

LATINOS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Case study:
The construction of Latino identity in Wageningen

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FOREWORD

This research is executed as a finalising part of my Master International development Studies with a major in Sociology and Rural development at the Wageningen University. My individual interest to see the Latino people with their particularities within the Dutch society, motivate me to use empirical data for qualitative analysis. I am grateful for the opportunity I had to develop and execute this research.

I would like to thank all Latinos and Dutch people who participated in –depth interviews and someone has patiently answered other complementary questions through e-mail. The answers of my interviewed were for me, as Latina, constantly recognized. Thank you for sharing your stories with me. Without you this research would not have been possible.

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SUMMARY

In the Netherlands there are about 3,1 million allochtones and within this group, according to CBS the Latinos represent the smallest distinguished group of non-western origin. In the seventies and eighties Latinos, mostly from Chile and other South American countries migrated to the Netherlands as asylum politics. Later most Latinos from all countries of Latin American continent came to the Netherlands, having met their Dutch partner, here or in Latin America. This group of Latinos migrants and asylum seekers have in general a good educational level and most of them are cosmopolitan. Moreover Latinos have their own identity, culture, catholic religion and language (Spanish and Portuguese) that differentiate them from Dutch people and others. At the same time Latinos began to organize themselves in - Latin American Dutch organization, OLAH, which constitute a unique organizational model in the Netherlands, because of their mixed ness within their members, Dutch and Latinos. In this context it is interesting to investigate how the first generation of Latinos construct the Latino Identity in the Netherlands. Understanding the complex reality of this identity in every day life, it means challenging the static perceptions and discourses about Latino Identity at personal and group level and /or rethinking the different identities that one builds in the Netherlands after migration.

Transnational migration implies changing times and environments. Latinos perceive change in everyday life in the Netherlands, as well as in their identities construction. This research uses the idea of social constructed identity, looking the discursive approach of Hall (1997), by which everything is constructed and apprehended through discourse, perceptions, practices and power relations. By the way culture, transnational migration, integration and gender relations within the mixed couples are also considered in the construction of Latino identity.

The main research questions are:

(1) How do Latinos construct their identity in the Netherlands?

And (2) how is this identity represented within Dutch society, at individual and group levels?

There is not one single answer to the research questions because the identity construction as a process has different influences, inside and outside of the person and Latino group. It is socially constructed as transnational identity among many others identities in the Netherlands. The qualitative approach was adequate for this research, because it enables new viewpoints to arise. In order to achieve the answers of the research questions and respond to the chronological life of the interviewed, it held 35 in depth interviews with Latinos of the first generation from which 31 are/were married with Dutch people and 4 with Latinos living in the Netherlands. Latinos were chosen as research population because they are a small group living in the Netherlands between 2 and 30 years. They are integrated within the Dutch society and most of them have a high level of education. This research concerns exploring new elements in maybe the first one on Latinos identity construction in the Netherlands.

The Latinos identity construction process is represented in some common characteristics, attributed by themselves as self definition and by “others” as self-assumed by the Latino group. In global terms refers to the common language (Spanish, Portuguese), spontaneity, religion (Catholicism), music, food, not web organized, solidarity, etc. as distinctiveness of this social group. The term “Latino” is usually used outside the Latin American countries and continent. Generally Latinos after migration will first identify themselves as any national,

Colombian, Nicaraguan, Peruvian, etc. But it is generally understood among themselves, that they are Latinos. From the interviews it became clear that not all Latinos think consciously about their identities. But someone are experiencing their “hybrid identity”: Latino, Andino, Caribbean and Dutch within their families.

The discursive construction of Latino involves, the debate on integration and the interaction with the nation-State and Dutch governmental institutions dedicated to dealing with “migrants” permission residence. From the interviews most Latinos perceive Integration as a process “to feel at home”. To fell at home means for Latinos, to experience in daily life within the mixed couples accept culturally external elements, without losing their roots and own principal characteristics. Additionally, in the case of the “Latino women and men,” the representations of gender indicate in general, that they are equally or less emancipated than the Dutch.

Finally the construction of Latino Identity is related to the Latin American Dutch Organization (**OLAH**), the place where the diversity and common characteristics mentioned generate a possibility of meeting within the Latinos and Dutch people. Moreover, The Latino identity at personal and group level is constructed with individual’s elements, innovated by others and finally results in a combination of both. Due to this, they are now in the position to see the Latino identity as a change, as empowerment and as a necessary condition for their functioning in the Netherlands.

1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of my research is the identity construction of Latinos¹ in Dutch² society. I investigate the constitutive elements of Latino identity at personal and group levels. I emphasize the differences and similarities in discourses, perceptions and practices of Latinos and others, in terms of which Latinos make sense of their identities and new lives in this country. Language is the most fundamental constitutive element of culture: it is through language that Latinos, the Dutch and others express their identities and lives and become aware of themselves and others. Additionally, I perceive that migration and integration play an important role in how Latino Identity is constructed in the Netherlands. Therefore in this research I analyse what happens in everyday life in issues of Latino identity, discourses, power relations and practices in the context of the Netherlands.

1.1 Background of the study

The Netherlands is a country where 16 million people of different nationalities and cultures coexist. Recently the subject of identity in multicultural Dutch society has been a topic of many debates; this is creating differences not only between the government and the population in general, but also between natives (autochtonen³) and immigrants (allochtonen⁴).

In 2010 there will be almost two million non-western allochtonen in the Netherlands. Of these, Latinos represent the smallest distinguished subgroup of non western origin (CBS:2003). In the nineteen-seventies, most Latinos who migrated to the Netherlands were Chileans who sought political asylum. Later, people arrived from other dictatorial regimes in Latin America: Uruguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Brazil and others. In general, this group of migrants or refugees have a good educational level.

In daily practice, Latinos are constantly defining and redefining their own place in Dutch society. They are very diverse in culture, identity in educational and socio-economic status, differing both from each other and also from other migrant groups in The Netherlands. My motivation for choosing to focus my research on the Latinos in Wageningen and their process

¹ The term Latinos refers to men and women, who came to the Netherlands from various Latin American countries. The term excludes those from the countries of North America and the former and present overseas territories such as the Antilles and Suriname. Latinos have their own identity, culture, religion, and language (Spanish and Portuguese). Latinos themselves generally use the term "Latino" just as the Dutch people identify them; in this report this term will be used more than the designation "Latin American." In this context 'Latino' refers to both men and women, but occasionally 'Latina' is used to refer to a woman and Latino to a man, to emphasize gender. .

² Dutch is the adjective describing a person or an object from the Netherlands or Holland. These two names for the country can be confusing for foreigners. According to Jacob Vossestein (1998) Holland and the Netherlands are identical, "just two names for the same country". 'Holland' is more often used in English by foreigners such as the Latinos and also by the Dutch themselves. 'The Netherlands' is more often used in a formal way, as in ceremonies or for diplomatic purposes. (Vossestein 1998:8) In this thesis I use both names.

³ "Autochtonen" is the Dutch word for people of Dutch origin born in the Netherlands.

⁴ "Allochtonen" are those born in, or having at least one parent born in, a foreign country.

Allochtonen born outside the country are the *first generation* and allochtonen born in the Netherlands the *second generation*. First generation allochtonen are categorized according to their birth country as *western* and *non-western*. The *non-western allochtonen* are those born in *Turkey, Africa, Latin America* or *Asia, with the exceptions of Japan and Indonesia*.

Alders, M., 2003, Allochtonenprognose 2002–2050: bijna twee miljoen niet-westerse allochtonen in 2010. Bevolkingstrends 51(1), blz. 34–41. CBS, Voorburg/Heerlen.

It should be noted that "allochtone" could have a negative connotation for some autochtone Dutch people.

of identity construction is that I am a Latina, a Spanish native speaker living in the Netherlands. Being Latina and a member of the Latin American Dutch Organization (OLAH⁵), I am able to discern the prejudices of Latinos and I can be critical of some Latino perceptions.

For a better understanding of Latinos in the Netherlands, it is necessary to review both a bit of history and the societal composition of Latin America. Latin American society is a multicultural community: because the population is a mix of ancestries, ethnic groups and races, this part of the world is one of the most diverse and rich on the globe. The composition varies from country to country. Some countries have a predominantly mixed population. In other countries, people of Amerindian origin, or native cultures, are in the majority. Inhabitants of European ancestry dominate in some populations and others are primarily of African descent with a long history of slavery. In Latin America, European culture and government were imposed, as was the Roman Catholic Church. The Church became a major economic and political power, as well as the official religion of the continent. Furthermore, the rich mosaic of Latin American cultural expressions is the product of the many diverse influences mentioned above, although the most enduring European colonial influence was language: Spanish and Portuguese. (wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_Americans)

It is interesting to know about the origin of the term “Latino.” Here I try to register the general sense, the daily perception in the Latino network. In Wikipedia, Latino refers to native speakers of romance languages. Nations speaking Italian, Portuguese and Spanish were influenced by Roman civilization, as well as by the natives or inhabitants of the ancient Latium. On the other hand, in the United States (U.S.) people speak not only of Latinos but also of Hispanics. According to Wikipedia⁶, the term “Latino” comes from various sources and was officially adopted in 1997 by the U.S. government. “Latino” is defined as “a native or inhabitant of Latin America; someone who lives in the United States and who comes from or whose family comes from Latin America. According to the census of 1970, Hispanic is the official and theoretical word to refer to Latinos in the U.S. Hispanic is related more to persons who self-identify with Spanish ancestry and Spanish speakers. In practice there are distinctions between Hispanic (people from Spain) and Latino (people from the Latin American continent). Both speak Spanish. However, neither Hispanic nor Latino refers to a race, because a Latino can be of any race (White/Caucasian, Black/African American, Asian, Native American or Pacific Islander), although as officially defined in the United States, Latino does not include Brazilian Americans or natives of Spain residing in the U.S. Here it is important to mention that, contrary to this two-category division into Latino and Hispanic, Flores (2003) affirms that there are those in the U.S. who use the different national designations or country names: Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Colombians and others, just as some Latinos in the Netherlands do. Above all, now the “Latino social movement is prominent as a virtual creative subculture because the Latino contribution to contemporary popular music, dance, performance and visual imaging has accompanied important signs of social organization and self-identification among young Latinos”. (Flores, 2003: 96-102)

For the purpose of this research I use the term “Latino” in the way Latinos define themselves. It refers to someone who lives outside the Latin American countries and is a native speaker of Spanish or Portuguese. Latino is a short term for Latin-Americans, yet it can also refer to the

⁵ Organization Latino Americana Holandesa.

⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latino>

Latino group of people living in the Netherlands. Consequently Latino has to do with or is always related to the Latin American Continent. The book “*Understanding the Americas*”⁷ defines the term Latino/a in the same way, as anyone who “manifests the palpable sense of belonging to the same group of people who share a similar historical trajectory that in turn gives coherent expression to the notion of the Americas”. (Matos: 2003,19)

In the European journal *Focaal* I found a piece of research by Pero concerning “Political engagement of Latin Americans in the UK,” but in the Netherlands there is not much information available about Latinos or their identity. It is for this reason that I use empirical data for qualitative analysis in this research. This study is explorative, seeking on the one hand to gain an understanding of the process of the construction of Latino Identity in terms of personal and social experiences inside Dutch society. On the other hand, this research challenges the static perceptions and discourses about the different identities that migrants, and in this case Latinos, build in the Netherlands.

This research begins with an investigation of the aspects or things that define the identity of a person or group of people belonging to a migrant group like the Latinos and how this influences their development. It is important to have an idea of how Latinos develop and feel within Dutch society: is it because of their identity as Latinos or because they consider themselves world citizens or even Dutch citizens rather than Latinos? It means that Latino Identity with its particularities and Latinos’ connection or social integration within the new Dutch society are constructed and reconstructed.

Therefore in this study I analyse what happens in everyday life in issues of Latino identity, discourses, power relations and practices in the changing context of the Netherlands. How do people understand and what are their perceptions about Latino identity? What do the actors say about that identity, how do they express their own identity? What is the complexity of identities in a multicultural context like the Netherlands?

1.2 Relevance of the Study

Analysis on identity issues can contribute to helping people understand the interplay of differences and similarities between human beings regardless of who or where they are. Principally, however, this research can provide better insight about the process of identity formation, which can be of import to individuals who find themselves in a situation of cultural contact and change inside the host country.

Although there are many studies about different allochtoon groups in the Netherlands, these studies do not include specifics about Latinos, a relatively small subgroup. It is interesting to get to know the reality of the Latino Identity construction process.

Understanding the complex reality of this identity in everyday life means challenging the static perceptions and discourses about Latino Identity or rethinking the different identities that one builds in the Netherlands. Thus this understanding can contribute as well to building social equity with respect, and acceptance and recognition of other people and cultures inside the Dutch society.

⁷ Understanding the Americas: Insights from Latina/o and Latin American Studies. Lynn Stephen, Patricia Zavella, Matthew C. Gutman and Felix V Matos Rodriguez, in *Perspectives on Las Americas. A rider in culture, history and representation*. 2003. pp 19

1.3 Outline of the thesis

This work is presented as follows. In the first part of Chapter One, the **introduction** introduced the topic of this research on Latino identity construction within Dutch society, reviewing the origin of the Latino notion and the relevance of the study. With this background, it is possible to delve into the research questions. Next, there is a discussion of the **theoretical framework** on identity construction, culture, interculturality, transnational identity and gender, looking at the discourses, perceptions, practices and power relations in Latinos' daily lives. At the end of this chapter, the fieldwork **methodology is** presented, including the operationalisation of concepts present in the construction of Latino identity. Chapters two, three and four present the description and analysis of the qualitative data and the results of this research, trying to approach the complex construction of Latino identity at both the personal and group level within the Dutch society. Chapter two, "What makes us Latinos. Differences and similarities between us and others as experienced by Latinos," contains the interviewee profile; general cultural, social and educational characteristics of Latinos; and the dimensions of Latino Identity construction. Chapter three, "Latino Identity Dynamics in a context of integration and transnationalism," discusses the Latinos' transnational migration in terms of reasons, motivations and expectations in coming to and staying in this country. Here the Latino identity dynamics at the individual level are interpreted and represented in certain social experiences in Latinos' encounter with the nation state. This chapter also presents the effects of Latino identity in terms of integration and gender relations within mixed couples. Chapter four, "The Latin American Dutch Organization and Latino group identity," describes the Latino Identity represented at group level in the Latino- Dutch organization OLAH. Finally, chapter five, "Conclusions and Recommendations," is dedicated to the discussion of the findings and relates them to the theoretical framework as answers to the research questions.

1.4 Research Objectives

The general objective of this research is to analyse how Latinos construct their identity in the Netherlands and how this identity is expressed in the microcosm of Dutch society in Wageningen. The study focuses on individuals but includes an examination of the social group called OLAH, the Latin American Dutch Organization. OLAH is the product of members of mixed couples and the result of their Latino - Dutch interrelationships.

The following specific objectives were formulated towards achieving the general objective of the study:

- a) To gain better insight into the Latino Identity construction process.
- b) To identify the dimensions those define the Latino Identity.
- c) To know the influence of Latino Identity in who Latinos are and what they do in everyday context.

1.4.1 Research Problem

(1) How do Latinos construct their identity in the Netherlands?

And (2) how is this identity represented within Dutch society, at individual and group levels?

1.4.2 Research Sub questions

- a) *What are the discourses, perceptions and practices of Latinos related to their identity?*
- b) *What are the differences concerning certain subjects between Latinos and Dutch people and in which contexts are they produced?*
- c) *What are the dimensions and cultural characteristics of Latino Identity and how do Latinos express their own identity?*
- d) *What are the practices and gender perceptions of Latinos in the construction of Latino Identity within mixed couples?*
- e) *What are the principal discourses, perceptions and practices about integration and how are they related to Latino Identity?*
- f) *What are the relevant discourses about migration and how are these connected to the different locations in a transnational context?*
- g) *How do Latinos experience transnationalism in relation to their identity construction?*
- h) *What are the discourses, perceptions and practices of Latinos relating to the Latin American Dutch Organization (OLAH) and how is its identity represented?*

1.5 Theoretical framework

This chapter presents various discourses and concepts about identity, culture, gender and migration. All of these concepts will be employed to discuss the notion of Latino Identity using the idea of transnational identity of Latinos in the Netherlands.

1.5.1 Identity and the construction of Latino Identity

The way in which Latinos position themselves in the Netherlands is not easy to define, but the concept of identity helps to capture it. Many academics consider identity as the identification of the individual with one specific group, despite differentiation along the lines of some characteristics. It permits Latinos to recognize themselves, reaffirm the belonging to their group and their differentiation from “others.” These others can be Dutch or people from migrants groups in the Netherlands.

There are various definitions of identity:

“Sets of social expectations related to ourselves and others that are grounded in the interplay between similarities and differences and pertain to the personal, relational and communal aspects of life” Hall, (2005:102).

“Identity is a dynamic and fluid process of construction and (trans)formation in which intention and instruction, reflexivity and domination, sense and performance, individuality and social embeddedness converge and clash”. Siebers (2004: 78).

Identity is challenged by the process of globalisation and fragmentation, where individuals don't construct their ideas in isolation but in social context, and this changes over time. (Siebers, 2004; Hall, 1997). In reality, “Personal identity gives way to social identity....In many situations we react to others in terms of our identity as a unique individual with a

particular personality, known likes and dislikes, skills and talents, attitudes and opinions. But in groups there are also new identity possibilities.” (Tajfel and Turner, 1991:34) Exemplifying this statement, some Latinos see themselves as a man or woman with, for example, a Uruguayan past and a Uruguayan –Dutch present. In fact, most Latinos married to Dutch people experience the process of “cultural hibridity that gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (Brabha, 1990, 215).

In the construction process, Latino identity could manifest “particularly in combination with a recognition of the fact that each individual deals with several and multiple identities, has [sic] the advantage of pointing to diversity and contradiction within the lived experiences of the individual”. (Ewing, 1990 in Siebers, 2004: 78). In this sense some Latinos said, “first I am Peruvian, Mexican, etc and then I am Latino (a), I am teacher, I am mother, I am professional, etc.” It depends on the context in which they find themselves .

This research is about the construction of Latino Identity. Thus it is opportune to use the idea of social constructed identity by an **approach through language** developed by Hall (1997). In this approach, “we construct meaning by using representational system concepts and signs”... Things don’t have any meaning by themselves. “We use signs organized into languages of different kinds, in order to communicate meaningfully with others.” Hall, (1997:15,19) Moreover, Long (2001) indicates that according to post structuralism, language and discourses are considered components of the social reality that is constructed every day. In this view, there are two approaches: The *Semiotic and Discursive*.

For the purpose of this work I only use the **Discursive approach**⁸. It refers not only to the different kinds of *languages*, but also to *knowledge and power relations*. In order to use this approach, it is necessary to define discourse. By discourse, Hall (1997: 47) means the “production of knowledge through language” and Foucault (in Hall, 1997: 51) defines discourse as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about something, a way of representing a particular topic at a particular historical moment.” In other words, “Foucault argues that in fact discourse should be seen as something which constrains our perceptions and that everything is constructed and apprehended through discourse... which is associated with relations of power” (Foucault in Mills 2006:54,55). Moreover “the discourses are not only pronounced in the verbalization of the text, but also is pronounced in the nonverbal conducts, the corporal expressions and feelings” (Long 2001:3) It means that *discourse* is not purely a linguistic concept; it is about *language, knowledge, power and practices*. In this way discourse can be defined as a particular way of saying the truth.

The discursive approach plays an important role in the social construction of Latinos’ identity. Through language, knowledge, power and practices it is understood that identities are “phrased in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, descent, nationality, religion, class, lifestyle, etc that are context dependent and may shift rapidly”. In the same way Turner (1991 in Hall 2002, 120) explained in terms of social identity that “we have different roles that govern our actions and feelings”. Social identities are made sense of in comparison to other relevant identities. Thus in daily life we identify. We are not part of one single group, but of many more. It means that the Latinos have *multiple identities*: they are Bolivians, Nicaraguans, fathers, mothers, teachers, professionals, etc.

⁸ Michael Foucault represents the Discursive approach.

In this research the discursive approach is represented by discourses, perceptions and practices culled from conversations and interviews with Latinos regarding the process of their social interaction, negotiation with the new context, and the reconstruction of their lives in the Netherlands. Thus, the construction or formation of Latinos' identity is an outcome of the interaction between individuals and groups. It is socially constructed in the process of differentiation of one from the other. This identity construction is not defined in isolation. It is a process, not static and it is changing continuously with time. All social practices and ideas of Latinos have a discursive aspect: they are expressed by discourses, narratives through the language. Latinos' discourses are central because they play a fundamental role in their socialization and the strategies they use when they are (re)constructing their lives in a new context such as the Netherlands. In summary, the discourses refer to the self-perception and self-definition as Latinos.

1.5.2 Hybridism and Latino identity

The formation of the Latino identity takes place in the interaction between individuals (personal) and groups (communal). This interaction occurs not only between them, but also with people from the host country. Then there are two different groups: Latinos and Dutch, with two different communal identities that interact and communicate in daily life. Principally this interaction and communication occurs within mixed couples, and these are socially constructed. Consequently, the Latino identity is a dynamic process of creation and (trans)formation "not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a concept of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity." (Hall, 1994,402). It means, for some Latinos, self-identification resulting from a mix of hybrid elements in the Netherlands. Hybridisation is defined as "the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices (Schelling, 1991, cited by Lie, 2003:87).

Latinos' identity is principally linked to discourses, practices, knowledge and power relations and the way in which Latinos represent their own cultural characteristics as individuals and as a group. It could be said that the identity of the Latino group is formed by a diversity of forms and conceptions that come from inside and outside of the group. Smith (1987, 25) said, "The membership of a group constitutes a personal identity". In reality, the Latino group is represented by the Latin American Dutch Organization (OLAH), being also the identity of OLAH in process of construction and of Dutch-Latino hybrid elements. This is identity construction in the differentiation. It permits Latinos to recognize their belongingness to their Latino culture and group, declare themselves 'mixed Latinos' or simply Latino or Mexican, which has a relationship to the Latin American continent within Dutch society.

1.5.3 Culture and Interculturality

This research analyses different dimensions of Latino Identity, dimensions that imply that cultural characteristics of Latinos serve as differentiation from others. In this sense it defines the concept of culture that will be used in this research.

Among many definitions **culture is:**

"All that is learned, shared and transmitted among groups of human beings from generation to generation." (Mennell, 1993: 20)

“Culture is the set of characteristics shared and transmitted by a certain human group, that serve to organize its life-style, in order to define its own identity by differentiating itself from other human group”. The same author says: “cultural affiliations usually are not closed boundaries but inter-tied circles. It is common to belong simultaneously to different cultures. People do not always share the same cultural reference, but the people can be created with own elements, innovated by others or by a combination of both”. Albó (1999: 79, 84).

Culture is not an individual process; it is possible when social interaction is taking place. Culture is not static in the course of time and it is in a constant process of change; the identity as discursively constructed has the same process of change. (Hall 2005)

Taking the above concepts together, culture could be defined as a social process by which people learn, share and transmit all things that are constructed by the way humans live. In other words, culture is an acquired set of forms and ways to experience the world. These forms and ways to think and behave are intrinsically tied to a language, because the language is not only a communication instrument but, mainly, the expression of a way to perceive the world. It means, for Latinos, to think, to speak Spanish, Portuguese and other languages, to express themselves, to perceive, to behave, to organize themselves socially, to communicate, to feel and to value themselves as individuals and as a group. Moreover, the value of Latino culture is not in competition with other cultures within Dutch society, but rather in the comprehension of cultural characteristics and practices that are in some cases transmitted from generation to generation. It just constitutes the difference with other cultures within Dutch society.

In many sections of this research, the way both Latinos and the Dutch actually communicate is discussed. For this reason it is useful to examine the concept of **interculturality**.

“Interculturality, as understanding of the other, is in fact intercultural communication and it describes the relation between cultures.” (Santillan 2002: 22)

“Interculturality refers to the attitudes and relations of people or human groups of one culture with reference to other cultural groups, their members or to their features and cultural products”.... It means that “Interculturality occurs when a group begins to understand the meaning that has the things and objects for others”. (Albo 1999:84,91)

In other words, the following can be asserted: if **interculturality** supposes to understand the world culture in contact, thus the intercultural relations, the intercultural communication of Latinos and Dutch in a practical situation could be the integration of the two. Thus interculturality could be interpreted as **integration**: means to be open from both sides to the cultural change, created and accepted, in this case by Latinos in the process of their identity construction and integration in the Dutch Society.

1.5.4 Transnational Identities

In this section the focus is on Latinos' transnational migration from Latin America to the Netherlands. The migration is the departure point to study the Latino identity construction in this country. According to CBS (Garssen et al.,2005), a migrant is “a person who enters or leaves the Netherlands, irrespective of his or her origin. So the person is not necessarily a member of an ethnic minority”. In this sense and for the purpose of this research it uses the following concept of migrant: A person who changes his her place of residence from a nation and continent and settles in a new nation and continent. Looking at the experience of Latinos, we can speak here about **transnational identities**.

The transnational lived experience of Latino migrants is followed across the construction of 'identities'. In this context "Transnationalism and identity, says Vertovec (2001:573 in Grillo&Mazucato, 2006:188), are concepts that inherently call for juxtaposition...We noted above that transnationalism frequently involves the reformulation of gender roles and relationships. But it also obliges both those who move and those who stay to articulate, code and re-code a whole range of identities." Indeed migrants must negotiate or learn to negotiate with a multiplicity of potential (new) identifications and definitions of self and other, often in a hostile host environment. (Grillo&Mazucato 2006)

The host environment represented by the nation-state is an important element of transnationalism. "It affects the way migrants move and organize themselves. They create barriers (restrictive visa policies) or provide opportunities (employment in developed country economies) (Mazzucato et al, 1994:3). In fact Latinos are pushed by the receiving society to integrate and that means, in the words of Grillo & Mazzucato (2006: 192), "they are therefore obliged, albeit sometimes in minimal fashion, to open out and address other cultures and societies". At the same time these authors connect transnationalism with double engagement that is interwoven with lives in both receiving and sending societies. In the case of Latinos, double engagement could mean the way of life in the receiving society (the Netherlands), within mixed couples with elements of Latino and Dutch worlds and cultures, in which intercultural dialogue is essential. In this context other Latinos construct cultural identities in the receiving country by engaging themselves in idealised representations of home (Mazzucato et.al, 1994:2). This ideal representation of home some times breaks down when Latinos travel to their former countries after a long time.

"Transnational identities are like the flow of immaterial things, such as ideas and feelings of solidarity across boundaries." (Clifford,1994 in Mazzucato et al., 2002:2). Moreover, Tamango (2004:28) indicates that the cultures are enriching the transnational process through a constant process of assimilation, transformation and conservation of practices and discourses that are created and recreated in confrontation with the transnational world.

