



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# **Transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices among migrants in Sweden: a communicative perspective.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Increasing mobility of the world's population, growth of immigration flows, and relative distribution of immigrant population around the globe make it necessary to strive for a deeper understanding of cultural change occurring in migrants. The study aims to collect micro-experiences of immigrants from the three selected countries (the Russian Federation, Iran and the People's Republic of China) who live in Sweden. The study has the goal to examine how transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices takes place. For that purpose nineteen in-depth interviews are conducted. Analysis of the qualitative data is done through a combination of deductive and inductive approaches. Features of cultural transformations, their causes and circumstances are presented, and further analysis in correspondence with the theoretical framework of the study is done.

The data of the study supports a non-linear model of acculturation, which considers cultural transformation as a reversible process. This study reveals that acculturation may be seen as an undulation process with regard to the residence time of immigrants and the width and depth of communication with the host society. Several hypotheses stimulating and restraining cultural transformation are suggested. And recommendations for future research are provided.

*Key words: cultural change, values, behavioral practices, acculturation, immigration, integration, cultural adaptation*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*The first chapter of the study portrays a problematic field of research with regard to increasing migration flows around the world and the necessity to understand adaptation experiences of immigrants. Based on the problem statement, a research question is articulated. It is followed by the formulation of an aim of the study and outlining the delimitation of the study. The chapter is concluded by presentation of a disposition of the thesis paper, including the structure of chapters and a brief overview of their content.*

### 1.1. Problem statement

The mobility of the world's population realizes in various forms and is significantly increased during the last decades. This is relevant for the world at large and for Sweden in particular. According to the United Nations' report in 2010 the amount of immigrants in the world has reached 214 million people, approximately 3.1 percent of world's population (UNDESA, 2009). Moreover, the distribution of immigrants drastically differs from country to country. For instance, 87 percent of the population of Qatar are immigrants, whereas the same indicator for Indonesia barely reaches 0.1 percent (IOM, 2012). European countries became the world's top host countries, with the largest amount of international migrants, representing around 10 percent of European population in total in 2012 (OECD, International Migration Outlook, 2012).

In Sweden the percentage of immigrants is higher than the average mean in Europe and is estimated as 14.1 percent of population in 2010, whereas in 1990 it was just slightly more than 9 percent (UNDESA, 2009). According to the Swedish Statistics, in 2011 the amount of foreign-born population in Sweden has reached 15.1 percent, and the amount of Swedish-born people with at least one foreign-born parents (second-generation migrants) is estimated as around 20 percent of the population (SCB, 2012). That makes the issue of handling immigration highly relevant. And it is not only about managing the flows of immigration, but also administrating integration processes to the market, political participation and socio-cultural integration.

The process of managing migration takes place on both national and international levels. From an international perspective the General Assembly of the United Nations will hold the second High-Level dialog on international migration and development during the 68th session in 2013 (UN Population, 2013). The first High-Level dialog took place in 2006 and outlined the major issues of migration. In January, 2013, Sweden has assumed chairmanship of the Global Forum on Migration and Development that will last until 2014. This means that Sweden will play a significant role in setting the agenda for the upcoming High-Level dialog at the United Nations and will coordinate global initiatives with regard to migration and development. Broadly speaking, migration nowadays significantly relates to the issue of global development. And it is claimed in the official Statement of the Swedish Government, the next two years will be particularly important for international efforts to promote synergies between processes of migration and development (Regeringskansliet, 2013).

The efficient handling of migration is impossible without general understanding of the processes of adaptation and cultural transformations in immigrants from their own perspective. This study has a focus on the social-psychology of immigrants, experiencing necessity of adjusting and adaptation to realities, culture and values of the host society. As we can see in the particular case of Sweden, the official State position towards the cultural aspects of migration is multiculturalism (the same as in the Netherlands, Canada, Australia and several other countries). It means the widespread acceptance of the value to a society of cultural diversity, low levels of prejudice and discrimination, positive mutual attitudes among ethnocultural groups and a sense of attachment to, or identification with, the larger society by all individuals and

groups (Kalin and Berry, 1995). Nonetheless, as scholars point out, the reality in those liberal, immigrant-receiving countries is that the deliberate and explicit recognition and protection of immigrants as distinct ethnic groups is in decline (including Sweden) (Freeman, 2004). Despite of the official state policy, Nordin (2005) claims that successful immigrants in Sweden are “ones who had buried, hidden, or subordinated their old lives while they rejoiced publicly about everything acquired from a blissful existence in Sweden” (Nordin, 2005, p.169). Allwood (1985) suggests to call Swedish immigration policy “centripetal bilateral pluralism” (centripetal force is a force pressing from the periphery towards the center). This occurs when there is one majority group in a country and a number of minority groups and the members of the minority groups receive a certain support for being able to have bilateral freedom of choice between his or her own group and the majority group (Allwood, 1985, p.21).

Scholars claim that human cultures emerge from people’s struggle to manage uncertainties and create some degree of order in social life (Trice and Beyer, 1993, p. 1). It means that resettlement per se creates a certain degree of uncertainty and catalyzes transformation processes in forms of “specific cultural compromises” (Schierup and Ålund, 1986, p. 22). Interaction between cultures may lead to different ways to handling cultural tension based on personal-based factors. Schierup and Ålund, who made a big study of the adaptation of immigrants from former Yugoslavia in the Scandinavian countries in the late 1980s, point out that the cultural heritage of migrants should be placed in its proper context. It is not an immutable body of norms, given once and for all, but a dynamic force linking the historical processes and present day actions, a social force which is continually replenished, remolded and transformed through its incorporation into practice within the complex and changing historical reality of the migration process (ibid.). The increasing amount of immigrants and the necessity to manage migration flows require in-depth analysis of immigrants’ patterns in relation to cultural change. As scholars point out, migrants do not simply become integrated into new settings through a single, exclusive path – anyone (or more) modes of incorporation can each follow multiple pathways (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007, p. 143). The topic of cultural transformations among migrants is lacking empirical evidence showing the perspective of immigrants. Those factors outline the problematic area that is the focus of the study.

Nowadays increasing immigration rates do not let authorities postpone an active developing of state migration policies. Increasing inequality in society in combination with lack of state efforts create social tension that can flame up into massive riots and public disorder. The week-long unrest in May, 2013 in several suburbs of Stockholm and several other Swedish cities shows the high relevance of the issue of integration. Nordin (2005) stresses that integration into and adjusting to a new society have never been easy for newcomers to any nation, but these tasks are even harder for non-Europeans coming to an insular nation like Sweden (Nordin, 2005).

## **1.2. Research question**

The main research question for the study is based on the problematic area.

- (1) *How do immigrants experience transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices in a host society from a communicative perspective?*

According to this research question: the study is focused on migrants’ experiences during the process of integration into a host culture. How do they negotiate their “new” culture, which cultural values do they import from their country of origin and which – from the host country? Which values are more stable during acculturation and which are relatively flexible? Moreover, we would like to examine the temporal perspective of the acculturation process to find out if

migrants who have lived in the country different length of time have changed differently or not and how those changes are distributed in time.

### 1.3. Aim of the study and delimitation

The main aim of the study is to scrutinize transformation processes that occur/ do not occur in immigrants in Sweden that came from several countries. An idea of the study is to examine temporal and cultural dimensions of change/ no change. An understanding of transformation processes is not possible without taking into account a communicative perspective. As it is stated by Edward Hall: “Culture is communication and communication is culture” (Hall, 1959, p. 217). And later Kim (1979) in the work “Towards an interactive theory of communication-acculturation” emphasizes that communication is the underlying process in acculturation by which an immigrant and the host sociocultural system interact (Kim, 1979, p. 436). Based on these assumptions we will consider a communicative perspective as the basis for cultural transformation processes for the purpose of the study. The analysis of samples can possibly let us find out which values are relatively malleable and due to that can be changed faster, and which are steadier, and correspondingly will be kept by migrants longer. And finally, the study aims to contribute to a more deep understanding of the issue of cultural dynamic.

The study will have certain limitations with respect to achieving the main goal. Firstly, we will examine the only immigrants from three countries of origin. Instead of talking about immigrants in general, we include the cultural variable in the research. Hopefully, this can help us to understand if representatives from certain cultures can adapt to a host culture easier and faster than others. For the purpose of the study three countries are selected, namely the Russian Federation, Iran and the People’s Republic of China. The selection of these countries is based on the statistics of the immigration to Sweden from the last decade. According to Swedish Statistics, these countries represent significant impact on the migration flows to Sweden:

Country of birth/ period of time	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
China (excluding Hong Kong)	909	1060	1204	1434	1563	1749	2035	2485	2925	3462	3484	2836	2675
Iran	1250	1444	1587	1300	1610	1365	2274	1795	2169	2976	3249	2751	2971
Russian Federation	1087	962	1055	1019	1245	1019	1474	958	978	1192	1288	1217	1280
Total amount of immigrants to Sweden	58659	60795	64087	63795	62028	65229	95750	99485	101171	102280	98801	96467	103059

Table #1. Immigration to Sweden by country of birth. Source: Swedish Statistics, 2013-02-20

Legal international immigrants can be divided into several groups: labor migrants, marriage migrants, chain migrants (mainly grounded on family ties), return migrants (also called circular migration, e.g. voluntary movements), seasonal migration (immigrants for a time in response to labor or climate conditions, for instance, farm workers, tourist guides and animators<sup>1</sup>), refugees (people who reside outside the country of origin due to fear of prosecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion and others) and asylums (forced to leave home region because of unfavorable conditions). Broadly speaking, it is possible to separate these types of migration into two big categories (1) forced and (2) free immigration. Due to the time restrictions we are not able to examine cultural transformation of all types of immigrants. Therefore the

<sup>1</sup> The animator is a person who deals with the organization of people’s leisure time when on holidays, e.g. plays with kids, organizes sport activities and evening shows for tourists.



study will be limited by considering only the category of free migration and excluding forced immigrants.

As stated above the amount of foreign-born population in Sweden is now over 15 percent, and moreover the percentage of Swedish-born people with at least one foreign-born parent is around 20 percent of the population. The latter group is called second-generation immigrants. It consists of people whose parents moved to Sweden. Many scholars emphasize significant differences between the first- and second-generation immigrants in relation to many variables (e.g. integration into a job-market, level of education). However, the study will focus only on the first-generation immigrants, due to the purpose to examine cultural transformation, whereas in the case of the second-generation immigrants it will be rather a negotiation of their identity.

Several scholars emphasize the importance of gender in understanding immigrants' experiences of immigration and adaptation in the receiving society. For example, social structural factors and values pertaining to family relationships may lead to very different experiences from men and women. For example, Dion and Kawakami raise another interesting issue on how ethnic identity may differ between women and men because of such factors as gender-related socialization pressures (Dion and Kawakami, 1996). However, the scope of the study does not allow including gender in the analysis of variables affecting cultural transformation processes.

Traditionally the two types of adaptation are applicable either to a person's original culture or a new one: psychological and sociocultural. The psychological adaptation refers to psychological health and relates to coping with stress. The sociocultural adaptation refers to social skills and cultural learning (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 1993). For the purpose of the study we will limit the examination of cultural transformation mainly by evaluating sociocultural adaptation. However in many cases the psychological notions could be employed.

The study will be limited with regard to categories of cultural change taken into account. We will limit the study to some main categories of change, which will be listed and motivated further in the theoretical framework of the study.

#### **1.4. Disposition**

The thesis consists of seven parts, divided into several sub-chapters according to the main topics of the discussed issues. The first chapter "Introduction" includes a statement of the problem, description of the field of immigration from various perspectives, statement of the research questions of the study, the presentation of the aim of the study and the delimitation. Chapter two provides the background information, including relevance and novelty of the study and definitions of terms. The theoretical framework is presented in the chapter three and is a basis for the study and analysis. The review of related literature and theories is also presented there. Chapter four describes the methodological framework of the study, including motivation of the method used, a critical assessment of the method and its possible limitations, and ethical considerations. Chapter five presents the data results in a transparent and objective way, including the categories for analysis stated in the theoretical background as well as new topics emerging from the data. Chapter six contains a discussion of the results with regard to the theoretical assumptions and previous researches done in the field. The seventh chapter includes conclusions of the study, reflections on the research process and suggestions for future research.

## 2. BACKGROUND

*The second chapter of the study provides the motivation and relevance of the study. Increasing mobility of the world's population as well as a lack of phenomenological studies on micro-level scrutinizing immigrant experiences in adaptations and cultural change are discussed. Further an overview of the immigration from the chosen countries (Russia, China and Iran) is provided. The brief overview includes analysis of immigration flows from these countries, considering waves of immigration and socio-demographic characteristics of the immigrants (age, gender, level of education and others). Finally an overview of Swedish migration policies is presented. The summary relates history of immigration to Sweden and State efforts to manage immigration and integration.*

### 2.1. Relevance of the study

As has been stated in the introduction to the study, the issue of immigration is on the agenda on both global and local levels. The increasing mobility in the world creates new forms of cultural adaptations or transformations. At the same time the state efforts in many cases neglect the immigrants' perspective on the process of fruitful integration. The various aspects of immigration are highly relevant for both policymakers and scientific community. Nevertheless, several scholars conclude that despite significant attention from the research community, a need for more studies on the issue of international labor migration remains. Favell, et al. (2006) call for more micro-level phenomenological studies on the everyday realities of "global mobility" with a specific focus on high-skilled migrants. The understanding of personal experiences of immigrants can create a new perspective on managing cultural integration as well as contribute to a more deep understanding of the processes of cultural transformations and cultural change at large. The latter is possible due to the fact the immigrants are a group which to a certain extent is forced to cultural change and through them it is possible to observe it and compare it with socio-dynamic of culture in general.

### 2.2. Immigration from the sample countries to Sweden

As has been stated above, there are three countries selected for our comparative analysis: the Russian Federation, Iran and the People's Republic of China. Earlier we provided statistical information on the impact of representatives from these countries on immigration to Sweden (see Table #1). And now we will provide an additional overview of the immigration to Sweden from the chosen countries.

#### 2.2.1. Russia

The features of emigration from Russia to Sweden have been different in the last twenty years. At the beginning of the 1990s the largest migration flows from Russia consisted of ethnic Germans and ethnic Jews. In the end of the century the flow became more diversified with, for example, highly skilled and educated migrants (in 2003, 43 percent of the migrants from ex-Soviet republics had an education level of university or higher) (Olofsson and Malmberg, 2010). However, the analysis made by Olofsson and Malmberg shows, in spite of rather high probability of being well-educated, immigrants from the former Soviet republics have been relatively unsuccessful on the Swedish labor market, even considering the effects of duration of residence (ibid).

Currently, legal immigration from Russia to Sweden is possible on basis of work, studies, family ties, humanitarian grounds and the need for protection.

Similar to migrants in general, Olofsson and Malmberg (2010) find an overrepresentation of young people among those who move to Sweden from the former Soviet republics. As many as 50–60 per cent are under the age of 30 years, which is higher than the figure for immigration to Sweden in general (only 26 percent). The share of immigrants who are 30 years of age or younger had increased from 10 per cent in 1986 to almost 40 per cent in 2003 (Olofsson and Malmberg, 2010). Analysis of the migration statistics shows also a gender-specific age distribution. Looking at all the age groups, a large overrepresentation of women is found: about 60 per cent of the immigrants consists of women, whereas the similar figure for migrants from other parts of Europe is around 45 percent. One important explanation for the high level of female migration is the high frequency of women who migrate to marry a Swedish partner (*ibid.*). According to Swedish Statistics, the Russian-born population in Sweden is over 17,000 people (SCB, 2013). At the same time the number of female Russians is two times higher than the amount of male immigrants (11,566 against 5,754 correspondingly).

This relative absence of Russian migrants in Sweden is a paradox in a way, because contacts between the two countries are increasing, the geographical distance is small, but the income differences are still great (Olofsson and Malmberg, 2010, p. 95). At the same time after the dissolution of Soviet Union like her neighbors to the East and West, Sweden was gripped with fear of a great Slavic migration to Scandinavia (Nordin, 2005, p.48).

