

**MULTILAYERED CULTURAL IDENTITY
AND THE PERCEPTION OF THE SELF**

Master's Thesis

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>This qualitative study examines the reciprocal relationship between a person’s multilayered cultural identity (MCI) and the concept of self (CoS), that is presented purely on a theoretical level and encompasses various theories. Nowadays, in an increasingly globalising world, it is not enough to merely look at a national, ethnic or other type of identity. It is important to realise that there are different layers in an identity that one can view themselves through. The ways an individual perceives themselves through their multicultural background can also be different. This thesis helps identify the ways a person can see themselves. The thesis also attempts to explain the varied nature of one’s self-perception, and the ways in which multilayered cultural identity can be manifested through self-perceiving. The way the literature review was conducted was through a partial approach to scope literature available on the topic for this study. In the process of examining the phenomenon, views of various authors have been presented on this subject. As a result of the comparison and analysis of different theories, it appears the term ‘multilayered cultural identity’ does not, in fact, exist in the modern literature. Instead, it is often used as ‘multicultural identity’ (MI).</p> <p>Nevertheless, this study would like to emphasise the structure, i.e. the layered nature of a cultural identity (CI) (identity’s capacity to be built layer-by-layer). Regardless the absence of the MCI in the modern literature, the focal constituting components of the concept (namely, culture and identity) have been described and discussed in various sources. Therefore, this thesis takes a look at each of the concept’s components separately and presents a mutual interplay between them with regards to the CoS.</p> <p>Since the field of intercultural communication is interdisciplinary, the scope of theories applied in describing and explaining the phenomenon is broad. It covers such fields as psychology, intercultural communication, and culture and gender studies. As a result of applying the theories, it has been found that there are at least four different ways of one’s self-perception; when an individual’s perceptions appear to be loyal; as possessing a situational identity; as an absence of the multilayered perception and; as split and doubled perceptions. There are correlations between self-esteem and the way an individual perceives themselves. A ‘group’ and the ‘other’ play an important role in the majority of perceptions.</p>	
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We are entirely made up of bits and pieces, woven together so shapelessly that each of them pulls its own way at every moment. And there is as much difference between us and ourselves as between us and others. ~

/ Montaigne, 1958:244 /

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

To begin with, it is necessary to introduce some of the basic concepts used in this theoretical study. The concept of identity (CoI), be it cultural, social, ethnic, personal, or some other, is a current issue for every individual, because everyone of us, to a greater or lesser extent, is concerned about the question of who we are. In this study, the emphasis is on the cultural identity (CI) with respect to one's self-perception. Self-perception is seen as an inherently social phenomenon (Kwan, John, Kenny, Bond, and Robins 2004). Self-perception is based on the self and how one sees themselves. Before going into more detail, it would be relevant to state at once that self, on its own, is a broader concept than identity (Markus and Kitayama 1991). In the literature, the concept of self (CoS) appears as an implication of the wholeness through many different (cultural, social, ethnic, personal, and other) identities that can be possessed by a person. The different identities can, as well, be perceived as various levels which make self as a multidimensional construct (Shavelson and Bolus 1982). This idea is developed further in the following paragraphs of this chapter.

The CoI has been perceived through a few approaches. Freud (1911) was one of the first authors to mention identity in his works. Ever since the CoI has given rise to many discussions, by various authors, among which, are also such contemporary authors as Leary and Tangney (2003).

Mentioning different views of identity, the CoI can be seen as a static phenomenon (Fanon 1967; Lustig and Koester 1993); having a core, which is unlikely to change during an individual's lifetime. Identity can also be seen as fluid (Mead 1934; Giddens 1991; Ludovico 2009), changing and dynamic. Identity can be perceived in all other ways situated between the two approaches (identity as static and identity as fluid), as they include elements from both approaches. The combination of two opposite approaches creates a possible third space for understanding the concept or phenomenon, which does not belong to either approach, but lies somewhere in between. According to the second approach of identity as a changing entity; identities are also different,

i.e. multilayered, nuanced, and thus, unique. Constructed layer-by-layer, identities form one's entire self-identity.

As various literature shows, identity is very often placed at the same level as culture, because both of these concepts are closely linked to one another. It can also be said that culture is one of the major factors influencing a person's perception of their own identity. The links between identity, culture, and perception are described in chapters 3, 4, and 6. Samovar and Porter (1982) combine the concepts of culture and identity into the concept of CI and link CI to one's image of their self. The authors write: "The center, or core, of cultural identity is an image of the self and the culture intertwined in the individual's total conception of reality (Samovar and Porter 1982:392)." The conception of reality, supposedly, is the actual knowing of whom one is whereby a person undertakes a process of identifying oneself. The importance of self-identification positions the person to know who they are, where they belong, and elevates their self-esteem (Harré and Moghaddam 2003). Assumingly, an individual's self-image is also linked to a degree of self-esteem of an individual. This paper conveys that self-esteem, in general, is crucial in social interaction, as a personal quality of an individual.

The Master's degree studies in Intercultural Communication at the University of Jyväskylä emphasise the role of 'the other' being very important in the process of realising one's own identity. In connection to the importance of 'the other', the process of identification is also discussed within this thesis. The role of 'the other' appears to be important because identity is very often placed against the outer world, against other people. As a result of placing identity against the outer world, an individual realises the intricate ways in which their own identity is shaped.

With the emergence of transnational communities, the issue of multiculturalism has become increasingly relevant not only in interpersonal relations, but also in the understanding of who we are. It has meant, a person's identity is no longer a static, one-sided entity, but, on the contrary, it consists of various elements

that independently exist in the perception of one's identity and add up to each other, creating a complex whole (self). The construction of one's identity on multiple levels can have different effects in the way a person perceives themselves. Thus, a multilayered identity has a direct link to the CoS (Shavelson and Bolus 1982; Byrne 1984; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Bong and Clark 1999), and shows the presence of various manifestations of one's self-identity (Giddens 1991; Aalto 2009).

The aim of the study is to explore the reciprocal relationship between a person's multilayered cultural identity and the concept of self, viewed through a theoretical level perception, using various theories.

To support the purpose of the study, the following research questions were asked:

1. How is multilayered cultural identity described in modern literature?
2. What relationship does a multilayered cultural identity of an individual have with the perception of one's self?

This theoretical study on MCI and the perception of the self is threefold as it is based on scientific, social, as well as, personal factors. From a scientific point of view, the concept of CI is varied, as different researchers offer different perspectives on the nature of CI. The concept of CI is expanded upon in the following paragraphs of the current sub-chapter. Since the research topic is *Multilayered Cultural Identity and the Perception of the Self*, this study concentrates on the type of identity that includes multiple layers in the process of identity construction. Taking this into account, the writer of the thesis would also like to provide a link to CoS, and explore the possible ways of relating concepts, which are created as a result of an individual possessing such multilayered CI.

Nowadays, the phenomenon of MCI is viewed socially, as the number of people having multiple identities ethnically, linguistically, historically, and

culturally is increasing. This is due to various globalising forces happening worldwide. Adler (1977) implies:

No one is culture free. Yet, the conditions of contemporary history are such that we may now be on the threshold of a new kind of person, a person who is socially and psychologically a product of the interweaving of cultures in the twentieth century. (Adler 1977, as cited in Bennett 1998:225).

Generally, both scientifically and socially, intercultural communication with the question of multiple identities is current and is also necessary to discuss. As ten Thije (2003 cited in Komlosi, Houtlosser, and Leezenberg 2003:199) states, “the development of ethnic stereotypes and prejudices (that may result from international exchange programmes), as well as the construction of multiple identities, determines the relevance of intercultural communication.”

The relevancy of this study can be supported by Huntington’s ideas, expressed in an interview with Chaudary (2008). The interview was published online and it is written in it that “global politics in the coming decades: cultural identities – meaning cultural heritage, language, religion – and cultural antagonisms and affiliations will play a major role” (Chaudary 2008). Cultural identities will play a major role, because, according to Huntington, “cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones” (Huntington 1998:138). In the end, according to Huntington, a clash among major civilisations would result.

The writer of this paper has a Latvian-Russian cultural background, and feels emotionally attached to the issue of multileveled identity self-perception. Accordingly, the question of CI’s relationship to the way individuals perceive themselves refers to insights of the writer’s personal psycho-social and intercultural state.

To introduce the reader to an important concept discussed in this thesis, namely MCI, first, it would be relevant taking a step back to look at CI, because this is the concept that is being built upon. In sub-chapter 1.2, Methodology of the

Research, the view of MCI shall be presented, which is the basis from which the study's angle is viewed from.

In the following paragraphs, the understanding of CI is presented so as to provide the reader with various views of the concept. According to Kim (2007), CI can be classified into five different types following various authors and their theories. These CI perspectives are; the adaptive and evolving entity of an individual; the flexible and negotiable entity of an individual; the discrete social category and an individual choice; the distinct and communal system of communicative practices; and, finally, the discrete social category including a non-negotiable group right.

Adaptive and evolving entity of an individual

When CI is perceived as an adaptive and evolving entity of an individual, a person possessing this identity is able to adapt easily. According to Kim's integrative communication theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim 1988, 1995, 2001, 2005a) this type of identity supports the idea of being dynamic, evolving and not static or categorical. Moreover, it does not imply a choice of one identity element over the other, but instead, it maintains one's original identity and enables an acquisition of the new one at the same time. This leads to the process of successful adaptation.

Flexible and negotiable entity of an individual

This type of CI, described as the flexible and negotiable entity of an individual, is supported by various theories, such as Imahori and Cupach's (2005) identity management theory, Ting-Toomey's (1993, 2005) identity negotiation theory and Kim's (1997, 2005b) contextual theory of interethnic communication. This type of identity suggests its integrationist nature, which is categorical, but also flexible. Thus, in comparison to the previous identity type of CI as an adaptive and evolving entity, the type of CI as flexible and negotiable can be said to be

adaptive, but slightly more categorical in emphasising the core identity than the type of CI as an adaptive and evolving entity of an individual.

Discrete social category and an individual choice

As to CI as a discrete category and an individual choice, the key word to best describe this type would be “volunteering”, because, according to this perspective, persons choose to identify themselves with various categories they wish. Here appears, according to Phinney (1993), the possibility of a “bi-cultural identity” development, which can lead to a secure identification of oneself by combining two cultural identities.

Distinct and communal system of communicative practices

This type of CI in difference from the preceding ones emphasises community. While the types of CI as adaptive and evolving and as flexible and negotiable were directed at the individual, the identity as a distinct system of communal practices emphasises a shared system of values that are unique to the group or community in question. This fact also puts the present type of identity in opposition to the type of CI as flexible and negotiable, which highlighted individual choice.

Discrete and non-negotiable social category and group right

CI as a discrete and non-negotiable social category and group right, includes aspects of critical inquiry. Representatives of this view are Tsuda (1986), Flores (2001) and others. This type of identity implies separatism, assimilationism, and the “culture at any cost” position, making it the most extreme way of perceiving CI of the five types described above.

The CI types presented are, in fact, various approaches to the essence of the concept of CI. Depending on which perspective one takes, CI can take up different shapes. In this thesis I am going to work mostly with a combination of

the types of CI as the adaptive and evolving entity of an individual and as a discrete category and an individual choice. It is because these types view CI as something that is adaptable, evolving and voluntary.

In addition to the perception of CI as a discrete category and an individual choice (Kim 2007) and an Integrative Communication Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation (Kim 1988, 1995, 2001, 2005a), some other theories shall be applied to this theoretical study in a way that they would help understanding some of the concepts and the phenomena. One of these theories is Positioning Theory (Harré 2004), which implies a dialogue between a person's collective and personal identity psychology. Other theories would be Self-Verification Theory (Swann 2005 in Leary and Tangney 2003) and Cultural Identity Theory (CIT) (Collier 1994), which supports the view that cultural identities are negotiated, co-created, reinforced and challenged through communication. Finally, Queer Theory (Butler 1990) shall be used. This theory deals with the concept of identity 'performativity'.

The process of constructing a MCI, which in turn relates to the perception of the self, resembles a closed cycle. Expanding on Ludovico's (2009) and Giddens's (1991) views, throughout their lifespan, an individual builds cultural self-identities with cores on various levels (this is where the multiple layers appear). With the help of self-reflexion (Giddens 1991) individuals achieve either approval or disapproval of their personal values gained before. This explains CI to be a fluid phenomenon. Closing the circle, the way individuals perceive themselves is dependent on the construction of their (self-) identity or vice versa. The process of MCI construction, as a closed circular cycle, is illustrated in figure 1.

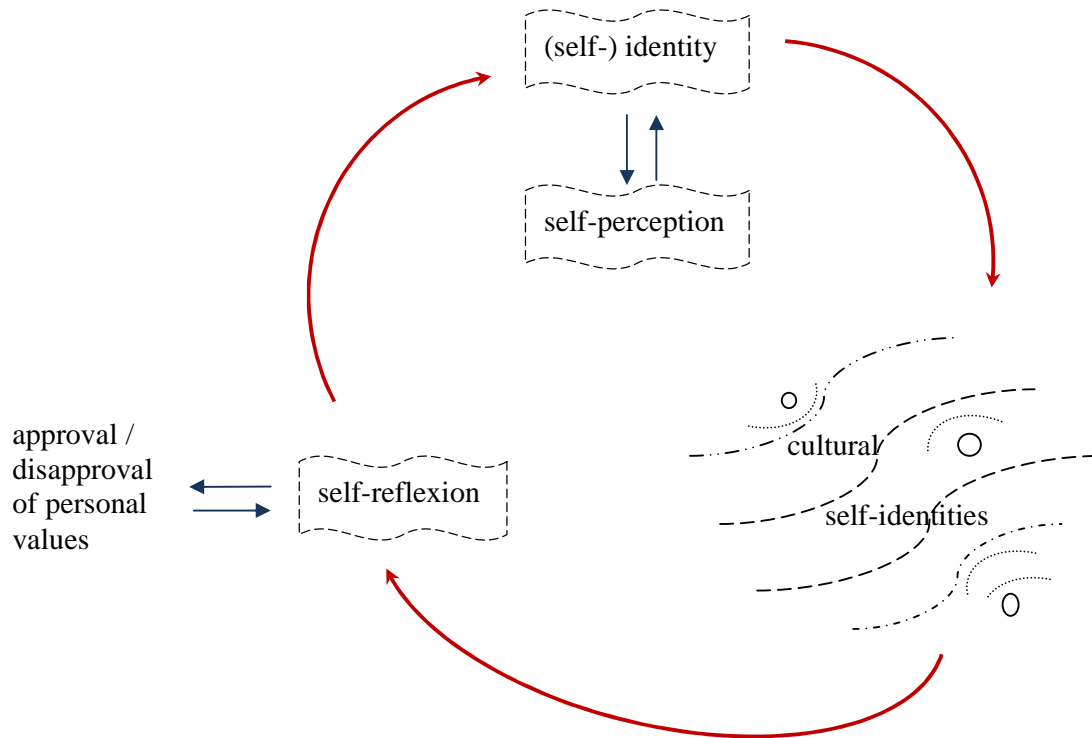


FIGURE 1. The Process of Multilayered Cultural Identity (MCI) Construction as a Closed Circular Cycle

To summarise numerous discussions that happened around the issue of CI, the psychologist Erikson (1968) defined CI as belonging to the core of an individual, assigning CI the most important role. In various literature sources, CI appears in different forms, depending on the angle from which CI is viewed.

1.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The qualitative method used in this theoretical study is a literature review (Machi and McEvoy 2009). Literature review, as a research method, assumes the fact that knowledge can be accumulated and built upon from what other researchers have previously described. To expand on the method used in this research, literature review is also known as a critical review essay, and it can be defined as a summary and evaluation of writings about a specific topic (Knopf 2006).

