Understanding the Identity Choices of Multiracial and Multicultural Afro-European and Black Women Living in Germany: Identifying a Model of Strategies and Resources for Empowerment

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Dominique Michel-Peres, Dipl.-Psych.

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1. Gutachter: Prof. Dr. Heiner Keupp
2. Gutachter: Prof. Dr. Dieter Frey

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Berichterstatter: Prof. Dr. Heiner Keupp
Disputationstermin: 29.01.2007

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München, den 10.10. 2006 Dominique Michel-Peres, Dipl.-Psych.

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ABSTRACT

This grounded theory study investigated the identity choices of highly achieving multiracial and multicultural Afro-European and Black immigrant women living in Germany and the role these choices played in their personal constructs of coping and self-empowerment. 10 open-ended narrative interviews, field observations formed the data base; whereby the field observations where used to affirm or disaffirm evolving hypothesis. The historical, social, and cultural context in which these women live is reviewed, and key terms such as racism and discrimination are clarified. The individual racial identity choice and coping strategies were analyzed, and a theoretical model was developed describing the a) causal conditions that influence and form racial identity choices, b) phenomena that resulted from these causal conditions, c) the contextual attributes that influenced type of strategy developed, d) intervening condition that have an impact on the type of strategy developed, e) the strategies themselves, and f) the consequences of those strategies. The components of the theoretical model are first described and then illustrated by narrative excerpts.

TOWARD A BETER UNDERSTANDING OF THE IDENTITY CHOICES OF MULTIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL AFRO-EUROPEAN AND BLACK WOMEN LIVING IN GERMANY: IDENTIFYING A MODEL OF STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

The purpose of this ground theory study is to explore the identity choices of high achieving Black and Afro-European women living in Germany and the role these choices play in the strategies they chose to reach their goals. Note that the term *Black* as well as the prefix *Afro-* is used through out this paper. The terms used when referring to the women interviewed here will be strictly the terms they use to describe themselves. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that the term “Black” is not derogative; it was the designation of preference following the Civil Rights Movement. The *Afro-* prefix was first established in the mid 1980’s by the Afro-Germans and at the start of 1990’s by African Americans

The overriding question for my research is: What theory explains why some non-White minority women are able to jump the social hurdles and racial inequalities they face most of their lives. What characterizes them and where did they find the strength not to give up? 60- to 90-min. open-ended narrative interviews field observations are used as the data source.

This study is not a study on racism and discrimination per se. It examines the resources needed to meet the demands of a White society on its own terms. A short review of the social historical frame of the European construction of *race* is presented to place these narratives in context. Also, the structural and interrelation aspects of racism and discrimination, from both a sociological and social psychological perspective, are presented. Furthermore, recent research findings on the psychological effects of racism and perceiving pervasive discrimination are also discussed. Finally, findings on mono-racial and biracial identity development are presented. These topics serve as background elements to illustrate the societal framework in which the women interviewed and many women similar to them made their choices and took control of their lives from a psychological perspective. A

narrative approach also allowed for the investigation of how these women make sense of their lives from socio-historical and cultural vantage point. Their biographies provided insight into the influences on their (racial-) identity formation. Including the role environment plays in identity development and the identity choices individuals makes within a given social-psychological framework.

Although formally based on the analysis of narrative interviews, an underlying ethnographic aspect of this study must be addressed. As a "subject" of this study, i.e. a multicultural, Black immigrant, and successful despite living in a discriminatory society, the researcher is embedded in the environment she peruses. She encounters cultural themes of identity construction and strategy development on a daily basis, through the experiences of her children, Black and Afro-European friends, and in discussions with European family members and friends. She has questioned which factors determine whether a non-White minority group member, succeeds in a White-majority society. Here success refers to academic and professional achievement, in terms of setting goals and reaching them despite obstacles. Thus, the database does not only include the analysis of 10 interviews but also 40 years of observation, conversations, and encounters.

The focus of this study is the personal and environmental factors that influence the identity development of multi-affiliated non-White minority women. A central theme is the effects of pervasive discrimination on racial identity choices of multiracial and multicultural Afro-European and Black women living in Germany. One theoretical point of reference is Cross's *Nigrescence Theory of Identity Development* (1978, 2001). This model describes six stages of identity development of Blacks and non-White minorities. It is sensitive to positive and negative social interactions; those that can throw a person back to an earlier developmental stage and those that lead to a sudden awakening in a later stage. Cross proposes identity development as a continuing process, and takes into account the often-ambiguous social situations in which visible minorities find themselves in prejudiced societies. A further point of reference is Keupp's *Patchwork identity Model* (1997, 2002). According to Keupp, identity construction has increased in its complexity. Identity development in the late modern era is no longer merely internalizing preordained values and traditions.

Because of the rapidly changing expectations, frames of reference and values, today's individual has to find their personal "fit" or place within society. Identity development has become self-development, which requires self-organization, self-embeddedness, and proactivity. According to Keupp, "The measure of successful identity construction is inner authenticity and recognition from others"[1] (author's translation).

Of further relevance is the role social identity plays in the lives of non-White (multi-) bicultural /multiracial people plays; and how the role and place of social identity differ for members of devalued social groups. Particularly if one belongs to two social groups, one dominant and the other devalued. Furthermore, whether or not the internal and external coping maneuvers differ for different types of multiculturalism? Additionally, what factors influence the racial and cultural identity choices of biracial and multicultural individuals? Finally, what strategies lead to educational, professional, and personal achievement? Answers to these questions may give way to developing new perspectives in multicultural counseling. Thus, counseling can increasingly focus on methods of empowerment instead of deficiencies and victimization.

There is a propensity toward victimization or deficiency in studies on the effects of racism and discrimination, especially for Blacks. These focus on the detrimental effects of racism and discrimination and the often self-defeating reactions of the target groups. The human and social harm caused by racism and discrimination can neither be argued against nor ignored. However, the *racial anxiety* (Steel, 1990) can prove to be more self-defeating for non-White minorities than the discrimination and racism confronting them. Hence, investigating the internal and external resources that play a role in overcoming the effects of racism and discrimination, may help non-Whites find ways to participate and find a voice in mainstream society, if they so choose. Maryse Condè, author and activist in the African revolutionary movement during the sixties writes:

[1] Original: Das Gelingen dieser Identitätsarbeit bemisst sich für das Subjekt von Innen an dem Kriterium der Authentizität und von Außen am Kriterium der Anerkennung. From: Foliensatz zu der Vorlesung „Einführung in die Reflexive Sozialpsychologie" SS 2005/2006 Universität Innsbruck

> Today we can no longer stick to the role of innocent victims. It is quite easy to be a victim . . . We must acknowledge that we are responsible adults. (Maryse Condé; cited in Schipper, 1999, p.77).

1. Conceptual Point of Departure

In a grounded theory study, theory evolves after one has collected and analyzed the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). However, in this case the researcher wears very strong cultural and racial lenses, this affects the initial observations and questions brought into the field (Creswell, 1998). These notions may change or be moderated in the course of the analysis, but should nonetheless be given credence. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual starting point of this study.

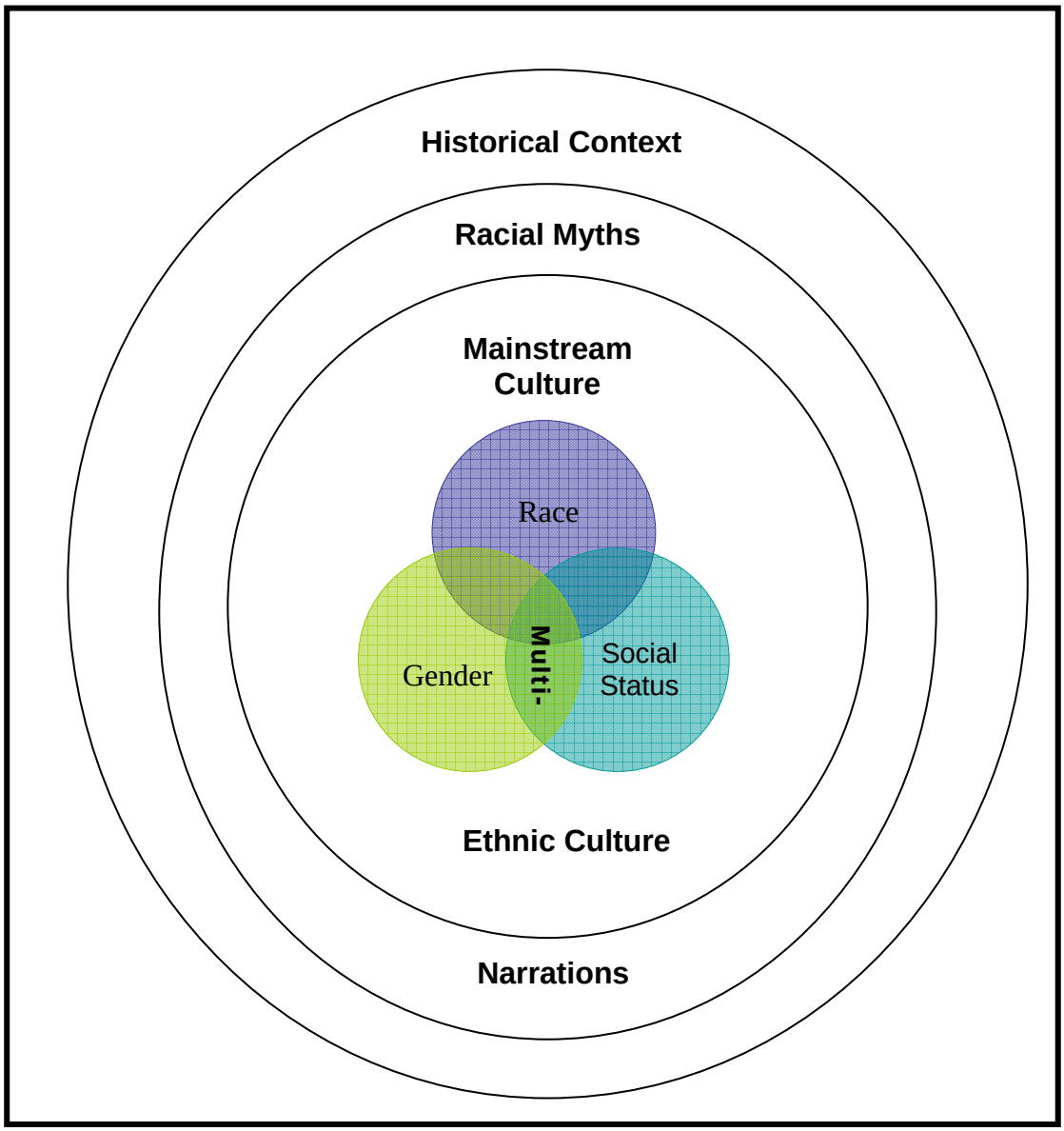

Figure 1. Conceptual framework: The embeddedness of identity in culture influenced by racial myths and narrations within a historical context.

The conceptual framework considers the multifarious factors shaping the life experiences and identity choices of multicultural, multiracial, and Black women in predominately-White environments. In its center are the interlocking core elements of their identity: *gender, race, and social status*. These elements are interrelated, interdependent, dynamic (Bell & Nkomo, 2001), and decisive in how individuals see and define themselves as well as influencing how they are seen and defined by others. These are embedded in a *cultural landscape* (mainstream culture) and are influenced directly or indirectly by the *ethnic cultures* of their kinship.

Culture serves as a frame of reference in which identity is grounded (Bell & Nkomo), and their ethnic culture or ethnicity provide a sense of group identity and affiliation. Additionally, their *multi-minority status* adds to the complexity of their lives as well as granting them access to multiple frames of reference. Essentially, they have a larger cultural reference pool, and various affiliations. *Stereotyping racial myths* affect how the mainstream culture perceives and treats these racialized groups (e.g., the libidinous Black woman, intellectually ungifted, etc.). *Narrations* are stories told by members of their ethnic group; tales about ancestral heroes, mysticism and spirituality. These narrations are healing; they provide a sense of continuity of belonging and of hope.

The frame encompassing all these elements is the *historical context*. The norms, values, institutions, and cultural mores that arise in society are the consequence of historical occurrences. Mills (1959) stated, “Neither the life of an individual or the history of a society can be understood without understanding both” (Mills, 1959; as cited in Bell & Nkomo, 2001, p. 18).

1.1. Bi-/Multi-isms and the Precariousness of Recognition

A comprehensive definition for biculturalism is the blending of the values, attitudes and behaviors of two cultures. Biculturalism's developmental facet requires that; "a cohesive set of interrelated thoughts, feelings, and behaviors emerge to form a bicultural identity, one that can be contrasted to a mainstream or strongly ethnically identified" (Rotheram-Borus; as cited in Maisuria, 2003, p. 21). However, what mechanisms are available when this cohesiveness of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors is burdened by a missing sense of *social embeddedness* (Colman, 1988; Granovetter, 1985) needed for building trust in our social environment. Social embeddedness, or the extent to which modeling the behavior of an agent needs inclusion in the society of agents as a whole, is essential to developing a sense of belonging a sense of being part of the social network as opposed to feeling misplaced or displaced.

All the women interviewed are bicultural and most are biracial. They have all struggled with the issue of bi- and multiculturalism as a precarious state, and not so much because of their "cultural difference" but because of their skin color. Skin color is the phenotype that often determines how one is treated in society. Ideally, the bicultural individual internalizes and harmonizes the values, attitudes and behaviors of more then one culture. However, in reality, biculturalism can lead to an ambivalent relation to ones "self". An interview question exploring this issue is: "What happens with the side of you that represents that, which has hurt you?" An Afro-German woman answered:

> . . .I can't identify with being German. . .it was this *German* that rejected me, didn't want me, and discriminated me. That is my *German* experience. . .I still know the [German] norms I have grown up with but apart from that there is no feeling there. Toward my Black heritage, I have feelings . . .

She articulated her ambivalence towards her German side by stating her lack of feeling towards it. She has not been able to come to terms with it, because it represents the non-recognition, rejection, and discrimination that she experienced throughout her childhood and young adulthood in Germany. However, this group is

far from homogenous in the generational and historical backgrounds and the role these play in their internalized self-concepts and cultural identities.

An example that highlights this difference is the importance of *recognition*, the sin qua non-for a sense of belonging. Rita, an African woman of mixed race (Cameroonian and Syrian-Kurd) who has lived in Germany 30 years describes her reaction when Germans confront her with the question, "*When are you going back to where you came from?"* and how hers differ from that of an Afro-German:

> When someone says to me go back where you belong I can answer, give me ten more years to earn some money and I'll be returning home with pleasure. But when you're born here and have been here all your life and some idiot on the U-bahn[2] tells you to go back where you came from- and you're born and raised in Bavaria that leaves you feeling bad.

This woman says of herself -"I know who I' am because I know where I come from".

Angela is Afro-German and describes her experience with the issue of *identity* and *recognition* in comparison with her father's attitude (an African immigrant from Ghana):

> [My father] doesn't feel rejected- because he never aspired towards acceptance as a German. For me it is different because I am a German whose German "self" remains unrecognized. When you are made to feel you are not a *real* German, the rejection goes deep. I was born and raised here but I do not know where I belong.

Charles Taylor (1994) stresses role recognition plays for ones sense of identity:

> ...the demand [for recognition] comes to the fore in a number of ways in today's politics, on behalf of minority or "subaltern" groups, in some forms of feminism, and in what is today called the politics of "multiculturalism". The demand for recognition in these latter cases is given urgency by the supposed links between recognition and identity, where this latter term designates a person's understanding of whom they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as a human being. The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or societies around them mirrors back to them a confining, demeaning, or contemptible picture of themselves. Non-recognition or

[2] Germany's metropolitan underground transportation system

> misrecognition can inflict harm; can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being (pp. 55-56).

Taylor argues that non-recognition or misrecognition may lead to a depreciatory self-image. He notes that these internalized pictures of one's own inferiority, may disable and impede taking advantage of opportunities even without any objective obstacles to advancement; thus making oneself an instrument of one's own oppression. Their most important task is therefore purging oneself of this imposed and destructive identity.

1.2. Racists Construction in Europe

> Must not the idea that there are superior and inferior races, and particularly, the idea that race shapes culture and is at the base of social differences, be sought very far back in our past, at the primary source of modern European culture, namely among the Greeks of the Hellenic period – or at least in the Middle Ages? This hypothesis acquires greater force as we move closer to the modern era and the spread of racism is linked with a number of founding moments, beginning with the discovery of other continents. (Wieviorka, 1995 p.3)

Wieviorka points out that although the most prodigious development of racist ideology took place in the nineteenth century; its roots are found much earlier. However, classic scholars have established that the idea of *race* has no equivalent concept in the thoughts of Greeks, Romans, nor the early Christians (Fredrickson, 2002). That is not to say that ethnic prejudice was not prevalent in Antiquity (for a review of the rise of anti-Semitism in antiquity and the middle Ages see Fredrickson). Although slavery existed, it was not color-coded. These slaves were bounties of wars and conquering nations. Fredrickson wrote, that the period between the latter Crusades and the start of the Portuguese presence in West Africa in the mid fifteenth century, was a period when Blacks were seen favourably and at times glorified. This in part because, in the wake of Crusades, Jews were being demonized and the Christianization of Ethiopia, gave the Black African a sanctified halo in the Euro-Christian imagination. First as the Portuguese navigators began exploring the Guinea Coast in the mid- to late fifteenth century they acquired slaves themselves, and sold them in Iberia- and marks the point when Black skin become indelibly identified with servile status in the European mind.

1.2.1. European expansion and exploration- its role in shaping images of Africans and of "races"

At the turn of the sixteenth century, the competition among European traders for Africa's natural resources increased drastically. Portuguese trade (which began in the mid 1400s) in Africa increasingly attracted rival European traders who created competing stations that tried to capture already established trade (Mutere, 1997). The first English voyagers arrived in West Africa after 1550, nearly a century after the Portuguese (Jordan, 2000). These early contacts with Africans were solely for trade. Jordan wrote:

> The earliest English descriptions of West Africa were written by adventurous traders, men who had no special interest in converting the natives or (. . .) in otherwise laying hands on them. . .Therefore, English contact with Africans did not take place primarily in a context which prejudged the Negro as a slave, at least not as a slave of Englishmen. Rather, Englishmen met Negroes merely as another sort of men. . . (p. 33). Because they looked different, lived differently and were not Christians; and appeared from the point of view of the English to be particularly libidinous. During this period the nature of the Negro complexion became an enigma for the early English explorers. This coupled with the fact the word "black" in the English language is laden with very strong negative connotations and brings to mind it's direct opposite "white". The opening of West Africa and the development of Negro slavery, which for the first time brought Englishmen frequently into firsthand contact with really black Negros, made the question far more urgent and provided an irresistible playground for awakening scientific curiosity. . . (p. 36).

Because of their century long contact with North Africans, the Spanish and Portuguese did not consider "Blackness" to be as mysterious. However, the globalizing of the international slave trade spanning several continents had already begun. According to Steyerl (2002), powerful merchant-banking families in sixteenth Century Germany, such as Tuchers, supplied the greatest financial contribution to the subjection, exploitation, and partial extermination of the population in Africa and Asia.

By the turn of the eighteenth century, Europeans rationalized their expansion as a "civilizing mission" (Jordan) based on White supremacy and provoked a number of tribal wars.

> Europeans assert their "spheres of interest" in African colonies arbitrarily, cutting across traditionally fixed boundaries, homelands, and ethnic groupings of African peoples and cultures. Following a "divide and rule," theory, Europeans promoted traditional interethnic hostilities. The European onslaught of Africa that began in the mid 1400s progressed to various conquests over the continent, and culminated over 400 years later with the partitioning of Africa. Armed with guns, fortified by ships, driven by the industry of capitalist economies in search of cheap raw materials, and unified by a Christian and racist ideology against the African 'heathen,' aggressive European colonial interests followed their earlier merchant and missionary inroads into Africa (Mutere, 1997).

These early contacts with the "Negro" and the consequent Colonial Projects hampered the people of the so-called Third World in their self-discovery and self-identification. This set the stage for the racist doctrine that flourished at the turn of the nineteenth century in Europe.

1.2.2. The stage is set: socio-historical and socio-cultural props

The social-historical and cultural changes, as well as the specific social context, which was Germany and Europe in the years from 1956-1970 affected the lives of the parents of the women interviewed; thus affecting their own lives in significant ways as well. Racial attitudes and emerging social systems throughout Europe during this period were a major influence in their lives. This was a corollary of the socio-historical currents on race at the turn of the 19th century, which played a significant role in European racist ideology and philosophy. Pseudo-sciences such as Social Darwinism and phrenology provided a rationalization for White supremacy, slavery and colonialism: ideologies that contradicted basic principles of the Age of Enlightenment. These tenets pronounced the rejection and banishment of spiritual and scientific authority, dogmatism, intolerance, censorship as well as the elimination of economic and social restraints. Dehumanizing and objectifying those considered inferior resolved this oxymoron. Social Darwinism was the vehicle that presented social classifications and consequent inequalities as laws of nature.

1.2.2.1. Social Darwinism and German colonialism

Social Darwinism argued that Darwin's premise of the "survival of the fittest" applies not only to evolution, but also to the social struggle for survival, whereby the "fittest" will win. Therefore, according to the Social Darwinist, those races that survived were morally entitled. El-Tayeb (2005) wrote:

> The ideological construct of the inequality of races, with the resulting need to fight for White domination, could now be presented as part of an inevitable natural process. Race, class, and gender hierarchies appeared as the final product of a millennia-long process, the mechanisms of which were beyond human control (p. 31).

The dominant current in German Social Darwinism was eugenics. Originated by Francis Galton, eugenics is a social philosophy that recommends racial hygiene or purification through various forms of intervention. The expressed goal of the German eugenic movement, led by Dr. Alfred Ploetz, was preventing the White race from degenerating, as other racial groups had. Interventions such as selective breeding, forced sterilization, outlawing mixed marriage, and genocide were used towards this goal. Their establishment in academia won the Eugenicists a large following. They stressed their scientific orientation, focusing on the findings of Darwin and Francis Galton to cement their ideology.

> By the early twentieth century, the notion that Africans constituted the most primitive kind of humanity, separate from civilized Europeans by a wide biological gap, had been well established. From its beginnings, the concept of race has been based on a black-white antagonism (. . .) The first group (White Europeans) represented mankind in its most perfect form, the latter in its most primitive. All the positive qualities the race scientists attributed abundantly to the white race were missing in the black one, which in turn abounded in negative characteristics (El-Tayeb, 2005, p. 36).

Having found a scientific and rational explanation for the superiority of the White race and inferiority of the Black race, the moral contract of civilizing primitive and barbarous peoples became self-evident to German conservatives. At the turn of the nineteenth century, against this tapestry of the pseudoscientific proof of Aryan supremacy and moral duty, began the German colonial project (El-Tayeb, 2005). A former colonial inspector, Paul Rohrbach explains the colonialist attitude toward the African natives as follows:

> In the context of world history, only the necessity to give up their free national barbarism and to become a class of servants to the whites gives the natives the right to exist. As for individuals, so it's for peoples that the useless have no right to live and that an existence is the more useful the more important it is for the general development (Rohrbach; as cited in El-Tayeb, 2005, p.41).

The colonialist attitude and Europe's expansion not only exploited work, resources, and land, but also led to the political and cultural subjugation of colonized peoples. This experience led to the internalized colonialism (Fanon, 1967) of the colonized as well.

1.2.2.2. Internalized colonialism

Internalized colonialism is the consequence of the Eurocentric values imposed on nonwhite minorities. European values define what constitutes beauty and intelligence; and whether one is civilized and cultivated. These values are internalized and accepted even by those who suffer their consequences; which leads to an ambivalent relation to ones *self*. Fanon describes internalized colonialism as follows:

> Every colonized people – in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality finds itself face-to-face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adaptation of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes "Whiter" as he renounces his "Blackness". . . (1967, p. 18).

Angela, an Afro-German interviewee describes the effects of her *internalized colonialized self*:

> I avoided being seen with Black people. . . I was ashamed of being Black, it embarrassed me. . .I avoided having Black friends (. . .) I preferred being the only Black somewhere then being noticed on the street with a Black friend. . .

This is an identity issue faced by Blacks in Europe in general and Afro-Europeans in particular, especially those lacking access to a Black or ethnic community with which they can identify and relate. Wanting to change ones skin, wishing it lighter; having straighter hair; in essence being a bit more White are manifestations of internalized

colonialism. Cross (2001) referring to Russell, Wilson, and Hall (1992) calls this desiring of "Whiteness" *colorism;* a consequence of society's glorification of European physical features. Internalized colonialism was first investigated by Fanon (1952, 1967) and elaborated by Stuart Hall (1990):

> . . .It is one thing to position a subject or set of peoples as the *Other* for a dominant discourse, It is quite another thing to subject them to that power "knowledge", not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, but the of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to the norm (. . .)This inner expropriation of cultural identity cripples and deforms. If its silences are not resisted, they produce, in Fanon's vivid phrase, "individuals without an anchor, without horizon, colourless, stateless . . . a race of angels." (as cited in Rutherford, 1998, p. 226).

Internalized colonialism cripples and deforms, it disfranchises its victims, leads to self-doubt and is compounded by the general belief in the innate inferiority of Black people and therefore ones own inadequacy.

1.3. Representation and Projections

In contrast to Taylor's inquiry on the moral necessity of recognising distinctive cultural traditions, Steyerl and Rodriguez (2003) argue that in order to gain new perspectives on the function of racism, postcolonial theories have changed their focus from recognition and acknowledgement towards the question of representation. Steyerl (2002) formulates this viewpoint as follows:

> . . .post-colonialism refers to a specific "conjuncture" of social force fields and a type of political positioning in relation to local conditions . . . They influence the emergence of certain subjectivities – and thus also the production of art and the formation of the aesthetic and cognitive categories of its perception. (p. 1).

From this perspective, they elaborate on Hegel's thoughts on *Subject* and *Subjectivication*.

> Hegel's model of the intersubjectivity, which presupposes the "Other", who is negated, in order to construct an autonomous "Self", represents the expression of an economic power [system], where an objectified and subjugated "Other" is begotten. Thus, the „Other" is the sine qua non of an

> ontological logic, in which the Alter[3] or the *"other one of both"*. . .is engulfed for the benefit of the *Self*. *Othering*[4] leads to an incessant, reconstruction of "race", of genderized and sexualized identities that serve as negative mirror images of the *Self*. (author's translation; Steyerl & Rodriguez, 2003, p. 8).

The ontological logic that without the other there is no self is also a conjecture proposed in psychoanalytical theories on racism. The psychoanalytical school of thought argues that racism is the unconscious rejection of the foreigner within us, the fight against repressed characteristics within ourselves. Wieviorka (1995, p.23) referring to Kristeva (1991), wrote of "the Other", the alien producing animosity and irritation, as being in fact ones subconscious. From this vantage point, Hegel's Model of intersubjectivity can be used as a metaphor to describe the function of racism, and the role of its victims in the European consciousness (Steyerl & Rodriguez). In these terms, racism is a projection of all that is undesirable to the *Self* into a subjugated or subordinate *Alter*. This reinforces the idea of an irrational *Other* in contrast to the rational [European] *Self*. Babka (2003) referring to Said (1978) wrote of the confirming function of the subaltern for the European identity. An identity based on the ideal of the White heterosexual male (Said) as opposed to the irrational "Other". The Other is different and is everything that the Self finds unworthy. Ferreira (2003) describes the process of Othering in her analysis of an interview with an Afro-German woman:

> Alice realized early on that she is Black, because the White around her confronted her with questions about her Black body und her origins. Being looked at and being asked about ones origins, is a form of control that embodies power . . . Alice is looked at . . . identified, and questioned, because as a Black, it is expected that she bares her personal history in order to justify her presence in *White territory* (p. 147).

Social interactions are thus racialized. For Afro-Europeans and non-White immigrants such confrontations have significant emotional and psychosocial affects for those being questioned. One is expected to legitimize their presence, and personal boundaries are trespassed in the process.

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[3] Translation: *Alterität*, which is defined as the one, the other one of both (Source: http://differenzen.univie.ac.at/glossar.php?sp=7)

[4] Author's Translation: *Identitären Zwangslogik*

These confrontations confirm the feeling of a precarious identity and affiliation shared by many Afro-Europeans (Erel, 2003; Mecheril, 2003) and Black immigrants. Research in the United States (e.g. Ogbu, 2004; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Waters, 1992) has shown that non-White immigrants less intensively feel this sense of estrangement from the dominant cultures, as do African Americans. This disparity, as mentioned above, is because Black immigrants feel they have a "homeland" that they can return to, even when the eventuality of emigration is in most cases quite unlikely. In contrast, Afro-Europeans are treated like strangers on their native soil. Post war Germany's Black children poignantly experienced this situation.

1.3.1. Postwar Germany's Black Children

Fatimy El-Tayeb (2005) refers to the relation of Germans with the issue of race, especially during Germany's colonial epoch and offspring of this period as the *schizophrenic German relation to race* (p.29). In her, essay *Dangerous Liaisons: Race, Nation, and German Identity* she stated:

> There is no doubt that blacks & blackness are central points of reference in German culture . . . from children's rhymes and stories such as *Ten little Negros, Strupel Peter. . .* to games such as *Who's Afraid of the Black Man*. . . And sweets named *Negerküß*, *Mohrenköpfe*, *Eisneger*. . .[and] referring to dull menial labor as *Negerarbeit.*. (2005, p.29)

Afro-Germans are still faced with the negation of their existence by the European-Germans; El-Tayeb continued, "Afro-German's have long been confronted with the dominant attitude in Germany which presumes blacks cannot be German and "real" Germans cannot be Black. Kantara (2000) wrote:

> . . . Black and German is still an oxymoron. "Do you feel you're German or African?"; "Isn't it difficult [being caught] between two cultures?"- not for the Black-German. The problem is in a society that refuses to repudiate its "White" self-image. The multicultural society is in reality multiethnic; [but] "culture" sounds less threatening (author's translation; Kantara, 2000) [5].