### **2.2.2. Iran**

The immigration flow from Iran to Sweden had several waves. Before the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1977-1979) there were less than 1500 Iranian immigrants in Sweden. There were mostly students and businessmen (Sohrabi, 1992). The flow of immigrants had increased with an outbreak of the Iranian revolution, but the most drastic changes had happened between 1985 and 1990 when the amount of Iranians in Sweden increased by four times from around 7,000 to 32,000 people according to Swedish Statistics. There are several factors that catalyzed that process: actions of the relatively established Islamic government, the Iran-Iraq war, and the spread of knowledge in Iran about Sweden because of its generous immigration policy (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997). In 1989 Swedish authorities introduced a series of restrictions; therefore the number of Iranian immigrants had drastically decreased at the period between 1989 and 1992. In the period between 2000 and 2012 the immigration flow of Iranians slightly grow from 1,250 to 2,971 correspondingly (See table #1). The accumulative amount of Iranian-born population in Sweden is over 65,000 in 2012. Children of this group comprise the second generation immigrants. The number of the second generation immigrants is estimated as 22,827 people (including 12,207 born to two Iranian-born parents and 10,620 born to one Iranian-born parent). The number of males is slightly higher than the number of females in both the first generation (34,402 against 31,247) and the second generation groups (11,691 against 11,136).

Iranians in Sweden tend to be highly educated; 25 percent of Iranian-born men and women have completed at least three years of post-secondary education. Relatively few (12 percent) have less than an upper secondary school education. In comparison with Swedes, Iranians are 6 percent more likely to have a post-secondary education of 3 years or more. Many Iranians came to Sweden with university degrees but have nevertheless gone on to obtain a secondary training or further degrees in Sweden as a way of re-educating themselves for the Swedish job market (Sohrabi, 1992).

Iranians can be found all around Sweden. In line with many other immigrant groups, they mostly settle in urban areas, and particularly in Sweden's four largest cities: Stockholm (36 percent of

the Iranian-born population), Gothenburg (16.9 percent), Uppsala (5.8 percent), and Malmö (5 percent) (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997).

Some scholars point out the role of gender in successful integration of Iranians into Swedish society. For example, Lewin (2001) examines the notion of gender-related adaptation of Iranian immigrants in Sweden and finds that Iranian immigrant women now have a better chance of adjusting to Western societies than Iranian men. And he relates it to the issue of identity crisis which Iranian women have greater possibilities to overcome in comparison with males (Lewin, 2001).

### **2.2.3. China**

China has a long history of internal and international migration and has a significant number of diasporas around the globe. Chinese migration is a large source for international migration (Skeldon, 1996), and internal migration in China is now considered to be the largest migration in human history, with some hundreds of millions of people (mainly peasants) from rural territories flooding into the urban areas of China (Fishman, 2005, p. 7).

Looking at the geographies of Chinese emigration, the most concentrated continent for overseas Chinese still remains Asia. Li (2000) explains this according to the geographic proximity on top of earlier Chinese migration into Southeast Asia. Now, Asia accommodates around 28 million overseas Chinese, this is 80 percent of total Chinese diasporas in the world (Li, 2000). Also China has now witnessed growing rates of return migration, due to the rising economic status in the world (Shen, 2010).

Nevertheless, nowadays China is in the top-five countries of origin for immigrants in Sweden (OECD, International Migration Outlook, 2011). Swedish authorities estimate the amount of Chinese-born population as 26,824 people in 2012 (SCB, 2013). The gender distribution of the first-generation migrants is: 40 percent are male and 60 percent are female. Started with almost equal amount of both male and female immigrants in the beginning of 2000s, the misbalance in gender distribution increased from year to year. In 2012 the number of Chinese-born male immigrants in Sweden increased only by around 400 people, whereas the number of Chinese female increased by 700 people.

### **2.3. Swedish immigration policies: an overview**

The history of immigration to Sweden is relatively short. Sweden has received a substantial number of immigrants from World War II until today. From the 1950s until the mid-1970s, the larger part of the immigrants came because of the high demand for foreign labor in the growing industries and service sector, and as a result it consisted almost entirely of European labor immigrants (skilled labor was mainly recruited from Northwestern Europe, mainly Western Germany and the Nordic countries). After the 1970s, Sweden has removed the need for foreign labor due to the increasing automation of manufacturing, outsourcing and relative decline in industrial growth. This has changed the composition of the immigrant population to a larger increase of refugees from Eastern Europe and from various non-European countries (Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and other). In turn, this new immigration has generated an increase of “tied movers” (relatives to earlier immigrants) (Bevelander, 2009).

Earlier, it was claimed that immigrants were warmly welcomed until the middle of the 1960s, when Sweden advocated a liberal integration policy due to the labor shortage. However, there was no clear political objective as to how immigrants and refugees should be integrated until the middle of the 1970s (Bevelander, 2009).

In 1965, the first steps were taken to facilitate the adaptation of immigrants to Swedish society. They consisted mainly of education in the Swedish language, general information about Sweden in several foreign languages, and the establishment of immigrant offices. Since the middle of the 1970s, a policy of ethnic or cultural pluralism was implemented based on three pillars: equality, freedom of choice, and partnership (Westin, 2000). Immigrants were granted the possibility to have equal access to the welfare state, and social and political rights and standards as native Swedes.

In 1998, the immigration policy was replaced by an integration policy aimed at the whole population, and a new central government agency was established [The Integration Board or Integrationsverket in Swedish] with the special task to oversee integration efforts throughout the Swedish society (Jederlund, 1998).

### 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*The third chapter presents the theoretical framework for the study. It defines culture, shows different approaches towards it and reviews them. Two main groups of approaches towards culture are presented, namely static and dynamic. They are compared and analyzed with regard to the context of migration. Further, the structure of culture is discussed, and a conceptual model for the analysis is described. Later in the chapter, a correlation between behavior and values is examined, and two approaches are portrayed. Next, we present the issue of social and cultural identities and relate it to cultural change. Then acculturation is described. Different approaches towards assimilation are classified into two groups: process-oriented and end-state-oriented concepts; and theoretical models within each of them are observed. In conclusion, categories for potential cultural changes are listed, and motivation of the choice is provided.*

#### 3.1. Culture: static versus dynamic approaches

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) in the famous book “Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions” present more than 150 existing definitions of culture. Hitherto there is no clear consensus on how culture can be defined in scientific discourse, which to a certain extent overcomplicates the discussion on what should be taken into account when analyzing culture of a particular person, social or ethnic groups. It is pointed out that each of the existing definitions of culture bears the ideological burden of a specific approach, or political agenda (Borofsky, 2001).

In the study we will use the definition of culture by Allwood who suggests that the term “culture” refers to all characteristics common to a particular group of people that are learned and not given by nature (Allwood, 1985, p.1).

Those characteristics can be both shared practices and ideas. The poststructuralist approach questions the notion of “sharedness” and claims that all members of a particular society do not share the identical set of meaningful ideas (Keesing, 1994). It means that specific cultural ideas have a certain distribution or frequency across population that is often not 100 percent. At the same time it raises the issue of the frequency at which an idea should be considered as cultural, and this question has no answer yet (Brown, 2008).

Another important issue towards the concept of culture is the “boundedness”, by which scholars mean a presumption that one can specify where a specific culture stops. For instance, Brumann (1999) questions whether one can draw a boundary between the people who share one culture and the people who share another (Brumann, 1999). Allwood (1985) points out that the cultural groups are often associated with nation states, and we may speak about Swedish culture, French culture and so on, however, a group does not necessarily have to be a national group. It may be any group that is distinguishable over a longer period of time. We can speak thus about teenage culture, male culture, the culture of the city of Gothenburg and other. Cultural differences between groups of these types are often just as great or even greater than those that exist between national cultures (Allwood, 1985, p.2).

From the historical paradigm the idea of culture appears on the scene as the central element of a long, closely knit English tradition of social criticism directed against the disintegrating and debasing effects of industrialization (Herbert, 1991, p. 22). Culture (or cultures), in this sense, involves styles of life and learning that run counter to negative effects of modernization. This perspective remains common among anthropologists: culture is often portrayed as beliefs and/or behaviors people retain despite interaction with the “West” (Borofsky, 2001). In line with

that Sahlins refers to "culturalism" as "the claim to one's own mode of existence < . . . > in opposition to a foreign-imperial presence" (Sahlins, 1994, p. 379). Culture, in this sense, conveys resistance to alien or alienating life ways. This notion is important in the case of examination of interaction between cultures that takes place in the case of immigration.

A majority of theoretical cultural frameworks can be classified into two large groups, considering culture as static or as dynamic (Fang, 2012). In the first case cultural values among people sharing a certain culture are seen as steady and enduring, whereas in the second approach they are considered as malleable and flexible.

### 3.1.1. Static approach towards culture

The first group of cultural theories includes significant works by Hofstede, project GLOBE and several others. Hofstede defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 9). He suggests examination of a particular culture throughout four bi-polarized dimensions. They are:

- (1) *individualism-collectivism* (dimension reflects the relationship between individual and a group),
- (2) *power distance* (category refers to relationship with authority),
- (3) *masculinity-femininity* (dimension shows the relation of individuals to competitiveness and quality of life),
- (4) *uncertainty avoidance* (relation to attitudes in unknown situations, rules and expression of emotions) (Hofstede, 2001).

Later his framework was developed further; and three other dimensions were added, namely:

- (5) *long-term orientation* (reflects the attitude towards future and past),
- (6) *indulgence-restraint* (shows the relation towards life control and importance of leisure),
- (7) *monumentalism – self-effacement* (Monumentalism stands for a society which rewards people who are proud and unchangeable. Its opposite pole, Self-Effacement, stands for a society which rewards humility and flexibility). (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, 2010)

The fifth dimension has been added after including several Asian countries to the study, and the latter two dimensions have been constructed by Hofstede in cooperation with Minkov, and were added to the third addition of the book summarizing Hofstede's framework issued in 2010, that shows the cohesiveness and reliability of the whole approach.

The main source for the mentioned cultural classification is the mean scores of these cultural dimensions. As McSweeney stresses, in the model of Hofstede the notion of culture is based on "sharedness" or statistical averageness of certain cultural orientations (McSweeney, 2002). Summarizing assumptions of the so called "bi-polar models", Fang points out that (1) complexity is tackled through simplification; (2) nationality or nation-state forms the basic unit of analysis; (3) the focus is on cultural differences; (4) values determine behavior, not vice versa; (5) values are stable over time, and national cultures are difficult to change (Fang, 2006, p. 72).

McSweeney (2002) highlights another important assumption of the Hofstede's framework: by the term "culture" Hofstede means the culture of a country or state and not necessarily of a

nation (McSweeney, 2002). However, recently Hofstede and Minkov (2012) conducted a new study based on the data from the latest wave of the World Value Survey. They examined 299 in-country regions from 28 countries in East and Southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Anglo world. The study shows that clusters of basic cultural values are concentrated along national lines, and cross-border intermixtures are observed relatively rarely (Hofstede and Minkov, 2012). To a certain extent this can also be supported by the concept of “imagined communities” by Andersson who sees nation as an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherent and sovereign (Andersson, 2006, p. 6). The suggestion is based on a reasonable assumption that nations are imagined since the members of a nation (even the smallest one) will never know most of other members of the nation. It is correlated with the suggestion made by Keesing (1974) who defines culture as “*an individual's theory of what his [or her] fellows know, believe, and mean, his [or her] code being followed, the game being played, in the society into which he [or she] was born.*” (Keesing, 1974, p.89). As members of a particular nation cannot meet and get to know all of their fellows, they have to base their understanding of their culture on the personal theory about other's systems of behavioral patterns and values. And further, the more representatives of the nation the person will meet and get to know, the more deep and precise will be his or her cultural framework.

### **3.1.2. Dynamic approach towards culture**

The second group of cultural approaches assume cultural values as flexible and dynamic. Representatives of the approach are Allwood (1985), Brannen and Salk (2000), Sackman and Phillips (2004), Leung et al. (2005), Fang (2006, 2012) and others. In the framework of the dynamic approach culture is considered as being learned and passed on to new members of the group through social interaction (Boyacigiller, et al., 2003). Fang suggests that culture may be reflected through the metaphor of “an ocean” (in the contrast with the onion' metaphor (Hofstede, 1980)). The ocean includes two interconnected processes: one occurs on the surface (visible manifestations of culture) and the second takes place in depth (transformations of cultural values), and explains the existence of intracultural variations defined as paradoxes of culture (Fang, 2006). Later Fang (2012) has developed a notion of cultural dynamics in relation to “ying-yang” concept employed from ancient Chinese philosophy. A similar notion can be found also in Trompenaars, who states that in the case of cultural differences it is possible for an individual to combine opposite values (Trompenaars and Voerman, 2009).

Both static and dynamic approaches towards culture primarily consider culture of a title nation and disregard mixture of cultures that may occur in the case of migration. From the static perspective, migrants can be seen as deviations from the national culture which will be the mean “standard” value. Nevertheless, it does not explain the issue of immigrants vis-à-vis to a cultural setting. From the dynamic approach, migrants can be considered as the participants of the process of social learning. Recently conducted studies, which are focused on empirical examinations of the integration of migrants and their cultural orientations, show that migrants have significant differences in values they brought from their culture of origin as well as from the host society. For example, Inglehart and Norris (2012) examine the values of Muslim migrants resettled in Western Europe and draw a conclusion that on the average the basic social values of Muslim migrants fall roughly mid-way between those prevailing in their country of origin and their country of destination. To a certain extent this study supports the dynamic approach towards culture.



### **3.2. Structure of culture: a conceptual model for analysis**

The study will be based on the conceptual models of culture developed by Allwood (1985). The model conceptualizes culture as a unit of four dimensions:

(1) *Patterns of thought* – common ways of thinking, where thinking includes factual beliefs, values, norms, and emotional attitudes.

(2) *Patterns of behavior* – common ways of behaving, where the behavior can be intentional/unintentional, aware/unaware or individual/interactive.

(3) *Patterns of artifacts* – artifacts and common ways of manufacturing and using material things, from pens to houses (artifact=artificial object), where artifacts include dwelling, tools, machines or media.

(4) *Imprints in nature* – the long-lasting imprints left by a group in the natural surroundings, where such imprints include agriculture, trash, roads or intact/ruined human habitations (Allwood, 1985, p.1).

The fourth dimension would not be relevant in the context of the current study, which does not consider long-lasting imprints of cultures. It is important that in Allwood's model the dimensions are intertwined with each other. In real-life situations it is hard to make a clear division if some particular manifestation of culture relates only to one of these dimensions. Most human actions combine specific ways of thinking with behavior and application of certain artifacts. So, it means that many of cultural traits cannot be clearly placed in one of these dimensions, but rather combine of all three of them. However, some traits can be defined. For example, faith per se is a representation of a human's basic assumptions about his/her life, whereas belonging to a congregation and corresponding involvement in religious practices represent behavioral patterns and sometimes – artifacts.

### **3.3. Values and behavior**

In a wide sense values are broad preferences concerning appropriate courses of actions and outcomes (French, 2011). Rokeach defines values as enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-states of existence are personally or socially preferable to alternative modes of conduct or end-states of existence (Rokeach, 1972, p. 159). This definition is characterized by a strong focus on rationalization of the concept of value, which is in line with the rational approach towards values and ethics of Max Weber (see Weber, 1904/2001). Rokeach suggests that there are two types of values, namely terminal and instrumental. Terminal values refer to desirable end-states of existence, such as happiness, social recognition, freedom, wisdom, an exiting life and other. These are the goals that a person would like to achieve during his or her lifetime. Instrumental values refer to preferable modes of behavior, or means of achieving the terminal values, for instance, love, ambition, intellect, honesty, obedience, forgiveness and other (Rokeach, 1972).

As we can see from the conceptual models of culture, the connection between internal values and visual manifestations of culture is direct and dynamic. It means that changes in values may change behavior and vice versa, changes in behavior may cause changes in values. That is very important in the context of migration. Hofstede (1980) suggests that values determine behavior. Another opinion on this issue is put forward by Bem (1970). Based on the theory of cognitive dissonance by Festinger (1962) Bem draws a conclusion that beliefs follow behavior and that the most effective way to change the hearts and minds is to change the behavior (Bem,

1970). Involvement in a behavior that contradicts personal beliefs creates cognitive dissonance, and according to Festinger (1962) the way to handle this for a person is simply to convince him/herself that he or she actually believes in what has been done. The suggested assumption forms a theoretical ground for understanding changes in migrants. Their involvement in life in a society with values and behavioral patterns that may differ from their own may lead to a cognitive dissonance, and the migrant will be forced to resolve it by compromising his/her values and beliefs. That transformations can be seen as a “specific cultural compromise” (Schierup and Ålund, 1986, p. 22).

Allwood (2007) claims that a very fundamental type of motive of human beings relates to pain and pleasure. People generally tend to escape pain and to seek pleasure. In other words if some way of behavior is considered by a person as socially preferable or benefiting he or she may decide to change their own manner in line with that. The subjective assessment of behavior occurs in the form of communication. Information about actions of other agents and their consequences is usually available to an agent in a communicating population (Helmstädter and Perlman, 1996). In addition, people involved in certain communication circles are usually exposed to the same symbolic representation of knowledge. This often suggests similar mental attitudes and an agreement on what are rewarding and aversive experiences (Bandura, 1986).

