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On the move within themselves – cultural distance and negotiation processes of cultural belonging

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- Acculturation has been described as a **multidimensional** process consisting of the confluence of different cultural practices, values and identifications.
- A growing body of research focuses on identifications of persons growing up with **multiple cultural experiences** and how these influences are **negotiated within *themselves***.
- «*Having exposure to multiple cultures is becoming the norm rather than the exception*» (p. 963, West et al. 2017)

■ Early Models

- LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton (1993)
- Phinney & Devich-Navarro (1997)

■ Newer Models

- Cultural Frame-switching (CFS) – Hong et al. (2000)
- Bicultural Integration Model (BII) – Benet-Martínez et al. (2012)
- Acculturation Complexity Model – Tadmor & Tetlock (2006)

■ Recent Models

- Transformative Theory of Biculturalism - West et al. (2017)
- Multicultural identity integration framework - Amiot et al., (2007); Yampolsky et al., (2013)

Framework developed by LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton (1993)

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- Conducted a literature review on the *psychological impact of biculturalism* with the intention to show alternatives to the assumption of a linear model of culture acquisition.
- Five different models of second culture acquisition (Assimilation, Acculturation, *Alternation*, Multiculturalism, Fusion)
- Focus on *effective functioning* of individuals in dual cultures.
- Development of the construct of bicultural **competence** which grows mainly out of the alternation model.

Dimensions of Bicultural Competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993):

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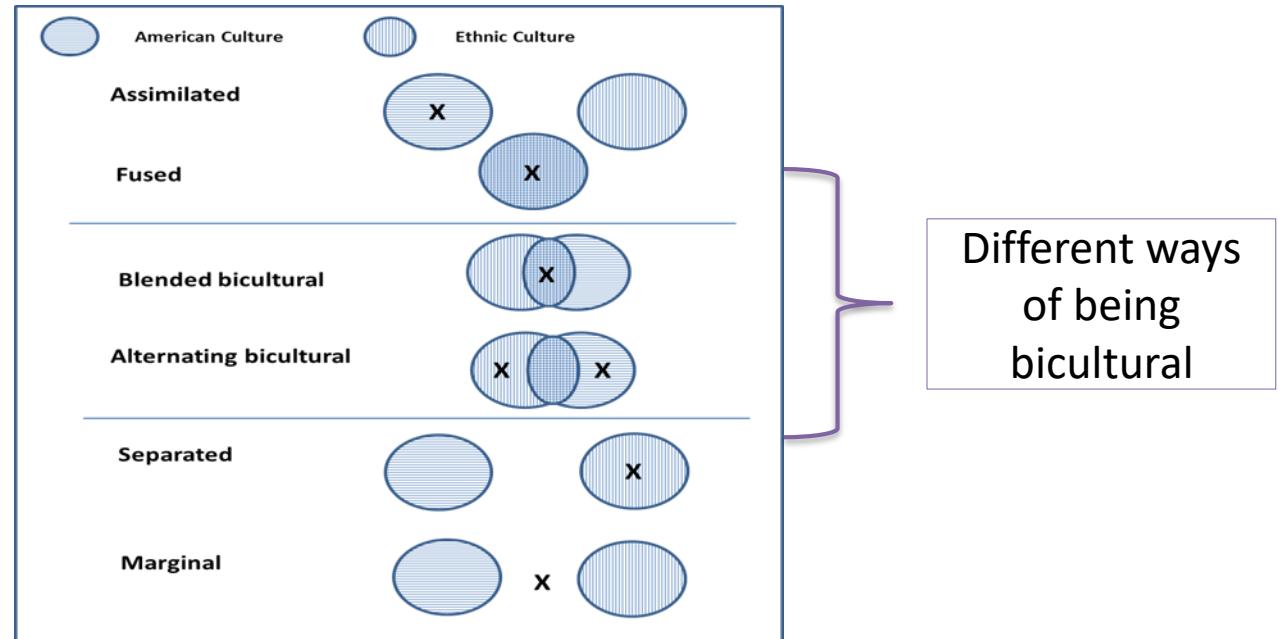


1. Knowledge of cultural beliefs and values
2. Positive attitudes to both groups
3. Bicultural efficacy
4. Communication ability
5. Role repertoire (range of culturally or situationally appropriate behaviors or roles)
6. Sense of being grounded (stable social networks)

Framework developed by J.S. Phinney & M. Devich-Navarro (1997)

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- There is more than one way to being bicultural:



The circles in the diagram represent ethnic and American cultures respectively, and the "X" represents the individual's position with respect to the two cultures.