Mundanelly, the Latino is a person from a particular country in Latin America, who constructs transnational identities, based in the global forms of identification: cosmopolitans and locals interplay with not only national identities, but also with positive and negative aspects of being of 'black', 'indigenous', 'mestizo' or white identity. All of these identifications influence and transform each other by affinity and gender relations, say Grillo&Mazucato (2006). In this sense it is not strange to hear somebody identify as Latino, Andean and Dutch at the margin of other identities that Latinos construct in the Netherlands.

In the case of Latinos, to speak about transnationalism could not be enough; it is necessary to speak about transcontinentalism. Transcontinentalism means for this study not only the crossing of national, but also continental borders. It is, however, more practical to keep the emphasis on transnationalism. It means, for Latinos in the Netherlands, to bring to their country of origin (and take back with them) both immaterial and material things such as self-referentiality, affirmation of cultural and social realities and new ways of thinking regarding customs, values and religion. (Grillo&Mazucato 2006:177). To live 'transnationally' also means to live with globalisation and the revolution in information and communication technologies, which make it possible to maintain ties with one's countries of origin through parents and family.

In this research, Transnational Identities work like an umbrella of all the concepts mentioned above, because the flow in the Netherlands of immaterial things like ideas and feelings, memories and loyalties permits Latinos to move and organise, perhaps in a different way than in their own countries of origin. However, in general it could be said that Latinos are now experiencing the construction of their transnational identities based in the every day negotiation with their own culture and the culture of the host society. Sometimes this negotiation takes a decisive place in the life of Latinos, because they need to conquer the language barriers and find job opportunities in the Netherlands as an important part of their personal development and a new life construction. New life is a practical thing, but also a new social and cultural construction, where people are individuals. One could say that, in this transnational context, Latinos negotiate their culture and identities in order to integrate and improve their welfare within Dutch-Latino families and into the Dutch society.

1.5.5 Gender Relations in mixed couples

In this study, different dimensions of Latino Identity will be analysed; one of these is **gender relations** among mixed (Latino - Dutch) couples. According to Grillo & Mazucato (2006), transnational migration is affecting the practices, the “roles” of men and women and transforming gender relations. As a consequence of the transnational context, **gender** can be defined as “the social roles of men and women and the sexual division of labour in society and related to the cultural definition of male and female” (Niehof, 2003:59). In other words “gender is the complex and still changeable system of personal, social and symbolic relations, where men and women become socially created and by which they receive roles, identities, status, power and material help resources within the society”. (Wekker&Lutz , 2001: 36)

The term ‘gender’ is about “the differences and social responsibilities concerning family, which is learned and is changeable, being able to vary considerably between cultures and within these, gender is not just like ‘sex’...Speaking about mixed Latino Dutch couples, gender roles are “behaviours learned in certain society based on social conditioners that also assign to the activities considered appropriate for women and the appropriate considered ones for men, old, adult and young”. Gutmann (1997: 8). In this sense the gender dimension and analysis of Latino process integration helps to visualise the experiences regarding identity construction of Latino men and Latina women and their differences dealing with gender roles within the family, e.g. raising children, cooking, cleaning the house, job and being successful.. Therefore, the gender roles are not fixed; they can change. In fact this does happen, in response to changing social conditions as is corroborated in this research.

1.6 Studies about Latinos, Identity and Transnationalism in the United States

The following studies could be a useful reference on what happens in the U.S. regarding the Latino Identity and which elements their authors stress.

A) The study of Flores (2003) approaches the meanings of the imaginary concept of Latino in contrast to the word ‘Hispanic’, arguing that sometimes ‘Latinos’ is used to refer to those citizens from the Spanish speaking world living in the United States and ‘Hispanics’ to those living elsewhere. However others refer to somebody who calls himself Hispanic or refers to his community as Hispanic as just wanting to be an American and forget his own roots.

Contrary to these two statements, there are those who use the different national designations or country names (e.g., Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Colombians, Mexican Americans, etc). In recent years, though, the Latino social movements are most prominent as an imaginary culture where the Latino contribution to contemporary popular music, dance, performance and visual arts has accompanied important signs of social organization and self-identification among young Latinos. (Flores, 2003: 96-102)

B) The work of Morandé (1994) analyses the Latin American cultural identity, which was formed in the meeting of Indian cultural values and the catholic religion brought by the Spanish. He argues that cultural patterns emerge not as a form of writing culture, because the Indians did know writing, but as an ethos or shared common experience that lives in the memory of the people. (Morandé, 1994:159)

C) The study of Mato (2003) refers to Blades' lyrics, indicating that listening to the songs of Blades, one can imagine the existence of certain social experiences in oneself, feeling, imagining the existence of a transnational community across all continents. (Mato, 2003:96-102)

D) Rumbaut (2003) studies the characteristics of being Latino in the U.S. He says that Latino/a is different in the U.S., for example, by the use and retention of the Spanish language. Others differences are, for example, education, income and labour participation. (Rumbaut, 2003:19)

E) Muntaner's (2003) examines the formation of ethnic identities not only through film and music but, "just as significantly in the very popular controversies generated by shifting cultural standards as embodied in depictions of Latinidad". (Muntaner's, 2003:19)

Main findings

The analysis of Latino Identity construction in the Netherlands is approached from the concepts of identity, culture, interculturality and gender, demarcated under the umbrella of transnationalism. From this transnational context, the challenges and barriers that some Latinos must face are greater than they themselves had realized, e.g., the barrier of the language, the new environment, the customs, the people, the work, the rules, etc. In synthesis the construction of Latino identity is the construction of a new life with new goals and hopes inside the globalised Dutch society.

The majority of Latinos who come to the Netherlands, in fact, bring with themselves the Spanish and Portuguese language. The language is the first element inside the baggage of cultural and national elements that allows Latinos to distinguish themselves from the Dutch people and from other people in this country. However, it can be noticed that there is cultural variety of identities and preferences within the same Latino group. At the same time, the difference in culture between Dutch and Latinos can be partly explained by the fact that Latin American countries are so called non-Western and underdeveloped countries. Latinos living in the Netherlands are inserted in a modern and different society, where individuality is more important than the collective; perhaps it influences the Latinos' way of thinking and acting with respect to both themselves and others. In this sense, language and discourse are very important in the construction and representation of the identity and daily life of Latinos. The discourses talk about the conversations and interviews conducted with Latinos on the process of their social interaction and negotiation with the environment. Other topics are the

constitution of power relations and knowledge production, like strategies used when they are reconstructing their lives in a new context like the Netherlands.

1.7 Methodology

1.7.1 Extended case study

According to Yin (1984), case study is a methodology that allows one to obtain a profound insight in complex social phenomena or social processes, enabling the researcher to obtain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. Van Vansel (1967) adds: the exploration of interconnected social events or social situations to understand social processes is called extended case study. In this research I use the *extended case study methodology*, because it permits me to engage in in-depth study of the construction of Latino Identity and how this identity is expressed in every day life in Wageningen. But at the same time, the application of this methodology will be based on the concepts, described in the theoretical framework, that are operationalised in this research. These concepts are analysed on the basis of the empirical results and these permit us to give answers to the goals of this research.

1.7.2 Criteria selected - Latinos in Wageningen

My motivation to choose the group of Latinos in Wageningen, as particular group for my field research, concerns myself. I consider myself Latina. At the same time, my own origin, language, background as well as the experiences I lived as a stranger or “allochtone” in the Netherlands, coincide with the elements of the target group of this research.

Other reasons considered to choose the Latino group are:

- a) There is a representative community of Latinos living in Wageningen (personal observation and comparison with other cities).
- b) The group Latinos is very different in culture, identity as well as in education and socio-economic status, in comparison with other migrant groups in the Netherlands.
- c) Most Latinos have a professional background and / or a higher educational level.
- d) There is a great willingness to tell and to contribute, through their opinions and experiences, to the topic of my research.
- e) The Latinos in Wageningen have an active organization named OLAH (Organización Latino Americano Holandesa), which is involved in different activities within Wageningen society.
- f) The majority of the Latinos interviewed have a Dutch partner. In my sample of 35 persons, 31 have a Dutch partner, thus 89%. (see annex 1)

1.7.4 Units of analysis

The *units of analysis* for this research are the Latinos and OLAH, both in Wageningen. From these I want to know their perceptions, practices and discourses. I want to see how identity is something that is used in talk: something that is part and parcel of the routines of everyday life and everyday interaction.

The research units include the following characteristics of people:

- People from different Latin American countries who identify themselves and are recognized principally as Latinos and other than Andeans, Caribbeans, Europeans.
- Latinos of the first generation who live in and around Wageningen
- Partners, mothers in law of Latinos.
- Leaders and members of the Latin American Dutch Organization OLAH in the city of Wageningen.

Latino: In this research, Latino refers to an *allochtoon*⁹ person or group of people who came to the Netherlands from different countries of Latin America, excepting the United States, Canada, and the former or present overseas territories, e.g., Antilles and Suriname. Latinos have their own identity, culture, religion and language (Spanish and Portuguese). Latinos themselves use the name “Latinos”, just like the Dutch people do. It should be noted that, in 1983, the Dutch government developed the Ethnic Minorities Policy, the key aim of which is to help migrant groups to integrate into Dutch society with the preservation of the cultural identity. This policy was applied to the Turks, Moroccans, Southern Europeans, Moluccans, Surinamese, Antilleans and refugees. Other migrant groups such as the Chinese and Latinos were not included, as they were not defined as an ethnic minority (Vasta 2003). In this sense, I use in this research also “Latino group” defined as a group of people who share and have many traits or common characteristics that belong only to them and these distinguish them from other migrant groups within Dutch society.

OLAH: OLAH is a Latin American - Dutch Organization founded in September 2003. Its objective is to stimulate and to facilitate cultural, social and sports exchanges for Latinos who reside in and around Wageningen, in order to strengthen the process of integration of Latinos in Dutch society. OLAH’s members are mostly Latinos (60%); the rest are Dutch (39%) and others (1%). OLAH is a network organization that connects Latinos with other persons and institutions within Wageningen’s Dutch society. To this aim they have a relationship based on trust with various Wageningen organizations .

Partners of Latinos: Dutch men or women married or living together with Latinos. Most of them have studied at Wageningen University and worked for several years in Latin American countries. Some of them have returned to the Netherlands.

1.8 Research Design

This is an explorative research. It is about exploring elements that play a role in the process of identity construction. Based on the literature review, a theoretical framework was developed; the principal concepts studied are: identity, culture, interculturality, transnational identity and gender related to the Latino’s identity construction. A qualitative approach is the best way to succeed in the aims of this research and discover new viewpoints.

Focusing on the lives of Latinos in Wageningen, I also applied a methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative phases. The qualitative phase aimed to identify relevant concepts

⁹ The Dutch Central Statistical Bureau (CBS, Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Voorburg 2005, quoted on <http://www.cbs.nl/nl/cijfers/statline/index.htm>) indicates that *allochtoon* people are those who have at least one parent born in a foreign country. The *first generation itself* is born abroad. The *second generation* is born in the Netherlands. *Non-western allochtoon people* come from Turkey, Africa, Latin America and Asia (with the exemption of Indonesia and Japan, because of their social-economic and -cultural position).

and ideas that Latinos use to express their perceptions and experiences regarding their identity in Dutch society. I made use of semi-structured and in-depth interviews.

The quantitative research refers to the data collection and analysis about the number of Latinos in the Netherlands and particularly in Wageningen. It involves the percentage of working persons, of mixed couples (Dutch-Latino), of nationalized persons or of those living on a residence permit, the length of residence in the Netherlands, etc. Part of this information can be found at the web page of the Dutch Central Statistical Bureau (CBS, www.cbs.nl). Although the Municipality of Wageningen manages most of the statistical information, privacy protection for personal data meant that I was not allowed to get access to their databases to get this information on my own.

1.8.1 Description of the data collection

The methodology for getting data in this research is principally qualitative. I conducted 35 semi-structured and in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observation. Primary and secondary information was gathered alternately during my fieldwork.

All these methods allowed me to go in-depth with my explorative research in order to get a better understanding of how Latinos construct their identity and how this is expressed within the Dutch society of Wageningen.

Since February 2006 I have been dedicated to interviewing Latinos and making observations. I consulted literature and secondary data in books, from the Internet, newspapers, etc, about identity, migration, and other themes of interest related to migrants people in the Netherlands. The methods of literature review used are:

- Literature recommended by my supervisors and some literature with which I was already familiar.
- Orientation to concepts, definitions and key words used in the literature.
- Browsing and systematically searching through the university catalogue using key words (identity, Latinos and transnationalism).
- Using a citation index and bibliographies: searching for relevant literature in recent articles and literature on the themes of this thesis.

1.8.2 Participant Observation

Strydom (2002 in Gonzalez 2005) defines *participant observation* as a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural situation in a particular community. The major advantage of my observation as the interviewer is, according to Robson (1993 in Gonzales 2005), that, I do not interfere with the subject's views, feelings or attitudes; I only have to watch what is being done and listen to what is being said.

Part of participant observation is descriptive observation. I was free in gathering the information. In the whole fieldwork period I was observing and making notes of my conversations and of the situations related to my research. This process helped me to avoid the imposition of a priori notions and ideas from my own culture on the people studied. (Berry *et al.*, 1992:233).

As part of the participant observation technique I am attaching to this thesis some examples of intercultural social activities realized by Latinos and their organization OLAH, since 2004.

1.8.3 In-depth, semi-structured interviews

- a. In-depth qualitative interviews with key informants. According to Lindlof (1995 in Gonzales 2005), several informants can offer a variety of insight views and perspectives because they have had unique experiences in the scene. Informant interviews range more widely and go deeply into the person's experiences.

Below I present a table with the principal characteristics of the people interviewed in the Netherlands. In appendix 1 there is a complete description of those interviewed.

35 Latinos interviewed						10 Dutch interviewed		
Female Male	Age	Profession Educational level.	Country of origin	Length of stay (years)	Dutch Partner-DP Latino Partner-LP	Female -F Male-M Mother- in-Law - ML	Age	Profession Educational level
F = 28 M = 7	31-40 = 12 20-30 = 8 41-50 = 9 50-60 = 6	agronomist 12 social areas 8 teacher 4 secretary 4 other 7 ----- (F) PhD WU 3 (F) MSc WU 6 (F) Univ. 15 (F) HBO 4 (M) MSc WU 3 (M) HBO 3 (M) VMBO 1	Peru 5 Nicaragua 4 Chile 4 Colombia 3 México 3 C. Rica 3 Bolivia 2 Argentina 2 Ecuador 3 Uruguay 2 Paraguay 1 DominRep 1 Salvador 1 Brazil 1	0 - 5 = 9 6 - 10 = 14 11 - 20 = 6 21 - 30 = 6	F = 26 DP F = 2 LP M = 5 DP M = 2 LP	F = 4 M = 4 ML = 2	30-45 30-45 75-80	trop.cult.tech.. (5) WU agrosocio- economist WU cultural antropologist sociologist

Table 1. Information on all interviews.

- b. I interviewed 45 persons, of which 35 Latinos; 28 women and seven men from different countries of South, Middle and North America (Mexico). I also interviewed 10 Dutch people (eight partners of Latinos, who come back after five to ten years working in Latin American countries; and two mothers in law).
- c. The interviewed Latinos were between 20 and 60 years old. They have lived in Holland for two to 30 years. 31 of the Latinos interviewed are married or form Dutch - Latino mixed couples. Most of the Latinos interviewed have a university degree.
- d. The professions of Latinos interviewed are in the fields of agronomic engineering (12), social areas (8), teaching (4), secretary/administrative, technical (5), other: lawyer, dentist, etc. (6).
- e. All of the conversations and interviews with Latinos were in Spanish, in order to create a confidential atmosphere and to allow them to express themselves freely. These subjects constructed their discourses and perceptions principally in Spanish. With the objective of respecting and protecting their privacy, I have always informed my respondents that their contribution will be anonymous in the report.

1.8.4 Operational definitions of key concepts in the Latino's construction of identity

It is important to remember that in this research the role of discourses or narratives, perceptions and practices is important in the construction and representation of Latino identity in daily life. These discourses refer to the analysis of the conversations and interviews conducted with Latinos. It is what Latinos say (discourses) and what they do (practice) in the process of their identity construction as well as in their social interaction and negotiation (integration) within the Dutch society that contribute to identity construction. Remarkable is that the interview subjects always tell their perceptions about identity *in relation to* the issue

of integration within Dutch society. For this reason it is necessary to refer to what the Social Cultural Plan Bureau defines on this matter:

Social-cultural integration points to the extent to which non-Dutch groups are a part of the host society or (still) distinguish themselves from this host society (SCP et al., 2005: 107). Important is the extent to which people from ethnic minorities engage in social contact with the population from the host country (SCP et al., 2005)

Structural integration points to the “position of [migrant groups] in the social stratification and the way in which this position relates to the position of the Dutch population. *The education, labour market and income position are the determining standards by which the structural integration is measured*” (SCP et al., 2005: 107)

The focus on the Latino identity as discursive construction is important for this research, because it allows one to have basic background information regarding the Latino Identity construction and define its characteristics. As Erwin (1990) mentions, “In reality people project multiple, inconsistent self representations, phrased in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, etc that are context dependent and may shift rapidly.” But Siebers (2004) says “not any more are deterministic and static ideas of representation valid as concepts of class and culture, because Identity is a dynamic and fluid process of construction and transformation.” This is why, according to the characteristics of my interviewed I emphasize subjects of education, job, language, gender roles and integration of Latinos. These elements have an influence on the self-representation as well as on the social construction of the Latino Identity at both individual and group levels, which also relates to the concepts described in the theoretical framework.

Here follow some *key concepts and their operational definitions*.

Perception is the ability to see and understand what happens in the environment of Latinos. For this research perception involves ideas, images, concepts, and knowledge about the Latinos’ identity in and around Wageningen.. Ideas and images of Latinos are in relation to the criteria they use about their self-definition, individually and as a group. These are: language, music, dance, food, religion, costumes, and values¹⁰ such as solidarity as dimensions of Latino identity construction.

Discourses are, according to Foucault¹¹ “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment. According to Hall¹² discourse is **language** and **practice**. For this research discourse is a particular way of saying the truth. This is that everyone expresses his or her truth verbally (language) and that it is related to what he or she does (practice). All practices have a discursive aspect, says Hall (1992:291). This is also related to the practices of the organization OLAH and Latinos in general.

Practices are all the things that Latinos do. It is the actions, preparation, and routine of Latinos that express the meaning of Latinos identity. Here we can refer to the patterns of

¹⁰ As personal experiences and culture are changing, values are also constantly changing. Cross-cultural studies point out that the pattern of values generally shows within-culture regularities and between-culture differences (Zavalloni, 1980 in Terpstra 1996).

¹¹ Foucault in Hall, S. (1997) Chapter 1: The work of Representation. In: Hall, S (ed), Representation . Cultural representations and signifying practices, London Sage p. 44.

¹² Ibid, p 44

behaviour of Latinos through expressions, power relations and attitudes¹³. One example is their participation in social and cultural activities.

Practices of cultural difference can be seen within the mixed couples (Latino-Dutch), within OLAH and in society in general. It can be seen that the particular ways to act, to speak and to behave of many so-called Latinos have to do with the cultural differences between Caribbean, Andeans, Amazon and European people. So the Latinos, according to Hall (2002: 105), are highlighting a similarity that distinguishes them from others, but at the same time they are different from one country to another and they do not share the same identity (difference). For example, the difference between Protestant and Catholic Latinos makes sense only in relation to the fact that they are believers in God and Jesus Christ (similarity). A protestant Identity is rapidly distinguished among Latinos by the absence, in religious customs, of both alcohol and devotion to Maria and other Saints. On the other hand, the SCP uses the characteristics of the processes of modernisation (individualisation, secularisation and emancipation) as calibration points to determine cultural differences between ethnic minorities-migrant groups (MPC) and Dutch people. (SCP, 2005: 116)

¹³ In social psychology it is often suggested that attitudes have three components: affect, behaviour and cognition. “The affective component refers to positive or negative emotions(...).The behavioural component involves our intentions to act in certain ways, to engage in human behaviours that are somehow relevant to our attitudes. Finally, the cognitive component refers to the thinking and interpreting that goes into forming or using an attitude. Each attitude, then is made up of a cluster of feelings, likes and dislikes, behavioural intentions, thoughts and ideas” (Baron et al.,1979 in Terpstra 1996).

Operationalisation of concepts present in this research

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Subjects' Constitutive elements</i>	<i>General Questions</i>
Latinos <i>General characteristics of Interview subjects</i>	Individual who came to the Netherlands from Latin American countries. <i>Perceptions, representations Discourses, Practices</i>	Age, Gender, country of origin, Education, Job, Family members, length of stay, marital status, etc.	Age, Gender, country of origin, Education, Job, Family members
Identity	Identity is socially constructed in the process of differentiation of one from the other. <i>Discourses - Language Perceptions - Knowledge Practices - Power relations</i>	-National/ continental identity -Education -Language -Job -Mixed couples -Gender roles -Integration -OLAH	<i>Can you describe who you are ?</i> How can you recognize a Latino? Do you consider yourself Latina (o)? At which moments do you feel Latina (o)? What are the principal characteristics of Latinos? What are the differences between Latinos and the Dutch? <i>Do you feel integrated within Dutch society?</i> <i>What is integration for you?</i> <i>Do you think there is any relation between integration and your identities?</i>
Culture	A social process by which people learn, share and transmit all things that are constructed by the way humans live. <i>Discourses, Practices- cultural differences</i>	Language: Span.,Dutch Dance, music Food Religion Solidarity Behaviour Latino- Dutch Interculturality	<i>What are the most representative characteristics of Latino culture?</i> Through which elements can you recognize Latino culture? Is there a difference between Latino and Dutch culture?
Transnational identities	Flow of immaterial things, such as ideas and feelings of solidarity, across boundaries. This permits Latinos to move and organise in the Netherlands.	-Migration -Nation State (power relations) -Globalisation -OLAH (power relations)	How did you come here? Reasons of migration? Do you have contact with your family in Latin America? Do you have a Dutch passport? What is your personal feeling and experience as Latina(o) in the Netherlands? What problems or successes have you seen within the Latino group and OLAH?
Gender	Social Construction. roles of men and women and the gender division of labour in society related to the cultural definition of male and female	-Roles man, woman -Family -Language -Education -Job	Which member of the couple determines what to do at home and why ? Are you working outside the home? How do you organise at home?

1.8.5 Methods of data analysis

In this research I used various ways to analyse the data. These were principally:

Discourse analysis: I analysed narratives or discourses of Latinos in daily life, discourses of OLAH's directive, speeches and reports from Wageningen municipality.

Situational analysis: I used this method because Latinos perceptions and interactions are reconstructed, in situations such as Pena Latina, OLAH's cultural activities, birthdays, and others.

Interview Analysis: I analysed the information from the interviews according to my research questions. Quotations were chosen from the answers of the respondents in order to illustrate results, points of view and conclusions.

1.9 Research area

City of Wageningen . The research was carried out in the city of Wageningen, province Gelderland, along the Rhine river . The presence of Wageningen University and Research Center (WUR) gives an international character to this city. Wageningen has a population of about thirty-five thousand (CBS, www.statline.cbs.nl, May 2005), from different countries and cultures. According to Brito¹⁴, Wageningen is an especially colourful, rich city, with people from 167 nationalities. Approximately five hundred inhabitants are Latinos. I live in this town myself, like the Latinos whom I interviewed.

The University of Wageningen (WUR) offers international masters of science (MSc) programs; it describes Wageningen for its foreign visitors as “Small and cosy, but with the allure of a big city”¹⁵. One WUR department describes the town as follows:

Wageningen's 35,000 inhabitants enjoy a thriving, cultural and social life. Theatres, cinemas, student clubs, bars, nightclubs and restaurants offer the visitor the elegance of a city with the safe environment of a rural village. The many international guests contribute to the international atmosphere. Wageningen is delightfully 'green', being surrounded by farmland, forests, nature reserves and the summer meadows of the Rhine river. (...) Wageningen is an international and intercultural community where the paths of many people cross and religious and cultural heritages are deeply respected. All the major faiths - Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam - are represented in Wageningen.

(<http://www.plantbiotechnology.nl/en/wageningen/living.html>)

¹⁴ Lara de Brito, member political party Groen Links: Manifest “Op weg naar gelijke kansen”. 2008.

¹⁵ Wageningen University. (<http://www.wau.nl/osa/beurzen/erasmus/ects/impression.html>, updated 06/2006 (MPC) .

2 “WHAT MAKES US LATINOS” - DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN US AND OTHERS AS EXPERIENCED BY LATINOS

MM: To be Latina is part of my Mexican identity. I believe that I feel like a Latina because we share the same influence of the colony. We share the same indigenous roots. The destruction of our prehispanic cultures, the Spanish language. We know the same singers; we sing the same songs.

This chapter contains a description and analysis of various Latinos’ discourses, perceptions and practices regarding their own Latino identity. It starts with a general overview of Latinos in the Netherlands, in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. Some of these characteristics will be related to the process of Latinos’ integration in the Netherlands. Furthermore, it explains the cultural character of Latinos, taking into account the discourses and perceptions about themselves and Dutch people. Here it looks at how Latinos want to show themselves (image, performance) to others and in which way they want to grow and develop, taking into account their past, present and future in this country. It is, in other words, what they believe to be important dimensions of their self-identification as a Latino person and as the Latino group in Dutch society. Self-identification is related to the representation of attributing characteristics like language, music, dance, catholic religion, food and other cultural, social factors such as solidarity inside and around themselves as a Latino and member of the Latino group. Finally, it presents the effects of Latino identity in terms of both integration and the interrelation with gender identity within the mixed couples (mixed cultures and identities: Latino-Dutch and others).

2.1 Latinos’ profile

The starting point is an overview of the general socio-economic, demographic characteristics of Latinos living in Wageningen, the Netherlands. This means Latinos’ sex, age, nationality, religion, level of education, employment, marital status (family composition) and length of stay in the Netherlands.

Latinos at the national level in The Netherlands--not including the former Dutch colonies--are the smallest group in comparison with others as is shown in table 1.