### **3.4. Cultural identity**

Individual values and behavior are closely related to the concept of identity. Allwood (1985) argues that at a particular point in time, a culture provides a number of properties and relations around which individual persons can organize their lives. People construct their social identity by regarding a part of these properties and relations as decisive for who he/she is. In this way, it is possible for a person to identify him or herself with his/her age, sex, family position, profession, political ideology, religious belief, regional residence or national affiliation. Most people have a potential for identifying themselves with several of these characteristics but come gradually to focus on a few as primarily creating his/her identity (Allwood, 1985, p.2). The concept of social identity is the part of the individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 2010). Tajfel's concept of social identity is related to a process of social comparison. The positive or negative character of social identity derives from comparison with relevant groups in the social context. As Tajfel and Turner (1986) argue, individuals need to belong to a group in order to secure a firm sense of well-being. That may lead to seeking for social acceptance. Understanding of a social subjective reality is an important ability of a human being. Based on the assumption of social constructivism (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) and the concept of “lifeworld” by Husserl (1936/1970) we can see reality as divided into objective and subjective. A person cannot know and experience everything, and it means that he or she can have only a subjective opinion about what reality is. In this case communication makes possible to create shared subjective reality as a shape of a common perception or interpretation of objective reality among members of a particular group. Therefore Hall claims that culture is communication, and communication is a culture (Hall, 1959, p. 186).

Further development of the theory of social identity is focused on an idea that relationships between social identities at different levels may come into play in intergroup encounters and may determine the degree of intergroup differentiation. A comparative identity concept considers that it is possible to include several ingroup actors into identification process (Ros, Huici, and Gomez, 2000). This is closely related to another theoretical idea of how minorities acculturate to a majority or a host society. For instance, the comparative identity of a Sami minority in Sweden is negotiated between belonging to the minority (ethnic background) and to

the Swedish nation (citizenship). What individuals have chosen to identify themselves with will determine to a great extent their attitudes, norms and values and will thus also color their behavior in different activities (Allwood, 1985). Hall sees identification as a construction, a process never completed - always "in process" (Hall, 1996, p.2). Similar negotiation process may take place in migrants.

### **3.5. Acculturation**

The concept of acculturation refers to how individuals who have grown up in one cultural context manage to adapt to a new context in the case of migration (Berry, 1997). According to Kim, communication is an underlying process in acculturation by which immigrant and host sociocultural system interact (Kim, 1979, p.436). Nowadays there are several models of the acculturation process that differ in the explanation on how the process of acculturation takes place in migrants and on what are the possible results of the acculturation process. For the purpose of the study we divided theoretical models of acculturation process into two big groups: process-oriented models and end-state-oriented models. The first big group of concepts includes those that have their primarily focus on the acculturation as a process of changes / no-changes. The second group of theories has the main focus of description on what kind of end-states can be achieved during the acculturation process of migrants into a host society. Now we will closely present these theoretical perspectives on the issue of acculturation.

#### **3.5.1. Process-oriented models**

As we have said above, the group of process-oriented theoretical models primarily focuses on the effort to understand how the process of acculturation takes place. There are three approaches that we will present: linear model (School of Chicago, Gordon), segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou, 1993) and non-linear model (van de Rijt, 2006). The first, the School of Chicago, assumes assimilation as a linear, gradual and irreversible one-way process of acculturation to a homogeneous receiving culture. The main representatives are Park, Burgess and Gordon. In 1921, Park and Burgess provided an early definition of assimilation: "a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life (Park and Burgess, 1921/1969, p. 735). Gordon (1981) defines assimilation as multidimensional process divided into seven corresponding steps:

1. Acculturation. When newcomers adopt language, dress, and daily customs of the host society.
2. Structural assimilation: large-scale entrance of minorities into cliques, clubs and institutions in the host society.
3. Marital assimilation: widespread intermarriage.
4. Identification assimilation: the minority feels bonded to the dominant culture.
5. Attitude reception assimilation refers to the absence of prejudice.
6. Behavior reception assimilation refers to the absence of discrimination.
7. Civic assimilation occurs when there is an absence of values and power struggles (Gordon, 1981).

As we can see from the model, acculturation is considered as the first stage of the assimilation process, which is linear (from one step to another), gradual (from less to deep involvement to the host society), and irreversible (goes in one direction). Gordon (1981) points out that cultural adaptation may be achieved without proceeding through all these levels. There are certain

limitations of the model: lack of distinction between individual and group assimilation, a disregard for other ethnic groups acting within society in addition to the “core culture” represented by the title nation (see Alba and Nee, 1997). In the USA there are two models of assimilation developed from the Gordon’s concept, namely “Anglo-Conformity” and “Melting Pot” (and “Cultural pluralism”, which was added later). The model of “Anglo-Conformity” in the form of the rapid “pressure-cooker” Americanization during and after World War I in the USA and the idea of “Melting Pot” has enjoyed several periods of popularity in America after of World War II, suggested the idealistic vision of American society and identity as arising from the biological and cultural fusion of different individuals. However, the contributions of Europeans to the mixture usually have been emphasized, but recognition of non-European groups was allowed as well (Alba and Nee, 1997).

The other alternative the linear model of assimilation is the segmented assimilation model by Portes and Zhou (1993). Instead of a relatively uniform, mainstream, common path of integration, we observe today several distinct forms of adaptation. The notion of segmented assimilation reveals how the individual, group and structural factors interact and generate three patterns of assimilation, namely (1) growing acculturation and parallel integration into the middle class, (2) permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass, and (3) rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrants’ community’s values and tight solidarity (Portes and Zhou, 1993). The important notion of the model is that assimilation may occur in some domains but not in others. It is possible that no economic progress is made or no ethnic identity is lost. This is a significant difference from the Gordon’s gradual model establishing several steps that migrants pass on the way to assimilation. Another noteworthy finding of Portes and Zhou (1993) is that there are several factors influencing the assimilation and cultural adaptation process:

(1) social perception of immigrants. It can be either prejudiced or non-prejudiced according to how they fit into phenotypic features of receiving culture (for example, skin color).

(2) existence of co-ethnic communities (cultural groups) from the same culture.

However, migrants do not simply become integrated into new settings through a single, exclusive path – any one (or more) modes of incorporation can each follow multiple pathways (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007, p. 143). The alternative to the “straight-way-assimilation” model has been developed recently by the American sociologist van de Rijt (2006) and assumes assimilation as a reversible process. The two main assumptions are (1) the quasi-assimilated immigrants assimilate further, while (2) the not-so-assimilated immigrants reverse-assimilate (a property that, in the context of academic prestige was dubbed the Mathew Effect) (van de Rijt, 2006).

### **3.5.2. End-state-oriented models**

The second group of theoretical models towards acculturation, as it was stated above, has its main focus on the end-state of the migrants. They formulate the results of the acculturation processes. One of the most famous models of this type is the fourfold model of acculturation by Berry (1980). The model defines four types of end-states based on the combination of two dimensions (1) retention or rejection of an individual’s home culture; (2) adoption or rejection of the host culture.

The four major acculturation strategies are:

(1) assimilation (individuals adopt host culture over original),

- (2) integration (individuals adopt host culture and at the same time keep their home culture),
- (3) separation (individuals reject host culture and preserve their culture of origin),
- (4) marginalization (individuals reject both cultures) (Berry, 1997).

As Berry points out both host society and the individual's personality play a role for preferred strategies. And immigrants are free to choose the stance they would like to strive to. Note that the personal attitude towards these four stances of acculturation may differ from the actual behavior. It means that internal willingness to be integrated may not correlate with the way manner of behavior, and in some cases may contradict it.

In line with the current debate on assimilation, the notion of transnationalism has been welcomed (Portes, 2006) because it permits focusing on the situation where people are rooted socially, politically and economically in more than one nation state. The concept of transnationalism makes a close connection between both country of origin and receiving country. Portes (2006) gives an insightful description of the entire process of emerging transnational communities. Meanwhile, new research shows that different types of global mobility have varied effects on migrant's belonging and identity, including forms of transnational identity (Dahinder, 2012). In global mobility several concurrent processes are taking place: development of a transglobal identity and resistance to it, which is strengthening local identities (Curten and Gaither, 2007).

Another important trend in scientific discourse towards migration is based on the fact that the acculturation process may involve more than two groups of cultures (home and host cultures). It means that during the process of acculturation both groups can influence each other with possible consequences for both. However, the contrast experiences have much greater impact on the nondominant group and its members, and for this reason much of the research on acculturation has focused on such nondominant people, tending to ignore the impact on the dominant population (Berry, 2001). Nevertheless, the recent trends in acculturation research have come to focus on the process of mutual change (Bourhis et al., 1997), involving both groups in contact.

### **3.6. Potential directions of transformations**

Since the study is limited by time and resources the examination of transformation of immigrants will be primarily focused on several potential directions of transformations. For that purpose we will try to analyze the three chosen cultures in comparison with Swedish culture and define several dimensions of culture that will further create the basis for in-depth interviews of the immigrants. From the combination of cultural dimensions suggested by Allwood (1985), for the purpose of the study we selected following cultural manifestations with relation to which immigrants' experienced changes: (1) Food habits; (2) Dressing habits; (3) Hospitality; (4) Expression of emotions; (5) Conflict behavior.

As we can see, the concepts included in the list represent different dimensions (in Allwood's terms) of culture: (1) artifacts, (2) behavioral patterns, and (3) thoughts. According to the foregoing discussion above, we claim that these listed manifestations of culture can hardly be clearly separated as belonging to only one of the mentioned dimensions. And as we have reflected above the combination of all dimensions can be found in each of those categories. Now we will go through the listed categories and briefly describe them with regard to the study.

The food habits can differ drastically in different cultures and are named among the practices that immigrants change during the process of acculturation (Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms, 2011). Comparing Sweden with the three sample countries, we can point out a big difference in each

case. Chinese cuisine is significantly different from the Western European, so is Iranian cuisine. In these three cases Russian cuisine is the most close to Swedish. Differences in climate and geographical zones form the diversity of typical products that can be used for cooking. Although the global market and the development of logistic systems around the world almost smooth over the availability of products in different countries, the ways of cooking and consumption may vary from one country to another. Some ingredients can be quite expensive. As several studies show, the acculturation process may implicate a risk factor for unhealthy behaviors among migrants including eating disorders (Unger et al., 2004). Acculturation to the foreign food system is associated with shifts from traditional diets to the meal typical for the host country. The consumption of vegetables and fruits, meat, fish, cereals and many other products may differ and cause problems with food acculturation. Researchers suggest numerous models with regard to how to operationalize food habits, including (1) the frequency of food consumption; (2) the ways in which a culture traditionally prepares and seasons its foods; (3) the daily, weekly, and yearly use of food; and also (4) changes in food habits within a culture, usually related to the structural growth (Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms, 2011, p.7). Culture decides also what food is appropriate, and what is not due to cultural beliefs and taboos, for example, pork for Muslims, beef for Indians and so on. During the study we will have a focus both on finished products and ingredients which respondents use, but also on their practices of cooking and eating, which are behavioral cultural practices rather than artifacts where food itself would belong.

Another category refers to a change in dressing habits. Clothes are not solely artifacts, but they have a certain symbolic weight, considering connotative meaning which people put into their clothes. An outfit and personal appearance are visible components which people use to differentiate and identify themselves and others (Garcia Inglessis, 2008). For this reason, the examination of attitudes, values and beliefs related to clothes is important for making sense of the acculturation process. It means that dressing habits may differ corresponding to different stages of acculturation (ibid). The outfit's choice can show both integration of a particular person and marginalization (rejection of the host culture and willingness to maintain the home culture). Change in dressing habits in the study includes not only types of clothes, but also preferred colors, models, and other emerging facets of outfits.

The third category refers to hospitality. It reflects how people socialize and go out. It can be portrayed in two forms: how people invite others to go out (whom to invite, where and how to do it) and how individuals go as guests themselves. An idea of hospitality per se reflects a general attitude towards other people. We suggest that it can be analyzed through the categorization of cultures being either relationship-focused or deal-focused (Gesteland, 2005). Tomalin and Nix (2007) emphasize that hospitality is vital in relationship-oriented societies. The three chosen cultures (Russian, Chinese and Iranian) belong to the relationship-oriented group of cultures, whereas the Swedish culture is included in the other group. The noticeable difference between these two groups is considering relationships with regard to doing business and to live in general. Relationships are pillars for the business in China, Russian and Iran. That is why people put significant attention to socialization and hospitality.

The fourth category refers to expression of emotions. We presume that all kinds of emotions can be taken into account for the purpose of the study. Emotions play a vital role in maintaining social order, including helping regulate social distance (drawing us towards some people and away from others), announcing our intentions, and influencing the behavior of others. Since emotions can be both helpful and disruptive, cultures develop norms about what constitutes desirable and undesirable emotional behavior (Soto, Levenson, and Ebling, 2005). Human experience of emotions is realized through cultural symbols (Lupton, 1998). Possible differences

in expression of emotions can be related to an individualistic or a collectivistic nature of a particular culture. For example, independence and autonomy are positively valued in individualistic cultures (like Sweden) and are less valued in collectivistic societies (like, Russia, China and Iran). Collectivistic character of the society leads to a greater importance of social rules that restrain emotional expression (Argyle, 1986). For instance, members of Chinese culture view emotions as dangerous, value emotional moderation, and emphasize social harmony over individual expression (Klineberg, 1938). Furthermore, extreme emotions are thought to cause illness in traditional Chinese medicine (Wu and Tseng, 1985). In contrast, Wierzbicka (1992) claims that Russians put a tremendous stress on emotions and on their free expression, that determines the high emotional temperature of Russian discourse and the wealth of linguistic devices for signalling emotions and shades of emotions. Trompenaars suggests dividing cultures into two large groups: neutral and affective cultures (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2011). The differences between these groups are in the ways and willingness to communicate emotions.

The fifth category is related to behavior of individuals in various conflict situations. Noteworthy, there is no single, universally accepted definition of what conflict is (Rahim, 2010). Baron suggests four elements that can be included into the definition of a conflict, namely (1) recognized opposing interests between parties in a zero-sum situation; (2) belief by each side that the other one is or will act against them; (3) that belief is likely to be justified by actions taken, and (4) conflict is a process (Baron, 1990). Behavior in conflict situations is in line with an individual's culture, and people from different cultures may demonstrate various attitudes and behavioral practices in situations of conflicts (Avruch, 1998). The category can be understood with regard to the dimension of uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2001). In high uncertainty avoidance cultures (for example, Russia and Iran) aggressive behavior in conflicts is acceptable, whereas in low uncertainty avoidance cultures (for instance, Sweden and China) individuals tend to contain aggression by avoiding conflicts and competition. In the low uncertainty avoidance cultures there is also a strong desire for consensus, and any deviant behavior is not accepted (Gudykunst, 1995, p.19). At the same time the current study focuses on transformations of values and behavioral practices in general and that is why we would not narrow down the type of conflicts or other circumstances and keep the broad concept of a conflict.

## 4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

*Chapter four presents a methodological basis for the study. Based on the features of the research question a methodological rationale is articulated. It is followed by the description of method selected for the study. Further, characteristics of the study's sample are presented. Then, data collection and its procedure are described, followed by an analysis of specific issues of structuring interviews and approaches to analyze the data. The chapter concludes with an examination of possible limitations of the methodological framework and ethical considerations.*

### 4.1. Methodological approach rationale

The study has a focus on immigrant experiences in the transformation of cultural values. This will lead to descriptions of individual narratives of the changes involved in the acculturation process. There is one main research question in the study:

*(1) How do immigrants experience transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices in a host society from a communicative perspective?*

The methodology of a study is determined by research questions asked (Creswell, 2007). "How"-questions aim to understand and/or explain behavior, beliefs, and identify processes and understand the context of people's experiences (Hennik, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011). Since fairly deep information is needed in our study, we need to get sincere and detailed information from the immigrants about their personal experiences of transformation of cultural values. This is possible to achieve through in-depth interviews. An interview is a procedure that requires the researcher to question the participants on the topic at hand (ibid.). Specifically semi-structured interviews are a type of interviews that offers the researcher leniency and freedom so that in addition to a developed interview guide other questions can be asked to collect supplementary interesting information that was not foreseen when creating the interview guide (Oktay, 2012).

