018) while a few others have pursued ethnographic approaches to understand the nuances of particular communities and groups (i.e., Muslim youth [Stuart & Ward, 2011], different ethnic groups in one national context [Schotte, Stanat, & Edele, 2018; Schulz & Leszczensky, 2015]). Nonetheless, the vast majority of studies incorporating Berry's four-fold model of acculturation conceptualize human experience through a nomothetic universalist approach and largely employ statistical measures of large-sample populations, both cross-nationally and within one national context (see Chirkov, 2009a for a full review). Following conceptualizations of culture as an external force that acts upon individual orientations and psyche, Berry's recommendation for assessing acculturation strategies explores individuals' cultural identification. These identifications are often assessed as "explicit, surface-level aspects" (Doucerain, 2019) such as "language, cuisine, fashions, and other preferences" (Chirkov, 2009b, p. 178). This orientation contributes directly to psychological and sociocultural adaptations, thus constituting a vital aspect of acculturation in Berry's model.

Berry's four-fold model has been instrumental in establishing a foundation for psychological and sociocultural acculturation across national contexts, especially within cross-cultural psychology. However, numerous scholars have raised important critiques and have proposed revised models, different conceptualizations of basic terms, and heuristically distinct research paradigms. Berry (2009) addressed many of these concerns and conveyed important considerations for future critiques on his (and his colleagues') work, but many concerns over his model remained unaddressed. The most important critiques fall into four categories: 1) inconsistencies with and ambiguous understandings of terminology (and their psychometric validity), 2) the conceptualization and operationalization of culture, 3) the importance of

national and local contexts, and 4) more dynamic process-oriented models. These are especially important considerations for a study focused on newly arrived migrants who are negotiating acculturative 'strategies' in intermediate stages, many of whom experience particular challenges as non-Western individuals. For the remainder of this chapter, these critiques will be addressed with careful consideration to accurately portray Berry's model (which, in his view, is often misrepresented [see Berry, 2009]) in order to develop a highly nuanced and contextually attuned conceptualization of acculturation that will guide the rest of this thesis.

3. Terminology Concerns: Inconsistencies, Ambiguity, and Psychometric Validity

Sam (2006) reflects that, as a result of differing conceptualizations of 'acculturation' versus 'assimilation', acculturation psychologists in the early 20th were initially confronted with clear inconsistencies that complicated their ability to aggregate information and develop their own models focused on individual life experiences. Rudmin (2003), in his critical history of acculturation, recognized that this ambiguity was never fully resolved, for many studies contradicted the findings of other articles simply by applying different terminology to the same phenomenon or by omitting vital references. For example, in the case of migrants losing a connection to their heritage culture but becoming connected to the larger, receiving culture, Redfield et al. (1936) classified this orientation as 'acceptance' (pathological in nature), Spindler & Goldschmidt (1952) as 'acculturated' (psychologically beneficial) and Simpson & Yinger (1953/1972) as 'assimilationist' (pathological). Beyond inconsistencies with terminology, researchers themselves have relied on equivocal, unresolved disputes over which strategies or

orientations are actually beneficial, leading to contradictory findings over the most favorable

strategies within particular national contexts and cross-nationally.

While this terminology disputes hindered conceptual developments, these early

ambiguities also confounded early understandings over the process and ideal end-states in

acculturation processes. Berry (1980), relying on Redfield's et al. (1936) definition of

acculturation, proposed a model focused on *orientations* or *strategies* that emphasized the

constant renegotiations in the face of drastic changes like, say, September 11th, 2001 for

Muslim-Americans (see Sam & Berry, 2010). Conversely, Redfield et al. (1936) conceptualized

acculturation as a unidirectional process towards a stable end-state, thereby not accounting to

larger societal disruptions. Thus, while Berry was efficacious in unifying earlier models into a

general understanding and operationalization of acculturation, his sources conceptualized this

process very differently and this discrepancy raises an important question: is acculturation a

stage-progressive process, or a matter of affective and behavioral orientation towards one goal

that can change depending on external circumstances?

Studies have at least appeared to corroborate the bi-dimensionality of acculturation,

but Chirkov (2009a) reflects that the majority of these are conformational by nature, rather

than exploratory, and as such, scholars still do not understand the basic tenets of the

acculturation process. Chirkov (2009a) argues that acculturation scholarship does not truly

understand what these 'acculturation strategies' even *mean*, and suggests that

> After a rigorous description of integration together with assimilation, separation, marginalization and other 'acculturation strategies', we may return to the bi-dimensional model with a clearer understanding of what does [sic] these strategies mean and how they are used by different groups of immigrants in various settings (p. 101).

It surely appears logical to assume that migrants can choose to retain particular aspects of their cultural identity through the acculturation process in the contemporary era of neoliberalism (see Bhatia & Priya, 2018; cf. Gordon, 1964). However, Chirkov (2009a) warns, it is precisely this "deductive-nomological model" (p. 100) that has led to the persistence of Berry's model which, in Rudmin's (2006) view, is psychometrically questionable (more on this later). These questions necessitate more critical examinations of the acculturation process and contemporary formulations in the context of ambiguous and, at times, contradictory conceptualizations.

Addressing concerns over the discontinuity between terminology, Rudmin (2009) reflects that Berry's model and recent revisions have been plagued by a "failure to systematically cite prior research… [and] failure to maintain common vocabulary" (p. 63). For example, Berry (1980) conceptualized "rejection" or "withdrawal" strategies for individuals that maintain connection to their heritage culture, but not the dominant society, in contrast to his later formulations that reference "separation", and "deculturation" was later replaced with "marginalization". Furthermore, Berry's early models (i.e., Berry, 1980) highlighted the extreme complexity of the issue, considering domains such as dominant groups allowing minority groups to choose their acculturation strategy and considerations of linguistic / personality shifts. However, the four-fold model obscures these other aspects, and while Berry and colleagues attempted to rectify this problem by proposing a similar four-fold model for the acculturation preferences of the dominant society (see Berry, 2006a), Chirkov (2009a) emphasizes the persistent inattention to the 'language' domain. As a result, he laments that nomothetic studies following Berry's model are inadequate to capture the enormous complexity of acculturation.

Beyond mere confusion, misappropriations of terminology, and oversimplifications, Rudmin (2006) discusses how these reformulations have misrepresented aspects of agency and, perhaps inadvertently, blame migrants for 'choosing' pathological acculturation strategies. Berry (2003) writes that his model of acculturation is "based on the assumption that nondominant groups and their individual members have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate" (p. 24) and this positively frames migrants as active agents in choosing personally beneficial pathways. As reflected earlier, however, Sam and Berry (2010) qualify this assertion, writing that "the kinds of attitudes members of the larger society have toward immigrants… can influence the adopted strategy" (p. 477). Irrespective of the *amount* of agency afforded unto migrants, this conceptualization of chosen strategies has the added effect of favoring certain orientations over others (from an adaptive well-being perspective), thereby simultaneously pathologizing others. In Rudmin's (2009) view, this is indicative of inadvertently pejorative conceptualizations of migrant agency, where "psychological research on acculturation has been misdirected by beginning in an era of negative stereotypes about migrant peoples" (p. 110) that "attribute[s] the minority group's problems to the minority group's attitudes" (p. 109). These ideologies are directly linked to Berry's model, where researchers laud 'integration' and pathologize 'marginalization' strategies by relating these orientations to acculturative stress. Unintentionally, these conceptualizations can actually serve to reinforce stereotypes and stigma against migrants, because "by [researchers] placing blame for distress on the minorities' choices, majority groups and their policies are released from any real responsibility" (Rudmin, 2006, p. 66).

Rudmin (2006) extends this argument further, questioning the psychometric validity of marginalization within acculturation because few migrants actually *choose* to distance themselves from their heritage group and their new national context. Scholarship following Berry's nomothetic universalist perspective often employ standardized questionnaires that mis-operationalize 'marginalization' because "respondents, from their own perspective, cannot be marginalized from groups they decided they do not want to belong to" (p. 11). Thus, according to Rudmin (2006), scholars should reconsider their operationalization of marginalization which "should not be conceived as 'I am distressed because I decided to have no cultural community,' but rather as 'I prefer something other than those two cultures'" (p. 11). This formulation effectively de-stigmatizes this strategy by conceptualizing it as an act of exploration while simultaneously reframing the construct as individuals *who are marginalized,* rather than individuals *who choose to marginalize themselves*. Relating this reorientation to constructs of acculturative stress, Rudmin (2006) posits that

> If marginalization is failure to enter preferred reference groups, then the person pursuing bicultural integration is most at risk of becoming marginalized because acceptance by two groups is more complicated and more doubtful than by one group. If so, then perhaps integration be a stressful acculturation option (p. 12).

This is in sharp contrast to Berry's model that consistently emphasizes that integration is the least stress-inducing acculturation strategy (excluding non-multicultural national contexts). While this pathway is sometimes pursued by migrant individuals, affirming its construct validity, its operationalization may mischaracterize its directionality, indicating questionable content validity. Rudmin (2006, 2009) makes acculturation scholars reconsider the conceptualization and operationalization of "marginalization" as a 'strategy' based on questions of agency, the

stigmatization of minority groups due to pathological choices, and equivocal results from these orientations (see also Robinson, 2019).

Along with questions of the psychometric content validity of marginalization, other scholars have interrogated the construct validity of 'integration' due to equivocal definitions and measures. Boski (2008) reflects that Berry's model considers only one type of integration that assesses "declared preferences for merging one's life and for being functional in several domains of two cultural worlds identified by country/national labels" (p. 143) which, in Berry's and his colleagues' views, is the most functional acculturation strategy. Boski does not reject this formulation, but rather discusses other conceptualizations of integration that consider 1. the perceived efficacy of merging cultures and cultural values (Boski, 2006), 2. functional specialization (i.e., maintaining heritage culture in private spheres and embracing dominant culture in public spheres; Arends-Toth, 2003), 3. bicultural competence and frame switching (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee & Morris, 2002), and 4. integration as marginalization (Rudmin, 2006). These different formulations highlight the ambiguity of one of the most stable components of Berry's four-fold model, as consensus has been reached within psychological acculturation scholarship. The preponderance of scholarship hailing the prospects of integration through Berry's conceptualization without thoroughly examining its components makes Chirkov (2009a) question "how deeply does this conclusion allow us to understand the mechanism of acculturation and how practically useful is this conclusion?" (p. 101).

Berry (2009) responds to many of these criticisms and challenges their efficacy in furthering theory, defending his formulations and theses. These discrepancies have not been resolved, however, and the source of such diverse conceptualizations must be further

scrutinized. When examining the origins of these terms and their meanings in Berry's and others' models, deviations often reside in understandings of what constitutes "culture". Sam (2006) reflects on this sentiment, writing that "how we define 'culture' and its related concepts will undoubtedly affect the results of acculturation studies and the interpretations of these results" (p. 22). Furthermore, even the constructs of studies rely on different measures and conceptualizations of culture: can culture be measured as 'identification' and 'preferences' (as in Berry's model), or is it a core component of human cognition that cannot be disentangled from societal competence (Doucerain, 2019)? To understand the source of these discrepancies, conceptualizations of culture must be critically assessed for their efficacy of describing human experience. Only through this thorough investigation can Berry's model be adequately assessed for its psychometric validity and applicability to disparate groups in diverse contexts.

4. Conceptualizing, Operationalizing, and Measuring Culture

4.1 Critiques on Berry's Notion of Culture

Berry (2009) outlines the core questions regarding culture that are central to the epistemological ideologies of cross-cultural and cultural psychology: "what is culture; where is culture, and how can it be accessed?" (p. 363). For the first question, Berry considers both concrete and symbolic understandings of culture to be valid – that is, observable aspects like "artefacts and institutions", as well as "abstract features" that serve to represent these outwardly discernable components through shared symbols and signs (i.e., language; p. 363).

Analogously, culture exists both outside and within individuals in Berry's view, to such an extent that "cultures are 'lying in wait' for individuals to come along", but while "particular individuals come and go… cultures remain more or less stable" (Berry, 2009, p. 363). However, culture can also be 'incorporated' into the individual, so its existence is somewhat internal to human psychology (though not a core tenet of cognitive functioning, because culture *influences* human psychology [see Sam & Berry, 2010]). For Berry, these dual-conceptualizations of culture are sufficient to capture the nuanced interactive nature of group-individual dynamics, but other scholars question the empirical and theoretical efficacy of these definitions.

Chirkov (2009a) laments that "there is no 'culture' in acculturation research" due to the lack of attention afforded to "shared norms, rules and meanings of the home and host cultures" (p. 101). Conversely, Bhatia's (2007a, 2018) extensive ethnographic projects exploring dynamic understandings of cultural constructs like parenting and autonomy paints a different image of migrant experiences, investigating culture through a bottom-up approach that sought to understand migrant experiences from 'indigenous' perspectives (see also Cresswell, 2009). Bhatia (2007a) considered what it meant to part of an Indian diasporic community in America and in his later ethnographic project, he considered the effects of globalizing forces on cultural aspects in India, thereby differentiating between cultural contexts, groups, and constituents. What sets these projects apart from comparable cross-national scholarship that employed Berry's model? Bhatia & Priya's (2018) exploration of the effects of neoliberal globalization illuminates these questions by arguing that cross-psychological notions of culture portray monolithic, static conceptualizations of cultures while simultaneously situating them within

geographic contexts that, perhaps unintentionally, conflate notions of 'nation', 'ethnicity', and 'culture' in ways that reify global inequities and coloniality (Bhatia & Mahalingam, submitted).

Addressing these concerns, Bhatia (2002a) questions "is there such a thing as a univocal, monolithic, American, English, Arabic or Indian culture?" (p. 61) to which he, and other scholars (e.g., Said, 1993; Valsiner, 2007) answer emphatically: no. Bhatia and Mahalingam (submitted) reflect that cultures and groups are necessarily bounded within contexts of colonial imperialism, neoliberal globalization, and asymmetrical power dynamics that influence them differentially depending on these circumstances. This allows for diasporic communities that differ greatly in their cultural expressions and experiences from those of the homeland culture (e.g., Indian-American diaspora's culture versus Indian culture), yet both are still bonded and connected temporally, if not geographically, with possibilities for bidirectional influences (see also Appadurai, 1991; Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Through this conceptualization, culture is highly dynamic, context bound, and responsive to external influences (especially other cultures; more on this later). Two pitfalls of traditional concepts of culture immediately emerge as a result of this simple formulation: equivalencies drawn between culture and nation, and essentialized notions of culture located within individuals.

Cross-cultural psychology's pursuit of universal psychological processes that are influenced by cultural mediations are promising, but studies akin to Berry's model often employ notions of dichotomous cultures / cultural artifacts that conflate nations with their perceived culture. Hofstede's (1991) classic operationalization of culture in the business environment assessed attitudes along different dimensions to categorize different nations according to their relative position in order to better facilitate intercultural communication. He interviewed

individuals and, using statistical measures, correlated attitudes with behaviors and linked them

with the participants' nationalities. Furthermore, he ranked nations along continuums that

established basic dichotomies like 'individualistic vs. collectivist'. Hermans and Kempen (1998)

dub this paradigm 'perilous', for it portrays culture as static and nation-bounded (see also

Bhatia & Mahalingam, submitted; Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Huntington (1993) famously

appropriated this notion of dichotomous cultures aligned with their nationalities and posited

that individuals from different 'civilizations' are prone to conflict due to incompatible cultural

values. However, as Bhabha (1990) writes, nationalism is a *process* through which nation-states

became associated with individuals, their ethnicities, and, finally, culture, implying that these

are separate, but related, entities. Anderson's (1983) notion of 'imagined communities' further

reflects this concept, such that individuals in nations do not experience perceive their

geographically disparate bonds to be equivalent with local community bonds. Thus, individuals

in their own nation *know* that their local culture does not reflect the *entirety* of the nation's

culture, yet researchers not incorporating indigenous psychologies fail to acknowledge this vital

reflection in when conflating one nation with one culture (see also Bhatia & Ram, 2009).

Appadurai (1991) alternatively proposes that cultures are not necessarily bounded by

geographic locations, but rather exist within the imaginations of groups and peoples within

them. Thus, Syrian communities existing outside of the Syrian nation maintain cultural

connections to their homeland, but necessarily evolve depending on their new local and

national circumstances (see also van Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013). Importantly, scholarship

investigating these diasporic circumstances must continue to interrogate culture within the

paradigm of heterogeneity, for individuals within diasporas also exemplify extreme diversity in

cultural expressions, preferences, and identities. Furthermore, Bhatia and Ram (2001) emphasize that conflating nation and culture overlooks the contested national histories and identities that were suppressed through processes of colonialism and nationalism (see also Anderson, 1983). By disentangling nation and culture, it becomes possible to examine the enormous complexity of migrant youth experiences and to interrogate local / national structures that allow particular identities to emerge while simultaneously proscribing others.

In order to truly understand the complexity of cultural groups, intercultural contact, and cultural exchange, scholars must conceptualize culture as a dynamic entity. Berry's (2009) perspective that cultures "are 'lying in wait' for individuals to come along" that, as a result of individual integration of particular cultural aspects, serve to influence "part of the psychological makeup of every person" (p. 363) approaches culture as a substance that can be outwardly observed and captured. However, his measures that address 'cultural identification' (Berry, 1997) imply that people *choose* particular aspects to adopt, and that these domains remain constant, so that others within the same cultural group can incorporate these same aspects years apart from one another. This perspective thus presumes that cultures are temporally stable and territorially located within 'cultural groups' and their constituents. These notions epitomize the dangers of "cultural essentialism" (Grillo, 2003) that views culture as "a conception of human beings as 'cultural'… bearers of *a* culture… which defines them and differentiates them from others" (p. 158, emphasis in original). Oliveri (2008) highlights the preponderance of European studies explicitly incorporating these perspectives to emphasize the cultural makeup of migrants in contrast to secular Europeans, relating this understanding with aspects of Orientalism (Said, 1979) and Weber's notion of an acultural modernity (Weber,

1921 / 1972). Thus, as Bhatia and colleagues have reflected (e.g., Bhatia, 2002a; Bhatia & Priya, 2018; Bhatia & Ram, 2001, 2009), notions of culture must embrace decolonial ideologies that actively resist these persistent colonial narratives and consider questions of race and citizenship to understand the developmental changes in the context of conflicting cultural influences.

4.2 Proposing an Alternative Formulation

How can culture be best conceptualized and operationalized to account for its dynamism and the complex influences it has on psychology and personal identity? Berry's model views culture as an 'antecedent variable' (see Bhatia, 2007b; Bhatia & Ram, 2001) which then influences psychology that is perceived to be universally distributed across cultural and national boundaries (see Sam & Berry, 2010). In contrast, Doucerain (2019) highlights the cultural psychological perspective that considers culture and cognition to be necessarily intertwined. That is, the individual cannot be taken out of their sociocultural context that is necessarily mediated by cultural influences, either in harmony or conflict with personal identifications (see Bhatia, 2007b). These influences, in Doucerain's (2019) view, are more indicative of tacit cultural schemas, rather than "a comprehensive, internally consistent, and integrated frame or worldview" (p. 13). Bhabha (1994) furthers this argument, arguing that postcolonial scholars must

> Confront the concept of culture outside *objects d'art* or beyond the canonization of the 'idea' of aesthetics, [and instead] to engage with culture as an uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value, often composed of incommensurable demands and practices, produced in the act of social survival (p. 172, emphasis in original).

These tacit, internal qualities of culture are more apt for exploration than the external, surface-level aspects like fashion and other preferences, and more representative of its effect on diverse lives. This draws on Bourdieu's (1983) notion of social capital and *habitus*, whereby cultural upbringing necessarily imparts worldviews that afford individuals with practices, schemas, and attitudes that, in particular contexts, afford more social opportunities. Therefore, culture can also be conceptualized through these affordances that are internal and highly contextualized (see also Kim, 2018; Portes & Landolt, 2000). Bhabha (1994) furthers this argument by advocating for a conceptualization of culture that focuses on its "enunciative" (active) powers instead of an epistemological, or static, notion: "if culture as epistemology focuses on function and intention, then culture as enunciation focuses on signification and institutionalization" (p. 177). Zittoun (2006) applies this concept to notions of symbolic resources that stem from cultural and social sources which individuals actively utilize to construct personal identities. Furthermore,

> The epistemological is locked into the hermeneutic circle, in the description of cultural elements as then tend towards a totality. The enunciative is a more dialogic process that attempts to track displacements and realignments that are the effects of cultural antagonisms and articulations… relocating alternative, hybrid sites of cultural negotiation (Bhabha, 1994, p. 177-178).

This perspective, analyzing culture along the "in-between spaces" (p. 1) that emerge from by cultural differences, actively "displays and displaces the binary logic through which identities of difference are often constructed" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 3; see also Barth, 1969). Thus, studying culture within the contested spaces of hybridized identities helps illuminate the dynamic, context-bounded qualities through which culture operates to orient individuals in society with continual negotiation based on external influences and internal preferences.

Berry's model of acculturation allows for negotiated identities through an 'integration' strategy but, as was reviewed earlier, this notion remains ambiguous and is insufficient to capture the full array of contested selves. Boski (2008) emphasized at least five different types of identity negotiation captured under 'integration' in acculturation research, exemplifying the complexity of this term. Measuring the degree of individuals' bicultural identity integration (BII) orientations, Benet-Martínez & Haritatos (2005) analyzed migrants' perspectives on how they perceived the contextually pertinent cultural identities along dimensions of 'distance' (versus overlap) and 'conflict' (versus harmony). Bhatia (2002a) similarly explores the contested and conflictual nature of hybridized identities that are produced as a result of a continuous "dialogical process" (p. 57). Valsiner (2007) extends this, arguing that constructing an immigrant identity in a diasporic community incorporates perspectives on the cultural 'other' through a dialectical, dialogical process. Importantly, these identities extend beyond mere identifications and instead reflect incorporations of cultural values and ways of thinking that must be attributed to culture's tacit influences. Thus, culture and cultural transformations are produced through negotiations of contested selves through this understanding of hybridized identities and internal processes.

Fine and Sirin (2007) emphasize the situated nature of hybridized selves, necessitating an investigation into the national, local, and global ecological contexts through which migrant youth develop a sense of self (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Aligning with Hammack's (2008) call for explicitly incorporating sociocultural understandings of development, Fine and Sirin (2007) extends dialogical notions of hybridized identities by conceptualizing hyphenated selves (e.g., Turkish-German). This "dialectic labor of psychological reconciliation" (Sirin & Fine, 2007, p.

151) involves more than negotiating the self within a national context that lauds or abhors particular cultural identities, considering instead "teens who live on the intimate fault lines of global conflict; teens who carry international crises in their backpacks and in their souls (p. 151). Thus, this cultural negotiation also extends into considerations of globalizing forces and international ecological contexts that operate through essentialized notions of culture that are conflated with national identities. In this sense, hybrid identities captured through hyphenated selves exemplify the transnational nature of migrant youth who interact with their surrounding contexts in relation to larger global developments. Hyphenated identities reveal an important adaptive strategy that returns agency to migrant youth who encounter new national contexts that proscribe particular cultural / national orientations, thereby exhibiting an empowerment-based negotiation of the self (García-Ramírez, de la Mata, Paloma, & Hernández-Plaza, 2011).

This investigation into the contested nature of hybridized and hyphenated identities highlights the internal, tacit qualities of culture and identity that are dialogically negotiated and situated within larger national and global ecological contexts. Both of these considerations (the importance of national and global contexts as well as the dialogical process of identity formation for migrant youth) deserve extensions to understand how they relate, or contrast, with Berry's four-fold model of acculturation. Therefore, the next section explores how considering national contexts allows for a more nuanced understanding of different migrant groups and their life experiences in relation to larger political influences and motivations. Finally, a full consideration of the dialogical process of identity formation in the context of acculturation and migrant youth will be explored as an innovative paradigm that may further Berry's model by dynamically measuring acculturation in intermediate adaptive stages.

5. The Importance of Past and Present National Contexts for Future Adaptation

While Berry's model of psychological acculturation focuses primarily on the agency of individuals choosing strategies that they believe will lead to the most successful adaptation in their new national context, he simultaneously emphasizes that migrants do not operate within vacuums and consider these orientations in relation to the dominant society's perspectives of immigration and cultural diversity (Berry, 1997, 2005, 2006a). Berry (2006a) emphasizes that while strategies may be mediated or constrained by national policies, the basic orientations that individuals follow reflect pathways that are universally applicable to all acculturating groups (see Bhatia, 2002a; Bhatia & Ram, 2001 for a critical review). Nonetheless, Sam and Berry (2010) maintain that integration is the most adaptive strategy across national contexts, even though it has been shown that this is only a permissible and efficacious strategy in nations that encourage cultural diversity (see García-Ramírez et al., 2011; Rudmin, 2006; Schotte et al., 2018). Ward and Geeraert (2016) reflect that considerations of the ecological contexts of acculturating groups would help illuminate these contrasting findings and help ameliorate acculturative stress. Chirkov (2009a) furthers this, arguing that Berry's perspective "has minimal pragmatic usefulness as it is practically impossible to apply the discovered regularities to specific communities" (p. 101). To that end, García-Ramírez et al. (2011) embrace a liberation psychological approach that emphasizes the political power of scholarship and without careful considerations of the particularities of diverse migrant groups and their ecological contexts, it is dubious whether agency amongst migrant youth could be fostered.

Berry's four-fold model has repeatedly predicted that integration leads to the most beneficial psychological and sociocultural adaptation, but Schotte et al. (2018) emphasize that "it is unclear whether the integration hypothesis applies in assimilative contexts across different outcomes, and across different immigration groups" (p. 16). Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal (1997) maintain that Berry's model was derived from North American, multicultural contexts, and Paloma, García-Ramírez, Camacho and Olmedo (2016) highlight that Berry "argues that bicultural identity can only be freely chosen by migrant groups when the mainstream society is open and inclusive towards cultural diversity" (p. 76). How applicable is his model to this thesis which investigates a German context that is considered 'assimilationist', even by Berry (more on this later; Phalet & Kosic, 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010; Schotte et al., 2018; Zick, Wagner, van Dick, & Petzel, 2001)? More importantly, "there are not proposals that lead migrant groups to reach well-being in oppressive or intolerant contexts" (Paloma et al., 2016), thereby necessitating a careful consideration of national contexts and policies. Recognizing this gap, Bourhis et al. (1997) propose an interactive acculturation model that conceptualizes adaptation and stress within the context of national policies and perceived discrimination. Berry's model operates within the confines of an assumed multicultural society and offers little advice for migrants in different contexts, thus requiring a reformulation to account for these divergent experiences. Furthermore, Berry's model must be refined to incorporate the particular experiences of non-white, non-European migrants.

Though Berry (1980, 2006a) has emphasized that acculturation studies are always situated within hierarchies of power between groups, Bhatia and Ram (2001) reflect that "when we adhere to universal models of acculturation, we undervalue the asymmetrical relations of

power and the inequalities and injustices faced by certain immigrant groups as a result of their

nationality, race or gender" (p. 8). Universal models that seek to predict acculturation strategies

and their outcomes are insufficient to understand the complexity of shifting cultural identities

in relation to questions of power in the nation-of-origin and the new national context. Bhatia

(2002a) outlines this perspective, arguing that

> When referring to an immigrant's acculturation process, we need to be attentive
> to issues of race, gender, and power status of an immigrant before and after
> migration to the host country. The acculturation process within the U.S. takes on
> a different developmental trajectory, if, say, the migrant was part of a powerful
> center or majority in his/her local milieu prior to migration, and after migration,
> he/she finds himself or herself to be a part of a minority living on the margins (p.
> 7).

Berry's model that focuses on the power dynamics in the host country is unable to capture the

nuances involved in this transition by considering past circumstances in the context of evolving

relationships of the migrant community to changing national contexts. Additionally, migrant

groups have different experiences within the same host country (see Schotte et al., 2018),

especially those groups who encounter Othering discourses due to persistent colonial histories

and racialization (Bhatia & Ram, 2001). Importantly, these considerations are closely tied to

national policies for citizenship (Ellis & Bhatia, 2019) and anti-immigration laws, thereby also

affecting identity formation. When scholars ignore these dynamic contexts and study

acculturation through predictable strategies removed from local particularities, these universal

models "minimize the inequities and injustices faced by many non-European immigrants. Even

worse we risk underrating, overlooking and suppressing the discordant and discrepant history

of immigration in the United States (and elsewhere)" (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, p. 9).

Embracing a decolonizing perspective, this study recognizes that these policies constrain and moderate the possibilities for acculturating individuals, thus framing it as a political project to help ameliorate the restrictive and oppressive conditions by exploring how individuals can achieve well-being during the acculturation process (Bhatia, 2019; García-Ramírez et al., 2011; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Revising Berry's model by considering how changing power dynamics in different national contexts, incorporating congruence frameworks for describing acculturative stress and adaptation, and explicitly reflecting on the particular experiences of non-white, non-European migrants help apply this model to the contemporary German migration context. These revisions, along with a reconceptualization of culture, help illuminate the prospective outcomes of the acculturation process, but do little to explain *how* individuals acculturate. Theorizing acculturation along axes of 'strategies', 'orientations', 'attitudes', or 'behaviors' allow for evolving perspectives, but cannot capture what the process actually entails, and measures it after long-term adaptation has been 'achieved' (whether this is even possible will be explored later). Therefore, Berry's model must be holistically reconsidered in favor of a new framework that theorizes acculturation as a continually negotiated identity formation process.

6. A Dynamic Process-Oriented Model – How is Acculturation Experienced?

Though Berry asserted that acculturating migrants follow predictable trajectories that can be categorized within his four-fold model, he has also reflected that significant events can transform these orientations and make migrants reconsider their adaptive strategy (see Sam & Berry, 2010). This formulation places dynamic renegotiations as secondary effects of

acculturative stress, while Bhatia & Ram (2004) emphasize that these alterations are central to

understanding how migrant youth begin to situate themselves in response to novel

circumstances. Drawing on theories of globalization that recognizes how migrants maintain

'transnational' ties to their homeland while living in their new country (see Glick Schiller, Basch,

& Blanc, 1995; Pedraza, 2006), Bhatia (2012) emphasizes that current migrants often belong to

diasporic communities. Importantly, this situates transnational individuals between worlds,

where identities must be negotiated to function in these communities and reexaminations are

necessary and expected (see Bhatia & Ram, 2009). This is further complicated by Hermans'

(2001a) assertion that contemporary globalizing forces are deterritorializing cultures, placing

them in constant fluctuations and individuals living in this environment dialectically negotiate

personal identities, sometimes constantly. This necessitates a postcolonial and poststructuralist

conceptualization of acculturation that highlights this dynamism and questions whether

individuals can ever be fully adapted in society due to questions of race and power.

Boski's (2008) review of different conceptualizations of 'integration' has been influential

in moving beyond Berry's "universal variables" (Cresswell, 2009, p. 168), but these theorizations

are more efficacious is describing its different forms, rather than exploring the process that

leads to diverse manifestations of integration. For example, Benet-Martínez and Haritatos

(2005) conceptualize bicultural identity integration (BII) to explain hybridized identities across

domains of cultural conflict and distance but reflect that "further studies are clearly needed to

expand and clarify the exact nature of the BII process" (p. 1043). Recognizing this gap, Bhatia

(2002a) proposes that

> Postcolonial and diaspora theories of hybridization force us to think beyond fixed
> national and cultural boundaries and allow us to think more in terms of moving

> cultures where here and there, past and present, homeland and hostland, self and other are *constantly* being *negotiated* with each other (p. 15, emphasis in original).

This approach rejects ideas of a linear, universal model of acculturation because contemporary individuals are situated within ambivalent identities. This provides a novel conceptualization of acculturation, but poses a challenge to scholars trying to operationalize these concepts – how can one measure such an inherently dynamic, situated process? Bhatia (2012) proposes that scholars engaging in identity-based studies on contemporary migrants living in diasporic communities should conceptualize acculturation as a dynamic, 'dialogical' process.

Hermans and Gieser (2012) write that conceptualizing a 'dialogical self' involves considerations of a "*dynamic multiplicity of I-positions*" (alluding to James' [1890] concept of identity; p. 2) that exemplify different components of the self and are constantly repositioning themselves in hierarchies of power. Drawing on Bakhtin (1986), these *I*-positions are then voiced in an interactive dialogue with one another and are influenced, mediated, and continually resituated due to globalizing forces and external power dynamics (see also Bhatia, 2002a). Importantly, "otherness enters the self from the most explicitly 'external' realms to the most seemingly 'internal' ones" (Hermans & Gieser, 2012), leading to 'double-voiced' discourses and internal contradictions / oppositions that necessitate ongoing negotiations with divergent senses of self (Bhatia, 2012; see also Howarth, Wagner, Magnusson, & Sammut, 2014). Bhatia (2002) reflects that "being othered or racialized is part of many non-European / Western immigrants' acculturation experience, and these experiences are tightly knit with their evolving conceptions of selfhood that is hyphenated, fractured and in-between" (p. 71), thus linking this dynamic process to questions of identity formation. This compels scholars to

reconceptualize the paradigm of linking initial 'strategies' with long-term, stable adaptation, because "advocating the strategy of 'integration' as an end point or examining acculturation in terms of universal categories overlooks the multiple, contested and sometimes painful voices that are associated with 'living in-between' cultures" (Bhatia, 2012, p. 127).