[5] Original: „Dennoch ist Schwarz und deutsch noch immer ein Widerspruch. „Fühlen Sie sich deutsch oder afrikanisch? "Ist das nicht schwierig zwischen zwei Kulturen?" Das Problem liegt eher bei einer Gesellschaft, die sich von ihrem weißen Selbstbildnis nicht verabschieden will. Die multikulturelle Gesellschaft ist in Wahrheit multiethnisch; „Kultur" klingt nur weniger bedrohlich…"

In 1952, an article appeared in the weekly journal *Das Parlament (*as cited in Opitz, 1992 p.80):

> Among the occupation babies, the 3,093 Negro mulattoes for a special group, presenting a human and racial problem of a special nature . . . The authorities of independent youth welfare agencies have for years been concerned about the fate of these mixed-blood children, for whom the climatic conditions alone in our country are not even suited. The question has been raised whether it wouldn't be better for them if they were taken to their fathers' countries. . .[6]

The debate over what to do with these children was greatly influence by the prevalence of Social Darwinism on Germany's attitude towards Blacks, laced with fantasies of "doing good", and "concerns" about what is best for these "other" children. Opitz (1992) cites how an Afro-German woman describes her feelings towards being Black and living in postwar Germany:

> Black means unworthy of existence. And that's exactly how I felt. I always stayed in the most remote corner; I was shy and timid and felt lucky to be asked to play with the other kids- and how (p.102).

We find a further illustration of the social context in which Afro-German children had to maneuver. In *Narrating "Race" in 1950s West Germany: The Phenomenon of the Toxi Films*, Heide Fehrenbach (2003) writes:

> Through the 1950s, the children were treated as marked by their White mothers' moral failings and their black fathers' racial ancestry by German commentators of all political and ideological stripes. (. . .) [This] practice established the children's fundamental, essential difference from white children, with the social need for German contemporaries to seek solutions to this *problem* of difference (Fehrenbach, 2003, p. 137).

Mary an Afro-French woman who has lived in Germany for 30 years is an interviewee of this study. She describes her experience with the projected problem of difference with these words:

> I've been asked, "Why are you Black?". Then I would have to consider, how to answer this question. Why am I actually Black? I answer, „Because my parents are black"; that is an answer, but is it enough? . . . Nobody asks why someone has blue eyes or why they are blond, but why are you Black . . . that I find amusing. It would not occur to me to ask an Asian why they are

[6] Das Parlament, 19 March 1952

> Asiatic. . . but [others ask] why are you black, why are you dark. My children have also been asked this question . . . then they came home and ask me "why am I Black?". . .

She is being asked to explain why she's "different", as if her Blackness is unreal. As if her Blackness were the figment of someone's imagination that suddenly stepped into the White reality and needs to be touched, questioned and looked at because: "Black is a construction in public and political discourse; Black is a mirage" (Gilman, 1982; as cited in Campt, 2005, p.82). Jennifer, an Afro-German interviewed describes similar experiences:

> . . .they are amazed about my hair, they want to touch my hair (. . .) they are surprised and ask why do I speak German so well. . .or I must have a problem with climate here. . .when I say I'm a Black-German they answer "there's no such thing". . .

According to Gilman in Germany, "the image of Blackness developed independently of an "external reality". [Blackness] was composed of "elements taken from external traditions and altered to fit certain needs of a radically different culture". . . He continues:

> [This image] is an accretion of borrowings which were altered and shaped to create patterns into which these projections where cast. Othering is an outgrowth of social-historical events, which led to the construction of race and hierarchies with an emphasis on difference. Not seeing, not acknowledging, and misrepresentation of the *Other* starts in social institutions, social politics, and social discourse (Gillman, 1982; as cited in Campt, 2005, p.82).

Ellison (1995) wrote in his prologue to *Invisible Man* of *invisibility*, a concept describing minorities as invisible objects that only exist in relation to the *Other*-Whites:

> I am an Invisible Man . . . When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, of figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me. . .You ache with the need to convince yourself that you do exist in the real world, that you are a part of all the sound and anguish, and you strike out with your fists, you curse and you swear to make them recognize you. And, alas, it's seldom successful (pp.4-5).

Consequently, the individual person's uniqueness, character and personality are negated. The individual is instead the representative of a *race* and perceived as a potpourri of preconceived notions and myths. Othering, misrepresentations, and the Social Darwinist myth of the innate inferiority of non-Whites in general, and Blacks in particular are reflected in the German schooling system.

1.3.2. Non-white minorities and the German educational system

Stephen Humphreys, in his report on the proceedings at the conference *Racism in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond: Origins, Responses, Strategies* in Budapest (2000) wrote:

> As a social phenomenon, racism [and discrimination] is, to a great extent, about identity: the construction and clarification of individual identity in an environment of potentially heterogeneous groups. Of the many factors impinging on the question of identity, *education* is one of the most important, given its role not only in value-construction but also in the earliest experiences of group identification.

However, research has shown that in Germany, exactly this aspect of education as a requirement for identification and integration has been neglected.

In her analysis of census data from 1989, 1991, 1983, 1995, and 1996 Riphahn (2002) addresses the issue of why second-generation immigrants in Germany still lag behind in educational achievement, she states:

> In a society where formal educational degrees are entry requirements at all levels of the vocational and academic training system, as in Germany, key factors for lifetime labor market success are determined early in life. If an increasing share of the population passes the educational system being systematically disadvantaged, this may justify the consideration of policy interventions. . . (p. 1).

Riphahn controlled for parental human capital, and found only a small part of the difference in school attendance between natives and second-generation immigrants can be explained by parental characteristics. Her analysis found that In Germany's 3 tier school system, the average second generation immigrant has a significantly

lower probability (-0.328; p<.01) of attending advanced school (Gymnasium[7]) than a German youth. Furthermore statistics taken in 2002 (see Table 1) showed that 26.08% of the children are found at the bottom of the German educational system (Hauptschule[8]and Sonderschule[9]) and stigmatized as chronic underachievers in school are immigrant children; compared to 13.69% Germans. Especially those children whose parents immigrated from Greece, Italy, Turkey and the former Yugoslavian make up a large percentile of the Hauptschule population. Students immigrated from Poland and other EU nations (e.g. France, England, Spain etc.) are not significantly over represented in the lower tracks- their number is only slightly higher than German students (Jugendsozialarbeit, 9.12.2002).

In view of these statistics, researchers have questioned whether ethnic discrimination plays a role in this lack of integration of certain immigrant groups in the German educational system and in German society as a whole. Goldberg, Mourinho, & Kulke (1996) stated, “The professional position of migrants and their occupational mobility process should be seen as indicators of their structural integration in the host high society” (Goldberg, Mourinho & Kulke 1996: 1.2.2.). These dire prospects play a role in the identity development of second-generation and third-generation immigrants; many lack motivation and are unwilling to participate in the mainstream. They construct their social world according to known patterns and the resources available. This construction takes place within the constant interaction and redefining of reality that takes place between the acteurs of a given habitus.

Habitus (Bourdieu, 1988) is a set of predispositions individuals develop during their lifelong interactions with their social environment. Their experiences in this context influence their perceptions of the social environment and leads to certain predispositions. These predispositions or habits are an accumulation of what they have learned works and what they can expect of the social environment in which they live. These behavioural codes and consequences are engrained within their consciousness. This collectively defined reality influences what we as individuals

[7] Pupils graduate after 9 years of secondary education- a prerequisite for academic studies
[8] Pupils graduate after 6 years of secondary education and are geared towards blue collar employment

expect and aspire to in life. There is a *logical conformity* (Durkheim) in their actions because socially disadvantaged minorities adjust their expectations to their chances, in light of an educational and labour system perceived as discriminatory.

Research (Gomolla, 2005: for a review see Becker & Lauterbach, 2004), has found evidence of organizational discrimination in Germany's educational system. According to Gomolla (2005), the negative educational careers of immigrant children begin as soon as they enter school. She argues, the disparities between the acquired educational levels of various segments of the population cannot be explained by individual characteristics of their members. She stipulates that these discrepancies are more likely the results of the structures, curricula, rules, and routines in schools. These ignore the changing socio-demographics in Germany and for the most part adhere to structures and curricula established at a time when Germany had a largely homogeneous cultural landscape: White-German, middle class, and Christian. An important societal instrument for identity construction and social embeddedness is its educational system. However, in Germany the education of immigrants in general and non-White immigrants in particular has remained a problem.

This point emphasises a relevant factor in the experiences of the women interviewed. Although most these women have earned university degrees or are highly trained in professionals, they faced prejudices about black intelligence sometimes from their teachers and often from their peers.

Jennifer, now 42 and a social-pedagogue, recalls her teacher recommending that she and her twin sister be send to *Sonderschule* (i.e. schools for the intellectually disadvantaged):

> . . . That is the first time my mother really fought for us; because she knew if she allowed our transfer to Sonderschule our future would be lost. We were having difficulties in school and our teacher said she thought we would be better off in special education classes. . .

[9] Schools for intellectually disadvantaged children

Jennifer's experience, is shared by many immigrant children in Germany (see Table 1.), especially those with low social economic status (Becker & Lauterbach).

Table 1

Ratio of German to Foreign Students According to School Track in the Year 2002 in Germany[13]

	Total	Gym-nasium	Real-schule[10]	Haut-schule	Elemen-tary school	Sonder-schule[11]	Other schools for Special Education
German	*89,42%* 8.012.062	*19,33%* 1.548.756	*14,92%* 1.195.585	*11,36%* 910.289	*34,53%* 2.766.532	*2,33%* 186.414	*2,19%* 175.180
Foreign students	947.969 *10,58%*	*9,52%* 90.237	*9,23%* 87.505	*21,36%* 202.471	*39,86%* 377.827	*4,72%* 44.724	*2,44%* 23.122
Total	8.960.031	1.638.993	1.283.090	1.112.760	3.144.359	231.138	198.302
RRI:[12]							
German: Foreign students		*9,52 : 19,33* **= *0,49***	*9,23 : 14,92 = **0,62***	*21,36 : 11,36 = **1,88***	*39,86 : 34,53 = **1,15***	*4,72 : 2,33 = **2,03***	*2,44 : 2,19 = **1,11***

Source: Report by the Department of Education and the Arts: KMK 171: Students, Classes, Teachers, and Graduates from 1993 to 2002, p. 22. Also included is data from the Federal Census Bureau on foreign students in schools during the scholastic year 2002/03.

[10] The middle track with six years secondary education in preparation for white collar occupations

[11] Special Education for the intellectually disadvantaged

[12] Relative Risk Indicator for the over or under representation of foreign students in relation to German students according to school type (e.g. The risk that a foreign students be put on the lower school track (Hauptschule) is 1,88 times higher than for a German student)

[13] The data, are based on the statistical report titled "Students, Classes, Teachers and Graduates from 1993 to 2002" presented at conference no. 171 by the Department of Education and the Arts in December 2003 (KMK 2003). The data contains the total number of students who were enrolled in secondary schools in 2002. However, because the published report doesn't distinguish between foreign and German students nor gender the data was communicated to and broken down beforehand by the Federal Census Bureau (Diefenbach, 2002 p. 7)

1.4. Summary

In order to understand the stories of the Afro-German and Black immigrant women portrayed here, a short review of the socio-historical and cultural contexts into which they were born into or migrated to, is necessary.

The deeply imbedded Social Darwinist ideology and the image of the primitive Black in the post-war German consciousness was a major hurdle for people of mixed race and Blacks. Finding legitimacy and a space to articulate and construct an identity in such a context was and is still a major challenge faced by bicultural non-Whites in Europe today.

Although diverse in cultural background, the mere fact of their African (even partially) decent puts them in a precarious position within White-European territory. In Germany, Afro-Germans are often believed to be foreigners, whose stay is temporary. They are part of modern European history and yet are denied recognition. Charles Taylor (1993) argued that non-recognition harms the soul because it is an essential factor in defining who one is. The fear of the Other, the foreign and the stranger are indicative of an unconscious struggle with the undesirable within the Self. These projections add to the burden of winning acceptance and recognition within racialized societies

Symptomatic of the damage to the spirit is internalized colonialism. Internalized colonialism is an inferiority complex, which is caused by the imposition of the cultural values and orientations of a dominant group at the expense of the local cultural originality (Fanon) of “subaltern” groups.

Faced with some overwhelming challenges these women persevered, each in her own way and with her own strategies. I asked one Afro-European woman, with a PhD. in Psychology and a psychoanalyst, what was her greatest success in life is, she answered, “Surviving”.

2. Racism and Discrimination

Research on the impact of discrimination and racism has slowly proliferated in the last 20 years in Germany. The focus of this research is for the most part on the violent racists acts of neo-fascist groups against foreigners. However, the social sciences in Germany have all but ignored the interrelational and structural aspects of racism and racial discrimination. Interestingly the forerunners of this area of research in Europe are the members of the target groups themselves (e.g. Gelbin et al., 1999; Mazón & Steingröver, 2003; Mecheril, 2003; Steyerl & Rodriguez (ed.), 2003). In addition, research has shown that even today, as the number of non-White immigrants and refugees arriving in Germany increases, very little social psychological or individual psychological research on this subject has been initialised.

The reasons for this lacuna in German academia, allowing for some notable exceptions (e.g. Mecheril, 2003; Weiss, 2001) can only be speculated[14]. Nonetheless, "in view of the pervasiveness, complexity and potential destructiveness of racism, it is imperative that every possible avenue of theoretical inquiry be pursued to analyse and thereby deal with the problem" (Goldberg as cited in Duncan et al., 2001, p. 1). However, "racism" remains a subject of debate among researchers from diverse fields. This, because a universal understanding of what racism is and what it is not has yet to be established.

2.1. Racism, Discrimination and Subjectivity

Weiss (2001) warns that a too narrow definition of racism, may not take into account the continuous transitions in social conventions [which influence the manifestations of racism] and lead to the trivialization of the problem through use of archaic designations[15]. A further point of debate is the subjectivity of the phenomenon racism and discrimination. Are there objective criteria for a discriminatory incident or is it a

[14] A further notable exception is the newly established BEST: Black European Studies at Johann-Gutenberg-University Mainz in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

[15] Author's translation. Original: …Dennoch können enge Rassismus Definitionen nicht befriedigen: Sie ignorieren die Wandlungsfähigkeit gesellschaftlicher Konventionen und laufen Gefahr, durch einen chronisch veralteten Rassismusbegriff die Tragweite des Problems zu unterschätzen (p 45)

matter of discriminated is on who perceives themselves as having been discriminated against?

2.1.1. Defining Racism

One definition of racism is that it is a set belief, ideologies that proclaim the superiority of one racial or social group over other groups, with the goal of dominating and marginalizing said groups. There is however, a structural component of racism as well that is rooted in the way societies are organized in terms of economics, politics, and its social institution (Neville et al. 2001). Thompson & Neville (1999) refer to the *recursive relationship* between ideological and structural racism:

> . . . manifests itself as a set of systemic practices and corresponding ideological beliefs resulting in and perpetuating a racial hierarchy in which White individuals as a group are garnered privileges from which racial and ethnic minority groups are systematically excluded. . . (as cited in Neville et al., 2001, p. 260).

Many of the writings on racism plead for a broadening of the definition of racism to allow for the changing social psychological, sociological and political contexts in which racists interactions take place (for a review see Weiss, 2001, p. 44). In their research paper on the psychological perspectives of racism Duncan et al. (2001) pointed out the difficulty in finding a universal definition of racism because of "its multifaceted and constantly changing manifestations "(p 1.). Also, Mecheril (2001) notes that one must distinguish between the phenomenon racism and perceived racism or *experienced racism*: "Experienced racism is a psychological category . . . experiences with racism takes place in a social context, and are subjective (author's translation: Mecheril, 2001, p.69). These experiences range from physical violence to being followed in a store by the security officer (Mecheril). However, Weiss (2001) pointed out that a normative approach in defining racism is futile because of constantly changing norms and [political] conventions. Hence, she suggests an analytic approach that allows us to examine what racism is as opposed to what constitutes racism. On the other hand Weiss warns of the danger of an overly expanding the criteria which designate racism, thereby running the risk of diluting the significance of this phenomenon. She proposes three distinctions for designating a

social interaction as racists: *Categorization, Hierarchy, and Influence in social structuring processes*[16]*.* Using this frame here, helps to organize the arguments set forth for a more analytic approach in defining racism. In the following the recent currents are presented in form of axioms that summarize the results of investigating, "What is racism?" The term axiom is used here as defined by Loury (2002):

> …In the mathematical sense, an assumption embraced for the sake of argument, the implications of which may be of interest…these axioms are self-evident , merely that they are plausible and worthy of exploration (pp.4-5).

In other words, these are proposals for the analysis of what racism is. The axioms provide structured elaborations on the debate on finding a definition for this phenomenon. An axiom is not a complete theory; but provides conditional intellectual presuppositions for developing a theory.

*2.1.2. What is racism***?**

> The horror inspired by Nazi anti-Semitism, the debates around decolonization- when the peoples and nations of the Third World began assert themselves as such – and the rise of the black movements in the USA in the 1960s, together with the smaller movements in the French and British West Indies, each in their way make it difficult to keep an analyses focused wholly and solely on individuals defined in terms of prejudice or personality structure. Confronted with racism which has taken on more or less institutional form within states or political forces and, in particular, with an anti-Semitism which was at the very heart of the experience of the Third Reich. . . (Wieviorka, 1995, p.27).

A social construct, race is a marker that effect lives and determines the opportunities available to racialized minorities. But not only skin color is targeted by racism, as anti-Semitism proves. This implies that a broader understanding of what racism as social stigmata placed on biological characteristics other than race. Further more is requires perusing the macro-structural underpinnings that facilitate its reproduction at the interrelation level.

[16] I've translated the term *Konstuktionsmacht* (Weiss p. 26) into *Influence in Social Structuring Processes* because it captures more closely its meaning

2.1.2.1. Axiom 1: Racism does not implicate the existence of races

- *Classification*

The social historical background for the construction of race as a means of "*Othering"* the colonized Black subject and Social Darwinist ideology as "scientific proof" is discussed in section 1.1. of this paper.

Racial classification is a cognitive act whereby social agents maneuver in ways that affect the lives of "Others" on the basis an observable social marker (e.g. skin color). The social arenas where this is acted out are for example hiring, housing, and regulations of financial institutions (Loury, 2002). However, although the term race is increasingly frowned upon, terms such ethnic group and cultural group serve as "quasi immutable markers of social, political and economic, privilege, restriction and exclusion" (Duncan et al. p. 3). In other words even though political correctness proscribes certain social classifications, this does not mean that the new acceptable terms are less threatening. Many of these terms are based on classifications of who belongs and the "Other", the "Foreigner" or the "Stranger". Wieviorka (1995)) depicts racism in the form of a logical duality along two axes that are diametrically opposed to each other: *inferiorizational logic and differentiational logic of racism*. He explains that the inferiorizational logic is base on the belief in a dominant race, to which all other races are inferior; and the differentiational logic argues for the "setting apart, exclusion, and in extreme cases the destruction of races which are thought to pose a threat" (p.43). Weiss (2001) referring to Wieviorka, describes the mechanisms behind this duality:

> Wieviorka distinguishes between the *inferiorizational and differentiational* logic of racism and explains their historical context. The inferiorizational logic is located in modern colonist state of mind[17]; the differentiational logic is a result of decolonialization – the migration to "motherlands" and from this the resulting postmodernist multi-culturalistic excuses (author's translation: Weiss, 2001, p.25).

[17] Original: …Die herabwürdigende Logik füge sich in den modernen assimilatorischen und kolonisierenden Zugriff auf die Welt.

Miles (2000) argues," . . . by deconstructing the idea of race, the effects of the process of racialization and of the expression of racism within the development of the capitalist world economic system, are more clearly exposed. . ." (p.140)

Separating racism from an explicit belief in the existence of races, while taking into account that the mere belief in the classification of a *Self* who has the power to subjugate an "Other" would broaden the scope of what constitutes racism. Conceptualizing racism as such, puts the changing forms of racism into their socio-historical context allowing for the investigation of the contextual forms of subjugation. This approach leaves room for the discourse on modern manifestations of *racism without racists* (Bonilla-Silva, 2003) such as abstract liberalism, cultural racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003); Steel, 1990), silent racism, and symbolic racism.

2.1.2.2. Axiom 2 Racism Implies the Existence of Societal Hierarchies

According to Duncan et al. (2001) the *systematically asymmetrical relations of power* denotes the hierarchical nature of racism. Referring to the writings of Thompson (1984), they defined the systematically asymmetrical relation of power as a "processes of social, economic and political marginalisation and domination" (p.4). Goldberg (2000) wrote of the *Underclass* to illustrate the hierarchical component of racism. According to Goldberg this designation, coined by Myrdal (1962) was strictly economic and described the chronically unemployed and underemployed, those marginalized or excluded from the postindustrial economy. By the end of the 70s, Goldberg continued, because of certain structural transformations and economic shifts, being of the Underclass population signified a behavioral characteristic. Those of the underclass where ascribed certain pathological social attitudes and actions. Eventually these a outward marker of these pathologies became racial group membership (Goldberg, 2000). Hence, albeit with the help of median representations and social-political discourse, an economic term of reference is racialized. Goldberg wrote

> . . .The interpenetrating lists of individual pathologies and cultural poverty that have been taken by social scientists and journalists alike to make up the Underclass condition, carry patently racialized connotations. . .(p.167).

It can be argued that hierarchical societal structures do not always implicate a racist system. In sociological theory, social stratification evolved as an instrument to ensure that within a given social structure the actors within this structure are adequately placed (Davis & Moore, 1945). In other words, social stratifications ensure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons- implying that some positions are "better" than others. Hence the authors explained, positions are ranked according to their functional importance and the availably of qualified personnel. They concluded that [social] position determines where an actor finds themself in the hierarchy and how much status in form of social privileges he or she enjoys. However, this model does little to explain social inequalities in general and racism in particular. The question remains: Why do Blacks still find themselves at the bottom of the stratification system?

In his article, "*Theory of Class Development and Social Stratification",* Max Haller (1983) argues that class, status and power are not the determinate dimensions of social inequality. He posits that we must distinguish between the *level of distribution of social resource* and the *relational level.* The former informs us on how knowledge and wealth as well as power and regard are distributed in a society. The latter sheds light on the relation between different members of a society. He concludes that the perpetuation of social inequality takes place at the relational or micro-level and is than reproduced at the macro-level. *Symbolic violence* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) is one mechanism that helps perpetuate social inequality. Through symbolic violence subjects internalize and accept the ideas and structures that subjugate them; thereby reproducing their own subordination. It is an act of violence because it hinders and subjugates the individual, but also symbolic, because it does so without directly or overtly using force or coercion (Connolly & Heally, 2004).

Delineating from this line of argument one can propose that so long the relational interactions between Blacks and Whites is overshadowed by a deeply embedded awareness of *racial otherness* (Loury, 2002) and a belief in the subaltern, which originated from the historical facts of colonialism and slavery, social hierarchies will perpetuate. Moreover, the habitus of the subjugated fuels his self-subordination. Rex (2000) referring to Warner (1936) writes:

> . . . Warner suggests that the best way to conceptualize the relationship of Negroes to the stratification system was to begin by imagining that at the bottom of the stratification system there was a barrier far more impenetrable than those which divided the various strata or classes. When some of those beneath this barrier began to acquire which *prima facie* should have placed them higher up in the stratification system, the effect was not to breach the barrier but to tip it diagonally, so that there was the possibility of an individual negro becoming and upper-class negro, just as there was a possibility of a white becoming a poor white. There would, however, be less association between these two groups than there would between poor whites and middle-class whites or between upper -class, middle-class and lower-class negroes (p. 123).

The barrier tilts but is not shattered, thus signifying that the position of Blacks in any given society remains burdened by societal (mis-) perceptions. The social relations they enjoy remain in essence horizontal within the macro-social context and the vertical rise is evident in comparison with others of *their kind*. Consequently, their social classification, their "race", belabors their rise in status within the social structure as a whole, because they lack symbolic power. Of symbolic power or *the power of world making*; possessing the means to impose a legitimatized and accepted version of the world*, Bourdieu* (1988) wrote*:*

> . . . Symbolic relations of power tend to reproduce and to reinforce the power relations that constitute the structure of social pace. More concretely, legitimation of the social world is not, as some believe, the product of a deliberate and purposive action of propaganda or symbolic imposition; it results, rather, from the fact hat agents apply to the objective structures of the social world structures of perception and appreciation which are issued out of these very structures and which tend to picture the world as evident. Social classifications (. . .) organize the perception of he social world and under certain conditions, can really organize the world (Bourdieu, 1988 pp. 21 - 22).

Bourdieu explains this in terms of the manifestation of symbolic power in social space. He argues that social structures express themselves as relations of power within a field, and within that imagined (symbolic) field spatial distance indicates social distance. Whereas social contact within this field social distances (e.g. contact between a secretary and their boss) are often camouflages. Here one must differentiate between social contact and social relationships.

According to Bourdieu, “these relations are the relations between positions occupied within the distributions of the resources which are or may become active. . .” (1988, p. 17). Bourdieu labels these resources *capital* -economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. Their lack of capital makes climbing the social ladder difficult for non-White minorities, because the distributors of said capital also own it and determine social status. This from a sociological point of view is a mechanism that perpetuates hierarchical systems.

Axiom 3 Racism Requires Influence in Social Structuring Processes

Influence in social structuring processes is more than power in terms of resource allocation (Weiss), it implies the *structural advantage*, of *race privilege* (Frankenberg, 1993). Mechril commented that possessing resources for *societal Othering*[18] is a prerequisite to participation in the perpetuation of racism. Racism, he continued,

> . . . is a phenomenon that is repeatedly conferred, maintained, and reinforced by positioning minorities and the majority along ethnic, cultural, and racial lines by means of constructed symbols and societal norms (author’s translation; 2003, p.69)[19].

Most researchers agree that racism, although acted out by individuals, is a societal phenomenon embedded in the fabric of a given society (e.g. Loury 2002; Neville et al. 2001; Weiss 2001; Hall 2000; Wieviorka, 1995). Neville et al. concluded,”. . .Layered within each of the structural and ideological components are multiple interlocking types of racism that exist on macro and micro levels” (p.) Bourdieu (1988) argues, that access to symbolic capital, is essential for societal influence or power:

> . . .*symbolic capital* is nothing other than economic or cultural capital when it is known and recognized, when it is known through the categories of perception that it imposes, symbolic relations of power tend to reproduce and to reinforce the power relations that constitute the structure of social space (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 21).

[18]Original:… der Verfügbarkeit der Mittel zum sozialen Wirksamwerde der Unterschieds-konstruktion. I use the term Othering as descriptive for the German phrasing, which would be awkward if translated in English.

[19] Original:… ist Rassismus immer als ein Phänomen zu verstehen, in dem im Hinblick auf ethnisch-„rassische“ und kulturelle Merkmale das Verhältnis von gesellschaftlichen Minderheiten und gesellschaftlich vermittelter Mehrheit erneuert, bestätigt, symbolisiert und praktisiert wird. (p.69)

Tilly (1998) writes of *categorical inequality* leading to *durable inequality*:

> Durable inequality among categories arises because people who control access to value-producing resources solve pressing organizational problems by means of categorical distinctions. Inadvertently or otherwise, those people set up systems of social closure, exclusion, and control. Multiple parties - not all of them powerful, some of them even victims of exploitations - than acquire stakes in those solutions. . . Through all of these variations, we discover and rediscover paired, recognized, organized, unequal categories such as black/white, male/female, married/unmarried, and citizens/not citizens. . . (Tilly, 1998; as cited in Loury, 2002, p. 211),

Racist and discriminatory acts at the micro-level represent and reproduce concessions made at the macro level (e.g. educational systems, political systems, organized bureaucracies). Social agents recognize and legitimize these symbolic acts by; "applying to the objective structures of the social world structures of perception and appreciation which are issued out of these very structures and which tend to picture the world as evident." (Bourdieu, 1988, p.21).

Understanding both macro- and micro-correlations of social inequality, helps sharpen our focus and clear our view when confronting racism, whatever garments it may don.

2.2. Racism and Racial Discrimination's New Attire

Starting in the early 1980s, there has been an ongoing debate about the need for the constitutional provisions made after the Civil Rights Movement for the advancement of not only African Americans, but for all minorities including White women. Intellectual conservatives brought forth the argument that because the American Constitution is color-blind, liberal policies such as affirmative action should be deemed unconstitutional. In 1994 Herrnstein and Murray, Harvard professors, published their book *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life.* In essence, this book proclaimed to have statistically proven that Blacks in the US have inferior intelligence, and their inability to rise in status in the US, has nothing to do with racism, but with lack of effort.

Later publications (e.g. Fisher et al, 1996; Jacoby & Glauberman, 1995) have since repudiated the Herrnstein & Murray's results. Nonetheless in the wake its publication many American conservatives used the book as final proof for the uselessness of affirmative action and social policies for the advancement of non-White minorities and White women. According to Carr (1997), liberals and conservatives alike strive for color-blind race relations in America. However, he argues color-blindness is actually a racist ideology. To understand this, racism must be place in historical perspective, from which one sees "racism as a basic part of the system" (p. xi).

As the influx of immigrants, voluntary and involuntary, into Europe increases the issue of structural concessions, polices and programs for them increases. Germany's inability to reach a consensus on the contents of an anti-discrimination law, gives just an inkling of the debates that will continue on both sides of the political sphere about how to protect the rights of said immigrants. However, the argument that there is no need for an anti-discrimination law because the German Constitution already preserves and protects the rights of all its citizens brings to mind the color-blind discourse in the US. Therefore, knowledge of the structural components of racism is essential as well as an awareness of the mechanics of racism and discrimination, in order to develop methods and instrument to measure their occurrence.

2.2.1. Central frames in racism

In his study on the prevalence of racism in the United States, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2003) analyzes the four major frames used by his respondents to explain racist occurrences. These frames are: *abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization of racism*. These are *set paths for interpreting information* (Bonilla-Silva) that cause a misinterpretation of the world around us. Hence, they help create, propagate, and confirm myths constructed around the issue of race and interracial relations. For purposes of our analysis, we will address *abstract liberalism, symbolic racism, and cultural racism*.

The *minimization of racism* is a consequence of abstract liberalism and suggests that racism and discrimination no longer play a central role in the opportunities and quality

of life of minorities. *Naturalization*, also known as Social Darwinism, has been discussed above (see section 1.1.3.2).