The technique of scoping study (Arksey and O'Malley 2005) was chosen as an approach to reviewing the literature on this topic. According to Mays, Roberts and Popay (2001:194) the aim of a scoping study is "to map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available... [and] can be undertaken as stand-alone projects in their own right". The scope of research in the case of this particular study is very large, because the field of identity research alone is very broad. For the sake of narrowing it down, the focus was placed on the concept of MCI with the deconstructed separate concepts constituting MCI. The separate concepts are identity, culture, and the concepts linked to the multiplicity and/or complexity of identity.

Depending on their purposes, there are various types of scoping studies:

1. To examine the extent, range and nature of research activity by rapidly reviewing the field(s), without going into much detail.
2. To determine the value of undertaking a full systematic review.
3. To summarise and disseminate research findings, this is done by concentrating more on the details in particular areas of study.
4. To identify research gaps in the existing literature through viewing the overall state of research. (Arksey and O'Malley 2005)

The aim of this literature review, as a scoping study, is a combination of the summarising and disseminating research findings and identification of research gaps in the existing literature.

Literature review, as a method, can also be determined by its general type (Machi and McEvoy 2009). This literature review is partly a historical, theoretical, as well as, a self-study review by its type. It is historical, because, to a certain extent, it documents the historical development of the concepts. It is theoretical, because it deals with a social phenomenon in theory. And, lastly, this literature review is a self-study, because a personal motivation to carry out the research on the given topic is very strong. Additionally, the writer's personal experience is partly used in describing the phenomenon.

The data for this literature review was collected by browsing various journals and books on the topic, available at the university libraries in Jyväskylä (Finland), Lugano (Switzerland) and Uppsala (Sweden). The electronic books and journals were found via various databases, such as EBSCOhost, Ebrary, SAGE Journals, SWISSBIB.

The writer's ontological standpoint assumes that the nature of reality is not of one single truth, but a combination of several realities that, as a result, still make the product of truth as subjective and necessary to discuss further. The writer also sees reality as a fairly relative phenomenon. It is not a single truth, but multiple realities that co-exist. On the one hand, the writer sees CI as a combination of opposite approaches or theories; while, on the other hand, the writer sticks with a certain theory. The writer has deliberately chosen not to speak about her perception of reality of CI from the scientific point of view only as a combination of various theories. It is done due to the fact that the writer's perception of this research is divided into two stages, where:

1. The initial or early stage of identity perception is a combination of two opposing views: identity as static, having a core, and identity as fluid and evolving. Therefore, it is a combination of the nature of identity both as flexible and rigid. To illustrate, identity is imagined as an entity possessing a core; however, everything else that is around this core is evolving dynamically throughout the span of a lifetime.
2. The later stage of identity (narrowed down to a CI) conceptualisation is viewed more as a structure. Thus, once CI is perceived as a construct, it is strictly seen as having a multiply layered nature.

The two stages of research are combined in figure 2, on page 16.

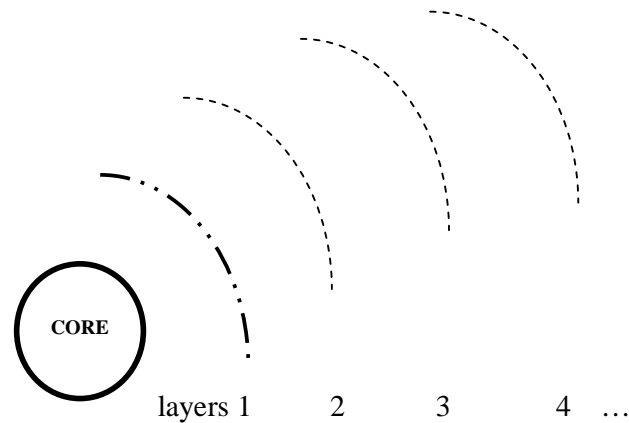


FIGURE 2. Structural Depiction of Identity as Perceived in Two Stages

Many other identities (personal, group, ethnical, religious, national, and other identities) can have the identity structure that is featured in figure 2. These various identities together, that are multilayered, create an individual's whole being, i.e. the self, which consequently, the self becomes multilayered. The CoS as a multidimensional construct (Shavelson and Bolus 1982) appears in the Introduction chapter, on page 6.

Writer's theoretical framework is CI. Development of the framework embraces the specific notions of multilayeredness, also known as multifaceted cultural identity, self, bodily or healthy self, self-identity, self-perception, identity flexibility, complex identity, and identity politics. Within the framework, the central concepts are MCI, self and perception.

The choice of literature was limited to sources dating from 1930's to the present. Even though the concept of MCI is fairly new, appearing for the first time in 1970's, older literature was used. As it has been previously mentioned in the second paragraph of this sub-chapter, this is due to the fact that the writer is deconstructing the components of MCI, into independent concepts of culture, identity multiplicity, identity flexibility and fluidity. These sub-concepts emerged in the research already in the middle of the 19th century. And since the intention of the thesis does not include concentrating on the chronological

development of these sub-concepts, they are mentioned in this paper only as a support. The sub-concepts are also used in order to provide with a background to the focal concept of MCI.

During the formulation of the concept of MCI, the writer preferred to work exactly with this wording of a concept rather than, for example, with bi-cultural one. The formulation 'bi-cultural' would restrict the sample of people who can belong to a group, while MCI embraces bi-cultural identities and, additionally, takes into account potential sub-cultures, which either exist on the conscious state of mind of a person or that exist, with a person simply not being aware of them.

To justify the choice of the concept even further, the writer is working with the concept of MCI as opposed to e.g. multicultural identity (MI). These concepts are synonyms in their essence. However, the writer finds it important to emphasise the layered or leveled nature of CI – the process of its construction which takes place layer by layer. Each layer is corresponding to a certain culture. These layers can exist both independently of one another and be merged according to varying context.

At the beginning of this study, it was assumed that the usage of the formulation 'MCI' appears in the literature precisely the way it is formulated. Thus, also the first research question was to find out how this concept under this formulation is described in the literature on this topic. However, as the process of research showed, the formulation 'MI' is used instead of 'MCI' in the literature. Therefore, indicating that MCI is, basically, described by MI. Nevertheless, taking into account that the two formulations are similar, just emphasising different aspects, the formulation 'MCI' shall be used also further in this thesis so as to highlight the structure of a CI.

1.3 DEFINITIONS

Further, in this thesis, certain phrases and notions are used in abundance. The use of “the author” implies the author of a book or journal in question, and, whose ideas were used in this thesis. The use of “the writer” implies the author of this paper or thesis.

The reason for making the differentiation between the phrases clear is because the usage of the phrases “the author” and “the writer” is frequent in this thesis. The shift from one phrase to another can be potentially confusing to the reader. In order to reduce the possibility of confusion, it was considered to be relevant to provide the reader with the definitions at the initial stage of this study.

Another phrase, frequently used in this thesis, is “the other”. This phrase implies another person other than oneself, and is used both in singular and plural forms in this paper.

Additionally, there are five notions used throughout the thesis. The abbreviations of the notions are as follows:

CI – cultural identity

CoI – concept of identity

CoS – concept of self

MI – multicultural identity

MCI – multilayered cultural identity.

2 THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY AND ITS MULTIPLICITY

2.1 IDENTITY

This chapter introduces the identity as a concept and its complex plural nature. In order to describe a plural perspective of identity, the concept of CI) into two separate smaller concepts; identity and culture is deconstructed. The reason for dividing the concept of CI into two independent smaller concepts demonstrates the different approaches of culture, and identity. As a result, one approach would be chosen, and that would be built upon further in sub-chapter 2.2.

Identity, as a concept, is both deep and abstract in its essence. The aspect that gives it deepness is the fact that identity is like a core of an individual and the core can be neither seen nor stated at once because it does not lie on the surface. The aspect that is seen, is just a part of the self; therefore, it takes longer to discover one's self in full, if possible at all.

In order to present various ways of defining the CoI, the wording of this notion shall be described first. The CoI comes from Late Latin language 'identitas' and from Late Latin 'idem' which means 'the same'. There are two basic meanings offered by an online version of English Collins dictionary (2000), where 'identity' is defined as:

1. Identification of oneself, e.g. "As moving to London destroyed his Welsh identity."
2. A synonym to the following concepts: distinctiveness, individuality, oneness, particularity, personality, self, selfhood, singularity, uniqueness.

The writer's personal interpretation of these definitions is that the first meaning emphasises the very act of identifying or acquisition of identity, while the second meaning stresses the capacity of an individual to be unique and distinctive from others. These meanings are interconnected, as they add to each other. In other words, the first meaning can be considered as the basic explanation of 'identity' (plain identification of oneself), and the second represents the identification of oneself as a unique individual.

The CoI has a complex nature. The individual's identity is easy to recognise; however, it is not necessarily precisely definable (Parry 2002). Supposedly, the complexity of identity is to do with the fact that it is easier to observe the product of a phenomenon (such as identity) than to, actually, characterise the phenomenon at any previous stage of its evolving. The question of different perceptions appears; how different individuals perceive the end product, how an individual perceives themselves, as well as, how others perceive them. The threefold nature of viewing identity indicates that if everything is based so much on perceptions, then there is no single truth, which, in its turn, means that there cannot be a single true definition of somebody's identity. As Huntington (1997:43) states, identity "is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people." Therefore, the writer believes the process of definition of one's identity requires an individual to adopt a flexible view, just as according to some theories that an identity in itself is fluid, flexible and constantly changing.

It seems that a person simply needs to find comfort in the uncertainty and not to perceive one's identity in radical terms. Perception of oneself in radical terms often implies a feeling of having to belong to one category or another, and not simultaneously to both, because doing so would undermine certainty and clarity. Indeed, according to Huntington (1993:24):

People have levels of identity: a resident of Rome may define himself with varying degrees of intensity as a Roman, an Italian, a Catholic, a Christian, a European, a Westerner. The civilization to which he belongs is the broadest level of identification with which he intensely identifies. People can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the composition and boundaries of civilizations change.

Therefore, identity is more situational and changeable according to varying circumstances.

Shifting back to the types of identities that one person can possess, Parekh (2008) offers the notion of a 'three-dimensional identity', which comprises of three interlinked components. The first component is an individual's personal identity based on the fact that people are unique, and have individual

distinctive features, lives, inner natures, and others. Secondly, individual's social identity, which emphasises a person's belonging to society, to its various (ethnic, religious, cultural, etc.) groups, by which define themselves and are defined by in return. And, lastly, "human beings belong, and know that they belong, to a distinct species, define themselves and decide how they should live and conduct themselves as human beings" (Parekh 2008:9).

The third component of identity is deliberately quoted in this thesis, because it is not really mentioned by Parekh (2008). Instead, Parekh summarises the individual's personal identity and individual's social identity into the third component. Supposedly, the third component can be seen as the overall type of identity, because it consists of an individual's personal identity and an individual's social identity. In the opinion of the writer, before the mentioning of the overall type of identity, something is still missing in Parekh's view on identity. In order to analyse Parekh's view on identity further, when speaking about the third component of identity, the author emphasises belonging. Could the third component then be collectivistic identity? That would mean that it almost coincides with the second component (social dimension) as the second and third components are so similar. Both the second and third components of identity emphasise belonging: either belonging to a cultural group (from a social identity's perspective, which is the second component) or belonging to a group of the same species (Parekh's third component of identity). Looking at these two components, it can be said that the same species for an individual would, in fact, be humans. Thus, it is a group of humans, encompassing the entire humankind on Earth. Consequently, the idea that implies inclusion of humans simultaneously implies the presence of a social aspect in the idea, because inclusion supports a collective, a society. So, Parekh's 'group of humans' becomes automatically a social group, i.e. a society.

In conclusion, the question of identity is complex. One of the arguments to the complexity of identity is the fact that it is 'three-dimensional' (Parekh 2008). It is easier to recognise aspects of identity than to actually define identity. Identity involves various aspects all at once, such as language, culture, religion,

ethnicity, and others (Parry 2002). In addition to the numerous aspects or spheres that simultaneously affect the definition of identity, the perceptions that are associated with identity are variable; How does one see oneself? How does one see others? And, how do others see that person? The aspect of flexibility in terms of identity becomes very important here, because it enables how views are adjusted on one's identity. In the following paragraphs, the construction of identity is discussed, whereby the issue is demonstrated as being far from simplistic.

Construction of identity

How is identity constructed and is it constructed at all? The question whether identity is constructed or not, is not so easy to answer. In fact, there is a theory for identity formation which implies that identity is socially constructed throughout a person's life through development. Kelly (1955) was, perhaps, the first author to propose that identity, in itself, represents a construct. Indeed, human identity is formed in the process and, is a result of socialising with other people. The formation of identity takes place in socialisation, which involves comparisons of others, through similarity and difference.

The formation of identity can also be said to take place under the corecurrence of various factors or influences. The factors that take place, according to Erikson (1968b); are a person's biological characteristics, their psychological needs, interests, and defences, as well as, the cultural environment to which a person is exposed. All these factors co-participate in shaping one's sense of ego identity. To highlight cultural environment or cultural milieu as Erikson describes it, it is very essential. Erikson continues to mention that once integrated together with the other two factors, cultural environment or cultural milieu provides a person with a sense of "bodily self" (Erikson in Kroger 2000:9). Moreover, according to Erikson, the sense of a 'bodily self' is not just some degree of awareness of who one is, but it is a perception of one's *I* as a solid entity.

To sum up, it is not certain whether identity has structure in it or not. In the case where it does have a structure, the issue of identity as a construct incorporates various factors that construct or shape it. The person's perception of identity's as a construct can be supported by Kelly's (1955) views, as well as, Erikson's (1968b) opinion that takes into account individual's biological characteristics, psychological needs, interests, defences, and the cultural environment to which a person is exposed.

2.2 SINGULARITY VS. PLURALITY OF IDENTITY

This sub-chapter stresses further the importance of viewing identity as a complex entity. A link of the complexity of identity to the debate of whether it is singular or plural is also stressed.

The underlying idea of this thesis is to emphasise a general statement of identity as an issue of complexity, which prevents the simplistic view on identity to be used. According to Parekh (2008:24), "this helps us to grasp and cope with the inescapable complexity of human life and to avoid taking a simplistic view of it." He continues:

Having plural identities has the additional advantage that one does not, morally and emotionally, overinvest (or become overwhelmed by) any one of them, and thus get it out of perspective. The need to balance and integrate different identities into a coherent life also cultivates the capacities for judgment, moderation, self-restraint and self-discipline. (Parekh 2008:24)

The writer would like to argue that the need to integrate different identities happens not just in groups. The need to integrate different identities happens also for individuals personally contributing to individual development.

The discussion on whether identity (either personal, social, cultural, or some other) is singular or plural is an ongoing process. However, recent approaches to identity research are supportive of the pluralistic (Sen 2006; Parekh 2008) view of the CoI. To look at the issue of the nature of identity from different views, Parekh (2008) considered that identity can be singular, but not monolithic. It seems, it is fairly difficult to capture the difference between a

singularity and a monolithic nature of identity, because both types of identity's nature imply identity being simple (consisting of one unit) and static.

The viewing of identity as singular and monolithic is a very primitive and simplistic way of looking at the CoI. Nevertheless, if the issue is perceived from the point of view that identity exists on its own (by being singular), and is changeable (not monolithic that consists of one constant material), then Parekh describes more insight, because his description allows some sort of continuity of the CoI. As the author describes Whitman's position on the nature of identity in his book:

... [*identity*] is necessarily singular, though not monolithic. An individual with several personal identities, or the one who wants to be several different kinds of a person at the same time, is not one person but several. It is because most, or even all of us, are "multitudes", as Walt Whitman put it, and harbor several undigested fragments of our "selves" that we strive to impose a substantial measure of order and coherence on our lives by committing ourselves to being certain kinds of people. (Parekh 2008:13)

Sen (2006) goes even further to defend the position that identity is plural. It is important to recognise the fact that people cannot be miniaturised, by being defined primarily based on religion, one culture, the homogeneous civilisation they live in, and other aspects. In addition, by the so-called 'miniaturising of the others', individuals ignore numerous other factors that, in fact, make a person who they are.