The study wishes to get a holistic picture of the cultural transformations among several groups of immigrants in Sweden, seeks an insider's point of view on this process and aims to understand the cultural meaning attached to the transformation experiences. These goals can be reached through the in-depth analysis of qualitative data. An important part of being able to understand another person is to be able to interpret the purpose or the motives behind his/her communicative and non-communicative actions. Allwood (2000) claims that if we cannot find any such purpose or motive, we cannot "understand" him/her as a rational motivated agent but have instead try to comprehend his/her actions in another way, for example, by "explaining" them causally. Allwood suggests division between "understanding in a wider sense", which can be defined as establishing a meaningful connection between input information and stored background information, and "understanding in a narrow sense", i.e., understanding of intentions and motives, can be seen as a special case of "explaining", in view of the causal role of motives and intentions (Allwood, 2000, p.14).

The aim here is to reconstruct from the complexity of empirical processes patterns which can be theorized as "general" concerning their relevance in a specific social field (Breckner, 2007). In contrast with quantitative approaches, the relevance of a pattern does not depend on its numerical distribution within a field but in its structuring impact, or its representational potential for the formation of a social field, which does not necessarily depend on the pattern's frequency of occurrence (Rosenthal, 1993). Those case-based patterns also illustrate how members of a society specifically react to social situations in their authentic life contexts. Life stories are constructed and presented as a narration telling someone else what has happened in one's life. The narrative is a means to organize experiences in a temporal and thematic order which



“makes sense” of what participants have lived through (ibid.). In-depth qualitative analysis of particular cases can help to make sense of how members of the different immigrant communities, or even the same immigrant community, experience migration.

It is noteworthy that a discussion is taking place in modern philosophy of science regarding the distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods in social research. Some researchers insist on a clear distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods (see Silverman, 1993; Sarantakos, 1993). Another view on the issue is possibility to combine both approaches in practice. A concept of methodological pluralism refers to a pluralism of method that enables the researcher to use different techniques to get access to different facets of the same social phenomenon (Olsen, 2004).

In the case of our study we aim to analyze the data primarily from a qualitative perspective. However, additional quantitative measurements of emerging patterns will be provided. The scope of the study does not allow us to draw conclusions that will be applicable for the immigrant population in Sweden at large.

#### 4.2. Sample

As was mentioned above, the sample includes three sample groups of respondents. The selection criteria were: participants in the study are needed to (1) be living in Sweden, (2) have been born in one of the three countries – Russia (USSR for those born before 1991), Iran or China. The respondents’ recruitment process included several steps: (1) various organizations were contacted, such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Gothenburg, the Iranian Cultural Organization, the Russian Orthodox congregation and others; (2) personal contacts with the people were taken; (3) a snow-ball technique was used, enabling respondents to recommend other people to conduct interviews with. During the process of selecting respondents diversity was encouraged.

Nineteen respondents were recruited in this way. For reason of anonymity each respondent got a special code. The respondents’ code includes two parts: alphabetic characters and numerical. The alphabetical part reflects one of three sample groups of the study: Russian sample (RS), Iranian sample (IS), and Chinese sample (CS). The number shows the serial number of the respondents within the sample. For instance, respondent number six with Russian origin gets the code RS6.

Since one of the aims of the study is to examine cultural transformations in correlation to residence time in Sweden, all respondents were additionally classified with that regard into three sub-groups. The first group consists of those respondents who has lived in Sweden less than five years, the second – between five and seven years, and the last group – more than seven years. The description of the samples including time of residence, reasons for resettlement and appointed codes are depicted in three following tables:

<b>No</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Time in Sweden</b>	<b>Reason for resettlement</b>
1	RS1	Female	30	USSR	7 years	Married a Swedish citizen
2	RS2	Male	22	Russia	6.5 years	Resettlement with family
3	RS3	Female	45	USSR	13 years	Married a Swedish citizen, now divorced
4	RS4	Female	53	USSR	12 years	Married a Swedish citizen
5	RS5	Female	59	USSR	12 years	Resettlement with family
6	RS6	Female	54	USSR	15 years	Married a Swedish citizen, now

						divorced
7	RS7	Female	26	USSR	3 years	Education
8	RS8	Female	25	USSR	3 years	Education
9	RS9	Male	32	USSR	6.5	Education, business

Table #2. Sample #1 (respondents with Russian origin).

No	Code	Gender	Age	Country of origin	Time in Sweden	Reason for resettlement
1	IS1	Female	29	Iran	6 years	Education, then married a Swedish citizen
2	IS2	Male	24	Iran	3 years	Education, has relatives living in Sweden
3	IS3	Female	30	Iran	4 years	Education
4	IS4	Male	34	Iran	5 years	Education, then married a Swedish citizen
5	IS5	Male	45	Iran	24 years	Resettlement with family

Table #3. Sample #2 (respondents with Iranian origin).

No	Code	Gender	Age	Country of origin	Time in Sweden	Reason for resettlement
1	CS1	Male	34	China	8 years	Education, work
2	CS2	Male	27	China	3 years	Education
3	CS3	Female	30	China	2.5 years	Education
4	CS4	Female	25	China	2 years	Education
5	CS5	Male	27	China	3 years	Work

Table #4. Sample #3 (respondents with Chinese origin).

As we can see from the samples description, the main reasons for resettlement of the Chinese sample are education and work. It may cause differences in the process of cultural change.

#### 4.3. Data collection

During the period between April, 7<sup>th</sup> and April, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013, nineteen in-depth interviews were conducted and recorded. Seventeen of them were done in live and two via Skype, based on the respondents' preferences. In all cases a mobile phone with recording software was used.

In total there are 722 minutes of recordings. The mean duration of the interviews was 37 minutes (with a minimum 24 minutes 19 seconds (CS1), and a maximum duration of 58 minutes and 50 seconds (RS3)). The division of interviews among sample groups is the following: (1) nine interviews with migrants from Russia (M=0:41:54), (2) five – from China (M=0:32:17), and (3) five – from Iran (M=0:36:49).

Sample group/Duration of the interview									
Russian	R1 (RS1)	R2(RS2)	R3(RS3)	R4(RS4)	R5(RS5)	R8(RS6)	R9(RS7)	R11(RS8)	R18(RS9)
	0:51:02	0:44:37	0:58:50	0:46:11	0:38:33	0:31:40	0:30:52	0:29:29	0:45:49
Chinese	R12(CS1)	R14(CS2)	R15(CS3)	R16(CS4)	R17(CS5)				
	0:24:19	0:42:08	0:33:32	0:30:27	0:31:00				
Iranian	R6(IS1)	R7(IS2)	R10(IS3)	R13(IS4)	R19(IS5)				
	0:44:56	0:30:45	0:36:04	0:42:07	0:30:12				

Table #5. The data characteristics.

#### **4.4. Structure of the interviews**

The data collection was based on semi-structured interviews. The script for the interviews was developed in advance and tested on a pilot participant to control the general understanding of the formulated questions. After the pilot interview, several questions were restructured and the formulation was clarified. The probing questions were added in order to find if researcher and interviewees have the same understanding of the concept used (see Appendix 1).

The interviews were divided into three parts:

- (1) Introduction and a “personal story”. The first part includes general questions about the background information of the respondents, including country of origin and the duration of stay in Sweden. Then interviewees were asked to tell their story of resettlement to Sweden.
- (2) Key questions on “cultural change”. The second section starts with an open question on how respondents assess their level of change in general. The key emerging categories were noted and added to the pre-selected categories to achieve the depth of the picture of their experiences. Further, the questions on cultural and behavioral changes related to selected categories were asked.
- (3) Closing questions. The last part of the interview includes the open question on new categories of changes that respondents could add and expand. Participants were also asked to evaluate their general personal perception of their integration to Swedish society.

Interviews were conducted in places that were comfortable for the participants and suitable for preserving anonymity. Some of the interviews were conducted in a café, some at the working places of the respondents. The time preferences of the respondents were considered to a high extent. All participants were informed about the core information of the study, and gave an informed consent to participate. The interviewees did not receive any payment. As Hennik et al. (2011) point out, people like to talk and to be listened to, so the actual interview experience can be enjoyable for participants. We can agree that a majority of the respondents enjoyed the interviews, being given the opportunity to speak about their experiences of cultural adaptation. Migration is an important and in many cases stressful and memorable event in the life of every immigrant. To “break the ice” at the beginning of the interviews, the researcher, being a person with foreign background himself, told his own story. This was a good practice for establishing initial trust between communicants.

#### **4.5. Inductive and deductive approaches**

The data has been transcribed, translated into English in the cases where the interviews were conducted in another language than English (several interviews were conducted in Russian for the comfort of the respondents), and anonymized (all identities and other information was excluded from the transcriptions to preserve anonymity of the respondents). Further analysis of emerging topics and reduction of the data were conducted manually. A combination of inductive and deductive approaches was employed for the coding process. The purpose of coding is to sort and categorize the information according to similarities (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002). Deductive codes originate from a theory in the scientific literature, and they are developed first, while inductive codes emerge from the data and can be added after reading the data (Hennik, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011). Some codes were derived from the topics of the theoretical framework of the study (deductive approach), while some codes were developed directly from the data (inductive approach).

#### **4.6. Limitations of the method and ethical considerations**

One of the facets of qualitative analysis is that an interpretive act can be both benefiting and limiting. Bauer and Gaskell (2000) claim that an interpretive character gives flexibility that helps to overcome the complexity of the communicative process, and thereby it benefits research. Meanwhile, the same feature may lead to inconsistency and subjectivity in analysis for an inexperienced analyst (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000). The philosophical assumption of an interpretive approach is that different social actors may in fact understand social reality differently, producing different meanings (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010). To overcome that possible limitation we put special attention on clarifying meaning during both processes of data collection and data analysis to avoid misinterpretation. The process of validating meaning of data codes was done. The researcher compared information contained in each code to clarify that the meaning is accurate and consistent. Moreover the preparation of the interview's script included the explanation of terms and cultural categories utilized. The pilot interviews were conducted for that purpose.

As we have pointed out above, several interviews were conducted face-to-face and two – via Skype (audio only). Nevertheless, we claim that the computer-mediated communication did not affect the interviews and therefore did not influence the final results. Computer-mediated communication is lacking non-verbal cues in comparison with face-to-face communication (Westerman, 2007). However, only verbal data was included into the analysis and thus the lack of non-verbal components did not limit the study.

At the same time, we can admit possible insincerity of the respondents. The issues of personal experiences of immigration and adaptation can be sensitive to a certain extent. And due to that fact the recruitment of respondents was mainly focused on people that the researcher does not know personally. So, people could be open and sincere with the researcher. During the interviews the openness was highlighted. We stressed that the questions have the main purpose only to guide the respondent, but if he or she would not feel comfortable answering any of them they can skip them. The interviewees were free to tell their own reflections and personal stories. Nevertheless, the absence of personal relationships between participants and researcher can be both strength and weakness. As we have said, on the one hand it gives freedom to participants. On the other hand it can create a lack of interpersonal trust.

One of the most significant limitations of the method is that in-depth interviews can provide only personal attitudes towards discussing issues and it may not reflect the actual behavior and values of the respondents. The latter can be detected through observations. As it was stated in the theoretical framework, in some cases attitudes may not be correlated with behavior of participants. Another noteworthy limitation is that respondents are not able to report an unconscious change. However, we tried to overcome this limitation by asking indirect questions about whether other people expressed to the respondents that they have changed or not.

Ethical considerations include the issue of preserving anonymity of the participants of the study. During the recruitment process anonymity of interviewees was emphasized. All interviewees gave an informed consent to the conditions of the participation. The data were accurately anonymized and no information compromising the confidentiality of their identity is revealed. Furthermore, all data records will be kept confidential unless the scientific community requires the researcher to present some of the data.

## 5. RESULTS

The fifth chapter presents the results of the study. A framework for presenting the results is described. The results include five presumed categories of cultural and behavioral transformations: food habits, dress habits, hospitality, expression of emotions and conflict behavior. Further, data-driven codes are described. There are eight codes that have emerged from the data.

### 5.1. Results framework

The data of the study will be presented according to the following framework. The main results of changes or non-changes for specific categories are summarized in a table. Further, we will present examples from the data on specific change/ no-change, continuing with reasoning about them. This reasoning focuses primarily on explanations of why some changes occurred or not. Then the process of change will be demonstrated. It refers to the residence time spent in Sweden. Since the study is primarily focused on a qualitative analysis, the main attention will be addressed to narratives and personal experiences of the respondents. Firstly, the five categories of change will be discussed: Food habits, Dressing habits, Hospitality, Expression of emotions and Conflict behavior. Then we will present the results of data-driven codes. There are eight of them: Cultural identity, Friendship and connections with society, Religion, Language, Non-verbal communication, Gender equality, Trust of others and Privacy.

### 5.2. The joint results

We start description of the results of the study with a presentation of the joint tables for changes/non-changes for each sample taken separately. Further, we will show the joint results for the all samples. Then the detailed results or each category of changes and additional emerging codes from the interviews will be provided.

No	Food habits	Dressing habits	Hospitality	Expression of emotions	Conflict behavior	Connectedness with Swedes <sup>2</sup>
RS1	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
RS2	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
RS3	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
RS4	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
RS5	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
RS6	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
RS7	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
RS8	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
RS9	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Total Yes/No</b>	<b>5/4</b>	<b>7/2</b>	<b>5/4</b>	<b>6/3</b>	<b>9/0</b>	<b>3/6</b>

Table#6. The joint results from the Russian sample.

No	Food habits	Dressing habits	Hospitality	Expression of emotions	Conflict behavior	Connectedness with Swedes
IS1	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
IS2	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
IS3	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
IS4	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO
IS5	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES

\* The category shows the current situation at the moment of the interview, and it should not be applied to the whole period of life in Sweden. The design of the study does not allow us to trace this category.

<b>Total Yes/No</b>	<b>3/2</b>	<b>3/2</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>5/0</b>	<b>2/3</b>
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Table#7. The joint results from the Iranian sample.

<b>No</b>	<b>Food habits</b>	<b>Dressing habits</b>	<b>Hospitality</b>	<b>Expression of emotions</b>	<b>Conflict behavior</b>	<b>Connectedness with Swedes</b>
<b>CS1</b>	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
<b>CS2</b>	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
<b>CS3</b>	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
<b>CS4</b>	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
<b>CS5</b>	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
<b>Total Yes/No</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>1/4</b>	<b>1/4</b>	<b>0/5</b>	<b>1/4</b>

Table#8. The joint table from the Chinese sample.

One of the features of the study is to examine transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices taking into consideration the residence time in Sweden. The next table shows the results of the interviews sorted according to the respondents' residence time in Sweden. The changes have been counted in relation to the five categories. And the number of changes shows the total number of "yes"-responses given by a particular interviewee. It means that the maximum mean of the changes is five and the minimum is zero. Participants have been divided into three groups: the first group consists of those who have lived in Sweden less than five years, the second – between five and seven years, and the last group – more than seven years. The relative percentage of changes reported in each of the groups has been calculated. As we can see in table #9, the relative percentage of changes for the first group is 45 percent, for the second is 84 percent, and is 46 percent for the third group.

<b>Less than 5 years</b>			<b>5-7 years</b>			<b>More than 7 years</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>No change</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>No change</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>No change</b>
RS7	5	0	RS1	5	0	RS3	2	3
RS8	3	2	RS2	3	2	RS4	1	4
IS2	1	4	RS9	5	0	RS5	4	1
IS3	4	1	IS1	4	1	RS6	4	1
CS2	1	4	IS4	4	1	IS5	2	3
CS3	2	3	--	--	--	CS1	1	4
CS4	2	3	--	--	--	--	--	--
CS5	0	5	--	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Percentage of change, %</b>	<b>45%</b>			<b>84%</b>			<b>46%</b>	

Table #9. The results with regard to the residence time in Sweden.

The total change within each sample group is displayed in the table #10. As we can see, the most transformed sample is the Russian with an average percentage of changes of more than 70 percent, while the least changed is the Chinese sample where the same index is less than 25 percent. The Iranian sample is in-between those two extremes and the percentage of changes and no changes is almost equal – 52 and 48 percent correspondingly.

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	32	71%	13	29%
Iranian sample	13	52%	12	48%
Chinese sample	6	24%	19	76%

Table #10. The total change in the three samples (results).

Further we will provide the results related to each section. Due to the fact that the samples' size is not equal, the relative percentage of answers will be presented in addition to absolute numbers of responses. Besides that we will provide the results from topics and codes emerged from the data of the study. We will start with the joint table of changes/ no changes on all five categories:

Category	Change, Percentage to all responses, %	No change, Percentage to all responses, %
Food	52%	48%
Dressing habits	63%	37%
Hospitality	42%	58%
Expression of emotions	48%	52%
Conflict behavior	73%	27%

Table #11. The total results on change/ no change to five categories.