This approach necessitates idiographic, qualitative studies of psychological acculturation that seek to understand migrant realities from their perspectives as opposed to interpreting attitudes along external, universal measures (see Rudmin, 2006). This research paradigm aligns with this study's goals, for "a dialogical approach, especially with regard to the acculturation of diasporic immigrants, assume *I* positions are shaped by issues of race, colonization and power" (Bhatia, 2002a, p. 73). This integrates the revisions of Berry's model pertaining to questions of culture and national context, where ethnographic studies of contemporary migrants must critically investigate how citizenship and immigration laws or 'othered' racialization affect the dialogical acculturation process of individuals from diverse migrant groups (see Bhatia & Ram, 2004). To understand these contexts, Cresswell (2009) advocates that scholars prioritize migrant experiences and engage in concrete activities that may elucidate their dialogical process. Particularly, analyzing the acculturation process through narrative life stories have been efficacious in understanding how individuals' *I*-positions are repositioned when engaging in local, national, and global contexts of change (see Bhatia, 2018; Kadianaki, 2010; Yampolsky, Amiot, & de la Sablonnière, 2013). Bamberg (2005) prioritizes these narrative inquiries in understanding diasporic identity formation, for "narrative analysis in identity research is fully interested in the inconsistencies, contradictions, and ambiguities that arise in interactions" (p. 222). Axiologically, this situates the participant as an active agent of knowledge production

while also allowing for politically motivated research designed to ameliorate challenging life circumstances resulting from asymmetrical power dynamics and persistent coloniality (García-Ramírez et al., 2011; Paloma et al., 2016).

Interrogating the dialogical self within a diasporic transnational migrant context allows for a unique reconsideration of acculturation that departs from Berry's influential four-fold model. Investigating the actual *process* involved in these transitions provides opportunities for expanding current understandings of the diverse life experiences of migrant groups around the world. This framework situates the acculturation process as a continuous renegotiation of contested, conflicting voices and selves, especially when considering the dynamism of globalizing forces (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, 2004, 2009). While Berry's model has been heuristically vital to the development of psychological acculturation theory, it is necessary to conceptualize this as a dynamic, contested process, to axiologically situate the migrant participant as an active producer of knowledge, and to contextualize studies within larger structures involving race, power, and agency in order to actualize the decolonizing project (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

7. Conclusion

Berry's model of acculturation has been extremely influential within cross-cultural psychology for creating an applicable taxonomy of different adaptive strategies that, in his view, universally apply to diverse contexts. Nonetheless, Ward (2008) encourages scholars to "think outside the Berry boxes" (p. 106) in order to further develop this field. This chapter has reviewed numerous ways to actualize this goal: 1) reconsidering and broadening Berry's

categories to better represent how individuals navigate different circumstances, 2)

disentangling nation and culture by considering deterritorialization, 3) conceptualizing tacit

functions of culture by framing it as a direct influence on cognition, 4) prioritizing the role of

national contexts and stipulations, and 5) reconceptualizing acculturation research through a

process-oriented model. By integrating these new perspectives, this chapter has emphasized

the importance of idiographic, qualitative, decolonizing projects that explore how diverse

individuals and groups have drastically different acculturation experiences based on questions

of race, gender, and power. Therefore, this new model will guide the rest of this thesis by

discussing how the life experiences of contemporary migrants in Lübeck, Germany directly

impact their identity development and adaptation to their new national context.

Aligning with the recommendations proposed throughout this chapter, this study must

also incorporate a thorough examination of the larger German national and political contexts.

Ellis and Bhatia (2019) emphasize that contemporary migration policies largely engage with the

particularities of globalization and neoliberalism, but also reflect dynamic conceptions of

nationalism and citizenship. Therefore, the next chapter will examine Germany's roots as a

nation-state, explore how contemporary policies reflect evolving conceptualizations of

'Germanness', and consider how citizenship is established in juxtaposition to migrant 'others'.

Chapter III: German National and Political Context

1. Acculturation in the Era of the German 'Refugee Crisis'

Adapting the dynamic process-oriented acculturation model from Chapter II to a particular national context involves more than accounting for different populations in a new political situation. As Maehler and Shajek (2016) highlight, German acculturation studies largely draw on Berry's taxonomy for conceptualizing migrant adaptation and operate through the 'integration as ideal' ideology, even though national responses to migration may not facilitate this orientation. Berry (1997) reflects that this 'orientation' may only be efficacious in national contexts that support multiculturalism. In Germany, this strategy may not be as adaptive, with Frankenberg, Kupper, Wagner, and Bongard (2013) postulating that "it is [the migrants'] orientation to German culture, rather than the acculturation strategy of integration, that leads to the most positive psychological and sociological outcomes" (p. 158). While this reflection may help orient some portions of analysis, a deeper examination of the current national context in relation to historical developments allows for a thorough contextualization of the idiosyncrasies of German migration beyond merely translating concepts to a different country.

This ethnographic study is framed within the particularities of the contemporary 'Refugee Crisis' stemming from conflict in the Middle East and heavily affecting European nations (more on this later). While the European Union is renowned for its internally porous national borders that greatly facilitate trade and travel, significant barriers such as border policing face migrants and refugees that manage to reach the shores (Patridge, 2019). Once

within the Union, migrants have more mobility and many move on to countries in central and

western Europe, but still encounter resistance via the Dublin Regulations: refugees must claim

asylum in the first European country through which they travel, meaning that mainland

countries are under no obligations to admit them (Bock & Macdonald, 2019; Patridge, 2019). In

this context, Germany's open border policy has been portrayed as a benevolent, empathetic

reaction to the incoming refugees, primarily Syrians (Hindy, 2018; Wakefield, 2019). However,

as the rise of Pegida (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident) and the

right-winged party AfD (Alternative for Germany) epitomize, this *Willkommenskultur* ('culture

of welcoming') is not a sentiment shared amongst all Germans. As a result, intensive political

debates have deeply divided the country based on 'the refugee question'.

Rather than conceptualizing these debates as novel reactions to oncoming migrants,

current sentiments must be understood within a historical context. While some have argued

that the framing of a 'crisis' has spurred these far-right movements (e.g., Bock & Macdonald,

2019; Kosnick, 2019), the roots of these animosities stem from historical constructions of

German 'citizens' in contrast to foreign, immigrant 'others'. Nation-building necessarily

constructs certain individuals as outsiders in its pursuit of establishing a national body and

German policy has undergone significant revisions in the 150 years since the formation of the

Second Reich in 1871. These evolving self-conceptualizations capture the essence of the

ambiguities in contemporary debates and policies, necessitating a thorough analysis of German

nationalization since its inception as an Empire.

In the next two sections, this historical context will be examined within the frameworks

of novel political developments and citizenship policies. Section 2 explores the roots of

'Germanness' and track its development through the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich, post-war split Germany, and up to the new millennium. Continuing this historical analysis, section 3 discusses how the new citizenship law instituted in 2000 has significantly changed the migration context, track how the following political debates reframed conceptualizations of German national identity, and frame the contemporary 'Refugee Crisis' within this context. These debates are scrutinized in section 4 to understand the meaning of policies designed to 'integrate migrants' and their effects on the various pathways of incorporation (Glick Schiller et al., 2004). Finally, these ideas are applied to the current migrant populations in Germany to identify primary markers of difference that frame the study's ethnographic analysis. Through this thorough examination of the developing contexts of migration in Germany, the process-oriented model of acculturation formed in Chapter II can appropriately account for the idiosyncratic discourses surrounding societal integration.

2. Engagement with Migrant 'Others': 1871-2000

A singular German Empire was formed by uniting a conglomeration of diverse principalities in central Europe by Otto von Bismarck in 1871. Prior to this momentous declaration of a new nation-state, there was no conceptualization of, or desire for, a unified Empire under Prussian leadership (Fulbrook, 2004). For the first time, peasants and aristocrats had to contend with larger political allegiances than their immediate regional contexts and separate from the collapsing Holy Roman Empire (the previous norm), presenting a difficult task for nation-building which was exacerbated by intense animosity towards neighboring states.

Nonetheless, Bismarck was tasked with creating a sense of political unity and belonging from these diverse principalities. Importantly, this process maintained the regional allegiances and emphasized a highly militaristic, though more symbolic than omnipresent, 'German state'. Instead of relying on political identification (and thereby redefining political identities), 'Germany' and 'Germanness' were defined through ethnic and linguistic identities. Additionally, the notion of a 'Second' German Reich linked this new nation-state as a novel development out of the Holy Roman Empire, heavily emphasizing the Christian roots of this empire.

In the Second German Reich, citizens were defined as a homogenous *Volk* ('people') through ethnic descent with a shared linguistic basis. This type of "cultural nationalism" is linked to Johann Gottfried Herder, a philosopher who "stressed the notion of a cultural community, a *Volk*… [and] that each culture must be viewed as an organic whole" (Fulbrook, 2004, p. 93). Cultural sameness was primarily expressed through "language as the essential defining characteristic of a nation…. The homeland was vast in comparison to most others… so a particular importance was accorded to the language as a unifying factor" (Barbour, 2000a, p. 15). Importantly, Herder posited that languages belonged to different *Volks*, simultaneously establishing German as a common language and a constituent of German ethnic identity entirely separate and unique from others (Kosnick, 2019; Yildiz, 2012). This notion of Germans based on shared cultural and ethnic characteristics epitomizes Barbour's (2000b) *Kulturnation* ('cultural nation') in contrast to a *Staatsnation* ('state nation'), a different form of nation-building that relied primarily on governmental affiliation and loyalty. Barbour (2000b) summarizes this circular logic, where "German is a single language because its speakers share a single national identity; they share a single national identity because they belong to a single

Kulturnation; they belong to a single *Kulturnation* because they share cultural characteristics; the most noticeable share cultural characteristic is the shared language" (p. 159). This conceptualization was formalized in 1913 with the first citizenship law, establishing Germans based on ethnic descent and cultural similarity without emphasizing the national territory (children also born to Germans abroad were granted citizenship; see Malkki, 1992), thus solidifying an ethnocultural nationalism (see also Barbour, 2000a; Brubaker, 1992).

After the First World War, Germany transitioned from a monarchy to a democratic republic, yet the core tenets of the *Volk* concept remained and even intensified. The government became heavily engaged in 'purging' foreign words from the German language, aspiring for linguistic (and ethnic) purity (Barbour, 2000b). Brubaker (1992) reflects that Polish immigrants, who constituted a significant population in Germany but were excluded on an ethnic 'othering' basis, were openly discriminated by the state, emphasizing the power of ethnically linked notions of nationality. These sentiments were also directed at Jews who were criminalized for 'stabbing Germany in the back' during WWI (Fulbrook, 2004), espousing racist ideologies of an 'enemy on home soil' (see also Brubaker, 1992). While national pride was heavily damaged after losing the War, these ethnically motivated attacks on perceived antagonistic 'others' foreshadowed the rise of Hitler and his efforts to racially purify Germany.

Hitler's Germany revived national pride in the *Volk* ideology by linking German ethnic descent to racial superiority. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws epitomized Nazi ideology that simultaneously reinvigorated national pride in Germanness by linking race to blood descent and revoked citizenship for 'non-racially pure' Germans, especially Jewish- but also Polish- and Slavic-Germans. This law, and the following actions orchestrated by Hitler, extended the goals

of German nation-building by moving from a relatively benign language purging "to expelling,

imprisoning, and exterminating people of supposedly alien race" (Barbour, 2000b, p. 165).

Thus, the creation of a German citizen through this *völkisch* ideology was inherently linked with

differentiation from, and antagonisms towards, immigrant *Ausländer* ('foreigners'). Balibar &

Wallerstein (1991 / 1988) summarize this process, writing that "it is this broad structure of

racism… which maintains a necessary relation with *nationalism* and contributes to constituting

it by producing the fictive ethnicity around which it is organized" (p. 49), drawing on Weber's

(1972 / 1921) notion of 'perceived' shared ethnic-descent, even if that was not wholly accurate.

Post-WWII West Germany engaged in a process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* ('coming

to terms with the past') by opening country borders to incoming migrants. First, the newly

formed Federal Republic repealed the Nuremberg Laws and reversed this action, re-granting

citizenship to those individuals who were persecuted and expelled by the Nazis (i.e., Jews,

Slavs, Poles). Additionally, Article 16 was introduced to the German constitution, stating that

"persons persecuted on political grounds shall have the right of asylum" (Bock & Macdonald,

2019, p. 12), a welcoming gesture that spurred significant migration into West Germany.

Interestingly, though two separate German states were established after the war, West

Germany (to a larger extent) maintained pan-German citizenship norms, so individuals who fled

the socialist East Germany into the West were still considered legal German citizens.

Two significant waves of migrants arrived in Germany within this post-war context

(though at different times) with very different political realities: the *Vertriebene* ('displaced

peoples') and *Gastarbeiter* ('guest workers'). The *Vertriebene* refers to ethnic German

populations who were living in regions constituting the 'larger' German realms (which Hitler

tried to unify) and were persecuted by Soviet forces, forced to flee westward immediately

following the war while emphasizing "stories of destruction, violence, killings, pillaging and

mass rape at the hands of the Red Army" (Bock & Macdonald, 2019, p. 12). A decade later,

Gastarbeiter, primarily Turkish individuals[1], began arriving into Western Germany where they

were contracted to work for a limited time and then expected to return home after their Visas

expired. However, many remained and brought family members into the country, establishing

Turkish ethnic enclaves in German neighborhoods and marking the beginning of a Turkish-

German diaspora while sparking debates over the dangers of *Binnenintegration* ('internal

integration', understood as 'ghettoization') to German society (see Ehrkamp, 2006; Elwert,

1982). While these developments were gradually leading to a more diverse West Germany,

Kurthen and Minkenberg (1995) reflect that "the number of foreigners living in the East was

very small" (p. 178), all stemming from then-Soviet states and many ethnic Germans actually

migrated westwards, thus maintaining a predominantly ethnic 'German' population.

The *Vertriebene* arrived immediately after the war while the *Gastarbeiter* began arriving

in the 1950s, leading to drastically different receptions based on their migration times and a

continuation of citizenship laws based on descent. In addition to revoking the Nuremberg Laws

of 1935, the West German government reinstated the 1913 citizenship law that maintained a

clause for continued citizenship based on ethnic descent, even if those individuals were living

and born abroad (Machtans, 2015). The *Vertriebene*, emphasizing their German ethnic roots,

were automatically granted citizenship upon arriving to West Germany (Bock & Macdonald,

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[1] Starting in 1955, this 'guest worker' program originally recruited individuals from within Europe (primarily from Italy). After the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, the Turkish 'guest worker' program began, and these individuals began to dominate national narratives as the most significant 'foreign' population arriving to Germany.

2019; Koopmans, 1999). However, there were strong cultural (and linguistic) barriers between

these refugees and the local Germans, leading to a slow, but eventual societal incorporation

with Germans compelled them to forget their woes over losing their first *Heimat* ('homeland')

and assimilate into their new lives (see Bock & Macdonald, 2019). Early post-war conflicts over

resources between local 'nationals' and the *Vertriebene* marked initial challenges, yet their

German descent greatly facilitated their integration (assimilation). In contrast, the *Gastarbeiter*

were never afforded citizenship because "workers were considered guests in Germany, with a

limited identity of temporary workers, not citizens or citizens-to-be" (Bock & Macdonald, 2019).

The establishment of Turkish communities in German neighborhoods challenged this legal

declaration of 'temporary' workers, but policy did not acknowledge this discrepancy.

Epitomizing the essence of *ius sanguinis* (citizenship afforded only to children of citizens;

Barbour, 2000b), this led to the creation of "native foreigners and foreign Germans"

(Koopmans, 1999, p. 629): Turkish-Germans born in Germany were considered 'foreigners' and

associated with criminality and societal danger. Furthermore, while *Gastarbeiter* learned

German to effectively work in the country, the cultural barriers were never fully disintegrated

as nationals feared that they would inevitably alter 'true' German culture. This categorization

extended beyond symbolic identification and directly affected their living conditions and life

satisfaction (Bock & Macdonald, 2019; Warner, 2014).

The different life experiences of *Vertriebene* and *Gastarbeiter* emphasize the

importance of legal citizenship in defining German identity through a contrast with the non-

German 'other'. Barbour (2000b) reflects that post-WWII West Germany recognized that "it

could not base its view of German identity on race, as this was utterly discredited, nor on

language, as this could imply a claim to incorporate Austria... the state had little option but to

recognize as Germans those who considered themselves to be Germans" (p. 165). This

conceptualization, markedly distanced from Nazi-propaganda that relied on racial categories,

still invoked a notion of non-porous ethnic borders epitomized through Barth's (1969) notion of

ethnicity existing on the borders between groups (cf. Brubaker, 2004). Because the *Vertriebene*

were ethnically German, their cultural differences could be theoretically reduced by orientating

themselves to the local culture (epitomizing assimilationist ideals), but their non-standard

German dialects marked them as linguistically distinct (see Linke, 2019) and many still identify

by this history of displacement today, thus approximating a more integrationist style.

Simultaneously, Turkish identity emerged as one of the ultimate markers of the immigrant

'other' living on German soil, a mirror against which German identity was constructed as 'non-

Turkish' and ethnically pure (see also Kurthen & Minkenberg, 1995; Machtans, 2015, 2016;

Warner, 2014). Importantly, cultural assimilation became powerful tools for *Vertriebene* to

integrate themselves, pathways that *Gastarbeiter* could not follow because of their non-

German ethnicity (and perceived extreme cultural distance), thus epitomizing the pervasiveness

of this citizenship ideology and its power on proscribing societal participation.

These sentiments were exacerbated with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the

Soviet Union in 1991 when a third wave of migrants arrived from countries in the former Soviet

Bloc. Dubbed *Aussiedler* ('resettlers'), these groups emphasized their German ethnic heritage

and their gradual distance from German-occupied territory due to shifting national borders,

echoing the claims of the *Vertriebene*. Similar to these earlier refugees, Koopmans (1999) writes

that "*Aussiedler* are not even seen as immigrants" (p. 640), but rather as expatriates who have

finally returned. This formulation would in theory, as with the *Vertriebene*, seamlessly integrate

them into society, but the reality was more complicated: as the majority came from formerly

Soviet regions, most were dubbed 'Russians' or 'Russian-Germans' where cultural and linguistic

barriers marked them as 'other' (Koopmans, 1999). Kaminer (2000) reflects on feeling different

in this context but, as with the *Vertriebene*, learning German was hailed as the pathway to full

incorporation into their new society (even if it did not truly remove cultural barriers). During

this same time, other asylum seekers arrived in Germany without ethnic German heritage, and

as a result of Article 16, the country was obliged to retain open borders as a gesture of post-war

cognizance. Fearful of 'asylum abuse' and 'waves' of refugees, the 1992-1993 government

amended this law, such "that those who had crossed through a so-called safe third-party state…

on their way to Germany could no longer claim asylum, but ought to be returned to that safe

country" (Bock & Macdonald, 2019, p. 18). These different engagements with *Aussiedler* and

the post-Soviet Union asylum seekers further emphasizes the persistent importance of descent-

based citizenship norms for societal reception and participation.

Yildiz (2012) reminds scholars that through the monolingual paradigm of descent-based

nationalism, "individuals and social formations are imagined to possess one 'true' language…

and through this possession to be organically linked to an exclusive, clearly demarcated

ethnicity, culture, and nation" (p. 2) and the integration of *Aussiedler* into German society

reflects this narrative. Indeed, the 'problems' of integrating foreigners debated amongst

political elites during this time period focused exclusively on Turkish-German diasporic

populations and their ethnic enclaves (for a full review, see Warner, 2014). Thus, while there

were clearly practical difficulties integrating *Aussiedler* due to language barriers and cultural

differences, their ethnic German heritage marked them as citizens which, alongside efforts at

learning German, was efficacious in reducing public perceptions of 'otherness'. This juxtaposed

the experiences of the descendants of the *Gastarbeiter* who grew up in a Turkish-German

diasporic context and spoke German, yet were treated as complete foreigners who refused to

integrate due to their ethnic enclaves and non-German ethnicity (Bock & Macdonald, 2019).

Additionally, the later waves of refugees in the 1990s mirrors these experiences (albeit to a

lesser extent) by demarcating between Germans and migrant 'others' who were perceived to

be abusing the social welfare state (see Bock & Macdonald, 2019; Brubaker, 1992). This

reflection epitomizes Ellis and Bhatia's (2019) emphasis on citizenship politics when analyzing

'othering' discourses, as the legal definition of *Aussiedler* as 'Germans' facilitated their societal

integration alongside learning German, an equally vital constituent of German national identity.

The national political debates in the late 20th century reflected these sentiments by

discussing how to best approach the 'problem' of integrating these migrant 'others'. Many

conservative politicians in the late 1990s argued that Germany is not a land of immigration

('*Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland*'), a "claim [that] articulates not a social or democratic

fact, but a political-cultural norm, an element of national self-understanding" (Brubaker, 1992,

p. 174), as immigrants do not officially constitute Germany according to ethnocultural

citizenship laws. Others argued that "Germany should finally recognize its role as a land of

immigrants, it should not base itself off of differentiation and repression, instead allowing for

societal participation" (Lindhoff, 2019), making this a contested issue where politicians split

along advocating for assimilationist and integrationist incorporation ideologies. In the end,

advocates for integrationist styles triumphed as Schröder (SPD), who was the Chancellor during

a liberal SPD-Green party coalition, passed a reform to citizenship laws in 1998 despite

considerable opposition from the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU). This new

policy "challenged the exclusive character of… citizenship based only on blood or descent…

through the introduction of… citizenship based on one's place of birth or long-term residence"

(Bock & Macdonald, 2019, p. 20). Writing before its ratification, Koopmans (1999) warned that

> It would be mistaken… to think that with some formal changes in citizenship law the
> problem of immigrant integration will be resolved…. The old, ethno-cultural conception
> of what Germany and German stand for will not immediately disappear by
> parliamentary decree from the perceptions of many Germans (p. 644).

Reflecting the tenets of *ius soli*, citizenship afforded to people born in the nation (Barbour,

2000b), this reform was legalized in 2000 and marked an important transition in citizenship

politics. Retrospectively, Koopmans' prediction was accurate: while this was an important

transition in citizenship politics, early modulations of descent-based citizenship were still

deemed valid and this continuation marked tensions between traditional notions of

'Germanness' along ethnic lines and newer ideas of 'naturalized' Germans. Although German

citizenship could no longer *exclusively* be tied to ethnicity, this ideology persisted and

presented a challenge to naturalized Germans who had to exemplify 'Germanness' in a very

different manner. The next section explores how these notions, coupled with novel

categorizations of migrant 'others', developed since this new law and how these different

definitions interact and conflict with each other in the contemporary era of migration.

3. Engagement with Migrant 'Others': 2000-Present

The citizenship law reform instituted in 2000 allowed for individuals to naturalize into German citizens if they have lived in Germany for 8 years, obtained B1 language competency according to European standards (independent language ability; see Rauch, Schastak, & Richter, 2016) and profess commitment to the democratic values of a modern German society (Bock & Macdonald, 2019). However, applicants would also (under normal circumstances) have to renounce their previous citizenships to affirm their commitment to German society, a stipulation that also reflected anxieties towards *Binnenintegration* ('internal integration' / 'ghettoization'; Elwert, 1982; Fritzsche, 2016; Schneider, Fincke, & Will, 2013). Furthermore, individuals born on German soil to migrant parents would be granted dual citizenship (German with their parents') until turning 21 when they would have to decide between their nationalities, reflecting a pronounced connection between territory and national identity (see also Brubaker, 1992; Malkki, 1992). This "cultural revolution" (Pries, 2001, p. 5) demonstrated an active engagement with migrant 'others' and new notions of 'Germanness' while spurring anxieties over the effects on society which were heavily reflected in political debates following the law's ratification.

Many politicians worried these new developments would encourage maintained ethnic identifications in everyday society, leading to a multicultural society. Angela Merkel emphatically declared that "multiculturalism has absolutely failed" (Speigel, 2010) by invoking notions of ethnic stratification (Esser, 2001) and fears divisions between groups instead of a peaceful coexistence (see also Pries, 2001). This sentiment sparked the *Leitkultur* ('leading culture') debates, where conservative politicians argued that immigrants aspiring to naturalize should align themselves with the German *Leitkultur* in order to foster integration. Recognizing

the inefficacy of continuing to define Germanness along ethnicity with this new citizenship law,

Bassam Tibi, a Syrian-German political scientist, decried multiculturalism "as merely an

expression of bad conscience over what happened in the colonial era" (Pautz, 2005, p. 43), a

sentiment reminiscent of post-war German Holocaust guilt over state-sponsored terror and

racism (see also Machtans, 2015). As an example of Germany's liberal, post-war progressive

humanism, CDU politicians favored the efficacy *Leitkultur* by drawing on notions of Christian

benevolence as a guiding German principle (Bösel, 2012). The pragmatic difficulties of engaging

with naturalizing immigrants sparked heated debates over the course and nature of societal

integration, with CDU politicians arguing that "the yardstick for integration is the *Leitkultur*…

this rests upon the basis of European/western values rooted in Christianity, the Enlightenment

and humanism" (Pautz, 2005, p. 46; see also Ehrkamp, 2006).

These debates represent a fundamental shift from ethnonational citizenship to one

based on cultural belonging derived from Christian Enlightenment values (Pautz, 2005).

Importantly, these debates are largely situated within the context of the September 11th, 2001

attacks on American soil by Islamic Fundamentalists where Islamophobic discourses also spread

throughout Europe, especially in Germany (Fritzsche, 2016). Thus, subdued connections

between Germany and its Christian roots became more visible through these debates and were

subtly juxtaposed with Islamic values (Warner, 2014). These 'German values' hailed democracy,

liberalism, and gender equality, all of which served to obliquely criticize Muslim immigrants and

their 'backwards' cultures (Fritzsche, 2016; Koopmans, 1999). While advocating for integrating

migrants, these debates were often more concerned with excluding individuals who refused to

align with these ideals, such that

> Cultural belonging and the adoption of German customs and mores became a prerequisite for wider social and political participation… immigrants, who could no longer be ignored as a substantial part of society, could nonetheless be excluded from political participation in it being firmly labelled as culturally incompatible (Pautz, 2005, p. 47).

These notions are riddled with static conceptualizations of culture that are inherently linked to nationality and ethnicity, thereby essentializing German and non-German cultural identities as a means of regulating naturalization. As Brubaker (1992) attests, citizenship politics are more explicitly designed to exclude undesirable subjects than to directly welcome potential future citizens, and "the *Leitkultur* debate clearly functioned to differentiate 'us' from 'them'" (Pautz, 2005, p. 47). Invoking beliefs in "a common ancestry and kinship with white European nationals" (Linke, 2019, p. 52), this ideology draws on Christian- and Enlightenment-based notions of modernity through its demarcation from a perceived 'other' Islamic / Arabic, non-white, non-European culture (Kermani, 2010; Wakefield, 2019). Importantly, cultural belonging redefined immigrants already in the country as non-Germans through this liberal formulation rather than explicit descent-based citizenship politics. As Machtans (2015) notes, "since 9/11, Germany's largest minority, formerly referred to collectively as 'Turks'… has increasingly been recast as 'Muslims', replacing ethnicity with religious affiliation and reducing the Turkish minority to its assumed religious beliefs" (p. 292; see also Warner, 2014). These debates epitomize the core tenets of Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* by emphasizing essentialist conceptualizations of culture that reject the possibility of a bi-cultural identity or changing cultures without disavowing previous national allegiances, thereby also conflating culture with national origin and (by extension) ethnic identity. As Brubaker (1992) summarizes,

"naturalization is perceived as involving not only a change in legal status, but a change in nature, a change in political and cultural identity" (p. 78).

Due to this essentialized notion of cultural belonging, ethnic-citizenship ideology and anti-migrant stances were reinvigorated by destigmatizing Islamophobic, Orientalist discourses in the name of protecting German culture from enemies within. Schönbohm, a prominent CDU politician, argued in the early *Leitkultur* debates that "social and political equality within a state can only be granted to those who are members of the German *Staatsvolk*" ('citizens' based on ethnic descent; Pautz, 2005, p. 44), linking cultural identification with historical notions of the German *Volk*. This paradigm is predicated on the notion that "the German 'collective' or *Gemeinschaft* is threatened by the enemy within" (Pautz, 2005, p. 50), such that politicians and regular citizens are inspired to 'protect themselves' against dangerous 'others'.

Central to the perceived importance of a German *Leitkultur* is the application of this Islamophobic paradigm that correlates (Islamic) religiosity with potential for terrorism (Dolezal, Helbling, & Hutter, 2010). Minster of the Interior Schäuble (CDU) emphasized in a policy brief about migration that while over 3 million Muslims became part of German society in recent years, "the coexistence of Muslims and the [German] majority society is... increasingly affected by the fear of possible Islamist radicalization" (Brettfeld & Wetzels, 2007, p. 1). This also presents a different image of the dangers of a multicultural Germany that could be threatened by Islam in the form of terrorism, as opposed to more liberal humanist arguments portraying hierarchies of ethnic groups (i.e., Esser, 2001; see also Warner, 2014). In this sense, Islam is not only incompatible with modern, German culture, but also dangerous to its structure and integrity, so a German *Leitkultur* is necessary to curb these potentially destructive ideologies

(Abadi et al., 2016). Furthering this, Brettfeld & Wetzels (2007) linked Muslim religiosity with

fundamentalist ideologies *and* poor academic performance amongst youth, both in contrast to

Christian youths' religiosity, thereby also privileging a Christian Germany. This 500-page brief

related education and German language competency to lower degrees of Islamic religiosity,

proposing a solution to this perceived potential for extremist terrorism.

This sentiment of internal threats is eerily reminiscent of Weimar-era anti-Semitic

animosities that framed Jewish-Germans as betrayers during the First World War from which

the Nazis heavily drew to further their plans of racial purification. Of course, Nazi political

xenophobia and 21st century anti-immigrant sentiments cannot be equated in their mobilizing

potential or effects on individual lives, but it demonstrates a historical continuity of tensions

and fears over 'foreigners' destroying German society. Thus, as Machtans (2015) laments,

> Seventy years after the Holocaust, it is obviously possible again in Germany to express ideas of racial superiority openly, to discriminate against minorities, and to deny them respect as human beings. Ideas previously limited to the extreme right have suddenly become socially acceptable… again (p. 293).

These anxieties were naturally met with resistance in favor of promoting a more tolerant

integration attitude. Beginning in 2006, Schäuble (CDU) established the *Islamkonferenz* ('Islam

Conference') to address these ideological perceptions in an open forum, and invited individuals

from Islamic organizations within Germany to represent Muslims around the country, thereby

recognizing the existence and persistence of Islam as a part of Germany (Doughan, 2020). This

was a vital first step in recognizing the presence and political importance of Muslims within

Germany, representing a sharp delineation from earlier notions of Germany as a land without

immigrants. Furthermore, this conference was enacted by a member of the conservative-

leaning CDU, demonstrating a new development in these debates where politicians across party

lines recognized the inefficacy of denying Islamic representation while at the same time hailing

Germany's roots in the humanistic, tolerant Enlightenment (see Machtans, 2016). However,

Machtans (2015) reflects that this also served to differentiate between Germans and Muslims

by concretely demonstrating the barrier between these groups. While this marked a stark

difference in perceptions of Muslims in Germany and a recognition of their place in society, the

Islamkonferenz still reinforced a perception of Islam as a static, monolithic entity, thus

homogenizing the extreme diversity of German Muslims (Machtans, 2016) and reducing them

"to their 'other' religious identities as Muslims, neglecting the complex and layered identities of

contemporary Germans" (Bock & Macdonald, 2019). Inadvertently, the *Islamkonferenz* served

to establish Islam as the ultimate 'other' within a post-9/11 German context, and conflated

religion with culture, culture with ethnicity, and ethnicity with nationality, serving to frame

Islam as the ultimate 'foreign' entity within 21st century German society (Kermani, 2010;

Machtans, 2015, 2016).

While these debates were located within the national political sphere, surges of

Islamophobic sentiments across Europe and xenophobic hate crimes within Germany

demonstrated their everyday political mobility by regular citizens. Machtans (2015) draws a

direct link between these political ideologies and murders of Turkish and Kurdish migrants

committed by the neo-Nazi National-Socialist Underground group between 2000 and 2007 (see

also Bock & Macdonald, 2019). Green (2015) emphasizes that these sentiments were present

throughout Europe, directly linking the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004 in the Netherlands by

a Muslim migrant and ISIS terrorist attacks in London and Madrid between 2005-2006 to rising

Islamophobic sentiments within Germany. Thilo Sarrazin's (2010) book, *Deutschland schafft sich*

ab ('Germany does away with itself'), represents the culmination of these racist, Islamophobic

ideologies throughout these debates by warning against the deterioration of German society

because of migrants' "inherited lack of intelligence", reflecting "nineteenth-century race

theory" (Machtans, 2016, p. 92; see also Abadi, d'Haenens, Roe, & Koeman, 2016; Richards,

2012). While there were certainly other expressions of anti-Muslim sentiments, either violently

or in public discourse, these particular instances had drastic effects on German perceptions by

exacerbating these tensions and demonstrating the mobilization potential of these ideologies

while also affecting migrants' identities as 'others' who could be attacked for 'looking Muslim'.

This sharp distinction between Germans and Muslim, citizens and foreign 'others', is

important for conceptualizing responses to the Refugee 'Crisis' that led to a million asylum-

seekers arriving to Germany in 2015 (Machtans, 2016). Removing the EU stipulation that

refugees have to claim asylum in their country of arrival, Angela Merkel famously opened

German borders to Syrian refugees, stating "*wir schaffen das!*" ('we can do this!'; Hindy, 2018).

