

УДК 008

**Mościcka Diana****EDUCATION OF MULTICULTURALISM – EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN WARMIA AND MAZURY**

*Identification with one's roots, knowledge of native culture and the arts enables man to exist in the community while maintaining a subjective belief in his uniqueness. The phenomenon of coexistence of different traditions, values in one country is of major importance and tends to make people think. Multicultural education should permeate school, class, the curriculum and teaching programs, teachers and social environment. Living in a multicultural world is richer, but also more difficult. It requires our activity, permanent learning and development to seek ways to compromise, because we all want a better future. Multiculturalism is an omnipresent phenomenon and it is us who decide whether we have to live without war, in peace and with each other or next to each other.*

**Key words:** multiculturalism, education, national and ethnic minorities.

**Мосціцька Д.****МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНА ОСВІТА – ПРИКЛАДИ ЗАХОДІВ, ЗДІЙСНЕНИХ У РЕГІОНІ ВАРМІЇ ТА МАЗУРИ**

*Ідентифікація зі своїм корінням, знання власної культури і мистецтва дають можливість людині існувати в колективі із збереженням суб'єктивного досвіду своєї винятковості. Співіснування різних традицій, цінностей в одній державі здобуває велике значення і спонукає до роздумів. Мультикультурна освіта повинна проникати в школу, класи, навчальні програми, до вчителів, а також у соціальне середовище. Життя в багатокультурному світі є багатшим, але й важчим. Воно вимагає нашої активності, перманентного навчання і розвитку, пошуку шляхів компромісу, оскільки ми усі прагнемо до кращого майбутнього. Мультикультурність – це явище, яке широко розповсюджене, і ми самі повинні вирішувати, чи доведеться нами жити без воєн, у мирі з собою та з тими, хто поряд із нами.*

**Ключові слова:** мультикультурність, освіта, національні та етнічні меншини.

Мосцица Д.

## МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ – ПРИМЕРЫ МЕРОПРИЯТИЙ, ОСУЩЕСТВЛЕННЫХ В РЕГИОНЕ ВАРМИИ И МАЗУРЫ

*Идентификация со своими корнями, знание собственной культуры и искусства дают возможность человеку существовать в коллективе, сохраняя субъективный опыт исключительности. Сосуществование разных традиций, ценностей в одном государстве получает огромное значение и вызывает размышления. Мультикультурное образование должно проникать в школу, классы, учебные программы, к учителям, а также в социальную среду. Жизнь в многокультурном мире является богаче, но и труднее. Она требует нашей активности, перманентного обучения и развития, поиска путей компромисса, поскольку мы все стремимся к лучшему будущему. Мультикультурность – это явление, которое широко распространено, и мы сами должны решать, будем ли мы жить без войн, в мире с собой и с теми, кто рядом с нами.*

**Ключевые слова:** мультикультурность, образование, национальные и этнические меньшинства.

One of the aspects of the modern world is multiculturalism reflected in the way we treat other people. Times of globalization are characterized by extreme anonymity<sup>1</sup>, which is caused by mass production, the omnipresent mass media and global distribution of cultural products. Today, globalization has led to the intensification of the processes of individualization, or the rediscovery of cultural identity<sup>2</sup>. We frequently forget about the subjective nature of the individual – the creator of culture. Present time is characterized by multi-ethnicity, clearly visible in countries with large numbers of immigrants.

After the First World War minorities in Poland constituted more than one-third of all inhabitants of the country<sup>3</sup>. Common traditions, fate,

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<sup>1</sup> D. Czajkowska-Majewska, Człowiek globalny, Warszawa 2009, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Kultura w czasach globalizacji, eds. M. Jacyno, A. Jawłowska, M. Kempny, Warszawa 2004, p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> T. Stegner, Tradycje wielokulturowości i wieloetniczności na ziemiach polskich – rys historyczny, in: Edukacja wielokulturowa w rzeczywistości polskiej, Ośrodek Kształcenia Ustawicznego Nauczycieli w Gdańsku, Gdańsk 2005, p. 6, online: <http://www.okun.gda.pl/zalaczniki/wielokulturowosc.pdf> (15.01.2015)

geography created a unique system of civilization and nation, destroyed by World War II. The post-war arrangements led to a country almost uniform in terms of religion and ethnic<sup>4</sup>.

The year 1989 is the date of democracy's triumph over communism in Central and Eastern Europe. It is the decline of the twentieth century that created the unique conditions to rebuild or create new international relations. In the so-called new Poland, people began to see the need for legal protection of national and ethnic minorities<sup>5</sup> who in 2005 (after many years) lived to see the Act<sup>6</sup>.