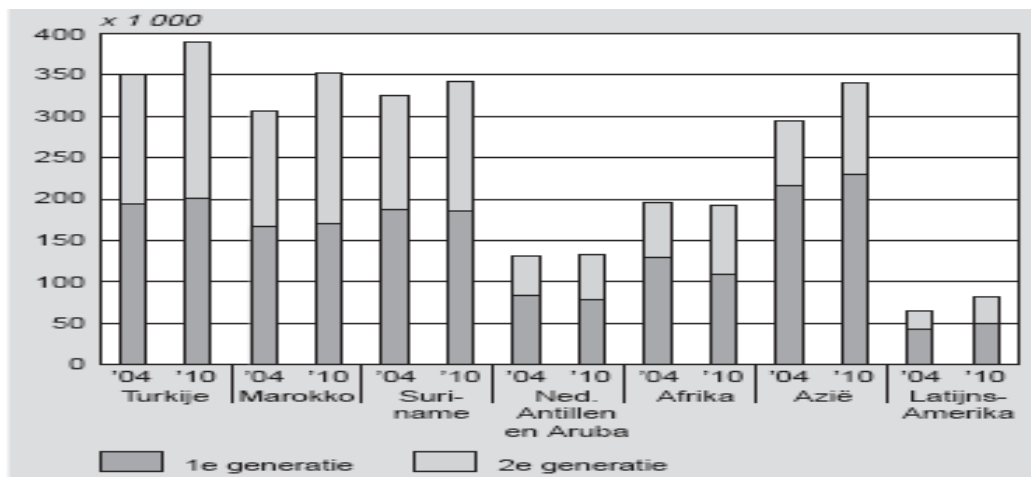


Table 1: Estimated number of non-western allochtonous people in the Netherlands according to their origin, between 2004 and 2010 (<http://www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/>)

The total population of Latinos that live in Wageningen, according to the statistical information from CBS (Table2), is approximately 509. My sample consists of 35 Latinos whom I interviewed. There are also 4 Dutch men, 1 Turkish man, 4 Dutch women and 2 mothers in law interviewed. It makes a total of 46 respondents (see appendix 1).

Total allochtones in Wageningen	8192
Western allochtones	4040
Non-western allochtones	4152
Of which Latinos	509

Table 2: Allochtone people in Wageningen on 1 jan. 2006 (www.cbs.statline.nl)

Wageningen is a small, safe but international city. An interesting place where people with different cultures and languages mix, directly or indirectly by the presence of the University. This small city, according to 2 interview subjects, has influence on the exploration of Latino identity and, as a woman suggests, on how Latinos are constructing their identity at the personal and group level.

RM: Outside Wageningen, in cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam, there are not many Dutch that are very aware of the Latin identity.

Sex and country of origin

Out of 35 Latinos, 28 are women and seven are men. Five people came from Peru; Four from Nicaragua and Chile; Three from Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico. There is only one person from Brazil, Paraguay, Dominican Republic and El Salvador, respectively. The country of origin is important for Latinos as two women mention regarding their national identity or Latino identity.

SE: I always feel Brazilian and I think that I'll not change my identity because I'm living in the Netherlands or in another place. I like samba (Brazilian folk music), traditional Brazilian food. I will be always be a Brazilian girl!

NG: "I do not feel Latina. I do not identify with Latinos. I feel more like a Chilean in the Netherlands".

EC: I feel Latina or Mexican depending on the group with whom I am. If I am with only Mexicans I feel as if I am in my country. If there is a group of Latinas, I feel in a familiar and relaxed atmosphere, by all the things that we share, starting with the language.

Table 3: Sex and country of origin

Female=F Male=M	Country of origin
F= 28 M= 7 T=35	Peru 5, Nicaragua 4, Chile 4, Colombia 3, México 3, C. Rica 3, Bolivia 2, Argentina 2, Ecuador 2, Uruguay 3, Paraguay 1, Rep.Dominic 1, Salvador 1, Brasil 1

Age, age at migration, Length of residence in The Netherlands

35 respondents are from the first generation of Latino immigrants. The average age of most interview subjects (12) is 31 to 40 years old and the length of residence or living period in the Netherlands is 6 to 10 years. The age of arrival in Holland is between 24 to 30 years old, which is estimated from age and length of stay. This group constitutes, more or less, the new

studying young Latinos and young professionals. In comparison to Latinos between 51 and 60 years old (6), who were mostly political refugees.

Table 4: Age, age at migration, length of stay

Respondents	Age/interview 2006 - 2009	Length of stay
T= 35	20-30 = 8 31-40 =12 41-50 = 9 51-60 = 6	0 - 5 = 9 6 -10 =14 11-20 = 6 21-30 = 6

Age and length of residence have influence on the construction process of Latinos' new lives, but also on their integration process in Dutch society, as mentioned by the following adult and young women.

LD: I already have lived here for many years.. Sometimes I feel frustrated, but not with a desire to emigrate, because my family is here. Frustrated because the system is very rigid for people used to having everything very flexible. It is hard. On the other hand I think that is a way to grow and in that sense I feel that I have grown and matured much in Holland. Having lived in so many countries I know that no one country is perfect. One can complain...but one is between the sword and the wall, so one must choose or the sword or the wall.

IV: To come here young has its advantages, because you do not have anything to lose, you learn the language quickly, you have possibilities to enter quickly in the labour market in comparison to Latinos who came here with a life and professional experience.

It is clear that adult and young Latinos experience their integration and new lives in Dutch society in different ways. For the young it is more a question of gaining possibilities and for adults, with regard to their goals, it is more difficult to lose what they have learned and achieved in their former countries. Nevertheless, for both it is an experience of new sensations, feelings and understanding of what happens in their surroundings.

Marital status and family composition

The total of Latino subjects who are married is 35; they have one to three children. It is important to mention that 31 are mixed couples, Dutch-Latino, and the rest (4 couples) Latino-Latino partners. Four of the Latinos interviewed are separated. In chapter 3, section 3.4.1, I analyze some aspects regarding mixed married couples.

Female Male	Dutch Partner (DP) Latino Partner (LP)	Children	Separated
F = 28 M = 7 T = 35	F = 26 DP F = 2 LP M = 5 DP M = 2 LP L-D= 31 ; L-L= 4	2 = 26 1 = 6 3 = 3	F = 3 M=1

Table 5: Marital status and family composition

Level of Education and employment

From the total of Latinos interviewed, most are women, professionals with a university degree obtained in their former country. Their degree is considered in the Netherlands to be the equivalent of HBO level. Seven of these Latinas have an MSc degree from Wageningen University and three are working on their PhD at the same university. Of the men, three have an MSc and four HBO level.

The profession of most of the Latinos interviewed is Agronomic Engineering. This is followed by social sciences (like Sociology, Psychology, Library Sciences, Social Communication, etc). The rest have professions such as teacher, secretary, dentist, lawyer, economist, etc. But in fact, most Latinos work in areas other than what they have studied, or under their level of education and aspirations.

Table 6: Level of education and employment

Female, Male	Profesión	Level of Education	Job
F = 28 M = 7 ---- T : 35	Ing.Agronomic 12 Social Area 8 Teacher 4 Secretary 4 Other 6	F = 3 PHd WU F = 7 MSc WU F = 15 HBO F = 3 VMBO M= 3 MSc WU M= 4 HBO	F =15 M =7 13 unemployed

2.1.1 Differences and Similarities among Latinos

In most cases Latinos try to stand out in whatever they do or wherever they are. Thus it seems that Latinos seek to be and to be seen as “nice, special, brilliant,” to assume successfully a particular identity, as a Nicaraguan, professional, mother, woman, etc. In this way, according to those interviewed, most Latinos stress that education and job are very important “to be someone” in the Dutch society because it makes them feel productive, allows them to practice the Dutch language and affords them possibilities of social contact.

For some Latinos, level of education is related to finding a “good job”. In other cases education doesn’t match with the job found and survival in Dutch society as mentioned the following quotations.

MC: I would like to find work in my field. To me, the important thing is that it be work well done and that it be useful in some way; in this sense I feel fulfilled.

CR: There isn’t a job for you, it doesn’t work that everyone can have an education...So Holland isn’t prepared for the masses of people arriving here. We have to wait some years before our children and grandchildren see a better future in this country.

NS: A job cleaning house is easy but without good social contact.

Obtaining a job or not, among Latinos, has to do with, age, knowledge, ambitions, abilities, possibilities, barriers, and identity. Fifty percent of the Latinos stress that important elements for finding a job are related to fluency in the Dutch language and sometimes also proficiency in English, e.g. for jobs in NGOs or International companies. Language is but one of many components of Dutch and Latino culture. However, some Latinos experience that any skills acquired in their homeland might also become outdated in the time it takes for them to learn Dutch, which can take as long as two to three years. In some cases it is accompanied by a lack of experience for any particular professional job in Nederland. It may be that, in spite of the Dutch **language**, society and the job market are not sufficient for building up a good life in the Netherlands.

In this way, fifty percent of Latinos are working in areas other than those they have studied, or under their level of education and aspirations. Presently, 22 Latinos work in the areas of cleaning, taking care of old people, working in the University, hospital, companies, kindergarten and NGOs. The rest (13) are studying, doing volunteer work or working in the

home. In some cases, the Latinos interviewed don't say explicitly that this fact has influenced the feeling or acceptance of their social-economical situation in Holland. From this I conclude that for some Latinos, their aspirations to grow and develop intellectually and professionally are lower than they expected or as related to their high level of education. The issue of a paid job among Latinos is a delicate topic, because some Latinos don't accept the idea of a new life without a job and low status in Dutch society; or because they accepted their new situation and still they are searching for new ways to realize their expectations and to reach their preferred personal and professional level in this country. Nevertheless, new life and sociocultural aspects mentioned in the previous section have more or less influence on the construction of Latino identity in this country.

2.1.2 Differences and similarities at the cultural level among Latinos

At the level of cultural activities, principally one can appreciate that Latinos work hard to demonstrate the "differences" in the music, dance, food, typical clothes and language - Spanish idioms and the indigenous language of Latin American countries, as a woman says.

KB: The typical Andean dress is different than the typical Central American dress. For example, the one does its best to show the mais and the other to demonstrate the potato.

In other words, the moment that Latinos demonstrate something it is because they want "others" to accept the difference; moreover those others realize that there are different kinds of Latinos. Some Latinos said that they are equal, but within this equality they have differences. It means similarity on the one hand, and difference on the other.

With regard to differences among Latinos, there are also other national, regional and local identities related to the history, ancestry, geography and environmental elements that kept them feeling "Andean, Caribbean, Amazon, Latineuropean" in the Netherlands. Bolivians, Peruvians and Ecuadorians, characterized as well by customs, share the Andean Identity with food and dances referring to the Inca culture in the Andes mountains. Whereas the Caribbean identity is shared by Latinos of Central American countries, having in common the lively and very happy music, beans and maize, the basis of their daily food. The Amazon identity is related to Brazil and the Latineuropean identity related to Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and part of Paraguay. Thus the Latino Identity is a "dynamic and fluid process of construction and (trans)formation where each individual deals with several and multiple identities, with the advantage of pointing to diversity" says Siebers. At the end of any formal or informal event, no matter the country of origin, economic, social or political situation, almost all feel like Latinos, because they enjoy sharing songs, dancing to lively music, mainly salsa, cumbia and merengue. These are, said some of those interviewed, important aspects to feeling Latino and to making life more pleasant in Holland.

2.2 Dimensions of Latino Identity construction

KB: To be Nicaraguan is not different from being Latino here in Holland, but within Latin American countries there are differences.

In this section I want to show how identity is constructed among Latinos. How the recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group within the discursive approach works, as Hall (1996) mentions. Along these lines, this section explains

the dimensions of identity and describes the most representative (cultural) characteristics identified by Latinos interviewed; at the same time it describes the differences and similarities between Latinos and Dutch people and how this contact works in daily life in order to understand the construction of the Latino identity in Dutch society.

RM: I feel the Latina identity more strongly when there is an exhibition or cultural celebration having to do with Latin America. Or when I participate in the activities of OLAH. In addition I identify myself by the language and a series of very similar cultural aspects that exist between people of Latin America.

The fact is that Latinos have their own country of origin, their mother tongue, and the organizations to which they are related. They frequently return to the history, the practices and the ways of life of their roots, and that indicates in some way a common sense of belongingness to the Latino culture. So Latinos share language, food, music and dance, religion and many other cultural elements that have their own denotation of identity.

2.2.1 Latino Identity and language

CC: Latinos identify themselves with the Spanish language, it doesn't matter from where those people come.

The *language, both Spanish and Portuguese*, is an important element of Latino identity. However, the Dutch language also plays a big role in daily Latino life, because it permits one to tell, to tell about the relation to the other, what one lacks, what one leaves out, and how identities are constructed through, not outside, differences.

In daily life most Latinos speak Spanish language amongst themselves, and some Brazilians speak Spanish and Portuguese. They use the languages in the supermarket or wherever they meet and inside their families with partners and children. It means that a set of forms and ways of Latinos' thinking is intrinsically tied to the Spanish language, and that the language is not only a communication instrument, but mainly the expression of how somebody perceives the world.

Most Latinos consider the Spanish language as something positive to transmit to their children, because this helps understand how the Latino culture works, with all the things that are implicit, when the family is visiting grandparents in any Latin American country.

2.2.1.1 Motives for learning Dutch language

Here it is necessary to analyse why some Latinos speak Spanish and not Dutch to their children or vice versa as the Dutch government¹⁶ in the Netherlands suggested it. According to Latinos experience, after a normal or quick Dutch language courses, which are expensive, some Latinos can speak Dutch well, while others not. Most of Latinos speak the Dutch with a "Latino accent" and some times with different pronunciation. Thus regarding an interviewed, she says that is not only the language to feel Dutch or Latino, are many other elements that influence on this.

¹⁶ TROUW newspaper. "Taales voor ouders helpt niets". The cabinet wants tackle the language delay of foreign children by giving an obligatory course to their parents Dutch. That treatment is to fails doomed, warn linguists. 24,nov 2008.

MM: I have had commentaries of some Dutch that they said to me, as soon as you speak the Dutch you will feel more Dutch and that hit to me...Although you speak the Dutch language never you go to speak it 100%, as you speak your maternal language. Any more it is not only the language, are all the elements of the culture.

It is frequently seen that children and partners of Latinos improve them in the Dutch Language. However, mostly young Latinos without children have more time to study the language and also they decide to speak only Dutch at home. Others who have children deliberately decide to speak Spanish at home, because of the practical use of the maternal language. They have social and affective tie and it is pleasant and practical if Latino's children can communicate with family, principally with grandpa and grandma, in the other side of the world. However some respondents' affirm that it is necessary to learn the Dutch language. Earlier, better. Otherwise, the language stays still a barrier. Although Latinos speak Dutch, they do not stop having certain obstacles, certain insecurities when they speak in Dutch language as mention the following informants women.

KB: I have lived in different countries where I have been able to express. If you can express your ideas and feelings, then you are free. But if you do not know to speak the Dutch in this case or if you speak and it is not good handled, it limits to you.

CC: The first year of my residence here, I didn't obtain to arrive with my message at the person, for example with the doctors, because I didn't have the suitable words and people think that you are an idiot, a stupid one who does not know to speak Dutch.

NG: The first impression that you give when do you not speak well the language, is that you are incapable. This is our weakness, but if you stay constant and you continue insisting with what you want to achieve, that weakness in the language pass to a second level and the people begin to see in you, your other qualities.

CZ: To learn the language seems to me something intelligent, with certain degrees of abilities and skills on the matter. If you do the effort, you can speak the Dutch, you do not need to dominate and to be an expert in languages, but to know and to demand your rights, not only you remain complaining Holland but also you say that it to people. Thus so you are going to obtain that they integrate to us through their language.

The managing of Dutch language permit Latinos communicate in the good way, they can make jokes, they can say what they want to say and the most important, to be themselves. Latinos can express the intern and extern things that are present in the person. The communication process becomes balanced, because the expression is more integral. Some Latinos notice a change but not a change of the personality, not of the cultural values, but rather, a change in the communication process that generates the freedom to be and stay them. Thus the change and acceptance of both happen with the managing of the language said some interviewed.

In general Latinos comment that some times it is difficult to break down stereotypes about the managing of the Dutch Language when one is speaking. It is associated mostly, to someone hoe looks like stupid, ignorant, without education, but the Latinos are human been with capacities that need the opportunity to demonstrate that. For some Latinos is a challenge to be fluent in both languages. Most Latinos say that the ability to speak in both languages is an advantage to function in this society. However there are exceptions among children of mix copules, who in most cases are losing the Spanish language.

2.2.2 Latino Identity and Food

BR: *Yo me siento Nicaragüense cuando como mis platos típicos nicaragüenses. I am Nicaraguan when I eat typic Nicaraguan plates.*

There are some typical traditions, customs and cultural characteristics among Latinos. For example when you are invited to children's birthday always you find a piñata¹⁷. The guests, adults and children, enjoy and have a great time trying to break the piñata. At the same time some Latinas prepare a special typical FOOD of their countries for that occasion. So the invitees are honoured by some special attention and happy atmosphere.

Regarding to the typical FOOD, for example in Nicaragua, Mexico, Costa Rica and other Latin American countries, tamales¹⁸ are popular favourite food. But in each country these are prepared differently. The one with corn leaves, the other with banana leaves and also with different fillings. Another example in that Caribbean's Cubans and Dominicans have in common the moved and very glad music, frijoles and corn as daily food.

LD: *A veces cuando me invitan una causa rellena me siento muy peruana". Sometimes when I am invited for a causa rellena I am Peruvian.*

Among Latinos the food is an important aspect in constructing ones identity, but the Latino identity is not build by the food, is more when ones is eating it, as an interviewed mentioned before.

2.2.3 Latino Identity in the music and dance

BR: *Cuando oigo la musica nicaragüense siento que estoy en Nicaragua y latina cuando estoy con el grupo latino. When I hear the Nicaraguan music I feel that I am in Nicaragua and I feel Latina when I am with the Latino group.*

The music and the dance are always present in the (formal or informal) meetings or activities from OLAH¹⁹. When Latinos listen music, they don't hesitate to begin dancing, or to play the guitar and sing. While the Dutch people are more passive, they look around with a drink in his hand or speak with each other.

Some Latinas listen and/or dance Latino music in the mornings, mainly in the winter and that is for staying with positive energy and joy to begin the day. Others feel particular emotion (proud) if they listen a typical song of their countries. Thus the music and the dance unite to Latinos in the Netherlands say Carmen.

CC: *De vez en cuando escucho musica y me siento bien y por ese mismo hecho mas me identifico con el grupo latino que con lo peruano. Entonces la musica y el baile nos une a los latinos. I listen music and I feel well and by this fact I identify myself with the Latino group that with the Peruvian. So the music and the dance united us to the Latinos.*

¹⁷ Piñata is a puppet, fruit, animal or anything made of carton or thick paper with a space full of things. Every child have to hit with a stick till the piñata is destroyed and everyone can pick up the sweets, small toys, balloons, etc. that fall from the piñata.

¹⁸ Tamales are made from corn flour and always have a filling with meat and/or meat and vegetables.

¹⁹ OLAH is a Latin American - Dutch organization.

RM: me siento orgullosa por ser peruana, aún me emociono si oigo una marinera o la flor de la canela.

I feel proud for being Peruvian, still I am touched if I hear a marinera or the flower of the canel.

Above all, music, song, poem and dance identify the Latino group, not mattering from where that people come.

2.2.4 Latino Identity and Catholic Religion

Most Latinos have a catholic religion. Some of them are passives and others active practicing. This means that almost every Sunday morning they go to the church and listen to the service as mention a respondent.

RM: En Perú estuve participando de un grupo que vive con mucha alegría la fe católica. Aquí en Wageningen hay un movimiento juvenil, con una espiritualidad parecida. La idea de este grupo es que a través del grupo de oración en español, en inglés y un coro internacional se transmita esta espiritualidad luego a los holandeses.

In Peru I was participating in a group that lives with much joy the catholic faith. Here in Wageningen there is a youthful movement, with a similar spirituality. The idea is that through a group of oration in Spanish, English,. As soon as possible this spirituality will be transmitted to the Dutch.

Some Latinos Christianise (baptize) their children. They organize spiritual and reflexion meetings, with topics to analyse the role of God in the education of children and the influence of the Dutch society in the spiritual of teenagers and kids. They have a strong believe in God, Jesus Christ and devotion to Virgin Mary and other Saints, but they are not fanatics in general.

Among Latinos, there are Roman Catholics and Protestants. The similarity between Latinos Protestants Latinos Catholics and Dutch Calvinists is the fact that they are believers in God and Jesus Christ. A protestant Identity is rapidly distinguished among Latinos by non-alcoholic customs and their non-devotion to Mary and the saints. Additionally the protestant church has no hierarchy.

Among the refugees of the year 70's, some of them do not know anymore if they believe or not in God and others do not like the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Moreover other Latinos do not agree with what the (Papa) representant of the Catholic Church said regarding abortion, for example. The Latinos are not fanatic in their believing. Some of them said that they carry God in their hearts and that is enough. They celebrate Christmas, Easter and few other Catholic celebrations.

Most of Latinos try to give or influence their children the catholic religion. But in some families the Dutch daddies do not want to influence their children with any religion. They say that their kids will decide which kind of religion they want. In other words the religion is one of the different opinion and perceptions regarding the upbringing of the children among Dutch and Latino parents inside the mix couples.

2.2.5 Latino Identity in Community Practices: Solidarity

Speaking about Solidarity and brotherhood, I observed that mostly Latinas (mothers with small children) help each other in the care of their children, some times without previous notice they go to help somebody who is in problems. The saying “today for me, tomorrow for you” has its effect in the majority of Latinos. It is interesting that in several parts of the Netherlands neighbours used to take care for each other in the same way, like the “Noarberplicht” (duty between neighbours) in Twente.

CF (Dutch): The customs that I assimilate was to share with other people and to create a warm atmosphere in order to celebrate. What I also like a lot is the solidarity between people, the availability among them to help anybody.

In other occasions we can see the solidarity in the collection of money, cloths, furniture's or others things like information for separated women. To help your Latino brother or sister is the motto and gives satisfaction for most of them.

BE (Dutch): In the Latin community, the Latinos do all things in groups and they help themselves very well. Here in Wageningen is more individual or the groups are small.

DS: I see that in Holland also there is certain solidarity, but with a different meaning. For example the Dutch do not worry if you ate or not.

Solidarity for Latinos is to feel that you are with somebody who needs you. Is giving your time, your unconditional support towards a group or person. Most Latinos practice solidarity, because they are always ready to cooperate, collaborate someone, even if she or he asks for it or not.

The solidarity becomes an element of describing self- ourselves Latino identity and how they want to represent themselves. It is reflected in the idea of family and how this element is related with the concept of solidarity, human warmth and sociability. Thus solidarity between Latinos is an authentic custom and is practiced participating in activities that respond mainly to the group interest.

MB: The Latinos have more a broad concept of family, because the family do not end with the grant parents, the family end with the neighbour, with the village. We have a family feeling inclusive national and continental. When the Latinos meet us in some place, without knowing each other, very quickly we are singing, dancing, speaking, laughing All the things by the filling of brotherhood.

Family for Latinos is very important, in the former countries or here and just within the Latino Families in the former countries, they learned with real examples the solidarity. Not only that, they learned also to share the own things with other, no matter if they need or not, to cooperate others no matter if they want or not, sometimes as a moral obligation. In this line some Latinos continue thinking and acting as “We”, rather than “I” like some Dutch people do, as tells a woman.

EC: In certain aspects I identify more with the Dutch mentality than with the Mexican, for example, respect by the rules, punctuality and being concise saying something. In others definitively no, lack of tact, exaggerated individualism.

In my conversation with a group of women I could advert that in the eyes of some Latinas, “I” still represent individualism, thus egoism and WE communitarism, solidarity. Some of them have more strong the sense of “We Latinos-community”, because the practice of this give them satisfaction to share what they have and not. Others learned to think and behave very well the “I Latino-individuality”. Some times necessary to develop as person say the

interviewed. Besides these different senses, Latinos admit that they live in an open society where the individual is important. The people respect the human rights, the rules and appointments.

Latinos speak the same language, each country with their own modisms and own expressions. They practice the same custom that differs from country to country. Latinos prepare the same plates, with the same name or other, but with different ingredients. They sing the same songs, but these are from different countries, singers, they dance in different rhythms and they have the same religion but they practice of different way. Spanish language together with dance, music and typical food of the former country, is the most mentioned cultural aspect that Latinos want to give to the children.

In summary, the discourses and practices about the representation of attributing characteristics like language, dance, music, food, religion and the socio-cultural aspects such as spontaneity, expressively, sociability, respect, hierarchy flexibility and solidarity are important elements for Latinos to become Latinos, “as subjects, which can be spoken”, Hall (1996: 5). It is self-identification as Latino person and as Latino group within the Dutch society. However the representation of one or other cultural characteristic, shared, transmitted or acquired among Latinos is used by them in organizing and gives form to their new lives in the Netherlands. These socio-cultural characteristics are part of their own identity that differentiates himself or herself from other people in the Dutch society.

2.6 Differences and Similarities between Latinos and Dutch

KB: Te das cuenta que hay latinos, cuando se oye gente riendo, gente hablando en voz alta, gente organizando fiestas, cuando hay presencia pues. Tu nunca vas a ver holandeses yendo como primeros a la pista de baile por ejemplo. O no vas a escuchar hablar y cantar en alto como los Latinos. El comportamiento informal tan libre de los Latinos, es diferente con los holandeses. You realize that there are Latinos; when you hear people laughing, people speaking in top, people organizing parties, when there is presence.

With the above and following quotations I want to explicit in this section how the set of social and cultural references, on which the feeling of property to a Latino or Dutch group is based. And how is this organized by Latinos and Dutch as well as a typical set of characteristics that some times does become as directions for social interaction. In other words, How it goes to certain extent one identifies oneself with Latino group or not and what Latinos and Dutch people mention about social and cultural characteristics of becoming Latino or Dutch. It refers to the abilities that ones learns in the social contact in comparison with other people and within this ones defines himself or herself as a Latino or Dutch and as a group.

2.6.1 Expressiveness, Spontaneity - Directness and Criticism

The Latinos in general are more **expressive** and **spontaneous** than the Dutch people and this can be recognized immediately mostly during conversation. The expressiveness is also present in some formal or informal activities were someone could make easy contact with everyone. Spontaneity and joy ness sometimes help Latinos not to take too much in serious the vicissitudes of the life in the Netherlands.

EC: Los latinos son más cálidos, hospitalarios, bailadores, espontáneos, alegres y desorganizados, mientras los holandeses son un poco fríos a primera vista, austeros, rígidos y a veces inflexibles organizados, con mucha confianza en sí mismos.

The Latinos are warmer, have hospitality, dance spontaneously, happy, not well organized, while from the first impression the Dutch look cold, careful with money, time, and attention, rigid, sometimes not flexible when it comes to organization, have trust in themselves.

HN(Dutch): Yo creo que la espontaneidad caracteriza a los Latinos. Me gustaría adoptar un poquito más de esa espontaneidad, porque nosotros somos un poco blancos y negros.