2.2.1.1. Abstract Liberalism

According to Bonilla-Silva, *abstract liberalism,* "involves using ideas associated with political liberalism (i.e. "Equal opportunity" and "Economic liberalism" (i.e. individualism, free will, entrepreneurial spirit) abstractly to explain racial issues." Bonilla-Silva argues that whites in the US reframe race-related issues in the language of liberalism to appear moral while opposing all measures, which would, de facto impede racial discrimination. Bonilla-Silva points out that abstract liberalism uses the principle of *equal opportunity* to argue that these policies encourages preferential treatment of certain minority groups (mainly Blacks and White women) by reversely discriminating against others (i.e. White males). The White majority's opposition towards affirmative action policies at the workplace and universities is, according to Bonilla-Silva, an example of how abstract liberalism justifies canceling these programs. Bonilla-Silva argues that equating affirmative action with reverse discrimination requires turning a blind eye towards the extreme under-representation of Blacks and Hispanics in most good jobs, schools, and universities.

Because *abstract liberalism* considers neither social nor psychological factors, its deliberations take place without reference to reality. Therefore abstract liberalism lacks the moral power to either protect minority groups from racial discrimination or prevent its occurrence (Trepagnier, 1996).

2.2.1.2. Abstract racism and its role in cultural racism

An expression of abstract liberalism in Germany is the statement, "Everyone has access to a free education in Germany." This is invariably uttered during discussions on the integration, through education, of the many immigrants, including Turks, and other minority groups living in Germany.

A case in point is the "liberal" German teacher who bemoans that her school is so overrun by Turkish pupils that many German parents have had to transfer their children to other schools where the majority is still German. The argument that transferring German children from schools with large (non-White) immigrant

populations diminishes the quality of education the children in these schools receive; results in the "ghettoizing" of the public schools and makes the integration process of the immigrant youths even more difficult, is challenged with the argument that "everyone has the same opportunities for education in Germany.". ."Besides," the challenge continues, "because of their *cultural backgrounds*, schooling is not as important [for immigrant children]. Therefore, it may be best that they finish their schooling early and go to work to help support their families." Such appraisals create the *cultural racist* myth that people of certain cultural backgrounds do not value education as highly as Central Europeans do and conclude that they are not fit to meet the requirements needed to succeed in this society. It disregards the fact that the fear and isolation of an older generation of immigrants and the continued bigotry against these immigrants can lead to self-perpetuating feelings of inferiority in the following generations. Hence, the culturally aware teacher quoted above fails to realize that her attitude and those of her like-minded colleagues result in a generation of disadvantaged youths. They are disadvantaged because they are approaching adulthood, with poor German language skills and substandard education, which does not provide them with marketable skills; thus leaving them inadequately prepared for the job market (see Table 1).

2.2.1.3. Cultural Racism and Self-fulfilling Prophecies

An understanding of the cultural background of the minority groups living in Germany and teaching these groups the particularities of German culture is important, but that is not enough. An understanding of the interpersonal mechanisms involved when individuals from two cultures meet, especially two cultures as historically intertwined, as are for example the German and Turkish cultures, is imperative.

The underlying beliefs behind abstract liberal attitudes in the classroom, in the workplace are based superior-inferior presumptions. Believing that another person is inferior leads to behavior, which confirms our expectations or self-fulfilling prophecies. Thus, expectations with respect to those believed to be inferior are lowered for their "own good" thereby reducing the need for true effort on the part the group deemed inferior (Steel, 1998). This group therefore comes to believe that it has diminished ability, intelligence or talent and eventually reduces its own expectations

of succeeding in this society (Duncan et al., 2001). Barbara Trepagnier (1996) coined the phrase *silent racism* to describe internalized negative attitudes toward minorities commonly harbored by whites. "Researchers of silent racism maintain that white people sitting around talking about racism acquire a sense that they are fair-minded, when in fact, in the process of so doing; they are colluding with a system that unfairly differentiates people on a racial basis. Benevolent intent does not eliminate the effects of exclusionary or demeaning behaviour. " (Trepagnier)

Abstract liberalism and cultural racism is comparable to *symbolic racism* (Wieviorka, 1995; Sears & Henry, 2003). Symbolic racism describes a system of beliefs that developed during the 1950s and 1960s civil rights movement. It marked a move from overt discrimination and racism to more subtle expressions thereof.

2.2.1.4. Symbolic Racism

The concept of symbolic racism describes a coherent political belief system (Wieviorka, 1995; Sear & Henry, 2003). This system of beliefs embodies four premises:

a. Blacks no longer face much prejudice or discrimination;

b. Blacks' failure to progress results from their innate laziness
lack of effort;

c. Blacks are demanding too much too fast; and

d. Blacks do not deserve what they have gotten (e.g. affirmative action)

According to the Sears & Henry (2003):

> The term *racism* reflects the hypothesis that symbolic racism includes an underlying prejudice toward Blacks. The term *symbolic* highlights symbolic racism's targeting of Blacks as an abstract collectivity rather than specific Black individuals; and its presumed roots in abstract moral values rather than concrete self-interest or personal experience (2003, p. 260).

Symbolic racism replaces heavy-handed racism and discrimination with more subtle forms (Wieviorka, 1995). This is embodied in outcries that foreigners are abusing the German social welfare system; that an anti-discrimination law would

cause an onslaught of legal battles. It places the burden of proving worthiness on those targeted by racism and discrimination. Germany's discourse on immigration epitomizes this notion of desirable vs. undesirable cultures. With the media as a vehicle, the politics of immigration is brought to the public. This abstract perception of non-White immigrants and moral gesturing are the basis for racism without racists.

Excurse: Germany's discourse on immigration

Stanik (2006) researched the discourse on immigration in German media. In particular, he compared this discourse in two major German publications[20]. *Der Spiege*l represents the liberal debate on immigration in comparison to the more conservative *Welt am Sonntag* Table 2 shows that the public as well as the political debate on immigration in Germany focuses on the question of prosperity, the threat posed to this prosperity by impoverished foreigners; and the categories "economically useful" vs. "undesirable immigrants". A further point of debate is whether Germany is an immigration country or not. Stanik summarizes as follows:

> ... Former immigrant workers from today's European Union aren't the subject of the migration discussion; their immigration is a "non-issue". Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese and Greeks are considered fully integrated and are therefore not ranked among the "problem immigrants". Within the European Union, European liberality is thus undisputed. To the "foreigner problem" rank immigrants from non-European Union countries as well as the "new" immigrants, who've arrived in Western Europe since the mid-80s as asylum-seekers with tourist visas or the so called "illegal aliens" (i.e. residency over a long period of time -more than 3 months ;author's note)- in German without a visa and with the intention of remaining permanently. The affiliation to Europe and/or to the "European culture", which excludes a connection to the Islam, seems to justify a line of demarcation in the migration discourse. This gives credence to the debate on the "ethnization" of migration policies . . .(author's translation).

The discourse in Germany according to these results, depicts two locations of the migration "problem". The first arena of debate is the economic German self-interest

[20] Wolfgang Staniks research covered not only the German media. He found parallels with the Left Wing liberal debate discourse in France found in the "Nouvel Observateur" and the Right Wing Conservative debate represented in "Le Point". I have chosen not to include this part of the discussion and focus on the German discourse.

vs. the threat to German prosperity. Here discussions on desirable vs. non-desirable immigrants take place. The second is the protectionist debate, whereby along this dimension the discourse runs from the fear of possible ethnization of Germany to the criminal menace to German national security. Germany's caught between the rock and the hard place of needing foreign labor forces and not being able to accept that Germany has indeed become multicultural. Pat Buchanan (2002) shared these fears for the US, when he wrote of "the threat to America due to the immigrant invasion that imperils the country and civilization." (Subtitle).

Table 2

Discourse on Immigration as Represented in two Major German Publications

	Der Spiegel	**Welt am Sonntag**
Focus Group of Discourse	**Informed German Public**	**Informed German Public**
Description of conflict	• Decreased prosperity because of impoverished immigrants; • "Alianization"[21] of German society	• Decreased prosperity because of impoverished immigrants; • Threat to national security from criminal immigrants
Agents	• Liberals (German and Integrated Immigrants) vs. • Fundamentalists (Moslems, ethnic oriented Germans)	Germans vs. Foreigners (= Strangers)
Consequences	• Rigid immigration controls; • Immigration according to economic utility; • Integration programs to facilitate the integration of immigrants	• No more immigration; • Unconditional assimilation of those foreigners already living in Germany; • Citizenship only for the assimilated; • Dismantling social security benefits for foreigner ; • Deportation of undesirable foreigners

Source: *Fazit: Die Festung Europa als Resultat eine neue Ethnisierung?* Wolfgang Stanik. 2006. Hamburger-Bildungsserver[22].

[21] Author's translation for *Überfremdung*

[22] http://hamburgerbildungsserver.de/welcome.phtml?unten=/ethno/europa/

2.3. Racial Discrimination: Subjectivity and Psychological Impact

Discrimination is the behavioral component of racism. It refers to "intentional acts that draw unfair or injurious distinctions, that are based solely on ethnic or racial basis and that have effects favorable to in-groups and negative to out-groups" (Jackson, Brown and Kirby 1998, p.110; as cited by Kasper & Noh 2001, p. 9). Because blatant acts of discrimination are no longer socially sanctioned neither at the institutionally level (e.g. apartheid, segregation) or micro levels (e.g. employment discrimination, housing discrimination) of society they have been converted into a hierarchy of merits and skills (Bourdieu, 1973). Bourdieu illustrates this mechanism using the educational system as an example of how social hierarchies are converted into the language of equality:

> . . .The objective mechanisms which enable the ruling classes to keep the monopoly of the most prestigious educational establishments, while continually appearing at least to put the chance of possessing that monopoly into the hands of every generation, are concealed beneath the cloak of a perfectly democratic method of selection which takes into account only merit and talent. These mechanisms are of a kind, which converts to the virtues of the system the members of the dominated classes whom they eliminate in the same way as they convert those whom they elect. [This] ensures that those who are "miraculously selected" may experience as "miraculous" an exceptional destiny, which is the best testimony of academic democracy. . . (1973, p. 497).

Such mechanisms make it difficult to find objective criteria to determine discriminatory acts, of this Allport wrote:

> Where clear conflict exists, with law and conscience on the one side, and with custom and prejudice on the other, discrimination is practiced chiefly in covert and indirect ways, and not primarily in face-to-face situations where embarrassment would result (Allport, 1987, p. 57).

Thus, the subjectivity of discrimination and we speak of *perceived discrimination*. Perceived discrimination refers to subjective perceptions of unfair treatment of racial/ethnic groups or members of disadvantage-ed groups (e.g. physically challenged), based on prejudice and ethnocentrism, which may be manifest at individual, cultural or institutional levels (Jackson and Lassiter, 1998). Perceived

discrimination and racism are phenomenon as well as subjective psychological experiences and have a significant impact on the well-being of their targets. These incidents often follow visible minorities living in discriminatory societies their whole lives. In the following, we will examine the impact discrimination on psychological development; specifically their psychological well-being, self-esteem, and motivation.

2.3.1. The Psychological Impact of Perceived Racial Discrimination

Research on the impact of perceived discrimination and racism from the target's point of view was almost non-existent well through the 70s. During the period following the civil rights movement social psychological research on racism and discrimination primarily investigated why or when dominant group members oppress or disadvantage minority or subordinate groups (Dion, 2001).

Fernando (1983, 1986) found that racial discrimination affects mental health via effects on psychological resources, including *self-esteem* and *self-efficacy.* According to this author:". .[Racial discrimination] affects *self-esteem*, causes *psychological losses*, and promotes a *sense of helplessness*.". A study with 585 visible and non-visible minority adolescents showed discrimination correlated significantly with negative psychological and behavioral outcomes related to *depression*, *anxiety*, and *anti-social behavior* as well as *social* and *instrumental competence* and *self-acceptance* (Kasper & Noh, 2001). Some studies (e.g. Romero & Roberts, 2003; Branscombe et al., 1999) on identity development in minority youths have shown how discrimination affects the *psychological adjustment* and *well-being* of these youths. The internalization of ascribed and devalued social positions and status, led to feelings of *inferiority* and *self-hatred*, *anger* that jeopardize *self-image, self-esteem,* and feelings of *self-efficacy*. However, Faltz (1996) refers to studies (Wylie, 1979; Hare, 1980; Kugle et al., 1983; Lay & Wakstein, 1985; Powers et al., 1971; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972), which found that the self-esteem of African American youths showed no decrease in self-esteem when they have performed poorly in school or when they have experienced blatant discrimination. Various theories have attempted to solve this paradox.

In his research on the social psychological impact of prejudice and discrimination from the perspective of the victim (2001) Dion posits attributing failure or misfortune

to prejudice or discrimination protects self-esteem of minority group members, as reflected by the results of self-evaluations following experimentally induced discriminatory scenarios. Furthermore, this effect has been found to be greater by visible minority group members (Blacks, Latinos) than white minorities (white women, Jews) because their self-esteem does not depend of the opinions or attitudes of the White majority (Dion, 2001; Crocker & Major, 1989). However, further studies have contested the attribution theory with their results.

Crocker and Major (1989) have perused theoretical perspectives in social psychology that predict experiencing prejudice will damage the self-esteem of its targets. First, if members of stigmatized groups recognize prejudice as rejection by the dominant group, the "looking-glass" approach to the Self (Cooley, 1956; Mead, 1934; as cited in Baldwin, 1979, p.52) suggests that those who recognize others' negative view of their group membership are likely to internalize that negative evaluation and have lower self-esteem. Likewise, an efficacy-based approach to self-esteem posits that because positive self-esteem is built by gaining a sense of control over one's environment (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983) and rejection by the dominant group reduces feelings of control (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997), attributions to prejudice should harm self-esteem

Kaspar & Noh (2001) reviewed theoretical and empirical research on ethnic identity as a psychological product that safeguards the self-esteem of individuals who perceive themselves as having suffered racial /ethnic discrimination. Using theories and research on identity, stress processes, and development they examine the empirical findings on: a) the direct association between discrimination and ethnic identity. More specifically research on the role perceived discrimination plays in the development of ethnic identity; and b.) Research on ethnic identity as a psychological buffer against the emotional scarring caused by perceived discrimination. Unfortunately, as will be discussed below, the findings for the former are contradictory.

2.4. Summary

Defining racism and discrimination from a macro-micro perspective provides the basis for a social-psychological study of these themes. The arena of racism is established at the institutional level and re-enacted among social agents in the form of discrimination. Symbolic racism, cultural racism and abstract liberalism are the attire of today's racism without racists, making an analytical, instead of a descriptive approach to defining racism necessary.

The main source points of racial discrimination at the institutional level are labour markets, education, housing, criminal justice, and immigration[23]. Nonetheless finding objective criteria for discrimination leaves too much room for debate, hence the term perceived discrimination as the point of departure for research.

Research on the psychological effects of racial discrimination has led to contradicting results. On the one hand, studies have found that perceiving pervasive discrimination impairs the mental health of non-White minorities living in discriminatory societies via their effects on their psychological resources including self-esteem and self-efficacy. On the other hand, numerous studies have found that African Americans retain their self-esteem even after performing poorly in school or when confronted with blatant discrimination. Researchers posit this paradox is the result of attributing failure or misfortune to discrimination protects the self-esteem of non-White minorities.

[23] Adapted from: Rebecca M. Blank, et al.. 2001. Measuring Racial Discrimination., p. 67. According to these authors the source points for discrimination in the US are labor markets, education, housing/mortgage lending, criminal justice, and health care.

3. Identity Construction, Patchwork Identities and the Stigmatized Self

According to Erikson (1974), identity formation is a major developmental task faced by youths. Erickson's identity theory is a phase model according to which, each phase represents a psychosocial "hurdle" that has to be surmounted before the individual can move on to the next phase. This and much of the research found on identity has focused on the main stream experiences (i.e. white middle class male) and from this vantage point conclusions are then drawn on minority experiences (Ibrahim, et al., 1997; Phinney, 1990). Hence, these earlier studies failed to consider the impact of race and ethnicity on identity. Over the last 20 years, a proliferation of research and theoretical literature has emerged from the necessity to close this hiatus.

The concept of racial identity has been contested because some meanings are derived from its biological dimensions and others from its social dimensions (e.g. Spickard, 1992; Helms, 1995). Today however, racial identity is discussed as a social construct, which "refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a particular racial group" (Helms, 1993; as cited in Chávez & Guido-DiBrito, p. 40). Chávez & Guido-DiBrito describe racial identity as a surface-level manifestation based on how we look with deep implications for how we are treated (p. 40). Some researchers say racial identity is "pride in one's racial and cultural identity" (e.g. Sue, 1981); whereas Phinney (1990, p. 499) refers to "the psychological relationship of ethnic and racial minority members with their own group". In contrast ethnic identity is defined as person identification with a particular segment of a larger society due to common origin, culture and the participation in activities that manifest their origins and culture (Ibrahim et al, 1997) Tajfel (1981; as cited in Burgos-Aponte, 2004. p. 5), described ethnic identity as part of an individual's self-concept. Accordingly, it develops from knowledge of membership in a cultural group and the value or emotional significance attached to that membership. Therefore, these individuals feel a bond across similar traditions, values and beliefs. Nagel (1996) describes ethnic identity sociologically

and characterizes it as “a dialectic between internal identification and external ascription” (as cited in Howard, J. A. 2000, p. 375).

Ethnic and racial identity development consists of social group identification along two distinct dimensions- culture and the social construct race. Ethnic identity development is an individual’s identification along the cultural dimension and its manifestations (values, behaviors, beliefs, and traditions). Racial identity development is a process whereby the individual comes to terms with the cultural, psychological, physical, sociopolitical implications of their membership in a particular racial group. Both processes have in common that they “. . . [Allow] individuals to make sense of the world around them and find pride in who they are. . .” (Phinney, 1990, p.). However, for members of stigmatized minority groups these can be painful processes.

This study aims to investigate the interaction between perceived discrimination by “visible” immigrants and Afro-Europeans in Germany and the effects of psychological and social resources (e.g. Coping, self-efficacy, social support) on their ethnic / racial identity choices. Furthermore, the role ethnic and racial identity may or may not play in the psychological adaptation of these groups to environmental stressors such as racism, discrimination, acculturation challenges, and managing biculturalism. Finally, the effects of a bi-cultural (-racial) background coupled with minority status on their major life decisions (i.e. education, career, family) are explored.

3.1. Identity Construction and Patchwork Identities: Who Am I?

It is almost impossible to explore *identity* and *identity development* from a purely psychological approach. To do so diminishes the complexity of this construct. Identity is a conglomerate of cultural, political, and social influences; a multi-facetted discourse. A discourse covering the question of how identity effects our social relations and involvements with others to how potentially divers forces (Rutherford, 1998) can be integrated in the political mainstream.

Here the focus is on the role of external forces that are internalized in the identity development of those who are "in-between". In-between-ness, displaced centeredness (Rutherford, 1998), precariousness (Mecheril, 2003) are signifiers used to describe the identity dilemma often face by individuals with multiple cultural and multi-racial affiliations[24].

Who am I? Identity is an answer to the question, "Who am I" (Antonio Blasi as cited in Keupp, 1997). Although well posed, this a difficult question to answer (Keupp). Keupp writes, ". . .Identity development under the current sociocutural circumstances has become precarious. . ." (author's translation: p.7,)[25]. He questions whether classic identity theories can comprehensively illustrate the identity construction in "a constantly changing globalized capitalist society" (Lecture material 2005/2006, Innsbruck University). Earlier identity theories presumed internalized traditions, values, and a sense of embeddedness in a given society were the result of successfully maneuvering the pitfalls of adolescence. While those who fail risked identity diffusion or incoherence (see Erickson, 1973; Marcia, 1980). That is the time-honored concept of identity theories; Stuart Hall (2000) refers to this as the logic of identity. He wrote:

> . . .a notion of the continuous, self-sufficient, developmental, unfolding, inner dialectic of selfhood. We are never quite there, but always on our way to it, and when we get there, we will at last know exactly who we are . . . There is something guaranteed about that logic or discourse of identity . . . And it helps us, I would say, to sleep well at night . . . Because what [concepts] tell us is that, there is a kind of stable, only very slowly changing ground inside the hectic upsets, dis- continuities and ruptures of history. Around us history is constantly breaking in unpredictable ways but we somehow, go on being the same. . .(p. 145).

A more creative and adequate answer to the "crisis" of identity development in post industrial, globalized time is what Keupp (1997) coined *patchwork identities*. Patchwork identity metaphorically describes identity construction (Keupp) as a

[24] This is similar to what Mercheril (2003) designated as *nation-ethno-kulturelle (Mehrfach-) Zugehörigkeit.*
[25] Original:. Identitätsbildung unter den gegenwärtigen gesellschaftlich-kulturellen Bedingungen prekär geworden ist.

patchwork quilt- joining different colors, patterns, and shapes. This description enables us to develop newer theories, which take into account alternative lifestyles and cultures. It leaves room for non-pathological analysis of the identity development of those who cannot use one national identity as a point of reference , one system of values and norms for orientation, or call one socio-historical timeline their own, nor speak of one cultural identity. Figure 2 illustrates the concept of identity construction as patchworking (Keupp,1997). Keupp posits four main global identity references (Meta-identity):

- *Central biographical narration* is the subject's narrative portrayal of their ideal self. This entails making sense of one's "Self" and one's life by sharing biographical chronicles with others; and answering the question "Who are you?".

- *Dominate identity components* represent those parts of our identities that in most situations dictate who we are and who others believe we are. According to Keupp (2002), the dominance of certain components depends on two factors:

    1. The dominate identity components lend consistency and self-security. Hence, we reveal, those characteristics that gain recognition, self-respect, autonomy, and originality in situations that are highly relevant.

    2. In certain stages in life, our identity components differ in salience. For example as a young adult in college the dominate identity components may be the student identity, student body president identity, striving scientist identity. When this phase is over other identities gain salience depending on the life course chosen.

- *Sense of Identity* develops through the coalescence of biographical experiences and self-evaluations against a background of increasing generalized identity standards (i.e. cognitive, social, emotional, corporal, and productivity-oriented standards) and identity components. Important for a sense of identity is authenticity and coherence; authenticity refers to an individual's perception that

their actions fit their own identity standards in a given situation. Coherence is the subjective evaluation of how well one can meet life's challenges.

- *Value orientation* plays a major role in the model because the model represents identity development as a work in process dependent on social and cultural context, as are value orientations. These change as biographical self-narrations change. Changes in life choices, gives rise to new situations shifting the salience of certain identity component over others. New life orientations also lead to changes in the importance of certain values over others.

Keupp's model takes into account the social-historical-cultural context of the subject. He posits identity as a process and not a result. Atomization of the subject, uprooting, and societal changes are all factors that add to the dynamics of identity development. This concept reflects Hall's belief in an identity concept that takes into account, the uncertainties, and

> . . . the notion of identity as contradictory, as composed of more than one discourse, as composed always across the silence of the other, as written in and through ambivalence and desire. These are extremely important ways of trying to think of an identity which is not a sealed or closed totality. . .(Hall, 2000, p.148).

Identity construction is an interactive process; it involves constantly reassigning and realigning our social interactions in the present, and anchoring them in our biographies, in order to compare them with past interactions. Thereby lending our discourses authenticity and continuity (Krappmann, 2005).

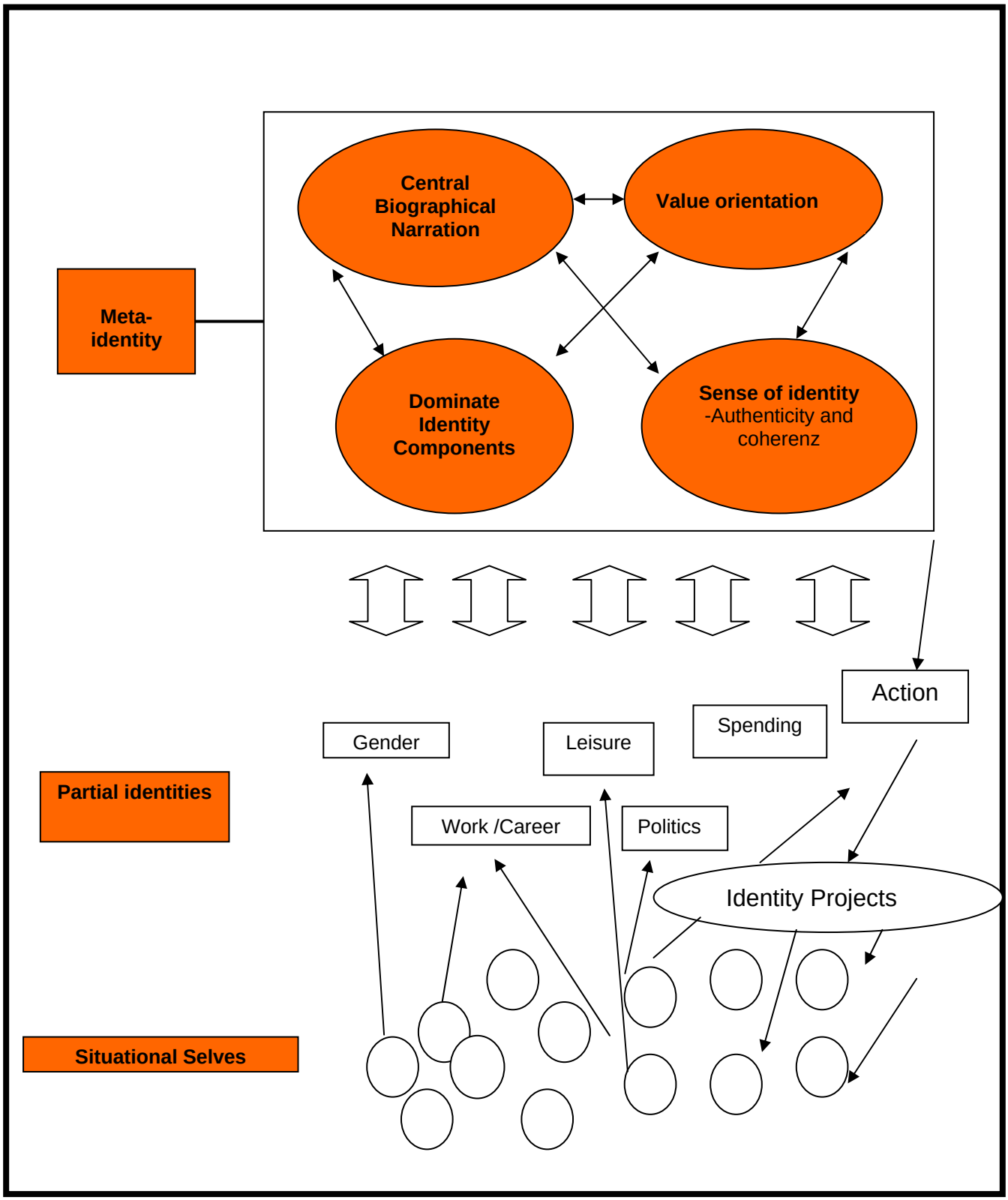

Figure 2. Identity construction as patchworking. (Source: Material from lectures held by Prof. Dr. Heiner Keupp at Innsbruck University, Summer Semester 2005 /2006. Innsbruck, Austria

3.1.1. Patchworks of Racial and Ethnic Choices

Because Keupp's model (1997) takes into account the social-historical-cultural context of the subject, this model leaves room for analysing the identity constructions process of multi-affiliated subjects. The multiracial and multicultural subject is uprooted regardless of were he or she finds him- or herself. Their multi-affiliation increases the complexity of their identity choices; because their multi-isms are not partial identities but central to who they are at all times, but social interaction partners do often deny the totality of their identity validation (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2004, Mercheril, 2003). Using the Keupp's patchwork construction model, a possible expansion to include racial and cultural choices is proposed

Central biographical narration is the subject's narrative portrayal of their ideal self. This entails making sense of one's "Self" and one's life by sharing biographical chronicles with others; and answering the question "Who are you?". The central biographical narration of multiracial and multicultural subjects also contains the answers to the question, "Where do you come from?" People with multi-affiliations are constantly challenged in their self-ascriptions.

- *Dominate identity components* represent those parts of our identities that in most situations dictate who we are and who others believe we are. But that is exactly the dilemma faced by those of multi-racial and multi-cultural memberships; whatever parts of their social identities they declare as salient they are often faced with the possibility that this will be ignored or declared invalid. Ones identity components are inextricably bound to the social context in which and individual is embedded (Rockquemore & Brunsma). Hence a third aspect is added:

    1. The dominate identity components lend consistency and self-security. Hence, we reveal, those characteristics that gain recognition, self-respect, autonomy, and originality in situations that are highly relevant.

    2. In certain stages in life, our identity components differ in salience. For example as a young adult in college the dominate identity components may be the

student identity, student body president identity, striving scientist identity. When this phase is over other identities gain salience depending on the life course chosen.

3. *Depending on the social-cultural context, ones racial- and cultural identity choices will be challenged or ignored. Therefore, the multi-affiliated individual has the developmental task of exploring the various structural contexts in which they maneuver in terms of when and where validation is most likely to be or not to be found. Additionally, differentiating among the various interactional experiences in which identity validation takes place and examining their interpretations of these experiences.*

- *Value orientation* plays a major role in the model because the model represents identity development as a work in process dependent on social and cultural context, as are value orientations. These change as biographical self-narrations change. Changes in life choices, gives rise to new situations shifting the salience of certain identity component over others. New life orientations also lead to changes in the importance of certain values over others.

➢ *For the multi-affiliated, value orientations are salient; especially if their social-identities have socially devalued membership components. They choose among the various culturally / ethnically determined values that are part of their biographies. They may choose to integrate the best of both, or negate the values of one affiliation for the other. Moreover, these may vary as biographical self-narrations change; especially those concerning racial- and ethnic identity choices.*

The meta-identities of multi-affiliated individuals are a decisive moment in their biographical self-narrations. Because apart from the normative development tasks facing all persons in this late modern era, with all its complexities and uncertainties, they must make social identity choices that may or may not be stigmatized and that may or may not be legitimatized.

3.2. Multicultural- Multiracial- Who am I?

In an interview on multi-cultural identities-, I was asked which culture I identify most strongly with - the US-American, the Haitian, or the German. My answer:

> I identify with these different cultures at different levels and all theses levels and levels of experience make up who I am at certain moments in different contexts but I always feel I'm being my *Self*. I believe it's because I was born in Haiti, I grew up with Haitian parents in New York, spend eight years of my life in an international boarding schools and have lived in Germany for 21 years, have a German husband and (Afro-) German children. I've never had the convenience of comfortably putting my self in a cultural shoe box. . .

