

## **Identity and Self in the Multicultural World**

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### **Abstract:**

The paper is premised on the post-modern condition of the ‘self’ and the ensuing emergence of hybrid, multiple cultural identities, and is configured as a diachronic symptomatology, a harkening back to the ideas that shaped the contemporary epistemic stage, illustrated with a case study of cosmopolitanism, global multiculturalism as the paragon of post-modern fragmentariness and multiplicity of identities. A consistent intimation with the analysis will be that the concept of cultural identity does not refer to a universal, fixed identity, but to a contingent, historically and culturally specific social construction to which language is central. Though we commonly assume that we have a ‘true self’, an identity which we possess and which can become known to us and others, I shall question the assumption that identity is a fixed thing to be owned or found, and suggest instead that it is better understood as an ongoing description of ourselves marking a process of becoming.

**Keywords:** construct; identification; positioning; Lacan; decentring.