HN: I believe that spontaneity characterizes the Latinos. I would like to adopt more and be a little more spontaneous, because we are more black and white.

The most Latinas women are spontaneous, expressive and lively and it is seen when they socialize, when they greet as first to people in the street or wherever Latinos are. When Latinos participate in activities as mentioned above they do it in order to build their social network, unwind and feel good in company of their families and friends.

ES (Dutch): Una diferencia muy marcada para mi es que los holandeses somos bastante directos, decimos lo que pensamos sin dar mucha vuelta y el latino en general busca otra manera para decirlo.

BR: Los holandeses son directos y nosotros somos indirectos, cuando nos dicen algo lo tomamos a mal, porque nosotros no estamos acostumbrados a que nos digan directamente las cosas, pero sabiendo como son, ya no hay ningún problema.

GA: We, Latinos, turn things around, less direct in saying things but we make friends very quickly.

Based on experience of most Latinos married with Dutch I found that the most mentioned difference between them is the **directness** and the **self confidence** of Dutch people. Since these are children, they are well stimulated at home and school in their self confidence and to say what they think and what they want. Contrary to this Latinos are well stimulated at home and school to be warm, kind and less direct, with a strong respect for older people in general. In section 2.2 when I spoke about education I am referring to the open hierarchic system present in Latin American countries, which do not help in some cases raising Latinos self confidence.

On the other hand Latinos interpret the Dutch directness sometimes negatively, because they are not accustomed to such a direct conversation. But the positive thing of the Dutch directness is the fact that you know who they are and what they think. Then the relation or contact with Dutch people could be better and without problems. But you need to know who they are and maybe to learn as strategy for the next time.

HN(Dutch): I want to have more diplomacy like Latinos. Sometimes we say the things as they are because we do not realize that we cause pain to other people. In this sense we are in a country that is needed to be developed in the human aspect. Spontaneity and diplomacy are the characteristic that I want to gain from the Latino.

Speaking about **diplomacy** of some Latinos. It means that the Latino always looks for the most appropriate way to say the unpleasant things to the people because he or she fears to damage the other person. But most Dutch people appreciate honest criticism more than flattery and compliments. The Latinos almost never say hard or negative things, when they are in front to the particular person, but Latinos could say things behind the back of someone. This behaviour in the Dutch society is found quite negative, hypocrite or false. Latinos may find it rather a more delicate and positive way to act. In fact, critical attitudes and Dutch strong opinions are clearly expressed, because they learned that everybody has the right to say

what they think, no matter child, young or adult. However their direct way of expressing themselves can be shocking foreigners and be interpreted as negative as mention a woman.

KB: Los holandeses son muy directos, y esa es otra forma de ser agresivo. BE (Dutch):

In daily life I notice that some Latinos adopt the directness and the Dutch criticism and they are good with it.

Ahora a mi esposo le gusta mas la puntualidad, se acostumbro y le gusta. Ahora el es mas directo para decir las cosas. My husband likes to be puntual. Now he is more direct to say things.

2.6.2 Sociability and Hierarchy - Egalitarianism and Pragmatism

TP: Ik denk dat Nederlanders erg nuchter zijn vergeleken latinos, veel gemakkelijker met de vrijheid om te doen wat je wilt, onafhankelijker (en dat mag je positief en/of negatief interpreteren.

One characteristic of most Latinos is the socialization. It means that they look for human contact, inside the Latino group or outside. They like very much to speak and to make contact with the people. The Latinos always make friends whenever, wherever they are as says a Dutch man.

H: (Dutch) Por ejemplo, mi esposa abraza a cualquier Colombiano que empieza a conocer en la calle, Yo con un Holandés en Alemania jamas lo haria. La verdad es que siempre quedo en los extremos, pero yo si quiero ir a esa mitad y me gustaria ser un poco más espontáneo. For example, my wife embraces any Colombian who she gets to know in the street. I wouldn't do so when I meet with a Dutch person in Germany. The truth is that I am always in the extreme. I would like to be in between and I would like to be a little more spontaneous.

Before I speak about hierarchy and how it influence in the behaviour and freedom of Latinos. Meanwhile the characteristic of Dutch culture or when one has contact with Dutch people (young, kid or adult) you can notice the freedom and egalitarianism among people relations says a Dutch man.

HN (Dutch): Yo creo que es el respeto que hay, yo como un director de una empresa puedo relacionarme de tu a tu con el chofer o el jardinero...Eso tu no ves en Latino America.

However, not all Dutchmen ignore hierarchy or status, like do some Latinos. But for the rest all are equal from a moral point of view. Since the Latinos experience, Dutch egalitarianism is appreciated very well by some Latinos as mention a woman.

IV: He realizado algunos trabajos con un autzembureau y alla siempre me han tratado bien. Incluso me regalaron flores por un trabajo de limpieza que realice. Entonces aprendí que no importa el trabajo que haga aqui la gente te trata bien como a persona y no por el hecho de que estas limpiando no te toman en cuenta. Me gusta el trato que te dan los holandeses. En el aspecto humano tratan por igual a todos.

Other Latinos consider that Dutch doesn't treat equal to somebody. There are different codes and this are not visible to first contact within the Dutch society. The following quotation exemplify this.

IV: En las tiendas que te miran la apariencia de extranjero y te empiezan a perseguir como si fueras una criminal. Eso me ha chocado, porque te juzgan y piensan extrajera va a robar algo y generalizan.

In the daily life, some Latinos by their physical appearance of foreigner or other things that distinguish them stay in the eyes of some Dutch people, as allochtones, with less education and less possibility to achieve for example better paid jobs. Or during their shopping's, Latinos feel uncomfortable here in the Netherlands because the workers in the shopping keep on following them as if they were thief.

In daily life, some Latinos noticed that the Dutch are **practical people**, with a highly developed sense of concreteness in different aspects of their lives. According to the citations bellow I find in a conversation, go to the point. In a job or activity X, task oriented. They tend to focus on contents and purpose rather than on aspects like personal contact, prestigious appearance, ceremony and circumstance. Practical aspects like timing, schedules, and pricing; planning with anticipation and others things are expressed in word and in action.

CC: In the hospital, everybody is worried and does not have time to hear you, then you must be precise. That cost frustration, tantrum and to send everything to the demon. Thus it is the life.

XY: Definitivamente la rigidez y la planificacion anticipada para todo, me parecen un extremo. Todavía no me acostumbro hacer citas con el medico o el dentista para el proximo ano. Solo en Holanda podría ocurrir eso.

EC: En ciertos aspectos me identifico más con la mentalidad holandesa que con la mexicana, por ejemplo, respeto por las reglas... En otros definitivamente no falta de tacto, individualismo exagerado.

According to some respondents below, Latinos like and practice some Dutch characteristics like punctuality, planning of activities, anticipated appointments, to be more direct to say things, etc. At the same time Dutch people value and practice some Latino characteristics, like to be kind with the people, to be more diplomatic and flexible with schedules and time.

LD: Despues de vivir tantos anos en Holanda siento que mis raíces siguen ahí, uno no las pierde. Uno es peruana latina y eso esta enraizado en uno, entonces eso no lo puedes perder. La vida es como un arte y uno tiene que saber como vivir ese arte. Muchas veces puedo decir que me siento holandesa. Inclusive hay gente latinoamericana que me dice que soy muy holandesa, porque me gustan algunas cosas. Me gusta ser organizada, me gusta tener una agenda, me gusta ser puntual. Pero yo creo que una no tiene que ser tan rigida. Cada persona tiene un baggage de experiencias y situaciones diferentes. Verle la parte positiva a todo.

JV: Esta cuestión de las invitaciones para visitar un amigo, o ir a su casa, o hacer una fiesta o un cumpleaños, eso lo tienes que hacer a lo holandés, porque si lo quieres hacer a lo latino no funciona. A la manera latina esperas que la gente espontáneamente te visite, para los cumpleaños no necesitas invitar al mundo entero, la gente viene de por sí, aquí no funciona así, aquí hay que invitarlos, llamar por teléfono, hacer la cita con muchos días de anterioridad y estas cosas tienes que respetarlas para llevarte bien con ellos.

The discourses and practices about Latinos and Dutch are not individual processes; moreover a social interaction which is taking place in the contact between them and other people through the language. In consequence, one can be Peruvian, Latina, and Dutch and sometimes one must adapt according to the circumstances trying to see the positive part of everything as an interviewed said. And this helps to see Latinos identity as discursively constructed and out of hybrid elements, which is in constant process of change.

2.7 Integration and Latino identity

During my interviews, Identity was direct related to Integration, at least very much mentioned by Latinos. In the context of transnationalism or transcontinentalism, here it is pertinent to speak briefly about the *integration process* of Latinos and the rules that were created by the Dutch government to achieve it.

CZ: In a certain sense I feel that I am part of the Dutch society, but the same society rejects you because you are foreign. That happens in all societies, but here we felt it more and we shared that the foreigners. Here the policy of immigration is directed to the regulation of how you have convert you in a citizen but also directed to how you have to behave as citizen and it changes the thing there. Yes I can contribute very much to this society, but when I am contributing already I am part of this society. At the same time is that feeling that never I am going to be part of this society. Well I have more the feeling to be a citizen of the world. The world is of all and we share it. For that reason I say that I have integrated to the world and not a specific society.

According to the Human Rights Watch (2007), since 2006, the Netherlands became the first country in Europe to argue that the process of integration should begin while migrants were in their country of origin. It was for people from 'non-western countries' that wished to migrate to the Netherlands for marriage or to join family members living in the Netherlands. These people must pass a compulsory, basic civic integration exam in the Dutch language before entering this country. The following interview is related to this matter:

MM: I think that all Latinos, we have had some moments, which is already enough. I don't want to be treated bad anymore, mainly due to the political part and the problems related to obtaining the residence permit. Sometimes you say I don't need this experience if I have my world there in LA. All this is because you want to be together with your family. Also a little frustration is what you feel. But later you go on further and you realize that it was not so bad and always there are bumps.

The Dutch government developed its law “active integration”-pre-immigration tests for migrants, called by Human Rights Watch (2007) “discrimination in the name of integration”. After two years on approval of this law, since 2008, the Dutch government is reviewing some aspects of the path to Integration and citizenship of immigrants in the Netherlands. In this line it is opportune to know what are the discourses and perceptions and what means integration for Latinos. The following table with Latinos integrated numbers and definitions of integration illustrate what is going on this matter.

Table 7: Number of Latinos integrated

35 Latinos	Integrated	In process of Integration.
men	5	2 (returned)
women	26	2 (returned)

Table 8: Definitions of Integration

Latinos	Def. Integration	Observations
4	-Feel at home and freedom to be “I”.	Most Latinos discover that the “I” identity is also important to develop.
7	-Feel at home. Accept norms, values Dutch society without losing own cultural inheritance.	Interact with the environment but being Latino, Andean or other strong identity that the person has or appreciate very well.
5	- Good Feeling finding our own place within a host society.	Own place is related to “good” job, but also well being in the family
4	-To find a job	Job that give independency economic and freedom.
5	- Speak very good the language	Influence of the Dutch society in to speak

		“very well the language as synonym of “integrated”.
4	-To share and experience the Latino and Dutch side	Accept of unconditional manner both cultures and worlds.
2	-To live “happy”. (Sentirse a gusto)	To live without any kind of social and economic problems.
8	Two-way process: Dutch society-Latino and Latino-Dutch society	Give and receive material and immaterial things reciprocally.

The above table presents a summary of the ideas and feelings of Latinos regarding their integration process in the Netherlands. However below I present examples of the complete quotations in the summary for a better illustration on this issue.

LW: *Integration for me is to feel being at home. On one hand, as sociologist I believe to know enough the Dutch mentality. Because to be able to know it, I have not only seen the behaviour but also history, the religion, amount of things that have happened in a so small country but simultaneously so rich. I have the freedom of being able to say and to make the things without going against anybody and the things that are permissible.*

NS: *Integration is to live in harmony in another country with a different culture from yours, to feel “at home”. For that it is essential to be able to communicate in the language of the country and to accept the norms and values that are in the society, but not necessarily of leaving our own cultural inheritance.*

KB: *Integration or to integrate itself is to find your own place within a society and feel good with that. It is not to lose your own culture or to adjust totally to the local culture, but to find your place for felling good and happy.*

CZ: *My experiences have been learning experiences and non-negative experiences. What has passed me has let I learn how I must work in this society. For example the difficulty when I speak by telephone. This has to do with a short time and the little patience that some Dutch has for listened you, but you go in advanced.*

JL:(Dutch) *Integration is that one lives happy in a country and that at least one has some friends of the country (continent) from where one comes. One should be to follow with its own customs and not to change their entire attitude because that is not natural.*

JV: *As we behave and we tried to do something, maintaining what is ours, showing and being what we are, we can perfectly be integrated and understand the Dutch society without causing any problem here.*

Most Latinos and Dutch consider that Integration is to find their own place, to feel “at home” without losing their own culture and identity, but accepting the norms and rules of the host country. In other words, Integration is a two-way process: Dutch society-foreigner and foreigner-Dutch society. However some Latinos feel that they are obliged to integrate into the Dutch society meanwhile others want to integrate here, accepting the norms and values of the host country but not necessarily abandoning their own cultural inheritance.

MB: *I will feel integrated in the Dutch society when I will have a work, because I am part of the Dutch productivity. To be integrated to Dutch society not means to be object of this. To be integrated to Dutch society means social contract where I give and I receive. When that happen I can be said that I am integrated, but at least I can say, that in my house, in my family, we have an integration in the Dutch and Latino society.*

KB: *Mas que la identidad cultural tiene que ver la personalidad. Que tu logres, tus sueños, lo que tu quieres en la vida.*

More than your cultural identity you can see your own personality, that you can achieve what you want to have in your life.

Other Latinos thinking that the integration process in The Netherlands is not easy for a foreigner with high expectations. Moreover for Latinos that are used to be welcomed wherever they are, they need to push closed doors and they feel that barriers are growing. Just it represses the own cultural aspects of the person, represses the personality of one. And because Latinos arrive in other country of another culture, another language, and these implies a constant learning process. They feel in a certain way a little limited, principally by the language. Thus integration is a permanent process of fighting in an acculturation process and it costs time, energy and money said some Latinos. At the same time, Integration means a social contract where they give and receive, not pretending be a Dutch person but to live together with Dutch. In the following quotations, women say:

MM: *I never am going able to be Dutch although I have my nationality, I am a Mexican that lives abroad and that is it. You cannot reject your roots. You acquire new things, you have the acculturation process, although you speak the language, you never go to speak it 100%, as you speak your maternal language.*

SE: *My husband and my family-in-law are the stronger reference points that I have with the Dutch society. I can also say that these reference points make me more identified and close to the Dutch society.*

In this transnational context some Latinos are doing an entire effort to be part of the Dutch society. They are “therefore obliged, albeit sometimes in minimal fashion, to open out and address other cultures and societies. For such migrants this is the fundamental challenge of the double engagement, which constitutes transnational migration, and how they address that challenge is crucial to their future trajectory in the Netherlands” Grillo& Mazucato (2006).

KB: *I have a better handling of the Dutch language, I have a career done in Holland, a job. I realize that I am myself and the Dutch people have learned to accept me and I have learned to accept them. At the end the balance is obtained.*

EC: *Estoy integrada en todos los aspectos: familiar, social, de trabajo. Debo admitir que un factor importantísimo que contribuye a que me sienta bien aquí es el poder compartir mis experiencias con otros paisanos, latinos y extranjeros en general.*

Most Latinos feel in the first years, the collision between two or more cultures. But afterwards, they learn the language, culture, social, political and economical system of this country and they integrate quicker within the Dutch society. Being man or woman, both have different, but also similar experiences in their integration process. A man told the following

AB: *I think that the few Latinos men are those who undergo more than women, to find their space, to compete, and to work. Also I have seen that the studies that you have and work experiences that you have in your country do not serve here. Only to have clear your future dream, so you know to what side you are going fighting and to haul the water to continue swimming, otherwise you lose yourself completely.*

Others notice that they succeeded in getting a job because of their higher education and they feel that they are integrated well. Nevertheless they still get the feeling that they do not speak sufficiently the Dutch language, according to what the Dutch society demands to be considered as “integrated”. A woman put it this way:

NG: *During a job interview for an international post a manager told me that if I speak so badly the Dutch language I could not possibly work in his organization.*

The first impression that you get, if you do not speak the language correctly, is that you are incapable. This is our weakness. But if you do insist on what you want to achieve, that language weakness gets to a second level and the people start to appreciate your other qualities.

Nowadays most Latinos said that they are integrated inside the Dutch society to the margin of their partners. Regarding to them the best way to integrate is: “to struggle by your truly objectives and what do you want to be and to do, because if you know what you want to be and to make, you have to work to achieve your desire and put much energy in that”. It is to learn well the Dutch Language, look for some course or short career, complementary or different to their actual profession and then look for a job. Only so they are satisfied and they can contribute to the Dutch society.

LD: The system is very rigid that stops customary people to have everything very flexible is hard. I can understand that much people cannot understand or hold that type of rigidity, but on the other hand I fodder that is a form to grow and in that sense I feel that I have grown and matured much in Holland. Having lived in so many countries, I know that any country is perfect. One can be complained and everything, but one this between the sword or to the wall, then one must choose or the sword or the wall.

CV: Here in Wageningen, I can ware as many time i wish a basket of fruits on my head and walk into the center. That I never did or will do in Santo Domingo, because that is not accepted as a deontologist. Here I feel the freedom to do it and I like to it. And Dutch people are fascinated to see me walking in my typical clothes. Therefore they admire my self-esteem.

According to the personal experience of 4 interviewed of the table 7 and the above quotation, Latinos feel more freedom to act how they want to be here than in Latin American countries. The reason could be by the less social control and less moral norms imposed by the church in Latin American than here in the Netherlands. In the same way, Integration is feeling at home for most Latinos. If they know who they are and how aware they are of it, they can function in the Dutch society. It is a constant searching of qualities, abilities outside themselves, whereas they are already in them. Now some of these Latinos are in the point to know and to choose which things they can do or not in order to demonstrate others and themselves that they are free and happy, doing what they want.

CP: En cuanto a mi hay cosas a las que me he adaptado muy naturalmente, como andar en bici, el idioma lo hablo pero me delata que soy extranjera. Aunque despues de haber vivido 20 años en USA me he acostumbrado a ser extranjera... es un poco parte de mi identidad Latina despues de los años.

To be foreigner is related to the bureaucratic complications for the residence permissions and the implications of the state “integration” politics, which are linked to a series of common experiences that make up not only a Latino constitution, but rather one of the “migrant” herself, as “allochtone” (not Dutch).

2.7.1 Latino Identity effects in the frame of Integration

This section is related to Latino attitudes towards integration and how they perceive some Dutch attitudes regarding the issue speaking of the Dutch Language. This I call the Latino identity effects. Identity effects related to the influences of the environment, but also in how Latinos are defining to be successful or not in finding a job in this country.

Based on 9 interviewed and participant observation of a course “Empowerment” organized by a local Institution where Latinos participated, I describe the thoughts and feelings of /and about a foreigner, Latino in this case. Of course this is related to the degree in which Latinos and Latino group have contact or treat Dutch people. In this sense the effects of the integration and citizenship laws of the Dutch government for immigrants, had direct repercussion (influence) in two directions:

1. the reaction of the media and Dutch population, in some cases directly against the immigrants.
2. the perception and self definition as Latino and Latinos feeling, reflection about the norms and rules of this country regarding foreigners.

In the first direction I found that Latinos categorise Dutch people in 3 groups, with whom they have direct or indirect (contact) relation in the society. Here it was interesting to hear what Latinos perceive or interpret the Dutch attitudes towards foreigners and principally towards the Latino’s way of speaking and expressing the Dutch Language. Here two interviewed said that not all foreigner Latinos express openly what they feel or think of Dutch people in general, because they are partners and because this is its country.

1. Dutch people which are open and progressive. These people do all effort to understand and integrate the immigrants into the Dutch society. They are able to follow a conversation and they listen to the Dutch what foreigners are speaking. Thus, they are kind and attain with foreigners. In this category fall mostly the Dutch with High level of education, who lived and worked outside Netherlands for a couple a years.

JV: In Peru Yo tenia colegas Dutch que eran muy progresistas y amables. Cuando vine aqui hacer mi Master me encuentre con otro tipo de Holandeses tan distintos a los que habia conocido.

2. Some Dutch people maintain in the margin to foreigners, they are indifferent, maybe they do not express openly their thinking, their dislike to foreigners and the competition of foreigner with them, but they speak with foreigner, maintaining their distance.

HL: (Dutch) The average of Dutch is less educated than any of Latin American people.. Poor people in Latin America behave better on the street than a guy who studies here. There are more dignity on the street in Latin America than here. And that hurts me.

3. Dutch people with a strong feeling of being Dutch, but in their social contact with foreigners as Latinos for example, they express openly their rejection to foreigners. This rejection is demonstrated in margination; the treatment in the supermarkets, in the shopping’s, in the buses, in the train or public offices.

MB: Un dia en el Albert Hein perdi una bolsa con libros dentro. Me acerque al mostrador para preguntar si no depositaron mi bolsa y la señorita muy descortés, sin ni siquiera buscar o preguntar dijo: Aqui nadie trajo ninguna bolsa. Al dia siguiente mi esposa que es Holandesa fue y pregunto por la bendita bolsa y le devolvieron inmediatamente. Por estas pequenas cosas te das cuenta que aqui hay que luchar diariamente en lo que se llama integracion en la sociedad.

The above quotation is one of many examples that every day one hears, being a foreigner. In fact some Dutch people do not put any effort to hear and understand what foreigners say, trying to speak the Dutch language. Some of these people don’t follow a normal conversation. They have really inconvenience with foreigner people. Any way, other informant said that

one can find the same kind of people any where in the world, and that is part of a integration process finalize the same informant.

In the second direction, 70% of the interviewed show how important is the Latinos attitude towards integration and to be recognized as person and professional within the Dutch society. In this sense, within the Latino community there are three groups of Latinos which rather than their cultural identity are distinguished by their personality. Nevertheless all Latinos, of one or the other way, they want to feel self-confidence, independency. They have learned that they can obtain it, only through a paid work. Jobs are where Latinos want to show their competitiveness, where they put in practice their capacities, abilities and knowledge to the service of the society.

1. Latinos who working out their dreams complain less. Latinos integrated in the Dutch society, means that Latinos effort, they worked very hard in order to achieve their goals, not only at professional level but also as women and mother. Work in the area of their earlier study or profession, helps in some cases to achieve their goals in the Nederland as the following woman mention.

KB: Yo creo que algunos latinos han logrado integrarse en la sociedad y tienen nacionalidad holandesa. Estos han realizado sus sueños. Yo me incluyo entre ellos, nos ha tocado luchar por alcanzar lo que queremos.

I believe that some Latinos have achieve the integration. They have Dutch nationality. These people realise their dreams. I, include me in this group. We must fight to achieve what we want.

IV: I believe that the way is to fight for your goals. What do you want to achieve. Because if you know what you want thus you how much you need to work to achieve that. You put your effort in it, to learn the language well, to look for a short course, related to your profession and later to a paid job. I put more energy in that. That satisfies me. I am coming to the point where I feel totally integrated.

2. Latinos who complain, but they desist of their professional dreams and seek other route, the easily, maybe realistic and with less time spend and stress in the way to achieve part of their goals. A woman says.

LD: Aquí en Holanda uno aprende a ser una persona fuerte. Yo conozco muchas mujeres que han tenido problemas grandes y han salido adelante. Inclusive tenían una profesión y al final tuvieron que hacer otro trabajo, pero igual se sienten contentas con los resultados

3. Latinos who stay completely at home, forget, chose or desist from developing their profession, but opt to invest more time in the family and house. Of course the above categories mentioned can change with time.

LU: Bueno yo creo que he tratado de conseguir un trabajo, pero como sociologa no he tenido campo y me he dado cuenta que una sociologa es mejor que trabaje en paises donde la necesitan y esto es LA, Asia Africa. Pero si he tratado de buscar algo en la cual he podido ocuparme y estoy contenta con lo que estoy haciendo. Para mi no es el hecho de tener exito y tampoco el hecho de destacar o tener un nombre o tener una fama. Eso para mi no tiene importancia. Para mi lo importante es que sea un trabajo bien hecho y que esta siendo util para algo y en ese sentido yo me siento realizada.

Summarizing, Latino Identity effects in the frame of Integration means to take account the power and the effort that someone carry with oneself, to make real ones dreams. Of course

here plays other elements as personality²⁰, than only the power and the desire to do something in the life. Personality is not the same as Identity. In this sense the effects of the Latino identity construction mentioned are in constant flux, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside representation.

Main findings

Latinos in Wageningen constitute a special case because they have mostly a high level of education. Most of them are married with Dutch people and they are cosmopolitans. Some Latinos never planned to come to live in the Netherlands, but came here coincidentally having met their Dutch partner, here or in Latin America. In this context it is necessary to say something if does the identity construction differ according to education and working situation, because both are related. The majority of the persons interviewed have a higher level of education. Only few men and women have a lower level of education, but still on a technical or administrative level. No Latinos have been found in Wageningen or interviewed without education or only basic education. Therefore the difference cannot be proofed with sufficient data. Nevertheless the difference between an academical Latino and someone with lower education appears clearly when speaking about their identity. For example a PhD student: "I have the feeling that not only the globalisation but also the postmodern theories are destroying the minorities. As I am opposite to this, I am very consciously working on my particular Andean identity". It seems obvious that Latinos with a high level of education and similar work have reflected on their identity, in particular at a more abstract and analytical level. While persons with a lower educational level, have answers to reflect on their identity: "I feel Latino when I eat typical plates, dance on my own music and when I meet with other Latinos." In both cases, Latinos have the tendency to idealize their identity. Some are very convinced to be Latinos others feel that they have become a mix of e.g. Nicaraguan, Dutch and Latino, while others are more realistic and others have not very much interest on this. Thus the difference between both groups seems to be more in the need and capacity to reflect on the identity than the outcome itself.

'Latino identity' is a notion more used outside of Latin America than inside the continent itself. On one hand, before coming here the Latino is unaware of other Latin American countries. That changes once the Latinos are in another country and continent. Because of the common language they seek each other. Latinos find that they have more in common that they realized, for example the same history of colonization, the same indigenous roots, the same process of their prehispanic cultures destruction and almost the same problems: political, social and economical. On the other hand, the Latino identity, as mentions Hall, (2005:102), is a combination of diverse and similar cultural aspects. Within the Latino community there are differences from person to person. Each person has its own regional, national identity, like Bolivian, Nicaraguans, Peruvians, etc, a different way to think, to feel, to do and to be according to its social, economical, political situation, with likes and dislikes, but also different to other minority groups and Dutch people within this country.