Multicultural and multiracial identities are multifaceted and require that the individual constantly calibrate their behaviors, their self-perceptions, often unconsciously, in varying settings and nonetheless remain authentic. The question, *"Do you identify yourself as Black or White?"* touches on this issue. Angela, an Afro-German answered; "When I'm with a Black person, I feel White; and when I'm with a White person I feel Black . . . sitting with you at the moment I feel White. . ."

In situations where Angela is with persons darker then herself, she allows herself to feel and acknowledge her Whiteness. Her tawny skin color sets her apart, and she need not fear that a Black (dark skinned) person would threaten the legitimacy of her claim. However, in the presence of a *real* German, of *real* White people, she becomes conscious of the precariousness of her racial memberships. She becomes self-conscious and self-aware; she is now Black because she has learned that that is the racial identity Whites ascribe her. The development of a multiracial identity is complex and has only recently become the focus of more intense research. Some of these new findings are presented below.

Multiracial identity development and racial-identity development is an ongoing process and its importance for the mental well-being of non-White minorities is recognized by researchers. (e.g. Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Cross,

1978 & 1995). Research on ethnic and racial identity, and developing various modes has increasingly gained importance in the U.S since the late 1960s.

3.2.1.1. Models of ethnic and racial identity development

These identity models distinguish between the concepts ethnic identity development and racial identity development. Helm's (1996) conceptualization provides such a distinction: [Identity models] "be considered "racial" models if they describe reactions to societal dynamics of "racial" oppression (i.e., domination or subjugation based on racial or ethnic physical characteristics commonly *assumed* to be racial or genetic in nature). . . [And] be considered "ethnic" models if acquisition or maintenance of cultural characteristics (e.g., language, religious expression) are defining principles (p. 144; as cited in Fischer & Moradi, 2001. p. 341). Phinney (1990) found, in her review of the research on ethnic identity in adolescents and adults, the theoretical frameworks: social identity theory, acculturation theory, and identity formation.

There are two main paradigms used to research ethnic and racial identity development: a) visible racial-ethnic group models (V-REG), and b) salience models /social identity.

3.2.1. Visible Racial-Ethnic Group Models

The visible racial-ethnic group models express the belief that race is the single most important aspect of a person's social identity. V-REG models of racial and ethnic identity development differentiate the identity development of visible racial-ethnic groups (e.g. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans from members of the European majority culture. The most cited research within this framework are Cross's theory of Black racial identity development or Nigrescence[26] Theory (1971, 1978, 1991, 1995), and Helms's White racial identity development model (1984, 1989a, 1989b, 1990), which uses Cross's model as the theoretical basis. Helm's model investigates the attitudes and behaviors White people internalize vis á vis other racial ethnic groups.

3.2.1.1.1 Cross's Theory of Black Identity Development

Cross's earlier theory of Black identity development or Nigrescence Theory (1978, 1995) posited a sequence of five stages in the process of attaining black racial identity:

a) Pre-encounter: A person adopts the strategy *racelessness* for himself or herself. Persons in the stage may make statements such as "I am an individual first my skin color doesn't count". At this staged the values and beliefs of the dominant culture are internalized as well as the stereotypes, and reinforcements of white superiority (Tatum, 1997).

b) Encounter: Now a person is confronted for the first time with discrimination. This encounter often disrupts their raceless worldview and can lead to an identity crisis. The encounter may be subtle but activates strong emotions such as shame, guilt, anger and anxiety (Torres et al., 2003);

c) Immersion-emersion: At which point the person becomes distinctly pro-Black and becomes intensely involved in exploring his Black heritage, and holds pro-Black and anti-White attitudes. The dominate emotions at immersion phase are anger, guilt and, and pride – "anger and guilt for accepting and internalizing a white frame of reference that was psychologically and emotionally unhealthy and pride because they are learning about black heritage and it is affirming and empowering" (Torres et al., p. 43.). Once they have come to terms with these emotions and have won new insights into who they are, a transition into emersion takes place. One emerges from these depths with new awareness of their racial identity;

d) Internalization: Is the phase during which the individual internalizes a positive black identity, while maintaining an open attitude towards Whites- with a willingness to enter friendships with them. The internalized identity primarily:

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[26] Synonyms with Black consciousness or the process through which a person realizes his / her or her Blackness.

1) Defends and protects a person from psychologically insults that stem from having to live in a racist society;

2) Provides a sense of belonging and social anchorage; and

3) Provides a foundation or point of departure for carrying out transactions with people, cultures, and human situations beyond the world of Blackness" (Cross, 1995; as cited in Torres p.44).

Racial identity development is not linear but recursive, a process determined by the quality of our interactions. Figure 4 illustrates the latest version of Cross's Nigrescence Theory from a life span perspective.

Figure 4 depicts a revision and further development of the Nigrescence Theory. According to Cross (1997, 2001) the necessity to reformulate the original model arose from recent and at times contradictory research findings on the correlation between self-esteem and racial identity. In addition, this model assumes a link between racial identity development and ego identity development. Lending from the work of Margaret Spencer (1995), Uri Bronfenbrenner (1979), Thomas Parham (1989) and Jean Phinney (1990, 1992), Cross was able to link Nigrescence Theory to the Eriksonian stages, while allowing for and explaining the diverse and healthy identities found among African Americans. The revised model depicts six sectors:

- *Sector One: Infancy and Childhood*

The sociological and ecological factors that play a role in the socialization of black infants and children are illustrated. As described by Bronfenbrenner, these factors are interlocked and influence each other. When one of these elements changes, the others also shift. For the Black child, these external influences have a tremendous effect on how high or low their racial salience is.

- *Sector Two: Preadolescence*

The emerging identity choices are depicted, whereby the family, school, and other social contexts affect this choice. Family attitudes toward race are transmitted to the preadolescent. Additionally, the salience of other social identities also influences racial salience.

- *Low Race Salience (LRS)* is the result of being raised in home where race is a non-issue. These preadolescents accord no significance to being Black. There developing identity may revolve on themes such as social status, personal talent or competencies, and sexual orientation. Emphasis is placed on individuality; group identity is of no concern.

- *High Race Salience (HRS)* is forged in race-conscious households that impress racial and cultural activities and themes upon their children's daily lives. Emergent High Race Salience refers to race as a central feature of the self-concept (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

- *Internalized Racism (IR)* this cluster represents the first signs of damaged self-concept and reflects in part the internalized racism found among the belief systems of family members or significant others (Cross). Negative racial myths perpetuated by the media and misrepresentations in schoolbooks are among the factors that lead to miseducation about racial categorizations; colorism or over- or undervaluing skin-color among blacks themselves can lead to racial self-hatred and inferiority complexes.

- *Sector Three: Adolescence*

At this sector the foci are issues of race and culture. At this point Black children may experience rejection from equally self- and increasingly race conscious White friends for the first time. Cross argues the emerging identity issues at this stage are comparable with moratorium. The comparable stage in Nigrescence is immersion-emersion. The adolescence searches for others like him, he may become preoccupied with Black-American history, and the like. According to Cross, an

important revision of his theory is reflected here because, " . . .we now make note of the fractional but significant number [of Black adolescents] who are socialized into, and come to accept, various types of low race salient identities. For them, a wide range of social anchors takes the place of race and Black culture (p. 255). He continues, „Black youth who enter adolescence with such nonrace-centered self-concepts will also experience moratorium, but rather than race and Black culture, *it will center on whatever nonrace issue is at the core of the emergent identity*" (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001, p. 255). Cross includes a spiral under Section 3, depicting the nonlinear or profound change potential (Cross) of these adolescent years.

- *Sector Four : Early Adulthood*

The three clusters in this sector represent the Black identity types found among a large sample of young Black adults. The LRS Adult main reference group orientations are not Blacks and Black culture. Cross (2001) explain that persons with LRS have main formative experiences in which race and Black culture played a more minor role.

-

The HRS Adult is *existentially* (Cross) Black, they perceive their environment as filled with racial issues. Their "Blackness" defines who they are and how they encounter others. The Internalized Racism Identities as in Sector 2 are now the result of many years of negative messages about the racial group. The process that may have begun in pre-adolescent years continues into adulthood.

- *Sector 5: Adult Nigrescence:*

Cross refers to Nigrescence as identity conversion. He argues that a racial resocialization occurs in the wake of the five stages of black identity formation; Pre-Encounter, Encounter Immersion-Emersion, Internalization, and Internalization Commitment (for detailed description of stages see pp.51-53 above). Its importance for psychological well being he describes here:

> The consciousness raising that parallels the conversion experience one of the most profound developmental experiences a Black person can traverse

> beyond the traditional developmental period. . . The nigrescence conversion experience may not be normative, but it is commonplace and is of historical significance (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001, p. 263).

This process can help the LRS adult whose non-race oriented beliefs are challenged, with a blatantly racists encounter, find answers and a new frame of reference.

- *Sector 6: Nigrescence Recycling*

Nigrescence recycling depicts the refining and expansion of an individual's Black identity across their adult life span. According Parham (1989; as cited in Cross & Fhagen-Smith, p.263) this is often triggered by further negative or positive racial or cultural experiences throughout ones life. These experiences may cause the person to question some aspects of their already achieved Black Identity. They may then once again enter a Immersion-Emersion phase where they search for new answers to this recent encounter and to broaden their knowledge concerning certain facets of their racial identity. Internalization Enhancement refers to a deepening of this person's racial consciousness and commitment. Cross wrote:

> In each instance of recycling, the person begins with her or his foundational identity and if recycling is reasonably successful, enhancement is achieved. As new layers are added to the foundation, the person moves closer and closer to a state of wisdom about the complexity, relativity, depth, and multidimensionality of what it means to live a Black life (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001, p.265).

Cross and Fhagen-Smith constructed a Black identity development model that takes into account the diversity of Black identity. First, the various ecologies that play a developmental role in the socialization of Black children are linked to the various racial outcomes. Furthermore, they also present low racial salience as non-pathological and resulting from a certain type of socialization. This is of relevance because high racial salience persons often see low racial salience individuals as naïve or being in denial. Additionally the model incorporates the life long social significance of race in Nigrescence Recycling.

Racial salience played a defining role in the lives of the women interviewed in this study. Their racial salience and social group identification, determined their self-perceptions, the content and quality of their social identities and the coping strategies they developed. Racial salience appeared to be the result of their racial socialization in the home. The role of racial socialization in the development of racial salience and racial identity choices is discussed further below. Further more adding low racial salience as a non-pathological path is relevant for multi-cultural counseling in Europe. In the field, it has been observed that multi-cultural counselors tend to label racial minority members as individuals in denial of the realities of discrimination and racism in order to assimilate into the mainstream and be deemed “normal”. Cross’s integrated model shows this is not so. This model helps toward understanding the role of racial socialization in the development of racial attitudes

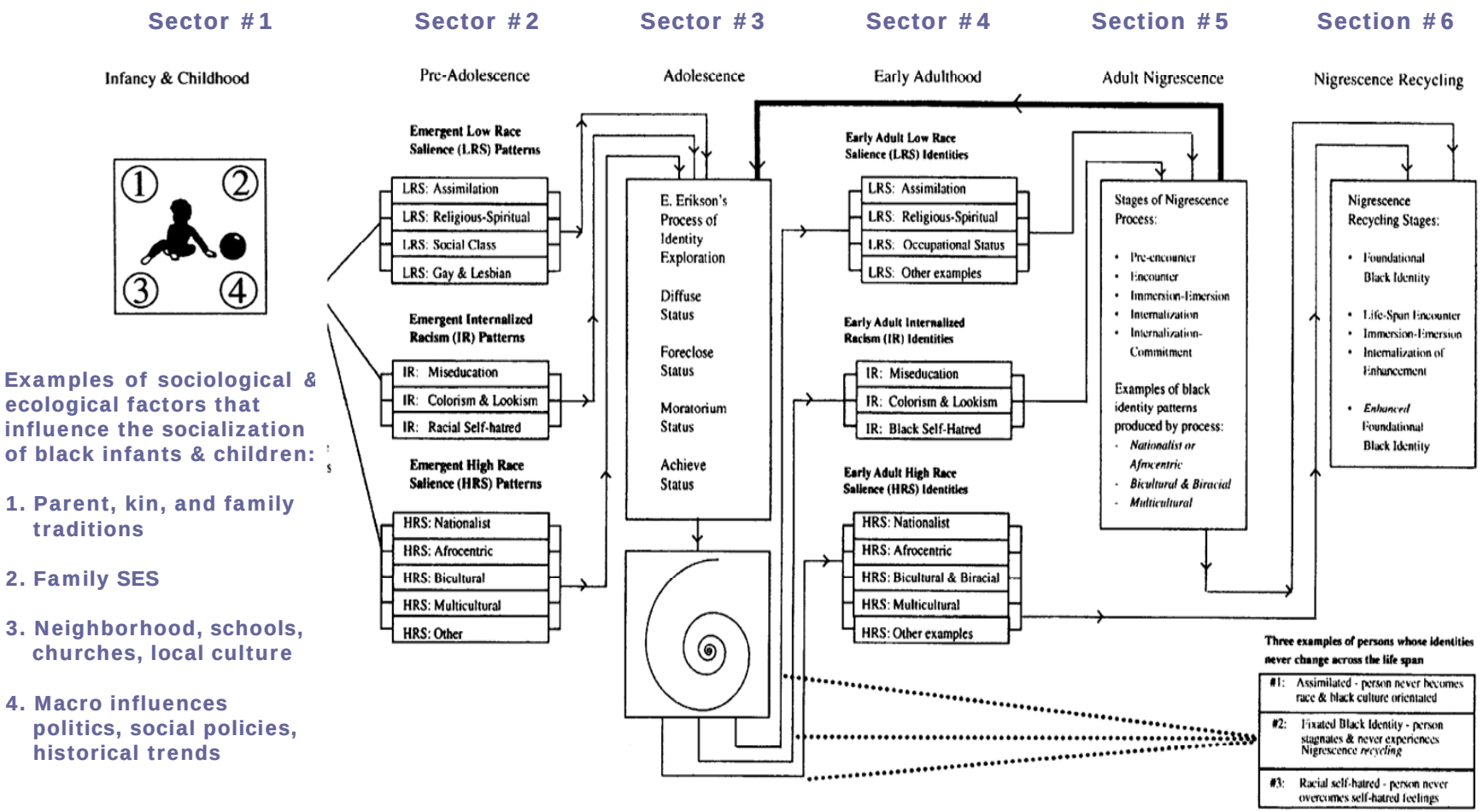

Figure 3. Descriptive model of the relationship between ego identity and Nigrescence: a life span perspective (Cross & Fhagen-Smith 2001) Source: *New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development* (p.148). Charmaine L. Wijeyesinghe and Bailey W. Jackson (Eds.), 2001, New York, N.Y.: New York University Press. Reprinted with permission.

3.2.1.1.2. Helm's model White Identity Development

Helm's (1990) model of White identity development describes a process by which Whites in the United States develop a non-racist, non-oppressive White identity as members of a privileged group in a society where White racism is part of social fabric. This model like Cross's posits various stages of racial identity development, but Helms refers to these as "statuses" (1995). The six statuses of Helm's model are:

- *Contact:* The individual is unaware of himself or herself as a racial being who benefits from racists structures;
- *Disintegration*: A person becomes aware of their Whiteness and the privileges they have because of race membership. This is a period during which the individuals may experience confusion, guilt, and depression brought about the acknowledgement of being beneficiary of a racist social system;
- *Reintegration:* during which feelings of guilt and anxiety are transformed into hostility and anger toward Blacks;
- *Pseudo-independence:* A time of intellectual acceptance and curiosity about the races develop, and hostility and anger toward Blacks dissipate;
- *Immersion-emersion:* during which the person actively searches for information about what it means to be a nonracist White; and
- *Autonomy:* Is characterized by a person's acceptance of her or his Whiteness, and appreciation of racial differences, and a commitment to end racism and other forms of oppression.

Helms model premises that racial identity for Whites has less to do with an increased awareness of "whiteness"; but with the development of a consciousness of their

perceptions, feelings, and behaviors towards Blacks. She stresses that whites should acknowledge their privileges, and the fact that these are at the expense of the minorities within society.

3.2.1.1.3. Racial Identity for Multi-Racial People:

Although research on bicultural and (mono-) racial identity development (e.g. Maisuria, 2003; Mecheril, 2003; Rotheram-Borus, 1993) has proliferated, research on biracial identity development is evolving more slowly. According to Wijeyesinghe (2001), although the public perception of biracial people is changing, the assumption that they are confused, distraught, and unable to fit anywhere in the racial landscape remains. She explains that early research on multiracial people were mostly clinical and generalized to this group as a whole. The models have since advanced and now present a more optimistic picture of the processes involved in multiracial identity development. Three models: The Poston Model of Biracial Identity Development and the Kich Model of Biracial Identity Development are outlined in Table 2.. The Wijeyesinghe Factor Model of Identity Development is illustrated in Figure 3.

Poston's Model of Biracial Identity Development describes a person's transition from being unaware of racial identity to achievement of multiracial identity whereby all racial components are integrated. He based his model on a study of the adaptation of Black-Japanese adults (Hall, 1980). The Kich Model of Biracial Identity Development is a three-stage model based on his research on biracial adults of Japanese and White ancestry. His model ends with achievement of a biracial or bicultural identity. Table 2 summarizes key aspects of the Parson Model of Biracial Identity Development and the Kich Model of Biracial and Bicultural Identity development. The Wijeyesinghe model was developed from a qualitative study of multiracial African American / European American adults. The participants chose from a range of racial identities, and Wijeyesinghe found eight factors that affect choice of racial identity by multiracial people. Figure 3 Illustrates the Wijeyesinghe Model of Biracial Identity Development.

Table 3

Summary of Salient Points in Poston and Kich Multiracial Identity Development Models

Poston Model	Kich Model
Personal Identity: • Self-definition is neither racial nor ethnic	**Awareness of Differentness and Dissonance:** • The first acknowledgment of difference between self and others • Dissonance occurs if the difference is perceived as negative
Choice of Group Categorization: • When becomes pressured to choose a group identity • Factors influencing choice: ➢ Social status ➢ Social support ➢ Physical appearance ➢ Cultural knowledge ➢ Political involvement ➢ Personal Differences	**Struggle for Acceptance:** • Pursuit of acceptance in face of increased dissonance • Trying to pass as a member of the higher status racial group by adopting the mannerisms of this group • Temporary devaluing of people's biracial selves • Although emotional difficult this stage offers opportunities for self-reflection and exploration.
Enmeshment/Denial: • Feeling of guilt and confusion for choosing the racial identity with higher status and negating the other racial self • Feelings of self-hatred are resolved through acceptance and appreciation of both parental cultures	**Self-Acceptance and Assertion of an Interracial Identity** • Increased acceptance of a self-determined biracial and bicultural identity
Integration • Recognizing and appreciating all racial ancestries	

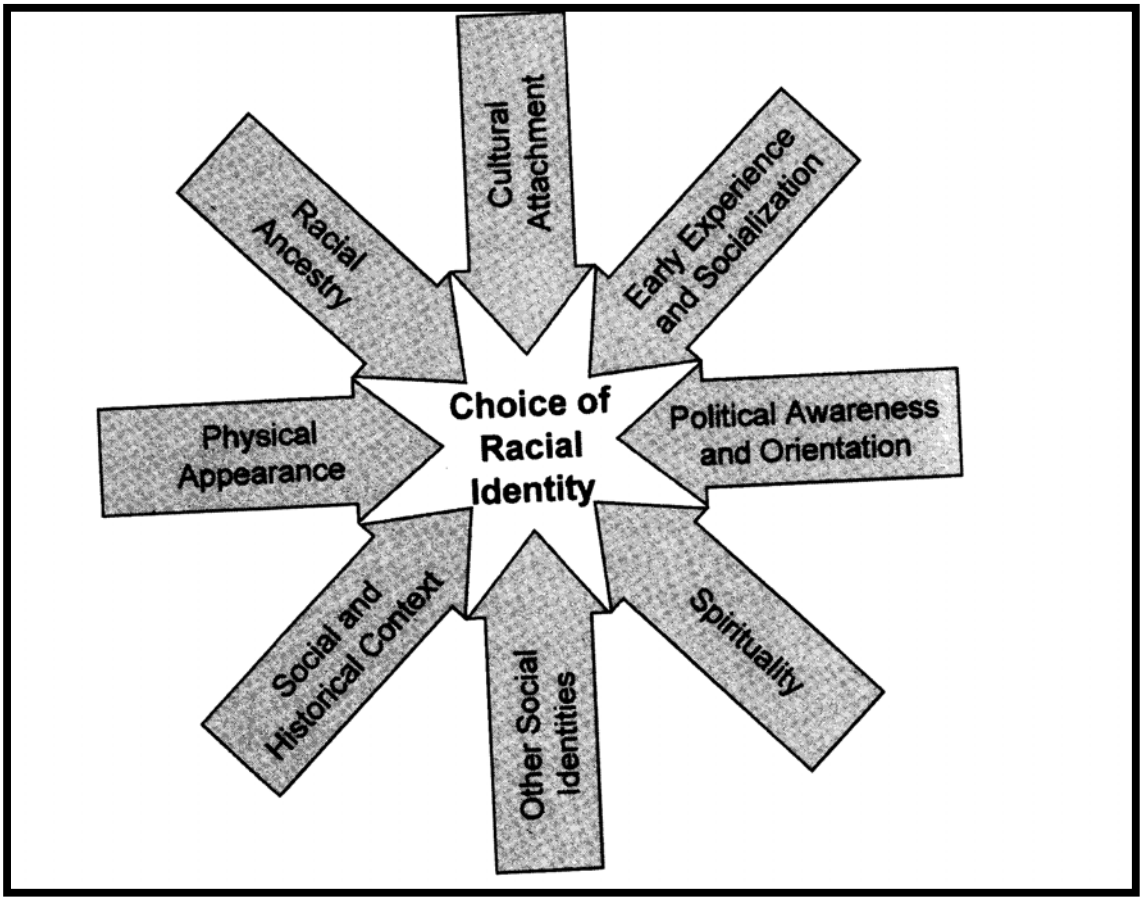

*Figure 4***.** Factor Model of Multiracial Identity (FMMI)
(Source: New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development (p. 137), by Charmaine L. Wijeyesinghe & Bailey W. Jackson III (Eds.), 2001, New York, NY.: New York University Press. Reprinted with permission)

The factors found are defined as follows:

- **Cultural attachment** refers to the exposure and attachment to cultural traditions. The monoracial choice by a multiracial person may reflect cultural preferences (e.g., a multi-racial person describing him or herself as Black can indicate a strong preference for black culture).

- **Early experiences and socialization** derived childhood contact with cultural aspects of the various representatives in the family. Additionally parental ascription of a child's racial identity can also influence the individual's racial choice. Family, community, and social institutions are socializing agents that play a role in how multiracial people identify themselves.

- **Political awareness and orientation** can lead to Self-ascriptions to a particular race, in which case the racial choice may equal a political statement.

- **Spirituality** was also found to play a role in the racial choices of this group. Wijeyesinghe argues that for some multiracial people, the process of achieving a racial identity is influenced by personal spiritual beliefs, traditions, and experiences.

- **Other social identities** varied in salience for some members of this group. The author proposes that other social identities (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation) can play a mediating role in choice of racial identity.

- **Social and historical context** effects how the multiracial responds to their various racial heritages. In the sixties multiracial people were not given a choice on the issue of racial identity. In the US only their minority identity (Wijeyesinghe) was recognized.

- **Physical appearance** is probably the strongest determinant to racial choice. Physical characteristics such as skin color, hair color and texture, and facial features can affect the choices open to them. It may also determine whether the racial community with which they identify accepts them (e.g. A "White" looking multiracial person may be confronted with mistrust in the Black community and visa versa).

- **Racial ancestry** is defined as the racial groups reflected in an individual's ancestors (Wijeyesinghe). It has been found that for multiracial people who have chosen a monoracial identity this factor plays a lesser role in their lives than those who chose to identify themselves as multiracial. Then, knowledge of their lineage provides an anchor and a connections to the various racial heritages represented in their family tree.

These models represent an evolvement of mono-racial identity development models and provide for developmental issues facing multiracial individuals. Research on multiracial developmental issues is beginning to proliferate in the US. In Europe, the focus is mainly on bi-cultural and bi-national identities and the question of acceptance and recognition. However, this study found that racial identity becomes an issue when an Afro-European visits countries where there is an even stronger racial polarization, for example the US. Sahra an Afro-German whose self-identification is bi-racial describes an observation she made while visiting New York:

> . . .I found it strange at first because not one white man looked at me, they totally ignored me, I never experienced this before. But the Black guys where all over me, I couldn't walk down the street without being asked for my telephone number at least ten times. It's only after I'd been there a while that I began to realize Blacks and Whites don't look at each other here,

This woman, whose father is African American and whose mother is German, had chosen for herself a multiracial identity, she had gained an acceptance of herself as being of mixed race and not just white or black. Identifying herself as Afro-German is not a political statement but an acknowledgement of diverse ancestry. However, in New York she found that a choice was made for her, she was ascribed an identity and treated accordingly.

The Black identity development model explores the various stages an individual goes through. Evolving from the early internalization of White mainstream values towards

racial awareness and coming to terms with their “Blackness” in a racist society. The White racial Identity model posits stages that whites experience, as they grow aware of their privileged status in society and how maintaining the status quo perpetuates racism and discrimination.

These models ascribe race as the single most important aspects of a person’s social identity. The salience models explore which social identity bears salience for individual and how this may or may not include race. Salience oriented researchers target the process of how differences are processed in a pluralistic society. These researchers (e.g. Giordano, 1973; McGoldrick, Pearce, & Giordano, 1982; Parrillo, 1990; Phinney, 1989,1992,1996; Smith, 1989) postulate that one’s self-affirming reference group identity is an internal process and fulfils the same psychological need for belonging, for historical continuity for both majority and minority group members.

3.2.1.2. Salience Model: Ethnic Identity Development Theory

Proponents of the salience models argue that other social identity’s besides race may play an important role in developing a sense of self. They argue that although race (a biological and genetic distinction) is an indelible social marker that effect how individuals perceives themselves as well as how they are perceived by others; ethnicity (social and cultural heritage transmitted through generations), and / or other social reference groups (nationality, religion, gender) are also important factors that constitute a person’s sense of self.

As cited in Goodstein & Ponterotto (1997); Smith (1991) defines ethnic identity development as a process of differentiation and integration. An individual transits from a state of unawareness of ethnic differences to awareness, from non-ethnic self-identification to ethnic self-identification, and from partial ethnic identifications to identity formation.

Smith's (1991) ethnic identity development theory is widely cited in multicultural counseling literature. In her theory Smith postulates that race, religion, or national origin may all be salient aspects of one's ethnic identity. She defines ethnic identity as a person's psychological relatedness and commitment to any of these groups. Much in line with Tafel's social identity theory, Smith posits that ethnic identity development can be seen as a process of *boundary-line drawing* (Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997), where individuals decide, which persons and groups are included within these boundaries (i.e., their ethnic membership group) and which are not. With this internal model of *us* and *them,* members learn attitudes and develop postures toward the ascribed out-groups that are discriminatory und adverse. She believes that the main force that ignites and guides a person's ethnic identity development is contact with members of the out-groups, regardless of the quality of this contact. Smith's model agrees with research findings proposing ethnic identification may be a buffer against the effects of discrimination and racism (Branscombe et al., 1999; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Phinney 1996; Swim & Stangor, 1998). Phinney's (1990) model of ethnic identity development, proposes two basic conflicts that minority ethnic groups face. These conflicts are:

- Self-concept threatening confrontations with negative stereotyping, prejudicial and discriminatory behavior from the majority population; and

- Conforming to value system that may not correlate with theirs in order to manage their lives despite their minority status.

Phinney's model allows for a multidimensional concept of ethnic identity as well as its self-concept protecting functions.

3.2.2. Implications for Afro-Europeans and immigrants

Both the Visible Racial-Ethnic Group and Salience Models give an inkling of potential difficulties faced by "visible" non-White immigrants and Afro-Europeans maneuvering

their developmental tasks. This, especially if an individual's self-esteem may be threatened because they are a member of a social group that is perceived negatively by mainstream society (e.g. US: African-Americans, Hispanics, etc. and in Germany: Turks and African Blacks and Afro-Germans). For first generation immigrants, developing linguistic and cultural identification with the dominant culture was often hampered by the context of reception and the degree of discrimination these groups where subjected to (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Usually uneducated and fleeing poverty in their homelands; they were often seen as a source of cheap labor and where relinquished to living at the bottom of the social ladder.

In their study of the second generation immigrants in USA, Portes & Rumbaut (2001) refer to Deux (1996) and her understanding of the dynamics ethnic identification:

> "Ethnic identification begins with the application of a label to oneself in a cognitive process of self-categorization, involving not only a claim to membership in a group or category but also a contrast of one's group or category with other groups or categories. Such self-definitions also carry affective meaning, implying a psychological bond with others that tends to serve psychologically protective functions." (Portes & Rumbaut, p. 151).

Because in the United States youths of European decent go through social identification processes as members of the racial majority, the need to identify along ethnic lines is practically non-existent. The children of European immigrants in the US were able to reduce the psychological stress of identity development in a bicultural environment by playing down their differences and quickly assimilating the "*American way of life*". By contrast, those whose ethnicity or race placed them in a minority status within the society they live in, the affirmation of their ethnicity provided a feeling of solidarity with others whom they believe share their experiences and an arena in which they are not "different". Analogous to this is the situation Afro-Europeans and Black immigrants in Europe reflected in what Mecheril (2003) has designated as a *precarious affiliation*[27].

[27] Translation: prekäre Zugehörigkeit

Precarious affiliation refers to the societal legitimation and acceptance of those who have to maneuver between multiple national-ethnic-cultural fields; and how this legitimation and acceptance is often denied. Nonetheless, a distinction must be made between the salience of ethnic identity development and racial identity development among Black-Immigrants and Afro-Europeans. This distinction is akin to the differences in meanings attached to ethnic- and racial identities among West Indian (Caribbean) immigrants and African Americans.