Multicultural identification (Amiot et al., 2007; Yampolsky et al., 2013)

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- **Categorization:** People identify with one of their cultural groups over others
- **Compartmentalization:** People maintain multiple, separate identities within themselves
- **Integration:** People link their multiple cultural identities.

Research Question: Cultural belonging

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Building on the multicultural identity integration research we were particularly interested whether participants

- identify with one cultural group over others (categorization),
- keep their influences separate (compartmentalization) or
- link their cultural influences (integration).

Research Question: Cultural belonging

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We also wanted to explore drivers for each outcome – in particular:

- The ***cultural distance*** of country of origin of parents.
- Parental constellation (mono – vs. mixed parental)

Participants

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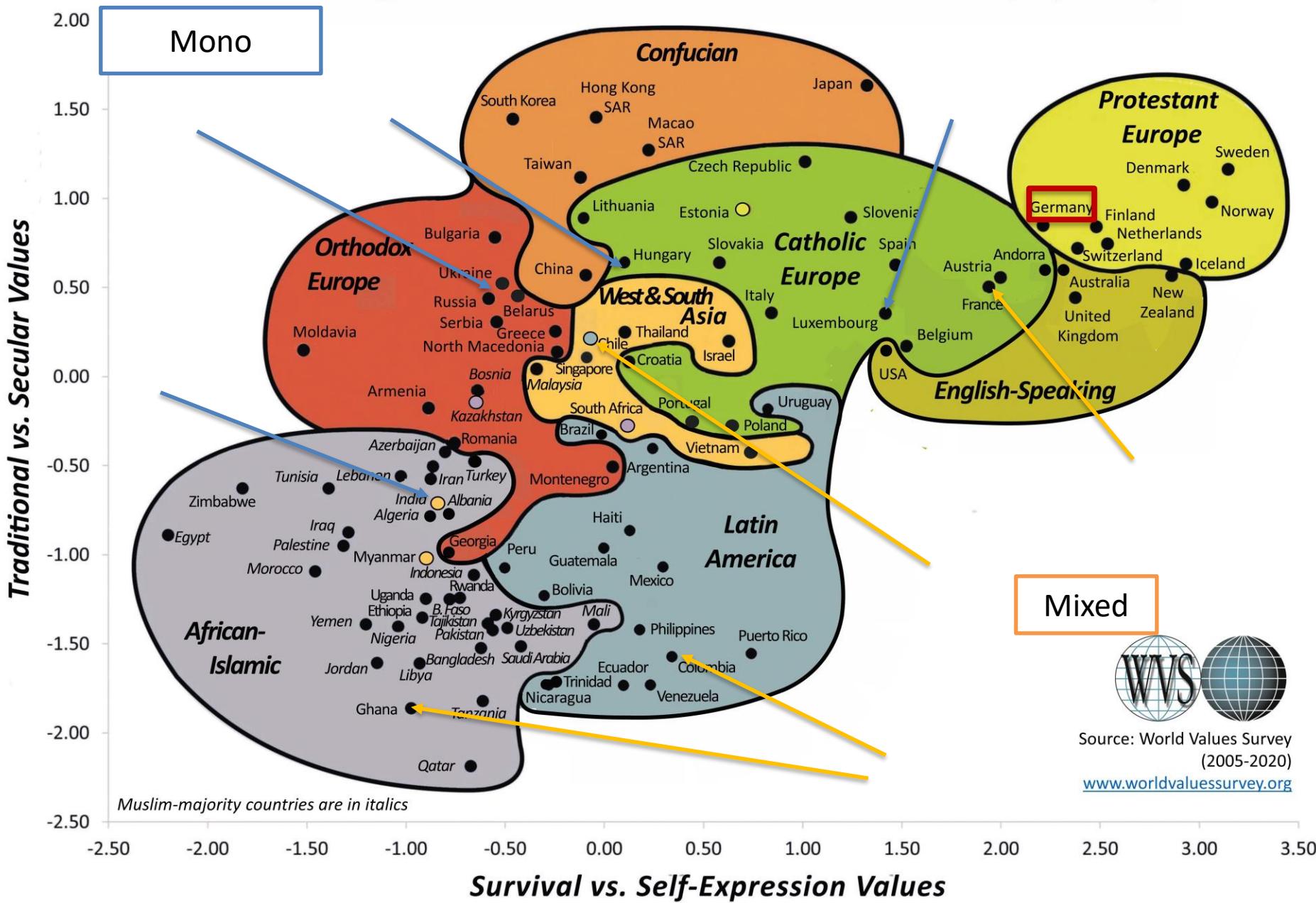
- 8 Participants (Qualitative Study)
 - All female
 - Age range – between 21 -25 ($M_{age} = 22.6$)
 - Well educated – all achieved higher education entrance qualification (Abitur)
 - All grew up **in Germany**
 - Half with **mono-cultural** first generation immigrant parents
 - Half with **mixed-national** parents – one parent German and the other parent coming from a different country.