Spurred by the image of Alan Kurdi, a 3-year old child, washed up dead on the beach

attempting to cross the Mediterranean into Europe, Merkel's decision inspired a new

Willkommenskultur ('welcoming culture') to incoming asylum-seekers and invoked a sense of

Christian benevolence derived from post-Holocaust guilt. As they did not *have* to open their

borders for refugees, "Germany could lead through moral authority, showing that it had

learned from its past and, as a result, could take on the moral responsibility that seemed to be

absent almost everywhere else" (Patridge, 2019, p. 268). Emphasizing solidarity, this

Willkommenskultur was accompanied by relocation projects, public funding for necessities, and

initiatives aimed at 'integrating' migrants (more on this later). Rather than a cohesive,

interrelated series of incorporation projects, the *Willkommenskultur* was a series of grassroots

projects located within city and state boundaries led by regular citizens, demonstrating a

unique public response to these immigrants. While some have argued that this culture inspired

more pity than solidarity (i.e., Patridge, 2019), public voices were optimistic and positive.

However, New Year's Eve in 2015 instigated new anti-migrant perceptions alongside this

Willkommenskultur that reinvigorated Islamophobic sentiments at national and local levels,

demonstrating the mobility of these dichotomous migrant perceptions that would inspire many

to rally in support of, or opposition to, Merkel's open border policy (Kosnick, 2019).

On New Year's Eve, 2015, numerous cities (primarily Cologne) reported incidents of

sexual assault against German women by northern African migrants, inspiring fears of a mass

attack on German culture and bodies (Noack, 2016). This image drew on racially charged anti-

migrant sentiments in the 1920s "when the black colonial soldier was imagined to threaten the

white *Volkskörper*" (Boulila & Carri, 2017, p. 288). While these images emphasized white

German bodies in contrast to migrants, the assaults were also mobilized in debates arguing for

cultural belonging and demonstrate the persistence anti-black colonial racism alongside racially

charged Islamophobic attacks (see Green, 2015). Thus, paradigms of all contemporary migrants

being 'Muslims' frames this event in a different light of rising Islamophobic tensions drawing on

centuries-old Orientalist images of Muslims as hypersexual beings in tandem with persistent

colonial discourse (see Naranch & Eley, 2014; Said, 1979). The president of the German Federal

Crime Police Office reported "there is a connection between the emergence of this

phenomenon and the rapid migration in 2015" (Noack, 2016), thus connecting the dangers of

welcoming unchecked amounts of asylum-seekers to potential attacks on German society

(encapsulated in white, female bodies). By linking the 'waves' of refugees arriving to Germany

with dangers against national bodies, this discourse allowed for the proliferation of anti-

migrant ideologies that were noticeably dichotomous to the earlier *Willkommenskultur*.

Many individuals decried migrants' supposedly backwards, patriarchal society that

inspired men to assault women, such that "seemingly progressive feminist agendas become

articulated within anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant discourses that declare sexism to be a

problem mainly, or even solely, of the non-European, Muslim Other" (Kosnick, 2019, p. 183). By

contrasting the progressive, modern, emancipated German society with migrants' perceived

Muslim religious backgrounds (all generalized and homogenized), "Cologne illustrates the

intersectional workings of racism and anti-feminism in a discursive climate where misogyny has

allegedly been overcome and can only be traced in racialized Others" (Boulila & Carri, 2017, p.

286). This perspective drew on dominant discourses that equated cultural identification with

religious affiliation and violence (Baumann, 1996), such that "the attacks [on New Year's Eve]

were interpreted as exposing a culturally rooted sexual threat carried by all male Muslim

refugees entering the country in large numbers" (Kosnick, 2019, p. 178; see also Green, 2015).

This disregards the diverse national backgrounds of these migrants by framing their identities

exclusively through a perceived monolithic, anti-democratic Islamic religious affiliation and

presumes that all arriving migrants were refugees fleeing conflicts in the Middle East. Following

these assaults, debates lauding a German *Leitkultur* ('leading culture') towards which migrants

should integrate themselves resumed in 2017, "the content of which has remained undefined

and vague, but… serves to exclude certain minority values and those of Muslims in particular"

(Bock & Macdonald, 2019, p. 24; see also Bauder & Semmelroggen, 2009).

These negative sentiments towards migrants were mirrored by (and facilitated) the rise

of the AfD, a right-leaning political party, and Pegida, a conservative organization focused on

maintaining a Christian, ethnically pure Germany. Originally an anti-European Union party

founded in 2013, the AfD garnered support in many former East German states (especially

Saxony) after a reshuffling of leadership accompanied by the arrival of new asylum-seekers

around 2015 that spurred a new anti-migrant stance (Bellon, 2016; Grabow, 2016). Linking

immigration with crime and advocating a stricter border control against the 'waves' of Muslims

coming to 'invade' and 'pollute' German society, this party surged in popularity after Cologne in

2015, reaching up to 12.6% votes in the national elections in 2017 (Bock & Macdonald, 2019).

The AfD's support during these elections was extremely variable between different states, with

the party gaining over 25% of the popular vote in some regions in Saxony but only 8.9% in

Lübeck, the site of this study (Clarke, 2017). The party remains small but is demonstrative of

rising right-winged anti-migrant sentiments across Europe and effectively solidified tensions

between the previous *Willkommenskultur* and rising dissatisfactions with 'waves of migrants'.

Grabow (2016) argues that this political movement is closely tied to Pegida and its

Islamophobic stances. Drawing on anxieties of a perceived Islamic Fundamentalist threat

(spurred by the attacks on the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine in 2015; Machtans, 2016), early rallies in

Dresden, Saxony drew thousands of Germans in open discontent with a perceived 'Islamization'

of the West. This rose in following years with the first 'waves' of refugees in 2015 and the

subsequent 2015 New Year's attacks, leading to over 200,000 supporters on Facebook

(Machtans, 2016). Tobias Rathjen's attack on two Shisha-bars on February 19th, 2020 that killed

9 individuals (Leber, 2020) demonstrates how these anti-migrant sentiments are automatically

intertwined with Islamophobic nationalist ideologies and have been mobilized to justify murder

in the name of protecting the fatherland, a paradigm many likened to AfD propaganda

(Ciesinger et al., 2020) and international anti-Muslim terrorism (Jansen, 2020).

These movements speak to the efficacy of anti-Muslim ideologies in contemporary

German politics predicated on the inevitability of cultural conflict (Grabow, 2016), for

"Islamophobia… is not driven by religion alone. Rather, it is as much determined by racism

based on cultural traditions and ethnic background" (Machtans, 2016, p. 91). The mobilization

of these racist paradigms is indicative of a resurgence of descent-based German citizenship

ideology by connecting cultural belonging (conflated with national background) with dangers to

the 'true' Christian German nation-state and its 'true' citizens, drawing overtly on Huntington's

Clash of Civilizations ideology (Green, 2015). At the same time, Machtans (2015) maintains that

"numerous anti-Pegida demonstrations in German cities indicate… that the vast majority of

Germans do not identify with Pegida's Islamophobic ideals" (p. 295). While these movements

are perceived to be gaining extreme political mobility, actual voting patterns demonstrates

their eastern regional efficacy, rather than a dominant federal presence. Nonetheless, they

represent a vocal minority that seeks to invalidate the 'Germanness' of contemporary, non-

ethnic Germans who have become naturalized based on cultural differences and dangers to

society (see AfD, 2017).

These debates linked historical conceptions of Germanness to contemporary

circumstances through cultural citizenship and cultural racism (Green, 2015). Refining the

National Integration Plan, first introduced in 2006, to address the challenges of incorporating waves of asylum-seekers in the first years of the 'Refugee Crisis' became increasingly important in 2015 (Gogolin, McMonagle, & Salem, 2019). Involving local- and regional-level activities, this prerogative reflects a negotiation between competing perceptions of immigrants and their place in German society. While there are numerous pathways of incorporation available to migrants with different degrees of efficacy (Glick Schiller et al., 2004), there are strong pressures for migrants to either pursue an integration or assimilation strategy, as outlined within Berry's taxonomy[2] (Pfafferott & Brown, 2006). Located within this volatile and polarized political context, the incorporation of contemporary migrant 'others' reflects a tendency to privilege an orientation towards the German *Leitkultur* through notions of 'cultural compatibility', echoing earlier sentiments. To understand how this affects contemporary migrants, the meaning of 'integration' in a political German context must be scrutinized for its implicit biases and assumptions about Germany, Islam, and migrant 'others'.

4. Migrant 'Integration': What does it Mean and What are its Effects?

The National Integration Plan is a set of goals and distinct programs emphasizing language learning and cultural reorientation towards democratic values that are determined on state levels, rather a centralized, detailed list of steps for individual states to take to guide the federal reception of migrants. Participation in this initiative is also voluntary (Gogolin et al.,

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[2] Though Berry's taxonomy was largely revised in the last chapter, his paradigm largely organizes the discourses within these debates. Therefore, it will remain useful to continue orienting the discussion through his terminology. For a review, see Maehler & Shajek (2016).

2019), making these 'plans' more akin to 'ideologies' or 'integration paradigms', but they still

remain important as a guiding, if not heavily contested, federal initiative (for a critical review,

see Bendel, 2014). A significant component of this National Integration Plan is to prepare

adolescents to continue their education and facilitate adults to obtain jobs in Germany. On the

Federal Agency for Migration and Refugee's online informational page about integration, it

heavily emphasizes 'integration courses' that are designed around supporting these goals.

Describing the efficacy of this project, the Agency writes that

> If you want to live in Germany, you should learn German. This is important if you
> are looking for work, have to fill out applications, support your children at school
> or want to meet new people. You should also know a few things about Germany,
> for example its history, culture and legal system (Bundesamt für Migration und
> Flüchtlinge).

The first link on this website is titled "language is the key to integration", further emphasizing

the importance of learning German in order to function in daily life. However, this sentiment is

not a neutral portrayal of adapting to life in Germany. While Glick Schiller et al. (2004) highlight

that there are individuals with migration backgrounds who have no German language skills and

posit this as a viable option for incorporating migrants, this national initiative frames such

adaptation as 'failed integration' (Schneider et al., 2013). Clearly, particular forms of integration

are idealized, necessitating an investigation into the framing of these debates and assumptions

about migrants and Germans through this new 'cultural identification' citizenship paradigm.

The national debates discussing how to integrate migrants (especially youth) are

predicated on studies that evaluated adolescent academic achievement on different variables

to ascertain methods of facilitating their adaptation. Gogolin et al. (2019) outline a history of

these studies, chronicling the development from cultural deficit models of achievement to

reflections on cultural and linguistic *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1983). For example, Tepecik (2013)

reflects that the Program for International Student Assessment's (PISA's) study framed migrant

experiences through a cultural deficit lens, thereby supporting an 'integration' ideology that

opposes ethnic enclaves (see also Giesen, Studer, & Yildiz, 2013). However, Moffitt and Juang

(2019) reflect that because 'Germanness' is not critically disentangled, these statistics are

appropriated to demonize Muslim migrant experiences, especially for Turkish- and Syrian-

Germans. This sentiment finds considerable resonance with studies that correlate immigrants

with high crime rates by conceptualizing *Aussiedler* as 'Germans', thereby skewing migration

statistics, but "such – often complicated – analyses usually find less public resonance than the

seemingly unequivocal, hard data of the official statistics" (Koopmans, 1999, p. 636). These

studies inform the official, national discourses (Halm, 2012) by providing the image of a socially

dangerous, ubiquitous Muslim migrant that must be 'integrated' to avoid destruction.

 These official discourses furthered an ideology of integrating migrants (perceived as

'Muslims') that drew heavily on earlier conceptualizations of a German *Leitkultur*. Schäuble

stated that "integration… presupposes the unconditional recognition of the free democratic

basic order of our country as the foundation of social tolerance and openness" (Brettfeld &

Wetzels, 2007, p. 1). The federal government emphasized this particular integration ideology,

as their 'integration courses' feature lessons about "the values on which German society is

based" (Bundesregierung, n.d.) alongside language learning. These democratic values are

represented through gender equality and freedom of speech, which are perceived to be

antithetical to a monolithic Islamic culture but integral to modern, Enlightened Germany

(Green, 2015; Stabile & Kumar, 2005). Thus, these national initiatives emphasize that Muslim

immigrants (perceived to be all migrants) must align with German democratic values and learn

German to facilitate social cohesion and reduce the potential for homegrown terrorism.

Taken together, these various components form the crux of the National Integration

Plan: learn German, respect democratic values, and understand how German history informs

these contemporary circumstances. Through this analysis, it becomes evident that these

'integration' strategies are actually repackaging assimilation discourses under the guise of

liberal humanism (Warner, 2014). Ehrkamp (2006) reminds scholars that "as politicians and

members of immigrant-receiving societies demand that immigrants adapt to the host country's

norms, cultures, and values, they produce assimilation discourses" (p. 1673). Following this

trajectory, Bock & Macdonald (2019) forward that these assimilation discourses were disguised

through 'integration' since the 1970s during debates about *Gastarbeiter* and *Binnenintegration*.

This is not an arbitrary decision, for "the term 'Integration' is preferred in German-language

scholarship because 'assimilation' has a strong negative connotation in German because of 'its

association with forcible Germanization'" (Ehrkamp, 2006, p. 1675), this association stemming

from the Nazi regime. Thus, as citizenship became redefined through cultural identification

through the 2000 law change, images of a guiding *Leitkultur* reinvigorated assimilationist

aspirations for a pure, modern Germany that necessarily characterized other cultures as

deviant, dangerous, and backwards. These policies also emphasized the importance of migrants

integrating themselves and blamed migrants for 'failed integration':

> Integration is mainly talked about… in cultural terms, framed as a process of
> adjusting one's ways and adapting to cultural norms and values, which are
> implicitly posited and constructed as homogeneous and often as universal…
> [and] entangling references to the diversity of culturally shaped attitudes and
> practices with delinquency reinforces the assumption that Muslim immigrants in
> particular are incompatible with, and even destructive of, German ways of life.

Migrants are thus required to change their ideas, habits and behaviors (Kosnick, 2019, p. 175).

These assimilation discourses are further reflected in naturalization requirements to obtain German citizenship and 'become' German that stipulate B1 language proficiency and an alignment with modern democratic values. Drawing on the relation between academic studies and national discourses, these ideologies certainly inform perceptions of immigrant acculturation by reflecting on the dangers of discordant perceptions of 'appropriate' acculturation attitudes (Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkoweski, 2006), thereby advocating that migrants reconfigure their identification to avoid intergroup stress and violence. Other studies have drawn links between naturalization and host-country identification (e.g., Fick, 2016; Maehler, Weinmann, & Hanke, 2019) which is framed as a positive acculturation strategy within a non-multicultural German context. Maehler & Shajek's (2016) review of psychological acculturation research in Germany reflected a tendency to rely on Berry's taxonomy *and* perceive integration or acculturation strategies as an active choice. While integration initiatives may be voluntary, migrants that do not pursue a pathway towards naturalization by participating in these courses are demonized for their 'failed integration' and rejection of modern, democratic German values.

The ideology of cultural identification as a prerequisite for naturalization reflects this scholarly perception of migrants *choosing* particular strategies (Pautz, 2005), so migrants are blamed for their failure to integrate appropriately. *Binnenintegration* is therefore perceived as a half-hearted attempt at identifying with German culture through the maintenance of ethnic identity in a space that is occupied by the non-German, unintegrated 'other' (Ehrkamp, 2006;

Schneider et al., 2013). Frankenberg et al. (2013) reflects on these equivocal understandings, for "public discourse has been characterized by a misleadingly inaccurate use of terms such as 'integration' in which the aspect of cultural maintenance is still widely neglected, reducing it to discussions on optimizing assimilation" (p. 165). This context conflates Muslim religious identity with the non-German, ethnic 'other' that is established as a potentially dangerous entity within society, necessitating a new National Integration Plan that advocates a modern, democratic German identification. Packaged under 'integration', this assimilationist ideology prioritizes acquiring German language proficiency and learning German history / culture to facilitate intercultural contact and societal cohesion.

In 2014, the new citizenship law allowing for naturalization on cultural grounds was revised to allow for dual citizenship, indicating an important departure from this assimilationist discourse. As the 2000 law change granted citizenship to children of foreign parents, individuals were originally required to choose between nationalities upon turning 21. The 2014 ratification altered this provision, no longer requiring these individuals *who grew up in Germany* to make this decision (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2014). This marks a departure from earlier assimilationist positions by postulating the coexistence of German citizens with other ethnic representations. At the same time, this was not extended to naturalized Germans who did not grow up in the country, indicating that migrants from abroad are potentially still dangerous by not being socialized around German democratic ideals, impacting their *habitus*. Therefore, while this change was important in recognizing dual citizenship possibilities and opening the door for integration-based incorporation ideologies, this ratification does not apply to contemporary migrants currently arriving to Germany, placing them in an ambivalent position.

In the context of national integration discourses that predominantly advocate assimilationist ideologies under the guise of liberal humanism with some aspects of integration, certain individuals are distinctly marked as non-German 'others'. These differences are mediated through citizenship regulations that privilege particular pathways of incorporation, and ethnic spaces (i.e., *Binnenintegration*) are perceived as ghettos that disrupt the integration process for newly arrived Germans (in contrast to *ius soli* citizens; cf. Elwert, 1982). The previous historical analysis helped conceptualize evolving notions of 'Germanness' in tandem with 'otherness' within the context of dynamic national discourses. Notions of ethnicity, religion, language, and race have arisen throughout this analysis, yet their conceptualizations within a German space and their interrelationships still remain largely unexplored. Therefore, the following section will explore how 'otherness' is created in the contemporary German context by contrasting these individuals with 'integrated' immigrants through conflations of racial identity, ethnic heritage, religious affiliation, and linguistic proficiency.

5. Making non-German 'Others': Race, Ethnicity, Religion and Language

Heavily relying on notions of an ethnically defined German *Volk*, race has played an important role in defining German citizens throughout the various governmental eras with varying degrees of salience. This notion of race draws directly from Weber's (1972 / 1921) conceptualization that emphasizes a common belief in ancestry and descent through blood relationships. This formulation, however, appears to conflate ethnicity with race, as this idea is often applied to both terms in a German context (see Brubaker, 2004). The differences are

more salient when examining Nazi Germany's engagement with Jewish 'others': these individuals, who were legally defined as 'Germans', were stripped of their citizenship for being a separate, non-Aryan (read: Germanic) *race*. Importantly, this subtle distinction provides clarity into the ambiguities surrounding race and ethnicity, as these individuals were *ethnically* classified as Germans (due to their citizenship status dependent on ethnic lineage) but *racialized* as non-German 'others'. Therefore, German reluctance to discuss race does not symbolize guilt associated with colonialism or slavery, but rather signifies a rejection of anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda that used race alongside *völkisch* ideologies (Goldberg, 2006).

This notion of a racially *and* ethnically defined German *Volk* is also predicated on assumptions of whiteness, though to a less overt degree than in the United States. Goldberg (2006) reflects that Germany's 'coming to terms with its past' engaged insufficiently with its history of colonialism and racial subjugation, as the realities and legacies coloniality served to establish Europe as a markedly white space (Linke, 2019) while also employing Orientalist discourses of inferiority (Naranch & Eley, 2014; see also Eligon, 2018; Garsha, 2020). Through this lens, migrants from the Middle East are distinctly non-German for their darker complexion, but these sentiments are rarely invoked due to the still salient Nazi past. Instead, more salient markers of racial 'otherness' are defined through hair color and thickness, for example (Linke, 2019). Nonetheless, Brandhorst (2009) emphasizes that racial demarcations are important when defining German citizens in contrast to 'ethnic' (read: foreign) individuals and Balibar and Wallerstein (1991 / 1988) highlight the employment of a 'national crisis' to justify xenophobia and racism against 'floods' of migrants (see also Kosnick, 2019).

The contemporary citizenship laws that define citizens based on cultural identification (thereby conflating nationality with culture) have reorganized 'otherness' around degrees of German language proficiency. Due to the 2000 law change that reframed 'Germanness' along cultural boundaries, "the racializing codes of 'whiteness' or 'blackness' are no longer reliable visual tools for ascertaining national membership. In turn, language practices have become new signposts of belonging" (Linke, 2019, p. 60). Bösel (2012), writing from a somewhat essentialist perspective of Muslims and their cultural incompatibility in Germany, reinforces this ideology through the cultural model of citizenship: "the German language is the foundation for the German culture" (p. 10). Through this understanding, language acquisition as a prerequisite for citizenship is not merely aimed at improving contact between migrants and German nationals, but rather an attempt to reduce perceived cultural distance (Czymara & Schmidt-Catran, 2016).

This model of cultural citizenship reinvigorates ethnic descent-based conceptualizations of 'Germanness' by a reintegration of language into national consciousness. Bourdieu's (1991) theses contextualize this argument by tracing the roots of nation-building to language politics and framing these emphases within this particular history: "the official language is bound up with the state, both in its genesis and in its social uses… This language is the one which, within the territorial limits of that unity, imposes itself on the whole population as the only legitimate language" (p. 45). Similarly, Yildiz (2012) argues that this 'monolingual paradigm' is linked to ethnicity, whereby "individuals and social formations are imagined to possess one 'true' language… and through this possession to be organically linked to an exclusive, clearly demarcated ethnicity, culture, and nation" (p. 2). Importantly, these connections establish 'Germans' and 'others' as antithetical based linguistic boundaries that are intertwined with

ethnic and racial demarcations: "the production of ethnicity is also the racialization of language and the verbalization of race" (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991 / 1988, p. 104). Thus, the impetus for migrants to learn German is predicated on cultural notions of 'Germanness' that are inherently conflated with descent-based citizenship conceptualizations, so migrants speaking "other languages [is] damaging and counter to 'integration'" (Yildiz, 2012, p. 208). Furthermore, Balibar (1995) reflects that foreign accents, grammatical errors, and nonstandard speech patterns are also indicators of degrees of 'Germanness', so migrants that learn German are distinguished from 'native', 'true', 'ethnic' Germans, even if both groups are legally recognized as 'German'. This consideration is especially apt in the context of the 2014 citizenship revision that distinguished between *ius soli* (formerly migrant) citizens and naturalized citizens who were not raised in a German context. As rising language proficiency amongst immigrant populations is hailed as a triumph of national integration initiatives, it is important to remember how these discourses are linked with historical notions of German *Volk*.

This "racialization of language" (Linke, 2019, p. 55) is mirrored by the ethnicization of non-Christian migrants. Warner (2014) reflects that the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* were heavily criticized for their distant (and potentially dangerous) culture, thereby linking their national origins with a culturally defined notion of ethnicity (see also Koopmans, 1999). As reflected earlier, however, the 2000 citizenship law recast 'Turks' as 'Muslims' (Machtans, 2015), linking Turkish nationality with a particular culture and religion such that "culturalized religion could become the prime focus of integration debaters in Germany, turning certain immigrant groups into a Muslim collective that was supposed to be both understood and addressed as a unified group" (Kosnick, 2019, p. 178). Therefore, the problems that were attributed to ethnic enclaves

(*Binnenintegration* debates) were reformulated to frame the "problem of integrating Islam"

(Engelbrecht, 2010, p. 3) through Islamophobic sentiments closely tied with protecting

Enlightened Germany from an Islamist threat (see Brettfeld & Wetzels, 2007). While some have

likened this ethnicity-religion conflation to the anti-Semitic politics of the Nazis (i.e., Doughan,

2020), this historical past has been thoroughly denounced by politicians that this comparison is

dubious (see Brubaker, 1992).

Despite a continued emphasis on religious identities as the defining characteristic of

refugees and migrants stemming from the Middle East, these individuals are still considered

'ethnic' in contrast to 'German'. Merkel's declaration that 'multiculturalism has failed' is

predicated on a fear of ethnic stratification in Germany and a rise in *Binnenintegration*. This

ethnicization of religion operates through Islamophobia to establish 'migrants' as 'Muslims',

which are inherently antithetical to 'Germans' (Engelbrecht, 2010; Fritzsche, 2016; Halm, 2012;

Schneider et al., 2013). Green (2015) emphasizes that this ideology is not bound to religious

intolerance, but invokes racial conceptualizations of Islam, such that these individuals are

further distinguished from the true German *Volk*. Brettfeld and Wetzel's (2007) policy brief

extends this argument by discussing the correlation between German language learning and

low Islamic religiosity (alluding also to reduced cultural distance), thereby linking acquisition to

religious identity. As Muslims are reduced to their religious identities, Islam is conflated with

non-German nationality through citizenship discourses of cultural identification and this

national tie is ethnicized through ideas of 'ethnic enclaves' threatening integration initiatives.

Migrants arriving into Germany are marked as 'others' through a simultaneous process

of religious ethnicization (regardless of their personal religiosity [Fritzsche, 2016]) and linguistic

racialization. In order to become a German citizen, migrants must learn sufficient German and align their values with democratic values (perceived to be) integral to modern Germany. This historical analysis of German citizenship reveals a persistent descent-bound conception of 'Germanness' that is tied with race and ethnicity. Operating in tandem with notions of Europe as a 'white space', these forces coalesce to pit incoming migrants as 'others' due to linguistic and religious differences alongside Orientalist discourses. As these markers of difference are subtly racialized and ethnicized in contemporary circumstances, Islam and non-native German proficiency, as well as degrees of 'whiteness', denote migrants as 'other'.

6. Conclusion

Contemporary debates about incorporating migrants are marked by competing ideologies advocating assimilationist or integrationist paradigms and this ambiguity hampers efforts of immigrants to identify the 'right' or 'best' pathway. There is a resurgence of previous conceptualizations of 'Germanness' from different time periods, such as the image of a racial German subject newly framed through liberal ideals of cultural identification. This highlights the importance of locating markers of difference within these historical and political contexts, as their mere translation would lead to a misrepresentation of the nuances in national discourses (see Cresswell, 2009). As Muslims are now cast as the ultimate, dangerous 'other' in the context of the 'Refugee Crisis' (Linke, 2019; Wakefield, 2019), it is also important to recognize these discourses as reconfigurations of anti-Turkish sentiments prior to 2000 (Warner, 2014). Current

circumstances thus necessitate a thorough understanding of these engagements with 'others'

by framing the German 'host country' in juxtaposition to its non-German 'immigrants':

> The notion of the 'host society' is important to consider because it implies uneven power relations…. Because host societies become host societies only in relation to immigrants, identity construction needs to be considered as a dialectical process in which immigrants and host societies define the respective 'other', and thereby themselves (Ehrkamp, 2006, p. 1677).

While this national consideration is helpful in appropriately contextualizing these notions,

Germany remains a decentralized nation where regional and local experiences are different due

to a relatively high degree of autonomy and different histories within each state. Warner (2014)

discusses how some states (*Länder*) have laws banning *hijabs*. While there is a national

educational system, the syllabi and experiences are widely different between states

(Heckmann, 2019). Therefore, while these 'integration' discourses represent national trends

and citizenship is located at macrosocial ecological levels (i.e., Ward & Geeraert, 2016),

"integration happens at the local level" (Heckmann, 2019, p. 72). To account for these regional

particularities, the next chapter will explore the city and school contexts of this study and frame

the interrelationship between national discourses and local realities.

Chapter IV. Framing of the Study: Positionality, Methodology, and Context

1. Introduction

As reviewed in the introductory chapter, this thesis is concerned with investigating

migrant incorporation in a transnational context while operating through qualitative

psychological methodologies. Although general psychology has been historically dominated by

quantitative, lab-based objective studies, qualitative inquiry is now more recognized as a valid,

rigorous counterpart to positivistic research paradigms, most notably due to Denzin and

Lincoln's (1994) *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* and a reformulation of Division 5 within

the American Psychological Association specifically addressing qualitative concerns (see

Gergen, Josselson, & Freeman, 2015). This research is thus embedded within this relatively

young tradition by utilizing ethnographic methods of participant observation and interpretative

interview analysis within a narrative format. This allows for an extensive engagement with the

underlying meanings of participant narratives (rather than wide-scale coded analysis [e.g.,

Fredericks, Parr, Amemiya, Wang & Brauer, 2019]) alongside careful theoretical development

across disciplinary boundaries. Bhatia's (2018) reflection that theory and data collection /

analysis are inherently intertwined reflects this thesis' mission of bridging general psychological

theories with sociocultural analysis, globalization frameworks, and historical-political

developments to contextualize student narratives. Thus, this chapter integrates earlier

theoretical developments into the fieldwork site alongside the researcher's positionality with

particular attention to transnational themes in order to frame the following interview analysis.

2. My Positionality: The 'Resident American' Amongst Germans and Migrants

During my second year as an undergraduate at Connecticut College, I applied for an on-campus program that sponsored an internship abroad as part of a curriculum dedicated to international scholarship and collaboration on global issues. Studying Human Development and German, I became interested in how traditional psychological concepts apply to different national contexts, eventually developing a research project related to issues of identity in a German migration context. Receiving funding from the Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts (CISLA), I volunteered at a *Gemeinschaftsschule* ('community school'; more on this later) in Lübeck, Germany, henceforth known as Karl-Eberhard[3]. I was assigned as a teacher's assistant in the school's German as a Second Language (*DaZ[4]*) programs during January and February 2019. The program was split into two classes by age, S1 and S2, for newly arrived adolescent migrants with little language experience to learn German. As students develop their skills, they become integrated into the 'regular classes' participate in an afterschool program (dubbed *Aufbau*) to further their linguistic competency (more on this later). This site was identified as a space for conducting my own ethnographic study that would later develop into this undergraduate Honor's Thesis. In preparation for the internship, I obtained approval from Connecticut College's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct ethnographic field notes and interviews with students in the classrooms. Explicitly transnational

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[3] This is a pseudonym for the school where the study was conducted to protect the privacy of the students and teachers there.

[4] This abbreviation, *Deutsch als Zweitsprache*, will be used throughout the study as the students and school operated through this terminology.

in nature, this research project developed out of an American collegiate context with the intention of understanding how migration affects development in different environments.

As a young American researcher, I entered a novel school context as an outsider who could relate to the migrant students' feelings as a pseudo-insider, but with very different consequences. Arriving after Karl-Eberhard's winter break, I entered this environment in the middle of the schoolyear, making it difficult to build friendships with my co-workers who had already established bonds and their daily schedules. At the same time, the administration warmly welcomed me on the first day, emphasizing how nice it was to have a 'resident American' who could supplement English lessons on American customs – indeed, during my third week, I was invited by a non-*DaZ* English teacher to visit her 8th grade classroom and talk to the students about life in America. Upon visiting the *DaZ* classes with one of the teachers, Frau B., my initial feelings as an outsider in this environment were met with a different reception: I was introduced as a teacher's assistant from America, an international visitor with stronger language skills than the students who would work with them for two months.

This identifier and status marker as a quasi-teacher managed to distinguish me from the students who, like me, had *come* to Germany instead of being born there. While we shared that aspect of our identities, a clear difference between us emerged: while these students were *migrants* and were actively establishing new lives in Germany (or planning on returning home), I *knew* that I would return home and *not* stay in Germany. This served to distinguish us, but arguably I was even less similar to Frau B. who had been born in the country and spoke fluent, native German in contrast to my strong, yet still developing, accent-laden speech. This placed my position at the school in a state of ambivalence: I worked as a teacher's assistant, yet I am

not fluent, nor am I a German citizen, and while I shared those aspects of my identity with the students, my status marker as a teacher and my short tenure at Karl-Eberhard distinguished between us. In essence, I was in a unique position between the students and teachers which allowed me to build strong bonds with the students in class while integrating myself amongst the teachers to gain a comprehensive image of the schooling environment.

This ambivalent position somewhere between the students and teachers was further complicated by my age and my language competencies. I was 21 when I arrived in Lübeck, making me closer in age to some of the students than my fellow teachers, at times only a few years dividing us, whereas Frau B. and Frau K. (the other main *DaZ* instructor) were in their late 20s or 30s. Nonetheless, the students addressed me exclusively as "Herr Brauer" and used the formal *Sie* ('you'), connotating a distance in power and status that superseded our similar age. In a German schooling context, *du* (informal 'you') is used between friends and classmates and while teachers address their students in this form, it is uniformly expected that all students respect faculty by responding with *Sie*, all while teachers address each other with *du* and their first name. Through my status as a teacher's assistant, I was treated as an authority figure and was addressed informally by other staff while the students maintained formality with me. This stood in contrast to my placement in the classroom, as I sat with the students at their tables (unless I was assisting with work) while the primary teachers remained at the front of the room. However, I was not officially allowed to be alone with the students in case of an accident and this further complicated my status as a 'teacher': while linguistic formality connotated me as an authority figure, I was simultaneously marked as not a full member of staff.

This complex position as a temporary teacher's assistant from America in a *DaZ* program composed of migrant and native German teachers became more complicated due to my language abilities. Like the other teachers, I can only speak English and German, marking me as similar to my counterparts. With the exception of a foreign-born English teacher (Herr S.), the other *DaZ* faculty were fluent in German and spoke very proficient, but near-native, English. In contrast, English is my first language and while I can speak proficient German, I am not entirely fluent and I retain a distinctly American accent. While I have studied the language for over 8 years and have visited the country multiple times, I am still not a near-native speaker, marking me as a 'foreigner', yet not a 'migrant' like the students in *DaZ*. This position never created outward tension between the students and me or the teachers and me, and my language skills were never questioned. Furthermore, my language skills greatly fostered bonds between me and my fellow teachers, further solidifying my position as a teacher's assistant. Similarly, my non-native language skills enabled me to bond with the students as another 'language learner', affecting my participation in their classroom environment and our future interviews.

As a white, Christian American with strong German language skills, I was able to 'pass' as a German (until I spoke, or if they knew me personally), affording me with unique mobility. Although I was clearly a new staff member in the eyes of most students (arriving in the middle of the year), most assumed I was a German citizen unless their English teacher referenced me as a 'resident American'. Being able to understand German also allowed me to operate in the local urban environment without needing to constantly ask for directions or assistance, making me appear as though I was a 'German'. When I interacted with store owners, however, they were curious about where I came from and my American status was greeted with curiosity and

wonder, rather than anxiety or tension. This status was supported by my white skin and light

hair color, and in contrast to some of my students' racial identities, I was not immediately

identified as a non-German due to my outward appearance (see also Butterwegge, 2017).

