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EDUCATION FOR THE MULTICULTURAL
AND CITIZEN-ORIENTED WORLD

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The socio-political transformation, globalization of the world, the intensifying process of people's mobility: migration, exile, tourism, give rise to multinational and multicultural nations. In response to these changes there is emerging a new current in pedagogy called intercultural education that runs simultaneously across the plane of culture and the one of citizenship. The intercultural education and civil education constitute the subject matter of the present paper.

Key words: democracy; civil education; intercultural education; responsibility; self-government, cooperation; multicultural character.

For some time now we have been witnesses to radical socio-political changes occurring in Eastern Europe, the most important of which including: disintegration of the socio-political structures to date, decline of the values and guarantees offered by the state (to which our societies were so much accustomed), and the recent process of unification of Europe.

New technologies have led humankind into an epoch of universal communication: information can reach the most distant regions of the Earth in a very short time. Our planet has become a small "global village" and the life of societies has been affected, to a large extent, by the growing process of population mobility and mixing, connected with migration, exile, joining families, or last but not least – with tourism. Consequently, there has occurred a great clash of different cultures and therefore there has appeared a necessity – as J. Nikitorowicz writes (2005; 18) – of creating an intercultural identity, educating and raising generations to meet the challenge of diversity, that is to make them capable of noticing, recognizing, understanding, mutual exchanging loan elements of life, cooperation and collaboration between people who are different in many respects.

A multicultural nature of societies in which individuals and groups expect to be noticed and to have their own culture and different character recognized and accepted has become a clearly noticeable fact. In the previous epoch the appearance of the majority of states and nations was based of the hypothesis that they were or should be uniform as far as their culture was concerned. This uniformity made for the essence of modern nationality, and the notions of state and

citizenship were its derivatives. Religious, language or national minorities, as well as autochthonous and tribal people had often been subjected (very frequently against their will) to interests of the state and dominating society, which used to cause tensions and conflicts. Contemporarily, uni-ethnic states are rare. In recent years there have been more states that not only tolerate cultural diversity, but also recognize the fact that multicultural and multiethnic character is far from being an obstacle; on the contrary – it lays true foundations for democratic social integration.

Together with those changes there appeared a serious challenge to education and raising new generations of the world. Education is beginning to be more directed at problems of the future of the world. We are asking questions such as: "How to shape man in the new reality?", "How to prepare people to live in a democratic multicultural community?", "How to be a citizen of one's own country and of the world without losing one's roots?" Answers to these and other questions require a new perception of education. Education ought to support the learner in creating his identity on the following levels: family, local, parochial, ethnic, regional, national, state, cultural, European, global – generally speaking – all-human identity through:

- learning about and understanding oneself, one's own culture, one's own world and roots, one's private mother-country; an individual conscious of his family-local cultural roots, equipped with a sense of value and dignity is able to understand other people and control fear, apprehensions or uncertainty;
- overcoming tendencies towards closing inside the sphere of one's own values, own cultural circle for the benefit of openness and understanding of others, respect for differences and treating the latter as a developmental factor;
- getting accustomed to perceiving and learning about the Different, shaping sensitivity and the skill of cooperation;
- inspiring towards exchange of experience in the scope of realization of programs of education, social and institutional activity (Nikitorowicz, 2005; s. 48).

The above-presented assumptions are contained within the framework of the so-called intercultural education which was worked out and proposed by Alexander Thomas and Norbert Ropers of the Hesian Institute of Research into Peace. This form of education takes into account and respects ethnic, racial and cultural differences between societies that are connected with differing visions of the world and cultural concepts. It is thus a process of a dialogue of cultures, protection against uniformization and also against local egocentrism.

The **intercultural education** has roused a new current in pedagogical science, which – in multinational and multicultural societies – is oriented not only

towards working with foreigners, but with own citizens as well, so that they should mutually teach each other the following: respect, tolerance, living side by side, experiencing cultures. Intercultural learning is present when in contact with a man from another culture we try to understand his specific system according to which he orientates his values, the way of thinking and acting. This requires a knowledge of one's own system of culture since the process of experiencing a different culture is one of experiencing one's own culture at the same time. People who meet one another very often are able to get rid of prejudice on either side and simultaneously are looking for a better understanding of the culture that is alien to them (Śliwerski, 2004; 292). Thus, this kind of education favors cognition, understanding and acceptance of different cultures and people behind them, as well as it prepares for cooperation and mutual making use of the output of people of different races, nationalities, denominations, and cultures (*Edukcja międzykulturowa*, 2000; 17).