The issue of what it is who a person believes themselves to be again becomes relevant to explore. Additionally, it is worthwhile to find ways to justify these beliefs. There is no absolute truth when defining who an individual is. It seems that even in attempts to define, different people will do this in different ways, concentrating on the identity elements, which in their perception, are more vivid or more important to emphasise. To the writer's mind, the way individuals perceive is purely a psychological and philosophical issue. Moreover, the important detail in the process of perceiving is the way an individual defines themselves, which can differ from how others see them. Therefore, this thesis acknowledges that there are two ways of seeing; the way

a person sees themselves; and the way others see them. Hence these two ways of seeing can provide a compromising way of viewing oneself; it could also be the most objective way of seeing one's identity to its fullest possible extent.

Parekh (2008:23) continues analysing the nature of identity by stating that identity is plural rather than multiple:

Since human life is inherently plural in the sense that different areas of life are autonomous to different degrees and make independent claims, different identities cannot be subordinated to any of them, however far-reaching it might otherwise be. The context decides which identity is relevant, and that identity, as socially defined, largely dictates appropriate behavior. We capture this better by saying that we have plural rather than several or multiple identities.

Parekh (2008) highlights the autonomous nature, that was already used earlier in this sub-chapter about identity singularity and its monolithic nature. Identity, however, was not formulated as 'autonomous' in the earlier part of this sub-chapter. Parekh's idea of autonomous nature of identity means the phenomenon from where people have plural identities in different life situations and contexts. Perhaps, this is a linguistic issue. Supposedly, 'several' and 'multiple' identities imply autonomy more successfully than 'plural' identities. Parekh's view on identity splits identity elements into mutually independent elements; whereas, the expression 'plural identities' that he uses, does not, in the writer's opinion, additionally assign an autonomous nature to a plural number of some entities (in this particular case, of identities).

The writer proposes a different way of expressing plurality. Plurality can be considered as the multiple layers of one's identity. This implies that having an identity (with some sort of a core) has various interpretations at the same time (layers that are built upon a core). Various interpretations emerge according to the varying contexts that people are in, and, therefore, these interpretations become potentially reshaped by new interpretations through different life events, as well as, in interaction with other people. Taking into account varying contexts that individuals are exposed to throughout their lives, the writer sees the birth of the phenomenon of a structured identity as the term 'multilayered identity'.

Developing a MCI can help a person cope with one's complex identity in a harmonious way. Although, Phinney (1993) proposes 'bicultural identity', as a type of identity that implies the combination of cultures in one's identity. The writer believes that by adding bicultural to CI, the possibility of combining more than two cultural identities becomes possible. Consequently, in the process of building upon CI, layer upon layer, CI becomes MCI.

The writer assumes that once CI consists of various levels and is plural, the self, which is a broader notion, can also be multilayered. It is because the self comprises many multilayered identities under the influence of which, an individual's perception of their self varies. Ludovico (2009) offers a concept that combines the self with the multilayered identity and formulates an identity as a multilayered self.

To remind the reader, the relationship between identity and culture was outlined in sub-chapter 1.1. The link between the two concepts, identity and culture is related to a person having several cultural backgrounds, who builds up their identity layer by layer. In the writer's opinion, combining both concepts of culture and identity serves as an illustrator of the thought about where a person with several cultural backgrounds builds up their identity layer by layer. It is so, because the two concepts of culture and identity mutually interact, and these concepts are flexible enough to be combined.

In this sub-chapter the issue of identity singularity and plurality was discussed. Despite introducing the issue of whether a singular identity is present or not, the following question still remains: how is it possible to explain identity's complexity? It is fairly difficult to do so, because singularity implies simplicity and, perhaps, even primitiveness. To view identity in such a way would not only be irrelevant nowadays, but also is ignorant of the nuances of identity. Therefore, the plural nature of identity is being suggested. In the following chapter, the relationship between identity and culture is expanded upon and viewed as a joint concept of CI. This way also the complex nature of CI shall be supported.

3 INTERPLAY OF IDENTITY AND CULTURE

CI has been investigated actively since 1950, when the psychologist Eric Erikson wrote a theoretical work on CI named *Childhood and Society*. Therefore, it can be said that for more than fifty years CI has held the attention of researchers'. Judging by the amount of research done on the issue of CI, this concept proves to be very researchable, which, in its turn, means that CI is engaging, worthy of discussion, current, and, because of CI's complexity, will be a fascinating field of study.

Before the discussion on CI, first, it would be relevant to disclaim what culture is, as well as to show that the concepts 'identity' and 'culture' are similar in the features they possess. In the process, the concepts 'identity' and 'culture' act reciprocally and react to one another, thus, creating an interplay between the two concepts. To begin with culture, this term is described and defined by numerous authors from different possible perspectives of this term. According to Tanno and Gonzalez (1998) there used to be 164 definitions of the word 'culture' in 1952, and, since then, the number has increased. The reason for the growing number of definitions of culture is the angle of emphasis from which culture is defined, which can be very different. For instance, to Novitz and Willmott (1990:5), culture "is not simply art, music and literature; it is the total collection of behavioural patterns, values and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people." It seems, this definition almost equates culture to mentality, because the definition emphasises a group of people and their distinctive behavioural patterns. It is a group of people, the collective aspect, which becomes crucial. The writer assumes that the distinctiveness in the behaviour is important, and the distinctiveness in the behaviour of an individual reflects the distinctiveness of the culture they possess. Novitz and Willmott write much particularly about the distinctiveness and the demarcating nature of culture. The distinctiveness, according to the authors, is deep, standing beyond the fact of two cultures being different and exclusive of one another. Furthermore, it would be simply not enough to evaluate distinctiveness of culture. The writer provides with the following example; there are different cultures within one territory, e.g. of Latvia, having two

major cultures: Latvian and Russian. It would not be appropriate to place the Latvian and Russian cultures against one another, in order to highlight their distinctiveness. Even if the cultures are very different from each other, it is not enough reason to consider one of the cultures or both to be distinctive of one another. On the contrary, the writer pertains the view that one should take a closer look at the components of culture, which, according to Novitz and Willmott (1990), are 'ingredients' of society, namely, language, institutions, art, religions, and others, and find something truly distinctive in them, in the way they appear, are applied, or are functioning in the society.

A similar principle of distinctiveness applies when speaking about culture individually as an enriching force or as a restricting one. Just as the cultural components, mentioned in sub-chapter 2.1, can even provide with a basis for one's identity, the cultural components can also limit one's identity. The limitation of one's identity happens, when identity belongs to a collective cultural group: "Cultural texts, or messages from the host culture, thus furnish those who reside within them much information about potentialities as well as limitations for the construction of an identity" (Kroger 2000:20). Culture, as an enriching or limiting force, can, possibly, mean that culture provides a ground for an identity; however, also has the capacity of limiting identity, creating boundaries, within which identity is to dwell and develop. The idea of culture being both enriching and limiting of identity is likely to be a fairly objective view on culture, since culture, being enriching and limiting involves both positive and negative aspects that the concept of culture encompasses.

Furthermore, culture can be perceived purely as a practiced product. Florida (2008) supports this point of view and refers to identity (the writer believes that it can also be specified as CI), as only being static in the past without any prospect of remaining the same in the future. Instead, Florida believes the CoI to be extensively dynamic nowadays since the question "Who am I?" has been replaced by the question of "Who do I want to be?" The author considers individuals to play different roles in society and, for the sake of them to be successful, individuals adjust their identity to what they consider to be most

desired. Therefore, it can be said, individuals are making their wishful identity become a reality.

Culture, as a practiced product, also means that culture as such does not really matter so much, but what does matter, is identity. According to Friedman (1996:75), the concept of culture “has not changed due to the increasing complexity of the world. What has changed, is the way in which identity and meaning are attributed within and among populations that have in fact been interacting for a very long period.” The aspect that changes is described as “the play of interpretations or of attributions of meaning that must be understood in terms of changing social contexts” (Friedman 1996:75). The author continues by writing that the awareness of any culture having elements from other cultures is nothing new; however, “the realization that imported elements are no longer absorbed and assimilated into a larger homogeneous whole is clear sign of a lack of integrative processes” (Friedman 1996:75). This, according to Friedman, is a question of identity, not of origins, as a person might think. Continuing the author’s de-emphasis of the role of origins in terms of culture, perhaps, this idea means that culture is not unique, but identity is unique, and identity, in this case, is the separating force, because identity draws boundaries and distances groups from each other.

Reading the views of various authors reveals not only links between different concepts, such as ‘culture’ and ‘identity’, but also the similarities of features that characterise of the concepts. As it has been discussed in the introduction chapter of this thesis, the individual’s identity can be viewed as static or rigid, having a core, and able to maintain the core throughout a person’s life. There is another view of identity as well. According to other scholars, identity can be seen as constantly changing, having no one particular stable component. The aspect that is interesting about the dual nature of identity is that ‘culture’, in itself, can be viewed from the same two mutually opposing perspectives, i.e. culture can be viewed as being static or it can be viewed as constantly changing.

Authors like Lustig and Koester (1993:41) see culture as “a learned set of shared perceptions about beliefs, values, and norms.” The words ‘learned set’ indicate the static nature of ‘culture’, resembling a core, which is gained and not so much altered during a person’s lifetime. Nevertheless, being dynamic and ever-changing forms another position of the nature of culture. For instance, the dynamic and ever-changing nature of culture is similar to the ideas expressed by Parekh (2008) in terms of plurality of a person’s identity, because Parekh sees identity as a non-monolithic entity.

It can be concluded that both approaches to viewing ‘culture’ are cultural communitarianism (LeBaron 2003a) and cultural determinism (Lewis 2007). Indeed, communitarians believe in communal identity, whereby identity is solely a matter of self-realisation and the discovery of it by a person, not of choice. In contrary to the view of communitarians, the determinists tend to believe that almost everything in life is based upon constant making of choices. The determinists’ view is described as being important for a person to have freedom to influence own loyalties, priorities, and by choosing whatever a person finds necessary or important (Lewis 2007). In the writer’s perception, once both identity and culture become changeable, CI begins to acquire the same changeable feature automatically.

In addition, the collectivistic factor, discussed in chapters 1 and 2, is very important in the definition of one’s identity. The same can be said about ‘culture’. To illustrate, Novitz and Willmott (1990:280) see culture as collective, because culture is “employed in a way which marks off groups of people by collecting together, or colligating, their characteristic and mutually dependent patterns of action and interaction, as well as values, beliefs and knowledge which guide them.” The following can be concluded from this; ‘culture’, like a plain identity, has also the capacity of collectiveness. Together, ‘identity’ and ‘culture’ form a force that gathers individuals together into a group, and also helps identify each one of them in terms of collectiveness. Thus, it can be said, the interplay between identity and culture is a two-way process that works in both directions.

No matter how collectivising identity and culture can be, both identity and culture can also have an opposite effect in the society. Indeed, 'culture' can also be dividing in terms of its collectiveness. Chenal (2006, *Diversity* section) writes in an online transcript: "Culture, which may enhance differences, can also foster a sense of shared citizenship, contribute to unify while also differences, sometimes, divide." Similarly, Friedman (1996) supports the thought that 'culture' collects people into one group, but becomes automatically placed against other groups, this way also showing culture's dividing nature in and among groups. According to the author, culture performs a role of "the identification of otherness" (Friedman 1996:72).

Due to the same reason of culture's function as 'the identification of otherness' the concept of CI becomes politicised. In the media, the so-called 'us-against-them' position among the members of different nations or within one nation takes place. As a result of taking the 'us-against-them' position, ethnicity becomes connected to social ideologies, for example, nationalism. The ideology of nationalism equates the notion of 'culture' to the notion of 'origin' (Friedman 1996). Once culture and origin are equated, this act automatically implies a question of taking one particular side to support. As a result, in the writer's opinion, the field of identity research (i.e. the discourse on immigration, minorities, and other aspects becomes too political and, thus, builds a strong link with another field – identity politics.

The writer believes that politisation of identity is exactly the point where a constructive and flexible development of identity in individuals and their attitudes should appear. The constructive and flexible view of identity stands in opposition to the "us-against-them" position and, consequently, helps prevent intercultural conflicts from happening. To speculate on the flexible seeing of identity further, if one takes the position of including both culture and origin in the perception of one's or someone else's identity, rather than choosing one culture, dealing with the issue in a constructive way becomes possible. Possibility of dealing with identity in a constructive way appears, because "the

self is more naturally divided; at least, it is capable of division and even thrives on it. When identities are multiplied, passions are divided” (Beiner 1999:215–216). The constructive view of identity, in its turn, saves humanity from conflicts.

Interestingly, Geertz (1973) uses a similar interpretation of the phenomenon of identity flexibility. The author has an emphasis on the replacement of individual choice, with the choice of the whole group which, consequently, leads to placing groups against groups. To sum Geertz’s idea up, individual choice, in contrary, is replaced by the group’s choice. In other words, identity of an individual becomes exactly what it appears to be like for the entire group. Once the values of a community (and, thus, the CI) become highly essential to its members, there is a possibility that a pluralistic ‘we-and-they’ view will develop, which is the contrary of the outcome of identity politicisation, i.e. the ‘us-against-them’ position.

Moreover, according to Fanon (1967), CI is static and given, thereby oppressing further possible complexity and, therefore, uniqueness. Thus, the author also believes in identity constructed through difference (placing oneself against the other), to be destructive in social interactions.

Returning to the relationship between identity and culture, in general, Friedman (1996) supports the view that culture as such and one’s personal identity are mutually connected. There are peculiar comparisons of ‘culture’ as a ‘human nature’, because, according to the author, “human biology requires an input of a cultural program in order for the human organism to be able to function” (Friedman 1996:72).

Friedman further discusses CI in terms of the beginning of this concept, i.e. whether CI is practiced or inherent in a person, achieved by oneself or ascribed by somebody else. To the writer, this is an essential point, since exactly two contrasting views exist: the one of CI being expressed within one’s race or biological descent, or the one being expressed in the heritage through learning,

which is distinctive for every person in terms of individual behaviour. The latter expression of CI as the heritage through learning can be equated to a Western notion of ethnicity, because it appears as a 'lifestyle' in practice and does not necessarily need to be based upon tradition.

Friedman further links CI to selfhood, claiming that the content of CI is dependent upon the way, in which a person's selfhood is constructed; while Samovar and Porter (1982) support a similar point of view, assigning the self a central role. Indeed, Friedman (1996) emphasises 'an image of the self' as the centre or core of CI. He believes that CI is "the "stuff" of both personality and culture" (Friedman 1996:33).

This chapter presented the concept of CI. This concept was deconstructed into two separate constituent concepts, namely of identity and culture. There is a so-called 'interplay' between identity and culture due to the fact that there is so much similarity between these two concepts. For instance, identity can serve as a uniting or enriching force, while it can also be limiting and separating. The same can be applied to culture; culture unites groups and is capable of separating a certain cultural group or an individual from another individual or other groups. In addition, culture can also be perceived as a practiced product (Florida 2008; Friedman 1996), which implies capacity of an individual to make a wishful identity become a reality. In the case of culture as a practiced product (as a lifestyle), culture becomes less important than identity, because once an individual is able to shape their identity the way they wish to, the given culture loses its meaning and becomes non-existent. It is identity that acquires focal role.

However, now that the CI has been described, it would be useful to link it to the structure of identity (sub-chapter 2.1). Dealing with the nature of identity as a plural entity and emphasising the structure of CI, the concept of CI becomes worth viewing further as a multilayered construct.