Latino, Dutch identities are not individual processes; moreover a socio-cultural interaction which is taking place in the contact between them and other people through the language (Spanish, Dutch). The language one of the many components of the Latino identity, permit Latinos express discourses, perceptions and practices about their new life in the Netherlands. Here plays very well the "discursive approach which sees identity as a construction, process

²⁰ I understand personality as the qualities that make up a person's character.

never completed – always in process” Hall (1996:2) In this sense Latinos recognise that only speak Spanish language is not enough; they need to speak Dutch, English and other languages, because it helps to do easy their lives in this country, according to the demands of globalised world. At the same time the discursive characteristics attributed by “others” and self-assumed by Latinos, in global terms refers to the common language (Spanish), spontaneity, religion (Catholicism), music, food, untidiness, solidarity, etc. as distinctiveness of this social group. In other words, the identity of Latinos is discursively constructed out of hybrid elements, which is in constant process of change. It means that this is more than language, customs, and beliefs. There is something related with the heart, thoughts, attitudes, and own consciousness. It expresses deep meaning, which has to do with Latino identity and at the same time of life and beliefs establishing their place and difference as ‘Latinos’ inside the Dutch society.

Several Latinos begin thinking about their identity in the Netherlands. Dutch people with whom they have contact often ask for their Latino roots. They may even know more about the history of their countries than themselves. Latinos may be questioned about the beauty of their country but also about the economical class where their families come from, about the discrimination of certain indigenous groups in their countries or their position during particular political periods – like the dad of Maxima in the junta in Argentina. Dutch people may idealize their lives in Latin America or put it in a new dimension that the Latinos didn’t were aware of before. Thus, Latinos are forced to think more about their roots and at the end about their identity. Latinos who came to the Netherlands with a higher educational level, who have lived before abroad or were raised in a more cosmopolitan environment are either already more aware of their identity and may recreate it.

The majority of Latinos and some Dutch people say that when one deals with Latinos, ones notices general characteristics like the Spanish language, food, music, dance, solidarity, spontaneity, sociability, respect, expressiveness liveliness and not being well organized, as categorías sociales distintas del grupo, but also important elements to be and become Latinos. It is self-identification in the social construction as Latino. These socio-cultural aspects are part of the identification and differentiation of Latino’s person - group from “other” person or minority groups in the Netherlands. However, When Latinos have lived for some period in the Netherlands they start to acquire new – in fact strange - elements like saying things more directly, like planning, like being more efficiently with time. Some Latinos realize that they need to comply if they want to function (work) in the Dutch system, as part of their social relations.

The most representative discourse regarding gender perceptions within mixed couples is according to the emancipation issue (defined by the Dutch society as part of the modern way of life) and the roles practiced by women and men within the mixed couples. Emancipation for both is represented in combining work and caring for the house and the children. Not emancipation for women and men is represented in the legal dependency of their husbands or wife’s, as migrants but also in the social and economic way, with pros and contras for Latinos themselves. Both the women and men interviewed suffer from the fact that they strongly depend on their partner, in particular during the first years: they don’t have their own income, they do not know sufficiently the language, they have difficulty driving a car and other practical issues to go e.g. to the hospital and they even depend on their partners for their visum. The Latino men add that they find it difficult to accept the change of roles: woman working and man cleaning and working in house, caring for the children.

However the gender division of labour is being the Dutch men who realises work in the public sphere and being the main earner of the family wage and the Latina women who realised more work at home and has a less hours jobs outside the door and moreover in the professional care taking sector although some Latina women managed to accede to other kind of professional jobs. (9%) are working in the same kind of jobs as in their home countries, others all had to accept labour under their level of job in their home country. Most of the Latina women do more household work and child care taking than their Dutch husbands do. Some feel resistance to do this kind of work in the beginning as household work is the worst valuated work in their home countries and in the case that families can afford it they pay a servant to realise this job. Depending on their experience and status in their home countries, some Latina women feel that doing this kind of work is a degradation of their status. In this sense, some women interviewed appear to have gained a better social position and status while migrating from Latin America to the Netherlands. They often got the possibility to finish a superior study or to find a job in their own field.. This is not the case for the men interviewed and for some other women. They have a good education and had a good job in Latin America, but work in the Netherlands under their level.

Emancipated or not men more than women Latinas, stay at home accepting or rejecting the role of care house and children, because in general men were used to the public life (work outside home) and to be principal economic supporter of the family. In the case of most high-educated Latinas-women, than men, some of them have been successful in changing their lives from limitations to opportunities. They have gained a better social position and status while migrating from Latin America to the Netherlands. They often got the possibility to finish a superior study or to find a job in their own field. This is not the case for the men interviewed and for some other women. They have a good education and had a good job in Latin America, but work in the Netherlands under their level.

Others are doing efforts to insert in the labour market but with often denied chances. Despite their successes the prevailing image of migrant women, Latina or not is connected to the negative image of them, within the Dutch society en general. Thus Latino women are well aware that the emancipation in the Netherlands is much more developed than in Latin America. They welcomed that their husbands did some tasks in the household that they were not used to do in their country of origin. Nevertheless in those cases where they went back, the men easily forgot their contribution to the household and returned to the traditional role patron. This differences between men and women influences the integration process in the Dutch society.

Most Latinos and Dutch interviewed say that Integration has acquired in the last years an unilateral way in the Netherlands, where some Dutch to a large extent have taken up themselves the right to criticize, to judge, to stereotype the foreigner like the idiot, the poor people, who needs somebody to think and to do everything for them. Whether one is Latino or from other origin, not including education, social or economical situation, one remains "different" in the eyes of most Dutch people. I say different as allochthonous in the negative way, or simply foreigner, "Latino", never Dutch. It is interesting to see that *the Dutch created allochthonous* to differentiate foreigner from Dutch people. And it is one of the many identities that Latinos have acquired in the Netherlands, which is although they do not like it by the low accompanying status of this word. In this sense integration, according to some Latinos (30%), is a permanent process of fighting in an acculturation process and it costs time, energy and money. However for the rest of Latinos (70%) they pursue their integration as a go-back process, in which both native citizens and immigrants have equal opportunities,

abilities and power to act. However the language is an obstacle to integrate regarding some interviewed, others change of perception and they are working now in showing other personal qualities. Thus integration, according to this group of Latinos, is a contract of reciprocal relation with rights and obligations on this. For instance the problems with the restrictive visa policies and integration have other meanings for Latinos than for other allochthonous people in the Netherlands.

Integration is measured by the Dutch government and society in terms of “*education, labour market and income position are the determining standards by which the structural integration is measured*” (SCP et al., 2005: 107). In this sense integration could be understood to mean entering work contexts recognized as “productive,” the extent to which several “Latinos” get work that doesn’t correspond to their level of education. Thus in general they are overqualified. However, as “integration” is understood as “to feel at home,” to accept the norms of the country without setting aside one’s cultural roots, this does allude to Latinos’ daily experience since leaving their families. It also alludes to their “hybrid” identity construction: Andean Latino; Andean, Peruvian, Latino, Dutch, etc. For example it is interesting to see that seven of the men interviewed four went back to Latin America. They all mentioned, that they were not happy in the Netherlands and could not integrate in the Dutch society.

The identity of Latinos is construct and reconstruct in daily life by virtue of its social and economic participation in the society and not only by its cultural properties. Latinos are part of a group, they has a national or ethnic origin, but some times, some Latinos, due to their new life and situation in Holland are in the dilemma to choose, to decide to maintain it or no, to remain or no, to return to their country of origin or not, etc. At the same time other Latinos are taking decisions, sometimes in rejection to the negation like person, they draws up their own existence and controls their experience. By the same fact to exist like person with a capacity to think and to reflect, to define itself in relation to itself and to others to recognize a similar capacity in others, the Latinos carries out a work to occupy their place, produces a effort that can offer personal satisfaction them. So it is related to personal new life conditions in the Netherlands where Latinos, no mattering from where they come, they laugh, cry, feed hopes, forge ideals, tell their own stories, undergo discriminations, build organizations and vindicate rights in the Netherlands. In summary, this research shows the dynamic and fluid process of construction and (trans) formation where each Latino deals with several and multiple identities, with the advantage of pointing to diversity” Siebers (1999) and how the changing character of Latino identity differentiates them from other people or minority group.

3 LATINO IDENTITY DYNAMICS IN A CONTEXT OF INTEGRATION AND TRANSNATIONALISM

BD: I am a Latina with a hybrid identity. If I had to choose I would vote by my Latino side; that is half of my life and this is something that I will never be able to erase. For that reason I think that making people choose between two nationalities is a stupidity.

In the previous chapter it is explained how Latinos become part of Dutch society and how Latinos themselves and others stress elements or dimensions in the construction of Latino identity. The present chapter contains an analysis of Latinos' transnational migration from different countries of the Latin American continent and of their settling process in the Netherlands. Migration is understood in terms of reasons (economic, social and political), motivations and expectations to come here and stay in this country. Here Latinos' discourses and perceptions about themselves and within the Dutch couples are important, related to gender relations and how Latino identity dynamics at the individual level are interpreted and represented in certain social experiences and in their encounter with the nation state. In other words, we will look at how Latinos play with certain norms and rules of the host country and how they are connected to the various physical, social, economic and political spaces in a transnational context.

3.1 Migration and identity construction

This section starts with Latinos in The Netherlands and describes the transnational Latino migration using quotes from those Latino and Dutch people interviewed. Hall (2006:4) mentions that "identities are constructed within not outside discourse" and precisely to understand this I try to situate Latinos in Holland, as persons and as a group with their own particularities, multiple identities, goals in their lives and their contribution to the host society. Moreover, I examine how they are playing with the social, cultural, political and economical situation of the Netherlands and how they are noticing differences in this process. Then this section gives examples and explains the reasons, motivations and expectations regarding how they came here and how this influences in their way of thinking and acting in certain circumstances.

MM: I think that the Latino emerges when you are in contact with other people from the same continent outside your country. Also in Mexico there is a Latin American sense.

3.1.1 Expectations, reasons and motivations for transnational migration

In the case of most Latinos, transnational migration to the Netherlands is mentioned as related to love by 31 of those interviewed. In chapter two I mentioned that the couples met each other in Latin America or here. Especially Dutch professionals graduated from Wageningen University often go to Latin America and return with their partners to this city. As well, Latino students came here to study for a masters or PhD degree and then found their Dutch partners. So Latinos immigrated for reasons of their love relationships or relations were formalized as a consequence of the law, as the following 2 subjects corroborate.

SH: I studied Economics at the public university in Brazil but I couldn't go on with my study because the university was on strike. I married a Dutchman and I had to chose between staying in

Brazil and waiting till the end of the strike or coming to the Netherlands, staying with my husband, learning Dutch and finishing my graduation here. I choose to be here.

MM: The first time I arrived in Wageningen I felt like a super Latina and together with other students from different Latin American countries we formed the big Latin American family.

Family reunification is a legal reason by which the partners could come to the Netherlands. Another reason was because of the present situation of their origin countries related to economy. In some Latin American countries, corrupt governments, no quality in elementary education, no technology and no job possibilities characterize the situation. In this sense, most Latinos accept to come here at the end of the job contract of the Dutch Partner or simply to accompany the partner to Holland and together find the best way for family development within Dutch society. The following woman says:

CZ: I can accept that the end of the working contract of my husband obligates us to come here, but also because Bolivia, a country of the third world, sleeps over a gold bed, with incalculable wealth, but is devoured only by few rich families. The intolerance and the lack of understanding are the everyday story.

These intercultural marriages, according to my interviews, are the principal reason, in recent times, for the presence of Latinos in Wageningen. Latinos as immigrants change their place of residence from various Latin American countries to a new state or nation and they settle in the Netherlands. The following citations explain the experiences of Latinos' first year, when they came here.

LD: In the beginning I had moments that I missed Peru and the places where I had been. The climate and normal circumstances of adaptation. At the same time it was a certain goal and new experience of other sensations.

XN: Wow!!!..What a beautiful country, green, very clean and organized....Some Dutch people have interest in you as a foreigner, but not always.

CV: When I arrived here, I didn't like the country nor their people with their anticipated appointments, I didn't liked the weather. I found almost everything boring, but sometime after I was changing my opinion and accepting some things useful to my own life.

Latinos were used to sunny and hot weather, to speaking with people and to be accepted wherever they are. But some Latinas arrive in The Netherlands in the winter; this makes them stay mostly at home. Some of them have children who are used to playing outside. They didn't stay between four walls. So it is understandable to think that they don't like the weather of this country. In general Latinos are used to being welcome always, in any place, but here some of them didn't feel that. However, after they live here for some time they begin to know, see and reflect the positive way of the things and the people in their surroundings.

The following citations tell what the principal reasons of Latinos were to come here. Most Latinos said **education** for their children, but also for young and adult Latinos migrants. They are convinced that this aspect is better in the Netherlands than that in their own countries.

LU: Basically we return by the education of our children

HJ: En relación a nuestros niños, a ellos les gusta mas la escuela aquí en Holanda que en Peru. Cuando a ti te gusta la escuela también aprendes mejor. Esta es una de las razones de quedarse por acá. Pero si continua la crisis intercultural y reglas inhumanas para con los migrantes, es mejor vivir en Peru u otro pais. Tambien depende de un lugar donde todo el mundo este feliz.

3.1.2 Latinos motivation to stay in the Netherlands

Most Latinos already they had the idea and motivation to speak “very good” the Dutch language, to find a job quickly, in order to integrate into the Dutch society as a woman informant says.

LW: My expectations were start a new life. In achieving that expectation I need to learn the Dutch language, to get along with the people, and to work. The differences between us are basically the customs and the national character of this country.

But not all expectations were being realized. Not yet. However, the motivations and expectations of most Latinos to come here were divers and similar at the same time. They are still searching their ways in realizing their expectations. Not all the expectation can be met. However, the reasons and motivations can work against the expectations or goals to be reached in personal and/or professional level in a developed country like The Netherlands. The motivation of Latinos to have a better economic situation is related to their live and status in their former countries. They had a good position in the Latin American society, as a dentist, a head of a project, director of a school, head of a department, etc. Some times this background does not help in achieving the expectation to live in the Netherlands say a Latina woman.

CV: We, Latinos have to forget what we were in the former countries. Here we need to start all over again.

Indeed transnational emigration from Latin American countries involves educated, often highly skilled, workers, which here the jobs obtained by Latinos are often incommensurate with their skills. They do manual labourers as something illiterate, with a consequent brain drain from their home countries. In this context Nieswand in Grillo& Mazucato (2006: 2) calls the “status paradox of migration”, wherein the status back home gained (by Latinos) through migration is accompanied by a “simultaneous loss of status in the receiving country”.

Nonetheless, the motivations to work in the same area that they studied and to have the same status in the Dutch society could be a positive one, so that the person will try hard to get back the knowledge, status and professional satisfaction to find the right place in the Dutch society. Other Latinos definitively change of study and they are adapting to the labor market. It could be related to flexibility that according to Mazucato (2006), flexibility is also manifest in the willingness to carry a portfolio of multiple, transnationally distributed careers, with consequent changes in male/ female relations and family organization in the Netherlands, in this case.

Three of my interviewed mentioned that they came here without personal expectations, but they do have familiar motivations. Behind this familiar motivation there is an economical reason to migrate to the Netherlands. When the husbands/wives (who earn the most income) cannot find a job in those Latin American countries than it is the most rational way to go back to Holland for those families. So the Latinos came here due to this situation. The most of them said that the principal reason was by the well being of their families and education of their children and that could be another reason they find the “happiness” in this country.

3.1.3 Reasons to return to Latin America countries

Seven of the Latinos interviewed returned to their own (other LA) country. In this sense the following citation resumes more or less what according to the Dutch partners is important to take into account in the construction of a new life for Latinos in the Netherlands. These are: Managing of, not only Spanish, but also Dutch and English language. Making real the illusions and expectations that one has in this country, otherwise one will stay frustrated that will affect not only the person himself but also the whole family.

BE (Dutch): We come back to Costa Rica because of my husband. He was not happy here. First of all, because of the language. Since the beginning he could not express himself whether in Dutch or in English. And here there are only few people who speak Spanish. This situation I had also in Costa Rica that time. I was frustrated because I could not say any joke. You behave differently because you do not speak the language and also because you do not understand what people say. Secondly, he came here with very much illusion because there in Costa Rica people talk only good things about Holland, and also because Holland is one of the first world. He came here with idealisms which he thought would become true in Holland but it turned out to be the other way around. During his master study here in Wageningen he did not have good experience. He had no luck. And then he changed a lot. He became more serious and depressed. But in general he tried to relate himself more to friends and my family. He also participate actively in the Latino community.

According to my research since 2005 till now, two men and five women returned to Latin America because of a new and better job, because of divorce or because they were not satisfied with their way of life here. Nevertheless, the rest of Latinos (interviewed) feel secure here for example because there is less robbery and violence. Moreover they find their freedom, which allows them to say whatever they want to say or painting their hair in whatever colour they want. In other words most Latinos did choice to live in the Netherlands, because they will compromise with the place where they want to live. Some of them said that it is not question of it is better here or better there. This kind of thinking doesn't help one to achieve ones expectations.

From Latinos point of view and experience, the migration is more positive than negative for the Dutch society. This world phenomenon of migration should not be judged negatively. Of course, there are Latinos who "suffer" more than others, but there are also Latinos that, through transnational migration and as part of their strategies, have improved their life situation. Making use of opportunities that were not available in their own countries.

In summary, the reasons, motivations and expectations of most Latinos to come here were with the idea to begin a new life and integrate to the Dutch society. It means as mentioned Hall (1996:4) "a process of becoming rather than being" ...how Latinos have been represented and how that bears on how Latinos might represent themselves. Thus it is to learn in short time the Dutch language, to find a job and to be independent (economically) from their partners. Some Latinos did not achieve some of these things, maybe in the nearby future.

3.2 Encounter with the Nation State - The Netherlands

NG: Some Latinos forget that they are in another country, because they begin to compare, to criticize and some times to overestimate their own cultures. When they return to their country they give account that only was an "ideal" of countryI believe that one must learn to be happy where one's is, to take advantage of the positive things and to learn to live with the things that you do not like much.

This section is related to the Latinos encounter with the Nation State, the Netherlands as an important aspect of the Latinos transnational life in this country. According to Mazzucato et al,(1994), the nation-state regulate the activities that migrants engage in and the identities that they create. The nation –state represented by government and society, play an important role in the new life of Latinos in the Netherlands, because they need to learn and accept things, some times different from those in their former countries.

In opinion of Latinos, Dutch people and the media, the atmosphere of the last years in the Netherlands has changed dramatically, after the dead of Pim Fortuyn (2002) and Theo Van Gogh (2004). Politically speaking, the Dutch government plays a role in the process of integration of different minorities groups; creates restrictive visa policies for migrants to enter this country as the following interview says.

MM: The situation of immigration before the nineties was better in Holland, people was open and excited to speak the foreigner, etc. Already when I came to live in 2000, the situation was different the policy was different. I pass through all red tape, through all those indignant situations. I never ask a favour to come here, then this situation hits, having had the different situation before.

Regarding to some Latinos and Dutch people interviewed, who came here with their partners before the 90s, the Dutch policy always aimed at integration in their own group, but the focus now is more on the obligation to become Dutch, to speak the language, etc. Sometimes it affects the way Latinos move and organize themselves, but principally in the feelings, thoughts and behaviours within their families, themselves, their former countries, their identity changing in the Netherlands. Speaking about restrictive visa policies, a Latina tells de following.

My husband has not work and therefore could not maintain me according to the Dutch government. The police came to my house to say me that I must leave the country... Then I had to return to Colombia with my baby of 4 months to wait for the residence permit. It was horrible"... In IND they said to me that our separation was going to be the test to know if our marriage were solid, based on the love or if it were something fleeting, can you imagine?

Some Latinas, together with their children, they have had to return to their countries to wait, it could be one year for a residence permit, while the husband stay here alone studying or working. This kind of story is a common story among immigrant for the last three years. Of course most Latinos did not expect this situations from a country like the Netherlands, with the most advanced laws in certain topics, like euthanasia, homo marriage, etc. In these kinds of situations, in most Latinos I notice a solid self-confidence as Latino. However there are some who become less secure, powerless in relation to the State. Here I can refer to the *power relations between the individual and the wider society* mentioned in Foucault's discursive approach, were the institutions as the State act upon individuals. Therefore the feeling of insecurity of some Latinos produces rejection immediately in this country where they live, like a defence mechanism. Nevertheless, time helps Latinos to forget all bad things and stand up with new energy to continue surviving in this country as says a woman.

E: Those that we have already lived some time in this country we can say that we can play with the rules. As we come from another culture we have a double advantage. It is like a boy who has grown in two cultures. Sometimes he says that he does not understand but you know that he does. It is the same with us and with our way to be and to live.

From the above citation I conclude that as a foreigner, one can take the advantage of growing with and between two or more cultures. And at the same time this condition permit Latinos to

play with the norms and rules of the host country as a way of resistance than simple passive “oppression” within the power relations in the Dutch society.

The constant interplay between what Latinos are and what they want to be, do them different, when they came here. However in opinion of one interviewed, the theories of post modernity and globalisation are influencing negatively in the destruction and diminishing of minorities, indeed of their identities.

JV: Modernity, post modernity and the globalisation are negatively influencing in the corrosion, destruction and diminution of minorities and therefore of their identities. On the contrary they emphasize, they heighten the culture and the identities of majorities and dominant culture.

NS: Yo me resumo un poco en este proverbio: “Genio y figura hasta la sepultura”.

From the second quotation I deduce that some Latinos locates their national and Latino roots in a certain space, so that Latinos remain aware of where they come from and that generates them a sense of well-being. One interviewed said that some authors conceptualise Identity like more fluctuating. Therefore some people of migrant groups, complain, reject its roots, its identity and try to assimilate themselves to the dominant society.

3.2.1 Latino identity implies reflexion or negotiation of the culture?

In this section I resume more or less how Latinos are reflecting and negotiating culture in the representation of their identity in the Netherlands. At the same time it can appreciate that cultural practices of Latinos in Wageningen have a fundamental role, in their decision to make their own lives, identities and social environment in this country.

JV: The Andean identity more than Latina is part of my person, who I am. I am aware of my European and indigenous past. When I am in Peru, in my family I try to confront with my brothers that they continue thinking that indigenous has less value than the white in Peru.

In the receiving country of the Netherlands, regarding the wide-ranging set of relationships Grillo& Mazucato affirm that are emerging transnational migrants as ‘locals’, and others as ‘cosmopolitans’ around a ‘Latino’ identity. It means for example that the ascribed identity of Andean Latino or Caribbean Latino depends how they prefer emphasize their Latino-ness or Andean-ness in the Netherlands or hoe they define themselves principally as Andean, rather than as Latinos.

JV: The contrast with other cultures does that my Andean identity for example is reaffirmed and insofar it is reaffirmed, it allows me to relate better with other people because so I am. Knowing who I am and not another person, I can interact well with people. My Andean identity is my reference. It represents my way to be and exist. It is the key to continue contributing in the society positively.

The important dimensions, topics of Latinos self-identification, pass by images that people have on the Latino appearance and the way how they express some things like goals, desires, cultural practices of the own country, the same ones that offer them the necessary emotional support to bear and to make more pleasant their life in Holland.

CV: I believe that as woman, mother and wife, you can only function in this society when you gives self value, self respect, self esteem and self criticism to yourself.

Some Latinos are in the process to take decisions and to accept their strong feelings of creating cultural activities. (Identity). To respect their emotional breakdowns and the support they need. (The “I” factor) And finally, the freedom to express their shortcomings and expectation of this society (interculturality). It could mean that recognizing their own YO=I in the Netherlands it could be synonym of development, grow up or simply, to adapt to the Dutch society

NG: One must learn negotiate in Holland. To negotiate I understand to reach an agreement where both parts are satisfied with the result.. I think respect the culture in which you live, and give the best thing of your culture; both are sufficient tools to be able to live in Holland. In this aspect I have tried to feel me considered and respected.

In this transnational context some Latinos are doing an entire effort to be part of the Dutch society. They are learning to negotiate because is needed for to live in the Netherlands. Some times trying to confront other people who thinks that foreigners don not contribute to the multicultural Dutch society and others sharing and showing the richness of the Latino culture, in this particular case. In other words Latinos are “obliged, albeit sometimes in minimal fashion, to open out and address other cultures and societies. For such migrants this is the fundamental challenge of the double engagement, which constitutes transnational migration, and how they address that challenge is crucial to their future trajectory in the Netherlands”. (Grillo&Mazucato 2006).

3.3 Latino Identity in the context of Globalisation and mobility

The Netherlands is a country strongly interconnected with the whole world, which have influences in its particular multicultural conformation, but principally in the construction of identities within its society. Latinos are conscious that they live in an age of globalisation and mass migration. Some are aware that this influences the new life they have built in The Netherlands. In this line I describe how Latinos move and connect with their homeland and how Latinos use the transnational spaces (economical, social and cultural) in making their new lives in the Netherlands.

Following the transnational experience of some Latinos, I refer to rare feeling here in the Netherlands and there in the country of origin, as an interviewed woman mention:

BR: Already I am 18 years old living here and mainly when I go of vacations to my country I don't feel Nicaraguan. When I am there, I feel a little rare, I feel me more tourist than Nicaraguan because I go of long time to my country.

The identity construction of Latinos in a transnational context, some times is related to the “rare” feeling that they have, to be more open, reflexive and critic to the situations in both countries. Taking account the perceptions of my interviewed and the research theory related I can state that Latinos are influenced constantly of people around, the counter of difficulties and certain factors in the identity construction and personal development inside the Dutch society. But at the same time it shows that most Latinos are flexible and have capacity and predisposition for change.

BR: I have changed much; I have grown much like person, although there are lost other things that I appreciated in my life. For example I feel much thinking less with the heart and that I miss. Passion and compassion went away. Now my capacity of analysis has been developed. I have changed much and the country as well. The economy, the things are now very hard.

The case of Latinos shows, the flexibility and fluidity of their identities as individuals and as group. They are constantly moving between Dutch and Latino culture and it is constantly constructed in their double engagement in the receiving country. Using the points of Siebers (2000), Mazucatto, (2002), At the same time I state that Latinos are dealing with the effects of globalisation in terms of global flows (people, goods, capital images) and feelings. Feelings of nearness, competition or affirming Latino's own collective identity, etc.