While the racialized linguistic difference did mark me as a foreigner, there was little tension

surrounding this 'otherness' and I was nationally marked as American, not *ethnically*. While

white skin may not be an explicit marker of 'Germanness' in a contemporary context, it forms

the foundation for Orientalist, Islamophobic, and post-colonial Othering that non-Western

migrants encounter. These sentiments surrounded me at Karl-Eberhard too, for when other

students noticed me in the halls, their curiosity was directed at the 'new American teacher'

who was marked by this status, not through skin color or outward 'ethnic' markers.

Through this reflection, my reception as a welcomed 'resident American' stands in stark

contrast to some of the migrants' experiences as a non-Western, dark-haired students, even

though we were all 'non-German'. In this sense, it would be inaccurate and misrepresentative

to claim that our experiences were identical, yet we could commiserate over living in a new

national context that operates in an entirely different language. This similarity, along with our

close ages, allowed me to bond with the students and build trust in their class environment

before discussing any possibilities of in-depth interviews. Importantly, however, I was

distinguished through my statuses as a teacher's assistant and a temporary researcher,

affording me significant transnational mobility that my students lacked. On my first day in *DaZ*,

Frau B. asked everybody to share a New Year's wish and one student stated that he wished he

could return to his homeland. My ability to travel home stood in stark contrast to the realities

surrounding me, that many of my students never *chose* to come to Germany, and would gladly

return home if they could, whereas I *chose* to travel to Germany knowing that I would be back

in America only months later. This research is thus not intended to merely investigate the

diverse experiences of migrants in contemporary Germany, but to explore ways to improve

their situations and engage in larger questions of transnational justice, equity, and compassion.

These different reflections contextualize my positionality and aspirations from this project at

Karl-Eberhard where I conducted semi-structured interviews with my students to understand

their experiences with German migration.

3. Interview Data Collection: Methodology and Participants

In addition to recording participant observation field notes at Karl-Eberhard, I conducted

12 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with three students in S1, five in S2, and four fully

integrated students (one in 8th grade, 3 in 10th) who I met in their afterschool *Aufbau* classes.

After the first few weeks of working in the *DaZ* program, I met with Frau B. to identify potential

participants amongst students who had sufficient German or English language proficiency[5] and

who would have diverse migration backgrounds and in-school experiences, allowing for a more

representative sample. During a week-long afterschool family-teacher conference period in late

January 2019, I met with these students and their families to discuss the option of participating

in the interviews. The project was discussed in detail and initial informed consent of the

students' parents or guardians was obtained. Before conducting the interviews, I again

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[5] The option of conducting the interviews with a translator present was rejected by the IRB due to the very personal nature of this research project.

reviewed the research questions and goals with the students to assure that they were still willing to participate, obtaining their signatures for adolescent consent[6]. Conducted in a separate, empty classroom in school during *DaZ* class, I tried to minimize disrupting their schoolwork by interviewing the students when they were engaged in individual work, as per Frau B.'s recommendation. They were recorded during February 2019, allowing me to build a relationship with the students before discussing and engaging in this project.

Guided by nine overarching questions (see Appendix A) and allowing for subsequent discussion pertaining to the students' responses, the interviews lasted between 15 and 25 minutes and were recorded on my laptop for future transcription. The semi-structured format allowed for larger topics to be presented and discussed with sufficient space for the student to elaborate on their responses, clarify terminology, provide personal reflections on the interview itself, and present new perspectives based on personal experiences, all aligning with goals of decolonizing projects and liberation psychological approaches (see Gubrium & Holstein, 2001; Hernández et al., 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The participants were presented with the option of conversing in English or German, and they all chose to conduct the interviews exclusively in German, even when some had very proficient English skills. This could have stemmed partly from reservations of talking in non-fluent English with a native speaker, or the fact that I only spoke German in school with them and a different language would likely affect our interactions and our perceptions of each other. This is an important consideration, as I am not a fluent German speaker and neither were the participants, but my language skills were stronger than

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[6] One of the participants was 18 and I only obtained her signature and did not meet with her parents or guardians as she is a legal adult according to the IRB's standards based around American law.

theirs and I was officially denoted as their 'learning consultant'. From their perspective, I was near on par with other teachers, though also a non-native speaker like themselves. Additionally, German remains a language of power in their contexts: speaking German allows them access to public support and is a foundational requirement for naturalized citizenship, making this a power-laden interview. For me, German was used as a means of interacting in this context and conducting research, while the students were situated in a different context of need.

This language consideration stems further into the transcription and translation of the interviews for this final representation. The interviews were first transcribed in German and care was given for their accuracy, but the audio was not always clear and a few words were challenging to discern. Additionally, neither the participants nor I spoke perfect grammar, so the word order was often tweaked to better approximate 'proper' structure and form, and to aide in comprehension. Finally, the interviews were translated into English for tailored reproduction in this thesis and were again reformatted to approach correct grammar. This presents important considerations: the authenticity of the interviews cannot be entirely assured based on slight discrepancies between the interviews and their transcriptions, and between the German versions and their English translations. These complications were unavoidable, however, as even if the transcriptions were perfect reconstructions of the interviews, the German grammatical errors could not be captured in English translations whose grammar is so distinct. For example, a mis-gendered noun in German may be a minor yet noticeable error, but English does not have gendered articles for nouns, making this grammatical error impossible to capture. Additionally, idiomatic phrases were difficult to translate for their nuanced undertones and implications in different contexts, but I

approximated suitable translations. As these complications were virtually unavoidable by translating the interviews, they will remain as important considerations and foundational framing for the research context alongside the power dynamics implicated by conducting them in German in a *DaZ* environment with an American researcher: a true transnational site.

The students embodied extraordinary diversity regarding the contexts surrounding their migrations to Germany and their experiences in the country / Lübeck. Some came pursuing economic opportunities, others fled war-torn regions and cannot return[7]. Many came with family members, and many others had to leave some or all behind in their home countries, some still able to contact them online while others virtually lost all contact. The participants and their classmates came from four continents, many from countries in Europe or the Middle East, and a few even came with prior German language experience. Most interview participants had extensive schooling before arriving to Germany, but some of their classmates arrived with little or no educational background and the communal classroom environment often placed them in informal peer-mentoring positions. Some came from schools divided along gender lines while Karl-Eberhard is open to both boys and girls. Their ages ranged from 13-18 years old, and their classroom environments ranged from full-time *DaZ* students to fully integrated constituents of the regular classes who only visited afternoon *Aufbau* sessions. The diverse backgrounds of these students present a different image than the ubiquitous 'migrant' by recognizing how these histories affect future possibilities. This chapter thus utilizes participant observations to create an image of Karl-Eberhard within these larger environments as a

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[7] Refugee or asylum status was not probed to avoid emotional trauma, as per IRB stipulations, but none of the students or *DaZ* teachers referred to these processes before, during, or after the interviews. See

contextualization for the following interview analysis. Much of the information about the

school's demographics, organization, and initiatives were accessed on their public website,

though that will not be linked here to protect the school's, teachers' and students' privacy, and

to comply with confidentiality stipulations from the Connecticut College IRB.

4. Regional and Urban Contexts

4.1 Schleswig-Holstein

Schleswig-Holstein is the northern-most *Bundesland* ('state') in Germany, bordering

Denmark on the north, Hamburg on its south-west border, Lower-Saxony just beyond and

around Hamburg, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern on the east. A population of approximately

three million (Statistikamt Nord, 2020), this state stands as a formerly West German state on

the border of the East, positioned precisely between two competing ideologies in post-WWII

split Germany. Like many states around this time, however, engagements with *Vertriebene* (see

p. 81) after WWII were marked by calls to welcome these ethnic German refugees into their

new home (*Heimat*). As Connor (2006) reflects, the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands

(SPD) was "the party of the refugees" (p. 192), yet many inhabitants felt dissatisfied with

policies that did not significantly improve the living standards and wellbeing of the *Vertriebene*.

Indicative of national trends, votes began surging for a *Heimat* ('homeland') orientated party in

the late 1940s, reflecting a notion of a second home for the *Vertriebene* that had found their

way to Schleswig-Holstein and agitation over a perceived second-class status (Connor, 2006;

see also DeWaal, 2016). Indeed, almost a million post-war refugees arrived in the state,

reaching 35% of the population in 1950 (Connor, 2006), and this population change has

cemented the refugees into local consciousness, affecting current migrant engagements.

This unique regional placement is also especially important in the contemporary political

context, especially when analyzing voter trends in the most recent elections for the AfD, a right-

leaning party that has risen rapidly in recent years, but whose resonance amongst citizens

varies considerably by state. In the 2019 European Parliamentary Elections, the AfD received

11% of the national votes, but only 7.5% of the votes in Schleswig-Holstein, one of the lowest

numbers across the country (Bundeswahlleiter, 2020). Furthermore, these 2019 elections were

largely indicative of the persistent political differences between former East and West states, as

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's (east) AfD votes tallied 17.7%, Niedersachsen (west) at 7.9%, and

Hamburg (west) at 6.5% (Bundeswahlleiter, 2019). Coupled with a significant 29.1% vote for the

Green Party, Schleswig-Holstein represents one of the most politically liberal German states on

the border between Denmark and Germany, and the former East and West Germanies.

I chose to conduct this study in Schleswig-Holstein particularly because of its unique

location and voting trends, hoping to find a context where refugees were welcome to

understand how this environment affects their integration. As Germany is a very decentralized

country, where individual states hold significant authority over education policies and regional

votes affect local realities as much as federal elections, this regional consideration is important

for framing this study within the larger national political environment. However, Heckmann

(2019) reminds scholars that "integration happens at the local level" (p. 72), so this thesis must

also account for the particular urban experiences in Lübeck, Germany. The following section will

thus explore my experiences in the city through an ethnographic style framed through historical

population changes to explore how these developments affect contemporary sentiments.

4.2. Lübeck

As I depart from the bus at the Sandstraße stop in downtown Lübeck, I am confronted

with a world of juxtapositions. On the other side of the street, there is a looming modern,

smooth-looking glass building, a contemporary mall with stores ranging from electronics to a

fully equipped fitness center. Similar styled buildings line the walkway with small drug stores

and convenience stores running down my side. As I look to the other side of Sandstraße, where

the pedestrian zone begins and a large boulevard directs my eyes down the street, the

atmosphere suddenly changes drastically. I cross the street and immediately on my left stands

the *Rathaus* ('town hall'), distinguished from the neighboring buildings by the black bricks that

establish its street-side façade. Along this walkway stand tourist-oriented shops that advertise

authentic souvenirs, like a hardcover copy of Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* and a figurine of

the local *Holstentor* (an archway characteristic of Lübeck), followed by Niederegger, a marzipan

tycoon emblematic of Lübeck pride for 200 years. The *Rathaus* faces into a broad courtyard

surrounded by bakeries, cafes, and the ubiquitous *Marienkirche* ('Church of the Virgin Mary'),

filled with a temporary skating rink for the cold winter months and a carousel that open in the

evening for local youth. Weather permitting, crowds bustle about, with those on the pedestrian

walkway simply meandering about their business and the frequency of arriving buses every

minute mirroring the activity of those across the street.

As I move from one side of the street to the other, I get the sense that I am traveling through both distance and time. The weathered red brick buildings that house the local Deutsche Bank and antique shops serve to dichotomize other large stores like Karstadt and Peek & Cloppenburg, both stories tall and markedly modern in its architectural style. As Ladd (2008) outlines, these styles, and contemporary demarcations from historical norms, represent evolving collective imaginations and transitions. Lübeck was heavily bombed by the Allies during WWII, with neighborhoods and landmarks in flames and destroyed by raids, persisting thereafter only in local memory. The city was faced with an architectural dilemma – should the buildings be rebuilt in the previous style to mirror their historical predecessors, or should new modes serve as a symbol for embracing post-war realities and confronting modernity's challenges to engage with the devastation of National Socialism by moving forward? Of course, this debate cannot be isolated from surrounding transitions, and the choice to rebuild the *Rathaus* and churches around the city reflects a particular engagement with the Nazi past. Contrastingly, other buildings were built along entirely different notions that departed from their prior functions, both forces coinciding to position post-war Lübeck as a city marked with historical continuities and contemporary novelties that mirrored other local developments.

Formally known as Hansestadt Lübeck ('the Hanseatic City of Lübeck'), the modern urban center began as a small imperial city under the rule of the Holy Roman Empire in the late 12th century. Only a few decades later, Lübeck was elevated to an Imperial Free City and governance transitioned into the hands of local merchants. Displaying a notion of transnational business unity, these merchants formed a trade league with others throughout Europe, transcending borders and establishing the Hanseatic League, over which the city of Lübeck and

its Council of Merchants presided. This influx of wealth was mirrored by extraordinary class

divisions, where working-class citizens were formally relegated and demarcated through

clothing options, even when they attended church. This medieval tradition cemented Lübeck as

a central hub for naval trade and passage for centuries until the mid 1600s, yet the city's

general prosperity stood as a symbol of its regional dominion. Indeed, a museum was opened in

2015 to feature this history and firmly link the modern city to its medieval roots in the

Hanseatic League. This historic pride shines in other landmarks that serve to remind citizens

and tourists of the city's roots, most especially in the *Holstentor* and *Rathaus*. Thus, while Kiel is

the capital city of Schleswig-Holstein, the two cities are comparable in total population, land

area, and contemporary migrant populations due to the persistence of medieval urban wealth

(Destatis, 2019; Statistikamt Nord, 2020).

Alongside this architectural personification of medieval pride and prosperity stand the

cultural and demographic changes following WWII, embodied in the surrounding landscape.

Lübeck was heavily affected by post-war migration trends, most largely from the ethnic German

Vertriebene, and by 1950 the population of refugees numbered 35% of the total population,

approximating the state's average (Connor, 2006; Statistisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein,

1974). Reflecting larger national trends, local residents urged these *Vertriebene* to imagine

Lübeck as their second homeland ('*zweite Heimat*'; DeWaal, 2016; see also Brockmann, 2010).

This symbolically established these new arrivals as constituents of the city, and the vast

majority were initially housed with residents to help them establish their new lives there

(Statistisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, 1974). This was not a benign, simple transition

process and was filled with tensions: as *Vertriebene* were considered refugees, their particular

access to new housing developments and food sources lead some Lübeckers to feel resentful.

However, the unique post-war housing condition integrating *Vertriebene* and locals under the

same roof helped alleviate these tensions, so most families now growing up in Lübeck share this

history of (mostly) positive refugee engagement. Reflective of larger national trends, the

Vertriebene were demographically considered 'Germans' (though linguistic and cultural

differences marked them as 'other'; see Chapter III for a full review). This citizenship status

obscures contemporary statistics, however, as official sources indicate that Lübeck's foreigner

population numbers only 8% of the urban population (Destatis, 2019), despite the fact that a

significant population of current Lübeckers immigrated into the city 70 years ago. This national

categorization classified them as German citizens and the different reception of contemporary

migrants indicates a new engagement with foreigners compared to post-WWII experiences.

While current migrants may be initially marked as non-German and 'other', that does

not mean that their reception has not been welcoming, and this is also expressed in the urban

landscape. A street running parallel to the *Rathaus* features Turkish and Syrian food markets,

signifying the rising diverse population within the city. Turkish barbershops and Indian

restaurants are paired with neighboring bookstores, antique shops, and clothing outlets,

neither out of place nor absorbed into the surrounding cityscape. Reflective of national trends,

Döner Kebab fill the streets both downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods, and while it

is debatable whether this indicates an appreciation of Turkish culture or appropriation of

cuisine (see Henderson, 2004), it nonetheless personifies the persistence of ethnic influences

alongside 'German' markets. As such, the incorporation of 'ethnic' styles into a modern

Germany is expressed in these diverse markets that are now central to the city.

After sightseeing, I prepare for tomorrow's work and I get onto another bus headed out of the urban center towards the central bus station, passing the prominent *Holstentor* on the bridge that links downtown Lübeck with the surrounding neighborhoods. I look around and see images of the diversity in the city: a younger woman with a dog, a family with toddlers whose stroller is packed with grocery bags, two school-aged girls with headscarves who give their seat to a passing older man. I eavesdrop and overhear numerous conversations, the majority in German, a few in English, and some in languages I cannot pinpoint, though likely Arabic or Turkish. I hop off at the central bus stop, directly next to the main train station, and walk home to rest before waking up early the next morning.

As I make my way back towards the central station, I walk towards bus stop 11 and look around to see familiar faces waiting alongside me. Some students I recognize and I wave to two *DaZ* students who are to music on their phones (while they can before school) and conversing amongst themselves. After several minutes, the bus comes and we pack in, far too many for all to sit and the students give their spots to older passengers with a nod of appreciation. And silently we drive to school together, lost in our own thoughts and music, before arriving at the bus station just down the street. The majority of those around me depart and I follow the crowd, some veering to the left towards another school, the majority continuing down the sidewalk. Taking advantage of the little remaining time before arriving, we continue along silently while listening to music, but there is an air of understanding amongst us – commuting every morning together, we have developed a semblance of unity and companionship that extends beyond *DaZ* borders and student-teacher boundaries. In harmony we arrive on school grounds and enter the doors as one group, and immediately our unity is met with stark

intergroup contrasts, a previously united body turned discordant, and I veer to the right into

the teacher's lounge, ready to start the day at Karl-Eberhard.

5. Karl-Eberhard – 'A School for All to Learn and Live'

5.1 The Gemeinschaftsschule in National Context

The Karl-Eberhard Schule consists of a *Gemeinschaftsschule* and its sister elementary

school down the street towards the bus stop. This type of school is not typical to the German

educational context, necessitating an explanation of its placement within the larger system.

Elementary school is available to all German children until fourth grade, during which they are

tested to determine their future pathway. For the following two years, the *Orientierungsstufe*,

('orienting stages'), students are placed in different schools based on tests and teacher's

recommendations, and these years are used as a transitionary period to assess school-student

fit. The children who perform best are placed in a *Gymnasium*, an intense and challenging

school that prepares its students for their graduation apprenticeship or exam (*Abitur*) and

afterwards for university. The next tier of students is assigned to a *Realschule* that offers

possibilities for continued study at a university by completing an *Abitur* at a *Gymnasium*, or

most often at a vocational school (*Berufsschule*). Both the *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* extend

into 10th grade, after which adolescents must decide between their potential futures at a

university, *Berufsschule*, other specialized schools, or a job. The remaining students are

traditionally placed in a *Hauptschule* that spans only until 9th grade, meaning graduates must

finalize their education at another school in order to pursue university education, though this is uncommon. Though each school specializes its coursework around these different pathways, theoretically allowing each student to find well-paying work after graduation, the lower-tiered schools have a negative reputation and lead to poorer job opportunities. It is possible for students to switch between school types throughout their education, but the statuses of the schools make it difficult to transition upwards from a *Realschule* to a *Gymnasium*, for example, with the added effect that family's socioeconomic status heavily influence these opportunities.

This traditional education system provides space for a merger school that bridges *Hauptschulen* and *Realschulen*, called a '*Gesamtschule*', but Karl-Eberhard is different. During 2010 and 2011, the *Hauptschulen*, *Realschulen*, and *Gesamtschulen* in Lübeck were transitioned into *Gemeinschaftschulen*, a conglomeration of the different pathways into one school. The *Gymnasien* were retained in order to preserve the primary pathway to university studies, but this transition effectively removed the hierarchies between the other schools to provide a comprehensive education for everyone – a sentiment that inspired the school's motto, "*eine Schule für alle zum Lernen und Leben*" ('a school for all to learn and live'). To account for different capabilities and backgrounds, the school is 'internally differentiated' by providing multiple classrooms within each grade which organize their courses throughout the year, never mixing between classes. Furthermore, the school offers graduation options that align with *Haupt-* and *Realschulen* standards: students can decide to finish their education in 9th grade and pursue a trade (as in a *Hauptschule*), opt for a final 10th year (*Realschule*), or pursue extra studies at a *Gymnasium* to complete an *Abitur* and study at a university. Karl-Eberhard does provide pathways for all to learn in ways that best suit them in a non-traditional environment.

Walking into the school, I notice this plurality in the student body, whose distinct cliques mirror the diverse educational backgrounds and futures embodied in the *Gemeinschaftsschule*.

5.2 Larger School Environment

Immediately after walking into the front door, I am struck by crowds of students milling about before the first class bell whose loud conversations and early-morning energy echo the hectic appearance of the entrance itself. Overhanging flags and laminated papers with 'hello' written in various languages visually express the diverse backgrounds of the students and their families – yet none display two languages or two national heritages, exemplifying a monolingual paradigm of migrant families stemming from *one* country with *one* non-German mother language (see Yildiz, 2012). An array of photographs of past students holding signs declaring "I stand against bullying" decorate the back wall, reminding the current body of past initiatives that persist in spirit. A collage with different signs and images hangs next to this with a hand-written note displaying "a school for all children, however they look" next to a picture of a fifth-grade classroom and a list of the 48 languages spoken by students here. On the right-hand side of the entrance are two doorways, one into the secretary's office and the other into the teacher's lounge, while hallways head off in every other direction towards classrooms and the broad main staircase to my left provides easy access to more classes, including *DaZ*. A poster hangs directly over the entrance to the teacher's lounge, exclaiming boldly and proudly that this school is a "*Schule ohne Rassismus – Schule mit Courage*" ('school without racism – school with courage'). This certificate confirms that, since 2016, Karl-Eberhard has been a part of this

nation-wide initiative to counteract discrimination and racism in educational contexts, with students pledging to fight these barriers to integration and participating in week-long projects annually to actualize this mission. These visual markers of tolerance and inclusion welcome me and the diverse student body daily, serving to remind those on school grounds that this really is supposed to be a school for all, a *Gemeinschaftsschule* true to its name[8].

Turning right, I head towards the teacher's lounge that is segmented by a door that symbolically demarcates 'student' and 'teacher' space. Two girls stand outside the entrance, allowing me to pass through the open doorway, though they dare not enter themselves – students may not enter this space and instead must ask another teacher to pass the message along. I smile to them and pass by, wishing I could assist but knowing that I would not be helpful, as I have only been at the school for a month and still only knew a few of the teacher's names (and of those, only their first names). The school is rather large with about 650 students and 60 teachers, but conversations amongst teachers are demarcated by which grade and classroom they teach. As such, I sit at my seat in the inner half of the large circle of desks and converse across the table with my co-worker, Herr S., who teaches English and Math for the *DaZ* students. Next to me, other teachers are discussing class assignments or relay a story that happened the previous evening, and although I sit right next to them, I am not an active participant. The teachers are assigned desks around the large table without any differentiations afforded to subject or grade taught, and the other teachers casually converse with their neighbors. Am I simply shy, a new face arriving amongst longstanding friends and coworkers, or

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[8] *Gemeinschaft* means 'community' and the school's notion of a community is displayed here as both diverse and inclusive.

is there something about working with *DaZ* that marks me as 'different'? I look around and notice Frau B. talking with tablemates near her, but quickly walks off as she notices Frau K. come into the lounge. Yes, *DaZ* is included, but somehow it still feels separate, a distinct entity in this space that differentiates teachers on status.

This salient differentiation amongst teachers, present but not completely deterministic, trickles down into the student population as well. While the teachers are assigned to a few classes and teach the same subject to each, the students are assigned to one classroom and stay with the same classmates year-round. Indeed, the *teachers* travel between classes to give lessons while the students remain in the same location for all of their subjects. Each grade is split into different classroom, so there may be an 8A, 8B and 8C, each with their own classroom composition that are also differentiated based on difficulty and intensity. Therefore, 8A is either more or less challenging than 8C, so as to account for the different educational pathways. This could, in theory, lead to conflict within grades and between classrooms, but the details of their assignments are not openly discussed amongst students, though the teachers do have friendly internal rivalries. Instead, this environment constitutes a sense of community amongst the students, as they spend all day together and sometimes the classes continue into the next year. Reflecting back on these differentiations, I realize that the cliques and friendships were not random: most were between students in the same classroom. Beyond mere organization, this differentiation serves to foster a communal environment within one classroom and separate from others. Where does *DaZ* fit into this web of interacting and conflicting communities?

Absorbed in my thoughts at my seat, I am suddenly brought back to the present as the first morning bell rings, announcing the start of the first period. No one moves to leave, and

neither do I as I resume conversing with Herr S. The students outside in the main hall shuffle about, meandering towards class with their friends, and I am reminded that this first announcement is more directed at the students than their teachers. I have watched Frau B. berate another student for his tardiness mere minutes after arriving late herself – it is acceptable for the teacher to arrive late, as class begins with her presence, but an unpunctual student gets reprimanded. Almost reluctantly, my co-workers slowly filter out of the teacher's lounge to class and I follow Frau B. up the main staircase, past the computer room, and towards the *DaZ* classrooms. With the classroom doors locked, the students stand huddled into clusters in the hallway, conversing with friends in German even though a few share other first languages. There is no rule about speaking German in school, but this norm helps foster a sense of community and inclusion, both core tenets of Karl-Eberhard's mission. I walk over to the students and wish them 'good morning' while seeking to engage them in brief conversation, noting the presence of a dozen students that accompanied my bus ride to school this morning. We walk into class, and *DaZ* begins only five minutes after the morning bell.

5.3 DaZ at Karl-Eberhard

As part of the National Integration Initiatives envisioned by the federal government, all schools in Germany are expected to offer opportunities for their students to learn German in order to meaningfully interact and participate in class. Due to the decentralized parliamentary system, these programs differ between states. Schleswig-Holstein has designed a three-tier *DaZ* curriculum that Karl-Eberhard has adopted. Migrants arriving into Karl-Eberhard are tested on

their German language capabilities in order to appropriately place them within this system.

Those with reading, speaking, writing and listening skills up until B1 (according to the Common

European Framework of Reference standards; see Rauch, Schastak, & Richter, 2016) are placed

in '*DaZ-Zentren*' ('*DaZ* centers', or classrooms) for approximately 25-hours per week of

intensive German language learning. Students typically stay in these centers for one or two

semesters, but teachers regularly reassess their students' progress. When they have achieved

sufficient language abilities, they become 'partially integrated' in a few of the regular classes,

while continuing to visit *DaZ* during the other subjects, and have afterschool '*Aufbau*' sessions

for 2-6 hours a week. The *Aufbau* course allows partially integrated students to get help on

their homework and do grammar-related exercises to reinforce important skills and assist with

comprehension. This semi-transition allows for the student to become acquainted in the

regular classroom in their stronger subjects while continuing to train their language skills in

DaZ. Finally, after gaining sufficient language skills, the student becomes fully integrated in the

regular classes and visits *Aufbau* lessons more infrequently, having gained sufficient grammar

skills and the necessary academic vocabulary. The transition periods are co-determined by

multiple faculty members and the student, allowing for a personalized *DaZ* approach.

Karl-Eberhard adapted this system to their educational context by splitting incoming

migrants into two *DaZ* classes, S1 and S2, and placement was determined exclusively by age,

not language skills or schooling history. With Frau B. as my primary supervisor, I spent three

days a week in S2, the older and smaller classroom, two days in S1, and every afternoon with a

different afterschool *Aufbau* section that is divided by grade. Slightly altering the proscribed

DaZ initiative, S1 and S2 taught other subjects (in German) in tandem with *DaZ*, such as math,

English, geography, natural sciences (*NaWi*), computer, and first aid in order to establish a foundational knowledge base necessary for transitioning into the regular classes. During my two months at the school, the classroom composition changed numerous times by students transitioning into partial or full integration stages with incoming students filling their empty seats. To account for these fluctuations, lessons are not planned around an overarching syllabus and are adaptable to different circumstances, meaning there is no set final exam and assignments are determined individually. This flexibility also enables teachers to tailor their instruction to different students' abilities: while someone may have impressive language skills, they may have no history of formal education and struggle in subjects while excelling in *DaZ*. By providing these different options, the teachers have effectively established an informal form of 'internal differentiation' that allows each student to work at appropriate levels of difficulty, yet this environment can be taxing on the teachers who have to devise creative assignments for each student.

Although the classrooms are split by age, there are still strong ties between them and the students due to the teachers' schedules and shared events. Frau K. is the primary teacher for S1, Frau B. for S2, and they spend the most time in the *DaZ* classes teaching *DaZ*, *NaWi*, and geography, but other teachers rotate to teach other subjects. Herr S. teaches English, computer, and math, and two other math teachers (Frau L. and Frau D.) join him during this period. Amongst these primary teachers, three (Frau L., Frau K., and Herr S.) migrated to Germany and learned the language here, making for a diverse group of teachers who can empathize personally with their students' language struggles. While Herr S. provides different assignments for English based on everybody's individual abilities, math differentiates between

difficulty levels by splitting the students into three groups and mixes students in S1 and S2.

Instead of dividing by age, students travel between classes as they grab their folders for math,

friends separated in classes exchanging comments and siblings catching up briefly before

headed off. The classes took three field trips together while I was there, one to the *Holstentor*

to gain knowledge about Lübeck's medieval history and its most famous landmark, a theatrical

performance about diversity, and ice skating next to the *Rathaus*. While these excursions

facilitated integration initiatives that stipulate German cultural and historical engagements

alongside language learning, they also actualized a shared sense of community within *DaZ*.

   This communal environment amongst *DaZ* students and teachers unintentionally serves

to differentiate this context from the rest of the school. Due to the intensive language learning

environment, the students do not receive much contact with others outside of *DaZ*, except

perhaps during their two long breaks after 2nd and 4th period. Reflecting back on the informally

divided teacher's lounge culture, the students' experiences largely mirror their environment.

Furthermore, the flexible curriculum and syllabi stand in stark contrast to the regular classes

whose lessons extend upon the previous days'. This has led to a negative perception of *DaZ* as a

'less intense' environment than the regular classes, a sentiment that a non-*DaZ* English teacher

confided in me. This is only compounded by the relatively little homework assigned to students

for each class, as the majority of the work is done together and should they need help, the

teachers cannot rely on parents to assist if they also cannot speak German. *DaZ* has effectively

established a community within itself and, somewhat contrary to the ideals of inclusion that

discourages these differentiations, this environment is outwardly viewed as something 'easy'

and 'disorganized'. Two questions arise from these observations: how are partially integrated

migrants affected by this negative perception, and how true is it?

6. The Classroom Environment

Walking into S2 behind Frau B., I sit at the hexagonal group table on the right between

two other boys, one from Italy and the other from Russia, with another sitting across from me

and greeting me as I sit down. The two girls filter into class together and take their places at the

table next to mine, laughing at their private joke. The last boys come in and meander towards

the back, the jokester stopping to say something to everyone and laughing at his own jokes

(without reciprocation) as Frau B. eyes him firmly to take his place between his tablemates.

Behind their table hangs an elaborate map of the world with different strings leading from

cards stapled alongside it, proudly displaying each student's home country, its flag, and their

native language (again, only *one* language and *one* nationality). As a few students stand to grab

their materials for *DaZ*, Frau B. beckons them to sit back down, ready to begin the day with a

group morning activity. Seeking to be heard over the back table's continuing stream of jokes

and brief, but very audible laughs, Frau B. looks to one of the girls and asks "*welchen Tag haben*

wir heute?" ('what day is it today?'). Needing only to look briefly at the date written on the

chalkboard, she intones "*heute ist Mittwoch*" ('today is Wednesday). Turning to her left, she

continues the morning ritual by addressing the boy across from me: "*Ne., welches Datum haben*

wir?" ('Ne., what is the date?'). He looks hesitantly towards Frau B., but as she points to the

date, he remains silent due to his developing reading skills. She helps him, stating that "*heute*

ist der 6te Februar, 2019" ('today is February 6th, 2019'), motioning for him to repeat the phrase

aloud and he does so, if not still entirely confident. Nonetheless, she smiles at him and invites

him to finish the exercise, so he turns to the back table and asks "*wie ist das Wetter heute?*"

('how is the weather today?'). Distracted by his neighbor, Frau B. asks him to repeat the

question and he stumbles out "*es ist wolkig*" ('it is cloudy'). Satisfied with his response, Frau B.

then moves on to ask each student to go up to the emotions board and move a clothespin with

their names to match their current mood as they say it aloud in a sentence (a few needing

significant assistance from Frau B.). Satisfied with their work, she instructs everyone to get their

red folders for *DaZ*, my tablemates helping the boy from Italy who still cannot understand much

German, and I look to the clock reading 8:25, halfway through class.

As everybody grabs their materials for the *DaZ* hour, I notice Frau B. moves to sit with a

new student who arrived in class two weeks ago. In one week, another new student joins my

table as two other girls, who were partially integrated students that only come in the

afternoon, become fully integrated. Frau B. is completely occupied during this time by helping

this new student become acquainted with the required school materials and assisting with

initial language-learning tasks, such as translating a vocabulary list into their mother tongue via

in-class tablets. I walk around the classroom, first stopping by the girls' table to ask if they need

assistance with their work on writing verbs in the past tense. After spending a few minutes with

them, the timid boy from the back table calls me over for assistance on a workbook assignment

that requires him to identify irregular verbs and their stem changes. Working slowly with him

(due to his limited listening comprehension skills), the jokester overhears our work and

abandons his own task, sitting down next to me and offering another explanation to help him.