4 CULTURAL IDENTITY AS A MULTILAYERED CONSTRUCT

Once CI is viewed as multilayered in terms of its structure, it is possible to naturally formulate this type of identity as MCI. There is another formulation that does not emphasise the structure of CI, as it simply indicates the presence of multiple cultures in such type of identity. This way of seeing CI, as the presence of multiple cultures within CI, is formulated as multicultural identity (MI). The discussion of the two concepts: MCI and MI, is presented in the following paragraphs of this chapter.

Multi (layered) cultural identity

In connection to the discussion of which concept ('culture' or 'identity') is more important, competing ideas emerged. In chapter 3, it was mentioned that culture is non-existent when it comes to a wishful identity, because all that matters is identity itself; how a person sees identity without any given determinants (like culture, nationality, religious affiliation, and others). Once a person skips the previously expressed idea of ignoring the determinants of identity and once a person imagines determinants or the factors that actually shape identity, the entire picture becomes different. When identity is perceived with its determinants, identity as such becomes non-existent, since identity is created and shaped by other, outer factors, one of which is culture. Therefore, what matters most is culture, and not the identity, as without culture there would not be a CI. It is so, due to the fact that there would simply not be a source or a medium for something to appear that would identify itself or be identified.

Based on the contemplations over the separate concepts of 'culture' and 'identity' (chapter 3), the concept of MCI becomes fairly easy to explain. There is support that CI has a layered nature as various authors claim that culture has multiple layers (LeBaron 2003b). Once the culture acquires multiple layers and is able to constantly change throughout the life of a person due to the social context changes (Friedman 1996), then also identity is able to acquire new

shapes alongside the cultural change. In such a manner, also identity alone becomes multilayered.

In addition to the discussion of CI as a multilayered construct, there are two competing concepts. These are the concepts of MCI and MI. The aspects that are going to be pointed out are the difference between MCI and MI and the relation these concepts have to the topic of this thesis.

According to Goldberg (1994:386), MI is “an identity that is unconstrained by cultural particularity or prejudice.” This seems to be a very general definition and, basically, the same, can be said about the MCI, because of an identity having multiple layers or levels that can be accommodated by a person, according to arising situation.

Goldberg (1994:381) further acknowledges that ‘multicultural’ is a successful adjective to use, because “it is inclusive, embracing; like “international” or “pluralist” or “ecumenical” it suggests largeness of conception.” Thus, it can be said that the notion ‘multicultural’ is simply larger than ‘multilayered’, because the latter concentrates on the specifics of the contents of a CI.

The definition of MCI does not appear in modern literature. Therefore, it is not really possible to present the concept of MCI as a separate definition and place it against the above definition of MI.

The underlying difference between MCI and MI is already in the way they are formulated, i.e. MCI emphasises the actual construction of a CI. In other words, MCI highlights the presence of levels, which are, undoubtedly, present also in a MI, but simply not stated in the formulation at once. The concept of MCI “has the benefit of allowing grades of difference” (Zeiler 2007:27). The inclusion of ‘grades of difference’, in its turn, makes the concept of a multilayered CI more comprehensive, because it becomes clearer to the reader in terms of what this concept encompasses.

The usage of the variation of 'MCI' is proposed in this study to emphasise the structural aspect of a CI. Due to this reason, MCI shall be used further in this study. However, it is equally important to note that none of the concept formulations is better than the other, nor any of these two formulations would be right or wrong.

Figure 3 (on page 37) displays the concept of MCI. An attempt to show CI split into layers has been made in this picture. The layers are depicted as dotted lines to show dynamicity present also within layers, because the layers have no clear boundaries, too. Each of the layers has a name. The names indicate the factors that are related to CI and the factors, also, initiate the formation of layers, thus, giving a way to MCI. As it can be seen, apart from some layers being named as various cultures, there are also other various factors present, such as language(s), ethnicity, nationality, and religion. The other factors were deliberately mentioned, because, supposedly, they equally participate in the creation of layers. For instance, MCI appears as a result of an individual having multiple cultural background, i.e. a few cultures. Nevertheless, one's identity can be viewed not only from the point of multiple cultures present, but also from the point of view of ethnic, national, and other types of background.

The non-culture related layers are not primary, but these layers do have a link to the fragmentation of CI, depending on what an individual chooses to emphasise, when viewing oneself. To provide with an example, an individual can have Latvian, Russian, and Ukrainian cultural backgrounds, with a Finnish nationality, so, no matter what country they belong to, assumingly can have an influence on the person's perception of one's CI. The reason for this influence is the emotional attachment and sentiments that can stretch from one factor to another, creating a link between them. The interconnectedness between the factors is the reason why layer-lines are depicted as interrupted or dotted lines.

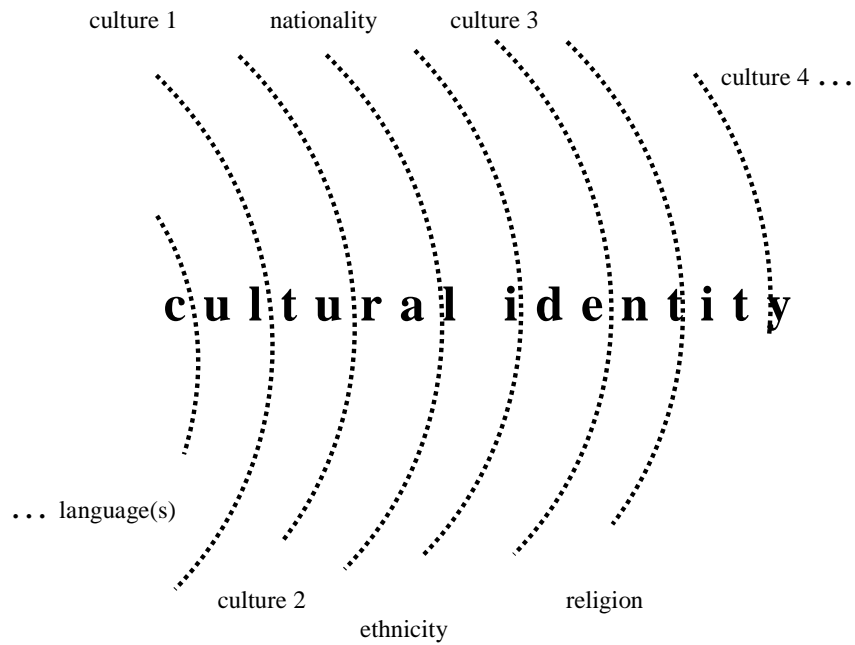


FIGURE 3. Multilayered Cultural Identity (MCI)

This chapter presented two competing concepts: MCI and MI. It also stated the preference of emphasising the structure of MI, as a way of leading discussions of the concept of MCI.

Having described the concept of MCI, the next step is to look at the CoS. As such, it is one of the objectives of this study to show the relationship between the two concepts, namely, how MCI relates to the way a person sees or perceives their self. In the next chapter, the concept of self is going to be described in order to later show the links between the CoI, CI, MCI, and CoS.

5 THE DIALECTICS OF SELF / SELFNESS

5.1 THE PECULIAR SELF

Detailed description of the CoS is featured in the following sub-chapters. Self as a wholeness of an individual's personality is like a full image of how one sees themselves and how others see that person. Within the process of perception, the general image is at stake and is an important aspect. Without the image, there would be practically nothing to perceive nor to have as a result of the process of perception. In addition to the CoS, the reciprocal action and reaction between self and identity shall be discussed.

Development of the concept of 'self' is very engaging in both linguistics and its practical usage. According to Tanno and Gonzalez (1998:101): "'Self' did not begin life as a noun but merely as a reflexive that indicated identity with something else." It is only now that this word 'self' is beginning to exist on its own, which means 'self' is acquiring more significance, not only linguistically, but also mentally. People seem to be concerned about knowing who they are, everybody seems to be striving for certainty, exploring their identity, image, and self. Indeed, according to Harré (2004), in an online source, psychologists use the concept of self "to refer to the beliefs that people have about themselves, their skills, their moral qualities, their fears and their life courses." Through the beliefs that people have about themselves, it identifies their selves.

Within the essence of the self, Harré (2004) claims that people have selves and offers three types of personhood. Firstly, there exists an embodied self, which emphasises singular, united, self-identical and continuous nature of one's point of view and behaviour. Secondly, it is the autobiographical self, which appears as a sort of an ideal way what people appear or are willing to appear to be like in life. Lastly, it is the social self, through which a person is able to show personal qualities in interpersonal relations with others.

The nature of the CoS is peculiar, because the concept encompasses three different types of it and one individual can possess all of them simultaneously. To compare these types of CoS, the first one (the embodied self) is a singular

type, while the social self is multiple, because the ways a person appears in the society can be various and different at different points in time. Meanwhile, the autobiographical self stands somewhere in between. On the one hand, autobiographical type of self is singular and, on the other hand, it is capable of acquiring various forms and, in the process, change.

To expand further on the peculiarities of self, it is essential to take a look at the possibility of this concept to also have a reciprocal link with identity. The notion of esteem shall be introduced with a purpose of demonstrating the link between self and identity.

5.2 IDENTITY AS ESTEEM AND ITS INTERPLAY WITH THE SELF

Harré and Moghaddam (2003) discuss the relationship between identity and the self, emphasising, in particular, the notion of a healthy self. In the authors' opinion, healthy self is tied to esteem. This could mean that if there are people like a certain somebody, it bolsters up their self-esteem; however, if one is outside a certain group, it may have an opposite effect on them. The opposite effect appears in practice as a low self-esteem. When shared with a group of people, identity provides a sense of confidence to an individual with a low self-esteem.

Alongside, Markus and Kitayama (1991) introduce the term 'self-construal', which similarly to Harré and Moghaddam's (2003) views, ties the CoS to either the lack of or the presence of a group. According to the presence or the lack of a group, the amount of esteem of an individual also fluctuates. To look at the concept of self-construal more closely, this concept implies one's self-image and is composed of an independent self (individual features, individual as a unique entity, static self) and interdependent self (the importance of relational connectedness, flexible self). The more interdependent the individual's self-construal, the more likely they are respectful, less pretentious, use problem-solving, and apologising in groups (Markus and Kitayama 1991).

In addition to the types of self, Kim (1997, 2005b) differentiates between identity security and identity insecurity (Kim 1997, 2005b). The differentiation between identity security and identity insecurity also contributes to the discussion on the connection between the CoI and self through the sense of esteem.

Is there a relationship between a healthy self (esteem) and a MCI of an individual? Even if the relationship between a healthy self and a MCI does not exist, in the writer's belief, it can be created. According to Harré and Moghaddam (2003), the higher the self-esteem (a person possessing a healthy self), the more a person is willing to accept variety of their selves' components on an equal basis. The lower the self-esteem, the more an individual is in a defence mode, thinking in terms of marginality, being either one or the other, but not simultaneously both. Theoretically, an individual with a higher self-esteem is more likely to adopt a multilayered view on one's CI.

Harré and Moghaddam (2003) indicate that the concept of the healthy self is also known as a dialogical self in research. And it seems to be so for a reason, because if one imagines the self as a diversity of elements (layers of a CI) within unity, then it can be said that the self is dialogical, whereby the self is capable of experiencing both unity and diversity simultaneously (Ho, Chan, Peng, and Ng 2001). A dialogue means cohesion and harmony, so, if one is to perceive the self as a dialogue, then the self needs to be balanced between its diverse elements and, at the same time, unite them into a whole.

Figure 4 demonstrates the reciprocal link between self and identity; the role of a connector between self and identity represents the notion of esteem. Indeed, the correlation between low and high esteem and the perception of oneself according to the illustration is dual. Following the CoS in terms of low and high esteem, an individual can develop both marginalised perceptions of one's self and, in contrary to that, a healthy or dialogical self. Similarly, once identity is taken as a starting point, low esteem leads to identity insecurity; whereas, high esteem creates a sense of identity security in an individual. Consequently,

it can be concluded that the underlying principle for the two different concepts (namely, self and identity) in terms of esteem is the same. Depending on the amount of esteem, also depend the ways in which concepts of self and identity appear in a person.

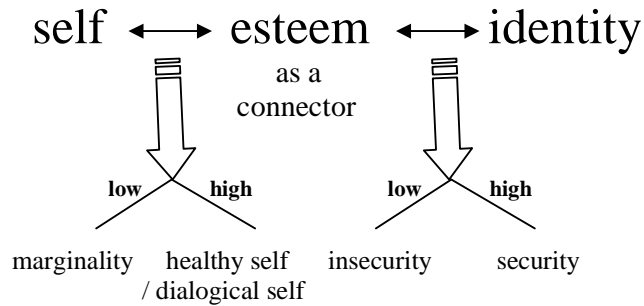


FIGURE 4. Esteem as a Connecting Notion Between the Concepts of Self and Identity

Having discussed interplay of self and identity individually, the attention is drawn now to how ‘the other’ can affect the linkage of these two concepts. The linkage shall be achieved with the help of the collective factor present in the relationship between self and identity. The following questions shall be answered; How important is a group and ‘the other’ to an individual? Does a group affect individual’s self and identity? Is there a correlation between the collective aspect and an individual’s self-esteem?

Collective factor

A group or a collective and ‘the other’ play a focal role in the collective perspective of the self-esteem-identity relationship. The relationship between the concepts is supported by Parekh’s (2008) view, which implies that self-esteem and respect towards oneself is socially constructed and that both the self-esteem and the respect towards oneself are influenced by the confirmation of others around.

As written in chapter 3, apart from the fact that placing one’s identity against the outer world (other individuals, groups of individuals) is reinforcing own

identity, it also provides with a sense of belonging, unity, as well as sentimental beliefs connected with the past. Together with a group, an individual becomes more certain as to where they stand, their beliefs about themselves, and other aspects. To the writer's best knowledge, group identification stems from the past, which is why group identification acquires such an importance. It is so due to the fact that, to a certain extent, people have primordial beliefs embedded in them. For some, primordial beliefs become challenged during the life span, for some, these beliefs continuously remain prevalent in thinking throughout lifetime. Therefore, past becomes a heritage for individuals, and, thus, they find themselves willing to belong to the historical values and stay true to these values throughout their life.

In connection to the sentimental beliefs from the past, Pomian (2009:9) provides with a point of view that links identity with the past, emphasising the importance of collective memories, which also turn into heritage:

Looking at the uses of the word "identity" in present-day language, we notice immediately that it is connected with the idea of stability. Identity refers to something that is not ephemeral, to something that preserves its distinctive characteristics despite the passage of time. Understood in this manner, it is roughly equivalent to what Braudel called *la longue dure'e*. But identity is also connected to at least two other words that have also become highly fashionable in the last twenty years. These words are: memory and heritage. This fact seems to point out to a strong connection of identity with the past. And indeed there is such a connection. When we speak about identity, we speak about something that we received from our predecessors.

Pomian's thoughts show that the nature of identity is fixed and not only fixed as such. His thoughts show that the nature of identity is also fixed to the past with the perception of identity's elements as a heritage through remembrance (which is 'memory' in the quotation above). The middle way of describing identity would be that identity does have fixed elements in it (forming a 'core') stemming from the past. However, at the same time, identity also maintains the capacity of changing over time, acquiring various shapes around its 'core'. As a result of changing, identity becomes created with the help of the layers that identity consists of.

It seems that what helps keep the shared memories is a group, other than the self. The actual thing that happens is that an individual either identifies themselves with the group by belonging or willing to belong to it, or identifies themselves as someone else not belonging to the group, by placing their self against the group. Therefore, the role of a group in one's identification process is essential. Even more so, there are several points that reinforce this importance. To further illustrate, in Nguni language (the language spoken predominantly in South Africa) selfness 'I' is 'ubuntu' and the word 'ubuntu' literally translated to the English language means 'collective personhood' (Miller 2005:77) or "a person is a person through other persons" (Ramose 1999:49; Shutte 2001:23). This translation comes from "Umuntu ngu-muntu ngabantu", which means "I am because we are" (Miller 2005:77).