### 5.3. Food habits

As it has been pointed out in the methodology, all three sample cultures have food habits that are different from the food habits in Sweden nowadays. However, we admit that people may differ with regard to personal tastes and preferences, as well as that some of them may have been following traditional food habits from their home countries, while others may have had different attitudes towards food back to their homelands. To keep track to the possible change in food habits, we asked participants to characterize their food habits back in their home cultures, then compare them with Swedish food habits (according to their personal experience), and finally reflect upon if any change in their food habits occurred since they moved to Sweden.

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	5	55%	4	45%
Iranian sample	3	60%	2	40%
Chinese sample	2	40%	3	60%

Table # 12. Change in food habits among the samples.

The results show that the most change occurred in the Iranian sample and the least changed in the Chinese. Russian respondents are in-between these two samples.

The informants report two factors that affected their food habits: an influence of Swedish people, and availability of products. The participant RS9 with the Russian descent told:

*When I was cooking, my girlfriend's family [Swedes] always commented my cooking: you use too much butter, too much oil. But mostly it was everyday life choices that made my food preferences. I mean the food you can find in any supermarket. I miss some Russian food, like kvas [Russian alcohol-free drink], pickled tomatoes, for example. But it's hard to buy these products here [in Sweden]. (RS9)*

*Here [in Sweden] there are much more options to eat healthy; in Iran you don't have it widely. (IS3)*

Some people have changed their food habits for reasons of utility, for example, a lack of time for cooking. There are two opinions from the respondents:

*Me and my girl-friend are working and don't have enough time to cook. But in Iran it is essential that you cook at home". (IS4)*

*I'm very practical in cooking food and Swedish model fits me better than Russian. For example, Russian mashed potatoes are literally the same potatoes but with an additional step of pressing them. (RS1)*

An emerging theme in many interviews was the healthiness of food in relation to changes in food habits. Almost all Iranian respondents mentioned that after some time of living in Sweden they are more conscious about healthiness of the food they eat. One of the respondents (IS3) points out:

*I don't cook now Persian food, and I think it's because I don't see it being healthy. It's always a lot of rice and oil. But I haven't been thinking about that back in Iran. It was just the food we ate every day". (IS3)*

Another respondent believes that mass media influenced his perception and made him think about the healthiness of a food:

*I have some traditional food with me even now. But it's rice. It's not so healthy. But back in Iran I would just eat it, and never think about it. <...> I think actually TV forced me to think about healthiness of food". (IS4)*

At the same time, table #12 shows that there is the significant amount of people who have not changed in their food habits (48 percent in the joint sample (see table #11)). One of the participants relates his unwillingness to change food habits to the familiarity of traditional food.

*I'm not think that Persian food is better than Swedish. However, for everything you eat your stomach creates ferments, and it's easy for your body to eat familiar food. (IS5)*

The emerging topic of food's familiarity can be found in several other interviews. Two female participants, one from Iran (IS3) and one from China (CS4) tell that they have gained a lot of weight from the first several months living in Sweden. And they relate it to the fact that their bodies were not prepared to eat unknown food, different from what they used to eat back in their home countries. This situation may play a noticeable role for foreigners coming from countries where cuisine is different from Western in general and Swedish in particular. There is not this emerging code in Russian sample's narratives.

The attitudes towards new food can be very different. The data of study consists of several examples. One of the respondents from the Chinese sample reports:

*Swedish food is ok, but I really cannot enjoy it. That is why I try to cook Chinese food as much as possible. (CS2)*

Interestingly, the data shows that participants experience lack of traditional food and, unfortunately, are not able to find familiar dishes and flavor even in the restaurants in Sweden



which position themselves as being Chinese or Persian. One of the respondents complains on that issue:

*In Sweden the flavor of food in Chinese restaurants is not the same, because they have to adapt it to taste of Swedish people. They don't like spicy food and prefer more sweet dishes. (CS5)*

The other respondent admits that the one thing he enjoys the most traveling back to Iran is Persian cuisine (IS1).

#### 5.4. Dressing

Another aspect of everyday life and cultural habits is related to the way people dress themselves. The trends in clothes may noticeably differ in the sample groups and in Sweden. There are several possible sub-dimensions of clothes such as preferences to official/ informal style of dressing, color preferences, particular aspects of outfits, for instance high heels and other. As we have pointed out in the previous section, people may differ with regard to personal tastes in dressing and matching types of clothes that fit them personally. To overcome possible differences in personal styles the interviewees were asked primary on how they have changed their dressing habits since moving to Sweden.

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	7	77%	2	23%
Iranian sample	3	60%	2	40%
Chinese sample	2	40%	3	60%

Table #13. Transformations in dressing habits among the samples.

The table shows that the most transformed sample with regard to dressing style is Russian, and the least changed is Chinese, whereas the results of the Russian sample are twice as many changes as Chinese (77 against 40 percent correspondingly).

From the responses of the participants we can draw a conclusion that change in dressing style occurred primary in two aspects: type of clothes and color. In the samples the situation is different. The female Iranian respondent pointed out that women in Iran are obliged to wear a scarf, a "hidjab" when walking outside. However, she stresses that women are generally much more dressed up in Iran in comparison with Sweden. The difference may cause a misunderstanding between Iranian and Swedish people. As one of the respondents' points out:

*Back in Iran I was very dressed up. It is the way society works. During first month in Sweden all the time I dressed in the same way as I've done back in Iran. But my friends asked me all the time if I plan to go to a party. And I really felt being overdressed. So, I was wearing high heels for the first six month. But not now. There are different weather and streets that are not fit for walking with high heels. (IS1)*

Several other respondents pointed out that condition of pavements in Sweden are differing from the condition in their home countries, and it causes change in their shoes preferences.

*I always wanted to wear high heels. And as my Swedish husband is very tall, I felt so glad that I finally can wear high heels walking with him. Because my previous fiancées were relatively small it was impolite to wear them. However,*

*after the first promenade at Haga [area in Gothenburg where streets are paved with stone blocks] I realized that it is almost impossible to keep wearing high heels. (RS1)*

The participants also mention a good taste of beauty of Swedish people and a tendency to be dressed lagom [Swedish, moderate, right enough].

*I like Nordic fashion. There are many people with natural taste of beauty. Walking around the city you look around and there are so many beautiful people. I like Swedes. It is less possible to meet people dressed "too much" here. Everything, as Swedes would say, is "lagom". (RS7)*

The general attitude towards outfits and dressing in Sweden is not the same as it is in the other countries. The Russian respondent explains:

*In Sweden people don't make a big deal and don't try to impress others with their clothes. The thing is that it should be stylish. (RS9)*

At the same time people care much more about their outfits in Russia than in Sweden.

*There is a very democratic attitude towards clothes. In Moscow it is the opposite. Even if you don't have enough money – you need, firstly, to have "labeled" clothes. Even food is secondary. Here I feel a freedom of choosing outfits. However, I think Swedes need to be tidier. (RS 6)*

In relation to colors of clothes there are two tendencies. A majority of respondents concluded that after some time in Sweden they had started to dress themselves in much darker outfits than they used wear back in their home countries. Noteworthy, several male respondents, reported the opposite: their wardrobe became more colorful after several years in Sweden. Let's exemplify both tendencies from the study data. The biggest change in dressing habits occurred in the Russian sample (77 percent, see Table#13). One of the respondents ironically told about the variety of colors in her wardrobe:

*Now if to open my wardrobe there are fifty shades of grey and black. (RS7)*

Many interviewees have experienced the shock of how Swedes dress. Here are some of the stories:

*It seemed that I came to the land of mourning. Firstly I thought that something has happened, and even asked my Swedish sambo [Swedish, co-habitant] about it. Dressing habits in Russia are much brighter. After World War II it was a lack of men. Thus, there was a high competition between female, and they needed to dress attractively and bright. When I just came to Sweden and I was wearing my typical clothes and I really felt being the black sheep among Swedes. (RS3)*

*My first impression of Gothenburg is that it is the city of darkness and dullness. (RS8)*

The two of respondents independently from each other came to interesting conclusions with regard to possible psychological correspondence between color and mood:

*I like bright colors, and Swedes don't understand me. Especially in Gothenburg with dark and rainy weather it is very important to add some colors. (RS1)*

*There is a certain connection between colors of clothes and a mood. If we make an imaginary experiment, and change clothes of all Swedes to brighter ones, it will definitely make people happier. (RS3)*

Many respondents reported that they now adapted to wear darker and simpler outfits. Nevertheless, there are several Iranian participants (two male) that have reported that they now wear brighter clothes.

*I wear more colorful. Yes, I changed from the beginning. Maybe not from the first year, but from the second. The first year I just haven't think that I can change my clothes. But later when I looked at other people, I've changed the way I dress myself. I'm more colorful now. (IS4)*

*Now I buy more colored clothes in Sweden. After a while my taste has changed. Back in Iran I wore "black-grey-white". (IS2)*

Participants from the Chinese sample demonstrated other interesting results. They have changed the least from three samples. Several respondents relate it to the fact that nowadays the global clothing's trademarks, for instance, H&M and Zara with Swedish origin, is widely presented in Chinese market. It means that it is easier to dress oneself in a similar way regardless of the country of residence. In addition to globalization, neighboring countries are influence on the fashion in China. One of the female Chinese respondents told:

*Now I'm dressing not so childish. In China we influenced a lot from Japan. Japanese girls so cute and stylish, so a lot of people dress in a similar way. But I don't do it anymore after that time in Sweden. (CS4)*

People who have lived in Sweden longer than ten years also tell that there are some changes in the way Swedes dress themselves that occurred during that time:

*Ten years ago the situation was different. Now young Swedes dress themselves better, in my opinion. Maybe it happened because there are many bright Muslim girls now in Sweden and Swedish girls influenced by them, therefore tend to dress better than before. (RS4)*

The logic of change or no change in relation to dressing style differ from person to person. There are two contrastive opinions:

*I dress darker than before. Bright clothes here seem to be very strange because all other people wear black, grey, dark blue. I would like to be in the mainstream. (CS3)*

*Being a dancer and a famous choreographer in my home city back in Russia – I got a habit to dress stylish and tidy. And I'm totally not afraid to dress differently from the rest of people. (RS4)*

## **5.5. Hospitality**

The next sub-topic of potential cultural transformations is related to the traditions of hospitality with regard to being a guest and being a host. As we have mentioned above in the Methodology part, the section of hospitality could be divided into two groups: the typical way people go to someone and how do they receive guests (with regard to food, drinks, entertainment and other parts of the reception activities). The joint results on the issue of change/no change in hospitality

are depicted at the table #14. As we can see, the most changed sample is the Russian, and the least is the Chinese (55 and 20 percent correspondingly).

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	5	55%	4	45%
Iranian sample	2	40%	3	60%
Chinese sample	1	20%	4	80%

Table #14. Transformations in hospitality among the samples.

Respondents receive guests in their home countries and in Sweden differently. Starting with inviting guests, for example, in Iran the invitation is characterized by a high level of uncertainty:

*You are not specifying time inviting guests in Iran. It is impolite to appoint a time, because guests are always welcome. So, inviting them to a dinner they can come at 6 pm, or at 8 pm. (IS1)*

The situation in Sweden is not alike, the time of invitation is appointed in advance, and it is expected from people to arrive in time. Respondents point out that the manner, which let them carefully plan the evening in advance, is better. For some of respondents it was the reason for changes.

*In Sweden everything is planned. I love it much more that you can plan it ahead. I'm a person who likes to plan. I have a lot of respect of the time. My time. And if somebody don't respect my time I will be irritated. If someone come late even for 10-15 minutes I become very irritated. I say to my Iranian friends here that I become more Swedish, and when I say to them come at seven I mean exactly seven and not eight or nine. Although it can be too direct for Iranians. However, now I'm as hospitable as I was in Iran. My guests feel like they are at home. But for Swedes it's a bit pushy when you say that you haven't eaten anything and you need to eat more. But for Iranians it's a norm. (IS1)*

*Swedish model of hospitality perfectly fits to my personal model. I did not like to cook too much back in Russian neither. (RS1)*

According to the data, women are more involved in receiving guests in both Iranian and Russian cultures.

*When we have guests in Iran my mom could never enjoy party, she asked if everything is good, food is all right, fruits are on places, if people is having fun. (IS1)*

At the same time enjoyment of the party and the evening is not always the core, and some people keep the manner of being hospitable as they have been in their home cultures.

*My husband made a point why I cook so much for guests. But I said that he can do in his way, but I will do it in the way I like, in traditional Russian manner. (RS4)*

In the Chinese sample the opinions agreed that the most typical way to go out and socialize with friends and family is to invite them to the restaurant or to a karaoke bar, as it is relatively cheap there. While in Iran – it is more popular to invite people in their home. In Russia both variants are accepted, but inviting to home is more in line with the traditional way. Towards the question

of payment for the dinner, respondents tell that in all examined cultures people almost never go Dutch. It means that someone pays for guests, while the next time you will pay for others.

*It works in a way: “you give to me, and then I will give to you”. When you go to the dinner, than you need to invite those people exactly on the dinner, not on coffee or “fika” [Swedish, coffee-break]. (RS3)*

58 percent of the respondents have not changed in relation to hospitality. They point out that they are as hospitable as they were back in their home cultures. Although many of them find that their manner to be looking unfamiliar for natives, Swedes accept it and in some cases even like it. As an example, one of the respondents tells:

*Swedes always go Dutch. But it is very strange for me, and I all the time gladly pay for my friends or girls whom I go out with. I cannot even imagine how I can say to a girl: it costs thirty three crones from you and thirty three from me. And interestingly, even if Swedes say that they would like to pay for themselves, but actually they like a lot when somebody will pay for them. (RS2)*

The data shows that at the same time it is very hard to be invited to a party by a Swede. Two Chinese participants complain:

*For a long time I share office with a Swedish colleague, and he has never invited me to his parties. (CS2)*

*In all three years I have never been at home of a Swedish person. (CS5)*

We consider the issue of friendship and connectedness with Swedes as one of the emerging code in the study and will scrutinize it later closely.

## 5.6. Expression of emotions

The next possible dimension of cultural transformation is related to expression of personal emotions. Respondents were asked to compare the way they express their emotions of different sorts (positive, negative, neutral) in their home culture and now after some time in Sweden. The joint results accumulated at the table #15.

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	6	66%	3	34%
Iranian sample	2	40%	3	60%
Chinese sample	1	20%	4	80%

*Table #15. Transformations in expression of emotions among the samples.*

As we can see from the results table, the most changed sample among those three is the Russian, and the least changed is the Chinese. Further we will exemplify what kind of changes occurred, and why Chinese sample demonstrated relative stability.

Respondents narrated that the way people express their emotions differ in Sweden and in their home countries. One of the interviewees relates it to the issue of collectivism as a cultural attribute:

*Russians are collective people, while Swedes are not. We [Russians] get bored to walk alone; we need to share our emotions: "Look! What a nice flower!" We are very emotional and we need to share it with others. (RS3)*

However, the Russian sample shows the most noticeable (66 percent) change with regard to expressing emotions:

*I became more reserved. In Russia I met some Swedes and I thought: "Look at this Swedish person! He's so relaxed, patient and calm. And now when I visit Russia, people say it about me. In Russia emotions are located very close to the surface. And therefore they can be expressed easily. While here [in Sweden] people keep their emotions within. The more neutral you are the better. (RS9)*

A similar change occurred with the representatives of the Iranian sample:

*In Sweden I'm boiling more inside. I haven't been the same back in Iran. (IS1)*

Interviewees pointed out also that there are certain intra-cultural variations within the Swedish population, for example, concerning regional differences, for example, the respondents suggest that people from the South of Sweden are more open and expressive in comparison with people from other parts of the country.

*There are very different Swedes. Sometime you can meet a very sincere and open Swede and it will make you very positively surprised. (RS8)*

*Firstly, I lived in a small city in Southern Sweden. People there were very open and tolerant towards foreigners. The Southern Swedes are very communicative. In Gothenburg it is not the same. When I moved to Gothenburg I faced even latent aversion towards foreigners. (RS5)*

Some of the informants were living in Sweden for a relatively long time, which makes them able to keep track of change within the Swedish society at large from the position of an observer. One of the respondents told:

*People become more open now in Sweden than they were ten years ago. Most probably, the increasing amount of foreigners plays a significant role in that. From the beginning, Swedes were scared when we [Russians] were talking aloud, gesticulated intensively. And they [Swedes] were afraid because they literally didn't understand us and the manner we behave. (RS4)*

Models of upbringing create a fundament for the expressing of emotions. And those models differ in the examined cultures. There is one of the most vivid examples from one of the Chinese respondents:

*The point is that in China upbringing system is not adapted to teach children how to express their emotions; they more focused on a precise knowledge. And I had to learn how to be open right after arrival to Sweden. (CS2)*

## **5.7. Behavior in conflict situations**

The next category covers the issues of behavior in conflict situations regarding both professional and personal lives. The respondents reported how they were dealing with conflicts

back in their home countries and compared it with Sweden. They highlighted the distinction between open and latent conflicts, skillfulness in conflict resolution and emotions in conflict. The total results are presented in table #16.