Latinos are experiencing the era of globalisation, in many aspects and it is an important component of transnationalism. In an increasingly globalised world, some Latinos (40% approximately) travel once per year between both countries and both continents. It depends on the economical situation of the Latinos and because normally the fly tickets to Latin American countries for all family are very expensive. However, the links with the homeland remains strong. Every Latino communicates by phone or e-mail, mostly with parents, more or less one time per week. In the year 70's, the communication of Latinos (politic refugees) with their family in Latin American countries done through letters and recorded cassettes. Using telephone was impossible because of the strong control of the dictatorial regimes in the houses of expatriated Latinos. Now it is common to see a woman tidying up the living room while she is by phone speaking her mother in Peru. This is what 'double engagement in the context of transnational live' means for Grillo & Mazucato (2006).

Through this research I found that Latinos in general do not send money every month to the parents in Latin America. Sometimes they feel a "moral obligation" to do it and they send money once or three times a year, depends on the circumstances. But what usual among some Latinos is, they help with money in their own country, members of the family who are in necessity.

The globalization in a context of transnationalism is an experience of Latinos through deep practices of periodic contact with family or parents who inhabit the original place and country. Following this transnational contact, some Latinos here in Wageningen make activities to collect money for small projects in their origin country. This kind of initiatives goes to support the local development in Latin America countries as result of the benefits of living transnationally. It means according to Mazucato et al (1994: 4), that in the context of mobility and flows Latinos create transnational economic and social spaces in which institutions are renegotiated or new ones are created.

3.4 Latino Identity and gender perceptions within the mixed couples

This section presents the interrelation of gender identity, gender roles within the mixed couples principally and the interplay of cultures: Latino-Dutch and identities: Latino-Dutch and others. Gender roles within a Latino Dutch family is affected by surrounding society, past society and family networks. The interaction and redefinition of Latino Identity and gender roles is reflected in the redefinition of the norms, rules and cultural values within the Latino Dutch families. About this Grillo&Mazucato (2006:9) affirm that transnational migration transforms gender relations and this is reflected in changes in expectations about gender relations and the performance of gender.

According to the interviewed it can be divided in two groups: The emancipated and not emancipated men and women. Being emancipation one of the key elements of the process of

modernisation and thus of the Dutch culture and society as it define SCP (2005). In this sense, one of both, Latino-Dutch or Latino-Latino couples behave according to the emancipation issue, in some cases that is different to the traditional roles stipulated for men and women.

MB: El holandés es una persona sumamente libre, no manda nadie, es un convenio familiar, donde nadie manda, cada uno tiene su rol y partes y cuando hay que decidir algo se decide entre los dos.

The Dutch is a free person, does not order anybody, is a familiar agreement, where, each one has its role and parts and when there is to decide something is decided between both

In the group of emancipated people the role of Latino men principally change in the Netherlands, because they stay at home taking care children, cooking and housekeeping, although they do not like this, while their wife is working, as tell a Dutch woman.

CF: (Dutch) A mi esposo no le gustaba mucho hacer trabajos de la casa. En realidad no le decia que no le gustaba mucho. Pero en su comportamiento me daba cuenta que se dedicaba de vez en cuando al trago y eso no era muy apropiado a veces.... Y siento que eso tiene que ver con el vacio que sentia de no estar haciendo algo productivo.

When Latinos, come to the Netherlands at a later age, they tend to experience crisis and stress upon arrival in this country. That is because an immigrant man doesn't find work quickly because of the insufficient knowledge of the Dutch language and lack experience for any particular job in the Netherlands. In this context Latino men are more affected because they were used to the public live, work out home and maybe they did not value the domestic work at home as mention an informant

KB: Aquí hay Latinos que se han quedado como ama o amo de casas y tienen miedo de ir a pedir trabajo porque no hablan bien el holandés. Un compatriota (varon) me decía: en mi país era una fiera y aquí soy nada.

Here there are Latinos who stay at home as housewife and they are scared to look for a job because they do not speak the Dutch well. A land mate told me, in my country I was a lion and here I am nothing

Within the intercultural marriages, some Dutch partners stimulate the emancipation for their wives or Dutch women facilitate their Latino husbands' conditions to work or study at something useful for their future lives. In this way, women principally do not remain in the house behind doors. These women have higher expectations of the Dutch modern way of life, because they look for the possibilities to earn money for themselves and their families, more freedom and alleviation of workload with the house and children.

KB: Ellos trabajan aunque no en su campo o lo que ellos esperaban, pero ellos se han integrado y están participando en la sociedad, pero no sabría decirte si son felices o si este fue su sueño, porque han dejado por completo su profesión.

They work but not in their field or in what they expect. But they have been integrated and they are participating in the society. But I can not tell if they are happy, or the situation is their dream. They leave behind their profession completely.

In the case of 13 Latinas women without a job, mostly the husband is outside house working and they stay with the traditional tasks at home. It is more showed by them as strategies to care and accompany the educational process of their children. Some times groups of Latinas women goes in the evening or in the weekend to drink something and dance, while the husband is caring the children. Regarding to this an woman informant says

*CV: Yo soy una persona acostumbrada a trabajar a ganar mi propia plata. Una persona acostumbrada a tener vida social, hablar con la gente, organizar comidas, fiestas. Yo soy una persona que me gusta salir ir a bailar de vez en cuando, así soy feliz.
I am a person to have social life, to speak with people to organize meals, celebrations. I am a person whom I like to dance, So I am happy.*

In other cases, although the women wants to liberate herself of the “victim” thinking, she goes out with her friends, she goes to the university, etc, she continues feeling guilty that she must stay at home taking care of the children, etc as a woman tell.

CC: Cost much energy to put in practices the valuation of the woman, but it is a valuation that you do not give another person but only your own self-esteem. I separate time for me and I am going to rest, because first I am, as I know some Dutch that make it and that I would like learning. Learn that individuality is also important. That we do not have the Latinas and that seems to me positive until certain point. But not exaggerate and to say I, I, I all the time.

From the 15 Latinas women who are working at this moment, some of them need to complain with the tasks at home after their job, while other Latinas “combine” tasks with the husband. Any way, Latino, women and men learn to accept, respect and adapt themselves as Latinos living here in the Netherlands. Not only because of their “Yo” or sometimes identity crisis, but also with their inner peace transformation to acknowledge that they are not only a foreigner married to a Dutch man or woman but also with their Dutch standards, rules values, culture, etc; even with the whole Dutch society. At the same time it means for Latinos to be aware, without losing their identities as “Caribbean”, “Andean” for example, that also are very appreciate for Latinos and this is possible inside de Dutch society said many interviewed. In this context, of gender identities, national, local and continental identities, cultures (Latino-Dutch) within the mix marriages, the Latino identity is reinforced or confronted in its process of construction. Nevertheless the interrelation of all identities shows the evidence of the ‘mixedness’ character of Latinos and their feeling of strong identification regard to the Dutch people.

*MB:Lo que he podido notar en algunas parejas aquí, es que que hay una inducción de la mujer que el hombre debe coger la dirección, y ella no quiere meterse con la organización del dinero, o con las cuentas (gas, agua, luz, ellas piensan que eso es del hombre. Hay una factura...no..el debe guardar eso.
I have been able to notice here in some couples, it that there is an induction of the woman who the man must take the direction, and she does not want to put with the organization of the money, or with the accounts (gas, water, light).*

In my informal conversation with some Latinas I found the group of non emancipated Latinas, which corroborate what the above interviewed mentioned regarding to the finances, taxes, accounts, utilities, rent, etc. as a typical task of the man. In this sense there are Latinas women that still think and behave according to the traditional role of men and woman. Because they associate gender roles and gender differences to the influence of the Latin American ‘macho culture’, which is giving to man and woman and that is not easy to change. Some times this kind of perceptions shows the dominant images of migrant men and woman in the Netherlands, as affirm a woman.

CP: Yo vivo un poco como si no hubiera habido "la emancipación de la mujer" y me quisiera actualizar... esto no sé si sea por mi situación, mi educación, falta de voluntad o sencillamente mi personalidad.

In other cases Latinos, men and woman perceive that there is a familiar agreement within the mixed couples, where women at least perceive that decisions are taken together in a more

democratic and equal way. Men and women have their role and both decide something in bad and good times. In the interrelation of cultures and identities, both respect their own identity and it contributes to the construction and living of Latino identity in the Netherlands. This also helps to teach children (Latinos of the second generation) appreciate that they are living between and with two cultures and that is important for both Latinos and Dutch. In this sense children learn quickly that men and women should do almost all tasks, without specific gender roles in the family.

3.4.1 Integration and gender relations within the mix couples

Before I mention that transnational migration affect gender relations. In this section I discuss how men and women are moving within the mixed couples and how is this related to their integration process in the Netherlands. In this sense to be married with a Dutch could be seen as an advantage for Latinos in their process of integration, as mentions two women.

CZ: The fact to be married with a native Dutch and not with a Dutch that has acquired the nationality does help to you understand the society, because you see it inside your home.

BE: (Dutch) Yo he hecho lo posible por apoyarlo en todo a mi esposo, pero no se si el resultado fue positivo. Yo no sabia muy bien como apoyar en este proceso. Con el idioma no le gusto mucho que le apoye. El apoyo mas grande fue dejarlo hacer las cosas a su manera, ser mas independiente y solo cuando el me pedía ayuda lo apoyaba, porque al principio todo quería hacerlo para el. Una cosa clave es si uno tiene un trabajo o no o si uno esta interesado en tenerlo o no.

Within the mixed couples the gender roles and gender perceptions are experienced in different ways: men and women move together, independently or in the shade of his, her partner. According to some Latina women, in the beginning they feel that their own identity is crushed by the so called integration process because of feeling forced to adapt and influenced by unequal power relations not only because the men being Dutch and the women being Latina but reinforced by the new relation with Dutch society which is formed by perspective of the husband and his determination in the new norms and values within the family, as mention a woman.

CZ: For me at the beginning it was a cultural shock and it is something that all people have when travelling to another country. In the family things come to the surface like why do people save, the War and through your partner you get to understand better this society. However here it is more I show you my society and you learn. This is like the relation teacher-student. I think that it is to be dominant in many cases. I assimilated it very well now I am going to be, who I am. A time to see and to learn arrives and later come the feedback.

Curiously there are more Latinas women married with Dutch men than Latinos men with Dutch women. In conversation with some Latinas, they deduce some reasons. By incompatibility in gender perceptions, which is influenced by the “macho culture” of Latin America, thus most times a dominant position of man in the family or because men perceive the dependency situation in the first years of their live in the Netherlands. Any way, there are more Latinas women in Wagenimngen than men.

Latinos know that in Latin America or in other places, nowadays men and women are equal in rights and obligations at all levels, and they have control and power in decision making of their bodies, aspirations and lives as human beings. For most Latinos it was great to see how women specifically started to change their ideas, attitudes and beliefs in them selves. This

changed women's role in the family make them aware in handling and stopping violence principally within the Latino families of the seventies as tell a refugee woman.

M: Después de varios años de vivir con un esposo que me maltrataba físicamente y de vivir en mi propia casa como en una cárcel, donde mis hijos eran los únicos que sufrían, decidí separarme... Lo más triste es que hablando con otras mujeres descubrí que ellas también eran maltratadas por sus esposos, pero que no decían nada pensando que eran las únicas que vivían ese problema en Wageningen.

Within the Dutch government there was and still exists the idea that women from migrant groups, experience a social isolation in Dutch society. For example some (Chilean) Latinas of the seventies were not permitted by their husbands, to follow Dutch language courses. They were expected to stay home, to do the cooking and taking care of the children. The men themselves did participate in those courses and other social activities. In contrast to this an interviewed man notice that Latinos men are more liberated than Latinas women. Even though she wants to be liberate, she still feels obligated to take care the children.

MB: Yo noto que soy más liberal y libre que las mujeres latinas aquí. La mujer latina diga lo que diga sigue pensando que debe estar en la casa cuidando los niños, y cuanto más se quiere liberar, sale a tomar algo, sale con las amigas, o va a la universidad a estudiar, y esta muy bien..es un proceso de cambio a la verdadera liberación, pero sigue sintiéndose culpable que debe estar en la casa cuidando los niños. Cuesta mucho relacionarme con ellas desde un plano de iguales, libres.

The practice of Latino culture and gender differences between Latino and Latina married or not with a Dutch person is nowadays more or less present in the Latino Identity construction. In this sense, the "cultural" and economical differences within couples are related to "feel at home-happiness", but also to customs and gender roles, which change during the stay of the Latino in the Netherlands. In some cases economic (traducido en job) and emotional reasons play a determinant role in come back (return) to home country as mention the following interviewed.

BE: (Dutch) Hace una gran diferencia si una viene a acompañar a un esposo o una esposa o uno quiere por si mismo venir a Holanda. Por ejemplo yo me fui a Costa Rica, porque yo quería ir, no por un esposo. En el caso de Antonio fue diferente, porque tuvo que acompañar a su pareja, porque la pareja tiene un trabajo o quiere volver a su país y eso es diferente.

CC: One time I was so depressed because I don't have job I stay home almost all the time, I think I am nothing to do. Additionally, I don't feel comfortable living here, but by my children and husband I have to stay here. I don't have choice. I hope this situation will chance in the future.

I notice that the differences among Latinos and Latinas are related in some cases to the conditions of a successful life in The Netherlands. It means to participate partial or fully in various aspects of Dutch life society, but maintaining their own culture and identity. Other Latinos living in the Netherlands are changing or adopting a modern way of life. This means for them, thinking and acting in the Dutch way, without a specific role for women and men in the household.

JV: En Latino América la mujer esta más pegada a la casa, entonces tiene mucho que hacer, preocupándose de la casa, los niños, la escuela, y todo eso. Automáticamente lo asumimos así, no es como acá que puedes intercambiar los roles. Los hombres latinos en cambio no están tan acostumbrados a la casa, están más acostumbrados a la vida pública, ellos son los que se trauman más rápido en Holanda..Conozco algunos casos al respecto.

BE: (Dutch) Las mujeres se adaptan mejor porque talvez estan mas acostumbradas adaptarse a ciertas situaciones. Por ejemplo yo conozco a algunas mujeres latinas profesionales que no han

podido obtener trabajo, tambien se que se sienten frustradas. Por otro lado es mas aceptado en la sociedad que las mujeres no tienen un buen trabajo, mientras para los hombres latinos eso si es muy importante. Aunque en la sociedad holandesa no importa si un hombre no tiene un buen trabajo.

CV: Yo creo que como mujer como madre como esposa, como ente social solamente se puede funcionar en la sociedad cuando tu te das tu propio valor, Cuando tu te sientes bien contigo misma como persona y aceptarte a ti misma. Conmigo todo fue mejor.

I believe that as woman, mother and wife, you can only function in society when you applicate self respect, self esteem and self criticism on yourself.

The above interviewed emphasise that Latino men are accustomed to a more public life in their home countries. Once in the Netherlands they struggle more than women when they realise that they are not the main economic supporter in the family and their wives must work changed while they do the tasks in house. This creates frustration and can result in drinking in order to alleviate their problems. At the same time, people are brought together by a certain fascination by a different culture. These relations can remain but in many times these differences together with the surrounding environment, can create difficulties and miscommunication leading to separation. Here the roles, norms values and the gender identity interact and influence Latino Identity construction, but also this open possibilities for change and variation in the practice of what men and woman do according to the circumstances. At the same time it can be seen the “positive” influence of the Dutch society in the process of Latinos integration.

3.5 The importance of Identity for Latinos and Dutch society

LD: Latinos have very much to contribute to Holland, because the majority comes with university studies and many desire of overcoming. Only that sometimes do you not have the opportunity or the necessary spaces to demonstrate it.

Some interviews relate the Latino identity with issues of intellectual capacity, hot sensibility and desire of overcoming. These Latinos attributes can contribute and reach the Dutch society says most Latinos. Working of Studying Latinos can break the stereotypes about allochtonous add others. Latino is not someone that is or looks like ‘ignorant or stupid’ but someone who has capacity of thinking and to sense, as an interviewed says.

CC: The Latinos we have not came to this country to take advantage from this, but to serve to the society with our professionalism and our way to be and to feel.

One of de advantages of being Latina said an interviewed is that she has been able to mix more quickly with the Dutch, because Latinos are very social and in some things fast and very alerts, that some times helps Latinos connect with people, and to make key contacts easily.

RM: Una de mis ventajas de ser latina es que me he podido mezclar más rápidamente con los holandeses. Los latinos somos en algunas cosas muy rápidos y alertas. En la parte social, me ayuda para conectarme con la gente, hablar, hacer contactos claves. En mi contacto con los holandeses en lo necesario soy como ellos pero también hago uso de mis "ocurrencias"latinas.

RM: In my contact with the Dutch helps that I am social, expressive and some times I also make use of my "ocurrencias" Latinas

Another interviewed said that the difference and advantage in general of Latinos regarding to other people, is that Latino is open to everybody and they can integrate quick where ever they are. Open means to hear and accept certain situations with positive mind. Some times, Latinos

spontaneity helps on this. So they want and like to share their culture and other things with others. Just here is the marrow of integration, to share and to receive, not to lock up us in our own culture, but to share, the life is short and is necessary to enjoy the pretty things that appear us in the Netherlands, conclude some Latinos.

*CZ: El punto mas interesante de la integracion seria que no hagas lo que no quieres que otros te hagan. Cuando decides cerrar con tu cultura ya no tienes nada para compartir con el resto
The interesting point of integration is that you do not do what do you not want that another do to you. When you decide to close with your culture you have nothing to share with the rest.*

In fact the advantage of dynamic Latino identity in the Netherlands, comes not only from a constant search to feel accepted like Latino and finding a place in the Dutch society, but from the problems that Latino must to confront, like to obtain a residence permission or the good managing of the Dutch language. This continues searching, sometimes offers Latinos, a lightening and joy, which allows them to be inserted within the Dutch society. This to be inserted within the Dutch society means for Latinos, a challenge for themselves in the constant playing with their own norms, culture and with the political, cultural and social rules of the Netherlands. Furthermore, to be different for Latinos from other people means or it appears like a resource or strategy that allows some Latinos, for example, to enter in competition within the labour market or in other spaces as say the following interviewed.

RM: I Think that is important first of all that I have my own identity like person, who I am, which are my goals in the life and what I can contribute to the society where I me find. Of this way I have appeared in the Wageningen society and I have been able to offer my contribution in the local policy, being member and participating in debates of the party political Groen Links.

In other words, the Latino identity makes of the Latino group a group of interest, whose power are in the work of the people on themselves to produce the difference. Just the Latino identity is organized as well as a typical set that does not become directions for the action, but since the moment in what the Latino faces internal or external challenges, the Latino identity can be questioned and mobilize Latinos in several ways. An example of this an informant woman says.

NG: I don't know if it is part of my identity and my costumes, but in my family in law, I teach my husband and sisters in law to be warm with their parents if they are seen them from long time...When the children visit their parents, they don't give kisses or embrace them. Seems to me that the familiar relation was cool. Contrary, I come always effusive and I give kisses and to hug my parents in law.

LW: 'La mayoría de los latinos aquí en Wageningen tenemos mucho que dar a conocer a los Holandeses sobre nuestros países de origen.

Latinos, like most migrants who came to The Netherlands, seek to develop themselves and their families. They had to learn to write, read and behave in - and according to - the Dutch society. Diplomas obtained in their countries have none or far less value in the Netherlands. Fluency or at least good knowledge of the Dutch language is a huge hurdle for finding a good job. Here they are seen as 'allochtonous foreigners' with an accompanying low status. Moreover, it is increasingly accepted that some politicians and media state or even give harsh opinions about allochtonous.

MB: Yo definiendo la identidad Latina, como parte de la cultura holandesa y la multiculturalidad que le ha dado forma durante más de 2000 años (Romanos, Batavos, Germanos, Españoles, Franceses etc).

I defend the Latino Identity like part of the Dutch culture and the multiculturalism, which gives form to it for more than 2000 years (Roman, Batavos, Germanic, Spanish, French, etc).

In the case of some Latinos, the identity becomes a reinvention and recognition within their integration process in the Netherlands. Thus the Latino identity is part of the multicultural Dutch society and it is defined by the social and economical participation of Latinos and also by their cultural properties. In fact Latinos are tied between affirmation of a group identity and individual participation in the Dutch society.

From above I conclude that Latino Identity as any other identity present in the Dutch society have to be accepted and respected like that, because Dutch and immigrants live in this country, does not matter where the last are from or what they are. At least all are human beings with the same right and obligations are inserted in the evolutive change and development of the Dutch society.

Main findings

The presence of Latinos in The Netherlands is by the global phenomenon called migration. Within this, reasons, perceptions, expectations and even feelings are different among Latinos. The experience of these people, often conflicting, wakes up and stimulates a greater conscience over their position in minority groups within the Dutch society. In this sense, some Latinos begin to reevaluate their roots, ancestries (Quechuas, Mapuches, Guaranis, Aztecas, Mayas-Andean, Caribbean, Amazon, and Latin-European among others), whether they were from an indigenous group, considered in Latin America an ethnic minority group or from a European original blend, which could help or not in mixing into the Dutch society.

Any identity we associate with expectations said Hall (2002:100). These expectations and motivations of most Latinos were different and similar at the same time. For instance these expectations are connected to verbal and non-verbal communication. When Latinos came here, they had the expectation to speak “very good” the Dutch language, to find a job, in order to integrate into the Dutch society. Expectations involved with being a stranger are different, at least partly, than the expectations involved with other identities said Hall (2002: 105). But not all expectations were being realized. Because some Latinos don’t accept the idea of a new life with low status in the Dutch society or because they accepted their new situation and still they are searching for new ways in realizing their expectations and to reach their personal and professional level in this country. Nevertheless, among Latinos the issue of a paid job is a delicate topic, because in fact most Latinos work under their educational level and beneath their aspirations. In most cases this fact has influence in the feeling or acceptance of their social-economical situation in the Netherlands.

According to the interviews I can state that the construction of Latino Identity is a reality. Although Latinos are born in different places of the Latin American continent, or many of them have already experienced living in other countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa. Thus according to Siebers, (2004) Hall, (1997), Tajfel & Turner (1991) and Grillo&Mazucato (2006), Latinos identify with their own country but at the same time see themselves as Latinos with national, regional or local identities and this is the power of the Latino identity.

The transnational lives of Latinos are related to their transnational identities and connected to countries and places of origin by the globalization. The revolution in information and communication technologies, some times cheap international air travel make possible to live transnationally say Grillo& Mazucato (2006) and the interviewed. The lives of many Latinos

migrants and refugees living and working in The Netherlands are thus ‘multi-sited’, obliging them to deal with a multiplicity of contexts social and cultural realities. It is to live a ‘double engagement’, which is manifested in manifold transnational linkages, which result in flows of people, goods, money, and ideas, and the creation of new institutions that cross national boundaries. (Mazzucato, 1994, 2006). In one-way or another they have contact with Latin American countries, but at the same time through the Latin American Dutch organization-OLAH they recreate the Latino atmosphere with music, dance and food.

In this line the representation of the Latino identity is constructed across minorities “in the receiving country of hybrid elements by engaging themselves in idealised representations²¹ of home” Mazzucato et al (1994: 3). Home related to the history, ancestry, geography, environmental and several elements of multicultural practices that feed the sense of ownership to Latin America.

The transnational emigration from Latin American countries to the Netherlands involves educated, often highly skilled, workers, which here the jobs obtained by Latinos are under their knowledge and skills. They constitute the brain drain from their home countries. In this context Nieswand in Grillo& Mazucato (2006: 2) calls the “status paradox of migration”, wherein the status back home gained (by Latinos) through migration is accompanied by a “simultaneous loss of status in the receiving country”. Nonetheless, all interviewed said that they are motivated to work. For some, does not matter in which kind of job, which according to Mazucato (2006), flexibility is also manifest in the willingness to carry a portfolio of multiple, transnationally distributed careers, with consequent changes in male/ female relations and family organization in the Netherlands. For others work in the same area of their study is or will be ideal, so that the person will try hard to get back the knowledge, status and professional satisfaction to find the right place in the Dutch society.

According to 80% of the interviewed, the interaction and redefinition of Latino Identity and gender roles is reflected in the redefinition of the norms, rules and cultural values within the Latino Dutch families. This redefinition of Latinos identity and gender roles is based on what the Dutch society define “emancipation” as a key element of the process of modernisation of the Dutch culture and society SCP (2005). In other words Grillo&Mazucato (2006:9) affirm that transnational migration transforms gender relations and this is reflected in changes in expectations about gender relations and the performance of gender. Where is common to see “amo de casa” while the wife is working or combine the domestic tasks, not always valued, when both are working within the mixed couples.

The construction of Latino identity goes with permanent confrontation with one self and others, lived in daily experience of other cultural realities but also related to gender perceptions within the mixed couples. Nevertheless, the cultural identities are dynamic and permeable, by the influence of transnationalism, which “implies peoples conscious efforts to reflect upon their culture” Mazzucato et al (1994: 3). In this transnational live, the transnacional migration, globalisation, integration and gender roles frames Latinos in their Latino Identity construcción.

²¹ “Representation is the process by witch members of a culture use language to produce meaning” in Hall, B.J. (2002) Chapter 4: How is Culture Related to who we are? .In: Hall, B.J. **Among Cultures. The Challenge of Communication**, pag 15

4. THE LATIN AMERICAN DUTCH ORGANIZATION (OLAH) AND LATINO GROUP IDENTITY

This chapter describes the Latino identity represented at the group level. I use the ideas, images and concepts that people have about the Latino - Dutch organization OLAH²² in Wageningen. At the same time I analyse the discourses and perceptions about OLAH, using the Foucauldian concept of discourse which refers to a “cluster of ideas, images and concepts that people have about a specific topic which usually are related to an institutional context that influences and shapes the perceptions of the people.” In this research I use the organizational, not the institutional context of OLAH.

The identity of Latinos at the group level is constructed by a diversity of forms and concepts that come from inside and outside of the group. Albo says: “each cultural group is living, growing and adapting itself, without losing its identity”. In this sense this research wants to explore the question: what are the discourses, perceptions and practices of Latinos related to Latin American Dutch Organization OLAH? What are the objectives of the organization and which activities are undertaken by OLAH that represent its own identity? How do the identity of the organization and of the individuals interact? Does OLAH express and confirm the Latino identity of their members? Through interviews and the participant observation method, Latino, Dutch, and other subjects respond to these research questions.

4.1 OLAH’s history and Latino Identity

In this section I chart the chronological development of OLAH in Wageningen. Before OLAH’s creation, there were some facts that contributed to the birth of this organization.

The first idea to create the Latin American organization was from a Bolivian woman in 2002. The idea was quickly spread by email and accepted by several Latinos who had recently come to the Netherlands.