A German philosopher Martin Buber goes even further in assigning importance of the role of 'the other' in ones identification. He wrote a whole book *Ich und Du* in 1923 on the significance of 'the other' in the formation and realisation of one's identity: "One becomes human only in *I-Thou* relationships, for only these call a person into unique wholeness... as I become I, I say Thou" (as cited in Kramer and Gawlick 2003:17). Similarly to this dialectics of identity and otherness, Fennell (2005:231) claims that CI is nothing more than group identification: "...cultural identity is not so much an identity as simply a kind of group identification (however created, however arbitrary, partial, or indeed temporary, and whether by way of pride, shame or indifference): a form of collective self-image...".

Perhaps, the created collective self-image that Fennell writes about is, basically, the same phenomenon when an individual perceives themselves personally in terms of belonging to a wider group, which happens, for example, by sharing the same culture. Thus, a person can be said to project a collective self image through a CI of a group, which takes place in Fennell's opinion with the help of an individual making simultaneously collective conceptions and self-conceptions. To the author, a CI is a "distinctive set of collective conceptions and self-conceptions. A cultural identity is a variable code

comprising sometimes quite complex linguistic, geographical, historical, religious and ethnophysiological elements...” (Fennell 2005:229). When seeing culture and identities as group characteristics, a person, nevertheless, has to be careful, because cultures and identities can only be perceived as group characteristics as long as they reflect, among others, shared cultural characteristics, practices, and values that are characteristic of a particular group.

In addition to the collective aspect, Tanno and Gonzalez (1998:3) tie one’s identity to group identification: “Identity is about the “I” and the “we”. It is about the rituals and rules, the idioms and ideologies, and the languages and experiences of the multiple “I’s” and “we’s”. Such is the complexity and the richness of identity.” The use of ‘and’ in the above quotation, (that is ‘I’ and ‘we’) places both concepts onto the same level, meaning these two exist alongside, creating a group that consists of the self (‘I’) and others together.

Taking the collective factor into consideration, the group plays an important role in the formation of one’s I. However, the same importance of a stable awareness of one’s I is essential within the group. This way, according to the psychologist Erik Erikson (1950 cited in Kroger 2000:137), “to truly meet others with whom to share a “We”, one must have a sense of “I”. To expand on this idea, one needs first to have a stable and solid understanding of oneself to be able to see where they stand in life, and where they can belong. Nevertheless, there is still a collectivistic value present on both individual and collectivistic dimensions, i.e. in shaping identity of both an individual ‘I’ and a collective ‘We’.

To induct, it can be concluded that an individual’s self-concept is composed of social and personal identities. Although, an individual may define themselves as a member of a certain ethnic group, they may not perceive themselves as being a ‘typical’ member of it. Another conclusion can be drawn that self does not create identities alone; these are co-created via communication with others (identities emerge when messages are exchanged between persons). The

property of ethnic identity is emphasised depending on whom we are communicating with and the topic of conversation (Gudykunst 2003).

Gudykunst's viewpoint reminds of Aalto's (2009) opinion that is based on the fact that a person's self-identity emerges out of interaction with 'the other', that by studying their identity, one gets to know about themselves. This point of view shall be discussed anew in sub-chapter 5.3. Similarly to Gudykunst and Aalto, Bourdieu (1979:191) believes that in society identity is likely to be defined and affirmed in difference, even opposition: "everything that distinguishes it from that which it is not and more particularly from that to which it is opposed". Indeed, healthy self is dependent on a group. It is by negotiating meanings about their selves within a group that a person comes to a realisation about their self and also creates an image of themselves to others (Positioning theory in psychology): "But the one's collective identity that takes on special significance when it comes to forming our self-concept is our cultural group" (Harré and Moghaddam 2003:203). According to Harré and Moghaddam, the self seems to have pervasiveness. The authors' idea raises a question of whether or not culture is simply a group identity. Is culture possible/Can it exist without a group? Can one person be said to have a culture, when they are the only ones to represent particular features (culture) of something? Perhaps, then, these would be just individual characteristics, unique features or peculiarities of that particular person. Therefore, taken in contemporary terms, whenever one speaks about culture, they usually imply a group that the culture is characteristic of.

Broadly speaking, cultural collective identity relates to every facet of one's life. De Vos (1990) also describes CI as 'self-defining in groups', because once there is a group, culture emerges with a group due to shared features or practices. Culture becomes defined on its own, and this is how group members and also those who are outside this group get to know about this. Similarly to De Vos, another author, Yinger (1986:21) believes that CI forms the person's "basic identity" and helps pertain the "collectivity of one's group", this way highlighting the core value of CI which not only becomes formed out of a

group, but which also helps to maintain CI in its supposed, initial form and/or state. CI serves as a continuous link to connect members within a group or to connect groups to groups.

To sum up, a group plays an important role for an individual person. Even more so, there is a correlation between a group and individual's self-esteem. For instance, once there is a confirmation from the group that coincides with individual seeing of one's self, what happens is the affirmation of one's identity, as a result of which individual's self-esteem rises. Thus, it can be said that a group factor does have a relationship with the way a person values themselves. Group factor does not merely affect an individual in a way that with the help of the group or 'the other' one gets to know much about one's own self, and, in addition to that, the process works the other way round. In order to have a sense of belonging to a group (or being able to relate oneself to 'the other'), one needs to have a stable understanding of one's self first.

Furthermore, collective sentiments about the past or something that had been jointly experienced, links an individual and a group together. As it has been found out, cultural collective identity has also the capacity of appearing in a self-defining way, which means that once there is a group, there is also a culture that automatically emerges out of a group, bringing a group's identity with it.

The aspect of group's participation in the individual's seeing of oneself has been discussed in this sub-chapter. It has been stated that a group can have an affirmative role in one's self and identity and the affirmative role has an effect also on an individual's self-esteem.

5.3 INDIVIDUAL SELF-EVALUATION

This sub-chapter discusses seeing of oneself (perceiving) in terms of one's self-worth, which leads to self-evaluation. The process of self-evaluation is described.

In terms of perception process, self becomes a product when it is evaluated and re-evaluated over time. Indeed, self-evaluation becomes the end stage of perception. Once again, the group factor plays here a vital role, because a human person is a social being. To support the view on the importance of a group factor, "self-identification needs the knowledge about the own collective story, but also the counterpart vision about ourselves, because we are too near to ourselves to do fundamental self-evaluation" (Aalto 2009:10).

According to Aalto, self-evaluation can and also happens through 'the other'. Selfness or self-identity is a complex concept, which, according to the author, goes further than the identity of 'the other', when a person defines them. The reason for self-identity to be a deeper concept than the identity of 'the other' is that one's self-identity appears as a response to other peoples' behaviour, one's self-identity is like a reflection of the others' behaviour. Also, an individual is too near to themselves in order to be able to identify themselves in a more or less objective way. It is only when one takes a step back from their selves through 'the other' that they begin to see themselves in a different light (Aalto 2009). Thus, "while studying the weird and unknown "other", one can learn more about one's own self-identity" (Aalto 2009:10).

Also from the point of view of Cameron (1999) the process of a person's self-identification is often unconscious until the moment the self-concept is challenged by the surrounding social processes. Indeed, by meeting challenges a person discovers new aspects about themselves and becomes aware what type of CI they have. The process of discovery, without doubt, is long, lasting throughout a person's life and constantly changing. Berlin (1993) emphasises in their social-epistemic theories that identity in itself is not a static phenomenon,

but right the opposite, identity is fluid and ever changing. In the course of an individual's life identity loses some of its elements and gains new ones.

Similarly, Hall (1994) has the position of CI being rooted in history and geographical locations; nevertheless, not being static, because, according to him, views of history and places are changing, as well. Alongside these views, also a person's identity is continuously acquiring new shapes.

To support the process of self-definition and evaluation further, Giddens (1991) views the concept of self-identity with the emphasis on the importance of self-reflexion. He considers that the process of self-reflexion gives continuity to one's identity by reflecting back on the past and revising such questions as who we are, and how we end up being who we are at the present.

Not only self-definition and evaluation are important for an individual, but also the revision of the definition and evaluation. The stage of revision is discussed more in detail in the following chapter (see Figure 7 in Chapter 6 as a support). Since CI (and, thus, also the self) is a flexible entity, changes over time, so the evaluation that a person had e.g. two years ago can be different from the current one. Once a person does the re-evaluation, they at the same time also receive a new insight into who they are at a particular point in time. The stage of re-evaluation would include who they used to be (comparison takes place), who they are then, how they have changed, and, most importantly, what they have learned from this, because re-evaluation is very much about developing oneself through learning:

Since our self-definition or conception of ourselves is embedded in our necessarily limited self-understanding, it always remains somewhat tentative and vulnerable to the destabilizing impact of unexpected influences. While holding on to our self-conception, we need to be alert to its possible reconsideration. Those who freeze their identity, ignore its fragility, and rule out its revision claim more than what any human being can and should. (Parekh 2008:13)

Parekh also mentions the right of a person to self-define themselves on their own, as well as respect towards self-definition as such.

There is a separate theory that has been developed supporting a similar view on the re-evaluation of the self, which is the so-called Self-Verification Theory. The Self-verification Theory “suggests that people may seek self-verification for one or both of two reasons: to bolster their feelings of psychological coherence (“epistemic” concerns) or to ensure that their interactions proceed smoothly (“pragmatic” concerns)” (Swann 1983 in Leary and Tangney 2003:369). Referring to another source, “Self-verification theory argues that people work to maintain their self-views because such self-views are a critically important source of psychological and interpersonal integrity and stability” (Swann 2005:80). As it can be seen, both reasons for self-verification deal with psychological comfort that creates harmonious seeing of oneself in a person. Swann (2005:370) suggests his own formulation of this phenomenon, by writing that what happens in an individual is “constructing self-confirmatory social environments”. In other words, a person basically seeks comfort through confirming their selves. Also Buber (1923) wrote about the importance of reaching continuity and coherence of the self.

To continue with the importance of harmonious perception of one’s self and the definition of it, Dag Hammarskjöld offers his own interpretation of the self, highlighting ‘congruence’ that needs to be present in the process of identification:

At every moment you choose yourself. But do you choose your self? Body and soul contain a thousand possibilities out of which you can build many Is. But in only one of them is there a congruence of the elector and the elected. Only one - ...which is your I. (Dag Hammarskjöld as cited in Kroger 2000:2)

Assumingly, congruence in the perception of one’s self is the harmony that a person should strive to achieve. It is the healthy self that also Harré and Moghaddam (2004) discuss in the Positioning theory. Although, Harré and Moghaddam urge to refer to the group, Dag Hammarskjöld encourages to take a look into oneself in order to see or find the most harmonious way to their selves.

From the writer's point of view, it is also essential to add that there can as well be many Is and these can also remain this way, without the need for an individual to find a single one (in contrary to what Dag Hammarskjöld proposes). Indeed, it is possible for a person to live with several Is throughout their life, in the same way as identity, which is multilayered, consisting of many components. In the writer's opinion, if a person feels in harmony with all the I's, which change according to different life situations, and accepts the fact that the self changes according to the context, one can still be in harmony without the necessity to pick a single I, in order to achieve certainty in the definition of their selves.

Various aspects of self-evaluation have been discussed in this sub-chapter. An important conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion is that self-evaluation is only possible in the presence of a CI perceived as a dynamic, changing, and fluid entity. This is because the process of self-evaluation involves looking at one's self from various perspectives, verifying one's identity, and reflecting upon it. At this stage, it still remains relevant to look at a more detailed approach to the process of perception as a multilayered phenomenon and also later to look at what perception brings with it (perception stages or the so-called products of perception).

6 PERCEPTION

6.1 CULTURAL PERCEPTION AS A MULTILAYERED PHENOMENON

Now that it has been discussed in chapter 4 that CI is multilayered, it can be assumed that the way one sees oneself can also take place on various levels or layers. Current sub-chapter deals with cultural perception and allows a thought for fragmented seeing of oneself, because different factors are taken into consideration when perceiving one's or the other person's identity. These factors are the already mentioned culture, nationality, religious belonging, ethnicity, and other factors. Viewing one's or the other person's identity through the different lenses the way a person perceives also changes. Changes in perception depend on which factors and how many of them a person is taking into consideration.

To begin with cultural perception and the essential part that culture plays in perception, Jandt (2004) claims that "culture has a much greater effect on the perception process than on sensation itself", which means that there is a stronger link between culture and perception of a person than between culture and a person's sensations. Furthermore, the author believes that each of the steps of perception process is strongly affected by culture. According to Jandt author, perception process begins with selection, when an individual selects one stimulus from competing ones in the environment to which he/she is exposed. Next, organisation takes place. The stage of categorisation implies the categorisation of stimuli through encoding. And, finally, the last step of perception is interpretation, which appears in practice in the form of decoding, i.e. attaching meaning to data.

As practice shows, perception is partial and, to the writer's mind, very often inaccurate, because perception depends on what a person chooses to emphasise e.g. when evaluating a phenomenon. The choice of emphasis is this initial stage of perception, because it is when a person selects a stimulus. The writer interprets that the reason why a person selects a stimulus is because they are feeling uncomfortable with uncertainty, with competing ideas, which are very

often contradicting. So, one way to put an end to uncertainty is making a conclusion in the form of choosing one stimulus, which can also be named in simple terms as deciding. Selection of a stimulus to concentrate one's perception on happens because it is easier to decide and, thus, also know than to leave undecided and continue to be bothered by the situation.

At this point, the stage of selection flows into organisation, when a person decides to 'organise' their ideas. In the writer's opinion, the necessity or urge to 'organise' is very closely linked to the discussed identity – self-esteem correlation. The lower the self-esteem, the less a person is ambiguity tolerant (consequently, a person also has higher uncertainty avoidance according to Hofstede's (1997) cultural dimensions) and is willing to know where they stand.

The different stages of perception can be summarised in figure 5 (on page 53), which depicts the perception process. In other words, the perception process is the chain of stages that consists of selection of a stimulus → categorisation through encoding (organisation) → interpretation through decoding (attaching meaning).

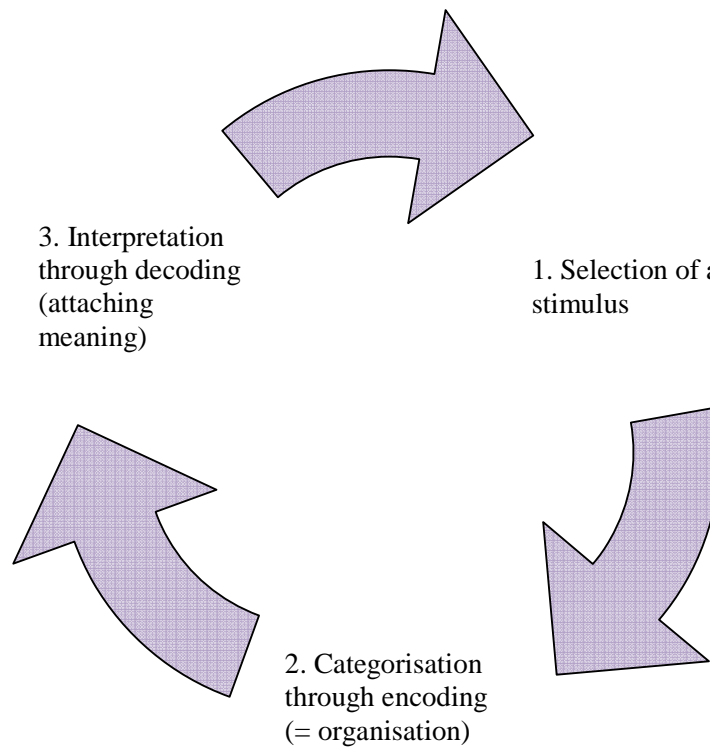


FIGURE 5. The Process of Perception (*adapted for this thesis from Perception as a Process Model by Doyle, 2005*)

According to Smith (1999), the process illustrated in figure 5 is the first dimension of perception. The first dimension of perception overlaps with Jandt's (2004) selection and organisation stages of the process of perceiving, when a person's self is in the struggle of contrasting their identity with their esteem. The struggle is, basically, the asking of a question "Who am I?". However, at the moment of the struggle between one's identity and one's esteem, another process takes place. Once there is also esteem present, the process of evaluation with a question "Am I worthy?" takes place, as well. And this, in its turn, according to Jandt (2004), is the stage of interpretation.