Country of Origin Parents:

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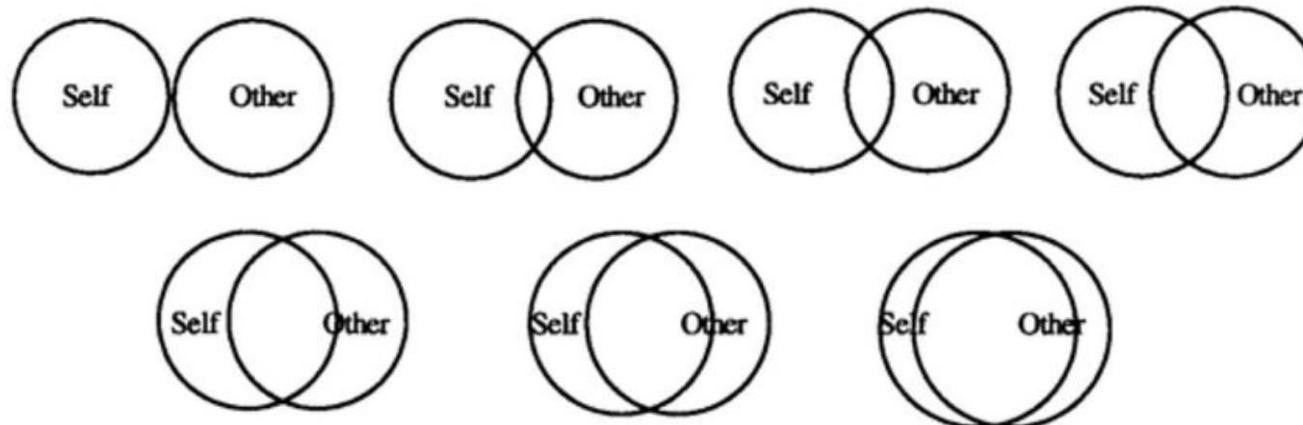
Mono-national	Mixed-national	
CoO Parents	CoO Mother	CoO Father
Luxembourg	France	DE
Hungary	DE	Ghana
Russia	Columbia	DE
Sri Lanka	DE	Chile

The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map (2020)



- Socio-demographic questionnaire
- Semi-structured interviews – (remote – Pandemic)
 - Opening question: Where are you from?
 - **Exercise 1:** Adapted Inclusion of Self in Other (IOS) – Scale (Aron et al. 1992):

Please circle the picture below which best describes your relationship

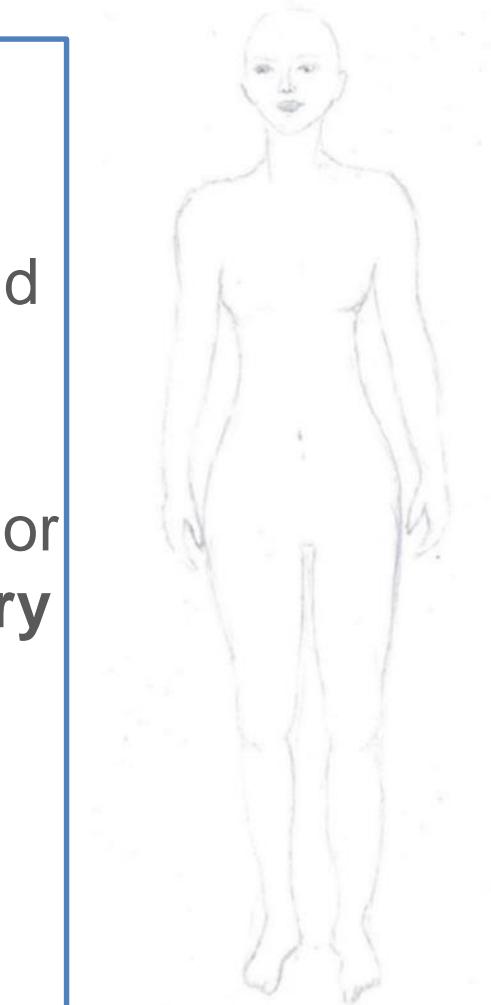


Exercise 2 – Outline of a person adapted from Brasad (2014)