Between appointments, and having distributed tasks, a group of 6 Latinas (women) and a Dutch woman committed themselves and accepted the challenge to write the statutes, goals, vision, mission in order to fulfill legal requirements and other details. Furthermore, it was necessary to approach the head of the organization ANELA (ex Latin American political refugees). In recent years, this organization had not been active because their members, mostly Chileans, had returned to their country. Others had moved to other cities in the Netherlands, leaving only a few here in Wageningen, as an informant man and woman affirm:

DJ (politic refugee): ANELA was an organization agonizing from lack of vitality. We did not have many members because some returned to their home countries. The new Latinos that arrived in Wageningen have other political ideas, social and economical positions different than the majority of political refugees from the seventies when we came to Holland.

RM: The president of ANELA attempted to absorb us in his almost dying ANELA.

²² The abbreviation OLAH will be used instead of the name Latin American Dutch Organization.

Inside the work group of the new Latin American organization, there were two directions: first, to continue with the creation of the new Latino Dutch organization, and second, to fuse both organizations into a single one. The latter did not succeed because ANELA's goals were more political and the people affiliated with this organization did not feel any identification with Latinos who are married to Dutch people, as the following subject affirmed.

DJ: I think that ANELA and OLAH could not function in a single organization, because of the political question. Some Latinos of recent years are apolitical, they wanted not to be leftist and the reason why they came here was different to us. They came for economic reasons or accompanying their partners.

In retrospect, each person had very different reasons for coming here. Once having established themselves in Wageningen, both groups struggled with the same daily challenges that immigrants face. According to mediator woman, between the president from ANELA and OLAH, there was an attempt to convince Latinos to work for ANELA. But that idea was not appreciated, because of the differences in goals and reasons to exist as an organization.

RM: We asked the president to show us ANELA statutes and reports of its financial situation. On three occasions the president did not appear at the meeting. For this reason, we decided to follow ahead as an independent association. We formed a provisional directive and we drew up very clear goals.

According to the Ex- coordinator of The Fraternité²³, the main 'conflict' between the president of ANELA and the representatives of OLAH, was because of miscommunication and personalities. These different personalities have to do not only with their social, economical, political background and country of origin but also with their own identity. This being said they are Latinos but coming from different countries.

4.1.1 Birth and development of OLAH

OLAH was born to public life in Wageningen, thanks to the hard work of a group of women who wrote the statutes and general lines of work of this young organization as mentioned an interviewed woman.

RM: OLAH was born like a desire of freedom of a Latinas women group, who wanted to have a place where to manifest mainly their culture. Moreover without having to be used by other organization like ANELA for its purposes.

In the beginning it was not easy for the work group because they did not have the financial means. But there was enough enthusiasm and they united forces to go ahead with the organization. In regard to this a Latina says:

RM: All women and their partners were ready to work much time for the Peña Latina. Cristina with her experience made a program of activities and I was in charge to look for a local to organize the Peña Latina pro-bottoms OLAH.

In order to prepare the Peña Latina, most members from OLAH and their partners worked very hard at dancing, singing, writing the content of the trip tics, speeches and preparing the typical Latin American food and other activities.

²³ La Fraternite was an organization created by allochtonous people of the minority groups self-organizations and economically support by the municipality of Wageningen

The Peña Latina was succeeded..At the end of the celebration we reunited around 900 Euros.
By commentaries of Latinos, Dutch and others of different origin, the Peña Latina was successful. The goal was obtained. It was to present to the society the birth of a new Latin American Dutch Organization in Wageningen. (see Annex 2 – Article Newspaper)

With the money earned in the Peña Latina, the members of the formal first OLAH's directive were able to register in the Dutch Chamber of Commerce of Arnhem - number 09139384, as OLAH - Latin American Dutch Organization.

4.1.2 OLAH's objectives

According to the statutes of OLAH, this organization was created with the following objectives.

- Promoting and organising activities which strengthen the interactive processes of Latin American in the Dutch society;
- Enriching Dutch and Latin-American multiculturalism from the development and strengthening of its own Latin-American identity;
- Spreading and supporting several multicultural Latin-American and Dutch activities, as an expression of equality of rights and possibilities within the Dutch society;
- Supporting local initiatives of small development projects in Latin-American countries that contribute to the enrichment and strengthening of its own local cultural identity.

The actual OLAH's president thinks that this organization complied in the beginning with its objectives by which it was created. Himself was occupied to inform and to make aware the new Latinos who come to this country, about the Dutch politics and the functioning of the Dutch system and society. In summary to give Latinos a short orientation and the tools on how to achieve what they pretend and want to achieve in this country.

MB: We can teach people how is functioning the system of this country. We have to prepare them in cumply the rules and all the requisits for to stay in this country. We don't give the impression that we have to use the system and not the Latinos will be used by the system.

Nowadays, although the communal Latino feeling within the multicultural Dutch Latino organization, a man interviewed thinks that OLAH's objectives does not match with the Latinos objectives and personal interests. He thinks that most Dutch people already know more or less the culture and reality of Latin American countries. But also he manifest that some Latino people want to make use of the organization in order to be more popular and known in the Dutch society. Thus it could means that OLAH satisfy partially the needs of their members?

OLAH as organization is a special group with 60% Latinos of 21 countries and 40% Dutch and others. The result of this mixedness makes OLAH's identity different in comparison to other self-allochtonous organizations. This enriches the growing process of the organization and sometimes this paralyses its development. The directive members speak the same language with different interpretations about the function of OLAH in the society. In this line I can conclude that there is not conservation of any identity, individual or as group, without change and transformation.

4.2 Discourses and perceptions about OLAH's ethnic identity

In this section I describe, due the discourses, perceptions and practices of different's members directive, some elements presents in OLAH's identity construction.

MB: I believe that the process of formation of our identity as organization, according to me take more time because of the diversity of the members form different countries and not only one. Simply the heterogeneity of OLAH where their members are of 21 different countries, of very different professions, different social classes, with different levels and processes of human development and with interests and different aspirations costs more time. Our unique common point is our interest by Latin America.

An own identity like " own" is the results of the subtle evolutionary change of the Dutch society development.

MB: I defend the Latino identity as part of the Dutch culture and the multiculturalism that gives it form for more than 2000 years (Roman, Batavos, Germanic, Spanish, French etc). OLAH is not in my opinion a new and small piece of the great governmental and social Dutch apparatus. We are not minority nor majority, only " we are OLAH".

In the beginning of this chapter I said that the identity of a group is formed by a diversity of forms and conceptions that come from inside and outside of the group. In OLAH's case the identity has a hybrid, heterogeneous conformation because some elements present in the organizational culture of OLAH have Dutch and Latino origin. In this sense OLAH's members understand that the multicultural differences inside this organization enrich and some times divide them. However OLAH still exist, maybe as unique hybrid organizational model within the Dutch society. This is corroborated by an informant.

MB: OLAH is a new organization where the majority of their members have the will to make permeable themselves with the culture, to excel in the local politic arena, in general to excel within the society. The Latinos we are not paupers. We want well to be part of Holland because it is our house. We are in that process to integrate us, also to learn new things that are transforming us but at the same time to the Dutch.

4.2.1 Juana, the Andean Latina president

First able, I describe and summarize what Andean Latina means for Juana as example of the multiple identities that one can find in OLAH's members.

Juana said that she develops basically her Andean identity in the Netherlands. This identity is translated in her PHd investigation "Indigenous Right of the water in the Andes of Peru and in her presentations, she speaks on the Cosmovision and Andean identity. She practices the Andean spirituality. She speaks Quechua language, she eats and cooks Andean food, and her house is full of Andean music, souvenirs and typical clothes of the Andes. So finally she dances very well the typical dance of the Andes (Huayños) and give or teach these to her children. In summary this are the elements or dimensions of Latino identity that I mentioned in chapter one.

En Holanda Yo desarrollo basicamente mi identidad Andina . Esta identidad se traduce en: 1o las actividades, talleres, , presentaciones sobre la cosmovision andina. A traves de mi investigacion Derechos indigenas del agua en los Andes del Peru, hablo sobre la identidad andina. Yo me encuentro comprometida con la gente andina por mi participacion y defensa de los derechos del

agua. 2o Yo practico la espiritualidad andina. No tengo una religion definida. Creo en los apus, en la coca, en las ofrendas y en el pago que se hace pachamama (madre tierra). 3o Cada vez que hablo con la gente siempre esta presente mi identidad y espiritualidad andina. 4o Mi casa esta repleta de musica (huaynos), adornos y vestimenta andina. El idioma quechua (Runasimi) trato de hablar y enseñar a mis hijos tambien de la cultura andina. 5o De alguna manera la identidad andina tambien se encuentra en la alimentacion: Quinoa, chuno, tostado de maiz (canchita), etc y esto preparo algunas veces.

The election of OLAH's directive is every year. In 2004, Juana Vera was the first formal president of OLAH. She took advantage of the opportunities that the municipality offers to minority groups, organizing and participating in all social cultural activities in Wageningen.

JV: A corto plazo participar en todas las actividades socio-culturales que se desarrollan en Wageningen, que tiene que ver con el 5 de Mayo, o incluso el mismo día de la reina., llevar un poco ese ritmo, decir que nosotros también queremos participar en esos espacios, otros es desarrollar en el corto plazo, algunos proyectos de comunicación intercultural, y teatro, donde se pueda combinar la cuestión latina e ir aprendiendo de la cultura holandesa, In the short term to participate in all sociocultural activities that are developed in Wageningen, that it has to do with 5 may or even the same day of the queen.. Participate in those activities. Another is to develop, some projects of intercultural communication, and theater, when ever possible combining the Latino and the Dutch culture

At the same time, OLAH's first directive is tried to do things that helped Latinos to integrate within the Dutch society in the short term. The following is from Juana.

JV: Dentro de la directiva, sentimos que el holandés es un problema para integrarte, estamos viendo esa posibilidad de seguir algunos cursos, al corto plazo. Y sobre todo hacer participar a todos los Latinos. We think how it is possible to follow short language courses. We feel that Dutch is a problem for integration. There are possibilities to provide courses so that Latinos are able to participate.

Speaking about participation among Latinos, Juana said the following:

JV: We Latinos we can be characterized by our easiness in participating in activities where there is a lot of contact with persons, meals, dance. But you find few Latinos who like formal meetings where you need to write statutes, internal regulations or working in projects.

Most Latinos participate in OLAH's activities where music and dance is present. However others, by their personal interest participate also in activities wherever necessary to produce knowledge en documents that support OLAH's functioning within the Dutch society. In Juana's opinion this was a priority, because one has to keep growing. Then, the open participation is the typical between Latinos regarding to parties. But not everyone accepts to participate in formal activities like meetings or to be involved in some activities or projects of the school or neighbourhood. It is not only that they like the informal activities, but also it is merely a compromise that must be done necessarily in order to build their social network.

JV: Desde mi propia posición individual, por ejemplo en el 'wijkcentrum' trato de compartir en las actividades y reuniones que hay, también estaba haciendo trabajos voluntarios en el barrio para aprender el holandés. Pero en otra parte desde la organizacion de latinoamericanos OLAH, en los eventos oficiales que organiza la municipalidad y otras organizaciones, cenas interculturales, pequeñas fiestas, charlas, discusiones. Todo esto es parte de la sociedad Holandesa.

Through the different activities mentioned above, the first directive wanted to present OLAH and contribute positively as group to the Dutch society. However, in the process of growing OLAH had to confront certain difficulties with La Fraternalite. According to Rosio, secretary of

the first directive, in the beginning OLAH could use the location of The Fraternité²⁴. The directive of this organization coincidentally had the same president as well as ANELA and they decided that OLAH could not be part of La Fraternite, because according to the statutes it was prohibited to accept two organizations of the same continent, ANELA and OLAH. As a result OLAH did not have a location to organize their activities.

RM: En este periodo, la municipalidad de Wageningen había disuelto la fraternité como cupula de organizaciones de minorías y se decidió que en adelante las organizaciones de minorías podrían reunirse en el local de welvada, y que la institucion de Welvada como ente ejecutor de la municipalidad se encargaría de todo lo referente a grupos minoritarios.

By this time, the municipality of Wageningen had dissolved the fraternité as cupola of minority organizations and had decided that in future the organizations of minority groups could meet in the Welvada location. So the institution Welvada would be in charge of minority groups.

According to a worker of La Fraternite, inside this Organization there were internal discussions with the directive of La Fraternite about non-democratic decisions related to the execution of some activities. The directive was not sufficiently open to accept other minority groups, which wanted to be part of this organization. There were also internal financial problems and the municipality of Wageningen decided to cut off the economical support to La Fraternite. After de dissolution of La Fraternite, OLAH and other such same organizations later made an agreement with Welvada about the conditions in using the location “Wijk Centrum de Nude”.

4.2.2 Minor: The strategic “Tico” president

Following the multiple identities that one can find within OLAH’s members. Minor characterizes himself as Tico, and “Tico²⁵” is a nickname for all people from Costa Rica. He plays guitar, sings and dances not only from his country, but also from other Latin American countries. He sings mostly social songs. He eats the typical Costa Ricans food, “Gallo pinto” in the breakfast. He has qualities of leadership with political formation. He almost always gives analytical answers to the questions and sometimes he behaves as bohemian, being it his personal identity regarding some Latinos.

At the beginning of 2005, OLAH counted with a new directive presided by Minor Barrantes. In the possession ceremony of the new directive, where I was present, Minor emphasised that OLAH’s face is Dutch and Latino. Two cultures and therefore two identities, and both should go hand in hand if everybody wants to construct a multicultural society in Wageningen.

According to the OLAH’s president, this organization must inform and make future Latinos conscious concerning Dutch politics. It should help people how to function within the Dutch system and Dutch society, giving them the tools and the strength to achieve what the Latinos want to achieve.

²⁴ La Fraternite was an organization created by allocthonous people of minority groups self-organizations and economically supported by the municipality of Wageningen.

²⁵ Originally Tico came from the diminutives that People use to say something in their daily live. For example “chiquitico, negritico”, etc. At the same time, regarding Minor Barrantes this word has its history related to the USA invasion in recluting slaves in Middle America. Principally peasants from Costa Rica struggle against the military troops of Wiliam Walker, being this group differentiate and identified as Ticos.

MB: We can teach people how the system of this country functions. We can prepare them in keeping the rules and all the requirements for residence in this country. We don't leave impression. We have to use the system and not the Latinos will be used by the system.

According to the secretary of this directive, she saw the development of the organization with fallen and stands up.

MM: Within OLAH there was some difficulties in the beginning. We are in a period of integration of the work group. We had administrative bureaucratic difficulties at Dutch level with the registry in the chamber of commerce. Registry in the bank was necessary to receive the contribution from the municipality, etc. The new directive took steps to put things in order. So you see the development of the organization as part of the OLAH directive.

The new directive had been looking to give agility to OLAH, to carry out punctual works with the socios, but also to create a professional organization as a new way to function in the future. In this sense the secretary tells:

MM: We are in the process of creating a professional organization; it is not a question of lack of money, but of dedication. In an organization of volunteers it is difficult to accommodate times and you need to be more flexible.

In the beginning the OLAH's directive had certain differences of opinion about functioning as a group within Dutch society. But also regarding certain definitions used for OLAH. In this sense a woman says that this directive had decided that they did not want to be seen as a minority group and therefore they did not want to be part of the Welvada institution. That was because the directive conformed by 3 Dutch men and 2 Latinos could not precisely define OLAH as minority group but as well as special group with 60% Latinos of 21 countries and 40% Dutch. Just it makes OLAH different to other self-allochthonous organizations in the Netherlands.

MB: I believe that the process of formation of our identity, that according to me take more time than an organization where all members are of the same country, but in OLAHs case there is diversity of members. Simply costs more time the concertation of a group where their members are of 21 different countries, of very different professions, different social classes, with different levels and processes of human development and different interests and aspirations. Our unique common point is our interest by Latin America.

Here I want to underline what the following interviewed says: OLAH is the results of the subtle evolutionary change in the development of the Dutch society.

MB: OLAH in my opinion is not a new and small piece of the great Dutch social apparatus (minority), but one of the results of the subtle evolutionary change in the development of the Dutch society. We are neither minority nor majority, only "We are". A something that likes you now has the difficult task to define us.

Through this research it emphasize that any Identity, in this case the Latino Identity is construct by the playing of differences among the own Latinos and others. Just by these differences is the Latino, Latino and not Dutch, Chinese or any other. These differences also are the results of the subtle evolutionary change in the development of the Dutch society. Then Latino identity or any other identity must be accepted, respected and recognised by all people who live in this country and want to build a social equity inside the Dutch society.

4.2.3 Carmen, the third president

Since 2007 in order to prevent the difficulties within the directive elections, people vote for a conformed group and not for a person and function. In this way Carmen Carcelen became OLAH's third president, together with four women forming the directive. (See annex 3, fotos van different directives).

In this period there was more organizing of activities. Not only having to do with OLAH but also with national Dutch holidays. In that same period, there was also less communication with Welvada and other alloctonous groups. Mustafa as an employee for Welvada, coordinating activities by/with minority groups, verifies this:

MC: I am aware that among OLAH's presidents, some were very open and participating and others were very arrogant who did not want to coordinate meetings and activities with Welvada and other minority groups in Wageningen.

In the perception of the treasurer of this directive, OLAH try to curry out with OLAH's objectives as much as possible. Even though the limited time of the member's directive, they spend a lot of time and energy in organising all activities. Particularly Clara was satisfied and happy with her participation within OLAH's directive.

4.2.4 Minor's second term as president

In 2008 Minor became OLAH's president again, because nobody else wanted to assume the responsibility of the organization, mainly because of availability of time. During his presidency he was very involved in OLAH's activities but also in the activities of national Dutch holidays.

There was a lack of time within the directive; therefore he delegated responsibility in establishing committees among the members in order to stimulate better participation and successful functioning of the organization. These action came as correction from the first presidency mistakes, that according to Martha (secretary) was done.

MM: Uno de los errores que hemos cometido la directiva actual ha sido centralizar las cosas, por falta de comunicación al exterior. Aquí surgen las dificultades de integrar un equipo de trabajo heterogéneo.

One of the errors that we have committed within the present directive has been to centralize things, by lack of communication to the outside. Here the difficulties arise to integrate a heterogenous work group.

The motto is: learn from our errors and that is hardly emphasizing in the Netherlands. Thus OLAH had to modify the way of formation and work within the directive in the future.

MB: En esta gestion Yo soy mas un instrumento, un tejedor, un facilitador de la organizacion como tal. Si la gente quiere hacer algo, la directiva le da las facilidades. Minor no va a tomar las iniciativas y tampoco va a decir como se tienen que hacer las cosas.

In this sense Minor's second term as president is characterized more by member's participation in the execution of different activities. This directive wants to create a future, the

conditions to exploit OLAH's multiculturalism. Multiculturalism represented in the 21 countries thus 21 or more identities plus the Dutch that conform this organization.

4.3 Identity strategies to reach personal and social goals of Latinos

The interviewed said that OLAH has an identity. Since the first president of OLAH, they try to maintain their own identity as organization within de self-organizations or allocthonous organizations in the Netherlands. OLAH is not an organization only to protect its interest as foreigners in Holland, but an organization that wants to participate along side the Dutch, just to enrich both sides. Martha says the following.

MM: Tratamos de mantener esa identidad distinta desde que se creo OLAH en cuanto a que no somos una organización para proteger nuestros intereses de extranjeros en Holanda, sino una organización que queremos participar junto con los holandeses y enriquecer los dos lados, tanto nuestro proceso de residencia en este país, como el informar a la sociedad holandesa de lo que somos y que podemos hacer... Yo creo que eso es una identidad distinta como organización y eso fue lo que me convencio para poder entrar a la directiva.

Since OLAH was created we have tried to maintain a different identity, within other allocthonous organizations. We are not an organization in order to protect our interests as foreigners in Holland, but an organization that wants to participate togheter to Dutch. In this way OLAH wants to enrich both sides. Just as much as our process of integration in this country. At the same time we are informing and showing other people what we are and what we capable of. I believe that this is a different identity as organization and that is what convinced me to accept to be part of the directive.

Speaking about participation and how Latinos wants to participate in the Dutch society. The following interview shows us what OLAH's members are capable of:

MB: En una reunión con el Alcalde, el estaba hablando de la ayuda que la municipalidad da a los extranjeros y especialmente al inburgerincurso, estaba hablando, hablando y entonces yo pedí la palabra y le dije, yo no vine a esta reunión a pedirle ayuda sino a decirle en que le puedo ayudar, a lo que vine es a ofrecer mis servicios. Yo pertenezco a una organización latinoamericana y dentro de ella hay gente que puede aportar, entonces yo le pregunto a Usted cuales son las necesidades de Wageningen para que nosotros también podamos ayudarle...El se me quedo mirando y no supo que contestarme.

Yo se que esto es una estrategia política de la municipalidad, de poner al inmigrante como una carga social y economica y es precisamente aqui, por mi experiencia en la política de mi país que probe de darle la vuelta a la estrategia. Yo soy muy político muy estratégico y en casos como estos los pongo en practica.

In a meeting with the Mayor, who was speaking of the aid that the municipality gives to the foreigners and inburgeringcourses especially, I requested the word and I said to him, I did not come to this meeting to request aid but to offer my service. I belong to a Latin American Dutch organization and within this organization there are people who can also contribute their services if it is needed. I asked him in which way we could help. After a silence there was no answer. I realized that this was a political strategy of the municipality, to put the immigrant as an indirect social and economic burden. With my political experience in my country I tried to turn the strategy. As a politician I am very strategic and in some cases I tend to put this in practice.

In chapter before I spook about the process of integration among Latinos and how is this conceived as a go and back process between Dutch and Latinos in this country. In this way OLAH informs and shows the Dutch society, who they are Latinos, what they are capable of, etc. But at the same time OLAH shows Dutch society and other allocthonous group that it has a different identity as organization, which wants to participate together to Dutch, enriching both sides. Just this helps OLAH contribute positively the Dutch society as a group.

MM: Es un proceso muy interesante y necesario, para demostrar a la sociedad holandesa que tenemos mucho para aportar y dar también. No nada más nos vamos a quedar entre nosotros para reforzar nuestro idioma, cultura y sentimiento patriótico regional. Yo creo que eso ha sido difícil entender para las otras organizaciones como para el municipio. El municipio ha reconocido que nosotros tenemos un carácter distinto, una identidad distinta. Que nosotros no tratamos de proteger el dinero que nos podrían dar, sino que nosotros podemos crear nuestros propios fondos sin perder lo que somos y nuestra función como el tener personas holandesas dentro la organización. Y eso ha sido parte del proceso de crecimiento de OLAH, lo cual en una reunión, un funcionario del municipio había dicho que las demás organizaciones tendrían que tomar el ejemplo de OLAH.

It is not only our goal to preserve our culture, language and reinforce our patriotic sentiment. I believe that has been difficult for the municipality and other organizations to understand this. They had to recognize that we have a different character, a different identity. The municipality understood that we were not asking for money, but that we can create our own funds without losing our identity (what we are and how we function). OLAH welcomes Dutch people and other nationalities, and that has been part of the process of growth of OLAH. At a meeting a civil servant of the municipality said that other organizations could learn from OLAH's example.

According to Martha OLAH has its own identity. She told us that the development of OLAH was an interesting process because it demonstrates to the Dutch society that Latinos also have much to contribute. Thus the OLAH's identity is an organizational reference that strives to maintain the Latino Identity as strategy to reproduce the cultural way of being Latino. But at the same time, OLAH can be a very useful instrument to deepen, to stimulate the conscience of the group and to extend horizons. OLAH has become the example for certain groups established in Wageningen.

According to Mustafa Celik, ex-coordinator from La Fraternite²⁶ and worker of Welvada, OLAH's identity is very different from other self-organizations of minority groups in Wageningen. Different in the sense that their members are not focused in demonstrating only their culture but they want to be part of Dutch society.

MC: I believe OLAH does not want to be a minority group. I have never seen their statutes, but it seems to me that their objectives are different from other self-organisations. It gives me the impression that Latinos want to become Dutch and that they have forgotten their roots and their culture.

Some Latino interviewed clarify saying that one thing is to become Dutch (that almost never it can happen of well by the acquired nationality and personal desire), but other thing is to be part of the Dutch society and this is more to be active in this country, as mention the following quotation.

CC: Los Latinos no hemos venido a este país para aprovecharnos de él, sino a servir a la sociedad con nuestra profesionalidad y con nuestra manera de ser y sentir.

To be part of the Dutch society is the reality of most Latinos. They live with a Dutch at home. Latinos and Dutch must to share all things as much as possible in their families (culture, thoughts, desires, likes and dislikes, kids, etc). Thus, OLAH represent at macro level what happen at micro level, the family. In other words the social relation of Latinos and Dutch principally produce the understanding of which Latinos are and how they communicate are related to the Dutch culture. In this way Albo (1998:54) says: "the ideal of *interculturality* is: 'the maximum development of capacity of people of diverse cultures to relate each other in a positive and creative way'. It implies not only relations of respect but also mutual enrichment.

²⁶ The Fraternite was an organization that agglutinated to all self-organizations of different existing minority groups in Wageningen from 1992 till 2003.

In this sense, in the case of Latinos “the membership of a group constitutes a personal identity”, Smith (1987, 25).

OLAH was created to help principally Latinos in finding their way in this country. On this basis OLAH build its identity as strategy to reach personal and social goals of Latinos in Dutch society. Most OLAH’s members recognise that this organization articulates well in speech and action, Latino’s expectation. OLAH tries to help people in solving problems of personal identity or when there are questions in regard to residence, etc. But at the same time OLAH contribute to Latinos group in developing self-image within the Dutch society. Speaking about Latinos self image the following interviewed says that Latinos with their high level of education and desires of constant superation can very well contribute to the Dutch society.

*LD: ‘La mayoria de los latinos tiene mucho que aportar a Holanda, porque la mayoria viene con estudios universitarios y con muchas ganas de superacion. Solo que a veces no tienes la oportunidad o los espacios necesarios para demostrarlo.
Most Latinos have much to offer to the Netherlands, because they come with much desire superations.*

Nevertheless there are other images outside OLAH, where Latinos the same as Turks, Moroccans and other foreigners stays “allochthonous” in the view of some Dutch people, with all stereotypes (through or false) that Dutch and others create for them. Just the allochthonous Identity shapes the different or similar social experiences that Latinos and others people as members of migrant groups/organizations have in the Netherlands.

4.4 OLAH’s Activities

OLAH is implementing until now some socio-cultural activities and public events in Wageningen, such as peñas latinas (Latin American Parties), formal and informal cultural meetings with music and dance presentations. At these meetings and other events OLAH seeks to promote and exchange the Latin American social, political and economical reality within Dutch society. Some of these activities are organised in order to get funds and help local initiatives in particular Latin American countries.