The phenomenon of coexistence of divergent traditions, values within one country is of major importance and is thought provoking. The biggest issue in affirmation of the existence of different cultures, traditions, customs and religion is the prejudice, which stems from the erroneous understanding of the «other – foreign». Therefore, identification with one's roots and knowledge of one's native culture enables man to exist in the community while maintaining a subjective belief about his uniqueness.

38 million 511 thousand people live in Poland, 1 million 467 thousand of which declare other than Polish nationality/ethnicity<sup>7</sup>. Warmia and Mazury Voivodeship is one of the few in the country – it is represented by all thirteen national/ethnic minorities. This region is characterized by a large variety of religion, culture, experiences, ethnicity and nationality<sup>8</sup>. This region is inhabited by the most clusters of national and

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<sup>4</sup> J. Tomaszewski, *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce w XX wieku*, Warszawa 1991, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> S. Łodziński, *Przekroczyć własny cień. Prawne, instytucjonalne oraz społeczne aspekty polityki państwa polskiego wobec mniejszości narodowych w latach 1989-1997*, in: *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce. Praktyka po 1989 roku*, ed. B. Berdychowska, Warszawa 1998, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ustawa z dnia 6 stycznia 2005 roku o mniejszościach narodowych i etnicznych oraz o języku regionalnym, Dz.U.2005.17.141 z późniejszymi zmianami.

<sup>7</sup> *Ludność, stan i struktura demograficzno-społeczna. Narodowy Spis Powszechny Ludności i Mieszkań 2011*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Chapter IV – ed. G. Gudaszewski, Warszawa 2013, p. 91, online: [http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/LUD\\_ludnosc\\_stan\\_str\\_dem\\_spo\\_NSP2011.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/LUD_ludnosc_stan_str_dem_spo_NSP2011.pdf) (15.01.2015)

<sup>8</sup> M. Ranius, *Ukraińcy na Warmii i Mazurach*, in: *W cieniu akcji «Wisła». Ukraińcy we współczesnej Polsce*, ed. M. Melnyk, Olsztyn 2008, p. 69.

ethnic minorities – 20342 citizens<sup>9</sup>: Ukrainians – 13037 people, Germany – 4645, Roma – 772, Belarusians – 600, Russians – 431, Lithuanians – 380, Jews – 153, Lemko – 95, Armenians – 71, Tatars – 51, Slovaks – 34, Czechs – 25 and Community speaking Kashubian – 48 people. The smallest number here represent indigenous people: Mazurians, Warmians and even Silesians live in this region<sup>10</sup>.

When considering multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity in Poland, we always take into account aspects not only related to national and ethnic minorities, but also the region, religion and approach to various contentious historical events<sup>11</sup>. The phenomenon of multiculturalism itself is defined as the coexistence of different values, traditions and beliefs within the framework of one country. However, in the western part of the Old Continent multiculturalism is identified as the extent of rights that groups of emigrants, who represent different cultural<sup>12</sup> and religious circles, are entitled to.

It is important to realize that at some point strangers from other countries can become our neighbors, they may be different from us in terms of appearance, skin color, customs, religion, art and culture. And yet for a long period of time, we were taught about national, ethnic and religious homogeneity in our country, while still failing to recognize some cultures or, for instance, human existence such as the dual cultural identity. But now, it is the moment to return to the roots. Therefore, it is worth considering what multiculturalism, or as some say «multikulti», really is, and what role it can play in education and, further along, shaping the multicultural society.

In today's society – «culture, in order to find expression in social life, must be grounded in institutions such as schools, mass media, the economy, etc.»<sup>13</sup> The main purpose of education is to create situations in which differences, mutual awareness, building good relationships, seeking what unites rather than divides should be understood. We should

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<sup>9</sup> Information received from the Representative of the Governor of Warmia – Mazury for national and ethnic minorities Joanna Wańkowska – Sobiesiak.

<sup>10</sup> Information from Joanna Wańkowska – Sobiesiak.

<sup>11</sup> O. Wasiuta, *Wielokulturowość współczesnego społeczeństwa*, in: *Wielokulturowość w dobie globalizacji oraz integracji europejskiej*, ed. P. Woroniecki, Olsztyn 2005, p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> *Dylematy tożsamości europejskich pod koniec drugiego tysiąclecia*, eds. J. Mucha, W. Olszewski, Toruń 1997, p. 127.