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■ Instruction:

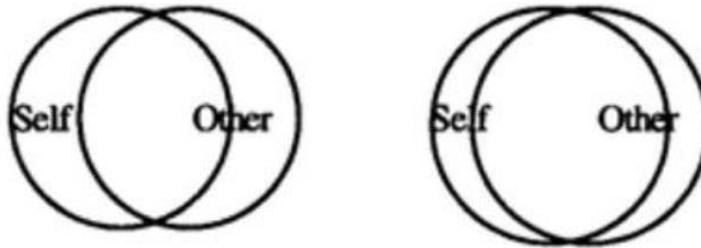
- You see an outline of a person and have some pencils.
- Choose a color that represents **Germany** for you and another color that represents your **other country of origin**.
- Please color in which parts of the body represent your cultures of origin.



Results

Exercise 1 – Mononational: Sri Lanka

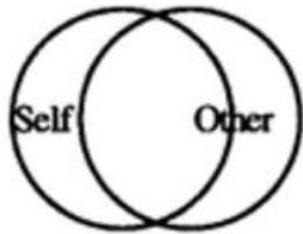
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- P2: “No 5 or 6 – I live in the German culture... but I also identify with the Tamil culture. In the middle there **is the overlap** – where I am confronted on a daily basis. This circle is perfect – the middle, a reflection of everything that is in the middle.
- ... the middle is where German and Tamil culture clash – or meet in a positive sense and where I try to pick out and integrate into my life what I want. ... I filter out what I want.
- ... later=> “ I have found my middle”

Exercise 1 – Mononational: Russia

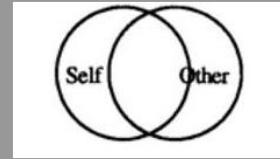
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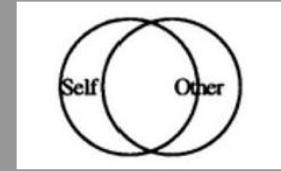
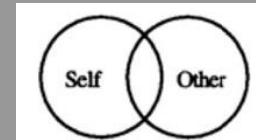
- P3: ... because there is a **lot of overlap**, about things that are similar, but not the same – one has room for interpretation.
- Explains that there are a lot of similarities (i.e. Religion) – but also differences – people are less friendly to strangers BUT – if a German person came to Russia – they could function quite well – it is not so dissimilar.
- “So habe ich das bisher empfunden, dass ich etwas aus dem Muster gefallen bin”.

Mono-national – Hungary

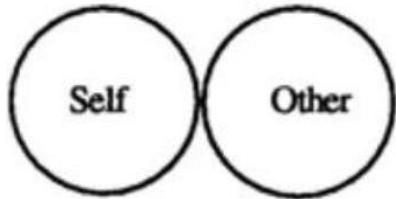
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- P6: (pause) I would say so the second row, far left, which is pretty much **fifty-fifty** I would say.
- I: Can you explain why?
- P6: ...I think that what shapes me most of all is German culture or Germany, because **I grew up there** and somehow, in contrast to Hungary, I can also benefit from the laws and advantages of a German passport. That means **I know the German system much better**. I didn't go to school in Hungary, I **speak fluent Hungarian**, but probably not in the same proportion as I speak German. That means German is of course super, super present, but I also have a really big circle of friends in Hungary and in Munich, where the Hungarian part always comes up. I was talking to a friend a week ago and she grew up the same way as I did and **we switched between Hungarian and German the whole time**. Somehow I noticed that there was another connection, because you somehow share more. And I think my socialisation with my people here is mainly influenced by Germany, but this fifty-fifty thing fits because **what I got from my parents is actually this Hungarian thing**. They sang me Hungarian children's songs, they spoke Hungarian, the whole family did, which is why I think it comes out in different ways, so to speak, sometimes it's a bit more in the foreground, sometimes it's a bit more in the foreground, but in itself I feel strange saying I'm only German and I feel strange saying I'm only Hungarian.