Frau B. rebukes him for being off task, though she appears pleased that he has finally started to focus on schoolwork, and he heads back to his seat as the Italian boy calls me over. I walk over and notice that he is working on a workbook assignment for classroom objects, the same list that he began over a week ago. Patiently, I smile and nod along as he excitedly points to a table and says "*der Tisch*!" ('the table'), continuing the naming-game that I created the day before to facilitate his learning. I play along by pointing at other objects and correcting him as we go along, until another student calls me over for help on a problem about school subjects. I look up at the clock and it is already 9:00, ten minutes past the break between first and second period. Additionally, second block is supposed to be geography, but nobody moves to take a break or switch folders, and Frau B. does not acknowledge this discrepancy. Due to the flexible environment, Frau B. allows everyone to finish their *DaZ* work for the next 15 minutes before transitioning, starting somewhat later than scheduled but aligned with everyone's progress.

Interrupting their individual work, Frau B. asks everybody to finish the sentence they are writing and to grab their materials for geography. Slowly the majority of the students swap their folders in the back of the classroom, the Italian not completely understanding the directions but following at their classmates' example. We pull our chairs into a circle at the front of the room and Frau B. engages everyone with an atlas hanging on the chalkboard, pointing to northern Germany where Lübeck is located. She turns to the jokester, who is still squabbling with his neighbor, and asks him where he is from: "*wo ist deine Heimat*?" ('where is your homeland?'). A girl turns to quiet him and his face lights up as he goes to the board and points: "*ich komme aus Afghanistan*" ('I am from Afghanistan'). Pointing at his Ghanaian tablemate's dark skin, he starts to make a jest about Africans, but Frau B. silences him with a

curt word and he sits back down, still laughing at his unspoken joke. She turns to the Italian,

sitting next to me with an innocent smile, and repeats her question. He simply stares back

smiling, clearly not understanding her question but engaged and cheerful nonetheless. She

outlines his sentence for him, knowing his background, carefully pronouncing each word

individually: "*ich komme aus Italien*" ('I am from Italy'). He repeats each word back to her, still

not comprehending, until she beckons him to stand and point to Italy on the map, and his eyes

brighten. "*Italia!*" ('Italy') he exclaims joyously, beaming at me and Frau B. motions him to sit

back down while beginning with the next student. This continues for everybody, including

myself, until the bell rings and Frau B. shuffles the students out: the first 25-minute break.

While S2 does not observe the five-minute breaks between subjects, the longer two at

9:30 and 11:40 are sacred to teachers and students alike who need mid-day break. As I follow

Frau B. into the teacher's lounge, I watch my students run outside onto the courtyard to meet

friends outside of class and expend their energy despite the near freezing temperature.

Greeting friendly faces in the walkway, I turn left to grab my lunch in the refrigerator and take

my seat across from Herr S. whose exhausted face is mirrored by an exacerbated sigh. He

grumbles about his hectic morning, having spent the first two hours with S1 and relieved to

finally get a reprieve. He complains that they were "*unruhig*" ('noisy') the entire time, needing

to mark two students in his book for future discipline, and I commiserate with him, knowing

that this will likely be repeated tomorrow when Frau K. will be entirely absent. As I and others

around sympathize with his morning, I am reminded of how differently the students behave

around Frau K.'s stern demeaner and consistent, public reprimands than Herr S.'s more

subdued, complacent attitude that unintentionally encourages more erratic behavior. Lost in

these thoughts, I return to the conversation as Herr S. casually mentions that Frau L. is absent

again today, the third day in the last week. I groan internally, knowing that I will have to take

over her class without any preparation or notion of what the students have been working on, as

I have been working with Frau D.'s section the last few days. It feels as though a teacher is

absent every day, forcing us to reshuffle classrooms, students, and sometimes entire subjects,

so the only sense of continuity is the inevitable amendment to their schedule (see Klovert,

Laurenz, & Quecke, 2019 for a review of teacher shortages around Germany). The students

certainly appear pleased as their schedule is disrupted, reducing their workload, but we

teachers scramble to find an activity that (hopefully) somewhat relates to their previous

lessons. This challenge is only exacerbated when Herr S. is forced to teach two sections of math

at once, likely the case this afternoon. We chat through the rest of the break, avoiding further

conversation about class, and start to prepare an impromptu combined math class together as

we head out the door a few minutes after the bell rings again to mark the end of break.

Though there is a high degree of flexibility between the classes and the specific lessons,

the overarching themes central to the National Integration Plan are preserved, though slightly

modified to fit the school's (and program's) own vision for migrant integration. Reflecting on

the implications of the stipulations in this national plan, there is an explicit connection between

German society and democratic values and this emphasis is expected to be implicitly embedded

within the program to concurrently teach history, language, and culture in the context of a

modern democracy. These are subtly ingrained in pedagogical practices like encouraging active

participation amongst all students, especially with those who have rudimentary language skills

(e.g., my Italian tablemate) by asking simpler, direct questions with significant scaffolding (i.e.,

teacher-directed help; see Vygotsky, 1978).

These practices were more explicitly developed during a teacher's training and

development day where the *DaZ* team spent a day discussing how to integrate democratic

values such as 'tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality' that are the foundation of German

society and, by extension, the school environment, according to our guiding manual. While we

developed a reward system for students acting on these goals, we spent the majority of the

time discussing how the classes already actualize this mission in their daily pedagogical

practices and how to improve them to better align with this initiative. Though not necessarily

presuming the students' lack of democratic values, we discussed how their home countries may

advocate different ideologies that could spark cognitive dissonance and classroom conflict. In

this sense, the paradigm has permeated all domains of *DaZ* life by necessitating a reorientation

of students' personal values towards those upheld in contemporary German democracy.

Deviating from the underlying ideologies of this federal plan, however, Karl-Eberhard's

DaZ program emphasizes the efficacy of students maintaining connections to their *Heimat*[9]. In

Herr S.'s computer class, the students were tasked with created a presentation about "*meine*

Stadt" ('my city'). This assignment directly infers ownership unto the students, making them

resident experts on their home, and implicitly implies that Lübeck is *not* their home, not even

their *'zweite Heimat'*, a phrase echoed by *Vertriebene* building new lives in Germany. This is

juxtaposed, however, by the class's field trip to the local *Holstentor* and its museum, designed

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[9] Meaning 'homeland', this word has a contentious history for its appropriation by Nazis to further Aryan ideals and post-WWII Germans seeking to find new lives in the face of millions of refugees.

to inform the students of the city's history and help orient themselves within this local space.

The classes also engage in a nutrition program where every other week, students from one of

the classes cooks a meal from their home country for the rest to enjoy during a communal

meal. Beyond cultivating a sense of unity amongst the students while supporting healthy eating

habits, this has the effect of reinforcing the students' non-German backgrounds through

'ethnic' foods in a positive light that values these traditions. Furthermore, while incoming

students are busy translating vocabulary lists into their mother tongue, this practice is

continued for all students across language levels, even when they are near-fluent and do not

necessarily need this activity. This perspective values the students' linguistic heritages alongside

the National Integration Plans that maintain the importance of establishing a *new* German

identity based on *German* cultural values. However, these activities still serve to reinforce a

monolingual paradigm linking students to their (singular) homeland linked with their (single)

mother tongue. Through these practices, the *DaZ* program has reinterpreted assimilationist

ideals espoused by nationalist policy makers (read: AfD) for the National Integration Initiative in

order to facilitate true 'integration' (by Berry's standards) by encouraging students to maintain

aspects of their non-German heritages while encouraging them to embrace democratic values

and German language learning, all while still operating in this monolingual paradigm.

The program's flexible curriculum is reinforced by spontaneity within the classroom

itself, as changes between subjects may be overlooked to finish an activity or a teacher's

absence temporarily alters the organization of each class. While this does not mean that *DaZ* is

less rigorous, it does disrupt continuity, where a schedule change is more typical than a

'normal' day. However, the students still gain a significant amount of exposure to German

language practice alongside studying subjects that may be entirely novel, or mere reviews, as the classroom composition is diverse across all variables. This diversity is encouraged by faculty whose practices hail the importance of students maintaining connections to their *Heimat*, a paradigm that runs contrary to ideologies that advocate assimilationist incorporation (and assumes that Germany is *not* their *Heimat*). Simultaneously, there is a heavier, but more subtle, emphasis on following Germany's rules and aligning with modern, democratic values. I would therefore expect students becoming integrated into the regular school system to function well in class due to their language skills and content background, but despite their congruity with German values, they would likely be marked as distinctly non-German and 'ethnic'. Merely a hypothesis, this idea will be further investigated in next chapter's ethnographic interview analysis. These perceptions were moderated through my outsider position as a temporary American researcher acting as a teacher's assistant that also afforded me significant mobility in the larger Karl-Eberhard environment and allowed me to contextualize these *DaZ* reflections within this space.

7. An American 'Resident Expert'?: Legitimacy and School-wide Mobility

Beyond being the 'new teacher' in school, I was immediately marked as 'the American' and used as a pedagogical resource, affording me the status of a 'resident expert' on all areas related to America and English, as explored earlier. As a natural extension of my teacher's assistant role in the *DaZ* environment, I was treated as an English expert on par with Herr S., as English is my first language. In contrast to my formal German pedagogical training, I had taken

only one English as a Foreign Language course before arriving to Lübeck, so while I could speak

the language as a fluent native, I often could not provide an explanation for grammatical

concepts, only knowing that it 'felt right'. This sentiment was heightened during *Aufbau*

sessions with Herr S., particularly with the older students who more frequently brought their

homework to review. Almost every time they wanted to work on their English assignments (and

when they did not, he would assign them English exercises for practice) because, as Herr S.

confided in me, "we must take advantage of you while we can". One lesson in particular

encapsulated these feelings: we reviewed the pronunciation of verbs ending with '-ed' in the

past tense and why they had different sounds. While I was fully confident in my ability to

discern the correct sounds from the mistakes, I had no idea *why*. However, Herr S. and the

others never noticed this shortcoming and even if they had, it was inconsequential: while Herr

S. learned how to speak grammatically correct English following certain rules, I *grew up*

speaking it and that afforded me a status comparable to his, that of a college-aged 'American'

equated with a middle-aged, degree-holding full teacher. This reflects a particular ideology of

language learning tied to childhood socialization and a particular ideology of 'native' speakers

being equally competent teachers regardless of formal training. An important consideration,

this differential treatment must be contextualized within this particular space and my American

identity to understand how, or if, it applies to a *DaZ* context, and will be explored in the

interview analysis chapters.

My overarching American identity extended beyond the *DaZ* environment and afforded

me the ability to explore other aspects of the school that are normally only frequented by

teachers assigned to those classrooms. In addition to visiting other English classes (as reflected

earlier), I also prepared lesson plans revolving around creative vocabulary usage for a 10th grade

class, thus extending my work context. In addition to allowing for more mobility within the

school, this also gave me the opportunity to observe the regular classes and their functioning in

contrast to the *DaZ* context. Some of the *Aufbau* students were in these classes, meaning I

could observe them in different contexts and, in some cases, provide more background into

their interviews with me. Through this identity, I was able to effectively navigate different

school environments and blend within the locus of teachers as an outsider within.

Sitting in the teacher's lounge and talking with Herr S., I feel a sense of ease amongst

my co-workers with my own desk and friends. Although I am only a temporary member of the

staff, I have quickly found my own place within the tight-knit community of teachers and while

there may be some language barriers due to my imperfect language skills, we still communicate

exclusively in German, a symbol of respect and acceptance. Two other teacher's assistants

around my age work in the kindergarten and with the *DaZ* nutrition program and while we are

about the same age, they are German citizens pursuing a degree in social work through a

formalized national education program. In contrast, my internship is a novel situation enabled

only through CISLA's funding, making this placement both more flexible and inconsistent in

daily tasks while placing me in a unique position with significant mobility and agency. Through

these identities, I was able to gain outside perspectives alongside insider viewpoints to enrich

my observations and frame the semi-structured interviews within the Karl-Eberhard context.

These reflections and the local contextualization within Schleswig-Holstein, Lübeck, and

the Karl-Eberhard school environment serve to frame the following interviews and their

implications. Especially considering the students' different experiences with schooling, this is

important both for considerations of socialization and for their new learning environment

accompanied by a new mode of instruction through German. Many studies of migrant

incorporation, psychological acculturation, or identity development do not thoroughly explore

these considerations, but this project intentionally engages in this ethnographic context to also

engage in questions of power dynamics and individuality. Taken during the ongoing 'Refugee

Crisis' affecting especially Europe and the Middle East, these student narratives exemplify the

extreme diversity of migrants arriving to Germany in recent years. These diverse backgrounds

and recent encounters in a new German schooling context help relate larger theoretical

discussions of 'Otherness' and development within a particular environment that affords

different opportunities to each student. In the following chapter, the translated interviews are

explored and analyzed within these local and larger national (and transnational) contexts to

engage in questions of language learning, identity development, acculturation, and citizenship.

Chapter V: Family and Classroom Dynamics

1. Transnational Students and Families

While this study is centered around the Karl-Eberhard environment and its *DaZ*

program, it is important to remember that this school context forms only a part of adolescents'

lives. Partially due to this project's research design focused on schooling environments and to

ethical considerations, I did not interact with my students and their families at their homes.

However, the majority of classes end at 1pm (with students in school for approximately 25

hours a week with intermittent breaks) and *Aufbau* sessions occur only a few days a week in the

afternoon. As an integral component of the National Integration Plan, predicted on language

learning and cultural reorientation towards German values (see Chapter III for a full review),

this is a relatively short time invested into *DaZ* efforts on the school's part. At the same time, by

participating in this environment, the students are actively involving themselves in their new

national and local contexts, indicating an initial acculturation orientation of integration or

assimilation. This and the following chapter examine the motivations behind these pathways,

consider the surrounding contextual factors, and discuss instances of change to understand the

dialogical *process* of acculturating in Germany. This chapter investigates these outside contexts

and frame their relevance to in-school contexts through questions of emotional functioning and

examine how students reimagine the *DaZ* environment to suit their personal goals of 'moving

forward' into their new German futures by selectively incorporating, and merging, values.

I asked participants to reflect on their relationships with the parents and other family members, leading to conversations around the diverse experiences in Germany in relation to their migration backgrounds, current situations, and transnational circumstances (see Appendix A for a review of the interview questions). As the interviews were semi-structured, many of the reflections in this chapter and the next were framed in response to questions that were not originally planned, and similar themes emerged in response to different questions. This necessitated an examination of the narratives as a whole, instead of merely transitioning from prompt to prompt. Some students now have families split across national borders, some are alone in the country while others have the support of siblings in school to ameliorate this challenging situation and some were able to migrate with their entire family. Within these contexts, each student had particular and distinct reflections on their contemporary circumstances emanating from his or her experiences. Most participants continue to have an emotional bond to their countries of origin, demonstrating a psychological attachment that has been retained throughout their migration process, demonstrating a form of 'transnationalism' that extends traditional conceptualizations focused on cultural artifacts, rather than psychological acculturative responses (see Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995). This continues to impact daily interactions, but in distinct ways that demonstrate the importance of contextualizing this migration process in relation to students' past lives in their countries of origin, larger family contexts, and questions of agency.

1.1 Split Families

Erik[10] is a 17-year old student who migrated from Kazakhstan 18 months ago and is now in 10th grade, participating in the afterschool *Aufbau* courses and preparing to graduate from Karl-Eberhard in hope of studying psychology at a university in the future. In contrast to the majority of the students in the *DaZ* program, he took German classes in his city in Kazakhstan before migrating to Germany and only spent two weeks in the *DaZ* program at school before moving into 10th grade. His parents, both doctors, decided to move to Germany in pursuit of work opportunities but, after a while, decided to migrate back home:

> E. They decided for themselves that the work in Kazakhstan is better, like they had problems with work in Germany and they didn't like the work here. Therefore, they decided to move back to Kazakhstan, but I decided to stay here in Germany and now I live with my grandmother and the relationship has changed, but I'm not upset that my parents moved back to Kazakhstan. It was my decision to stay here in Germany, I could have move back to Kazakhstan. So actually, my relationship with my parents is really good now, it didn't get worse.
>
> S. How is it different then?
>
> E. Now I don't have as many interactions with my parents, but we talk on the phone every day, not just once, but twice per day. It's going well.

In tandem with this new, online relationship with his parents, Erik was able to strengthen his relationship with his grandmother by living with her in Germany. This reflection speaks to his considerable degree of agency: Erik *chose* to remain in Lübeck while his parents *chose* to return home to Kazakhstan. By maintaining contact through daily phone conversations, Erik was able to retain a strong connection to his family members abroad, thus establishing an online transnational connection that maintained his old bonds *and* facilitated a stronger relationship with his grandmother (see also Appadurai, 1991). His parents could have insisted that he join

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[10] Student names were altered and are presented here as pseudonyms, which were chosen by the researcher.

them when returning home, but they instead recognized his independence and the economic

advantages of remaining in Germany.

> I think I want to stay here because it doesn't make any sense to move back to
> Kazakhstan because in Kazakhstan I don't have as many educational
> opportunities and options for work. For example, I really want to become a
> psychologist and there aren't many universities for psychology in Kazakhstan and
> if there are any, then the university is really expensive. Not everyone has the
> opportunity to go to college. And afterwards it's difficult to find work in
> Kazakhstan. Therefore, there are more options in Germany. I don't think I want
> to move back to Kazakhstan.

While Erik's decision to remain in Germany contradicted his parents', each family member

recognized the economic reasons for their separation. Interestingly, Erik repeatedly mentions

'Kazakhstan' and 'Germany' by name, a rhetorical narrative strategy that connotates neither

country as 'home'. Furthermore, he frames Kazakhstan through economic *disadvantage* which

overrides his desire to remain personally with his parents, thus relating migration to a practical

investment in the future beyond emotional, familial attachments. This also underscores Erik's

agency, as he is in the position to define his own future (by *deciding* between Germany and

Kazakhstan) in a way that also emotionally distances him from his country of origin. Through

these framings, Erik has started aligning his future with Germany while maintaining online ties

to Kazakhstan in a way that exemplifies transnationalism, but also emotionally ties him to his

new national context. This acculturative process can thus be classified somewhere between

assimilation and integration, as he tries to retain ties to his country of origin but does not seek

to incorporate these aspects into his new, daily reality in Germany, instead focusing on his

future through practicality. For Erik, the acculturative process involves significant independence

and agency as he becomes an adult in Germany, focusing on his future opportunities in a pragmatic manner that overrules his emotional attachments to his family.

In contrast, Oscar, a younger student in S1 and partially integrated in the regular math classes, has a different engagement with family dynamics, as he left his mother in Serbia to live with his father in Germany. When he was back home, Oscar remembered that he would see his father once or twice a year when he visited him, but this situation has been reversed. He still is able to talk with his mother every day on the phone, like Erik, but this distance has affected their relationship: "she misses me and I also miss her". As a result, Oscar and his father have grown closer after migrating to Germany and this represents a new family dynamic with new traditions: "I see him every day, he works a lot, like the whole day. On Monday he doesn't work very much, so we go somewhere like into the city". This represents an entire restructuring of family dynamics accompanied by the migration process, a disruption that has ramifications on his sense of self in tandem with other changes in his surrounding contexts (i.e., social, national).

Despite these changes in his surrounding environment that accompanied the migration process, Oscar frames Germany in a positive light. Upon arriving to Germany and seeing Lübeck for the first time, he reflects that "I thought to myself 'oh my God, it's so good and beautiful here'". Additionally, he reflects that the work opportunities in Germany are better paid, leading him to formulate his new life here partially around economic measures. However, he also expressed resentment towards leaving Serbia, claiming he never wanted to come to Germany. His current perception represents a shift in his psychological acculturative process, recognizing the possibilities in Germany rather than just the challenges and beginning to identify with this new context. He has started anew in Lübeck while reuniting with his father and forming new

family bonds alongside friendships. By continuing to talk on the phone with his mother abroad,

he maintains transnational bonds but feels the geographic distance.

> They're my family and therefore it's important. They're always there for me and
> when I need something, they do it…. Here in Germany it's prettier and there are
> a lot of nice things like the Holstentor. In Serbia there aren't things like that. But
> my whole family is living there in Serbia and only my father and sister are here.

While Oscar and Erik share circumstances of being separated by family due to migrating to

Germany, they engage differently in these dynamics based on their circumstances. Erik

demonstrated significant agency from the beginning, deciding to come to Germany because of

perceived benefits and continued to operate through this paradigm, while Oscar learned to

appreciate his new local context despite initial hardships (or, perhaps, resigned to this new

reality). Furthermore, Erik does not feel overburdened with familial stressors, having mutually

decided that he should remain in Germany. In contrast, Oscar found it challenging to cope with

the sudden change in family dynamics as he was suddenly with his father, but eventually found

a way to retain his connections to his family back in Serbia, alleviating this stress. In this

context, these students' acculturation processes represent different perspectives on their post-

migration situations based on their degrees of agency and their familial attachments,

demonstrating the efficacy of this process-oriented model to capture these dynamics. From a

dialogical perspective, neither student identified themselves rhetorically with one country or

the other, avoiding references to 'home' and living new lives somewhere in the temporal and

geographical middle-ground. After intensive work and emotional challenges, both students now

frame their positions and futures in Germany in a positive light.

While Erik and Oscar were able to renegotiate their parental relationships through online communications, other students lost these relationships while migrating to Germany. Jonathan, a 16-year old adolescent from Afghanistan, fled the Taliban occupying his village in 2016 to arrive in Lübeck after over a week of travel with other youth asylum-seekers. The Taliban sought to recruit him, his father and his siblings for work and service, leading his father to flee to Iran for several years, sending money back to his "homeland" for his family. During this exile, Jonathan was anxious that the Taliban would take him and his brothers away, causing significant stress. After his father returned and the Taliban increased pressure on the family to take Jonathan away, his mother sent him out of the country to escape, recruiting Jonathan's uncle to smuggle him past the border. As his family moved to stay with his uncle, the Taliban killed Jonathan's father. The next day he fled Afghanistan, traveling without a passport or identifying papers and getting physically abused by police officers in neighboring countries.

> I was in Iran, Turkey, then I was in Bulgaria, Serbia. Then I was in a container car for 3 days, I rode three days in a container in the back, not in the front with the driver, but the back. And it was locked shut. I was there for three days, well three nights and two days. There were three other guys with me, and then we arrived in Munich and left the container. There the police took us in and suddenly we were in Germany, first in Munich in a living group and then afterwards I came to Lübeck.

In addition to the trauma of fleeing his home village and family the day after his father's murder, Jonathan had to hope and trust this smuggler, who could have indentured him and his companions, just like the Taliban. The stress of this experience must be observed from the perspective of a lone young adolescent (only 13 at the time) arriving to Germany without any language or country knowledge and without knowing his family's fate in Afghanistan. Jonathan migrated to Germany illegally without passport papers and in the back of a truck, therefore

adding another layer of daily stress since the police could deport him. Jonathan demonstrates

considerable resiliency in his ability to continue without being overwhelmed. Fortunately, he

was assigned a caretaker to help orient Jonathan to his new life in Germany and this living

situation has helped reestablish a semblance of family-life:

> Now I feel really happy that I also have family here and that my caretaker is nice
> to me, and everything else…. That is a family, so to speak, all 10 of us live there
> together.

This helped establish a semblance of normality in his circumstances, effectively reducing the

stress of existing alone in Germany without a support system (especially in the case of potential

deportation). This is especially important when considering emotional ties to family: removed

from his parents and siblings, Jonathan has supplemented these persistent temporal bonds

with new ones in Germany, demonstrating a particular acculturative strategy stress coping

through the support of a family, even in a non-nuclear form. Yet while this environment helped

to restore a lost familial bond and ease his stress, he still grieves over his father's death and

thinks about his true family back home.

> J. Yeah, I'm still very much affected by it, I still have problems with my family like
> no contact and that kind of stuff. I would also love to have my family here. Also
> so that the Taliban doesn't get to them, like they also want to have my family
> members who are older.

> S. Do you worry for your family?

> J. Of course I worry about my family because I also care. I'm the oldest and I also
> have to do something for my younger siblings. If I don't do anything, since my
> father isn't here, then my mom can't do anything either. Amongst us, women
> don't go to work, which is something very different.

Three years later, Jonathan still has no contact with his family back home and yearns to reestablish this bond and to know his family's fate. Despite the distance separating them, he still feels the responsibility to care for his mother and younger siblings, worries about their financial security and physical safety from the Taliban, and all while acknowledging his own fortune at escaping from their grasp to build a new life in Germany with a new 'family' amongst fellow migrants. Yet even if he did gain the capability to communicate online, it is still possible that Jonathan would receive bad news about his family if the Taliban reached them after he migrated. Jonathan at least hopes for the best-case scenario and, through dialogical positioning, maintains an emotional connection with them by identifying Afghanistan as his "homeland", an acculturation strategy markedly different from Erik's and Oscar's. Even though he wants to return home to see his family, the Taliban could find and indenture him, placing him in an emotionally challenging position: if he gets deported to Afghanistan or gains the agency to return, either way he would have fulfilled his aspirations, but the transition could be perilous and he recognizes the complications of this desire. Jonathan's case is framed through a lack of agency and security, but by leveraging emotional support from 'family bonds', he has built a new life for himself. Though while he has found a new 'family' in Lübeck with his living group, *his* family remains at home in *his* village, and if this new 'family' cannot replace his lost bonds, they can at least help orient him in this new life and provide emotional support, demonstrating resiliency through this coping process and agency in choosing bonds.

While Jonathan yearns from some contact with his life back 'home', the reestablishment of these transnational ties is not universally beneficial. Markus, a 15-year old student from Ghana, also lost his parents when he was younger and only his uncle lives in his homeland. The

physical distance weighs heavily on him and he struggles with the lack of contact: "I think it's awful. You know, my uncle doesn't have any internet. That's really difficult for me." Like Jonathan, he lives with a group of youths and has a caretaker and guardian who he called "my German parents". This did not replace his parents from Ghana nor his uncle but helps him to establish a new semblance of family in Germany by emotionally attaching himself to the country for a new, future life here. For Jonathan and Markus, the loss of some family members is mirrored by the development of new bonds in Germany, demonstrating an acculturative coping strategy of choosing new systems of support in the absence of transnational ties.

Despite their very different backgrounds, these students have all found ways to reinvent traditional notions of 'family' to help orient themselves in Germany for a new life. Across these narratives, students demonstrate a persistence of emotional transnational bonds that frame new familial connections within a coping framework. Through reflections on split families, these relationships demonstrate a particular preference for maintaining pre-migration ties alongside embracing new German ties, exemplifying aspects of 'integration' acculturation orientations in this context. Despite these disruptions, the students expressed desires to continue on with their lives and futures in Germany, accepting their new places and aligning themselves with their current situation. Jonathan's and Markus' narratives also reveal how students demonstrate 'integration' orientations through their emotional connections in meaningful ways that frame their attachments to Germany as artificial extensions of the 'true' familial bonds stemming from their countries of origin (cf. Erik). In this sense, the changing family dynamics within these narratives of migration are complemented by new bonds with 'Germany', demonstrating a novel image of an 'integration' acculturative preference.

For other students, however, concerns over their split family only indirectly affect them, yet these external forces affect their own experiences and perspectives. Nora (17-years old) and Lisa (14-years old) are two sisters from Venezuela who migrated to Germany a year before this study and left in the middle of the school year. Their father is ethnically German (making them citizens as well; see Chapter III) and lived apart from the family in Germany for years, visiting them in Venezuela only periodically before their father decided they should migrate to join him. Nora and Lisa were upset by the sudden travel, leaving the country for the first time in their lives, but the political situation was creating daily anxieties for them and their parents, necessitating a sudden departure. Nora expressed the pain of leaving in the middle of her school year and leaving her friends for an unknown future.

> I spent my entire life in Venezuela and then it just came suddenly that my father said "we're going"…. I was so shocked and said "that can't be, I'm in 9th grade, I'm almost done with only 2 more years left, I really like it here even though there are a lot of problems" but he said no.

This sudden transition emphasizes Nora's and Lisa's lack of agency when migrating, and while they had a German father who would help orient them in their new lives, they were not ready to leave Venezuela behind. Despite this early hesitation, Nora later situates this background in a different context of political unrest that stands in contrast to their new lives in Germany:

> Yeah in Venezuela we didn't have a great situation politically and when we were there, it was difficult to live. Like I said, the situation isn't good in Venezuela and with food, school, everything. And because it was so difficult, my father had to keep working as well as my mother, and we had no time for ourselves. We couldn't go into the city, get ice cream. Firstly, there wasn't any money and also there wasn't any time. And when I came to Germany, everything changed. Here we can actually go into the city and eat together and chill at home and we don't think anymore "what are we going to eat tomorrow? What are we eating tonight?" Here we have peace and quiet.

This reflection echoes other students' observations of their easier lives in Germany as a result of being in a more politically and socially stable environment. Framing their past experiences through financial concerns and limited familial contact, Nora's narrative demonstrates a particular identification with Germany based on better social and economic circumstances. Lisa emphasizes that despite the disruption felt as a result of their migration to Germany, "we do the same things, we're practically always together, I'm always with my parents", perhaps indicating an 'integration' acculturative orientation through continued family traditions. However, the family was not able to escape entirely intact and their brother was left behind in Venezuela. Lisa reflects on the difficulties surrounding their migration: "It was really difficult to come here, I left all of my family in Venezuela. I came with my parents and my sister, but my brother is still in Venezuela. And yeah that's difficult." Although there are family resettlement programs in Germany to help alleviate these situations, the political instability in Venezuela would make this a challenging endeavor (and it was unclear from the interviews if the family had pursued this). While Lisa feels directly affected by this separation, demonstrating a persistent emotional attachment, their mother's angst has more direct, and drastic, effects.

Their mother struggles from being separated from her son and other family members, and this affects the sisters more than their personal anxieties. While other students were able to find new attachments in Germany to help fill the void of separated family members, this is not possible in their mother's case. On top of the daily stressors of the developing political uncertainty in Venezuela potentially affecting her son, the stress involved in the migration process had serious consequences on her physical health.

> [My mom] worries herself over the situation in Venezuela, she says "yeah, I want to learn now, I want to spend my time with learning the language", but she

> doesn't concentrate on it because some of my family is still over there: my brother's over there and she worries herself over him…. 2 weeks ago, she was in the hospital because of this topic, she had so much stress and thought constantly about our family and never had a peace of mind because anything can always happen…. That was really stressful and now it's even more difficult because more stuff has happened. Yeah, the relationship with my mother is good, but she's often in another world, always thinking about it and we don't want that, but I still understand.

This medical emergency demonstrates how familial stressors can have significant impacts on the lives of migrant adolescents, as these external anxieties trickled down to affect Nora's and Lisa's emotional wellbeing with their mom in the hospital. At least in school, the sisters are able to support each other through social contact and homework assistance, but their home life is filled with uncertainty and challenges. Nora's reflection at the end, that she wishes her mother would not become so attached, demonstrates a different ideology of coping from the other students: knowing that her mother's woes will trickle down, she advocates an emotional distancing in order to deal with this stress and a preference for 'assimilating' to Germany by moving beyond these past challenges instead of engaging with them daily.

Whether the emotional challenges of living in Germany with a split family is felt directly or indirectly, contemporary migrants in this context live in an emotionally transnational world while trying to adjust to new contexts through different coping strategies. The National Integration Plan (see p. 99) frames migrant incorporation primarily through language learning and cultural reorientation towards German values, but emotional connections demonstrate a need to address family-wide challenges in order to move forward in their new German lives. The Karl-Eberhard *DaZ* environment recognizes these realities through the student maps in the back with their homelands, but does not directly address parental / sibling disconnect or death.

While it may be challenging for some students to be reminded of their migrations, suppressing these backgrounds would be more inefficacious based on these reflections. Some students at Karl-Eberhard are able to operate in their new German context without daily worries over their distant or lost family members precisely because of the actions they took to reimagine these bonds in their new context. There were differing perspectives on whether migrants should continue to invest themselves in transnational emotional ties in these cases, demonstrating a diverse response to questions of family-wide connections that directly affect their new lives. These students approached this dilemma from the perspective of a split family context, but other students arrived to Germany with their entire family, necessitating an investigation into their realities to continue addressing these concerns from new perspectives.

1.2 United Families

Hannah is a 10th grade student from Syria who recently turned 18-years old and plans to graduate this year, hoping to pursue a college education next year. When she arrived three years ago, she was assigned into S1 while her brother went into Frau B.'s classroom in a comparable situation to Nora and Lisa's own *DaZ* experience. Reflecting on those early days, Hannah remembers feelings of helplessness due to the language barrier and new school-wide expectations: "it was really difficult at the beginning because I didn't know anything, didn't know how things worked here. Therefore, you just have to get used to it – the people, the teacher, like everything was new for me like I said." On top of a social and academic disruption, Hannah felt unable to even interact in this new environment, feeling like an ultimate outsider.

Eventually, she and her brother learned enough German to become partially integrated into the regular classes and finally fully integrated into 9th grade. Despite gaining sufficient language skills, she still felt disadvantaged because of unfamiliar assignments and course requirements, demonstrating a particular German academic *habitus* based on cultural upbringing. However, she was able to rely on familial support to help guide this process.

> There was this exam and it was relatively complicated for me because I didn't know how to go about it. But what really helped me was that my brother was also in the group. So he could do the organizational structuring and he really helped me.

After this experience, Hannah became more self-confident, assured that she could complete her schoolwork and compare with her German counterparts. Relying on her brother's support, Hannah's reflection frames her success as a result of her family remaining united and acculturating together. This extended into the whole family context, as eventually her brother's and her proficiency began to outpace their parents' progress. Arriving to Germany as young adolescents, Hannah and her brother grew as individuals and became more self-sufficient, and their parents acknowledged this growth by relying on them more for daily assistance.

> When I was in Syria, I was only 14 or 15 years old, but here I've already grown 3 years older…. And that really did change things, and they noticed that, that I could take responsibility for things on my own, that I know my way around classes in school.