OLAH is also participating together with other Organizations like Amnesty International, Otherwise, Wageningen University and others “Round Table meetings” (Mesas redondas), debates, films and other activities in order to exchange knowledge about the Latin American reality and its problems. At the same time OLAH organices locally different activities together with Welvada, the municipality, Bureau Antidiscriminatie and other Institutions, in topics which deal with the integration of allochthonous in The Netherlands. For instance members of OLAH, as Cristina Velazques create the “Baileaerobicos”, where allochthonous and autochthonous women in general can participate of it.

According to participant observation method I participate in the celebration of the International day against Racism and Discrimination, where also OLAH’s members were present. The Identity topic came up during the afternoon and evening in several ways. Identity as reality, as question but especially, identity as festival and enrichment, which deserves involvement, reputation and recognition. There I saw several identities of most immigrants, in gesture, different languages and music. In the discussion identity came forward in many experiences of the people present, with elements that I mentioned in chapters one and two of

this research. There I noticed that the understanding of identity for these immigrants from different countries of origin, among them Latinos is the same, but with different elements that are attributed to personal characteristics and country culture. The common sense of being Latino, Somalie, Turk, Etiopie of Marrocan, white of black, having Dutch nationality and some considering themselves Dutch, they remain in the eyes of some people and the Dutch government still as “*allochtonous*”. *Allochtonous* is one of the many identities that almost all immigrants acquire in this host country.

Since 2006 OLAH has supported different kind of activities, which in the past were organised independently from OLAH by certain Latin American countries. According to the calendar established nine countries were already represented in cultural acitivities²⁷: Mexico, Nicaragua Bolivia, Peru, Costa Rica, Rep.Domicana, Colombia, Ecuador, Netherland.

Until now the activities organised during the Dutch and other holidays have been very successful. On these occasions people can truly appreciate the elements of the Latino Identity. Identity represented principally in the language, typical costumes, dance, food and music.

In summary I can say, following the participant observation method and being present in almost all OLAH's activities, that the Latino group is diverse and similar in some aspects. Diverse in economical, political, social situations, but principally in opinions. For example, one can see that most refugees of the 70s do not participate in the activities of OLAH, because they express strong nationalism feelling as a Chilean, Uruguayan, etc, but this is more a discourse because of their origing and position as a refugee. However other Latinos and Dutch people considered them also Latinos in the same way as non-refugees. Thus at first side it seems that Chilean ex-refugees have a different identity construction than let say the new and young student Latinos of the last years. Other difference that one can recognise the differences within the members of OLAH, is that some Latinos committed to defending farmers rights and the participation of the indigenous movements in the process of emancipation of those Latin America countries. Others remain neutral on this topic. This could possibly be related to left or right wing political ideologies. When people is presenting an activity of its former country, the national identity emerges. National identity that is translated in songs, dances, language idioms, meals, and mainly in their feeling of nostalgia of the prettiest and dearest country of origin Thus, differences related mainly to the geographic place from which they come. At the same time, when they are dancing and singing popular Latin American songs the national identities and the differences disappear among Latinos.

4.4.1 Present and future of OLAH

Using the Identity concept of Siebers and according to different Latino' opinions I can state that the construction of OLAH's identity is in combination with the recognition of the fact that each individual member of OLAH deals with several and multiple identities, and it is just that this has the advantage of pointing to diversity. Thus the formation of OLAH's identity is perhaps a unique model in the Netherlands, because in the broad sense OLAH does not respond to the model of allochtonous or minority groups, but neither to the autochthonous or majority group. Then OLAH's identity should be transnational, because “Transnationalism implies people's conscious efforts to reflect upon their culture lead to the mapping of culture upon space in ways that go counter to official representations of national space and identity”.

²⁷ For more information, see web page: www.olah.nl

Mazzucato et.al,(1994:2). In this sense, the following interviewed describe what actually is OLAH.

MB: OLAH is a new social group and organization, where the members want to be permeable within the cultures. We try to stand out in where ever and what ever we do. We Latinos are not beggars and we desire to be part of Holland because it has become our home. We are in a forming process and we are constantly learning new things that are transforming us Latinos and the Dutch as well.

OLAH is a combination of Latino Dutch using both cultural practices. Its members are 60% Latino and 40% Dutch and others. This diversity is precise OLAH's strength and its richness. At the same time this can also sometimes create miscommunications because of differences in opinions and expectations and different cultures.

4.1.2 Challeges of OLAH

2009 will be OLAH's fifth anniversary. The framework of this celebration will involve the founders of this organization. It was necessary in writing this research to consult them about the evaluation and development of OLAH. A woman says:

JV:The greater problem that OLAH is facing at this moment is the lack of leadership. There are few leaders within the Latino community. These are occupied, with familiar problems and/or with other occupations.

The last year there was less interest to participate in the directive of OLAH. Nobody wanted to assume the posts of president, secretary, and vocals, as mention other woman.

RM: About OLAH, I think that something must happen so that the members will be more active in OLAH. Not only to receive but also to give something or to do something for the association inside the directive. Through OLAH, the Latinos could present us better like group and organization to the Dutch society. Otherwise we will be placed in the same coat where they are the Arabs, Moroccans and the rest of non western nationalities.

The directive of OLAH is what this organization represents to the Wageningen municipality and society in general. The experience teaches Latinos that OLAH needs a directive. This is voluntary and one must spend and dedicate time and patience to maintain actively this organization. Most people enjoy participating in OLAH's directive. Even though, some times they have other priorities such as family, paid job and other things, in spite of OLAH. Thus the lack of time and the personal priorities are the main reasons that they do not accept to be in the directive. However some OLAH's members believe that there are many ways to create a dynamic and effective directive, that does not absorb much time and work in maintaining activities within OLAH.

The organization of OLAH is an important and sensible thing related to the ethnic identity. On the one hand, OLAH has become an organizational reference that favours maintaining a Latino identity. On the other hand, OLAH allows expression and collective recognition, of both, Latinos and organizational identity. In this sense OLAH has become the main reference for other migrant groups already established in Wageningen, extending its horizons to everyone.

RM: I am sure that certain members ignore OLAH's difficulties and sacrifices in the beginning, which ultimately led to the success of OLAH. However people should realise that assuming responsibility lead to the development of this organization.

OLAH, with all the success and problems that it is currently confronting, has become a reference for deepening and specifying the Latino culture within the second generation Latinos in the Dutch society, as mention an informant man.

MB: Now OLAH is well known, not only in Wageningen, also in other cities. OLAH could be useful to our children; they could follow in contact with the Latino culture. However I feel that OLAH objectives must change according to the objectives of their members.

In some Latino's perception, OLAH does not always represent the sense "to be Latinos" within the multicultural Dutch society. However it is interesting to see that other Latinos try implicitly and explicitly to show themselves as something different to the rest of the western and non-western allochthonous. Because, according to the interviewed they find that the educational and intellectual level of OLAH's member is high and that is reflected in the discussions, activities and finally in the results achieved at professional level.

On the one hand OLAH is different from other organizations, because Latinos and Dutch make different the development of the organization. Both have the predisposition to share many traits and common characteristics that belong only to them separately but also in common. On the other hand, the experience shows Latinos that "all" immigrants are similar in the eyes of some Dutch people, whether they are: Latinos Turks or Moroccans. They are identified as *allochthonous* with the low accompanying status of this word.

In summary, the construction of OLAH's identity depends of their members and their will to develop their organization. However, by the characteristics mentioned above I can state that OLAH has a transnational identity, because according to Mazzucato et al,(1994) migrants construct cultural identities, move and organize themselves in the receiving country, as the Netherlands.

Main findings

The Latin American Dutch Organization (**OLAH**), is the place where precisely the common en different characteristics of Latinos generate a possibility of meeting in a special mixed organization with 60% Latinos of 21 countries and 40% Dutch and others members. I said special because Latinos and Dutch have and do not have the same cultural characteristics and traditions, but well both are coexisting and sharing languages (Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and sometimes English), catholic religion, political ideologies, histories and forms of lives, maybe different from other people living in the Netherlands. On this way OLAH constitute a space where the above characteristics mentioned generate the possibility of meeting in all senses.

OLAH, reproduces the internal diversity that is part of the Latin American conformation. But in addition to this the presence of Dutch people within this organization, give the evidence of multiculturalism within this organisation, beyond its common "cultural" characteristics. Consequently, the Latino identity as OLAH's identity, is a dynamic process of creation and (trans)formation "not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hibridity." (Hall, 1994,402). In this field of opening to the "diverse", is that the individual (Latino or Dutch), like a relational construction and contingent, enters in the game,

allowing that the people in some cases can feel like “hybrids”, as much “Latino Dutch” as “Dutch Latinizados” or Latino, Dutch Andean.

The membership of a group constitutes a personal identity says Smith (1987, 25). In this sense OLAH more or less represent at macro level what happen at micro level, the mixed couples. The result of this mixedness makes OLAH’s identity unique and different in comparison to other self-organizations within the Dutch society. This enriches the growing process of the organization and sometimes this paralyses its development. Latinos and OLAH are related with other migrant groups and some times considered minority group of the dissimilar third world culture.

OLAH is the result of transnational migration and of the modern development of Dutch society. OLAH constitutes at a macro level that which the Latino – Dutch mixed and intercultural couples are. OLAH is also in the process of constructing its identity and differentiating itself from other migrant organizations, just as the Latinos are doing at a personal level. In this line the formation identity of OLAH is dynamic and maybe unique in the Netherlands, because in the broad sense OLAH’s identity changes according the modern life of Dutch way, being the Latino (members) interested to show those differences.

In other words, the Latino identity makes of the Latino group a group of interest, whose power are in the work of the people on themselves to produce the difference. For most Latinos, their identity becomes a reinvindication of democratic recognition within their integration process in the Netherlands. Thus the Latino identity is defined by the social and economical participation and also by their cultural properties, inside the Dutch society. In the fact Latinos are tied between affirmation of a collective, group identity and individual participation in the Dutch society.

One important thing of OLAH’s organization is that Latinos are the natural reference, the matrix of OLAH in which better stays and reproduces the cultural way to be and become Latino. In consequence, the construction of the Latino identity at personal level, cannot be separated from the identity of the Latino group, because it is socially constructed. It means that some common characteristics shared by Latinos have influences of internal and external things of cultural, social, economic, political factors that go beyond the person and organization self.

Most Latinos live with a Dutch at home. Latinos and Dutch must to share all things as much as possible in their families (culture, thoughts, desires, kids, likes and dislikes, etc). Albo (1998:54) says: “the ideal of *interculturality* is: ‘the maximum development of capacity of people of diverse cultures to relate each other in a positive and creative way’”. It implies not only relations of respect but also mutual enrichment. Thus, in this way OLAH represent at macro level what happen at micro level, the family. In other words the social relation of Latinos and Dutch principally produce the understanding of which Latinos are and how they communicate or are related to the Dutch culture.

Every activity of OLAH shows the evidence of the ‘mixed’ character of Latinos and their feeling of strong identity in regard to the Dutch people. Some times Latinos notice that when they explain details about the turbulent history or actual current problems and reality of their countries, they are expressing verbally their claim and discriminative behaviour of some Dutch people towards the “allochtonous”.

The development of OLAH demonstrates to the Dutch society that Latinos have much to contribute. Thus the OLAH's identity is an organizational reference that strives to maintain the Latino Identity as strategy to reproduce the cultural way of being Latino. But at the same time, OLAH can be a very useful instrument to deepen, to stimulate the conscience of the group and to extend horizons. In this line, the construction of OLAH's identity goes against the globalisation's tendency to homogenize, wipe out cultural particularities and neglect traditions said Siebers. Moreover, OLAH's own identity is advocated as a minority right in the context of dominant societies like the Netherlands. In this sense anyone manifestation of OLAH, to live the cultural diversity is a fight that to be worthwhile.

The value of OLAH's activities help Latinos to develop and to achieve a firm self-image in the Dutch society. The Latino identity is in constant interrelation with a diversity of cultures in the social contexts of the Netherlands. It is fluid and Latinos have multiple identities. Although Latinos the same as Turks, Moroccans and other foreigners stays "allochthonous" in the view of some Dutch people, with all stereotypes (through or false) that Dutch and others create for them. Just the allochthonous Identity shapes the different or similar social experiences that Latinos and others people as members of minority groups/organizations have in the Netherlands.

The formation of OLAH is a unique model in the Netherlands, because in the broad sense OLAH does not respond to the model of allochthonous or minority groups in the Netherlands, but neither to the autochthonous or majority group. "particularly in combination with a recognition of the fact that each individual deals with several and multiple identities, has the advantage of pointing to diversity and contradiction within the lived experiences of the individual". Ewing (1990 in Siebers, 2004: 78). Siebers says "personal identity is in combination with the recognition of the fact that each individual member of OLAH deals with several and multiple identities, and it is just that this has the advantage of pointing to diversity". The diversity of Latinos in the Netherlands, should be seen in a positive way, bridging a gap between Dutch and migrant groups in this country.

From Hall and the interviewed point of view, the emergency of the Latino identity is explained from the discourses, social and power relations that the own Latinos recreate in the host country. By this, many immigrant Latinos tend to lose their ethnic identity, because of the establishment in this country. Other Latinos often takes time and challenge to develop them personal and socially in The Netherlands. Latinos contribution to the organization OLAH usually is substantial and enriching. That is for example presented in some meetings in or outside OLAH as an alternative way of Latinos development, let say development with identity inside the Dutch society.

In some people's perception who came from Latin American countries, OLAH does not always represent the sense "to be Latinos" among Latinos. Some Latinos does not get to be submerged completely by the group. They maintain clearly their own country identity. Nevertheless, the positive and negative pressure exerted by the group, along with other factors that vary according to the circumstances, determine frequently that Latino identity of the individual in front of the group is pronounced under the figure of mutual distrust and envy.

The almost generalized view or image of Latino Identity among Latinos, Dutch and others from migrant groups is that Latino identity is diverse and dinamic. This identity goes in agreement and not with the globalisation and mass migration, which allows Latinos integrate themselves easily or not into the Dutch society. This is indeed the contrast with members of

other minority groups that tend to close themselves and only interact among them. From OLAH are explicit answers in speeches and feelings referred to the demand of recovery of social, cultural spaces specify for the immigrant who lives in The Netherlands. Thus, the mixedness character of Latino's daily practices, take place, in the hybrid identity of Latinos. Identity that sometimes is manifest strongly in the mixed couples, where Latino's cultural practices are also in constant transformation by the influence of the environment, rules and norms of the host country, the current globalisation and its effects, etc.

50% of the interviews said that OLAH as organization motivate its members to deepen and to analyse the conscience of group and to extend its horizons. This organization has different activities (birthdays or intercultural meetings) were always participate some Dutch people. Among OLAH's member they know and they share customs and traditions, in intercultural practices that feed the sense on property to Latino America. The own OLAH's members recognize that they have national regional and local identities, clarified with some differences. Each one with their forms to be, to do, to think and to feel, nevertheless all coexisting, in a single united and enriched Latino community with the diversity.

Finally, I can say that Latinos' hybrid identity found in OLAH and in the mixed couples, could be managed not as an alternative denomination for Latinos, but as a concept, which makes possible the new positioning of well-considered Latinos. In this sense, hybrid identity offers space to the existence of a plural position within a multiple of identities, concerning the various influences within a person or group and the way the plurality is manifest in themselves and influenced by gender, education and other factors inside the Dutch society.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The conclusions from this research are given below, as related to the main research question.

How do Latinos construct their identity in the Netherlands?

With the analysis of Latino identity construction as a starting point, it is possible to establish three principle levels in those who is based and is represented the “Latino identity” as a collective (group of people) reference in Wageningen. The first level is linked to a different way of **discursive characteristics** attributed by “others” and self-assumed by the group being studied, which in global terms refers to the common language (Spanish), spontaneity, religion (Catholicism), music, food, untidiness, solidarity, etc. as distinctiveness of this social group. Additionally, in the case of the “Latino women and men,” are the representations of gender indicating that, in general, they are equally or less emancipated than the Dutch. A second level is related to the Latin American Dutch Organization (**OLAH**), the place where precisely these common characteristics generate a possibility of meeting. Finally, there is the third level: interaction with the **nation-State** and **Dutch governmental institutions** dedicated to dealing with “migrants.”

However, of the three levels discussed, none is suited or involves homogenous social experience (practices). Here, for example, are people who despite being Latino (South American women), who don’t see themselves as “Latinas” and don’t participate in OLAH activities, although they are recognized by other speakers as part of that “identity.” This is a discursive distance, a negation that would be connected to the characteristics of the same Latino transnational migration to the Netherlands, initially linked to exile (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay) and afterwards tied to other motivations (principally the uniting of couples and the quest to improve oneself through higher studies). This process has conditioned various positions, attitudes of the Latinos in view of the migratory phenomenon and the host society. This provides evidence that the construction of the “Latino identity” plays a role not only in that which the individual and the group assumes itself to be, but also in that which others attribute to them. A social construction, and the process of differentiation.

In any case, in regard to OLAH: within the organization is the internal diversity that is a part of the Latin American establishment. But it is also joined by the presence of Dutch members, exposing evidence of the multiculturalism which characterizes this group--which is far away from its common “cultural” characteristics (language, music, religion, etc.). In this field of opening to the “diverse” the individual, as a contingent and relational construction, it comes into play, allowing people in some cases to feel like “hybrids,” as much “Dutchified Latino” as “Latinized Dutch.”

However, this individual peculiarity of each “Latino,” involving as much the combination of the person’s professional status, as that of the country of origin, economic possibilities, gender characteristics, etc., also maintains the language and other common elements. This has to do both with how they are perceived by the host society and with the same processes that involve transnational migration. So for example, the residence permits and their bureaucratic complications and the implications of the state “integration” politics are linked to a series of common experiences that make up not only a Latino constitution, but rather one of the “migrant” herself, as “allochtone” (not Dutch).

What it comes down to is the multiple meanings possible for the concept “integration,” particularly since the incorporation of the term in governmental action. So, if “integration” is understood to mean entering work contexts recognized as “productive,” the extent to which several “Latinos/as” get work that doesn’t correspond to their level of education (in general they are overqualified), this is hardly possible. However, as “integration” is understood as “to feel at home,” to accept the norms of the country without setting aside one’s cultural roots, this does allude to Latinos’ daily experience since leaving their families. It also alludes to their “hybrid” identity construction: Andean Latino; Andean, Peruvian, Latino, Dutch, etc. Here I can say that Latinos’ hybrid identity found in OLAH and in the mixed couples, could be managed not as an alternative denomination for Latinos, but as a concept, which makes possible the new positioning of well-considered Latinos. In this sense, hybrid identity offers space to the existence of a plural position within a multiple of identities, concerning the various influences within a person or group and the way the plurality is manifest in themselves and influenced by gender, education and other factors inside the Dutch society.

How is this identity represented within Dutch society at individual and group level?

There is not one simple answer to the question of how Latino identity is represented within Dutch society at individual and group level. In the construction of Latino identity, the individual is always related to the group; in this sense self-definition discourses -- what the person and the group say about themselves -- play an important role. These representations about themselves have to do with their “reality-dream” to begin a new life and to stay in the Netherlands. Thus the interplay between what they are and what they want to be is important in the construction of Latino Identity.

It begins with the term **Latino**. “Latino” sums up the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Latin American continent. This diversity among the Latinos who migrate is related to the cultural differences in being Caribbean, Andean, Peruvian, a mother, father, professional, etc. This, in turn, is added to the couple’s Dutch culture, so that the construction of the Latino identity might be more complete.. Then “Latino” is defined outside of the Latin American continent, by those same Latinos being away from their original countries.

The Latino identity, for the majority of the migrants, starts to be lived as a real identity, and to be perceived, at the moment that they begin life in Holland-- as a consequence of more frequent interaction with Latino people in Wageningen. The opportunities to meet and identify with other Latinos in Wageningen are many because of the 31 mixed couples and Latino students (already described) living in this relatively small town. Notably, these opportunities increased because of the possibilities created by the organisation OLAH, (already described) and its accessible organised activities. However, for the most Latinos of the various migrant generations (refugees included), to be Latino starts with leaving the home country and starting to live in The Netherlands. Some Latinos (in recent years) even start to feel their national identity while being Latino in the Netherlands (e.g., starting to feel Bolivian outside of Bolivia).

However, the majority of the persons interviewed claim that the main reason for their **transnational migration** to the Netherlands was because of the Dutch partner or to consolidate mixed couples. Consolidation has to do with the expectation of speaking the Dutch language “very well” in a short time and to find a job, in order to integrate into the Dutch society. This is also related to the positioning of Latinos in Dutch society.

From the interviews it seems that identity construction differs a bit between **higher educated Latinos and those with a lower education level**. In both groups there are Latinos who are more aware than others of their identity and who reflect on the way it has been changing since they have come to the Netherlands. Nevertheless, in the group – with a lower education -- the Latino tends to or needs to emphasize identity more; e.g., they feel a Latino identity when they meet with other Latinos, but they do not reflect “in terms of academic theories” on their identity. The difference between the two groups seems to be more in the need and capacity to reflect on the identity than in the outcome itself. However, here we can conclude that education is related to work, but at the same time we can say that the relationship between work and identity is also two-way and two-fold. Gender and the way to be Latino, and the influence of work on identity and identity on work are at stake, even as this is intertwined with the social position.

In this sense, the most representative discourse on **gender perceptions and work** for most Latinos is related to the emancipation issue. Emancipation for both women and men is represented in combining work and caring for the house and the children within the mixed couples. Latino women are well aware that emancipation in the Netherlands is much more developed than in Latin America. They welcomed the fact that their husbands did some household tasks that they were not used to doing in their country of origin. On the other hand, the current gender division of labour is that the Dutch men work in the public sphere and are the main earners of the family wage and the Latina women work more at home and have a parttime job outside the home. Often, moreover, this job is in the professional care sector, although some Latina women managed to attain other kinds of professional jobs. Nine percent are working in the same kind of jobs as in their home countries; others all had to accept labour 'beneath' their level of job in their home country. Most of the Latina women do more household work and child care than their Dutch husbands do. Some feel resistance at first to doing this kind of work as household work is the worst valued work in their home countries; if families can afford it, they pay a servant to fulfill this task. This depends on their experience and status in their home countries. At the same time, Dutch men contribute more to household activities and the education of the children than Latina women could have expected from Latino men or in comparison with the men in their families in their country of origin. This is one of the reasons why Latina women accept the status quo or the contradictions in an unequal gender division of labour.

The unequal power relationship between Dutch men and Latina women is not only a consequence of the division of labour; it is also due to a different interaction with the Dutch society. This is not a linear power relation of oppressed and oppressor, because Latina women also have power sources or value themselves and are valued by their husbands and friends. However, the dynamics in the asymmetric power relation between Dutch men and Latina women have a substantial influence in the possibility of living the Latino culture, adjusting to Latino norms and therefore 'feeling Latino'. Latino women feel that Dutch norms and values dominate in the family and that in the end they accept, or are forced to accept, this new status quo. In spite of this status quo, some Latina women interviewed appear to have gained a better social position and status with migration from Latin America to the Netherlands. They often achieved the possibility of finishing a superior study or of finding a job in their own field. This is not the case for the men interviewed and for some of the other women. These individuals have a good education and had a good job in Latin America, but work in the Netherlands under their level. It is interesting that, because of this and other personal reasons, four of the seven men interviewed went back to Latin America. They all mentioned that they were not happy in the Netherlands and could not integrate into Dutch society.

Regarding integration, 31 of the 35 interview Latinos feel integrated into Dutch society. The seven who were in the process of integrating, returned to their country for different reasons. Nevertheless, the majority of Latinos have expressed that they pursue their integration as a go-back process, feel at home, in which both native citizens and immigrants have equal opportunities, abilities and power to act. Although the language is an obstacle to integrate for some of those interviewed, others had a change of perception and are working now on showing other personal qualities. Thus integration, according to this group of Latinos, is a contract of reciprocal relation with its rights and obligations. For instance, problems with the restrictive visa policies and integration have other meanings for Latinos than for other allochtoon people in the Netherlands.

Latinos and Dutch people are members of OLAH, the Latin American Dutch Organization with more than 100 members. The discursive construction of OLAH is based on the relation or combination of the Dutch and the Latino, which is also lived by the Latinos within the mixed couples. The majority (60%) are Latinos from 21 countries and Dutch, others (40%), represent more or less the “mixedness” of the Latino identity as unique and varied self organization within Dutch society. OLAH is the result of transnational migration and of the modern development of Dutch society. OLAH constitutes at a macro level that which the Latino – Dutch mixed and intercultural couples are. OLAH is also in the process of constructing its identity and differentiating itself from other migrant organizations, just as the Latinos are doing at a personal level.. The “mixed” character of Latinos’ daily practices take place in the hybrid identity construction of OLAH. So the construction of hybrid identity in OLAH offers Latinos an alternative manner of positioning themselves in Dutch culture and society.

Thus, Latinos are constantly moving between Dutch and Latino culture, and it has more or less influence in their constantly constructed identity. So the discursive construction of Latino identity at individual and group level occurs through dealing with the themes of migration, education, gender, integration and the establishment of OLAH in the Netherlands, which in turn is reflected in the different ways to be and become Latino. Additionally, the composition of “Latino” itself and the representation of Latino is not, in most cases, part of the dichotomies of Dutch/Latino discourses. This representation has to do with their own goals and the new life that they are building in the Netherlands. Moreover, Latino identity at personal and group level is constructed with an individual’s own elements, is innovated by others and finally results in a combination of both. Due to this, they are now in the position to see the Latino identity as a change, or as a necessary condition for their functioning in the Netherlands. By rejecting the dominant negative image of foreigners - “allochtonen”, Latinos demonstrate the capacity to create changes. Latinos are attaining the expression of the self-defined Latino. Not only the name, also the process of constructing the Latino identity as a meeting as a form of empowerment.

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Annex 2: Summary 35 Latinos interviewed

Female Male	Age/interview 2006 - 2009	Profesión Level Educat.	Country Origin	Length of stay	Dutch Partner (DP) Latino Partner (LP)	Kids	Job
F= 28 M= 7 T= 35	20-30= 8 31-40 =12 41-50= 9 51-60= 6	Ing.Agronom 12 Social Area 8 teachers 4 Secretary 4 Others 6 ----- F= 3 PHd WU F= 7 MSc WU F= 15 HBO F= 3 VWBO M= 3 MSc WU M= 4 HBO	Peru 5 Nicaragua 4 Chile 4 Colombia 3 México 3 C. Rica 3 Bolivia 2 Argentina 2 Ecuador 2 Uruguay 3 Paraguay 1 R.Dominic 1 Salvador 1 Brasil 1	0-5 = 9 6-10=14 11-20=6 21-30=6	F= 26 DP F= 2 LP M= 5 DP M= 2 LP	2=2 6 1=6 3=3	F=15 M=7

Annex 3: Article about OLAH published in newspaper Gelderland