Sample	Change		No change	
	Responses	Percentage, %	Responses	Percentage, %
Russian sample	9	100%	0	0%
Iranian sample	5	100%	0	0%
Chinese sample	0	0%	5	100%

Table #16. Transformations in behavior in conflicts among the samples.

The results surprisingly show that all respondents from the Russian and the Iranian samples have changed their behavior in conflict situations, whereas the Chinese respondents unanimously manifested that they have not changed in that respect. Let's take a look at several examples from the data. The general impression of the interviewees about Swedish conflict resolution tactics is rather pessimistic:

*It's a big problem [conflict resolution], but Swedes cannot resolve conflicts. When something happened people try to avoid it, don't notice, or just give up. And cannot simply speak it up and find a solution. They became stressed, then go to psychologists, take antidepressants. (RS1)*

*Swedes practice the model of the third part intervention into a conflict. It's a smart model, but, unfortunately, it is not working in real-life situations. Conflicts simply become, figuratively speaking, covered under a carpet. You are not discussing a situation with your colleague, but here you write an e-mail to your boss asking to resolve the situation. It takes time for the boss to figure out what to do and how, while the conflict remains. (RS3)*

*Swedes don't talk explicitly about conflicts. But they like gossiping. It's a sort of national sport in Sweden to complain about everything from their life, about colleagues and relatives. (RS9)*

In general, respondents conclude that now dealing with conflicts they become more tolerant, open to different points of views, non-judging and less categorical. It was the lesson that Sweden gave them.

*From the beginning I was very direct and emotional. When we had a discussion about Russia with Swedish people in many cases we parted being enemies. However now I became more diplomatic and tolerant to different points of view. (RS2)*

The lack of change in the Chinese sample is rooted, according to reflections of the respondents, in the similarity of Chinese and Swedish people with regard to conflict behavior.

*In China and in Sweden people both don't like to expose conflict, don't put it on table. I think in Sweden people consider face saving a lot like people from Asia. (CS3)*

However, the opinions of the Chinese respondents are not unified. Another Chinese interviewee told that the difference between Swedes and Chinese with regard to conflict behavior is still noticeable.

*In China normally conflicts are hidden, you wouldn't notice them. If people don't like each other, they hide it and other people will hardly notice that they do so. In Sweden it's more apparent. Swedish people are more straight forward, and don't hide too much. However, I haven't changed much. And I'm very Chinese in this aspect still. (CS1)*

## **5.8. Cultural identity**

One of the most important and profound emerging codes during all interviews is cultural identity. The interviewees reflected on the ways they related themselves to the Swedish host society and how they kept or neglected some parts of the identity they had back in their homelands.

There are three main codes with that regard that we have extracted from the data: (1) conscious acceptance, (2) non-integration, and (3) feeling being different. We will clarify each of these codes further and provide examples from the data.

The first mentioned code is conscious acceptance. It reflects the cognitive process of evaluation of cultural differences, finding correlations between the individual's personality and those differences, and taking a decision to follow/ or neglect certain traditions/ or adapt oneself to some cultural values. Many respondents mentioned that they have adjusted themselves to particular Swedish values which they found fitting to their personality, for instance dressing style, hospitality, expression of emotions and other. There are several examples from the narratives.

*Those things from Swedish culture that fit to my personality – I take it; but in case of mismatching traditions and values – I don't want to change myself just because it is Swedish values. (RS1)*

*I would like to keep the best parts of my Russian roots, and to take the best things from Swedish culture. But, certainly, not everything. (RS2)*

*I've learned a lot from Swedes. But they are not God's sons; they have both good and bad sides. (IS5)*

Respondents of the study accept that some of the transformations during their acculturation process possibly occurred unconsciously, whereas some of them were their conscious decision (for the latter see the previous examples). As an indicator of unconscious change respondents mention opinions of their family members, friends and acquaintances from their home countries. Among cultural categories that are affected by unconscious change are expression of emotions and dressing style. Nevertheless, it is difficult to distinguish change that has conscious or unconscious nature. And the design of the study does not let us grasp this issue.

The second code is "non-integration", which refers to another tendency in negotiating identity, which interviewees displayed in the study. Some of them see no objective reasons to be integrated into a Swedish way of life and adapt Swedish cultural values. For a number of respondents the acceptance at the workplace is more important than involvement in society at large.

*I don't think I'm very integrated into society. But I don't really care. I'm focused on my carrier, as long as my employer accepts me, it is ok for me. (CS1)*

Several other respondents feel that it is easier to socialize with compatriots and to be engaged into national communities within Sweden than to look for Swedish friends. As all three countries



chosen for the examination for the study have large representation in Sweden, it is relatively easy.

*Iranians have the tendency to group, socialize and make friends with Iranians. They have their own community, but I haven't gone in that direction in comparing with my brother and sister that live in Sweden as well. And that's why I adapted faster than they. (IS2)*

*In Sweden there is a big group of people from my nation [Iran], and it's really easy to be absorbed by that group of people. If you are a little bit lazy, you don't really need to be connected with the others [Swedes]. (IS4)*

It is also possible to separate oneself from Swedes and Swedish culture in a more rational manner, like it is depicted in the next example:

*I don't engage myself into Swedish society. I have my own world. I don't feel interested to dissolve into Swedish society. We co-exist in a good manner, I try don't disturb them [Swedes], follow laws and regulations. And at the same time I try to keep distance. I don't feel necessity to become Swedish. (RS3)*

The age of migrants when they resettled to the host country also plays a crucial role. Several respondents stressed that it has an influence on the process of their acculturation.

*When I came I was over 40 years old. And, probably, the age played its role in my adaptation. I have had so strong Russian training, that nothing really can change me. My Swede [her husband] tried, but gave up with no results. (RS6)*

Many of the respondents reported about the feeling of being different. It is the third emerging code in this section. Participants told that although native Swedes are polite and tolerant, they still make them feel being the "Other". And it may lead a sort of internal protest, as it was in the case of one of the participants.

*I'm another. At the beginning, I was thinking: yes, I'm Russian and I speak Swedish with a little accent, but I'm not different. However, all the time people behave like I'm so. They always expected that I will do something strange. And I finally admitted that. Yes, I'm different, and it's ok. And, yes, I can come to the meeting wearing red dress, and let people gossip and discuss the whole next month why I did so. (RS1)*

*After Swedes realize that I'm a foreigner they start talking, how they love cultural diversity. And as it is good, that there are so many foreigners in Sweden. But I would appreciate more if they wouldn't make me feel so different from them. (RS9)*

Some of the respondents grasp their cultural roots from a new perspective comparing it with the host society. For one of the respondents it was rather surprising discovery. Back in Russia he did not feel fitting into the mainstream Russian culture, but since living in Sweden he understood how much Russian he is.

*I felt that I will fit well in Sweden. And after around year or two I started to realize how much Russian I am. And I understood how deep those roots go. Like all those deep layers of culture and everything you've learned unconsciously revealed itself in contrast with the host society. (RS9)*

## 5.9. Friendship and connectedness with the society.

The next category causing cultural change is “connectedness”. It includes several types of possible bonds to Swedes. It can be to have a Swedish partner or sambo [Swedish, co-habitant], Swedish family, or just Swedish friends. As respondents point out, connections with Swedes play an important role in their integration and adaptation.

*My partner is Swedish, and I feel being a part of Swedish society. I actually feel myself very Swedish. If something will happen in Sweden I will be as sad as if it something bad has happened in Iran. <...> If I would marry an Iranian guy I would have the same feeling of Swedes as I have now. Now I feel more bounded with Sweden. (IS1)*

*During my first years in Sweden, I had a Swedish husband. I took part in different social activities and was more involved in the society. But after we parted with him, I turned to completely Russian-speaking environment. And I became back very Russian. (RS3)*

From the latter example we can see that connectedness with the Swedish person catalyzed acculturation, and how later separation from Swedes led to turning to compatriots and to the reverse adaptation. Negotiation of identity is a gradual process. The respondents claimed that their change can be observed in a temporal perspective.

*Changes have happened gradually. I didn't travel to Russia for two years after I moved to Sweden. And those years I spent with no contact with Russian. And after I came there I have realized those changes happened because I wasn't aware of them living in Sweden. And through the years this gap is widening because of me, and because of changes happened in Russian society as well. (RS9)*

*It's a kind of a “double vision” that I have now. Firstly when I see some things in Russia, they look so different from my new “normal”. But, secondly, I recognize them from my upbringing and my life in Russia. From that level it's deeply familiar. (RS9)*

Surprisingly, only few interviewees reported that they have Swedes among their friends, whereas the others do not, and have pessimistic opinion with regard to that issue. For instance the Chinese respondents share their experiences:

*Of course it would be great to have some Swedish friends, but I don't expect it. Swedes very nice and polite, but they keep distance with other people. (CS3)*

*I think Swedish people are not social. Even sometimes I try to speak with Swedes; I cannot make a conversation longer than ten minutes. (CS2)*

These participants have lived in Sweden less than five years, and still have no Swedish friends. Likewise the people living in Sweden much longer have difficulties in bonding with Swedish people. Here are some of the stories. After 15 years in Sweden interviewee RS6 still has no Swedish friends.

*My friends are Russians and Russian-speakers. I tried to make Swedish friends. It seems that they build a sort of a “glass wall”. They will be polite with you, smile, but at the same time will not let you get deeper into their personality. (RS6)*

The participants relate the lack of Swedish friends not only to the reserved Swedish character. They come up with several other reasons. Some feel that the lack of language skills complicates their communication. Another reason is a “mental connectedness” with people with the similar cultural background that lets people understand each other accurately and easily.

*My friends are mostly Persians. I prefer to speak my own language. It's hard to talk in foreign language and express all your thoughts. I'm not that skillful to speak foreign language. (IS4)*

*With Russians I'm more natural. They understand what I say, and also how I say it. With Swedes I have to think more: how my behavior could be interpreted. I put much more logic when communicating with Swedes, whereas I feel more natural with my Russian friends. (RS3)*

Interviewees also believe that the way to make friends is different for immigrants and for native Swedes.

*I had a lot of friends before. And I lost a lot of them now. You gain friends from your upbringing, your school, college; and it's harder to get friends later. It's not exactly natural way of getting friends. (IS5)*

*To get connected with Swedish people requires lots of efforts. And I think it is possible only if you grew up together from the school time. (RS1)*

Although some respondents have Swedish friends they admit that it is not the same friendship as it can be between Swedes.

*Although I have Swedish friends, but it's not like being a Swedish friend of a Swedish person. (CS3)*

## **5.10. Language**

An emerging code with regard to the adaptation process is language. It refers mainly to the ability to speak Swedish and the role of language in cultural transformations. The interviewees mostly have good command of Swedish, and those who do not – admit the importance of the language in the integration. Many respondents agree that state-running courses of Swedish language – SFI [Swedish for immigrants] were a very good start to acquire both Swedish language and culture.

*During those SFI courses, I met a lot of new people, learned how society functions. I got very compact and accurate information there. (RS3)*

Nevertheless, respondents find certain drawbacks in the system of language learning. They mainly complain on the teachers' qualifications.

*SFI teachers were certainly not high-skilled, but it was useful to get to know some traditions, holidays and Swedish values. (RS6)*

The interviews show that respondents see the Swedish language as a crucial factor to get into the Swedish society. And language skills give an opportunity to understand Swedes more deeply.

*I think Swedish people expect foreigners to learn Swedish. My colleagues at Volvo almost every day ask me if I have started learn Swedish, although working language is English. (CS4)*

*Somebody told me from the very beginning, that person became almost Swedish, when he starts thinking in Swedish. I'm still thinking in Russian and then translate to Swedish. (RS4)*

Connections with Swedes are very important in learning Swedish and use it in the same manner as native Swedish speakers would do. One of the respondents calls it “Swedish Swedish”.

*I need to learn Swedish more; I want to use it in a way how Swedes use it. Like, to employ slang words and so on. Sometime you can say something that others will understand it, but Swedes wouldn't say it in that way. (IS3)*

*Although I use Swedish everyday it's not a “Swedish Swedish”. (CS3)*

Interestingly, since several interviews were conducted in Russian, lingua franca for the participants, it was possible to notice change in language. The change occurred in their vocabulary: the participants sometimes employed Swedish words, adjusted to rules of Russian word-formation (by adding special ending or suffix). For instance, “респектировать” (from Swedish “respektera” – to respect), “вотать” (from Swedish “våga” – to dare), “акцептировать” (from Swedish “acceptera” – to accept). However, since the study did not focus on linguistic changes and was not correspondingly designed, we cannot draw conclusions on that issue. However, the future detailed observation on how immigration affect mother tongue seems relevant.

### **5.11. Non-verbal communication**

Since moving to Sweden the respondents have noticed significant differences in non-verbal communication. They report that typical Iranian or Russian manner can be misinterpreted by Swedish communicators. That is why they need to keep strict control over their non-verbal communication, and even over a pitch of voice.

*In Russia, talking with a person it would be appropriate to tap his shoulder, while in Sweden it may have “false” interpretations. Moreover, if I will do it for my male colleague in Sweden he may consider that as solicitation from my side. (RS1)*

*Russian language for Swedes sounds harsher, and when we speak Russian it sounds for them that we have a row. The intonations and sounds are different. I need to mind that when talking Swedish. (RS4)*

### **5.12. Religion**

The issue of religion emerged from several interviews. Two respondents from the Russian sample tell that they became believers after moving to Sweden. They started attending services in the Orthodox Church in Gothenburg, Sweden. And both emphasize the role of religion in their cultural change. It helped to overcome all difficulties related to the resettlement process, and assisted in keeping the culture of origin.

*Back in Moscow I was living with my family. They helped me in any situations. Whereas now I have to rely just on myself... and on God. It was the main reason I came to the Orthodox Church. If I would rely just on myself, it would be almost*

*impossible to get through all difficulties. But now I feel a help from God and the Church. (RS1)*

*The more you live, the more deeply you analyze yourself. I have changed in my manner of behavior, and way of thinking. I was very judging. But now I have changed under the influence of the Orthodox Church. Back in Russia I was an atheist, but here I became a church-goer. (RS3)*

Meanwhile religious practices sometimes may collide with the Swedish traditions. For instance, one of the biggest holidays in Sweden, Christmas, falls into the period of the strict advent fasting for Orthodox Christians. Respondents point out that it is hard to follow both traditions; and they try to avoid celebrations of Swedish Christmas to be able to keep the advent fasting.

### **5.13. Gender equality**

The respondents claim that they appreciate the development of gender equality in Sweden. Although the participants notice large differences in gender-based behavior and gender roles distribution, they still prefer the models accepted in their countries of origin. So, no change in that category has found.

*Life in Sweden has changed my opinion on gender equality. People here are very self-autonomous. And both male and female well-prepared for an independent life. While in my culture [Russian] there is a strong distinction between traditional gender role distributions. However, in my future family I see myself in the traditional female role. (RS7)*

*I still believe that women are naturally beautiful, while men are strong. And I don't want to move a wardrobe, because it is hard for me. I would prefer to cook something. (RS3)*

### **5.14. Trust of others**

Almost all participants of the study have mentioned in their interviews that the Swedish society at large has a high level of trust. They explain that people are open to strangers, confidential and would not cheat on others. The attitude towards trust is quite different in the three countries, chosen for the analysis. Respondents report that under the influence of the Swedish society they became more open and trustful. Interestingly, although they became more open in Sweden they would not behave similarly back in their home countries. Interviewees relate it to the huge differences in how society functions in Sweden and their home countries.

*Now I trust people more, but I don't think that I will do so if I will go back to China. It may get you into trouble. (CS3)*

*It's too much fraud in China, and from the very early age your family and teachers ask you do not trust strangers. (CS2)*

*All the time I come back to Moscow I try to be more attentive: mind pick-pockets, keep a bag carefully. And keep in mind always that it is not Sweden anymore. (RS1)*

Interviewees suggest that there are two types of trust: generalized and interpersonal trust. Participants characterize the situation in Sweden with the high level of generalized trust and the relatively low level of interpersonal trust. Respondents relate it to the Swedish seclusion.

*On the personal level I trusted people more back in Iran. In Sweden I became more careful trusting people on that level. But in general, in Sweden people lie less, they more honest. (IS3)*

*In Sweden people are more isolated. They trust each other, but they are not open to each other. (CS2)*

Participants of the study also reflect on the development of trust in the future, and they are quite pessimistic.