While she and her brother were understandably proud of their accomplishments and pleased that they were being recognized as older adolescents approaching adulthood, Hannah also wishes that she did not *have* to do everything on her own. Her mother, a retired elementary school teacher, tries and struggles to acquire German language skills. Hannah helps with her

mom's learning by studying alongside her, practicing the language at home, and acting as a translator when needed. This shift in family dynamics also reflects a new sense-of-self, with Hannah recognizing that she is no longer dependent on her parents and, in some ways, can better assist them than they can help her. These roles impart a higher amount of responsibility unto Hannah on top of her daily activities at school and with friends to such an extent that she wishes that she could also rely on her parents for support.

> Well I would have wished that they would be better than me at German, of course, because if that were the case, then they could have really helped me out more. I would have also felt a bit more comfortable because it really is stressful when you have to do everything yourself… Without my parents, I wouldn't have accomplished anything, but here it's been different because *I* can speak better German than they can. So, I have these ideas in my head that I should do everything by myself.

Lacking this daily parental support, Hannah is relieved to also have two older brothers who help her with any problems that stress her. However, how much do these situations have to burden Hannah before she reaches out to her siblings for support? Having developed a new personal identity predicated on independence, she feels that, as an adult who has acquired sufficient language knowledge and can operate in regular classes, she should not rely on her brothers. This reflects a shift in their family dynamics: despite the fact that her family migrated together and collectively embraced language learning to facilitate their adaptation, their interdependent family bonds became more *independent* and the unification under their parents' support dissipated. This new situation reflects a transition *after* arriving to Germany, where Hannah struggled in her first years at Karl-Eberhard from the novel schooling context and her sibling's assistance directly ameliorated her situation, reflecting an evolution in her personal identity as an 'adult' who does not need to rely on others but still values these bonds.

By emphasizing a strong family dynamic in Germany, Hannah also implies that they have not been split during their migration, so she is not constantly emotionally invested in her old life in Syria. Nonetheless, she maintains symbolic ties to her roots by continuing to abide by Islamic traditions and wearing a *hijab* in school, thereby emphasizing her religious identity while simultaneously adjusting to her new future in Germany in an overtly 'integration' style. Sandra, Hannah's close friend and classmate also from Syria, has a similar experience of migrating to Germany with her parents and discusses how her family has grown closer since leaving home.

> In Syria you think that everything is easy. You don't have to talk with one another very often and then do something with each other because we simply had to study and learn, my parents worked, and that was it. But here we talk with each other more at home… we have more experiences now, because for example my parents are in German courses and they tell me about things that happened, and I also tell them what happened in school.

The daily novelties of adjusting to a new national environment are stimulating for Sandra's family and through their diverse experiences, they have been able to grow closer together. This reflection highlights another aspect of migration regarding family dynamics: with parents and students engaging in different components of the National Integration Plan, their individual experiences coalesce to orient the entire family dynamic along this trajectory, testifying to the importance of maintaining unity within the family. For example, the linguistic assistance that Hannah provides for her mother attests to how traditional pathways of support (i.e., parents assisting with their children's work) are reassessed as a result of the entire family's engagement in local integration initiatives. In this context, the efficacy of family unity is also derived from the interdependent system of support that operate together towards an acculturative goal which, as Hannah's story attests, can change depending on external forces.

These stories exemplify the extraordinarily diverse family contexts of migrant

adolescents at Karl-Eberhard. The transition to Germany does not erase individuals' ties to their

countries of origin or their families, and these memories colliding with newer developments

can cause significant stress for these individuals. Families that migrated together exhibit more

resiliency by staying together and these students retain symbolic and emotional connections to

help orient them in their new environments through an 'integration' ideology, yet others

expressed desires to simply 'move on' and stop worrying about troubles back in their countries

of origin. These narratives exemplify new manifestations of this acculturative orientation by

considering persistent emotional bonds that alleviate the trauma involved in (particularly

forced) migration. These stories also highlight how the dynamics of family life affect their

motivations and functioning at Karl-Eberhard. For example, Jonathan's story highlights how

some students are constantly emotionally burdened by the circumstances surrounding their

migration, affecting their in-school performance. On the other hand, students with a sibling in

the other class are able to find peer support for their coursework and are reassured daily of

their safety, while others constantly worry whether their family still lives. As these narratives of

family dynamics directly affect in-school performance, it is important to examine how Karl-

Eberhard engages in these questions of transition and emotional bonds. In particular, the next

section discusses how the *DaZ* program advocates an assimilationist acculturative ideology

(rather than 'integrationist' styles) of 'moving forward' without addressing these concerns

while still creating a space for students to feel welcomed into their new community.

2. ***DaZ – Orienting to German Life and Community Building***

2.1 Facilitating New Lives in Germany

As a core component of the National Integration Plan, the *DaZ* program at Karl-Eberhard is a direct manifestation of federal- and state-level political ideologies within this local space. While many politicians advocate that migrants pursue an 'integration' acculturation strategy, right-winged voices (though a significant minority) espouse more assimilationist perspectives that fear a multicultural society as the detriment to true 'German' culture. These national discourses are marked by contention, but the decentralized nature of German society makes this situation more complicated. However, the implementation of *DaZ* programs abide by state-level decisions, making the Karl-Eberhard environment a direct manifestation of Schleswig-Holstein perspectives. As reviewed in Chapter IV, this state is amongst one of the more liberal regions, thus embracing a more integrationist ideology. However, the teachers and school still have significant autonomy, making this program's goals unique to this space, yet also representative of (some) larger national and state-wide trends. As part of the goal of reorienting migrants towards a German 'way of life' and cultural values, the program particularly emphasizes the importance of completing a German education for their future lives which requires, concurrently, German language skills. Jonathan directly outlines this message connecting language learning to the job market and future life satisfaction:

> If you're 18 in Germany without a family, then you have to get an apartment by yourself, do your education and learning by yourself and cannot do anything problematic. It's really important when you're in Germany to complete your education, that's really important in order to get a job, otherwise you won't earn anything and if you don't complete your education, you have to clean kitchens. I

say to everyone that's living in Germany, they have to complete their education and learn the language.

This reflection reinvigorates ideologies of incorporation that the West German government forwarded for incoming Turkish migrant workers during the post-war economic boom within this new migration context. In order to obtain a job (a core component of adult incorporation; see Glick Schiller et al., 2004), Jonathan emphasizes that migrants first have to complete their education but in order to actualize this, they must first learn the language. Through this framing, it is reasonable to blame migrants for their faulty incorporation if they failed to complete their schooling and gain sufficient language knowledge. Jonathan, unintentionally, reinforces this ideology by emphasizing that he is 18, an adult in a German context who is perceived to be independent and successful, reflecting similar themes in Hannah's narrative in this educational context. In this sense, his narrative serves to establish his individuality and his new 'adult' identity in Germany, yet also places potential failure on himself, rather than the *DaZ* program, for example, reflecting a non-neutral paradigm. These associations resulted from a learning process, however, and Jonathan epitomizes the culmination of these lessons by contrasting his education in Afghanistan to his current circumstances and future aspirations:

> When I was back in my homeland, it was really different back then, like for example I would wake up early every morning and go to work. It was midnight, 11 pm, and early in the morning at 8 am I was at work until 11 pm or midnight. I was at work the entire day. And in Germany I feel really good and the apartment is really good. In Germany, everyone thinks for himself.

This reflection emphasizes the different cultural values assigned to education and work in Germany compared to his homeland. Despite being years younger, Jonathan remembers working virtually the entire day to support his family and assigned relatively little importance to

finishing, or even continuing, his schooling. Concretely, this educational system has a very different structure than German schools and was limited to male children: "I was only in school in my homeland for 3 years when I was young and only learned things like 1, 2, 3…. We lived well, my father worked, and we were so happy, I went to school with my siblings". Symbolically the entire educational system has a different role in this context as a place to learn basic skills before starting to work. As he discusses the promises of a German education and embraces this paradigm for his future, Jonathan exemplifies 'moving forward' as part of an assimilationist acculturative orientation that recognizes the importance of this ideology for his new life while not also trying to merge this new perspective with the rural model in Afghanistan. Through the *DaZ* program, Jonathan has internalized the importance of completing a German education for his future life, a perspective that holds merit but, in this case, overrides his previous viewpoint.

This ideological reconceptualization of the role of education is a significant result of the reorientation process implicitly forwarded by the *DaZ* program, but other particularities testify to the far-reaching effects of this realignment. Anna, a 16-year old girl from Iraq, describes some of the larger structural differences that, from her first day at Karl-Eberhard, forced a complete reassessment of educational systems: "In Iraq, our school is only for girls and the other is for boys, so not together". This separation along gender lines extended beyond the direct schooling environment and structured even her extracurricular opportunities.

> For us, in Iraq, girls can't play, only boys can play soccer and basketball. At our school when I was in Iraq, we could also play basketball, but only one day a week. But here in Germany, you can go to music, play soccer, everyone's the same.

As Anna engages in these activities now after migrating to Germany, she is able to explore core interests in a way that has reformulated notions of gender and self, thereby directly affecting her personal identity. Anna does not see any problems with mixed-gender learning or activities, and is happy to have the opportunity to become involved in soccer and basketball at school, both core components of her identity as a young woman as she later reflects, thus indicating a positive result of changing national contexts to facilitate her identity development. By normalizing this mixed-gendered learning context, Anna does not problematize this 'gender equality' framework and has adopted this German, democratic ideology into her new life here, demonstrating again an assimilationist orientation that overrides these prior, 'incompatible' ideologies. This internalization is most pronounced in Anna's comparison, but it can also be located within Jonathan's anecdote of going to school with his male siblings, not other women. Both students were schooled and socialized in single-gendered learning environments in their homelands, yet upon arriving in Germany there were no expressions of discontent over their new mixed-gendered context. These sentiments were not merely suppressed, but overwritten as a result of intense emphasis on democratic values of equality emphasized within the *DaZ* learning environment in different facets, thereby testifying to the efficacy of the internalization of this democratic value (and assimilation). Other aspects of orienting to new German lives, however, were discussed more directly and occasionally met with resistance, demonstrating an active engagement amongst the students with value-laden questions of German ways of life.

On my first day in S2, Frau B. asked everybody to reflect on their experiences with New Year's Eve in Germany (a first for many). One student told a story about partying with friends in the middle of downtown Lübeck, shooting fireworks into the sky and laughing as the scraps fell

into the crowds, running away as pedestrians shouted at them. Immediately afterwards, as the

students around me were laughing at the image, Frau B. started lecturing the student on the

importance of them abiding by German laws to be seen as "good migrants" because so many

perceive foreigners as disrupting societal peace. Occurring only a few years after the 2015/16

New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Cologne and other cities, these perceptions are directly tied to

the reactions by citizens across Germany lamenting over the failed integration of dangerous

migrants. These sentiments surely exist and Frau B.'s reflection demonstrates an active concern

for negative public perceptions and, through this, an active engagement with larger narratives

of migration and 'foreigners'. At the same time, this forwarded a particular image of migrants

integrating themselves into Germany by abiding by these laws and not drawing attention to

their 'foreignness' – an effective tactic to reduce possible discrimination, but also reminiscent

of 'passing' as a 'good' German in contrast to a 'bad' migrant. Through this formulation, it is the

prerogative of the adolescent migrant to learn and abide by these rules and their transgressions

would seem to indicate (to Germans) a deliberate rejection of these values, thus indicating an

assimilationist acculturation orientation based on the humanist desire to reduce perceived

discrimination. This represents a much more explicit engagement with value reorientation in

the process of German 'integration', a notion that Jonathan recognizes and hails:

> Yeah, the laws here are good and many aren't very good, because for example I
> smoke cigarettes and in Germany, if someone's under 18 then they're not
> allowed to smoke. When I was in my homeland, I smoked a lot and went to
> work, but here I have to go to school, learn the language and all that, so that law
> is difficult for me. Everyone has to learn that soon. That is very different
> between my homeland and Germany… I want to learn the laws and rules and
> then they won't say to me that I come from another country.

Jonathan's narrative emphasizes that he does not agree with all these new German values, as some of the laws "aren't very good", yet he still recognizes the practical necessity of appearing to abide by these values to avoid negative public perceptions. Though he has not internalized these new rules, Jonathan still recognizes the importance of outwardly supporting German law and order. In this narrative, Jonathan is also embracing an 'integration' style by continuing this activity (and thus retaining this value) in a new German context, regardless the potential consequences (legal and social). Through this reflection, his earlier indications of approaching an assimilationist acculturative orientation becomes more complicated as he selectively determines which values are vital for future success, and which he can surreptitiously retain.

Beyond general norms about behavior in public, the process of learning new rules in a German context extends directly into school-life. Hannah, now years out of the *DaZ* program, remembers this process and still struggles with discrepancies between her current educational setting and her school in her homeland, representing a persistent cognitive dissonance: "there were some rules at our school that don't exist at this school here". Anna also discusses her own experience with these differences that caused significant turmoil between her and Frau B.:

> We have so much paper! For example, my teacher, she wants to speak to my father about my report card for example, then she takes a piece of paper and writes so and so on it, you have to give it to your father and we have to talk together, then I get other pieces of paper, come to class and get more – man it's a lot of paper…. With us, our teacher says "on this day you have to come here with your father and we'll speak together". But here in Germany I get 3 pieces of paper…. First, I got a paper from Frau B. for an appointment, but I didn't know what it was and I threw it away in the trash. The she asked me "why did you throw it away?" I saw "I didn't understand anything", then she said "okay, then simply ask!" Then I said "I get so many pieces of paper and I don't want anything to do with these papers."

This anecdote highlights multiple areas of misunderstanding and miscommunication – Anna did not understand the content of the paper invitation nor did she understand the *reason* for using paper for this meeting. She perceives it as a benign act, but this paper serves as a symbol for German procedures; by throwing it away, Frau B. sees an act of defiance against this formalized process of review. As Frau B. approaches her to clarify this confusion, she serves to reinforce the importance of paper-based communication in Germany, demonstrating an active effort to orient Anna towards this internalization. As Anna rejects this at the end of the anecdote, she exemplifies a rejection of this value, instead retaining modes of communication in Iraq that indicates a leaning towards 'integration' or 'separation' acculturation orientations in this context. Similarly, although Jonathan understands that it is illegal to smoke underage, he discusses how he shares cigarettes with his friends in the city, thus combating an internalization of these rules that compete with their own values, demonstrating agency in *choosing* how and when to consider assimilation or integration styles.

These more explicit lessons of 'official' laws and rules (both German and the school's) thus serve as sites of resistance for students trying to retain their home country's values while new, practical paradigms are more readily adopted by students. The *DaZ* program is predicated on preparing students for their future education through language learning and an orientation towards German ways of life, and this paradigm is especially pronounced in lessons about democratic values and appropriate behavior. While the underlying messages of gender equality and the importance of education are largely adopted by the students, other laws and norms are selectively adapted, contested, and resisted by students from countries with different rules. This demonstrates the agency of migrant adolescents to selectively internalize lessons that they

believe apply to their new lives and will be beneficial. Importantly, these reflections also attest

to the selective, intentional engagement with potentially competing values, as students may

embrace particular German rules in one context where it is perceived to have practical benefits

for their future, while retaining those from their countries of origin in another context when

they are less (directly) impactful on their long-term incorporation.

The program's goal of orienting these migrants to new lives in Germany is well reflected

in these narratives of internalization, but these reflections also demonstrate the individual

agency of these students to decide, for themselves, which are more beneficial. As a separate

program within the larger Karl-Eberhard environment, these classrooms are also very close-knit

by spending the majority of their school day together, necessitating an investigation into the

DaZ environment itself. In their interviews, many students discussed how the *DaZ* program and

its classes functioned as a community to welcome them into the larger schooling context and,

in some instances, as a 'secondary family' to supplement the bonds lost when migrating.

2.2 Community Building in DaZ

S1 and S2, the two *DaZ* classrooms, are set up to promote a sense of commonality

amongst the students through the map of each students' homeland hanging in the back of the

room and posters of their faces filled by images of their favorite things. The choice to seat

students by tables fosters the creation of groups and tablemates beyond mere classmates,

further stratifying them yet establishing each as an entity within the larger whole. The early

morning activity of reviewing the date and weather across tables unifies them within the

particular classroom, and by correcting each students' pronunciation or sentence structure

regardless of proficiency or background, Frau B. reinforces their positions as peers to each

other. This normalizes public corrections which, in some other environments, can be

detrimental to adolescents' self-esteem because of implicit hierarchies established between

'good' (smart) and 'bad' (dumb) students. Instead, the universality of Frau B.'s comments

establishes each student as a 'learner', no better than the others, and welcomes the migrants

to work together towards self-improvement while simultaneously bettering each other. This

practice is followed by Frau K. in S1, establishing an overarching sense of communal learning.

These peer corrections represent initial steps in community building within the

classroom: as new students arrive, unable to speak German and communicate with their

neighbors, they can at least recognize when their peers correct their language use. Anna

reflects that in those early days, when she could hardly communicate with her peers and was

alone with her brother at school, she became friends with her tablemate and this friendship

would eventually become central to her new life in Germany:

> So, on my first day at this school I was completely new, I was here on September
> 20th 2018 and I was nervous because I was a bit new. Then Amelie, my friend,
> she also goes here, she was also new and we could speak a little German but not
> very well. She said "where are you from" and "what's your name". I learned and
> so did she. And we spoke during the breaks but not much. And then after a
> month we could speak really well, well not really well but good enough.

Both Amelie and Anna arrived in Lübeck around the same time, quickly forming a bond in class

and now, just seven months later, their friendship has blossomed as they spend time together

outside of school as well. This is an important reflection because, despite the fact that they

could barely communicate with each other, the communal environment fostered in this

classroom allowed them to form a new bond that has persisted. Friendships are a vital

component of adolescent lives and development, but even more so in a migration context

when these students do not have a support system in their new environment. Anna recounts

how, after learning basic phrases, she tried conversing with the other girl at her table, Nora:

> She taught me a lot before. We learned a lot. And when she came here she could
> already speak German. When I said a sentence, for example on my first day here
> I said "T-Tschüß" with the T. Then she said "why did you say the T?" and I said
> "because the first letter is a T" and she said "no that's not right! In German you
> have to say 'Tschüß' without the T". Then I said "ok, thank you!"

While the public corrections serve to establish each student as an equal learner within the

class, this act is also used to foster these interpersonal relationships. Anna's and Nora's

relationship began as a result of their mutual learning, but while Amelie and Anna were both

new learners, Nora used her stronger language skills to form this friendship, demonstrating

how hierarchies between learners' competencies are suppressed to support a community feel.

Anna, Amelie and Nora happened to sit at the same table upon arriving to Karl-Eberhard, also

as the only girls, and bonds almost immediately formed as a result of these converging factors

alongside the mobilization of peer language learning. This paradigm persists further than these

initial bonds and most participants emphasizes that the majority of their friends in school are,

or were, in the *DaZ* program. For others, this sense of community continues beyond friendships

and serves to establish notions of a 'second family' in their new national context.

Similar to Anna's reflection on the challenges of migrating to Germany in the middle of

her school years, leaving friends and family behind in her home country, Amelie expresses

overwhelming sadness on her first day at Karl-Eberhard: "it was really difficult for me and when

I went to school on my first day here, I cried because I was new here and I didn't know

anybody". Eventually, as Anna managed, Amelie started learning more German and felt more

comfortable with her table- and classmates, forming a particularly strong friendship with

Jonathan. As we began her interview, she reflected on these feelings and articulated an

especially strong connection to her classmates and teacher.

S. Ok, so how do you like S2 here?

A. I find it really nice, the teacher is very good. For example, the teacher teaches
us right and we understand ourselves as well. All of us in the classes are like
brothers and sisters.

S. Brothers and sisters, what do you mean by that?

A. I mean we're always there for each other and we're all the same and yeah.

Beyond conceptualizing her *DaZ* peers as friends (as per Anna's reflection), Amelie emphasizes

a familial bond by classifying her classmates as 'brothers and sisters' which entangles them in a

more stable, cohesive group that respects each as an individual. Her reflection highlights Frau B.

as a unifying figure, undeniably benevolent and central to this sentiment, reflecting a positive

engagement with this environment as integral to her new life in Germany. As her friendship

with Anna helped ameliorate the emotional difficulties of migrating to Germany, this new sense

of a 'second family' helps fill the void left by family members who could not accompany her.

This also represents how external concerns over transnational families extend into the school

context, reflecting agency in *how* these new bonds will look based on each students' desires.

This reflects a non-nuclear notion of 'family' that is not central to traditional German familial

values, thus also indicating how Amelie has reimagined this space to align with her personal

aspirations rather than adhering by 'German norms'. Furthermore, the emphasis on a familial

bond maintains her connection to *DaZ*, meaning she will retain this notion of a 'second family'

with her migrant peers even after integrating into the regular classes. As Amelie's younger

brother is in the other classroom, this notion of a 'second family' embraces a pan-*DaZ* sense of

community, incorporating both S1 and S2 and enforcing 'migrant' identities in this context.

Jonathan echoes these sentiments of familial bonds within the *DaZ* program from a

different perspective as an older adolescent who has lost contact with any family members in

his home country. As an underage teenager, he has been placed in a living group with a

caretake who have developed a sense of familial bonds, as explored earlier. However, *DaZ*

serves as a 'secondary family' for Jonathan in an in-school context through similar notions of

support and respect, thus not replacing his living group 'family' or his family back home.

> J. I think my class is really cool, everyone is nice to me, and I am to them, and actually my teacher, Frau B., is really nice to me. She helped a lot with German, learning German and so on, and she helped me find an internship location. That helps a lot. I feel alone, even though I have no family here. I'm all alone in German and my family is in my homeland, Afghanistan, and I feel alone, even though I have friend and teachers who are nice to me here.

> S. Yeah so kind of just like a second family.

> J. Exactly like a second family… that is very important. When I'm happy, then I also have my family. If I'm sad, if I don't have any family, who am I supposed to go to then?

Throughout this reflection, Jonathan emphasizes the emotional support and guidance he feels

emanating from the *DaZ* environment, especially as a result of Frau B.'s instruction and his

classmates' respect. This is emblematic of Jonathan's agency by utilizing this environment to

fulfill his desire to regain familial bonds, also testifying to the strong community feel within *DaZ*.

Having lacked agency in the migration process, he now demonstrates it in this new context of

liberal democracy that embraces choice, while also imagining the class as a 'family' in a non-

traditional way that echoes Amelie's desires. Neither student emphasized these types of bonds in their previous national context, so this intentional family-building reflects a reconfiguration of this space to suit their emotional needs on top of practical concerns. Reflecting neither true assimilation or integration acculturative styles, this represents a novel interpretation of the *DaZ* community to fill voids of familial support, thus testifying to the importance of these bonds for migrant students and their creativity in reimagining this space for their needs.

As students acquire sufficient language skills and begin integrating into the rest of the school, this strong *DaZ* bond could have a negative effect on students who wish to stay in the class because of the reliable support, but their narratives paint a different picture. Having recently transitioned into full integration, Nora contrasts the *DaZ* classroom with the regular class environments along degrees of teacher support:

> When I was in the DaZ class, it was much easier than now because there, Frau B. had time for me. She could sit next to me and explain everything, but now in the regular classes it's somewhat different now, as we have to integrate ourselves, we have to understand everything that the teachers since in one go because he can't go to every table and say "yeah, I can do that with you" and explain it for 20 minutes or so…. I think it's ok because… that's just a step forward and above, since then I can… feel a bit independent because I don't have to be next to a teacher and always need help.

In contrast to Frau B., this teacher is not able to provide the individual support that exemplified the *DaZ* environment for Nora, thereby simultaneously affecting the learning environment around her. Rather than being perturbed by her new teacher's inability to provide personal assistance during class assignments, she invokes her 'independence' as the defining factor in this new context, thus also reflecting a more adult-like identity akin to Hannah's personal development. Her early comments reflect an appreciation for S2 and her old teacher, but the

emphasis on moving 'a step forward and above' reflects the intentional usage of this learning

space and knowledge for future success, a consideration more important than remaining in the

DaZ program which would, in comparison, limit them. Amelie echoes these notions when

discussing her upcoming transition into a vocational school in the upcoming year:

> S. Would you like to stay in S2, or would you rather be partially integrated into the regular classes?

> A. Yes, that is right that it feels like a family, but I would like to move on and not continue to stay in DaZ next year because I have to have a career and I don't think that I can stay in this school.

As Amelie is already 16-years old, she does not have the option to stay in *DaZ*, yet her comment

indicates that even if she could choose to remain, she would gladly transition onwards into the

regular classes in order to continue on with her life. Jonathan, perhaps even more reliant on

this familial support system because of his personal history, presents a similar perspective:

> I wanted to stay here actually, but I'm turning 17 soon so I'm not allowed to stay in the G*emeinschaftsschule*…. Unfortunately, yeah, but it will also be really cool when I can start my career, when I go to the vocational school and continue my education. I think that's also really cool.

For both Amelia and Jonathan, this classroom context has been instrumental in their ability to

integrate themselves into their new national and schooling environments, but both also

recognize this space as a transitionary period before full integration and their eventual career.

In this sense, *DaZ* functions to orient them in these new schooling and national environments,

but student narratives reflect a desire to continue forward, emphasizing a pragmatic view of

the importance of this program for their future, eventual full integration (captured through

career success and individuality). Overall, *DaZ* fosters a community where tablemates become

friends and classmates become parts of a larger support system that serves as a 'secondary

family', facilitating emotional coping, while providing practical preparation for future lives.

To understand the influence of this community bond in the context of the larger Karl-

Eberhard school environment, older students who became fully integrated were asked to

reflect on their current classroom experiences and their friendships. Hannah and Sandra

reference the challenges of participating in an overwhelmingly 'German' class as non-native

speakers, yet these difficulties extend beyond mere language skills. Hannah discusses

transitioning into the regular classes the year before after spending months in the *DaZ*

classrooms and meeting Sandra for the first time:

> H. So last year I got to know another classmate that also comes from Syria
> [Sandra]. We always have a good time with each other, it's really nice. But with
> the others, I don't really believe in myself enough to start up a conversation with
> them. I'm the kind of person who doesn't just go up to someone and ask
> something. I always wait until they say something to me.
>
> S. You're a bit shy.
>
> H. Exactly, but this year it's also gone a bit differently because I also like how
> they hung out with each other and I thought to myself, "why are we just sitting
> here, no I can also talk!" So then I did that and it went well I would say.

In contrast to the more fluid, natural bond she felt with Sandra, Hannah felt the need to

actively approach her classmates, yet a year later she still feels closer to her migrant friends

than many of these peers. While they were quite responsive to her efforts, friendships did not

flourish as easily as they did with Sandra or in the *DaZ* classes. Hannah was able to overcome

her initial timidity, but Sandra reflected still feeling 'other' or different in this space. Reflecting

on these dynamics, she invokes another type of bond amongst her German peers that she

noticed upon entering this new environment after spending almost a year in *DaZ*:

> The Germans, I think they don't want to speak with me because they've known their friends since 5th grade or kindergarten and so they don't want to get to know new friends, I think. But they are actually nice. They're nice, but they don't want to talk much.

While she emphasizes the well-intentioned attitudes of her classmates, the difference between her classmates and her retains a boundary barring her full integration into the established community. Classes at Karl-Eberhard are infrequently mixed, so students in one fifth grade class (e.g., 5A) will likely remain in the same cohort throughout their years, eventually graduating together in most cases. Therefore, the students had established a strong sense of community over their last four years when Hannah and Sandra arrived as virtual outsiders. While this fosters a community within the regular classes, this simultaneously makes it challenging for new students to feel 'welcome' in this space, affecting their identity as 'others' in this space. On the other hand, Erik experienced few problems with integrating into his 10th grade classroom and reported overwhelmingly positive accounts of his classmates.

> I think that the people in my grade are really nice. Before I moved here to Germany, I thought that there would be, well maybe not discrimination, but difficulties with integration, but no! The Germans in my grade are really nice and like to interact with migrants… I thought that many German students don't like to have contact with migrants, but that's not true… they started to get to know me, they asked so many questions about my homeland and about myself, so then I started to speak with my classmates.

Erik's ease at becoming a member of his classroom community starkly contrasts Hannah's and Sandra's experiences. Interestingly, he draws connections between their reactions to him as a migrant and general questions of toleration versus discrimination, somewhat contrary to the girls' reflections. Why was his transition more seamless and overwhelmingly positive? Erik discusses how he was only in the *DaZ* program for two weeks before becoming fully integrated

into this classroom, as he took language lessons in Kazakhstan before migrating to Germany. He did not spend enough time in *DaZ* to become fully acclimated into their community, instead almost immediately moving into the new class. At the same time, his classmates' curiosity over his 'homeland' maintains his status as a 'migrant', though without negative connotations. For Sandra and Hannah, migrant status barred them from feeling welcomed, reflecting differential treatments of different migrants: both are girls from Syria, reflecting dominant narratives of 'Arab migrant women' as representative all migrants, who are also perceived to also be Muslim and anti-democratic (more on this later). The students were identified as 'migrants', but the ease of Erik's integration contrasted with Hannah's and Sandra's highlights the persistence of *DaZ* labels into the regular classes alongside the differential treatment of migrants who look like they fit national narratives surrounding the 'Refugee Crisis' and 'floods' of Muslims arriving.

This 'migrant status' becomes the counterpart to 'German' in the regular classroom as former *DaZ* students gravitate towards each other while further differentiating themselves from their peers. At the same time, there is a recognition of different types of migrants who are treated differently depending on their backgrounds, demonstrating how Orientalist discourses affect this schooling environment. Within the *DaZ* community, these differences are more subdued, and Erik emphasizes being friends with fellow migrants across backgrounds: "yeah they're also my friends because we've also had many interactions, for example with the *DaZ* students from Syria and others, not just with Germans, but also with other *DaZ* students." Thus, the negative perceptions tied to contemporary Syrian migrants are not prominent within this space, but after leaving *DaZ*, they are reinvigorated and affect the ability for migrants to integrate themselves on top of affecting their identity development as 'others' in this space.

Overall, *DaZ* as a program and its classes foster a strong community that turns neighbors into friends and classmates into pseudo-kin which remains relevant even after becoming fully integrated into the regular classes. This bond is strengthened by Frau B.'s and K.'s pedagogical ideologies of communal learning and peer corrections, but the students themselves instigate these relationships to facilitate their orientation to their new lives in Germany and at Karl-Eberhard across the school, demonstrating individual agency. Hannah discusses the permeation of these bonds throughout the entire school, arguing that "the majority of people that live here aren't from Germany. Or that they were only born in Germany but aren't Germans", thus contributing to a high 'migrant' population that, in some ways, juxtaposes 'Germans'. As Erik demonstrates, however, these labels are dependent on many contextual factors. Still, these examples of community building demonstrate the collective agency of the students in *DaZ* to reimagine these classroom spaces for their purposes which extend beyond the administration's expectations. While this space is instrumental in providing a foundation for future academic achievement, career goals, and partially successful in orienting students towards a German *habitus*, these interviews highlight how students selectively incorporate lessons that will directly apply to their future lives while rejecting others as unimportant, demonstrating a highly contextualized migrant acculturation process somewhere between assimilation and integration.

Representing one of the core components of the National Integration Plan, the *DaZ* environment is tied to questions of migrant incorporation and forwards a particular image of what 'good' integration looks like. Emphasizing the importance of obtaining an education for future success, Karl-Eberhard presents a new paradigm of learning for many of these students, and these narratives demonstrate how they embraced this ideology. Instead of just following

program policies, however, the participants continually exemplified individual and collective agency by adopting particular lessons important for their future lives while also merging prior ideologies to this new space, reflecting a selective and contextualized negotiation between 'integration' and 'assimilation' orientations. This reflects a continual acculturation process that reacts to situations based on personal values and their view on what will be most efficacious for their future lives. By reimagining notions of 'family' and 'in-class communities', these students are cognizant of how these systems of support will forward their incorporation into Germany, reflecting also identity development by situating themselves in this new space and recognizing their status as 'migrants' who need to adjust to this new context. This also internalizes the notion that migrants themselves are responsible for integration, making these acts of individual agency highly efficacious for their incorporation and identity development as individuals.

However, by only focusing on students' backgrounds as important components of their identity but not as potential barriers to integration and overlooking the manifestation of Orientalist discourses within this space, these concerns are not addressed, making assimilation orientations more efficacious for some than others. As these students selectively internalize particular lessons for future success, it is important to look at how this is process is actualized: in order to graduate *and* to naturalize to become German citizens (if that is desired), students must be able to speak and understand the language, making this a core component of future adaptation. To understand the diverse effects of this central component of migrant futures, the next chapter discusses the many effects of language learning for these students and how they envision their future lives in Germany based on questions of belonging and national identities.

Chapter VI: Language Learning and Future Prospects in Germany

1. Learning German for Future Aspirations and Daily Life

As the previous chapter discussed, one of the primary goals for many of these students is to obtain a German education in order to continue their lives and succeed in the job market. These aspirations were clearly framed around their individual agency to determine what is important for their own lives, but there was little investigation into the actual *process* of reaching these goals. This chapter discusses how learning German is a functional method of completing their education. The system and mode of instruction is so unique to the German context, special consideration will be paid to investigating how students learn to succeed beyond *DaZ*. Furthermore, adolescent lives extend far beyond the in-school context (as explored in the last chapter) and when these students are interacting in downtown Lübeck or shopping with their parents, speaking German becomes a matter of daily functioning beyond the school context. Therefore, it is important to understand how this 'integration process' extends beyond the Karl-Eberhard environment to frame language learning as another selective integration tactic to facilitate their societal incorporation. Finally, this chapter reinvestigates themes of emotional attachments in questions of belonging to consider whether their futures in Germany are conceptualized as a new 'home' where they 'belong', or whether this is just a new environment. Therefore, this chapter discusses how migrant adolescents perceive their current situations and envision their future lives through individual actions, public perceptions, and national categorizations.