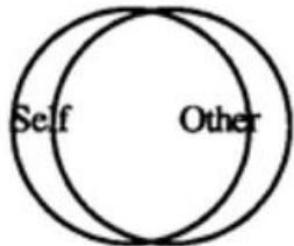
- P7: ...There are two options. So my first option, if I look at it from the point of view of how **my points of contact are**, that is, rather the groups of people with whom I interact, then I would say the second from the top right. Because then one circle would be people I have to do with in Germany, the other circle would be people I have to do with in Luxembourg. And the overlap would be **my close family members**.
- P7: ... So, that's when I look at it in terms of persons. But if I look at the culture in general, what are the **cultural similarities**, what are the cultural differences, then I would probably take the one at the bottom in the middle. Because I would say that there are, of course, cultures outside of Germany (pause). So when I look at cultural differences, I see **that there are definitely a lot of similarities**. Because in comparison with many other cultures that are further away, I don't think the Luxembourg and German cultures are very different in terms of behaviour. But you can see that there are also differences. Even little things like whether you take your shoes off at home or not.



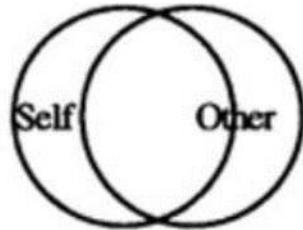
- P1: “I keep my cultures separate”

Mixed national (DE -France)

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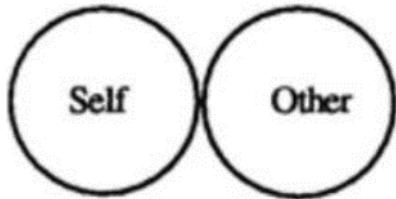
- P4: “You cannot separate the cultures ... I am a **mixture of both** – I have both, both sides have influenced me, made me who I am and have made a mixture.“
- ... I have gaps in both cultures ... there is always an insecurity.



- P5: “Hm, that's difficult (pause). Because **I have a stronger connection to Germany** (pause), I think I would tend towards the one at the bottom in the middle.”
- I: Can you explain why?
- P5 : Well, as I said, because I have a stronger connection to Germany, **because I was born and grew up here and also grew up mainly in my German side of the family, that is my focus**, I would say, in my personality, but I also have these Colombian roots, which of course I don't forget, but I didn't grow up with them....
- I: So they are more in the background.
- P5: Exactly. I am definitely interested in the culture, but Germany is my home country (Heimat), including culture.

Mixed national (DE- Chile)

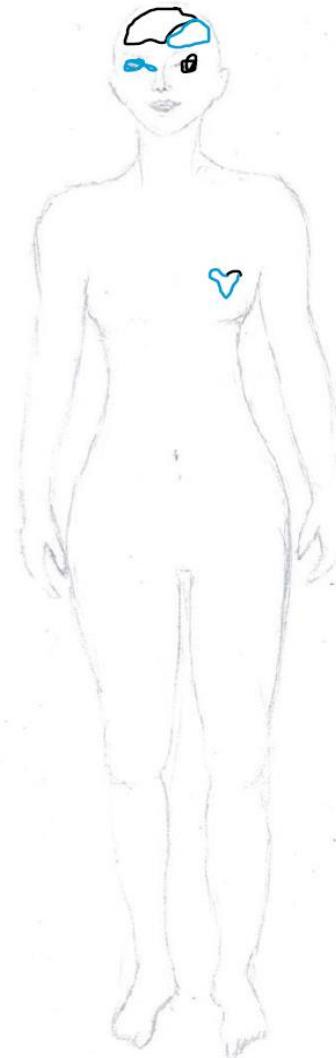
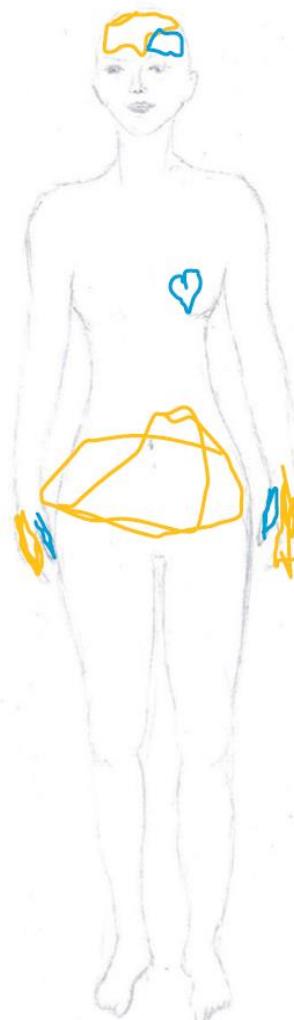
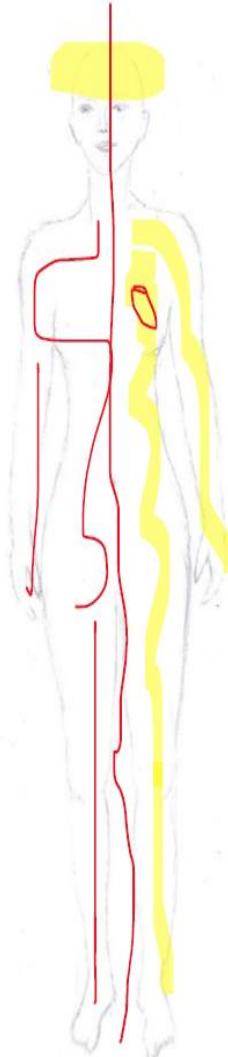
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- P8: “Well, I would definitely say that **I have these two identities**, but **I don't see an overlap**. And I have never lived in Chile for any length of time, so somehow I feel Chilean, but somehow not”.
- I: So you already see the two cultures very separately?
- P8: Well, **it's kind of both me, but at different times**, if that makes sense (laughs). Well, because my parents are also separated and only my dad is Chilean, there is quite a big difference depending on where I move and who I talk to.