3.3. Cultural Differences and the Salience of Ethnic and Racial Identity and Oppositional Identity

The self-esteem protecting functions of ethnic identity, racial identity, and oppositional identity has been the subject of research for many years in the US (e.g. Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997; Jackson & Lassiter, 1998; Branscombe et al.,1999; Burgos-Aponte, 2002). Studies have found that cultural background plays a major role in the salience of these constructs as self-esteem protecting instances. Ogbu (1998, 2004) distinguished between voluntary and involuntary minorities as an explanation for these cultural differences.

3.3.1. Voluntary and involuntary minorities

In her study (Waters, 1992) on ethnic and racial groups in America, Mary Waters found that Caribbean immigrant distance themselves from American blacks. According to Waters, these immigrants emphasized their own cultural and ethnic identities to mark their distinction from Black-Americans. Furthermore, they did not generally expect racism and racists reactions from whites as did their African American counterparts. Expecting less racism, aversive interactions with whites where attributed to their individual characteristics rather than to their racial characteristics (Waters). In addition, she also found that American society in general and Whites in particular generally do not realize these distinctions in Black identities. Referring to Ogbu's (1978, 1998) theory on cultural differences between voluntary migrants and involuntary minorities Water

explains the distinction between groups defined by race and those defined by ethnicity as follows:

> The important distinction Ogbu makes is between immigrant *voluntary minorities* who chose to move to a society in order to improve their well-being and caste like *involuntary minorities* who were initially brought in to the society through slavery, conquest, and colonization. . .Ogbu argues that voluntary minorities have a greater degree of trust in White Americans, and the societal institutions [they] controll; than do involuntary minorities . . . They see discrimination as a temporary barrier to be overcome . . .(Ogbu, 1990; as cited in Waters, 1992 p 4-5).

Voluntary immigrants identify themselves in terms of their ethnicity. Their daily lives are closely bound to other members of their ethnic groups. They usually live in close-knit communities, and observe the rituals and holidays of their native lands. They also urge their children to speak their native tongue when at home or among themselves (i.e. Little Haiti, Miami; Little Havana, Miami; Turks in Hasenbergl).

Ogbu (2004) describes the psychological orientation that develops among many involuntary minorities as being *oppositional*. An *Oppositional identity* according to Ogbu (Ogbu & Simons, 1998; Ogbu, 2004[28]) is the identity these minorities construct in order to define themselves in terms of their opposition to the European Americans. They do not define themselves in terms of how they differ from mainstream Whites, but articulate their social identity as oppositional to what they believe White Americans represent (Waters, 2002).

The ideal of an oppositional identity for Black-Americans fueled the “Black Power” movement of the 60’s and early 70’s. It gave Black Americans a sense of finding a voice, of being heard and seen, and served to help form a sense of collective identity. The Black Power movement was important in reinforcing the oppositional collective identity (Ogbu, 2004). The movement with its slogan “Black is Beautiful” helped Black-

Americans win a sense of racial pride. Ogbu witness this transformation first hand and describes it as follows:

> The transformation included shifts in identity labels from *Negro* to *Colored* to *Black*, changes in identity symbols, such as from processed, i.e. chemically straightened …[author's note], to natural hair style; and changes in organizational membership. . .The changes continued. . .in the early 1990s, a conference was organized in New Orleans by Blacks to change their collective identity label to Afro- Americans. . .(p.19).

Later in the early 1980s, Rap music provided a venue for ghetto youth to express their anger and frustration and evolved into the more commercial Hip-Hop scene. Today the oppositional collective Black identity is expressed largely through language and manner of communicating. According to Daiby (1972), the function of Black vernacular English has been to "strengthen the in-group solidarity of Black Americans to the exclusion of Whites. . ." (Daiby, p. 172; as cited in Ogbu, 2004 p. 20). Despite the positive reinforcements provided by an oppositional collective identity, it has its dangers.

3.3.2. Oppositional identity and the burden of "acting White"

By definition, the oppositional Black collective identity's frame of reference is the negative interpretation of "White" attitudes and behaviors. Consequently, research has found that those Blacks who conform to so-called "White" values and mannerisms (e.g. high academic achievement, manner of speaking, professionally ambitious), risked accusations of acting "White" and being ostracized by the Black community (Becknell, 1987; Kochman, 1987; Luster, 1992; Ogbu, 1999). This fear of acting "White" and consequently losing a sense of belonging and becoming alienated from the Black community, is one of the major issues facing many inner city youths today. Steel (1990) perused the "oppositional identity" as a possible explanation for the achievement gap between African American and European-American High-School students

[28] This article was published Posthumous

Shelby Steele (1990) argued that centuries of humiliation and shame have taught Black-Americans to *recompose* their feeling of racial vulnerability and self-doubt. They have learned to sublimate their feelings of inferiority into a blanket rejection of the values of the mainstream, hoping to shake off their feelings of inadequacy. This rejection does not merely negate mainstream values, but also causes Black-Americans to disregard opportunities otherwise available to them on the basis that a good education and proper language skills is associated with "them"- the cultural mainstream that neither wants "us" nor accepts "us". Feelings of shame are redefined. Attempts at disciplinary measures in school are called racial harassment. Consequently, the person who recomposes events can never address the true challenge of their situation (i.e. adapting to the expected norms of behavior in a given setting). Moreover, the person who can help is afraid of intervening because they may be seen as racists or prejudiced. This creates a cycle of political correctness on the one side and self-esteem protection efforts on the other side. This burden of acting "White" (Ogbu) is one reason why many Black-Americans are reluctant to join the mainstream and seize the opportunities offered them. Despite the many federally sponsored equal-opportunity programs in the US from the 1970s and throughout the 1980s, the achievement gap remains. Parallels can generally be drawn between minorities in Europe (e.g. North African youths living in the Banlieues of Paris; Turkish youths in Neu Köln in Berlin).

Appiah (1994) perceives the oppositional identity as a *bohemian ideal.* The bohemian ideal propagates authenticity at the cost of rejecting the conventions in a given society. He wrote:

> . . .if in understanding myself as African-American, I see myself as resisting white norms, mainstream American conventions, the racism (and perhaps, the materialism or the individualism) of White culture, why should I in opposition to the demands of social life why should I at the same time seek recognition from these "White" others (p. 257).

Appiah points out the irony that the very social forces that the oppositional identity is trying to fight are the same forces that fuel it and whose acceptance it seeks. They succumb to *stereotype threat* (Steel, 1997). The fear that stereotypes (e.g. intellectual inferiority) ascribed to their social group may be proven true, and therefore do not compete in a given area but psychologically disengage themselves.

However, although differences in attitude towards dominant groups and attribution to racism and discrimination are found between Afro-Europeans[29] and Black immigrants, evidence of oppositional identities in terms of non-conformation to the mainstream as described above was not found in this sample. *Accommodation without assimilation* (Ogbu, 2004) is the strategy most observed.

3.3.3. Accommodation without assimilation

Accommodation without assimilation describes the strategy whereby Blacks adopt European-cultural behaviors and speech in order to succeed in school or in other institutions that are evaluated with European criteria. They do this without reneging their racial identity and ways of behaving or relating to people in their communities. According to Ogbu (2004), Black autobiographers have mentioned two important functions of accommodation:

a) it helps Blacks maintain their sanity in a racist society, and

b) it helps them get ahead in White establishments.

Wiederman (1985) refers to accommodation as a “seventh sense” needed to remain sane in discriminatory environments. She wrote:

[29] Among Afro-European subgroups (i.e. African American-European and Afro-African-European) differences are also observed.

> I learned a trick early on; a survival mechanism as old as slavery [*sic*]. If you are born Black in America, you must quickly teach yourself to recognize the invisible barriers disciplining the space in which you may move. This seventh sense you must activate is imperative for survival and sanity. Nothing is what it seems. You must always take second readings, decode appearances, and pick out the abstractions erected to keep you in your place. Then work around them. What begins as a pragmatic reaction to race prejudice gradually acquires the force of an instinctive response (Wiederman, 1985; as cited in Ogbu, 2004, p.22).

The educational system is an arena where accommodation as a skill comes into play. It is learning to decode the symbolism and unspoken rules of this environment and thereby gaining more control over personal outcomes. Ginger, an Afro-European interviewed for this study, stressed the importance of education and knowing how the "system" works. They all saw it as a duty, a means to being heard and of helping their community. It is an instrument used to gain symbolic capital (Bourdieu). Addressing this issue, I asked Ginger, an Afro-Portuguese woman:

> *How did you get into the university, despite the fact that there were at the time no Blacks there? How did you manage to continue?*
>
> ...for me certainly going to the university was regaining something that was take from me and my mother and my grandmother . . . The colonial story is something that's so present in our family, my so recent and so present- that it has influenced me a lot. What gave me the strength was that I felt I was recovering something- I was reprieving fragments- it gave me a chance to become myself. It was also the big chance to embrace my history- It was something very spiritual- I didn't simply think ,I'm going to study psychology- I felt that in light of my history and reality – it was a political and spiritual mission.

Having lived in Portugal while Portugal was at war with its colonies, she experienced first hand the pain of being negated, made invisible, "Othered", and subjugated. She tells of school classes in which the African children had to sit in the back of the classroom and how they were beaten everyday for minor gaffes. Her father (a European-Portuguese) instilled in her at a young age the importance of education for a Black woman in a racist world. She recalled:

> He told me, as a Black woman living in a racist society; you have to be educated, and not only educated but highly educated- get the best education you can possibly get out of the system . . . He was part of the system and he understood its rules. . .

Being educated became a means of finding what was lost and debased by racism. She could embrace her history, discover her truths, and at the same time using her skills to provide healing for her community. Some further points stressed by the interviewees where:

a) The importance of being fluent in German and preferably English as well;

b) Know the rules, understanding how Europeans "tick";

c) Being well trained for your profession;

d) The German values they most readily adopt are punctuality, reliability, and preciseness

They share the belief that education plays a strong role in group subordination and control. They also believe that only by entering the contest is there ever a chance that the situation of minorities will change.

However, there is evidence of a correlation between the racial socialization, internalized racist attitudes, and accommodation vs. assimilation tendencies of the women interviewed. Angela, an Afro-German who oscillates between feelings of shame and denial concerning her racial identity and pride in her African father's achievements stated:

> . . . My father [a medical doctor] always acted as if it were self-evident that we all [four siblings] would go to the university- I find it amazing that he put all four of us through university without any of us becoming crazy or doing drugs….

But during her studies she felt the need to assimilate to "pass":

> . . .[my chosen] profession stood for whiteness. . .During my studies I always felt I needed to change in order to find acceptance. . .There was another Black student but I had nothing to do with him…

Studies have shown (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; for a review see Gillem & Thompson, 2004), lack of racial socialization in the home and the negative stereotypes about a racial group can lead to internalized racists attitudes. Hence, a bi-racial individual may adapt the attitudes of the higher-status racial group and devalue the socially stigmatized racial self and the group as a whole.

3.3.4. Personal and group attributions to racism and discrimination

Difference in attitude toward the dominant groups in Europe and the attribution to racism and discrimination is found among the women interviewed and correlate to field observations. In general sensitivity to issues of race is more pronounced in Afro-Europeans than Black Immigrants. This is demonstrated by how Rita, and African immigrant responds to the interview question:

> *Have you experienced discrimination or racism in Germany?"*
>
> African-Immigrant: "When I'm asked this question and answer "no", I'm told both by [well meaning liberal] Germans and Afro-Europeans that I'm being naïve and in denial. I can't seem to get across to them, that this is not my main concern in life. . .I'm tired of hearing people tell me that they can't make it because they're Black or how hard life must be here for me …

The same question as answered by Mary an, Afro-European:

> . . .For example when searching for an apartment . . .we always had to take the most expansive available, although we couldn't really afford it, but we knew there wouldn't be as many applicants to compete with . . . I knew [when we didn't get an apartment] it wasn't because of my husband who is blue eyed and blond, I was the problem. . .

Rita does not identify herself primarily as the member of a racial group; her focus is on individuality. The Afro-European woman identifies herself as member of a racial group discriminated against because of skin color. The Personal / Group Discrimination Discrepancy Theory (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997; Taylor et al. 1990) posits that some individuals perceive discrimination as group targeted and not personal. Ogbu (2004) distinguishes between the cultural heritage and immigration background as determinants of the strategies used. Moreover, research has shown that the attribution strategies are self-esteem protecting strategies. Additionally, the effectiveness of these strategies are depends on the salience of racial- and ethnic identity. Studies on racial identity salience vs. ethnic identity salience have discovered that these determine whether personal related attributions or group related attributions to discrimination are used.

3.4. Racial and Ethnic Identity's Role in the Self-Esteem of Minorities

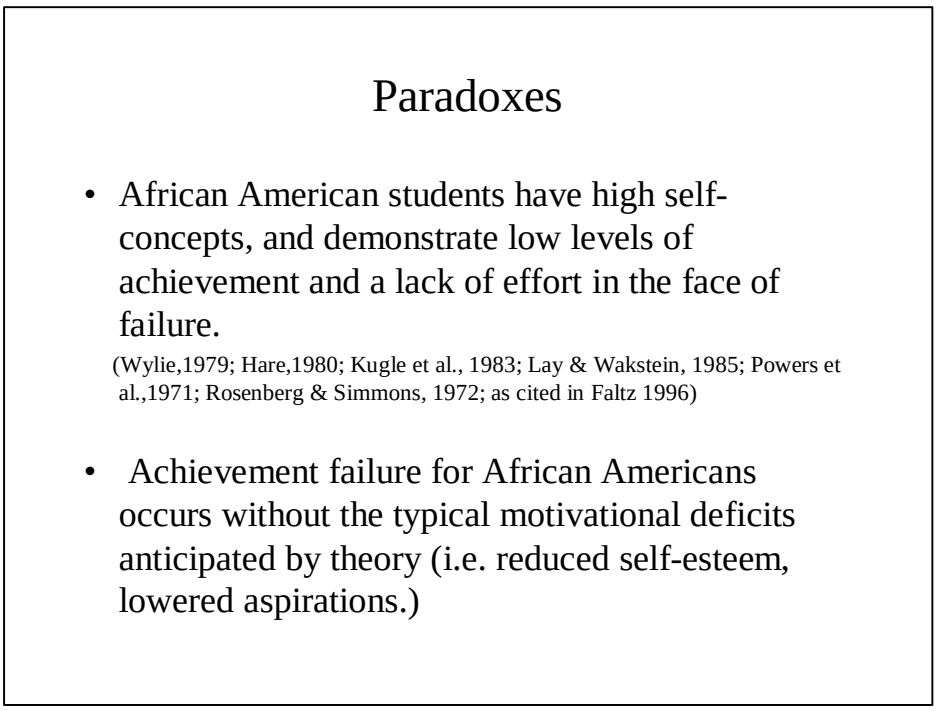

Figure 5. Paradoxes found in self-esteem research results on the consequences of perceived pervasive discrimination for African-American youth

3.4.1. Self-esteem

According to Kaspar & Noh (2001), research based on developmental psychological concepts found prejudice, racism, and discrimination may mediate the effect of ethnicity, race, or social status / class on psychological outcomes:

> This and other structural interpretations presented in the sociology and psychology literatures, specify discrimination as a derivative of social stratification factors (e.g., race, class, ethnicity, gender). These eventuating in segregated (e.g. social, psychological, economic and residential) contexts (e.g., school, neighborhood, health care) that threaten mental health and

> successful adaptation. . . (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996; Gonzales and Kim 1997; Krieger 1990; Williams 1994; as cited by Kaspar & Noh, p.5).

However, they continue, research on identity development has provided a robust theoretical foundation to support the belief that the *salience of personal identity* is an important factor in predicting the mental well being of minorities (Erickson, 1963 1964 1968 1980; as cited by Kasper & Noh, p.6). Nonetheless, they found that despite the vast amount of theoretical work available, the empirical proof is difficult and the research literature offer contradictory results. Figure 5 depicts the paradoxes found in self-esteem research on African-American youth. They credit this to the difficulties in operationalizing the constructs identity and ethnic identity. In addition, the Eurocentric nature of earlier identity research failed to investigate the psychological function of ethnic and racial identity development. Later studies have identified components of ethnic identity and their role in self-esteem (Isajiv, 1990; Kwan & Sodowshy, 1997; Phinney, 1990, 1992; Tajfel, 1981). These components are categorized in *internal /attitudinal* and *external* dimensions. The internal/attitudinal dimension of ethnic identity involves:

a.) Identifying oneself as a member of and ethnic group;

b.) one has a sense of belonging and attachment the ethnic group as well as finding security and comfort within the group;

c.) preferring affiliation with members of this group to member of an out-group; and

d.) bearing a positive of negative attitude toward the group dependent on the level of pride and satisfaction with the group.

The external component entails active involvement with ethnic

organization and speaking the language. These researchers conclude that the internal dimension influence self-esteem to a larger degree than the external.

Self-esteem is widely understood to refer to a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self. Hence, self-esteem is how we evaluate ourselves. However, Porter and Washington (1979, 1993) argue that studies on self-esteem in an ethnic or racial frame of reference, should distinguish between group and personal self-esteem. Group self-esteem refers to how an individual evaluates their ethnic / racial group membership. Personal self-esteem on the other hand is how one feels about themselves regardless of race or ethnicity. This includes feelings of *intrinsic worth*, *competence*, *and self-approval* (Porter & Washington, 1993; Ervin & Stryker, 2001). Most studies reviewed use the group image paradigm to examine the role of racial / ethnic identity and self-esteem of minorities.

Although it is assumed that self-esteem suffers by members of minority groups which are constantly ranked lowest in society's prestige structure and who are historical plagued with negative stereotypes, as are African Americans and Hispanics in the US; studies have shown this is not the case (for reviews see Porter & Washington 1979, and Jackson & Lassiter 1998). Simmons (Simons, 1978; as cited in Mckinzie) questions whether the high self-esteem ratings of African Americans and Hispanics in the US are due to a disjuncture between the concept of global self-esteem and coping mechanisms.

Crocker & Major perused the role of *attributional ambiguity* in the strategies used to protect self-esteem and explain the paradox results in research on self-esteem. Attributional ambiguity is experienced by minority group members especially when given negative feedback by members of the dominate group. They question whether the feedback is due to their personal deficiencies or discrimination. These researchers have found that external attributions to negative feedback protect the self-esteem of minority group members.

Overall research results on the correlation between self-esteem and racial and ethnic identity development has been contradictory, because factors such as personal self-esteem and group related self-esteem are often conjugated. Furthermore, attribution studies have also been contradictory in their findings. On the one hand, some studies argue, attributing failure to discrimination protects self-esteems, while other conjecture that contribute failure to discrimination diminishes sense of control and belief that on can influence outcomes. A belief that one can control outcomes is a very important factor for self-esteem, therefore lacking this would damage self-esteem.

Discrimination and Identity in Youth

- Some studies on identity development in minority youths has shown how discrimination affects the adjustment and well-being of these youths. The internalization of ascribed and devalued social positions/statuses, lead to feelings of inferiority and self-hatred, anger, jeopardized self-image, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Others have shown no effect on self-esteem.

(DeVos and Suarez-Orozco 1990; Erikson 1964,Stevenson, et al. 1996; Inniss 1992; Uba 1994; u.a. as cited in Kaspar & Noh 2001)

Figure 6. Research results on the detrimental effects of membership in devalued social-groups

3.5. Social Identity and Stigmatized Identities

Developed by Tajfel and Turner (1986), Social Identity Theory posits that individuals identify themselves in terms of group membership. Thereby implying that persons have two dimensions along which they define themselves: social, defined by membership in various social groups; and personal identities, the distinctive individual features that distinguish an individual from others. Social Identity Theory further asserts that group membership creates in-group/out-group categorizations and embellishments. Hence, Turner and Tajfel (1986) showed that the mere self-identification of an individual with a group leads to their positively differentiating their group from others. Since the 70s much of the explanations found in social psychology for discrimination, racism, and stereotyping are derived from the Social Identity Theory. In contexts where group membership is stigmatized this is a particularly difficult process.

3.5.1. Social Identity and stigmatized identities

Oyserman stated:

> Minorities must make sense of themselves in terms of what it means to be a member of racial of ethnic or group. . . They face the simultaneous task of creating a sense of self in terms of their own personal characteristics, traits and competencies and the content and nature of their social Identities (Oyserman et al.,1997; as cited in Oyserman & Harrison, 1998, pp.281-300).

Minorities with stigmatized group identities must not only remain aware of their individual identities and capabilities, but maintain an awareness of the obstacles, stereotypes that racism causes in order to protect their feeling of personal well being because;

> . . .knowing that feedback may be ambiguous or misleading due to one's category membership, and so on, provides a means to create a sense of self as competent and capable in spite of negative feedback one might receive due to group membership (Oyserman & Harrison, p. 287).

In Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, Goffman (1963) differentiates between *virtual social identity* and *actual identity construction*, the former refers to a social artifact, reflecting social meanings ascribed to visible marks- in our case skin color. The latter is biographical, relatively objective and not ascribed by society (Loury, 2002). Thus two major challenges faced by visible minorities when negotiating their social identity are:

1. Coping with attribution ambiguity

2. Maintaining a sense of Self independent of the *spoiled collective identity* (Goffman) constructed by the "Other"

3..5.1.1. Coping with attribution ambiguity

Since the experience of discrimination is often ambiguous, targets of discrimination find themselves in an *attributional dilemma* (Dion, 2001) as to whether a negative experience they have encountered is due to prejudice or discrimination on the part of those they are interacting or dealing with, or whether the setback reflects their own failings or other personal characteristics (Dion). Jennifer describes this feeling of uncertainty while studying for her law degree as follows:

> . . .The profession stood for whiteness, a white world, that's male dominated. . . I felt denied entrance to this world because I'm Black. . .besides I don't look conservative. . .No one ever said to me it's because I'm black but I was often told don't look like a lawyer. Only much later did I come to realize it's because I'm an attractive women that people couldn't quite see me as a lawyer and not because I'm Black.

The question "Is it because I'm Black", is present: "Did I not get the job because I'm not the best qualified or is it because I'm black"; "Did I not get the apartment because the landlord wanted a tenant with a higher income or is it because I'm Black?" I asked another young woman about her aspirations towards getting a university degree while

growing up in Germany; ". . . I had my doubts whether this was an option open to me because I had internalized the belief that blacks aren't as intelligent as whites".

Nonetheless, research findings on attribution ambiguity have been contradictory (e.g. Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997; Steele, 1997; Branscombe & Ellemers; Major et al., 1998). On the one hand studies have found that attribution ambiguity more often leads to an external attribution to failure (e.g. negative feedback because of discrimination), which in turn protects self esteem. On the other hand, some studies have shown, the attribution ambiguity may give rise to *stereotype threat*. Stereotype threat (Steel) leads to avoiding the domain in which one is negatively attributed (Black intellectual ability) and psychologically detaching the significance of this domain for self-esteem. Studies have soon this may play a role in the gap in scholastic performance between African American and European-American students. They also found evidence that stereotype threat at least plays a role in women's under representation in mathematical sciences.

3.5.1.2 Maintaining a sense of Self independent of the "spoiled collective identity"" (Goffman)

Maintain a sense of "Self" independent of the "spoiled collective identity" entails *social creativity* (Branscombe & Ellemers, 1998). Social creativity describes how members of disadvantaged social groups develop responses and strategies to help maintain a positive personal or social identity. Either the strategies chosen may be individual or group based. Individual strategies are directed toward sustaining a positive personal identity; group based strategies aim at improving the position of the group as a whole. Furthermore group strategies have been found to correlate with high in-group identification, 1998; individual strategies with low in-group orientation (Branscombe & Ellemers; Oyserman & Harrison; Major et al., 1998). Cindy,An Afro-German (African-Afro) interviewed with low in-group identification answered a question about her relationship with Blacks in Germany stated:

. . .I don't know many [Blacks] and wasn't raised with them. I grew up in a

> German family, therefore I don't really know how to assess Blacks and I don't want to hurt anyone.

An Afro-German woman with high in-group identification responded to the same question as follows:

> . . .the more blacks I met, the more clearly I realized that we shared the same pain. How experiencing racism and discrimination can destroy a person's soul. Not having any one to share these experiences with, you resign yourself and find ways to cope . . . finding someone who has gone through the same experience . . Finding a place for this sorrow and pain. . .finding a place not only to find strength but also to mourn. . .

Her strategies are also group based, she is actively involved in organizations that provides among other services, networking opportunities and support groups for Afro-Europeans and Blacks living in Germany.

The strategies of minority group members with low in-group identification are primarily focused on individual mobility and are more strongly guided by the values of the dominant social group. The answer to the question, "How difficult is it for non-Whites to have success in their field of choice?" Sandra, an Afro-German, articulates the belief in individual mobility despite membership in a devalued social group:

> . . .I know that Germany isn't ripe for a Black news anchor woman; but I fundamentally believe that there's no limit. . .for that what a person wants to do. . .with talent and education a Black person the sky's the limit.

She believes race relations in Germany will improve with time, and that eventually professional fields in Germany that were once closed, will open to Black women and other non-White minorities She also believes in being prepared for these opportunities, and being prepared includes attaining cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), thereby accumulating knowledge of the culture and its prerequisites for status.

3.5.1.3. Ethnicity, race, gender and other socially defined groups as developmental contexts

Eccles (2004) researched how social identities are linked to racial and ethnic identity development. She perused social group membership as a social context crucial for development and identity development. Her focus was primarily on the role racial identity plays in helping Afo-American youth cope with discrimination in school. Referring to the research results of various social scientists in the US on the effects of racism and discrimination on their targets Figure 7 depicts her summaries of research on social group membership and their consequences. On race and race relations (e.g. Cross, 1991; Ogbu,1990; Phinney,1992 and Steel,1997l), she calls to mind that marginalization, stigmatization, discrimination and stereotypes play a central role in the lives of Black youths growing up in America. She argues that both social and personal identities influence their behavior and achievements of racialized individuals because these play a role in their expectations / ability self-concepts, and their values and goals. Figure 4, depicts the result of her study.

Eccles (2004) found that personal experiences subcultural beliefs, images, and stereotypes; as well societal beliefs, images, ideologies, and societal stereotypes moderate personal and social identities. These in turn affect what an individual believes he can expect from life and how much control he believes he has on outcomes. In addition, these individuals develop a perception of what specific activities will bring them in the end. The aspects that Eccles focused on were racial identity as a social identity, experiences of racism and how these two aspects interrelated to understand school achievement.

Despite the fact that the focus of this study involves the how racial identity is achieved and its salience as a social identity. Eccles findings confirm the findings of this study as well. The women interviewed have internalized societal beliefs, which have had an

impact on their life's choices. These societal beliefs are the beliefs reflected by the socialization agents who have played a role in their lives (i.e. parents, teachers, peers, etc.). Moreover these agents not only play a in normative socialization but in their racial socialization as well. These identity constructing social interactions, as in Eccles study they determine which personal, behavioral, and emotional characteristics are salient and authentic.