1.1 Academic Success and Future Career Goals

As adolescents arriving to Germany, often in the middle of school years, these students must learn German in order to continue their education at Karl-Eberhard and beyond. The regular classes at the school are taught chiefly in German and this is the most explicit goal of the *DaZ* program: to prepare migrants for regular education through language acquisition. By providing a space to learn, it is then the students' prerogative to become engaged and motivate themselves to gain language competency. The nature of a *Gemeinschaftsschule* encourages diverse educational and vocational pathways, with 10th grade being entirely optional, and Karl-Eberhard's motto exemplifies this aspiration: *"eine Schule für alle zum Lernen und Leben"* ('a school for all to learn and live'). Especially within the *DaZ* context, the students' various post-graduation goals are mirrored by their backgrounds: for some, this environment is their first experience with formal schooling; for others, it represents a novel pedagogical style that must learned before success is possible. These students have very different experiences with this environment based on their diverse backgrounds and their expectations vary, but learning German remains central to their future goals.

Hannah reflects that learning German is critical in order to continue with her education and emphasizes the practical application of language learning to comprehension:

> In my opinion, the language is very important, of course, in order to keep going forward. If someone can't speak very good German and wants to go to college, for example, that wouldn't work out very well. If you can understand everything that's written on the board, then you can say something about it and can at least express your opinion. But, for example, if I don't understand everything, then it's much more difficult for me, of course. I would say that the language is really the most important aspect of being able to continue forward.

Hannah repeats that she must 'master' the language in order to feel completely capable in an educational context that presumes high linguistic capabilities, demonstrating how learning German is central to her current goals. Reflecting that "I really had this idea that I want to master the language so that I can somehow develop myself", Hannah frames her learning process within her identity development by extending her possibilities in this context. Nora agrees with Hannah's assessment, relating language learning to her similar future aspirations:

> I want to stay here, I want to live here, enjoy my time here, study at university and so on. And yeah, I can speak a decent amount of German and I want to learn more and more because I want to study medicine in college and for that I absolutely need German and English. But first I have to learn German really well.

Both aspiring towards higher education (despite the challenges of this pathway in this school context;), Hannah and Nora discuss how communicating in German will be instrumental to their ability to finish their time at Karl-Eberhard with strong grades (vital to studying medicine) and understanding their future coursework. Interestingly, Nora also imbeds other components of her *DaZ* education in this reflection by discussing how learning English is equally important for her future goals, indicating a particular status for this language (). Even after gaining language proficiency, the transition into the regular classes was still challenging for Hannah based on class content and structure: "last year was difficult for me personally because I didn't really know much about the subjects". These sentiments are predicated on the different exam formats in 9th grade than those in Syria, attesting to the structural differences that accompany linguistic challenges. This reflection reflects a potential downside to the *DaZ* program by not providing the students with representative assignments that will prepare them for future, high-stakes exams in the regular classes. This has the added

effect of affecting perceptions of migrant struggles because, if these challenges remain

unaddressed, lower achievement levels could be attributed to cultural incongruencies instead

of a lack of preparation and content knowledge (see Brettfeld & Wetzels, 2007). At the same

time, Hannah discusses how this lack of experience is difficult to mitigate because of the

students' diverse educational backgrounds in *DaZ*:

> It really does vary because if you come from one country into another and it's
> not the same all around… like I would say that you learn better here than in
> Syria…. In Syria I never had to give a presentation. Here I've already done that;
> the first time was in 9th grade… and it was relatively complicated for me because
> I didn't know how to go about it.

Despite her time in *DaZ*, Hanna felt unprepared to give a presentation, not because of the

language barrier but because this assignment was foreign to her. These reflections refer to an

earlier version of the program that has since been modified to address these concerns and

actualize goals of integrating migrants into the school and preparing them for success. Sandra,

who was also in *DaZ* a few years before this study and quickly integrated into the regular

classes, discusses how this lack of experience is further compounded by other linguistic

barriers. When beginning our interview, she immediately emphasizes how challenging 10th

grade at Karl-Eberhard has been for her:

> The things we do I find easy, but, for example, in geography and other subjects
> like it you need to understand German and if you understand everything then
> you can do the work, but if you only understand half of it, then you can't really
> do everything.

Echoing Hannah's perspective on the importance of learning German, Sandra relates linguistic

competency to achievement. Additionally, these challenges affect Sandra's and Hannah's

senses of self, as they thought that they were ready for the regular classes, but are unable to

succeed despite their efforts, making them question their competency and abilities. However, when conducting the interviews, Sandra and Hannah were (in my view) two of the most fluent and near-native speakers of the participants, and they were experiencing significant difficulties in their daily classroom activities. If these well-accomplished students felt that they were not prepared to fully participate in class, why had they been recommended for full integration, and why have students of lesser linguistic abilities been integrated as well? After further reflection, these language difficulties were found to be not related to basic comprehension or grammar, but rather to each subject's academic terminology. Discussing her *DaZ* learning environment, Sandra emphasizes that their curriculum was incompatible with the regular school syllabi:

> We only had German back then, no math or geography. Only German. Because of that you had to learn how to speak…. When I only learned German, I didn't learn certain words that I now need in biology or geography, so when I learn biology now, for example, I am also learning words that I've never heard before.

While in theory this intensive language learning environment would most efficiently prepare students for the regular classes by achieving fluency at a quicker rate, they would not gain important subject-specific terminology that would frame their future education. Furthermore, the lack of experience with German-styled assignments (e.g., presentations) constrains their ability to effectively navigate this learning environment even if they learned the necessary academic vocabulary. After Hannah and Sandra moved into the regular classes, the *DaZ* program was reorganized to incorporate these classes, reflecting the school's engagement with these concerns. When the current students were tasked to give a presentation on 'their city' in computer class, then, the students gained practical experience with German-style assignments, thereby addressing Hannah's critique.

Other students still in the intensive *DaZ* program reflect on how these other subjects help structure their education in general, even beyond the Karl-Eberhard environment. Andreas, a 16-year old student from Russia, has not learned enough German to be partially integrated into the regular classes but must transfer schools next year because he cannot continue as a full-time student in Karl-Eberhard's *DaZ* program after turning 16. Therefore, he will be transferring into a vocational school where he can continue his regular education on top of learning a trade. Immediately before conducting our interview, he returned from a two-week internship as an auto mechanic where he had the opportunity to apply his developing language skills while learning job-specific vocabulary and important skills which he will apply at his new school. Reflecting on his education at Karl-Eberhard, Andreas discusses how some subjects were more important based on his schooling background and future goals:

> I've learned a lot in the DaZ class, in German, in English, everything. But in
> geography and earth science, not as much because in Russia I already knew
> everything.

Referencing his own educational background when assessing his learning, Andreas highlights how each student prioritizes particular lessons and subjects. This is an important consideration because each student arrives to this program with drastically different educational backgrounds that also prioritize subjects in a distinct pedagogical style. In this sense, *DaZ* must prepare students across these backgrounds for all future educational pathways, a difficult task compounded by these asymmetrical histories. Despite this wide array of expectations and previous experiences, some subjects remain vital to all students' education in the regular classes at Karl-Eberhard. Roman, a partially integrated 14-year old student in S1, outlines this sentiment in unequivocal terms:

> Well DaZ helps, because if you're not in DaZ and you go to the regular classes, then you don't know absolutely anything. For example, some can't speak English and such, you learn math, English, and German, you have to. The most important is German, then English, then math because if you don't know them, then you can't go into the regular classes.

Roman's reflection emphasizes the intentional engagement by the students as to what subjects will be the most helpful and important in the future, demonstrating a selective incorporation of these lessons for individual goals. These are not the same as Andreas' reflection, highlighting their different educational backgrounds and demonstrating how students have diverse perspectives on the 'important' subjects. English and German remained central to both future pathways, thus making language learning important in general, but especially these two languages as modes of communication and pedagogy in this schooling context. Importantly, however, the students' own first languages are *not* emphasized as valuable languages in this context, demonstrating Yildiz's (2012) notion of "selective multilingualism" (p. 209) that ranks German and English as particularly favorable.

The different reflections explored in this section describe how each student's individual educational background and future career aspirations affect their experiences in *DaZ* and their expectations from the program. Hannah's and Sandra's grievances over lacking a comprehensive curriculum and its effects on their current functioning are contrasted with Roman's success as a partially integrated student who benefited from a reconfigured *DaZ* program. For students pursuing higher education, learning other subjects in addition to German is necessary to succeed in school and their eventual careers, while for other students, some subjects may seem unnecessary. Regardless of their backgrounds and future goals, every participant reflected how German (and the *DaZ* environment) is necessary to function in school

and to obtain a job after work, emphasizing its practical application in these contexts. Thus, the transition from a chiefly language-based program into an all-encompassing curriculum helps facilitate students' migration by establishing a foundation for individual development based on their personal aspirations, allowing them to feel self-efficacious in their future learning environments (affecting their identity as a 'good' learner and their motivations to continue).

Through these students' reflections, the *DaZ* program appears to be very efficacious in preparing students for their future educational pathways and career goals through language instruction and a broad education across different subjects. By participating in language learning processes, the students conceptualize their new schooling environment as a gateway to future success (reflecting in-school and national narratives; see p. 100), a different notion for many than in their countries of origin. Furthermore, as these narratives highlighted the importance of some languages (i.e., German and English) over students' other competencies, students suppress their diverse linguistic backgrounds in favor of embracing this monolingual / 'selective multilingual' paradigm (Yildiz, 2012). This represents an assimilationist style as well as an intentional engagement in learning for future success, and while linguistic diversity is suppressed, this orientation still may be efficacious for establishing a future in Germany. As discussed in Chapter V, migrant incorporation must be also examined outside of the Karl-Eberhard environment to understand how these messages apply to migrants' daily lives before examining whether these efforts have been successful in building futures in Germany.

1.2 Applications of Language Learning to Daily Interactions

As the students' reflections in the last chapter emphasize, adjusting to new national and schooling contexts as adolescent migrants involves more than merely adapting to new norms and necessitates community building alongside educational goals. Simultaneously, teens build their lives in social worlds, surrounded by peers and friends who are often more central to their daily concerns than academic troubles. Many of these students who arrived recently to Germany cannot speak the local language, drastically limiting their prospects of finding friends in school or in afterschool programs, an important aspect of adolescent identity development predicated on peer input. In the *DaZ* classes, classmates speak over a dozen first languages, such that German is the only true common language amongst them (some speak English, but most have better language skills in German). In order to actualize goals of community building and forming new friendships, students in *DaZ* thus *have* to participate in language learning. For some, like Oscar, a popular teen in S1, this provides a strong impetus for active engagement:

> Yeah, I want to have a lot of friends and yeah, so I speak with them and I study German at home and in school… when I came to class for the first time, I met my first friend and I hung out only with him because I couldn't speak German, but I could speak English, and we spoke together. When I began learning German, then I had more friends.

Oscar's English competency facilitated this early friendship, yet it did not encompass his larger social goals, leading him to focus heavily on language learning. After gaining more German competency, he was able to relate more with his classmates and became integrated into the classroom culture, thereby emphasizing the language-bound relationship within this program. In this reflection, the promises of English learning are regulated by German language competency, necessitating an engagement in German *first* in order to communicate with peers.

Roman, Oscar's S1 peer who is more integrated in the regular classes, provides a similar reflection from the perspective of a student who has largely moved beyond the *DaZ* classes yet retains a connection to the community and his old classmates. Reflecting on his first weeks in Germany as a new student at Karl-Eberhard, Roman discusses the challenges of not being able to communicate with his peers: "at the beginning it was a little difficult because I couldn't speak the language and didn't have any friends, but slowly after time it got better… because I didn't have any friends or anything, it was boring". As he gained more language skills and grew more self-confident, he began participating in a local soccer club where he met native Germans with whom he could practice his German. Two years after joining, they have grown much closer as a result of Roman's growing capabilities, closer even than his S1 peers.

> R. The friends from school are only school friends and many of my friends from the soccer club also go to school here.

> S. And what about the people in S1?

> R. Well they're also like normal friends, but we don't see each other as much, only during school time. But regarding the other friends, we're practically always together playing soccer outside.

Roman exercises a considerable degree of control throughout this reflection, as he could have strengthened his friendships with his S1 peers instead of his soccer friends, but he *wanted* to be with them more often. This testifies to the power of language learning by providing options for future friendships and affording these migrants with the agency to decide their path based purely on their preferences. Importantly, Roman relates his language competency and these friendships to his incorporation, saying he feels "like I'm at home here… because I'm like the other kids and the other German kids, like I know the language just as well as them". Roman

has mobilized his language learning to facilitate bonds with German peers and, as other

scholars predicted (i.e., Czymara & Schmidt-Catran, 2016), this process also reduced cultural

distancing as he framed himself alongside 'the other German kids'. Dialogically aligning himself

with Germany by calling it 'home', Roman has effectively suppressed his linguistic background

by learning German and becoming involved in activities with other Germans. Importantly, this

represents an intentionally assimilationist acculturation orientation that simply recognizes his

current life in Germany while downplaying questions of cultural and linguistic differences.

Other students reported different functions of German language usage in their daily

lives outside of friendships, discussing its importance for navigating their new local and national

contexts in very pragmatic terms. Jonathan, from the perspective of an adolescent housed in a

living group with other teenagers, emphasizes that language learning is essential for anyone

seeking independence in their new lives. Extending the scope beyond his immediate school-

based context, he explores how the lives of people he knows are hindered by not being able to

speak German when trying to interact in the city or visiting the doctor:

> German is important for everyone that's living in Germany… you need the language when you go to the doctor, for example, so that you can speak with him in German. You can't speak with him in your mother tongue. If he can speak English, then yeah ok, but if he doesn't for example, then you have to speak in German. It's really important for everyone to learn German…. Yeah you have to learn it in order to live in Germany. That's really important for everyone. I would also say that everyone has to learn it.

Jonathan's reflection provides a different perspective on the importance of learning German by

discussing its application in daily life based on his friends' experiences. At the same time,

however, he references visiting the doctor's office with his peers who cannot interact in

language, acting as a translator, and frames this as a positive bonding experience that provides

him with more opportunities to practice his German. Moreover, this reliance serves to solidify

their interpersonal bonds and adds another layer of support outside of Karl-Eberhard: "I think

it's also good that I have friends that call me when they need help. When I need help, then they

also come to me because I also help them." Nonetheless, Jonathan maintains that everyone

should learn German because it allows for individuality in their new contexts, an important

consideration for young adolescents developing personal identities about to be entering adult

lives in Germany which, as last chapter reviewed, are marked by individuality.

While Jonathan furthers the ideology that everyone should learn German, Hannah

provides a different perspective that discusses how different situations lead to varying degrees

of necessity. As an adolescent approaching high school graduation, Hannah frames her personal

need to learn German in a similarly practical manner that applies Jonathan's circumstantial

anecdote to questions of daily interactions in Lübeck:

> Well like I said, it's really important for me to learn the language, not just for my
> education, because you need the language everywhere. Not just in school with
> Germans, but also on the street. When I'm going shopping for example, I have to
> talk in German. It's really important to learn the language.

For Hannah, a student with friends throughout the city who constantly interacts with others,

learning German is framed through pragmatic terms of simply trying to navigate the urban

environment. When reflecting on her family's language learning endeavors, however, she

provides a very different perspective than Jonathan's universal claim. As a retired teacher,

Hannah's mother mainly remains at home during the day, does not have to worry about

starting (or continuing) her career in Germany, and has limited interactions with people in the

city. Hannah's mother nonetheless has engaged herself in language learning by enrolling in a

course in the city, and Hannah disagrees with this decision:

> I said to her, that if I were her, I would have skipped past learning the language
> because she doesn't really need the language…. She's done with her education,
> what else does she need? I spoke to her about it and she said that it doesn't
> depend on whether you want to continue your education, for example, but
> rather it's really important to master the language so that she can feel better
> here. I don't know why, but that's what she said to me… she spends the majority
> of her time at home, what does she need the language for? I've asked myself the
> same thing, but she has a completely different opinion.

Embedded within this reflection are highly contextualized notions of the application of learning

German to particular circumstances. Hannah's mother, a relatively secluded individual without

a career to pursue in Germany, does not have as many daily interactions as Hannah, indicating

an ideology about language learning dependent on particular contextual factors like age,

occupation and communication. At the same time, her mother could want to communicate

with neighbors, making her consideration not entirely encompassing. In this sense, Hannah

advocates language learning for people who will have to interact in particular ways in society.

Interestingly, as learning German is so important for integration or assimilation orientations,

her reflection proposes that older people could follow a separation acculturation ideology, a

perspective in contrast to national narratives, yet highly attuned to these contextual factors.

For these students, learning German has more applications than linear pathways to

future educational success and career goals. Many adolescents are temporally removed from

these prospective futures and emphasize the importance of language learning for making new

friends in this new environment. Others, however, recognize the importance of using German

for operating within their larger urban and national contexts. Throughout these reflections, the

students discussed appropriating their language learning to personal goals of building a network of friends and navigating their daily lives, both important for personal identity development and acculturative goals. None lamented over having to learn German, indicating that these students are highly emotionally engaged and do not feel compelled to participate due to national pressures. Rather, they display individual agency by selectively choosing to engage in this learning process based on their contextualized future life goals.

In this last section, the importance of learning German for these adolescents was framed through the assumption that they would remain in their new national context. I have discussed their current circumstances as 'migrants in Germany', a relatively neutral term that does not presume that they *want* or *can* to stay in the country (especially important for students who migrated illegally, or who were forced to flee their countries of origin). For students seeking to further their educational and career goals, they imply that German will remain important in the future and, likely, will remain in the country. Similar to the reflections in Chapter V, many students want to return to their previous national contexts but lack the power to choose this option. For some, this new context is the gateway to future success, and for others it acts as a reminder of their loss of agency. With this intentional framing, it is important to conclude with future prospects for these students with a focus on questions of belonging in the context of language learning and national identities.

2. Futures in Germany

2.1 A Future in Germany versus Belonging to Germany?

As the last section discussed how language learning is utilized by the participants towards multiple domains of their new lives in Germany, many discussed their eventual futures in this new environment with the assumption that they would remain. While many lamented their familial loss in their countries of origin, there was little discussion about returning home in the coming years, even amongst those who were privileged with the *choice* to migrate to Germany. Many expressed desires to reconnect with loved ones back home, yet few discussed plans to emigrate out of Germany because of practical considerations (i.e., warn-torn regions) or because they grew to appreciate their new circumstances (i.e., Oscar's reflection in Chapter V). For these students, there is a strong impulse to remain in Germany and to accommodate themselves to this new environment, especially by acquiring German language skills and abiding by new national laws and norms. However, it is also important to dialogically examine whether they feel like they *belong* to their new, German national context to understand their sense of self (identity development) and whether they want to simply 'move on' in Germany and embrace an assimilationist orientation (in contrast to maintaining strong connections to their 'home'; see Bhatia, 2002a for an example). As the participants were sampled from different stages in the in-school integration process, they varied widely an linguistic competency, duration in Germany, and future aspirations, representing different stages in their individual adaptation processes. Through this framing, this final section will consider questions of belonging through an interrelation of personal factors and public reception to examine the larger question of being and becoming German for contemporary transnational migrants.

Jonathan's plans for a future in Germany are framed in reference to his personal family history and his homeland, to which he cannot return, while his desire to be perceived as a 'German' reflects intentions to build a new life in his new country. In the last chapter, he discussed the emotional challenges that surrounded his migration to Germany and wished that his remaining family could be reunited, though this hope was unlikely to be substantiated. Even if they could reconnect, Jonathan reflects that he would not be able to return home due to significant dangers, implicating Germany as a place of safety while also highlighting the benefits of his new living circumstances.

> Yeah, it's actually really important for me to learn German because later I may want to pursue a career or something and I will also live in Germany, which is good for me because there is only war in my homeland, there's only stress. War and the Taliban. There are so many difficulties there, that's why I like it in Germany. I would also like to have my family here. When you're in Germany, then you know how good life can be. With us, there's only war and things like that… I've never been as happy as I was on my first day in Germany.

Despite the fact that he illegally migrated into the country in the back of a truck, Jonathan foresees no future difficulties with remaining in Germany and initiates plans to remain by learning the local language. Of course, he has not forgotten or forsaken his family back home, but he also recognizes the dangers of trying to return. In this sense, Jonathan's eventual future in Germany is both inevitable (in his mind; whether that is actually true is another question) and, if not ideal, at least positive. At the same time, language learning is a vital component of Jonathan's ultimate goal of fully integrating himself into the national and local communities: "that is also really important so that your life can continue on, when you work, and you have to learn everything from the beginning again. Learning the German language for the German education system, you need that." By framing his incorporation into Germany through language

learning and conceptualizing a future in this new context, Jonathan is making long-term plans

to remain. Later, however, he discusses how this engagement may not be sufficient to feel like

a 'German' alongside feelings of belonging and integration:

> I've also learned a lot of things well like that laws and stuff. And soon I will also learn even more so that I can become almost like a German, so that others to say "yeah, they're all foreigners, they come from other countries, they do bad things". I want to learn the laws and rules and then they won't say to me that I come from another country. Everyone mixes the countries together.

Despite his language proficiency, Jonathan does not truly feel that he is a true 'German'

because of these different norms and laws. Interestingly, he relates this identification to his

feelings of belonging in his new country, thereby framing his integration process in a linear

progression towards a final state of 'becoming German'. His indicator of 'Germanness' is not

captured by any objective measure or formal identification, but rather through fears of others'

perceptions of his 'foreignness' that juxtaposes 'Germanness' which are captured in his actions

(i.e., following laws or breaking them) on top of speaking German in public. This presents a

different conceptualization on the role of language learning in acculturation, implying that

acquiring German does not necessarily entail a reorientation towards a 'German' *habitus* or

immediately afford symbolic capital to 'pass' as German (see Bourdieu, 1983). These discourses

of incompatibility are largely directed at (perceived) non-Western migrants (see Chapter III),

reflecting an intentional engagement in these dominant narratives that frames language

learning as only one step towards recognition as a 'German'. While Jonathan is not entirely

content with his current circumstances due to familial separation, he embraces his and

Hannah's advice of simply 'continuing forward' by learning German and abiding by new laws in

an effort to 'become German', following a particularly assimilationist strategy that he worries

could fail because of others' perceptions. By trying to abide by these larger rules and

approximating German values, Jonathan hopes to 'pass' in an effort to belong alongside

learning the language to effectively operate in his new context.

While Jonathan has embraced these new circumstances, some of his peers still struggle

to adapt to life in Germany, like Amelie who has already been in the country for 8 months. She

discusses her first few weeks through themes of loneliness by being separated from her friends

in her homeland and grief at being separated from her brothers who remained in Montenegro.

While this split-family dynamic particularly burdens her parents, Amelie internalizes many of

these feelings and as she attends school every day with her younger brother, she is constantly

reminded of her other siblings: "It is difficult and therefore I'm a bit sad because I don't have

anyone here from my country." Within this reflection, Amelie dialogically associates her home

and her identity with Montenegro through 'my country'. This positioning simultaneously

dichotomizes her current situation in Germany as an 'outsider' in this new country. Associating

integration with feelings of contentment in her new national context, Amelie reflected

negatively about her current circumstances, wishing her family could be reunited, "no, I don't

feel very good here and I don't belong here because I still have to learn more." Despite her

desire to return and her connection to her 'homeland', Amelie lacks the agency to leave

Germany and return home to reunite her family, thereby exacerbating her discontent through

feelings of powerlessness and affecting her identity as an active agent in her life. Interestingly,

she supplements this homeland attachment with a reflection on her personal (language)

learning progress, incorporating familial bonds and individual German competency as reasons

for her current lack of belonging. This also affects her acculturation in Germany, as she does not

want to approximate 'Germanness' because of persistent emotional ties, and if she remains in

the country, she will likely embrace a more integration style, or separate herself.

Anna echoes many of these sentiments and connects learning German to belonging

through a personal experience that made her feel 'othered' and therefore non-German. While

Amelie had to leave siblings behind in Montenegro, Anna's migration allowed her to reconnect

with her father while leaving her past life behind, a challenging decision that still affects her:

> My mother said "no, don't be nervous! You'll see your father soon!", then I said
> "yeah, I'm really glad for that", but my heart was, well I don't know, but it was a
> bit tough. New country, new people, new language, new friends, new school,
> everything new. I don't like that. But after a month, it was good and went fine.
> But I still want to be able to return to my home.

Anna's account of all the 'new' facets of life in Germany underscores the emotional toll of the

migration on her and her family and simultaneously reinforces Iraq as her 'home' where

everything feels stable and natural. Despite their different family situations, Amelie and Anna

also both invoke similar dialogical strategies to emotionally align themselves to their homes in

contrast to Germany. For Anna, however, feeling like she belongs to Germany involves more

than emotional attachments and she reflects on being perceived as a non-German because of

her language skills as a more influential factor for not belonging in this new country.

S. Do you believe that you belong to Germany though?

A. No.

S. How come?

A. Of course not, I'm not a German. I'm an Arabic girl, I'm no German. Once I was
on the bus and there was this woman, she was German, and there wasn't any
space, and I was standing in the bus and my friend, she's Muslim, was wearing a
headscarf. She was just standing there like me and there wasn't any space. This
German woman had many bags with her and one of them fell, then she said

> "hey, make room, go away". My friend, she had earbuds in, didn't hear, so I grabbed her hand and said "D., make some room", but I said it in Arabic because she could also speak Arabic. Then the woman said "fuck all foreigners" … I thought I didn't hear her right, because why would she have said something like that? Then I said, "I'm sorry, she didn't hear anything", and she replied "yeah, you too, you didn't hear." Then I said, "what's wrong with you?" and she said, "nothing with me, but you're a foreigner." Then I thought "yeah, of course I'm a foreigner and you're a German. I live in your country and not in mine." But in our country, no one acts that way, it's our country. With us, when someone comes from another country, he lives with us at our house.

This anecdote captures how the interrelations between universal migrant perceptions (see p. 108-109) and language learning affect Anna's own identity and her feelings of belonging in Germany. Her friend, who was wearing the headscarf, is categorized by Anna as 'a Muslim', also capturing the older woman's sentiments about migrants in Germany in general. From Anna's perspective, these comments arose after she spoke in Arabic, but the woman could have been presuming these associations immediately upon entering after seeing the headscarf. While Anna was not the immediate cause of her frustration, the woman connects the two girls as both 'foreigners' and attacks both of them for the perceived slight. By not speaking German in public, Anna and her friend were instantly marked as 'foreigners' with a particularly strong negative connotation and Anna's response actually cement this status. As a result of this older woman's perception predicated on her language usage and her emotional connections to her homeland, Anna has disassociated herself from Germany, yet she hopes eventually to be recognized as a member of society, leading her to engage intensively in her studies. For now, though, Anna recognizes that she does not belong to her new national context: "I know I'm not like a German, because they always say, well not everyone, of course not all of them, but this woman said 'you're a foreigner' and I replied 'yeah, I know'".

Interestingly, this woman's boorish remark arose after Anna spoke to her friend in Arabic, signifying her 'foreignness' through language rather than her friend's headscarf from Anna's (outsider) perspective. This reflection is particularly demonstrative of the powers of a monolingual nation-state paradigm and 'selective multilingualism' that devalues this language, as outlined in Yildiz (2012). The woman's reaction on the bus can also be interpreted as a reaction to Arabic being spoken in Germany, rather than an instant association between this and migrant status. As nation-state ideology has so effectively connected Germany to the German language, simply hearing a 'foreign' language was enough for the woman to identify Anna's friend as a foreigner. Yet, perhaps, she would not have reacted in the same way if she had heard another language, such as English for example (as in Oscar's reflection, p. 194). This signifies a particular value placed upon certain languages while also testifying to the prevalence of universal notions of contemporary migrants as 'Muslims' (often presumed to also be Arabic; see Fritzsche, 2016), thus testifying to the mobilization of Orientalist discourses for conflated anti-migrant perceptions. In this context, what factors were most influential for the woman to classify Anna and her friend as 'foreigners'?

Hannah, the only participant who wears a headscarf daily, discusses how others' perceptions of her place in Germany are not necessarily affected by this noticeable symbol of her Islamic religiosity. When migrating from Syria, Hannah contrasted the differences between the Muslim populations in her homeland versus in Germany that reflected a different role of religion in public life, all while emphasizing stability in her personal identity as a pious Muslim:

> I always had an idea of who we were in Syria, but here, because I wear a *hijab*, it's not the same as it was in Syria. There are also many Muslims here, but they don't wear headscarves, but for me personally, I really abide by our religion. I

respect my religion above everything else, wherever I am. I still am the same as
how I was born, I would say.

This reflection captures how migrants who are religious minorities in their new national

contexts often alter how individuals express their religiosity in public space. As a visible marker

of Islam, the *hijab* is an especially noticeable symbol that has been heavily debated for its place

in countries across Western Europe, including Germany, especially through anxieties of

extremist terrorism (Brettfeld & Wetzels, 2007; Halm, 2012; Killian, 2003). Her reflection

operates through an ideology of identity tied to childhood experiences, arguing that she has not

altered her identity despite changing national contexts (reflecting critiques on the 2000

citizenship reform; see p. 104-105). Though Hannah does not recount moments of prejudice or

discrimination as a direct result of her *hijab* during the interview, she does reflect on a time

period when, after newly arriving in Germany, she decided to leave off the headscarf to see

how others reacted to this change. Unsure about whether she should continue wearing it in

public, she conducted her own ad hoc experiment with somewhat unexpected results.

> At the beginning when I came to Germany, I didn't really feel so sure about
> whether I really wanted to keep wearing the headscarf. Therefore, I went to my
> parents and said that I didn't want to keep wearing a headscarf anymore and
> they replied "of course, that's your business, you have to decide for yourself
> what you want to do". And I took off my headscarf for a week or so and went
> throughout school without my *hijab*. But then I saw that it really didn't change
> anything, and I thought to myself, "why should I hide my headscarf because of
> other people?" So, I said to myself "no, I'd rather put it on again and I'll hold
> onto it because it really doesn't change anything". So that really captures my
> identity and I really feel strongly about it, such that I continue to wear it.

This reflection is indicative of an integration acculturation orientation by continuing these

traditions from Syria in this new national context, leading to feelings of 'otherness' but with

undertones of maintaining her personal identity. Framed in the context of Anna's account of

the discrimination that she and her friend experienced on the bus, Hannah expected to be

treated better as she took off the headscarf by making a clear link between her *hijab* and

others' perception of her as a migrant, a sentiment she perceived as overwhelmingly negative.

Why, then, did she feel as though people treated her the same as with her headscarf? Perhaps,

after already arriving to school for some time wearing this symbol, her peers and others in the

school had already made this connection and did not need the *hijab* to remind them that she

was a migrant, a Muslim, especially due to her black hair (a distinct marker of 'otherness'; see

Butterwegge, 2017). Additionally, this event occurred recently after arriving in Germany, before

she had gained enough language competency to become even partially integrated into the

regular classrooms and establishing herself as a migrant in the *DaZ* program. Finally, her

developing language skills were sufficient to cast her as 'not native German'. She did not have

to wear a headscarf to be marked as an 'other', she only needed to speak (see Linke, 2019).

However, even after she's gained significant language skills to become fully integrated into the

regular classrooms, Hannah still feels the effects of her *hijab* based on other's perceptions.

Responding to whether she feels integrated in German society, Hannah felt ambivalent:

> Well I don't know, I would say yes and no because there are certain people that
> don't really want to relate to or understand my headscarf, and that's their
> business. I don't concern myself with what they say. Who I am and what I do are
> more important to me… I've been addressed three of four times by someone
> who asked why I feel that I have to continue wearing a headscarf here in
> Germany and I always replied how I really want to do it and I wear it willingly….
> I've stayed true to how I really am, and I feel proud about that… [but] there are
> always people who will always criticize me.

This final reflection provides a more conclusive answer as to whether wearing a *hijab* impacts public perceptions of these students. As Hannah has gained strong language competencies by constantly using it in school and in public, she is one of the most proficient students who I interviewed at Karl-Eberhard. Despite these strides, the constant remarks about her headscarf, questioning whether it has a place in Germany and whether it is even a personal choice or a parental imposition (thereby also challenging her individual agency and identity), serve to remind Hannah that this symbol is a marker of difference in her new national context. By wearing it daily, she has confirmed for most that she is a Muslim and, due to conflations between Muslims and migrants, that she does not come from Germany. Hannah attributes this public reception as the fundamental reason for her lack of societal incorporation and why she does not belong, despite over a year of trying to find her place in this new environment. In this sense, Hannah cannot aspire towards an integration orientation, as some people's perceptions will constantly remind her of her non-Western heritage, making 'passing' all but impossible. At the same time, she has prepared for an extended future in Germany by striving to complete her education while learning the language, reinforcing the maxim of simply 'continuing forward'.

For these four students, adjusting to life in Germany is framed through notions of feeling 'othered' because of some public receptions. These narratives framed 'Germanness' and 'migrant' or 'foreigner' along a spectrum of personal attributes and others' perceptions: while 'foreign' is an expansive category, incorporating aspects of language usage, visual symbols of 'otherness', and considerations of *habitus* through laws and norms, 'German' is a restricted identification that allows little space for diversification in the perspective of these 'othered' migrants. This framework, establishing migrant 'foreigners' and 'Germans' on opposite ends on

a linear spectrum, does not leave room for intermediate positions or identities – from their perspective, they are either 'German' and embrace this new context without transnational woes, or are rejected. This paradigm makes it difficult for migrants who feel 'othered' to follow an 'integrationist' strategy, seeking to maintain aspects of their lives before migration, because they feel compelled to adopt an 'assimilationist' style to be recognized as 'German'. As Anna's anecdote described a particular negative encounter with 'otherness', this classification as 'German' or 'foreign' can also impact migrants' daily interactions in their new lives and affect their personal identities.