The aims of the intercultural education are convergent with the educational axiology of a citizen-based and democratic society. Among the former M. S. Szymański lists the following:

- openness towards the world and communication on the global scale between people of different races, languages, religions, origins, traditions, and lifestyles;
- engagement for peace, equality, brotherhood and solidarity in one's own country and all over the world;
- advocating a just world without wars, exploitation, repression and hunger;
- awakening ecological awareness;
- appealing to eradicate the sense of cultural superiority, to make use of dialogue and negotiation, exchange of values, to pull down barriers that hamper showing respect for different lifestyles, tolerance, getting rid of ethnic prejudice and stereotypes, opposing manifestations of discrimination, racism and hostility towards national minorities (*Edukacja międzykulturowa*, 2000; 105).

The idea of intercultural education is known and successfully put in practice in the Polish schools. The research into cultures of the frontier, education of minority groups, and – primarily – into the process of shaping the cultural identity – have a rich tradition. One of the units of the University of Białystok is Section of Intercultural Education responsible for running a subject under the same name. A lot of research has been conducted in this respect by the Team for Researching Culture and Education of the Frontier at Silesia University of Katowice.

Intercultural education crosses not only the plane of culture, but also runs across the plane of citizenship. The process of creating a citizen of a national community and a citizen of the world is particularly vital and results from the assumption that in order to be a valuable citizen of the world, one must be a

valuable citizen of a local community, a citizen of his own nation in the first place. Civil education, *i.e.* education based on and oriented towards the citizen, appears to gain particular importance here: the significance of this kind of education is underlined by the fact that the year 2005 was established as the European Year of Civil Education.

The **civil education** aims at making the individual accustomed to fulfilling all kinds of duties towards society such as: taking care of social goods, honest attitude towards work, social discipline, solidarity towards other community members, respecting principles of equality, justice and righteousness. Hence, the civil education includes as follows:

- consciousness of mechanisms of functioning of a modern state, at present – mainly – a democratic, multinational and multicultural state;
- consciousness of citizen's duties and rights;
- preparation of young citizens for performing roles and fulfilling duties in the future.

There are influences of axiological (formation of civil, patriotic attitudes) and practical (young people's share in the social life based on principles of democracy and on relations with the authorities and state offices) nature present in the civil education. This sort of education also includes **education in the spirit of democracy**.

Democracy – as N. Bobbio claims (1987) – is a process which, as a matter of fact, has no end; a process during which people become aware of the truth that the society which they form is not a closed system, that the vision of the whole is created so that one should become aware of its freedom. Transformations within the democratization of life and the drive towards democracy as an expression of citizen's co-participation of individuals in taking decisions about the fate of masses allow preserving basic moral values that determine social life, that is: aiming at social justice; aiming at truth understood as obtaining honest information on phenomena of social life; aiming at liberty of social and individual's life; aiming at preservation of man's and citizen's dignity.

While writing about the birth of participating democracy in the United States, John Naisbitt (1997) concludes that Americans solve a great number of life problems themselves. The drop in trust in political parties, transition of power from the hands of chosen officials into those of people voting directly in local referenda are the main features of active democracy. Instead of investing into offices and officials, people start investing into themselves.

Raising the young for participating democracy means, first of all, awakening the way of thinking in terms of responsibility for "one's own yard". This process begins in the family which must guard against all kinds of attempts aiming at depriving it of intimacy and making it a tool in the political strife. The family should prepare the child to be not as much in the world as among people, within

concrete relations; it ought to equip the young with the courage of speaking out and acting in their own name without heeding the costs. The sense of one's own decision is the basis of participating democracy.

The raising for democracy is closely linked to **raising in the spirit of self-government**. The idea of self-government goes back to the view which was expressed in the past which maintained that the commune is a natural organizational unit. The commune was perceived as a community constituting the only true form of organizing the public life. The basic feature of this community was a small territorial size and small number of inhabitants, which facilitated direct interpersonal relations (Król, 1989).

If decentralizing, hence appearance of local governments, is to truly favor development of democracy, we have to assume that its sense is part of every human being, although probably many will have to be helped to be able to waken this sense in themselves. Otherwise the majority of local governments will be used merely to settle business of various institutions (Murzyn, 2001; 66).