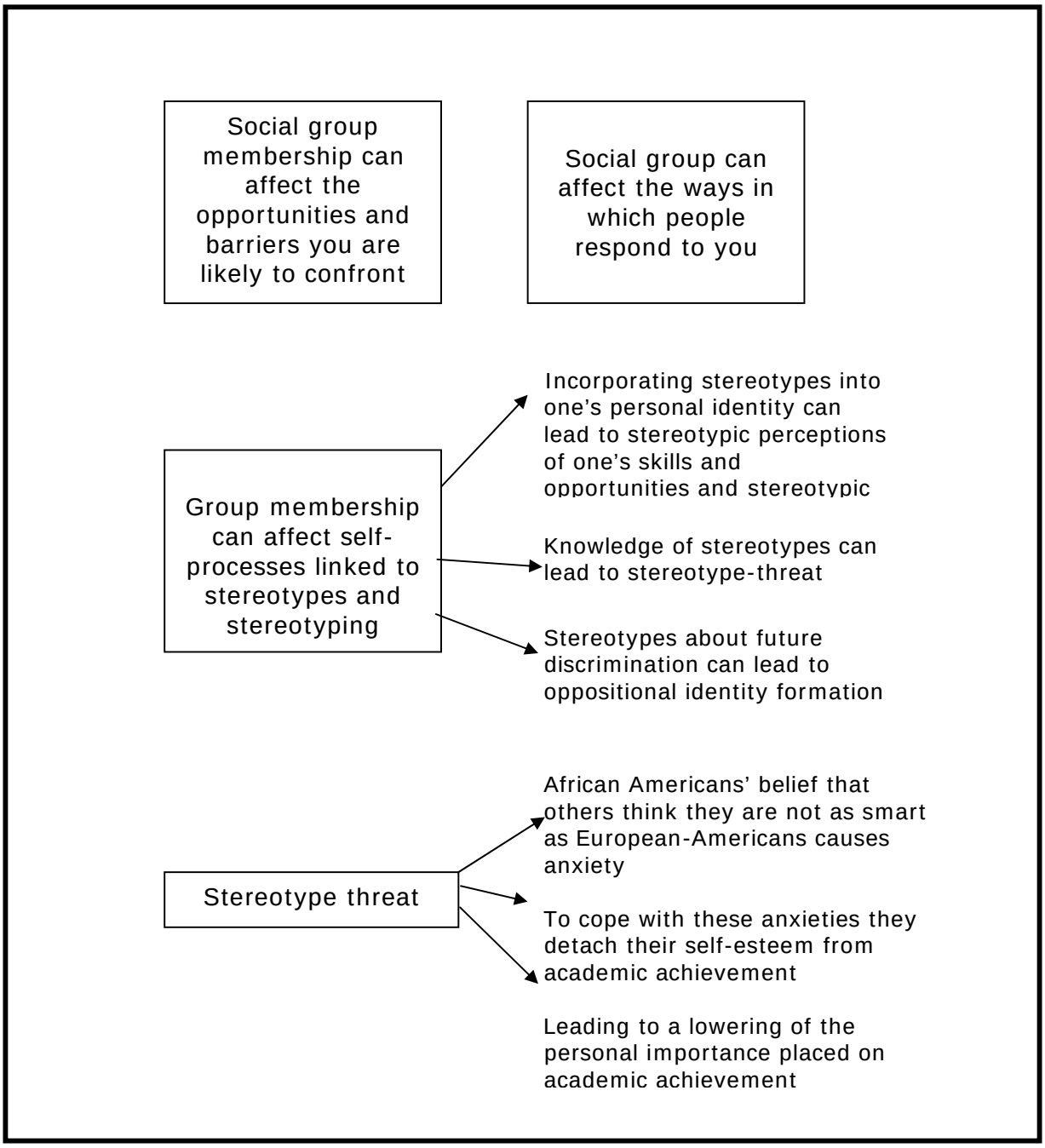

Figure 7. Summary of research results on social-group membership and its consequences (Eccles, 2004)

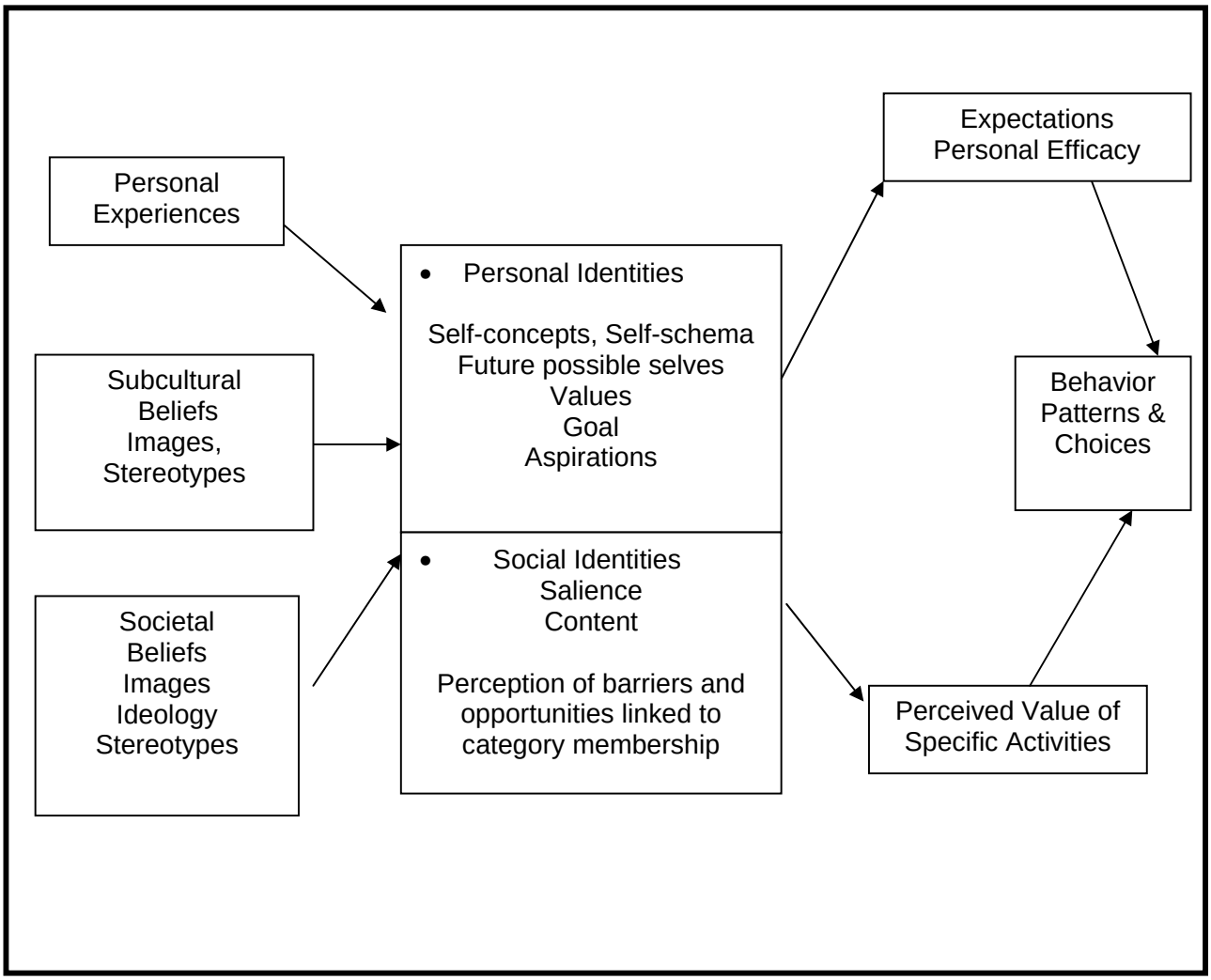

Figure 8. Results of research on the factors affecting social identity development and how they interact (Eccles, 2004)

3.4 Summary

Recent research on identity formation has distant itself from linear identity development models (e.g. Eriksonian Model) towards more recursive models which take socio-cultural complexities into account. These models see identity formation as a continuous work in progress, a quilt resulting from ever changing life environments.

American identity theorist in particular found it necessary to find alternatives to Eurocentric formulas, which fail to include the effect of non-White minority status on identity development. Thus, the Black Identity Development Model offered recourse. This model posits a sequence of five stages in the process of attaining black racial identity. This model has been reformulated for various ethnic groups in the US and links to ego identity development were incorporated. In the wake of these developments in identity research, there has been a deepening interest in the question of White identity development. The theorist argue that only a conscious awareness of whiteness and the privileges accorded on account of being white and part of the dominant culture- will racism and discrimination end.

Non-White minorities in general and people of African decent in particular have the added challenge of a social identity that has negative connotations. As members of a stigmatized social group, Blacks are rarely seen as individuals, but as representatives of their group. Research investigating the coping strategies of victims of this negative perception have found that the strategies run along two dimensions; those that are group based and individual base. The group base strategists have high in-group identification while the individual strategists have low in-group identification and emphasize their individuality. Furthermore research has found that personal and social identity, are shaped within a social-cultural context where certain beliefs on race and racial ideologies are weaved within its fabric. Thus influenced personal and social identity determine an individual’s expectations and belief in their self-efficacy and what

the perceive as worthwhile effort. These expectations, beliefs, and perceptions lead to certain behaviour patterns and life choices.

4. Identity Choices in Multiple Contexts: Concepts, Properties and Dimensions

4.1. Methodology

This is a qualitative study on Black European women and Black immigrant women who've lived in Germany at least 20 years; who managed to overcome societal hurdles and reach their goals. Originally 15 women agreed to be interviewed, but in the end only 10 participated. Of the 5 who didn't participate, three cancelled because they felt the interview would be too time consuming and two simply didn't keep the appointment. Aside from their shared Black heritage, all these women overcame the barriers of racism and discrimination in Germany to reach their goals. The research goal was finding out which personal, societal, and psychological factors played a significant role in their identity development and their motivation to succeed. The interviews are retrospective reflections of their experiences, which include insights on their interactions and interpretations leading to a reconstruction of their past experiences. Riesmann (1993) sees the autobiographical reconstruction as an act allowing individuals to construct past events, claim identities, and construct lives. Most of the women commented, that the interviews forced them to reflect and remember past events in light of their present understanding and experience.

Noteworthy is that these biographies depict how, despite the socio-historical and cultural context these women grew up in; and the identity struggle they faced as members of a stigmatized social group, they followed and achieved their goals. This, notwithstanding (in some cases) internalized limitations due to their ascribed social status. They developed coping strategies that allowed them to maneuver towards their goals. However, an element which always was present was a turning point when they realized that they need not be limited and that they are only as limited as they believe themselves to be. All names used are pseudonyms.

4.1.1. Participants

Table 4
Participants' Ethnic Backgrounds

Afro-Europeans	2nd Generation Black Immigrants
1 Afro-French	2 Biracial Africans
4 Afro-German (West Germany)	1 Haitian-American (investigator)
1 Afro-German (East Germany)	
1 Afro-Portuguese	
1Afro-Austrian	

10 women whose ages ranged from 35 and 47 years old were interviewed. They are Afro-Europeans and Black immigrants who have live in Germany or central Europe for at least 20 years. The investigators interview was also included in the data. The interviewees were of diverse ethnic backgrounds (see Table 2). All the interviewees were bicultural and nine were biracial.

The Afro-Europeans varied in terms of whether their Black parent is from Africa, the US, or the Caribbean; and whether their mothers or fathers were Black. Furthermore most (6) of these women are academics, and those who are not (4) have been professionally trained for their respective occupations.

4.1.2. Procedure

The research participants were recruited using the snowballing method, whereby interviewees recommended friends, colleagues, and relatives whom they felt may be willing to participate in this study. Three of the interviewees were friends and although we have discussed discrimination and racism in Germany, prior to these interviews, we never discussed our personal confrontations with these phenomenon nor our

biographies. The interviewees were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, hence their names will not be revealed here or to third parties. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the privacy of the participants. It was important that the investigator participate in the process because it helped not to project personal opinions into the interpretation of the while analyzing the data. Morrow and Smith (1995) referring to Peshkin (1988) and Strauss (1987) recommend that researchers include their personal interviews in the data analysis as a means of self-reflectivity, because “any tacit biases and assumptions can be subsequently analyzed” (as cited in Creswell, 1998, p. 301).

The first 90 min. interview served as the basis for the initial theoretical sampling. Coding and analysis of the data helped decide what data needed to be collected next. After ten interviews, saturation was reached, and distinctive patterns on the racial and cultural salience of the focus group were identified. Hence, the fundament for the development of a model of strategies and resources for empowerment emerged. This data is triangulated with field notes and observations.

The interviews took place in Munich and Berlin: At the researcher’s office in Munich, at her apartment or the interviewees’ place of business in Berlin. The narrative interviews were between 60 to 90 min. long. With the consent of all the participants, the interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

4.1.2.1 The narrative interview

Social scientists recognize narrative interviews as one of the most helpful investigative approaches available. These help us explore how we construct and make sense of the various contexts and events that summarizes our lives (Lucius-Hoene, 2000; Atkinson, 1998; Riessman, 1993; et al.). Atkinson describes the function of the life story when exploring identity development as a means of organizing experience and fashioning or verifying identity. He wrote:

> The act of constructing a narrative of a life could very well be the means by which that life comes together for the first time, or flows smoothly from one thing to the next, to be seen as a meaningful whole. For some people, telling one's story can be a way of becoming who one really is. It can be a way of owning once and for all the values and attitudes that have been acquired over a lifetime from family or elsewhere. Telling a life story the way on sees it can bone of the most emphatic answers to the question, "Who am I". . . (p. 12).

Rita, an African woman interviewed, experienced these feelings of coherence across time, acknowledging her life's course including biographical interruptions, disappointments, moments of bliss, and everyday occurrences. These experiences are the frame within which she could reconstruct the landscape of her life, and reflect on how they influenced the person she is today.

> . . .telling my story brought back to mind events I had long forgotten. The act of telling my story helped me reflect for the first time on the paths I've traveled to become who I am today. I became conscious of the values which have guided me. It was a rare opportunity that I'm thankful for. . .

The life-story interview as used in this study, allowed the participants to become aware of their active participation in the construction of who they are at this moment in time. All the same, these portraits are limited. It's necessary to keep in mind that life stories are representations of phenomenon, thus our only recourse is letting symbols portray primary experiences, because we no longer have direct access (Riessman).

4.1.2.2. The interviewing process

The primary goal of the narrative interview is to enable the interviewee to tell a story or create a narrative about their life or central elements and events in it. During these interviews, one can discover patterns, diversions and ambivalences (Atkinson, 1998). This requires that the interviewer allow the interviewee to find his or her own story telling pace and coherence.

In this study, the interviews were open-ended; the interviewees were allowed to answer questions without interruption. Specific questions were on hand and used only when needed (e.g. a theme is fully exhausted by the respondent). In most cases, this approach led to a “stream of consciousness” (Atkinson), whereby they freely associated their thoughts and gave insightful responses. Following the socio-demographic questions, the first question- “Tell me about your scholastic path” set, in most cases, a narrative in motion.

The choice of a relatively neutral question as initial question was the fear that too personal a question before the interviewee had the chance to acclimate to the interview situation and the interviewer may have made the women interviewed self-conscious and inhibited a free flowing narration.

4.1.2.3. The interview

Although the interviews were open-ended, there was a frame or a line of questioning followed in terms of areas that were covered. These areas were:

1) Parental background
   -Immigration history
   -Discriminatory experiences
2.) The role of religion or spirituality in their lives
3.) Self-Concepts
4.) Ethnic / Bi-cultural Identity
5.) Goals, expectations, and attribution for outcome
6.) Pervasiveness of perceived discrimination and coping strategies
7.) Personal definition of success / achievement for members of minority groups in discriminatory societies

These areas were chosen based on the literature research. Research on ethnic, racial Identity, and the effect of perceived discrimination in the US and Canada point to these frames as key concepts (e.g. Ponterotto et al. 2001; for a review see Phinney, 1990; Lay & Wakstein, 1985) in the lives of immigrants and minority group members. All the interviews with one exception, which was conducted in English, were conducted in German. Professional transcribers wrote the transcription. The excerpts used in this study are English translation of the German interviews; the originals are in appendix 1. The researcher translated these excerpts herself, and because of her fluency in both languages, a high level of exactness is guaranteed.

4.1.2.4.. Underlying Ethnographic Aspects: Field notes and observations

Informal ethnographical aspects of this study play a major role in the analysis. Encounters, observations, and conversations with individual representatives of the groups involved permeate the analysis. Being a member of the group being investigated, provides a lifetime of intensive experience with the subject of this research and demanded a lot of self-reflexivity of the researcher. Although this is a life story form of inquiry it is nearly impossible to ignore one's own subjective experience concerning the data being collected (Atkinson, 1998). And even more so when one identifies with the cultural constellations being studied, making it necessary to log and examined subjective experiences for biases and assumptions (Morrow & Smith, 1995). Also, being of the group permitted lengthy observations in the field and discussions with representatives of this social-group not formally involved in the study. While observing interactions in normal settings, recurring patterns and themes were detected.

4.2. Verification of Concepts and Categories

In accordance with the principles of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), the analytic process did not aim towards hypothesis testing, but letting a theory emerge. In keeping with Strauss & Corbin's (1998) methodology, analysis began with coding. The first step is open coding which allowed the identification of categories, as well as their properties and dimensions. Axial coding follows and the connections among the categories are perused, allowing patterns and subcategories to emerge. "Axial coding is the act of relating categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions."(Strauss & Corbin, p.124). Categories and codes where investigated until saturated. Relatively late in the analysis, a central phenomenon emerged. Field note and observations; memos and a self-reflexive interview added to the data.

4.2.1. Verification

Strauss and Corbin (1990; as cited in Creswell, 1998) recommended seven criteria to verify credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of a grounded theory study. These criteria are:

Criterion 1: How was the original sample selected? What grounds?

Criterion 2: What major categories emerged?

Criterion 3: What were some of the events, incidents, action, and so on that pointed to some of these major categories?

Criterion 4: Based on what categories did theoretical sampling proceed? What guided data collection? Was it representative of the categories?

Criterion 5: What were some of the hypotheses pertaining to conceptual relations among categories, and on what grounds were they formulated and tested?

Criterion 6: Were there instances when hypotheses did not hold up against what was actually seen? How did they affect the hypotheses?

Criterion 7: How was the core category chosen (sudden, gradual, difficult, easy)? On what grounds?

These quality issues are addressed below.

4.4.1.1 Quality verification

- *Criterion 1: How was the original sample selected? What grounds?*

The participants were selected in accordance with theoretical sampling. They were representative of the social-groups focused in this study: Women, ages 35-50; Afro-European and living in Germany; Black immigrants living in Germany for over 20 years. Research showed that nothing has been written about high achieving non-White minorities in Europe and the psychological factors involved in whether or not they overcome the burdens of racial discrimination and racists social structures achieve academic and profession goals. Moreover most studies on the achievement gap between White-Europeans and non-White minorities are conducted with adolescents who are actually still in the process of constructing an identity, going through psychological changes, and struggling to find their place in the world. The women chosen have a life they can reflect upon and provide insights on how it was, and the processes they went through to become the persons they are today. These insights can help find a model for empowerment that can lay the foundation for asset oriented multicultural counselling.

- *Criterion 2: What major categories emerged?*

The major categories that emerged are: Coping Strategies, Personal Characteristics, Social Identities, Threats, and Opportunities.

- *Criterion 3: What were some of the events, incidents, actions, and so on that pointed to some of these major categories*

Coping strategies emerged after analysing the interviews and finding that there are distinct constants to how these women protected their self-esteem in context in which they felt threatened or were receiving ambiguous signals. With variance along the dimensions of racial salience and group identification

Personal characteristics crystallized in the manner these women defined themselves. Among these is their self-ascribed racial and cultural (ethnic) identity choices, self-evaluations, and the amount of control they feel they have over outcomes in their lives.

Social identities are not only their social characteristics, in terms of the social-groups to which others ascribe them. Also, how they interpret these ascriptions and how these interpretations affect their well-being, and aspirations.

Threats are the external factors that threaten their self-definitions and their aspirations. They are the issues embedded in the social context in which they live that effect their personal characteristic and social identities in a negative manner. This category arouse from investigating the social-cultural-historical field that influence how they are perceived in their social environment.

Opportunities are the self-perceived resources available to these participants. They represent, that which the interviews feel influenced them in a positive way and lent to their empowerment.

Criterion 4: Based on what categories die theoretical sampling proceed? Guide data collection? Was it representative of the categories?

The initial categories were derived from the first 90 min. interview. They were examined as to their external and internal dimensions. In keeping the with the principles of grounded theory, subsequent interviews were analysed and it was found that the initial

categories were repeated but varied in their characteristics, which led to the evolution of subcategories and dimensions.

- *Criterion 5: What were some of the hypotheses pertaining to conceptual relations among categories, and on what grounds were they formulated and tested?*

Hypotheses to the conceptual relations among the categories were:

1. Personal characteristics determine the strategies chosen.
2. Content and salience of social identity determine the strategies chosen as well.
3. Personal characteristics and social identities are recursive, whereby race salience plays a moderating role.
4. Threats play a role in not only the social identities of minorities but how their personal characteristics develop, influences under which they develop their strategies.
5. Opportunities or resources effect significantly how development tasks are achieved, the effects of threats are diminished, personal characteristics develop and social-identity choices are made.
6. A major moderating factor is the group identification or race salience.

These hypotheses were formulated on the grounds of field observations and analysis of the interviews. They were tested, by looking for contradictions, biases and exceptions in the interviews.

Criterion 6: Were there instances when hypotheses did not hold up against what was actually seen? How did they affect the hypotheses?

Fortunately, the hypotheses held up to what was actually observed and the contents of the interviews. Additionally, although the group differed in their political and social outlooks, which was affected not only by their social-economic status but even more so by their racial salience; there were consistencies in there choice of strategies in relation to their racial salience and the intensity of group identification. Finally, previous research also supported these findings.

Criterion 7: How was the core category chosen (sudden, gradual, difficult, easy)? On what grounds?

The core category- *Racial socialization and parental-racial beliefs with the resulting racial salience affected their strategies and interactions*- emerged relatively late in the analysis. While examining the data it became clear, racial socialization and racial salience was significant for all strategies choices as well as the content and salience of their social identity. Furthermore, these influenced how threats and opportunities are perceived. Additionally, the data showed that racial salience determined how these women articulated their identities life choices and reached their aspirations as well as in which areas they chose to do so.

Choosing racial salience as core category also accords to the criteria put forth by Glaser (1978). These criteria are:

1. The category must be central
2. The category reoccurs frequently
3. It takes more time to saturate
4. The connections with other categories comes quick and richly
5. It has a clear and grabbing implication for formal theory
6. Has considerable carry through, does not lead to dead ends
7. Is completely variable
8. It is also a dimension of the problem
9. It tends to prevent two other sources (social interest and logical deductive) of establishing a core which are not grounded
10. Can be any kind of theoretical code: a process, a condition, dimensions, a consequence.

These criteria provide a guideline for research evaluation and testing; allowing the researcher to answer questions pertinent to their study and retrace their steps in a

concise manner. The analysis followed principles recommended by Strauss & Corbin (1998). This led to an initial model which tested the fit of concepts, dimensions, categories and the properties of these categories. Finally, a theoretical model with abstracted conditions, actions and interactions; consequences is proposed. In Chapter 5. the analysis and results are presented as well as narrations depicting the conceptual development of the proposed model.

5. Analysis and Results

The analysis followed the grounded-theory method. Each transcript was analyzed and meaning units were extracted (i.e. phrased, sentences, and text passages) that represented concepts related to the theory being perused. The concepts where then categorized according to which sources of influence they represented (see Table 4). These where axially coded according to how these related to each other and classified under higher level-categories (e.g. coping strategies) as shown in Figure 9. Finally, a core story emerged, consisting of the participants' racial socialization, racial saliencies and consequently their racial or group identification choices. These consequently determined the strategies they chose to reach their goals within their socio-cultural context and in accordance with their personal backgrounds. A theory evolved to include the constructs that emerged because of their actions.

5.1. Sources of Influence

5.1.1. Direct and indirect dispositional and situational sources of influence

Stangor & Sechrist (1998) propose a conceptual model which in addition to the domains *dispositional and situational influences,* the distinctions *direct vs. indirect sources* of influence provides multidimensional landscape, allowing a deeper analysis on the interactions and effects of various factors. The former refers to influences that are not mediated by subjective perceptions or interpretations, the latter are those that are determined by internalized perception or expectation (Stangor & Sechrist).

Referring to research on the difference in academic choices and academic success between men and women; and European Americans and African Americans as examples they write:

> For instance, regarding women's achievement. . . [these models] suggest that differences in aptitude are important, they have generally controlled for these variables, focusing instead on the extent to which stereotypes have been Internalized by the target person. . .Conversely, the models of academic choice and achievement of African Americans have not generally taken into consideration the potential importance of initial differences in aptitude, interests or abilities between African-Americans and European-Americans, and have focused almost entirely on the impact of stereotyping and prejudice. Because existing models are each somewhat limited in terms of the variables they consider important, an approach that simultaneously considers all of the variables assumed to be important within each of these existing models could be useful to the extent that it provided a clearer focus on the many potential Influences. . . (1998, p.109).

This approach was used to provide a framework for sorting the various categories, concepts, and patterns that arouse during open coding. The disposition and situational factors that emerged from the interviews are listed in Table 4. The direct situational factors: racism and discrimination have been discussed in chapters 1 thru 3 above; as has racial stigmatization. Therefore, a description of these factors will not be repeated here.

Table 4

Dispositional and Situational, Direct and Indirect Factors Found after Analysis of Interview Data

	Dispositional	**Situational**
Direct	Ability Personality	Racism (see chapter 2) Discrimination (see chapter 2) Stereotyping Social economic status Social resources
Indirect	Accommodation /Internalized "Twice as good rule" Aspirations/ Expectations Assimilation / Passing Attributional style Internalized racist attitudes Invisibility Race-salience Resilience Self-Concept Self-Efficacy Spirituality	Attributional dilemma Community Role models Racial stigmatization Racial socialization Perception of parental experiences with racism /discrimination Parental racial beliefs

5.1.1.1. Dispositional factors

Direct disposition factors

- *Ability*

Ability refers to cognitive ability deduced from language use, level of education, and awareness of the social mechanisms of the context in which they live. All the women interviewed were high achieving and therefore it was to be expected that the would show excellent language skills, most have a university degree, and those who do not have been extensively trained and have many years of experience in their professions. They are all politically aware and are familiar with past and current social issues in Europe.

- *Personality*

Personality characteristics that characterize a person, specifically in terms of extroversion vs. introversion; openness to new experiences vs. reticence; agreeableness vs. disagreeableness; conscientiousness vs. lack of conscientiousness; and emotional stability. These factors where deduced from the interaction with the interviewer, and could later be confirmed or disaffirmed with the transcript analysis. How the interviewee described events and her reactions during these interactions lent insight into her personality. As a group, they are extroverted, open, and very agreeable to be with. They are highly conscientious in their profession lives, and are conscientious of the role they play in their communities. Their emotional stability is deduced from the hurdles and disappointments they've both professionally and personally had to overcome, yet they remain open to new challenges, and they have found their purpose in helping others.

Indirect dispositional factors

- *Accommodation and Internalized Twice as Good Rule*

There was consensus in the group that knowing the rules of the system was essential in attaining their goals. They recognized that accommodating themselves to the criteria set by a White-European society in order to work within this society was essential. Also, even if in young adulthood they found themselves over-assimilating to fit in, at this point in their lives, they've all managed to find their place within the social context- where they can be themselves without feeling outcast. This is the root of the internalized "twice as good rule". It's a belief carried by people of African decent, living in White dominated societies; this belief is carried down through generations. The belief that non-White minorities have that they must work twice as hard and be twice as good at Whites in any given field in order to be acknowledged for their achievements. The European father of an Afro-European interview formulated the twice as good rule as follows: "As a Black woman you have to be educated, not only educated but highly educated". This sentiment is reflected in the interviews, field observations, and studies on high achieving non-White minority women and their biographies (e.g. Bell & Nkomo, 2001, Felix, 2002).

- *Aspirations and Expectations*

Faltz (1996) found that the paradox between the expect self-esteem lost of Black-American students and the effect on their self-esteem; can be solved when conceptual differences behind the variables aspirations and expectations used in studies on self-esteem and achievement are clarified. Referring to Mickelson (Mickelson, 1990), she notes that when measuring students attitudes towards education it's important to differentiate between *abstract* and *concrete* attitudes. The latter are *expectations* that "reflect the diverse empirical realist that people experience with respect to returns on education from the opportunity structure ….[this] reflect the race, class, and gender differences in the opportunity structure that co-varies with academic achievement (p. 7). The former are *aspirations* that "reflect abstract attitudes" (p.7). According to the author, this variable may explain the suppression effort in an academic setting as a "cultural reaction to past discrimination" (p.8). Hence, she argues Black underachievement maybe be a symbolic rejection of "White" values.

The sample in this study varied in their *expectations* in correlation with their racial salience, and social status; whereby those with high racial salience and low social economic status background did not expect much in terms of returns for their efforts. However, they all *aspired* to professional and personal achievement and adapted to the expectations of mainstream society in order to do this. Most accommodated themselves to mainstream criteria without assimilating.

- *Assimilation and Passing*

Contrary to accommodation, assimilation describes the strategy whereby Blacks and bi-racial individuals adopt European-cultural behaviors and disparage their low-status racial self while doing so. Poor racial socialization in the family and personal social environment coupled with internalized racists attitudes appear to be mitigating factors for choosing this strategy.

- *Attribution style: Attributions to Racial Discrimination vs. Attributions to Self*

Attributions are beliefs about the causes of one's success or failure; motivation is influenced by the reasons people give (attributions) for success and failure. People may attribute their success or failure to their ability, effort, the context of the situation (including task difficulty), or luck. Studies on attribution style have shown those who believe they achieve success because of effort will be more likely to persist during difficult times.

The attribution to discrimination or individual effort varied in correlation to the racial salience of the interviewees. This is also confirmed in field observations and earlier studies (see Section 3 of this study). Those who highly identified with being Black tended to attribute negative experiences in social contexts (e.g. not getting an apartment or a job) to racial discrimination. By contrast, the lower an individual's race salience the more likely their attributions to negative social experiences were personal and specific.

However, in both cases, they protected their self-esteem. Whereby the in-group oriented individual saw discriminatory acts as against their group as a whole and have chosen to work in fields where they are actively involved in bettering the lives of other non-White minorities living in Germany. Through their work they retain a feeling of control, of being able to some degree, influence the outcomes for members of their social group. Those who have low racial salience identities and make personal attributions to failure, also feel more in control of their lives. Even in situation where the reason for their failure is ambiguous, they attribute it to pragmatic reasons. Ricarda a low racial salience women commented:

> When I was hunting for an apartment and at the appraisal, I see all the other aspirants are couples and maybe German, I know my chances are slim. I know my chances are slim, not because I'm Black, but because I was at the time a young single mother, who was working freelance.

Noteworthy is also that both those who attribute negative social experiences to racial discrimination and those who attribute to self, attribute positive social experiences and performance to self.

- *In-group / Out-group Identification*

The women interviewed varied in their in-group / out-group identification. This extent of their identification with their (ascribed) racial group determined their strategies for maintaining a sense of self, aspirations and expectations, and their attribution styles. Figure 9 depicts how these various factors relate to social group salience. Racial Salience is directly related to social-group salience.

Expectations and aspirations are related to social group identification. The data showed that those who have high in-group identification have a less positive outlook on what they expect from society as a whole as far as social justice is concerned. However because they have a sense of self-efficacy, they aspire to achieve their goals because they are willing to make the effort and be twice as good. Conversely those with low in-

group identification have high expectations, because they believe that although racial discrimination is an issue, they give it no credence in their lives. They make conscious choices of the social contacts they seek, especially those relevant to their professional goals.

As mentioned above (Section 3.3.2.2), group salience have been found to determine the strategies chosen for maintaining a sense of self, regardless of how their social group is perceived by other social groups. These strategies are either group or individualistic. Group based strategies aim at improving the position of the group as a whole. Individual strategies are directed toward sustaining a positive personal identity. Group based strategies found in this group are involvement in political issues concerning immigrants and identity politics concerning Afro-Europeans in Germany. Individual strategies included being in high-profile professions (Law, Journalism) which places them in professional arenas, where non-Whites are not widely represented. Studies have supported these findings (e.g. Branscombe & Ellemers; Oyserman & Harrison; Major et al., 1998).

Accordingly, attribution styles were also found to be directly related to social-group salience. Of the women interviewed, those with high in-group identification, showed a propensity towards attributing failure in social context (e.g. housing) to discrimination and failure in performance to effort; whereas, interviewees with low in-group salience attributed failure in social context to more pragmatic reasons, and attributed lack of effort in areas concerning performance.

These findings are confirmed by research results (for a review see section 3 of this study) and field observations prior and during the course of this study. They provide insight on how the self-perceptions and strategies of people of the same social-group vary, all the while empowering them to reach their goals. Furthermore, within the sub-

groups the relational factors are recursive, they strengthen each other with their consequences.