*I think that trust in the Swedish society will decrease in the future. Young generation is not the same as the old. (IS4)*

### **5.15. Privacy**

The emerging issue in several interviews is the issue of personal privacy and social attitude towards it. The interviewees characterize Swedes as to a high extent tolerant towards the privacy of each other; they respect it and do not try to intervene into the personal borders. Respondents find this feature generally positive and for some of them it was the important reason for resettlement to Sweden from their collectivistic countries. Likewise participants point out that in a long-term perspective a feeling of being independent turns into a feeling of loneliness.

*I was a private person in Iran. It was also one of the reasons to go abroad. But there [in Iran] you cannot be private; you need all the time be with your family, friends. Family is very important to me too, but I'm still quite private person. (IS1)*

*With regard to privacy - in Iran people live in one extreme, here [Sweden] – in another. From the beginning I like the more independent life, but in long term – person feels lonely. (IS3)*

*People here [Sweden] respect your privacy. While in China people like gossiping, and you need to protect your private life. (CS4)*

The feeling of being lonely goes as a red line through all interviews of the Chinese respondents. Although they agree that the decision to move to Sweden was somehow related to escaping from the over-populated China; they admit that they miss their friends, families and closer connections with people.

## 6. DISCUSSION

*The sixth chapter includes an analysis of the results in relation to the theoretical framework of the study. Six topics are defined and explained. They are: waves of cultural transformations, a conscious adaptation, a correlation between transformation of values and behaviors and a social conformism, steadiness and flexibility of cultural values, culturally dependent features of cultural change with regard to the three examined cultures and a change within the Swedish society.*

### 6.1. Cultural transformations: an undulation process

There are a number of noteworthy features in the results. Firstly, we will discuss the results of the detected changes within three samples from a temporal perspective. As stated in the purpose we aim to examine differences in cultural transformations among migrants, and one of the variables that can possibly influence these changes is residence time. As the results show (see Table #9), the changes were different with regard to different residence time in Sweden. The percentage of change for the first group (respondents who had lived in Sweden less than five years) is 45 percent, for the second group (who had lived in Sweden from five to seven years) is 84 percent, and for the third group (with a duration of stay in Sweden that is longer than seven years) is 46 percent. As we can see the middle group has demonstrated the biggest changes in culture that have happened. The third group shows almost the same level of change as the first, despite the fact that the residence time in Sweden differs significantly.

The results come to disagreement with the linear theories of assimilation, represented mainly by the School of Chicago, that consider assimilation and acculturation to be linear and straightforward processes of change and adaptation of immigrants to the host culture/society. Nevertheless, the results provide evidence supporting non-linear models of assimilation. As van de Rijt (2006) claims, assimilation can be seen as a reversible process. The author suggests: (1) quasi-assimilated immigrants assimilate further; and (2) not-so-assimilated immigrants reverse-assimilate (van de Rijt, 2006). As we can see from the examples of the data, there are several respondents who have lived in Sweden for a relatively long time that report having experienced an undulation process of adaptation. The excitement and confusion of the first years in Sweden made them learn a lot of the culture and society and adapt themselves during these first several years a lot. The peak of this transformation has reached after approximately five years. This period was characterized by the highest level of change and adaptation. After these five years some of them assimilate in reverse. The data of the study suggests two possible causes of the reverse assimilation: (1) psychological and (2) socio-communicative causes.

The psychological factor is grounded on the fact that the construction of social and cultural identity (identification) is based on the opposition and contrast with "others", according to Tajfel and Turner (1986). Hall (1996) claims that identification is constructed on the back of recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. When immigrants get to know Swedish culture, they get a chance to understand more deeply their own cultural roots in contrast with the host society. And they metaphorically go back to their roots in spite of getting more deeply into the host culture. The data shows that it can be done through joining ethnic communities, national organizations, or religious congregations (as several Russian respondents have done). Nevertheless, these reverse-assimilated migrants are not marginalized from the host society. They know and understand

Swedish cultural values, norms and regulations, but consciously decide to be different and keep their roots. It can be referred to as a “re-enactment” of cultural identity. Scholars emphasize that the re-enactment of cultural practices after immigration does not come about spontaneously, but usually results from the clash with the host society (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001).

The other cause is socio-communicative. It relates to communication of immigrants with the host society. Based on the data, we suggest a hypothesis that width and depth of communication with representatives of the host culture is directly proportional to the width of adaptation and depth of cultural change. In comparison with a person who moves to a new country on his/her own, a person who moves in with his/her family may become isolated from the rest of society. On the other hand, a sole migrant may of course also be at risk of becoming isolated in the new country if he/she fails to develop social ties there. Marriage with natives or long-term residents may be a way to facilitate social and economic integration. But at the same time moving to a country for marriage gives a chance to quickly develop contacts with the new country, but marriage migration in many case results in relative isolation because contact with other immigrants from the same country may be not as frequent (Olofsson and Malmberg, 2010). The data shows that those respondents who have good connections with Swedes have reported change more often than those who have no such good connections. The data also shows that the reverse assimilated migrants alter their circle of friends and acquaintances (it is typical for all three samples). However, the limited data of the study does not allow us to prove this hypothesis; therefore additional examination of immigrant experiences is needed. The analysis may take into account the variable of communication with the host society, as well as we need to take into account both the width and depth of the contacts with host culture. A thorough examination of the hypothesis the longitudinal track of the same immigrant sample seems relevant.

## **6.2. Conscious adaptation**

An analysis of the change that the respondents have experienced and an examination of their argumentation of how that change occurred reveals an interesting fact. Acculturation is a creative process. Berry (1997) points out that acculturation may stimulate the emerging of new cultural forms not found in either of the cultures in contact. Eliot (1962) claims that people who migrate to a new country take with them only a part of the home culture. The culture which develops on new soil must therefore be bafflingly alike and different from the parent culture: it will be complicated sometimes by whatever relations are established with the native race and further by immigration from other than the original source (Eliot, 1962, pp. 63-4).

At the same time, the data of the study shows that change is based on a conscious examination of both cultures. Many participants stress that they have transformed their behavior, values and manners when one of two conditions occurred:

- (1) the values of the host culture were fitting to their personality (and vice versa, mismatching values were neglected),
- (2) individuals wished to adopt certain values and behavioral practices (in case that they did not like some of their own behavioral practices and values and were eager to change them).

The suggested concept of rational adaptation is based on the idea of conscious changes. And to a certain extent it agrees with the concept of selected assimilation by Portes and Zhou (1993), and the suggestion by Allwood (2007) of people seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. The selected assimilation concept suggests that immigrants can be integrated unequally in



different dimensions (Portes and Zhou, 1993). For example, one person can be well-integrated into a labor market and at the same time be segregated from a dominant culture. It is also in line with Allwood's (2007) suggestion which means that if some way of behavior is considered by a person to be pleasure-gaining, socially preferable, and benefiting, he or she may decide to change the way of thinking according to that.

One of the most vivid examples of conscious adaptation from the study is the issue of privacy. Many interviewees stressed that they became much closed in their private lives. They point out that privacy is one of the pillars of Swedish society, which perfectly fits to their own personality. Several respondents even named the escape from collectivistic cultures to individualistic Sweden as the main reason for resettlement. It concerns mainly Iranian and Chinese samples. Scholars report that modern Chinese society experiences considerable changes: a shift from a collectivist, social-oriented culture to an individualistic, self-oriented one. Further, it is possible that better educated and less traditional Chinese are more likely to immigrate to countries where an individualistic ethos prevails (Yang, 1986). Since Sweden is one of the examples of the individualistic cultures. Swedes adore privacy, considering it as a prime feature of Scandinavian culture (Tomasson, 1970). As Lawrence and Spytbey (1986) point out that people in Sweden do not "drop in" on each other (unless you are very good friends) and there is a strong preference for a private office among white-collar workers as well as among students in their accommodation. However, as the results of our study show, too much privacy may cause a feeling of loneliness, as it happened with almost all respondents from the Chinese sample. It relates to the concept of family in Chinese tradition. "Familism" is the bedrock of Chinese societies and Chinese business (Bjerke, 1999). Business in China is based on the concept "guan-xi" [Chinese, connections or relationships]. Although networking is important in Western world, it is only one aspect of a business, whereas in China "guan-xi" is the only way business can be conducted (Seagrave, 1996). An individual in Asia is not an individual in the Western sense of a person in isolation, but includes also his or her relations (Jansson, 1987). And with that respect Chinese values are based more on personal obligations rather than on individual rights. One of the reasons why family is so important in China is that it provides security in an insecure world (Bjerke, 1999). In the case of increased uncertainty due to migration the necessity of family increases and the lack of these relations makes people feel insecure and lonely.

Similar attitudes towards collectivity can be found in Russian tradition as well. The critique of European individualism has long history. After visiting France in the 1770s the Russian writer Denis Fonvisin coined a new word "*un homme charmant*". The French "*home charmant*" was the definition of an egoist who exists for himself and for the superficial social life, whereas Russians identify themselves with their duties to the Church, the state, and the bureaucracy (Boym, 1994, p. 77). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Soviet Union all "private" was seen as politically dangerous and deprived of social meaning. However, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union the tendency of individualization has started. And Russians who grew up in 1990s are less attached to collectivistic values. It reflects in the data: Russian informants in comparison with the Chinese people did not experience the lack of collectivism in Sweden.

Another example of conscious adaptation is change in the level of trust. Although the respondents came from the low-trust societies (with regard to generalized trust, and not necessarily personal trust), the data shows that the respondents have adjusted their attitude towards generalized trust in the society after some years in Sweden. In the majority of cases the level of generalized trust has increased. It is in line with the study by Dinesen and Hooghe (2010) who found that those individuals coming from low-trust societies become more trusting

when migrating to high-trust societies (for example, Sweden). Nevertheless, those changes that were reported by the respondents of the study relate only to behavior within the host Swedish society, whereas back in their home countries they will behave as they have done before (according to their words). It is another example of what Rokeach (1972) calls socially preferable choice. At the same time we can see that the respondents differentiate generalized and personal trust. Almost all respondents from China reported that they would not trust strangers, but at the same time they would highly trust their friends and family. It relates to the Chinese concepts “gaun-xi” and “shinyung” [Chinese, personal trust], which are essential for the Chinese people. There is a similar concept in Russia – “blat” [Russian, connections with people that assist to get something] that refers to the importance of personal trust and connections. Some authors suggest that interpersonal trust has fundamentally two forms – a cognitive form and an emotional form (McAllister, 1995). In the first case trust originates from the trustee’s decision regarding whom to trust, to what extent, and under what conditions. From this perspective, the person’s perception of another’s competence and integrity is the critical condition. Emotional trust, on the other hand, is grounded on emotional ties between individuals. It is claimed that emotional trust is prevalent under cognitive trust in China and in Russia (Michailova and Worm, 2003). Gable (1959) emphasizes the importance of personal connections in Persian culture as well. A lack of personal trust in Sweden in comparison with the other countries was highlighted in narratives of almost all participants. They feel anxiety, since the usual forms of connections are not appropriate in Sweden in general. At the same time some scholars find certain forms of informal connections between people in Sweden as well. There is a widely discussed and criticized concept of “Göteborgsandan” [Swedish, Gothenburg spirit], that has rather negative connotations in Swedish socio-political discourse, and is basically about an intimate cooperation between public and private sectors. In practice it has often meant that men from politics and trade or industry meet under informal circumstances and agree on things above the heads of the citizens (see Falkemark, 1999).

In conclusion we can say that the data shows that certain change may have occurred unconsciously and individuals had limited control under the whole system of values and beliefs. According to their own words, they have not been thinking of how they have changed. Finally, we agree that cultural change represents the combination of conscious and unconscious transformations. However, the balance between these parts is unclear. Which values are open for conscious changes, and which tend to change at unconscious level? Further research on that issue is needed.

### **6.3. Social conformism**

The other noticeable result of the study is that with regard to visible manifestations of the culture the issue of social conformity arises. Talking, for instance, about dressing style some groups of the interviewees put significant attention to not standing out from the other people. It can be called a “conformity pressure” of the dominant mainstream culture (Gudykunst and Kim, 2003). The unfamiliar behavior of an immigrant is often perceived in the host country as being “wrong” (Kramer, 2010). Although respondents agree that Swedish society is tolerant towards differences and encourages diversity, the feeling of being different can create an internal pressure. It means that in some cases it is not the society itself that directly and openly rejects people deviating from established norms, but people themselves create this pressure. The conformity within the society in Sweden is high. There are twofold cultural orientations within the Swedish society. Swedes seem to need social autonomy strongly and not to be dependent on other individuals, such as neighbors, relatives, employers, and so on. At the same time, Swedes seem to need a collective support for their opinions. Collective solutions are the hallmark of the

Swedish society (Daun, 1991). This phenomenon is called “collective individualism” (Lindkvist, 1988) or “cooperative individualism” (Stromberg, 1991). Lindkvist (1988) explains that it is as an unusual combination of socialism and individualism, not the individualism of selfishness but the individualism of self-fulfillment. Bjerke (1999) claims that one of the aspects of the “collective” part of the Scandinavian “collective individualism” is that Scandinavians are not supposed to stand out in a crowd.

Kelman (1958) suggests to differentiate three types of conformity, namely (1) compliance, that refers to a public conformity, whereas a person can possibly keep his/her own original beliefs; (2) internalization, that refers to both public and private acceptance; and (3) identification, which relates to conforming to someone who is liked or/and respected (Kelman, 1958). At the same time individuals who do not conform to a majority can display independence, as the unwillingness to bend under the group pressure (Forsyth, 2013).

From the study we can conclude that people with stronger personality and higher degree of self-confidence and individualism show less willingness to change their cultural preferences. Some researchers assume that there is a correlation between culture and conformity. For example, Milgram (1961) claims that people from collectivistic societies to higher degree tend to show conformity than people from individualistic societies. Although all three countries selected for the study classified as collectivistic (Hofstede, 2001), they do not show the same level of conformity. The current study shows that the Chinese sample considers conformistic behavior to higher extent than the Russian and Iranian samples. We can also conclude from the data that Chinese respondents tend to have just public conformity and keep their own values and beliefs. It refers to compliance in Kelmas’s classification. In this case we see the agreement with the notion of culture by Allwood (1985) that divides culture into several dimensions. The study shows that these dimensions can be in contradiction with each other. It means that personal values would differ from manifested behavior, as for example, dressing habits. From this perspective we see that the concept of resolution of cognitive dissonance suggested by Festinger (1962) and further developed by Bem (1970) is not working in practice. Both contradicting categories co-exist without any tendency to resolve this cognitive dilemma. The “ying-yang” concept of culture suggested by Fang (2012) can be an explanation to a certain extent. It assumes that contradicting values and behavioral models can co-exist on different levels of a cultural “ocean”, and under specific circumstances certain values became salient, whereas certain – go out from the surface of cultural manifestations. However, additional examination of the issue is needed.

Another variable that can possibly influence the immigrants’ conformity is age. As the results show, those immigrants who moved to Sweden being adults changed less in comparison with those who came being younger. The tendency is in agreement with another social research that suggests a conclusion that older individuals displayed less conformity when compared to younger ones (Pasupathi, 1999). Despite of the fact that it is certainly hard to determine at which age preferences are formed, it seems reasonable that feelings of belonging to the source country’s culture and people may be stronger for those migrating at older ages. Another Swedish study shows that arriving in older age increases the probability to live among, work with, and marry foreign-born individuals (Åslund, Böhlmark, and Nordström Skans, 2009).

#### **6.4. Flexible and steady values**

One of the goals of the study was to examine if there is certain correlation between changing values that make possible to consider particular values and cultural categories as relatively steady and other as relatively flexible. We would like to stress that due to the fact that the study is primary qualitative we cannot claim that the qualitative results of reported changes are

inferable to the immigrant population in Sweden at large. However, the aim is to find possible trends and tendencies for future qualitative examination. The analysis of changes of five pre-established cultural categories shows that the categories with the highest change are “conflict behavior” and “dressing habits” with 73 and 63 percent of reported changes correspondingly, and that with the least change is “hospitality” (with only 42 percent of “yes”-responses). Now we will look closer at each category.