The second dimension that Smith (1999) offers concerns the group, where personal aspects of a person's self are placed in contrast with the collective aspects. The personal aspects of a person's self in contrast with the collective aspects is a continuation stage of interpretation, however, just on a group's level.

The graphical illustration of the influence of the group or ‘the other’ is depicted in figure 6.

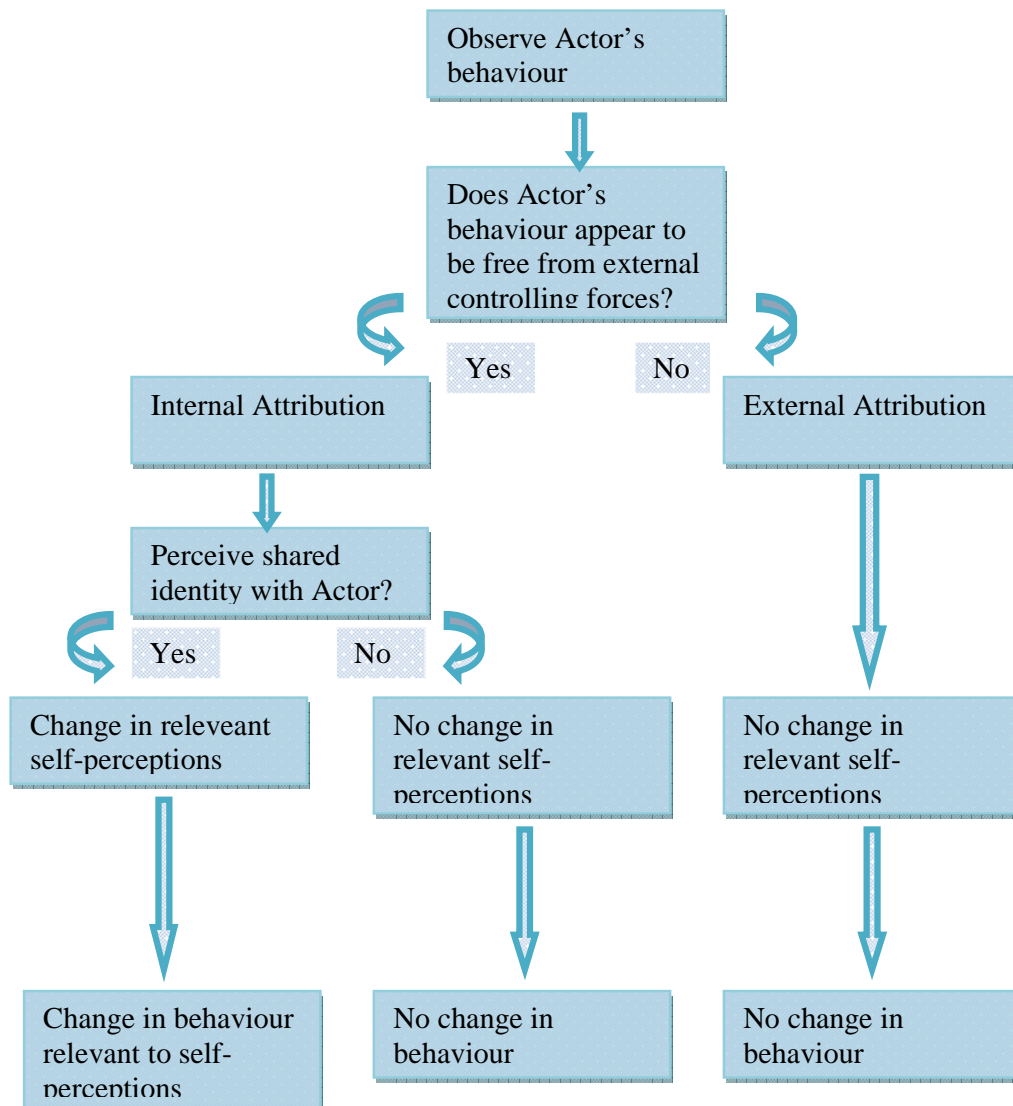


FIGURE 6. The Influence of ‘the Other’ in the Process of Perception

(adapted for this thesis from The spyglass self: A model of vicarious self-perception, Goldstein and Cialdini, 2007)

The original idea underlying figure 6 by Goldstein and Cialdini (2007) is the Self-perception theory (Bem 1967), which implies that a person decides upon their attitudes and feelings, by observing how they behave in certain situations.

Figure 6 depicts self-evaluations as a result of observing other people (the actor). Once an observer identifies their actions with one's own, they imagine themselves to be in the place of the actor. Consequently, an observer comes to a realisation that they are the same or similar to the actor. In such a way, an observer person learns something about their own identity and new ways of seeing or perceiving oneself. If an observer fails to relate themselves to an actor, no change in behaviour of the observer happens. Possibly, the important question now is how the process of perception of an individual is directed towards themselves (their selves), towards their own cultural background, which is composed of multiple layers.

The process of perception is surely complex and multilayered in its nature. Perception is just one part of the self-evaluation process. Continuing with the aspects of self-evaluation and the importance of self-evaluation from sub-chapter 5.3, looking at perception on a broader scale, i.e. as part of re-vision, becomes relevant.

6.2 THE PRODUCTS OF PERCEPTION

At the point when self-identification or verification takes place, a person goes through the process of perception again, in other words, perceiving oneself anew (see Figure 7 for a graphical illustration of the perception and revision of it as a perpetual cycle). Figure 7 is presented in order to demonstrate the importance of perceiving oneself repeatedly from the very start. The process of perceiving anew happens through re-vision, when an individual revises or re-evaluates their CI. After perceiving anew, the conception (i.e. formation) of one's image in a person's mind follows. Once the initial image has formed, it is followed by expression of the image e.g. in a form of behaviour. The expression of the image in a form of behaviour is the transition from theoretical image to practical expression of it. The cycle of perception continues with reflection, when an individual, having noticed their behaviour or the manifestation of their image in practice, reflects upon the behaviour. In such a way, evaluating whether it is the desired behaviour or not, and whether it corresponds to the initial image they created of themselves in their minds. The

final stage of the process of perception is the actual beginning, i.e. the revision of the entire cycle.

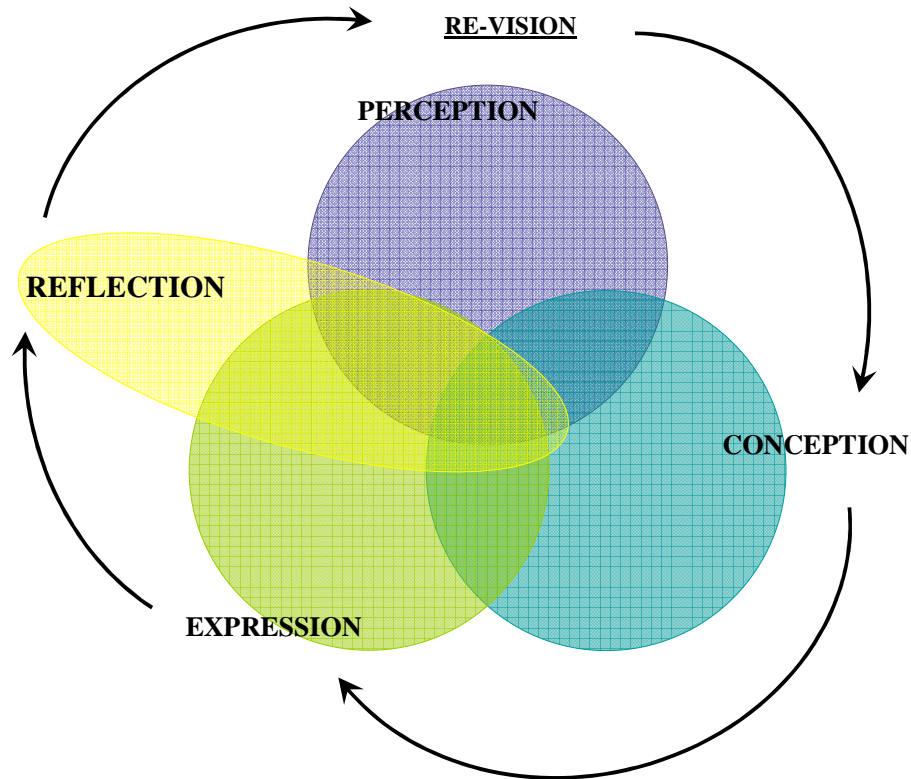


FIGURE 7. The Products of Perception (*adapted for this thesis from a Cycle of Artistic Inquiry by Siegesmund, 2000*)

Once perception is taken as a product of re-vision, perception becomes one part of this process as also what figure 7 illustrates. Following the logical procession of thinking, the process of perception, i.e. figure 5, can be included into the products of perception displayed in figure 7. Consequently, a new model of perception as an important part of re-vision process can be created. Thus, figure 8 below displays the combination of the products of perception with perception as an emphasised aspect.

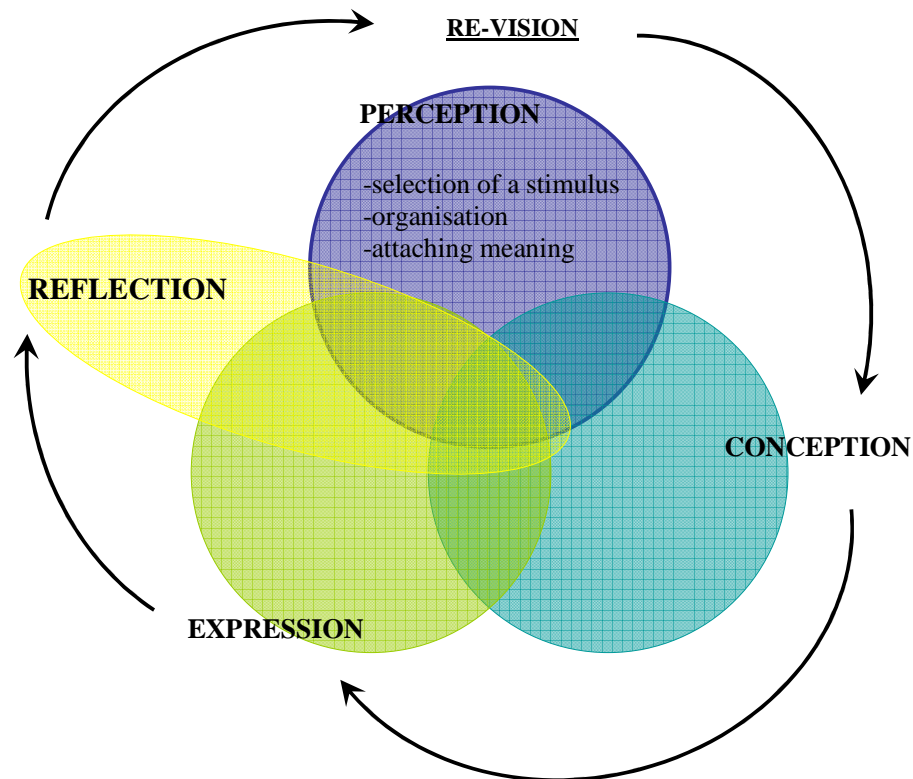


Figure 8. The Process of Perception (Figure 5) and the Products of Perception (Figure 7) Combined

To view the process of perception from a more collective perspective, it is useful to involve ‘the other’ into the discussion. The idea that identity is very often self-defining in groups has been discussed in sub-chapter 5.2. Therefore, the aspect that perception brings with it is the avowal and ascription of CI within a group. An individual belonging to several different groups can be said to possess multiple cultural belonging:

In-group cultural identities and relationships with out-group members are constructed contextually through avowal and ascription. Avowal consists of the perceived identity enacted by the self or group members in a given communication situation. In other words, avowal is, “this is who I am (we are) as a member(s) of my (our) cultural group here and now”. (Collier and Bowker 1994:132–133)

Moreover, ascription of identity is closely linked to the process of perception, which, in its turn, importantly takes place through ‘the other’: “Ascription of

identity consists of perceptions of others' identities and self's perception of identities attributed to self by other." (Collier and Bowker 1994:132–133). The role of 'the other' in the process of perception and creation of one's self is indeed pivotal. To highlight its importance further, in East Asian cultures there is a concept of 'face', which implies a person's public identity (Jones 2008). According to Leary and Tangney (2003:552), it "includes the notion of one's social image that is perceived by others."

To shift the angle from 'the other' to the individual themselves, the writer would like to introduce Judith Butler's (1990) approach to explaining how self is affected, and what self appears to be like in practice. This approach goes in contrary with an earlier mentioned Giddens's (1991) understanding of self-identity and is similar to the views of Michel Foucault (Butler's "Queer Theory" is for the most part a further development of Foucault's ideas). So, according to Butler, there is no inner self; identity as such is not fixed in an individual. As a consequence, all that matters is people's performativity, the ways they express themselves in life. According to her, an individual has a 'body' upon which they can build up whatever they wish and that it should not be tied to the act of identifying, because the ways of building oneself are just a mere performance. However, the reality proves to be different, because individuals tend to identify themselves and each other as well as with each other. Therefore, a struggle between a mere performativity and embedded identity perception takes place (Gauntlett 2002).

Butler's (1990) theory, undoubtedly, helps explain the process of identity's relation to perception and even the act of its manifestation. However, it is also worth of mentioning that her view is a fairly extreme way when taking an identity as a dynamic and fluid entity. Butler's way of seeing dynamic identity, because she believes in nothing in an identity to be fixed or attached. To personally interpret this, everything in terms of identity is like 'hanging in the air', where one identity element is substituting another, appearing and disappearing. To explain the same idea in other words, a person performs

whatever appears and merely performs it without attaching any additional meanings to the performance.

Taking this theory to explain cultural CI's relationship to the self, a person can make of themselves basically what they wish to. A person can make wishful identity become real by taking various roles and simply performing them in life. Hence, a person can perceive themselves belonging to a Latvian, Russian, to the mixture of both (which can be the third culture) or identify themselves as belonging to Finnish culture and be cosmopolitan at the same time. Not having anything fixed in one's identity allows a person to shape and re-shape and build layers of one's CI easily. Also, such authors like Leary and Tangney (2003) believe in the possibility of construction of a desired identity by an individual.

In the writer's opinion, the construction of a desired identity is very closely linked to the changeable nature of life. If only life was static with no changes taking place, there would be no need for re-vision of one's identity, at least not from the outer factors' influence. The fact that times are changing, the perception of one's identity cannot stay the same. Instead, identity should change alongside. Writing about the change, it would now be relevant to propose the discussion on perception in terms of change (as changing times, environment, identity, and the perception of it). The following paragraphs describe different perceptions and what manifestation forms they can take for a person individually.

Through the lens of 'change'

In the times of socio-cultural and/or socio-political change in a country what happens is exactly change. Change becomes as a "constant *becoming* rather than stable *being*" (Piotr Sztompka as cited in Alexander, Eyerman, Giesen, Smelser, and Sztompka 2004:155). The space for fixed perceptions does not exist anymore, everything becomes flowing and changing. The phenomenon of change also makes the writer recall the fluidity of the concept of 'identity', its

changeable nature, and since identity is changeable, it can also be re-defined through the processes of change (cultural or, in general, social, or some other). Re-evaluation of one's identity takes place, because identity's components change, as well; a person becomes someone else rather than statically stays as they are.

In his chapter, Sztompka proposes the term 'cultural trauma', which is a consequence of a cultural change for an individual or society at large. This way, change can be as a sort of developmental change. Change initiates and/or serves as a catalyst of the process of reshaping one's identity.