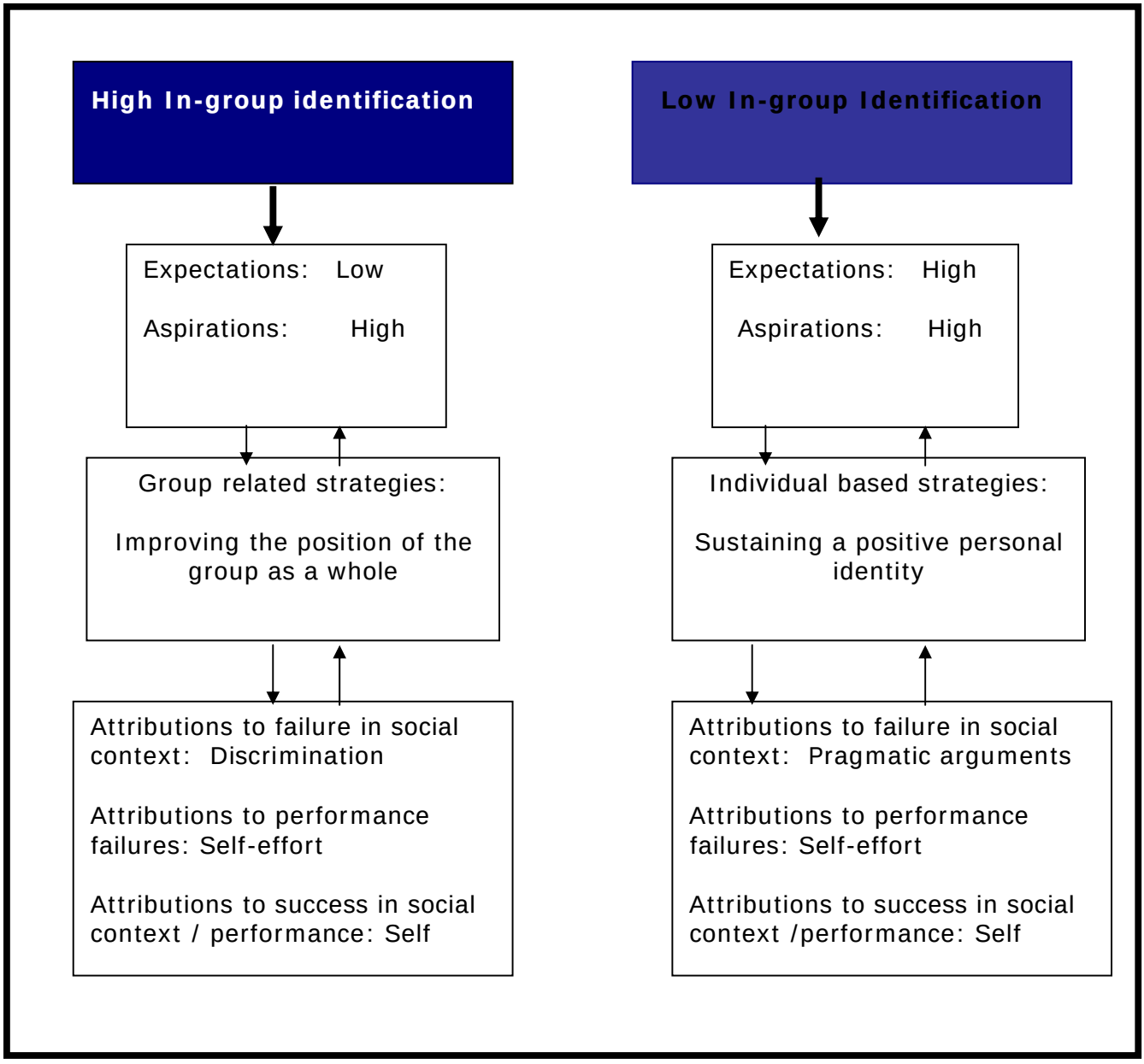

Figure 9. In-group and out-group identification in relation to expectation and aspirations; group vs. individual based strategies; and attribution style

Internalized Racists Attitudes

Cross (2001) recognizes this a endangerment to an individuals self-concept. These attitudes reflect the messages on race received from family members or significant others (Cross). It's caused by a misrepresentation of racial issues and social inequalities base on race. Negative racial myths are ingrained in the conscious, leading to racial self-hatred and inferiority complexes. Only two of the women interviewed had at some point in their lives internalized racist attitudes. Jennifer an Afro-American-German was able to face her racist attitudes and was transformed them through intensive contact with the Black community in Germany and contacts with African Americans through her network. Angela, is still struggling with these inner patterns, but she is conscious of them and has begun to take a closer look at the roots of these attitudes. Jennifer and Angela's stories are told in section *5.2. Multi-cultural and Multi-racial Narrative*.

- *Invisibility: Inconspicuousness vs. Passing*

Invisibility is a coping mechanism used by most of these women from childhood through to young adulthood. It varied from extreme form of wanting to remain inconspicuous and not standing out; to passing and hoping that the Blackness is not to apparent. One interviewee told of not wanting to win at sport meets in order not to standout, because being Black in an all White environment is conspicuous enough. Another spoke of straightening her hair, and dressing very conservatively to fit into her environment. High racial salience led to the need to be inconspicuous, not to be seen; whereas low racial salience appeared to lead more towards passing, of wanting to fit in, whether in appearance or mannerisms. Empirical studies and field observations support this interpretation (for a review see; Gillem & Thompson (Ed.), 2004).

- *Racial Salience*

Race salience to describe the centrality of the issue of race is in a person's development (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Those biracial women who have shown high racial salience- have also chosen a mono-racial, Black identity. Although this encompasses

only three of the women interviewed, this conclusion is supported by field observations. So much so that those Afro-European women who have made a mono-racial choice, label themselves with the *-European* suffix do so as a political statement for recognition. Biracial women who have low racial salience chose a biracial identity. Although often faced with the social ascription of being Black, their self-perception is that of a person who both Black and White is. According to Gillem (2000), biracial women who wish to claim a biracial identity, yet who are assumed by others to be Black must contend with resistance from their social environment. None of those interviewed described themselves as mono-racial White. This is supported by studies on biracial identity (Bowles, 1993; Root, 1990; as referred to by Rockquemor & Brunsma, 2004), that have found that it is extremely seldom that a biracial person self-ascribe themselves as mono-racial White

For mono-racial, women the choices they make appear to be based on their group-identification. Mono-racial women, do not have the racial choice issues of biracial women, but their racial salience or the extent of their racial-group identification plays a major role in the strategies they choose in interaction with their social environment. Whereby high racial salience lead to group oriented beliefs and strategies; and low racial salience result in more individualistic strategies.

- *Resilience*

Resilience is defined as the ability to manage the vicissitudes of life and to adaptively protect oneself from the detrimental consequences of stressful events. Studies have found that resilience comprises seven skills and abilities: seeking social support, problem-solving, personal competence, acceptance of self and life, concepts of parental and peer relations, and general self-concept (Garmezy, 1983; Blocker &Copeland, 1994; Jew, Green & Krogerl, 1999; as cited in Henset, 2003). Despite the adverse effects of perceived pervasive racial discrimination, the fact of their achievements speaks for their resilience. The degree of their personal experiences with discrimination varies as does

their attributions to discrimination. However, from this group, even those with extreme and blatant experiences with racism reveal in their narratives certain moments when specific events coupled with the social context in which they lived, may have proven detrimental to their mental well- being (abandonment by a parent, death of a parent, suicide of peers etc.). The data showed that those who had experienced the more heavy-handed forms of discrimination, tended towards mono-racial Black identity choices and more actively searched to maintain or find contact to their African roots. Most report that this search or identification with their "Blackness" was a source of strength and made them robust.

- *Self-concept: helpers vs. movers*

Referring to Rosenberg (Rosenberg 1979; as cited in Demo, 1992, pp. 304-305) the notion of self-concept used in this study is based on the idea of a self-concept composed of regions. The regions specified are extant, desired, and presenting. The extant self, is made up of social identity elements, roles, and dispositions. Whereas the desired self include the idealized image, committed image (actual goals), and a moral image. Self-concept develops through life experiences in interaction with others and is not static. Because it is a product of social interaction and self-reflexive and developmental adaptations (Demo) there always remains the potential for change and development. Narrations provide clues to the points of development and change of the narrators self-concept in correlation with changing social contexts and expanding spheres of influence.

At this point in their lives all the narrators in this study have developed a self-concept of the *self-as-doer*, they do not experience themselves as victims, but as women who have taken control of their lives. They vary in whether their self-concept is that of *helper* or primarily a *mover*. The helpers conceive of themselves as having a mission to help and teach other members of their salient social groups. They use their experiences with discrimination to empower others and to develop strategies and find resources to cope

with the situation. The movers have individualistic goals, they are aware that racial discrimination is an issue, but they have decided for themselves that they will not succumb to it.

- *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura (1977), and describes a person's belief about his ability to successfully complete a task. Thus, this belief influences both their decision to perform a task as well as the amount of effort that will be invested into completing the task. Generally, self-efficacy has been found to increase persistence at performing a task, which in turn increases the chances of successfully completing the task, thereby further increasing self-efficacy. Low self-efficacy is associated with a devil's cycle of task avoidance, low performance, and continuous decline in self-efficacy. Bandura proposed that four types of experiences can influence self-efficacy: prior experiences with similar tasks, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and level of anxiety. In more general terms, self-efficacy is an individual's assessment of their effectiveness, competence, and causal agency (Gecas, 1989).

In this group self-efficacy developed as result of their return on efforts. Studies (for a review see Gecas) have found that a major factor in developing efficacy is the relation between system responsiveness and instrumentality. They came to believe that their efforts would lead to the desired results through empiric evidence. While reflecting on their lives they all concluded that as soon as they decided to take a course they would succeed with perseverance. Rita, a Cameroonian of experiencing this at school:

> . . . School was catastrophic because I didn't understand anything . . .they let me Graduate with D- average. . .I realized this was my last chance and along with a psychologist with whom I was befriended we petitions to the Board of Education and got permission to repeat the ninth grade. . .this time the teachers were impressed with my resolve and they supported me in my efforts my grade point

> average rose to a B….I decided to continue on the more advance track and finally got a diploma in finance.

Rita experience how the system responded and she felt she was instrumental for her own success. She concluded, “I’ve always found that if you want something, when you really want to achieve something- people notice and are willing to help…”

This correlates with their attributions to success. Regardless of racial salience or group identification, they attributed their success to their own efforts. They also acknowledged their resources (i.e. teachers, family, role models, community, etc.) who helped then when difficulties arised. Unusual with this finding is that, even those who had internalized racist views and limitations believed that despite the social stigma of being Black, if they tried hard enough they would succeed. It appears that this self-efficacy diminished the effects internalized limitation by lending these women a sense of control over outcomes in their lives.

- *Spirituality*

Spirituality plays a strong role in the lives of all these women, not in terms of conventional religion, but connectedness with the spiritual. Some spoke of African religious traditions brought to them by their African mothers, others experienced this spirituality through others of the Black community, who introduced them to rituals and told them of African goddesses. They all spoke of their spirituality as a source of strength and an essential part of who they are. Rachel an African interviewee tells of a recent visit to her homeland, Cameroun:

> I felt this African spiritual power from my uncle. . .it’s not something to play with, it’s very strong and whether you have this power or not depends on where you’re from and how it was given to you. . .I got it from my mother’s milk. . .

The degree of spirituality, varied along the lines of their involvement with their African roots. Those who had chosen for themselves a biracial identity tended towards the more Europeanized Far Eastern esoteric practices (e.g. Meditation, Yoga,).

5.1.1.2 Situational factors

Direct situational factors

- Racial Stereotyping

Race is a social marker used to group people based on this common characteristic. Stereotyping is cognitive process whereby we generate and file information in a "classification system" on the people we encounter. In the case of racial interactions cognitive act is often followed by a normative judgment (Loury, 2001), and the normative judgment on non-White minorities is in most cases negative. The individual is perceived as the representative of group and carrier of negative connotations. Thus racial stereotypes affect the lives of their targets existentially, affecting housing, employment and educational opportunities.

- Social Economic Status of Family of Origin (SES)

Social class is often determines the opportunities available to an individual. Low social economic status has been associated, with a propensity towards, illness, delinquency, and mental disorder etc.; while high social economic status has been correlated with longevity, above average intelligence, and all the embellishments society has to offer.

The women interviewed are found at both ends of the spectrum, from uneducated blue collar backgrounds to professional households, where one or both parents are academics. However, their aspirations and achievements were high regardless of their family of origin's social status. Nonetheless, both field observations and the interview data indicate a relation between SES and racial identity choices of bi-racial women, and the in-group or out-group orientation of mono-racial Black women and the race salience

of both. Bi-racial women of high SES show an inclination towards bi-racial identity choices with low race salience, and those with low SES chose self-ascribed mono-racial Black identities and high race salience. An analogues pattern is observed in Black mono-racial individuals. High SES show low race salience and low in-group identification; whereas those with lower SES show high race salience and high in-group identification.

Noteworthy is also the High SES with low race salience pattern observed by Black and Black-White bi-racial immigrants interviewed in the field, was regardless of their SES in Germany, their attitudes reflected the SES they and their family of origin had in their homelands.

➢ *Indirect situational factors*

- Attributional dilemma

Non-white minorities who bear the burden of negative stereotyping can find themselves in an *attributional dilemma* whereby they are ambiguous as to the cause of a negative experience during a social interaction (e.g. employment application is rejected, poor performance evaluations etc.). They are unsure whether their failure is due to personal characteristics or because of racial discrimination. The frequency of finding oneself in this ambiguous state is closely related to race salience and in-group / out-group orientations; whereby the higher the race salience and in-group identification; the more like negative experience in social interaction would be attributed to discrimination. However, high racial salience and internalized racists attitude coupled with low in-group identification leads often to attributional dilemma. For these women race is very salient at a psychosocial and emotional leve.

- *Community*

Is the social network in which these women find themselves. Five of the women interviewed where very embedded in the Black and Afro-German community in

Germany. Their work also involves helping minority group members in the areas of social welfare, mental health, and education. They are very dedicated to their roles in society and passing on their experiences to help others. The have high race-salience in the most positive way and are highly in-group identified. The participants with low race-salience have little or no contact to members of their racial or ethnic group outside their families. They are embedded in a German social-network and are highly out-group identified.

- *Parents' experiences with racism and racial discrimination*

The data was perused for the effect parental experienced racism and racial discrimination and their coping strategies had on how the women interviewed faced racism and developed their own strategies. However, a consistent pattern did not emerge in neither the interviews nor field observations. Whether the European parent had difficulties (e.g. German women who bore children for Black GIs) or the Black parent (e.g. African women who come to live with their European husbands in Germany), did not seem to have a direct effect on racial salience and identity choices of their daughters. Note however, that all these women had family and social networks that may have buffered the direct effect of what their parent or parents was going through.

- *Racial socialization and parents' racial attitudes and beliefs*

The amount of racial socialization in the home appeared to have an effect on the racial identity choices and strategies of these women. Three categories reflecting racial attitude and beliefs where found: 1) race as a non-issue or taboo; 2) pride in African heritage and awareness of socio-political realities of discrimination; 3) Black is bad.

1) Race as a non-issue or taboo

Only one participant, Jennifer, describes her German mother's attitude towards the race issue as being taboo. Her mother had experienced so much rejection and humiliation

from her German counterparts because she had children with a Black man, who in turn left her. She describes her mother as having withdrawn and living as inconspicuous as possible; a mechanism she also adopted. She stated:

> . . . she withdrew and tried to live unnoticed…she also repressed and ignored these [racist] occurrences . . . she simply didn't talk about it. . .

This and the fact that her father was absent most of her childhood and eventually left her entirely, she remained ignorant of her Black heritage and had only the projected racist images of her social context to go by. Only as she began exploring her racial heritage was she able to change the internalized racist images of Blacks and replace them with positive perceptions. Her preoccupation with her African American roots influenced her self-ascribed mono-racial Black identity choice.

Research (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Carter, 1995 as cited in Buckley & Carter) has shown that racial socialization is necessary for healthy biracial identity development. Carter (2004) argues that internalizing a positive sense of one's disparaged (Black) racial background and than developing a positive view of the less oppressed group is an important developmental task. Hence, although some parents believe ignoring the issue of race, racial discrimination, and racism protects their offspring, this may prove very detrimental, because it leaves the child with vague, stereotypical images about an essential part of his identity.

2) Pride in African heritage and awareness of socio-political realities of discrimination

More than half the women interviewed (7) had parents or a parent who instilled knowledge of and pride in their African heritage, while familiarizing them with the socio-political realities of discrimination and race.

Sandra an Afro-German experienced this type of racial socialization. Sandra's mother is German and her father is Ghanaian; her parents divorced when she was one year old.

She grew up not knowing her father, whom she did not meet until she was 30 years old. She tells of how her mother racially socialized her:

> . . .my mother had from the very beginning made sure that the “Black” [part of me] not be ignored. She was an art teacher and for Christmas she made a Black Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and laid them in the manger. . . Whenever African art exhibitions opened in town we went. . .even films shown at the “America Haus“[30] where seen. . .Black was never a taboo at our house. . .

Living with her German mother she was nonetheless exposed to African culture and Black American culture in a very self-evident and natural manner. She was able to acknowledge her African heritage.

These factors all played a role in varying degrees in the live of the women interviewed. They influenced their racial identity choices as well the strategies they chose to empower themselves. Because biracial and bicultural individuals are often ascribed mono-social identities, the may feel pressured to make as choice, as recent studies have shown (for reviews see Gillem & Thompson, 2004). Field observations have show the mono-racial Afro-European women, who are born and raised in Europe and have European passports, are often regarded as being members of the culture of their racialized parent originated from. This despite the fact that they may have had little or no direct contact with that culture. How they enter and manoeuvre such social interactions are marked by these factors and in turn form the content of their social and personal identities. Figure 10 shows how these factors relate to each other and the higher order categories in which they are placed. The categories and sorted and now form a multi-dimensional landscape.

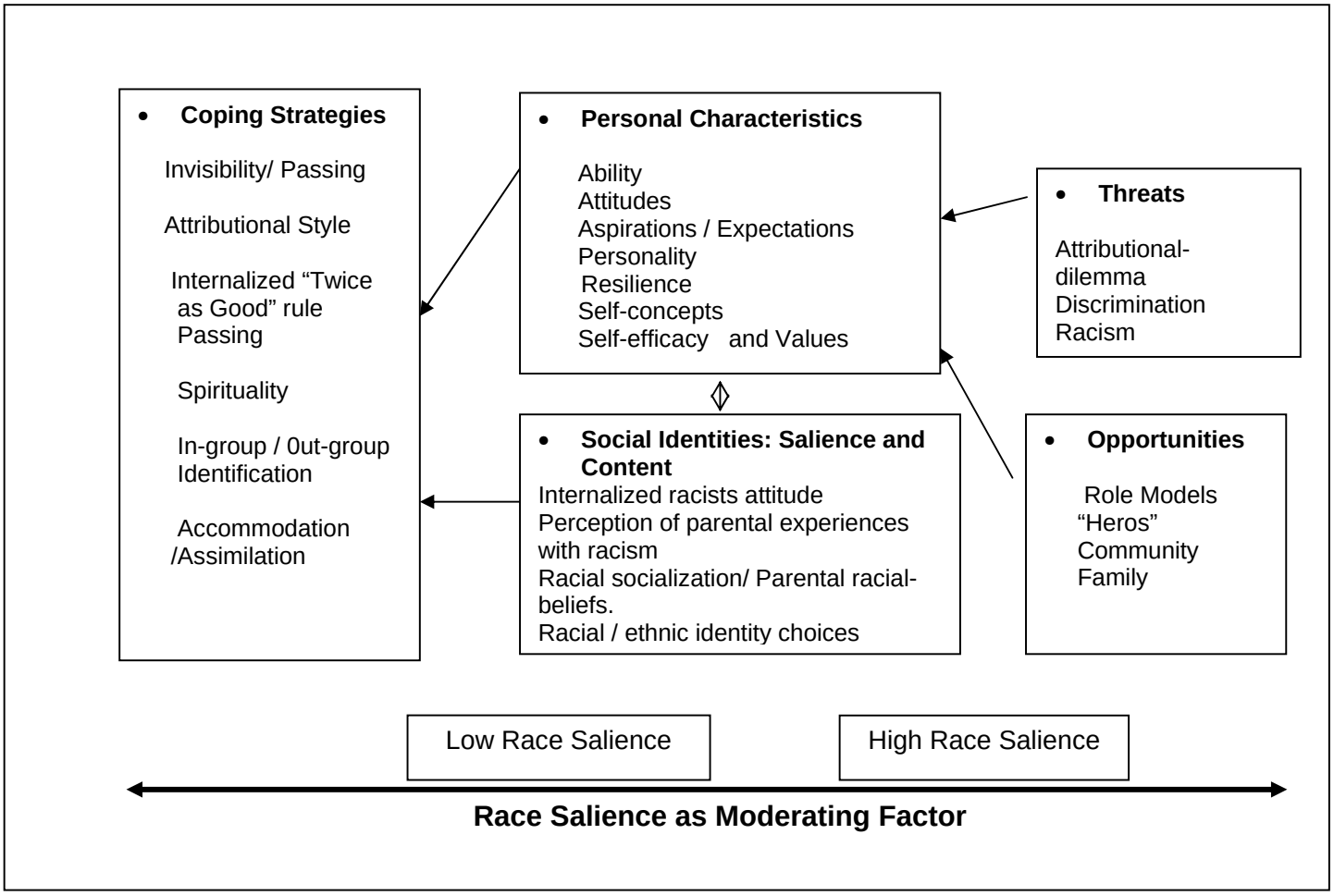

Figure10. The results of axial coding: Higher Categories (coping strategies, personal characteristics, social identities, threats, and opportunities) and their respective subcategories.

[30] American cultural and educational centers found in most major German cities.

5.1.2. Higher categories

5.1.2.1. Coping strategies

The coping strategies applied by the women varied relative to their racial salience and group identification. Some of their strategies were emotional (i.e. invisibility, passing, spirituality), while other were cognitive (accommodation, individualistic, community activist, internalized twice as good rule).

5.1.2.2. Personal characteristics

Applies to what distinguishes them as individuals. It's their own personal approaches to life, how they traverse their the social environments. It's the configurations of the "I" (Mead, 1934) who responds in social interactions to the attitude and actions of others.

5.1.2.3. Social Identity: content and salience

´The content of social identity are all the social group memberships that are social y ascribed (gender, race, social class etc.). It's an individuals understanding of who he or she is, that is derived from knowledge of the attitudes toward membership in a social group. This coupled with an awareness of the value and emotional significance attached to this membership (Eccles, 2004).

The salience of social identity refers to the internalised group membership that becomes part of the self-concept. Social identity has high salience when a given feature defines who a person is terms of a particular social group membership. These factors are the conditions that enhance or inhibit social identity salience: Internalized racist attitudes, perception of parental experiences with racism, racial socialization resulting from parental racial-beliefs; racial and ethnic identity choices. Moreover, social identity salience influences how an individual perceives his or her social interactions.

5.1.2.4. Threats

Threats are the external factors that threaten their self-definitions and their aspirations. They are the issues embedded in the social context in which they live that effect their personal characteristic and social identities in a negative manner. This category arouse from investigating the social-cultural-historical field that influence how they are perceived in their social environment.

5.1.2.5. Opportunities

Opportunities are the self-perceived resources available to these participants. They represent, that which the interviews feel influenced them in a positive way and lent to their empowerment.

All these elements were investigated for the interactions, causal conditions leading to phenomenon, the contexts in which they are enacted and the developmental consequents until a core category emerged could be traced through all the narratives. Figure 11. shows how the concepts and categories found would fit in a proposed theoretical model.

5.1.3. Core Category, phenomena, and consequences

5.1.3.1. Core Category as causal condition

The core category- *Racial socialization and parental racial-beliefs with the resulting racial salience and how this affected their strategies and interactions*- were the causal conditions which led to certain phenomenological experiences and consequently to their strategies choices as well as the content and salience of their social identities. Furthermore, these influenced how threats and opportunities are perceived. The racial socialization stemmed from their parents' own racial beliefs. Those beliefs ranged from Black is bad and is a cause for shame to Black is wonderful and has certain cultural roots that are worth learning about ; and race is a non- issue.

5.1.3.2. Phenomenon resulting from racial socialization and parental racial-beliefs

- Internalized racists attitudes

Two of the women interviewed had to struggle throughout their lives with their own internalized racists attitudes. Jennifer has achieved resolution with this issue with intensive involvement with the Black community. Angela is still wrestling with this issue but is finding way to resolve this for herself (e.g. a theater presentation with Black narrations). As Jennifer and Angela's stories reveal below, positive racial socialization was lacking in the home for both. But with Jennifer it was a race as taboo socialization and Angela interpreted hers as Black is bad and shameful.

- High or low race salience

Valerie, an Afro-Austrian whose father is Nigerian describes herself as European. Although she went to school in Nigeria until she was 19 years old. She said:

> . . .I was raised in the European tradition . . . having lived in Nigeria I know that life is very hard there. Some [Afro-Europeans] long for their African roots, and think that life would be better there because everyone is dark and they believe they would be better accepted there, but that is simply not true…

Her racial socialization took place in Africa, where she was treated and perceived as White in her environment. In the home race was a non-issue; it wasn't taboo but unimportant. She has low race salience, which shift the salience of her social identities. She bio-chemist and software developer, working in a male dominate profession, therefore giving gender issues more salience than race. Cross & Fhagen (2001) wrote of low race salience adults:

> Their formative experiences helped them construct a vision of the world, themselves, and others with categories, processes, and a sense of history in which race and Black culture played a nonessential role. Their lives are rich, textured, vital, dynamic, and full of nuance. Thus, it cannot be said that they are without an identity (p. 260).

Valerie is an example of how low or high race salience is not a comparison of better or worse. It is a consequence of racial socialization and choices an individual makes within a given setting.

- Racial Identity Choices

What race doe I belong to? Am I White or Black or both? For bi-racial individuals their racial socialization plays an important role in biracial identity development. Angela's mother had difficulty dealing what she perceived as the difficulty of raising Black children in German society. Angela felt the message was, "Black" is difficult. This left her feeling feeling socially marginalized, of not fitting in. She said, "I've always wanted to belong . . . be part of the group . . . but I had the impression that I wasn't accepted. . ."

Ginger grew-up in Portugal, and experienced life in a colonialist country. She lived in the African community in Lisbon and was deeply embedded in their cultures. Her primary contacts with White Portuguese were at the institutional level and she experienced these encounters for the most part as negative. Her father who is White-Portuguese had always spoken openly with her about the racial climate not only in Portugal but in all of Europe. He stressed the importance of higher education for a Black woman living in Europe.

She's identifies herself as mono-racial Black, she immersed in the Black community in Germany, and is very committed to helping other Blacks. An excerpt of her interview reveals the depth of her commitment to her Black racial identity.

> *Question: You identify very deeply with the Black part of you, what happens to the White part? How do you identify yourself?*
>
> I see myself as that, part White and part Black. I am a Black woman. I experience myself as a Black woman. This conflict or ambivalence doesn't exist for me. I see myself as a Black woman with a Black mother and a White father. And the Black experience is what defines my reality. I don't know the White experience and I never will because I'm not White….

Ginger acknowledges her biracial ancestry, but it has no meaning in her personal self-understanding. Her racial socialization took place in a context defined by racism and oppression and consequently her racial self-identification also represents the group she feels safer with and whom she trusts.

5.1.3.3. Context in which coping strategies develop

Coping strategies evolve in response to the social realities of the women interviewed. These strategies evolved to prevent them from feeling powerless, helpless and victimized. These strategies are influenced by the attributes of the context in which they may feel threatened. These contextual attributes are related both to the causal condition- *racial socialization and parental racial-beliefs* - the consequent phenomena. These *contextual markers* (Marrow & Smith, 1995) are:

- Explicitness of racial beliefs of parents and the social environment
- Perceived negativity of racial group membership
- Appearance

The explicitness of the racial beliefs of parents ranged from blatantly negative to subtle avoidance of the topic. The explicitness in the social environment ranged from blatant racism to subtle acts perceived as discriminatory. Perception of racial group membership varied from Black is a burden and shame in being Black (or partially Black), to an idealized image of Black and an "I'm Black and I'm proud" attitude. Appearance ranged from dark-skinned with coarse hair to very light skinned with White textured hair; with eye colors ranging from dark brown to blue.

5.1.3.4. Intervening conditions influencing coping strategies

These are conditions, which in addition to context influenced the strategy choices of the women interviewed:

- Family racial beliefs
- Contact with community
- Values / Spirituality

- Aspirations

The attitudes of the family as a whole toward the question of race played a role in the strategies they chose. Biracial Afro-European whose White family members were open to discussions of race and discrimination and showed an true understanding of these issues, tended toward individualistic strategies. By contrast, the Black immigrant women whose families have an tradition of involvement in the Black community and pre-occupation with African heritage and culture, in-group oriented strategies. Personal values and beliefs played a role in the chosen strategies. Some of these women felt that had a more obligation to help other non-White minority women and share their experiences with them as well as the lessons they have learned.

5.1.3.5 Consequences of strategies against powerlessness, helplessness and victimization

The strategies used by the women in this study helped them find behaviors and resources that allowed them to use become aware of their assets, and use their skills. Their strategies enabled them to feel in control of the outcomes in their lives and not as victims of fate. They are autonomous women who have carefully chosen the relationships they allow in their lives and how to protect themselves against emotional harm. They are self-determined and self-made. They are clear of what they want in their lives and have a clear agenda for helping others. They are authentic and the identity choices they have made is the result of a life long process of self-reflection. Their relationships are based on trust and shared knowledge. They are coherent; appraise themselves as capable of meeting the challenges with which they are faced.