<sup>13</sup> W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford 1994, p. 77.

remember that in order to understand diversity one needs to know and appreciate their own culture and the arts, which will allow them to compare, and discuss whether something is, indeed, different, intriguing, uninteresting – but not necessarily worse. Intercultural communication is the main objective of education that allows us to cross the borders of our own culture and is also internally enriching.

Whether we like it or not, future generations are multicultural societies with all the positive and negative consequences. Primarily, historical and religious factors influenced the spread of xenophobic attitudes, isolation, and the use of stereotypes and prejudices. For centuries, the functioning of animosity, complexes and rumors had impact on our attitudes and hostility toward diversity. Therefore, it is necessary to openly discuss them, negotiating, arguing, developing projects and, above all: organizing workshops, meetings, inviting artists from different regions; dissemination of knowledge about the many cultures of the world in the form of lectures or exhibitions; visiting historically or culturally interesting places; learning about everyday life of people representing other cultures, participating in feasts and competitions.

A multitude of cultures requires broadly understood tolerance, placing anti-racist educational programs for schools and universities, as well as create rules against racial discrimination or any other forms of prejudice<sup>14</sup>. Poland also needs regulations concerning spreading the «healthy» ethnic stereotypes in the media. Convincing politicians to collect and allocate government or European Union funds for ethnic festivals<sup>15</sup>.

Multicultural education should permeate the physical environment, school, class, the curriculum, teachers and society. Different types of activities should bring effects, and, above all, the recognition in the programs of the Ministry of National Education – teaching of ethnic minorities – not only statistics but real facts. It is a chance to learn more about diversity, understand it more. This is another way for the elimination of all kinds of phobias. The question of educating teachers themselves is huge. Whether Polish schools meet the challenges or are open to meeting with otherness – diversity – depends on the teachers' knowledge, skills and culture.

The purpose of multicultural education is: interest about it and understanding the differences; creating equal educational opportunities for

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<sup>14</sup> K. Tomczyk, *Dylematy multikulturalizmu we współczesnych społeczeństwach liberalno – demokratycznych*, Warszawa 2007, p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 19.

all children; preventing from and objecting to discrimination, prejudices and racism; a firm «no» for cultural assimilation, and «yes» to the multicultural contacts with cultural pluralism; fairness to students coming from other countries and belonging to minorities; developing multicultural curricula; training for teachers<sup>16</sup>; funding bilingual education for students from national/ethnic minorities.

Only since 1989 can we talk about multicultural education in Poland. Earlier, the state policy was nationalist; little was said and done about the «others,» also in the sphere of education. It was connected with the promotion of «national unity» . It was not until the fall of the communist regime, the advent of political freedom, when movements of cultural, national and ethnic minorities started to rise.

Many practitioners points to the important role of educational projects – «Leonardo da Vinci» and «Socrates»<sup>17</sup>. Young people who take part in these projects realize, in the course of activities, such universal values as a partnership, cooperation and respect.

Poland has become an attractive place for the eastern nations. This results in the problem of the education of foreigners and their children, and yet the right to education also applies to them. Teaching foreigners is a multi step process that requires delicacy and understanding of differences in thinking, religious and cultural considerations.

Theoretically, the Polish public schools are open to accepting children of immigrants, which is also stated in the law – but teachers have problems, new challenges, for which their universities did not prepare them. Those problems are faced also by school principals and parents themselves. The level of multicultural education in the twenty-first century is still too low, but significantly higher than in the 90's of last century. Polish children mostly have a positive attitude to minorities thanks to contacts with the history of minorities, shared activities, television programs, films or foreign exchanges.

A good example of multiculturalism in Polish schools is the Group of School with the Ukrainian Language in Górowo Hławeckie. What gives the school a special character is cultivating tradition which shapes the

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<sup>16</sup> J. Szydłowska, Edukacja do wielokulturowości. Sprawozdanie z seminarium «Edukacja romska – współczesne wyzwania», in: «Media, kultura, komunikacja społeczna», nr 8, UWM w Olsztynie, Olsztyn 2012, p. 224, online: [http://www.uwm.edu.pl/mkks/pdf/MKKS\\_8/20-cz-4-recenzje-szydłowska.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu.pl/mkks/pdf/MKKS_8/20-cz-4-recenzje-szydłowska.pdf) (15.01.2015)

<sup>17</sup> E. Walkiewicz, Wstęp, in: Edukacja wielokulturowa ..., op. cit., p. 2.