Change as a catalyst of the process of reshaping identity is a positive perception of cultural trauma that is being dealt with at this point, because cultural perception in this case is perceived in terms of personal development. The question of perception is essential here. Perception can be dual and, depending on what it is, also person's emotions and the way they see themselves varies. One way of a dual way of seeing perception is taking the cultural trauma (change) as negative and really traumatic for a person, causing such emotions as loss of identification, sadness, polarity in various contexts, confusion and the like emotions. Meanwhile, another way of perceiving the cultural trauma would be in a form of a heritage, which is a positive way of seeing one's components of identity that were brought by the change. According to Sztompka, cultural trauma "shows its positive, functional potential as a force of social becoming" (Alexander et al. 2004:194).

In the case of post-communist countries and societies like Latvia, the change of political power (from communist political regime to democracy) took place. The change of power was a political change; however, it automatically and strongly affected the culture that was to appear later on: "One source of cultural traumas is the intensifying intercultural contact, or confrontation of diverse cultures, often resulting in tension, clash, and conflict. The most traumatizing situations occur when the imposition and domination of one culture is secured by force" (Alexander et al. 2004:162).

When a person speaks about force, they very often imply concrete measures that are taken after the culmination point of the process of change has happened; however, can force be just a plain change of power already in itself? In the writer's opinion, it can. The writer does not mean to say that 'change by force' has to be a deliberate negative influencing of the other as it is mentioned in the Sztompka's quotation. To the writer's mind, it is already the very process of change of power that is natural. The change happens naturally and serves as a force or a catalyst for the further change to happen. Once culture and self are connected, that is culture is one of the elements which shapes the self, then according to Leary and Tangney (2003:553): "If the self is molded by culture, changes in cultural environment may affect how the self is perceived."

From the point of view of an individual, "change is especially likely to occur when a person receives feedback that threatens one's confidence in one's self-views" (Leary and Tangney 2003:553). The reception of feedback coincides with the idea of self-verification (Swann 2005), which includes confirmation from the outer environment, namely, from other members of a group or other people other than the self.

6.3 (THE POSSIBLE WAYS AND REASONS OF) PERCEPTION MANIFESTATION

As a result of taking 'either-or' position in the process of identifying, a person takes away from oneself a possibility of experiencing life in its diversity. Taking 'either-or' position, according to Goldberg (1994:372), is irrelevant in today's world, since the author perceives leaving one's culture of origin "as limiting to the development of personal identity." Under the condition of modern pluralism, a plural view on identity would change traditional understanding of identities and make a simultaneous participating of one person in different identities not only a possibility but increasingly even the rule. This means that perceiving identity as a complex, multiple entity is not only relevant nowadays, but simply necessary.

After the perception, comes the actual manifestation of a MCI, which can be described and defined through social behaviour. First of all, depending on how a person behaves, a person can perceive themselves and be perceived by others as being either solidary and loyal to one or two or more cultures. Being solidary or loyal e.g. to two cultures can, consequently, result in the so-called dual-loyalty, which might cause negative reactions from people around:

Under normal circumstances, most human beings live happily with multiple identifications and enjoy moving between them as the situation requires. Sometimes, however, one or the other of these identities will come under pressure from external circumstances, or come into conflict with one of the individual's or family's other identities. Conflicts between loyalty to a national state and solidarity with an ethnic community, within or outside the boundaries of that state, may lead to accusations of "dual loyalties", and families may find themselves torn between the claims of competing communities and identities. (Smith 1999:229–230)

In terms of an individual, the writer believes that a person might feel the inner struggle to choose; otherwise, they would think they are not being honest neither to themselves nor to the people around. Sometimes a person with a dual-loyalty can even experience the feeling of being lost, because in addition to failure to choose between two cultures, they fail to understand which of the cultures is more dominant in them.

Secondly, an individual can come to a realisation that they are very different according to varying contexts. An individual might feel like they do not possess any one or a few identities at all, because they feel that their CI is situational. Situational CI might be there or it might not be, or a situational CI can be substituted by something else. To continue with Smith's point of view:

...it becomes important to observe the distinction between individual and collective identification. For the individual, or at any rate for most individuals, identity is usually "situational"; if not always optional. That is to say, individuals identify themselves and are identified by others in different ways according to the situations in which they find themselves; as when one goes abroad, one tends to classify oneself (and be classified by others) differently from one's categorization at home. (Smith 1999:230)

Also Helve and Wallace (2001) view identity based on a varying context and look at this issue from the perspective of young people (between the age of 15

and 24). The authors believe that young people do not have fixed values and norms for these are dependent on places they are in.

The situational perception of one's CI slightly overlaps with or reminds of Butler's theory of identity performativity (Butler 1990). Butler's theory implies the changeable nature of identity and the capacity of a person not to be attached to identity, but merely perform situational roles.

The phenomenon of perceiving one's identity according to situation can also be named as 'frame switching'. Offered by Leary and Tangney (2003:555) the act of 'frame switching' "suggests that multiple internalized cultures are not necessarily blended and that absorbing a second culture does not necessitate a substitution of the old cultural meaning system." Indeed, the fact that is important to highlight here is that multiple layers of a CI can be independent of each other, and these layers can exist like that without blending.

Ethnicity–culture–territory relationships dimension

The ethnicity-culture-territory dimension suggests at least two ways of manifesting one's MCI. The relationships are as follows:

- ethnicity + culture, where identity perception is tied to where one comes from as to their ethnic roots, while making CI static, because according to Brubaker (2006:148) "movement of borders across people" takes place instead of people crossing the borders and 'deleting' them.
- territory + culture implies identity perception that is tied to where one presently belongs to by living within a certain territory. Brubaker (2006:148) names this phenomenon in the way that "ethnic groups arise through migration", which is the opposite of the 'ethnicity + culture' dimension.

To sum up, in the first (ethnicity + culture) relationship an individual possesses a culture according to their ethnic background or ethnic roots, and in

the second relationship an individual possesses a culture of a territory (where they reside) in question.

Borders–migration dimension

The division into ‘ethnicity + culture’ and ‘territory + culture’ can also be named as ‘immigrant ethnicity’ and ‘territorial nationality’ perception (in the order of their equivalent relationships mentioned above) after Brubaker (2006). However, the author looks at basically the same issue, but from a different angle, from the one of borders and migration. Indeed, Brubaker distinguishes two ways of how ethnic heterogeneity can be socially organised and politically expressed. In the author’s opinion this differentiation can be made as ‘immigrant ethnicity’ and ‘territorial nationality’. The author continues by writing that in the east central Europe “ethnicity is nationalized, while nationality and nationhood are ethnicized” (Brubaker 2006:149), which according to the author is more threatening.

The author develops the idea by stating that ‘immigrant ethnicity’ is mainly characteristic of the Eastern European countries, members of which are

... ordinarily citizens of the country in which they reside, yet they often identify culturally and sometimes politically with a neighbouring “kin” or “homeland” state, to which they see themselves as “belonging” by shared ethnicity or culture, though not by legal citizenship. Lastly, and crucially, they define themselves in national terms. They see themselves as belonging not simply to a distinct ethnic group, but to a distinct nation or nationality that differs from the nation or nationality of their fellow-citizens. (Brubaker 2006:148)

The last sentence of the quotation, basically, serves as an answer to the question what the perception of CI appears to be like in practice (how it is manifested) and why cross-cultural clashes come into being already within the geographic-political borders of one state. As Brubaker stated (see the previous paragraph), the ‘immigrant ethnicity’ type of identity perception is dangerous or more threatening in a social context.

Following the pattern that Brubaker offers, ethnicity within such states becomes nationality forming a territorial ethnicity-as-nationality perception of identity, where “ethnic heterogeneity is coded as national heterogeneity” (Brubaker 2006:148). The author continues by writing that “this territorial ethnicity-as-nationality is very different from immigration-engendered polyethnicity. Using the same term – “ethnicity” or “ethnic minorities” – to designate both can be misleading.” (Brubaker 2006:148).

Dealing with the borders-migration dimension of perceiving, the necessity to look at the issue of identity manifestation from a different angle arises. Consequently, that also changes the perception of the issue. In the paragraphs describing borders-migration dimension, MCI is simply ignored in the process of perceiving one’s self. It, basically, does not exist, because one way of seeing one’s culture takes place, as a mono-culture or as a homogenous culture and, in addition, attaching its meaning to other types of identity (equating CI to ethnic identity, as well as to national identity). The self, in this situation, is created based solely upon primordial (Smith 1998) conceptions.

Following the ‘immigrant ethnicity’ pattern, in other words, the absence of multiple layers in the perception of one’s self, the situation where multiple layers are present becomes relevant to look at. The absence of multiple layers in a person’s perception of one’s self cause negative emotions, because self-perceptions are split and/or doubled in the case of possessing multilayered identity.

[Indeed,] the old pedagogical and homogenizing narratives of the people and the nation have given way to split and doubled perceptions of identity, history and community, where the self is defined by its relationship to the other. We live today in fragmented and precarious nations housed in anxious states. (Anderson 1983; Bhabha 1990 in Smith 1999:259)

To the category of split perceptions one can also fit marginalisation (Jandt 2004), which implies a loss of one’s CI and inability to perceive oneself as belonging anywhere.

It seems, perception is a very subjective phenomenon, because perception is based on each individual's own interpretation. Moreover, perception can also be confusing. Described in the previous paragraph of this sub-chapter, perception can even cause split and doubled interpretations, leaving a person totally confused as to who they are in cultural terms. Not only personal perceptions can be confusing, but also other people's perceptions, which in mutual interaction or exchange have effect on people. In connection to this, Meurs, van (2010:11) offers her own definition of perception: "Perception: imagine you meet someone who thinks the earth is flat. Would it occur to you that you are wrong for thinking it is not? Imagine they try to convince you from seeing things their way. Annoying, isn't it?" Perception, as the writer sees it, is like playing a game with individual subjective interpretations of the experienced. Exactly in such situations as, for example, the one described by Meurs, van, a person can see what perception really is.

In conclusion, MCI of an individual can be manifested in the following ways. First, MCI can be manifested as solidarity and a feeling of loyalty to various cultures represented in a person's identity, and, at the same time, MCI can sometimes cause negative connotation of the phenomena, which is named as a person having dual (or multiple) loyalties simultaneously. Second, MCI can be manifested situationally, without having any constant or unchanging form. Third, there can be an even more exaggerated way of manifesting that takes place through the notion of 'immigrant ethnicity', by which own cultural perception is determined. The way of manifestation through 'immigrant ethnicity' implies absence of multilayered perception in an individual, because it (one culture) is substituted by or equated to ethnicity. And, lastly, MCI can appear in practice as split and doubled perceptions. The split and doubled perceptions create identity confusion in a person, when they do not know which culture to relate themselves to.

According to Brück, von (2009, section "B" in General Remarks Concerning the Construction of Identity), "different identities do not necessarily exclude each other, but can complement each other." Also Risse (2003) and Schlenker

(2007) believe that these various identities can be related to each other through mutual influencing. The mutual influencing is reinforced by the processes of amalgamation (mixing and blending) and exclusion.

In theory, it can be generally concluded that multiple identities are capable of taking various forms:

- identities can complement (not excluding) each other;
- identities can blend with each other;
- identities can exist independently of each other;
- identities can exist independently and be switched or changed according to varying context.

The forms of multiple identities or types of perceptions of MCI can be illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 1. Types of Self-perceptions and Their Effects

Type of perception / Perception as:	Effect of the type of perception
Solidarity and loyalty	Dual loyalties
Situational identity	Frame switching
Absence of a multilayered perception of one's cultural identity	'Immigrant ethnicity', by which one's own cultural perception is determined
Split and doubled	Marginalisation

Looking back at the collective factor and its close relationship with the individual self explains why MCI appears in practice as it does: "The individual faces a constant tension between wanting to be unique on the one hand while being like others on the other." (Harré and Moghaddam 2003:211). The process mentioned by Harré and Moghaddam is the so-called 'optimal distinctiveness', which Brewer (2003) has written much about.

According to Moss (2009), there are two fundamental needs of a person in relation to the surroundings, which are the need to belong or assimilate (the writer's addition would also be 'to integrate') and the need to feel distinct and

unique. This way a person can create one's own unique culture. The two needs are contradictory, however, when balanced they can create a healthy or dialogical self.

The author continues by writing that the two "fundamental needs, for example, are fulfilled when individuals identify with smaller groups: they feel they belong to this collective but nevertheless feel distinct from the majority of individuals in their environment" (Moss 2009).

Culture is collective, so an individual belongs to a cultural group, but, as soon as it comes to making choices, the angle changes from collective to individual. The change of angle happens because then the issue at stake is a personal identity. Collective cultural identity, thus, only serves as a catalyst. As a matter of fact, what happens is that an individual is self-verifying and merely performing (according to Butler) the end-result of self-verification.

Regardless Butler's ideas, not only verification and performance are important, but also the question of retaining one's MCI. Once a person has found their self in the process of self-evaluation and self-verification (Swann 1983, 2005), they find themselves willing to maintain self as it is. This is because the act of retaining identity comes into play.

6.4 RETAINMENT OF ONE'S IDENTITY

No matter how much a person might be willing to adjust to changes and, as a result, change, one can find that being true only to a certain extent. The changes a person experiences are created by one's exposure to different cultures (and, in general, other different external factors). One becomes affected by the different cultures. However, taking the Theory of Identity which supports the view of identity having some sort of a core, then the resistance to change is in the form of a core. A person might be influenced by various factors; however, there is something in a person that they decide not to become influenced by, but, on the contrary, the elements of their identity that they wish to sustain.. Mahatma Gandhi (1921:170) once wrote: "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I

want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as free as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.”

Jacques Chirac expressed a similar thought during the campaign for cultural diversity emphasising the uniqueness of each culture and, thus, also people’s refusal to change culture easily: “Culture is not a commodity. Nations want to exchange their goods, but they want to retain their soul.” (UNESCO convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. *The campaign for cultural diversity: why it matters to you.* 2007:6). In this quotation, culture is viewed in a gracious way as a soul of a nation. This description of culture assigns culture too much value to be simply exchanged or substituted by something else. Hence, this is the issue of the retainment of one’s culture as identity.

Willingness to remain as a certain type of a person can pave the way to making a completely new individual cultural system. The cultural trauma has been discussed in sub-chapter 6.2. It has also been discussed what cultural trauma brings with it, depending on how cultural trauma is perceived and what attitude a person adopts towards change. In general, it can be concluded that the process inevitably leads to change in whatever form and despite everything: “In spite of the disruption and disarray of cultural order that trauma brings about, in a different time scale it may be seen as the seed of a new cultural system.” (Alexander et al. 2004:194). The possible appearing of a new cultural system can, undoubtedly, create separate identities. The separate identities would be completely new identities with all their uniqueness and distinctiveness in combination of various cultural elements. To exemplify, in the context of Latvia, the possible identity perceptions can be as Latvian-Latvian, Latvian-Russian and Russian-Latvian cultural identities. The writer urges the reader to note the importance of order in which the cultures in each of the perceptions are stated.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The thesis presented the issue of MCI through the lenses of self-perception, using various theories as a support to explain the phenomenon. Since the field of intercultural communication is interdisciplinary, the scope of theories applied in describing and explaining the phenomenon was also broad (ranging from the field of psychology to gender studies). Thus, making the scope of theories applied also interdisciplinary.

To remind the reader of the research questions posed at the beginning of the study, the research questions were the following:

1. How is multilayered cultural identity described in modern literature?
2. What relationship does a multilayered cultural identity of an individual have with the perception of one's self?