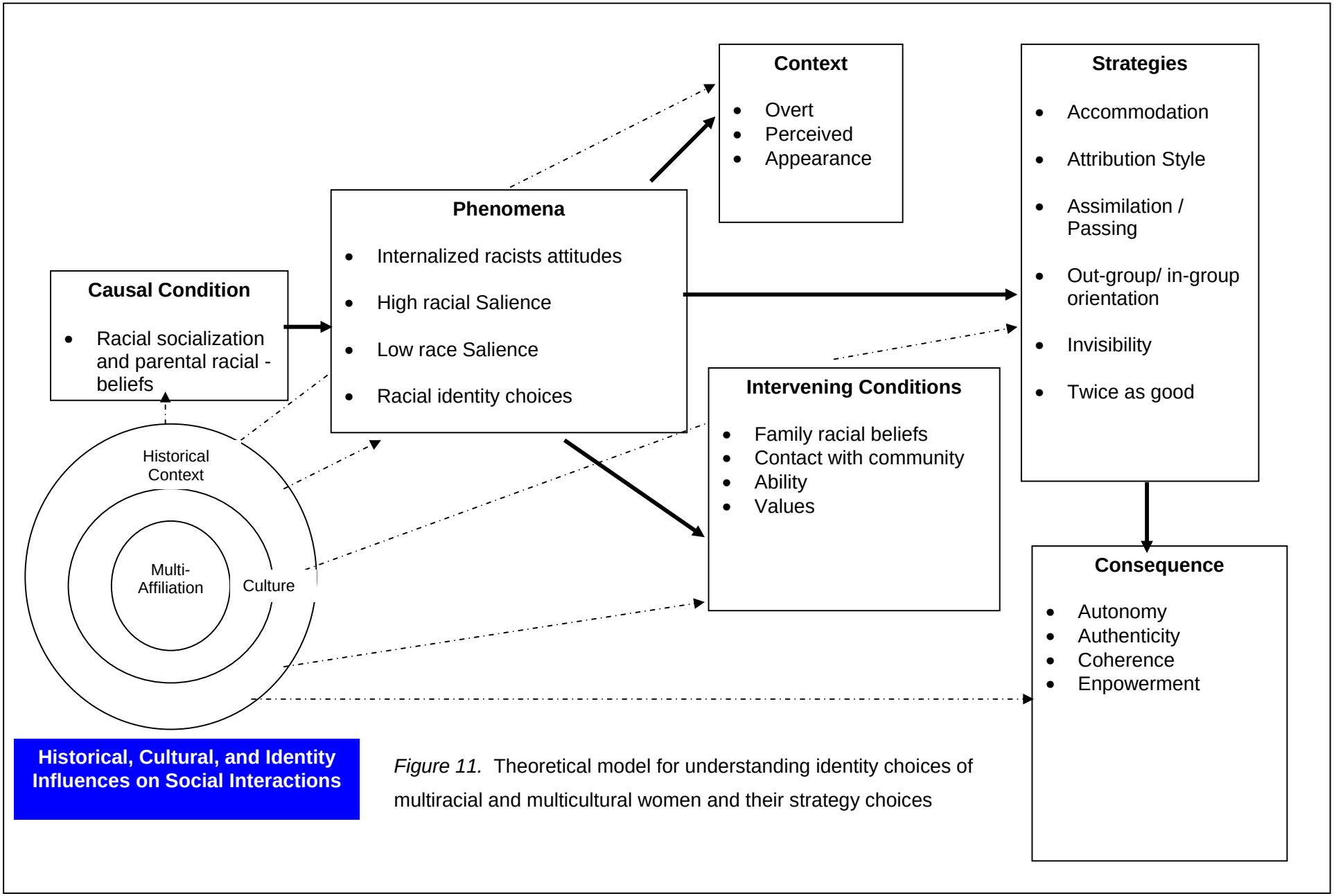

Figure 11. Theoretical model for understanding identity choices of multiracial and multicultural women and their strategy choices

5.2. Multicultural-Multiracial Narratives: Excerpts from two lives

Am I Black, White or both? To which culture do I swear my allegiance, with which culture do I identify; that of my mother, that of my father, or that of my land of birth? These are the questions which the women interviewed have asked themselves most of their lives. They decided where to locate themselves within the social meshing in which they found themselves. These choices were essential as well as existential, because regardless of their own self-definitions-they are repeatedly confronted with social agents negating their choice and ascribing to them other social categorizations. Their self-definitions are robust because these were determined by their life experiences. Their narratives are their interpretations of this journey that made them each to the person they now know themselves to be.

5.2.1. Jennifers Story

> *Question: Tell me about your scholastic path*
>
> Jennifer: I went to Hauptschule until the eighth grade, followed by an apprenticeship as a lifeguard and in municipal pool maintenance. I later trained to be a masseuse. After working 8 or 10 years as a masseuse, I went back to school and completed my *mittlere-Reife*[31]. Afterwards I continued on to a Vocational High School (German: Berufsfachschule), followed by one year at school to get my certification, allowing me to attend the University and study social education. . .

The scope of her resolve to succeed becomes evident in light of her biography. Jennifer grew up in a small Bavarian village, her mother German, her father a married African American G.I. Their affair lasted 10 years and ended when Jennifer was six years old. Up until then, Jennifer had rarely seen her father, but after the separation, he returned to the U.S. and she has not seen him since. Along with his tendency towards physical violence against Jennifer's mother, these were major developmental risk factors in Jennifer's childhood. Research has shown that the risk of suicide, delinquency, drug

[31] Equivalent to 10th Grade in the US and does not qualify students for university admission.

abuse, and teenage pregnancies is disproportionably high among children from fatherless homes.

Jennifer was confronted with racial slurs against her family and herself. Her mother was called nigger whore by some, Jennifer and her sister “nigger children”. At school, the children teased and bullied her because of her skin color. Jennifer says of this period of her life, “Yeah, school, especially elementary and middle school was hard, very hard. I was not only confronted by your schoolmates but also by my teachers, how do I cope with that”. Well into her teens, Jennifer withdrew and tried not to be noticed. She became in essence invisible.

Jennifer describes her grandparents as her main supporters financially and emotionally. She also experienced success at sports and as a student, with a teacher who supported her a great deal in these endeavors. Her involvement in sports brought her in contact with youths with better perspectives than herself, and she felt inspired by them.

> During puberty, I no longer had dreams because I could not image that I would ever escape this blue-collar life. It was being in the sport club that helped because I came in contact with youths who didn’t have to start employment at sixteen, but who were going on to get a higher education. In addition, she adds . . . nonetheless I had my doubts this was an option open to me because I had internalized the belief that Blacks are not as intelligent as Whites are.

Up to this point Jennifer was only aware that she was different because she is Black and Blacks were, in her mind, inferior. However, a clear concept of what it means to be Black eluded her until her sports teacher started supplying her with books written by and about Blacks.

Jennifer began exploring who she is in terms of her racial identity. At this time Jennifer became increasingly involved in the then emerging Black Community in Germany, which has grown into a very important source of support and information for Blacks living in

Germany. Because exclusion by White-Germans was painful, inclusion and identification with the Afro-German community provide her with a means of protecting her psychological well-being and a sense of belonging.

5.2.1.1. Explicitness of experienced discrimination and perception

> Question: *If I understand correctly in school, you were not only confronted with racists behavior by your fellow pupils, but also by the teachers. How did you handle this?*
>
> Jennifer: I realized I was being treated differently and that I was apparently „different"; I also look different. I chose to become inconspicuous and unobtrusive, so that others would not notice me. I had internalized the racism to a certain extent.(. . .) I didn't want to be the center of attention because people would then probably approach me and speak to me. I preferred being invisible. . ."

Jennifer describes her need to be invisible in order to protect herself from the stares of those who perceive her as different, as alien. A person who is invisible is overlooked, not questioned, and not criticized. She felt racial self-hate, having internalized a racist identity projected by her social environment. She felt unworthy, According to Cross & Fhagen-Smith (2001), internalized racism is an early sign of damaged self-concept caused by miseducation about racial categorizations. Internalized racism reflects the beliefs on race prevalent in ones social setting. The negation of her identity, of who she is, the ambiguity of her place, her "self" objectified by her environment. The indiscrete questions, the impertinent stares made her wish she were imperceptible.

> *Question: How do you think Germans see Blacks?*
>
> As foreigners, who are either here seeking asylum or are refugees
> . . . Most believe that Blacks come to Germany or Europe because of the opportunities they hope to find. Also, they, believe that Blacks are not as intelligent as whites, (. . .) they bear a lot of children. . .they can dance, sing, are very social, are poor but nonetheless happy; and are good in bed.

Jennifer describes what she believes to be German perception of Blacks. This description reflects the unspoken feedback she is gotten from her social environment. She registered her environment as denying her existence as an individual and perceiving her as representative of a group that is foreign and unknown. And the unknown can only be described in form of stereotypes, patched together from impressions primarily pick-up in the media

5.2.1.2. Racial Salience

As Jennifer began exploring her Blackness, her racial identity became salient to her identity. Jennifer says of her self-designated "Afro-German" identity label: "I don't call my self Afro-German because I find the German so great, but because I want others to be aware that there are "other" Germans.". Jennifer had at this point begun exploring her Black heritage. She learned about the Black political activists of the Civil-Rights movement and those who became prominent in the 1980s in the US. The first book she read was *Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver [32] she says of this experience:

> Jennifer: On the back-cover was written: „We shall have our manhood. We shall have it or the earth levelled by our attempts to gain it. . ."[33]and I thought „wow". I felt at that moment a resistance, and anger against this injustice. Most of my information came from the US. At the time there was not much known about Black-Germans in Germany, not that I was aware of.

Jennifer was 14 at the time of her racial awakening. She began identifying with a virtual community of people sharing the same burden. Yet she appeared to have found solace in her discovery that despite the racism and the discrimination she experienced in Germany, she felt it was much worse in the US. Her experiences as a Black-European gained a sense of proportion. She began to realized that she still had room to maneuver

[32] Eldridge Cleaver was co-founder of the Black Panthers. A collection of essays written by Cleaver while serving a prison term, *Soul on Ice* was published in 1968 and referred to as the philosophical foundation for the Black Power Movement.

[33] Jennifer had read the German translation of *Soul on Ice* so the quote she read was: "Wir werden Menschensein. Wir werden es sein, oder die Welt wird dem Erdboden gleichgemacht…", here the goal is gaining recognition as a humanbeing , in the original the goal is recognition of the Black manhood.

and control her personal outcomes. Reading stories of the personalities behind the Black-Power movement of the 1970s lent her a sense of self-efficacy. She had a cause with which she could now identify. Her racial identity became a source of pride and not of shame.

> *Question: As of that moment what did you decide for yourself- what did you envision for your future?*
>
> Jennifer: At that time I did not have a vision; however I knew that I would fight against this [racism and discrimination]. I would defend myself against it and know that they [Whites] are not right. To learn about all this gave me strength and self-confidence. But then to act upon this was difficult, having internalized all of that [racism] and to now change the [inner] patterns, doesn't happen all of a sudden, and I don't believe one can do it alone. . .

For Jennifer contact with her chosen in-group became essential for her further development. She felt anger for accepting and internalizing a social frame of reference that disempowered her and made her feel ashamed. She was beginning to develop a sense of pride in her "Blackness". She sought contact with others like her, to share her experiences, to get feedback she can trust, to have a sense of belonging.

> My contact with the Black community in Germany was decisive for my [racial] development. Up until that time, I had not met any Blacks in Germany. Among these Black Germans, there were some who had studied at the University, I didn't know that that existed [Blacks who had been to the University], they became my role models, this was a real "aha" experience for me. I met with these men and women regularly. We shared our stories or simply got together. That was my turning point; it was my Black coming out. I found this experience even deeper than my coming out as a lesbian.

She tells of the emotional release when she found and became part of the Black community:

> . . .and there was someone, someone who expressed exactly what I had been feeling and living. Also to see how experiencing racism destroys a human life destroys a person's soul; that was difficult to bear.(. . .) I know people who during that time simply gave up or committed suicide (. . .) Finding a place to mourn and

> acknowledge the pain. Regaining this place that they'd taken from us. A place to learn about Black histories and to meet other Blacks . . .This [experience] touched our souls profoundly. . . we would only listen to Black music, we all wore Afros, We had our Afro-flash

For Jennifer the Black community became a place of refuge, of sharing and of life long friendships. In her chosen racial identity, she found her *seelisches Heimat.* Jennifer found her essential Blackness. She defined part of her mission as a Black women as making others aware of racial issues and racial injustice in a non-racist manner:

> . . .and what I always bring with me are these Black themes and carry them into my various social environments. . .during my studies. . .and at work. These values and beliefs I live out in White environments . . .During my studies whenever I was assigned a theme paper I always incorporated the subject of Blackness . . .I tried to introduced this topic through books, pictures, and language. I tried to use non-racist language. . .

5.2.1.3 Sense of self

Jennifer's nigrescence (Cross & Fahgen-Smith,2001 ;Cross, 1997, 1995,1978) was a milestone in her development and saved her sanity, her sense of self, and her self-esteem. She includes her sense of racial self in all that she does. She is not only very active in the Black community but also in the social community as a whole. She does this with compassion and understanding because of the pain of exclusion she has experienced.

> Question: *Jennifer in your opinion what does it mean to be "Black"?*
> Jennifer: "To be black means to me, to be counted among people who've mastered something, people who have experienced racism and what it means to be outcasted (. . .) Being Black means fighting and always being aware that one is different, that one is Black.

Jennifer identifies Blacks as a courageous people; this image of Blackness gives her strength. She believes that, although being Black may be hard, they are survivors. She has incorporated this attitude in her life, and she no longer feels victimizes.

> Question: *What are the positive results of your learning experiences?*
> Jennifer: I learned that I can fight and now I can test how far I can go.

> Question: *Do I understand you correctly, because of the difficulties, Blacks face their whole lives, they are tougher and have more spine?*
>
> Jennifer: Yes, they can bear more, are tougher, and have more spine.

On the one hand, her racial perception idealizes Blackness; on the other hand, she sees Blackness as equal to perpetual suffering and pain, with suffering as a purgatorial fire that strengthens. The role models and heroes she has chosen embody courage in spite suffering, they are radical and militant. Noteworthy is, although the heroes she idealized, where radical and militant, she identified with their ideology but not their actions. The ideology of the Black race as a proud and strong race, that despite centuries of oppression and subjugation where destined to overcome. She found a positive channel for her Blackness instead of developing an oppositional identity. She accommodated her self to the rules of the main stream without assimilating; she was aware that with out the instruments that education provides, what she deemed her mission for the community would have been much more difficult to achieve.

Jennifer has made a racial identity choice, and it is mono-racial. She identifies herself as Black, the German she feels is of no consequence.

5.2.2. Angela's Story

Angela is 35 years old. She was born in Germany; her mother is German and her father from Ghana. Her parents met while Angela's father was in medical school here in Germany, She has two brothers and a sister. Angela was in her early twenties when her parents divorced and the children remained with their father.

> *Question: Tell me about your scholastic path*
>
> Angela: (. . .) I was always torn between my need for security, recognition, and individuality. In my mind security and recognition was very much entwined with studying law. It represented „Whiteness" and a White world that is also dominated by men. I felt denied the option of becoming a lawyer because I am Black, non-conservative, open. During my studies, I felt I had to be different to find a place

> for myself in the world of lawyers. [I went I into entertainment law] because I had the impression in the world of producers and performing artist I am allowed to be Black and nonetheless be accepted by this group [in the law profession]. . .

Her depictions leave the impression of navigation through a field of partial identities that do not quite coalesce. She bore the complexity of multiple minority membership: She wanted to participate in the White man's world but she describes herself as Black and she is a woman. She believes that the world of performing artist and producers allows her to be Black.

5.2.2.1. Attribution ambiguity

> *Question: You said your were advised not to become lawyer because you are Black. Who told you this?*
>
> Angela: No one ever said this directly to me, but I was the only Black student at law school. . .There was another Black student but I had nothing to do with him. . .I was also the only woman. . .I felt I did not belong there.

Angela experiences attribution ambiguity, being in a White male dominated profession she does not know whether she should attribute the misgivings, she feels her personal environment emits and her own doubts to her gender, her race, or both. Angela, had also internalized the limitation she felt in Germany;

> In another country where there are Black lawyers, I wouldn't have had the feeling. . . I knew I could be Black. . . and study law.

Angela has strong feelings of not belonging of being member of a non-recognized minority and struggles with feelings of inferiority because of this.

5.2.2.2. Parent's experiences with racism and racial discrimination

Angela's mother's attitude appears to be a conditional factor that played a central role in her racial identity development. Moreover, the fact that Angela has feelings of attribution ambiguity not only towards how her racial ascriptions are perceive in society but also her gender, support the premise that her mother's experiences with racism and

racial discrimination played a pivotal role in her own racial identity development. Of her mother's experiences with racism she stated:

> …My mother experienced a great deal of [social] pressure and racism because she chose to marry an African and bore children with him. She experienced a great deal of racism and as a White woman in Germany, she had never developed strategies to deal with the situation…

She tells of her mother efforts to compensate for these experiences:

> . . . My mother over identifies with Blacks. . . She travels three times a year to Ghana and runs a business between Ghana and Germany. She writes books and the heroine is a Black woman or of mixed blood…

These two passages speak of a woman who is insecure of her place and is *culturally* and *socially dislocated*[34]. Terms usually reserved for individuals living outside the cultural or social center, because of lack or recognition. Angela's mother feels ostracized by her cultural and social environment. Angela interprets her mother's preoccupation with Africa as her attempt to justify how's she was treated by her social environment by slipping into "Black skin". Angela acknowledges that she has probably derived her own racial insecurity from her mother.

> . . . my mother, Blond with green eyes, would be holding her little brown daughter by the hand, and when she was asked whether I was her child. . . I could feel her insecurity. She felt ashamed. I often got the impression that she was ashamed [of us]. When we were well behaved, she wasn't ashamed, but when anything wasn't quite right… I remember when I was 12 or 13 coming home with a punk hair cut or with 14 having suck mark on my neck and than she would say, "Your already Black and now this."; then I knew she couldn't deal with having Black children . . .

These early experiences set the foundation for Angela's internalized racists beliefs. A person's first object of identification is the mother; the first looking glass for the self . The looking-glass self, is a theory that proposes that an individual's self-concept arises from their social interactions (Cooley, 1902; as cited in Baldwin, 1979, p.52). Specifically, the

[34] http://www.africawithin.com/asante/aftrogermans.htm

individuals imagines how they appear to others and makes assumptions about how they are being judged; as a result of the contents of these assumptions, the individual develops pride or shame about their appearance and incorporate this into their self-concept.. A passage in her interview confirms this:

> *Question: I've noticed that Blacks who've attained a certain status here [in Germany], don't have contact with other Blacks; do you have a possible explanation?*
>
> . . .earlier I had very little contact with Blacks because I was ashamed that I was Black and I found it humiliating. . .

Angela feels that her mother projected the racism she'd experience on to the children:

> My mother was always a bird of paradise- she was always and outsider. She didn't develop any strategies to cope with the difficulties of a mixed marriage in Germany, and projected the racism that she experienced on the three of us.

Angela says of herself that she is also racist;

> . . .I'm also very racists; right now I'm very aware of your skin color. . .when ever I'm with a Black person I feel White, and when I'm with a White person I feel Black. I'm mixed and [therefore] like a chameleon that changes into the color opposite that of his environment.

Despite being essentially raised by her Ghanaian father, who's a medical doctor, with a successful practice; she still struggled with the negative Black image. She says proudly of her father:

> He instilled a great deal of self-confidence, pressure to perform, and a matter of fact attitude concerning our skin color. . .he grew up in Ghana and came from a academic family. . . It's only when you come to Germany you're made to feel that you can't be so intelligent because you don't belong to the master race.

She attributes her fathers self-confidence and strength to his sense of knowing who he is and where he comes from. Of her father's experiences with racism she says:

> . . . my grandparents are racists, friendly racists. . .they rejected my parents . . . because of their decision [to marry]. . . My father told us that he at his graduation ceremony his medical degree certificate was thrown at his feet. . .

Angela's statements expressed her ambivalence about how she feels about Blackness. On the one hand she has the internalized message that "Blackness" is shameful and on the other hand it's her African father, who gave her stability, pride, and instilled in her the importance of high performance and achievement.

5.2.2.3. Internalized Racism and Race Salience

Race is a major issue in Angela's life; although she identifies herself as bi-racial, her racial socialization left her with unsolved issues regarding race. Cross (2001) used race salience to describe the centrality of the issue of race is in a person's development. High race salience according to Cross (2001) is forged in race-conscious households- but this in positive terms. It can be argued that high race salience can also be the over preoccupation with race and its negative connotations. Race is a very salient issue for this woman at an emotional and psychosocial level (Buckley & Carter, 2004). In Angela, this over occupation, implemented by her White mother, led to internalized racists beliefs. Whereas her father, who epitomizes the ant-stereotypical Blacks, incorporates for Angela, structure, order and achievement, didn't eliminate her internalized racists concepts. Despite the contradictions she finds in her direct environment:

> *Question: Can you describe characteristics, which you would say are the Black side of you?*
>
> In the past I always thought that the wish for self-fulfillment and expression were Black, and the wish for structure, security and order as well as intellect were White. But my parents are the complete opposite.; my mother is chaos and insecurity. . .I'm glad I finally realized that.

Angela, worked 1,5 years in Paris in charge of the law department of a large firm.

She explains her inner conflicts when she felt caught between loyalty to the firm and doing the right thing for a Black client because she knew the client was trusting her be she was Black.

> . . . I felt like an Uncle Tom, the house nigger…I knew that the firm accept me because I wasn't *really* Black . . .I often didn't open my mouth when racists dialogues took place in my presence, of course I lost my self-respect…

Angela's key point for her racial choices is apparently her skin color, and because of her appearance she used the strategy of passing to avoid being subject to discrimination. Although she self-ascribes a bi-racial identity, she remains ambiguous towards what is "Black" beyond the skin tone. This maybe because, she has very little contact with her ethnic roots:

> *Question: How strongly do you identify with your African roots?*
>
> Very little I'm afraid . . .I have no contact with my cousins or aunts and uncles. . My parents constantly travel to Ghana… I haven't been there the last 13 years…Ghana simply doesn't play a role in my life…

> *Question: How strongly do you identify with German culture?*
>
> Very strongly, I had a very good contact with my grandparents. . .they're deeply rooted Bavarians…I know the Bavarian tradition very well, I know and understand the language…Because of my German education I'm very familiar with German high-culture.

Angela's German-ness is an essential part of her self-identification. Being acknowledged, accepted, and recognized by the society she lives in has been a dominate force in her life, and has fueled her personal and professional ambitions. Her Black self-awareness is threatening the side of her who wants to belong to the mainstream.

After the birth of her child Angela left the firm she was working for and is now successfully self-employed. She feels that this maybe her chance to be more authentic and more involved. She is working on a theater project that will involve the narrations of Black women. She said," . . .I now want to be authentic-to accept that I'm Black, I also want to be politically active. . . speak out against Racism. . ."She has yet to truly immerse herself in her Black heritage and learn more about her African roots. Angela realizes it is an import step towards internalizing a positive sense of her denigrated (Black) racial background and developed a positive non-idealized image of her White racial affiliation.

6. Conclusion: Implications for Transcultural and Transracial Counseling and Empowerment

The perspective taken here is a focus on empowerment and the exploring of assets which can serve non-White minorities living in Europe in helping them define themselves in a way that they find adequate in view of their backgrounds and cultural origins. This would be a step away from the victim-helper roles often fallen into in multicultural counselling. Several participants in the study and in discussion in the field have commented they feel pressured to perceive their environments in same manner as their counterparts do. The idea of different perceptions leading to different realities and modes of behaviors and different identity saliencies is wide spread in counseling and therapeutic practices here and in the U.S. However in transcultural or transracial counseling contexts, counselors have yet to realize their Eurocentric expectations of how non-European minorities feel and behave and adapt to their multi-faceted environments may not be adequate

Recently studies have begun expanding the models for racial identity development to allow for the variety of identity choices and means for adaptation that non-White minorities have. The main reason for this tendency are the contradictions and paradoxes found in studies on the effects of racism and discrimination and the differences in whether or not discrimination is perceived and the attributions they make for the difficulties they often confront in social interactions. The claim that those who pronounce they haven’t experienced discrimination or racism just wants to assimilate into the mainstream, is in denial or naïve no longer holds.

6.1. Focus on Primary Socialization Issues and Subjectivity

Taking a conceptual starting point that embeds the subject in a multicultural-multiracial-socio-historical setting puts inevitably in center stage socialization issues, self-perceptions, perceived foreign assessments and how individuals evaluate these perceptions. The individuals in the study interact in multiple-contexts which are often complicated by the issue of race. For most non-Whites living in White majority societies a primary socialization issue is learning to be Black or learning to act White.

These primary socialization issues are just recently being addressed in literature on racial identity development (for reviews see Gillem & Thompson (Eds.), 2004; Wijeyesinghe & B.W.J. III, 2001; Steele, 1998a). The increase in non-clinical studies on bi-racial identity development has helped give the idea that along with normative socialization for non-White minorities the racial and ethnic socialization plays an essential role in the individual's identity development (e.g. Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001 & Wijeyesinghe, 2001). How the primary socialization agents (parents, immediate family) socialize the child depends on their own racial self-perceptions as much as the beliefs they harbour on race, their perceptions of how their race or their child's partial race membership is accessed by society as a whole. The primary socialization as an important developmental context for non-Whites in terms of developing a positive or negative racial self-perception, and in case of the latter finding a means to overcome early stigmatization was an issue of this study.

Counselling in trans-cultural and trans-racial settings, exploring the experiences within home and the question of race and ethnicity was articulated and discussed, can give insight in the adaptation and identity issues facing the client. As is in the monoculture and monoracial counselling setting, the key to adaptation solutions isn't first found "out there", but the first socialization arena, the family. As proposed in this study, the parental racial-beliefs and attitude play formative role in the saliency racial identity and the saliency of other social identities. However, it's important that the individual feel free to

choose especially in a consulting setting, which content of their social identity they want to give credence.

6.1.2. Focus on strengths and assets in trans-cultural and trans-racial counselling.

Saleeby (1992; as cited in Edwards & Pedrotti, 2004, p.38) proposes five basic assumptions for empowerment in therapy and counselling:

1. Despite life's struggles, all persons possess strengths that can be marshalled to improve the quality of their lives. Practitioners should respect these strengths and the directions in which clients wish to apply them.

2. Client motivation is increased by a consistent emphasis on strengths as the client defines them.

3. Discovering strengths requires a process of cooperative exploration between clients and helpers; expert practitioners do not have the last word on what clients need to improve their lives.

4. Focusing on strengths turns practitioners away from the temptation to judge or blame clients for their difficulties and toward discovering how clients have managed to survive, even in the most difficult of circumstances.

5. All environments- even the most bleak-contains resources.

These assumptions emphasize respect for the client's frame of reference and world views (Edwards & Pedronti). This can be easily forgotten in transcultural and transracial settings especially if the counsellor has, other than in his or her professional training, no direct experience with the issues the client may be facing. This also includes racializing issues which the client doesn't experience as a racial issue. In terms of strengths and assets, the diverse background can be a source of richness and pride. The emphasis is on it *can* be a source of richness and pride, but only when the client wants to focus on those aspects of her social identity. Because its important that consider that these issues may be non-issues for the client because of their racial and ethnic socialization. Bi-racial and bi-cultural non-White minorities are often forced into dichotomous categories, whereby an important part of their development tasks is learning to define and accept them. The counsellor is challenged make him- or herself aware of their preconceived notions of certain social groups no matter how well meaning or harmless (e.g. the happily impoverished; the blessed naïve etc.), because entering counselling situations with preconceptions, risks leading the counsellor to denying the client his or her own self-ascription and self-definition.

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Dipl.-Psych.
Dominique Michel-Peres
Fallmerayerstr. 11
80796 München
dominique.michel_peres@t-online.de

Name	Michel-Peres
Vorname	Dominique
Nationalität	USA
Geburtsort	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Geburtsdatum	20.09.59
Adresse:	
Private	Fallmerayerstr. 11 80796 München Deutschland Tel. +49-89-95959915
Geschäft	Kaiserstr. 13 80801 München Deutschland Tel +49-89-33066859
E-Mail	dmp@harvestconsultancy.org
Website	http://www.harvestconsultancy.org

Dipl.-Psych.
Dominique Michel-Peres
Fallmerayerstr. 11
80796 München
dominique.michel_peres@t-online.de

Curriculum Vitae

Persönliches

1979 -1990	Familiengründung, Hausfrau und Mutter
09/1982	Geburt meiner Tochter
06 /1989	Geburt meines Sohnes
05/ 1992	Geschieden

Schulbildung

09/1996 – 07/1997	**Studienkolleg, München** Abitur
09/1973 – 05/1976	**St. Joseph's Academy, Pennsylvania USA** High School Diploma

Universitätsbildung

10/1997 - 01/2001	Ludwig Maximilians Universität, München Studium der Psychologie Abschluss: Diplom Psychologin Univ. Vertiefungen: ABO Psychologie-Eignungsdiagnostik-Führungsverhalten
09 /2003-01/2007	Ludwig Maximilians Universität, München Promotionsstudium: Sozialpsychologie NF: Soziologie und Interkulturelle Kommunikation
09/1976 - 05/1979	Columbia University, New York Studium der Psychologie

Dipl.-Psych.
Dominique Michel-Peres
Fallmerayerstr. 11
80796 München
dominique.michel_peres@t-online.de

Einschlägige Freiberufliche Tätigkeiten

Referentin: Das Ministerium für Arbeit, Sozialordnung, Familie und Frauen
Interkulturellen Kompetenz und Konfliktmanagement in der Arbeit mit Immigranten

Referentin: Beruf Fortbildungszentren der Bayerischen Wirtschaft (Bfz)
Projekt: Interkulturellen Kompetenz und Konflikttraining für den Beruf(XENOS Projekt)

Lehrbeauftragte zum Thema Meditation and Konfliktmanagement an der Ludwig Maximilians Universität in München. Lehrstuhl für klassische Sozialpsychologie (WS 2004- WS 2005)

Lehrbeauftragte für Kommunikation, Soziale Kompetenzen, Konfliktmanagement und Führungstraining an der Verwaltungsschule der Sozialverwaltung in Wasserburg am Inn (Ausbildung aller Dienste)

11/1997-03/2001	**Ludwig Maximilians Universität** Lehrstuhl für Persönlichkeitspsychologie und Psychodiagnostik. Lehrstuhl Assistentin
3/1994 - 6/1997	**Louisa Models, München** Vermittlung von Fotomodellen im In- und Ausland für Printmedien, T.V. und Film. Akquisition und Kundenbetreuung Gagen- und Vertragsverhandlungen
7/1993 – 3/1994	**Schick Design** Deutsche Vertriebsgesellschaft der Französischen Brillenfirma Lafont Kundenbetreuung und Koordination zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich
10/1991-01/1993	**Actors and Arts, München** Organisation von Castings für Film und Werbung
10/1990 –10/1991	**Nova Models, München** Assistentin in Booking