

The culturally modified brain in multicultural world By Zita Vilutyte, artist (Lithuania)

What is the relationship between culture and the brain? Not only brain forms the culture but the culture forming the brain also. Culture – is a product of human brain, which is the source of thought and action. Based on what we know nowadays about neuroplasticity, such answer is no longer sufficient. Neuroplasticity of the brain is its ability to change.

Culture is not only a product of the brain - it also includes forming activities. The dictionary provides the following definition: the mind, skills, manners, etc. training and development; in education and training based development; mind, tastes and manners training, development and improvement.

We become cultured learning different things: customs, arts, manners, rules of access to technology, ideas, beliefs, philosophies, religions.

Neuroplasticity research has shown that any ever mapped a long-term activity - as well as physical and sensory activities, learning, thinking and imagining- changes our brain. Cultural ideas and activities are no exception. Brain modified conducted cultural activities - reading, learning to play some instrument and learning new languages . We all have what could be described as culturally modified brain and in culture is constantly getting new leads to changes in the brain

Merzenich (Michael M. Merzenich (born in 1942 in Lebanon, Oregon) is a professor emeritus neuroscientist at the University of California, San Francisco) said: "Our brain is remarkably different in the details from the brain of our ancestors. In each stage of cultural development, the average person had to learn new skills that gain the causing abilities of large scale of changes in the brain. In fact, each of us through life gains enormously and comprehensive inherited from an ancestry, and such use of the plasticity restores the development of cultural history.

Neuroplasticity added approach to understanding that the culture and the brain is like a double-sided: the brain and the genetic basis develops the culture, but the culture at the same time forms the brain. Sometimes these changes can be dramatic.