national consciousness of students. The tradition of the school is present in the daily work – during the entire education young people learn the history, geography, culture, art and language of their ancestors. This School is the largest facility of all for the representatives of the Ukrainian minority in Poland. Around 200 students from the region and other parts of the country and even from abroad attend this school<sup>18</sup>. The school initiates and co-organizes national and international conferences. It develops projects and obtains grants. The project carried out in the years 2008 – 2010: «The development of entrepreneurship among school students based on artistic and craft creativity using the EU funds under the ESF» deserves special attention<sup>19</sup>. As a part of this project the following extracurricular activities were conducted: arts and crafts, embroidery and lace making, folk arts and folk sculpture in wood, vocal and ethnographic classes – old songs – new experiences<sup>20</sup>. Song and Dance Ensemble «Dumka» has existed in the school for 45 years, the foundation of the ensemble have always been the students from the Ukrainian classes<sup>21</sup>. The ensemble has given more than a thousand concerts and the fact that the previous members of «Dumka» animate socio-cultural life in the place of their residence is noteworthy.

In Warmia and Mazury, German minority also nicely presents its achievements, among others by organizing a Summer Fest «Sommerfest». Various cultural events (like Festival of the Nations of Europe «Under the Sky»), contests, surveys and other festivals are held annually in Olsztyn and beyond. There are common rooms in which tradition is cultivated, there are artistic groups and also CDs and books are published.

Although it is said that the Roma are a scattered minority<sup>22</sup>, about 400 Roma people (in the region 772 persons) live in Olsztyn and have: their common room, an association of Roma Culture «Hitano», there

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<sup>18</sup> Vide: [http://www.szkolazdumka.pl/pol\\_ver/](http://www.szkolazdumka.pl/pol_ver/) (15.01.2015)

<sup>19</sup> Promotional material – leaflet of Local institutions of Warmia and Mazury Group of Schools with the Ukrainian Language in Górowo Iławeckie, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Nasza szkoła, eds. W. Aksjonowa, D. Babiak, R. Gonsorek, Ż. Krukienicka, Górowo Iławeckie 2009, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> I. Stankiewicz, Asystent edukacji romskiej w polskiej szkole (z doświadczeń własnych), in: Współczesne wyzwania polityki wobec romskiej mniejszości etnicznej – edukacja, dyskryminacja, wykluczenie społeczne, eds. S. Garbart, E. Subocz, Warszawa 2013, p. 219.

are also four artistic groups. In the summer, there takes place the Roma Day with the rolling stock, artistic performances and Roma food<sup>23</sup>. In the Primary School No. 2 in Olsztyn, there is a class for Roma children, who are slowly getting better educational results. Students often present their dance, musical and vocal talents. They are happy to play and learn together. Multifaceted support of Roma children in the field of health, physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social functioning have been taken since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004. Their individual preferences were taken into account with regard to their ethnic and cultural specificity<sup>24</sup>. Educational activities of the project are also addressed to Polish teachers who are educated in multiculturalism, gain knowledge of the history and traditions of Polish Roma.

Living in a multicultural environment is richer but also more difficult. This requires of our activity, permanent learning and developing in order to seek ways of compromise, because we all want a better future. Warmia and Mazury is a region that can be proudly described as a place inhabited by people with different backgrounds who share a common idea of openness to others. This unique region often referred to as an ethnic melting pot, and the Tower of Babel, in which there is a creative and peaceful coexistence. It is emphasized frequently in the speeches of politicians and local government officials that in the region of Warmia and Mazury, at the crossroads of different cultures and political impacts, local provincial authorities are an example of creating a united Europe.

Warmia and Mazury is a place of beautiful nature, it is one of the most beautiful regions in Poland and maybe in Europe, with an interesting though confusing story. A region on the border between the Christian and pagan culture, the Slavic and Germanic culture. Here, indigenous people live with one another: Masurians, Warmians – with Kresowiaci (inhabitants of Kresy) and people from the area of the former Rzeczpospolita. They found their place on earth – create a new history, culture and economy. And strength, specificity and originality of this region lies precisely in the diversity and multicolored diversity, cooperation and harmony.

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<sup>23</sup> W. Katarzyński, Olsztyńscy Romowie swojego święta nie uczczą. Piękni Cyganie zagrali, ale tylko w Warszawie, «Gazeta Olsztyńska», 7.04.2011, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> Vide: [http://sp2olsztyn.pl/krysluka/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=38](http://sp2olsztyn.pl/krysluka/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=38) (15.01.2015)



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