The initial stage of the presentation of the main findings to the research questions is, generally, connected with the possible ways of viewing identity. In order to remind the reader of the possible ways of viewing identity, the writer would like to return to the ideas expressed in the Introduction (chapter 1) of this thesis. According to chapter 1, there are opposing views of the CoI in terms of what the concept appears to be like. One view is that identity is a static entity, with a core, which is unlikely to change during the time (Fanon 1967; Lustig and Koester 1993). Another way of viewing identity is as a fluid and constantly evolving entity, without a core (Mead 1934; Giddens 1991; Ludovico 2009). Possibly, there are various other approaches to identity with authors emphasising different aspects. Regardless the possible other ways of viewing identity, the writer would like to propose the third way of seeing the CoI. The third way is the way that combines two opposing views of identity. Namely, the writer believes in an identity having a definite core, which is quite stable throughout the lifetime. It can become altered slightly, but, certainly, not become easily changed. In addition to the fairly static centre, the core; identity possesses levels or layers that surround the core, and these layers are very dynamic, mutually permeating, and able to change quite radically. For instance,

the layers can be altered, changed, mutually switched, removed, and created anew.

The reason to align with the writer's position is as follows. The view of identity proposed does not take a radical position, but, instead, this view combines both views of identity as being static and fluid. 'The middle way' of seeing identity implies the possibility of having a core, which is something that is more or less stable in one's personality. The view comprising two opposing views also gives a person a chance to possess something of a more stable nature, having some sort of a 'backbone'. At the same time, the both views' comprising way of looking at the issue of identity gives plenty of opportunity for change. It is noteworthy to disclaim that identity does not exclude change, but, in contrary, identity gives a way to change. The process of change, presented in chapter 6, is a positive and favourable phenomenon. Change is a positive phenomenon, because people find themselves living in the constantly changing times. Change of a society and each one individual in a society becomes a completely natural consequence. According to Sztompka (as cited in Alexander et al. 2004:155), change is a "constant *becoming* rather than stable *being*". Therefore, a changing identity is the type of identity that is very much relevant nowadays.

Due to the fact that the writer of the thesis has adopted a dynamic view on the CoI, the main findings of the literature review in question are presented taking this view into account.

The main findings

The main findings of this literature review were that identity is plural and has a complex nature due to identity's dynamicity and fluidity. There are links between the major concepts of the topic of this thesis. In other words, the concepts: culture, identity, and the self are interconnected. Allowing the plural nature of identity, also the concepts culture and the self, in mutual interplay with identity, are plural. The plurality of the three concepts, in its turn, allows viewing of culture, identity, and the self in a layered way, making each of the

concepts consist of multiple layers. Consequently, the relevancy of looking at the CI from a multilayered perspective arises.

As a result of this literature review, it has been found that the exact formulation 'MCI' of this concept is not really used in the modern literature. The formulation 'MI' appears instead. Therefore, the answer to the first research question of this study is that MCI is described as MI in the modern literature. The concepts of MCI and MI are similar; however, they do not emphasise one and the same aspect. The nuance in the difference between the two formulations has been discussed in sub-chapter 4.1. The difference can be summed up to be in the broadness of the concepts out of which two formulations 'multicultural' is broader, because 'multicultural' implies multiplicity of cultures present in an identity. Meanwhile, 'multilayered' stresses the structure built layer-by-layer of such type of CI. The structure, however, is already included in the multiplicity, because for something to be multiple, it has to be built or consist of multiple appearances (layers, levels, stages, blocks, or any other form in which the multiplicity can be displayed). In this thesis, the choice was placed on the usage of the wording 'MCI' to emphasise the structural nature and the capacity of a CI to be multiplied. The importance of the development of multiple identities (Thije, ten 2003) has also been discussed much in the literature; however, it does not emphasise the layers already present in one identity.

The writer hopes the term 'MCI' will be used more in the future in order to stress not merely the presence of multiple cultures, but also the multiple layers that each of the cultures can consist of, as well. Here, identity is not perceived as something that is very strictly defined, except for the presence of a core. Identity is not perceived as something strict, because very often defining means limiting, and, in the writer's perception, identity is something that is evolving outside its core, having no clear boundaries. That is why to define one's identity is a complicated task, if it is possible at all. An individual can only interpret their perceptions, and it is only by taking into account both own

perceptions and the perceptions of others (i.e. how others perceive that person), that one can come to a more or less objective viewing of one's self.

Despite the fact that the formulation suggested in this thesis is absent in the modern literature, the components (which are also concepts on their own) constituting this term: culture, identity, and self have been discussed much by contemporary authors. In addition, it has been found that there are mutual links also between culture, identity, and the self. The concepts are all interconnected and they help explain each other. For instance, just like culture relates to one's identity, culture also has a link to the self. The self is a wholeness of all identities, and, thus, is also a broader term than identity. Discussions around these concepts and their mutual interplay trigger other essential concepts, such as the concept of a healthy self which comes along with the social aspect (the role of a group and 'the other'). Healthy self, in its turn, is also connected to self-esteem and the amount of esteem is, to a fairly large extent, dependent on the others. The amount of esteem is also dependent on the feeling of belonging to the others, and being accepted in a group of others.

Another finding that can be drawn from the literature review in question is that MCI of an individual as a social being is dependent on a group and appears, is shaped and manifested in interaction with others (Positioning Theory and Cultural Identity Theory). The manifestation of MCI for the most part is or can be due to pure performativity (Queer Theory). The manifestation of MCI is or can be dependent on the need and necessity to self-affirm and self-verify a person's own CI (Self-Verification Theory).

Concluded at the end of this study, identity, in itself, is a very flexible entity also in terms of its inter-relationships with other identities (as well as layers of identities). Identities can complement each other. Identities are also capable of blending with each other. Moreover, they can exist simultaneously and independently of each other. Identities can, as well, exist just independently and be switched according to varying situations and circumstances in a person's life.

This study has shown that there are at least four different ways of seeing oneself because of the dynamicity of identity in interrelationships with other identities. First of all, a person can see themselves as solidary and loyal to two or more cultures at the same time. Second, a person can see themselves in a way that their perception changes according to varying context (linked to possessing a situational identity). Third, a person can see themselves as not belonging to any of the categories, by lacking a multilayered perception of their CI at all. Lastly, a person can see themselves in a confused way due to their perceptions being split and doubled. Moreover, there is a correlation between self-esteem and the way perceptions are manifested (i.e. how perceptions appear in life).

According to various perception manifestations of MCI, various effects of manifestations have been explored. The effects found are the feelings that certain ways of perceptions can cause to an individual personally. To give an example relevant to this discussion, such effects can be that a person feels loyal to two or more cultures at the same time. Another extreme way of perceiving oneself is having a feeling of marginalisation. A person can be said to possess marginalised perceptions, when they fail to relate themselves to any of the cultures. In other words, a person with marginalised perceptions experiences confusion in terms of their CI.

Tying the concept of a healthy self to the possible perception manifestations, it can be said that there is, indeed, a connection between them. The way the writer sees healthy self, in practical terms, is the solidary way of perceiving one's self. Healthy self is also about the varying way of seeing oneself according to different situations (situational perception) in terms of their MCI. So these are the ways of perceptions mentioned as the first and the second types in sub-chapter 6.3 (see also Table 1 for assistance) of this thesis. The third and the fourth types, absence of a multilayered perception and split and doubled perceptions of one's CI, are not applicable to the notion of a healthy self. This is because the third type, the absence of the perception of a CI as a

multilayered construct or phenomenon, implies rejection. In the writer's perception, healthy self is based on awareness, understanding, and, lastly and most importantly, on acceptance. As to the fourth type of perception, namely split perception of a CI, neither this way of seeing oneself projects healthy self of a personality. It is due to the feeling of rejection, confusion and unconstructive seeing of one's self.

Additionally, it has been found that the way an individual sees themselves is dependent upon their perception and that the perception is a very subjective source of input. Having discussed the process of perception with its constituent stages, it is possible to come to a certain conclusion. The conclusion suggests that the later stages of perception, i.e. self-identification, verification, reflection, and repeating re-evaluation of oneself are particularly important as to how a person sees themselves. The findings suggest that, in general, it is important to go through all the stages in order to see oneself from a varied perspective. Nevertheless, the writer is sceptical that something objective can come out of the subjective basis. Once perception is subjective at its initial stage of the selection of stimuli, the outcome will also be subjective. It is due to the fact that a person is already being subjective as to what they choose as stimuli, why they pick out exactly those particular stimuli from the environment and not the other? An individual is biased already as to what they prioritise and choose to concentrate on in their perceptions of themselves. A separate question is how others see them, which has to be also taken into account. It is only by taking the combination of two views (how one sees and how others see that person) together, a person can be objective about themselves to its possible extent. Therefore, the group and others around play a vital role in the process of making self-perceptions.

To sum up, MCI, in its essence, is cosmopolitan, because the term is inclusive of various cultural elements. People possessing this type of a CI are named as cosmopolitans for they "suppose that all cultures have enough overlap in their vocabulary of values to begin a conversation" (Appiah 2006:57). This is what the idea of a MCI is basically aimed at, to create or mould one's CI in such a

way that there would be no radical ways of self-perceptions as 'one or the other'. Instead, it is useful to substitute the radical self-perceptions with complementary perceptions in which one identity element complements to, permeates with, and is built upon by another element. Consequently, the existence of all identity elements at the same time becomes possible.

7.2 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

Looking back on the work done, the process of collecting literature sources for the thesis was fairly international. In the process of writing the paper, the writer has been working at the libraries in Finland (at the University of Jyväskylä), Switzerland (during the Eurocampus 2009 exchange studies at the University of Lugano) and Sweden, while an exchange studies semester at the University of Uppsala.

The time of studying the subject of MCI and its relationship with the perception of the self was, undoubtedly, interesting and engaging; however, not without its contradictions and uncertainties. The uncertainties also have an effect on the reliability of this study, which is purely based upon a theoretical framework with sole insights from author's personal experience as a source of practical implication. One, among other uncertainties, was that, in the very beginning, the writer was considering the possibility of carrying out a case study on the subject, with semi-structured in-depth interviews as a data collection method. Initially, the writer intended to get to the bottom of the issue in terms of finding out the reasons lying behind certain ways of how individuals perceive their cultural identities. Nonetheless, in the process of considering the research type the writer realised that finding out the reasons would be far too idealistic way of carrying out this study. Therefore, encouraged by the thesis adviser, the writer realised that the topic of *Multilayered Cultural Identity and the Perception of the Self* was very suitable for a theoretical study. Thus, it was decided to begin the process of research by gathering relevant literature and, with the help of the literature, deconstructing key concepts of the thesis topic.

As the next step, the links between the concepts were explored and described in order to show mutual interconnectedness. In addition, the question of how the concepts are related to each other in terms of the topic of the thesis was also explored. Undoubtedly, this could have been done also for a case study if only it was chosen to be carried out. The text on concepts would have been in its theoretical part. Nonetheless, explaining the theoretical nature of the rest of the text (namely, the 2nd research question, including the ways in which a person can perceive themselves as a result of a multilayered construct of their identity). The writer realised that by carrying out interviews, it would be unlikely to cover all the possible multilayered cultural identities perceptions of individuals. In order to make the probability higher, the writer would have to carry out numerous interviews, which would also influence the volume of the work done. It would be far too large for the thesis that was intended to be written in the beginning. Therefore, it seemed to be more effective and engaging to speculate theoretically upon the phenomenon of MCI.

The sources of data used in this study were reliable. The sources were books of various acknowledged authors in the field of identity research. Alongside the paper copies of books borrowed from the libraries, the writer was also using electronic versions of books, which were not available in paper format. In addition to that, the writer was using electronic journal articles as a source of information for her research. This was possible due to the access to databases of the universities' libraries. For instance, the databases EBSCOhost, Ebrary, SAGE Journals, SWISSBIB.

Also, other non-library based electronic sources were used, such as Internet homepages of various organisations and private homepages of different individuals. Validity of these type of sources can be questioned in terms of their availability on the Internet. At the time of writing this thesis the Internet pages were available; however, they might become inaccessible over time. This can happen either due to the fact that particular article pages' names have been changed or removed by their creators, or simply made temporarily unavailable.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this literature review as a scoping study. The limitation of the study is achieved with the help of the scoping studies limitation points proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005). To begin with, this scope study does not acknowledge the quality of evidence presented in the primary research reports in a formal way. Also the quantity of data generated for the scoping study to discuss the topic in question is always a point of discussion. Consequently, the issue of how broad and how deep this study should be becomes debatable.

The following questions arise in the writer's mind. Is the present breadth and depth of research chosen sufficient? Should it still be adjusted? If adjusted, how will it influence the literature currently reviewed and the presented findings? Will it possibly shift the focus of the thesis and re-adjust its aim? The re-adjustment of the aim would not be a desired outcome. How the reliability of the study and its findings would be affected?

Expanding on the choice of sources, the selection was based on what seemed relevant for the chosen thesis topic at that point in time. Certain aspects were taken into consideration when selecting the sources. The aspects were relevancy, current nature, variety, and whether or not the sources in question were suitable for the support of the writer's arguments. It is impossible for the writer to be completely certain of not having overlooked important sources during this study due to the simple fact that probability of doing that is always high. The probability of overlooking important sources is high, because, for example, while a person is concentrating on one aspect, (which at that point seems to be very important), one can easily ignore another essential aspect. Meanwhile, this other essential aspect might prove to have been fairly useful at the later stages of the study.

Next point, according to the authors Arksey and O'Malley, is that the scoping study does not deal so much (if at all) with synthesising the data from the literature. Instead, a scoping study has more of a narrating and descriptive

function. It seems, it would be a nearly impossible task to provide with both functions in just one literature review. Both synthesising, narrating and describing the data would not be possible, because already taking one (e.g. descriptive) function into account, “conducting a scoping study requires reviewers to have high degrees of analytic skill in order to develop frameworks through which large numbers of studies can be described” (Arksey and O’Malley 2005:30). In conclusion, this study is only partially a scoping study, because ideas are presented and described in it however, there is a personal touch present in this scoping study, as well. The personal touch serves as another limiting aspect to the study.

Lastly, there is a general debate concerning the very scope of a literature review. Arksey and O’Malley are concerned about the role of a scoping study in relation to other types of literature reviews, and whether or not there are boundaries present between them. In the case of this thesis, it is difficult to draw clear boundaries and identify to which type this literature review belongs as its type and the aim are a mixture of several types. Therefore, the discussion of the definition of this literature review serves as another limiting factor to this study, in case, the definition is necessary at all. The question whether there is necessity to define this literature review or not makes placing this study into a particular category very relative.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The potential relevance of the topic *Multilayered Cultural Identity and the Perception of the Self* and, thus, the issue around multilayered construct of a CI as perceived by a person themselves was described in the Introduction section (chapter 1) of the thesis.

In the writer’s opinion, the issue of perceiving one’s CI as a multilayered construct is truly universal. In any corner of the world an individual can find themselves thinking about identity issues, either the same person changing locations or different single individuals in different parts of the world. Also, in terms of a group, any nation can find themselves facing the issue of identity. It is not only about the cross-cultural paradigm (across the cultures and across the

states or countries). It is, as well, about the intercultural individual aspect and intercultural relations of the people within the borders of the same state, once the state encompasses various cultures in it. Today, the relevancy of intercultural relations is increasing due to globalising forces that reinforce migration and establishment of various smaller and larger cultural communities within one country. Hence, the discussions on the necessity of developing MCI is both a current and an on-going process: “There is a general trend towards dynamic and multifaceted identities in the context of globalization, which is favouring the emergence of a nomadic spirit.” (UNESCO World Report 2009:7).

Finally, the question of identity and its perception by an individual is a psychological issue. The writer believes that for an individual to be concerned about their identity is a never-ending process. Identity and how an individual sees identity is something that is just so characteristic of a human to be concerned with. Willingness to discover their selves is a natural outcome, as it is only by finding selves that one can develop harmonious and healthy perception of one’s ‘bodily self’, the concept that has been emphasised in this Master’s Thesis.

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