In the case of “conflict behavior” we observe quite a complicated distribution of transformations. Both the Russian and the Iranian samples unanimously report changes, whereas in the Chinese case – no one said that he or she have changed in that respect. The respondents changed with regard to conflict behavior mostly in a manner of separating emotions from the conflict situation (as so in Russian and Iranian cultures). They became more diplomatic and consensus-oriented. That reflects the Swedish way of a behavior in conflict situations. The Swedish manner, generally speaking, is beneficial for all participants. It includes open and tolerant communication between the parties of the conflicts, free expression of various opinions and striving for mutual agreement for possible resolution. If Russians and Persians would keep their emotional manner of conflict behavior it could cause additional problems. Thus change in this category is in line with Allwood’s suggestion that people tend to avoid pain and seek pleasure (Allwood, 2007). On the other hand, a relative stability of the Chinese sample with regard to this category can be explained by certain similarities of acceptable forms of conflict behavior in Sweden and in China. The Confucian tradition, which emphasizes cooperation; and avoiding conflicts is one of Chinese ways to keep social harmony (Jansson, 1987). People expect to save “face” for everybody on all occasions (Lewis, 2007). In conflict situations, aggressive behavior from either party can damage “face” of the other. The adoption of “face-giving” and “face-saving” behavior in conflict situations is valued as a means to maintain a sense of harmony. In the Chinese case the concepts of “renging” [Chinese, favor] and “pao” [Chinese, reciprocation] have particular salience. It means that concessions made by one party is normally expected to be responded to by an equal amount of concessions made by the opposing party. “Favor” is expected to be reciprocated by the Chinese and therefore they are more willing to “invest” in conflict situations by initiating a compromise solution (Kirkbride, Tan, and Westwood, 1991). The striving for consensus in China is as important as it is important in Sweden. Hence, Chinese do not need to adapt themselves to the Swedish way of dealing with conflicts.

The category of expression of emotions demonstrates various changes in the three samples. The least change occurred with the Chinese informants and can be explained as in the case of conflict behavior by similarities with the Swedish culture in restrain of emotional expression. Many Russian respondents have changed in that respect to be able to limit their expressiveness.

The next category of cultural change is dressing habits. The study shows that the participants have changed in their style of dressing which became more casual and simple, they have altered their color preferences and choice of certain outfits. For example, almost all female respondents avoid high heels now. The relatively high flexibility of dressing habits that has been observed during the study can be related to the issue of conformity. The question of conformity was closely discussed previously. Noteworthy, these changes are realized in a form of compliance (external manifestation) rather than values change. People keep their preferences and change only to fit into the external environment.

The category of food habits demonstrates almost equal amounts of change and no change (52 and 48 percent correspondingly). The change mainly occurred due to change in personal lifestyles since moving to Sweden. For instance, it relates to the lack of time for cooking. The

availability of specific final products and ingredients make people adjust their food habits as well. The societal affect is also notable; several respondents report that life in Sweden forced them to think about the healthiness of food. However, in the cases when traditional food and ingredients are widely available (for example, Chinese restaurants in Sweden) representatives of these cultures less likely to change their food habits.

The least changed category is the “hospitality”, less than half of the respondents reported change in this regard. It can be explained by considering another variable, “connectedness with Swedes”. It needs two to tango and hospitality is a process that involves two parts – a host and guests. And it is obvious that the manners of hospitality need to be fitting to people who are invited. It was stated above that the informants experienced the lack of contacts with Swedes, and some of them even have never been invited to a Swedish home. And the circle of friends and acquaintances of the respondents mainly consists of compatriots or other immigrants. In this case we observe again that the lack of contacts with natives hinder the acculturation process. It can be seen as the evidence in support to the hypothesis we stated in the section one.

### **6.5. Cultural-related features of transformations**

The study shows that the three samples demonstrate different attitudes and models of cultural transformations. The most change occurred in the Russian sample with an average level at 71 percent, and the least in the Chinese sample – with the level of less than 25 percent. The Iranian sample shows medium results (52 percent of reported change). However, we should admit that these groups of immigrants have different preconditions of adaptation. Portes and Zhou (1993) claim that there are two factors that influences the process of assimilation, namely, (1) social perception of immigrants (that can be either prejudiced or non-prejudiced according to fitting of migrants into phenotypical features of the receiving culture (e.g. color skin and other)), and (2) existence of co-ethnic communities (cultural groups) from the same culture (Portes and Zhou, 1993). The results of the study show agreement with these factors.

In the case of the study we can see that interviewees pointed out the importance of the existence of ethnic communities. As in the case of Iranian sample we can see that due to the large Persian diaspora in Sweden it is easier for Iranian immigrants to keep their identity, resist cultural change, have Persian friends and be involved in social activities with compatriots. As we can see from the data, there are several factors encouraging that process:

(1) language proficiency (respondents stressed that it is significantly easier for them to express their thoughts on their mother tongue in comparison with, for example English or Swedish; however people with good skills in foreign languages do not see language as an obstacle for communication);

(2) cultural similarities (as respondents pointed out it is easier for them to keep friendship relations with representatives from the same cultural group (in the case of Russian sample – participants tend to have Russian-speaking friends who are not necessarily of Russian descent, but from former Soviet countries).

However, the strong ethnic communities can influence immigrants in two possible ways, according to Faist (2000). On the one hand strong networks and immigrant communities may be a precondition for the success of immigrants in the receiving society (successful pioneers can be role-models for newcomers, may guide them to the job market and give valuable pieces of advice with regard to how the host society functions), but may also be a constrain, if the migrants are weakly integrated into the labor market and social life, and they will demonstrate

the examples of segregation or marginalization. Triandis et al. (1986) also argue that the more power the immigrant group has in its new setting, the less likely it is that accommodation to new cultural norms will occur.

The next factor is social perception of migrants. Portes and Zhou (1993) make an important conclusion that in the case of European migrants in the USA, the white skin color reduces a major barrier to entry into the American mainstream. And for this reason, the process of assimilation depended largely on individual decisions to leave the immigrant culture behind and embrace American ways. Such an advantage obviously does not exist for the people from for example Africa and Asia (Portes and Zhou, 1993). The vulnerability factors to downward assimilation defined by Portes and Zhou (1993) are: color of skin, location, and the absence of mobility ladders. With regard to phenotypic differences the Chinese sample differs the most from the Swedish type of appearance, whereas the Russian is the most similar to that. At the same time there are no complaints on discrimination due to color of skin and appearance in the data. We can think of this as the general tendency for inclusiveness in the Swedish society. However, the data of the study is not sufficient to examine the correlation between phenotypic differences and cultural transformations and additional research is needed.

General attitudes towards cultural groups can play a significant role in the cultural transformation. For example, Nordin (2005) points out that those Chinese who came to Sweden from Vietnam blended quietly into Nordic society because they did not complain, impose, or demand. In the most cases Swedes react positively to the deferring demeanors of most Southeast Asians. However, a lack of keenness about accepting gypsies in Sweden was matched by an almost equal disdain for welcoming Russians (Nordin, 2005, p.170). Allwood (1985) assumes an interesting fact, i.e. that the global hierarchy of cultures and languages can also be found in countries of immigration, as a kind of locally adjusted hierarchy between immigrants. Thus, in Sweden, Anglo-immigrants have high status, followed by other Nordic countries, followed by North European countries and immigrants from nations which are powerful in a global perspective, like Japan or China, but traditionally not very common in the local Swedish context. As Robins (1996) claims, cultural relationships may easily become dominated by fears and anxieties, or by fantasies involving the projection of collective emotions on the others. They may become restricted by cultural arrogance, denying the possibilities inherent in the others, and producing feelings of indifference or resentment towards them (Robin, 1996). The Swedish journalist Elizabeth Hedborg draws an exaggerated picture of how Swedish people perceive Russians: "The ordinary Swede's knowledge of Russian reality hasn't changed in time. Russians can be described only in two ways: they are either dangerous or oppressed. One should either be afraid of them or feel sorry for them." (Groth, 2006, p. 287).

The importance of location has emerged in the study's data. One of the respondents in the Russian sample was living in migrant densely populated city Södertälje (around 40 percent of the population are immigrants (Kommunfakta, 2013)) for the first five years in Sweden, and later moved to Gothenburg. He reports that during the life in the "migrant city" he was not able to get to know Swedish culture deeply. And he started acquisition of Swedish cultural values and acculturation processes just after moving to Gothenburg, according to his personal reflections. Thus we can see how important cultural environment is in relation to the process of cultural adaptation. Another respondent who lived the first two years in Skåne, province in the South of Sweden, points out that there was an environment that is friendly for foreigners. She relates it to the high amount of immigrants and relatively high openness of Swedes on the South in comparison with people from the other parts of Sweden. However, we should admit that reaction on a high amount of immigrants can be different.

Not only has the city of residence affected the acculturation process, but an area within the city has done it also. Several years ago the Swedish daily newspaper Göteborgs-Posten published series of journalist investigations with a common title “One city – two worlds”. The articles compared mostly Swede-inhabited Näset to alien-dominated Lövgärdet [both are living areas within Gothenburg, Sweden]. Neither side of town really comprehended how the other lived. Ignorance led to myths and false generalizations. Interesting to notice, living in culturally diverse neighborhoods people tend to have stronger cultural identities compared to more homogeneous environments (Bisin et. al., 2006).

Life in “migrant areas” can intensify a tendency to neglect the host culture at large. As stated above, contacts with representatives from the host culture can positively influence cultural adaptation and integration of individuals, as well as the contacts with marginalized migrants can have an opposite effect. The studies on a minority influence show that it can override conformity effects in some cases and lead to an unhealthy group dynamic in general. For example, a single “bad apple” (an inconsiderate or negligent group member) can substantially increase conflicts and reduce performance in work group (Felps, Mitchell, and Byington, 2006).

## **6.6. Change within the Swedish society**

One of the emerging codes is changes within Swedish society under the influence of immigration. Many respondents, especially those who had been living in Sweden for quite a long time, report noticeable differences in Swedes. The communication between immigrants’ and host cultures is not a one-way flow, but two-way. Integration of the migrants into the society can create various forms of cultural fusion (Kramer, 2010), which literally mean that the encounters of immigrants with the host society and its adoption will also leave their imprint on it. There are numerous examples of cultural fusion from historically multicultural societies, namely curry hamburgers, playing jazz with traditional Japanese instruments, adding Polynesian warrior dances to an American college football pregame routine, changes in fashion and ideals of beauty. Moreover, the visible manifestations of culture can distract attention from changes taking place on the inner deep layers of cultural values and beliefs. Heterogeneous societies become more open-minded, less prejudiced and tolerant.

Immigrants influence the societies they move to. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sweden was relatively homogeneous society and started to experience multiculturalism recently. During the last 20 years Swedish patterns of communication have gone through a number of noticeable changes, for example, concerning forms of address, types of greetings, and probably also concerning the show of emotion publicly (Allwood, 1999). Nordin (2005) assumes that it was acceptable for native Swedes to borrow from foreigners, but impositions by aliens on Swedes were forbidden. Thus Swedish youth freely copied foreign youth’s habits, speech, and dress, and aliens could entertain and educate by teaching Swedes how to tango, sing gospel, or belly dance. The reality was that Swedes always chose what they wanted to take from the many different cultures presented in Sweden (Nordin, 2005, p.170).

The changes in culture and society is significant, whereas causes of these changes are not clear but must probably be sought in a combination of many different factors like political reforms, increased material welfare, changes in communication technology, etc. (Allwood, 1999). Inglehart argues that economic development, cultural and political changes go hand by hand with regard to shift of values (Inglehart, 1997). Nevertheless it is misleading to view cultural change as “Americanization” (spread of the value system from the USA in the world). The study that Inglehart and Baker (2000) have conducted shows that industrializing societies in general are not becoming like the United States. In fact, the United States seems to be a

deviant case: its people hold much more traditional values and beliefs than do those in any other equally prosperous society. And if any societies exemplify the cutting edge of cultural change, it would be the Nordic countries (Inglehart and Baker, 2000, p.49). The development of mass media plays also important role in that process, for example socio-psychologist Abraham Moles developed the concept of mosaic culture. It means that the perception of information nowadays is random and chaotic, which does not let receivers of communication hierarchically organize pieces of information into cognitive knowledge (Moles, 1986). Increased immigration noticeably affects culture of a host country. And the way Swedish culture responded to the increasingly heterogeneous society is an emerging area for future research.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

*The seventh chapter consists of conclusions with answering the research question of the study, reflections on the process of conducting the research and suggestions for future research.*

The study has the aim to scrutinize individual experiences of immigrants in Sweden with regard to transformations of their values and behavioral practices. The main research question was articulated.

*(1) How do immigrants experience transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices in a host society from a communicative perspective?*

The study shows that the transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices is an undulation process that may include several waves. It supports the “non-linear” model of acculturation that leaves the possibility for reverse acculturation. The study shows that the most change occurred in the group of the respondents who had been living in Sweden from five to seven years, whereas the participants who had been living in Sweden more than seven years demonstrate almost the same level of transformations as those who moved less than five years ago. The study suggests two causal factors: (1) psychological and (2) socio-communicative factors. The first refers to the process of negotiating social identity in contrast with the receiving society which may lead to reverse acculturation. The second factor is related to the interaction between immigrant and the host culture, especially with natives. The study leads to a possible conclusion that connections with carriers of host culture can positively contribute to adaptation and acculturation processes, and vice versa.

The analysis of transformation of values and behavioral practices shows that the process of selected acculturation takes place in many cases of immigrant experiences. The selection takes place according to a “conscious adaptation”. It refers to the situation when immigrants consciously select certain values and behavior for transformation and neglect others. The choice is based on utility and social acceptance of a certain behavior.

Moreover, the study shows that values of immigrants and their behavioral practices can stay in contradiction with each other. It means that in many cases visible manifestations of culture can be adapted just on the behavioral level without altering values and attitudes both in short- and long-term perspectives. The analysis of social conformity shows that there is mainly the process of compliance, when people tend to change only visible manifestations and keep their attitudes and beliefs.

Nevertheless there are two other factors articulated that make notable influence on cultural transformations. These are ethnic communities in Sweden and place of residence. Both factors can either significantly decrease acculturation and hence transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices of immigrants. Residence in immigrant areas or densely migrant populated cities and strong ethnic communities make immigrants to keep their home culture to higher extent than to adapt to a host culture. In a sense it correlates with the hypothesis of connections with the host culture suggested previously.

The analysis shows that there are no unified tendencies that certain values are more flexible and other are resistant to change. The study sees the cultural-dependent differences among the sample groups with that respect.

The qualitative nature of the study does not let us draw conclusions that will be possible to extent to the whole amount of immigrants. At the same time it allowed us to find noteworthy tendencies in transformation of cultural values and behavioral practices among the three groups of immigrants [Russian, Iranian and Chinese] in Sweden. With that respect the research can be considered as a pilot study for further examination of the issue of cultural change.

We suggest including close examination and approbation of hypotheses which were suggested in the study for statistically representative sample of immigrants for the future research. The study can be also improved by adding socio-demographical perspective, such as gender, level of education, integration in labor market and other.

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## Appendix 1. Interview script.

### *Section 1. Background information.*

1. What is your age?
2. What is your nationality by birth?
3. Since when have you lived in Sweden?

### *Section 2. Personal story.*

4. Why have you decided to move to a foreign country? And why to Sweden?

### *Section 3. Contacts with the host culture.*

5. How well do you integrated into Swedish society in general at that moment?
6. How do you keep in touch with Swedish culture?
  - a. Do you have Swedes among your friends?
  - b. Do you belong to any types of social groups where majority of participants are Swedish?
7. How have you got to know Swedish culture? (Special courses, books, TV shows, talking with people, etc.)

### *Section 4. Contacts with the home culture.*

8. Do you keep any contacts with your home culture? People, traditions, etc.
9. Do you belong to any national community in Sweden? If so, with what purpose?
10. How often do you use your mother tongue? At work, at home, in every day communication.
11. What does your home culture means for you now?

### *Section 5. Changes and transformations.*

12. Looking back to yourself in your home country and now in Sweden, do you think that you have changed? In which way? How have it happened? Any examples, stories?
13. Have you noticed that now after some time in Sweden in some situations you behave differently you would do in your home country?
14. Do you think that some changes may occur unconsciously and you are not aware of them?
15. Have your friends/relatives/parents said that you behave/act/think differently now?
16. How did you experience these changes? Do you agree with them?

### *Section 6. Values and behavioral changes.*

17. Can you claim (or some people have told you) that you behave like a Swede in some situations? If so, in which?
18. Can you claim that you think like a Swede in some situations? If so, in which?
19. During the process of changes have you noticed what have happened firstly, (1) have you changed your behavior and then tried to understand why Swedes behave so, or (2) firstly understood why people behave so and then adjusted your behavior?

### *Section 7. Transformations.*

20. Do you think the behavior of people in conflicts in Sweden is differing from your home country?
21. How do you behave in conflicts with Swedish people? With people with the same background as you?
22. Do you behave differently now than you used to do it before?
  - a. Dressing habits
  - b. Food habits
  - c. Hospitality
  - d. Expression of emotions
  - e. Other topics