Trust in disinterested solidarity, which is the foundation of true community, can be cultivated only in direct relationships. Even a government composed of the best specialists in their fields will not be able to solve most of people's problems since it will always stay too far from a single human being. The idea of self-governing stems from the conviction that most problems can be effectively solved in the context of mutual neighborly relationships and mutual education towards individual responsibility and tolerance of others.

A local community is the source of authentic social life. It is in it where people educate and control one another. The essence of civil education thus is to constantly make the learner aware that each man should move towards small groups like the family and local community – as it is in such groups where freedom goes side by side with responsibility because the group of this size can secure cooperation and compromise. Preparing the young to meet the requirements of small groups, which are a natural environment for development of the spirit of self-control and self-governing, is the priority task for civil education.

Self-governing in local communities ought to be based on concerted action and – hence – the next task to perform by the civil education – raising for cooperation and co-acting. Cooperation, according to W. Okoń (1984; 346) means cooperation between individuals or groups of people performing their parts of the task with a view to reaching a common valuable aim. Cooperation is based on mutual trust, loyalty, as well as subjecting oneself to the superior goal, which is properly made aware of. However, it should be stressed at the beginning that cooperation, co-acting, can not mean people's resignation from own autonomy.

The basis of cooperation includes interpersonal communication (since it is difficult to do something jointly without having information on the partner's intentions and actions) and positive emotions. A lack of the latter, indifference, and

certainly the presence of negative emotions, weaken considerably or even inhibit cooperation. Creation of a common good has its value when it is made in the climate of freedom and co-creators enjoy the sense of liberty in action and complete subjectivity.

Subjectivity is an internal source of all causality (Górniewicz, 1997; 24). This means that human being's actions flow out of himself, so it is he who influences events and is free to make his own decisions, and to act in the manner he feels fit. A sense of being able to influence events is a source of positive self-evaluation and self-acceptance, strengthens the process of self-realization. When a human being loses the conviction as to being able to influence events, his sense of value lowers, there appear reactions of apprehension, the level of motivation falls down (Łukaszewski, 1984).

Co-acting, apart from producing material artifacts, may favorably influence the following: perception and satisfying needs of people living within the closest surrounding, a rise in trust in people, improvement of communication with the environment, becoming aware that conflicts and misunderstandings are a common problem for many people and one ought to learn ways of their solving.

Raising for a responsible life. Responsibility is understood here as a necessity to bear consequences of one's conduct and behavior. It results from the inner conviction or external obligation. R. Ingarden (1987; 72) distinguishes four different situations, in which there occurs the phenomenon of responsibility: someone is responsible for something; someone takes on responsibility for something, someone is held responsible for something, someone acts responsibly. A responsible action is a behavior conscious of procedure and results at all of its stages. This is also avoidance of negative acts and their effects, and generating positive ones. The doer must control the direction and range of his own acts. Every day, in his professional, cultural, workers' union-oriented, or consumer's job each community member must feel responsible towards others.

Civil education requires a reformed school, a school that :

- for the sake of proper understanding of phenomena of globalization underlines that the basis of the skill of being a citizen is formed by reasonable knowledge of the existence of various ways of living in other cultures and of relations occurring among world problems and the life of large and small communities;
- teaches critical reflexion that enables the citizen to gain intellectual independence, which will allow recognizing quality and justification of different kinds of reasoning and evaluating;
- teaches ethics and morality on concrete examples, engages in situations in which learners must settle down moral dilemmas and doubts as regards their own conduct;

- creates conditions to learn tolerance and respect for the Different, where pluralism and intercultural education take into account the growing interest in both local and global cultures;
- makes dialogue the leading method.

The democratic participation in the life of small and large mother-countries depends to a degree on citizen's virtues which we will instill in our successors.

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ОСВІТА ДЛЯ МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОГО ГРОМАДЯНСЬКОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА

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Розглянуто соціополітичні трансформації, глобалізаційні процеси у світі, інтенсивні процеси людської мобільності: еміграція, імміграція, туризм, мультикультуралізм. Звернено увагу на новий напрям у розвитку педагогіки – імільтикультурна освіта, що охоплює культуру і захищає громадянські права кожної людини. Висвітлено суть мультикультурної і громадянської освіти.

Ключові слова: демократія, громадянська освіта, мультикультурна освіта, відповідальність, самоврядування, співробітництво; мультикультуралізм.