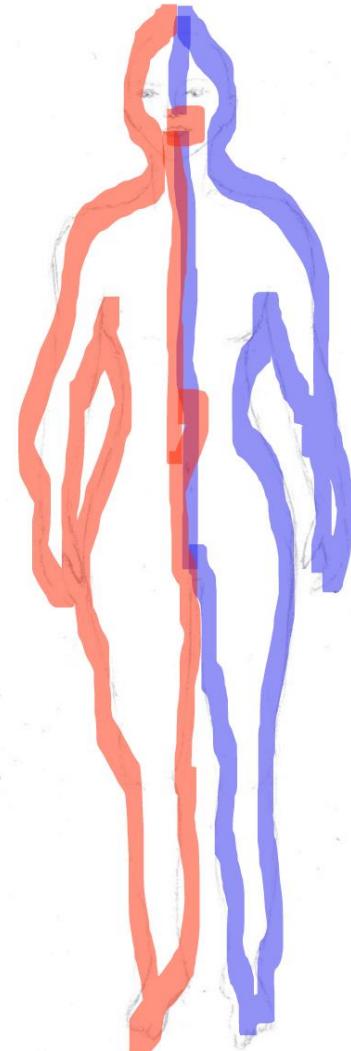
Mono-national parents (Sri-Lanka, Russia, Hungary, Lux) :

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Mixed-national parents (Ghana, French, Columbia, Chile):

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French German participant:

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- “... and in the middle there's a bit of a mishmash, this purple is more like a shell [Hülle], because I think it is a kind of protection, because inside I don't really know what's going on.”
- P2: “Well, from the outside you don't see the split that is sometimes in me, this insecurity, and from the outside I think you only see one thing. This cover is supposed to protect this ambivalence a bit and also somehow represent that I am still a human being and that **I am ultimately not defined by culture, but by my character...**”



- Mono-cultural parents => INTEGRATION
 - Participants link their cultural identities – sense of belonging to both.
 - Cognitive – socialization – what I am comfortable with, what I know (brain)
 - Emotional – value transmission through parents – heart – country of origin. (heart)
 - Pride in being able to be fluent in home country language
 - Perspective taking -> (eyes)
 - Doubling of resources – having two cultural frames of reference
 - Focus on **similarities** – what one has in common – cultural distance in the background.

Dimensions of Bicultural Competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993):

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- Mixed-national participants – more mixed
 - **Categorization** – emphasis of the stronger experience of one cultural group over the other (body in one colour)
 - Less contact with non-German parent
 - Lack of prototypicality – identity denial
 - **Differences** emphasized... Cultural distance?
 - French – German: Integration is attempted, but compartmentalization practiced.
 - P2 accentuates the differences - and effectively compartmentalizes both cultures – actively trying to do both justice – and fearing to fail. An effortful process.

- Second generation participants:
 - Sense of being grounded in Germany – rational/ cognitive
 - Emotional attachment to the country of origin
 - Importance of the country of origin for sense of identity
- Growing up in mixed national families
 - Parental “imbalance” – one immigrant parent
 - Less contact to immigrant family/ background
 - Expert expectations – that can’t be met
 - Conflicts between parents may also be passed on
 - Negotiation more complex



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