Therefore, the process of trying to belong by approximating this monolithic image of 'German' becomes a matter of necessity, to such an extent that migrants still emotionally attached to their homelands and lost family members feel the impetus to acquire language skills and learn the local norms to at least 'pass' (if they can). By leaving little room for variation through this acculturation ideology, these students largely reflected on their 'process' of 'becoming' German, dialogically positioning themselves in an intermediate stage on the path towards this end goal. Yet despite these efforts, they are not willing to abandon their emotional attachments to their lives before migrating, perhaps indicating an area of resistance against assimilationist ideologies that regulate 'Germanness' in contrast to transnational 'foreigners'. Belonging is a process that entails approximating a German *habitus* which, for some students, is unobtainable, leading them to pursue 'integration' by maintaining ties to their homelands.

These students present an image of integration into their new German contexts that is largely sculpted around others' perceptions of their progress, rather than their personal identifications, and largely operates an 'either / or' ideology that makes students choose

between maintaining transnational ties and identities, or assimilating to become 'German'.

While Hannah is one of the most proficient German speakers of all the participants in this

study, she still feels that she does not belong to the country because of some people's

perceptions of her *hijab*, and Jonathan worries that others will classify him as a 'foreigner' who

constantly breaks laws. Interestingly, none of these students reflected on national

identifications of 'Germanness' or 'foreigner', instead relating their integration process to their

everyday experiences. While they may hope to someday become naturalized, these daily

experiences will likely continue affect their own self-conception. For other students, however,

German nationality is the primary marker of 'Germanness' and, accompanied by linguistic

proficiency, actualize aspirations of belonging. To understand how these components interact

and to build a comprehensive image of German integration from migrant perspectives, the next

section explores how national identities affect this process with considerations of developing

language skills to frame each factor in relation to earlier reflections on public perceptions.

2.2 Citizenship as a Gateway to Belonging?

Citizenship is a formal, state-sanctioned measure of 'Germanness' whose definition has

changed drastically during distinct eras of German history, as explored in Chapter III. For those

who were stripped of this classification on the grounds of 'impure' blood, those who were not

able to naturalize themselves or their children on ethnic grounds, and those who were granted

citizenship upon arriving to the country due to distant blood lines, this classification directly

influences current opportunities and future prospects. While its requirements have changed

drastically over time, older categorizations remain in place alongside newer formulations. As

such, there are many current 'types' of German citizens: individuals born abroad with German

parents or ancestors, Russian migrants who are descendants of Germans persecuted by the

Soviets (*Aussiedler*), people born in Germany with German parents, and naturalized individuals,

who could have been born to non-German parents or migrated to the country after birth (since

2014, people who were born in Germany to foreign parents can apply for dual citizenship, while

those who migrated later in life must still choose). While this may present a picture of

extraordinary diversity in the national population, the majority of them are afforded citizenship

on ethnic or racial grounds (yet there is considerable cultural diversity). For contemporary

migrants lacking these German roots, most will have to pursue naturalization, involving strong

language skills (B1; intermediate competency) and a pronounced orientation towards

'democratic, modern German values' and long-term residence, all while renouncing their prior

nationalities. To understand how this affects the integration process of contemporary migrants,

this section explores different students' perspectives who view this national definition as the

first step towards belonging to German society.

For Erik, arriving to a new country was not immediately accompanied by new feelings of

being 'out-of-place' because this sentiment had already surrounded his life before leaving

Kazakhstan. His family's decision to come to Germany reflected a critically aware engagement

with their mixed ancestry that served to facilitate his transition, affecting his identity in his

homeland and now in Germany.

> I don't feel like a foreigner amongst Germans because in Kazakhstan, I also felt
> that way, like not as a Kazakhstani. My whole life I never knew who I was,
> Kazakhstani or German… I have German ancestors and Russian ancestors. I have
> many identities…. Although I lived in Kazakhstan, my first language was Russian,

and I never knew who I was. And now I still don't know. They always said that I'm simply a person, neither a 'German' nor a 'Kazakhstani'. And now I also say that, I feel pretty much the same everywhere.

This reflection accounts for many unique circumstances that relate to Erik's past through his mixed ancestry while also providing insights into how his situation could be compared with others'. Importantly, he emphasizes that he is a descendant of a mixed German-Kazakhstani bloodline, establishing him as something 'other' in his homeland that is further compounded by his Russian first language. In addition to commentating on the influential role of 'pure' ancestry in a Kazakhstani context, this also testifies to the powerful effects of a monolingual paradigm in establishing some individuals as 'other' due to a link between nationality and language. However, in his new national context, he actually feels more welcome and included in the larger society, as evidenced by denying his 'foreigner' status which, as developed in the last section, stands in contrast to 'German'. Despite his migration background, his sense of self did not change because his past life was also filled with questions of heritage, never quite sure where he belonged. Erik's German ancestry officially marks him as a German citizen, despite having only distant roots in this country, and this largely framed his inclusion by positioning him as member of society alongside his 'German' peers: "yeah I feel integrated. I don't feel like a different part of society, I feel like a normal part of society, perfectly normal." Interestingly, Erik never mentioned obtaining German citizenship after arriving in the country, meaning this identity could be more theoretical in nature, thereby further attesting to the powers of a descent-based national identity on envisioning a future in Germany.

This was greatly facilitated by his strong language skills, having taken German classes in the city before migrating to Germany. Erik discusses feeling equal to his German peers due to

his linguistic proficiency, arguing that "I can do everything like other parts of society, like other people… I think language is really important, because of the language I can feel integrated". The confluence of his German skills and his citizenship prospects operated *together* to facilitate his relatively seamless transition into his new national context by being almost immediately fully integrated into the school's regular classes while not having to worry about being an outsider 'migrant' or 'foreigner'. Identifying as a pseudo-pariah, Erik's choice to remain in Germany while his parents returned back to Kazakhstan can be understood, then, as an intentional choice between two potential future 'homes', to which he currently has no permanent ties, but rather represent different possibilities. Thus, his dual ancestry affords him the agency to *choose* his future 'home' which, at least in the German context, is fostered by his language abilities. Erik's national detachment is a particular result of his German-Kazakhstani mixed ancestry, affording him the privilege to decide to stay in Germany for a better future prospect, testifying to the influential power of this definition of 'Germanness'. While Erik's story presents a clear picture about the power of arriving to the country with descent-based citizenship prospects, it does not disentangle the effects of this status and his language proficiency on his integration process. To understand the impact of both factors in fostering belonging, other situations must be examined where citizenship is present without language skills, and vice versa.

Andreas shares Erik's history of coming to Germany with ancestral attachments as a *Spätaussiedler*, a subsection of *Aussiedler* for later arrivals who can become citizens due to their collective history of ethnic persecution by the Soviets (see p. 84-85). He accentuates this history and aligns himself with both national identities, emphatically stating: "I am a *Spätaussieder*. Like German. My grandma and grandpa are German, but I was born in Russia." This reflects a

very direct engagement in these national histories and reflects an identity based on this particularity. Like Erik, Andreas emphasizes his mixed roots and identifies along both national lines, but he has not developed as strong language skills as Erik (Andreas is a fulltime member of *DaZ*). To become a German citizen as an *Aussiedler*, applicants must demonstrate B1 language skills in accordance with other groups of migrants. Therefore, Andreas has not attempted gaining citizenship and, when reflecting on whether he feels like he belongs in Germany, he directly links these factors: "not like a German, I can't speak German good enough yet." His formulation directly establishes his language skills as a causal reason for his lack of national identification, instead pitting him as a 'migrant' or 'foreigner' despite his ancestral roots. This presents an interesting perspective on the role of citizenship for integration: Andreas has German roots through his grandparents, but he does not attempt to identify himself as a 'German' because he lacks language skills. This relates citizenship and language competency to his integration process, because as Andreas does not feel like a 'German', captured in this national categorization, he does not feel like he truly belongs in Germany and must continue learning the language to further this process. In this sense, citizenship cannot exist without the presence of language abilities (Linke, 2019) and this is the primary factor for belonging and integration in his case. What does it look like the other way around?

Sandra presents a contrast to Andreas because she fully integrated into the regular school system, exemplifying strong language skills, but does not feel like she belongs because of her non-German heritage and citizenship. Responding to whether she feels like she has become integrated into her new German context, she initially felt ambivalent until deciding that she was not: "that I don't know, I don't believe so… because I wasn't born here and I'm not a part of

Germany. Like I'll always remain a Syrian, I have Syrian citizenship, that's why." This is

important in the post-2014 context where, because she migrated to Germany instead of being

born in the country, she cannot aspire towards dual citizenship, instead choosing to identify

along her Syrian identity. Even if she wanted to pursue naturalization, however, she doubts her

abilities to feel like a part of society in the future because she was not born in the country,

emphasizing an ideology of belonging predicated on early life experiences and childhood

national identities that actually align with the tenets of the 2014 reform (see p. 104). Yet at the

same time, she discusses sentiments of national detachment that echo many of Erik's earlier

claims through a reflection on her language skills: "in Syria, Arabic isn't my mother tongue and

here it's the same thing, where German is also not my mother tongue. So it's the same." A

complex linguistic hybrid, Sandra's reflection suggests that her past marginalization on account

of her non-native Arabic competency mirrors her current position as a non-native German

speaker and therefore a 'foreigner' through a comparable monolingual paradigm (Yildiz, 2012).

　　　　Sandra extends these questions of national belonging to her cultural upbringing, arguing

that her earlier experiences in a non-Western country make it difficult for her to adjust to her

new circumstances. Juxtaposing her past situation as a repressed, native minority against her

current circumstances as a migrant with significantly more rights, Sandra feels tensions in her

place in Germany: "there's equity here, like all people are the same. In Syria, for example, that's

completely different. For example, I'm Kurdish, but I don't any rights at all. But here, it's

different – although I'm not German, I have rights and I appreciate that." This consideration

exemplifies the importance of considering changes in social statuses between national contexts

in a psychological acculturation paradigm because she feels insecure in this position, still unable

to internalize this notion of general equality (see Bhatia, 2002a). This reflects Jonathan's earlier

insistence about learning about new national laws and norms for adjusting to their new lives,

but for Sandra, this history of feeling disenfranchised in her homeland makes her current

position as a non-German foreigner with rights feel out of place, if not specious.

Alongside this general equality that Sandra notices, she also reflects on the culture of

silence surrounding migrant backgrounds, arguing that "no one talks about that here, like the

majority of people that live here aren't from Germany. Or that they were only born in Germany

but aren't Germans." Despite the classroom activities and setup that promote students to

retain connections to their past, Sandra's reflection locates these sentiments exclusively in the

DaZ program, arguing that as students transition into the regular classes, they encounter a form

of colorblind ideology that overlooks these backgrounds to build positive new experiences. As

students with linguistic and cultural challenges in the regular classes, Sandra's reflection

provides a plausible explanation for the academic disruption that partially integrated migrants

experience upon visiting the regular classes. This environment facilitates students' efforts (and

desires) to 'pass' as Germans in class, but this is not possible for everyone, however, as Sandra

reflects on being 'othered' as a result of her physical appearances: "with certain people yeah, if

they see that I have black hair for example, then they're automatically not nice to me in my

opinion, or they see me and simply shove me or something" (see Butterwegge, 2017). Despite

her language skills, Sandra reflects on being cast as an 'outsider' because of the purported

national norms of equality that are starkly contrasted with instances of 'othering' in Lübeck, an

equivocal relationship that will persist even if she pursues German naturalization because of

her particular background as a Syrian woman. Serving as an explicit example of how Orientalist

and Islamophobic ideologies affect daily life, Sandra's reflection emphasizes how some students

cannot attempt to assimilate in this new context as a result of their 'foreign' outward markers

and by being forced to choose between nationalities (and, by extension, identities).

Nora and Lisa, the two sisters from Venezuela, argue along similar lines from the other

perspective of students who feel integrated into Germany almost solely due to their citizenship

status. As their father is a German citizen, the two participants were born with German

citizenship and while that was not a particularly influential factor for their lives in Venezuela, it

represents a vital component in their German futures (both students presume that they will

stay in the country). Responding to whether she feels like she has become integrated into

German society, Lisa immediately referenced her ethnic heritage, stating "yes… well, firstly' I'm

also German, you could say, so yeah." This unequivocal statement must be understood in

contrast to earlier reflections by other students, emphasizing the power of this particular

category of blood-tied German citizenship. Nora expands on this notion, arguing that she

belongs to Germany because "with my blood, I feel that I'm a German." This presented identity-

laden ambiguities upon arriving to the country as they were confronted with the monolithic

image of the contemporary foreign 'migrant':

> Well regarding migration, I don't know if I'm a migrant. I'm German, I have a
> German passport, so I don't know if I'm one. And with the actual migration,
> when we came, it was difficult. Really difficult. So for my identity I would also say
> yes…. We had never been outside of Venezuela, we never left Venezuela, we
> were always in Venezuela. And that was such a shock.

Her repetition of Venezuela, her homeland, indicates a persistent emotional attachment to her

home, while her earlier comments suggest that Germany could be, if not become, a new home

as well through a dialogical conflict between different 'homes'. Nora disidentifies with the

image of a 'migrant' that is associated with foreign elements (and heavily conflated with Arabic

or Muslim identifies) through her German passport, arguing that her German 'blood' makes her

identity more akin to her national counterparts, despite migrating to the country (in contrast to

Sandra). When their family was still in Venezuela, her father was abroad in Germany, so they

did not gain significant language experience before arriving to the country, potentially

hindering her integration along linguistic lines (as with Andreas). However, Nora presents a

different picture of the role of German in her life by relating the language to her national blood,

framing her linguistic development as a simple process facilitated by citizenship.

> Firstly, when my father and I came, that was a little bit "okay…." for me and I
> thought that yeah, this is my country, I also belong here. And then, when I
> learned German, or when I learn German now, then I believe that I could have
> spoken this language earlier, or that I have always had it in my head. And that
> makes me a bit more self-sure and that really helps me.

Nora's explanation for her expeditious linguistic development draws heavily on a congruence

between German citizenship and language based on theories of innate predisposition. This

represents an explicit reflection on the racialization of language that was historically tied to

ancestral definitions of 'Germanness', linking cultural elements to genetic predispositions that,

in actually, likely did not manifest themselves until arriving to Germany. Even if this reflection is

not entirely representative of her history, it reflects a particular ideology of language tied to

heritage and aligns with Herder's notion of language being tied to distinct *Volks* (see p. 79-80).

Nora and Lisa have therefore appropriated this national ideology to facilitate their integration

into their new country, arguing that they belong to Germany because of an interrelationship

between blood descent and (presumed) innate linguistic prowess.

This provides a different perspective on the role of citizenship by supporting the integration process that aligns with the earlier students' reflections. Nora and Lisa share their ethnic German ties with Erik, with both discussing their relatively easy transition into Germany through this background. While Erik was able to train his language skills before arriving, Nora and Lisa displayed extraordinary self-efficacy by predicting their eventual achievement due to their blood ties (facilitated by earlier national narratives of racial 'Germanness). This supports Andreas' reflection, for while he does not currently feel integrated due to his developing language skills, he will eventually gain competency and then belong to Germany. Sandra's reflection argues similar points from the position of an 'outsider', discussing how despite her significant language development, she feels 'other' in Germany because of her lack of an ethnically defined citizenship with undertones of persistent Orientalist paradigms affecting her daily interactions, precluding her from embracing an assimilationist acculturation orientation. For these students, national classifications of 'foreigner' versus 'German' predicated on perceived interrelations between ethnic descent and language skill or cultural reorientation and linguistic competency are central to their integration process.

3. Conclusions

As a central component of the National Integration Initiative, language development plays an important role in the lives of adolescent migrants trying to build new lives in Germany. While Karl-Eberhard largely emphasizes learning German for future academic and career success, student narratives reveal more nuanced applications of their acquisition for basic daily

functioning and overall wellbeing in Germany through friendships. However, language development was not entirely sufficient for students to feel that they actually belong to their new national context. Some students argued that the cultural norms and new laws instigated moments of cognitive dissonance as their current experiences contrasted from their past experiences in their countries of origin, thereby supporting the school's initiative to promote cultural reorientation to understand German customs. At the same time, students from backgrounds that partially, or fully, aligned with monolithic images of contemporary migrants as Arabic, Muslim, dark-haired, and from non-democratic backgrounds found significant barriers to their integration process due to interpersonal 'othering' that made them feel unwelcome. For these students, a lack of belonging contrasts their plans to remain in Germany and would necessitate an 'integration' acculturation style for efficacious incorporation. For students that benefited from an ethnic German heritage, arriving to their new national context was defined through a welcoming culture that greatly motivated them to learn German in order to feel fully integrated. Throughout the reflections, students emphasized the persistence of the monolingual paradigm in the racialization of language, while some lamented their significant linguistic strides were being overshadowed by their non-German blood.

In these reflections, students emphasized eventual futures in Germany, with different engagements with their countries of origin. Many students are still bonded to their homelands due to split family circumstances, while others are happy to embrace their new environment with their backgrounds informing their current experiences. At the same time, some students indicated a preference for assimilationist orientations, and this proved efficacious for migrants with particular identities and backgrounds that aligned with historical German citizenship

categories based on descent. Thus, Koopman's (1999) warning that these ideologies would

persist and preclude incorporating new categories of migrants resonates in this context.

The *DaZ* classroom's map exercise highlighting students' national and linguistic histories

is important for students to retain emotional connections with their countries of origin, but for

other students, this project hinders engagements with the past by obscuring hybridity and

underplaying adversity. By emphasizing *one* country of origin and *a* mother tongue, this

paradigm overlooks national and cultural hybridity, as shown in Erik's background as a

Kazakhstani with German ancestry and whose first language (Russian) reflects earlier instances

of marginalization which is obscured through this exercise. Additionally, Sandra's background as

an ethnic Kurd in Syria is also embedded with disenfranchisement, but by only asking for her

'homeland', this history is suppressed. These backgrounds heavily inform current experiences

and the *DaZ* program would benefit from an intentional engagement with past social relations

to understand current positions as 'foreign' migrants (see Howarth, Wagner, Magnusson &

Sammut, 2014 for an example of a project actualizing this concept).

Overall, these narratives paint a complex image of contemporary migration in a German

context filled with diverse past histories that differentially affect current circumstances. While

the largely decentralized nature of German secondary education indicates diversity within the

National Integration Plan, Karl-Eberhard exemplifies a particularly strong support structure to

help facilitate migrant belonging across backgrounds. While many students envision future lives

in Germany, the majority arrived in this new national context outside of their control, and many

cannot leave even if they wanted. For these migrants, acculturating into their new national

contexts is a matter of necessity, not choice, and the persistence of historically located

ideologies of 'Germanness' resurging in this context of 'floods' of migrants arriving poses

significant barriers to non-Western adolescents who may not even believe in the prospects of

naturalization. While many acculturation scholars hail the promises 'integrating' into their new

lives (i.e., Maehler & Shajek, 2016), these narratives demonstrate the efficacy of assimilation

orientations for students who can (and want to) 'pass' as Germans while 'moving forward' with

their lives. These narratives therefore underscore the necessity of similar programs across

Germany to engage in these questions of transnational bonds, past disenfranchisement, and

the value of language learning in the context of current instances of discrimination, public

'othering', and national citizenship classifications to facilitate societal incorporation across

backgrounds.

Conclusion

1. Reflections on Theoretical Developments based on Student Narratives

The current migration environment in Germany represents a congruence of changes within the national context and in the international sphere that collide, and in some ways conflict, with previous ways of thinking. Angela Merkel's decision to open country borders to victims of the 'Refugee Crisis' in a display of Christian benevolence and dedication to human rights (Patridge, 2019) was met by fierce opposition from a newly formed right-winged party, the AfD, appealing to German 'natives' worried that their society would be corrupted (or attacked; Bellon, 2016; Kosnick, 2019) by these foreigners. In response to intensifying globalizing forces attaching the country to pan-European and international dilemmas, the AfD largely instigated a resurgence of ethno-nationalist notions of 'Germanness' that were being threatened by new naturalized citizens from non-German heritages as a result of the 2000 (and 2014) citizenship law changes (see AfD, 2017). The current thesis is situated within this contested political history, and simultaneously within larger sociocultural psychological discussions over persisting colonial influences, Orientalist discourses, and diverse acculturative responses to these tensions. The diverse student narratives illuminate the array of possibilities for contemporary migrants in this space that, in many ways, extend the theoretical discussions in the earlier chapters, necessitating a review before proposing future research directions.

1.1 Identity Development within Psychology

Psychological studies focused on identity development of adolescents around the world must incorporate an active engagement with their participants' surrounding sociocultural contexts to understand how power hierarchies can preclude particular formulations. As sociocultural psychology is flourishing as a subdiscipline through this concept, this lesson should extend to general psychological pursuits, especially those based on quantitative measures predicated on statistical objectivity. Marcia's (1966) classic formulation of different identity states is important for recognizing the challenges that adolescents face in 'choosing' a particular identity, yet it does not investigate *why* certain pathways are available while others remain distant and unobtainable. For example, Nora's aspirations to study medicine at college after graduating captures many internal preferences and a particularly positive sense of self, yet this study showed that the label of a migrant in the *DaZ* program has a negative connotation and, as the school is not a *Gymnasium* (the traditional pathway to higher education), this desire may not be reached. The diverse experiences within Karl-Eberhard and the larger urban environment demonstrate the differential reception of individuals based on presumed personal characteristics, especially related to persistent Orientalist stereotypes predicated on Islamophobia and historical national responses to *Gastarbeiter* (see Green, 2015; Warner, 2014). To understand *how* individuals orient themselves in their local and national worlds, the surrounding political, social, and cultural dynamics must be examined.

As general psychology is broadening its heuristic scope, it is important to conceptualize how individuals, not historically central to identity-based studies have different life experiences that orient their identities in novel manifestations. Henrich, Heine, and Norenzayan's (2010) seminal study revealed how the majority of psychological studies in top APA journals are

predicated on individuals in specific contexts (Western, education, industrial, rich, and democratic [WEIRD] countries), which is unrepresentative of the many life experiences in other environments. The student narratives in this thesis highlighted how some participants, such as Sandra and Hannah, felt precluded from certain future pathways based on their backgrounds. Simultaneously, shifting power hierarchies affected their shifting identities, thus contributing to this field by conceptualizing very diverse situations concurrently to explore all possibilities. Importantly, the qualitative nature of these investigations helped understand these circumstances from the students' perspectives, thereby directly engaging in questions of intent and highlighting student voices alongside the researchers' outsider perspective. My position as an American in this transnational migration context allowed me to actualize Henrich and colleagues' (2010) recommendations, and the narrative structure allowed for an examination of shifting notions of self in relation to these larger questions, demonstrating the efficacy of this research paradigm. This transnational identity development study expanded the heuristics of psychology by examining shifting sociocultural factors heavily dependent on individual characteristics and histories, thus also addressing concerns of Eurocentrism and a suppression of indigenous psychologies by framing the study through personal migrant narratives.

1.2 Psychological Acculturation Studies

Recognizing the importance of Berry's (2005) seminal theory of acculturation, the current study embraced a more dynamic qualitative research paradigm and methodology to examine the diverse responses to changing national and cultural contexts. As I explored in

Chapter II, Berry and colleagues have dominated this field with a four-fold model that, in his view, applies universally to all acculturation contexts, yet other scholars have critiqued this ambitious ideology for overlooking particular challenges for non-Western groups (i.e., Bhatia & Ram, 2004, 2009), inconsistent terminology (Rudmin, 2009), and the lack of attention paid to the acculturation *process* itself (Hermans, 2001a). Operating through a process-oriented acculturation model cognizant of these critiques, the current study analyzed student narratives to reveal dynamic adaptation strategies that respond and change based on external factors and individual aspirations. The challenges of migrating to Germany with a non-Western background that (even if only partly) aligns with notions of 'Muslim migrants' were more pronounced and situated within feelings of discrimination, thus highlighting how the universal model forwarded by Berry does not capture these different experiences within one national context. The special attention paid to Germany's national and historical particularities helped contextualize these experiences in a framework of continuity between previous notions of 'Germanness' met with new, contested citizenship policies (Ellis & Bhatia, 2019). This was also instrumental in framing acculturation models (primarily developed in American and Canadian contexts) in this different context with distinct engagements with migrant incorporation in order to contextualize these experiences in this non-traditional acculturation research environment.

Rather than rejecting Berry's formulations, this thesis sought to expand his formulation and within this distinct national background through a process-oriented model focused on emotional responses to their situations. The participants were all involved in the *DaZ* program, a direct manifestation of the decentralized National Integration Plan, meaning that they were not fully engaging in 'separation' or 'marginalization' strategies. While Sam and Berry (2010)

forwarded that integration is the best pathway to positive long-term adaptation, a thesis that

some scholars operating in a German context found specious (e.g., Frankenberg, Kupper,

Wagner, & Bongard, 2013), these student narratives revealed that assimilationist orientations

can actually be beneficial (e.g., Erik in his 10th grade class). However, not all students were able

to pursue this strategy, especially if they did not fit a particular image of 'Germanness' that did

not integrate non-Western migrant backgrounds. Many students exhibited an integration

orientation in some contexts while simply assimilating in other realms, depending on whether

the lesson or cultural value had pragmatic benefits for their futures in Germany. This presents a

different image of acculturation that is dynamically responsive to minor changes in their

environment, leading some to maintain aspects of their lives in their countries of origin in one

context while trying to 'pass' as a non-migrant in another situation. Importantly, this process-

oriented model revealed how acculturation orientations are heavily dependent on larger social

and political circumstances while also being contextually malleable, adapting to fit adolescents'

immediate and long-term needs. These responses were located in this particular national

context, necessitating a review of German citizenship alongside this acculturation model.

1.3 Migration in the Current German National Context

The contemporary political debates on how to incorporate migrants in Germany operate

through new conceptualizations of German citizens predicated on cultural belonging in ways

that represent a distinct break from earlier ethnicity-based citizenship ideologies which the AfD

(2017) hails as the 'correct' and 'only' measure of 'Germanness'. As Koopmans (1999) warned,

these historically situated citizenship ideologies did not disappear after the 2000 law change,

instead they instilled a hierarchy of different categories of 'Germans'. Individuals who migrate

to Germany must prove their cultural orientation towards German values by incorporating

lessons from these *DaZ* classes, whereas citizens who are considered German by ethnic descent

do not have to prove their 'Germanness', as it is presumed to be innately ingrained (see Nora's

reflection on language learning, p. 205-206). Furthermore, migrants who partially fit the

ubiquitous concept of 'Muslim migrant from a non-democratic country' feel the need to

constantly prove their allegiance to modern German democracy to navigate local contexts, not

only to pursue naturalization. These students, born outside of the country, in most cases cannot

aspire towards dual citizenship (see Bundesminesterium des Innern, 2014 for exceptions),

instead feeling compelled to demonstrate their 'Germanness' by speaking the language and

abiding by national laws and rules, yet this is still not enough for many to feel fully integrated

and some lamented that naturalization is not even a possibility for them, as they will never truly

be German in the public's eyes (see Sandra's narrative, p. 202-204). In this sense, there is little

room for hybrid German identities for non-Western migrants who instead have to choose

between their identifications if they want to pursue naturalization. Therefore, many embrace

an 'integration' orientation by learning the language and following certain laws that will lead to

better future prospects, without aspiring to legally become German. This represents a heavily

cognizant and adaptive strategy that recognizes the limitations of their societal incorporation,

yet still demarcating them as 'other' as non-citizens (see Brubaker, 1992; Fick, 2016).

The *DaZ* program at Karl-Eberhard is particularly beneficial for these students by

providing multiple future pathways and recognizing the importance of maintaining emotional

ties to heritage countries and cultures. Taking a particular stance in the larger migrant

integration debates, this liberal manifestation of the National Integration Plan does not seek to

simply involve students in their new lives by overlooking their migration histories, instead it

highlights and hails the diversity within the school and classroom. Some student histories are

characterized by violence and trauma (e.g., Jonathan), making these engagements challenging

for them who may want to simply 'move forward' beyond these memories. For others, the

maps of students' countries of origin and first languages obscure their hybrid identities in their

previous (and current) national contexts (i.e., Erik) and reinforce a monolingual paradigm that

may not apply to their life experiences (e.g., Nora and Lisa; see Yildiz, 2012). Furthermore, some

students were members of oppressed minorities in their countries of origin (e.g., Sandra) and

this history is largely overlooked through this practice. Finally, there is little reference to *how*

the students arrived in Germany, thus not engaging in questions of individuality and self-

determination within this migration context. The school recognizes the fallacy of monolithic

images of 'the' current migrant as a Muslim from a non-democratic background, but it could

still extend these practices to engage in questions of hybridity, oppression, and agency.

2. Future Research Directions and Recommendations for Migrant Incorporation

The current study has shown how traditional theories of adolescent identity

development are not able to address the complex sociocultural challenges facing non-Western

migrants to formulate identities that align with aspirations for individuality based on

sociocultural factors particular to their national contexts. To truly make psychology a pursuit of

human experiences across the world, theories developed in American and European contexts

cannot be simply applied to individuals in different situations because they would overlook the

local and national particularities that encourage distinct identity formations. Universal models

of development are ill-equipped for these research endeavors, necessitating an engagement

with local (indigenous; Cresswell, 2009) psychologies and perspectives to understand *why*

individuals follow certain paths, especially for non-Western and postcolonial subjects in order

to align with decolonizing paradigms (Tuck and Yang, 2012). This is important to actualize

Henrich et al.'s (2010) and Arnett's (2008) aspirations to expand the domains of psychology to

understand identity around the world.

The current study was conducted in the context of the 'Refugee Crisis' in Germany, but

the thesis itself was written during the novel coronavirus pandemic affecting the world in

unprecedented ways, and this will have drastic impacts on international migration policies and

practices. For future studies engaging in questions of migrant incorporation in different national

contexts, it will be vital to conceptualize how this development affects public perceptions and

national policies. Furthermore, as European borders remain closed to refugees during the

coronavirus (Bremmer, 2020), fewer asylum seekers are arriving to Germany, affecting future

demographics and, likely, altering the 'integration' landscape. By embracing a process-oriented

model of acculturation, the current study was able to explore how *shifting* positions in society

affect self-conceptions and dynamic public perceptions based on different backgrounds. This

was instrumental in understanding how adolescent migrants respond to large-scale changes in

their lives, thus expanding identity development studies by exploring how, when, and *why*

identity formations evolve in different contexts. Future identity-based studies (within a

migration context) should conceptualize different individual backgrounds alongside instances of

dramatic change in order to study the developmental process in a dynamic research paradigm.

These student narratives highlighted instances of turmoil and feelings of 'otherness' in a

new national context that made them feel as though they do not belong, necessitating a

modified migrant engagement at the German national and local levels. The xenophobia

espoused by the AfD has ramifications on public perceptions by destigmatizing racist ideologies

against contemporary migrants and forwarding a historically-located descent-based citizenship

model as the 'true' measure of 'Germanness'. Furthermore, the 2014 alteration allowed for

dual citizenship *only* for children born in Germany to foreign parents, signifying a persistence of

anxieties over *Binnenintegration* and a multicultural society. As these narratives demonstrate,

migrants who would have to pursue naturalization on cultural grounds find it challenging to

maintain aspects of their pre-migration identities without jeopardizing their reception as 'true'

Germans, making them feel unwelcome but not enough to feel marginalized. Integration

acculturative strategies were shown to be beneficial, yet not possible for all, necessitating a

rethinking of these assimilationist policies and influences. Otherwise non-Western migrants

may feel compelled to abandon their pre-migration histories to pursue a particular image of

'German' that would be harmful to their identity and, possibly, inefficacious. Karl-Eberhard

represented a positive environment that supported this diversity and recognized the

importance of maintaining connections to geographically distant pasts, despite some

shortcomings. However, these student narratives emphasized instances of cultural and

linguistic hybridity that are overlooked in these activities and suppressed in efforts to create a

particular image of 'Germanness', necessitating a recognition of and support for diversity.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Do you feel prepared to take and succeed in classes here? Why / why not?

Fühlst du dich vorbereitet, Kurse hier zu nehmen und erfolgreich im Unterricht zu sein? Warum / warum nicht?

2. How has your schooling in Germany been affected by your German as a Second Language class?

Wie wurde deine Bildung hier in Deutschland von deinem DaZ-Kurs beeinflusst?

3. Where did you meet most of your friends (ie. the German as a Foreign Language class, other classes, a program outside of school)?

Wo hast du die meisten deiner Freunde kennengelernt (z.B. in dem DaZ-Kurs, in anderen Unterrichten, durch ein Programm außerhalb der Schule)?

4. Does religion play a role in your life? To what extent?

Speilt Religion eine Rolle in deinem Leben? Inwiefern?

5. Has your relationship with your parents changed since coming to Germany? How?

Hat sich deine Beziehung mit deinen Eltern verändert, seitdem du nach Deutschland angekommen bist? Wie?

6. Are your parents also learning German? How has that changed your relationship?

Lernen deine Eltern auch Deutsch? Wie hat das eure Beziehung verändert?

7. How has learning German and living in Germany shaped your identity?

Wie haben das Deutschlernen und Wohnen in Deutschland deine Identität formuliert?